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# Perceptions of Middle School Students and Parents on the Effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

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Prevention Program

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### Abstract

Bullying has been recognized as a significant problem in adolescents. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) has been the most successful and widely used program in schools to reduce the incidence of bullying. This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of middle school students and parents on the effectiveness of OBPP. Online surveys for students and parents were developed using a Likert-type scale. The results indicate that students and parents believe OBPP is effective in increasing knowledge of bullying and how to effectively deal with it. Parents do not perceive that incidents of bullying have decreased since implementation of OBPP. This parent perception is inconsistent with student belief that with OBPP bullying happens less. The results suggest that further research is needed on the perceptions of the effectiveness of OBPP.

## Perceptions of Middle School Students and Parents on the Effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Bullying in schools has been problematic among adolescents. This is affecting many areas of their well-being, including school achievement and development of positive social skills (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996; Olweus, 1993a). Bullies and victims of bullying are at risk for emotional, social, and psychiatric problems that could continue into adulthood (Holt, Finkelhor & Kantor, 2007; Nansel et al., 2001; O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999). The National Crime Victimization Survey reported bullying in grade six at 39.4%, seven at 33.1 %, and eight at 31.7%, (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 28% of students ages 12 through 18 have reported being bullied at school. The statistics are even higher for rural schools where the reported percentage totals 30.5%. Possible reasons for higher rates of bullying in rural areas could be due to their geographic and social isolation. Students who are bullies may be more likely to adopt attitudes associated with archaic justice, which supports using violence to resolve conflicts (Dulmus, Sawers & Theriot, 2006; Schwaner and Keil, 2003).

Current literature on middle school bullying clearly indicates that it is a problem in schools; the purpose of this research is to shed light on the perceptions of middle school students and parents on the effectiveness of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). This study is quantitative, using two separate Likert-type surveys, one for students and the other for parents. The questions are specifically designed to determine the perceptions of the participants regarding the effectiveness of OBPP. Specific information regarding the setting/population, instrument used and research design will be discussed in the method section. In order to adequately address this problem, a definition of the term bullying needs to be established.

Bullying is defined as an act of someone intentionally inflicting injury or discomfort to another individual that is considered to be aggressive behavior or if he/she is victimized or exposed to negative actions repeatedly over time (Olweus, 1993a). Obtaining information from students and parents that have participated in this program can be used to enhance the programs main objective of reducing bullying. There is a significant amount of research available that points to the effectiveness of reducing bullying in schools. This study is intended to provide information on participants perceptions which can benefit administrators and school personnel as well as the counseling profession.

Before this study can present the perceptions of middle school students and parents on the effectiveness of OBPP, current literature on bullying and OBPP must be presented. Specifically, research pertaining to the perceptions of bullying in schools will be examined, along with how OBPP has been implemented and the evaluation of the success of this program in reducing bullying.

### **Review of Literature**

The purpose of this literature review is to present bullying as a problem in schools. In addition, literature will be presented to discuss OBPP in reducing bullying incidents. Researchers have found that individuals within the school community (e.g. teachers, administrators, parents, and students) recognize that bullying is a significant issue (Holt, Kantor & Finkelhor, 2009; Jacobsen & Baumen, 2007; Lund, Blake, Ewing & Banks, 2012; Maunder, Harrop & Tattersal, 2010; Wang, Iannotti & Nansel, 2009). This review of literature investigates previous findings on established anti-bullying programs (Karma, Voeten, Poskiparta & Salmivalli, 2010; Salmivalli, 2010). The majority of the research is on OBPP (Black & Jackson, 2007; Bowllan, 2001; Coyle,

2008; Olweus, 1991; Olweus, 1993a; Olweus 1997). Therefore, the focus of this review is on the implementation and effectiveness of OBPP in a variety of school communities (Bowllan, 2011; Edmondson & Hoover, 2008). The literature explores the role of each member of the school community in executing the anti-bullying program (Ahmed and Braithwait, 2004; Carlson & Christenson, 2005; Conner-Burrow, Johnson, Whiteside-Mansell, McKelvey, and Gargus, (2009); Kallestead & Olweus, 2003; Kuhut, 2007; Olweus, 1993; Reese, Vera, Simon & Ikeda, 2000). Potential barriers that may hinder the success of the program along with ways to overcome them are examined (Coyle, 2008; Limber, Nation, Tracy, Melton & Flerx, 2004; Walter, Gouze and Limb, 2006). Researchers have shown OBPP to be effective in reducing the incidences of bullying (Limber, Nation, Tracy, Melton & Flerx, 2004; Schroeder et al., 2012; Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij & Van Oost, 2000; Whitney, Rivers, Smith & Sharp, 1994).

### **Anti-Bullying Programs**

#### **KiVa.**

Prevention programs have been developed because of the pervasiveness of bullying in schools and its harmful effects on students. Two of the most widely researched anti-bullying programs are KiVa (an acronym for *Kiusaamista Vastan*, “against bullying”; the Finnish adjective *kiva* means “nice”) and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). The KiVa anti-bullying program was designed to increase anti-bullying attitudes in classrooms as well as promote student attitudes/behaviors to defend victims of bullying. Lessons involving activities such as classroom discussion and group work are implemented to make students more aware of bullying behaviors and encourage them to speak up for others who are being treated in an aggressive manner (Salmivalli, 2010). In a randomized control trial using 234 schools in Finland,

it was found that after nine months of being exposed to the program the odds of being a bully or a victim of a bully were 1.3 times higher in the control group than a student who participated in the KiVa program (Salmivalli & Poskiparta, 2012). Karma, Voeten, Poskiparta, and Salmivalli, (2010) suggest the initial phase of evaluating the KiVa program has been successful in reducing bullying and victimization in schools. Researchers indicate that the KiVa anti-bullying program is effective in reducing incidents of aggression and victimization among students. Since KiVa is new and does not yet have a significant amount of evidence based research on its effectiveness, focus will be on OBPP which has been used widely in schools to date.

### **OBPP.**

The first widespread bullying prevention program was developed and implemented in the 1980s by Dan Olweus (Olweus, 1993a). It is built on four key principles that have been heavily researched (Black & Jackson, 2007; Bowllan, 2001; Coyle, 2008; Edmondson & Hoover, 2008; Kalstead & Olweus 2003; & Olweus, 1993a) regarding development and modification of aggressive behaviors. These four principles are in place to create a school environment described as 1) warm with positive interest and involvement from adults, 2) firm limits to unacceptable behavior, 3) non-hostile or physical sanctions are consistently applied when rules and limits are violated (principles 2 and 3 require a certain amount of monitoring and surveillance by the adults in charge), and 4) adults both in school and at home are to act as authorities (Olweus, 1993a).

A key component of the OBPP core program is awareness and involvement by adults. To determine the severity and awareness of bullying at a particular school, and the level of involvement by adults, a bully/victim questionnaire is administered. The school administration encourages teachers to get involved in the dissemination and implementation of the anti-bullying

curriculum. This can be achieved by using information obtained by questionnaires, surveys, in service day training, increased supervision of students during recess and lunch time, along with facilitating student groups that address bullying. Students are an integral part in developing class rules against bullying and are encouraged to participate in regular student meetings. The students are instilled with the message that bullying is not tolerated in the schools.

Collaboration is essential between all of the stakeholders, (e.g. parents, students, and school staff) in regards to reinforcing zero tolerance of bullying. Honest and open discussions are necessary with staff and parents of involved students (Olweus, 1991; Olweus, 1993; Olweus, 1997). Each bullying incident is unique, requiring a candid discussion regarding both the bully and victim roles in the event. The program utilizes teachers and other school personnel, students and parents to play a major role in the restructuring of the school climate. Counselors, psychologists, and social workers are “experts” who function as planners and coordinators, in counseling teachers and parents (Olweus, 1997). Parent perceptions indicate that bullying is a significant issue (Connors-Burrow, Johnson, Whiteside-Mansell, McKelvey & Gargus, 2009; Holt, Kantor & Finkelhor, 2009; Nordhagen, Nielsen, Stigum & Köhler, 2005).

OBPP has been effective in reducing incidents of bullying (Bauer, Lozano & Rivara 2007; Olweus & Limber, 2010). Edmondson and Hoover (2008) evaluated the effectiveness of OBPP by soliciting feedback using a pre and post-test (the Olweus bullying questionnaire) completed by teachers. The analysis indicated positive change in individual behavior after implementation of OBPP. Much of the research that has demonstrated the effectiveness of OBPP has been done by the creator of the program; this could lend bias to the results.

## **Perceptions of Bullying in Schools**

### **Teachers and administrators.**

Teachers and administrators recognize bullying occurs frequently in every area of the school throughout the day. School staff are aware that bullying occurs in all parts of a school: buses, hallways, bathrooms, lunchrooms, locker rooms, and classrooms. The revised 71-item version of the Olweus School Personnel Observation and Awareness of Bullying between Students at School Questionnaire was administered to school personnel (e.g. nurses, librarians, social workers, lunch room monitors, bus drivers, janitors, and counselors) from three rural schools. Ninety-three percent of teachers and administrators reported that in the past three months they had witnessed bullying between students. Teachers and administrators reported 64.1% of the time that they had witnessed bullying in the hallways and stairwells, while 57.7% witnessed it in the lunchroom, 56.4% saw it occur in the classroom, and 53.8 % on the playground (B. Thomlison, R.J. Thomlison, Sowers, Thereiot & Dulmus, 2008). The bullying behaviors included name calling or teasing, being excluded by others, shoving, hitting, kicking, spreading false rumors and taking another student's belongings or money (Thomlison, et al., 2008). Teachers and support staff define direct (i.e. pushing, kicking, or punching) and indirect (i.e. belittling, rumors, or teasing) behavior as bullying more than students do (Maunder, Harrop & Tattersal, 2010). Differences in perceptions between students and teachers may be due to students not completely understanding the definition of bullying. School counselors have been trained to recognize emotional and psychological aspects of student functioning; therefore, they have a unique skill set when addressing incidents of bullying (Jacobsen & Baumen, 2007).

**School counselors and school psychologists.**

Over 560 school counselors and school psychologists completed a web-based survey on bullying in their schools. Seventy percent of those surveyed acknowledged that bullying was a problem where they work, affecting 10 to 15 % of their student population (Lund, Blake, Ewing & Banks, 2012). School counselors that worked in a school that had a bullying prevention program were more likely to intervene in all types of bullying (e.g. relational, verbal, physical, and cyber) than counselors without a program (Jacobsen & Baumen, 2007).

**Students.**

Rao and Simkiss (2007) surveyed 50 ten to sixteen-year old participants about their bullying experience using a modified Olweus questionnaire. Thirty percent reported that they had been bullied. None of the 32 children who responded thought bullying others was fun; however, 15.6% admitted bullying other children. Wang, Iannotti and, Nansel's, (2009) study in the United States of 7,508 adolescents collected from the 2005/2006 Health Behavior in School-aged Children (HBSC) found no difference in students perceptions of bullying behaviors between grades six, seven and eight. This suggests that the age of the middle school student is not significant in regards to their awareness of being bullied. The researchers also found that 20.8% of all students believe that they were bullied physically, 53.6% verbally, 51.4% socially, and 13.6% electronically. A group of 5,171 students from 37 schools were asked to complete the Olweus Bully/Victim questionnaire. Approximately 82% of the students reported being bullied for a month or longer (Solberg and Olweus, 2003). A self-report questionnaire was administered to 1,429 students between the ages of eight and 13 assessing peer victimization and bullying. Hunter, Boyle, and Warden (2007) discovered that 35.6% of participants experienced peer

aggression and victimization. These studies confirm that both faculty and students indicate there is a high percentage of bullying occurring in school. The impact of bullying extends beyond the school grounds into the home environment.

### **Parents.**

Results suggest there is a discrepancy between parents awareness of their child's involvement and of what their children believe in regards to being bullied. It seems that parents believe that bullying is a problem, but much of the time are not aware of when or if their child is a victim of bullying while at school. Parents are an integral stakeholder in their child's school community. In other words they have a vested interest or concern in regards to how the school environment affects their child. Therefore, it is important to investigate whether parents believe that bullying is an issue for their child prior to implementing any anti-bullying curriculum. It is extremely difficult for parents to determine whether an incident is an act of bullying (Mishna, 2004). Twenty parents whose children had reported being bullied completed in-depth interviews. Only half of the participants were previously aware that their child had been bullied (Sawyer, Mishna, Pepler & Wiener, 2011). Parents who were not aware that their child was bullied reported being surprised. Over half of the parents reported knowing that their child had previously seen bullying among their peers. These parents were able to describe negative effects their child displayed because of being victimized (e.g. stomach aches and not wanting to go to school). Holt, Kantor, and Finkelhor, (2009) examined 205 fifth grade students and their parent's attitudes towards bullying. Students completed self-report surveys about involvement, attitudes towards, and responses to bullying. Parents responded to a self-report questionnaire regarding their attitudes toward, and perceptions of their child's involvement in bullying. Eighty-eight percent of the parents believed that teasing hurts kids and 81% said that schools should pay more

attention to bullying. Overall, 59% of children indicated that they had been teased or picked on at school versus 41% of parents thinking that their child was teased or picked on (Holt et al., 2009).

These findings shed light that various members within the school community perceive that bullying is a major problem. It is important to have cooperation and collaboration among parents, school faculty, and students in order to successfully implement OBPP.

## **Implementation of OBPP**

### **Role of parents.**

Olweus (1993a) explains the importance of involving parents in the prevention of bullying. Shetgiri, Lin, and Flores, (2012) examine factors and trends among perpetrators of bullying. Researchers assessed parental emotional anger with children by using a self-report measure that asked how the parents feel regarding their communication and relationship with their child. Parent frustration with their children seems to have a direct association to children having emotional, developmental and behavioral problems. Georgiou (2008) finds that responsive mothers have positive effects on their children. A responsive mother is defined as a mother who is available to talk and help their child deal with daily problems. Specifically, children of responsive mothers adapt better socially to school and display higher achievement levels. These children are less likely to be aggressive and are more accepting of their peers. Non-responsive mothers' children have a tendency to show signs of aggressive/bullying behavior (Georgiou, 2008). On the other hand, children are likely to be victimized and bullied when their parent becomes too overprotective. This suggests that children that have parents who are involved in their lives are less likely to be involved in bullying. OBPP includes the parents of both bullies and victims by involving them in conversations whenever an incident occurs

(Olweus, 1993a). It is important that parents regularly communicate with school personnel (Ahmed & Braithwait, 2004; Carlson & Christenson, 2005; Kuhut, 2007; Reese, Vera, Simon & Ikeda, 2000). OBPP encourages teachers and parents to communicate and work as a team to combat bullying.

### **Role of school faculty.**

School faculty, classroom teachers in particular, are important to the execution of OBPP. Teachers serve as a role model and provide refuge for students who encounter unfamiliar/uncomfortable situations (Bowen, Bowen, Richman, & Brewster 1998). It is critical to successful implementation of OBPP for teachers to recognize what bullying is and how often it occurs. The majority of the curriculum/program is facilitated by teachers; therefore, a key factor in successfully implementing this program is teacher support. The level of bullying that teachers perceive in the classroom is an indication of teacher cooperation with the program. In other words, if a teacher does not recognize that bullying is an issue in one's class, they are less likely to embrace the program (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). Conner-Burrow, Johnson, Whiteside-Mansell, McKelvey, and Gargus, (2009) report that teacher support for students who are being bullied is a key factor in reducing the symptom of depression which has been shown to occur in victims of bullying. Teachers that have a perceived responsibility for changing the culture of bullying in their classroom are more likely to be involved in anti-bullying efforts. Accomplishing this can be done by making the material seem straightforward, as well as providing guidelines on how to deal with bullying related problems. This increases the likelihood that teachers will support the program (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). All school staff, not just teachers, need to take part in establishing policies or guidelines regarding bullying situations and

how to effectively manage them. In addition to getting micro-level individual support, it is equally as important to receive school wide support.

### **Role of school-wide support.**

A significant indicator of school wide support is open communication among the staff. The school climate influences bullying dynamics within the building. In other words, it is reasonable to anticipate students who attend schools where adults accept bullying behavior will participate in more of these behaviors (Baker, 1998). This finding points towards the importance of establishing a school environment that discourages bullying behaviors. Ma (2002) conducted a climate study with 92 middle schools examining school characteristics of victims and offenders of bullying. Schools have fewer incidents of bullying when they use positive disciplinary actions and have strong parental involvement, along with high academic expectations. Black, Washington, Trent, Harner and Pollock, (2009) outlined specific steps on how a large urban school district implemented OBPP in their elementary and middle schools. Team building plays a significant role in effectively executing implementation of the program. Defining each person's role in the program (i.e., administrators and, teachers) and fostering their input facilitated a collaborative approach. They also established a timeline when pieces of the program should be completed. This imparted accountability among the individuals who were responsible for carrying out these steps (Black, et al., 2009). The success of the program will be increased when staff shares among themselves their methods for effective implementation of the program. "Positive orientation to change" (p.6) is also a strong predictor of successful implementation of OBPP (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). If school faculty believe that change is necessary to improve the school culture, then gaining support will be a much easier undertaking. It is important for teachers to foster a safe environment for students to discuss bullying. Class meetings are times

set aside where teachers encourage students to discuss bullying and make suggestions on how to reduce/respond to bullying.

### **Role of students.**

Although teachers facilitate the meeting, it is the students' responsibility to contribute their ideas. They are involved in creating class rules against bullying. Students are more likely to experience an increased sense of responsibility to follow or enforce the rules if they are involved in creating them. During class meetings it is essential that students participate in the discussion (Olweus 1991; Olweus, 1993a; Olweus, 1997; Whitney, Rivers, Smith & Sharp, 1994). Without student input successful implementation of the program would be impossible.

### **Barriers to Implementation**

The following barriers to implementation of OBPP have been identified by faculty members of a rural middle school (Coyle, 2008). The local community was resistant to change, diversity, and outsiders. In this particular study individuals were unwilling to work with someone from outside their community. It seemed as though the students were accepting of the individual introducing a new program; however, parents continued to be resistant.

Key factors were identified in order to foster support for OBPP from the community. One was to insure that the terminology was easily understood by the intended audience when the program was introduced. In addition, staff shared realistic expectations regarding the ongoing integration and expected outcome of the program (Coyle, 2008). In other words, it is important to adapt to the targeted audience. If it is apparent that the program is too drastic a change for the community, it could be implemented in steps to work towards the same goals. The school schedule, in particular finding time to hold classroom meetings, can be challenging. Teachers are

responsible for instructing a large number of students which make it difficult to discuss intimate topics that may occur around the issue of bullying (Limber, Nation, Tracy, Melton & Flerx, 2004). Walter, Gouze, and Limb, (2006) find that teachers had a limited knowledge about behavior problems and their treatment in the classroom. Education and training of teachers to understand and manage behavior problems, including bullying, is essential. Although there has been significant research done to evaluate the success of OBPP, it is important to periodically examine the program at each particular site to determine if any adaptations or changes would increase its success.

### **Evaluation of OBPP**

The effectiveness of OBPP has been evaluated in particular schools, including urban/suburban or rural communities. In 1983 Olweus implemented his first anti-bullying prevention program. Forty-two Norwegian schools were involved consisting of 2,500 boys and girls in grades four through seven. Approximately two years after the introduction of the program 50% of bully/victim problems were reduced (Olweus, 1993a). In 2000 the American Academy of Pediatrics stated that bullying is a significant problem in American schools and advocated for an anti-bullying program such as OBPP because of the positive results obtained in Norway (Glew, Rivara & Feudtner, 2000). Research in the United States and Europe shows OBPP is effective in reducing the incidences of bullying in schools (Limber, Nation, Tracy, Melton & Flerx, 2004; Schroeder, et al., 2012; Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij & Van Oost, 2000; Whitney et al., 1994). OBPP has been shown to be effective in both urban/suburban and rural school districts.

**Urban/suburban schools.**

In the United States, six public elementary and middle schools participated in four years of OBPP. Researchers investigated whether the program was effective in urban settings. Before the program was implemented, 65 bullying incidents were reported for every 100 student hours. After four years of using OBPP they observed a reduction to 36 incidents for every 100 student hours (Black & Jackson, 2007). The incidents of bullying were measured by using a checklist of bullying behaviors that consisted of physical, verbal, and emotional bullying. A staff member would note when they observed any of the previously mentioned behaviors. A small Catholic seventh and eighth grade middle school in the northeast section of the United States implemented OBPP. All 112 students resided in either an urban or suburban setting. The revised Olweus Bullying Victim Questionnaire was administered to the participants as a pre-test and post-test. Seventh grade females reported a 34.4% decrease in being excluded and a 31.1% decrease in being bullied one year after implementation of OBPP (Bowllan, 2011). These findings indicate that students report OBPP is effective in decreasing bullying/victim type behaviors. There was a 25% increase in reports of being bullied and a 35% decrease of being indirectly verbally bullied (Bowllan, 2011). This finding points towards an increased recognition of what bullying is upon putting into practice OBPP. This program has not only been shown to be effective in urban/suburban settings but has also been successfully implemented in rural areas.

**Rural schools.**

There is also a need for rural schools to implement an anti-bullying curriculum. One hundred twelve sixth through twelfth grade students in a rural community participated in a survey to examine the frequency of bullying related incidents. Fifty-two percent of the

participants agreed that bullying gives students power over others. The majority of students surveyed agree that something needed to be done to combat bullying (Kulig, Hall & Kalischuk, 2008). Swain, Henry and Kelly (2006) report there is a high incidence of aggressive behavior among students living in rural communities. A Midwestern rural community implemented a program that was modeled after OBPP. Pretests and posttests were administered to students and teachers. By the end of the third year, 752 students had participated in the program. Twenty teachers and social workers from the school district were asked to report their perceptions of bullying. Over 65% of them reported that they saw a positive change in individual student behavior (Edmondson & Hoover, 2008). All of the studies indicate that OBPP produces positive results in terms of reducing acts of bullying. They also point to how this program works in a variety of settings (e.g. urban, suburban and rural). OBPP is shown to be effective in reducing bullying behavior using a variety of reporting measures. Examples consist of self-report questionnaires or surveys done both by school staff and students, and/or observation or behavior checklists.

This literature review provides clear evidence that bullying negatively affects children. The research demonstrates that individuals within the school community agree that bullying is a major concern, one that needs to be addressed. OBPP is the most widely researched bullying prevention curriculum. When executing OBPP there are a number of barriers that need to be addressed. Successful implementation of this bullying program requires a collaborative effort from the entire school community. Current findings point towards OBPP being effective in reducing incidents of bullying in a wide variety of communities (i.e. urban, suburban and rural). Dan Olweus, the creator of OBPP, has either conducted the research himself or collaborated on many of the studies, which could have influenced much of the current research.

There hasn't been an abundance of research without the program creator's participation. The current study attempts to extend the literature on the effectiveness of OBPP by investigating the opinions of students and parents. This independent study examines student and parent perceptions on the effectiveness of OBPP.

### **Method**

Bullying incidents and behaviors are prevalent in middle school, where it occurs frequently throughout the school day. OBPP has been used to help reduce incidents of bullying, along with providing strategies to effectively recognize and handle these situations. In order to understand if the students and parents perceive OBPP to be effective, a sample of middle school students and their parents must be utilized. The following section describes the setting and how the participants were selected for this study. An explanation is given on how and why computerized surveys utilizing a Likert-type scale were selected in order to obtain data on middle school student and parent perceptions of OBPP.

### **Setting and Participants**

This study took place in a rural middle school in Western New York. The school district (K-12) consists of students that are predominantly Caucasian (92%) and 22% of the student population is eligible for free or reduced lunch (NYStart: New York State Testing and Accountability Reporting Tool, 2012). The population for this research included all students currently enrolled in grade six (approximately 88 students), grade seven (approximately 62), and grade eight (approximately 69) totaling approximately 219 students and their parents.

Participants included students in the middle school ( $n = 12$ ), and middle school parents ( $n = 36$ ). There was no academic punishment or reward for completion of the survey. Overall, the response rate was approximately 5% of student population and 16% of the parent population.

### **Instrument**

Students were asked to complete a thirteen item online survey titled (Survey for Students) “Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.” The survey was designed to assess the student’s perception of the effectiveness of OBPP. Item 1 was a statement of assent for students, explaining that their responses would remain anonymous and they had the right to discontinue the survey at any time. Item 2 represented directions on how to complete the survey. Item 3 represented whether the student had ever experienced bullying before startup of the program. Items 4-6 and 11 were designed to assess whether student knowledge of what bullying is and how to deal with it has changed since participation in OBPP. Items 7-9 represented student perception of incidence of bullying and whether there had been a change since OBPP was added to their curriculum. Item 10 signified student perceptions of teacher response since OBPP was started. Item 12 requested students to respond to the statement, “My fear of being bullied has decreased since the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program” was started. Item 13 assessed student perception on whether they continued to be bullied (see Appendix C for student survey in its entirety).

Parents were asked to complete a twelve item online survey with the same title, the only difference being (Survey for Parents/Guardians). The survey was designed to assess the parent’s perception of the effectiveness of OBPP. Item 1 was a statement of consent for parents, explaining that their responses would remain anonymous and they had the right to discontinue

the survey at any time. Item 2 represented the directions on how to complete the survey. Items 3-5 and 10 signified parent perception of their child's knowledge of bullying and ability to handle it since participating in OBPP. Items 6-8 assessed parent perception on whether the incidence of bullying had changed since their child had participated in the program. Item 9 signified parent perception of teacher response since OBPP. Item 11 requested parent response to the statement, "My child's fear of being bullied has decreased since the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program." Item 12 assessed parent perception on whether their child continued to be bullied (see Appendix D for parent survey in its entirety).

Survey respondents rated each item using a modified Likert-type scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree). An online survey was the most effective tool to administer the survey to the intended audience. This quantitative method was chosen, rather than an open ended or interview style survey, so the results of the items would represent numerical data that allow for statistical analysis. In addition, using the electronic method, Survey Monkey, to distribute the survey was selected as the most cost effective and timely method for the school district. Accessibility of the survey on the internet allowed the participants to answer the survey at their convenience, without disrupting instructional time. This study assessed both parents and students perceptions, which required different surveys to clearly delineate the perceptions between the two groups.

### **Research Design and Approach**

Survey Monkey is a widely used internet program designed to create and disseminate surveys for an intended audience. This was chosen because the school already purchased a subscription to use Survey Monkey and utilizes this format frequently to gather information

throughout the school year. To promote student and parent completion of the survey, letters explaining the purpose and importance of the study were initially sent home with report cards. In order to increase the response rate a second attempt was made by disseminating the information to the students during an Olweus team meeting several months later. The information contained a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey. There were directions for the parents, explaining how to access the parent survey on the school district website. An informed consent form for the parents to sign and return was included so a link to the student survey could be emailed to them (See Appendix A for the cover letter and informed consent form). Once the permission slip was returned, the researcher sent an email to the address provided by the parent so the student could access the survey (See Appendix B). If the participants did not have access to the internet, they were given the opportunity to complete the survey on one of the computers at the school counseling center. After the link was sent there was no way for the researcher to determine if the survey was completed by a particular individual, which insured confidentiality and anonymity of the participant.

The data was quantitative, since Likert-type scales were used on the surveys. The variables were the perception items on the surveys. These were: more likely to report bullying to an adult, less likely to participate in bullying, more knowledge of what bullying is, how harmful bullying is, how to effectively deal with it, fear of being bullied, and whether or not they (parents) believe students are still are being bullied. Each of the variables examined a perception of how students and parents viewed bullying since the implementation of OBPP. The means of parent and student responses were compared, which provided valuable information on each group's view of OBPP's effectiveness.

Pearson Product Correlation Coefficients were run to analyze the relationships between the student variables and between the parent variables. The Pearson coefficients shed light on the two-way relationships of student perceptions about bullying and the two-way relationships of parent perceptions about bullying.

## **Results**

The following results are presented to assist in answering the research question of student and parent perceptions on the effectiveness of OBPP. The items on the surveys that addressed perception asked for a belief or opinion on effectiveness of OBPP. The tables represent only the survey items that address perceptions of students and parents about the impact of OBPP (see Appendix C for Student Survey and Appendix D for Parent Survey in their entirety). Tables are provided for frequency of student and parent responses, comparing means, and using Pearson Product Correlation Coefficients for relationships among student perceptions and relationships among parent perceptions. The data is presented in these formats to illustrate how middle school students and parents perceive the effectiveness of OBPP.

### **Frequency of Student Responses**

The majority of student responses on the posttest were agree or strongly agree to the first five items (see Table 1). This demonstrates that OBPP has educated the students on what bullying is, its harmful effects, and how to effectively deal with it. On the other hand, more students disagreed or were neutral on item 6 regarding a decrease in their fear of being bullied since OBPP.

Table 1: After OBPP Training: Frequency of Student Responses for Perception Items

Survey Items	Response Values*				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. More knowledge of what bullying is	1	1	1	6	3
2. More knowledge on dealing with bullying	0	3	2	4	3
3. Increased understanding of how harmful bullying is	2	2	1	4	3
4. Is less likely to participate in bullying	1	1	2	4	4
5. Is more likely to report bullying to an adult	0	0	3	6	3
6. Fear of being bullied has decreased	3	1	5	1	2

\*Response Values: 1 = Strongly Disagree 5 = Strongly Agree

### Frequency of Parent Responses

Twenty-eight out of 64 parents did not complete the content areas of the survey. They only answered the first two items, which gave consent and explained the survey. These 28 responses were omitted from the data analysis. Based on the frequency of responses shown in Table 2 the majority of parent responses were neutral, agree, or strongly agree to the first four items. This demonstrates that in their perception OBPP has educated their children on what bullying is and how to effectively deal with it. Parents responded that their child's fear of bullying had not diminished. Additionally, more parents responded to item 6 with strongly disagree, disagree, or neutral regarding their belief that bullying happens less since implementation of OBPP.

Table 2: After OBPP Training: Frequency of Parent Responses for Perception Items

Survey Items	Response Values*				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Child has increased understanding of bullying	4	1	10	19	2
2. Child has more knowledge on dealing with bullying	3	5	9	17	2
3. Child is more aware of how harmful bullying is	2	2	9	16	5
4. Child is more likely to report bullying to an adult	3	4	5	14	4
5. Child's fear of being bullied had decreased	3	7	8	10	2
6. I believe bullying happens less	4	9	11	5	1

\*Response Values: 1 = Strongly Disagree 5 = Strongly Agree

### Comparing Means

For the Likert scale comprised of strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), strongly disagree (1). The majority of the means fell closest to neutral (3). The means on five of the items show that students scored higher than their parents (see Table 3). Students had the greatest mean (4.0) on the item, *more likely to report bullying to an adult*. The perception item with the lowest student mean (2.83) was *fear of being bullied has decreased*. The lowest student mean (2.75) was for the item, *still being bullied*. This item represents an event rather than a perception, but was included due to its significance when comparing it with the parent item, *I believe bullying happens less since OBPP implementation*.

The parents' greatest mean (3.58) was on the item, *increased understanding of how harmful bullying is*. The lowest mean parents reported was (2.66) on the item, *I believe bullying happens less since OBPP implementation*. The highest mean difference (.6) was on the item, *more likely to report bullying to an adult*. The lowest difference between student and parent

means (.09) represented whether students indicated they were *still being bullied* and parents perception on *whether bullying happens less with OBPP*. The significance is that students agree that they are being bullied less with OBPP, whereas parents disagree that bullying happens less.

Table 3: Comparing Student and Parent Means

Survey Items	Student	Parent	Mean Difference
More likely to report bullying to an adult	M = 4.0 SD = .74 N = 12	M = 3.4 SD = 1.19 N = 30	.6
Less likely to participate in bullying	M = 3.75 SD = 1.23 N = 12	M = 3.29 SD = .86 N = 31	.46
More knowledge of what bullying is	M = 3.75 SD = 1.22 N = 12	M = 3.38 SD = 1.05 N = 36	.37
More knowledge on dealing with bullying	M = 3.58 SD = 1.12 N = 12	M = 3.27 SD = 1.06 N = 36	.31
Increased understanding of how harmful bullying is	M = 3.33 SD = 1.45 N = 12	M = 3.58 SD = 1.02 N = 34	.25
Fear of being bullied	M = 2.83	M = 3.03	.2

has decreased	SD = 1.40 N = 12	SD = 1.13 N = 30	
Still being bullied (student)	M = 2.75 SD = 1.28 N = 8	M = 2.66 SD = 1.03 N = 30	.09
I believe bullying happens less since OBPP implementation (parent)			

### Correlations

Calculating mean scores provided interesting and relevant results, however it is important to understand which items related to each other for students and parents. Pearson two-tailed correlations were run respectively for students and parents on all of the perception items that have been discussed in the previous tables. In the following narrative, only the meaning of the Pearson r-coefficients with p-values less than .01 (see Tables 4 and 5) and patterns will be discussed.

#### Student

There is a strong relationship between students that indicated they have *more knowledge of what bullying is since OBPP* and *their fear of being bullied has decreased* (see Table 4). This indicates that if students have knowledge of what bullying is, it is more likely that their fear of being bullied will decrease. There is also a strong relationship with students who indicated that they have *more knowledge on how to deal with bullying* and *how harmful it is*. This indicates that

increased knowledge of how to deal with bullying is associated with increased student awareness of how harmful it is.

Table 4: Student Perceptions Pearson Product Correlation Coefficients (n = 12)

	More knowledge of what bullying is.	More knowledge on dealing with bullying.	Increased understanding of how harmful bullying is.	Less likely to participate in bullying.	More likely to report bullying to an adult.	Fear of being bullied has decreased.
More knowledge of what bullying is.	r = 1.000	.498 p = .100	.200 .534	.189 .557	.405 .191	.719** .008
Increased understanding of how harmful bullying is.	.200 .534	.712** .009	1	.566 .055	.329 .297	.332 .292
Less likely to participate in bullying	.189	.227	.566	1	.478	.277

	.557	.477	.055		.116	.384
More likely to report bullying to an adult.	.405	.317	.329	.478	1	.526
	.191	.315	.297	.116		.079
Fear of being bullied has decreased.	.719**	.677*	.332	.277	.526	1
	.008	.016	.292	.384	.079	

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Parent**

There are strong relationships between parents perception that their child has more knowledge of what bullying is and these four items about their child: *has more knowledge on dealing with bullying, has an increased understanding of how harmful bullying is, is more likely to report bullying to an adult, and fear of being bullied has decreased* (see Table 5).

Table 5: Parent Perceptions Pearson Product Correlation Coefficients

	Child has more	Child has more	Child has increased	Child is more	Child's fear of	Bullying happens less than before
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	knowledge of what bullying is.	knowledge on dealing with bullying.	understanding of how harmful bullying is.	likely to report bullying to an adult.	being bullied has decreased	implementation of OBPP.
Child has more knowledge of what bullying is.	r = 1.000  36	.851**  p = 0.000 36	.572**  .000 34	.717**  .000 30	.742**  .000 30	.399*  .029 30
Child has more knowledge on dealing with bullying.	.851**  .000 36	1  36	.572**  .000 34	.569**  .001 30	.713**  .000 30	.356  .053 30
Child has increased understanding of how harmful bullying is.	.572**  .000 34	.573**  .000 34	1  34	.683**  .000 30	.424*  .019 30	.365*  .047 30
Child is more likely to report	.717**	.569**	.683**	1	.400*	.394*

bullying to an adult.	.000 30	.001 30	.000 30		.029 30	.031 30
Child's fear of being bullied has decreased.	.742** .000 30	.713** .000 30	.424* .019 30	.400* .029 30	1 30	.129 .498 30
Bullying happens less than before implementation of OBPP	.399* .029 30	.356 .053 30	.365* .047 30	.394* .031 30	.129 .498 30	1 30

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Summary of Results

These results indicate that both students and parents perceive that OBPP increases knowledge of bullying and how harmful it can be along with ways to effectively respond when bullying occurs. Student and parent responses are in disagreement that the implementation of OBPP has decreased incidents or fear of being bullying. The discussion section will elaborate on the significance of these findings and future areas that could be improved.

## **Discussion**

The negative effect of bullying on students has created pressure on school districts to address this concern as part of the curriculum. This pressure has caused school administrations to review the school culture and how bullying effects it. Schools have implemented bullying prevention programs, with OBPP being the most widely used to address this issue.

The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of middle school students and their parents on the effectiveness of OBPP. Many studies have collected data that indicates OBPP is effective in reducing the incidence of bullying in school. The surveys used in this study investigated what student and parent perceptions were on OBPP effectively addressing the issue of bullying. The results confirmed that the program is effective in educating the students on what bullying is, how to deal with it, and its harmful effects. However, students and parents did not perceive that OBPP reduced the fear of or number of incidents of bullying. The discussion of the results will address major findings on the perception items of the surveys, which include frequency of student and parent responses, comparing student and parent means, correlations existing between items on student and parent surveys respectively, implications for the education field, limitations of this study, and recommendations for future research.

### **Frequency of Student Response**

Results show that students surveyed believe OBPP has been effective in some areas more than others. The majority of students agreed that they have more knowledge of what bullying is, its harmful effects, and how to effectively deal with bullying since OBPP. However, their fear of being bullied has not decreased. These findings suggest students perceive that OBPP has positively impacted their knowledge of bullying but not changed their fear of being bullied.

### **Frequency of Parent Response**

Results represent parent's belief that OBPP has effectively provided their child with more knowledge of what bullying is, how to deal with it, and the harm it can cause. They did not perceive that OBPP decreased their child's fear of being bullied or the occurrence of incidents of bullying. This is contrary to the literature (Glew et al., 2000; Limber et al., 2004; Olweus, 1993a; Schroeder et al., 2012, Stevens et al., 2000; Whitney et al., 1994) that emphasized OBPP has been shown to be effective in reducing the number of incidents of bullying. Those research findings specifically addressed OBPP effectiveness in reducing actual incidence of bullying, while this study examines perceptions of students and parents on the effectiveness of OBPP.

### **Comparison of Student and Parent Response Means**

When comparing the responses of student and parent means to the perception items it is clear that both groups closely agree with each other that OBPP has significantly impacted student knowledge of what bullying is. The most significant finding is that students believe they are being bullied less and parents perceive that incidents of bullying have not been reduced. It is possible that parents do not believe that bullying has decreased because their children are now more aware of what bullying is; therefore they talk about it or report it more. Although students disagree that they are still being bullied with OBPP, the mean number of 2.75 is close to a neutral response, which does not strongly support that they are not being bullied. This is somewhat contradictory to (Olweus 1993a) findings that after two years of OBPP implementation bullying incidents have decreased by 50%.

Another significant finding was the mean difference on the item asking whether they were more likely to report bullying to an adult. This was the highest mean differential, students

agreed (4.0) where parents were closer to neutral (3.4). This shows that students are more likely to report bullying to an adult than what their parent perceives. It is possible that students report bullying at school more than at home. This could speak to the effectiveness of the program in creating a safe, non-judgmental environment where students can disclose incidents.

### **Significant Correlations between Survey Items**

#### **Students**

There were several perception items on the survey that had strong relationships with one another. Increased understanding of what bullying is had a strong relationship with decreased fear of being bullied. There was also a strong relationship between an increased understanding of how harmful bullying is and more knowledge on how to effectively deal with bullying. In other words, students who believe they gained more knowledge of what bullying is and its harmful effects, also perceived their fear of being bullied to be less, and indicated they had increased knowledge on how to deal with bullying. OBPP has shown to be effective in increasing student knowledge, which has positively impacted student belief that they are able to effectively deal with and be less fearful of bullying.

#### **Parents**

Findings between perception items on the parent surveys indicated strong relationships between multiple items. If their child had more knowledge of what bullying is, the child would tend to know how to respond effectively to bullying, comprehend its harmful effects, and have less fear of being bullied. These findings show the relationship between the belief that their child has more knowledge of what bullying is and their child's ability to cope with bullying. The

significance of these findings in relation to OBPP is that having knowledge of bullying is associated with the child's overall response to bullying.

### **Implications for the Education Field**

The results of this study represent the perceptions of the effectiveness of OBPP, which in turn impacts the value of this program in the world of education. The study results indicate that there are specific areas of OBPP that are perceived to be effective. Students believe that having more knowledge reduces the fear of being bullied and empowers them on how to effectively deal with it. Parents believe that their child's increased knowledge of bullying impacts other areas that bullying affects. This represents the importance of school personnel's ability to deliver accurate information of what bullying is and its effects so that students are able to effectively deal with bullying when it occurs.

In terms of parent perception of OBPP reducing bullying, the findings do not support previous research that OBPP has reduced the incidence of bullying. Student results on whether they were still being bullied were also not as strong as previous literature indicates. This finding may suggest that the perception of the effectiveness of OBPP is significantly less than the actual data on lowering incidence rates. The influence this has on schools shows that further communication regarding the decreased rates of bullying incidence needs to be shared with students and parents.

### **Limitations of this Study**

Although this study yielded valuable results from the viewpoint of students and parents on the effectiveness of OBPP, several limitations were revealed. The sample population available was small, only 219 students and their parents/guardians. This is a significantly smaller sample

size than many of the previous studies. In spite of multiple attempts to encourage participation, the response rate was low, with only 5% middle school students and 16% of parents. There were a significant number of parents who only responded to the introductory questions and could not be included in the analysis of the results. This could be due to the parent survey being on the school district's main webpage. Perhaps parents who had elementary or high school students clicked on the survey without realizing it was just for middle school parents, even though it was clearly stated on the link.

The design of the study did not allow for direct comparison of data between the student and her/his parent/guardian. The surveys were focused on anonymity and maximizing the response rate of both populations. It was not until after the data was analyzed, that it became apparent collecting paired responses would have been beneficial in comparing results using a t-test. When inputting the statistical data the student and parent items were not keyed into separate databases. Therefore, inferential statistics could not be obtained, which affects the generalizability of the results. Recognizing the limitations of this study will benefit researchers who investigate perceptions of OBPP in the future.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study sheds light on the perceptions of middle school students and parents on the effectiveness of OBPP. Future research should focus on designing an instrument that allows pairing of student with her/his parent responses. Doing so will increase the value of the results by making it possible to generalize the findings. It will be important for future research to examine parents' belief that OBPP has not decreased the number of incidents or their child's fear of being

bullied. It is also recommended that further investigation be done regarding student belief that OBPP has not decreased their fear of being bullied.

The study contributes to literature on OBPP because unlike much of the current research, it is independent from the author of the program. The findings suggest that students have experienced less bullying than before OBPP, although these results are not as strong as previous studies indicate. The results suggest that students and parents find several areas of OBPP to be effective, including increasing knowledge of bullying and how to deal with it. However, parents do not perceive the incidence of bullying has decreased with OBPP which is contrary to existing literature. Therefore, future research should address why parents perceive OBPP is not decreasing bullying incidents.

## **Conclusion**

This study has identified that students and parents perceive OBPP to be effective in several areas. The findings point toward student and parent belief that participating in OBPP effectively educates students on bullying and how to appropriately respond when it occurs. Additional research needs to be done on student and parent perceptions to determine why parents do not believe bullying has decreased with OBPP. Further communication regarding the decreased rates of bullying incidence needs to be shared with students and parents. It is clear that middle school students and parents agree implementation of OBPP is an effective educational tool to address bullying.

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Appendix A

[REDACTED]

Counseling Office [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter describes a research study being conducted with our middle school students and their parents to investigate perceptions on the effectiveness of the Olweus Anti-Bullying program. The purpose of this research is to understand whether parents and students believe the current anti-bullying program in the school is effective. The individual conducting this research is a Graduate Student in the counseling education department at the College at Brockport State University at New York, current counselor intern John Brewer.

If you or your child agrees to in this study you will be asked to answer a brief online survey. Please go to the [REDACTED] website at [www.\[REDACTED\].org/](http://www.[REDACTED].org/) where a link will be available on the homepage for you to access the parent/guardian survey.

Participation in this study will assist the district in evaluating and improving the current anti-bullying program.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

John Brewer

Counselor Intern

## STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT FOR YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE

The purpose of this research project is to investigate the perception among middle school students and their parents of the effectiveness of the Olweus Anti-Bullying Prevention Program. The importance of pursuing this topic is due to the administration's interest on whether students and parents think the program has made a difference. This research project is being conducted in order for the researcher to complete his thesis for the Department of Counselor Education at the College at Brockport, SUNY.

In order to participate in this study, your informed consent is required. You are being asked to make a decision whether or not to participate in the project. If you want to participate in the project, and agree with the statements below, your completion of the survey signifies your consent. You or your child may change your mind at any time and leave the study without penalty, even after the study has begun. Your child can refuse to participate even if you have given permission for him/her to participate.

This project has been approved by the SUNY College at Brockport's Institutional Review Board. Approval of this project only signifies that the procedures adequately protect the rights and welfare of the participants. Please note that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access.

I understand that:

My child's participation is voluntary.

1. My child's confidentiality is protected, there is no identifying information being collected from my child. Participation will have no effect on grade status.
2. There will be no anticipated personal benefits of the study because of my child's participation in this study. There are two foreseeable risks in this study. First is the time it takes to complete the survey. Second, there is potential for an emotional response due to the sensitive nature of the topic. If an emotional response occurs your child may visit the schools counseling center should he/she need to speak with someone.
3. My child's participation involves answering 10-15 questions online which can be accessed from any computer with internet capabilities. Please note that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. The researcher will email me a link for my child to access the survey once this permission slip is returned to the Counseling Office. It is estimated that the survey will take about 5-10 minutes.
4. The results will be used and reported in aggregate form in a thesis by the Graduate Student conducting the survey. Consent forms will be kept confidential by the researcher in a locked filing cabinet and will be destroyed at the end of the study. The results of the survey which contains no identifying information will be kept on a password protected computer that only the researcher will have access to. Data will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

I am 18 years of age or older. I have read and understand the above statements. All my questions about my child's participation in this study have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to their participation in the study realizing I they withdraw without penalty at any time during the survey process. Submitting the survey indicates my consent for them to participate.

If you have any questions you may contact:

Student Researcher:

John Brewer

[Redacted contact information for Student Researcher]

Faculty Advisor:

[Redacted contact information for Faculty Advisor]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address to send link for your child to access survey

Appendix B

Subject: Student Survey for Olweus Anti-Bullying Program

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thank you for giving permission for your child to participate in the survey being conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program. Below is the link your child will use to access the online survey:

[REDACTED]

Thanks again for allowing your child to participate.

John Brewer  
Counselor Intern

[REDACTED]

## Appendix C

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program****Statement of Assent**

I am Mr. Brewer the Counselor Intern and would like you to complete this online survey. These questions will help find out whether you think the current Olweus Anti-Bullying is working. No personal information will be collected and your answers will unknown, no one will be able to tell how you answered each question. If you choose to participate, this questionnaire will take about 5-10 minutes. Your participation will not affect your grades in any way.

The surveys will only be accessible by the researcher and again contains none of your personal information.

Your parent/guardian has given permission for you to participate in this study but it is up to you to decide if you want to participate. You may at choose at any time to stop participating in this study.

Your participation in this study will assist the district in evaluating and improving the current anti-bullying program. There are two risks that could possible happen during this study. First is the time it takes to complete the survey. Second, there is potential for an emotional response due to the topic of the survey. If an emotional response occurs you may visit the schools counseling center should you need to speak with someone.

If you would like to participate in the survey click on Agree below to start the survey. If you have any questions about the survey please contact Mr. Brewer at [REDACTED].

Thank you for your help.

Mr. Brewer

**\*1. Clicking on the (Agree) button below indicates that:**

- **You have read and understood the above information**
- **You voluntarily agree to participate**

- Agree
- Disagree

## (Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program

### Directions

Please answer the following questions regarding the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program you participated in during the 2012-2013 school year. Click on the number that best describes your thoughts on the effectiveness of this program. All answers will remain anonymous.

#### **\*2. Click Next to continue:**

- Next

## (Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program

#### **\*3. I had experienced bullying before this program?**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

## (Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program

#### **\*4. I know more about what bullying is than before I participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*5. I have more knowledge on how to effectively deal with bullying than before I participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*6. My understanding of how harmful bullying is to others has increased since participating in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*7. I have experienced less cell phone/internet bullying than before I participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*8. The number of incidences of physical bullying (punching, kicking, pushing) that I have experienced have decreased since I participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*9. I would be less likely to join in when others bully someone else than before I participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*10. Since participating in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program I have seen my teacher's respond better when bullying happens.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*11. Now that I have participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program I would be more likely to report bullying to an adult.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program**

**\*12. My fear of being bullied has decreased since the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

## (Survey for Students) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying Program

**\*13. I still am being bullied even with the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

## Appendix D

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying****Statement of Informed Consent for Parental Participation**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter describes a research study being conducted with our middle school students and their parents to investigate perceptions on the effectiveness of the Olweus Anti-Bullying program. The purpose of this research is to understand whether parents and students believe the current anti-bullying program in the school is effective. The individual conducting this research is a Graduate Student in the counseling education department at the College at Brockport State University at New York, current counselor intern John Brewer. If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to answer a brief online survey which will take approximately 5-10 minutes.

Your participation in this study will assist the district in evaluating and improving the current anti-bullying program.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to change your mind and stop being in the study at any time.

I understand that:

1. My participation is voluntary.
2. My confidentiality is protected, there is no identifying information being collected from this survey.
6. The benefits of the study have been mentioned previously. There are two foreseeable risks in this study. First is the time it takes to complete the survey. Second, there is potential for an emotional response due to the sensitive nature of the topic. If an emotional response occurs, you may contact the schools counseling center should you need to speak with someone.
3. My participation involves answering 10-15 questions online which can be accessed from any computer with internet capabilities. The amount of time to complete this survey is approximately 5-10 minutes.
4. The results will be used in a thesis by the Graduate Student conducting the survey.
5. The results of the survey which contains no identifying information will be kept on a password protected computer that only the researcher will have access to. Data will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

You are being asked whether or not you are willing to participate in this survey. If you wish to give permission to participate, and agree with the statement below, please click Agree. Remember, you may change your mind at any point and withdraw from the study.

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-**

**\*1. Clicking on the (Agree) button below indicates that:**

- **You have read and understood the above information**
- **You voluntarily agree to participate**

- Agree
- Disagree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying****Directions:**

**\*2. Please answer the following questions regarding the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program your child participated in during the 2012-2013 school year. Click on the number that best describes your thoughts on the effectiveness of this program. All answers will remain anonymous.**

- Continue

### (Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying

**\*3. My child has an increased understanding of what bullying is since participating in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

### (Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying

**\*4. Since the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program my child has more knowledge on how to effectively deal with bullying.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

## (Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying

**\*5. My child's understanding of how harmful bullying is to others has increased since participating in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

## (Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying

**\*6. I have seen my child experience less cell phone/cyber bullying since he/she participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1-Strongly Disagree
- 2-Disagree
- 3-Neutral
- 4-Agree
- 5-Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying**

**\*7. Since my child participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program he/she has mentioned fewer incidences of physical bullying (punching, kicking, pushing).**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying**

**\*8. Since my child participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program I have heard less feedback from others (school, parents, and students) that my child has participated in bullying others.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying**

**\*9. My child has indicated that his/her teacher responds more effectively when bullying happens since the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program has been implemented.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying**

**\*10. Now that my child has participated in the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program he/she would be more likely to report bullying to an adult.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying**

**\*11. My child's fear of being bullied has decreased since the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree

**(Survey for Parents/Guardians) Effectiveness of Olweus Anti-Bullying**

**\*12. I think that bullying in general happens less than before the implementation of the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program.**

- 1- Strongly Disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 3- Neutral
- 4- Agree
- 5- Strongly Agree