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South Australia

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# THE PREVALENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

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## Executive summary

The report examines the prevalence and effectiveness of anti-bullying policies being used in a convenience sample of Australian government schools in six state or territory educational jurisdictions. It has drawn upon the perceptions and experiences of a range of stakeholders, that is, schools, teachers, parents and educational administrators from a number of Australian states and territories.

Online questionnaires were answered by schools (N = 26) through a school representative in consultation with colleagues; students (N = 1,688) in Years 5 to 10; teachers (N = 451) and parents (N = 167). In addition, interviews were conducted by telephone with regional administrators/educational leaders (N = 10). Both quantitative and qualitative methods of analyses were employed.

Results were analysed in relation to type of school (primary, secondary and combined), disability, gender, ethnicity and year of schooling.

The results provide an account of the social context in which bullying takes place. These include estimates on bullying prevalence, student responses to bullying and effects on student wellbeing. How schools are responding is then examined in relation to proactive approaches (i.e., preventing bullying) and reactive approaches (i.e., responding to cases of bullying) adopted by schools.

Key findings were that approximately 15% of students reported being bullied, most commonly in verbal and covert ways. Disabled students reported being victimised more often than able-bodied students. In general, the sample of Indigenous students was not bullied more than others, but there was evidence of them being more often racially harassed.

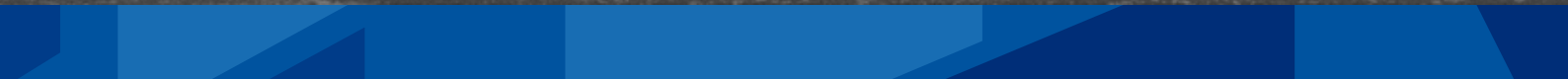
All the schools reported having a written anti-bullying policy, but only 47.8% of students indicated that they were aware of its existence. Most students reported that teacher-led instruction and activities on bullying took place at their school, more commonly in primary schools. Whilst students generally recognised the value of this work, they indicated different priorities about what is most useful in stopping bullying.

A minority of students (37.7%) reported that they were being bullied to teachers/counsellors. Of these, 29.3% reported that the bullying had been prevented from continuing and a further 39.6% that it had been reduced. Intervention methods, as reported by teachers, included the use of sanctions, strengthening the victim, mediation and restorative practice, and to a lesser extent the Support Group Method and the Method of Shared Concern. Basing their judgements on the experiences of their children at school, parents of bullied children were the least positive in appraising the effectiveness of the work of teachers.

Results from teachers on a test of knowledge about bullying indicated that on many issues teachers were in error or divided in their beliefs. Generally, teachers believed that training in countering bullying, especially at pre-service level, was inadequate. It was also evident that the pressure of other business together with scarce resources made it difficult for schools to focus on bullying.

Based on the results from this study, the following recommendations are made: (i) enable all members of the school community to become familiar with the school anti-bullying policy; (ii) seek out and act upon student feedback on the helpfulness of actions taken by the school in addressing bullying; (iii) pay particular attention to students who are most vulnerable to being bullied; (iv) engage more effectively with students who are being bullied and require help from the school; (v) provide more anti-bullying professional learning for both pre-service and practising teachers; and (vi) conduct further research to address issues identified as significant in this study.





# 1. Introduction

It is now well established that bullying in schools constitutes a major problem worldwide. Bullying is prevalent in schools in every country in which surveys have been conducted and being severely and/or repeatedly bullied at school is a serious health risk. An estimate based upon reports by Due et al (2009) from school children aged 11 to 15 years from 35 countries indicated that 10.9% were being bullied two or three times a month. In Australia it has been reported that approximately one child in four is being bullied over a period of several weeks (Cross et al, 2011). Evidence of the psychological harm, especially through the loss of self-esteem and persistent feelings of anxiety and depression, has been widely reported (Olweus, 1993, Forero, 1999, Rigby, 2003, Sourander, 2005, Wolke et al., 2013). In addition, studies have shown that peer victimisation is significantly related to poor academic performance (Juvonen, Wang and Espinoza, 2011; Lacey and Cornell, 2013).

Over the last ten years or so a great deal has been learned about the kinds of anti-bullying strategies that are being used by schools around the world. As a consequence, it is now evident that *some*, but not all, strategies have been effective in reducing the prevalence of peer victimisation. For instance, according to the most comprehensive meta-evaluation to date of the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs, approximately 20% reduction in bullying has been reported when well-designed strategies have been implemented and carefully evaluated (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). Unfortunately, little is known about what schools in general are doing, both proactively and reactively, in addressing school bullying. Nor is it known what elements in anti-bullying programs are making significant contributions towards reducing bullying.

A major study commissioned by the British government has provided useful knowledge about the frequency with which particular anti-bullying strategies are being employed in schools in England, and with what outcomes (Thompson and Smith, 2011). These included proactive strategies such as employing a whole-school approach, adult modelling of positive relationships, curriculum work, cooperative group work, circle time, cyber mentoring, bystander defender training and meetings with parents. In addition, the British study examined a number of reactive strategies in dealing with cases of bullying: the use of direct sanctions, restorative approaches, mediation, the Support Group Method and the Method of Shared Concern. For the first time in any country estimates based upon extensive and comprehensive information provided by schools and local education authorities revealed how often particular strategies were being used in primary and in secondary schools and with what success.

In Australia no such systematic study has thus far been undertaken. We have to rely on piecemeal and largely anecdotal evidence of unknown validity. There is some evidence that anti-bullying strategies based upon the Friendly Schools Whole of School Intervention Program (Cross et al, 2011) can significantly reduce bullying, but it is not known how widely the program is being implemented and which of the many elements in the program are contributing to its success. Similarly, it is evident that the Method of Shared Concern can be used to resolve some cases of bullying (Rigby and Griffiths, 2010, 2011), but it is not known how widely this and other alternative reactive strategies are being used in Australian schools and with what success.

The present study replicated some parts of the study conducted in Britain. In particular, we were interested in what teachers could tell us about the actions that were being taken in their schools in addressing bullying, both proactively and reactively and with what outcomes. But in addition we were interested in the perceptions and experiences of students themselves. These included students who reported having been bullied at their school and those who had not. Of particular interest were the

experiences of Aboriginal students. Earlier research conducted in Australian schools between 1993 and 1998 indicated that Aboriginal students were bullied by their peers more often than other students, especially through hurtful name calling (Rigby, 2002, p184).

Three aspects of this study were innovative. One was examining the level of knowledge among staff members of research-based findings related to bullying behaviour in schools. This enabled us to pinpoint issues about which teachers were well informed, divided or badly informed. These findings have important implications for pre-service training and staff development sessions. A second aspect was gaining parent views on how their child's school was responding to bullying. Information from parents was seen as complementary to that obtained from the other sources. Thirdly, it was considered important to obtain the views of regional educational leaders on the matters investigated in the schools and revealed by our research.



## 2. Rationale for the study

Previous inquiries into bullying in Australian schools have revealed the prevalence and harmfulness of bullying behaviour among students (Rigby, 1997, Ferero et al, 1999, Cross et al., 2011; Hemphill, Tolitt and Kotevski, 2012). However, no systematic study has been undertaken to examine how Australian schools are responding to the problem and with what success. Knowledge of the actions that are being taken by schools and their effectiveness can provide an informed basis for identifying and promoting more effective ways of addressing student-to-student bullying.

Rather than relying on only one source, we decided to acquire information from a variety of sources. These included schools to provide an account of the actions that they had been taking to address bullying and with what results; students to describe how they had been affected by bullying and the help received from the school; parents to provide information about how they saw the school operating in addressing bullying and how their own children had been affected; and educational administrators to provide their perspectives and insights into what schools were doing. Each source provided a distinctive but complementary account to enable a composite picture to emerge.

One part of this inquiry focused upon what teachers knew about evidence-based findings relating to school bullying. We believe that scrutinising teachers' knowledge about bullying behaviour is a significant part of appraising what schools are doing.

In this inquiry into the actions undertaken by schools to counter bullying it was important to establish the social context in which the problem was being addressed. This entailed an examination into what bullying was actually occurring in the schools and how members of the school community were reacting to what was taking place. Relevant information was obtained from each of the sources we accessed, especially from students who were able to articulate what they had seen happening and what they had personally experienced.

In summary, in view of the widely acknowledged prevalence and negative effects of school bullying, we believed it was important to discover what actions schools were taking; especially as no previous inquiry of this kind had been undertaken in Australia. This knowledge is needed to address student-to-student bullying more effectively.

### 3. Methodology

In summary, the study made use of a survey design, as employed in the pilot study conducted in May 2014 (Rigby and Cox, 2014). This entailed the development of (i) a Student Questionnaire, (ii) a School Questionnaire, (iii) a Knowledge of Bullying Quiz, and (iv) a Parent Questionnaire. Each of these was delivered online and responded to anonymously. In addition, an interview schedule was designed for use with regional educational leaders. The interviews were conducted by telephone following the completion of the online surveys and the analysis of the questionnaire data.

#### Measures used in the project

There were four questionnaires used in this study, each conducted online, and one interview schedule employed in interviews by telephone.

##### **The Student Questionnaire**

This contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions. It included a set of items derived from a published test of Material Deprivation (Main and Bradshaw, 2012) which has been used extensively as a partial substitute for assessing socioeconomic status. The Student Questionnaire is provided in Appendix 5.

##### **The School Questionnaire**

This questionnaire was answered by a staff member nominated by the principal in consultation with other staff. See Appendix 6.

##### **The Parent Questionnaire**

Parents were provided with a link to this questionnaire via the school. See Appendix 8.

##### **The Knowledge of Bullying Quiz (KBQ)**

This consists of 40 true/false questions based on a review of published research literature in the field. See Appendix 7.

##### **The Interview Guide for Regional Educational Leaders**

This open-ended interview schedule was developed after the results from the above questionnaires had been examined. We sought reactions and views in response to the information provided by the students. See Appendix 4.

#### Ethical clearance

Permission to undertake this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of South Australia and from each of the six educational jurisdictions that approved participation by their schools. It was a condition of such approval that no names of jurisdictions, sites or names of individuals be included in any report and that participation required active and informed consent.

## The selection of respondents

Respondents for this survey were of two kinds: (i) those associated with schools: students, staff members and the parents of students attending the school, and (ii) those in positions of external educational leadership.

### The schools

A stratified random sampling procedure was used initially to obtain the names of schools to be invited to take part. The aim was to obtain consent from 100 schools. To take into account the likelihood that some schools would decline the invitation to take part, we approached double the required number of schools by letter or by email. Selection of schools to approach took into account the following:

- (i) The number of eligible schools in the jurisdiction compared with other government jurisdictions.
- (ii) To be eligible a school had to cater for mainstream students, as distinct from providing education exclusively for special needs students. To safeguard anonymity, schools with less than 10 students in a class from which data was required were not eligible on the grounds that individual children might be identified on the basis of demographic data collected from such a class.
- (iii) Representation of types of schools according to their prevalence in the jurisdiction. Thus the numbers of primary, secondary and combined schools included in the sampling was proportionate to their number in their jurisdiction.
- (iv) Geographical location. Selection took into account the numbers of schools in the location that were in the following categories: major cities, inner regional, outer regional and remote.

In Term 4, 2014 eight randomly selected schools in two jurisdictions agreed to take part and a further six agreed to take part in Term 2, 2015. Mindful of the low acceptance rate of schools in 2014, we decided to quadruple the invitations. One of the jurisdictions indicated that they wished to nominate the schools to be invited, rather than permit the random selection.

It was further decided that in order to obtain a more adequate sample of schools a self-selection process would be used with the assistance of the Principals Australia Institute (PAI). Principals Australia Institute advertised the project and included invitations to express an interest in participating in their newsletter to every Australian school.

Those schools that contacted us with expressions of interest were provided with details about the project and a consent form to indicate the school's involvement in the project (see Appendix 1). We made it clear that respondents could withdraw from the project at any stage. After consent had been given by the school principal and acknowledged, further information was provided on two occasions.

In total 46 schools gave their consent and participated in the project. Not all the schools answered or facilitated the answering of each of the questionnaires, that is, the questionnaires for the school, the students, teachers (the quiz) and parents. As a consequence the numbers of questionnaires providing data received varied according to the group identity of the respondents. Further information about the sets of data available from each group is given in the section on results.

In summary, the sampling was partly random, partly self-selection and partly nominated by jurisdiction and was notably affected by the withdrawal of some schools.

## **Selection of students and parents**

Consenting schools undertook to contact the parents of students who were attending the school in Years 5–10. Information was sent home via the student. This included an explanation of the project and what was involved and consent forms for both parent and student to sign (see Appendix 2). An opting-in process was employed. Parents were also provided with a link which would enable them to access the Parent Questionnaire.

## **Selection of teachers to answer the quiz**

The principal at each school undertook to inform the staff of the quiz and how it could be accessed online. This was undertaken either at staff meetings or in the individual teacher's time. The quiz was completed by 476 teachers at 26 schools.

## **Selection of regional educational leaders**

The initial intent of inviting 40 regional administrators to complete questionnaires was modified in three ways.

Firstly, because of the lower than anticipated response rate from schools we decided that it was inappropriate to involve the original number of administrators and so the number to be invited to participate was reduced. Based on the ratio of the number of eligible schools in each jurisdiction a new target of 24 administrators was set.

Secondly, we reviewed our original terminology of 'regional administrators' to be more inclusive of the variation between states. We determined that the interchangeable terms 'educational leader' and 'regional administrator' would more accurately describe the positions of those whose responsibilities encompassed both systemic initiatives to reduce bullying and supporting schools in responding to bullying. In presenting and discussing results we use the term 'educational leader'. The selection of both state-wide and regional leaders and administrators is an example of maximum variation sampling (Patton, 1990, p 4). This purposive sampling enabled the identification of common patterns and themes across the varied programs and anti-bullying approaches promoted by each jurisdiction. Jurisdictions nominated the relevant educational leaders to be invited. Two of the jurisdictions decided to contact their appropriate personnel directly. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, they have been assigned a numerical code from 62 to 74. We use these codes in the results section when quoting their comments. Table 1 shows the jurisdiction, number and roles of participants.

**Table 1: Jurisdiction, number and role of participants**

Jurisdiction	Number invited	Number who consented	Number who participated	Role of participant
Qld	5	2	2	1) State-wide manager 2) Regional officer
NSW	8	4	3	1) State-wide director 2) Regional coordinator 3) Regional coordinator
ACT	1	0	0	
Vic	6	5	3	1) State-wide project officer 2) Regional manager 3) Regional officer
SA	2	2	1	State-wide manager
WA	2	1	1	Regional executive director

Thirdly, the smaller sample size and the selection of a range of educational leaders with varied roles and responsibilities meant that an online survey would not produce generalisable data. Instead, we used the small size and heterogeneity of the purposive sample to generate detailed and rich information about anti-bullying approaches. We therefore decided to conduct phone interviews with the consenting educational leaders. A letter was sent to educational leaders to invite their participation (Appendix 3). The interviews were semi-structured and an interview guide (Appendix 4), prepared after analysis of the student questionnaires, was sent to participants. This guide enabled participants to prepare for the interview and to provide comparable information. It further allowed the interviewer to probe, to use the participant's language and to let the participant share in the direction of the conversation.

## 4. Results

The results in this section relate to responses to (i) the Student Questionnaire, (ii) the School Questionnaire, (iii) the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz, (iv) the Parent Questionnaire, and (v) interviews conducted with educational leaders.

### The Student Questionnaire

#### Sample composition

In total, 1688 students responded to the questionnaire. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the student numbers according to location and type of school.

**Table 2: Location and type of school with student numbers**

Type of school	VIC	SA	NSW	QLD	ACT	WA	Total
Primary	11 (275)	10 (375)	1 (15)	2 (134)	0	1 (27)	25 (826)
Secondary	1 (32)	2 (122)	4 (392)	0	0	0	7 (546)
Combined	0	2 (102)	0	1 (97)	1 (117)	0	4 (316)
Total	<b>12 (307)</b>	14 (599)	5 (407)	3 (231)	1 (117)	1 (27)	36 (1688)

Details regarding the gender composition of the sample and the type of school are given in Table 3.

**Table 3: Gender composition of the sample by type of school**

	Primary	Secondary	Combined	Total
Girls	466	282	165	913
Boys	360	264	151	775
Total	826	546	316	1688

The breakdown according year level and gender is given in Table 4.

**Table 4: Gender of students according to year of school**

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
5	176	215	391
6	191	247	438
7	119	148	267
8	124	118	242
9	78	68	146
10	87	117	204
Total	775	993	1688

Note: Apart from compulsory questions relating to gender, year of schooling and school, respondents were not required to answer each question. As a consequence there was some variation between the numbers of responses to different questions, as indicated in our report of the results.

## Demographics

### *Ethnicity*

A large majority of respondents (88.3%) indicated that they were born in Australia. Other countries included the UK (2.0%), India (1.4%), New Zealand (1.0%) and the Philippines (0.9%). A further measure related to ethnicity concerned the language spoken at home: those who spoke English 'always' (84.0%); sometimes another language (12.6%); and always or nearly always another language (3.4%). Languages spoken at home included Italian (1.4%), Greek (1.2%), Punjabi (1.2%) and Filipino (0.9%). Indigenous identity was identified using a single question: 'Do you regard yourself as an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander?' According to this criterion 97 students (45 boys and 52 girls) in the sample were Indigenous Australian, that is, 6.7%.

### *Disability*

For the purposes of this project students were identified as having a disability if they indicated that they were receiving extra help from the school because of their disability. They comprised 5.1% of the sample. Disabilities reported included ADHD, autism, vision impairment, cerebral palsy, diabetes, dyslexia and hearing loss.

### *Material deprivation*

The Child Material Deprivation Index (CMDI) composed of 11 items was used to assess the extent to which students were deprived of material resources commonly accessed by their peers. This provided scores ranging from 0 (greatly deprived) to 11 (not deprived). For 1628 students completing the CMDI, the mean score was 8.75,  $SD = 1.72$ . The alpha coefficient indicating the internal consistency of the 11-item index was .53. Items and results are given in Appendix 9.

## Responses

### *Perceptions of students of the school environment relating to interpersonal relations*

Students were asked how they perceived aspects of the school environment, in terms of how well students got on together, how often different kinds of bullying occurred and where the bullying occurred.

A high proportion of students (over 75%) believed that most, if not all, students at their school got on with each other well (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Students' perceptions on how students relate at school (N = 1665)**

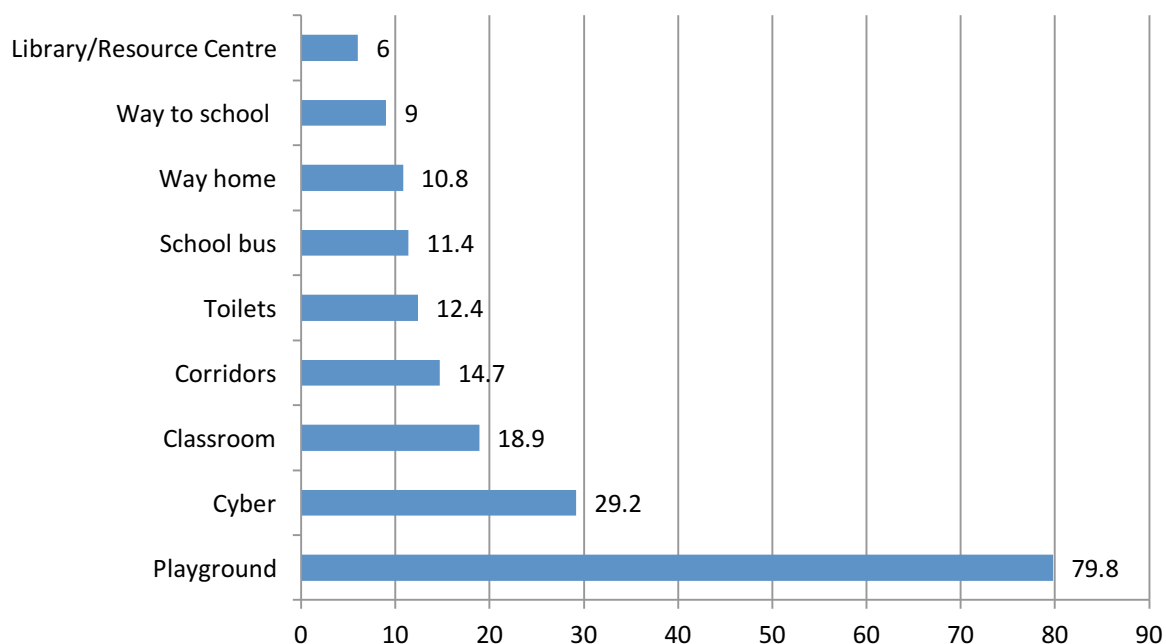
Student perception	%
Get on well	12.3
Most get on well	63.1
About half get on well	19.5
Most do not get on well	3.9
Do not get on well	1.3

#### *Perceived frequency of bullying in the schools*

Students were provided with a list of different kinds of bullying that might take place at their school and asked to indicate how often they saw each happening. The most commonly perceived forms of bullying involved the spreading of malicious rumours 'to make other kids not like me', with 30.7% reporting that this happened quite often or very often at their school. The percentages of students perceiving other forms of bullying as happening quite or very often were: being made fun of or teased in a mean and hurtful way (26.3%); being ignored or not allowed to join in (19.5%); being hit, pushed around (14.9%); being made afraid of being hurt (12.2%); cruel things said online (12.2%); harassing of students because of their race (10.5%); harassing texts or emails (8.9%); sexual harassment (3.8%). In making judgements students tended to differ widely, for instance 45.3% opined that no-one was ever made afraid of getting hurt. Full details of how students perceived bullying at their school are given in Appendix 10.

#### *Perceptions of where bullying occurs at the students' school*

To obtain student perceptions of where bullying was occurring at their school, respondents were provided with a list of places where it had been indicated in previous studies that bullying occurred in the school environment. The percentages of respondents indicating that bullying occurred 'often' in the different places are given in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Percentages of students who reported that bullying occurred often at certain places**

The total number of students responding to each question varied between 1498 and 1523.



Thus a large consensus – around 80% – reported that bullying occurred often in the playground, followed by ‘cyber bullying’. Some saw bullying occurring frequently in the classroom (18.9%). Bullying to and from school accounted for 22.2%. Notably in areas where students may be expected to be safe, in the library or resource centre, 6% of students indicated that bullying took place often.

#### *Perceived and reported safety of students from being bullied*

We assessed safety of students from being bullied in relation to (i) students who found it difficult to defend themselves, and (ii) all students according to locations.

Student perceptions (N = 1615) of whether their school was a safe place for students who find it hard to defend themselves from other students are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Perceptions of the safety of children who find it hard to defend themselves from other students**

	Percentages endorsing
It is safe for them	30.7
It is usually safe for them	42.2
It is safe about half the time	19.1
It is usually not safe for them	5.3
It is never safe for them	2.8

The perceptions of students of the vulnerability of those with difficulty defending themselves differed widely, with a substantial majority (72.9%) seeing children who find it hard to defend themselves as usually or always safe. However, 27.2% saw them as at risk about half the time or more often.

#### *Perceptions of the safety of students from bullying in three environments*

For comparison, responses were provided indicating reported feelings of safety experienced by all students in three different social environments: (a) at school, (b) going to and from school, and (c) where they could be accessed through cyber bullying. The percentages of students indicating that students feel safe half the time or less often is given in Table 7.

**Table 7: Percentages of respondents indicating feeling unsafe half the time or more often in different locations**

Locations	%	N
At school	22.2	1535
To and from school	12.2	1527
Cyberspace	14.1	1535

Differences between the types of schools (primary, secondary and combined) were not significant with respect to level of safety at any of the locations, by chi square,  $p > .05$ . For each type of school the school environment was perceived as the least safe and going to and from school the most safe.

These results suggest that that some parts of the environment are considered less safe than others, with the school environment being least safe. However, students who reported feeling relatively unsafe in one environment tended to feel unsafe in other environments. Constituted as a three-item scale, the measure produced a reliable index of how students felt about being safe from bullying, with an alpha coefficient of .74.

We examined gender differences in perceived safety using all the categories of responding, as detailed in Appendix 11. Significant gender differences were found for each location. These indicated that more boys than girls reported that they always felt safe. Notably a higher proportion of girls often felt unsafe from cyber bullying.

#### *The presence and behaviour of bystanders*

Respondents were asked to answer a series of questions to provide their perceptions of the presence of bystanders when bullying occurred; whether action (if any) was taken to stop the bullying; whether 'speaking out' against the bullying stopped it from continuing; and whether bystanders encouraged the bullying.

There was considerable variation among students regarding the likelihood that bystanders would be present when bullying took place (see Table 8).

**Table 8: Presence of others when bullying takes place (N = 1624)**

	Percentages responding
Always takes place with others present	9.1
Usually takes place with others present	39.3
About half the time others are present	31.2
Not usually others present	17.4
Others never present	3.0

Thus most students (79.6%) saw bullying occurring at least half the time with others present.

Whether actions were taken by students when they see bullying going on also produced a wide range of judgements among students. Of those who reported that bullying occurred at least sometimes with others present (97% of students), some (19%) indicated that no-one said or did anything to stop it, some (47%) that sometimes people do speak out; some (27 %) that those present usually said or did something to try to stop it; and some (7%) that they always do so. Thus the most common response was that bystanders 'sometimes' speak out.

Whether speaking out by students against the bullying they witnessed made a difference again produced mixed responses. Speaking out against bullying when it happens was seen as making no difference by 23% of respondents; 37% saw speaking out as 'sometimes' stopping the bullying; 22% thought it stopped the bullying about half the time; 16% thought it usually stopped the bullying and 3% that it always stopped the bullying. Thus the effectiveness of speaking out against bullying by student onlookers was seen as limited, with 41% of respondents believing that it would stop the bullying on half the occasions or less.

Bystanders encouraging the student(s) doing the bullying was seen as never happening by 32% of respondents; 56% indicated that bystanders sometimes did; 9% that they usually did and 2% that they always did. Thus encouraging the bullying was seen to take place with varying degrees of frequency by 68% of the respondents.

#### *Perceived help-seeking behaviour of bullied students*

We asked questions to ascertain student perceptions of the frequency with which students seek help when they are bullied; and the perceived effectiveness of teachers/counsellors in stopping the bullying. Views on whether students who are bullied at their school seek help are provided in Table 9.

**Table 9: How often bullied students are perceived as telling somebody to get help (N = 1604)**

	Percentage responding
They always tell	17.8
They usually tell somebody	44.9
They sometimes tell somebody	32.9
They never tell anybody	4.4

Most students (62.7%) believed that bullied students generally or always told someone to get help. A very small percentage (4.4%) thought that they kept it to themselves.

*Perceived effectiveness of telling a teacher or counsellor/psychologist*

Views on the effectiveness of telling a teacher/counsellor at one's school in getting the bullying stopped are given in Table 10.

**Table 10: Perceived outcome after a student has told a teacher/counsellor of being bullied (N = 1521)**

	Percentage responding
The bullying always stops	11.4
The bullying usually stops	42.3
The bullying stops about half the time	26.2
The bullying usually does not stop	12.4
The bullying never stops	2.8
The bullying usually gets worse	3.9
The bullying always gets worse	1.1

Judgements differed widely from the very positive – bullying 'always stops' (11.4) –to the bullying 'usually or always gets worse' (5%). A slight majority of the students (53.7%) saw outcomes as positive more than half the time, but an almost equal number (46.3%) saw less positive outcomes occurring, i.e., bullying stopping half the time or less.

*Knowledge and perceived effectiveness of the school anti-bullying policy*

Asked whether their school had an anti-bullying policy in writing, among the respondents (N = 1,618) 47.8% indicated that their school had such a policy, 49.1% that they did not know and 3% said no.

Of those who had indicated that their school had such a policy, 66.1% indicated that they had seen it. Of those places where the policy had been observed the most common was in their classroom (63.1%) followed by information sent home (16.3%) and in their diaries (13.5%).

Some 44.5% did not know whether their parents had seen the policy and 10.3% thought the parents had not seen it.

How the students (N = 465) who had seen the policy rated its usefulness is given in Table 11.

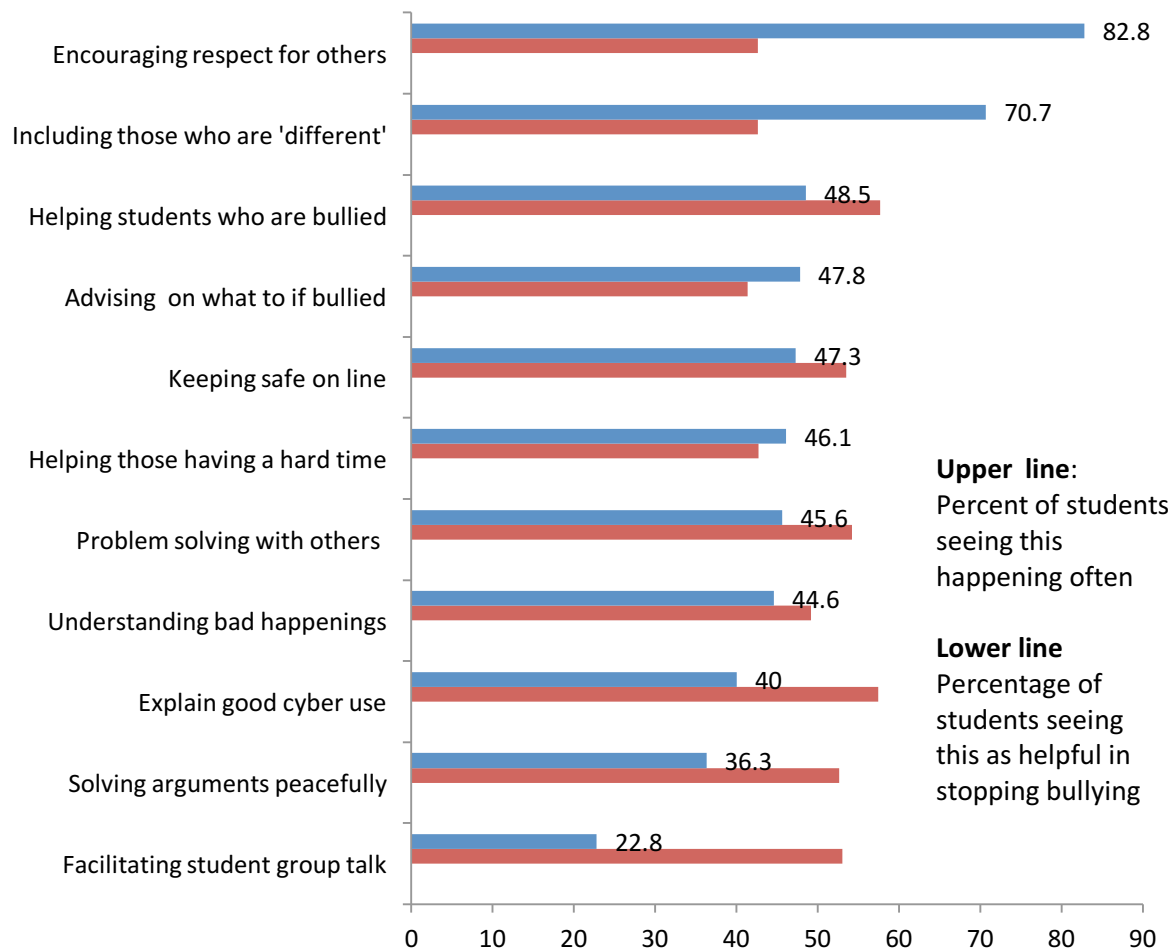
**Table 11: Perceived usefulness of the schools' anti-bullying policy**

	Percentage of respondents
It is not useful	12.0
It might be useful	32.3
It is quite useful	43.9
It is very useful	11.8

In summary, just less than half the students were aware of the policy. Most students were unsure or did not know whether their parents had seen it. Of students who were aware of it, approximately 88% considered that it might be or was quite or very useful.

*What students saw teachers doing in classes that was relevant to bullying*

Students were asked to indicate how frequently teachers engaged their classes in a number of activities that were thought to be relevant to addressing bullying, and then to rate each one according to how useful it was in helping to stop students from being bullied at school. Figure 2 provides a summary of the results. (Appendix 12 provides the full details).

**Figure 2: Students' perceptions of actions taken often by teachers in the classroom**

Some teacher-led classroom activities were seen as occurring substantially more often than others. Those seen as 'often' ranged from 22.8% to 82.9%. Similarly, the rated helpfulness of the class work with respect to stopping bullying ranged widely. Some were seen as more than twice as helpful as others, judging by the percentages of students rating a given activity as 'very helpful'.

Comparisons were made between types of schools, primary, secondary and combined, using student responses to the 11 items describing classroom actions to counter bullying, as summarised in Figure 2 above. The three types of schools differed significantly on each of the items, with students from primary schools indicating that the anti-bullying action was carried out most frequently. Details of the comparisons are given in Appendix 16, including results of testing for significance.

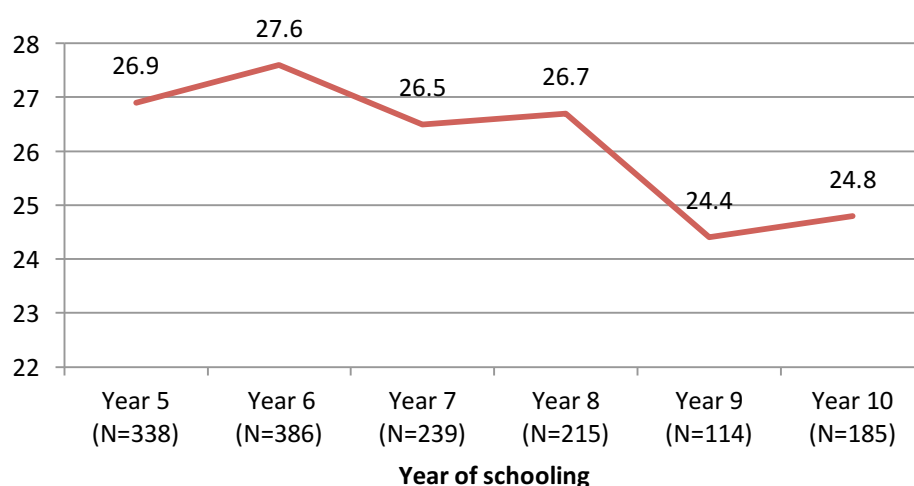
To provide a more general comparison between types of school, a multi-item scale was produced utilising the eleven items describing classroom actions. Each item was scored as follows: Never = 1, Sometimes = 2, Often = 3. Constituted as a Likert type scale based on results for 1,477 respondents the reliability using Cronbach alpha was high at .87. Items with highest item-total correlations (corrected) were 'Teachers advise us about what to do if we are bullied by someone',  $r = .67$ , and 'Teachers talk with us about what we can do if we see someone being bullied',  $r = .66$ . These items may be regarded as central to the measure (see Table 12).

**Table 12: Results for comparisons between types of school using the Index of Classroom Action (ICA)**

Type of school	Mean	SD	N
Primary	27.43	4.12	722
Secondary	25.69	4.37	476
Combined	24.89	4.62	279

Mean differences between types of school on the ICA were compared using a One Way ANOVA, a statistical test which determined whether the differences were significant, that is, unlikely to be due to chance. The differences were significant (by One Way ANOVA,  $F = 44.28$ ,  $df = 2$ , 1474,  $p < .001$ ). Further comparisons between mean scores between each type of school (using post hoc comparisons –Tukey HSD) indicated that scale scores for primary schools were significantly higher than those for secondary ( $p < .001$ ); scores for primary were significantly higher than those for combined ( $p < .001$ ); and scores for secondary significantly higher than those for combined ( $p < .05$ ). These results imply that, according to students in primary schools, classroom actions addressing bullying are conducted significantly more often at their school than is seen to be the case by students in secondary schools, who in turn see such actions occurring in class more often than do students in combined schools.

A further analysis examined whether the Index of Classroom Action was related to the years of schooling (see Figure 3). Comparisons of results from students in different years indicate a general trend towards less reporting of teacher-led action in classrooms to reduce bullying.



**Figure 3: Mean scores on the Index of Classroom Action, Years 5 to 10**

#### *Student perceptions of teacher responses to bullying*

Students were asked how teachers were responding to bullying, focusing upon (a) how motivated they believed the teachers were in countering bullying; (b) how attentive they were to bullying going on in the schoolyard, and (c) how far the school was providing training for peer helpers.

Students were asked: 'Do you think teachers at this school want to do something to stop bullying?' Table 13 summarises their responses.

**Table 13: Perceived motivation of teachers to stop bullying (N = 1553)**

	Percentage responding
All want to	68.0
Most want to	21.6
About half want	7.1
Most do not	2.2
None do	1.1

A high proportion of students (89.6%) saw teachers as mostly or always motivated to take action to stop bullying. A minority of 10.4% saw only half or less motivated to stop the bullying.

Comparisons between the results from students at the three different types of schools indicated that students from primary schools thought a higher proportion of their teachers were motivated to stop bullying than was the cases for students in either secondary or combined schools. Among primary school students 73.6% indicated that all their teachers wanted to do something about bullying; corresponding figures for the other types of schools were: secondary 65.2% and combined 58.2%.

Perceptions of how attentive teachers were to bullying in the schoolyard were indicated by responses to the question 'Do teachers keep an eye on students in the schoolyard to stop bad things from happening?' (see Table 14).

**Table 14: Perceived attentiveness of teachers to bullying in the schoolyard (N = 1557)**

	Percentages
Yes	52.0
Mostly	31.9
Only sometimes	11.6
Rarely or never	4.5

Paying attention to 'bad things' which may include bullying was seen as mostly or always the case at their school by 83.9% of students, with 16.1% dissenting.

Comparisons between results from students at the three types of schools indicated that students in primary school believed that their teachers were more attentive to bullying in the schoolyard than was reported to be the case in either secondary or combined schools. Among primary school students 57.2% reported that they did, compared with 47.4% among secondary school students and 46.6% among students at the combined schools.

*Does your school train some students to help those who are having trouble with others?*

A minority of 30.5% of respondents (N = 1,556) saw their school as providing training for some students to help those who were having trouble with others at school. A large proportion (51.8%) did not know whether the school did so and some (17.7%) thought their school did not. Of the 471 students who evaluated the work of students trained to help others, 66.0% thought their work was helpful, 24.4% indicated that they did not know, and 9.6% opined that it was not helpful.

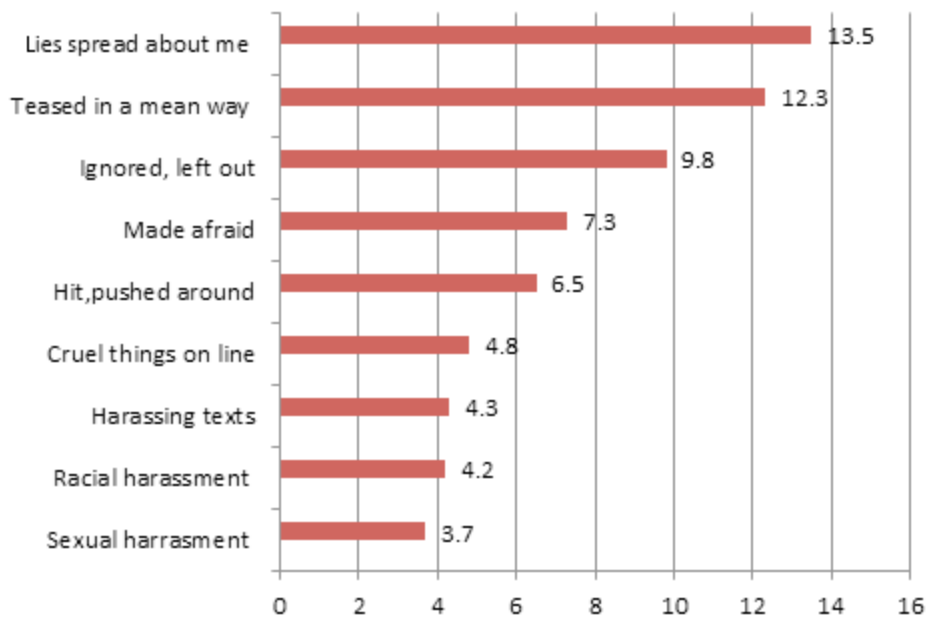
*Personal experiences of students in relation to school bullying*

The following results relate to the personal experiences of individual students as distinct from perceptions of what is happening among all students attending their school.

Three measures of being bullied were employed: (a) the set of 9 items each describing a form or means of bullying, (b) a measure of bullying in general as experienced during the year, and (c) a measure of whether the students who had been bullied were being bullied at the present time

*Forms of bullying experienced by students*

The extent to which students reported having been *personally* bullied in different ways is summarised in Figure 4 (further details in Appendix 14).



**Figure 4: Percentages of students reporting being bullied often in different ways**

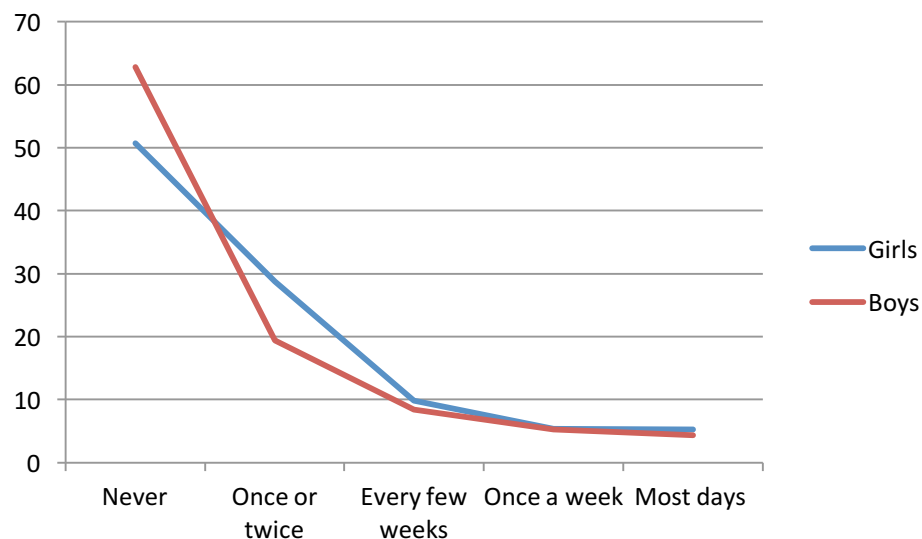
Numbers of respondents for the forms of bullying ranged from 1503 to 1522. It should be noted that the categories may overlap, for example 'lies may be spread' about someone through cyber technology or otherwise.

For most forms of bullying there were statistically significant gender differences. Girls reported being bullied more often by being ignored, having rumours spread about them, teased and made fun of, sent harassing texts and cruel things being said about them online. Boys reported being bullied more by being kicked or pushed around and by being harassed racially and sexually. Detailed results for boys and girls with gender comparisons are given in Appendix 15.

The difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students on the frequency of bullying in general was significant on one of the nine items listed in Figure 3. This was for racial harassment. Whilst over 75% of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students reported that they were never racially harassed, the proportions of those who were racially harassed often differed markedly. Among Indigenous students 10.5% reported being a target of racial harassment 'quite often' or 'very often'; among non-Indigenous students the corresponding figure was 3.2%. The difference was statistically significant by chi square = 14.84, df = 3,  $p < .01$ .

The general measure of being bullied, as used in a previous Australian study (Cross et al, 2009), provided the following results from 828 girls and 682 boys, given in Figure 5.





**Figure 5: Reported frequency of being bullied**

As indicated in Figure 5, for both boys and girls more than half the students reported never having been bullied in the previous 12 months; a small minority reported being frequently bullied. The distributions for boys and girls across levels of frequency of being bullied however were significantly different: chi square = 24.82, df = 4;  $p < .001$ . Notably 62.8% boys claimed they had never been bullied compared with 50.7% of girls.

The percentages of students reporting being bullied at school in 2014–15 can be compared with the percentages reported in a national study in Australia by Cross et al (2011) conducted in 2007. It was reported in the earlier study that 27.7% of students in Australian government schools were being bullied 'every few weeks or more often' (see Cross, 2011, p182, Table 5.7). In the present study, weighting results for boys and girls equally, the corresponding figure was 19.8% based on  $N = 1,510$ . This suggests that there has been a modest decline in reported bullying in Australian schools over the last seven years or so.

Responses on whether bullying was still continuing were reported by 631 students who had been bullied. Among boys ( $N = 234$ ) 47% indicated that it was currently happening. Among girls ( $N = 397$ ) the figure was 37.3%. As a percentage of *all* students this equates to 15.5% currently being bullied.

#### *Comparisons of bullying according to type of school*

Comparisons were made between bullying experienced according to whether a student attended primary school, secondary school or a combined school. This was done in two ways. First a Victimization Scale was created. This was considered desirable as it provided a means by which comparisons between groups could be made on 'bullying in general' as distinct from specific forms of bullying. This required a demonstration that the 9 items indicated in Figure 4 assessing the frequency of being bullied constituted a reliable scale. To do so, responses to each item were scored as follows: Never = 1; Sometimes = 2; Quite often = 3; Very often = 4. The victimisation score for each respondent was the sum of the scores on each of the items. Constituted as a Likert scale this measure was highly reliable, with an alpha coefficient of .88, based on  $N = 1454$ . This measure was subsequently used to compare mean scores for the three types of schools.

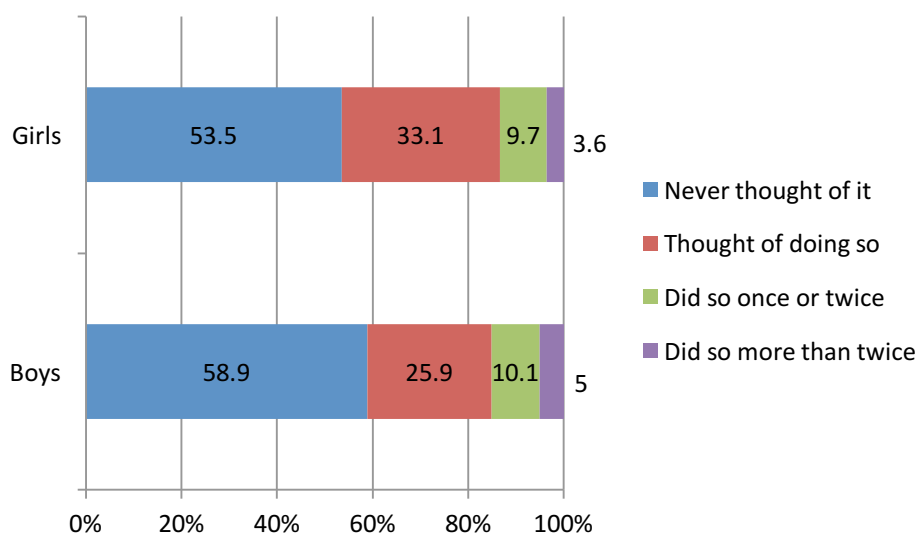
The results for students on this measure were: primary schools (student N = 700), mean = 12.11, SD = 4.25; secondary schools (student N = 479), mean = 12.17, SD = 4.50; combined schools (student N = 275), mean = 12.09, SD = 4.20. By one way ANOVA,  $df = 2$ ,  $F = .045$ ,  $p > .05$ . Thus overall the level of victimisation (being bullied) did not differ significantly between types of schools. (For subsequent analyses involving victimisation results were pooled.)

The results for types of schools were compared using responses from students as to whether they were being bullied currently. Based on a sample of 631 students who answered the relevant question bullying was reported as still continuing according to 41.9% of students in primary schools, 38.1% in secondary schools and 46.2% in combined schools. The proportions of those being bullied were not significantly different: chi square = 2.07,  $df = 2$ ,  $p > .05$ .

#### *Reported effects of being bullied*

##### a) The emotional effects of being bullied

Those students who had indicated that they had been bullied at school were asked to indicate how they felt at the time they were bullied in terms of the anger they felt, being upset, sadness and being frightened. The results are summarised in Figure 6.

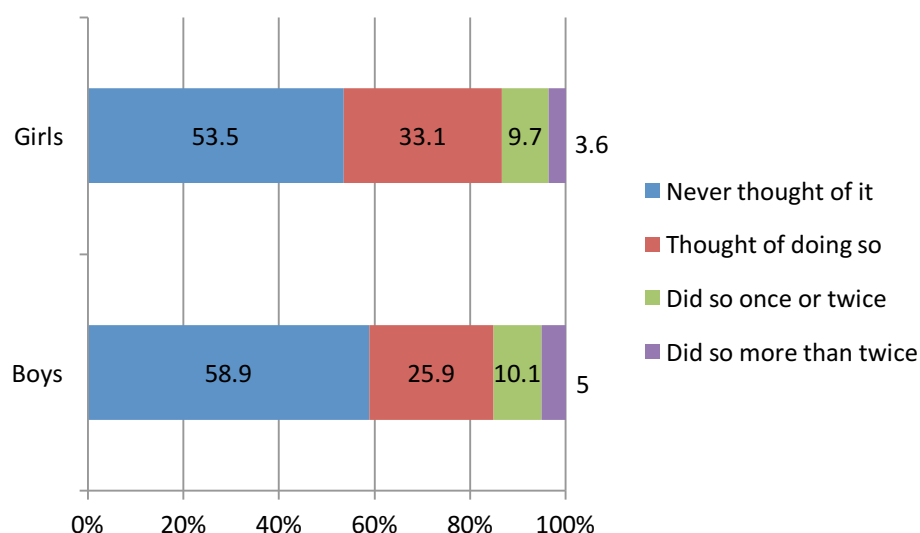


**Figure 6: Emotional reactions to being bullied: percentages reporting the emotion 'often'**

Between 20% and 50% of those bullied experienced one or more negative emotions to a relatively high degree, that is, were quite upset or very upset. There were gender differences in the responses, with girls reporting being more upset, more sad and frightened, in each case significantly more,  $p < .05$ . Further details are provided in Appendix 15.

##### b) Effects on absenteeism

Students were asked whether they had stayed away from school because of bullying. The responses of girls and boys to the question are given in Figure 7.

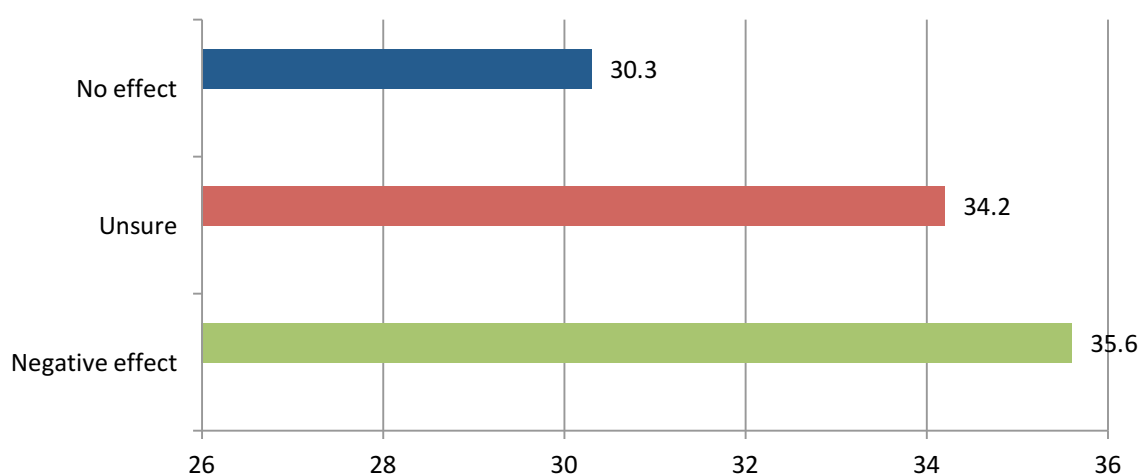


**Figure 7: Reports of bullied students about whether they stayed away because of bullying (N = 258 boys and 411 girls)**

Thus of the students who reported having been bullied, 13.3 % of girls and 15.1% of boys indicated that they had stayed away from school because of bullying. Many more had 'thought of doing so'.

#### c) How school work was seen to be affected

Respondents were asked whether the bullying had made it hard for them to do their school work well (see Figure 8).



**Figure 8: Effects of being bullied on schoolwork according to students who reported having been bullied**

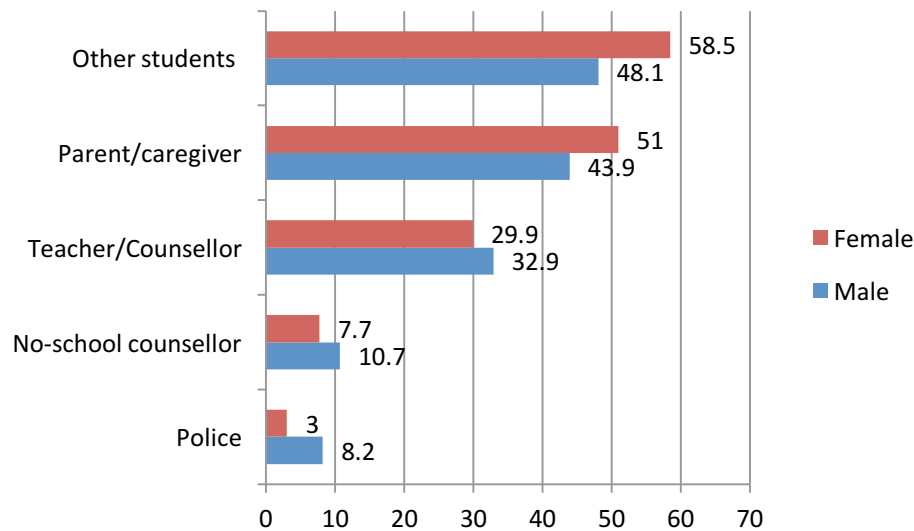
The respondents were 252 boys and 408 girls. The gender differences were non-significant.

Some students (30.3%) who reported having been bullied at school reported that the bullying had not affected their capacity to work well. Some were unsure. The largest proportion (35.6%) believed that the bullying had made it hard to do their school work well.

### *Awareness of others of the bullying, who were told and with what effect*

Students who reported having been bullied were invited to say how aware they thought others were of the bullying, who they told, and with what outcomes.

Students were asked whether others were aware that they were being bullied. The others included another student or students, parents or caregivers, teachers or school counsellors/psychologists, the police and an out-of-school counselling service (see Figure 9).



**Figure 9: Awareness of the bullying by others**

Other students and parents/caregivers were the most likely to be aware of the bullying. Some significant gender differences were found. Girls were more likely than boys to report that other students were aware that they were being bullied. Boys reported a higher level of teacher, police and non-school counsellor awareness regarding their being bullied (see Appendix 18).

Students who were bullied reported asking for help from the following: another students or students (52.3%); parents or caregivers (51.4%); a teacher or school counsellor (37.7%), the police (4.2%), or an out-of-school counsellor (10.2%). Significant gender differences were found, with girls more likely to seek help from another or other students and boys more likely to seek help from the police and from a non-school counsellor. Parents/caregivers were equally asked for help by boys and girls (see Appendix 18).

### *Reasons why some bullied students did not tell a teacher or counsellor*

Students were asked why they did not seek help from a teacher or school counsellor/psychologist. The reasons given could be classified under seven headings as follows:

1. The bullying was not severe enough to justify telling a teacher.

Because I could handle it.

I didn't think it was bad enough to go to that extent.

2. There were other preferred options for getting help: parents, friends, outside counselling service.

Because it was something my parents and friends could handle.

Because I was going to a counsellor outside the school.

3. Uncertainty about the teacher/counsellor's role in the matter.

They don't need to get involved in our personal lives.

They are here to teach us.

It's none of their business.

What the hell are they supposed to do?

I feel like it's not their problem.

4. Having to disclose a personal matter to someone with whom one has an impersonal relationship.

I didn't feel comfortable telling someone I didn't know.

I didn't know them properly.

Nobody wants to talk to a stranger about their problems.

There is no-one at the school I can trust.

5. Negative views about the help that would be offered.

I didn't think they would understand.

They might laugh. I've seen them brush off other students' problems.

The counsellor would say: 'Tell them to stop and they will', but that NEVER works.

I didn't think they could help.

6. Fear of repercussions.

I did not want to be teased because I told a teacher.

I didn't want to make the bully more angry with me.

If I told, they would bully me more.

Because the people were my friends and I didn't want to lose them.

I was worried that the teacher would talk to the person and I was going to get bullied even more by the person.

It would put a target on my back.

7. A sense of personal inadequacy.

I felt weak and ashamed.

I was embarrassed.

I was frightened.

### *The reported reactions of those they told*

The reactions of the people they told are summarised in Table 15.

**Table 15: Perceived reactions of those informed**

Person told	Knew	Interested	Helpful	Advised	Did something
Student or students	52.7	72.4	83.1	81.4	78.6
Parents	24.8	82.9	85.8	88.3	78.5
Teacher/counsellor	21.1	75.5	81.1	78.4	72.4
Out-of-school counselling	35.1	72.9	74.6	82.8	62.5
Police	57.2	66.7	66.7	72.7	76.2

It should be noted that the results are likely to be much more reliable when the person informed is a student, parent or teacher rather than the police or out-of-school counsellor, as the numbers for the latter are much smaller. In general, students tended to report positively on the degree of interest, helpfulness and the readiness of those informed to give advice and act on behalf of the student.

There were some significant gender differences. Notably girls reported their peers being more helpful (though boys reported that other students more frequently did something to help). Girls reported that the teacher/counsellor was more likely to show interest when told about the bullying. Finally, boys more commonly reported that the police and the out-of-school counselling service were more likely to have knowledge of the bullying the student reported (see Appendix 19).

### *Reported outcomes after seeking help from different sources*

Outcomes after reporting being bullied to various people are given in Table 16.

**Table 16: Student-reported effects of seeking help**

Person(s) informed	Effect of reporting bullying			
	Stops	Reduces	Same	Worse
Student(s) (N = 331)	29.3	39.6	23.0	8.2
Parent(s) (N = 320)	28.8	43.1	22.8	5.3
Teacher/counsellor (N = 223)	29.1	39.5	23.8	7.6
Police (N = 20)	40.0	35.0	5.0	20.0
Out-of-school counselling (N = 56)	25.0	33.9	33.9	7.1

There were marked similarities in outcomes associated with informing students, parents and teachers. In interpreting these statistics it should be noted that the number of persons involved varied widely according to who was informed. Also the kinds of cases that are brought to the attention of potential helpers may vary widely, e.g., extreme and physically damaging assaults more commonly involve the police. Further, students may report to more than one source of help who may in turn inform another.

Reported outcomes did not, in general, differ for boys and girls. An exception was that telling an out-of-school counselling service produced more positive outcomes for boys, that is, in stopping or reducing the bullying.

Comparisons between types of schools with respect to outcomes after students had sought help from teachers suggest that different outcomes may be associated with different types of school. See Table 17.

**Table 17: Effect of reporting bullying to teacher/counsellor at three types of school**

Type of school	Reported bullying outcome			
	Stops	Reduces	Same	Worse
Primary (N = 132)	36.4	32.6	27.0	9.1
Secondary (N = 55)	21.8	54.5	20.0	5.5
Combined (N = 36)	13.9	41.7	36.1	8.3

The outcomes for the three types of school were significantly different, with chi square = 15.41, df = 6,  $p < .05$ . These results suggest that outcomes from reporting the bullying to a teacher/counsellor were more positive for primary school students and least positive for students in combined schools.

#### *What teachers did and how helpful the actions were*

Respondents were asked to indicate whether certain actions were undertaken by the teacher or counsellor when the student sought help. These are listed in Table 18 in order of frequency together with indications of their helpfulness.

**Table 18: How teachers acted and with what outcomes**

	Frequency (%)	Helped stopping bullying (%)
1. Student(s) bullying told to stop	63.5	73.6
2. Advised on how to stop it	62.7	67.2
3. Bullies to apologise to me	60.6	70.9
4. Warning given to bullies	55.7	70.5
5. Kept an eye on things	52.3	63.6
6. Meeting with bully and me	51.5	69.6
7. Teacher spoke to the class	42.0	63.3
8. Teacher talked to bully's parents	41.7	71.1
9. Teacher talked to my parent(s)	40.7	75.3
10. Bullies deprived of privileges	25.4	67.3
11. Bullies given a detention	22.7	65.9
12. Bullies to do community service	22.4	79.5
13. Suggested my parents speak with bully's parents	19.9	77.5
14. Bully suspended	17.3	59.4
15. Peer mediation arranged	14.5	67.0
16. Referred to outside school help	12.2	50.0
17. Bully excluded	9.6	52.6
18. Police informed	6.2	66.7

Differences in how cases of bullying were treated according to the gender of the bullied students were of interest. On 5 of the 18 actions taken by schools there were significant gender differences ( $p < .05$ ) in the frequency of the actions taken, but none in outcomes following the action. Each one of these related to punitive actions being imposed on boys more often than on girls, namely, bullies being deprived of privileges, required to do community service, being given a detention, excluded or suspended (see Appendix 21 for details).

*Overall evaluation of students who went to the school for help when they had been bullied*

Bullied children who sought help were asked to look back and indicate how helpful or otherwise they found the school to be. Their responses are summarised in Table 19.

**Table 19: Perceived helpfulness of the school in cases of bullying (per cent)**

	Very helpful	Helped a bit	No effect	A bit worse	A lot worse
Boys (N = 77)	36.4	33.8	19.5	3.9	6.5
Girls (N = 116)	41.4	44.0	12.1	1.7	0.9

From these results the majority of students found the school helpful in responding to the bullying, but with a higher percentage of girls (85.3%) than boys (70.1%) reporting that the school was helpful: chi-square = 6.52, df =1,  $p < .05$ .

Whether students who had been bullied and told a teacher would do the same if they were bullied again is summarised in Table 20.

**Table 20: Reported likelihood that a student would seek help from a teacher/counsellor again (per cent)**

	Yes, definitely	Probably	Don't know	Probably not	Definitely not
Boys (N = 80)	47.5	26.3	10.0	10.0	6.3
Girls (N = 116)	44.8	27.6	16.4	5.2	6.0

No significant gender differences were evident in the reports as to whether they would seek help again from the school if they were bullied.

*Factors associated with being bullied, feelings of safety from being bullied and rated helpfulness of the school in dealing with cases*

A number of variables were selected as possible correlates of measures of peer victimisation, students' feelings of safety from being bullied and how helpful the school was, as seen by students who had been bullied and sought help from the school. These comprised the following:

1. identifying as an Indigenous Australian
2. ethnicity as inferred from the language mostly spoken at home
3. student disability as inferred from reportedly seeking relevant help from the school
4. material deprivation using the 11-item Material Deprivation Scale completed by students
5. gender of the student
6. year level
7. victimisation frequency as reported by students.



The matrix of correlations is given in Appendix 22 together with details regarding the measurement of the variables. The results can be summarised as follows:

- Identifying as Indigenous was not associated with being victimised at school using the total Victimization Scale over the last year or currently. (Analyses of correlates with individual items on the Victimization Scale indicated that there was one significant correlation: 'Being harassed by another student because of my race' was correlated significantly with being Indigenous:  $r = .11$ ,  $N = 1,290$ ,  $p < .001$ .) Indigenous students were just as positive about the help provided by the school when they were bullied.
- Ethnicity was not associated with being victimised or feeling unsafe from bullying. There was a significant tendency for the selected measure of ethnicity to be associated with a more positive rating of the help received from the school,  $r = .16$ ,  $p < .001$ .
- Students reporting a disability were more likely than others to be bullied at school (the correlation with the Victim Scale was  $.09$ ; with currently being bullied being  $-.11$ , in each,  $p < .001$ ). They were not however more likely than others to feel unsafe.
- High levels of material deprivation were associated with a likelihood of being bullied at school and feeling less safe (the correlation with the Victim Scale was  $.19$ ; with feeling safe at school,  $-.13$ , each,  $p < .001$ ).
- Girls were more likely to rate the help they received from the school positively ( $r = .10$ ,  $p < .001$ ).
- Year level of schooling was unrelated to being victimised or feeling safe at school.
- The greater the reported victimisation, the more negative were judgements regarding their school's helpfulness.
- Students who were bullied reported feeling much less safe at school:  $r = .60$ ,  $p < .001$ .

#### *Advice provided to the school by students who had been bullied*

Students were asked: If you were asked to give advice on how the school should handle the sort of bullying that happened to you, what would you say? This question elicited a large number of diverse responses. In some cases the response was specific to the student's situation, for example 'protect me'. In other cases the advice was more general and related to how teachers should act, for example, by encouraging good behaviour. Student responses can be summarised under the following headings, with illustrative examples:

##### 1. Teachers should take action to stop the bullying.

Be aware of what is happening and do more things to prevent it.

Actually help and not just tell me to ignore it.

##### 2. Teachers should be vigilant in identifying cases of bullying.

Have a teacher around the place to keep an eye out for it.

Take more notice instead of waiting for the problem to be brought to their attention.

##### 3. Teachers should encourage students to seek help from others if they are bullied.

Talk to a friend or parent/caregiver about what was happening and if that didn't work go to a teacher or police.

Don't put up with it, seek help and it will make the problems easier, don't hesitate.

4. Teachers should punish students who engage in bullying.

Have the students know the consequences for bullying and enforce those rules.

Put everyone who bullies into detention.

5. Protect the victims of bullying.

Keep the bullies away from their victims.

Make sure everyone is safe.

6. Victims should be encouraged to be resilient.

Don't let it bother you, because that's what they want.

Get over it; no one will ever be able to help you.

7. Teachers/counsellors should engage with the students in resolving the problem.

Talk to the bully and tell them enough is enough, otherwise there will be consequences.

Keep the bullier (sic) and the bullied (sic) in and talk about it.

8. Promote positive behaviour.

Tell people who were part of the bullying to stop because it's not right and the person that got bullied could be very hurt.

Just be nice to one another.

9. Teachers should engage with the parents of students who become involved in bullying.

Have a little meeting with their parents [of those identified as victims] and the parent of the kid who was bullying.

Call the bully's mum or dad or carer.

10. Surveys of bullying should be conducted and meetings held to discuss the problem.

Every so often give out an unnamed survey to see how many people are being bullied and sort things out.

Have occasional meeting with random students.

11. Students can play a positive part in helping address the problem.

Have the kids who have been bullied talk to peer groups about bullying.

Talk to a student who has also gone through these things [been bullied].

12. Be resigned to the problem: nothing will change it.

I wouldn't say anything, they wouldn't give a crap.

Nothing, there's no way you can help a bully to stop.

13. The school should continue doing what it is doing.

Do exactly what they did the first time because it really helped me.

I don't think the school needs much more advice. I think they have it under control.

14. Don't know what could be done.

I am not sure to be able to answer that question.

I don't know, stop asking me.

Note in some cases responses fitted more than one category, e.g., stand up for yourself (6) and others, never be a bully (8) and tell a teacher (3).

### *Gender differences*

In the results from the student questionnaire much attention was paid to gender comparisons. The findings are summarised here.

Significant differences were found in the reports of girls and boys on the ways in which they experienced bullying by peers. Girls were more likely to report being deliberately ignored, having rumours or nasty stories told about them, being teased in a cruel way, having cruel things said to them online and being sent harassing texts. Boys were more likely to report being physically bullied, racial harassed and sexually harassed. Overall, girls reported being bullied significantly more often than boys.

Some of the reported effects of being bullied were greater for girls, who reported being more upset and sad, but equally as frightened and angry as boys. Girls reported seeking help more from peers when they were bullied. Boys were more likely than girls to seek help from the police and out-of-school counselling services. Girls reported a significantly greater interest on the part of teachers when they sought help.

Outcomes after informing a teacher were similar for boys and girls; however boys were more likely to report that the person or persons who bullied them was disciplined by being placed in detention, deprived of privileges, made to do a community service, suspended or expelled from the school.

## The School Questionnaire

Schools were asked to provide responses that reflected a consensus of opinion provided by a person nominated by the principal working in consultation with other selected staff members. However, at seven schools staff questionnaires were completed by a number of individuals (ranging from 2 to 21) independently. To provide a single version the responses from schools with multiple respondents to questions were aggregated. The average response to the nearest whole number was used in these cases.

**Note: The school numbers (1-26), provided in the tables and throughout the written text, vary due to the number of respondents that answered that particular question.**

### Characteristics of the schools

#### *Type and location of the schools*

Results were available from 26 coeducational schools of which 17 were primary schools, 5 secondary schools and 4 combined schools (see Table 21).

**Table 21: Type and location of schools in the sample**

	VIC	SA	NSW	QLD	ACT	WA	Total
Primary	8	6	1	2	0	0	17
Secondary	1	1	3	0	0	0	5
Combined	0	1	0	1	1	1	4
Total	9	8	4	3	1	1	26

N.B. School numbers given in the following results vary due to the number of respondents that answered particular questions.

#### *Availability of counsellors*

Twenty out of twenty-six schools had the services of a school counsellor or school psychologist (5 primary and 1 combined school did not). Secondary schools each had a full-time person; on average primary and combined schools had a person for one day a week.

### Responses

#### *Perceived quality of relations at the schools between students*

Twenty-five schools made judgements: 4 indicated that students at their school get on well together, 19 that they did mostly, and 2 that they got on well about half the time.

#### *How staff saw kinds of bullying occurring*

Each one of the 26 schools provided answers recognising that bullying occurred at their school in each of the listed ways, as given in Table 22. The most common forms of bullying were ignoring individuals, making fun of them in a mean and hurtful way, and telling lies or nasty stories to make others not like them. Bullying by individuals was seen as more common than bullying by groups. These results were similar to those reported by students.

**Table 22: School perceptions of the frequency of modes of bullying**

	Numbers of schools making judgements			
	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
1. Ignored, left out or not allowed to join in	1	14	9	2
2. Hit, kicked, pushed around	5	18	3	0
3. Lies or nasty stories to make other kids not like me	1	16	7	2
4. Made afraid of getting hurt	3	20	3	0
5. Made fun of or teased in a mean and hurtful way	0	17	8	1
6. Sent harassing texts or emails	6	18	2	0
7. Cruel things said online or in social network, e.g. Facebook	4	19	3	0
8. Sexual harassment by another student	9	16	1	0
9 Harassing of students because of their race	7	17	2	0
10. By a group bullying one person	2	22	1	1
11. By one person bullying another person	0	19	6	1

*Where bullying occurs, according to schools*

Bullying was seen as occurring by some schools in each of the listed areas (as was the case for students) and most frequently in the playground (see Table 23).

**Table 23: Perceptions of schools of the frequency of bullying at different locations**

Locations	Perceived frequency of occurrence			
	Never	Occasionally	Fairly often	Often
Classroom	2	22	2	0
Corridors	2	19	4	1
Playground	0	11	13	2
Toilets	8	15	2	1
Library	12	14	0	0
School bus	8	14	4	0
Between home and school	4	21	1	0
Cyber space	5	15	6	0

*Reported presence of bystanders when bullying occurs*

There was marked variation between the 26 schools over the extent to which bystanders were present when bullying occurred, with 1 indicating 'always'; 15 'usually'; 8 'about half the time'; and two 'not usually'.

*What the students do*

The majority of school representatives (N = 19) perceived student bystanders as speaking out against bullying 'only occasionally', with a minority (N = 7) perceiving this happening 'usually' at their school.

### *What happens when a student speaks out?*

Schools were divided about whether speaking out by students who were bystanders was an effective means of stopping the bullying. Seven thought that it usually stopped the bullying and seven thought it did about half the time. A further twelve thought it did 'sometimes'.

### *Do students encourage the bullying?*

The majority (N = 21) thought that students sometimes encouraged the bullying, three thought they never did so and one that they usually did.

### *Who are targeted by the perpetrators of bullying?*

Schools identified a range of characteristics of targeted students. Judgements were provided by 25 schools. Of these most involved physical appearance (see Table 24).

**Table 24: Characteristics of targeted students as perceived by schools**

Characteristics	How often influential		
	Never	Sometimes	Fairly often
1. Having an odd appearance	3	18	4
2. Being obese	3	16	6
3. Being of low socioeconomic status	10	13	2
4. Being or seeming 'gay'	10	14	1
5. Having a disability	10	15	0
6. Gender	12	13	0
7. Belonging to a particular cultural or religious group	12	12	1
8. Aboriginal or Torres Strait identity	15	9	1
9. Religious affiliation	17	8	0

### *Perceived safety of students who find it hard to defend themselves*

Schools were asked whether their school was a safe place for students who found it hard to defend themselves from other students. A large majority of schools saw their school as being safe for them (N = 10) or usually safe for them (N = 13), with only two schools making a less positive assessment. One school indicated that their school was safe for such students about half the time, another that it was usually not safe. These judgements are much more sanguine about the safety of such children than those provided by students, among whom over a quarter were of the opinion that it was unsafe for them half the time or more often (Table 6).

### *Whom students approach when they are bullied at school*

According to 24 schools, based on mean rankings from 1 to 5, teachers and counsellors (mean ranking 1.87) were the most likely to be approached for help, followed by students (2.08), parents (2.21), the police (4.58) and out-of-school counsellors (4.92).

### *Features of the schools' proactive approach to countering bullying*

Schools were asked to say how (i) teachers and (ii) teachers and students worked together in countering bullying, using a 5-point scale from 'very badly' to 'very well'.

At most schools the view was that members of the school community worked well together in addressing bullying. However, in a minority of schools this was not seen to be the case (see Table 25).

**Table 25: School judgements on how well members of the school community worked together to counter bullying**

	Very badly				Very well
	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers working together	0	1	5	11	8
Teachers working with students	0	0	4	16	5

#### *The school anti-bullying policy*

A series of questions was asked relating to the school anti-bullying policy (see Table 26).

**Table 26: Actions taken by schools in relation to their anti-bullying policy**

	Yes	No	N
School has a written anti-bullying policy	25	0	25
The policy is on the school website	18	7	25
The policy has been reviewed since 2012	21	4	25
The National Safe Schools Framework was used to assist	12	13	25
The policy has been discussed with the staff	24	1	25
The policy has been discussed with students	23	2	25
The policy has been discussed with parents	18	7	25
The policy has been discussed with the school council/board	22	2	24

In addition, four schools indicated that they had received relevant advice from a non-school education department advisor, a further 10 were unsure and 4 thought they had not.

#### *Further school practices relating to bullying*

Schools (N = 25) indicated that students were expected to report incidents to teachers if they were being bullied. In a minority of schools (6) steps were taken to reduce the risk to students of exposure in doing so, for example, by making 'bully boxes' available. These could be used to 'post' messages to staff. In another school students were encouraged to get another person to report their problem, rather than do so directly.

Most schools (15) indicated that they had a peer support program, for example one that paired senior and junior schools in a 'buddy system' so that support could be provided by the older student. In one school two Year 11 students were linked with groups of Year 6 students whom they looked after. Activities involving the 'buddies' included (i) organising games for younger children, (ii) mediating in disputes, (iii) undertaking projects together, and (iv) lunchtime meetings. A minority of schools (7) reported that they provided training for peer mediators.

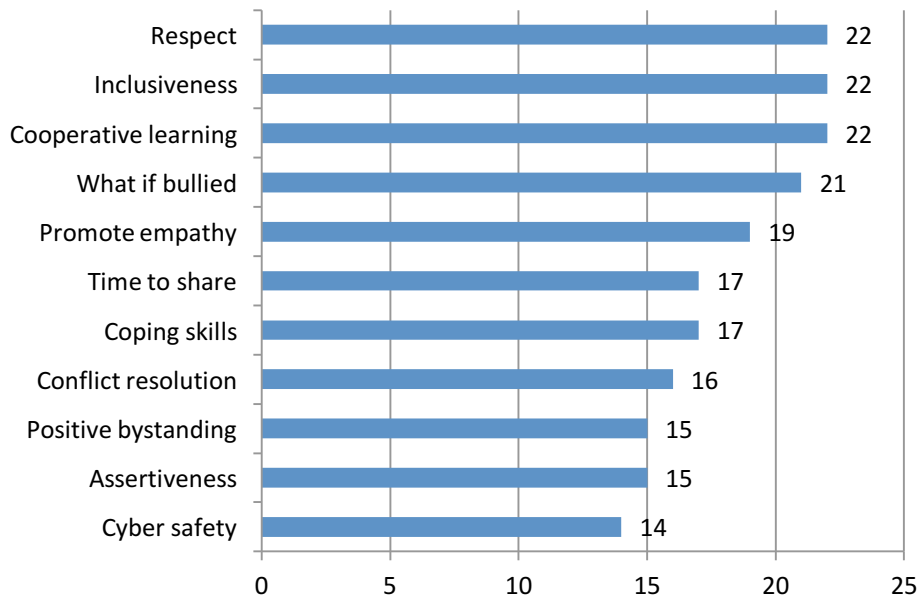
Twelve of the 25 schools reported conducting surveys with students regarding school bullying since 2012. Results had been communicated to the staff (11), the school council/board (10), students (9) and parents (8).

Professional development sessions or staff meetings on school bullying had been held by 11 of the 25 schools since 2012, led mainly by staff members (10) with some input at times from education department personnel. Bullying had been addressed at a whole-school or year-level assembly by 18 of the 25 schools.

Of the 24 schools that responded to the question of whether teachers were expected to discuss the issue of bullying with their class, only one indicated that there was no such expectation.

#### *Classroom instruction and/or activities relevant to bullying at the school*

Schools reported a wide range of classroom instruction and/or activities that were seen as relevant to stopping bullying, as indicated in Figure 10.



**Figure 10: Schools (N = 25) including a substantial amount of specified content in classroom work**

Schools provided further details on what was being done to address school bullying proactively. These included the following resources, activities and programs:

- using the Kids Matter Framework
- buddy support
- 'Play is the Way'
- applying the Child Safety Curriculum
- Managing the Bull
- Friendship Club meeting at lunchtime
- pastoral care program
- Program Achieve
- Stop Think Do
- teaching values
- Tribes
- Rock and Water
- Bounce Back
- Secret Agent Society
- preparing Year 6 students for high school
- school camps.



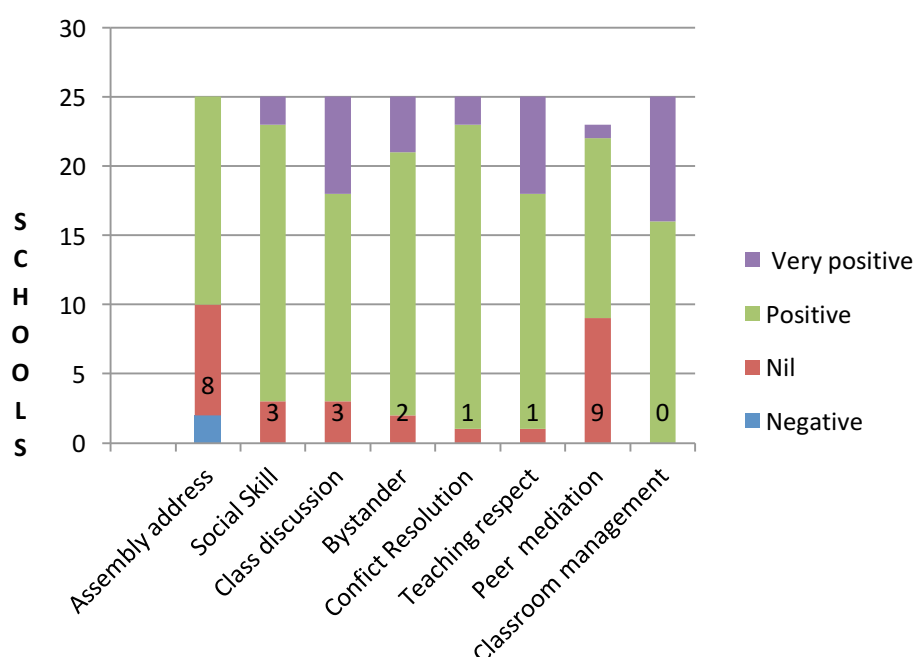
For further explanation of these resources, activities and programs see the glossary in Appendix 25.

### *Evaluation of selected proactive activities*

Eight activities were rated, including six that involved work undertaken in classrooms of direct relevance to reducing bullying: namely, teaching respect, conflict resolution, bystander intervention, social skill development, peer mediation and holding class discussions. In addition, teachers were asked to rate the impact of (i) classroom management and (ii) addresses delivered at assemblies in reducing bullying in a school.

In each case respondents were asked to indicate whether the activity had a positive effect (decreased bullying) a negative effect (increased bullying) or had nil effect (made no difference). Results are available for seven of the eight strategies from 25 schools. One strategy (peer mediation) was rated by 22 schools.

As indicated in Figure 11, the majority of schools rated each strategy as positive or very positive in stopping bullying. Classroom management was unique in being rated as positive or very positive by all the schools. Differences between schools were greatest with respect to assembly addresses and peer mediation, with a substantial minority of schools indicating that their effects on stopping bullying were either nil or increased the bullying.



**Figure 11: Reported effectiveness of eight proactive strategies to stop bullying**

### *The role of the school in countering bullying outside the school*

A large majority of the schools indicated a readiness to tackle cases of bullying involving their students that occurred outside the school itself. The exception was 'during school holidays or weekend' (see Table 27).

**Table 27: Expressed readiness to engage in addressing bullying incidents outside the school**

Situation	Yes	No	Unsure
On the way to school	19	6	0
On the school bus	18	6	0
Outside school hours using cyber technology	18	4	2
On the public transport to and from school	18	6	0
During the school holidays or weekend	9	10	6

*Responding to cyber bullying*

Twenty-four out of 25 schools reported that they actively encouraged students to report to the school cases of cyber bullying occurring outside the school; 24 out of 26 schools indicated that they would investigate whether children being cyber bullied away from school were also being bullied at school; 20 out of 25 schools indicated that the school had in fact been able to identify the student or students doing the cyber bullying.

*Cases of bullying and level of severity*

Schools were asked to say how many cases of bullying of different levels of severity they had encountered since 2012. Schools varied in the number of cases they reported, in part because of the substantial differences in student numbers between primary and secondary schools. In presenting these results, the focus is on revealing the relative prevalence of low, moderate and high severity cases being addressed by the schools in the current sample (see Table 28).

**Table 28: Reported cases of bullying dealt with by schools (N = 25) according to rated severity**

Severity	Reported frequency of cases						
	None	1–4	5–9	10–14	15–19	20–24	25+
Low	0	2	3	3	4	2	11
Moderate	2	4	4	6	4	2	3
High	5	9	6	1	2	0	2

As expected, most cases of bullying were of low severity, with relatively few (or none) rated as 'high severity'.

*Frequency of use of intervention strategies*

Brief descriptions of six methods of intervention were included in the school questionnaire and schools were invited to answer questions about their use and effectiveness.

The frequency with which the methods were used is indicated in for 24 or 25 of the schools in Table 29.

**Table 29: Frequency of use by schools of methods of intervention**

	Frequency of use					N
	Never	1 or 2	Several	F often	V often	
Direct sanctions	2	4	9	5	5	25
Strengthening the victim	0	2	10	6	7	25
Mediation	0	3	8	10	3	24
Restorative practice						
With just those directly involved	2	3	7	8	5	25
At a group/class meeting	5	6	9	3	2	25
At a community conference	11	10	3	0	1	25
Support Group Method	10	8	4	3	0	25
Method of Shared Concern	10	5	9	0	1	25

Table 29 indicates that each one of the methods was used on some occasions by some of the schools. The extent of the use of the methods varied greatly. Some schools (N = 5) used direct sanctions very often and some (N = 2) not at all. Mediation, strengthening the victim and restorative practice (with those directly involved in the bullying) were used most often. The Support Group Method, the Method of Shared Concern and community conferences were not employed at all or used rarely (only 'once or twice') by more than half the schools.

#### *Direct sanctions*

School responses differed between those who believed that direct sanctions should be used in all or practically all cases of bullying and those that identified situations in which sanctions might not be justified. Occasions of bullying requiring direct sanctions included 'when bullying had been substantiated', and 'when a child had behaved inappropriately to another in front of other students'.

Some schools specified situations in which direct sanctions were used at their schools:

- For extreme forms of bullying, severe bullying, so-called serious bullying, cyber bullying, cases of violence, where there has been physical harm and in one-on-one bullying.
- Where other forms of intervention have failed, such as warnings, counselling and the use of restorative practice.
- Where the 'bully' is not ready to change his/her behaviour.

#### *Strengthening the victim*

Some schools saw strengthening the victim as always a relevant strategy, that is, 'whenever there is an incident' or whenever it appeared 'on the radar' that someone was being victimised.

Views concerning the perceived severity of the bullying were contradictory, with one school suggesting that strengthening the victim was more appropriate when the bullying was severe, and another school when the victim was just feeling 'uncomfortable', for example, being pushed about by others or had a 'friendship issue'.

Generally, schools supported the strategy of strengthening the victim if the student had low self-esteem, was deficient in coping skills and was prepared to work with a 'behaviour teacher'. It was noted that some students might need to develop skills that result in them not provoking others and thereby eliciting negative treatment.

### *Mediation*

Some schools saw mediation as applicable in all or most cases of bullying, e.g., 'when individuals/small groups are acting inappropriately', and 'when we know who the bullies are and the circumstances involved'.

Views on mediation produced some contradictions. One respondent stated that mediation should occur when the bullying was 'severe'; another thought that the bullying incident should 'not be major' and be 'at a low or mild level'. Differences also were found over whether mediation was better suited to 'individual' or 'gang-based' bullying. Mediation was seen by one school as a last resort: for example after restorative practice or circle time had failed. Some proposed that mediation should involve 'younger children', and 'children from the same classes'. There was little consistency in views over the circumstances in which mediation should be employed.

However, when mediation was used, it was generally agreed that that differences in the power of the two parties should not be major; that both sides should understand the procedure to be followed and freely agree to be involved; and that it had become evident through prior negotiation with the parties in conflict that a positive outcome could be achieved.

### *Support Group Method*

Responses identifying when this method was used were relatively few, with some respondents being unfamiliar with its use and unable to comment. Those aware of the method identified that it would be used in cases of group bullying, especially bullying of a severity towards the 'low end of the scale'. Its use was seen as justified in cases where the victim was distressed and 'really affected by the bullying'. Further, the names of all concerned should be known and a mediation process used to enable all parties to be aware of how each other is feeling. It was said by some to be mainly used at one school in the primary sector to give support to the victim and help them to see that there are others who will support them. One comment was that it was used 'to effect [sic] deep-seated, entrenched behaviours – or family behaviours'.

### *Method of Shared Concern*

Generally respondents were unfamiliar with this method and made relatively few observations regarding its use. It was noted however that it was used at one school in cases of 'ongoing bullying happening with a group who are picking on one particular student' and also used with 'repeat offenders', and where 'two parties need to resolve an issue'. It was further seen as typically involving 'small groups of friends who have low level/bitchy [sic] issues'. Permission from parents was required at one school before this method could be applied with a student.

### *The use of sanctions*

Sanctions of various kinds were used by some schools in dealing with cases of bullying. Estimated frequencies from schools are given in Table 30.

**Table 30: The frequency with which particular sanctions are used at schools in cases of bullying**

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Verbal reprimand	0	8	10	6
Withdraw privileges	1	11	10	2
Temporary removal from class	2	16	5	1
Internal detention	1	17	6	0
Community service	9	11	4	0
Meeting with parents of those involved	1	10	11	2
Suspension from school	7	17	0	0
Informing the police	10	14	1	0

*Discussions with parents regarding cases*

Schools (N = 24) indicated whether they involved parents in discussions over cases of bullying (see Table 31).

**Table 31: The frequency with which parents are involved in discussing cases of bullying**

With whom the discussions take place	Never	Sometimes	Always
Bully's parents only	1	17	6
Victim's parents only	2	14	8
Both the above	6	10	8

The results suggest that the schools commonly discuss the bullying with either the parent(s) of the bully or with the parent(s) of the victim, and to a somewhat lesser extent with both.

*Evaluation of methods and training used in case interventions*

The numbers of schools reporting on the effectiveness of the methods varied widely, between 12 and 23. This variation was affected by the fact that some schools did not use one or more of the methods (see Table 32).

**Table 32: The rated effectiveness of the intervention strategies**

Method of intervention	V -ve	-ve	Nil	+ve	V +ve	Mean rating	N
Restorative practice							
With just those directly involved	0	0	1	17	4	4.14	22
At a group/class meeting	0	1	1	13	4	4.05	19
At a community conference	0	0	2	10	2	3.83	12
Strengthening the victim	0	0	1	21	2	4.04	23
Mediation	0	0	2	18	3	4.04	23
Support Group Method	0	0	3	7	2	3.92	12
Method of Shared Concern	0	0	2	10	0	3.83	12
Direct sanctions	0	1	4	16	1	3.77	22

All of the methods were rated positively, with mean ratings on a 5-point scale of greater than 3. The highest ratings were given to the methods used most often: restorative practice (with individuals), strengthening the victim and mediation, each with mean ratings greater than 4. Differences between schools were greatest over the effectiveness of direct sanctions, with one school rating this approach as 'very effective' in stopping bullying and another as having the negative effect of increasing bullying.

In response to the question of whether their school opposed or discouraged any strategies, one school indicated that they opposed the use of direct sanctions on the grounds that 'direct sanctions did not benefit anybody but the power of the teacher'. Also one school discouraged the use of an 'external reward system' and ignoring bullying. 'Play is the way' was singled out by one school as a program to be discouraged.

The majority of schools indicated that staff members had receive some instruction or training in the use of direct sanctions, strengthening the victim, mediation and restorative practice. Relatively few had received training in the use of the Support Group Method or the method of Shared Concern.

Schools (between 22 and 24) provided information about the instruction or training staff members had received in relation to each of the methods (see Table 33).

**Table 33: Reported training received in methods of intervention**

Method	Amount of training			N
	None	Some	A good deal	
Direct sanctions	7	11	4	22
Strengthening the victim	6	14	3	24
Mediation	6	17	1	24
Restorative practice	4	16	4	24
Support Group Method	16	7	1	23
Method of Shared Concern	16	6	1	23

#### *Reported overall level of success in intervening in cases*

Schools were asked to estimate the percentages of cases in which their interventions were successful in decreasing the bullying, had no effect (stayed the same) or increased. Based on the results provided by 26 schools, it was estimated that the bullying decreased in 78.4% cases, stayed the same in 19.2% of cases and increased in 4.4%. Corresponding estimates provided by students who had gone to a teacher for help were: bullying decreased 68.6%, stayed the same 23.8%, and increased 7.6%.

#### *Sources of influence on the school in addressing bullying*

Schools indicated that they had been influenced by a wide range of sources in addressing school bullying. These are listed in Table 34 together with judgements made by schools about how influential they were.

**Table 34: Resources and their rated degree of influence in addressing bullying**

	Schools indicating how influential			
	Nil	A bit	Moderate	A lot
National Safe Schools Framework	6	8	4	4
The school council/board	6	10	4	4
Parents/caretakers	8	10	6	0
Non-school dept advisor	8	12	2	2
Results from student feedback	2	8	9	5
Results from parent feedback	3	6	10	5
Education dept policy	1	5	6	12
National Centre Against Bullying	12	7	3	2
Suggestions from staff members	0	7	12	5
KidsMatter	5	10	5	2
Bullying No Way website	3	14	5	4
Social and emotional learning programs	4	3	9	8
Friendly Schools Program	9	9	4	2

In interpreting these results it should be noted that the ratings in some cases may have been due to relative unfamiliarity with the nature of the resource. With this caution, the results suggest that the schools were influenced a good deal by factors in their professional environment, especially from education department policy and also suggestions made by staff members and feedback from students and parents. Among important external influences were social and emotional learning programs. Information and resources from KidsMatter, the Bullying No Way website, the National Safe Schools Framework and the Friendly Schools Program were seen as particularly useful.

#### *Training to counter school bullying*

Schools were asked to rate the training their teachers had received in addressing bullying at their school. The responses from 24 schools are summarised in Table 35.

**Table 35: Rated training relevant to bullying received by teachers at the schools**

	Rated training				
	None	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pre-service education as part of teacher training	3	12	7	2	0
Professional development at school	0	3	12	9	0
Training outside school	3	4	11	5	1

The majority of schools (15) indicated that either no pre-service training had been provided or that its quality was 'poor.' Training undertaken through professional development at school and through relevant training obtained outside the school were seen as more positive.

Training in ways of countering school bullying was seen as important by most schools. Two out of three schools rated each of the suggested ways as very important (rated greater than 4 on a 5-point scale). Mean ratings for each were: dealing effectively with actual cases 4.8; classroom management 4.8; providing emotional support for victimised children 4.6; working well with parents on bullying issues 4.6; helping children to cope with aggressive peers 4.6.

### *Views on changes in bullying over time*

Views on whether the prevalence of bullying had changed since 2012 differed between schools. Among the 24 schools, 12 thought it had in general stayed the same. There were 2 that believed it had increased and 10 that it had become less prevalent. Notably, reported changes in the prevalence of bullying depended on the form of the bullying. Most schools (12 out of 23) reported that *indirect bullying* had increased, whilst at the same time physical and verbal bullying had either stayed the same or reduced. Little change was reported for cyber bullying, with 8 reporting it had stayed the same, 4 that it had reduced and 6 that it had increased.

### *Further steps the school might take to reduce bullying*

Schools were asked to indicate what further steps they thought could be taken to improve the situation with respect to bullying at their school.

A wide range of suggestions were made, as listed below:

1. Provide better training within the school to deal with bullying, for example, regular professional development sessions to promote circle time, restorative practice and school values, handling cases of bullying, ways of dealing with different kinds of bullying, giving support to victims and promoting resilience.
2. Improving parent education about bullying, for example by clarifying what actually constitutes bullying, informing parents of the legal ramifications of bullying online, and how children can become better citizens.
3. Providing resources to implement anti-bullying programs and supporting school leaders to be more actively engaged in dealing with bullying.
4. More appropriate responding to cases of bullying, for example, reacting more quickly and consistently.
5. Greater commitment to tackling bullying. It was argued that policies and procedures are apt to be 'for appearances' – and more than 'lip service' is needed in dealing with bullying.
6. Focus especially on the 'hard cases', that is, the small minority of students who perpetrate most of the bullying and are not greatly affected by what the school does.
7. Promote social and emotional learning in classrooms, with teachers taking strong ownership of the programs being delivered.
8. Address the problem of the abuse of technology especially with more senior students.
9. Provide greater support for the work of the South Australian Police (SAPOL) on bullying.
10. Encourage children to seek help.
11. Continue to build on what the school has achieved, updating policies as required.
12. Conduct surveys.
13. Promote consistent classroom management.
14. Apply a whole-school approach, supported by assemblies with students and meetings with staff and parents.



## How the School Questionnaire was answered

In a final question, schools were asked to describe the process used in answering the questionnaire.

As noted, schools were requested to assign responsibility to a staff member who would meet with colleagues and provide responses to the questions based upon the judgements provided by the group. There were some variations in how the task was undertaken, as described below.

- Meetings were held at which key members of staff most relevant to the subject met and jointly responded to questionnaire items from which a consensus was used to provide a judgement for the school.
- Consultations were conducted with colleagues, especially senior staff and those who had been at the school since 2002.
- Records of how cases of bullying had been handled were accessed (though here it was noted the records were not always complete).
- Results were examined from surveys conducted by the school.
- Information about the school's work on bullying was viewed on the school website.
- Discussions were held at staff meetings.
- Personal knowledge was shared.
- At a number of schools (N = 7) the instructions for one person to be responsible for answering the questionnaire through engagement with other staff members was not followed. As a consequence some responses relating to their school were provided by individuals working alone and utilised in relation to the selected questions, as indicated.



## Knowledge of Bullying Quiz

The questionnaire was answered by 451 teachers. Respondents were not required to provide demographic data. Hence a substantial proportion of respondents did not provide data that could possibly identify them as individuals. Gender data was lacking from 16.6% of respondents. No information was provided on age from 18.4%. The school was not identified in 23.1% of the completed questionnaires.

Findings relating to the percentages of responses that were 'correct', that is, are consistent with reported evidence-based findings, are presented for the entire sample. For sub-samples of the data for which demographic data was available comparisons are provided.

### Scores on the knowledge test

The percentages of respondents with 'correct' answers are given below for items according to (i) whether there was a high consensus on the 'correct' answer (over 75% correct), (ii) whether the 'correct' answers were given by more than 50% of respondents but by less than 75%, and (iii) whether the answers given were mostly incorrect (see Table 36).

**Table 36: Items and scores on the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz**

	Percentage correct
<b>High consensus: greater than 75%</b>	
1. It is widely agreed that schools should adopt a whole-school approach. (T)	97.1
2. Bullying occurs when a person or group repeatedly abuses their power over someone. (T)	96.9
3. Deliberate unfair exclusion is a form of bullying. (T)	94.9
4. Social skills training has been employed to help children to avoid being bullied (T).	94.0
5. Bullying has at times been conceived as the desire to hurt someone or put them under pressure. (T)	92.2
6. Bystanders usually speak out when they see bullying happening. (F)	91.8
7. Homophobia is a factor that can lead children to bully those they think are gay. (T)	91.6
8. Positive behaviour support commonly makes use of a non-punitive strategy for dealing with cases of schoolyard bullying. (T)	90.7
9. Schools have no legal obligations in responding to cases of bullying. (F)	90.7
10. Children identified as repeated victims of school bullying in primary schools have been reported as having much poorer mental health than others as adults. (T)	89.8
11. When children leave their primary school and enter a secondary school, bullying typically decreases. (F)	88.5
12. Peer supporters are sometimes trained to be mediators to resolve student conflicts. (T)	88.5
13. Children who are bullied never act provocatively. (F)	86.7
14. Some children quit bullying when they become aware of the hurt they have caused. (T)	85.4
15. The most effective way of stopping a case of bullying is to punish the offender. (F)	85.4
16. The Support Group Method involves a meeting at which the perpetrators of the bullying are invited to meet with some supporters of the victim to help resolve the problem. (T)	84.5
17. Research indicates that about 1 child in 6 is bullied in schools on a weekly basis. (T)	82.7
18. Parents of children who are being bullied should sort out the problem with the parents of the bully. (F)	82.7

	Percentage correct
19. Classroom management is unrelated to bullying among schoolchildren. (F)	82.0
20. Restorative practices seek to induce a state of remorse on the part of the offender. (T)	78.7
21. Children who are cyber bullied are more often than not also being bullied at school using traditional means. (T)	75.6

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**Divided beliefs, with the majority giving the 'correct' answers**

22. According to teachers, their interventions in cases of bullying are successful in about two cases out of three. (T)	73.4
23. For mediation to occur those involved should be free to discontinue their involvement in the procedure if they so wish. (T)	69.8
24. Children should be taught to delete every offensive message they receive on their computer. (F)	64.7
25. Children are more likely to tell their teachers than their parents if they are being bullied at school. (F)	64.1
26. Bullying in schools is becoming more and more prevalent throughout the world. (F)	60.3
27. Most bullying nowadays is through cyber technology. (F)	57.9
28. The direct influence of teachers on bystander behaviour is generally stronger than that of student peers. (F)	57.2
30. The prevalence of bullying in school is much the same in all countries. (F)	54.3
31. Typically bullying occurs when no-one is watching. (F)	53.4

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**Divided beliefs, with the majority giving the 'incorrect' answer**

32. Insecure attachment to a caregiver in infancy is related to being involved in bully-victim problems later as schoolchildren. (T)	49.4
33. Bullying at school is predictive of a greater likelihood of children engaging in crime as adults. (T)	49.2
33. Schoolchildren tend to bully more as they get older. (F)	48.3
34. Bullying is a statutory offence punishable by law. (F)	45.0
35. The Method of Shared Concern is considered inappropriate for use in cases of group bullying when there has been some provocation. (F)	42.1
36. Victimisation (being bullied) at school tends to increase with age. (F)	40.4
37. Boys tend to bully more than girls, especially physically. (T)	39.0
38. Strong parental protection does not increase the risk that a child will be bullied at school. (F)	38.4
39. Children with high self-esteem are less likely to bully others. (F)	33.5
40. Genetic factors can influence whether a child will bully at school. (T)	32.2

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### Comparisons of scores for different groups

1. For 84 males and 283 female teachers, mean scores on the Knowledge Scale were not significantly different: males mean = 29.10, SD = 3.94; females, mean = 28.37, SD = 2.87,  $t = 1.85$ ,  $p > .05$ .
2. Age was correlated with the Knowledge Scale,  $r = .12$ ,  $N = 368$ ,  $p < .05$ . This correlation suggests a tendency for knowledge to be greater among older staff members.
3. Comparisons between knowledge scores from respondents according to type of school indicated that teachers in the secondary sector with a mean knowledge score of 29.25, SD = 2.73 ( $N = 95$ ) scored significantly higher than teachers in the primary sector with a mean score of 28.30, SD = 3.41, ( $N = 172$ ) and also higher than teachers in the combined schools with a mean score of 28.04, SD = 3.20, ( $N = 105$ ). For both comparisons,  $p < .05$ .
4. The main sources endorsed by respondents as providing the most information were: professional reading 53.8% ( $N = 198$ ), followed by the general media 32.9% ( $N = 122$ ), a university course 8.2% ( $N = 30$ ) and the internet 5.2% ( $N = 19$ ).
5. Higher scores on the knowledge test were obtained by respondents who reported that their main source of knowledge about bullying came from professional reading (mean 29.1, SD = 2.92,  $N = 198$ ), followed by university course (mean = 28.60, SD = 3.98,  $N = 30$ ), then the general media (mean = 27.96, SD = 2.96,  $N = 121$ ), and last, the internet (mean = 26.13, SD = 4.64,  $N = 19$ ). Respondents endorsing professional reading as their main source of information scored significantly higher than those endorsing the media and also the internet. Those endorsing 'university courses' scored significantly higher than those endorsing the internet, but not higher than those endorsing the general media.
6. Respondents were asked: Do you want to see information about what appears to be the best answers and, most importantly, explanations based upon public research about why such claims have been made? Of the 351 respondents who answered this question, 43.6% indicated that they wished to do so. The mean scores on the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz for those who indicated that they wanted to see the answers was 29.00, SD = 3.45,  $N = 198$ ; for the others, it was 27.84, SD = 3.06,  $N = 153$ ;  $t = 3.26$ ,  $p < .001$ .



## Parent Questionnaire

Respondents to this questionnaire consisted of parents of students in the targeted schools who had consented to participate by answering the online questionnaire. Of the 167 parents, 96 (57.5%) had children attending primary school, 61 (36.5%) high school and 10 (6.0%) attending a combined school.

According to the respondents, this questionnaire was answered through consultation with the child or children (42.4%), with a partner (33.1%) and with a friend or friends (17.4%). Other people mentioned were a teacher, a counsellor and an employee from the department of education.

### Perceived relationships among students attending their child's school

Most parents (92.7%) saw relations between students at their school as positive (see Table 37).

**Table 37: Perceived quality of interpersonal relations at the school according to parents (N = 162)**

	Percentage agreeing
Students get on well together	14.3
Most students get on well together	78.4
About half the students get on well together	6.8
Most students do not get on well together	0.6
The students do not get on well together	0.0

Comparisons with results in Table 5 describing students' perceptions of 'how students got on together' indicate that parents had a more positive view of student relationships at the schools. Among students, 75.4% estimated that relations were mostly positive compared with 92.7% of parents.

### The school anti-bullying policy

Most (65.3%) of the parents who responded (N = 163) replied that their school had an anti-bullying policy; 2.5% said that the school did not; and 31.3% that they did not know. In this regard they were somewhat better informed than the students.

Of those that indicated that the school had such a policy, 81.2% had seen it on the school's website, 76.7% had seen a copy provided by the school; 12.7% had seen it in their child's diary; and 59.0% in other places. These included classrooms, posters and noticeboards at the school, and school newsletters. Some parents were informed about the policy at an information night at the school, by a teacher or at a governing council meeting. The policy was rated by 105 parents. Most saw the anti-bullying policy in a positive light, with 21.9% rating it as 'very good' and 43.8% as 'good'. It was seen as 'adequate' by 28.6%, 'poor' by 4.8% and 'very poor' by 1.0% of parents.

Further comments on the policy stressed that it needed to be better publicised and more rigorously implemented or enforced. Some opined that their school policy was not specific enough regarding what consequences were to be applied when students had engaged in bullying. Some also suggested that their school's policy showed a lack of understanding of more covert forms of bullying.

### Involvement of parents in addressing bullying

Rather more than half the parents indicated that the school had sought to inform them about what it was doing in tackling bullying (see Table 38).

**Table 38: Actions taken by schools to involve parents**

Action	Yes	No	DK	N
1. Received information about bullying from the school in a newsletter	60.1	20.2	19.6	163
2. Invited to a meeting at the school with other parents to discuss bullying	19.6	69.9	10.9	163
3. Attended a meeting at school with other parents	50.0	50.0	0.0	30

Of the 15 parents who attended a meeting, 5 found it 'very helpful', 9 'helpful' and 1 'not helpful'.

### Involving students in countering bullying

How parents saw the school as involving students in countering bullying is summarised in Table 39.

**Table 39: Parent perceptions of how students were involved**

	Yes	No	DK	N
1. The subject of school bullying was addressed at school's assembly	42.5	8.8	48.8	160
2. Teachers talk to students in the classroom about bullying	63.1	5.0	31.9	160
3. Teachers actively promote positive relationships between students through exercises and/or discussions	74.8	5.0	20.1	159
4. The school encourages students to help other students who are being bullied	57.6	9.5	32.9	158
5. Students are advised by the staff to seek help from a trusted adult if they are being bullied at school	65.4	6.6	27.7	159

Parents identified the following actions that were taken by schools to counter bullying:

1. encouraging acts of kindness, often of a subtle kind
2. teaching techniques for children to use to deter bullying
3. providing a set of values relevant to bullying which were highlighted in classrooms and a newsletter to parents
4. asking students to design posters promoting positive behaviour to discourage bullying
5. providing information for parents about cyber bullying
6. training teachers in the use of methods of restorative practice
7. training peer mediators
8. creating friendship groups for children who tend to be isolated at playtime
9. putting on a play about bullying and involving students in discussions afterwards as a springboard for action
10. teachers involving the class in constructive discussion about how bullying problems could be resolved
11. cultivating a positive community atmosphere.



Parents also made a number of critical points:

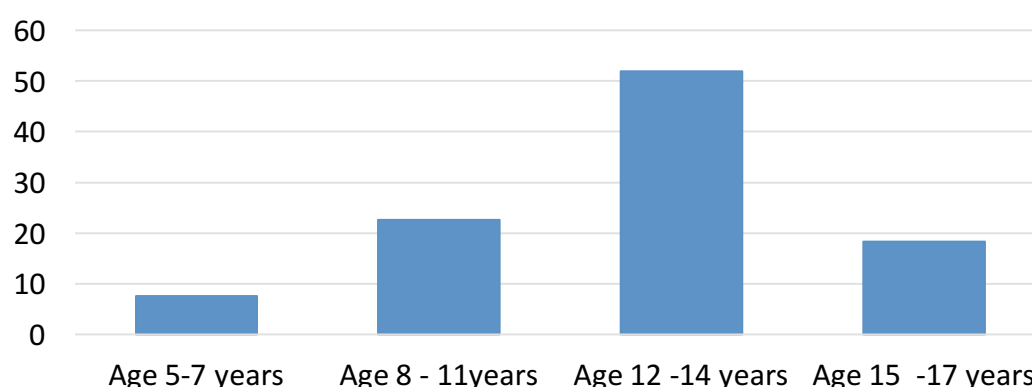
1. not taking complaints of bullying by children seriously or not enforcing anti-bullying measures
2. over-reliance on reactive measures, rather than proactive work
3. inconsistency in the application of rules against bullying
4. claims being made by a school that they are teaching conflict resolution without this being the case.

### **Views on the quality of supervision of student behaviour at the school**

The quality of supervision of student behaviour at school was seen by parents (N = 163) as 'very good' by 14.7% of parents and 'good' by a further 45.4%. Less positive ratings were provided by other parents: supervision was seen as 'adequate' by 27.0%, 'poor' by 11.0% and 'very poor' by 1.8%.

### **Parent perceptions of their child's experiences at school**

Views were expressed in relation to 160 children among whom 87 were boys and 73 girls. Ages ranged from 5 to 17 years; and year of schooling from Reception/Kindergarten to Year 12. The distribution according age in years is given in Figure 12.



**Figure 12: Age distribution of students**

### **Overall happiness at school, as perceived by parents**

Assessments made by 160 parents of their own child's happiness at school were that 41.3% were 'always happy', 45.6% 'usually happy', 8.1 % happy about half the time and 5.0% were usually or never happy at school.

### **Parents' views on whether their child had been bullied at school**

Approximately half the parents (50.3%) reported that their child had been bullied at school, 42.8% thought not, and 6.9% indicated that they did not know. This is slightly higher than that reported by students (given in Figure 4).

### **Parent perceptions of how their child was bullied**

The frequency with which parents reported that their child had been bullied in different ways is given in Table 40.

**Table 40: Kinds of bullying experienced by their children**

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often	N
1. Ignored, left out or not allowed to join in	19.0	46.8	21.5	1.2	79
2. Hit, kicked, pushed around	51.3	42.3	6.4	5.4	78
3. Lies or nasty stories to make other kids not like me	37.2	32.1	19.2	11.5	78
4. Made afraid of getting hurt	61.0	28.6	6.5	3.9	77
5. Made fun of or teased in a mean and hurtful way	14.1	47.4	26.9	11.5	78
6. Sent harassing texts or emails	85.5	9.2	2.6	2.6	76
7. Cruel things said online or in social network, e.g. Facebook	81.8	6.5	7.8	3.9	77
8. Sexual harassment by another student	89.6	9.1	1.3	0.0	77
9 Harassing students because of their race	92.2	6.5	1.3	0.0	77
10. By a group bullying one person	29.2	44.4	15.3	11.1	72
11. By one person bullying another person	2.6	55.8	27.3	14.3	77

The ranking of the kinds of bullying experienced by their children is very similar to that disclosed by students who were bullied in the student questionnaire. The Spearman rank order correlation was .93 ( $N = 9$ ),  $p < .05$ . As with students, a higher proportion of parents reported that their children were more likely to have been bullied by another individual than a group.

#### **Child's perceived reactions to being bullied at school**

From the 80 parents of students who were bullied at school, 3.8% reported that their child was 'not upset at all'; 16.3% indicated the their child was 'a bit upset'; 46.3% that the child was 'quite upset' and 33.8% very upset. These results suggest that parents report that their children were more upset than was disclosed in the student questionnaire: the percentage of students who reported being very upset (weighting the figures for boys and girls equally) was 23%.

#### **Absenteeism because of bullying as perceived by the parent**

Parents ( $N = 80$ ) of students whom they believed had been bullied reported that 30% of them had stayed away from school because of bullying at the school. A further 5% were 'unsure'. Corresponding figures provided by students suggest that the estimate from parents may exceed that provided by students which indicated that around 14% of bullied students stayed away from school because of bullying.

#### **How parents were informed of the bullying**

Parents were informed about the bullying from one or more sources. Most parents (94.9%) reported that they had been told about it by their child. Some parents (27.8%) reported seeing it happen. Other sources of information about the bullying included another child (51.4%); another adult, not a teacher (28.6%); and the school (14.1%).

Parents reacted in a number of ways after being told about the bullying, as indicated in Table 41.

**Table 41: How parents reacted**

	%	N
Told my child to ignore it	46.8	74
Told my child to stand up to it	64.9	77
Discussed with my child what could be done	95.0	80
Arranged to talk it over with bully's parents	19.2	78
Spoke with child/children who bullied	6.6	76
Spoke with the school about it	81.0	79
Sought help outside the school*	20.3	69

\*Outside the school parents sought help from psychologists (4), the police (2), the education department (2), a teacher at another school, a social worker, a teacher friend, a counsellor, a GP, a social worker, and a martial arts instructor.

According to parents other persons were also told about the bullying (see Table 42).

**Table 42: Who else were told besides the parent(s)?**

	Yes	Don't know	No	N
Friend or friends	61.5	14.1	24.4	78
Teacher/counsellor	57.7	9.0	33.3	78
Another adult	39.5	13.2	47.4	76
The police	3.9	2.6	93.4	76
Out-of-school counselling service	14.5	1.3	84.2	76

As reported by students, telling other students was seen as a more common action than telling a teacher.

### What the school did

47.5% of parents (N = 80) reported that no action was taken by the school, with 10% saying they were 'unsure'. It is not clear from these results how informed the school was about the bullying. As noted in Table 29, parents did not always make contact with the school about the bullying. Nor is it clear whether 'giving advice' was *a/ways* seen by parents as an 'action'.

The parents were asked to identify whether certain actions were undertaken by the school in relation to their child being bullied. Some parents were unable to say. For example 42.5% did not know whether the parents of the 'bully' had been contacted and 46.2% were unaware of whether the perpetrator of the bullying was given detention. However, a large majority reported that the he or she was reprimanded. As reported by students who were bullied, most parents (65%) identified that the school offered advice to the victim. 50% of the parents of the bullied children reported that the school had arranged a meeting involving both perpetrator and victim. A detailed list of the identified actions and their frequency is given in Appendix 23.

### *Perceived effectiveness of school action*

The outcome, according to the parents (N = 73) following action taken by the school is summarised in Table 43.

**Table 43: Perceived effect of the school's action**

Outcome	%
1. Stopped the bullying	27.4
2. Reduced the bullying	32.9
3. Made no difference	30.1
4. Made matters worse	9.6

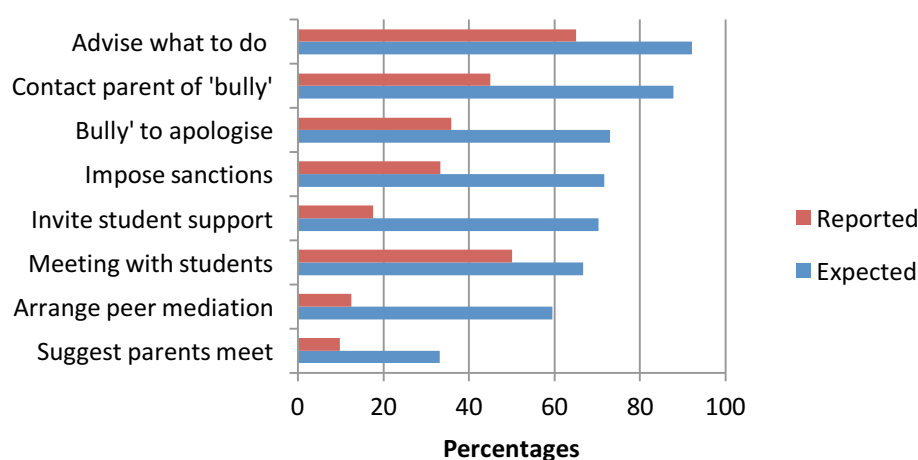
The outcomes were similar those reported by students who were bullied, who indicated that in 29.3% of cases the bullying stopped and in 39.6 % of cases the bullying was reduced.

#### *How well the school handled the case*

The most common response from parents (N = 74) was that the school handled the case 'moderately well' (28.4%), with some indicating that it was handled 'quite well' (23%) and some 'very well' (16.2%). Negative evaluations regarding the handling of the cases were made by approximately one third of parents, with 24.3% reporting that it was handled 'quite badly' and 8.2% that it was handled 'very badly'. Most parents (58.7%) reported that the school could have handled it better, with 30.7% unsure.

#### *Reported actions taken by the school and what parents expected the schools to do*

Parents were asked to indicate what the school did about their child being bullied. In addition they were asked to say what they expected the school to do. The results for eight actions are given in Figure 13.

**Figure 13: Reported actions taken by the school and parental expectations**

The results suggest that the parents expected more action from the school than they believed was taken, especially in contacting the parents of the suspected bully, getting the 'bully' to apologise, imposing sanctions and inviting other students to provide support.

#### **Reported and expected outcomes for bullied children**

Comparisons were also made between outcomes effected by schools as reported by parents whose children had been bullied, and outcomes expected by parents if their child had been bullied.

Among the 73 parents of children who had been bullied, 20 indicated that the bullying had been stopped; 24 that the situation improved for their child; 22 that there was no change; and 7 that the bullying got worse. Among the 75 parents whose children had not been bullied, in the event of their child

being bullied, 37 expected that the school's action would stop it and 38 that the situation would improve. None of these parents expected that the situation would remain unchanged or get worse. The differences were significant by chi square,  $p < .01$ . Parents whose children had not been bullied expected that the outcomes would be more positive than those reported by parents whose children had been bullied.

### **How it could have been handled better**

In parents' comments on how cases involving their children could have been handled better several themes emerged:

1. better surveillance by staff and greater sensitivity to the hurt being experienced by a child, especially by indirect means, as in exclusion and isolating
2. quicker identification of problems and more adequate communication with parents
3. avoiding unfairness in dealing with cases, as in removing victims from classes they wish to stay in rather than changing the behaviour of those who are bullying that child
4. the greater use of punitive measures with children who bully, rather than an unrealistic emphasis upon the need for the victim to be resilient
5. failure to respond to parent requests for the issue to be mediated.



## Interviews with educational leaders

Of the 14 consenting educational leaders, 10 confirmed an interview time and were sent an interview guide prior to the telephone conversation. We determined the topics for the 30-minute interview after an analysis of student feedback and identified three main areas for consideration: student-to-student bullying, anti-bullying policies and addressing bullying. Refer to Appendix 4 to see the information and open-ended questions provided to educational leaders as discussion starters. Two of the 10 participants reported that they had consulted with, or sought advice from, colleagues in preparing for the interview. Another had conducted a review of her state's documentation about bullying for the past decade.

### Student-to-student bullying

None of the educational leaders was surprised by the student data revealing that more than a third of boys and nearly half the girls had been bullied in the past year. All of them believed that this was illustrative of the bullying occurring in schools.

Four of them wondered if, in fact, the survey data might be an example of under-reporting, with one saying:

Many cases aren't reported, so even though you've got the percentage of boys and girls who have responded in your survey, I think there is probably a lot more that never report it to the schools or to their parents. (68)

Another noted: 'Bullying has an extreme impact on a small number of students but I think it has an impact on a really large number of students who don't report' (64).

One educational leader believed the differences between boys and girls in acknowledging that they were being bullied or had been bullied in the past year may have been caused by 'our culture of, well, what boys do versus what girls do'. Another added:

So I do believe there are behaviours that would probably find themselves defined as bullying that boys don't perceive as bullying, and there would be an under-reporting of those behaviours because there might be an expectation that it's just something they need to deal with. (70)

In exploring the differences between claims of being bullied by boys and girls, two participants commented that they had evidence of the changing nature of bullying, especially among girls.

There's been a significant increase in the level of aggression or violence by girls as well. So it used to be that exclusion – just that sort of underhanded bullying occurred between girls. We've seen quite an increase of violence between girls. (72)

The impact of the bullying on learning was also not surprising for the educational leaders. Six participants whose responsibilities included dealing with disengaged students reported that being bullied was often cited as a reason for non-attendance: 'A lot of the reasons the students give for school refusal and disengagement come back to stating that they have experienced bullying in school and that not wanting to go back into that environment, absolutely' (63).

One noted that, because of this, distance education had a growing trend of enrolments of students that have been bullied and now have a poor association with mainstream schooling: 'They still want to learn but want to do that where they're not interacting with their peers' (70).

However, while acknowledging the significance of bullying on student learning, three of the regional administrators/educational leaders expressed concern about bullying being cited as the main cause of non-attendance. One believed that bullying was an easy excuse when something goes wrong:

Usually there are other underlying issues there. Bullying is just a very easy and acceptable thing to say. It's not acceptable, or they don't perceive it's acceptable, to say look I'm actually staying away from that class because I don't understand the work. I can't read or I can't write. That shows a fault or an issue with them whereas it's easier to say I'm being bullied. (72)

### **Anti-bullying policies**

While each of the educational leaders acknowledged that it was a jurisdiction requirement for all schools to have documented anti-bullying policies, they identified great variation between schools in the development, implementation and review of these policies. Seven participants described schools as having the authority to determine where their anti-bullying policies were placed. They identified anti-bullying policies being linked with, or contained in, other policies such as student wellbeing or promoting positive behaviour. One regional administrator/educational leader wondered whether such linking of policies strengthened or concealed each school's anti-bullying plans. Only one jurisdiction required its schools to have an identifiable, explicitly named policy.

Every school must have an anti-bullying or bullying prevention plan. A number of years ago, unfortunately following an inquest, the anti-bullying plan which used to be embedded in the student welfare and discipline policy had to be lifted out as a stand-alone policy. This was good as a really good template was developed. (64)

Nine participants were not surprised by the student feedback that more than half the students were not aware of their school's anti-bullying policy. One summarised the reason that students were either unaware of the policy or hadn't seen it as 'The policies are not user friendly, in terms of they're not worded in a way that the general public would readily understand, or they're out of date, or there's very minimal information available' (68).

Three educational leaders responded that in developing anti-bullying policies school were merely fulfilling their obligations, because they were required to have a policy on 'everything under the sun' and would just have it there as part of their compliance and use it only as needed. One believed that the terminology used in the questionnaire may have elicited that response and felt it would have been more appropriate to ask students if they knew what action was taken by the school if someone was bullied: 'That is, if they were asked are they clear what the expectations are if someone bullies. However, it would be interesting if they hadn't been taken through that process' (74).

One regional administrator/educational leader found the student feedback surprising: 'I found that hard to believe. In every school that I've been involved with the anti-bullying processes are integrated into core learning somewhere' (70).

### **Approaches adopted by schools**

All the educational leaders/regional administrators believed that bullying was not restricted to schools; rather that

It's a whole of community issue ... it just is not something that only happens in a school setting; it happens in families, it happens in communities and sporting groups and so the notion of bullying just being in schools – yes – but we need to think much broader than that. (64)



They strongly favoured educative rather than punitive approaches in schools. Some believed that schools could promote understandings of bullying and teach the skills to reduce bullying by adopting holistic, proactive approaches. They valued large-scale methods such as promoting positive behaviour (72); the teaching of pro-social skills (63); building resilience (62); conflict resolution training (68); and peer mediation (67).

Others favoured the explicit teaching of very practical strategies about what to do when one is bullied, that is, 'the pathway to report' (70). They believed that the explicit teaching about the role of bystanders included the provision of examples as well as articulating the importance of speaking up against bullying (66). They identified the benefits of a variety of specific anti-bullying programs and urged schools to review their policies, structures and programs regularly.

Although there was no common commitment from the educational leaders/regional administrators to either generic social and emotional learning programs or explicit anti-bullying approaches, they agreed that if we are really serious about doing something about bullying, approaches need to 'be built-in, not bolted-on to the school day' (64).

### **Other concerns common to educational leaders**

Other topics raised by all those interviewed were a) the acknowledgement of the demands on schools and b) the call for greater understanding of bullying.

#### *Demands on schools*

All participants acknowledged the work done by schools within the competing demands placed on them. One participant recognised the amount of work undertaken by jurisdictions and schools to address bullying as 'a tidal wave of activity ... with iteration after iteration of planning, policies and programs' (64).

Four educational leaders/regional administrators commented on the positive intent of schools in adopting strategies to respond to bullying, with one summarising this as 'I think schools want to do, absolutely want to do, the right thing: they are there for kids' (64). Another saw schools as supporting all students because schools take seriously the issue of responding to bullying and documenting their responses: 'there's been a huge increase in recognition of accountability and responsibility by our schools in making sure that we're doing the right thing by our students' (72).

Two other participants cited the regular review of such documentation as a means of setting targets for the following year and ensuring that relevant data drives the school's approach to bullying (63 and 66).

Of those participants who were critical of schools' responses to bullying, all acknowledged the challenges for schools. One cited the lack of time and resources as the possible cause for schools' diminishing focus on bullying and the consequent lack of clear communication with their communities: 'I think it's a double-edged sword, the schools could do more, but schools certainly need more to be able to do more' (68).

Another highlighted the difficulty of sustaining policies and anti-bullying strategies in highly transient regional contexts where not only did students and their families regularly transfer but staff and leadership teams also changed over frequently: 'The confluence of different variables makes a clear ongoing rigorous approach difficult. The robustness of what was there before may be lost; it is a continually moving feast.' Within this context, the educational leader urged schools to continue to 'embed practices that won't be eroded with the movement of different elements' (66).

Others cited competing demands such as curriculum reforms and new documents, changing jurisdiction directions and community expectations as challenges for schools in maintaining their emphasis on bullying.

schools are just inundated with things that are new on their plate every day ... and then the next tsunami hits the school and the eye goes off the bullying ... you know it's just time and energy gets directed into other things. (64)

One described it as simply the busyness of life in schools which often prevents a cohesive response: 'they're often putting out spot fires rather than proactively trying to engage the students' (68).

Two of the educational leaders whose responsibilities included working with families who had a complaint against a school named the lack of support from families as the challenge for schools in responding to bullying: 'I just think sometimes there's a lot of pressure on a school to solve something that it needs a community approach and it needs a family commitment' (72) and 'the parents don't come on board and, you know, and the parents expect the school to sort it out yet they're not prepared to come to the party and assist' (68).

### *Greater understanding of bullying*

The educational leaders/regional administrators all identified the definition of bullying as an issue which needed to be addressed with parents as well as students.

One expressed concern that the term 'bullying' was used in a very generic way and called for 'rigorous conversations with students, parents and communities about what constituted bullying as opposed to relational aggression' (64). This concern was shared by another participant:

a lot of the bullying accounts and recounts that we get from our parents and our students don't fit the definition of bullying. They're more social discourse and social interactions because they are not sustained and there's not a differentiation of power.

I think generally speaking people are too quick to label what is a conflict as bullying. (66)

Another believed that parents' lack of understanding about bullying led them to label incidents as bullying when it may have been a one-off case of disagreement.

Sometimes the parent's understanding of what bullying actually is may not necessarily be what their child is experiencing. It could be a situation of mutual conflict where a couple of kids are just at each other.

... it's one thing that we do need to address with parents, explaining to them what the definition of bullying actually is. (68)

Two other educational leaders noted the parents who complained had such a limited understanding of bullying that they often promoted bullying behaviours with their children and adopted such actions themselves. The parents often unwittingly keep it going and blame the school (74). 'We have some parents that have such little understanding they are encouraging and coaching their children in very antisocial ways. We've got parents that are very big bullies' (67).

Parents' own school experiences were seen as a contributing factor in the ways they encouraged the children to stand up for themselves.

They say 'it happened to me at school and now it's happening to my child'. So a lot of it is their own understanding of what bullying is but they bring their own history of what happened to them at school into the equation as well. (72)

## 5. Discussion

The aim of this project is to discover what government schools in Australia are doing to counter student bullying and the effectiveness of their actions. This has involved examining the current situation regarding bullying in Australian schools followed by an exploration of what anti-bullying actions schools are taking and with what perceived success. In doing so, we have drawn upon the perceptions and judgements of students, schools, parents and educational leaders. Each group has contributed important insights.

We will discuss the results of our study under five major headings:

- A. Background to bullying in the schools
- B. Approaches taken by schools in countering bullying and their effectiveness
- C. Resources of schools in addressing bullying
- D. Teacher knowledge of bullying
- E. Limitations and implications of the study

### Background to bullying in the schools

As a preliminary step to inquiring into what is being done to counter bullying in schools and with what success, it was necessary to examine relevant aspects of the situation in schools. These included the extent and nature of bullying taking place in the schools and how students respond to its occurrence. Relevant information was sought from students, teachers and parents.

#### The prevalence of bullying

Students provided the most extensive data regarding the prevalence of bullying. Reporting on their experiences, approximately one student in five indicated being bullied every few weeks or more often during the previous 12 months. Differences in the percentages of children who reported being bullied were unrelated to the type of school attended, that is primary, secondary or combined. Comparisons with results reported by Cross et al (2011) in a national study conducted approximately seven years previously suggest that there has been a small but significant reduction in bullying overall. This finding is consistent with world trends (Rigby and Smith, 2011). However, the level of bullying in schools remains at an unacceptably high level, with an estimated 15.5% of students reporting that they were being bullied at the time they answered the questionnaire.

Educational leaders were not surprised by the estimates of bullying prevalence reported in this study, with several wondering whether bullying prevalence had not been under-reported. Some believed that boys in particular may not be disclosing that they had been bullied on grounds that they felt that they ought to deal with it themselves. This view is consistent with the reported finding that many more boys than girls report not being bullied at all.

Perceptions of teachers and students of the prevalence of bullying at their schools were similar, with schools and students mainly of the opinion that bullying occurred 'sometimes' rather than 'often'. However, both individual schools and individual students gave a wide range of estimates of how much bullying was actually taking place. For instance, although most respondents indicated that bullying did not occur at their school 'often', some 20% of schools and 20% of students thought that it did happen 'often' or 'very often'. This suggests that individuals may differ widely in what they see as bullying or differ in their awareness of the existence of bullying behaviour. This was recognised by educational leaders who emphasised the need for a clearer understanding of the meaning of the term 'bullying.'

## Forms of bullying

In general, students, schools and parents recognised that bullying could take a variety of forms with different degrees of prevalence. Verbal bullying such as cruel teasing and indirect forms of bullying such as rumour spreading and exclusion were seen as most common by all three sets of informants. Physical bullying was less common. Racial and sexual harassment were least common. According to students' self-reports cyber bullying was personally experienced less than direct physical bullying. This finding is contrary to the belief held by 42% of teachers (as inferred from answers to the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz) that 'most bullying nowadays is through cyber technology'. Nevertheless, results from interviews conducted with educational leaders indicate that concerns expressed by schools and parents over cyber bullying are currently requiring much attention, arguably because of the relative newness of the phenomenon and uncertainty over how to deal with it. The order of reported prevalence for the nine forms of bullying is very similar in the results provided by students, schools and parents. Distinctions between the different ways bullying can take place and their relative prevalence appear to be well understood.

## Location of bullying

There was close agreement between students and teachers about where bullying was taking place, that is, in the playground (where most bullying occurred), classrooms, corridors, toilets, the library, the school bus, to and from school, and in cyber space. In this context a substantial proportion of students (29%) identified cyber bullying as happening 'often'. The importance of this latter form of bullying was well acknowledged by schools, with 24 of the 26 schools indicating that if one or more of their students were involved in cyber bullying 'outside school hours' they would investigate and take appropriate action. This is despite there being no legal requirement for schools to do so.

## The victims of bullying

Responses to the school questionnaire suggest that the main feature characterising victims of bullying is their physical appearance, such as being obese or odd looking. At the same time, more than half of the schools noted that students who were disabled in some way and students of low socioeconomic status were also more likely to be bullied than others. This perception is supported in the student data in which measures of disability and material deprivation (a proxy for socioeconomic status) correlated positively with levels of self-reported victimisation. Being or seeming gay was also seen as a factor in attracting bullying at school. Although recognised as relevant at some schools, cultural differences, race and religious differences were seen as relatively unimportant in accounting for students being bullied at school. Notably, the measure of ethnicity used in this study was unrelated to being bullied or feeling unsafe.

Of particular interest to this project was the possibility that Indigenous students would be targeted and bullied more than others at school. Self-reports indicated that Indigenous students experienced more racial harassment than other students. However, the more general measure, the Victimisation Scale, did not differentiate Indigenous students from others. This may have been because the sample of Indigenous students was small ( $N = 97$ ) and not fully representative. On the material deprivation index the Indigenous sample did not score below average. It seems possible that wider sampling including Indigenous students from remote communities would have produced different results. As it was, there was no evidence – apart from racial harassment – that the Indigenous students *in this study* had been bullied more than other students. There was also no evidence that they differed from others in feeling unsafe from being bullied.

## **The safety of students**

Students reported that their safety from bullying depended upon locations. Being at school was seen as the least safe place, with 22.1% of students indicating that they felt unsafe from bullying at least half the time. For 'on the way to and from school' the corresponding percentage was 12.2%. Cyberspace was seen as unsafe for at least half the time by 14.1% of respondents. The difficult task of ensuring the safety of children from bullying at school is clearly not being achieved for a substantial proportion of students while they are at school.

Comparisons could be made between perceptions of schools and students with respect to the safety of students who find it hard to defend themselves from their peers. Using the criterion of feeling unsafe half the time or more often, there were striking differences between student and staff assessments. Among students 27.2% opined that such vulnerable children would feel unsafe half the time or more; however only 2 of the 26 schools made such a judgement. Although the sample of schools is small, the differences are statistically highly significant. It seems likely that either schools underestimate the vulnerability of such children or students overestimate how unsafe from bullying students who find it hard to defend themselves may be.

## **The harm done by bullying**

The harm done by bullying in school is apparent from responses both to the student questionnaire and to the parent questionnaires. Among bullied students, approximately 55% reported being made sad; 50% frightened; 45% upset; and 20% angry. Absenteeism due to bullying among bullied students was reported in the surveys by both students (25% of those bullied) and by the parents (30%). Student data also suggests that approximately one third of those bullied believed their capacity to do their schoolwork well had been negatively affected. According to one educational leader the extreme impact of bullying may extend to a large number of students who do not report being bullied.

Among the regional leaders there was recognition that some students were finding that, because of bullying at their school, they needed to study elsewhere. This was seen as reflected in the growing number of students who avail themselves of distance educational facilities. At the same time, an opinion was expressed that some students who are finding it difficult to cope with schoolwork may be claiming that they were being bullied at school as an excuse for not attending. Data from the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz indicates that the bulk of teachers are aware of the negative health consequences of bullying, with approximately 90% of teachers agreeing that 'children identified as repeated victims of school bullying in primary schools have been reported as having much poorer mental health than others as adults'.

## **Gender differences: prevalence, nature and responses to bullying**

Recognising gender difference can be important in understanding how the schools were addressing bullying. The results in this study suggest that boys and girls differ somewhat in their reporting of the extent and nature of the bullying they experience. A higher proportion of boys report that they were never bullied. Arguably a denial that one has been bullied is consistent with a macho image that some boys wish to project. The bullying experienced by boys and girls tended to be of a different kind. As reported in previous studies (Cross et al, 2011), girls reported being bullied in many covert ways and were much less likely to be bullied physically. These differences are important in discussing why schools may use different approaches in dealing with cases of bullying by boys and girls.

One view expressed in interviews with educational leaders was that physical aggression among girls had increased significantly in recent years. This perception was not supported by results from the present study, in which 80.7% of girls (N = 823) reported that they had never been physically bullied at school. An early study of the prevalence of forms of bullying conducted in the late 1990s with a sample of 15,000 Australian schoolgirls reported a slightly higher estimate of 82.0% of girls who had never been physically attacked (Rigby, 1998).

A further difference between the genders lies in the expectations each has of their peers when they seek help after being bullied. Whilst boys and girls were equally likely to tell their parents/carers if they were bullied, the results indicate that girls were more likely to think that their peers knew what was happening to them and to seek their help. This suggests that the training and use of peer supporters or mediators may be of particular value for girls. The results also suggest that boys are more likely than girls to seek help from the police and counselling services outside the school. Getting help from the police may be a reflection of the fact that boys are more likely to be involved in physically violent encounters that make police involvement particularly appropriate. It is unclear why boys appear to be more likely than girls to seek help from non-school counselling services.

Despite the results showing that there is little difference overall in the extent to which boys and girls are bullied, many girls reported feeling much less safe from bullying in three different locations: the school, going to and from school, and in cyberspace – especially the latter. Emotional reactions to bullying are consistent with this pattern. A higher proportion of girls than boys report being sad, frightened and upset after being bullied. This suggests a higher level of perceived personal vulnerability to bullying among girls.

### **Bystander behaviour**

The presence of other students when bullying occurs provides an opportunity for possible bystander intervention. In the schools that were sampled, students, schools and teachers – the latter as revealed through the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz – concurred in generally agreeing that other students were typically present when bullying occurred. This view is widely supported in the research literature (Pepler and Craig, 1995, Rigby and Johnson, 2005). They also agreed that bystanders intervene relatively rarely to try to stop the bullying and that occasionally they encourage the bullying. Results from the student and the school questionnaires on the success of bystander interventions are similar; only a minority of respondents thought that such interventions were successful in stopping the bullying. The schools generally recognised the importance of promoting positive bystander behaviour: in fact, 23 of the 25 schools opined that promoting student bystander behaviour is an effective strategy. This widely held belief that bystander intervention occurs infrequently and has limited success in stopping bullying presents teachers with the challenge of bringing about more frequent and effective student bystander action.

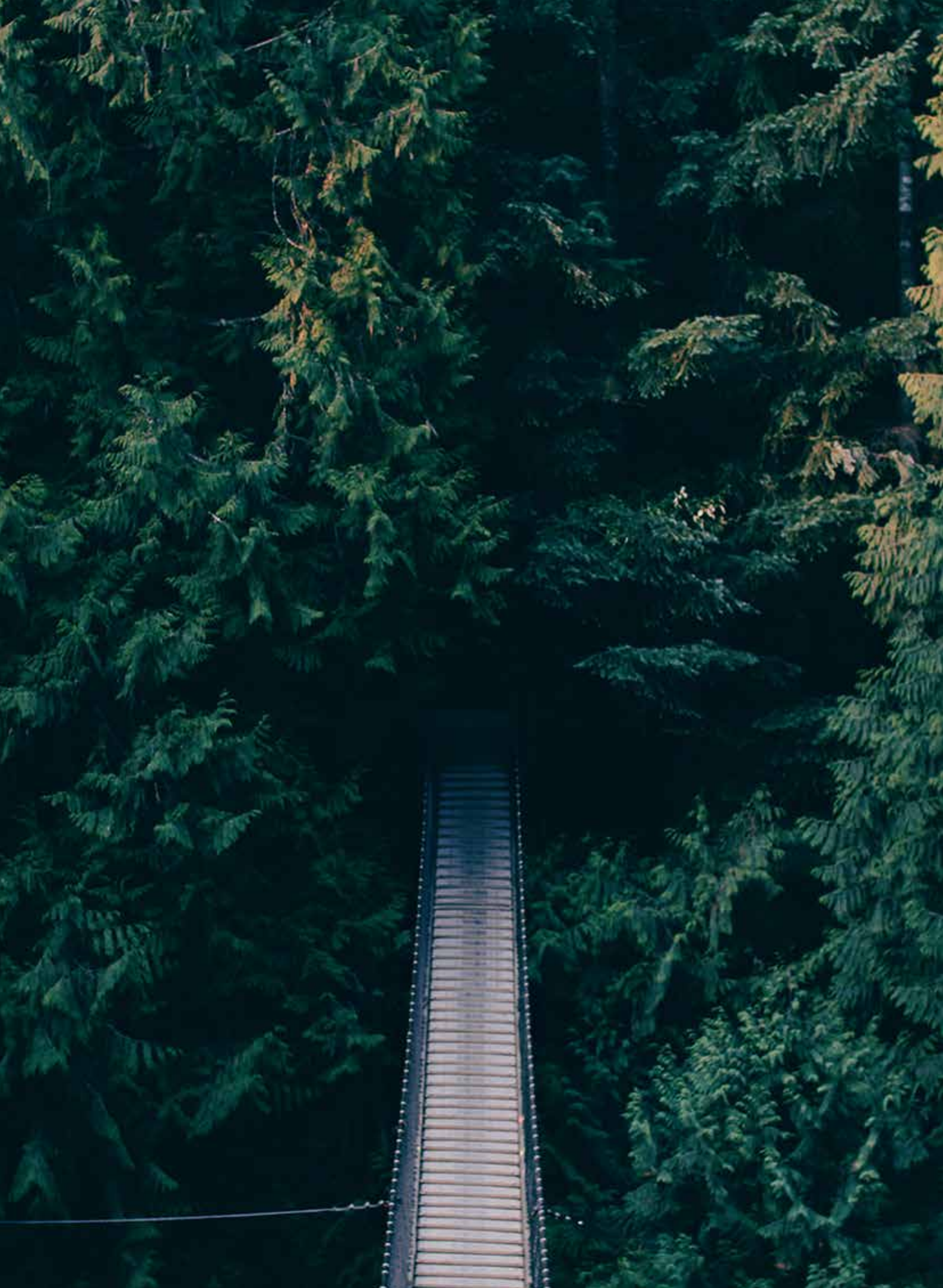
### **Telling behaviour**

Each one of the 25 schools answering the relevant questionnaire item indicated that students who were being bullied were 'expected' to report incidents to teachers. They all urged students who were being bullied to tell. However, reports from students indicate that only 37.7% of bullied students do so, compared with 52.3% who seek help from another student or students and 51.4% who seek help from a parent or caregiver. In general, direct assistance from schools in tackling cases of bullying appears limited by reluctance on the part of many students to tell a teacher.

The reasons students gave for not telling a teacher or counsellor were varied. For some students the bullying was thought to be not severe enough to justify seeking help. In some cases students believed they had better options than telling a teacher, such as telling a parent or friend or informing an out-of-school counselling service. Fear of possible repercussions was also a prominent consideration, especially when it was thought that the bullies might find out that they had informed on them. Some students believed that teachers would not be genuinely interested in helping them or were unable to do so. Disclosure of a personal problem to someone one did not know was a major difficulty for some children. Given the school culture, asking teachers to help with personal problems seemed inappropriate to some. Convincing students that the school can and will help without incurring unacceptable risks emerged as a significant challenge.

In summary, the situation in Australian government schools is widely recognised, with approximately half the students reporting having been bullied at least once in a given year and one in five being bullied every few weeks or more often. Although there are signs that the prevalence is reducing, it remains a serious concern for an estimated 15% of students, as evidenced by reports from students and parents of the harm that has been suffered by victims. This includes feeling unsafe at school, emotional damage, absenteeism and difficulties in attending to schoolwork. As noted, some students are more vulnerable to being bullied by peers than others. These include children with disabilities and those who report being materially deprived. Teachers identify that students who are physically different from others and who appear 'gay' are more commonly targeted. There was evidence that Indigenous students were more likely than others to be racially harassed. Most bullying is observed by student bystanders but few intervene. Approximately one third of those who are bullied at school seek help from a teacher (many more go for help from parents and from other students). The evidence suggests that the reluctance of many students to seek help from teachers, for a variety of reasons, results in many students who are bullied not receiving the help they need.







## Approaches taken by schools to counter bullying and their effectiveness

The work of schools in countering bullying is commonly classified under two headings: proactive and reactive. The former refers to steps that are taken to prevent bullying from occurring; the latter to steps taken when bullying has occurred and action is needed to resolve the problem. The two approaches are not entirely distinct. For example, how cases of bullying are resolved may serve to prevent further bullying. Approaches that include the promotion of empathy and pro-social skills may help to determine whether a case is resolved effectively. In short they have complementary and overlapping functions. However, we will maintain this distinction in the discussion below of what approaches are taken by schools.

### Proactive approaches

#### *School anti-bullying policies*

One of the expectations placed upon schools in Australia is that they should have an anti-bullying policy along lines suggested by the National Safe Schools Framework (Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 2004). Each one of the 25 schools responding to the question indicated that they had a written anti-bully policy. The majority conveyed that it was on the school website and had been discussed with the staff and the school council/board. 23 of the 25 schools had discussed it with students. Most students (52%) did not know whether the school had such a policy or thought it did not. Parents were somewhat better informed, judging from responses to the parent questionnaire which indicated that fewer (35%) did not know that the school had an anti-bullying policy. These results suggest that the schools may be largely ineffective in disseminating vital information and raising awareness in the wider school community of their anti-bullying policy.

Some educational leaders showed no surprise that so many students were unaware of the policy. They suggested that schools are currently required to have so many policies that producing anti-bullying policies tends to be regarded as an act of compliance. The policies themselves, according to one educational leader, are not user-friendly, out of date or contain minimal information. One interviewee suggested that students might have demonstrated greater awareness if they had been asked to say if they knew what action the school would take if someone was bullied. Another did express surprise, finding the student feedback hard to believe, having worked with schools where the 'anti-bullying processes' are integrated into core learning.

Students and parents provided views on the effectiveness of the policy in addressing bullying. Of those that made a judgement of its effectiveness 56% of students thought the policy useful, and a further 32.3% that it might be useful. Over 90% of parents indicated that their school's anti-bullying policy was adequate or better, with approximately 1 in 5 rating it as 'very good'. However many parents commented that the policy was not well implemented, for example: 'The policy is fine, if only it were adhered to', and 'The policy is adequate but enforcement is lacking because of staffing shortages'. From these results the effectiveness of school policies appears to be seriously limited by not being adequately applied. This view is supported by comments made in interviews with educational leaders who opined that schools tended to produce anti-bullying policies to comply with imposed requirements rather than as plans to be acted upon.

It may be concluded that the effectiveness of policies addressing bullying in schools may be seriously limited because a substantial proportion of students and parents are unaware of their existence.

### *Classroom work related to bullying*

Schools indicated that considerable emphasis was placed on what could be done in classrooms to promote awareness of bullying and to develop attitudes and skills that could assist in reducing the problem. Teachers were expected to address the problem with students in class.

Students provided evidence of what was actually done in classrooms in teacher-led activities. In responding to their questionnaire, between 22.8% and 82.8% of students confirmed that teacher initiatives to prevent bullying through classroom work often took place at their school. For instance, 70.7% of students saw class activities taking place to encourage inclusiveness and 40% of students saw teachers explaining what constitutes appropriate use of cyber technology. Results from the Parent Questionnaire reveal that most parents were aware that teachers talk to students in the classroom about bullying, actively promote positive relationships between students through exercises and/or discussions, and encourage students to help other students who are being bullied. The strong emphasis in recent years on the value of promoting social and emotional learning and the adoption of initiatives from overseas, such as the SEL program (Durlak et al, 2011) and the Australian Friendly Schools program (Cross et al, 2011) was apparent in descriptions of classroom activities.

There were, however, according to students, differences in what was being done in class between year levels and between types of school. Generally students in the lower year levels reported more classroom activity devoted to addressing matters relevant to bullying. Students in primary school reported more such activity than did students in secondary school. Given that levels of peer victimisation were not found to differ between types of schools, it could be argued that the proactive classroom work to prevent bullying found in primary schools should be appropriately undertaken at a secondary level. It is unclear why combined schools which cater for many younger students should apparently do least in countering bullying through classroom actions. Given the limited number of schools of uncertain representativeness in the sample, confirmation of this result is needed in further studies.

By and large, evaluations of what was being done in classrooms to prevent bullying were positive. According to over half the students some aspects of classroom work were helpful in stopping bullying. These included lessons on how students who are being bullied could be helped; how arguments could be solved peacefully; keeping safe online and appropriate cyber behaviour; problem solving with others; and promoting student discussions of matters of concern. Schools (but not students) rated highly the importance of promoting respect for others and promoting inclusiveness as means of stopping bullying. Students placed more emphasis on the value of student discussions, for example through circle time. In general, classroom work on bullying was rated highly by students and teachers, but there were differences in the perceived effectiveness of particular actions or activities involved in classroom work. One question raised by these results is whether classroom activities seen as particularly useful by students should be given a higher priority and employed more.

### *Encouraging the reporting of bullying*

A further proactive approach involved encouraging students to tell a teacher if they were being bullied. All the schools indicated that they were doing this. The effect could be that students who engaged in bullying would know that what they did would get back to the school. This might be expected to deter some students from bullying others.

It is clear that despite schools urging students who are being bullied to seek help from teachers only a minority did so, with students generally preferring to disclose their problem to fellow students or to parents. Explanations of why many students who have been bullied do not tell a teacher or counsellor range from their feeling that the severity of the bullying was not sufficient to seek help from the school

to a belief that the school would not or could tackle the problem effectively and may well make the matter worse. Fear of repercussions following a school intervention, such as angering the bullies more and in some cases leading to a loss of friends who are involved in the bullying was emphasised. Several schools indicated that they had sought to make it less risky to tell teachers directly and face the possibility of ridicule from peers by providing bully boxes that could be used as a means of requesting help from teachers less conspicuously. It was also revealed that some students are very reluctant to disclose personal matters to a teacher whom they regard as a stranger. Some felt that it is not the business of the school to become involved in issues of bullying in addition to carrying out their prime role in teaching. It appears that the role of the school in handling cases of bullying is unclear to some students.

It may be concluded that the practice of schools of instructing students to tell them if they are being bullied is often ineffective. As a deterrent to bullying it appears to have limited effectiveness.

#### *Peer support*

Some schools sought to promote peer support as a proactive approach to countering bullying. Arguably students who are supported by others are less likely to be bullied. Buddy programs were therefore employed in some schools in which older students were linked with younger, more vulnerable students to whom they offered support. Peer mediation was also encouraged in some schools. As a proactive measure it provides an opportunity for students to be assisted in resolving minor problems or conflicts before they escalated into more serious affairs involving bullying. Peer mediation was supported by 15 of the 26 schools, but of these only 7 indicated that they provided special training.

Compared with other strategies for reducing bullying, the schools did not rate peer mediation highly. For instance, as reported, nine out of 24 schools indicated that peer mediation had nil effect on bullying. Among students two out of three rated peer mediation as 'helpful.' One in four was unsure and one in ten thought it was not helpful. A more valid assessment of the effectiveness of this approach is needed using data gathered from schools that are committed to this approach and provide appropriate training.

#### *Other proactive approaches*

Other proactive approaches considered relevant to reducing bullying included addresses given at school assemblies, more skilled classroom management, surveillance of playground behaviour and working more closely with parents. Talks at assemblies were seen by schools as the least effective of these approaches, with one school indicating that they were counterproductive and likely to increase bullying. By contrast, good classroom management was rated as highly effective by teachers, arguably through preventing bullying in the classroom and indirectly influencing behaviour in the playground. This view has been strongly supported through empirical studies conducted in Norway (Galloway and Roland 2004). Surveillance of student behaviour by teachers was rated positively by over 80% of students and by most parents.

The degree to which the schools collaborated with parents is difficult to gauge. A high proportion of parents invited to attend the school for group meetings to discuss issues did not attend and (as reported) parents made numerous negative comments regarding the way cases were handled. However, it may be questioned whether the parents electing to answer the questionnaires constituted a representative sample.

#### **Reactive approaches**

How the school reacted to being informed of cases of bullying can be gauged from independent accounts provided from schools, students and parents. These are discussed under (i) the account from the schools, (ii) the account from students, and (iii) the account from parents.

### *The account from the schools*

Schools were asked to indicate how often they made use of each of six basic methods commonly employed by schools in dealing with cases of bullying. These were (i) direct sanctions, (ii) strengthening the victim, (iii) mediation, (iv) restorative practices, (v) the Support Group Method and (vi) the Method of Shared Concern (Rigby and Griffiths, 2011). To prevent misunderstandings of what was meant by each method, we provided descriptions of each one in the questionnaire.

The frequency with which the different methods were used by schools differed widely, with strengthening the victim and mediation being used in all the schools and direct sanctions and restorative practices being used at times in over 90% of the schools. The less popular methods, the Support Group Method and the Method of Shared Concern, were used at times in 40% of the schools. These findings indicate that the schools were not committed to using any one method exclusively in addressing cases of bullying.

How often restorative practices were applied depended on the context in which they were used. When the practice involved only those directly involved in the bullying, over 90% of the schools reported using it. In general, this approach was used less often in group or classroom meetings, and less frequently still when community members become involved in the rarely held community conferences. The conferences are typically employed in very serious cases as an alternative to taking legal action.

There were wide differences between schools' use of direct sanctions, with two of them reporting that they were never used in cases of bullying and five indicating that they were used very often. These differences suggest that the use of sanctions in dealing with cases of bullying is controversial across schools.

The low usage of the Support Group Method and the Method of Shared Concern may be due to unfamiliarity with these approaches and the comparative unavailability of training in their use. Published accounts of their effectiveness in reducing bullying (see Thompson and Smith, 2011, Rigby, 2014) have not as yet become widely known and appropriate training is largely lacking.

A further reason for the variations in usage of the different methods may lie in the varied nature of forms of bullying. As reported by teachers, bullying occurs at different levels of severity and may or may not involve groups as perpetrators. Very severe bullying, which was comparatively rare, was generally seen as requiring the use of sanctions or community conferences. Group bullying was seen by teachers and students as less common than bullying by individuals. This may be one reason why methods employed to address group bullying, such as the Support Group Method and the Method of Shared Concern, are used less frequently.

The ratings of the effectiveness of the six methods provided by the schools suggest that each of them had a positive effect in stopping or reducing bullying, with ratings of the effectiveness of the different methods of intervention on a 5 point scale ranging from 4.14 (restorative practice with those involved in the bullying) to 3.77 (direct sanctions).

One unexpected finding is the relatively high usage and high ratings of mediation, given that many educators argue that its use is limited to cases in which 'bullies' and 'victims' freely wish to be mediated and where the imbalance of power between the two sides is slight (Cowie and Wallace, 2000). It is possible that the term 'mediation' was understood by some teachers as involving processes that are used in restorative practice which put pressure on 'offenders' to experience remorse and apologise, rather than as processes that involve no such pressure. Although an attempt was made in the instructions provided for respondents to clarify the term 'mediation' as it is used in research, it seems likely that some respondents interpreted the term more broadly.

In rating the six methods teachers were slightly more positive about the use of restorative practices than others, especially in situations in which the perpetrator and the victim were brought together and work with a practitioner of the method. Other applications were seen as slightly less effective. Relatively high ratings were given to 'strengthening the victim' as an approach. Little information on how this was done was provided, however, beyond the suggestion that the victims should be encouraged to be more resilient.

Finally, it should be noted that schools were sensitive to the need to apply particular methods to cases for which they were considered appropriate. How effective a method could be was seen as dependent upon the situation in which it was applied.

### *The account from students*

Students who had been bullied provided information on how the school responded when they asked for help in cases of bullying. Around 80% of the teachers/counsellors who were informed were unaware of the bullying. By contrast around 50% of respondents reported that other students were aware of the bullying. This suggests that involving students in actions to identify and assist in discouraging bullying could be a rewarding strategy.

According to the bullied students who informed the school, the immediate reactions of teachers and counsellors were generally positive. Over 70% of these students reported that teachers and counsellors were helpful, provided advice and took some action. Girls reported that teachers and counsellors showed a higher level of interest in the bullying than boys did. This may have been, as suggested by one educational leader, due to a culturally derived belief that boys are expected to cope better with aggressive peers.

According to students the school generally applied pressure on the bully to change his or her behaviour, for instance, by telling the perpetrator to stop, warning the bully, requiring the bully to apologise, keeping an eye on things and talking to the bully's parent(s). A minority of students reported that disciplinary action was taken, such as depriving the perpetrator of privileges, imposing a detention, requiring community service, suspension and exclusion. On rare occasions the police were informed and referrals made to outside agencies. In an intermediate number of cases, meetings were arranged, for example between the students in conflict, with the parents of the victim and with the parents of the bully. Peer mediation was used occasionally. There were suggestions that the parents of the children in conflict should meet together to resolve the problem.

Finally the information provided by students suggests that there were consistent gender differences in the way the schools tended to deal with cases of bullying. The results (detailed in Appendix 21) indicate that girls who have been bullied were much less likely to report that the perpetrator was subjected to disciplinary sanctions, including loss of privileges, detention, suspension, exclusion and community service. Given that previous research has shown that bullying in schools tends to occur mainly *within* gender groups, this finding suggests that boys are more likely than girls to be disciplined if they engage in bullying. In part, this may be as previously reported because male bullying tends to be more physical and as such appropriately handled using a punitive approach.

The effectiveness of what was done may be considered under three headings (a) ratings of the helpfulness of particular actions of teachers/counsellors, (b) the reported outcomes for students personally following seeking help from a teacher/counsellor, and (c) the general helpfulness of what was done.

#### a) Ratings of the helpfulness

On the whole, students were positive about the help they received from teachers. For each one of the 18 teacher/counsellor actions that were presented in the student questionnaire for them to rate, at least 50% of the students indicated that they were helpful to them. Some 70% or more rated some of the actions as helpful. These included the school talking about the bullying with one's parents and/or the parent of the perpetrator. They also found it helpful for sanctions to be applied as a means of stopping the bullying, especially through the use of reprimands and the imposition of community service. They appreciated the opportunity to be involved in meetings with the perpetrator and the school counsellor or teacher to resolve the problem. They approved of the practice of getting the 'bully' to apologise. An unexpected result was the high rating given by students to the school recommending that the parents of the students in conflict meet to sort out the problem together. This piece of advice is commonly dismissed as unwise and even dangerous. Whether it is effective may depend on the judgement of the person at the school who recommends this course of action and the teacher's knowledge of the parents involved. The overall impression from these results is that a range of actions implicit in the use of the six methods of intervention were well appreciated by students who had been bullied and sought help from the school.

#### b) The reported outcomes following seeking help from a teacher/counsellor

According to students the outcomes after telling a teacher/counsellor fell into four categories: the bullying stopped, the bullying reduced, the situation did not change, and the situation got worse. Although the outcomes may have been in part brought about by other influences besides the school (some students sought help from a number of sources) it seems likely that the school usually played an important part.

The results suggest that approximately 29% of the cases were resolved fully, that is, the bullying stopped; in 40% of cases there was a reduction in the bullying; in 24% of cases there was no change; and in 8% of cases the bullying got worse.

Significant differences were noted in the outcomes following school interventions at the different types of schools. A somewhat higher rate of success in stopping bullying was reported by students in primary schools. Given the limited number of schools of uncertain representativeness in the analyses leading to this result, confirmation of this finding is needed. However, it is consistent with the view that bullying has been reported as being more effectively addressed with younger students, arguably on the grounds that they are often more readily influenced, especially by authority figures (Smith, 2010).

It should not however be thought that the results from student reports showing such limited success are unique to Australian schools. Similar results have been reported in a range of published studies in England (Smith and Shu, 2000, Thompson and Smith, 2011); the Netherlands (Fekkes et al, 2005); the United States (Nixon and Davis, 2011); and Australia (Rigby, 1998, Rigby and Barnes, 2002). It should also be recognised that factors that give rise to bullying are not confined to the school environment. Family and child-rearing factors (Rigby, 2013); socioeconomic status (Due et al, 2009); levels of community violence (Wolke et al., 2013) and genetic factors (Ball et al, 2008) have each been shown to contribute to the prevalence of bullying. There are clear limitations on what a school can do.

Nevertheless, the results can realistically be interpreted as implying that there is considerable scope for improvement. The fact is that students reported that, after reporting being bullied to the school, in 70% of cases it continued, albeit in many cases in a less intensive way. This raises the question of whether more appropriate and more effective methods of intervention can be adopted and applied in schools to prevent cases of bullying from continuing.

### c) Overall teacher helpfulness

A further method of obtaining evaluative evidence of the schools' work from students was asking students to rate the helpfulness of teachers' actions overall when they were approached for help. The results suggest that on the whole students who told the teacher about the bullying found them helpful. Asked whether they would seek help from them again if they were bullied over 70% of students said they definitely or probably would. It may be that whether the bullying stopped or even decreased may not be the sole or even the most important criterion in assessing teacher effectiveness. Students can be helped through limited reductions in the bullying and also through an increase in the sense that they are supported by significant others (Rigby, 2000).

#### *The account from parents*

Parents provided similar results to students. Given that the information about what the school did was, in part, derived from discussions between the parent and the students, the high level of agreement was not unexpected. Most parents reported that the schools reprimanded the bully and advised the victim on what they could do. Approximately half the parents of bullied children indicated that meetings were held at which the perpetrators and the victims attended, apologies were required from the perpetrators and parents of the students were contacted. One noteworthy aspect of the accounts from parents is the substantial proportions of parents who reported that they did not know how the case of bullying had been handled by the school; for example between 42% and 47% of the parents of bullied children did not know whether the parent(s) of the perpetrator had been contacted by the school or whether the perpetrator had received a detention or similar punishment. This raises the question of maintaining communication with the parents. What the schools did when a student was bullied did not meet the expectations of parents. Most parents believed that the school should have done much more than they did. Much larger percentages of parents believed that the school should have contacted the parent of the suspected bully; that the school should have invited other students to help the victim; that the school should have arranged for peer mediation; and that the school should have imposed sanction or punishments on the perpetrators. Approximately one third of the parents of bullied children indicated that the case had been handled badly or very badly and more than half that it could have been handled better.

Further results show that the parents of non-bullied children would have expected more positive outcomes if their children had sought help after being bullied. None of the 75 parents of non-bullied children believed that teacher intervention would make no difference or make things worse. By contrast among the 73 parents whose children had been bullied, 22 reported no change after the intervention and 7 that matters got worse. This suggests that for many parents the failure of the school to improve the situation for bullied children would have been very surprising. It is possible, however, that the parents of non-bullied children believed that their children were different from those who were victimised and would be helped more effectively.

In general, many of the responses from parents suggest negative attitudes towards the school which need to be addressed. The question may be raised as to whether parents and schools are sufficiently engaged in working together to counter bullying. According to schools significant efforts were made to involve parents through newsletters and invitations to attend meetings about bullying. However, of the 167 parents who answered the questionnaires only 15 (9%) attended, among whom 14 reported that the meeting was 'helpful.' In part the situation may be improved through developing more effective methods of engaging parents; although the situation may also be improved through adopting and applying more effective methods of intervention.



## Teacher knowledge of bullying

Results for the knowledge test are useful in identifying areas in which better teacher education about bullying is needed. It was widely agreed with a 97% consensus among the teachers completing this test that a whole-school approach is important in addressing bullying. However such an approach is difficult to achieve if there are disagreements between staff members on key issues. At what point disagreements seriously jeopardise cooperation and efficiency and on what issues is difficult to determine. We suggest first that where a majority of staff members hold opinions about bullying that are at variance with commonly accepted research findings practical difficulties may well arise.

There were nine such issues. These include the now widely rejected view among researchers in the field that 'bullies have low self-esteem', a view that can lead teachers to believe that encouraging persons who bully to feel good about themselves is likely to reduce bullying. The view that bullying per se is a legal offence (not that it 'should be') is simply at odds with the law as it stands in Australia and can contribute to serious misunderstanding. The rejection of the view that some children are more predisposed to act aggressively and bully others is contrary to research evidence and can lead to the view that it is no more difficult to change the behaviour of some children than others.

On nine further issues teachers appear to be seriously divided, even though the 'correct' answer was given by the majority. Almost half the teachers indicated that the prevalence of bullying is much the same in all countries, a false belief that is contrary to reports that the prevalence of bullying is related to the nature of the social environment – and can be reduced by producing positive changes in the social climate. Many teachers (around 40%) appear to be unaware that the prevalence of bullying has been decreasing slightly over the past two decades and that this is likely to be due to awareness raising and to more effective anti-bullying policies becoming available to schools. There are therefore grounds for optimism. Some 30% of teachers appear to be unaware that for mediation to occur students should be free to discontinue their involvement in the procedure if they wish. Unawareness of this requirement contributes to much misunderstanding. Finally there is a persistent belief among many teachers that 'most bullying nowadays is through cyber bullying', despite numerous demonstrations in the research literature to the contrary (Olweus, 2012). Whilst this belief may encourage teachers to confront a serious menace, it can lead to attention being taken away from other forms of bullying. In general, results from the knowledge test point to the need for better education and training in this area. The need appears to be greater, according to the scores on the test, for teachers in primary schools and also for those who obtain information largely through the media and the internet.



## Resources of schools in addressing bullying

Effectively countering bullying depends to a large extent on the resources available to a school. Reports from the schools indicate that the resources are of different kinds. These include (a) specialised personnel such as counsellors or psychologists, (b) contributions, suggestions and support from the school community, (c) sources of information and instruction from bodies external to the school, and (d) the provision of appropriate training in addressing bullying.

The availability of relevant specialised staff in schools is clearly limited, judging from the information provided by the 26 schools. Five primary and one combined school reported that they did not have access to a school counsellor or psychologist. Although the secondary schools each had a full-time counsellor, on average primary and combined schools had such a person for one day a week. Arguably the work done by counsellors is especially important in the earlier years of schooling, enabling children at risk to be identified more readily and provided with necessary help and support.

Staff reports indicated that their approaches to countering bullying were influenced especially by members of their school community, including not only teachers but also students and parents. In some cases schools had conducted surveys to obtain feedback and elicit suggestions. This process serves the vital purpose of bringing the school together and makes a 'whole-school approach' possible. At the same time it cannot be assumed that the suggestions that are made are invariably well informed. Results from the Knowledge of Bullying Quiz indicate that among staff members there can be misinformed or contradictory opinions about what steps are desirable in intervening in and preventing bullying.

In addition to information and suggestions from members of the school community it is clear that schools are now accessing a wide range of externally provided resources. Some of these are mainly educational or instructional, for example, the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF), the National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB), the Bullying No Way website and KidsMatter. In some cases schools have adopted particular programs such the Friendly Schools Program and versions of the Social and Emotional Learning Program. A growing number of programs have become available. Choosing the appropriate one for one's school is partly a matter of ensuring that it is acceptable to the school community; partly, it is a matter of carefully examining the evidence for the program's effectiveness. As reported by schools, training in the use of methods of addressing bullying is generally limited. According to the most widely accepted authority on program effectiveness, only a minority of the programs being promoted have been validly assessed (Ttofi and Farrington, 2011). The need for better training to counter bullying was clearly recognised by most teachers, judging from reports from the schools. The greatest need is better pre-service training. The majority of schools reported that such training was 'poor' or that none was provided. The widely recognised importance of the problem of reducing bullying and the availability of evidence-based scholarly texts on the subject support the need for better training. Nowhere is this lack of training more evident, according to school reports, than in the area of knowledge and skills relating to alternative forms of intervention in cases of bullying. Comparatively little was known in the schools about demonstrably highly effective methods of interventions such as the Support Group Method and the Method of Shared Concern (Rigby, 2014). Currently, education and training in the schools about bullying is provided to a large extent in professional development, often effectively according to school reports, and/or through workshops held outside the school, though here the quality was reported as quite variable. For the most part evidence-based education and training play little part at a pre-service level.

## Limitations of the study and their implications

This study has a number of limitations. Although it drew upon data from a variety of sources, that is schools from six different state/territory jurisdictions, students, teachers, parents and educational leaders, in terms of sampling it has limited representativeness. As described, to obtain the sample of 36 schools we employed a supplementary non-random method of selection. In obtaining a sample of students, the requirement of active, opting-in consent from parents/caregivers for their child's participation biased the sample towards the inclusion of some students rather than others, for example the inclusion of students who were less likely to be bullied (Shaw et al, 2014). Parents choosing to be in the survey themselves were more likely to be those more concerned about the issue of bullying. A further limitation relates to the selection of the kinds of schools included in the survey. Only mainstream schools were included. Special schools were not included. Students participating in the survey were from Years 5 to 10 only. Hence generalisations in this survey cannot be made to all Australian government schools or to students at all year levels.

The limitation on the extent to which conclusions can be generalised is particularly evident as far as Indigenous students are concerned. The sample ( $N = 97$ ) was not only small but also probably unrepresentative of Indigenous students. As noted, their level of material deprivation was not different from other students. This appears inconsistent with figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010), which indicate a much lower level of economic wellbeing among Australian Indigenous people compared with non-Indigenous people. Hence, it would be unreasonable to claim on the basis of this study that Indigenous students in general experience the same level of bullying as others. However, this study did find that Indigenous students experienced a significantly higher level of racial harassment than non-Indigenous students. Further studies are needed to discover whether other aspects of bullying are experienced more often among Indigenous students using a larger and more representative sample.

Another limitation of this study is that it was not possible to link the views of students, parents and teachers to particular schools. Clearly schools differ in the prevalence of bullying, the kinds of bullying experienced there and how they respond. Further studies could usefully address this deficiency, possibly by focusing upon schools of interest that employ different ways of addressing bullying with different outcomes.

A final and important limitation to this study concerns the reliability of the estimates of effectiveness of interventions. They are based upon perceptions of members of the school community. To some extent it has been possible to obtain data from relatively independent sources, that is, from schools, teachers, parents and educational leaders, and to compare the data from the different sources and consider possible bias. Given these limitations, this study may best be regarded as exploratory and the outcomes primarily serve the purpose of generating hypotheses that can be tested in further inquiries.

## 6. Outcomes achieved

This research has provided an account of the approaches being used by a sample of Australian government schools to address school bullying and perceptions of their effectiveness. The areas examined include:

1. The context in which schools operate in tackling bullying, providing details of the prevalence and nature of the bullying, as reported by students and perceived by parents; where it takes place; how bystanders respond; levels of safety from bullying experienced by students; the distress of those who are bullied; and the actions students take in seeking help from others.
2. Comparisons between different types of schools, primary, secondary and combined, with respect to the extent to which students report being bullied by peers and their perceived levels of safety in different locations.
3. What schools do proactively to address bullying through the development and dissemination of anti-bullying policies and through working with students, especially through classroom instruction and related activities.
4. How the proactive work of schools is regarded especially by students.
5. What schools do in tackling cases of bullying, as reported by schools, students and parents and how effective they see such work in stopping or reducing bullying.
6. How selected demographic and social factors relate to the prevalence of bullying and the responses to what is done to address the problem. These include indigenous identity, ethnicity, material deprivation, gender and grade level.
7. What sources of information and training influence schools in how they tackle bullying.
8. What teachers know about research-based information about school bullying.
9. How educational leaders respond to key findings from the study.



## 7. Recommendations

### **Enable all members of the school community to become familiar with the school anti-bullying policy.**

- 1 Promote greater community awareness to address bullying in schools.
- 2 Disseminate and discuss information relating to school anti-bullying policies more fully with students and parents.
- 3 Inform parents about what the school is doing and how incidents involving their children are being handled.

### **Seek out and act on student feedback on the helpfulness of actions taken by the school in addressing bullying.**

4. Identify student perspectives on what is considered most helpful in reducing bullying.
5. Prioritise classroom instruction and activities that are seen by students as particularly helpful, such as instruction on the appropriate use of cyber technology and opportunities to meet and discuss relevant issues in groups.
6. Provide students with the opportunity to evaluate bullying interventions as applied by the school.

### **Pay particular attention to students who are most vulnerable to being bullied.**

7. Recognise and offer support to those students against whom there is social prejudice, as in bullying that is related to race, disability, obesity, homophobia and material deprivation.
8. Identify and assist students who lack the personal capacity to cope effectively with aggressive behaviour of others.

### **Engage more effectively with students who are being bullied and require help from the school.**

9. Inform students and parents of the help that is available from the school in dealing with cases of bullying.
10. Encourage more bullied students to avail themselves of assistance from the school.

### **Provide more anti-bullying professional learning for both pre-service and practising teachers.**

11. Increase evidence-based knowledge of bullying through improved pre-service education and in-service professional learning.
12. Develop the capacity of school staff to apply bullying interventions as part of ongoing professional learning.

### **Conduct further research to address issues identified as significant in this study.**

13. Examine how the risk of bullying can be minimised among students experiencing material deprivation, disability and racial discrimination.
14. Evaluate the use and effectiveness of specific programs and methods of intervention to reduce bullying in schools.
15. Determine how year level and gender-related differences influence how schools address cases of bullying.



## 8. Conclusions

A wide range of proactive and reactive strategies are being employed in Australian government schools to counter bullying among students. These strategies were identified from responses to online questionnaires answered by representatives from 26 Australian schools in six state/territory educational jurisdictions, by students (N = 1,688) in Years 5 to 10 and parents of the students (N = 167). Evidence suggests that the prevalence of bullying overall in Australian schools is reducing, though at a modest rate. However, it remains at an unacceptably high level with an estimated 15% of students reporting being bullied at the time of the inquiry in 2014–15. Higher levels of student victimisation were found among students with reported disabilities and those who more materially deprived. In general, students of non-English speaking background and Indigenous students in this study were not bullied more than average, although there was evidence of racial harassment directed towards the latter. Many of the students who were bullied reported experiencing severe emotional stress, with negative effects on their schoolwork and school attendance. Interviews with educational leaders (N = 10), with whom we shared our findings, confirmed the substantial degree of reported bullying occurring in schools and the serious negative consequences and offered insights.

Against this background, anti-bullying policies had been developed, as required, in each of the participating schools. However, around 50% of the students and 35% of the parents in the samples were unaware of their existence. A major response from schools involved promoting social and emotional learning, and classroom instruction and activities designed to develop attitudes and social skills to prevent bullying from occurring. In general, students and parents saw these initiatives as helpful. Schools are using a variety of approaches to handle cases of bullying but with only limited success, as reported by students who have sought help from the school. Knowledge of bullying among teachers (N = 451) who completed a quiz based upon findings from published research was in many cases inadequate, more so among teachers in primary schools. Students and parents provided extensive feedback, both positive and negative, on the work of schools in addressing bullying, together with suggestions for improvements. Despite the many initiatives, both proactive and reactive, being undertaken in many schools, there remains much to be done in reducing the unacceptably high level of bullying and in addressing the cases that are identified more effectively. Reports from teachers and educational leaders indicate a strong need for schools to be more adequately resourced in this area and to receive appropriate and specialised training.







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## 10. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Letter to principals

#### **Prevalence and Effectiveness of Anti-bullying Approaches in Australian Schools Study**

My name is Professor Ken Rigby and I am writing to you on behalf of the School of Education at the University of South Australia. I am conducting research to identify the range and effectiveness of strategies used by schools in Australia in addressing bullying between peers. Schools and Departments of Education will benefit from this research by receiving reports on what strategies are being used nationwide and how successful they are. Students will be the prime beneficiaries of the application of this knowledge.

The project is being conducted with Dr Kaye Johnson, co-investigator in the School of Education at the University of South Australia.

I would like to invite your school to take part in the project. Your school is one of 400 schools across Australia selected randomly to be approached to take part in this study

The study seeks information from (i) all students in years 5 to 10, (ii) a staff representative (iii) parents/carers of students in years 5-10 and (iv) all staff teachers.

- (i) Students will be invited to participate in completing anonymously an on-line questionnaire about school bullying in Term 2 2015, lasting approximately 30 minutes.
- (ii) A staff representative, nominated by the Principal, will be invited to complete a questionnaire on bullying on-line after consulting with other staff members. Estimated time approximately 60 minutes.
- (iii) Parents/carers will be invited to complete a questionnaire anonymously on-line, at home or elsewhere relating to their perceptions of how the school is responding to bullying. (Approximately 15 minutes)
- (iv) Teachers will be invited to answer anonymously on-line a 40-item Knowledge of Bullying Quiz (Approximately 15 minutes). As this questionnaire is also informative it could be used for a Training and Development opportunity.

I plan to keep the school's involvement in the administration of the research procedures to a minimum. However, it will be necessary for the school to facilitate a number of activities.

- (i) Distributing information about the project and consent forms to students to take home for their parents/caregivers to provide consent for the student to participate; and subsequently to collect and collate those returned and provide these to the school's nominated contact teacher (Time involved depends on the numbers of student groups, estimated time per group around 15 minutes per home group/class teacher)
- (ii) Arranging for groups of students to access computers to answer the 30 minute questionnaires on-line.
- (iii) Communication (as required) by phone (15 minutes). This could involve communication with the researchers and where requested with parents.

#### **The researchers would provide the following to participating schools and regions:**

1. A school level report on the data collected from students, teachers and parents to participating schools.
2. A final national research report to participating schools and regions in 2015. No respondents to the questionnaires and no schools taking part in the study would be identified in any report. This report would be of value to schools in identifying ways in which the school's response to bullying could be improved.
3. Information to students and parents on how help can be obtained for children who are being bullied will be provided in the student and parent questionnaires.
4. Schools will receive an honorarium to offset some of the costs, such as photocopying, the amount depending on the size of the school. Please contact Ken Rigby for more information about this.

Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary.

If any member of a participant group decides to participate and then later changes their mind, they are able to withdraw their participation. This could be at any stage of their involvement in the Project. There will be no consequences relating to any decision by an individual or the school regarding participation. Decisions made will not affect the relationship with the research team or with the University of South Australia. Please note that participants cannot withdraw data once it has been submitted.

Information that identifies anyone will be removed from the data collected. The data are then to be stored securely in a password protected computer file at the University of South Australia. They can only be accessed by the co-investigators and their research assistant, Mr Alex Stretton, PhD student in the School of Education at the University of South Australia. The data will be stored for a minimum period of 5 years, after which it will be destroyed by deleting the file.

The identity of participants and the school will not be disclosed at any time, except in circumstances that require reporting under the Department of Education Child Protection policy, or where the research team is legally required to disclose that information. Participant privacy and the confidentiality of information disclosed by participants are assured at all other times.

Please note that in the process of analysing the data, the research team may identify that a student participant is in need of immediate support. On a handful of occasions in the past the researchers have provided the relevant demographic information to schools, so that schools can then locate such students and follow up as needed. The researchers are not able to identify the particular students as data is anonymous and locating the students is dependent on the school using the provided demographic information (gender, age, date of birth) to identify the student. The decision to provide demographic details to the school will be based on the researchers' professional opinion after they have analysed the data.

The surveys contain the contact information for Kid's Helpline and we would encourage that you inform your school psychologist about the research through the provided information letter and ensure that they are aware that participating in the research may cause some students to be upset.

The data will be used only for this project, and will not be used in any extended or future research without first obtaining explicit written consent from participants.

Consistent with Australian Government Department of Education and Training policy, a summary of the research findings (including a summary of your school's community responses) will be made available to the School and to the Department of Education. This is expected to be delivered in December 2015.

The research has been approved by the University of South Australia Ethics Committee and has met the policy requirements of the Department of Education, as indicated in the attached letter.

No member of the Research Team will have any contact with the children.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study with a member of the research team, please contact me on the number provided below. If you wish to speak with an independent person about the conduct of the project, please contact the executive officer of the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee, Ms V Allen at [vickiallen@unisa.edu.au](mailto:vickiallen@unisa.edu.au) or phone 08 83023118.

If you have had all questions about the project answered to your satisfaction and are willing for the school to participate, please complete and return the **Consent Form to me by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March** on the following page.

This information letter is for you to keep.

*Dr Ken Rigby, PhD,  
Project Leader and Adjunct Professor  
School of Education  
University of South Australia  
Phone 08 83021371  
Email: [ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au](mailto:ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au)*

## Consent Form Template for Department of Education Site Managers

### Consent Form

- I have read this document and understand the aims, procedures, and risks of this project, as described within it.
- For any questions I may have had, I have taken up the invitation to ask those questions, and I am satisfied with the answers I received.
- I am willing for this *[insert name of Department site]* to become involved in the research project, as described.
- I understand that participation in the project is entirely voluntarily.
- I understand that the *[insert name of Department site]* is free to withdraw its participation at any time, without affecting the relationship with the research team or *[insert organisation/institution responsible]*.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time
- I understand that this research may be reported or published in a journal, provided that the participants or the school are not identified in any way.
- I understand that the *[insert name of Department site]* will be provided with a copy of the findings from this research upon its completion.

Name of Site Manager (printed):

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date:    /    /



## Appendix 2. Letter to the parent/carers

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Prevalence and Effectiveness of Anti-bullying Approaches in Australian Schools Study**

My name is Professor Ken Rigby. I am the project leader of research supported by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. We want to find out what Government schools in Australia are doing to prevent school bullying and how effective this is.

I would like to invite you and your child to take part in the project.

Your child is invited to participate by completing an on-line questionnaire about bullying at the school and what is done about it. Your child will not need to put her/his name on the survey. The survey will be done in class time. If your child has difficulty reading, he or she can listen to the questions being asked. You will need to return a consent form to the school so your child can join in this study.

You are invited to participate in the study by completing an on-line questionnaire. You will not need to put your name on the survey. The survey is about bullying at your child's school and how it is dealt with. This parent survey could be answered at home or in a library. The survey is available at <http://tinyurl.com/RigbyPS2015> and you give your consent at the beginning of the survey.

#### **Do my child and I have to take part?**

Parents can choose to take part even if the child does not.

If the parents do not take part they can still consent for their child to participate.

Your child also has a letter from us that was discussed in class to discuss with him/her. You will need to return the consent form to the school by (date) for your child to be included in the project.

#### **What if either of us was to change our mind?**

You or your child can change your mind at any time up until the data has been collected. There will be no consequences if you choose to change your mind. It will not affect your family's relationship with your child's teacher or with your child's school.

#### **What will happen to the information collected, and is privacy and confidentiality assured?**

Information that identifies anyone will be removed from the data collected.

The data will only be seen by Professor Ken Rigby and Dr Kaye Johnson, the co-investigators, and their research assistant, Mr Alex Stretton. Participant privacy and the confidentiality of information is assured at all times (except in circumstances that require reporting under the Department of Education Child Protection policy). The researchers are not able to identify the particular students as the data is anonymous. The data will be used only for this project, and will not be used in any extended or future research without first obtaining explicit written consent from you and your child.

It is expected that the Australian Department of Education will release the full report of the Study in December 2015.

School of Education

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CRICOS Provider Number  
00121B

Dr Ken Rigby (Ph.D.)

Project Leader/Adjunct  
Professor

[ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au](mailto:ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au)

National Police Certificate

ICN-131017-125424 (21-10-2013)



### **Is this research approved?**

The research has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee and has met the requirements of the Australian Department of Education and Training.

The study does not involve contact with children by the researchers.

### **Who do I contact if I wish to discuss the project further?**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study with a member of the research team, please contact me on the number below. If you wish to speak with an independent person about how the project is conducted, please contact the executive officer of the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee Ms V Allen at [vickiallen@unisa.edu.au](mailto:vickiallen@unisa.edu.au) or phone 08 8302 3118

### **How do my child and I become involved?**

Please ensure that you:

- discuss what it means to take part in the project with your child before you both make a decision; and
- ask any questions you may have about the project.

Once all questions have been answered, and you and your child are both willing for him/her to become involved, please complete the attached **Consent Form** and return to your child's teacher. Your child will also complete the Consent Form attached to his/her letter.

*Dr Ken Rigby, PhD,  
Project Leader and Adjunct Professor  
School of Education  
University of South Australia  
Phone 08 83021371  
Email: [ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au](mailto:ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au)*

### Consent Form

- I have read and understood the information letter about the project, or have had it explained to me in language I understand.
- I have taken up the invitation to ask any questions that I may have had and am satisfied with the answers I received.
- I understand that participation in the project is entirely voluntarily.
- I understand what it means for me to participate in this project.
- I have discussed with my child what it means to participate in this project. He/she has explicitly indicated a willingness to take part, as indicated by his/her completion of the child consent form.
- I understand that both my child and I are free to withdraw that participation at any time without affecting the family's relationship with my child's teacher or my child's school.
- I can withdraw my involvement at any time.
- I give permission for the contribution that my child or I make to this research to be published in a journal, provided that my child, the school and I are not identified in any way.
- I understand that I can request a summary of findings after the research has been completed.

#### Consent for my child to participate in the research project

- I am willing for my child to become involved in the project, as described.

Name of Child (printed):

Name of Parent/Carer (printed):

Signature of Parent:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:     /     /

## Appendix 3: Letter to educational leaders

In recent years it has been widely recognised in Australia, as in many other parts of the world, that bullying can cause a great deal of distress for those who are repeatedly victimised by their peers. Numerous intervention strategies have been implemented by schools. However, little is known about the prevalence and effectiveness of these strategies.

You are invited to take part in a national research project into the prevalence and effectiveness of anti-bullying approaches in Australian Government schools. It is anticipated that the results of this research could greatly increase the capacity of educators in Australia to address the problem of student to student bullying much more effectively.

This study is funded by the Australian Department of Education and Training and undertaken by the School of Education at the University of South Australia. The Project Leader is Adjunct Professor Ken Rigby and the co-researcher is Dr Kaye Johnson. The research has been approved by the University of South Australia Ethics Committee and has met the policy requirements of your Education Department (24/9/14)

Information is being sought from regional education leaders as well as from schools, students and parents across Australia. As education leaders, your opinions and judgements will assist in acquiring knowledge that is vital in addressing school bullying. We will invite you, with the consent of your line manager, to take part in a short interview by telephone during June. We will forward topics for discussion when we have negotiated a suitable date and time for the interview.

Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate and then later change your mind, you are able to withdraw. This could be at any stage of your involvement in the project up until data has been submitted. There will be no consequences relating to any decision by an individual or the region regarding participation. Decisions made will not affect the relationship with the research team or with the University of South Australia.

Information that identifies anyone or jurisdiction will be removed from the data collected. Participant privacy and the confidentiality of information disclosed by participants are assured at all other times. The data are then to be stored securely in a password protected computer file at the University of South Australia. They can only be accessed by the co-researchers and their research assistant, Mr Alex Stretton. The data will be stored for a minimum period of 5 years, after which it will be destroyed by deleting the file.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study with a member of the research team, please contact me on the number provided below. If you wish to speak with an independent person about the conduct of the project, please contact the executive officer of the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee, Ms V Allen at [vickiallen@unisa.edu.au](mailto:vickiallen@unisa.edu.au) or phone 08 83023118.

Please complete the attached consent form and return to Kaye Johnson ASAP

For any further information please contact Kaye Johnson by email at [kaye.johnson@unisa.edu.au](mailto:kaye.johnson@unisa.edu.au)

Dr Ken Rigby (Ph.D.)  
Project Leader/Adjunct Professor  
Co-Investigator  
University of South Australia  
[ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au](mailto:ken.rigby@unisa.edu.au)

## Consent Form Educational Leaders

### Consent Form

- I have read the information and understand the aims, procedures, and risks of this project, as described within it.
- For any questions I may have had, I have taken up the invitation to ask those questions, and I am satisfied with the answers I received.
- I am willing to become involved in the research project, as described.
- I understand that participation in the project is entirely voluntarily.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time.
- I understand that this research may be reported or published in a journal, provided that the participants and the jurisdiction are not identified in any way.
- I understand that I will be provided with a copy of the findings from this research upon its completion.
- I have the support of my line manager in participating in this study.

Name of Educational Leader :

Signature:

---

Date:

Name of Line Manager:

Signature of Line Manager:

Date:

## Appendix 4: Interview guide for educational leaders

### The prevalence and effectiveness of anti-bullying approaches in Australian schools study

Thank you for confirming a time for our conversation.

Please see our discussion starters for a phone interview that will last about 30 minutes.

They relate to the findings of our survey answered by 1688 students in Year 5 to 10, in Government schools in 6 States/ Territories in Australia from 2014-2015.

#### Topic 1: Student to Student bullying

37% of boys and 49% of girls reported that they had been bullied once or twice or more by their peers during the current year.

10% of students reported that they had been bullied on a weekly basis or more often.

They reported that the bullying took a variety of forms, such as malicious rumour spreading, cyber bullying and physical abuse.

16% of students reported that the bullying was still continuing.

Students who had been bullied identified negative effects on their school attendance and on their ability to do their school work well.

Around 6% said they had stayed away from school because of bullying and a further 12% had thought of doing so.

**How does this national view correspond with the student to student bullying in schools you know?**

#### Topic 2: Anti-bullying policies

All the schools in the sample had an anti-bullying policy.

However, 52%, more than half the students reported they were not aware of their school's policy.

Of those who knew their school had a policy, 34% said they had not seen it.

81% of students believed that an anti-bullying policy would be useful in addressing bullying.

**What is your response to this data?**

#### Topic 3: Addressing bullying

Students report that teachers emphasise

- 1) encouraging respect for others and
- 2) promoting inclusiveness of students who are different.

(Teachers agree that they rate these highly as a means of addressing bullying.)

Students see these strategies as least helpful in reducing bullying.

They say they want to know

- 1) what to do if one is bullied
- 2) how to help others who are being bullied and
- 3) how to keep safe online.

**What implications does this have for individual schools and system wide responses?**

#### Topic 4: Further comments

## Appendix 5: Student Questionnaire

### Questionnaire for Students

This survey is about bullying at school. The questions ask you to say what is going on between students at your school. It also asks you to tell us what your school is doing to stop bullying. It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you or a friend need any help with bullying you should inform a trusted adult, a parent, caregiver or school counsellor/psychologist. For advice on a bullying problem you or they may like to contact Kids Helpline by phone on 1800-55-1800 or online: at <http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/>

The school has received permission from you and your parent(s)/caregiver(s) for you to be involved in this survey. You can withdraw this permission at any time. Your answers will help make the school safe for everyone. You should not complete this survey if your parents have not given you permission to complete it. If you do not wish to continue the survey you can stop at any time. However, if you give consent and you leave we will use the data up to that point. If you wish to stop please tell a teacher.

I agree to be involved in this survey

Yes

No

About you: In this part of the survey you will be asked to say a few things about yourself and then describe some of the things that go on at your school

To begin with, please answer each of the following questions.

Q1 What is your date of birth?

Q2 How old are you in years?

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

Q3 Are you

Male

Female

Q4 Which school do you currently attend?

Q5 What is your present year level?

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

The next questions enable you to tell us more about yourself. It would be helpful if you could answer each one of them.

Q6 In what year level did you begin to attend this school?

Reception/Kindergarten

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

Q7 Were you born in Australia?

Yes

No

Q8 If no, in which country were you born?

Australia

China

Germany

Greece

Hong Kong

India

Italy

Lebanon

Malaysia

Netherlands

New Zealand

Philippines

South Africa

United Kingdom

Vietnam

Other

Q9 Do you regard yourself as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander?

Yes

No

Q10 What language do you speak at home?

Always English

Sometimes another language

Always or nearly always another language



Q11 What language(s) (apart from English) do you sometimes or always speak at home?

Arabic

Australian Indigenous Language

Cantonese

Dutch

Filipino

German

Greek

Hindi

Italian

Mandarin

Malay

Punjabi

Vietnamese

Other

Q12 If 'other' what language do you sometimes or always speak at home?

Q13 Do you have the following?

	Do you have the following?	
	I have	I don't have
Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself		
Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home		
A garden at home, or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends		
A family car for transport when you need it		
At least one family holiday away from home each year		
Family trips or days out at least once a month		
The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people of your age		
A pair of designer or brand name shoes		
An iPod or iPad other personal music player		
Pay TV (eg. Foxtel)		
Access to internet at home or on a smart-phone		

Q14 Do you want the following?

	Do you want the following?	
	Yes	No
Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself		
Some money that you can save each month, either in a bank or at home		
A garden at home, or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends		
A family car for transport when you need it		
At least one family holiday away from home each year		
Family trips or days out at least once a month		
The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people of your age		
A pair of designer or brand name shoes		
An iPod or other personal music player		
Pay TV (eg. Foxtel)		
Access to internet at home or on a smart-phone		

Q15 Do you get extra help from school because you have a disability?

Yes

No

Q16 If yes, describe your disability and what help you get from the school

This part of the survey is about how you see things at your school

Q17 Which of these sentences best describes how students get on together at your school?

This is a school where students get on well together

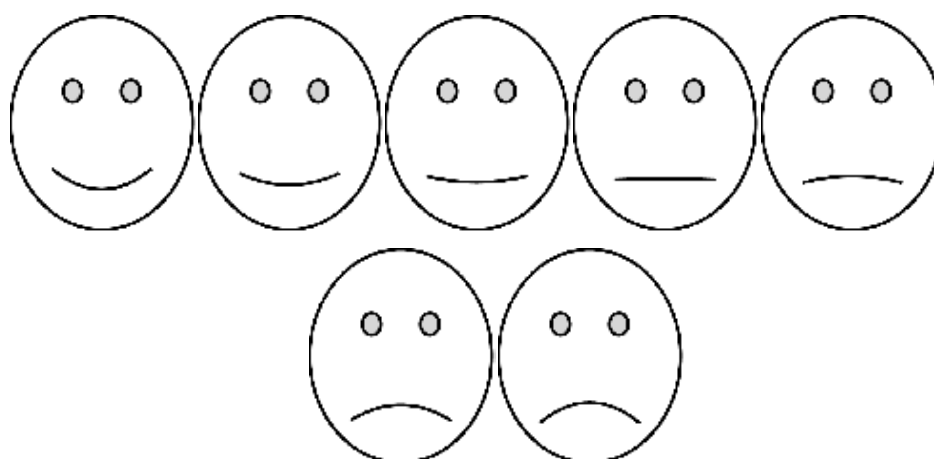
Most students get on well together

About half the students get on well together

Most students do not get on well together

This is a school in which students do not get on well together

Q18 Look at these drawings. Which face describes how most students react to other students at your school?



You may have noticed that students sometimes bully other students. There are lots of different ways that students can be bullied. Bullying is when these things happen again and again to someone who finds it hard to stop it from happening. Bullying can happen in the following ways:

Q19 How often would you say that students at your school have been bullied in the following ways? Please answer each of these.

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
Ignored, left out on purpose or not allowed to join in				
Hit, kicked or pushed around				
Lies or nasty stories told to make other kids not like them				
Made afraid of getting hurt				
Made fun of and teased in a mean and hurtful way				
Sent harassing texts or emails				
Cruel things said online or on a social network such as Facebook				
Sexual harassment by another student				
Harassing of students because of their race				

Q20 How often would you say that students at your school have been bullied this year in the following ways? Please answer each.

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
By a group bullying one person				
By one person bullying another person				

Q21 When bullying takes place at your school are other students present?

Always

Usually

About half the time

Not usually

Never

Q22 What do students at your school do when they see bullying going on?

There is never anyone there when bullying is going on

They don't say or do anything to try to stop it

They sometimes say or do something to try to stop it

They usually say or do something to try to stop it

They always say or do something to try to stop it

Q23 What happens when a student at your school speaks out against the bullying?

It makes no difference

It sometimes stops the bullying

About half the time it stops the bullying

It usually stops the bullying

It always stops the bullying

Q24 Do students who see the bullying encourage the students doing the bullying?

They never do

They sometimes do

They usually do

They always do

Q25 Is your school a safe place for students who find it hard to defend themselves from other students?

Yes, it is safe for them

It is usually safe for them

It is safe for them about half the time

It is usually not safe for them

It is never safe for them

Q26 When students are bullied at your school do they tell somebody in order to get help?

- They always tell somebody
- They usually tell somebody
- They sometimes tell somebody
- They never tell anybody

Q27 If students tell a teacher or a school counsellor/psychologist at your school, what happens?

- The bullying always stops
- The bullying usually stops
- The bullying stops about half the time
- The bullying usually does not stop
- The bullying never stops
- The bullying usually gets worse
- The bullying always gets worse

Q28 Does your school have a policy in writing about stopping bullying?

- Yes
- Don't know
- No

Q29 Have you seen the policy?

- Yes
- No

Q30 Where have you seen the policy?

- In my school diary
- On the school website
- In the classroom
- At a meeting at the school outside the classroom
- In information sent to my home
- Other (If 'other' please say where) \_\_\_\_\_

Q31 How useful is the school's anti-bullying policy in preventing bullying?

- I haven't seen it
- It is not useful
- It might be useful
- It is quite useful
- It is very useful

Q32 Have your parents or caregivers seen the policy in writing about stopping bullying?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Here is a list of things that teachers may do in class at your school. Please indicate what is true at your school.

Q33 Teachers encourage us to respect one another

- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

Q34 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

- Not at all
- A bit helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful

Q35 Teachers expect us to include other kids who are different from ourselves

- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

Q36 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q37 Teachers discuss with us how we can help students who are having a hard time

Never

Sometimes

Often

Q38 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q39 Teachers explain how we should behave towards others when we are using cyber technology, such as when texting or sending on-line messages to other students.

Never

Sometimes

Often

Q40 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q41 Teachers ask us to work with other students to solve problems

Never

Sometimes

Often

Q42 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

- Not at all
- A bit helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful

Q43 Teachers teach us how to keep safe on-line

- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

Q44 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

- Not at all
- A bit helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful

Q45 Teachers help us to understand how people might feel when bad things happen to them

- Never
- Sometimes
- Often

Q46 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

- Not at all
- A bit helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful

Q47 Teachers talk with us about what we can do if we see someone being bullied

- Never
- Sometimes
- Often



Q48 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q49 Teachers make time for us to talk to each other in a group about things that interest us and any problems we have at school

Never

Sometimes

Often

Q50 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q51 Teachers suggest ways in which arguments can be settled peacefully

Never

Sometimes

Often

Q52 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at your school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q53 Teachers advise us on what to do if we are bullied by someone

Never

Sometimes

Often

Q54 Does this help to stop students from being bullied at this school?

Not at all

A bit helpful

Helpful

Very helpful

Q55 What else do teachers do to make it safer for students from being bullied?

Q56 Do teachers keep an eye on students in the schoolyard to stop bad things from happening?

Yes, they do

They mostly do

They do only sometimes

They rarely or never do

Q57 Does your school train some students to help those who are having trouble with others?

Yes

No

Don't Know

Q58 Do you think what these students do is helpful?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q59 Do you think teachers at this school want to do something to stop bullying?

All of the teachers want to do something to stop school bullying

Most of the teachers want to do something to stop school bullying

About half of the teachers want to do something to stop school bullying

Most of the teachers do not want to do something to stop school bullying

None of the teachers want to do something to stop school bullying

The next questions are about your personal experience of bullying at school

Q60 Before this year, were you bullied by any other student at school? Please click below for each year whether you were not bullied, sometimes bullied or often bullied.

	Not bullied	Sometimes bullied	Often bullied
Reception/Kindergarten			
Year 1			
Year 2			
Year 3			
Year 4			
Year 5			
Year 6			
Year 7			
Year 8			
Year 9			

Q61 How safe have you felt from being bullied when you were at school THIS YEAR?

- ☐ I always felt safe this year
- ☐ I usually felt safe this year
- ☐ I felt safe about half the time
- ☐ I hardly ever felt safe this year
- ☐ I never felt safe this year

Q62 How safe have you felt from being bullied on your way to and from school THIS YEAR?

- ☐ I always felt safe this year
- ☐ I usually felt safe this year
- ☐ I felt safe about half the time
- ☐ I hardly ever felt safe this year
- ☐ I never felt safe this year

Q63 How safe have you felt from being cyber bullied by a student or students from your school THIS YEAR? ('cyber bullied' means being sent harassing texts or emails or cruel things said on line or on a social network such as Facebook)

- ☐ I always felt safe this year
- ☐ I usually felt safe this year
- ☐ I felt safe about half the time
- ☐ I hardly ever felt safe this year
- ☐ I never felt safe this year

Q64 When bullying occurs between students who attend your school where does it take place?

	Never	Occasionally	Fairly Often	Often
In the classroom				
In the corridors/locker room/entrances				
In the playground				
In the toilets				
In the library/resource centre				
On the school bus				
On the way to school				
On the way home from school				
Through cyber technology				

Q65 Add any other place or places where it occurs

Q66 How often have you been bullied THIS YEAR? Please give an answer for each way.

	Never	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often
Ignored, left out on purpose or not allowed to join in				
Hit, kicked or pushed around				
Lies or nasty stories being told about you to make other kids not like you;				
Made afraid of getting hurt				
Made fun of or teased in a mean or hurtful way				
Sent harassing texts or emails				
Cruel things said about me online or on a social network such as Facebook				
Sexually harassed by another student				
Harassed by a student because of my race				

Q67 How often have you been bullied THIS YEAR by a group or one person? Please answer both of the following.

	Never	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often
By a group bullying you				
By one person bullying you				

Q68 How often THIS YEAR were you bullied by another student or group of students from your school?

I was not bullied at all this year

I was bullied by at least one student once or twice this year

I was bullied by at least one student every few weeks this year

I was bullied by at least one student about once a week this year

I was bullied by at least one student most days this year

Q69 How long THIS YEAR did the bullying continue?

All of this year so far

For most of this year

For several months

For about a month

For several weeks

For about a week

For several days

For a day or two

I was not bullied at all

Q70 Is the bullying still happening?

Yes

No

If you are still being bullied, you need to talk to someone who can help you. This should be a trusted adult, a parent, caregiver, teacher or school counsellor/psychologist. For advice on your problem you may like to contact Kids Helpline, by phone on 1800-55-1800 or online at <http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/>

**Questions shown only to those who have not been bullied this year**

Q71 Imagine you were being bullied THIS YEAR by a more powerful person or group and you felt you were unable to handle it. Which of these words would best describe your feelings?

How angry?	Not angry	A bit angry	Quite angry	Very angry
How upset?	Not upset	A bit upset	Quite upset	Very upset
How sad?	Not sad	A bit sad	Quite sad	Very sad
How frightened?	Not frightened	A bit frightened	Quite frightened	Very frightened

Q72 If you were bullied how upset do you think you would feel on the scale from 0 (Not upset at all) to 100 (extremely upset)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Please give your answer using the slider

Q73 Please add anything else to describe how you think you would feel if you were being bullied

Q74 If you were bullied do you think you would stay away from school?

Yes

Not sure

No

Q75 Do you think the bullying would make it hard for you to do your school work well?

Yes

Not sure

No

Q76 Do you think you would seek help from any or all of the following? Please give an answer for each.

By 'out of school counselling service' we mean someone who may offer help from outside the school, such as a doctor, a psychologist or a phone-in service such as the Kids Helpline.

	Yes	No
Another student or students		
Parents or caregiver		
Teacher or School Counsellor/psychologist		
The Police		
Out of school counselling service		

Q77 Why do you think it would be useful to ask for help from other students?

Q78 Why do you think it would be useful to ask for help from parent(s) or caregiver(s)?

Q79 Why do you think it would be useful to ask for help from a teacher or school counsellor/psychologist?

Q80 Why do you think it would be useful to ask for help from the Police?

Q81 Why do you think it would be useful to ask for help from an out of school counselling service?

Q82 Why do you think you would not seek help from another student or students?

Q83 Why do you think you would not seek help from a parent or caregiver?

Q84 Why do you think you would not seek help from a teacher or school counsellor/psychologist?

Q85 Why do you think you would not seek help from the Police?

Q86 Why do you think you would not ask for help from an out of school counselling service?

Q87 If you were asked to give advice to schools on how they should handle cases of bullying what would you say?



**Questions shown only to those who indicated being bullied this year**

Q88 At the time you were bullied which of these words would best describe your feelings?

How angry?	Not angry	A bit angry	Quite angry	Very angry
How upset?	Not upset	A bit upset	Quite upset	Very upset
How sad?	Not sad	A bit sad	Quite sad	Very sad
How frightened?	Not frightened	A bit frightened	Quite frightened	Very frightened

Q89 If you were bullied how upset would you feel on the scale from 0 (Not upset at all) to 100 (extremely upset)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Please give your answer using the slider

Q90 Please add anything else that could describe how you felt when you reported being bullied

Q91 Have you stayed away from school this year because of bullying

No, and I never thought of doing it

No, but I thought of doing it

Yes I stayed away once or twice

Yes I stayed away more than twice

Q92 Do you think the bullying made it hard for you to do your school work well?

Yes

No

Not sure

Q93 Were the following people aware that you were being bullied?

	Yes	Unsure	No
Another student or students			
Parents or caregivers			
A teacher or school counsellor/psychologist			
The Police			
An out of school counselling service			

Q94 Did you ask anyone to help you?

No, I never thought of doing so

No, but I thought of doing so

Yes, I did ask someone for help

Q95 What happened to the bullying over the next few weeks?

It stopped

It reduced

It stayed the same

It got worse

Q96 Did you ask for help from:

	Yes	No
Another student or students		
Parents or caregivers		
A teacher or school counsellor/psychologist		
The Police		
An out of school counselling service		

Q97 When you told another student or other students, what happened? Please answer all the questions

	Yes	No
They already knew		
They were interested in what was happening		
They offered to help		
They gave helpful advice		
They did something to help me		

Q98 How do you think they had become aware that you were being bullied?

Q99 Briefly explain what, if anything, the student(s) did

Q100 What happened after you asked for help from a student or students?

The bullying stopped

The bullying reduced

The bullying stayed the same

The bullying got worse

Q101 When you told your parent or caregiver, what happened? Please answer all the questions

	Yes	No
They already knew		
They were interested in what was happening		
They offered to help		
They gave helpful advice		
They did something to help me		

Q102 How do you think they had become aware that you were being bullied?

Q103 What did your parent or caregiver do to help you?

Q104 What happened after you asked for help from a parent or caregiver?

The bullying stopped

The bullying reduced

The bullying stayed the same

The bullying got worse

Q105 When you told the Police, what happened? Please answer all the questions

	Yes	No
They already knew		
They were interested in what was happening		
They offered to help		
They gave helpful advice		
They did something to help me		

Q106 How do you think they had become aware that you were being bullied?

Q107 Briefly explain what, if anything, the Police did to help you

Q108 What happened after you asked for help from the Police?

The bullying stopped

The bullying reduced

The bullying stayed the same

The bullying got worse

Q109 When you told the out-of-school counselling service what happened? Please answer all the questions

	Yes	No
They already knew		
They were interested in what was happening		
They offered to help		
They gave helpful advice		
They did something to help me		

Q110 How do you think they had become aware that you were being bullied?

Q111 Briefly explain what, if anything, the out of school counselling service did to help you

Q112 What happened when you asked for help from an out-of-school counselling service?

The bullying stopped

The bullying reduced

The bullying stayed the same

The bullying got worse

Q113 From what out-of-school counselling service did you seek help?

Doctor

Psychologist

Other Health Professional

Kids HelpLine

Other on-line support

Q114 If 'other' please write the name of the service

Other Health Professional

Other on-line support

Q115 When you told the teacher or school counsellor/psychologist what happened? Please answer all the questions

	Yes	No
They already knew		
They were interested in what was happening		
They offered to help		
They gave helpful advice		
They did something to help me		

Q116 How do you think they had become aware that you were being bullied?

Q117 Briefly explain what, if anything, the out of school counselling service did to help you

Q118 What happened when you asked for help from a teacher or school counsellor/psychologist?

The bullying stopped

The bullying reduced

The bullying stayed the same

The bullying got worse

Q119 Looking back now, do you think it was a good idea to have asked for help from the following?

	Yes	No
Another student or students		
Parents or caregivers		
Teachers or School Counsellor/psychologist		
The Police		
Out-of-school counselling service		

Q120 Why did you not ask for help from other students?

Q121 What reasons might you have for not seeking help from your parents or guardians?

Q122 Why did you not ask for help from a teacher or school counsellor/psychologist?

Q123 Why did you not ask for help from the Police?

Q124 Why did you not ask for help from an out-of-school counselling service?

Q125 The following questions are about what the school did (if anything) about your being bullied this year

Q126 Did the school become aware that you were being bullied?

Yes

No

Don't Know

Q127 How did the school find out about the bullying?

It was noticed by one or more of the teachers or staff

It was reported to them by my parents or caregivers

They were told about it by a student or students

The Police told them

I told them myself

They were told by someone outside the school

I don't know

Q128 Did the school do anything about the bullying?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q129 When a teacher or school counsellor/psychologist became aware that you were being bullied what did they do? Please answer all the questions.

Q130 A teacher or counsellor/psychologist advised me on what I could do to stop the bullying.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q131 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q132 A teacher or school counsellor/psychologist talked to my parents or caregivers about what was happening.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q133 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q134 The school got in touch with the parents/caregivers of the student/students who were bullying me to tell them about it.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q135 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q136 The school suggested that my parents/caregivers should get in touch with the parents of the student/students who were bullying me and work things out together.

Yes

No

Don't know



Q137 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q138 A teacher or counsellor/psychologist met with you and the student/students who were bullying me to discuss how you could get along better.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q139 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q140 The school arranged for a student mediator to help you.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q141 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q142 A teacher or counsellor/psychologist told the student/students who were bullying to stop bullying you.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q143 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q144 A teacher or counsellor/psychologist warned the student/students who were bullying me about what would happen to them if they bullied you again.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q145 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q146 A teacher or counsellor/psychologist got the student/students who were bullying me to apologise.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q147 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q148 A teacher spoke to your class about the bullying and asked them to make things better for you.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q149 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q150 The student/students who were bullying me were made to do some community service such as cleaning up the school yard.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q151 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q152 The student/students who were bullying me were told that they were not allowed to do certain things such as playing a team sport.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q153 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q154 The student/students who were bullying me were given a detention.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q155 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q156 The student/students who were bullying me were suspended from school for a time.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q157 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q158 The student/students who were bullying me were excluded from school.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q159 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q160 The school informed the Police about the student/students who were bullying me and what they had done.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q161 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q162 The school arranged for someone outside the school to give you help, such as a psychologist or social worker.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q163 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q164 The school kept an eye on what happened to you over the next few weeks to see if things had improved.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q165 Did this help in getting the bullying stopped?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q166 Please add anything else that the school did to help to get the bullying stopped

Q167 Looking back, did you find what the school did helpful?

Yes, very helpful

Helped a bit

Made no difference

Made things a bit worse

Made things a lot worse

Q168 If you were bullied again would you seek help from a school teacher or the school counsellor?

Yes, definitely

Probably

Don't know

Probably not

No, definitely not

Q169 If you were asked to give advice on how the school should handle the sort of bullying that happened to you, what would you say?

If you or someone you know is being bullied or still upset from being bullied they need to talk to someone who can help. This should be a trusted adult, a parent, caregiver, teacher or school counsellor/psychologist.

For advice on a bullying problem you or they may like to contact the Kids Helpline, by phone on 1800-55-1800 or online at <http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/>

Thank you very much for your help in completing this questionnaire.

## Appendix 6: School Questionnaire

This questionnaire is to be answered anonymously online through discussion with other staff members by the person nominated by the school principal.

On behalf of the School I give permission for the data derived from this survey to be used anonymously in the Prevalence and effectiveness of anti-bullying approaches in Australian schools study. Please indicate your consent or otherwise by ticking the desired box. In consultation with other staff this questionnaire will take approximately 60 minutes to complete.

☐ I consent

☐ I do not consent

Q1 Please fill in the following

Name of school

Postcode

Q2 Type of school

☐ Primary

☐ Secondary

☐ Combined

☐ Special (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q3 Approximately how many students in years 5 to 10 do you have enrolled in each year level? (If zero please indicate)

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

Q4 Number of years the respondent has been employed at this school

Q5 Does the school have the services of a school counsellor or school psychologist?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q6 How many equivalent days a week is such a person normally available to work with students at this school?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Q7 Which best describes how students get on together at your school?

- This is a school where students get on well together
- Most students get on well together
- About half the students seem to get on well together
- Most students do not get on well together
- This is a school in which students do not get on well together

In this survey we are interested in school bullying which for the purposes of this questionnaire we define as follows: Bullying occurs when a more powerful person or group of persons repeatedly seek to upset, hurt or intimidate somebody. It may take place in the school grounds, in class, on the way to school, on the way home or by electronic means. Remember this is NOT the same thing as occasional quarrelling or fighting between people who are about equally matched. With bullying one person or group is more powerful in some way and the target cannot effectively defend himself or herself.

Q8 How often would you say bullying goes on at your school in the following ways?

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
Ignored, left out on purpose or not allowed to join in				
Hit, kicked or pushed around				
Lies or nasty stories told to make other kids not like them				
Made afraid of getting hurt				
Teased in a mean and hurtful way				
Sent harassing texts or emails				
Cruel things said on-line or on a social network such as Facebook				
Sexual harassment by another student				
Harassing of students because of their race				



Q9 When bullying occurs at your school by whom is it carried out?

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
By a group bullying one person				
By one person bullying another person				

Q10 When bullying occurs between students who attend your school where does it take place?

	Never	Occasion-ally	Fairly often	Often
In the classroom				
In the corridors/locker room/entrances				
In the playground				
In the toilets				
In the library/resource centre				
On the school bus				
On the way home from school				
Through cyber technology				
Add any other place or places where it occurs				

Q11 When bullying takes place at your school are other students present?

Always

Usually

About half the time

Not usually

Never

Q12 What do students at your school do when they see bullying going on?

There is never anyone present

They don't do anything to stop it

They occasionally say or do something to try to stop the bullying

They usually say or do something to try to stop the bullying

They always say or do something to try to stop the bullying

Q13 What happens when a student at your school speaks out against the bullying?

- ☐ It makes no difference
- ☐ It sometimes stops the bullying
- ☐ About half the time it stops the bullying
- ☐ It usually stops the bullying
- ☐ It always stops the bullying

Q14 Do students who see the bullying encourage the students doing the bullying?

- ☐ They never do
- ☐ They sometimes do
- ☐ They usually do
- ☐ They always do

Q15 Give your estimate of the percentage of students at your school in each of the following categories for THIS year

- Never bullied
- Bullied once or twice during the school year
- Are bullied every few weeks
- Are bullied about once a week
- Are bullied most days or most often

Q16 The following is a description of the various forms of bullying that can take place in a school. At your school how would you rate them in terms of their severity, that is their likely impact on your students' physical/emotional wellbeing?

- Extreme physical force
- Moderate force
- Sexual harassment
- Racial harassment
- Verbally abusive behaviour
- Avoiding and isolating individuals
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Sending threatening text messages
- Sexting
- Bullying by individuals
- Bullying by groups

Q17 When bullying occurs at your school how often is it due to the target:

	Never	Sometimes	Fairly often	Often
Being identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander				
Belonging to a particular cultural, linguistic or religious group				
The gender of the person				
Having a physical disability				
Having an odd appearance				
Being obese				
Of low socio-economic status				
Being or seeming 'gay'				
Having a religious affiliation				

Q18 Is your school a safe place for students who find it hard to defend themselves from other students?

Yes, it is safe for them

It is usually safe for them

It is safe for them about half the time

It is usually not safe for them

It is never safe for them

Q19 If students do seek help who do you think they are most likely to approach?

Rank/order the following from 1 'most likely to be approached' to 5 'least likely to be approached'. To re-order simply click and drag into desired order

\_\_\_\_\_ Another student or students

\_\_\_\_\_ A parent or caregiver

\_\_\_\_\_ A teacher or counsellor/psychologist

\_\_\_\_\_ The Police

\_\_\_\_\_ An out-of-school counselling service

Q20 This section is about how the school is addressing school bullying

Q21 How well would you say that teachers and students at your school work together to stop students bullying each other?

\_\_\_\_\_ Please indicate your answer with the slider

Q22 How well would you say that teachers at your school work together to stop students bullying each other?

\_\_\_\_\_ Please indicate your answer with the slider

Q23 Does your school have a written anti-bullying policy? (This may be embedded in another policy such as a wellbeing or behaviour management policy)

Yes

No

Q24 Is the anti-bullying policy available on the school's website?

Yes

No

Q25 Has your school's anti-bullying policy been reviewed?

Yes

No

Q26 In what year was it last reviewed?

Q27 Has the National Safe School's Framework (NSSF) been used for purposes of reviewing or developing the anti-bullying policy?

Yes

No

Q28 Has the anti-bullying policy been discussed:

	Yes	No
With staff?		
With students?		
With parents?		
With the School Council/Board?		

Q28 Has your school received advice or suggestions from a non-school based education department advisor in the development of your anti-bullying policy?

Yes

No

Unsure

Q29 Are teachers expected to talk and discuss the issue of bullying in class with students?

Yes

No

Q30 Do teachers include the classroom instruction and/or activities that are relevant to bullying at the school?

	None	A little	Substantial	A great deal
Respectful relations between students				
Coping skills				
Encouraging cooperative learning				
Promoting inclusiveness				
Time for students to share their ideas feelings and experiences				
What students can do if they are bullied				
Encourage empathic behaviour				
Assertiveness, as distinct from aggressiveness				
Conflict resolution skills				
Positive bystander behaviour				
Reducing the risk of cyberbullying				

Q31 Please add any other classroom activities, programs or curricula that are used to help prevent bullying

Q32 Does the school have a peer support program?

Yes

No

Q33 Briefly describe the program

Q34 Are any students at your school trained in how to act as peer mediators?

Yes

No

Q35 Are students expected to report incidents to teachers or the school counsellor/psychologist if they are bullied?

Yes

No

Q36 Does the school provide a way for students to report if they are being bullied at school without speaking directly to a teacher or counsellor/psychologist

Yes

No

Q37 Please explain how the school makes this possible

Q38 Has your school conducted a student survey on school bullying since the beginning of 2012?

Yes

No

Q39 Have the results of the survey been shared with:

	Yes	No
School Council/Board		
Staff		
Students		
Parents		

Q40 Has the school held one or more Professional Development sessions or staff meetings for teacher/ staff on school bullying since the beginning of 2012?

Yes

No

Q41 Who led the professional development?

A staff member(s)

A non-school based education department advisor

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q42 Has school bullying been addressed at a whole school or year level assembly since the beginning of 2012?

Yes

No

Q43 How would you rate the effectiveness of each of the following strategies in preventing bullying in your school in the last three years?

	Very negative effect (increased bullying)	Negative effect	No effect	Positive effect	Very positive effect (decreased bullying)
Addresses given at school assemblies about bullying					
Good classroom management					
The use of classroom discussion groups in which students can share their experiences, for example during 'Circle Time.'					
Promoting active Bystander behaviour in students					
Peer mediation programs					
Social skills training, including promoting appropriate assertiveness					
Teaching and developing respectful relationships					
Teaching conflict resolution skills					

Here are some questions about bullying involving students that takes place out of school

Q44 Sometimes students engage in bullying outside school, for example, to and from school, on the school bus and in cyberspace. If one or more of your students were involved in the bullying, would your school investigate and take appropriate action?

	Yes	No	Unsure
On the way to or from school			
On the school bus			
Outside school hours using cyber technology			
On public transport to or from school			
During the school holidays or weekends			

Q45 Does the school encourage students who are being cyber bullied outside school - possibly by another student or students from your school - to report it to the school?

Yes

No

Q46 If yes, would the school investigate whether the student reporting the cyber bullying is also being bullied at school?

Yes

No

Q47 Have you been able to help in identifying the student or students doing the cyber bullying?

Yes

No

This next section is about how the school handles cases of bullying

Q48 Since the beginning of 2012 approximately how many cases of bullying of low, moderate or severe kinds have been identified by the school?

	None	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25+
Low severity cases							
Moderate severity cases							
High severity cases							

Describing different ways of handling cases is not easy because schools sometimes use a variety of ways to handle a particular case. However, one way of classifying methods is to consider them under six different main headings. These are explained below.

In answering the following questions bear in mind that combinations of methods are sometimes used; for example a school might sanction those students who bully and help the victim to cope more effectively, and also require those students who bully to reflect on what he or she has done and to apologise. First, here are some questions about how often at your school the following approaches are used in dealing with cases of bullying, sometimes in combination with others. Because some schools use different terms to describe their approaches, we have described below what we have in mind.

Q49 **Direct sanctions** Direct sanctions involves the use of penalties, punishments or consequences administered in accordance with school rules after bullying has taken place. How often over the last twelve months were direct sanctions used by your school in cases of bullying?

Never

Once or twice

Several times

Fairly often

Very often



**Q50 Strengthening the victim** Strengthening the victim involves helping the victim to acquire and employ social and assertiveness skills in order to cope more effectively, especially with verbal forms of bullying. How often over the last twelve months were attempts made to strengthen the victim to cope better?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Several times
- Fairly often
- Very often

**Q51 Mediation** involves inviting two persons in conflict to meet with a mediator to resolve any dispute or difference that may underlie or fuel underlying any bullying behaviour. The mediator – a staff member or trained peer mediator - remains neutral and refrains from imposing a solution. How often over the last twelve months was mediation by staff members or peer mediators used to handle cases of bullying?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Several times
- Fairly often
- Very often

**Q52 Restorative Practice** Restorative Practice involves a meeting which includes the identified 'offender(s)' and the victim. The former are required to reflect on the harm that has been done, experience a sense of remorse and act restoratively, for instance to apologise. How often over the last twelve months was restorative practice used in addressing cases of bullying in each of these ways:

	Never	Once or twice	Several times	Fairly often	Very often
At a meeting with only the individuals directly involved in the bullying, that is the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s)					
At a group or classroom meeting at which all the students present can take part					
At a meeting including non-school members such as parents; that is at a Community Conference					

**Q53 The Support Group Method** This is a non-punitive method which involves a meeting first with the victim, then with those identified by the victim as those students who are doing bullying. The meeting includes other students who are expected to be supportive of the victim. The victim is not present. The practitioner shares knowledge of the victim's distress and requires each person present to state how they will help the person who has been bullied. The situation is then carefully monitored. How often over the last twelve months was the Support Group Method used in addressing cases of bullying?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Several times
- Fairly often
- Very often

**Q54 The Method of Shared Concern** This is a non-punitive method that begins with one-to one interviews with students who are suspected of bullying someone. After the practitioner has shared a concern for the victim, each suspected student who is bullying is asked to indicate how he or she will act to improve the situation. The outcomes are then monitored. Subsequently the suspected bullies are required to meet as a group with the practitioner to determine how the problem is to be resolved. A final meeting is held, this time including the victim, to reach an agreed and sustainable resolution. How often over the last twelve months was the Method of Shared Concern used in addressing cases of bullying?

- Never
- Once or twice
- Several times
- Fairly often
- Very often

**Q55** Please add any other way(s) (not covered above) that your school employs in addressing cases of bullying

**Q56** Now consider each of the methods again. It may be that the school uses different methods for different sorts of cases; for example, according to whether the bullying has been done by a group or by an individual; whether it is seen as mild or very severe; according to the nature of the bullying – physical, verbal, indirect, cyber; the age of the child; whether the bullying has been provoked; whether the students in conflict request mediation; whether the student involved in bullying is remorseful afterwards; whether warnings from staff have been unheeded. Briefly indicate under what circumstances, if at all, the school is using these methods: (Leave blank if not used)

**Q57** Direct sanctions are normally applied at our school when:

**Q58** Efforts to strengthen the victim by increasing his/her capacity to cope are undertaken by our school when:

**Q59** Mediation by staff is used in cases of bullying when:

Q60 Mediation is used by peer mediators at school when:

Q61 Restorative practice with only those directly involved in the bullying is used by our school when:

Q62 Restorative practice with a group or class of students is used by our school when:

Q63 Restorative practice at meeting involving non-school members, that is a Community conference, is used by our school when:

Q64 The Support Group Method is used at our school with student when:

Q65 The Method of Shared Concern is employed at our school when:

Q66 What training or instruction (if any) has been received by staff members in the use of these intervention methods since the beginning of 2012? (Note training could include reading about the approach or viewing videos or using interactive modules)

	None	Some	A good deal
The use of direct sanctions			
Strengthening the victim			
Mediation			
Restorative practice			
The Support Group Method			
The Method of Shared Concern			

Q67 Have there been any strategies that your school has particularly opposed and discouraged since the beginning of 2012?

Yes

No

Q68 If yes, then please say briefly which strategies, and why

Q69 How often are the sanctions listed below used in cases of school bullying?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Verbal reprimand				
Withdrawal of privileges				
Temporary removal from classes				
Internal detention				
Community school service, eg., picking up litter				
Meeting with the parents/caregivers of the student involved in bullying				
Suspension from school				
Informing the Police				

Q70 How would you rate each of the following strategies as employed at your school in stopping cases of bullying from continuing?

	Very negative effect (increased bullying)	Negative effect	No effect	Positive effect	Very positive effect (decreased bullying)
Direct sanctions					
Strengthening the victim					
Mediation					
Restorative Practice with individual students					
Restorative Practice with a group or class of students					
Restorative Practice involving non-school members, that is a community conference					
Support Group Method					
Method of Shared Concern					
Using a Peer Support Program					

Q71 When an intervention takes place, it may sometimes seem appropriate to discuss matters with parents or caregivers of the student who is bullying and/or those of the victim, or have both sets of parents/caregivers discuss this with each other. Is this process undertaken?

	Never	Sometimes	Always
With the bully's parents/caregivers only			
With the victim's parents/caregivers only			
With both sets of parents/caregivers			

Q72 How often do you suggest that the parents/caregivers of the victimized student meet with the parents/caregivers of the students doing the bullying to work things out together?

Never

Occasionally

In about half the cases

Quite often

Always

Q73 Have records been kept about how a case of bullying was handled this year?

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely
For non-severe cases				
For cases of moderate severity				
For very severe cases				

Q74 How often are cases of bullying monitored after an intervention?

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely
For non-severe cases				
For cases of moderate severity				
For very severe cases				

Q75 For how long are cases usually monitored?

For a few days

For several weeks

For a month or so

For several months

Q76 In order to assess whether an intervention has been successful what does the school do?

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Rarely
We keep an eye on things				
We interview the victim				
We interview the student who is bullying				
We interview the parents/caregivers of the student who is bullying				
We interview the victim's parents/caregivers				
We consult with other relevant teachers				
We question bystanders about it				

Q77 In what percentage of cases would you say that the bullying decreased/stayed the same/increased after the school has taken action?

\_\_\_\_\_ Decreased

\_\_\_\_\_ Stayed the same

\_\_\_\_\_ Increased

Q78 What changes have been noticed at your school since the beginning of 2012 in these forms of bullying?

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased
Using physical force, as in hitting			
Using verbal means, as in insulting			
Using indirect ways, as in excluding			
Using technology, as in texting			

Q79 Taking into account ALL forms of bullying since the beginning of 2012 what changes have taken place at your school?

Bullying has become more prevalent

Bullying has stayed about the same

Bullying has become less prevalent

Q80 To what extent has the work of the school in addressing bullying been influenced by the following:

	Nil	A bit	Moderately	A lot
The National Safe Schools Framework				
The School Council/Board				
Parents/caregivers of your students				
By a non-school based education department advisor				
Results from student feedback or surveys				
Results from parent/caregiver feedback or surveys				
Education Department policy				
The National Centre against Bullying (NCAB)				
Suggestions from staff members				
Kids Matters				
Mind Matters				
Bullying No Way Website				
Social and Emotional Learning Programs				
Friendly Schools Program				

Q81 Add any other source that has influenced your school in how it has addressed bullying and indicate whether the influence has been 'a bit', 'moderately' or 'a lot.'

Q82 What kind of training do you think would be most helpful to teachers at your school in deciding what to do about school bullying? Please rate the importance you would attach to the following:

	Not very important	2	3	4	Very important
	1				5
Good classroom management					
Dealing effectively with actual cases of bullying					
Helping children to cope with aggressive peers					
Providing emotional support for victimized children					
Working well with parents/ caregivers on bullying issues					

Q83 How would you rate the training your teachers have received in addressing bullying at your school?

	None provided	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pre-service education, as part of their teacher training					
Professional development at school					
Other training from outside the school related to bullying					

Q84 Add any comment (e.g.name of out of school provider)

Q85 What further steps do you think could be taken to improve the situation with respect to bullying at your school?

Q86 Finally, briefly describe the process followed in obtaining the information that has assisted you in completing this questionnaire

Thank you very much for your participation

## Appendix 7: Knowledge of Bullying Quiz

Knowledge about school bullying is gradually advancing, but there is still uncertainty on some issues. In this exercise, you are asked to say what you think is true or false based on your personal experience and understanding. Given below are 40 statements about bullying in schools. Please read each of them carefully and indicate whether it is, in your opinion, true or false. In some cases you may feel unsure, in which case indicate what is more likely to be the case. Bear in mind that the questions are to be answered anonymously. Immediately on completion you will receive information about what appear to be the best answers – and, more importantly, explanations based upon published research as to why such claims have been made. The questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Before you answer the questionnaire, please indicate whether you agree that the results may be used for research purposes in which no persons or schools will be identified.

I agree

I do not agree

Q1. Bullying in schools is becoming more and more prevalent throughout the world.

True

False

Q2. Bullying occurs when a person or group repeatedly abuses their power over someone.

True

False

Q3. Research indicates that about 1 child in 6 is bullied in schools on a weekly basis.

True

False

Q4. Children who are bullied never act provocatively.

True

False

Q5. Deliberate unfair exclusion is a form of bullying.

True

False

Q6. Typically bullying occurs when no-one is watching

True

False



Q7. Bystanders usually speak out when they see bullying happening.

True

False

Q8. The direct influence of teachers on bystander behaviour is generally stronger than that of student peers.

True

False

Q9. Boys tend to bully more than girls, especially physically.

True

False

Q10. Victimisation (being bullied) at school tends to increase with age.

True

False

Q11. The prevalence of bullying in school is much the same in all countries.

True

False

Q12. When children leave their primary school and enter a secondary school, bullying typically decreases.

True

False

Q13. Children with high self-esteem are less likely to bully others.

True

False

Q14. Most bullying nowadays is through cyber technology.

True

False

Q15. Children who are cyber bullied are more often than not also being bullied at school using traditional means.

True

False

Q16. Children should be taught to delete every offensive message they receive on their computer.

True

False

Q17. Bullying has at times been conceived as the desire to hurt someone or put them under pressure.

True

False

Q18. Children identified as repeated victims of school bullying in primary schools have been reported as having much poorer mental health than others as adults.

True

False

Q19. Schoolchildren tend to bully more as they get older.

True

False

Q20. Bullying at school is predictive of a greater likelihood of children engaging in crime as adults.

True

False

Q21. Bullying is a statutory offence punishable by law.

True

False

Q22. Schools have no legal obligations in responding to cases of bullying.

True

False

Q23. Insecure attachment to a caregiver in infancy is related to being involved in bully-victim problems later as schoolchildren.

True

False

Q24. Genetic factors can influence whether a child will bully at school.

True

False

Q25. Strong parental protection does not increase the risk that a child will be bullied at school.

True

False

Q26. Parents of children who are being bullied should sort out the problem with the parents of the bully.

True

False

Q27. Homophobia is a factor that can lead children to bully those they think are gay.

True

False

Q28. Classroom management is unrelated to bullying among schoolchildren.

True

False

Q29. Children are more likely to tell their teachers than their parents if they are being bullied at school.

True

False

Q30. Peer supporters are sometimes trained to be mediators to resolve student conflicts.

True

False

Q31. The most effective way of stopping a case of bullying is to punish the offender.

True

False

Q32. Some children quit bullying when they become aware of the hurt they have caused.

True

False

Q33. According to teachers, their interventions in cases of bullying are successful in about two cases out of three.

True

False

Q34. Restorative practices seek to induce a state of remorse on the part of the offender.

True

False

Q35. The Support Group Method involves a meeting at which the perpetrators of the bullying are invited to meet with some supporters of the victim to help resolve the problem.

True

False

Q36. Positive Behaviour Support commonly makes use of a non-punitive strategy for dealing with cases of schoolyard bullying.

True

False

Q37. The Method of Shared Concern is considered inappropriate for use in cases of group bullying when there has been some provocation.

True

False

Q38. For mediation to occur those involved should be free to discontinue their involvement in the procedure if they so wish.

True

False

Q39. Social skills training has been employed to help children to avoid being bullied.

True

False

Q40. It is widely agreed that schools should adopt a whole-school approach.

True

False

Your score summary for this quiz will appear on the next page.

Q41 What is the name of the school you currently teach at?

Q42 What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other (i.e., both/neither, transgender, transsexual)

Q43 What is your age?

20-24

25-29

30-34

35-39

40-44

45-49

50-54

54-59

60-64

65+

Q44 What is the main source of your knowledge about bullying?

University courses

Professional reading

General media

Internet

Q45 Do you want to see information about what appears to be the best answers – and, more importantly, explanations based upon published research about why such claims have been made?

No thanks

Yes please

Q46 Do you want the list of references cited here?

Yes

No

## Appendix 8: Parent Questionnaire

As you may know, the school is taking part in an Australian government funded study to discover how State and Territory schools in Australia are addressing the problem of bullying. Information is being gathered from schools and from students throughout Australia. They can tell us a great deal about what policies and practices are being adopted and how successful they are. It takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. But in addition, we believe that parents of children attending schools can tell us a good deal about their children's school and the experiences of their children. Even if your child is unaffected by bullying, your views and opinions on school bullying are of great interest to us. Please take some time to answer this anonymous questionnaire on-line. It will help in developing better policies and practices in Australian schools.

I give permission for the data derived from this survey to be used anonymously in the Australian Government study into the prevalence and effectiveness of anti-bullying approaches in Australian schools. Please indicate your consent or otherwise by selecting the desired response below

Yes

No

In this questionnaire you are asked questions about the school your child attends and then about your child's experiences at that school. If you have more than one child attending the school, answer for your older or eldest child only.

Q1 What school does your child attend?

Q2 Is your child's school a:

Reception or Kindergarten - year 12 school (including an area school)

High School

Primary School

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q3 Does your child attend the school specified above?

Yes

No

Q4 How many of your children currently attend this school? Please answer using numerical values (eg. 1, 2, 3 etc)

Q5 When did your eldest child (of those currently attending) first begin to attend this school?

1999

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

Here are some questions about your child's or children's school

Q6 Which of these sentences best describes how students get on together at your child's school?

The students get on well together

Most students get on well together

About half the students get on well together

Most students do not get on well together

The students do not get on well together

Q7 Does the school have an anti-bullying policy?

Yes

No

Don't know



Q8 Where have you seen it?

	Yes	No
On the school's website		
In a copy provided for me by the school		
In my child's diary		
Other (please indicate below)		

Q9 How would you personally rate the policy?

Very good

Good

Adequate

Poor

Very Poor

Q10 Please comment if you wish to add to your answer

Q11 Have you received any information about bullying from the school in a newsletter?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q12 Have you been invited to attend a meeting at the school with other parents to discuss issues of bullying?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q13 Have you attended such a meeting?

Yes

No

Q14 How helpful was it?

Very helpful

Helpful

Not helpful

Q15 How good is the supervision of student behaviour by staff at the school?

Very good

Good

Adequate

Poor

Very Poor

Q16 Is the subject of school bullying ever addressed at your school's assemblies?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q17 Do teachers talk to students in the classroom about bullying?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q18 Do teachers actively promote positive relationships between students through classroom exercises and/or discussions?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q19 Does the school encourage students to help other students who are being bullied?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q20 Are students advised by the staff to seek help from a trusted adult if they are being bullied at school?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q21 Please add anything more that the school does to help prevent bullying at the school

The next questions are about your child's experience of bullying at this school. If you have no children that have been bullied then you will be asked what you would do if they were bullied.

Remember that if you have more than one child attending the school, you should provide answers about your eldest child.

Q22 Gender

Male

Female

Q23 Age

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

Q24 Present year of schooling

Reception/Kindergarten

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

Year 11

Year 12

Q25 Is he or she happy in attending this school?

Always

Usually

About half the time

Usually not

Never

The next questions are about bullying between students at your child's school. We define bullying as follows: Bullying occurs when a more powerful person or group of persons repeatedly seek to upset, hurt or intimidate somebody. It may take place in the school grounds, in class, on the way to school, on the way home or by electronic means. Remember this is NOT the same thing as occasional quarrelling or fighting between people who are about equally matched. With bullying one person or group is more powerful in some way and the target cannot effectively defend himself or herself.

Q26 To the best of your knowledge has the child described above been bullied by students attending the school? Bear in mind that bullying can include cyberbullying that may occur outside school hours.

Yes

No

Don't know

Q27 What form has the bullying taken? Please provide an answer to each of the following:

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
Ignored, left out on purpose or not allowed to join in				
Hit, kicked or pushed around				
Lies or nasty stories being told to make other kids not like your child				
Made afraid of getting hurt				
Made fun of or teased in a mean or hurtful way				
Sent harassing texts or emails				
Cruel things said about him or her on-line or on a social network, such as Facebook				
Sexually harassed by another student				
Harassed by a student or student because of his or her race				

Q28 Was the bullying done:

	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
By a group bullying your child				
By one person bullying your child				

Q29 How upset was your child about the bullying?

Not at all upset

A bit upset

Quite upset

Extremely upset

Q30 Did your child ever stay away from school because of bullying?

Yes

No

I'm not sure

Q31 How did you find out that this child was being bullied? Please answer for each of the following

	Yes	No
The child told me		
I saw it happening		
Another child told me		
Another adult (not a teacher) told me		
The school informed me		
Other (please specify below)		

Q32 How did you respond when you found out that your child was being bullied at school? Please answer each item.

	Yes	No
I told my child to ignore it		
I told my child to stand up to the child or children doing the bullying		
I discussed with my child possible things that could be done		
I suggested ways in which the bullying could be stopped		
I arranged to talk it over with the parents/carers of the child or children who had engaged in the bullying		
I spoke with the child or children who had bullied my child		
I spoke with the school about it		
I sought help from outside the school (If so, please indicate from whom below)		

Q33 Did your child tell any of the following about being bullied?\* By 'out of school counselling service' we mean someone who may offer help from outside the school, such as a doctor, a psychologist or a phone-in service such as the Kids Helpline

	Yes	Don't know	No
A friend or friends			
A teacher or counsellor/psychologist at the school			
An adult besides yourself			
The Police			
An out-of-school counselling service*			

Q34 Did the school do anything about your child being bullied?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q35 Did the school do any of the following?

	Yes	Don't know	No
Advise the child on what he or she could do to stop the bullying			
Contact the parent/carers of the child or children doing the bullying			
Suggest we should contact the parents or carers of the child or children doing the bullying			
Arrange a meeting between my child and the child or children doing the bullying together with a teacher or counsellor/psychologist to resolve the problem			
Invite some other students to give support to your child			
Arrange for a peer mediator to help resolve the problem			
Get the child or children doing the bullying to apologize			
Impose sanctions or punishments on the child or children doing the bullying			

Q36 Did the school do any of the following?

	Yes	Don't know	No
Reprimand the child or children doing the bullying			
Impose a detention on the child or children doing the bullying			
Took away privileges, eg. playing in school games			
Require some community services, eg. picking up litter			
Suspend the person or persons doing the bullying from attending school for a few days			
Suspend from attending school for a number of weeks			
Report the child or children doing the bullying to the police			
Apply any other punishment (please specify below)			

Q37 What part (if any) did the school play in getting the bullying stopped?

What the school did stopped the bullying

What the school did reduced the bullying

What the school did made no difference to the bullying

What the school did made matters worse

Q38 How well do you think the school handled this case of bullying

Very well

Quite well

Moderately well

Quite badly

Very badly

Q39 Do you think the school could have handled the case better?

Yes

Unsure

No

Q40 If 'yes' please indicate how you think the case could have been handled better

Q41 If your child was bullied at school how do you think you would respond?

	Yes	No
I would tell my child to ignore it		
I would tell my child to stand up to the child or children doing the bullying		
I would discuss with my child possible things that could be done		
I would suggest ways in which the bullying could be stopped		
I would arrange to talk it over with the parent/carer of the child or children doing the bullying		
I would speak with the child or children who had bullied my child		
I would talk with the school about it		

Q42 If your child was bullied would he or she tell any of the following about it? \*By out-of –school counselling service we mean someone who may offer help from outside the school, such as a doctor, a psychologist or a phone-in service such as the Kids Helpline

	Yes	No
A friend or friends		
A teacher or counsellor/psychologist at the school		
Another adult besides yourself		
The Police		
An out of school counselling service*		



Q43 Would you expect the school to do any of the following?

	Yes	Don't know	No
Advise the child on what he or she could do to stop the bullying			
Contact the parent/carers of those doing the bullying			
Suggest we should contact the parents or carers of the child or children doing the bullying			
Arrange a meeting between my child and the child or children doing the bullying together with a teacher or counsellor/psychologist to resolve the problem			
Invite some other students to give support to your child			
Arrange for a peer mediator to help resolve the problem			
Get the child or children doing the bullying to apologise			
Impose sanctions or punishments on the child or children who had been bullying			

Q44 Would you expect the school to do the following?

	Yes	Don't know	No
Impose a detention on the child or children doing the bullying			
Take away privileges, eg. playing in games			
Require community services, eg. picking up litter			
Suspend the child or children doing the bullying from attending school for a time			
Suspend from attending school for a number of weeks			
Report the child or children doing the bullying to the Police			
Apply any other punishment (please specify below)			

Q45 If your child was being bullied at school, how effective do you think the school would be in getting it stopped?

They would stop the bullying

They would reduce but not stop the bullying

They would make no difference

They would make things worse

Q46 Finally, in answering this questionnaire did you consult with any of the following?

	Yes	No
Your partner		
A friend or friends		
Your child or children		
Other (please specify below)		

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey. During 2015 we will be obtaining more survey data from school, students and parents throughout Australia. In late 2015 a report on the study will be published on-line and made accessible to the general public. If your child is being bullied or is still having difficulty coping with a previous experience we suggest you do one or more of the following:

- Discuss the issue with a trusted teacher or counsellor at the school
- Discuss the issue with your partner and/or a trusted friend
- Encourage your child to ring the KidsHelpline on 1800 55 1800
- Contact a Parentline in your state or territory (Go to [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au) click on 'grown ups' then click on 'Parentline')
- Seek support from an out of school counselling service
- Other helpful information and resources for parents can be found at [bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://bullyingnoway.gov.au) and <http://www.kenrigby.net/12-Prevention>

## Appendix 9: Results for the Material Deprivation Scale

Deprivation Scale items	'I have' (per cent)	N
1. Some pocket money each week to spend on yourself	60.0	1674
2. Some money that you can save each month either in a bank or at home	80.1	1670
3. A garden at home, or somewhere nearby like a park where you can safely spend time with your friends	87.0	1670
4. A family car for transport when you need it	97.1	1673
5. At least one family holiday away from home each year	80.1	1669
6. Family trips or days out at least once a month	64.4	1673
7. The right kind of clothes to fit in with other people of your age	93.1	1669
8. A pair of designer or brand name shoes	79.9	1664
9. An iPod or other personal music player	91.3	1672
10. Pay TV (e.g., Foxtel, AUSTAR)	48.8	1666
11. Access to internet at home or on a smart-phone	92.8	1688

Modified version of A Material Deprivation Scale of Main and Bradshaw (2012).

Alpha coefficient = .53, N = 1628

Mean = 8.75, SD = 1.72, range 0–11

## Appendix 10: Student perceptions of the frequency of kinds of bullying at their school

Form of bullying	Percentages of students reporting				N
	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often	
1. Ignored, left out or not allowed to join in	14.6	65.9	14.8	4.7	1653
2. Hit, kicked, pushed around	32.9	52.3	11.3	3.6	1655
3. Lies or nasty stories to make other kids not like me	22.5	46.8	20.5	10.2	1649
4. Made afraid of getting hurt	45.3	42.5	8.9	3.3	1648
5. Made fun of or teased in a mean and hurtful way	23.9	49.8	19.4	6.9	1644
6. Sent harassing texts or emails	59.6	31.4	5.8	3.1	1648
7. Cruel things said on line or in social network, e.g. Facebook	55.4	32.4	8.6	3.6	1653
8. Sexual harassment by another student	77.4	18.8	2.4	1.4	1645
9. Harassing of students because of their race	57.6	31.9	7.0	3.5	1650
10. By a group bullying one person	27.9	50.6	15.3	6.3	1612
11. By one person bullying another person	19.2	57.6	18.1	6.1	1600

## Appendix 11: How often students reported feeling safe from bullying in three locations, with gender differences

	Percentages					
	Always	Usually	Half	Usually not	Never	N
<b>At school</b>						
Girls	42.7	34.2	16.0	5.1	2.0	837
Boys	54.2	24.8	13.2	4.9	3.0	698
Chi square = 25.32, df = 4, p <.001						
<b>To and from school</b>						
Girls	62.2	25.8	9.5	1.8	0.6	834
Boys	70.6	16.9	8.9	2.2	1.4	693
Chi square = 20.73 df = 4 p < .001						
<b>Cyberspace</b>						
Girls	59.9	24.0	11.5	3.2	1.4	838
Boys	72.0	16.2	8.0	2.2	1.6	697
Chi square = 25.93 df = 4, p < .001						

Appendix 12: Students’ perceptions of the frequency of actions taken by teachers with students in classrooms, with ratings of helpfulness in stopping bullying

Action	Rated frequency			Helpful to stop bullying					
	Never	Sometimes	Often	N	Not	A bit	Quite	Very	N
Teachers encourage us to respect one another	2	15.3	82.8	1606	11.7	45.8	33.7	8.9	1559
Teachers expect us to include kids who are different	2.7	26.5	70.7	1603	8.6	45.1	36.6	9.7	1539
Teachers discuss with us how to help students who are having a hard time	8.3	45.6	46.1	1602	5.7	40.1	42.7	11.5	1447
Teachers explain how to behave towards other when using cyber technology	12	48	40	1589	9.4	42	35.9	11.6	1375
Teachers ask us to work with other students to solve problems	5.9	48.4	45.6	1584	9	41.8	38	11.2	1462
Teachers teach us how to keep safe online	10.5	42.2	47.3	1587	8.1	38.5	36.2	17.3	1391
Teachers help us to understand how people might feel when bad things happen to them	8.1	47.3	44.6	1577	5.5	40.6	40.7	13.2	1427
Teachers talk to us about what we can do if we see someone being bullied	6.2	45.3	48.5	1577	6.4	36.9	39.4	17.3	1459
Teachers make time for us to talk together in groups	26.2	51	22.8	1546	5.9	41.2	41.1	11.9	1122
Teachers advise us on what to if we are bullied	6	46.1	47.8	1545	5.5	35.3	41.4	17.9	1421
Teachers suggest ways in which arguments can be settled peacefully	10.3	53.4	36.3	1547	7.1	40.4	38.8	13.8	1359

## Appendix 13: Self-reports of kinds of bullying experienced by students

	Reported frequency of bullying at the school (percentages)				N
	Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often	
1. Ignored, left out or not allowed to join in	55.7	35.5	14.8	6.0	1522
2. Hit, kicked, pushed around	73.7	19.8	4.3	2.2	1519
3. Lies or nasty stories to make other kids not like me	59.8	26.6	8.0	5.5	1519
4. Made afraid of getting hurt	77.1	16.7	4.5	2.8	1519
5. Made fun of or teased in a mean and hurtful way	60.1	27.6	7.2	5.1	1513
6. Sent harassing texts or emails	85.9	9.7	2.3	2.0	1515
7. Cruel things said online or in social network, e.g. Facebook	86.1	9.0	2.4	2.4	1515
8. Sexual harassment by another student	89.9	7.4	1.6	1.1	1513
9. Harassing of students because of their race	86.4	9.4	2.5	1.7	1503
10. By a group bullying one person	70.6	20.6	5.1	3.8	1481
11. By one person bullying another person	56.9	30.6	8.2	4.4	1479

## Appendix 14: Self-reports of kinds of bullying experienced by students, with gender comparisons

		Reported frequency of bullying at the school (percentages)				
		Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often	N
<b>1. Ignored, left out or not allowed to join in</b>						
Boys		64.1	29.3	4.5	2.2	693
Girls		52.4	35.1	7.4	5.2	829
Chi square = 27.15, df = 3, p < .001						
<b>2. Hit, kicked, pushed around</b>						
Boys		65.4	25.9	5.6	3.0	691
Girls		80.7	14.7	3.1	1.4	823
Chi square= 45.52, df = 3, p < .001						
<b>3. Lies or nasty stories to make other kids not like me</b>						
Boys		69.1	20.9	6.4	3.6	689
Girls		52.2	31.3	9.4	7.1	830
Chi square = 45.85, df = 3, p < .001						
<b>4. Made afraid of getting hurt</b>						
Boys		75.5	15.7	4.8	1.4	690
Girls		77.6	15.7	4.2	1.4	829
Chi square= 0.67, df =3, p > .05						
<b>5. Made fun of or teased in a mean and hurtful way</b>						
Boys		66.6	24.6	6.3	3.5	686
Girls		55.5	30.1	8.0	6.4	827
Chi square = 18.93, df = 3, p < .001						
<b>6. Sent harassing texts or emails</b>						
Boys		89.0	8.6	1.5	1.0	689
Girls		83.4	10.7	3.0	2.9	827
Chi square = 13.63, df =3, p < .01						
<b>7. Cruel things said online or in social network, e.g. Facebook</b>						
Boys		88.6	8.4	0.9	2.0	687
Girls		84.1	9.5	3.6	2.8	828
Chi square = 14.21, df = 3, p , .01						
<b>8. Sexual harassment by another student</b>						
Boys		87.2	8.9	2.6	1.3	686
Girls		92.1	6.2	0.7	1.0	827
Chi square = 13.71, df = 3, p < .01						



		Reported frequency of bullying at the school (percentages)				
		Never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often	N
<b>9. Harassing of students because of their race</b>						
Boys		82.9	11.8	3.4	1.9	685
Girls		89.2	7.3	1.8	1.6	818
Chi square = 13.36, df = 3, p < .01						
<b>10. By a group bullying one person</b>						
Boys		73.7	18.9	2.0	2.9	666
Girls		68.0	22.0	3.0	4.5	815
Chi square = 6.87, df = 3, p > .05						
<b>11. By one person bullying another person</b>						
Boys		61.7	27.6	7.1	3.6	663
Girls		52.9	33.0	9.1	5.0	816
Chi square = 11.76, df = 3, p < .01						
<b>12. By either group or individual</b>						
Boys		62.8	19.4	5.3	4.3	682
Girls		50.7	28.7	5.4	5.3	828
Chi square = 24.82, df = 3, p < .001						

## Appendix 15: Gender comparisons on emotional reactions to being bullied

	Not	A bit	Quite	Very	N
<b>Angry</b>					
Boys	19.4	28.9	28.9	22.9	253
Girls	14.3	37.9	27.2	20.6	412
Chi square = 6.70, df = 3, p > .05					
<b>Upset</b>					
Boys	25.2	34.3	26.0	14.6	254
Girls	11.1	27.5	29.2	32.2	407
Chi square = 41.02, df = 3, p < .001					
<b>Sad</b>					
Boys	30.0	30.8	24.9	14.2	253
Girls	14.5	28.2	26.7	30.6	408
Chi square = 36.39, df = 3, p < .001					
<b>Frightened</b>					
Boys	56.7	25.2	16.2	7.9	254
Girls	45.0	29.8	13.4	11.7	409
Chi square = 9.14, df = 3, p < .05					

## Appendix 16: Student perceptions of classroom activities relating to bullying in primary, secondary and combined schools

	Frequencies reporting (%)		
	Never	Sometimes	Often
<b>Encourage respect for each other</b>			
Primary (789)	2.4	10.4	87.2
Secondary (512)	0.8	17.4	81.8
Combined (305)	3.0	23.3	71.8
Chi sq =41.42, df =4, p < .001			
<b>Expectation to be inclusive</b>			
Primary (785)	1.9	20.6	77.5
Secondary (514)	3.3	30.4	66.3
Combined (304)	3.9	35.2	60.9
Chi sq = 36.51, df = 4, p <.001			
<b>Discuss how to help others</b>			
Primary (785)	5.9	39.0	55.2
Secondary (515)	10.3	50.9	38.8
Combined (302)	11.3	54.0	34.8
Chi sq= 54.89, df = 4, p < .001			
<b>Explain appropriate cyber use</b>			
Primary (779)	11.0	44.2	44.8
Secondary (513)	9.6	53.4	37.0
Combined (297)	18.9	48.5	32.7
Chi sq = 29.92, df = 4, p < .001			
<b>Work with others to solve problems</b>			
Primary (780)	4.7	45.4	49.9
Secondary (508)	6.5	51.2	42.3
Combined (296)	8.1	51.7	40.2
Chi sq = 13.63, df = 4, p < .01			
<b>Teach safety online</b>			
Primary (779)	8.1	35.4	56.5
Secondary (512)	11.5	48.2	40.2
Combined (296)	15.2	49.3	34.8
Chi sq =55.54, df = 4, p < .001			
<b>Understanding feelings of others</b>			
Primary (777)	4.2	41.7	54.1
Secondary (504)	10.9	53.2	35.9
Combined (296)	13.2	52.0	35.5
Chi sq = 69.42, df = 4, p < .001			
<b>What to do when you see bullying</b>			
Primary (773)	3.2	40.0	56.8
Secondary (509)	7.9	49.1	43.0
Combined(295)	11.2	52.5	36.3
Chi sq = 58.09, df = 4, p < .001			

	Frequencies reporting (%)		
	Never	Sometimes	Often
<b>Make time for student talk</b>			
Primary (755)	19.9	49.7	30.5
Secondary (502)	32.1	52.6	15.3
Combined (289)	32.5	51.6	15.9
Chi sq = 60.76, df = 4, p < .001			
<b>Suggesting ways to resolve conflict</b>			
Primary (756)	7.3	48.3	44.4
Secondary (503)	11.5	60.2	28.2
Combined (288)	16.3	54.9	28.8
Chi sq = 53.05, df = 4, p < .001			
<b>What to do if one is bullied</b>			
Primary (755)	4.5	41.7	53.8
Secondary (502)	5.4	48.6	46.0
Combined (288)	11.1	53.5	35.4
Chi sq = 38.04, df = 4, p < .001			

## Appendix 17: Awareness of others when students are being bullied, according to boys and girls

	Percentages indicating the awareness			
	Aware	Unsure	Not aware	
<b>Other student(s)</b>				
Boys (258)	48.1	38.8	13.2	p < .05
Girls (405)	58.5	30.4	11.1	
<b>Parents/caregivers</b>				
Boys(253)	43.9	26.9	29.2	ns
Girls (398)	51.0	22.6	26.4	
<b>Teacher/counsellor</b>				
Boys (255)	32.9	32.9	34.1	p < .05
Girls (401)	29.9	25.9	44.1	
<b>Police</b>				
Boys (255)	8.2	20.0	71.8	p < .001
Girls (400)	3.0	9.0	88.0	
<b>Out-of-school counselling service</b>				
Boys (252)	10.7	23.0	66.3	p < .001
Girls (392)	7.7	11.7	80.6	

## Appendix 18: Persons from whom help was requested after being bullied, with gender comparisons

	%	No.
<b>Another student or students</b>		
Boys	45.7	254
Girls	56.5	400
Chi square = 7.31, $p < .01$		
<b>Parent or caregivers</b>		
Boys	51.6	254
Girls	51.7	400
Chi square = 0.0, $p > .05$		
<b>Teacher/counsellor</b>		
Boys	41.1	45.3
Girls	35.6	40.2
Chi square = 2.03, $p > .05$		
<b>Police</b>		
Boys	7.6	249
Girls	2.0	394
Chi square = 11.90, $p < .01$		
<b>Non-school counselling service</b>		
Boys	14.1	248
Girls	7.8	396
Chi square = 6.55, $p < .05$		

## Appendix 19: Reported reactions of person told, with gender differences

Person told	Knew	Interested	Helpful	Advised	Did something
<b>Student or students</b>					
Boys (107)	57.0	72.9	76.9	81.9	91.7
Girls (210)	50.5	72.2	86.3	81.1	82.1
Differences	ns	ns	p< .05	ns	p < .05
<b>Parents</b>					
Boys (119)	29.4	70.6	85.8	88.4	82.5
Girls (184)	21.7	78.3	85.9	88.2	75.9
Differences	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
<b>Teacher/counselor</b>					
Boys (93)	24.7	62.2	77.9	77.4	68.5
Girls (135)	18.5	82.5	83.3	79.1	75.2
Differences	ns	p < .01	ns	ns	ns
<b>Out-of-school counselling service</b>					
Boys (30)	53.3	64.5	66.0	79.3	69.0
Girls (27)	14.8	82.1	40.0	86.2	56.6
Differences	p < .05	ns	ns	ns	ns
<b>Police</b>					
Boys (15)	73.3	66.7	85.7	68.8	73.3
Girls (6)	16.7	66.7	14.3	83.3	83.3
Differences	p<.05	ns	ns	ns	ns

## Appendix 20: Outcomes following telling others, with gender comparisons

	Stopped	Reduced	The same	Got worse
<b>Telling other students</b>				
Boys (109)	30.3	44.0	18.3	7.3
Girls (222)	28.8	37.4	25.2	8.6
Chi square = 2.52 df =3 p > .05				
<b>Telling parents</b>				
Boys (122)	24.6	48.4	22.1	4.9
Girls (198)	31.3	39.9	23.2	5.6
Chi square = 2,54, df = 3, p > .05				
<b>Telling teachers/counsellors</b>				
Boys (92)	26.1	40.2	26.1	7.6
Girls (131)	31.3	38.9	22.1	7.6
Chi square = 0.83, df = 3, p > .05				
<b>Telling out-of-school counselling service</b>				
Boys (30)	33.3	43.3	16.7	6.7
Girls (26)	15.4	23.1	53.8	7.7
Chi- square = 9.18, p < .05				
<b>Telling the police</b>				
Boys (14)	35.7	35.7	7.1	21.4
Girls (6)	50.0	33.3	0.0	16.7
Chi square = 0.70,df =3, p > .05				



## Appendix 21: Differences in teacher/counsellor responses to bullying, according to gender of the victim (significant differences only)

	Yes	DK	No	N
<b>Bullies deprived of privileges</b>				
Boys	25.3	31.6	43.0	79
Girls	20.5	65.0	14.5	117
Chi square = 6.37, df = 2, p < .05				
<b>Bullies given a detention</b>				
Boys	32.9	31.7	35.4	82
Girls	15.5	18.1	66.4	116
Chi square = 18.78, df = 2, p , .001				
<b>Bullies suspended</b>				
Boys	24.7	23.5	51.9	81
Girls	12.2	12.2	75.7	115
Chi square = 11.98, df = 2, p < .01				
<b>Bullies excluded</b>				
Boys	16.3	20.0	63.8	80
Girls	5.1	9.4	85.5	117
Chi square = 19.12, df = 2, p < .01				
<b>Bullies to do community service</b>				
Boys	25.3	31.6	43.0	79
Girls	20.5	14.5	65.0	117
Chi square = 10.97, df = 2, p < .01				

## Appendix 22: Correlation matrix showing relationships between selected variables

	Eth	Dis	Depr	Gen	Yr	Vic	V now	Help	Safety
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>1. Indigenous</b>	.03 <i>1440</i>	.04 <i>1380</i>	.01 <i>1399</i>	.00 <i>1440</i>	-.09 <i>1440</i>	.03 <i>1247</i>	.03 <i>558</i>	.01 <i>172</i>	-.03 <i>1289</i>
<b>2. Ethnicity</b>		.02 <i>1602</i>	.07 <i>1627</i>	.00 <i>1684</i>	.00 <i>1684</i>	.03 <i>1453</i>	.06 <i>631</i>	.16 <i>191</i>	-.04 <i>1499</i>
<b>3. Disability</b>			.10 <i>1563</i>	-.10 <i>1603</i>	.02 <i>1628</i>	.09 <i>1399</i>	.11 <i>611</i>	.07 <i>183</i>	-.01 <i>1440</i>
<b>4. Material deprivation</b>				.02 <i>1628</i>	.02 <i>1628</i>	.10 <i>1417</i>	.07 <i>616</i>	-.06 <i>187</i>	-.13 <i>1458</i>
<b>5. Gender</b>					-.02 <i>1688</i>	.05 <i>1454</i>	.09 <i>631</i>	.10 <i>191</i>	-.08 <i>1500</i>
<b>6. Year level</b>						.02 <i>1454</i>	-.06 <i>631</i>	-.02 <i>191</i>	-.02 <i>1500</i>
<b>7. Victimisation Scale</b>							.33 <i>593</i>	-.24 <i>176</i>	.60 <i>1404</i>
<b>8. Current victim status</b>								-.29 <i>174</i>	-.32 <i>607</i>
<b>9. Total helpfulness</b>									.18 <i>185</i>

Note: Numbers for each of the correlations given in italics

Coding of variables in the matrix

Indigenous: Do you regard yourself as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander? No = 1; Yes = 2

Ethnicity: What language do you speak at home? Always English = 1; sometimes another language = 2; always another language = 3.

Disability: Do you get extra help from the school because you have a disability? No = 1; Yes = 2.

Material Deprivation Score on the scale from 1 to 11 (higher scores indicate greater deprivation).

Gender: Males = 1; Females = 2.

Year level: Scored between 5 and 10

Victimisation Scale: Each item scored from 1 (Never) to 4 (Very often) and summed for the 9 items.

Current victim status: Is the bullying still continuing? No = 1; Yes = 2.

Total helpfulness: The sum of scores of two items (a) Looking back, did you find what the school did was helpful? (Made things a lot worse = 1; made things a bit worse = 2; made no difference = 2; helped a bit = 4; yes, very helpful = 5) and (b) If you were bullied again would you seek help from a school teacher or school counsellor ? (Definitely not = 1; Probably not = 2; Don't know = 3; Probably = 4; Yes, definitely = 5).

Safety: The sum of scores from three items: (a) How safe have you felt from being bullied at school this year? (b) How safe have you felt from being bullied on your way to and from school this year? (c) How safe have you felt from being cyber bullied by a student or students from your school this year? Responses to each question scored as follows: I never felt safe this year = 1; I hardly ever felt safe this year = 2; I felt safe about half the time = 3; I usually felt safe this year = 4; I always felt safe this year = 5.

## Appendix 23: Reported actions by schools according to parents

	Yes	DK	No	N
1. Advised the child on what he or she could do	65.0	17.5	17.5	40
2. Contacted the parents/carers of those bullying	45.0	42.5	12.5	40
3. Suggested parents contacted parent(s) of those bullying	9.8	4.9	85.4	41
4. Arranged a meeting involving the children and the teacher/counsellor to resolve the problem	50.0	2.5	47.5	40
5. Invited some students to support your child	17.5	37.5	45.0	40
6. Arranged for a peer mediator to help	12.5	12.5	75.0	40
7. Got the child/children responsible to apologise	35.9	20.5	42.6	40
8. Imposed sanctions or punishments on the person or persons responsible for the bullying	33.3	33.3	33.3	39
9. Reprimanded the person or persons doing the bullying	92.3	7.7	0.0	13
10. Imposed a detention on the person/persons bullying	30.8	46.2	23.1	13
11. Took away privileges from the offenders	38.5	38.5	23.1	13
12. Required some community service	7.7	46.2	46.2	13
13. Suspended the bullies for a few days	15.4	15.4	69.2	13
14. Suspended for a number of weeks	7.7	7.7	84.6	13
15. Reported to the police	0.0	15.4	84.6	13

## Appendix 24: Reported parental expectations of school actions if their child were to be bullied

Expected action	Yes	DK	No	N
1. Advise the child on what he or she could do	92.2	4.1	2.7	74
2. Contact the parents/carers of those bullying	87.8	8.1	4.1	74
3. Suggest parents contacted parent(s) of those bullying	31.1	43.2	56.8	75
4. Arrange a meeting involving the children and the teacher/counsellor to resolve the problem	66.7	22.7	10.7	74
5. Invite some students to support your child	70.3	14.9	14.9	74
6. Arranged for a peer mediator to help	59.5	21.6	18.9	74
7. Get the child/children responsible to apologise	73.0	21.6	5.4	74
8. Impose sanctions or punishments on the person or persons responsible for the bullying	71.6	20.3	8.1	75
9. Impose a detention on the person/persons bullying	54.7	28.0	17.3	75
10. Take away privileges from the offenders	68.0	18.7	13.3	75
11. Require some community service	52.0	21.3	26.7	75
12. Suspend the bullies for a few days	37.3	38.7	24.0	74
13. Suspend for a number of weeks	9.5	40.5	50.0	74



## Appendix 25: Glossary

This glossary seeks to explain or clarify terms with which the reader may be unfamiliar, as they are of relatively recent origin and used in this report in a specialised sense.

### **Anti-bullying policy**

This refers to written documentation required of all government schools in Australia describing how the school will address school bullying. It may be part of a more general policy, such as the school behaviour policy, or form a stand-alone document. Guidelines are provided in the National Safe Schools Framework.

### **Bully box**

This is an anti-bullying device designed to allow students to report acts of bullying anonymously without becoming directly involved in the incident. It may take the form of a physical box into which notes may be inserted or in the form of a mobile phone app.

### **Bullying No-way Website**

The Bullying. No Way! website ([www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)) provides information and resources to help teachers and schools create and maintain safe and supportive school environments.

### **Child Material Deprivation Index (CMDI)**

This is an index based on responses to 11 questions assessing the extent to which students are deprived of material resources that are commonly accessed by their peers.

### **Circle time**

Circle Time refers to class meetings held periodically in which participants have equal status and are enabled to explore and address issues which concern them.

### **Classroom management**

Working effectively with students in the classroom situation whilst establishing and maintaining positive and constructive relationships with individual students and being responsive to their emotional needs.

### **Cyber bullying**

The use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature.

### **Cyber safety**

Cyber-safe behaviours are the safe, respectful and responsible use of internet and mobile phone technology.

### **Direct sanctions**

These refer to negative consequences that are imposed upon students who are identified as being responsible for an act or acts of bullying. In Australian government schools they may include verbal reprimands; meetings with parents; temporary removal from class; withdrawal of privileges; school community service; detentions and internal exclusion in a special room; short-term exclusion; and permanent exclusion.

## **Index of Classroom Anti-bullying Action (ICA)**

The ICA is a reliable 11-item scale of the frequency of teacher-directed classroom action to counter bullying, based upon student reports.

## **Kids Help Line**

This is a free, private and confidential telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between 5 and 25 years

## **KidsMatter**

KidsMatter is an Australian mental health initiative promoting wellbeing among children in primary schools and early childhood education centres.

## **Knowledge of Bullying Quiz (KBQ)**

The KBQ is a 40-item true/false questionnaire (based on reports from evidence-based sources) assessing knowledge of bullying

## **Method of Shared Concern**

This is an intervention method considered suitable for cases of group bullying. Each *suspected* perpetrator is interviewed singly. The practitioner shares a concern for the victim and invites assistance in improving the situation. The victim is then interviewed alone and progress is monitored. Next a meeting with the group of suspected bullies is arranged at which each member is required to indicate how they will act when a final meeting is convened with the victim present. At that meeting the problem is mediated.

## **National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB)**

The NCAB is a peak body working to advise and inform the Australian community on issues of childhood bullying and the creation of safe schools and communities, including the issue of cyber safety.

## **National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF)**

The framework provides school communities with a vision, a set of guiding principles and the practical tools and resources to build a positive school culture.

## **Peer support**

Peer support in schools promotes the development and exercise of the means by which young people themselves can provide emotional and practical support for fellow students.

## **Proactive approaches**

Proactive approaches to bullying are those taken to prevent bullying from taking place, for example through appropriate policy development, social and emotional education, and the training of peer mediators.

## **Reactive approaches**

Reactive approaches to bullying focus on how cases of bullying can be handled once they have been identified, for example through the use of sanctions, applying restorative justice and holding meetings to resolve ongoing conflict.



## **Resilience**

Resilience is the ability of individuals or groups to adapt to stress and adversity.

## **Restorative practice**

This refers to the means by which practitioners can resolve conflict between students by bringing about genuine remorse on the part of the offender(s) accompanied by restorative action, for example, apologising to a victim and having the apology accepted. The practice may be applied in different social contexts: at meetings attended solely by those in conflict; at group or classroom meetings at which other students are also involved; or at a community conference at which adult stakeholders are present such as parents.

## **Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEL)**

Social and emotional learning involves students having opportunities to learn and practise social skills such as cooperation, managing conflict, making friends, coping and being resilient, recognising and managing their own feelings, and being empathic.

## **Strengthening the victim**

As an intervention method, strengthening the victim involves assisting the victimised child to cope more effectively with the bullying, for example by developing effective interpersonal skills and a more resilient attitude.

## **Support Group Method**

This is an intervention method which calls upon the assistance of students who are prepared to provide emotional and practical support for a student who has been bullied by a known perpetrator or perpetrators. After meeting with the victim, the practitioner invites the supportive students and the identified perpetrator(s) to a meeting at which the case is described in detail and proposals are elicited from everyone as to how each will act to resolve the problem.

## **Type of school**

This term is used to describe schools that cater for different age groups, namely primary, secondary and combined. The latter provides education for students of all ages.

## **Victimisation**

The term 'victimisation' is used in this report to denote 'being bullied'.

## **Victimisation Scale**

This is a reliable 11-item measure of the extent to which each student has been bullied over the last twelve months.

## **Whole-school approach**

This term is used broadly to describe the active collaboration of all members of a school community to address bullying in accordance with an agreed plan. It is distinct from an approach that ascribes responsibility to particular staff members who operate independently of other school community members.

**The following refer to specific programs noted in the text used by some schools**

*Bounce Back*

This is a wellbeing and resilience program aimed at fostering resilience in young people. It focuses mainly on teaching coping skills to help young people respond positively to the complexity of their everyday lives, despite experiencing sadness, frustrations and hard times.

*Program Achieve*

This program emphasises the qualities needed to be successful, academically and socially, and to achieve high levels of wellbeing. These include confidence, persistence, organisation, getting along and emotional resilience.

*Friendly Schools Program*

The Friendly Schools Program is an Australian evidence-based initiative that seeks to reduce bullying in schools primarily through the development of pro-social attitudes, social skills and positive interpersonal relationships. To assist teachers in conducting sessions with students, information and descriptions of classroom activities are provided in the form of a classroom pack. Parents are also provided with helpful advice.

*Managing the Bull*

This is a 6-week course developed in the United States that seeks to build resilience in bullied teens through games, activities and discussions.

*Play is the Way*

This program makes use of physical interactive games and guided reflection to develop appropriate emotional control, character and social competence

*Rock and Water*

This educational program aims to enhance the social, emotional and spiritual development of boys and girls, based especially on engagement and reflection on physical activities designed to develop greater self-awareness and social competence.

*Stop Think Do*

This program teaches younger children how to exercise appropriate self-control, make considered decisions about how to act, and employ effective social skills to prevent and resolve conflict.

*Secret Agent Society*

This program involves playing games, typically accessed by computer, that enable students to recognise and regulate their emotions and cope with challenges such as being bullied.

*Tribes*

This program enables students to work together in long-term, small, heterogeneous groups called tribes to develop a sense of inclusion and social skills, such as active listening, problem solving and conflict resolution.





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**Dr Kaye Johnson** is an experienced educational leader in schools as a principal (Woodville Primary School and Centre for Hearing Impaired 2001-2007, Riverdale R-7 School 1994-2000) and within the state office of the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (as the manager of the South Australian Institute for Educational Leadership 2010-2014). She has contributed to national leadership development through her membership of AITSL's School Leadership Quality Advisory Committee in 2013 and 2014 and her role on the AITSL Expert Steering group for the Professional Standard for Principals from 20010-2014. In 2008 and 2009 Kaye was National Co-ordinator of *KidsMatter*, the Mental Health Initiative for primary schools in partnership with Principals Australia, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, *beyond blue* and the Australian Psychological Society. In 2007 Kaye was awarded her Doctor of Education for her thesis entitled *Researching with children: Exploring children's perspectives of their place(s) in their local primary school*.



