## Knowledge and Skills of Public Elementary School Teachers on Bullying Prevention and Management in Puerto Rico

Dr. Francisco Xavier San Miguel Torres February 11, 2025





#### Puerto Rico – US Territory 1898 Many feel discriminated

 Department of Education responds to both US and PR interests, though budget comes from US.

• Teachers are not well paid, and education does not enjoy priority. Ex. UPR & 250 schools closed in 10 yrs.

Culture: Spanish, religious power, machismo, homophobia, transphobia, hip hop lyrics



#### Introduction

• The underestimated and significant problem of bullying is being addressed internationally.

• School bullying is the most underestimated public health problem in North America (Fraser 2015).

• I selected the population and research questions to address the gap that has not been studied in Puerto Rico.

# Historical Background

In 1986, Olweus defines bullying. Social behavior and the Anti-Bullying movement gain international momentum.

Bullying is not a topic in the media or on the political agenda in PR (Rivera 2011). Pluralistic ignorance.

# **Problem Statement**

No studies were found in Puerto Rico on the understanding, application of public policy, and effectiveness of training on bullying.

According to Dr. César Rey (2020), research on school violence is needed in PR.

According to Cava et al. (2010), school bullying hinders the objectives of the ELA Constitution and Law 85 for students. It obstructs justice and equity.



Document the current state of teachers' knowledge and skills on school bullying in Puerto Rico.

Contribute to the need for research in Puerto Rico on bullying that generates interest, to adjust public policy to correspond the international trend of UNESCO and the World Anti-Bullying Forum (WABF).

Promote social change, especially for the most disadvantaged. Fight for human dignity.





Provide justice and equity to all students to minimize cruelty, misery, trauma, sadness, suicides, low academic achievement, and school dropout rates caused by bullying. Prevent the suffering and pain of victims and their families.

Need for data regarding the knowledge and skills of teachers: a key figure in the prevention and management of school bullying.





Examine the knowledge and skills of teachers in preventing and managing bullying, focusing solely on the impact of an outdated written policy, with a minimum of training.

#### **Conceptual Framework**

Investigate the depth and level of knowledge and skills on school bullying of the teacher, a vital component of the educational system to reduce bullying according to successful programs. Identify deficiencies and opportunities in the current public policy.





#### **Research in Puerto Rico**

García	
2008	

#### **Survey of Teachers**

- 92% zero information about bullying during professional training
- Teachers do not feel capable of handling bullying

### Ocasio Domínguez 2017

#### **GLSEN 2015**

- 99.5% were victims of homophobic comments (e.g., "dyke" or "faggot")
- 69% of surveyed LGBTQ community members felt unsafe in their school environment.

#### Quiles 2021

- Most frequent reasons for bullying include: weight, physical appearance, nerdy appearance, looking homosexual or effeminate, "tomboy" appearance, religious beliefs, or being talented in arts, music, or sports.
- Quiles evidenced the correlation between mental health, violent behavior, and even suicidal thoughts and attempts with having been a victim of traumatic bullying experiences.

Dr. Roxany Rivera: "Bullying is indeed a matter of life and death in Puerto Rico"

#### Research, Articles, Books, Antibulling Pograms and Internet Resources at the International Level

**Consequences - Moral Disconnection** 

Mastery of the bullying topic vs. common sense

The teacher's role

Cyberbullying (rise and need for research)

LGBTQ+ (subgroup with the highest number of studies)

Social isolation

Anti-bullying programs and curricula





#### **Methodological Design**

Quantitative

Comparative



#### **Population and Sample**

The totality of elementary school teachers from kindergarten to eighth grade in the public education system of Puerto Rico equal 18,891 potential participants with similar characteristics that form a set with statistical research potential (Ary et al. 2010).

Representative sampling to achieve a 95% confidence level. The goal was to obtain a sample of 392 (Solvin 1960).

415 were obtained.

#### Methodology

#### 34 Item Questionaire (3 sociodemographic)

in *Microsoft Forms* (DEPR compatible format)

2 Dimensions

16 Knowledge

17 Skills

#### Likert Scale 1 to 5

Strongly agree
Agree
Indecisive
Disagree
Strongly disagree



#### Title: Questionnaire for teachers to measure knowledge and skills about bullying

#### Cuestionario para maestros para medir conocimientos y destrezas sobre acoso escolar

Luego del proceso de validación de contenido Modelo Lawshe (1975).

Cuestionario para maestros para medir conocimientos y destrezas sobre acoso escolar

Instrucciones: Para cada pregunta, indique cuánto está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo, marcando el número con el cual se identifica mejor. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas. Lo importante para el beneficio de los docentes es ser honesta(o) en su respuesta. Sus respuestas serán confidenciales y se garantiza el anonimato. Su participación es voluntaria y puede dejar de tomar el cuestionario en cualquier momento.

Elija la respuesta con la que se sienta más identificado(a).

#### Escala:

- 5 Totalmente de acuerdo
- 4 De acuerdo
- 3 Indeciso
- 2 En desacuerdo
- 1 Totalmente en desacuerdo

#### **Compliance with:**

- 1. Participant rights and consent
- 2. Confidentiality and anonymity
- 3. DEPR (Mr. Israel Sánchez)
- 4. IRB of Caribbean University
- 1. En mi institución de preparación académica para ser maestro, el currículo incluyó el tema de acoso escolar.

Totalmente en acuerdo



#### Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient .801 > .7

High reliability for all 31 items

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) .773 > .5 VALIDATES CONSTRUCT

High (strong) linear correlations



# ata Analysis

#### **Question 1**

What is the level of elementary school teachers' knowledge in Puerto Rico to manage school bullying according to the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?

#### **Descriptive Statistical Analysis (SPSS)**

Figura 6

Nivel de conocimientos de los maestros



### CARIBBEAN UNIVERSITY BAYAMÓN I VEGA BAJA I CAROLINA I PONCE

#### **Question 2**

What is the level of elementary school teachers' skills in Puerto Rico to manage school bullying according to the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?

#### **Descriptive Statistical Analysis (SPSS)**

Figura 7

Nivel de destrezas de los maestros



# ata Analysis

#### **Question 3**

¿How do the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers on bullying differ between school types: regular public and Montessori?

#### Null hypothesis RETAINED (p=.478>0.05)

Ho1. There is no significant difference in the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers on bullying between school types: <u>regular public</u> and Montessori.

#### **Statistical Analysis (SPSS)**

Non-parametric test: Mann Whitney U

#### **Question 4**

¿How do the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers on bullying differ between <u>years</u> of experience?

#### Null hypothesis RETAINED (p=.504>.05)

Ho2. There is no significant difference in the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers on bullying between <u>years of experience</u>.

#### **Statistical Analysis (SPSS)**

Kruskal-Wallis Test



#### **Question 5**

¿How do the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers on bullying differ between educational <u>regional offices</u> (ORE)?

#### Null hypothesis RETAINED (p=.893>0.05)

Ho3. There is no significant difference in the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers on bullying between educational <u>regional offices</u> (ORE)



**Statistical Analysis (SPSS)** 

Prueba de Kruskal-Wallis Test



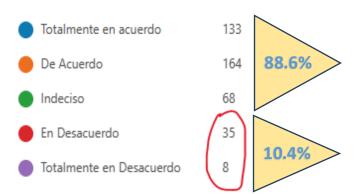
#### **Findings**

#### Traces of an obsolete paradigm

32. Interventions with the aggressor and the victim are the most effective tactics to reduce school bullying.

32. Las intervenciones con el agresor y la víctima son las tácticas más efectivas para reducir el

acoso escolar en la escuela.



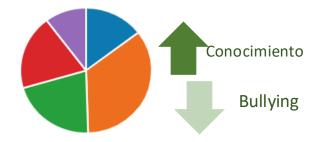


### Findings

18. I was taught how to identify and monitor cyberbullying.

18. Me enseñaron a cómo identificar y monitorear el acoso cibernético.

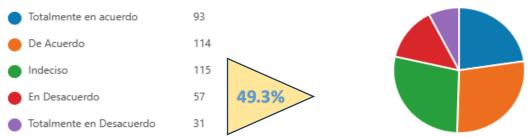




19. I am aware of the scientific evidence that showed that 4 out of 5 gay students or perceived gay have been bullied in school.

19. Conozco y estoy clara(o) sobre la evidencia científica de que 4 de cada 5 estudiantes gay, o

19. Conozco y estoy clara(o) sobre la evidencia científica de que 4 de cada 5 estudiantes gay, o que se percibe son gay, han sido acosados en la escuela.



20. Suggesting to the victim that they should tell the abuser to stop the behavior is effective.

20. Decirle a la víctima que le diga al abusador que pare el comportamiento es efectivo.

49.3%



•	Totalmente en acuerdo	30
	De Acuerdo	87
•	Indeciso	96
5	En Desacuerdo	147
•	Totalmente en Desacuerdo	50

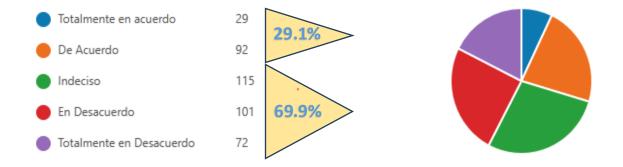




#### A new Paradigm begins with me as a teacher.

21. I greet the bully with a smile and cheerfulness every day when I see him in the morning.

21. Recibo al abusador con saludos y alegría todos los días cuando le veo en la mañana.





Cultural Unconscious Effect vs. Expectations

"I STOP labeling, I change attitudes and behaviors" Espelage





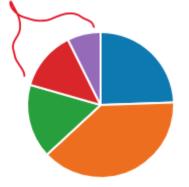
#### Common sense can be harmful - Olweus

23. I use the words "aggressor", "bully", and "victim" when students are in my presence, when I refer to school bullying.

23. Utilizo las palabras "agresor", "bully" y "víctima" cuando estudiantes están en mi presencia,

para cuando me refiero a acoso escolar.







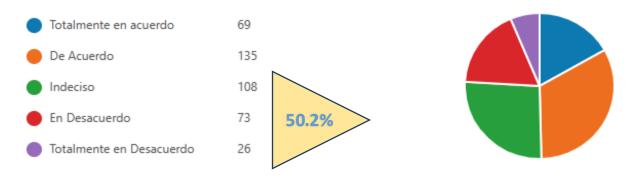
Labeling



#### Not mentioned in DEPR Public Policy

26. When I gather my students to discuss school bullying, I have them sit in a circle or semi-circle so that they can see each other's faces and facial expressions directly.

26. Cuando reúno a mis estudiantes para hablar de acoso escolar, los siento en círculo o semicírculo para que se vean directamente los rostros y expresiones faciales.



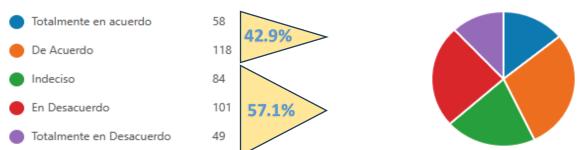


#### Examples of content for new curriculum

Trainings and knowledge that save lives

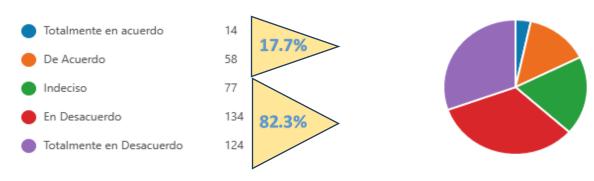
27. I have given my students the opportunity to communicate anonymously if they have witnessed or experienced bullying in a suggestion box.

27. He dado la oportunidad a los estudiantes de escribir anónimamente si han presenciado o protagonizado acoso escolar en una cajita de sugerencias.



28. In the past year, I have administered at least one sociometric test to students to identify isolated or marginalized students.

28. En el pasado año he administrado al menos una encuesta sociométrica a estudiantes para identificar estudiantes aislados o marginados.





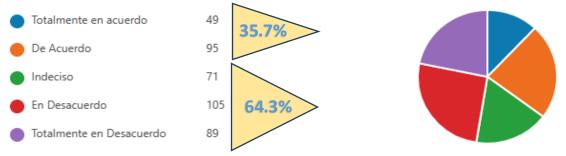
**Findings** 

#### Mentioned in DEPR Public Policy

#### **Critical Thinking Development**

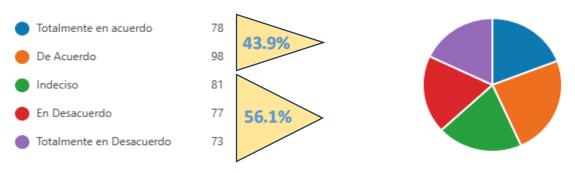
29. I have asked students to stage or role play as the bully, victim, and bystander, depicting different situations of bullying to foster empathy and develop skills on how to behave appropriately.

29. He pedido a los estudiantes que dramaticen o creen escenas de teatro con los roles de agresor, víctima y espectadores, sobre diferentes situaciones de "bullying" para que se fomente empatía y desarrollen destrezas sobre cómo proceder apropiadamente.



30. After the dramatizations, students discuss each situation and ways to stop bullying among themselves.

30. Luego de las dramatizaciones se discute entre estudiantes la situación y maneras de frenar el acoso.





### Content in proven Antibullying Programs (Olweus, KiVA, AVE)

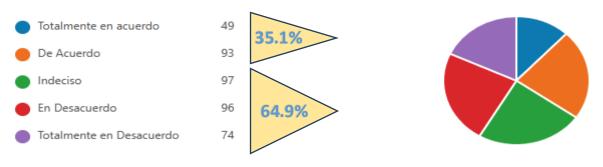
33. I involve parents in anti-bullying campaigns and periodically send them information on the topic via email, text message, or paper.

 Involucro a los padres en las campañas antiacoso y les envío periódicamente información sobre el tema por e-mail, textos o en papel.



34. As part of the DEPR training, I learned how to lead a meeting with parents or caregivers and what to say and ask during a bullying intervention.

34. Como parte de los adiestramientos administrados por el DEPR, me enseñaron a cómo dirigir una reunión con padres o cuidadores y qué decir y preguntar, durante una intervención de acoso escolar.







#### Conclusions y recommendations





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#### **Conclusions**

- 1. Teachers have limited knowledge and skills to recognize, prevent, and manage school bullying.
- 2. The study revealed that over 50% lack skills on cyberbullying and supporting LGBTQ+ students.



#### **Conclusions**

3. The results point towards the lack of a comprehensive curriculum that includes detailed training to enable teachers to manage bullying and the review of the literature suggests the need for a new public policy that aligns with international trends.



#### Recommendations

1. Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of public policies, training, curricula, or programs implemented. DEPR must provide information on proven curricula and programs to reduce bullying, as a way to enable and equip teachers to provide all students with the opportunity for a safe and bullyfree learning and teaching experience.



#### Recommendations

- 2. Include a curriculum segment on Bullying (including Cyberbullying) in teacher preparation institutions.
- 3. Invite experts to a Forum or Conference in Puerto Rico that includes researchers, psychologists, academics, students, and families of victims.



- 1. University curricula for teachers in Puerto Rico, determining what they include about school bullying
- 2. Cyberbullying, sexting, inappropriate content without consent
- 3. Moral disconnection of students, teachers, principals, parents, and adults in the school (vs. not delving deeper)
- 4. LGBTQ+, suicide attempts (students and parents)
- 5. Compliance and effectiveness of current public protocol and policy, measuring CoCE operation, and assessing compliance with reports of school violence





#### **Research Limitations**

- 1. The understanding of school bullying situations among teachers was not compared
- definitions were not investigated
- 2. Compliance with CoCE, principals, protocols, and mandatory bullying reports was not investigated
- 3. It is unknown what teacher training institutions teach about bullying



#### **Sustained Philosophy**

Olweus, KiVa, WABF & Cyberbullying Research Lab
"Only by delving deeper can bullying be reduced."

- 1. First curriculum variant or segment During **teacher** academic preparation
- 2. Second curriculum variant within the DEPR Antibullying program or curriculum Includes in-depth **teacher** training, semester refreshers, recent research, new concepts and practical training (A la Carte for Private Schools)



### **Contributions**

- New information on school bullying in Puerto Rico, regarding teachers' capacities
- Established new paradigm (Gap) and international trend
- Validated instrument accessible at no cost
- •Curricular variant on school bullying for students to become teachers. The content includes the following topics: (And in Appendix 16)



### **Bullying Curriculum for future teachers**

- 1. The evolution of the definition of bullying according to UNESCO and the World Antibullying Forum 2023
- 2. Presentation of research and its findings and implications
- 3. Psychological and sociological perspectives
- 4. Moral disengagement and prosocial and positive coexistence behavior
- 5. Transfer effect and the bullying circle
- 6. Bystander (the majority and not so innocent) behavior

### **Bullying Curriculum for future teachers**

- 7. What are the bully's motivations?
- 8. Consequences of school bullying: mental health, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, self harm, as a proven tool to dismantle moral disengagement
- 9. The power imbalance factor and intimidation
- 10. The marginalized or socially isolated
- 11. Cyberbullying and online safety aspects, promoting online safety and well-being incl. Sreen Time control
- 12. Sexting, consensual and non-consensual, sexual harassment
- 13. Social media like Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube and Instagram, and tools to curb bullying

### **Bullying Curriculum for future teachers**

- 14. Criminal perspective, what is legal and what is illegal, including legal cases
- 15. Analysis of successful anti-bullying programs internationally
- 16. Public policies of countries successful in reducing school bullying
- 17. Bullying prevention
- 18. Bullying management and intervention
- 19. Integration of adults in the school community, including parents
- 20. Common sense versus methods and protocols proven by research

## **Bullying Curriculum for future teachers**

- 22. Empathy and compassion, self-esteem, and well-being
- 23. School climate
- 24. Sense of school belonging
- 25.Most vulnerable and needy subgroup, LGBTTQ+
- 26.Self-harm, suicide attempts, suicide
- 27. Games, simulators, videos, dramatizations, debates, and
- classroom activities
- 28.Racism, discrimination, labeling based on appearances or disability

### **Bullying Curriculum for future teachers**

- 29. Family (parents, siblings) and community influence, bullying in society
- 30. Cultural violence
- 31. Importance of student participation in anti-bullying programs
- 32. How to identify the signs of bullying
- 33. How to promote communication from the victim and the bystander to report bullying
- 34. The teacher's role as a catalytic and leading agent in program strategies



## Questions?



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Educando a futuros maestros en la prevención y manejo de acoso escolar (presencial o virtual) – 3 créditos (Total Tiempo 32 horas)

Primer módulo de 4 – Introducción a Acoso Escolar (Tiempo 8 horas)

Objetivos El maestro será capaz de:	Métodos	Recursos	Evaluación	Competencia
		Why does bullying occur? (youtube.com)		
Identificar tipos de acoso escolar, la evolución de las		What is Bullying? - Cyberbullying Research Center	Presentacione s en grupos de	Cognitiva
definiciones, consecuencias.		A guide - How to stop bullying - World Anti-Bullying	3-4	
Conocer los grupos		Forum (worldantibullyingforum.com)	estudiantes,	
susceptibles a ser víctimas y		Dr. Dan Olweus and the Olweus Bullying Prevention	sobre los recursos.	Cognitiva
los abusadores.		Program (wistia.com)	recursos.	
Explicar Desconexión Moral	Lecturas y videos		Discusión y	Procedimental
Expired Descendantification	, racos	Prevent Bullying in Schools (wistia.com)	debates sobre temas.	y Actitudinal
Exponer investigaciones	Discusión en	What Is Bullying   StopBullying.gov	temas.	Cognitiva
recientes, tendencias y mejores estrategias.	clase virtual		Seleccionar	
incjoies estrategias.		Effects of Bullying   StopBullying.gov	tema para	
Conocer Programas		Versión Completa: ¿Qué es bullying? Tiina Mäkelä	presentación final y elegir	Cognitiva y
Antibullying Olweus y KiVa		explica cómo reconocer y prevenir el acoso escolar	grupos	procedimental
Asimilar profundizar en tema		(youtube.com) KiVa		
del bullying es la clave		BULLYING UNA HISTORIA REAL (youtube.com)		Cognitiva





Educando a futuros maestros en la prevención y manejo de acoso escolar (presencial o virtual) – 3 créditos (Total Tiempo 32 horas)

Segundo módulo de 4 – Subgrupos LGBTTQ+, y marginados, sus riesgos y consecuencias (Tiempo 8 horas)

Objetivos El maestro será capaz de:	Métodos	Recursos	Evaluación	Competencia
Dominar qué es identidad de		bullying-cyberbullying-sexual-orientation-lgbtq.pdf  Accelerating Acceptance 2023   GLAAD		Cognitivo y
género y orientación sexual como alto riesgo		Loneliness   KiVa Program	Presentacione s en grupos de	actitudinal
Reconocer qué es etiquetar, discriminar por raza, discapacidad y apariencias	Lecturas y	LGBTQI+ Youth   StopBullying.gov  El Bullying homofóbico y transfóbico en los centros educativos: taller de sensibilización para su prevención;	3-4 estudiantes, sobre los recursos	Cognitivo y actitudinal
Familiarizarse con las estadísticas, leyes, casos, suicidios	videos Discusión en clase	guía de facilitación; 2015 (cndh.org.mx)  Laws, Policies & Regulations   StopBullying.gov	Discusión y debates sobre temas	Cognitivo y actitudinal
Identificar cómo identificar estudiantes aislados o marginados e integrarlos y darles sentido de pertenencia	virtual	LGBT High School Students Share Their Experiences (youtube.com)  EL BULLYING HOMOFÓBICO (youtube.com)	Entrevistar víctima LGBTTQ+, o familiar sobre	Cognitivo, procedimental y actitudinal
Conceptualizar el bullying puede ser de vida o muerte		Habla madre de adolescente trans que se suicidó por bullying (youtube.com)	acoso escolar	Cognitivo y actitudinal
		El aislamiento social también es bullying - SOBRE  LOS HOMBROS - DéjateTV (voutube.com)		





Educando a futuros maestros en la prevención y manejo de acoso escolar (presencial o virtual) – 3 créditos (Total Tiempo 32 horas)

Tercer módulo de 4 - Cyberbullying (Tiempo 8 horas)

Objetivos El maestro será capaz de:	Métodos	Recursos	Evaluación	Competencia
Definir cyberbullying, identificar señales		What is Cyberbullying?		Cognitiva y procedimental
Conocer actividades para que los estudiantes conceptualicen las consecuencias emocionales y legales que pueden causar		Cyberbullying Fact Sheet: Identification, Prevention, and Response  Teen Sexting - A Brief Guide for Educators and Parents (cyberbullying.org)	Presentacio- nes en grupos de 3-4 estudiantes,	Cognitiva, procedimental y actitudinal
Enseñar sobre sexting, lo que no es consensual, lo ilegal y sus consecuencias	Lecturas y videos Discusión	Digital Dating Abuse: A Brief Guide for Educators and Parents - Cyberbullying Research Center  Cyberbullying Collection - The Choose Kindness	sobre los recursos Examen sobre cyberbullying	Cognitivo y actitudinal
Empatizar con el abuso y hostigamiento de relaciones digitales	en clase virtual	Project  Sexting, Digital Dating Abuse, and Other Online Relationship Issues - Cyberbullying Research Center	basado en los recursos	Cognitivo y actitudinal
Conocer medios sociales y cómo protegerse del bullying		Tips for Teachers   StopBullying.gov		Cognitivo y procedimental
Enseñar sobre dickpicks, sexo y relaciones en línea		Navigating Cyber Threats: A Teenager's Guide to Addressing Cyberbullying (creep-project.eu)		Cognitivo



Educando a futuros maestros en la prevención y manejo de acoso escolar (presencial o virtual) – 3 créditos (Total Tiempo 32 horas)

### Cuarto módulo de 4 — Prevención y manejo del acoso escolar

Objetivos El maestro será capaz de:	Métodos	Recursos	Evaluación	Competencia
Confiar en su conocimiento para prevenir y responder al acoso escolar	)	Preventing Bullying Collection - The Choose Kindness Project		Cognitivo y procedimental
Identificar desbalances de poder e intimidación		Responding to Bullying Collection - The Choose Kindness Project		Cognitivo
Enseñar sobre el círculo del bullying y el rol del observador	Lecturas y	Supporting a child subjected to bullying   Friends	Discusión sobre los recursos.	Cognitivo y procedimental
Conocer políticas públicas exitosas internacionalmente	videos  Discusión	Bystanders to Bullying   StopBullying.gov	Presentación grupal en	Cognitivo
Aprender cómo hablarles a los padres de estudiantes	en clase virtual	Help Children Build Resilience   StopBullying.gov  Set Policies & Rules   StopBullying.gov	Power Point sobre tema a seleccionar durante tercer	Procedimental
Integrar otros adultos dentro del entorno escolar		Acoso Escolar CC #18-2022-2023.pptx (live.com) (política pública DEPR)	módulo	Procedimental
Reconocer idiosincrasias culturales como machismo, violencia cultural		Microsoft Word - ManagChallPoliticSeas Contributor Change Educators.docx (ibpaworld.org)		Cognitivo y actitudinal





### Currículo acoso escolar para futuros maestros (presencial o virtual)

### Lecturas Adicionales de Cyberbullying

Objetivos El maestro será capaz de:	Métodos	Recursos	Autor(es)	Competencia
Enseñar utilización adversa de la tecnología y medios sociales como la adicción al internet		Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying (2024) Tercera Edición Corwin Press (libro de texto)	Hinduja & Patchin	Cognitivo, Procedimental y Actitudinal
Explicar anonimato, pseudonimato, roles de víctimas y bully Entender qué es el metaverso, violencia sexual digital, la		El ciberacoso_ Identificación, Prevención y Respuesta.pdf  Qué hacer cuando tu hijo(a) es víctima de ciberacoso.pdf	Hinduja & Patchin Hinduja & Patchin	Cognitivo, Procedimental Cognitivo
huella digital como prueba de delito  Crear y aplicar estrategias y soluciones a problemas reales de estudiantes  Ejecutar el contrato de uso de la tecnología con estudiantes	Lectura	Qué hacer cuando tu hijo(a) inflige ciberacoso a los demás.pdf  Prevención del ciberacoso preguntas que los representantes deben hacer a sus hijos sobre la tecnología.pdf	Hinduja & Patchin Hinduja &	Procedimental  Cognitivo y Procedimental
Asumir el rol del maestro, cambiar clima escolar		Contrato de uso de la tecnología.pdf	Patchin Hinduja & Patchin	Procedimental y Actitudinal



Dra. Cristina Salmivalli Sweeden, KiVA



## With the experts in bullying WABF 2023



Dra. Dorothy Espelage





Dr. Kevin Runions, Canada



Dra. Debra Peppler, Canada

Dra. Antonella Brighi, Italia Futura Investigación Sexting



Dr. Sameer Hinduja
Futura Investigación
Cyberbullying





