

Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention



Needs Assessment Summary

Compiled by:

Amanda B. Nickerson, Ph.D. | Director

Heather Cosgrove | Graduate Assistant

Rebecca E. Ligman, M.S.Ed. | Program and Operations Manager

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Graduate School of Education

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Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention

The Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention will reduce bullying abuse in schools and in the community by contributing knowledge and providing evidence-based tools to effectively change the language, attitudes, and behaviors of educators, parents, students, and society.

Amanda B. Nickerson, Ph.D. | Director
Rebecca E. Ligman, M.S.Ed. | Program and Operations Manager
Heather Cosgrove | Graduate Assistant
Michelle Serwacki | Graduate Assistant

Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention
Graduate School of Education
University at Buffalo, The State University of New York
428 Baldy Hall
Buffalo, NY 14260-1000
P: (716) 645-1532
F: (716) 645-6616
alberticenter@buffalo.edu
gse.buffalo.edu/alberticenter

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Executive Summary

Overview

After officially launching in July 2011, one of the first tasks of the Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention was to engage in a needs assessment. Through a quantitative survey, focus groups, and numerous individual meetings, details were collected about the current perceptions of bullying and harassment in schools, areas of weaknesses and strengths, challenges faced, and greatest areas of need in Western New York. The intention is that the findings of this needs assessment will guide the development of the Alberti Center's resources, materials, and programs.

Participants

Data and input were collected from students, educators, community organization professionals, researchers, and leaders of similar centers. Of the 165 individuals who participated in the survey: 58.5% were mental health professionals, 26.2% were school administrators, 8.5% reported "other" profession (e.g., graduate student, BOCES coordinator, private psychologist), 6.1% were school teachers, and 0.6% were community members; 34.6% worked with elementary students, 24.1% worked with high school students, 23.5% worked with middle school students, 14.8% worked with more than one age group, and 3.1% worked with infants; 56.4% worked in a suburban setting, 22.1% worked in a rural setting, 18.4% worked in an urban setting, and 3.1% worked in more than one setting.

Findings

Information obtained through the needs assessment revealed the following:

- Respondents reported being particularly concerned about verbal bullying, cyberbullying, and relational bullying (between 82 and 92% of respondents reported being "concerned" or "strongly concerned") compared to physical bullying (a little more than 50% of respondents reported being "concerned" or strongly concerned").
- School staff who responded indicated that the most common strategies used were talking to the student who bullied and talking to the student who was bullied after an incident. Issuing disciplinary consequences for the student who bullied others was also a commonly used strategy. In addition, classroom rules against bullying and contacting parents (of both the student who bullied and the target) were reported to be used often. Student involvement in bullying prevention efforts, and staff and parent education/training were used less commonly.



- Individuals involved in the focus groups emphasized the need for education, both of school staff and parents, about the issue of bullying prevention and intervention. Having access to age-appropriate resources was also expressed as a need. Funding and cost-effectiveness of efforts was a consistent theme, both with regard to research and to programs used at the school level.
- In terms of events, there was great interest in the topics of peer relationships and bullying, parents and bullying, and cyberbullying. A little more than 75% of respondents preferred a half-day format for conferences, and there was a preference for conferences to be held during the academic year, particularly in the fall.

Action Items

Based on this information, there are several areas where the Alberti Center can focus its efforts to help address the gap between the current and desired state of affairs:

- Provide education, in the form of training and seminars, for both educators and parents about bullying prevention and intervention.
- Provide resources for practitioners to use in their work on bullying prevention with different age groups.
- Hold conferences during the academic year on the topics of cyberbullying, peer relationships and bullying, and parents and bullying.
- Emphasize the importance of including students and parents in bullying prevention and intervention efforts.
- Seek funding opportunities for research and assist schools in trying to find cost-effective ways to implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention efforts.



Introduction & Objectives

The Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention began with a generous gift from University at Buffalo Graduate School of Education alumna Jean M. Alberti (Ph.D. '70, Educational Psychology). The center was officially launched in July of 2011, when Amanda Nickerson, Ph.D., became the inaugural director.

During the start-up phase of the center, it was important to conduct a needs assessment with stakeholders from the greater Buffalo region in order to identify the current state of affairs with regard to bullying prevention and intervention, as well as to identify gaps in services and needs. The intention is that the findings of this needs assessment will guide the development of the Alberti Center's resources, materials, and programs.



Method

Quantitative

- Survey with participants from three conferences: one sponsored by the Western NY School Psychologist Association and two by the Western New York Educational Services Council.

Qualitative

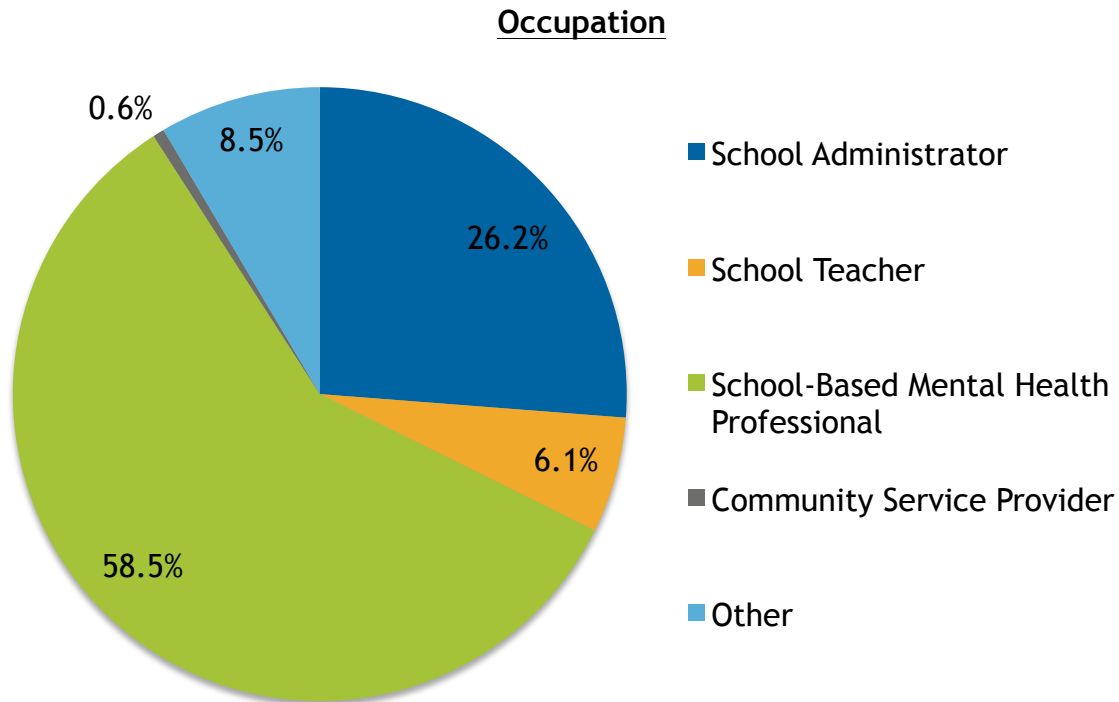
- Individual meetings and interview with directors of similar centers.
- Individual meetings and interviews with school and community professionals.
- Individual and group meetings with UB faculty and staff (e.g., individual researchers from Education, Psychology, Research Institute on Addictions, Business, Social Welfare, Communications).
- Focus groups with participants from the first Alberti Center Symposium (April 2010) and the Western New York Educational Services Council conference (September 2011).
- Discussion points from small group meetings with middle school students from National Federation for Just Communities Middle School Youth Leadership Conference (December 2011).



Participants

Quantitative Survey

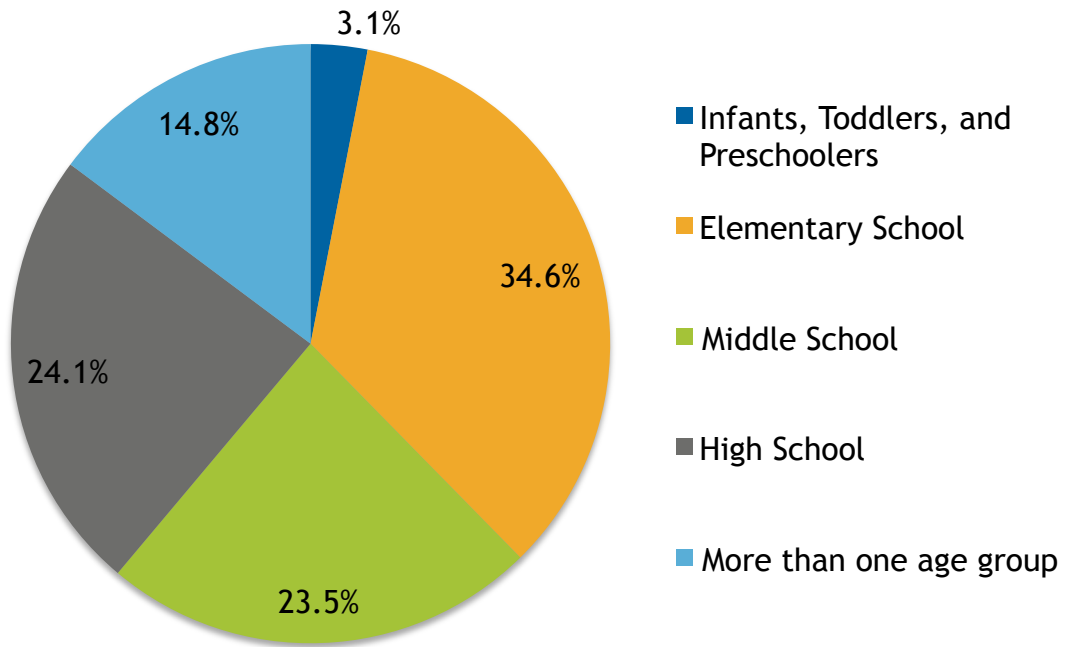
The survey was completed by attendees at three conferences featuring the Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention. Across these three events—one sponsored by the Western New York School Psychologist Association and two by the Western New York Educational Services Council—165 people participated in the survey.



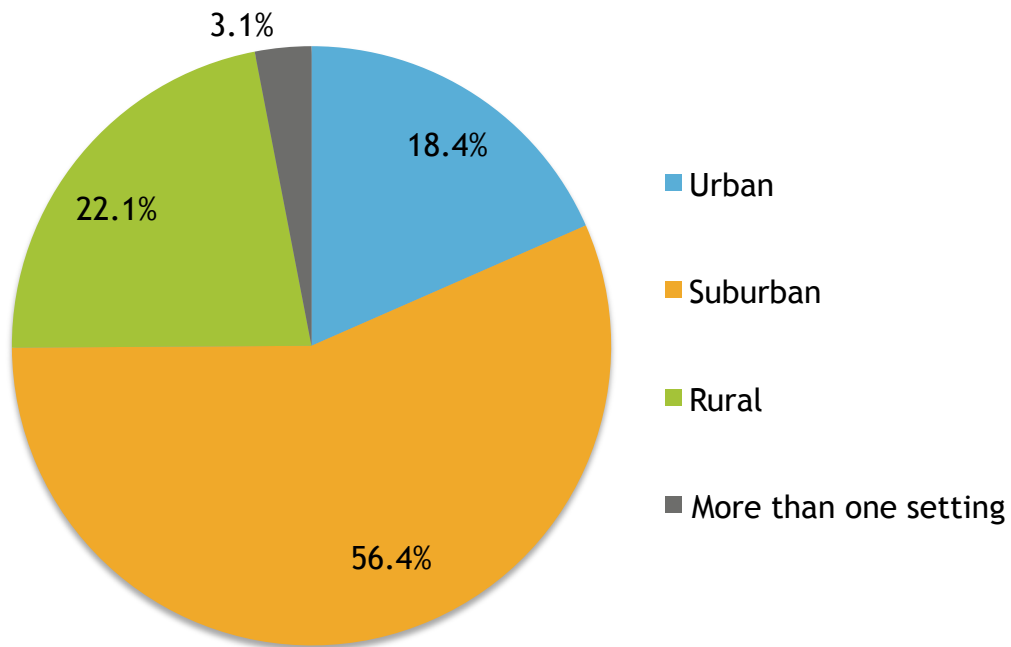
“Other” Occupation responses included: graduate student, BOCES coordinator, and private psychologist.



Age Group with Whom Respondents Worked



Setting in Which Respondents Worked



Measure

Survey of Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention Strategies

The original survey by Sherer and Nickerson (2010) was based on an extensive review of existing theoretical and empirical information about school-based bullying prevention and intervention. A total of 39 anti-bullying **strategies** were included in the original survey. Respondents provided frequency of use of each strategy on a 4-point rating scale (1 = *never*, 2 = *sometimes*, 3 = *often*, 4 = *always*). After pilot testing, a “don’t know” option was also added. Respondents were also asked for demographic information, such as occupation, age group with which they worked, and location of school setting (rural, urban, or suburban).

For the purposes of this needs assessment, the 39 strategies assessed by Sherer and Nickerson (2010) were condensed to 31 items by eliminating redundant items or collapsing items. In addition, respondents were provided with a definition of bullying: Bullying is **intentional, usually repeated acts** of verbal, physical, or written aggression by a peer (or group of peers) **operating from a position of strength or power with the goal of hurting the victim** physically or damaging status and/or social reputation. They were asked to think about the population with whom they work, and to indicate their level of concern about different types of bullying (physical, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying) on a 4-point Likert-type Scale from 1 = *Not concerned*, 2 = *Slightly concerned*, 3 = *Concerned*, 4 = *Strongly concerned*.

Respondents were also asked to respond to 3 open-ended questions: (a) What, if any, formal program their school used (e.g., Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Second Step, PATHs, PBIS); (b) opinion about what seemed to work best in preventing and/or intervening with bullying; and (c) areas in which school needed improvement. For planning purposes, respondents were also asked to indicate potential topics of interest for future conferences (peer relationships and bullying, parents and bullying, facts vs. fears about school violence, threat assessment, bullying across the lifespan, homophobic bullying, cyberbullying, and other). They were also asked to indicate preferences for types of conference presentations and the most convenient time of year for these conferences.

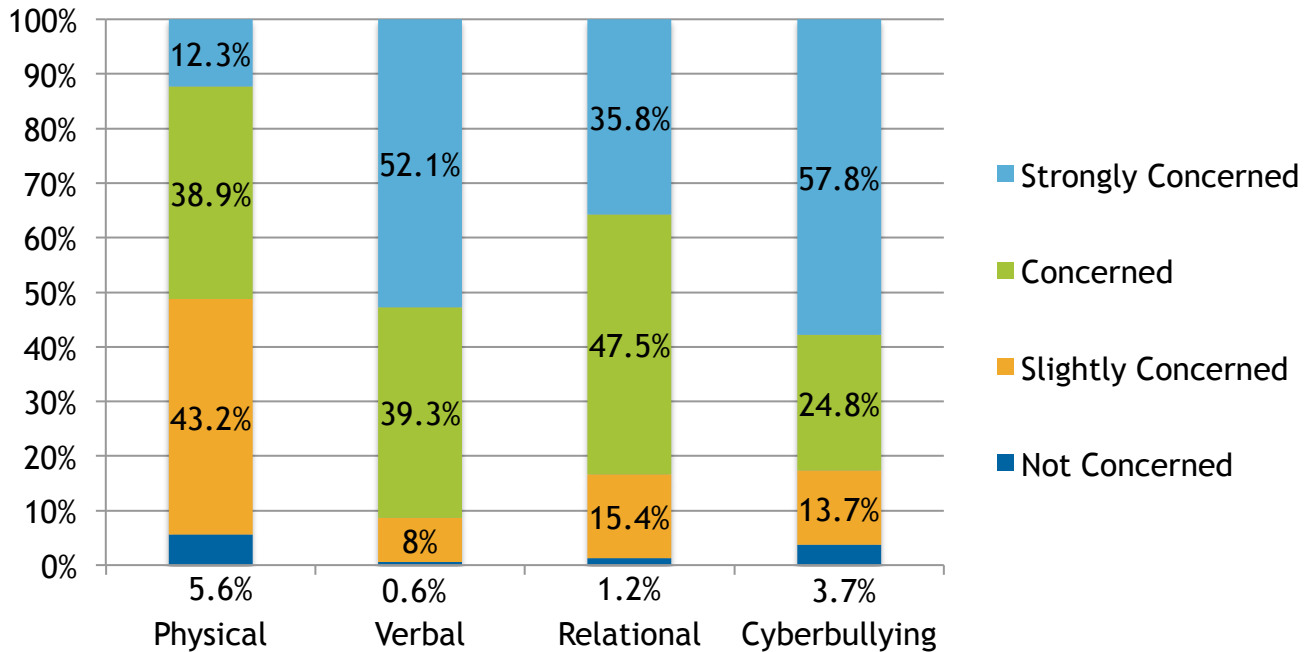
In order to determine whether the measure assessed the constructs of interest with regard to bullying prevention and intervention strategies used by schools, exploratory factor analysis, using the Maximum Likelihood Method with Oblique rotation (Promax) was conducted on the 31 Likert-type items assessing frequency of use of the practices. Seven items (“administering school-wide survey,” “modifying space/schedule,” “improving recess quality,” “procedures to avoid contact between bullies and victims,” “increasing adult supervision in ‘hot spots,’” “anti-bullying written/web-based resources for teachers,” and “discipline consequences for bullies”) had a communality of less than .40, so these items were dropped. The remaining 24 items were then factor analyzed, resulting in a 5-factor solution that explained 68.6% of the variance. Factor loadings, eigenvalues, and percent variance explained per each of the final factors are displayed in the Appendix.



Quantitative Results

Note: When participants did not complete individual items, percentages were based on the number of individuals who responded to that particular item.

Concerns About Types of Bullying



Prevention and Intervention Strategies Used in Respondents' Schools

Factor 1: Student-Involved Prevention and Intervention					Mean 1.75	SD .62
Strategy	Never n (%)	Sometimes n (%)	Often n (%)	Always n (%)	Don't Know n (%)	Mean (SD)
Identifying students at risk for victimization and providing intervention	6 (4%)	46 (30.5%)	63 (41.7%)	29 (19.2%)	7 (4.6%)	2.67 (0.99)
Problem-solving based adult mediation procedures	38 (25.3%)	39 (26%)	30 (20%)	16 (10.7%)	27 (18%)	1.80 (1.25)
Students working as school welcoming for new students	36 (23.7%)	43 (28.3%)	30 (19.7%)	29 (19.1%)	14 (9.2%)	2.16 (1.25)
Peers offering companionship to victims	39 (25.7%)	49 (32.2%)	38 (25%)	9 (5.9%)	17 (11.2%)	1.89 (1.09)



Students taking leadership roles in anti-bullying activities	49 (32.5%)	59 (39.1%)	22 (14.6%)	12 (7.9%)	9 (6%)	1.86 (1.01)
Peer mediation	66 (43.4%)	41 (27%)	19 (12.5%)	10 (6.6%)	16 (10.5%)	1.61 (1.05)
Formal participation of students in decision making process	66 (43.7%)	50 (33.1%)	15 (9.9%)	8 (5.3%)	12 (7.9%)	1.61 (.96)
Students working as peer counselors to victims	101 (66.4%)	24 (15.8%)	10 (6.6%)	2 (1.3%)	15 (9.9%)	1.23 (.77)
Peer juries/court to "try" bullies	126 (83.6%)	13 (7.9%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)	11 (7.2%)	1.04 (.49)
Factor 2: Educational, Training, and Systems Approaches					Mean: 2.35	SD: .80
Strategy	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Mean
Classroom rules against bullying	8 (5.3%)	25 (16.4%)	40 (26.3%)	72 (47.4)	7 (4.6%)	3.07 (1.13)
Talking to students about bullying in student assemblies	10 (6.6%)	46 (30.3%)	46 (30.3%)	42 (27.6%)	8 (5.3%)	2.68 (1.11)
Anti-bullying educational curricula in classroom	22 (14.6%)	52 (34.4%)	42 (27.8%)	25 (16.6%)	10 (6.6%)	2.33 (1.12)
Violence prevention curricula in classroom	27 (17.9%)	49 (32.5%)	38 (25.2%)	23 (15.2%)	14 (9.3%)	2.19 (1.18)
Distributing printed resources about bullying to students	33 (21.7%)	58 (38.2%)	33 (21.7%)	19 (12.5%)	9 (5.9%)	2.13 (1.08)
Anti-bullying training for teachers and staff	22 (14.7%)	76 (50.7%)	26 (17.3%)	21 (14%)	5 (3.3%)	2.24 (.98)
Weekly class meetings to discuss bullying and peer conflicts	63 (41.7%)	34 (22.5%)	17 (11.3%)	18 (11.9%)	19 (12.6%)	1.68 (1.19)
Factor 3: Interventions with Students Involved in Bullying					Mean: 3.05	SD: 0.80
Strategy	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Mean
School staff talking with victims following incidents	1 (0.7%)	14 (9.2%)	48 (31.6%)	82 (53.9%)	7 (4.6%)	3.30 (1.01)
School staff talking with bullies following incidents	1 (0.7%)	15 (9.9%)	47 (30.9%)	82 (53.9%)	7 (4.6%)	3.29 (1.00)
Identifying students at risk for bullying others and providing intervention	13 (8.6%)	47 (30.9%)	66 (43.4%)	21 (13.8%)	5 (3.3%)	2.56 (0.95)

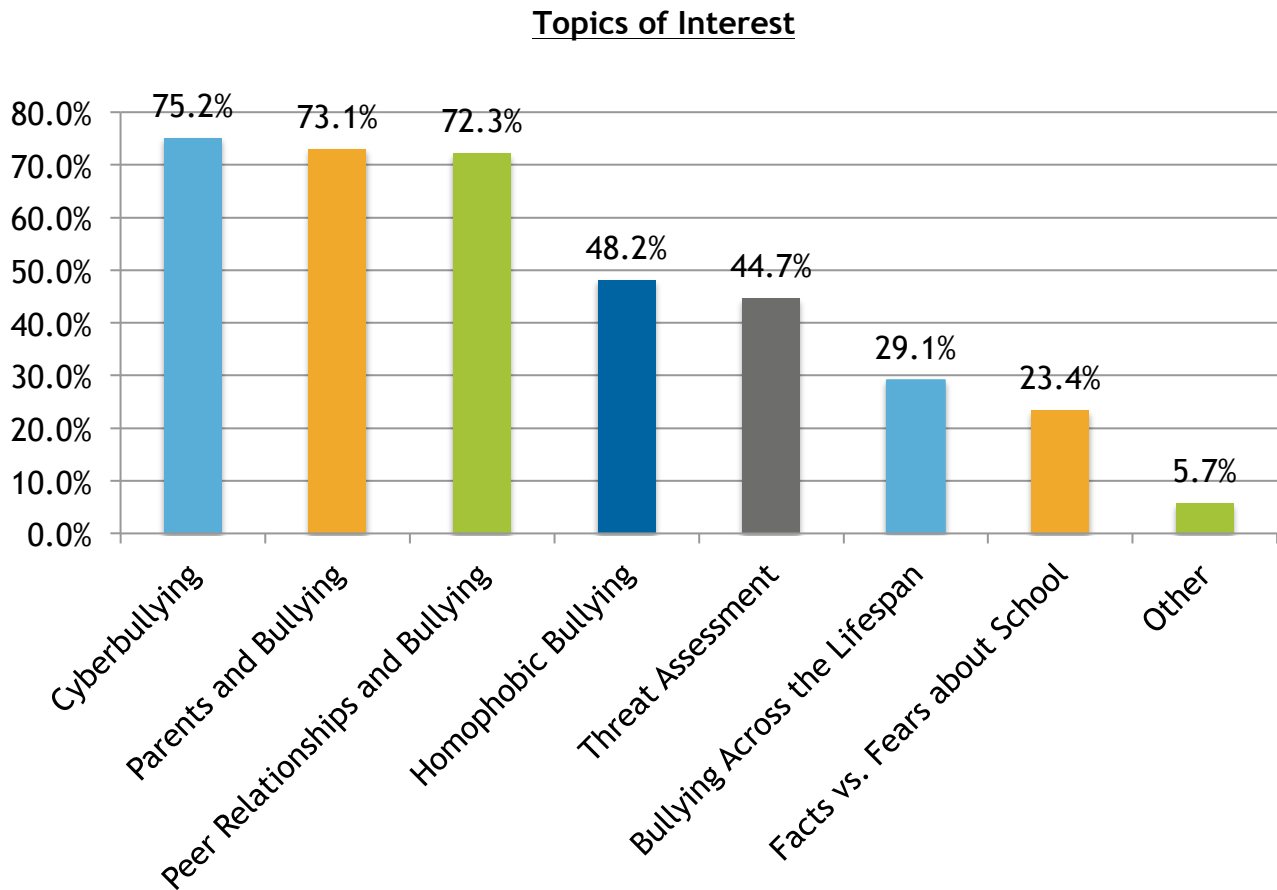


Factor 4: Parent Information and Education					Mean: 2.10	SD: .99
Strategy	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Mean
Informing parents of the anti-bullying policy and program	15 (9.9%)	35 (23.2%)	56 (37.1%)	30 (19.9%)	15 (9.9%)	2.47 (1.20)
Educating parents about bullying via printed resources or trainings	24 (15.9%)	58 (38.4%)	37 (24.5%)	15 (9.9%)	17 (11.3%)	2.06 (1.12)
Providing parents with information about the anti-bullying curriculum and activities to support their use at home	36 (23.8%)	54 (35.8%)	27 (17.9%)	12 (7.9%)	22 (14.6%)	1.81 (1.14)
Factor 5: Contact with Parents of Students Involved in Bullying					Mean: 2.77	SD: 1.02
Strategy	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Mean
Contacting and meeting with parents of victims	5 (3%)	34 (20.6%)	63 (38.2%)	42 (25.5%)	8 (4.8%)	2.83 (1.04)
Contacting and meeting parents of bullies	7 (4.6%)	37 (24.3%)	64 (42.1%)	35 (23%)	9 (5.9%)	2.72 (1.06)
Other Items (Did Not Load)					Mean: 2.33	SD: .72
Strategy	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Mean
Disciplinary consequences for bullies	3 (2%)	23 (15.1%)	57 (37.5%)	60 (39.5%)	9 (5.9%)	3.03 (1.08)
Increasing adult supervision in 'hot spots'	6 (3.9%)	18 (11.8%)	59 (38.8%)	59 (38.8%)	10 (6.6%)	2.99 (1.13)
Procedures to avoid contact between bullies and victims	5 (3.2%)	42 (26.8%)	66 (42%)	34 (21.7%)	10 (6.4%)	2.69 (1.05)
Improving recess quality	34 (22.7%)	41 (27.3%)	24 (16%)	14 (9.3%)	37 (24.7%)	1.63 (1.27)
Modifying space and schedule to reduce occurrence of bullying	24 (15.3%)	45 (28.7%)	43 (27.4%)	26 (16.6%)	19 (12.1%)	2.21 (1.24)
Anti-bullying written/web-based resources for teachers	25 (16.8%)	56 (37.6%)	38 (25.5%)	19 (12.8%)	11 (7.4%)	2.19 (1.10)
Administering a school-wide survey	71 (44.9%)	58 (36.7%)	13 (8.2%)	8 (5.1%)	8 (5.1%)	1.63 (.90)



Conference and Event Interests

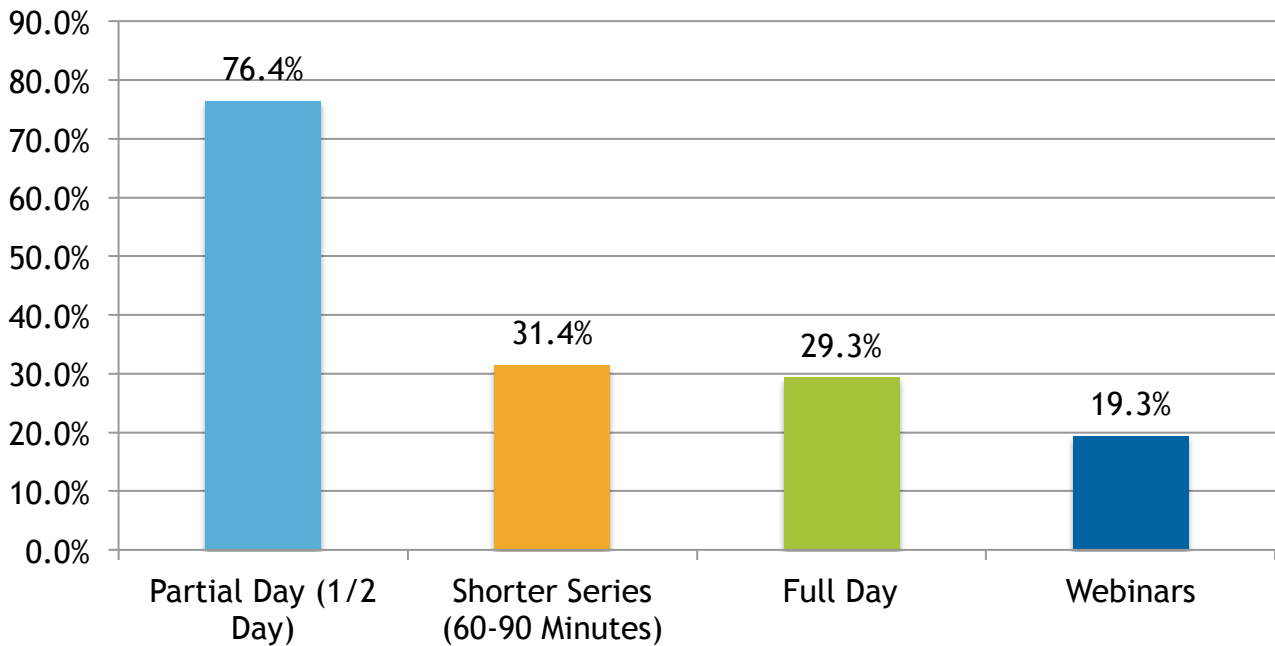
Note: The survey version provided at the third event contained a slightly altered set of event-specific questions. Consequently, those question responses were excluded. The survey responses from 143 participants are included here. When participants did not complete individual items, percentages were based on the number of individuals who responded to that particular item.



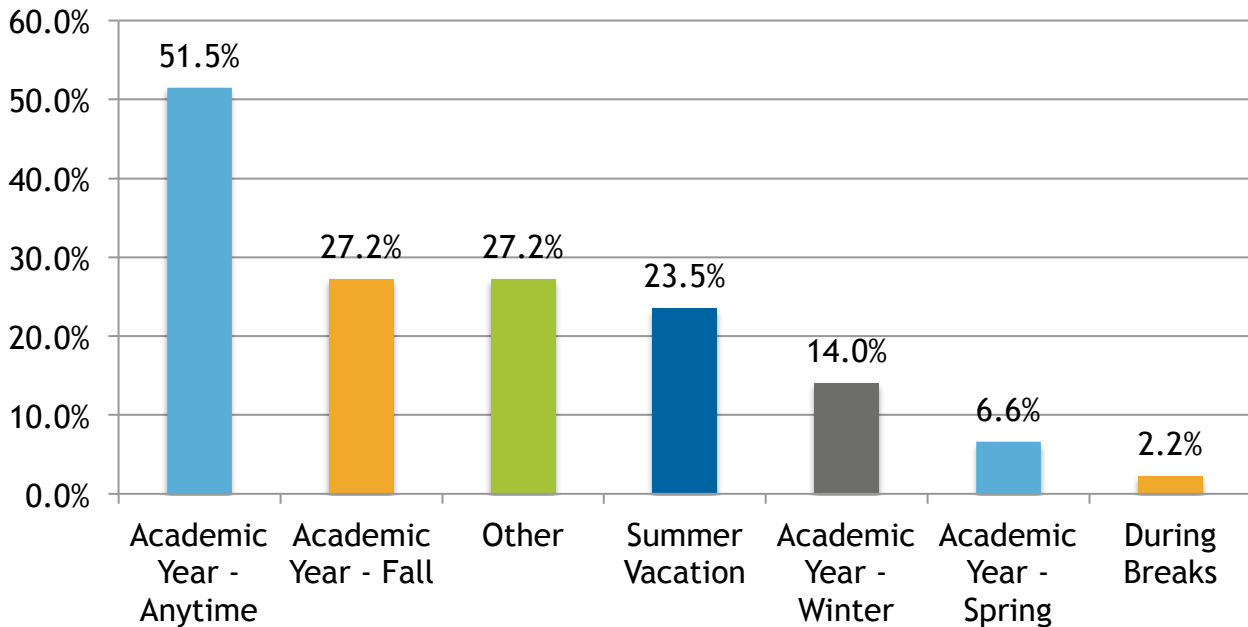
“Other” responses included: behavioral interventions, parents’ understanding of the difference between conflict and bullying, mental health concerns, anti-bullying programs, relational aggression in girls, bullying involving students with disabilities, bullying and RTI, and working with bully-victims.



Event Format



Time of Year



“Other” responses included: clarification of precise timing within fall, winter, spring or summer; after school (4 - 6 p.m.); staff development days; and in-service days.



Qualitative Results

Stakeholder Meetings

Individual Meetings and Interviews with Directors of Similar Centers

The director of the Alberti Center for Bullying Abuse Prevention held individual meetings (or phone conversations) with five individuals who have extensive experience directing either university-affiliated centers or other centers with related missions. The purpose of these conversations was to gather information about ways to successfully structure the administrative functioning of the Alberti Center. Themes from these meetings are summarized below.

Importance of Linking with Others. The importance of getting others (faculty with similar interests, school and community professionals) invested in the work and the mission of the center was reiterated across interviews as important to helping maximize impact. The methods of involvement varied, from those that would be key partners for conferences and other presentations, to those that could serve on an advisory council to have others spread the word and to help gather support for the center. Some other key issues that emerged from conversations about building these links was the issue of funding. Although there is often a desire to partner, a common issue is how to access funds to support these collaborations and relationships. Another theme was the importance of being very clear about what role (and power) different stakeholders would have. A caution raised about the advisory council was the need to clearly define the purpose, and how it is different from the role of a Board of Directors for a non-profit, for example.

Funding issues. In each conversation, the theme emerged of how the center would manage resources in order to achieve success. Although the models for funding varied greatly (e.g., funding through legislation, combination of university funding and fee-for-service through schools, combination of university and grant funding), this was always a key question regarding sustainability and growth. In addition, an underlying theme was the difficult funding climate in terms of state and federal grants.

Individual Meetings and Interviews with School and Community Professionals

Meetings and interviews were conducted with a number of individuals and small groups, including: representatives from the area BOCES, local school districts (Buffalo Public Schools, Williamsville, Amherst, West Seneca, Orchard Park), community service providers (e.g., Child and Family Services, Character Education Council of Western New York, Cradle Beach, Kids on the Block), service providers at UB (e.g., Wellness Education Services), and other professionals (e.g., private therapists, lawyers, educational consultants).



Strong Commitment to the Issue of Youth Development and Bullying Prevention. The individuals and groups involved in these conversations were all passionate about trying to find effective ways to prevent and intervene with the pervasive problem of bullying. Since many of the organizations are large, there were usually multiple initiatives and programs being used, including mediation, restorative justice approaches, diversity training, bystander intervention training, theraplay, and art and performance activities. Meetings with representatives from local schools revealed that there is a commitment to educating the whole child and taking steps to tackle the issue of bullying.

Investment in the Approach Used. The approaches varied, with one school district adopting a specific bullying or violence prevention program (e.g., Olweus Bullying Prevention Program). Most of the schools took a comprehensive approach to cultivating positive behaviors, character, and overall wellness (e.g., Leader in Me, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, Search Institute Developmental Assets), viewing bullying as one part of a larger context of behavior. Central to the perceived success of the programs seemed to be the commitment and support of the administrator at the building level. A similar theme was identified in meetings with community service providers in terms of an investment in the approach used, with most having spent years creating a niche.

Desire to Show Evidence of Effectiveness of Approach. In all conversations, there seemed to be a sincere desire to look at what was working and to provide evidence to document effectiveness. However, evaluation was very rarely considered at the initial stages of planning unless it was a systematic part of a program or approach used (e.g., Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, PBIS, Search Institute). In the cases where it was part of an approach used, data were collected and an entity outside of the school system analyzed the data and fed it back to the school. Many schools and agencies mentioned being open to faculty and student research from UB.

Individual and Group Meetings with University at Buffalo Faculty and Staff

Meetings were held with individuals and groups from the University at Buffalo departments of Education, Psychology, Research Institute on Addictions, Business, Social Welfare, and Communications.

Focus on Research Mission of University. In all meetings with faculty members, the emphasis on the University at Buffalo's status as a research university was stated as critical to the role of the faculty's work. Although commitment to the issues related to bullying and victimization was evident, it was clear that the means by which faculty could address these issues was through conducting research.

Funding. Related to the aforementioned focus on research, the topic of pursuing grant funding to support this work was raised in every conversation with faculty members. Funded efforts were those that were regarded as most enticing and sustainable.



Focus Groups from Western New York Educational Services Council Event

1. What systematic programs/interventions have you been using that you think are working to reduce bullying? What evidence do you have to suggest this?

Empirically Supported Programming. On all levels of the school system (elementary, middle, and high school) there was a general theme of using one or more evidence-backed interventions (PBIS, Second Step, *Rachel's Challenge were mentioned most often), if funding was available. Members of the focus groups commented that they felt these programs were helpful to reduce suspensions, improve school climate, and increase self-confidence in targets of bullying. One comment was made that these programs can be expensive to maintain. *Note: Although Rachel's Challenge was mentioned as an evidence-based approach, we are not aware of evidence supporting the effects of the program.

Cost Effectiveness. Many focus group members commented that they are unable to fully implement empirically supported anti-bullying programs due to lack of funding. They stated that in most cases, they would create their own programs (Peer Mentoring, Classroom Presentations, and Positive Character Trait Promotion) or borrow pieces of other programs to suit their needs. Maximizing cost effectiveness appeared to be a significant theme for most participants.

Time Concerns. The time required for many of the bullying prevention and intervention programs was also cited as a concern and possible barrier to use.

2. What other things are your school/district doing that seems to impact bullying? In what ways?

Involvement of All Staff. Attendees discussed the need for all staff to be involved in anti-bullying efforts, including administrators, teachers, counselors and social workers, bus drivers, and cafeteria workers. In particular, group members indicated that they felt their efforts needed additional support from the administration, and that teachers should be encouraged to take the lead in their classrooms in order to make the programs more active and engaging.

Clear Definitions and Expectations. Participants stressed the importance of setting clear definitions and expectations for students, and that this information be developmentally appropriate. Group members indicated that this could be especially difficult for the elementary level, where students need explicit instruction in what behaviors are appropriate for school and may not understand what bullying is.

Empathy and Character Education. Group members talked about the value of including empathy and character education in the curriculum. Many shared details about specific character programs that are used, including incentive and recognition programs.



3. What types of things are your school/district doing that specifically include students and/or are student-directed that address bullying? How are you doing this? What changes are you seeing?

Using Developmentally Relevant Tools. Group members discussed numerous methods used to engage with students on their level and facilitate discussion. Among these were bully boxes, media (e.g., popular television shows such as “What Would You Do?”), and anti-cyberbullying programs and software (e.g., NetSmartz and isafe).

Limited Student Involvement in Bullying-Specific Efforts. In the conversation, members reported that student efforts were often led by teachers, counselors, or administrators and that these groups may exist but are fairly limited. Interventions appeared to be directed towards students but did not explicitly involve students in their development (i.e., showing movies, having a bully box). Some schools stated that they had teen leadership programs not directly connected with bullying but with positive character trait development instead.

4. What do you perceive as the greatest needs in this area? How can research partnerships with UB and the Alberti Center assist?

Information About Evidence-Based Programs. A strong need was expressed for information about bullying prevention programs. Specifically, guidance is needed to evaluate which programs are evidence-based and effective, what costs are involved, and how to properly implement.

Parent and Community Education. Several groups expressed an interest in involving parents with bullying awareness and intervention. Suggested methods included Parent Awareness Nights, learning how to engage parents and the community, and the need to educate adults on how their behaviors impact their children. It was also recommended that parents be educated on cyberbullying and social networking for their children. Timing and group size were important points, often indicating that small groups would increase sensitivity and presenting at an open house would result in a captive audience.

Staff Development and Training. Most members were in agreement that there needed to be more consistent, informational staff training throughout the year. Topics suggested included general bullying education (recognizing, intervening, and bystander education); cultural sensitivity; dealing effectively with parents of students who bully others and students who are the target of bullying; and working with parents who bully others. Some groups even indicated that these trainings should be mandatory and include all members of school staff (bus drivers, cafeteria workers, teachers, administrators, etc.).



Focus Groups from 2010 Alberti Center Symposium

Need for More Information. Attendees remarked that they are seeking more information on bullying programs and their effectiveness. Individuals commented that they would like more information about the Alberti Center and what resources it has to offer to educators and community members. It was suggested that the Alberti Center's website include downloadable resources and that a follow-up conference be held with a focus on how the center has progressed.

National Federation for Just Communities Middle School Youth Leadership Conference

Small Group Discussions

Role of Bystander. A good deal of the four small group discussions centered on the role of bystanders in bullying. After being asked to reflect on personal experiences as a bystander, students identified ways to help as a bystander, including stepping in and getting an adult to help. The students also shared reasons why they may not intervene, citing fear of retaliation, embarrassment in front of peers, being friends with the student doing the bullying, and not liking or agreeing with the target of the bullying.

Perceived Impact of Reporting Bullying Incidents to School Staff. As an alternative to standing up to a student who is bullying another student, the groups discussed going to a teacher or school staff member to help. Many of the students indicated that telling a teacher about a bullying situation does not always produce positive and meaningful results. Some of the reasons students gave were that the student who was bullying will lie about what occurred or that telling a teacher or school staff member will make you a target for bullying.

Student Brainstorming Sessions

Students were grouped by school and asked to identify what they can do to make a difference with bullying in their school. Below are the themes under which the responses fell:

- Help the Victim/Intervene
 - Stand up in the moment
 - Comfort the target after an incident has occurred
- Get Help from an Adult
- Spread and Anti-Bullying Message
- Live the Golden Rule



Conclusions and Action Items

Conclusions

Information from the needs assessment revealed the following:

- Respondents reported being particularly concerned about verbal bullying, cyberbullying, and relational bullying (between 82 and 92% of respondents reported being “concerned” or “strongly concerned”) compared to physical bullying (a little more than 50% of respondents reported being “concerned” or strongly concerned”).
- School staff members who responded indicated that the most common strategies used were talking to the student who bullied and talking to the student who was bullied after an incident. Issuing disciplinary consequences for the student who bullied others was also a commonly used strategy. In addition, classroom rules against bullying and contacting parents (of both the student who bullied and the target) were reported to be used often. Student involvement in bullying prevention efforts, and staff and parent education/training were used less commonly.
- Individuals involved in the focus groups emphasized the need for education, both of school staff and parents, about the issue of bullying prevention and intervention. Having access to age-appropriate resources was also expressed as a need. Funding and cost-effectiveness of efforts was also a consistent theme, both with regard to research and to programs used at the school level.
- In terms of events, there was great interest in the topics of peer relationships and bullying, parents and bullying, and cyberbullying. A little more than 75% of respondents preferred a half-day format for conferences, and there was a preference for conferences to be held during the academic year, particularly in the fall.



Action Items

Based on this information, there are several areas where the Alberti Center can focus its efforts to help address the gap between the current and desired state of affairs:

- Provide education, in the form of training and seminars, for both educators and parents about bullying prevention and intervention.
- Provide resources for practitioners to use in their work on bullying prevention with different age groups.
- Hold conferences during the academic year on the topics of cyberbullying, peer relationships and bullying, and parents and bullying.
- Emphasize the importance of including students and parents in bullying prevention and intervention efforts.
- Seek funding opportunities for research and assist schools in trying to find cost-effective ways to implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention efforts.



Appendices

Appendix A: Complete Needs Assessment Survey

Dr. Jean Alberti Center for the Prevention
of Bullying Abuse and School Violence



Needs Assessment

Our center is focused on identifying, researching, and disseminating information about the prevention of bullying and school violence. We are conducting a needs assessment in order to find out more about existing practices related to bullying and school violence prevention and intervention, as well as current issues and needs from the perspective of various stakeholders. Thanks for taking the time to provide your input!

1. What is your occupation? (Check which applies)
 School administrator School teacher School-based mental health professional
 Community service provider Other _____ (please specify)
2. With what age group do you work? (Select all that apply)
 Infants, toddler, and preschoolers Elementary school Middle school
 High school Other _____ (please specify)
3. In what setting do you work? (check which best applies)
 Urban Suburban Rural
4. Bullying is **intentional, usually repeated acts** of verbal, physical, or written aggression by a peer (or group of peers) **operating from a position of strength or power with the goal of hurting the victim** physically or damaging status and/or social reputation. With regard to the population with whom you work, please indicate your level of concern about these issues:
 - a. ***Physical bullying*** (involves repeatedly hitting, kicking, or shoving someone weaker on purpose).
 Not Concerned Slightly Concerned Concerned Strongly Concerned
 - b. ***Verbal bullying*** (involves repeatedly teasing, putting down, or insulting someone on purpose).
 Not Concerned Slightly Concerned Concerned Strongly Concerned
 - c. ***Relational bullying*** (involves getting others to repeatedly ignore or leave someone out on purpose).
 Not Concerned Slightly Concerned Concerned Strongly Concerned
 - d. ***Cyberbullying*** (involves using electronic means (e.g., cell phone, email, internet chat, etc.) to repeatedly tease, harass, or socially isolate someone on purpose).
 Not Concerned Slightly Concerned Concerned Strongly Concerned



5. Please circle the number indicating how often your school uses the following strategies to prevent/handle bullying incidents:

Strategy		Never	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know
School Environment	Administering school-wide survey to assess bullying problems	1	2	3	4	5
	Modifying space and schedule to reduce the occurrence of bullying (e.g., staggering lunchtime or recess)	1	2	3	4	5
	Improving recess quality (e.g., inclusive activities)	1	2	3	4	5
	Procedures to avoid contact between the bullies and victims	1	2	3	4	5
Staff Involvement	Anti-bullying written or web-based resources for teachers and non-teaching staff (bus drivers, teacher aides, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
	Anti-bullying training for teachers and staff	1	2	3	4	5
	Increasing adult supervision in "hot spots"	1	2	3	4	5
Working with Bullies & Victims	Identifying students at risk for bullying others and providing intervention as needed	1	2	3	4	5
	Identifying students at risk for victimization and providing intervention as needed	1	2	3	4	5
	School staff talking with bullies following bullying incidents	1	2	3	4	5
	School staff talking with victims following bullying incidents	1	2	3	4	5
	Problem-solving based adult mediation procedures (e.g., the Method of Shared Concern, the No Blame Approach)	1	2	3	4	5
	Disciplinary consequences (i.e., suspension, expulsion) for bullies	1	2	3	4	5
Parent Involvement	Informing parents of the anti-bullying policy and program	1	2	3	4	5
	Educating parents about bullying via printed resources or trainings	1	2	3	4	5
	Providing parents with information about the anti-bullying curriculum and activities to support their use at home	1	2	3	4	5
	Contacting and meeting with parents of bullies	1	2	3	4	5
	Contacting and meeting with parents of victims	1	2	3	4	5



Educating Students	Talking to students about bullying in student assemblies	1	2	3	4	5
	Distributing printed resources about bullying to students	1	2	3	4	5
	Violence prevention curricula in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
	Anti-bullying educational curricula in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
	Classroom rules against bullying	1	2	3	4	5
	Weekly class meetings to discuss bullying and peer conflicts	1	2	3	4	5
Peer Involvement	Students working as school welcomers to help new students explore the environment	1	2	3	4	5
	Peer juries/court to “try” bullies	1	2	3	4	5
	Formal participation of students in decision making process of how to stop bullying	1	2	3	4	5
	Students taking leadership roles in anti-bullying activities (e.g., assemblies, performing in dramas, leading discussions)	1	2	3	4	5
	Peers offering companionship/friendship to victims (e.g., after-school clubs, buddying)	1	2	3	4	5
	Peer mediation	1	2	3	4	5
	Students working as peer counselors to victims	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please indicate what, if any, formal program your school uses to prevent bullying or related issues (e.g., Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Second Step, PATHs, PBIS):

7. Please indicate your opinion about what seems to work best in preventing and/or intervening with bullying:

8. Please indicate in what areas your school needs improvement:



9. Please indicate which potential topics for conferences you would be most interested in attending. Circle all that apply.

- a. Peer Relationships and Bullying
- b. Parents and Bullying
- c. Facts vs. Fears about School Violence
- d. Threat Assessment
- e. Bullying across the Lifespan
- f. Homophobic Bullying
- g. Cyberbullying
- h. Other (please specify) _____

10. Please indicate types of conference presentations you think would be most preferable. Check all that apply.

- Full day Shorter series (60-90 minutes) Webinars Partial days (1/2 day)

11. What is the most convenient time of year, in your opinion, to hold a conference (e.g., academic school year, summer vacation, during breaks, spring quarter, etc.)? Please be specific.

12. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Thank you!



Appendix B: Factor Loadings for Survey

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Eigenvalue	10.473	2.245	1.493	1.25	1.003
% Variance	43.6	9.4	6.2	5.2	4.2
Reliability	.88	.88	.79	.89	.93
Students working as peer counselors to victims	1.046	-.351		.167	
Peer mediation	.750				
Peers offering companionship to victims	.733				
Peer juries/court to “try” bullies	.642	.153	-.131	-.147	.101
Formal participation of students in decision making process	.621	.320		-.114	
Students taking leadership roles in anti-bullying activities	.536	.241			
Students working as school welcomers for new students	.399		.142		
Problem-solving based adult mediation procedures	.361	.161			.113
Identifying students at risk for victimization and providing intervention	.360	.166	.280		
Anti-bullying educational curricula in classroom		.959			-.116
Violence prevention curricula in classroom		.792			
Anti-bullying training for teachers and staff		.685		.103	
Talking to students about bullying in student assemblies	.151	.548	.162		
Distributing printed resources about bullying to students	.176	.531			



Classroom rules against bullying	-.188	.429	.223	.149	.173
Weekly class meetings to discuss bullying and peer conflicts	.380	.410	-.143	.119	
School staff talking with victims following incidents			1.019		
School staff talking with bullies following incidents			.939		
Identifying students at risk for bullying others and providing intervention	.296	.237	.305	-.112	
Educating parents about bullying via printed resources or trainings				.912	
Providing parents with information about the anti-bullying curriculum and activities to support their use at home		.127		.807	
Informing parents of the anti-bullying policy and program		.150		.549	.146
Contacting and meeting with parents of victims					1.014
Contacting and meeting with parents of bullies					.872

