



Psykhe

ISSN: 0717-0297

psykhe@uc.cl

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Chile

Lorion, Raymond P.

The Evolution of Community-School Bully Prevention Programs: Enabling Participatory Action
Research

Psykhe, vol. 13, núm. 2, noviembre, 2004, pp. 73-83

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Santiago, Chile

Available in: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=96713206>

- How to cite
- Complete issue
- More information about this article
- Journal's homepage in redalyc.org

redalyc.org

Scientific Information System
Network of Scientific Journals from Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal
Non-profit academic project, developed under the open access initiative

The Evolution of Community-School Bully Prevention Programs: Enabling Participatory Action Research¹

La Evolución de Programas de Prevención de Matonaje en Comunidades Escolares: Promoviendo la Investigación-Acción Participativa

Raymond P. Lorion
Towson University

Community scientists must resist the temptation to “solve” an identified problem. Rather, they must partner with members of the community and transfer to them the knowledge and skills to understand and resolve their needs. This case-study reports a community’s efforts to reduce school-based bullying. Within a participatory-action approach, teachers, students, administrators and parents organized to assess the ways in which members of the school-community mistreated each other. Students bullying each other was part of a larger systemic pattern in which teachers bullied each other and, with unexpectedly serious consequences, their students. Through their active participation, members of the school-community engaged together in understanding and resolving the problem.

Los científicos comunitarios deben resistir la tentación de “resolver” un problema identificado. Ellos deben, en cambio, aliarse con miembros de la comunidad y transferir a éstos el conocimiento y habilidades para comprender y resolver sus necesidades. Este estudio de caso da cuenta de los esfuerzos de una comunidad para reducir el matonaje en la escuela. Con un enfoque de acción participativa, profesores, estudiantes, administradores y padres se organizaron para evaluar las formas en que los miembros de la comunidad educativa se maltrataban unos a otros. El matonaje entre estudiantes era parte de un patrón sistémico mayor, en el que los profesores se maltrataban entre ellos y, con consecuencias inesperadamente serias, a sus alumnos. A través de su participación activa, los miembros de la comunidad educativa se involucraron juntos en la comprensión y resolución del problema.

Overview

This case study describes a series of steps undertaken to engage school-communities in the development and adoption of local bully-prevention programs as an illustration of one approach to community-based participatory action research (Jason, Keys, Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor, & Davis, 2004). From the outset, the intent of our involvement was to assist the *school-community* to take steps to examine how bullying touched the lives of local youth and to translate the resulting information into a responsive and sustainable intervention to prevent bullying. The work described herein took place over approximately five years and involved urban, suburban and rural communities. Each of these settings had requested assistance in *quickly* selecting and implementing

evidence-based bully prevention programs. The sense of urgency in these communities arose primarily from media reports of serious violent episodes that had occurred recently in schools from seemingly similar communities. Reportedly, each of the perpetrators of the violent acts had been (or, in some instances, were assumed to be) victims of persistent bullying. Influential parents in the communities contacted me after they had convinced members of the local school board that “something needed to be done about bullying”.

Each community requested that “proven interventions” be identified and implemented as soon as possible. In their view, the problem was clear, i.e., some children were being “bullied” by other children. The solution also therefore seemed quite clear, i.e., find and punish current bullies and implement a bully prevention program to avoid further problems. My response surprised those making contact. I indicated little interest in simply exporting an established program into their communities. I did, however, offer to work *with* them in formulating a process by which *they* would determine how “bullying” was manifested in *their* community and apply that information in

Raymond P. Lorion, College of Education. Correspondence concerning this article must be sent to the author, Towson University, College of Education - 301 Hawkins Hall, 8000 York Road, Towson, MD 21252-0001. E-mail: rlorion@towson.edu

¹ This paper is based on a class presentation to the Escuela de Psicología, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, May, 2003.

designing *their* solution. I explained that “bullying” as I understood the term applied to a wide range of behaviors and thus its nature had to be determined before the means by which to respond to it were selected. I assured them that finding an answer would be easy once the question was clarified. Although I emphasized the importance of their participating in the assessment of need, I did not make explicit the degree to which I intended to have the community own, operate, and evaluate the work. From the outset, I viewed their request as an opportunity to enable them to assess and respond to this and other concerns as a participatory action project. Similar steps were taken in each of the three communities. How the process unfolded in West Hope² will be described in detail as an illustration of one approach to community empowerment.

The School-Community

I use the term “school-community” to refer to the multiple overlapping interpersonal spheres that define an educational setting. These spheres include the administrators, the teachers and the students. Yet their interactions and the setting’s educational success also depend on the involvement of many others necessary for a school to operate. These others include clerical staff, bus drivers, janitors, security staff, educational specialists (e.g., counselors, school psychologists, speech therapists), as well as substitute teachers, parent volunteers and involved youth volunteers (e.g., tutors from the local college). Ecologically, the school-community extends beyond the building to include the neighborhood within which it is located. Invariably, therefore, it must include the residents and families living within that neighborhood. They may or may not have children who attend that school but their lives are impacted by the school’s presence in their neighborhood. Their views of its occupants, their agreement with its mission and their support for its success represent important ecological elements that influence the educational experiences and success of the students. The neighbors, for example, might value the school, watch for the safety of students on the way to and from the building, watch over the setting when school is not in session and even assist with its multiple programs. They

may admire and encourage the teachers or view them with hostility. They may welcome the teachers and staff into the neighborhood or resent their use of scarce parking spaces.

Yet another dimension of the school-community is the parents and families of the students enrolled in the setting and of the teachers, administrators and staff who come to school each day to contribute to the children’s education. Each educator is impacted by how the school day goes and how comfortable and supportive the environment is of the educational mission. Over time, we want to develop programs whose effects ripple across these interrelated spheres that define the school-community.

West Hope is a suburban community approximately 25 miles outside of a large, metropolitan city. Unlike its urban neighbor, West Hope has very limited ethnic, cultural and economic diversity. West Hope’s population of fewer than 50,000 is predominantly Caucasian, working to middle-class. West Hope’s residents take pride that their community is generally free of major crime and poverty and a safe and comfortable place to raise children. Most families live in modest homes that are carefully maintained. The majority of West Hope’s children is enrolled in neighborhood elementary schools and transfer to a common middle school (grades 5 to 8) and high school (grades 9-12). Reportedly, bullying was a problem at each of these academic levels.

Stages of Participation

My initial contact with the West Hope School District came by phone from the Office of the Superintendent. His Assistant described the community’s concern and invited me to consult with them on selecting among alternative bully-prevention programs. As noted above, I expressed limited interest in doing so. After some discussion, we agreed that I would hold a single meeting with the District’s administrative staff and building Principals. The meeting would focus on a general discussion of bullying and its many variations. I asked that those who were to participate in my workshop meet and prepare a presentation on bullying from their perspective. My comments would follow that presentation and examine the available clinical and research literature on bullying. The third portion of the workshop was to involve an examination of the differences in our respective views of bullying and their implications for intervention. Finally, based on

² The name of the community is fictitious to protect its anonymity as agreed on early in negotiations concerning how what would be learned in our collaboration would be shared with other settings and disciplines.

what happened during those three sections, we would together determine what, if any, next steps needed to be taken and how they saw me and the members of my research team as participants in those subsequent steps.

The workshop succeeded far beyond my expectations! Their presentation involved a 20 minutes video composed of media depictions of bullying episodes interspersed with narratives about the lives of bullies and their victims. Its content echoed my emphasis on the multiple varieties of bullying behaviors. In combination, our separate depictions of bullying generated substantial discussion leading to *their* conclusion that the District's teachers should be exposed to both presentations. To maximize their informational value, it was agreed that these presentations would include a survey of teachers' experiences with different forms of bullying (Appendix A).

A Process Emerges

Over the next several weeks, separate workshops were offered to all elementary and secondary (i.e., middle school and high school) teachers. Each meeting increased the school-community's appreciation of the need for it to understand *its* form of bullying. As teachers and administrators discussed the data *they* produced, their desire for additional information grew. Consensus emerged among them that students needed to be brought into the process and become engaged in the community's effort to respond to its "bullying problem." The Middle-School and High-School Principals took responsibility for discussing with their faculties how their students would become involved in the exploration of bullying in West Hope.

Student involvement differed for the middle and high schools. In the middle school, the students and teachers decided that a school-wide discussion of "how people treat each other" should occur. A small group of 7th and 8th grade students were selected by the Principal to create a vehicle for catalyzing the discussion. Supported by the high school's highly sophisticated audio-video lab, the 7th and 8th grade students edited a copy of the movie "Remember the Titans" to insert a series of sketches that raised questions for groups of students to discuss as they viewed the movie. Readers may recall that the movie focused on the experiences of a seemingly tight-knit school-community that, to meet a court-mandated integration order, must adjust to the imposition of an African-American football coach by the local

school board. In many respects, that community was comparable to West Hope. The film examines the relationship between the new and prior (White) coach, the development of understanding between White and Black players, and the means by which segments of the community that heretofore had lived separate lives came together.

The group of 7th and 8th graders viewed the movie and selected specific points at which to insert their discussion points. Generally, the scenes selected depicted points of interpersonal strain or the expression of hostility and rejection. Although the West Hope community had a very small African-American population, the tension between the races was palpable in meetings with the 7th and 8th graders. Given the underlying racial themes considered in the movie, deliberation on this issue was unavoidable but tender. Reflecting the sensitivity of the topic very few of the places in the movie at which discussions were introduced involved race directly. Instead, the issue lay just below the surface and thus could be touched upon or not depending on the audience. At each of the points in the movie selected, the 7th and 8th graders scripted scenes that linked the issue depicted in the movie to the experiences of students in the school. They did so, for example, by "interviewing" students in the lunch hall, or by reproducing a scene from the movie on the school bus or in a classroom. Their insertions were poignant, relevant and provocative.

On the selected date, the edited version of "Remember the Titans" was shown to all classrooms simultaneously. At designated points in the movie, the "interviews" were presented followed by an open-ended question for students to discuss among themselves and with their teacher. The movie then resumed until the next insert appeared and the next topic was introduced for discussion. In the weeks that followed, teachers met together to share the substance and tone of their classroom discussions and to determine what steps they might take to keep the conversation going. Importantly, with minimal input from our team, the middle school had undertaken a substantive and ongoing conversation about interpersonal relationships. In the process of learning about the nature of bullying in their school they were engaged in an intervention about that very issue. Their reflections and discussions had set in motion a process to change the nature of the setting and sensitize members of the school-community to the impacts of their words and actions on each other.

The high school teachers, by contrast,

recognized that they had yet to involve students in the process. They suggested that students complete their own survey. Teachers proposed that students enrolled in the high school's social science course modify the teacher survey to apply to students and conduct the survey as a class assignment. Rather than being assigned the task of surveying the students, my students and I were asked to serve as consultants to the high school students who would actually do the work. Over a series of meetings, we advised the students as they prepared a request to the School Board for permission to alter their curriculum to include work on the survey and, subsequently, to conduct and interpret the survey. Their work began in the fall and by spring they had created the "Student Experience Survey" (Appendix B), distributed to all students enrolled in grades 7 through 12. Nearly 1600 students (in excess of 90% of those enrolled in grades 5 – 12) completed the forms. We assisted the students in analyzing and summarizing the survey responses. They, however, decided how to translate their findings into a series of conversations about "how we treat each other in school." Those conversations continue nearly two years after they began! Again, the process of exploring the problem evolved into an intervention that influenced its nature and consequences for the members of this school-community (Lorion & Jackson, 2004; Lorion & Sokoloff, 2003).

Reflections on a Process

As noted, my initial response to West Hope's request for selection and implementation of a "proven" bully-prevention program was negative. From the outset, I made clear to them that I had no basis for assuming that I understood the problem they wanted solved. Albeit unspoken, I assumed the same about them! My position reflected long-held skepticism about the lasting value of efforts to solve community problems through the importation of solutions that worked in one setting into another. Those seeking a solution to a local problem may believe that they will best be served by transferring an intervention with some empirical validation to their setting. That approach, however, denies the community the opportunity to understand the unique nature of its problem and relieves it of its responsibility to solve that problem. Rarely is there a sufficient match between characteristics of a community and an intervention developed by others for problems arising elsewhere to allow for the

application of an established intervention without change.

Readers should note that I describe the emergence of "a process" rather than "the process." This is intentional for it needs to be understood that communities can follow a variety of pathways in addressing and solving their problems. Partnerships between community scientists and communities evolve in many different forms. There is no single correct way to partner; the essential element is that all parties are open to the emergence of a true and collaborative relationship. That requires that each appreciate and respect the expertise and commitment of the others to contribute to finding a solution.

Granted that this perspective jeopardizes the fidelity of established interventions and thus appears to undermine the diffusion of evidence-based approaches! Balancing that is the fact that requiring a community to grapple with understanding its problem and designing an appropriate solution enhances its likely sustainability. Simply stated, I want to involve those to be impacted by any intervention directly in its development and implementation. Doing so may result in *their* solution to *their* problem and in *their* commitment to continue that solution until the problem was resolved. It may also provide them with the capacity to assess their effectiveness, modify the intervention as circumstances dictate and, most importantly, take credit for their achievements.

The Partners Collaborate

The challenge before my team, therefore, was to lead the representatives of West Hope to appreciate that the challenge before them was to risk engaging in a process whose outcome was uncertain and which had the potential of making them aware of negative aspects of themselves and of their community. By engaging them in a series of small steps with no obligation to proceed beyond that step, we moved from agreeing to discuss the problem to their engaging in a series of inquiries about its nature that represented, as noted above, actual interventions³. Initially, responsibility for addressing the problem rested with the School Superintendent and his immediate staff. By the end, teachers and students had become deeply involved in trying to understand and resolve *their* problem. As the process continued, my students and I were less and less involved, frequently not consulted

³ It should be noted that we also retained the right to cease our involvement at any step along the way.

before they chose to take a step and, toward the very end, had to contact them to get updated on the process. In every sense, it had become *their* process and we had worked ourselves out of the process. By taking it slowly at their pace, we had successfully transformed a request that we solve their problem into a fully participatory process that eventuated in it becoming the school-community's (Lorion, Feinberg, Settani, & Horrigan, 2004).

The Risk of Engagement

As noted, we began our involvement by emphasizing the diversity of forms of bullying. Initially, they associated expressions of concerns about "bullying" with the stereotypic view of the application of physical aggression by one or more students on a small number of victims. With minimal effort we moved beyond physical aggression to consider the verbal harassment, teasing, and insults that characterize much of youths' interactions. We also explored the nature and consequences of social rejection that isolates victimized students from most if not all of their classmates. Such ostracism is frequently observed among girls, especially in schools in which cliques are dominant. These forms of student-on-student victimization were explored in some depth and their implications for preventive interventions examined.

Early in the discussions, however, attention shifted from how students related to each other to how faculty related to other faculty and to their students. Somewhat unexpectedly, discussions of bullying among students turned quickly to questions about how faculty related to each other and especially to how they related to their students. The topic arose during the initial meeting of administrators when a Principal inquired about the impact on a school of a critical colleague. He explained that a long-term member of his teaching staff was abrasive and frequently offended colleagues and students. When questioned about his interpersonal style, the teacher explained that his methods for providing "constructive criticism" were time-tested ways to improve the effectiveness of colleagues and the motivation of students. Given that he rarely received feedback about the style, he saw little reason to change his method. If the recipients of his verbal "corrections" changed their behavior in the desired direction, his strategy was validated; if they did not, their intransigence confirmed!

In its own way, each group of teachers arrived at consideration of how the faculty treated each other and treated the students. The group in which that issue emerged most strongly was the high school faculty. Early in my comments, I became engaged in a brief verbal exchange with a teacher. Our words shifted almost immediately from question and answer to verbal parrying before I returned to my planned comments. Later, as I presented a general statement about faculty exchanges with students, the teacher with whom I had parried asked if my retort to him would be an example of bullying. Somewhat taken aback, I noted that bullying represented a pattern of interactions rather than a single event. I also asked if he felt bullied or had been made uncomfortable by my words. He denied both. I then asked those about him if they would comment on their thoughts and feelings during our exchange. One teacher remarked that such exchanges were typical for him and she was used to his challenging whoever was speaking. Another said that he was surprised that our exchange had quickly moved to parrying and he wondered whether he would have to engage with me in that way. A third teacher said that following the exchange he planned not to say anything.

These comments allowed us to examine how such exchanges impact far beyond the two or three individuals directly involved in the comments. We heard from another teacher who described her own experience in middle school with a teacher who regularly used insults and criticism as a means to motivate students and punish those she believed had not met her standards. The consequence for her was that in many of her subsequent classes with that teacher she (as a student) avoided as much as possible coming to the teacher's attention and saying anything unless absolutely certain of its correctness. To this day, the teacher explained, she remembers how uncomfortable she was in that classroom and how little she learned in that subject. She also acknowledged that she had promised herself never to be like that with her own students.

As noted, the high school teachers decided to involve their students in the process of learning about how bullying occurred in their school and how it impacted on students. Following our discussion that day and the exchange I had with one teacher (subsequently identified to me as the one most frequently criticized by students as being "mean" and verbally abusive to students), the teachers encouraged the social studies teacher to include consideration of teacher-teacher and student-teacher exchanges in the

students' survey. One such question was "have you ever seen a teacher embarrass or put down a student in the classroom". Not only had many students endorsed this item but those who did reported that they were much less likely to report bullying episodes to administrators that they (the student) experienced personally or that they witnessed. Students endorsing that item also reported that they felt less safe in school than students who did not endorse the item and found it overall less supportive. Surprisingly, students who endorsed the item also reported that they were much less likely to inform administrators of weapons in the building than those who did not report observing such negative teacher behaviors. These patterns were consistent across grades 5-12 but most notable during the transition into middle school (i.e., grade 5) and high school (i.e., grade 9).

Apart from the student responses to the teacher items, the surveys of the teachers and those of the students were quite consistent in their depiction of the nature and extent of bullying in West Hope's schools. Generally, very few students complained of and very few teachers witnessed the kinds of physical acts of bullying characteristic of its stereotypic presentation. Approximately 20% of students of both gender across the grade levels reported being the victim of various forms of social ostracism and, especially, verbal insults. For them, attendance at school was an emotionally negative experience. Days were described as tense, uncomfortable and lonely. They found little solace in their studies and felt distant from most of their classmates. Focus group discussions that followed the surveys revealed a sense by many victims of being outside of the social world of their classmates, of looking into a world in which they felt unwelcome.

The Up and Down of a Participatory Approach

As noted at the beginning of this paper, the approach to involvement described herein reflected a series of interrelated assumptions about community engagement as a means to the creation of viable and sustainable interventions responsive to community problems:

1. The community psychologist must appreciate the inherent capacity within settings to identify and solve their problems.
2. The community psychologist must appreciate the inherent desire within settings of solving those problems.

3. The community psychologist must appreciate that the problems within settings often interfere with the setting's capacity to understand and solve the problem.
4. The community psychologist can best serve a setting by participating with it in systematically examining the nature, extent and sources of its concerns and organizing the resulting understanding into an indigenous strategy for responding to those concerns.
5. The community psychologist can make lasting contributions to settings by empowering those within the setting to recognize, organize and utilize resources to which they have or can gain access and to apply those resources in ways that maximize the participation of those within the setting and those impacted by the problem.
6. The community psychologist must constantly be engaged in reducing a setting's need for the involvement of the community psychologist and in increasing the setting's capacity to understand and solve its own problems and respond to its own needs.

As noted, the aforementioned process undertaken in West Hope has been repeated on multiple occasions over the past five years. We have applied it to urban schools, suburban schools and most recently rural schools. In each instance, we disappointed the setting initially by refusing to provide what they wanted because we felt an obligation to work with them to understand what they needed. Repeated experiences with simply replicating a prior solution from one setting in another setting had taught us that even if initially effective in reducing the referral problem, such imported interventions rarely lasted for long after we departed. Subsequent discussions with stakeholders in such settings clarified for us the important difference between an intervention perceived by them as belonging to another (i.e., ourselves or the original designer of the intervention) and one that belonged to them (i.e., had arisen through their efforts to understand and resolve their problem). If the imported intervention did not have lasting effects, the failure was ours. Less frequently did "home-grown" interventions fail because those responsible for their creation and implementation were on-site and invested in keeping the work going and maintaining its success! More often than not that meant continually revising elements of the intervention as circumstances changed or as the deliverers of the intervention learned about its

limitations and strengths or simply became routinized in applying the program.

The benefits to a community of participatory work are multiple and lasting. If successful, however, they will rarely be attributed solely to the external consultant. Frequently, many within the setting will correctly see themselves as responsible for the work that results from such collaboration. Some may even question what I or my team actually contributed to them. To engage in such work requires that one set one's ego aside and take a sense of accomplishment at what *they* have achieved. We must never lose sight that it is easier for them to withdraw from our intervention than to abandon the product of their work. In West Hope, we contributed to their recognition and confrontation of how teachers related to students because *they rather than we* brought it up. *They* invited students to participate in the assessment of the problem and in discussions of how to resolve it. Unquestionably, we would have faced understandable resistance and resentment had we raised the issue. We would have encountered substantial impediments as outsiders because we were outsiders. *They*, on the other hand, assumed responsibility for bringing the issue to the table.

In a very real sense, we believe they used our involvement as a cover to address something about which they had concerns. Should we feel? Of course and grateful for the opportunity to serve on their behalf! Engaging in participatory work with communities and their agencies requires an appreciation that each partner

influences the nature and direction of the work. From the outset, we asked how we could be helpful and offered to assist them in understanding and responding to bullying. They took us at our word and involved us as long as we were their partners rather than their therapists or their directors or any other role in which we placed ourselves and our interests about them and their concerns. Participatory work is demanding in that respect. It demands that you respect your partners and participate in *their* work. If nothing else, this and other such efforts have taught us clearly that they must assume responsibility and control for they rather us must live with the consequences!

References

- Jason, L. A., Keys, C. B., Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor, R. R. & Davis, M. I. (Eds.). (2004). *Participatory community research: Theories and methods in action*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Lorion, R. P. & Sokoloff, H. (2003). Building developmental assets under political spotlights. In P. Benson (Ed.), *Developmental assets and asset-building communities: Implications for research, policy and practice* (pp. 121-156). New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Lorion, R. P. & Jackson, T. L. (2004). Culturing violence: The developmental and socio-political consequences of pervasive community violence. In T. Jackson (Ed.), *Innovations in clinical practice: A source book* (pp. 5-20). Sarasota, FL: Professional Resources Press.
- Lorion, R. P., Feinberg, M., Settani, S. & Horrigan, J. (2004). A life-span perspective on bullying behaviors and their consequences. In T. Jackson (Ed.), *Innovations in clinical practice: A source book* (pp.117-134). Sarasota, FL: Professional Resources Press.

Appendix A

Teacher Experience Survey

date __/__/01

Please provide the following information:

1. Gender: M _ F _ 2. Date of birth: __/__/__ 3. Marital status: Single __ Married __

4. Race/ethnicity (optional - check those that apply):

African American __ Asian __ Caucasian __
Hispanic/Latino __ Native American __ Other __

5. Educational background:

Associates degree in _____ Bachelors degree in _____
Master's degree in _____ Doctoral degree in _____

6. How long have you been teaching? __ years At your current school? __ years

7. How many school districts have you taught in? 1 __ 2 __ 3 __ 4+ __

8. What grade(s) have you taught? (circle all that apply) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

9. What grade(s) do you currently teach? (circle all that apply) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

The following questions are about your perceptions of the climate of the school and its neighborhood. Please select one of the following answers:

Never..... Rarely..... Sometimes..... Often..... Always.....

10. Does your school have a problem with bullying?	N	R	S	O	A
11. Does your grade level have a problem with bullying?	N	R	S	O	A
12. Does your classroom have a problem with bullying?	N	R	S	O	A
13. Do some of your colleagues bully their students?	N	R	S	O	A
14. Do you or other teachers feel bullied by some colleagues?	N	R	S	O	A
15. Do you feel safe in your school?	N	R	S	O	A
16. Do you feel safe in the community near your school?	N	R	S	O	A
17. Do you worry about being robbed at school?	N	R	S	O	A
18. Do you worry about being robbed in the community near your school?	N	R	S	O	A
19. Do you worry about being at or around your school after dark?	N	R	S	O	A
20. Do you worry about being threatened by kids at or around your school?	N	R	S	O	A
21. Do you worry about being shot, stabbed, or attacked at or around your school?	N	R	S	O	A
22. Have you ever thought of changing schools or school districts because you felt unsafe?	N	R	S	O	A
23. Have you ever thought of changing careers because you felt unsafe at or around your school?	N	R	S	O	A

In the past 12 months:

24. Did you see male students bullying other students at school?	N	R	S	O	A
25. Did you see female students bullying other students at school?	N	R	S	O	A
26. Did anyone verbally threaten you at school?	N	R	S	O	A
27. Did anyone physically threaten you at school?	N	R	S	O	A
28. Did you see someone else verbally threatened at school?	N	R	S	O	A
29. Did you see someone else physically threatened at school?	N	R	S	O	A
30. Did you see someone else get physically hurt at school?	N	R	S	O	A
31. Did you know of a student in your school who had access to a firearm?	N	R	S	O	A
32. Did you know of a student in your school who carried a firearm to school?	N	R	S	O	A
33. Did you know of a student who had access to a knife as a weapon?	N	R	S	O	A
34. Did you know of a student who brought a knife to school as a weapon?	N	R	S	O	A
35. Did you feel afraid of a student assigned to your classroom?	N	R	S	O	A
36. Did you stay home because safety related issues at school made you physically uncomfortable?	N	R	S	O	A

In the past 12 months:

37. Did you stay home because safety related issues at school made you emotionally uncomfortable?	N	R	S	O	A
38. Were you unable to fall asleep because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
39. Were you unable to sleep throughout the night because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
40. Did you have dreams or nightmares about safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
41. Did you lose your appetite because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
42. Did your weight change (up or down) because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
43. Did you find yourself tense or angry at school because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
44. Did you find yourself tense or angry away from school because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
45. Did you find your ability to teach impaired because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A
46. Did you find it hard to relax and “unwind” on the weekend because of safety related issues at school?	N	R	S	O	A

The following question is entirely optional:

In the space below, please provide a brief description of your most memorable experience related to school safety in the past year:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

If we can contact you to further discuss the climate in and around your school, please provide your name, address, and phone number.

NAME:

ADDRESS:
.....

PHONE:

NOTE: IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE CONTACTED BUT WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE
FINDINGS, PLEASE CHECK HERE:

Appendix B

Student Experience Survey

Please provide the following information about yourself: Gender: __Male __Female

Circle how old you are today: 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

Circle the grade you are in today: 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Please read the following statements about your experience at this school during the past year and circle “YES” if what is described happened at least some of the time.

Circle “NO” if it never happened.

1. Does bullying happen at this school?	Yes	No
2. Does bullying happen on the school grounds?	Yes	No
3. Does bullying happen in your homeroom?	Yes	No
4. Does bullying happen in your other classes in this school?	Yes	No
5. Have you ever seen a teacher embarrass or “put down” a student in a classroom?	Yes	No
6. Do you feel safe at this school?	Yes	No
7. Do you worry about being robbed at this school?	Yes	No
8. Do you worry about being threatened by another student at this school?	Yes	No
9. Have you ever seen a male student bully other students?	Yes	No
10. Have you ever seen a female student bully other students?	Yes	No
11. Has anyone ever verbally threatened you at this school?	Yes	No
12. Has anyone ever physically threatened you at this school?	Yes	No
13. Have you ever seen another student verbally threatened at this school?	Yes	No
14. Have you ever seen another student physically threatened at this school?	Yes	No
15. Have you ever seen another student physically hurt by a bully at this school?	Yes	No
16. Have you ever known a student who brought a weapon to this school?	Yes	No
17. Have you ever felt afraid of another student at this school?	Yes	No
18. Are some students regularly embarrassed by other students at this school?	Yes	No
19. Did you ever find it hard to learn because of bullying at this school?	Yes	No
20. Have you ever had trouble sleeping at night because of bullying at this school?	Yes	No
21. Have mean or embarrassing messages about students in this school been posted on the internet?	Yes	No
22. Have you ever wished you had a safe place to go to escape bullying at this school?	Yes	No
23. Have you ever seen a teacher ignore a student being bullied by another student at this school?	Yes	No
24. Have you ever wished you could get back at a student who has bullied you at this school?	Yes	No
25. Would you tell a teacher or administrator if you were being bullied?	Yes	No
26. Would you tell a teacher or administrator if you saw another student being bullied?	Yes	No
27. Would you tell a teacher or administrator if you knew a student had a weapon in this school?	Yes	No

Comments: Please tell us below anything you want to add about bullying in this school?
