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# Bullying Prevention: Combining Whole-School Approaches and Positive School Climate

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Bullying Prevention: Combining Whole-School Approaches and Positive School Climate

Margaret C. Mink

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### Abstract

Bullying is a common occurrence in schools and it can have many serious consequences. The literature review examined the following whole-school anti-bullying programs: The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, Steps to Respect, and Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support. The review also defined school climate and explored the connection between positive school climate and bullying prevention. The Authoritative School Climate Survey is a tool used to measure students' perceptions of school climate and make improvements. The review of the literature supported the utilization of school climate data to inform anti-bullying programs with the overall goal of preventing bullying and increasing school safety. The research study included use of the Authoritative School Climate Study to gather students' perceptions of school climate at a rural, intermediate/middle school. Although participation was limited, results indicated a need for a whole-school anti-bullying program to target the aggressive attitudes of students as a method for bullying reduction.



### Bullying Prevention: Combining Whole-School Approaches and Positive School Climate

Bullying is currently the most common form of school violence. Physical bullying in boys and social bullying in girls reach peak levels during the middle school years (Domino, 2013). Bullying is defined as intentional and repeated acts of aggression (physical, verbal, emotional, social/relational, or psychological) against persons who are weaker than the perpetrator(s) (Boulton, 2013; Domino, 2013; Turner, Exum, Brame, & Holt, 2013; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). Children who are bullied can experience numerous consequences, such as difficulty sleeping, physical ailments (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007), drug use (Langdon & Preble, 2008), academic troubles and truancy, deficits in emotional and psychological well-being, violent retaliation (such as by school shootings), suicidal ideation, and attempted or completed suicide (Turner et al., 2013). Children who bully are also susceptible to the aforementioned consequences in addition to greater chances of involvement in criminal activity (Langdon & Preble, 2008). Boulton (2013) and Vreeman and Carroll (2007) found long-lasting effects into adulthood for children who are bullied, such as increased anxiety and depression and lower self-esteem.

All types of bullying can have negative effects on children who are bullied, but research indicates that various types of bullying can affect individuals differently. For example, Turner et al. (2013) reported that males and females who are verbally bullied might be more likely to experience depression and suicidal ideation. In addition, Turner and colleagues found that females who experience cyber bullying (the use of technology and/or social network sites to bully a person) are more susceptible to depression than males who are cyber bullied.

The prevalence of bullying and the severe effects noted above call schools to action, and schools can take many different approaches to prevent and reduce bullying. Individualized

interventions target children who bully or who are bullied and include tactics such as anger management or social skills training (Smith, Cousins, & Stewart, 2005). Whitted and Dupper (2005) reported that individualized efforts and group interventions, such as peer mediation, conflict resolution, or classroom lessons, are largely ineffective because bullying is a systemic issue that affects the whole school. Conversely, Smith et al. (2005) found individual and group interventions to be beneficial in encouraging empathy and teaching problem-solving skills to children involved in bullying. Whole school, anti-bullying programs are currently a popular approach and vary in effectiveness (Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, & Isava, 2008). Whitted and Dupper (2005) asserted that effective whole-school interventions strive to improve the overall school culture and climate to prevent and reduce bullying.

This literature review will examine the following whole-school interventions and their effectiveness in preventing or reducing bullying behaviors: Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP; Olweus, 1991; Olweus & Limber, 2010), Steps to Respect (STR): A Bullying Prevention Program (Committee for Children, 2001), and Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support (BP-PBS; Ross, Horner, & Stiller, 2008). The literature review will also address the link between positive school climate and bullying prevention and how the Authoritative School Climate Survey (ASCS; Cornell, 2013) can be used to foster safer school climates and guide anti-bullying interventions.

In addition, the author will detail the utilization of the ASCS to determine students' perceptions of school climate in a rural intermediate/middle school. The purpose of this study is to assist the school in choosing an effective anti-bullying program based on students' perceptions of the school's needs. According to Whitted and Dupper (2005), anti-bullying programs are more effective when based on improving overall school climate. The author will make

connections between students' perceptions of school climate and how the school's needs could be met by implementing one of the aforementioned anti-bullying programs. After distributing the ASCS to students and analyzing the results, the author will discuss recommendations for the school as to which anti-bullying programs might best meet the school's needs in reducing and preventing bullying.

### **Whole-School Anti-bullying Interventions**

#### **Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)**

The OBPP was designed and first implemented in 1983 in Norway after three, young, male students committed suicide because of being bullied (Hong, 2009). The OBPP contains four major tenets: adults at school should treat students with warm, positive regard; firm, clear limits should be set to govern students' behavior; adults should enforce consistent, fair consequences when students disobey behavioral limits; and adults at school should model appropriate behavior and lead by example (Olweus & Limber, 2010). The OBPP encompasses components at the individual, classroom, school, and community levels (Olweus & Limber, 2010), which suggests that bullying prevention requires multiple systems working together to create a positive environment for students.

The following are examples of components at each level of the OBPP. At the individual level, all school staff are responsible for intervening immediately when they witness bullying behavior (Olweus & Limber, 2010). In addition, a designated staff member should meet individually with students involved in bullying and their parents. Classroom-level components include publicizing school rules against bullying and holding class discussions about student behavior. At the school level, staff need to be trained in bullying prevention, and the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire should be distributed to students in grades three through 12. At the

community level, community members should be included on the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee. Implementing the OBPP at multiple levels provides consistency and positivity in the school environment, which leads ideally to safer schools with fewer bullying situations.

Student safety and bullying prevention and reduction are the primary goals of the OBPP, but the program is not always effective. On one hand, Olweus and Limber (2010) found that between 2001 and 2006 in 14 Norwegian schools, bullying rates reduced approximately 40% in grades 4 through 7. The OBPP seems to be repeatedly effective in Norway and the positive results extend after implementation of the program. However, researchers have not found similar success when the OBPP was implemented in schools in the United States (Olweus & Limber, 2010; Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004).

Unlike the success in Norwegian schools, a study of six schools utilizing the OBPP in South Carolina yielded no significant reductions in how often students disclosed being bullied (Olweus & Limber, 2010). After one year of OBPP implementation in a northeastern U.S. middle school, Bowllan (2011) found decreases in 7<sup>th</sup> grade females' reports of social exclusion and being bullied; there were no significant improvements for other grade levels or student groups. In a study by Bauer, Lozano, and Rivara (2007), the OBPP program had no profound impact on student reports of bullying in 10 Washington middle schools. However, Bauer and colleagues noticed that White students reported fewer instances of relational and physical bullying during program implementation; they found no comparable effects for other races or ethnicities.

Researchers offer some suggestions as to why the OBPP is less successful in the U.S. Olweus developed the OBPP in Norway for a different population, which could contribute to

variations in the program's effectiveness in other countries (Bauer et al., 2007). Hong (2009) asserted that the OBPP could be less effective with low-income populations, especially Hispanic and African-American students, because parental involvement in the program is less likely to occur in low-income families. Successful implementation of the OBPP requires parental involvement (Olweus & Limber, 2010), which could be harder to achieve when parents and families are struggling financially (Hong, 2009). According to Hong, many Hispanic and African-American families headed by single mothers in the U.S. struggle to make ends meet, leaving little to no time for parent involvement in their children's school lives.

An additional reason for the OBPP's lack of effectiveness in the U.S. could be school staff and administrators' tendency to choose randomly the elements of the OBPP that seem easiest to implement (Olweus & Limber, 2010). For example, Olweus and Limber found that teachers had the most difficulty finding time for weekly discussions with students about bullying. Weekly meetings for teachers were also challenging for many schools to accomplish, but these elements are necessary for the OBPP's successful implementation. Smith et al. (2004) proposed that the OBPP is more successful in Norway than in the U.S because classrooms are smaller in Scandinavian schools and the government is more involved in citizens' welfare. Smith and colleagues' assertions are debatable, but differences in government involvement could contribute to the OBPP's effectiveness in various countries.

Although the OBPP is inconsistently effective (Bauer et al., 2007; Hong, 2009; Olweus & Limber, 2010; Smith et al., 2004), the program attempts to reduce and prevent the serious concern of bullying in schools. The program uses a multi-tiered and systemic approach to making schools safer. The next whole-school anti-bullying program focuses on attitudes of members of the school community as a means to prevent and reduce bullying.

**Steps to Respect (STR): A Bullying Prevention Program**

The STR program is based on social-ecological theory, which asserts that attitudes and behavioral norms drive a person's actions (Committee for Children, 2001; Brown, Low, Smith, & Haggerty, 2011). STR, for students in grades 3 through 6, strives to reduce and prevent bullying by teaching and promoting respectful attitudes and norms in the school environment (Brown et al., 2011; Frey et al., 2005). Frey and colleagues reported that STR includes three levels of intervention for preventing bullying: staff training, classroom curriculum, and parent engagement.

The following are examples from each intervention level of STR. At the staff training level, teachers, counselors, and all school staff receive extensive instruction regarding the definition of bullying and how to intervene (Frey et al., 2005). STR also increases staff members' awareness of bullying situations and encourages staff to monitor vigilantly all student behavior (Brown et al., 2011). At the classroom curriculum level, for 12 to 14 weeks, teachers present lessons focusing on positive relationships, developing emotional and social maturity, and being able to recognize and report bullying (Frey et al., 2005). The lessons encourage respect among students and teachers, creating an environment where bullying behavior is less accepted and reinforced (Brown et al., 2011; Frey et al., 2005). Langdon and Preble (2008) reported that increased levels of perceived respect among students and teachers correlated with lower levels of bullying. At the parent engagement level of STR, parents receive information about the program and the skills children are learning so parents can support the process at home (Frey et al., 2005).

After implementing all levels of STR in six schools, Frey et al. (2005) found that students in the intervention group became less accepting of bullying behavior than students in the control group, which suggests the program affected students' attitudes toward bullying. Although the

effect was small, the results indicate that attitudes and cultural norms influence how students respond to bullying behavior. In Frey and colleagues' work, STR fulfilled its purpose in changing attitudes toward bullying behavior.

In a study with 33 elementary schools, Brown et al. (2011) found that 50% of all students, teachers, and school staff reported that STR was effective in improving peer relations and willingness to intervene in bullying situations. However, student participants in Brown and colleagues' study did not report significant improvements in school climate, whereas staff members perceived school climate as having improved. The results suggest that students, teachers, and staff members perceive school climate differently, but STR was effective in forging positive relations between some students.

The studies by Brown et al. (2011) and Frey et al. (2005) support the efficacy of STR, but not all instances of bullying can be avoided. Bullying behaviors increase typically throughout the school year (Brown et al., 2011), but programs such as STR can prevent or slow the acceleration of these behaviors. STR, which is grounded in social-ecological theory, slows and prevents the increase in bullying by targeting students' attitudes toward bullying (Brown et al., 2011; Frey et al., 2005). The program can work effectively to alter attitudes toward bullying with student, staff, classroom, and parent-level interventions. However, STR might not impact significantly the overall school culture or climate (Brown et al., 2011). The next program discussed focuses on improving behaviors around the school to decrease bullying occurrences.

### **Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support (BP-PBS)**

BP-PBS is designed to be an addition to a pre-existing School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) program in a school (Good, McIntosh, & Gietz, 2011; Ross & Horner, 2009, Ross et al., 2008). The SWPBS program creates safer school environments (Horner et al., 2009)

and can lead to decreases in disciplinary referrals and suspensions for students (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010). SWPBS contributes to such improvements because of its multi-tiered structure aimed at encouraging positive behaviors, preventing behavioral issues, and providing consistent, fair consequences for misbehavior (Horner et al., 2009). BP-PBS within SWPBS also includes a multi-tiered approach.

The following paragraphs outline the intervention tiers for SWPBS and then for BP-PBS within the program. First, the primary tier of SWPBS involves teaching and defining expectations for students and rewarding students who abide by the expectations (Horner et al., 2009). The secondary tier lends extra support by including structured interventions for students who are more likely to engage in problem behaviors. The tertiary tier interventions meet the individualized needs of students who require the most intensive support to reach behavioral expectations.

Similar to the multi-tiered structure of the SWPBS program, BP-PBS has three tiers for bullying prevention (Ross et al., 2008; Ross & Horner, 2009). BP-PBS gives students the tools necessary to prevent and escape from bullying situations on their own by endorsing the Stop, Walk, and Talk method (Good et al., 2011). In the primary tier, students receive instruction to stop bullying behaviors with a school-wide “stop signal.” The secondary tier involves walking away from the incident when the “stop signal” is not enough. Lastly, the tertiary tier encourages students to inform an adult when the bullying continues. The tiers of BP-PBS correspond with the ascending intervention tiers in SWPBS.

Research provides evidence in support of the efficacy of both SWPBS and BP-PBS. Bradshaw et al. (2010) found that schools utilizing the SWPBS program reported lower suspension rates and fewer office referrals for major or minor behavioral concerns, which



increased school safety. Horner et al. (2009) asserted that improved social and behavioral environments for students, per SWPBS, could contribute to greater academic achievements when combined with effective teaching and curriculum. In addition, Ross and Horner (2009) found that BP-PBS within SWPBS led to decreases in aggressive behaviors for all target students in their study. Good et al. (2011) witnessed a 41% decrease in office referrals for bullying during their study with a middle school in Canada. BP-PBS seems to be effective in creating safer schools and preventing instances of bullying (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Good et al., 2011; Horner et al., 2009; Ross & Horner, 2009) because it provides a clear, simple response when a student witnesses or becomes involved in a bullying situation. The Stop, Walk, and Talk method may be easier for many students to use because it eliminates the pressure of defending oneself to the bully with words (Good et al., 2011). The Stop, Walk, and Talk method can bring an abrupt end to bullying situations, take away the reinforcement that encourages the bully, and it has also led to more positive bystander involvement in bullying instances (Good et al., 2011; Ross & Horner, 2009).

Although SWPBS and BP-PBS can be effective ways to decrease bullying and make schools safer, some limitations exist. Bradshaw et al. (2010) and Horner et al. (2009) found that full implementation of the SWPBS program requires consistent effort from all school staff and administration. The program's effectiveness could vary based on the involvement and fidelity of all stakeholders. Over the course of one year, Good et al. (2011) reported that students noted decreased bullying behavior, but it is unclear how long the positive effects of BP-PBS are likely to last. In addition, Ross and Horner (2009) cautioned that BP-PBS did not eliminate all aggressive behaviors of target students in their study, and some students might need additional incentive to improve behavior.

SWPBS and BP-PBS are multi-tiered approaches meant to support all students, decrease bullying, and increase school safety. As a whole-school program, SWPBS can lead to lower suspension rates and a safer overall school climate (Bradshaw et al., 2010). As an additional element to SWPBS, BP-PBS encourages all students to “Stop, Walk, and Talk,” and can result effectively in fewer bullying incidents (Good et al., 2011).

### **School Climate and Bullying Prevention**

#### **School Climate Definition**

School climate can be defined as the quality of relationships among students, teachers, and school staff (Eliot, Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2010; Klein, Cornell, & Konold, 2012). School climate research examines often students’ perceptions of how much teachers care for their students and how well students get along with one another (Eliot et al., 2010). Klein et al. (2012) identified positive school climate as a key factor in research to improve bullying situations and violence in schools. When students perceive that teachers care about them and relationships are characterized by mutual respect, adolescents are less likely to resort to violent or deviant behaviors, therefore creating a safer school environment (Eliot et al., 2010; Klein et al., 2012). According to Whitted and Dupper (2005), the most effective anti-bullying programs and methods aspire to change the whole school climate and culture instead of targeting just students who bully or who are bullied. Greene (2003) asserted that all students, parents, teachers, and staff members play a crucial role in changing successfully the overall school climate.

#### **The Authoritative School Climate Survey (ASCS)**

The ASCS (Cornell, 2013) is a survey instrument used to measure students’ and teachers’ perceptions of school climate and bullying, often with the goal of informing school anti-bullying efforts. There are two student versions of the survey: the secondary version for students in

grades 6 through 12 and elementary version for grades 3 through 5. Cornell developed the ASCS based on the theory that safe schools require a climate with a mixture of support and structure. Support entails accepting, trusting relationships between students and teachers, while structure refers to the need for enforcement of rules and fair consequences. Cornell believes the optimum learning environment is one of high support and high structure, and the ASCS results can help schools become aware of their needs for improvement. For example, if survey results indicated a majority of students witnessed or experienced bullying in the hallways, the school could plan to make hallways safer and provide increased supervision.

The ASCS includes multiple scales with questions to assess school climate (Cornell, 2013), and students answer most questions on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “*strongly disagree*” to “*strongly agree*.” Three scales in particular on the ASCS have been shown to lend considerable insight into bullying prevention: the prevalence of bullying and teasing scale, aggressive attitudes scale, and willingness to seek help scale (Bandyopadhyay, Cornell, & Konold, 2009; Klein et al., 2012). Additional scales on Cornell’s instrument include the student engagement scale, school disciplinary structure scale, student support scale, academic expectations scale, victim experiences, and bullying experiences. Any or all of the scales can be used to assess different aspects of school climate.

The following discussion elaborates on the three ASCS scales shown to be most relevant to research on bullying and school aggression. Bandyopadhyay et al. (2009) performed the first study that examined the validity of the three scales. Bandyopadhyay and colleagues found that the three scales together accounted for a considerable percentage of variance in aspects of school violence, such as suspension rates and teacher reports of gang activity, bullying behavior, and help-seeking. Such results support the criterion and external validity of the three school climate

scales, which means the scales are relevant to real-life bullying situations and predictive of school climate (Klein et al., 2012). For example, if students score high on aggressive attitudes and low in help-seeking, school climate is likely to be negative with higher bullying rates.

The first scale, prevalence of bullying and teasing, asks students' opinions about the nature of bullying and how often it occurs at their school (Cornell, 2013). These questions and statements are important for gauging schools' needs because bullying impacts the entire school's climate by encouraging an atmosphere of intimidation (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2009). An example statement from Cornell's secondary version of the prevalence of bullying and teasing scale is, "Students in this school are teased about their clothing or physical appearance." The elementary version contains statements such as, "Students at this school are teased about their clothing," with answer options "yes" or "no."

The next scale, aggressive attitudes, assesses students' attitudes toward those who bully and those who are bullied (Cornell, 2013). An example statement from Cornell's secondary version of the aggressive attitudes scale is, "If someone threatens you, it is okay to hit that person." The elementary version includes statements such as, "It feels good when I hit someone." Bandyopadhyay et al. (2009) and Klein et al. (2012) found that students who believe bullying is acceptable or advantageous are at higher risk of becoming students who bully. Brockenbrough, Cornell, and Loper (2002) also asserted that children who are bullied are more likely than non-bullied children to develop aggressive attitudes and participate in risky behaviors such as carrying weapons and using drugs and alcohol. The above research indicates that examination of students' aggressive attitudes can assist schools with improving their overall atmosphere.

The third scale, willingness to seek help, asks students about the likelihood that they will seek help when bullied or after witnessing dangerous incidents (Cornell, 2013). Cornell's willingness to seek help scale includes statements such as, "There are adults at this school I could talk with if I had a personal problem," (secondary version) and "If I tell a teacher about bullying, that teacher will help," (elementary version). Schools are safer with fewer bullying behaviors and lower suspension rates when students are more willing to seek help from adults (Eliot et al., 2010). School safety increases when students are willing to seek help because adults become aware of dangerous situations and can help stop them (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2009). Eliot and colleagues reported that student willingness to tell adults is a key factor in violence prevention, which could encourage school officials to provide anonymous ways for students to report violence or threats. The above research supports the idea that a positive school climate, which features trusting, supportive relationships between students and adults, will lead to students' increased willingness to seek help.

### **Cultural Effects**

Research suggests there are racial and gender differences in perceptions of school climate. Bandyopadhyay et al. (2009) reported that minority students tend to view the school environment as less safe than Caucasian students. The discrepancy could be due to minority students' possible lack of trust for Caucasian authority figures (Eliot et al., 2010), causing them to feel less safe and connected to school adults. In addition, Eliot and colleagues reported mixed results in the literature regarding differences in help-seeking behaviors of minority and non-minority students. Some minority students are more likely to seek help from a trusted adult with whom they developed a positive relationship. As for differences in aggressive behavior, Klein et al. (2012) found that minority students show higher rates of aggression, but Caucasian students

engage more frequently in substance use. Such results indicate that differences between races in perceptions of school climate are important aspects of improving school safety.

Similarly to differences between races, males' and females' perceptions of school climate also vary. Males tend to view school climate as more negative than their female counterparts, and they tend to engage more often in all types of bullying except social bullying (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2009; Klein et al., 2012). Additionally, Eliot et al. (2010) found that males are less likely to ask for help because it can be a sign of weakness and societal norms discourage weakness in males. However, higher levels of perceived teacher support were associated with increased willingness to seek help in both male and female students.

In connection with school climate, Klein et al. (2012) examined differences between males and females in risk behaviors. Since males tend to view school climate more negatively than females, this could impact their engagement in risk-taking and misbehaving at school. In general, adolescent females indicate higher rates of depression and suicide attempts while males are more likely to complete suicide attempts. In their study, Klein and colleagues discovered that a positive school climate can be a protective factor in preventing and reducing risk behaviors in all students. The above research suggests the need to examine differences between males and females in perceptions of school climate to protect against risk behaviors and increase school safety.

### **The Link between School Climate and Bullying Prevention**

The connection between school climate and bullying prevention lies within the idea that if all members of the school community feel connected in positive ways within the school climate, bullying is less likely to occur. Many researchers support that a positive school climate is a significant protective factor in reducing student risk behaviors and bullying (Bandyopadhyay

et al., 2009; Eliot et al., 2010; Klein et al., 2012). The ASCS results can assist schools with targeting specific areas of improvement in school climate so as to reduce and prevent bullying. For example, Bandyopadhyay and colleagues found that the prevalence of bullying and teasing scale raises schools' awareness of a bullying issue and the need for intervention. The ASCS aggressive attitudes scale can identify student beliefs that bullying is acceptable or encouraged. If results show significant positive attitudes and beliefs toward bullying, schools could choose programs that focus on attitudes. The ASCS willingness to seek help scale identifies reluctance or inability to report violence safely, which can alert schools to the need for a safe way to report. The ASCS contains multiple avenues for improving school safety and reducing bullying and violence.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

Bullying is currently the most common form of school violence and includes physical, verbal, emotional, social/relational, and psychological behaviors directed from stronger persons to weaker ones (Boulton, 2013; Domino, 2013; Turner et al., 2013; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). Turner and colleagues asserted that children who experience bullying can suffer many consequences, including suicidal ideation and desires for violent retaliation. Children who bully can also experience the same consequences as well as possible involvement in criminal activity (Langdon & Preble, 2008).

The severity of the possible consequences of bullying makes a compelling case for schools to intervene. Schools can choose from a variety of individualized interventions or whole-school approaches to target bullying. Researchers expressed differences in opinion on the effectiveness of individualized approaches (Smith et al., 2005; Whitted & Dupper, 2005).

Whole-school intervention programs also vary in effectiveness (Merrell et al., 2008), but Whitted and Dupper stated they tend to target the overall school culture.

The first whole-school anti-bullying program discussed was the OBPP, which encompasses individual, classroom, school, and community levels of intervention. Olweus and Limber (2010) asserted that bullying prevention and elimination are systemic efforts, and without the full participation of each level, the OBPP will not be successful.

The next program, STR, targets attitudes and beliefs about bullying. STR teaches relationship development and socio-emotional maturity skills, which can lead to more positive relationships among students and teachers and fewer bullying instances (Brown et al., 2011). Frey et al. (2005) found that students became less accepting of bullying behavior after completing STR, but the program did not necessarily alter the overall school climate.

The final anti-bullying program discussed was BP-PBS, which fits into the larger SWPBS and targets student behaviors to increase school safety. The Stop, Walk, and Talk method is simple and encourages students to solve their own interpersonal issues (Good et al., 2011). BP-PBS lowered effectively the suspension rates and office referrals in previous research studies, which led to safer schools and more positive school cultures (Bradshaw et al., 2010).

The aforementioned anti-bullying programs strive to increase school safety through different methods, but they each have the potential to impact the overall school climate. Klein et al. (2012) found school climate to be a major factor in preventing bullying and reducing school violence. The ASCS (Cornell, 2013) allows schools to gather students' perceptions of bullying and school relationships in an effort to improve the overall school culture. In addition, the ASCS results can inform schools about cultural differences in perceptions of school climate. Because a positive school climate can contribute to bullying prevention, the ASCS can be a valuable tool in



school assessments of bullying. The ASCS results can be used to answer the following research question: According to student perceptions, what needs does the school have to meet in order to implement an effective anti-bullying program? The results can raise schools' awareness about which anti-bullying programs will best fit their needs. The prevalence and serious consequences of bullying require schools' conscious efforts to create safe, positive environments for students by choosing programs that meet students' needs.

### **Method**

This study explores several anti-bullying programs as well as the connection between bullying and school climate. School climate involves the relationships among all members of the school community, and research indicates that positive school climate is a systemic achievement and can help reduce bullying (Cornell, 2013; Klein et al., 2012). This study utilizes the ASCS with students in a rural middle school to answer the following research question: According to student perceptions, what needs does this school have to meet in order to implement an effective anti-bullying program? The research design for this study is a quantitative needs assessment that measures students' perceptions with a survey.

### **Setting**

The study took place over the course of two weeks at a rural middle school in the northeastern United States. The school serves students in grades 4 through 7. During the 2012-2013 school year, there were 545 enrolled students: 48 percent ( $n = 264$ ) males and 52% ( $n = 281$ ) females (NYSED, 2014). Fifty percent of students qualified for free or reduced lunch during the 2012-2013 school year. Seventy-eight percent of students ( $n = 424$ ) were Caucasian; eight percent ( $n = 46$ ) were Multiracial; seven percent ( $n = 37$ ) were Hispanic or Latino; six

percent ( $n = 34$ ) were Black or African American; one percent ( $n = 3$ ) was American Indian or Alaska Native; and zero percent ( $n = 1$ ) were Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

The researcher visited all the homeroom classes in grades 4 through 6 and all the periods of grade 7 Family and Consumer Science class to reach the most students. All the students sat at their assigned desks while the researcher introduced the survey and distributed materials.

### **Participants**

All students in grades 4 through 7 who were present during the two weeks of survey distribution had an equal opportunity to take part in the study. Along with the survey, the researcher passed out informed consent and assent forms, and students could choose whether or not to participate in the study. In order to participate, students had to return the consent/assent forms with a parent or guardian signature and complete the survey.

There were 48 participants total: 44 percent ( $n = 21$ ) were fourth graders, 38% ( $n = 18$ ) were fifth graders, 17% ( $n = 8$ ) were sixth graders, and two percent ( $n = 1$ ) were seventh graders. Fifty-six percent ( $n = 27$ ) were females and 44% ( $n = 21$ ) were males. Eighty-three percent ( $n = 40$ ) of participants were Caucasian, eight percent ( $n = 4$ ) were African-American, and eight percent ( $n = 4$ ) were Multiracial. The researcher is a graduate student school counseling intern and a Caucasian female in her mid-twenties.

### **Measurement Instrument**

The Authoritative School Climate Survey (ASCS; Cornell, 2013) is a survey instrument that gathers students' perceptions of bullying, school climate, and relationships between members of the school community. The survey comes in two separate forms: the elementary form for students in grades 3 through 5 and the secondary form for students in grades 6 through 12 (see appendices A and B). Students must answer *yes* or *no* questions and questions on a 4-

point Likert scale with answers ranging from “*strongly agree*” to “*strongly disagree*.”

According to Bandyopadhyay et al. (2009), the three ASCS scales that contribute most directly to bullying prevention are the prevalence of bullying and teasing scale, aggressive attitudes scale, and willingness to seek help scale. Bandyopadhyay et al. (2009) established the validity of the ASCS and found that the instrument measures accurately students’ perceptions of school climate. Research also supports the reliability of the ASCS and that it measures school climate consistently (Klein et al., 2012).

### **Procedure**

The data were collected using anonymous surveys delivered to each classroom by the researcher. Data collection occurred over a two-week span so the researcher could reach all classrooms and the most students possible. The researcher spent five to 10 minutes in classrooms introducing herself, explaining the study, and passing out the survey and informed consent. Students were told they could choose whether or not to participate in the survey, but parent permission was required if they decided to participate. The researcher explained that surveys and permission forms should be turned in to students’ teachers within one week, and teachers separated surveys from forms to maintain student confidentiality. The researcher also informed students about the chance to win a prize if they chose to participate. A student from each grade level who filled out the survey and brought back parent permission would win a drawing for a \$10 gift card to McDonald’s.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher organized data in two SPSS spreadsheets; one with grades 4 and 5 data and the other with grades 6 and 7. The data were analyzed using descriptive measures of central tendency (frequency, mean, median, and mode) and bivariate correlational tests.

## Results

Bandyopadhyay et al. (2009) found three scales on the ASCS to lend the most insight into bullying prevention: the prevalence of bullying and teasing scale, aggressive attitudes scale, and willingness to seek help scale. The following paragraphs indicate the results from each of the three scales on the survey completed by students in the study.

### Prevalence of Bullying and Teasing Scale

#### Fourth and fifth grades.

Forty-four percent ( $n = 17$ ) of participants in grades 4 and 5 were bullied at school in the past month, and eight percent ( $n = 3$ ) bullied someone at school in the past month. The most common locations students observed bullying were classrooms (64%;  $n = 25$ ), the cafeteria (51%;  $n = 20$ ), and outside the school (51%;  $n = 20$ ) with the fewest reports on the bus (26%;  $n = 10$ ). Fifty-six percent ( $n = 22$ ) of participants believed students at the school were bullied based on looks, 41% ( $n = 16$ ) thought students were bullied because of clothing, and 26% ( $n = 10$ ) thought students were bullied because of their race.

#### Sixth and seventh grades.

Thirty-three percent ( $n = 3$ ) of participants in grades 6 and 7 were bullied at school in the past year. One participant reported being bullied physically, three reported verbal bullying (two stated it occurred “more than once per week”), four reported social bullying (one stated it happened “more than once per week”), and one reported online bullying occurring “more than once per week.” Participants also reported having their property stolen (44%;  $n = 4$ ), having someone threaten to hurt them (66%;  $n = 6$ ), and being verbally insulted (66%;  $n = 6$ ). No participants reported being threatened with a weapon. Sixty-six percent of participants ( $n = 6$ ) at this level believed bullying was a problem at this school, but 78% ( $n = 7$ ) agreed they felt safe at

school while two participants disagreed. Participants agreed bullying occurred based on clothing or physical appearance (77%;  $n = 7$ ) more often than race or ethnicity (33%;  $n = 3$ ) or sexual topics (44%;  $n = 4$ ).

### **Aggressive Attitudes Scale**

#### **Fourth and fifth grades.**

Fourth and fifth grade participants responded to the following statements regarding aggressive attitude: bullying is fun (zero responded “yes”), you will have fewer friends if you are afraid to fight (18%;  $n = 7$  said “yes”), people will look up to you if you fight (10%;  $n = 4$  said “yes”), and it feels good to hit someone (zero responded “yes,” but one participant left the statement blank).

#### **Sixth and seventh grades.**

Sixth and seventh grade participants reported the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with several statements on the aggressive attitude scale: it is okay to hit someone who threatened you (one participant out of nine agreed); it feels good to hit someone (all disagreed); people will look up to you if you fight a lot (two participants agreed); you will have fewer friends if you are afraid to fight (all disagreed); good fighters are popular in our school (33% agreed); bullying is okay sometimes (all disagreed); bullying is not really that bad (all disagreed); some people deserve to be bullied (44% agreed); it is your fault if you let someone bully you (33% agreed); and bullying is sometimes fun (all disagreed, but one was left blank).

### **Willingness to Seek Help Scale**

#### **Fourth and fifth grades.**

Some participants (39%;  $n = 15$ ) at this grade level told someone they were being bullied in the past month. They informed parents (21%;  $n = 8$ ), friends (18%;  $n = 7$ ), and teachers or

another adult (18%;  $n = 7$ ). Many participants believed there was an adult at school they could go to with a problem (82%;  $n = 32$ ) and that if they told a teacher about bullying, that teacher would help (69%;  $n = 27$ ).

#### **Sixth and seventh grades.**

Most participants in grades 6 and 7 reported they would tell an adult if someone at school talked about killing someone (eight agreed and one was left blank) or if another student brought a gun to school (all agreed). The majority of participants also agreed they had adults at school to talk to about concerns (89%;  $n = 8$ ) and that if they told teachers about bullying, the teachers would help (67%;  $n = 6$ ). Seventy-seven percent ( $n = 7$ ) agreed they felt comfortable asking teachers for help with schoolwork and all participants reported they had at least one adult at school who wanted them to do well.

#### **Cultural Differences**

##### **Fourth and fifth grades.**

Nine female participants as opposed to two males reported being bullied once or twice in the past month. Six participants out of the 17 who reported being bullied at school in the past month stated the bullying occurred one or more times per week, and five of the six were males. Four were White, one was Black, and one was Multiracial. Three participants stated they bullied someone else in the past month; two were females, one was male, two were White, and one was Black.

All 10 female participants who reported bullying also reported telling someone about it, whereas only five of the seven males who reported bullying told someone. Of the 15 participants who told someone, 10 were White, three were Multiracial, and two were Black. Eight students did not believe a teacher would help if told; five of the eight were females and three were males.

Seven of the students who did not believe a teacher would help were White and one was Multiracial.

Seven participants believed they would not have many friends if they were afraid to fight; four were females and three were males. Four of the participants with this outlook were White, two were Multiracial, and one was Black.

#### **Sixth and seventh grades.**

Of the nine participants in grades 6 and 7, two disagreed they felt safe in school; one male and one female, one who was White and one who was Black. Only two participants at this grade level reported being bullied once or twice in the past month or more than once per week; both were females and one was White and the other was Black. One Black female participant reported bullying someone else in the past month.

Three out of nine participants (two White females and one White male) disagreed that teachers would help with bullying. Three out of nine participants also agreed it is a person's own fault for being bullied. Two males and one female (two White and one Black) reported this belief.

### **Measures of Central Tendency**

#### **Fourth and fifth grades.**

In Table 1 below, the variables were coded as numbers for data analysis. For example, under "Grade Level," participants in fourth grade were coded as "1," while fifth graders were coded as "2." Males were coded as "1" and females as "2." Race was coded as the following: "1" American Indian or Alaska Native, "2" Black or African American, "3" White, "4" Asian, "5" Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and "6" Multi-racial. Ethnic background was coded as "1" for yes and "2" for no. Variables Q1 and Q2 were answered on the following scale: "1"

never, “2” once or twice, “3” about once per week, and “4” more than once per week. The remaining variables were coded as “1” for yes and “2” for no. The table indicates the average, middle, and most popular answers for each item on the survey.

Table 1

*Fourth and Fifth Grade Measures of Central Tendency*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Grade Level	1.46	1.00	1
Sex	1.56	2.00	2
Race	3.26	3.00	3
Ethnic Background	1.89	2.00	2
Q1 Bullied at School	1.66	1.00	1
Q2 Bullied Someone	1.08	1.00	1
Q3 Told Anyone	1.61	2.00	2
Q4 Told Friend	1.81	2.00	2
Q5 Told Parent	1.78	2.00	2
Q6 Told Teacher	1.81	2.00	2
Q7 Seen Bullying in Classrooms	1.34	1.00	1
Q8 in Hallways	1.64	2.00	2
Q9 in Restrooms	1.72	2.00	2
Q10 in Cafeteria	1.46	1.00	1
Q11 seen Outside School	1.47	1.00	1
Q12 on Bus	1.72	2.00	2
Q13 Bullied Because of Looks	1.44	1.00	1
Q14 Bullied Because of Clothes	1.59	2.00	2
Q15 Bullied Because of Race	1.74	2.00	2
Q16 Teacher Will Help	1.23	1.00	1
Q17 Adult to Talk to	1.16	1.00	1
Q18 Bullying is Fun	2.00	2.00	2
Q19 No Friends if Afraid to Fight	1.82	2.00	2
Q20 People Look up to Fighters	1.89	2.00	2
Q21 Feels Good to Hit	2.00	2.00	2



### Sixth and seventh grades.

In Table 2 below, sixth graders were coded as “1,” while seventh graders were coded as “2.” Coding for sex, race, and ethnic background were the same as fourth and fifth grades. For home language, participants answered “yes” (coded “1”) if their family spoke a language other than English, or “no” (coded “2”). Variables Q1 through Q23 were answered on the following scale: “1” strongly disagree, “2” disagree, “3” agree, and “4” strongly agree. Variables Q24 through Q28 were coded as “1” no, “2” one time, and “3” more than once. The remaining variables were coded as “1” never, “2” once or twice, “3” about once per week, and “4” more than once per week. Again, the table indicates the average, middle, and most popular answers for survey items, which is important information to learning more about the prevalence of bullying in the school.

Table 2

#### *Sixth and Seventh Grade Measures of Central Tendency*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Grade Level	1.11	1.00	1
Sex	1.56	2.00	2
Race	2.78	3.00	3
Ethnic Background	2.00	2.00	2
Home Language	2.00	2.00	2
Q1 Adult to Talk to	3.11	3.00	3
Q2 Teacher Will Help	2.67	3.00	3
Q3 Feel Comfortable Getting Help with Schoolwork	3.22	3.00	4
Q4 One Adult Wants me to do Well	3.78	4.00	4
Q5 Kill Would Tell	3.50	3.50	3 and 4
Q6 Gun Would Tell	3.56	4.00	4
Q7 Feel Safe at School	2.89	3.00	3
Q8 Bullied Because of Clothes	3.11	3.00	4
Q9 Bullied Because	2.00	2.00	1

of Race			
Q10 Sexual Teasing	2.22	2.00	1
Q11 Bullying is a Problem Here	2.78	3.00	3
Q12 Bullied Because of Sex Orientation	2.00	2.00	1
Q13 Telling Truth on this Survey	4.00	4.00	4
Q14 Ok to Hit	1.78	2.00	2
Q15 Feels Good to Hit	1.56	2.00	2
Q16 People Look up to You if You Fight	1.67	1.00	1
Q17 Not Many Friends if Afraid to Fight	1.56	2.00	2
Q18 Fighters are Popular	1.67	1.00	1
Q19 Bullying is Ok Sometimes	1.44	1.00	1
Q20 Bullying is Not That Bad	1.22	1.00	1
Q21 Some People Deserve to be Bullied	1.44	1.00	1
Q22 It's Your Own Fault if Bullied	1.89	2.00	1
Q23 Bullying is Fun	1.25	1.00	1
Q24 Property Stolen	1.78	1.00	1
Q25 Attacked/Pushed/Hit	1.22	1.00	1
Q26 Threatened to Hurt Me	2.00	2.00	1
Q27 Threatened with Weapon	1.00	1.00	1
Q28 Mean Insults	2.11	2.00	3
Q29 Bullied Past Month	1.44	1.00	1
Q30 Bullied Past Year	1.56	1.00	1
Q31 Bullied Someone Else	1.11	1.00	1
Q32 Physical Bullying	1.11	1.00	1
Q33 Verbal Bullying	1.78	1.00	1
Q34 Social Bullying	1.67	1.00	1
Q35 Cyber Bullying	1.33	1.00	1

**Correlational Data**

Tables 3, 4, 7, and 8 include the significant correlations (two-way relationships) among variables for all grade levels at the .05 and .001 confidence levels. The levels indicate that five percent or one percent of the time that a statistically significant relationship was found between two variables in the current study, it was due to chance. Tables 5, 6, and 9 through 11 indicate the non-significant two-way correlations between variables.

Table 3

*Fourth and Fifth Grade Correlations at .05 Confidence Level*

	Told teacher	Adult to talk to	Seen in halls	Seen in cafeteria	Seen outside	Seen on buses	Looks	Clothes	Based on race	No friends if don't fight	Look up to you if fight
Grade Level						.338* p=.05					.325* p=.05
Sex							-.374* p=.05				
Race									-.396* p=.05		
Ethnic Backgr ound									.405* p=.05		
Bullied at School Past	-.339* p=.05			.407* p=.05					-.363* p=.05		



Table 4

*Fourth and Fifth Grade Correlations at .001 Confidence Level*

	Ethnic Backgr ound	Told friend	Told any one	Told parent	Told teacher	Seen in cafeteria	Seen outside	Clothes	No friends if don't fight
Grade Level		-.519** p=.001							
Race	-.973** p=.001								
Bullied at School Past Mo		-.503** p=.001	-.497** p=.001				-.419** p=.001		
Told Anyone		.616** p=.001		.711** p=.001	.653** p=.001				
Told Friend					.643** p=.001	.463** p=.001			
Seen in classroom						.457** p=.001	.427** p=.001		
Seen in halls						.523** p=.001			
Seen in rest rooms		.436** p=.001							
Seen on Buses									.479** p=.001
Looks								.523** p=.001	

Table 5

*Fourth and Fifth Grade Non-significant Correlations Part I*

	Grade level	sex	race	Ethnic backgnd	Q1bullied at school	Q2 bullied someone	Q3Told anyone	Q4Told friend	Q5Told parent	Q6Told teacher	Q7Class rooms	Q8 Halls
Grade level		1.91 p=.243	.021 p=.900	-.031 p=.860	-.072 p=.666	-.059 p=.727	.011 p=.946		.134 p=.437	-.211 p=.218	.132 p=.429	-.165 p=.316
Sex			-.252 p=.122	.190 p=.274	-.214 p=.198	.059 p=.727	-.143 p=.390	-.131 p=.448	-.015 p=.930	-.248 p=.145	-.171 p=.303	-.011 p=.947
Race					.263 p=.111	-.179 p=.288	-.170 p=.307	-.051 p=.767	-.191 p=.264	-.116 p=.499	-.082 p=.626	-.079 p=.632
Ethnic backgnd					-.335 p=.053	.080 p=.657	.251 p=.152	.094 p=.604	.176 p=.336	.207 p=.256	.099 p=.576	.199 p=.496
Q1bullied atschool						.232 p=.167			-.272 p=.114		-.235 p=.161	-.176 p=.292
Q2 bullied someone							-.172 p=.316	-.128 p=.461	-.072 p=.686	-.098 p=.581	.213 p=.212	.028 p=.871
Q3Told anyone											.302 p=.069	.276 p=.093
Q4Told friend									.238 p=.168		.169 p=.332	.328 p=.051
Q5Told parent											.211 p=.224	.155 p=.368
Q6Told teacher											.211 p=.224	

Table 6

*Fourth and Fifth Grade Non-significant Correlations Part II*

	Q9rest rooms	Q10 cafe	Q11out Side	Q12 Bus	Q13 Looks	Q14 Clothes	Q15 Race	Q16 Help	Q17talk	Q19 no friends	Q20 lookup
Grade Level	-.220 p=.179	-.257 p=.124	.312 p=.056		-.295 p=.044	-.064 p=.697	.190 p=.246	.079 p=.654	-.122 p=.467	.299 p=.064	
Sex	-.091 p=.580	-.071 p=.676	-.045 p=.789	-.055 p=.748		-.313 p=.053	.076 p=.646	.090 p=.608	-.046 p=.785	-.007 p=.967	.209 p=.208
Race	.049 p=.767	-.089 p=.602	-.095 p=.571	.049 p=.778	.035 p=.834	.170 p=.302		.034 p=.847	.031 p=.851	-.225 p=.169	.094 p=.576
Ethnic Back ground	-.006 p=.973	.197 p=.272	.161 p=.362	.000 p=1.000	-.010 p=.953	-.070 p=.688		.000 p=1.000	-.075 p=.669	.313 p=.067	-.114 p=.522
Q1bullied at school	-.185 p=.266			-.105 p=.548	.111 p=.508	.032 p=.847		.252 p=.150	-.005 p=.979	-.088 p=.601	.158 p=.349
Q2 bullied someone	-.042 p=.804	-.076 p=.664	-.285 p=.092	-.027 p=.881	-.274 p=.101	-.158 p=.350	-.293 p=.078	-.144 p=.425	-.135 p=.433	-.138 p=.416	-.213 p=.212
Q3Told anyone	.197 p=.236	.298 p=.077		.037 p=.831	.143 p=.390	.075 p=.656	.129 p=.441	.151 p=.394	-.018 p=.918	.033 p=.845	.087 p=.607
Q4Told friend			.113 p=.518	-.112 p=.534	.237 p=.107	.297 p=.079	.009 p=.960	.050 p=.787	.000 p=1.000	-.241 p=.156	-.180 p=.302
Q5Told parent	.081 p=.640	-.073 p=.683	.200 p=.249	-.112 p=.534	.152 p=.375	-.075 p=.665	.154 p=.369	-.044 p=.813	.000 p=1.000	-.060 p=.729	.269 p=.118
Q6Told teacher	.284 p=.094		.200 p=.249	.015 p=.933		.267 p=.116	.203 p=.236	-.149 p=.415	-.031 p=.860	-.031 p=.856	.075 p=.669
Q7class Rooms	.053 p=.752			.208 p=.223	.171 p=.303	.166 p=.321	.053 p=.752	.061 p=.732	.137 p=.419	.056 p=.736	-.108 p=.523
Q8hallway	.244 p=.135			.179 p=.295	.119 p=.471	.245 p=.132	.173 p=.293	-.004 p=.982	-.144 p=.388	.068 p=.681	-.084 p=.615
Q9rest Rooms		.195 p=.248	.208 p=.210	-.108 p=.532			-.107 p=.516	-.302 p=.077	-.069 p=.681	.004 p=.982	.159 p=.340
Q10cafe			.296 p=.075	.037 p=.835	.122 p=.470	.257 p=.124	.073 p=.669	.017 p=.925	-.124 p=.470	-.109 p=.523	-.217 p=.203
Q11outside					.152 p=.363	.169 p=.312		-.074 p=.678	.012 p=.944	.315 p=.054	.165 p=.330
Q12bus					-.069	.231	.308	-.078	-.216		-.066







Ok to Hit Q14								.672* p=.05		
Feels Good Q15									.730* p=.05	
Bully Not Bad Q20				.756* p=.05						
Bully OK Q19				.791* p=.05						.745* p=.05
Deserve BullyQ 21										.745* p=.05
Property Q24		.686* p=.05								

Table 8

*Sixth and Seventh Grade Correlations at the .001 Confidence Level*

	Ok to HitQ14	Safe at School Q7	Bully Ok Some Times Q19	Bully Not That Bad Q20	Bully Past Mo Q29	Bully past Yr Q30	Bully Others Q31	Not Many Friends Q17	Deserve Bully Q21	Mean Insult Q28	Verbal Bully Q33	Cyber Bully Q35
Adult to Talk to Q1	-.867** p=.001											
School HelpQ3		.804** p=.001	-.822** p=.001									
Do WellQ4				-1.00** p=.001	-.870** p=.001	-.808** p=.001						
Gun TellQ6								-.800** p=.001				
Feels Good Q15									.800** p=.001			
Bully OK Q19								.800** p=.001				
Bully Not Bad Q20					.870** p=.001	.808** p=.001						
Property Q24										.862** p=.001	.845** p=.001	
Bullied Past Mo Q29						.946** p=.001	.945** p=.001					

Bullied Past Yr Q30								.904** p=.001					
Social BullyQ 34												.800** p=.001	.875** p=.001

Table 9

*Sixth and Seventh Grade Non-significant Correlations Part I*

	Grade Level	Sex	Race	Q1 Adult	Q2Tch Help	Q3wk Help	Q4Do Well	Q5Kill Tell	Q6Gun Tell	Q7 Safe	Q8 clothes	Q9 Race
Grade Level		.316 p=.407	.189 p=.626	-.069 p=.859	-.289 p=.451	-.550 p=.125	.189 p=.626	-.378 p=.356	-.395 p=.292	-.555 p=.121	.316 p=.407	.000 p=1.000
Sex			.060 p=.879	.175 p=.652	-.365 p=.334	-.032 p=.936	-.478 p=.193	.258 p=.537	-.350 p=.356	.219 p=.571	.100 p=.798	.548 p=.127
Race				1.05 p=.788	-.218 p=.573	.491 p=.179	.357 p=.345	.378 p=.356	.060 p=.879	.367 p=.331	.060 p=.879	-.327 p=.390
Q1 adult					-.160 p=.681	.444 p=.231	.105 p=.788	.626 p=.097	.175 p=.652	.385 p=.307	-.219 p=.571	-.480 p=.191
Q2tchr Helps						-.058 p=.883	-.218 p=.573	.146 p=.730	.183 p=.638	-.320 p=.401	.320 p=.402	.333 p=.381
Q3work Help							.151 p=.698	.539 p=.168	.253 p=.511		-.174 p=.654	-.346 p=.361
Q4Do Well								.000 p=1.000	.598 p=.089	-.105 p=.788	-.209 p=.589	-.655 p=.056
Q5Kill Tell									.500 p=.207	.500 p=.207	-.119 p=.780	.000 p=1.000
Q6Gun Tell										.219 p=.571	-.575 p=.105	-.274 p=.476
Q7Safe											-.570 p=.109	-.240 p=.534
Q8clothes												.411 p=.272

Table 10

*Sixth and Seventh Grade Non-significant Correlations Part II*

	Q10 sexual	Q11 Prob	Q12Sex Orient	Q14OK toHit	Q15feel Good	Q16 lookUp	Q17No Friends	Q18 Popular	Q19 bullyOK	Q20not Bad	Q21 Deserve	Q22own Fault
Grade Level	-.419 p=.261	.472 p=.200	-.375 p=.320	.125 p=.749	-.395 p=.292	-.289 p=.451	.316 p=.407	.500 p=.170	.395 p=.292	-.189 p=.626	-.316 p=.407	-.359 p=.342
Sex	.627 p=.071	.271 p=.480	.237 p=.539	.040 p=.920	-.350 p=.356	-.091 p=.815	.100 p=.798	.632 p=.068	.350 p=.356	.478 p=.193	-.100 .798	-.369 p=.328
Race	-.144 p=.711	.162 p=.677	-.567 p=.111	-.189 p=.626	-.478 p=.193	-.218 p=.573	-.478 p=.193	-.189 p=.626	-.598 p=.089	-.357 p=.345	-.598 p=.089	-.068 p=.862
Q1 adult	.338 p=.373	-.595 p=.091	-.208 p=.591		-.614 p=.079	-.400 p=.286	-.219 p=.571	-.139 p=.722	-.175 p=.652	-.105 p=.788	-.570 p=.109	-.423 p=.256
Q2tchr Helps	-.440 p=.236	.198 p=.610	.289 p=.451	.289 p=.451	.183 p=.638	.000 p=1.000	-.091 p=.815	.000 p=1.000	.091 p=.815	.218 p=.573	.365 p=.334	.104 p=.791
Q3work Help	.351 p=.355	-.240 p=.534	-.150 p=.700	-.575 p=.105	-.316 p=.407	.115 p=.767	-.601 p=.087	-.500 p=.170		-.151 p=.698	-.538 p=.136	-.126 p=.747
Q4Do Well	-.403 p=.282	-.130 p=.740	-.567 p=.111	-.189 p=.626	-.478 p=.193	-.546 p=.129	-.478 p=.193		-.598 p=.089		-.598 p=.089	-.068 p=.862
Q5Kill Tell	.459 p=.253	-.405 p=.320	.135 p=.750	-.378 p=.356	-.500 p=.207	-.603 p=.114	-.500 p=.207	-.258 p=.537	-.258 p=.537	.000 p=1.000	-.258 p=.537	.000 p=1.000
Q6Gun Tell	-.024 p=.951	-.461 p=.212	-.237 p=.539	.040 p=.920	-.350 p=.356	-.639 p=.064			-.550 p=.125	-.598 p=.089	-.100 p=.798	-.114 p=.771
Q7Safe	.613 p=.079	-.476 p=.196	-.208 p=.591	-.381 p=.311	-.175 p=.652	.160 p=.681	-.570 p=.109	-.277 p=.470	-.614 p=.079	.105 p=.788	-.219 p=.571	-.249 p=.518
Q8clothes	-.241 p=.532		.474 p=.197	.040 p=.920	.100 p=.798	.183 p=.638	.550 p=.125	.395 p=.292	.350 p=.356	.209 p=.589	-.100 p=.798	.398 p=.289
Q9Race	.264 p=.492	.594 p=.092		.650 p=.058	.274 p=.476	.167 p=.668	.274 p=.476	.577 p=.104	.548 p=.127	.655 p=.056	.548 p=.127	.156 p=.689
Q10sexual		-.301 p=.432	.457 p=.216	-.267 p=.488	-.024 p=.951	.088 p=.822	-.024 p=.951	.076 p=.845	.024 p=.951	.403 p=.282	.024 p=.951	.027 p=.944
Q11Prob			.257 p=.504	.493 p=.177	.027 p=.945	.198 p=.610	.271 p=.480	.429 p=.250	.217 p=.575	.130 p=.740	-.027 p=.945	.108 p=.782
Q12Sex Orient				.187 p=.629	.474 p=.197	.289 p=.451	.474 p=.197	.250 p=.516	.474 p=.197	.567 p=.111	.474 p=.197	.539 p=.134
Q14OK toHit					.395 p=.292	.072 p=.854	.040 p=.920	.250 p=.516	.316 p=.407	.189 p=.626		.157 p=.686
Q15Feel							.550	.158	.350	.478		.653



Table 11

*Sixth and Seventh Grade Non-significant Correlations Part III*

	Q23 BullyFun	Q24 property	Q25 attack	Q26 threaten	Q28 insults	Q29 PastMo	Q30 PastYr	Q31 bully others	Q32 physical	Q33 verbal	Q34 social	Q35 cyber
Grade Level	-.218 p=.604	.472 p=.200	-.189 p=.626	-.433 p=.244	.359 p=.342	-.164 p=.673	-.205 p=.596	-.125 p=.749	-.125 p=.749	.064 p=.870	.125 p=.749	-.125 p=.749
Sex	.000 p=1.000	.515 p=.156	-.060 p=.879	.548 p=.127	.114 p=.771	.416 p=.266	.520 p=.151	.316 p=.407	.316 p=.407	.567 p=.111	.632 p=.068	.316 p=.407
Race	-.655 p=.078	.454 p=.220	.286 p=.456	.327 p=.390		-.590 p=.094	-.528 p=.144	-.661 p=.052	.189 p=.626	.339 p=.373	.094 p=.809	.189 p=.626
Q1 adult	-.120 p=.776	.476 p=.196	.367 p=.331	.240 p=.534	.423 p=.256	-.091 p=.816	.091 p=.816	-.069 p=.859	-.069 p=.859	.355 p=.348	.485 p=.185	.555 p=.121
Q2tchr Helps	.253 p=.546	-.396 p=.291	.546 p=.129	.000 p=1.000	-.259 p=.501	.190 p=.625	-.047 p=.904	.144 p=.711	.144 p=.711	-.517 p=.154		
Q3work Help	-.522 p=.184	-.086 p=.826	.189 p=.626	.520 p=.152	.126 p=.747	-.132 p=.736	-.016 p=.967	-.100 p=.798	-.100 p=.798	-.100 p=.798	.051 p=.896	.100 p=.798
Q4Do Well	-.655 p=.078	-.130 p=.740	-.357 p=.345	-.327 p=.390	.068 p=.862			-.661 p=.052	-.661 p=.052	-.315 p=.410	-.189 p=.626	.189 p=.626
Q5Kill Tell	.354 p=.437	.405 p=.320	.577 p=.134		.302 p=.468	-.250 p=.550	-.126 p=.766	-.378 p=.356	.378 p=.356	.493 p=.215	.258 p=.537	.378 p=.356
Q6Gun Tell	-.149 p=.725	-.217 p=.575	-.060 p=.879	.274 p=.476	-.142 p=.716	-.520 p=.151	-.416 p=.266	-.395 p=.292	-.395 p=.292	-.162 p=.677	-.079 p=.840	.316 p=.407
Q7Safe	-.361 p=.379	.166 p=.669	.105 p=.788		.249 p=.518	.091 p=.816	.319 p=.402	.069 p=.859	.069 p=.859	.444 p=.231	.555 p=.121	
Q8clothes	.206 p=.625	-.095 p=.808	.209 p=.589	-.274 p=.476	-.142 p=.716	.065 p=.868	-.182 p=.639	-.040 p=.920	.316 p=.407	-.253 p=.511	-.553 p=.122	
Q9Race	.462 p=.249	-.149 p=.703	.000 p=1.000	.333 p=.381	-.467 p=.205	.569 p=.109	.427 p=.252	.433 p=.244	.433 p=.244	.000 p=1.000	-.144 p=.711	-.433 p=.244
Q10sexual	.206 p=.625	.170 p=.662	-.115 p=.768	.660 p=.053	-.151 p=.699	.351 p=.354	.552 p=.124	.267 p=.488	.267 p=.488	.566 p=.112	.648 p=.059	.610 p=.081
Q11Prob	-.149 p=.725	-.191 p=.622	-.162 p=.677	-.149 p=.703	-.246 p=.523	.113 p=.773	-.113 p=.773	.086 p=.826	.086 p=.826	-.340 p=.370	-.472 p=.200	
Q12Sex Orient	.701 p=.053	-.386 p=.305	.000 p=1.000	.144 p=.711		.493 p=.177	.370 p=.327	.375 p=.320	.375 p=.320	-.096 p=.806	-.250 p=.516	-.375 p=.320
Q14OK toHit	.218 p=.604	-.279 p=.468	-.236 p=.541	.000 p=1.000	-.359 p=.342	.164 p=.673	.021 p=.958	.125 p=.749	.125 p=.749	-.208 p=.591	-.312 p=.413	-.437 p=.239





### Discussion

Bullying is the most common form of school violence and can have devastating effects on children who bully and who are bullied (Langdon & Preble, 2008; Turner et al., 2013; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). The seriousness and consequences of bullying make it a priority in schools and there are various programs and interventions to address it. Individualized, group, or peer mediation interventions target the students who bully and the students being bullied. Such tactics have some support in the research community because they can teach empathy and problem-solving skills (Smith et al., 2005), but others believe bullying is a systemic issue requiring whole-school, cultural interventions (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Whole-school approaches also vary in effectiveness (Merrell et al., 2008), but unlike individual or group interventions, they aim to improve the overall school climate to prevent and reduce bullying.

Research supports that a positive school climate where all members feel connected and understood can lead to a safer environment where less bullying occurs (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2009; Eliot et al., 2010; Klein et al., 2012). The Authoritative School Climate Survey (ASCS; Cornell, 2013) is an instrument that measures students' perceptions of school climate. The results can lend insight into what students believe the school needs for an anti-bullying program.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to utilize the ASCS in a rural intermediate/middle school to gather students' perceptions about their school's overall climate. Students' perceptions would be used to inform the school's decision about what kind of anti-bullying program could best meet students' needs. In answer to the research question, it seems like participants believe the school needs a comprehensive anti-bullying program, trusting relationships with teachers, education about connecting their attitudes to behaviors, and encouragement to develop a respectful, overall school climate.

**Prevalence of Bullying Scale**

Almost half of the 48 participants in the study experienced some form of bullying in the past month or school year. More than half of the participants in grades 4 and 5 witnessed some form of bullying, and the majority of participants in grades 6 and 7 believed bullying was a problem at the school. The participants made up about nine percent of the total school population, but if bullying seems to be an issue with this small sample, it could possibly be a significant concern for many other students in the school.

More females than males reported being bullied in the study, but there were more female participants overall. The outcome could have been different if more males had taken part. However, most of the fourth and fifth grade participants who reported being bullied more than once or twice per week were males. This finding suggests that males and females may experience bullying differently in the frequency, severity, and type and they could require different interventions. Out of the four participants who admitted to bullying someone else, three were females. This finding might indicate a difference between genders in willingness to admit to bullying or it could be a result of having more female participants.

More than half of the participants in grades 4 and 5 observed bullying in locations where there could be a high ratio of students to adults, such as classrooms, the cafeteria, and outside of school. In planning for their anti-bullying program, the school could take into account that limited adult supervision could contribute to increased bullying instances.

Many participants believed that students are most often bullied because of physical appearance or clothing, but students are also bullied because of their race or sexual orientation. This finding suggests that an effective anti-bullying program for this school could focus on teaching and encouraging respect for the uniqueness of each person.

**Aggressive Attitudes Scale**

Eighteen percent of the fourth and fifth grade participants believed a person who was afraid to fight would have fewer friends. A few participants agreed that people who fight are looked up to or viewed in a positive light and are sometimes more popular. Almost half of the sixth and seventh grade participants believed some people deserve to be bullied, and a third believed it is a person's own fault for being bullied. Aggressive attitudes seem common within this small group of participants, which could mean other students at the school hold similar attitudes and beliefs.

**Willingness to Seek Help Scale**

Fifteen out of the seventeen fourth and fifth grade participants who reported they were bullied also told someone else about it. Most participants in all grade levels felt like there was an adult at school they could reach out to, but 31% of fourth and fifth grade participants and 33% of sixth and seventh grade participants did not believe they could trust a teacher to help against bullying. The majority who did not trust teachers to help were females. The school could explore this finding further to understand the reason for the lack of trust. Perhaps students who reported bullying before did not think teachers and administrators took seriously their concerns. A clear program with steps for how to handle bullying could increase students' trust in adults and willingness to seek help because there would be less room for uncertainty. For the participants who did not report bullying or who do not trust the teachers to help, it would be beneficial for the school to know what those students need in order to seek help.

The minority students who participated in the study reported high willingness to seek help, contrary to previous research, which states minority students may have less trust for Caucasian authority figures (Eliot et al., 2010). However, the current study represented only 18

percent of the total school population of Black students and nine percent of multiracial students. The current study represented no students from the school's Hispanic/Latino, American Indian/Alaskan Native, or Asian/Pacific Islander populations.

An effective anti-bullying program might provide a wide variety of anonymous options for reporting bullying. In addition, the program could involve parents in the reporting process because students seek help often from parents, as they did in the current study.

#### **Fourth and Fifth Grade Correlations**

There were several significant correlations among variables for all grade levels at the .05 and .001 alpha levels, which means that five percent or one percent of the time that a statistically significant relationship was found between two variables in the current study, it was due to chance. For fourth and fifth grades, the strongest correlation at the .001 level was a positive relationship between telling anyone about bullying and telling parents. This indicates a relationship between students reporting bullying to anyone and reporting to their parents. This correlation suggests it is crucial to involve parents in the anti-bullying program and to encourage collaboration among students, parents, and the school.

Moderate, positive correlations also exist between telling someone about bullying and telling the teacher or a friend. This suggests that teachers and friends also play an important role as people students turn to when bullying occurs. Schools should consider that when students tell their friends about bullying concerns, the issue may not be resolved as effectively as when students tell adults.

The results showed moderate, positive two-way correlations between observing bullying in the classrooms and the cafeteria, classrooms and outside, and hallways and the cafeteria. All of those locations could have less adult supervision where teachers or monitors might not see

everything going on between students. The correlations also suggest that bullying is likely to occur across multiple locations. The findings could encourage the school to increase adult supervision in these areas and educate teachers on how to intervene. In addition, school officials might consider developing a school-wide signal for students to use when bullying occurs with limited adult supervision. A special signal could raise adults' awareness of bullying situations and increase safety for students, a suggestion from the Bully Prevention in Positive Behavior Support (BP-PBS) program (Good et al., 2011; Ross & Horner, 2009).

The results showed a moderate positive correlation between observing bullying on the bus and the belief that a person will have fewer friends if afraid to fight. The bus is another location with less structure and adult supervision, and the correlation suggests a more aggressive environment on the school bus. Students might benefit from increased supervision on the bus as well as an anti-bullying program that seeks to prevent bullying by changing attitudes.

The final moderate correlation found for grades 4 and 5 was between bullying based on a person's looks and bullying based on clothing. The correlation between these two reasons for bullying suggests they are likely to co-occur. Bullying about physical appearance among middle school students is common because of the importance many adolescents place on looks and material goods (Domino, 2013). Middle school students are at a developmental stage where they desire to fit in, and schools can play a major role in encouraging and teaching respect and creating an environment where all members fit in.

### **Sixth and Seventh Grade Correlations**

Several strong correlations found in this study suggest a relationship between establishing trust with adults in school and having less aggressive attitudes. Having an adult to talk to about concerns correlated strongly and negatively with believing it is okay to hit someone, which

indicates that increased adult support could be linked to positive attitudes and less acceptance of violence. Students who have at least one adult who wants them to do well could be a protective factor against thoughts that bullying is acceptable or not that bad. In addition, there was a strong correlation between feeling comfortable asking teachers for help with schoolwork and having an overall sense of safety at school. Although the sample size was small, these findings indicate the importance of trusting relationships between adults and students at school. Students who have at least one adult who wants them to do well might encourage a positive self-image for the student, which translates into increased self-respect and respect for others. Previous research supports the idea that mutual respect and positive relationships with teachers and adults at school can increase students' self-esteem and self-image (Connors-Burrow, Johnson, Whiteside-Mansell, McKelvey, & Gargus, 2009; Graham, 2011).

Positive, trusting relationships between students and teachers could be a potential protective factor against aggressive attitudes at school. The current study found a significant positive correlation between multiple aggressive attitudes, such as it feels good to hit someone and some people deserve to be bullied, and bullying is sometimes okay and a person will have fewer friends if afraid to fight. The correlation suggests that students who engage in one aggressive attitude could be more likely to have others. A focus of the school's anti-bullying program could be to target students' attitudes and educate them before aggressive attitudes develop.

The study found another important, strong correlation between believing bullying is not that bad and having been bullied in the past month or year. This could indicate that students who have been bullied recently might be more likely to believe bullying is not that bad. This could become a damaging and painful cycle for the student being bullied. The student might feel

worthless and helpless and experience many of the lasting, negative effects of bullying mentioned earlier (Turner et al., 2013; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007).

### **Limitations**

The greatest limitation for the study was the small sample size. More students might have participated if parent consent were not required. Because the sample size was so small, the researcher cannot make recommendations that generalize to the whole school. The recommendations are based only on the participants' responses and speculation as to what they could mean for the whole school.

Another limitation was the lack of teachers' and parents' perceptions on bullying at the school. Before administrators choose and plan for their anti-bullying program, it might be beneficial to collect responses from teachers and parents so as to gain a clearer, more complete picture of the school climate.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

Based on the participants' responses, bullying seems to be an issue for at least some students. The fact that even a few participants feel unsafe at this school is a concern that warrants the development of an anti-bullying program. Before choosing a program, the researcher suggests the school gather a more representative sample of students' perceptions of the school climate. A larger sample size would shed greater light on differences in perceptions of bullying between males and females and different races and ethnicities.

Many participants seem to engage in some aggressive attitudes, which contributes to the overall school climate. To improve the school's climate, administrators and staff could spend time planning thoroughly an anti-bullying program, one that seeks to change students' attitudes in order to affect their behavior in the future. An example of a program that targets students'

attitudes is Steps to Respect. Another recommendation is to gather teachers' and parents' perceptions of bullying at the school. Because relationships between students and teachers are so important, and because participants in grades 4 and 5 reported the most bullying in classrooms, it is crucial to hear teachers' opinions on the issue. Teachers may not see or hear all that goes on in the classroom or they may have different beliefs about what constitutes bullying, but their input matters for a whole-school program. Another critical element of the program could include educating teachers, students, and parents about the definition of bullying and why prevention is important. Teachers also need to know how much their relationships with students mean as potential protective factors against aggressive attitudes and behaviors. Student and teacher relationships could be the foundation of a positive, safe school climate and a whole-school anti-bullying program.

Steps to Respect features parent involvement in anti-bullying efforts, which could benefit the school in the current study. The strongest correlation found between variables for fourth and fifth graders was between telling someone about bullying and telling parents. If the school chose to implement a program that encourages participation from parents, students could receive support for the program at home and parents could be partners in creating a safe school environment (Frey et al., 2005).

Whole-school anti-bullying programs are unique because they require effort from each member of the school community to be effective. School counselors have a special role to play within such programs because they possess the skills to be leaders and advocates and can encourage connections within schools. The researcher recommends that school counselors utilize their leadership and advocacy skills to assist in the development and implementation of whole-school anti-bullying programs that best meet students' needs.



**Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research into whole-school anti-bullying programs could focus on learning what purposes bullying serves for children who bully and where students' aggressive attitudes might originate. Learning more in-depth information about students' responses on the ASCS or bullying surveys can further assist schools with developing effective programs. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative studies could benefit the research community in finding ways to prevent and limit bullying. Qualitative work would involve open-ended questions instead of being limited to Likert scales for responses. Future research should head in a more detailed direction after gathering initial perceptions of students, teachers, and parents on bullying at any particular school.

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*Appendix A*

The Authoritative School Climate Survey: Elementary Form Grades 3 – 5

**Authoritative School Climate Survey: Elementary Version (Grades 3-5)**

**(Cornell, 2013)**

Welcome to the school climate survey. Your answers will be private. Your teachers will not know your answers.

Place a check mark in the box that matches your answer for each question.

Please return your survey to the envelope labeled “Surveys” in the front office. If you wish to enter the prize drawing, turn in your name and grade level separately to the folder labeled “Prize Drawing.”

<p><b>What is bullying?</b> There are lots of ways to bully someone. Bullying means hurting someone who is smaller or weaker.</p> <p>-A bully can hurt you by teasing or calling you names.</p> <p>-A bully can hurt you by hitting you or threatening to hit you.</p> <p>-A bully can hurt you by getting everyone to be mean to you.</p> <p>-It is not bullying when two students have a fight or argument and are about the same in strength or power.</p>	<p><b>Never</b></p>	<p><b>Once or twice</b></p>	<p><b>About once per week</b></p>	<p><b>More than Once per Week</b></p>
<p>1. Have you been bullied at school in the past month?</p>				
<p>2. Have you bullied someone at school in the past month?</p>				

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
3. Have you told anyone that you were bullied in the past month?		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>If you answered the last question "No," you should also answer the next 3 questions (#4-6) "No."</i>		
4. Have you told a friend that you were bullied in the past month?		
5. Have you told your parent/guardian that you were bullied in the past month?		
6. Have you told your teacher or another adult at school that you were bullied in the past month?		
<b>Where have you seen bullying in the past month?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
7. I have seen bullying in the classrooms.		
8. I have seen bullying in the hallways.		
9. I have seen bullying in the rest rooms.		
10. I have seen bullying in the cafeteria.		
11. I have seen bullying outside the school building.		
12. I have seen bullying on the bus or at the bus stop.		

<b>Answer the following statements about bullying behavior. (Cornell, 2013)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
13. Students at this school are teased about how they look.		
14. Students at this school are teased about their clothing.		
15. Students at this school are teased or put down for their race.		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
16. If I tell a teacher about bullying, that teacher will help.		
17. There is an adult at this school I can talk to if I have a problem.		
18. Bullying is something fun to do.		
19. If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends.		
20. If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you.		
21. It feels good when I hit someone.		

**Demographics Questions: Please circle your answers.**

22. Are you a boy or a girl?    Boy        Girl

23. What grade are you in?    3<sup>rd</sup>    4<sup>th</sup>    5<sup>th</sup>

24. Is your ethnic background Hispanic or Latino?    Yes        No

25. What is the best description of your race?



American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

White

Multi-racial

**Thank you for taking this survey.**

**(Cornell, 2013)**

Please return your survey to the envelope labeled “Surveys” in the front office. If you wish to enter the prize drawing, turn in your name and grade level separately to the folder labeled “Prize Drawing.”

*Appendix B*

## The Authoritative School Climate Survey: Secondary Form Grades 6 – 12

**Authoritative School Climate Survey: Secondary School Version (Grades 6-12)****(Cornell, 2013)**

This survey is being given to students in grades 6-7. The questions will ask how you feel about your school and how students get along with one another and their teachers. We want to know your opinion in order to learn ways to improve your school.

Your individual answers to the survey are anonymous, which means that no one will know how you answered. Student answers will be summarized in a report to the school that does not include anyone's name.

It should take about 15-25 minutes to complete the survey. Place a check mark in the box that matches your answer for each question.

Please return your survey to the envelope labeled “Surveys” in the front office. If you wish to enter the prize drawing, turn in your name and grade level separately to the folder labeled “Prize Drawing.”

<b>How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1. There are adults at this school I could talk with if I had a personal problem.				
2. If I tell a teacher that someone is bullying me, the teacher will do something to help.				
3. I am comfortable asking my teachers for help with my schoolwork.				
4. There is at least one teacher or other adult at this school who really wants me to do well.				
5. If another student talked about killing someone, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.				

6. If another student brought a gun to school, I would tell one of the teachers or staff at school.				
<b>How much do you agree or disagree with these statements? (Cornell, 2013).</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
7. I feel safe at this school.				
8. Students in this school are teased about their clothing or physical appearance.				
9. Students in this school are teased or put down because of their race or ethnicity.				
10. There is a lot of teasing about sexual topics at this school.				
11. Bullying is a problem at this school.				
12. Students in this school are teased or put down about their sexual orientation.				
13. I am telling the truth on this survey.				
<b>Do you agree or disagree with these statements?</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
14. If someone threatens you, it is okay to hit that person.				
15. It feels good when I hit someone.				
16. If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you.				
17. If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends?				
18. Good fighters are popular in				

our school.				
19. Bullying is okay sometimes.				
20. Bullying is really not that bad.				
21. Some people deserve to be bullied.				
<b>Do you agree or disagree with these statements? (Cornell, 2013)</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
22. It is your own fault if you let someone bully you.				
23. Bullying is sometimes fun to do.				
<b>Have any of the following happened to you personally <u>at school this year</u>? This includes while you are going to and from school. This also includes school events like field trips, school dances, and sports events.</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>One Time</b>	<b>More than Once</b>	
24. A student stole my property.				
25. A student physically attacked, pushed, or hit me.				
26. A student threatened to hurt me.				
27. A student threatened me with a weapon.				
28. A student said mean or insulting things to me.				
<b>Use this definition of bullying to answer the questions below:</b>  <b>-Bullying is the repeated use of one's strength or popularity to inure, threaten, or embarrass another person on purpose.</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once or twice</b>	<b>About once per week</b>	<b>More than Once per week</b>

<p><b>-Bullying can be physical, verbal or social.</b></p> <p><b>-It is not bullying when two students who are about the same in strength or popularity have a fight or argument.</b></p>				
<p>29. I have been bullied at school in the past <b><u>month</u></b>.</p>				
<p>30. I have been bullied at school <b><u>this year</u></b> (since school started last fall).</p>				
	<p><b>Never</b></p>	<p><b>Once or Twice</b></p>	<p><b>About Once Per Week</b></p>	<p><b>More than Once Per Week</b></p>
<p>31. I have bullied others at school this year.</p>				
<p><b>Use this statement to answer the next question: Physical bullying involves repeatedly hitting, kicking, or shoving someone weaker on purpose.</b></p>				
<p>32. I have been physically bullied or threatened with physical bullying at school this year.</p>				
<p><b>Use this statement to answer the next question: Verbal bullying involves repeatedly teasing, putting down, or insulting someone on purpose.</b></p>				
<p>33. I have been verbally bullied at school this year.</p>				
<p><b>Use this statement to answer the next question: Social bullying involves getting others repeatedly to ignore or leave someone out on purpose.</b></p>				

34. I have been socially bullied at school this year.				
<b>Use this statement to answer the next question: Cyber bullying involves using technology (cell phone, email, Internet, social media, etc.) to tease or put down someone. (Cornell, 2013)</b>				
35. I have been cyberbullied at school this year.				

**Demographic and School Attendance Questions: Please circle your answers.**

36. Are you male or female?      M      F

37. What grade level are you in?      6<sup>th</sup>      7<sup>th</sup>

**Ethnicity and Race Demographic Questions: Please circle your answers.**

38. Does your family speak a language other than English at home?      Yes      No

39. Is your ethnic background Hispanic or Latino?      Yes      No

40. What is the best description of your race?

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

White

2 or more races

**Thank you for taking this survey.**

(Cornell, 2013)

Please return your survey to the envelope labeled “Surveys” in the front office. If you wish to enter the prize drawing, turn in your name and grade level separately to the folder labeled “Prize Drawing.”