The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

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Program Developer Dan Olweus

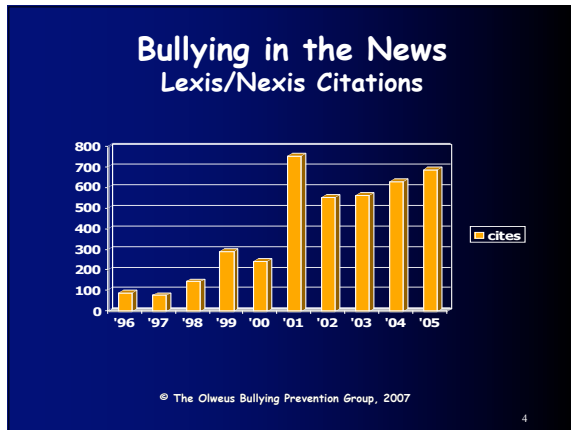© The Olweus Bullying Prevention Group, 2007

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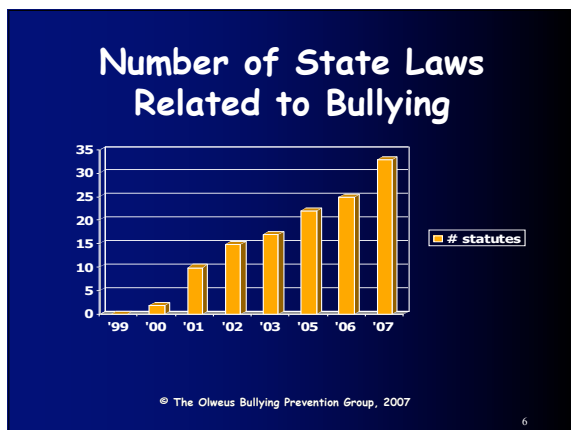**Recognition of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program**

- Blueprint Model Program (Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence)
- Model Program (SAMHSA)
- Effective Program (OJJDP)
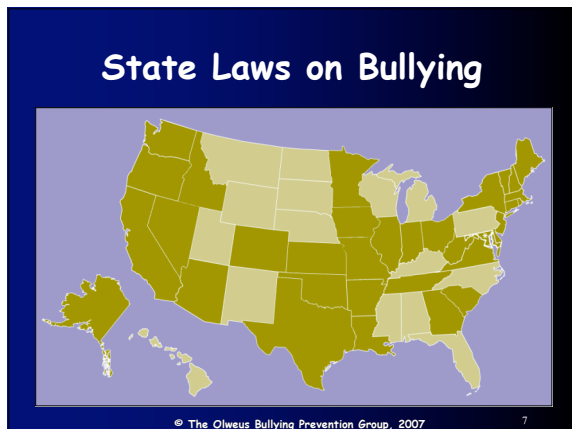- Level 2 Program (US Dept. of Education)

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Bullying in the News
Lexis/Nexis Citations

cites

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Research on Bullying
PsychInfo Searches

#articles

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Number of State Laws Related to Bullying

statutes

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State Laws on Bullying

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Olweus Trainers in the US

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Program Components

School-wide

Classroom

Individual

Community

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Program Components

Classroom

School

Parents

Community

Individual

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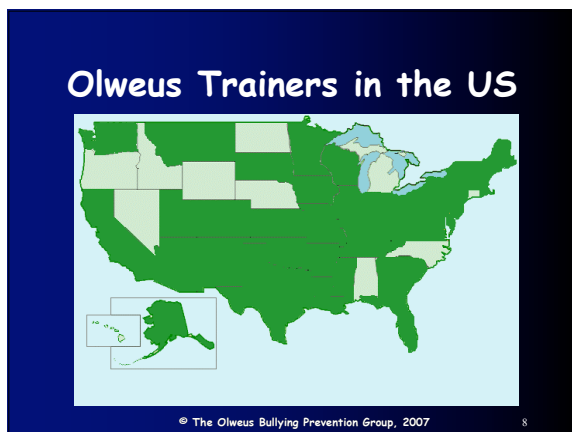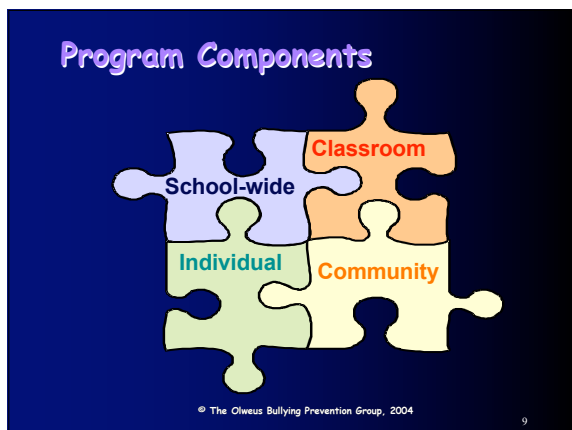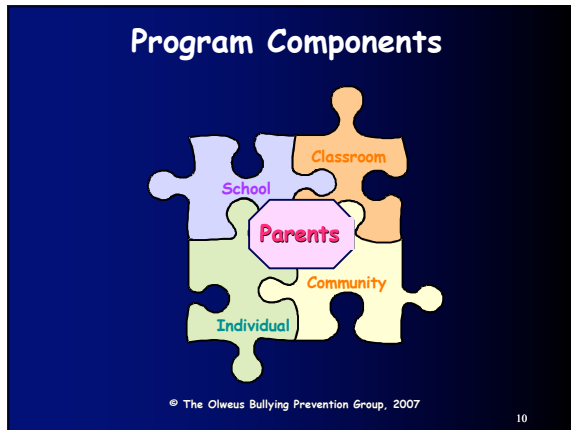
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The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program IS...

- Designed for ALL students
- Preventive AND responsive
- Focused on changing norms and restructuring the school setting
- Research-based
- NOT time-limited: Requires systematic efforts over time

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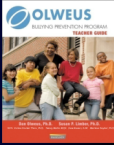11

The OBPP IS NOT...

- a curriculum
- a conflict resolution approach
- a peer mediation program
- an anger management program

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Required OBPP Materials

- **OBPP Schoolwide Guide**
  - CD of written materials
  - DVD: Overview of OBPP

- **OBPP Teacher Guide**
  - CD of written materials
  - DVD: Six scenarios for class discussion

- **Olweus Bullying Questionnaire**
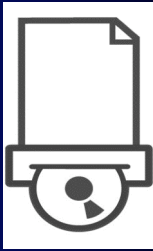
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Schoolwide Guide and Teacher Guide Icons

SP

Available In Spanish

DVD Symbol   **CD-ROM Symbol**

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Goals of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

- **Reduce existing bully/victim problems among school children**

- **Prevent the development of new bully/victim problems**

- **Improve peer relations**

- **Improve school climate**

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Program Principles

1. Warmth, positive interest, and involvement are needed on the part of adults in school.
2. Set firm limits to unacceptable behavior.
3. Consistently use nonphysical, nonhostile negative consequences when rules are broken.
4. Adults in the school should act as authorities and positive role models.

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Bullying . . .

"A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students."

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Bullying involves an imbalance in power or strength.

The student who is bullied has difficulty defending himself/herself.

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BULLYING = PEER ABUSE

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* Bullying
* Spouse abuse
* Child abuse

1. All involve imbalance of power;
2. The perpetrator blames the victim for their bad behavior;
3. The victim may blame him or herself for the abuse, if it is not stopped.

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How has society reacted to abuse?

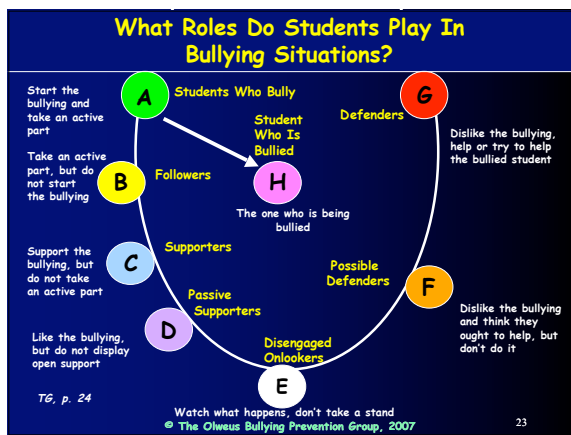1. Through denial "*It's not important;*" "*He didn't mean it.*"
2. By blaming the victim or asking the victim to solve the problem: "*You should wear different clothes;*" "*He just does it because he loves you;*" "*Just laugh it off;*" "*Don't go around them.*"
3. And through comprehensive intervention including training, consequences, helping abusers change, positive peer pressure, and support for targets.

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Why Focus on Problems Caused by Bullying Behaviors ❓

- Because of:
  - Short and long-term effects on victims
  - Concern about students who bully
  - Impact on bystanders
  - School social climate/safety
  - Legal concerns/risk management

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What Roles Do Students Play In Bullying Situations?

Start the bullying and take an active part

A Students Who Bully

G Defenders
Dislike the bullying, help or try to help the bullied student

Take an active part, but do not start the bullying

B Followers

Student Who Is Bullied
H
The one who is being bullied

Support the bullying, but do not take an active part

C Supporters

Possible Defenders

F
Dislike the bullying and think they ought to help, but don't do it

Passive Supporters

Like the bullying, but do not display open support

D

Disengaged Onlookers

E

TG, p. 24

Watch what happens, don't take a stand
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Effects of Being Bullied

- Lower self-esteem
- Depression & anxiety
- Absenteeism & lowered school achievement
- Thoughts of suicide
- Illness

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Health Consequences of Bullying
(Fekkes et al., 2004)

|	Bullied	Not bullied
Headache	16%	6%
Sleep problems	42%	23%
Abdominal pain	17%	9%
Feeling tense	20%	9%
Anxiety	28%	10%
Feeling unhappy	23%	5%
Depression scale		
moderate indication	49%	16%
strong indication	16%	2%

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Impact on School Engagement & Student Academic Achievement

Buhs, E. S., Ladd, G.W., Herald, S. L. (2006)

Peer Exclusion and Victimization: Processes That Mediate the Relation Between Peer Group Rejection and Children's Classroom Engagement and Achievement? *Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 98, No. 1, 1-13.*

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Peer Acceptance/ Rejection	Chronic Peer Maltreatment	Classroom Disengage- ment	Achievement Decrease
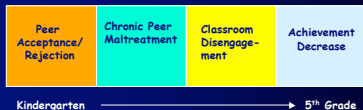
Kindergarten ⟶ 5th Grade

380 Students age 5-11
"Peers' sustained acts of exclusion, although perhaps not a visibly harmful as verbal or physical forms of abuse, may be particularly detrimental to children's participation, foster disengagement from learning activities, and thus, have a greater impact than peer abuse (name calling & physical abuse) on their progress in the academic domain." (page 11)

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Concerns About Children Who Bully

· Children who bully are more likely to:
  – Get into frequent fights
  – Be injured in a fight
  – Steal, vandalize property
  – Drink alcohol, smoke
  – Be truant, drop out of school
  – Report poorer academic achievement
  – Perceive a negative climate at school
  – Carry a weapon

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Effects of Bullying on Bystanders

· Bystanders may feel:

  – Afraid
  – Powerless to change the situation
  – Guilty for not acting
  – Diminished empathy for victims over time

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Effects of Bullying on School Climate

· Creates a climate of fear and disrespect
· Interferes with student learning
· Students may feel insecurity and not like school as well
· Students may perceive lack of control/caring from adults

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Ultimately...

It's a question of rights.

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Risk Factors for Bullying
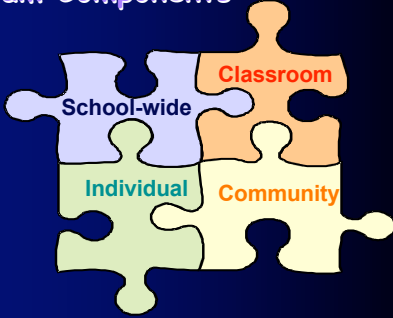
Individual

Family

Peers

School

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Program Components

School-wide

Classroom

Individual

Community

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Overview of School-Wide Elements

1. Form Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee
2. Train committee and all school personnel
3. Administer bully/victim questionnaire
4. Develop school policies & rules against bullying
5. Increase supervision
6. Use consistent positive and negative consequences
7. Hold staff discussion groups
8. Involve parents
9. Hold school-wide "Kick-Off" Events

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1. Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee

- Composition:
  - Administrator
  - Grade level teacher representation
  - School counselor and/or mental health professional
  - Paraprofessional / non-teaching staff
  - Parent
  - Before & after school program leader
  - Community representative

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2. Training for All School Personnel

- Administrators
- All educators / faculty
- Custodians
- Bus drivers
- Lunchroom supervisors
- Support staff / paraprofessionals
- Adults often at the school
- After school program providers

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Planning for Implementation

- Conduct a school-wide needs assessment to determine student vulnerability
  - How often is bullying happening in our school?
  - For whom is bullying an issue?
    - Gender
    - Grade Levels
    - Roles in Bullying Situations
  - Where is the bullying taking place?
  - Where is more adult supervision needed?

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4. school rules Against Bullying

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will include students who are easily left out.
- When we know somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

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Classroom Interventions

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Interventions at the Classroom Level

- School rules posted and discussed
- Consistent use of positive and negative consequences
- Regular class meetings (weekly)
- Incorporation of bullying themes across the curriculum
- Class-level parent meetings (where possible)

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Class Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings with students and their teacher.

Students often feel more open to share feelings and struggles they are having at school and explore solutions.

They report feeling more connected to their classmates and to the adults at school.

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Individual Elements

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Elements at the Individual Level

1. On-the-spot interventions

2. Follow-up discussions with children who are bullied

3. Follow-up discussions with children who bully

4. Staff information-sharing

5. Parental involvement and follow-up

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COMMUNITY EFFORTS

Community

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Communities Support Prevention Efforts

• Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
• City Council
• County Commissioners
• Non-Profit Family/Child Organizations
• Violence Prevention Coalitions
• Public Service Organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary)

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Spreading the Anti-Bullying Message in the Community
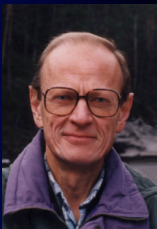
- Local Media – Newspapers/ Radio/ Television
- City and County Health Departments
- Local Police Departments
- Domestic Violence Coalitions
- Juvenile Court

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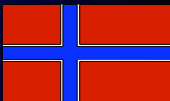
The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

- First systematic research on bullying conducted in early 1970s.
- OBPP part of Norway's national campaign against bullying in early 1980s.

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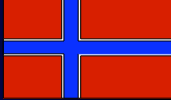
Program Outcomes: Norwegian Sample (1983-1985)

- 50%-70% reductions in students' self-reports of bullying and victimization
- Reductions in self-reports of antisocial behavior such as vandalism, fighting, theft, alcohol use, and truancy
- Improvements in class "social climate"
- Similar results have been found in several follow-up studies (1997-1998; 1999-2000; 2001-2003).

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Program Outcomes and Key Findings: Norway

- **Reduction in bullying and antisocial behavior**
- **Improvements in classroom social climate**
- **"Dosage" affects success**
- **Timing of effects**

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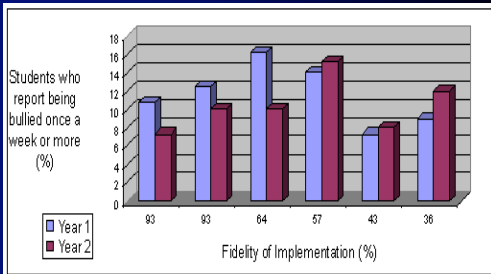
Evaluations in the United States

- **South Carolina Study**
  - **18 public middle schools (mostly rural)**
  - **Reductions in students' reports of bullying others after 1 year.**
  - **Reductions in boys' reports of being bullied and feelings of social isolation after 1 year.**

- **Philadelphia Study**
  - **6 public elementary and middle schools**
  - **Urban setting, mostly minority and low-income families**
  - **Bullying incident density decreased by 45% over 4 years**

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Comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 student survey data arranged by fidelity of implementation

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Evaluations in the United States

- **Washington Study**
  - **10 public middle schools** (7 interv./3 control)
  - **Relational and physical victimization decreased 28% among white students; no decrease among students of other races**
  - **Students in intervention schools more likely to perceive other students actively intervened in bullying**

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Evaluations in the United States

- **Chula Vista, CA Study**
  - **Surveys of students, staff, parents from 3 elem. schools.**
  - **Decreases in reports of being bullied:** by 21% after 1 year.
  - **Decreases in reports of bullying others:** by 8% after 1 year, and 17% after 2 years.
  - **After 1 year, students more likely to perceive that adults at school tried to stop bullying.**
  - **After 1 year, parents felt that administrators had done more to stop bullying.**

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Program Outcomes:
Additional US Sites Collecting Data
(Not Yet Published)

- Virginia
- York, PA
- Arizona
- Iowa
- Minnesota
- Virginia
- New York
- Tennessee

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Katie Moffett, director of Bully-Free Virginia at Virginia Commonwealth University said, "Many schools in Virginia have seen a dramatic drop in bullying incidents since starting the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*. In fact, the program is so well received that some insurers are giving a five percent discount to school districts that are using *OBPP* because it meets criteria for reduced liability risk."

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Dr. Doreen Dauer, supervisor of Student Assistance and Prevention Programs in Prince William County said, "In the beginning of the pilot program, 20.5 percent of students surveyed said they were bullied 2-3 times a week. At the end of the pilot program, only 8 percent of our students said they were bullied 2-3 times a week. This program has proven results in decreasing bullying incidents and we are offering it to all schools in our district. Even more, the program really makes for a kinder, more supportive school environment."

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Edgerton School, Kalispell, Montana
Before Program Implementation

Office Referral Monthly Totals 05-06

Month	Referrals
September	28
October	43
November	25
December	37
January	27
February	35
March	19
April	42
May/June	47

Program Introduced September 2006

OLWEUS Monthly Totals

Referrals by month:
- September: 1
- October: 24
- November: 9
- December: 3
- January: 5
- February: 5
- March: 4
- April: 10
- May/June: 14

(Y-axis: Referrals, 0–30; X-axis: Month)

Edgerton OLWEUS Program Data 05-06 Sept – June.

43 Different Students Involved
Of the 43 Students:
- 29 students with 1 referral only (68%)
- 10 students with 2-3 referrals (23%)
- 3 students with 4-5 referrals (7%)
- 1 student with 6 or more referrals (2%)

Bullying Referrals Sept. - June

- 29, 68% — 1 Referral Only
- 10, 23% — 2-3 Referrals
- 3, 7% — 4-5 Referrals
- 1, 2% — 6+ Referrals

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Edgerton OLWEUS Program Data 06-07 Sept. – Dec.

10 Different Students Involved
Of the 10 Students:
- 9 students with 1 referral only (90%)
- 1 students with 2-3 referrals (10%)
- 0 students with 4-5 referrals (0%)
- 0 student with 6 or more referrals (0%)

Bullying Referrals Sept.- Dec.

- 9, 90% — 1 Referral Only
- 1, 10% — 2-3 Referrals
- 0, 0% — 4-5 Referrals
- 0, 0% — 6+ Referrals

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Linn-Mar Community School District

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
Excelsior / Oak Ridge Middle School Statistics

School years
(Pre) 2004-2005, (Yr. 1) 2005-2006, (Yr. 2) 2006-2007

Mike Shipley
At-Risk Intervention Specialist
Certified Olweus Trainer

Number of Students Taking the Olweus Survey

Excelsior Middle School
2005: 770
2006: 788
2007: 766

Oak Ridge Middle School
2005: 342
2006: 360
2007: 400
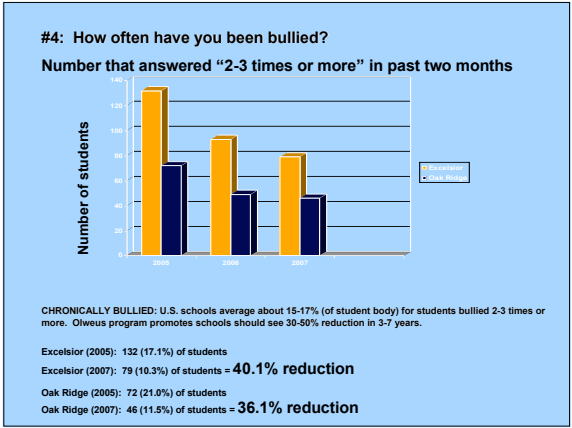
#4: How often have you been bullied?

Number that answered "2-3 times or more" in past two months

CHRONICALLY BULLIED: U.S. schools average about 15-17% (of student body) for students bullied 2-3 times or more. Olweus program promotes schools should see 30-50% reduction in 3-7 years.

Excelsior (2005): 132 (17.1%) of students
Excelsior (2007): 79 (10.3%) of students = **40.1% reduction**
Oak Ridge (2005): 72 (21.0%) of students
Oak Ridge (2007): 46 (11.5%) of students = **36.1% reduction**

#18:   Where have you been bullied?
Computational basis: those bullied "once or twice" or more according to question 4

Oak Ridge Middle School	2005	2006	2007
Hallways / Stairwells	70.7% (1)	63.4% (1)	58.0% (1)
Lunch room	54.9% (2)	50.8% (2)	56.3% (2)
School bus	51.3% (3)	44.1% (3)	48.0% (3)
Classroom (teacher absent)	48.8% (4)	38.3% (5)	42.4% (4)
Classroom (teacher present)	44.4% (5)	35.8% (6)	37.8% (5)
Gym class / locker room	35.6% (6)	33.3% (8)	32.0% (7)
On the way to and from school	33.1% (7)	33.9% (7)	34.9% (6)
Playground / athletic field	27.1% (8)	39.8% (4)	21.1% (8)
Somewhere else in school	21.3% (9)	21.9% (9)	11.3% (9)
In the bathroom	14.6% (10)	11.3% (10)	6.5% (10)
School bus stop	10.9% (11)	10.3% (11)	5.6% (11)

#18: Where have you been bullied?
Computational basis: Those bullied "once or twice" or more according to question 4

Excelsior Middle School	2005	2006	2007
Hallways / Stairwells	67.5% (1)	62.1% (1)	54.1% (1)
Classroom (teacher absent)	54.3% (2)	42.5% (2)	43.4% (2)
Lunch room	47.7% (3)	38.5% (5)	34.8% (5)
Classroom (teacher present)	44.4% (4)	39.6% (3)	37.1% (4)
School bus	36.2% (5)	38.8% (4)	39.8% (3)
Playground / Athletic field	34.0% (6)	19.5% (8)	19.3% (8)
Gym class / locker room	31.9% (7)	24.3% (7)	21.2% (7)
On the way to and from school	24.8% (8)	27.4% (6)	25.2% (6)
Somewhere else in school	23.2% (9)	13.7% (9)	17.5% (9)
School bus stop	11.4% (10)	12.8% (10)	7.6% (10)
In the bathroom	7.3% (11)	6.3% (11)	5.3% (11)

Know the difference between system change and curriculum based programming!

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Talk About Implementation Well in Advance!

- Do you have administrative and staff support to engage in a systems change program?
- At least 50% of the adults in the system need to have a favorable attitude/ commitment toward the program before starting implementation.

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Planning for Implementation

- Careful planning is critical to program success!
- It may take a school year to be ready to implement this program.

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Consider Readiness and Commitment

- Do you have staff agreement?
- Do you have administrator & school board commitment?
- Will you provide the time for committee/staff to implement with fidelity?
- Will you provide the needed resources?
- Are you willing to collect needs assessment data and ongoing data for decision-making?
- Are you willing to implement over time, not just a one-year commitment?

Conclusions and the Future

- **The Bullying Prevention Program is reducing bullying behavior in schools where there is fidelity of implementation**
- **Not all schools are able to embrace the program**
- **Need to expand the program to select schools that are ready**

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