2009

Elementary School Children's Recognition of and Experiences with Bullying: Gender and Developmental Differences

Robyn B. Bratica
University of Rhode Island

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Bratica, Robyn B., "Elementary School Children's Recognition of and Experiences with Bullying: Gender and Developmental Differences" (2009). *Open Access Master's Theses*. Paper 1680.
<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/theses/1680>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN'S RECOGNITION OF AND
EXPERIENCES WITH BULLYING: GENDER AND DEVELOPMENTAL
DIFFERENCES

BY
ROBYN B. BRATICA

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
PSYCHOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

2009

Abstract

Previous research has indicated that boys and girls differ in the ways that they display aggression and experience victimization. The purpose of this study is to examine the ability of children, in the third and fifth grade, to correctly differentiate between various forms of aggressive acts and pro-social behavior. The results of this study indicated that though there appear to be developmental differences in the identification of aggression, there was not evidence to support gender differences. The study also provides information regarding rates of peer victimization. Specifically, groups of children who self-report higher rates of victimization are identified, as well as the frequency with which children identify same-gender peers to be victims of aggression. The results indicate that fifth grade students self-identified experiencing overt aggression at a greater frequency than third grade students, third grade girls self-identified as experience pro-social behavior at a frequency greater than fifth grade girls, fifth grade boys self-identified as experiencing relational aggression at a frequency greater than third grade boys, and fifth grade male students perceived peers as experiencing relational aggression at a greater frequency than fifth grade female students.

Table of Contents

	page
Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Aggression and its Variations.....	1
Aggressive Behavior in Early Childhood.....	3
Children of Preschool Age.....	4
Middle Childhood.....	6
Early Adolescence.....	7
Gender Differences in Aggression and Victimization.....	8
Recognition of Aggression.....	9
Research Questions and Hypotheses.....	11
Chapter II: Method.....	13
Design.....	13
Recruitment.....	13
Participants.....	14
Setting.....	15
Materials.....	15
Informational Form/Opt Out Sheet.....	16
Demographic Questionnaire.....	16

Stop Bullying Now! DVD.....	16
Responses to Vignettes Questionnaire.....	18
Procedure.....	19
Chapter III: Results.....	21
Gender and Grade Differences in Aggression and Pro- Social Behavior Identification.....	23
Reports of Pro-Social Interactions and Peer Victimization.....	25
Perceived Experiences of Same-Gender Peers Related to Victimization and Pro-Social Behavior.....	29
Chapter IV: Discussion.....	33
Summary of Results.....	33
Interpretation of Findings.....	34
Implications of Results.....	37
Limitations.....	38
Future Directions for Research.....	40
Summary and Conclusions.....	41
Appendix A: Informational Consent Form Given to Principals.....	42
Appendix B: Informational Form Given to Parents of Students.....	44
Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire	46
Appendix D: Survey Administered to Male Students.....	47
Bibliography.....	71

List of Tables

Table	page
Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants.....	22
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Correct Identification of Aggression and Pro-Social Behavior.....	23
Table 3. Summary Indices for MANOVA.....	25
Table 4. Self-Reports of Experiences of Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Gender as the Independent Variable.....	27
Table 5. Self-Reports of Experiences of Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Grade in School as the Independent Variable.....	27
Table 6. Perceived Experiences of Same-Gender Peer Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Gender as the Independent Variable.....	31
Table 7. Perceived Experiences of Same-Gender Peer Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Grade in School as the Independent Variable.....	31

List of Figures

Figure	page
Figure 1. Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Pro-Social Behavior with the Variable Gender.....	28
Figure 2. Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Pro-Social Behavior with the Variable Grade in School.....	28
Figure 3. Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Overt Aggression with the Variable Gender.....	29
Figure 4. Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Overt Aggression with the Variable Grade in School.....	29
Figure 5. Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Relational Aggression with the Variable Gender.....	32
Figure 6. Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Relational Aggression with the Variable Grade in School.....	32

Chapter I:

Introduction

Aggression and its Variations

Aggression refers to action made by an individual that causes physical, psychological, or emotional harm to another person (Guerin & Hennessy, 2002). Aggression is experienced universally; almost every adult in the United States can recall an experience of peer aggression, and almost every child can report either aggressing on a peer, being the victim of peer aggression, or witnessing peer aggression (Orpinas, Honre, & Staniszewski, 2003). Traditionally, research has focused on overt, or physical aggression (Underwood, 2003), which refers to the harming of others through physical damage or the threat of physical damage (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996). Examples of overt aggression include pushing, hitting or kicking another individual (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996). In contrast to overt aggression, relational aggression harms others through damage to peer relationships (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996). Examples of relational aggression include the spreading of rumors or using social exclusion to isolate an individual from other members of the peer group (Grotmeter & Crick, 1996).

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior that occurs when an individual who cannot easily defend himself or herself is repeatedly victimized by peers (Smith, Schneider, Smith & Ananiadou, 2004). Involvement in bullying, as either a bully or a victim, has been shown to lead to several negative long-term consequences in children, including adjudication, school dropout, and poor psychosocial adjustment (Cohn & Canter, 2003). In a recent study of 24,345

students in grades four through twelve, O'Brennan, Bradshaw, and Sawyer (2009) found that students involved in bullying, either as a victim, or as a bully-victim, reported higher internalizing symptoms, such as sadness, loneliness, and worry than did peers who were not involved in bullying (O'Brennan et al., 2009). Further, victims and bully-victims reported feeling less safe and more disconnected from school than their non-involved peers (O'Brennan et al., 2009). Also, victims, bully-victims, and bullies were all identified to be at greater risk for aggressive-impulsivity, defined as getting angry easily, having difficulty controlling their temper, doing things without thinking, and threatening to hurt someone, than non-involved peers (O'Brennan et al., 2009).

Similarly, an Italian study of third, fourth, and fifth grade students found that victims of bullying tend to suffer from a variety of psychosomatic and behavioral difficulties (Gini, 2008). Behavioral difficulties demonstrated by children who were victims of bullying included conduct problems, hyperactivity, and problems with peer relationships. The psychosomatic symptoms displayed by the victims of bullying in this study included sleeping problems, feeling tense, feeling tired, and dizziness (Gini, 2008). Another recent Italian study documented the experiences of 734 older students in the equivalents of American grades seven, ten, and thirteen, or post-secondary (Bacchini, Esposito, & Affuso, 2008). This study similarly found negative experiences for individuals involved in bullying, as victims of bullying and bully-victims reported more negative perception of relationships with classmates and peers than non-involved peers and bullies, while bullies reported more negative perception of relationships with

teachers than not-involved peers, victims of bullying, and bully-victims (Bacchini et al., 2009).

Despite documented harmfulness of bullying, teachers intervene during only 4% of all incidents of bullying (Cohn & Canter, 2003). In the United States, it is estimated between 15% and 30% of all students are either bullies or victims of bullying, making bullying the most common form of violence in the country (Cohn & Canter, 2003). One study conducted with middle and high school students in the Midwestern United States found that approximately 81% of male students and 72% of female students had been victims of bullying during their school years (Hoover, Oliver & Hazler, 1992). Students also reported that from ages 10-14 the bullying they experienced was at its greatest frequency (Hoover et al, 1992). As this study describes, bullying appears to occur predominately during the period from late elementary school to early middle school. However, children begin to express aggression from a much younger age.

Aggressive Behavior in Early Childhood

At as early as one year of age, infants begin to engage in mild forms of physical aggression, and by 18 months, such aggression may be quite common (Underwood, 2003). By 17 months of age, most children will have displayed physical aggression towards parents, siblings, and peers (Tremblay, Nagin, Séguin, Zoccolillo, Zelazo, Boivin, Pérusse, & Japel, 2004). Several factors may contribute to the development of physical aggression in early childhood, with the presence of older siblings greatly predicting the occurrence of physical aggression among toddlers, as an odds ratio of 4.1 was calculated, which was significant at

an alpha level of .05 (Tremblay et al, 2004). This is a logical assumption, as a requirement for the occurrence of physical aggression is a target towards which the aggression is focused. During early childhood, aggression does not always occur in a negative context. In fact, young children often display aggression during positive social interactions. For example, access to desired objects does not appear to be a predictor of aggression, as it has been shown that conflicts among one and two years old children were more frequently occurring when there was an overabundance of toys as opposed to when toys were limited in availability (Underwood, 2003). Most often, children learn to use alternatives to aggressive behavior to express emotions and anger upon entering preschool (Tremblay et al, 2004). However, for many children aggressive behavior may continue, and may in certain situations emerge as relational, as opposed to physical, aggression.

Children of Preschool Age

During preschool children begin to learn methods to settle disputes with peers and to appropriately display aggression (Underwood, 2003). One method utilized to exert aggression by children in this age group is rough-and-tumble play (Underwood, 2003). Rough-and-tumble play often occurs with children in a dyad, and consists of physical contact in a playful manner. Such contact often involves hitting, grabbing and pushing, but is accompanied by non-threatening facial expressions and vocalizations (Underwood, 2003). Therefore, though the actions involved in this form of play may appear intimidating, the laughing and expressed joyful facial expressions of the children involved bring about a clear

understanding that these actions are not meant to be in any way distressing (Peterson & Flanders, 2005).

Though boys tend to engage in rough-and-tumble play to a greater extent than girls (Underwood, 2003), this form of play does not completely replace physical aggression, as throughout preschool ages boys display overt aggression at a greater extent than girls (Wood, Cowan & Baker, 2002). This may be partially due to the fact that preschool aged girls are viewed negatively by their peers when they express anger, a consequence not necessarily faced by preschool boys for similar expression (Underwood, 2003). As a result, girls may begin to express their anger or respond to peer provocation by socially excluding their peers or engaging in other forms of relational aggression (Underwood, 2003).

The timing of peer rejection, which is an example of a relationally aggressive behavior, may have specific consequences for children depending upon their age. Early experiences of peer rejection could lead to social-cognitive deficits, which would potentially lead to increased aggressive behaviors (Boivin, Vitaro & Poulin, 2005). Such an increase of aggressive behaviors is troubling as displays of aggression, either physical or relational, during early childhood, have been linked to increases in concurrent and future deceptive behavior (Ostrov, Ries, Stauffacher, Godleski, & Mullins, 2008). Also, an increase in aggressive behaviors in turn may lead to an increase of peer rejection (Boivin et al, 2005). Recognition of causes of peer rejection at an early age is crucial, as it has been shown to lead to a higher risk of absenteeism, school dropout, low grades and

grade retention when children progress through higher grades (Kupersmidt, Buchele, Voegler & Sedikides, 1996).

Middle Childhood

Bullying during elementary school is an international phenomenon. Rates of bullying during grades one through five range from 11.3% in Finland, to 49.8% in Ireland, with bullying rates of elementary school students within the United States at 19% (Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003). There are numerous factors related to bullying in elementary school, one of which is the emergence of cliques. Cliques within elementary schools usually consist of four to five children who share several characteristics with one another, such as age, gender and race (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003). Identification within a clique may cause a child to view their peers within this group as superior to children outside of this group (Mullen, Brown & Smith, 1992). Furthermore, Kwon and Lease (2007) found that cliques of children who demonstrated elevated levels of bullying were not ranked any less popular than pro-social peers. In contrast to developing groups of peers, elementary aged children also begin to develop mutual antipathy with classmates. A study of elementary school aged children found that 28% of children in grades 3 and 4, and 38% of children in grades 5 and 6, were able to identify one or more enemies (Pope, 2003).

Children in elementary school begin to associate the actions of others with personal attributes. For example, Embry and Luzzo (1996) found in a study of children in both second and sixth grade, the students who had been called names by their classmates began to develop negative peer beliefs. Such negative beliefs

may be detrimental to the ability of a child to make friends or further develop pro-social relationships.

Early Adolescence

Though bullying has been documented within elementary schools, during the transition from primary to secondary school a spike in bullying rates has been shown to occur (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). In a retrospective study conducted by Eslea and Rees (2001), the age at which most adults recall being bullied the most was from age 11 to age 13. There may be several reasons for this increase in bullying rates, such as changes in social affiliations and, consequently, an attempt to establish dominance in a new peer group (Pellegrini & Long, 2002). There is reason to believe that the increase in bullying associated with early adolescence begins to fade once children enter high school. Bacchini and colleagues found that in a sample of Italian middle and high school aged children, when examining instances of bullying that occur at a minimum of two to three times per month, students in high school were more likely than students in middle school to be not at all involved in bullying, either as a bully, a victim, or as a bully victim (Bacchini et al., 2008). Further, when the sample of students was further segmented into instances of bullying occurring about once a week or more, high school students were still less likely to be involved in bullying as a victim or bully-victim than middle school students (Bacchini et al., 2008). Therefore, it is of great importance to focus prevention and intervention efforts on students who are still in elementary school, before this increase in bullying occurs.

Gender Differences in Aggression and Victimization

Beginning in early childhood, girls and boys display aggression differently. Girls within preschool classrooms have been found to socially reject peers following provocation at a greater frequency than boys, and are less likely to outwardly vent anger towards peers (Underwood, 2003). As children become older, such gender differences become more pronounced. For example, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) found that among students in grades three through six, girls were more likely to engage in relational aggression than boys, and that boys were more likely to engage in overt aggression than girls. Similarly, Hilarski, Dulmus, Theriot and Sowers (2004) found that with relational aggression, middle-school aged girls engaged in this form of aggression to a greater extent than boys. However, in regards to physical aggression, boys and girls in both elementary and middle school were found to engage in this form of aggression at comparable rates (Hilarski et al, 2004). Similar results were found in a sample of children in middle school in Western Canada (Closson, 2009). This study, which examined peer relationships within cliques, found that girls were more relationally aggressive towards their friends than boys, but girls did not differ from boys in displays of overt aggression (Closson, 2009). However, reactive aggression was found to be negatively correlated with peer likeability for girls, but had a non-significant correlation for boys (Closson, 2009).

Other studies have found that overall involvement with bullying may vary by gender. Using a sample of Italian youth, Bacchini and colleagues (2008) found that in instances of bullying occurring more than two to three times per month,

boys are more likely to be classified as bullies than girls (Bacchini et al., 2008). However, once only individuals who were involved in bullying once a week or more from this group were examined, there were no observed gender differences (Bacchini et al., 2008).

Girls also differ from boys in both rates of and reactions to victimization. Most often, children bully other same-sex peers. However, when cross-sex bullying does occur, most often it occurs with a male bully and a female victim (Seals & Young, 2003). Furthermore, girls have reported the experience of being bullied as more emotionally troubling than their male peers (Hoover, Oliver & Hazier, 1992). Therefore, it is of great importance to acknowledge the differing needs of male and female students, and form of aggression employed by each gender, when attempting to recognize the occurrence of aggression and in the development of potential interventions to combat this issue.

Recognition of Aggression

There appear to be varying degrees to which school-aged children recognize differing forms of peer aggression. In a study of 1,820 students between the ages of 11 and 14 in the United Kingdom, it was found that 33.5% of students identified bullying as only physical abuse, and only 5.3% of students discussed bullying including the concept of social exclusion (Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencourt, & Lemme, 2006). Further, children ages 13 and 14 were more likely than children ages 11 and 12 to discuss the concept of social exclusion (Naylor et al., 2006). In another study, when asked to identify various situations as bullying or pro-social behavior, it was found that children ages four

through eight could distinguish between aggressive and non-aggressive acts, but children at the age of fourteen were able also distinguish between physical and non-physical acts of aggression (Monks & Smith, 2006). However, children between the ages of eight and fourteen were not included in this analyses, and therefore it is of great importance to include children within that age range to determine, to a greater specificity, at what age girls and boys are able to differentiate between overt aggression, relational aggression and pro-social behavior.

Varjas and colleagues (2008) began to examine this issue by interviewing 30 children between the ages of nine and fifteen who were in grades four through eight (Varjas, Meyers, Bellmoff, Lopp, Birckbichler, & Marshall, 2008). The results of this study indicated that students in the overall sample identified bullying as maltreatment toward an individual by other individuals or by a group, and identified instances of physical, relational, and verbal aggression (Varjas et al., 2008). However, this study gave overall group results and did not separate participants by either age or grade level. Therefore, it seems necessary for information to be collected specifically at different ages and grade levels, in order to determine at what age children are able to correctly differentiate between differing forms of aggression. Such information may have important implications for prevention and intervention efforts, as children with an awareness of differential forms of aggression may be able to benefit from more specialized prevention and intervention efforts than children without such an understanding. Further, there is evidence that gender differences also exist in the ability to

differentiate between differing forms of aggression. Naylor and colleagues (2006), found that in a sample of children ages 11 through 14, a similar proportion of both boys and girls (65%) reported that bullying often involves physical abuse (Naylor et al., 2006). However, 64% of girls and only 54% of boys acknowledged that bullying may also involve verbal abuse (Naylor et al., 2006). This finding illuminates the fact that further research is necessary to understand the gender differences in the identification of aggression, to further specialize prevention and intervention efforts to the needs of students.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on aforementioned review of contemporary literature, the following primary research questions were asked, and the accompanying hypotheses were tested: The first research question asked: Are there developmental and/or gender differences in the ability of children to correctly differentiate between overt aggression, relational aggression, and pro-social behavior? The following hypotheses was tested:

- 1) Fifth grade students are able to correctly identify overt aggression, relational aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than third grade students.
- 2) Girls are able to correctly identify overt aggression, relational aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than boys.

The second research question asked: Are there developmental and/or gender differences in the frequency with which students report peer victimization? The hypotheses for this question were as follows:

- 1) Fifth grade students report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than third grade students.
- 2) Girls report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than boys.

Chapter II:

Method

Design

To examine the first two hypotheses, the current study employed a nonexperimental between groups 2 X 2 factorial design. There were two independent variables: gender (male and female), and current academic grade (third grade or fifth grade). There were three dependent variables: correct identification of pro-social behavior, correct identification of overt aggression, and correct identification of relational aggression. The second two hypotheses were examined using multiple between groups designs. Once again there were two independent variables: gender (male and female), and current academic grade (third grade or fifth grade). There were six dependent variables: (a) self-reported frequency of experiencing pro-social behavior by peers, (b) self-reported frequency of experiencing overt aggression by peers, (c) self-reported frequency of experiencing relational aggression by peers, (d) frequency of observing same-gender peers experiencing pro-social behavior by others, (e) frequency of observing same-gender peers experiencing overt aggression by others, and (f) frequency of observing same-gender peers experiencing relational aggression by others.

Recruitment

Principals at elementary schools in Rhode Island were contacted and were asked about any interest in including their school in a study related to bullying and peer aggression. The aims of this current study were discussed in person with

interested principals, who were also given an informational consent form about the study (Appendix A) and the principals were asked to provide written consent allowing this study to occur at their school. Following the written consent of each of the elementary school principals, all materials were submitted to and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Rhode Island.

Informational forms (Appendix B) were then sent home with students, and mailed to parents either individually or through a school newsletter. Parents who did not want their child to participate in the study were asked to send back the form with their child opting them out of the study, and parents were also provided a telephone number and email address to contact the student researcher if needed.

Participants

A total of 164 students, 85 from grade five and 79 from grade three, from three elementary schools within one school district in Rhode Island participated. Of the 85 students in grade five, 44 students identified as female and 41 students identified as male. Further, of the 79 students in grade three, 40 students identified as female and 39 students identified as male. Therefore, there were a total of 84 female students and 80 male students participating in the study.

To provide a sample that resembled the ethnic breakdown of the state of Rhode Island, a school district whose student population represented the ethnic population of the state was chosen for this study. The demographic information available for Rhode Island indicates that 79.3% of individuals living within Rhode Island identify as Non-Hispanic White, 11.2% of individuals identify as Hispanic or Latino, 6.3% of individuals identify as African-American, 2.8% identify as

Asian-American, 0.6% identify as Native American or Alaskan Native, and 0.1% identify as Hawaiian Native or Other Pacific Islander (U.S. Census, 2008).

Within the study, 47.0% of the student participants identified as Non-Hispanic White, 5.5% of the students identified as Hispanic or Latino, 4.9% of the students identified as Native American, 3.1% of the students identified as African-American, 2.4% of the students identified as Asian-American, 1.2% of the students identified as White and African-American, 0.6% of the students identified as White and Native American, and 11.0% of the students designated “other” for their ethnicity, while 0.6% of students designated White and “other” for their identity. Further, 21.3% of students were unsure about their ethnicity, while 2.4% of students stated that they identified as White but were also unsure about their ethnicity. While an ethnically diverse population was included in this study, based on the research questions and available literature, ethnic differences in the population were not measured.

Setting

Data were collected in elementary school classrooms during the month of May 2009. Students remained in their classroom for the duration of the data collection, and data were collected from an entire class of students at one time.

Materials

In addition to the materials listed below, the materials necessary for this study included a projection screen, a projector, and a laptop computer.

Informational Form/Opt Out Sheet

Due to the fact that bullying education was already in place in the district where the project took place, an informational opt out form was utilized (Appendix A). Copies of this form were sent home with the children in classrooms designated by the school principals to participate in the study. Forms were also sent to parents through the mail, either in the form of a letter or as part of a newsletter, or through email. Parents were asked to reply if they were opposed to their child participating in this study.

Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire was used to obtain information regarding the participants' age, birth date, grade in school, gender, and ethnicity (Appendix B).

Stop Bullying Now! DVD

Participants viewed a DVD entitled Stop Bullying Now! (United States Department of Health and Human Services), containing a collection of twelve "webisodes" (short cartoons, ranging from approximately 10 seconds to two minutes in length, that were originally broadcast on the Stop Bullying Now! Website), produced by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The twelve webisodes were further incremented for the current investigation into a total of 25 vignettes, each which displayed instances of overt aggression, relational aggression, or pro-social behavior. The choice to use vignettes was made based on the fact that bullying may be a sensitive subject matter for many students, and therefore vignettes may provide a less distressing

and more comfortable manner for students to discuss this topic (Barter & Renold, 2000).

The webisodes were developed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration, in partnership with more than 70 different agencies, including faith-based, education, health and safety organizations (Melzer-Lange, Cohen, Grossberg, Matthews, Heuermann, Kocs, Hale & Gilmore, 2005). Also, 11 children ages nine to thirteen were consulted in the development of the webisodes, and assisted in the development of the characters and the situations that were featured (United States Department of Health and Human Servicesb). Therefore, the webisodes may be considered developmentally appropriate for the students who were included in this study. Before the commencement of this project, ten graduate students in school psychology were asked to watch the vignettes and to determine if the actions viewed could be considered reflective of overt aggression, relational aggression or pro-social behavior. Only those vignettes which were decided upon by 8 out of 10 individuals in this group as either consisting of overt aggression, relational aggression or pro-social behavior were included in the study. This established convergent validity and discriminant validity of the vignette content (Lounsbury, Gibson & Saudargas, 2006). Based on the feedback of the ten graduate students in school psychology, it was decided that one of the vignettes would be removed due to the lack of clarity regarding the type of aggression depicted, as within this vignette, two different situations, one which involved pro-

social behaviors and one which involved overt aggression were occurring simultaneously. Therefore, 24 vignettes were shown to participants.

Responses to Vignettes Questionnaire

After students watched each vignette, they were asked to respond to three questions (Appendix C). The first question and response choices were adapted from a three-item peer-nomination scale of physical aggression, a five-item peer-nomination scale of relational aggression, and a five-item scale of pro-social behaviors to be used with preschool students (Crick, Casas & Mosher, 1997). The first question asked “What did you see in this cartoon?” and followed with three choices: 1) I saw children being nice to each other, 2) I saw a child calling another child mean names, starting a fight, or pushing or hitting other children, and 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends. To assess the appropriateness of these questions and the accompanying responses, five teachers at each grade level (i.e. third and fifth) were asked to review the question and the potential responses, and to determine if the question and responses are appropriate for students in the third and fifth grade. Students then were asked to answer a second and third question, using a 5-point scale, relating to personal experiences of victimization and pro-social behavior, and perceived experiences of same-gender peers relating to victimization and pro-social behavior. The second question asked, “In this cartoon you met (insert name of character), how often do other kids treat you how (insert name of character) was treated?” Students were given the following choices: never, less than once a week, once a week, more than once a week, every day. For the third question, students were

asked, “In this cartoon you met (insert name of character), how often do other kids treat other girls/boys in your class how (insert name of character) was treated?” Students were given the choices: never, less than once a week, once a week, more than once a week, every day. Once again, to establish that these questions were developmentally appropriate for the student participants, five teachers at each the third and fifth grade level were asked to both evaluate the ease with which children at those grades may be able to read the questions. After reading through the questions, all of the teachers unanimously stated that the questions were developed at an appropriate level for the students within their class.

Procedure

After collection of the any returned forms, students who were participating in the study were reminded that they could end their participation at any time. Students were then distributed a packet of papers, the first sheet of paper requesting demographic information (Appendix C), and the sequential sheets of paper asking students to answer three questions relating to the vignettes (Appendix D). Upon receiving these packets, students were instructed to fill out the first sheet, which asked for demographic information. Segments from the DVD entitled Stop Bullying Now! (United States Department of Health and Human Services), were then shown to each classroom of students. Following the viewing of each vignette, students asked to answer a questionnaire containing three questions, which were read aloud to students by the experimenter. The questions included: “What did you see in this cartoon?”, “In this cartoon you met

(insert name of character), how often do other kids treat you how (insert name of character) was treated?”, and “In this cartoon you met (insert name of character), how often do other kids treat other girls/boys in your class how (insert name of character) was treated?” Forms were separated to ensure that students are asked about a peer of the same gender. After the final vignette had been shown, the experimenter collected the packets.

Chapter III:

Results

Prior to statistical analysis, all responses to the questionnaires were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and information from this spreadsheet was then entered into the statistical analysis software package SAS 9.2. The first statistical analysis summarized answers from the demographic questionnaire regarding the age, grade in school, gender, and ethnicity of the participants. These figures are presented in Table 1. Descriptive statistics also were calculated for the dependent variables of correct identification of pro-social behavior, correct identification of overt aggression, and correct identification of relational aggression based on the independent variables of gender and grade in school. These statistics are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: *Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

Characteristic	n	Percentage
Gender		
Female	84	51.22
Male	80	48.78
Grade		
3	79	48.17
5	85	51.83
Age		
8	16	9.76
9	55	33.54
10	53	32.32
11	36	21.95
12	4	2.44
Ethnicity		
African-American	5	3.05
Asian	4	2.44
Hispanic/Latino	9	5.49
Native American	8	4.88
White	77	46.95
White/African-American	2	1.22
White/Native American	1	0.61
White/Other	1	0.61
White/Unsure	4	2.44
Other	18	10.98
Unsure	35	21.34

Note: Numbers represent characteristics in the total sample. For students in grade 3 only, there were 40 female students and 39 male students, and in grade 5 there were 44 female students and 40 male students. Also, all students ages 8 and 9 were in grade 3, and all students ages 11 and 12 were in grade 5. Forty-five 10-year-old students were in grade 5, while eight 10-year-old students were in grade 3.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Correct Identification of Aggression and Pro-Social Behavior

	Pro-social n=8		Overt Aggression n=5		Relational Aggression n=11	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Gender						
Female	7.40	0.81	4.30	1.02	6.25	3.07
Male	7.44	0.95	4.34	1.18	5.56	2.97
Grade						
3	7.20	1.05	4.29	1.11	5.14	3.05
5	7.62	0.62	4.34	1.09	6.64	2.84

Gender and Grade Differences in Aggression and Pro-Social Behavior

Identification

To examine the hypotheses that, a) Fifth grade students are able to correctly identify overt aggression, relational aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than third grade students, and b) girls are able to correctly identify overt aggression, relational aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than boys, a 2 X 2 factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. The results of this MANOVA indicate that the interaction effect of gender and grade on identification of relational aggression, overt aggression, and pro-social behavior, was not statistically significant, Wilks' Lambda 0.997, $F(3,158) = 0.14$, $p = 0.93$. For the main effect of gender, Wilks' Lambda was 0.984, $F(3,158) = 0.85$, $p = 0.47$, not a statistically significant result. For the main effect of grade, Wilks' Lambda was 0.881, $F(3,158) = 7.14$, $p < .001$, with an effect size of eta square equal to 0.12, which is a large to medium effect

size. These results support the conclusion that students in grade five are better able to identify overt aggression, relational aggression, and pro-social behavior than students in grade three. However, the hypothesis that girls are better able to identify overt aggression, relational aggression, and pro-social behavior than boys was not supported. Full summary indices for the interaction of grade and gender, the main effect of gender, and the main effect of grade are listed in Table 3.

To further examine the significant main effect of student grade level a separate univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed for each dependent variable, using the grade level of students (grade three or five) as the independent variable. The ANOVA was significant for the variable of pro-social behavior, $F(1,162) = 9.90, p < .01$, with eta square equal to 0.06, which is a medium effect size. The ANOVA was not significant for the variable of overt aggression, $F(1,162) = 0.08, p = 0.77$. The ANOVA conducted for the variable of relational aggression was significant and produced the result, $F(1,162) = 10.55, p < .01$, with eta square equal to 0.06, which is a medium effect. Together, these results support the conclusion that students in grade five are better able than students in grade three to identify pro-social behavior and relational aggression.

Table 3: *Summary Indices for MANOVA*

Statistic	Value	F Value
Gender by Grade Interaction		
Wilks' Lambda	0.997	0.14
Pillai's Trace	0.003	0.14
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	0.003	0.14
Roy's Greatest Root	0.003	0.14
Gender Main Effect		
Wilks' Lambda	0.984	0.85
Pillai's Trace	0.016	0.85
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	0.016	0.85
Roy's Greatest Root	0.016	0.85
Grade Main Effect		
Wilks' Lambda	0.881	7.14***
Pillai's Trace	0.119	7.14***
Hotelling-Lawley Trace	0.135	7.14***
Roy's Greatest Root	0.135	7.14***

*** $p < .001$

Reports of Pro-Social Interactions and Peer Victimization

To examine the hypotheses that fifth grade students report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than third grade students, and girls report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than boys, students responded to questions regarding the frequency with which they are the target of pro-social behavior by a peer, or the frequency with which they are a victim of overt or relational aggression using an ordinal scale; therefore, nonparametric statistics were used to analyze the results. A total of 18 rank sums tests were performed to examine potential overall differences between girls and boys and third and fifth grade students, as well as potential differences between third and fifth grade girls, third and fifth grade boys, third grade girls and boys, and fifth grade girls and boys. The results of these rank sums tests are presented in Tables 4 and 5. Overall, the vast majority of these tests were not significant; however, three

significant results were found. For self-reports of pro-social behavior, there was a difference between female students in the third grade compared to female students in the fifth grade, as $z=2.12$, $p<.05$ (grade three $M=22.98$, grade five $M=18.09$). For means of pro-social behavior, see Figures 1 and 2. Further, for self-reports of relational aggression, there was a difference between male students in the third grade compared to male students in the fifth grade, as $z=-2.45$, $p<.05$ (grade three $M=37.56$, grade five $M=46.68$). There was also an overall significant effect for the self-report of overt aggression of students in different grades in school, as $z=-2.06$, $p<.05$ (grade three $M=18.86$, grade five $M=21.89$). For means of overt aggression, see Figures 3 and 4. These data suggest that fifth grade students are the victims of overt aggression more frequently than third grade students. Further, third grade female students report more frequent experiences of pro-social behavior than fifth grade female students and third grade male students are the victims of relational aggression more frequently than fifth grade male students.

Table 4: *Self-Reports of Experiences of Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Gender as the Independent Variable*

	Pro-Social Behavior		Overt Aggression		Relational Aggression	
	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value
Overall Gender Differences	-0.52	0.60	-0.25	0.80	0.18	0.85
Third Grade Gender Differences	-1.39	0.17	-0.55	0.58	-1.02	0.31
Fifth Grade Gender Differences	0.93	0.35	0.17	0.86	1.29	0.20

Table 5: *Self-Reports of Experiences of Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Grade in School as the Independent Variable*

	Pro-Social Behavior		Overt Aggression		Relational Aggression	
	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value
Overall Grade Differences	1.33	0.18	-2.06	0.04*	-1.92	.05
Female Grade Differences	2.12	0.03*	-1.11	0.27	-0.23	0.82
Male Grade Differences	-0.24	0.81	-1.80	0.07	-2.45	0.01*

*p<.05

Figure 1: Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Pro-Social Behavior with the Variable: Gender

Figure 2: Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Pro-Social Behavior with the Variable: Grade in School

Figure 3: *Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Overt Aggression with the Variable: Gender*

Figure 4: *Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Overt Aggression with the Variable: Grade in School*

Perceived Experiences of Same-Gender Peers Relating to Victimization and Pro-Social Behavior

To further examine the hypotheses that (a) Fifth grade students report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than third grade students, and (b) girls report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than boys, an additional

18 rank sums tests were performed using gender and grade in school as independent variables and the perceived frequency of same-gender peers experiencing pro-social interactions or victimization in the form of overt or relational aggression as dependent variables. The results of these ranks sums tests are presented in Tables 6 and 7. Overall, the results of these analyses were not significant. However, there was a significant result for perceived frequency of same-gender peers being victims of relational aggression, for students in grade five, $z = 2.17, p < .05$ (female $M = 41.02$, male $M = 45.32$). This result indicates that among students in the fifth grade, male students report that same-gender peers experience relational aggression at a higher frequency than do female students. For means of relational aggression, see Figures 5 and 6.

Table 6: *Perceived Experiences of Same-Gender Peer Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Gender as the Independent Variable*

	Pro-Social Behavior		Overt Aggression		Relational Aggression	
	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value
Overall Gender Differences	-0.24	0.81	-0.59	0.55	1.30	0.20
Third Grade Gender Differences	-1.30	0.19	-0.67	0.50	-0.21	0.84
Fifth Grade Gender Differences	1.05	0.29	-0.09	0.92	2.17	0.03*

*p<.05

Table 7: *Perceived Experiences of Same-Gender Peer Pro-Social Behavior and Victimization with Grade in School as the Independent Variable*

	Pro-Social Behavior		Overt Aggression		Relational Aggression	
	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value	z-score	p-value
Overall Grade Differences	0.91	0.36	0.10	0.92	0.65	0.52
Female Grade Differences	1.82	0.07	0.42	0.67	1.62	0.11
Male Grade Differences	-0.54	0.59	-0.23	0.82	-0.48	0.63

Figure 5: Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Relational Aggression with the Variable Gender

Figure 6: Mean Self-Report (Question 2) and Perceived Peer (Question 3) Frequency of Relational Aggression with the Variable Grade in School

Chapter IV:

Discussion

Results of previous research indicate that children at the age of eight can distinguish between aggression and non-aggressive acts, while children at the age of fourteen also can distinguish between physical and non-physical acts of aggression (Monks & Smith, 2006). The purpose of the current study was to provide information about children in between the ages compared by Monks and Smith, regarding their ability to distinguish between aggressive and non-aggressive acts as well as between physical and non-physical acts of aggression. Further, this study examined the ability of girls and boys to differentially distinguish between aggressive and non-aggressive acts and between physical and non-physical acts of aggression.

Summary of Results

The results of this study provide support for the first hypothesis, which relates to the ability of fifth grade students to identify aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than third grade students. Specifically, it was found that fifth grade students are able to correctly identify relational aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than third grade students, but a significant difference was not found for the identification of overt aggression. However the second hypothesis, which stated that girls are able to correctly identify overt aggression, relational aggression and pro-social behavior at a greater frequency than boys, was not supported.

The third hypothesis, that fifth grade students report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than third grade students, was supported, but only in specific situations. For example, students in grade five reported being a victim of overt aggression at a higher frequency than students in grade three, and boys in grade five reported being victim of relational aggression at a higher frequency than boys in grade three. Also, female students in grade three reported being the recipient of pro-social behavior by their peers at a greater frequency than fifth grade female students. It should be noted that this is conceptually different from a finding that third grade students are victimized less than fifth grade students. The fourth hypothesis, that girls report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than boys, was not supported. However, when students were asked about same-gender peers being victims of relational aggression, it was found that fifth grade boys reported other boys in their class to be victims of relational aggression at a greater frequency than did fifth grade girls when describing other girls in their class.

Interpretation of Findings

The fact that a significant difference was found between third and fifth grade students in the identification of relational aggression is not surprising, as it is similar to the finding by Naylor and colleagues (2006) that older children were more likely than younger children to discuss the concept of social exclusion. However, in the study conducted by Naylor and colleagues (2006), children ages 13 and 14 were more likely to discuss social exclusion than children who were ages 11 and 12. In the current study, children in the fifth grade, who had ages

ranging 10 through 12, were better able to identify relational aggression, defined by social exclusion, than children in the third grade, who had ages ranging 8 through 10. Also, the present study confirmed the findings that children between the ages of 9 through 15 can identify instances of physical and relational aggression (Varjas et al., 2008). However, the present study was more specific than Varjas and colleagues (2008), as it demonstrated that students in both grades three and five were able to identify overt aggression, but students in fifth grade were better able to identify relational aggression and pro-social behavior.

Though previous research has indicated that girls and boys differ in terms of the type of aggressive behavior that they are likely to display, (Closson, 2009; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Hilarski et al., 2004; Underwood, 2003) the present work did not find gender differences in the ability to correctly identify different forms of aggressive behavior as well as pro-social behavior. Therefore, though girls and boys engage in different aggressive behaviors, there does not appear to be a gender difference in the ability to identify different types of aggressive behaviors.

When students were asked to self-report the frequency with which they are victimized by peers or the recipient of pro-social peer behavior, only three of the eighteen between-group comparisons were found to be significant, though the expected number of significant tests by chance would be $.05 \times 18 = 0.9$. The findings that were significant supported the hypothesis that fifth grade students report victimization by peers at a greater frequency than third grade students. Also, fifth grade students reported being the victim of overt aggression at a higher

frequency than third grade students, while fifth grade boys reported being the victim of relational aggression more frequently than third grade boys. Finally, third grade girls reported experiencing pro-social peer behavior at a higher frequency than fifth grade girls, indicating that fifth grade girls receive less pro-social attention than third grade girls. The fact that fifth grade students in these three situations reported higher rates of victimization (or lower rates of pro-social attention) than third grade students may in turn be due to the fact that fifth grade students were better able to identify relational aggression and pro-social behavior than third grade students. However, the overall result that fifth grade students experience overt aggression more than third grade students is likely not a result of awareness, as there was not a significant difference between the third and fifth grade students in identifying overt aggression. Therefore, this result should be considered as actually capturing the fact that fifth grade students are in fact experiencing overt aggression at a greater frequency than third grade students. Interestingly, though three comparisons of students in the third grade with students in the fifth grade were significant when students were asked to self-report the frequency of pro-social behavior or victimization, no significant differences were found between third and fifth grade students when students were asked to report on the frequency with which a same-gender peer was victimized or the recipient of pro-social behavior.

When between-group comparisons were made between male and female students, no significant differences were found for self-reports of victimization or experiences of pro-social behavior. This result is surprising, as several studies

have indicated that girls engage in relational aggression more frequently than boys (Closso, 2009; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Hilarski et al., 2004), with most bullying and victimization occurring with same-sex peers (Seals & Young, 2003). Further, when students were asked to report on the victimization and pro-social behavior of a same-gender peer, fifth grade boys reported that same-gender peers were victims of relational aggression at a higher frequency than did fifth grade girls. This finding was surprising as it was actually an opposite effect to that which had been hypothesized. In terms of overt aggression, the fact that students did not appear to differ in this form of aggression was not as surprising, as multiple studies have previously shown that boys and girls display similar rates of overt aggression (Closso, 2009; Hilarski et al., 2004).

Implications of the Results

The results of this study have several implications for bullying prevention and intervention programs. As students in the third grade were less able to correctly identify relational aggression and pro-social behavior (as compared to aggressive behavior) than fifth grade students, bullying programs within the third grade should begin by helping student learn to identify and discriminate aggressive behavior as compared with non-aggressive behavior, and identifying forms of covert aggression. In contrast, fifth grade students, who already have knowledge of aggressive versus pro-social behavior and are better able to correctly identify relational and overt aggression, should be receiving more specialized bullying and violence prevention programs which do not necessarily teach students about aggression and bullying, but rather focus on ways to prevent

the problem of bullying or provide students with the skills necessary to face an aggressive peer. This may be especially important for fifth graders as overall fifth grade students reported experiencing overt aggression at a greater frequency than third grade students, and fifth grade boys reported experiencing relational aggression at a higher frequency than third grade boys.

Due to the fact that there were not significant gender differences in the identification of aggressive behaviors or pro-social behavior, bullying prevention and intervention efforts may not need to be differentiated based on gender, but only should be based on the age of students. However, it should be kept in mind that fifth grade boys reported that their same-gender peers are victims of relational aggression at a higher frequency than fifth-grade girls, a finding that is different from previous research conducted in this field. Therefore teachers, social psychologists, and other school personnel should be aware of this fact and should be attentive to relational aggression that may be occurring among fifth grade boys.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study that should be addressed. First, though ten graduate students watched the vignettes and rated each as either involving pro-social behavior, relational aggression or overt aggression, there is the possibility that if another group of adults had been asked to watch the vignettes, there may have been disagreement among the vignettes which could have potentially resulted in more vignettes being eliminated. Also, regarding the vignettes themselves, only five of the twenty-four vignettes contained overt

aggression (while 11 vignettes contained relational aggression and 8 vignettes contained pro-social behavior). Though this small sample of vignette type may not have had serious implications for the results, it would have been ideal to have included the same number of vignettes depicting each type of scenario.

Another limitation of this study is the fact that the external validity may be limited due to the fact that data was collected from only one school district in Rhode Island. Though the sample was designed to include a representative sample of children with ethnic backgrounds similar to that of the state of Rhode Island, the fact that numerous children selected “unsure” as their choice for ethnicity made it difficult to determine the actual ethnic characteristics of the participants in this study.

As only four of a total thirty-six rank sums tests were found to be significant, there is the likelihood that one or more of these significant results were due to chance, as when using an alpha level of .05, it is likely that 5% of the results will be due to chance alone. Therefore, it is difficult to determine if the self-reports of victimization which produced a significant result, as well as the one significant rank sums test regarding perceived victimization of a same-gender peer, were truly indicative of the current differences in victimization of students, or were simply an artifact of chance. Also, students were asked to report how often situations occur to them, or to same-gender peers, that are the same as the characters in the vignettes. By asking students to report on such specific types of situations, it is likely that students who are being victimized, but in situations different than those depicted in the vignettes, did not report their victimization.

Future Directions for Research

The current study examined the ability of children at different ages and genders to identify aggression and pro-social behavior and to report on victimization and rates of experiencing pro-social behavior. Future research could expand upon this project in several ways. To begin, in determining the ability of children to correctly identify different forms of aggression, this study focused on correct responses by the participants. In the future, it would be interesting to examine the incorrect responses made by students to see if patterns emerged about the types of incorrect responses that were commonly made. Further, as students were asked to report on personal experiences of victimization and pro-social experience in a narrow context (responding to the actions depicted in the vignettes), it would be useful in the future to administer to students a more comprehensive measure of experiences of peer victimization.

Future research could also re-examine the questions posed in this study, but using ethnicity as the independent variable. This is suggested because it is possible that differences would emerge in the identification of aggression and pro-social behavior, as well as in reports of victimization among different ethnic groups.

Also, as differences were found between students in grade three and grade five, it could be useful to replicate this study but to also incorporate students in grade four, to determine specifically at what point students are able to correctly identify relational aggression and pro-social behavior, and to also examine differences in victimization between students in grade three and grade four, and

grade four and grade five. Finally, the finding that fifth grade boys perceive same-gender peers to be victims of relational aggression at a higher frequency than fifth grade girls is quite different from what previous research has indicated, and therefore may be a potential area for further investigation.

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, this research indicated that children in the fifth grade are better able to correctly identify relational aggression, and pro-social behavior than are children in the third grade. This study did not, however, provide evidence for gender differences in the identification of overt aggression, relational aggression, and pro-social behavior. This study also indicated that fifth grade students report being the victim of overt aggression at a higher frequency than third grade students, that fifth grade boys report being the victim of overt aggression at a higher frequency than third grade boys, and third grade girls report being the recipient of pro-social behavior than fifth grade girls. Also, fifth grade boys reported that same-gender peers are the victims of relational aggression at a higher frequency than fifth grade girls. Based on the results of this study, bullying prevention and intervention programs in school should be differentiated for students based on age, but not necessarily based on gender.

Appendix A:

Informational Consent Form Given to Principals

The University of Rhode Island
Department of Psychology
10 Chafee Road
Gender and Developmental Differences in the Identification of Aggression

You have been asked to include your school in the research project described below. The researcher will explain the project to you in detail. You should feel free to ask questions. If you have more questions later, Robyn Bratica, the person mainly responsible for this study, will discuss them with you, and may be reached at 774-573-9216.

Description of the project:

This study will examine the ability of third and fifth grade students to correctly differentiate between relational aggression, overt aggression, and pro-social behavior. This study will also examine with the frequency of peer victimization among third and fifth grade students.

What will be done:

This study will include approximately 120 boys and girls from elementary schools in Rhode Island. Students who participate will watch a series of cartoon videos, and students will be asked to respond to written questions related to these videos. These questions will ask students to describe the behaviors of the characters in the videos, and will also ask students to identify the frequency with which they are placed in similar situations as the characters in the videos. The time required of students to complete this session should be no more than 30-45 minutes.

Risks or discomfort:

As this study will take place during school hours it is expected that students will miss a small amount of class instruction while participating in this study. Students are not expected to experience significant discomfort as a result of participating in this study. Students may feel slightly uncomfortable answering some of the questions related to their own experiences of peer victimization, but children do not have to answer any questions that they do not wish to answer.

Benefits of this study:

Although there will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this study, the researcher may learn more about the ability of children to differentiate between different forms of aggression and between aggression and pro-social behavior. Furthermore, the researcher may learn more about the frequency at which students report experiences of peer victimization.

Confidentiality:

All information will be held as confidential as is legally possible. Only the researcher will see the questionnaires. No names will be on any of the questionnaires. Instead, names will be replaced with identifying numbers. Each child will be informed that his or her answers will be kept confidential. However, if it is revealed to me that a participant in the study is doing something that is potentially dangerous to himself/herself or to someone else, I am required by law to investigate this and possibly report it. This will be made clear to any child who participates in this study. The chances of this occurring are small, however, it is important that you be informed of the limits of confidentiality before you make your decision about involvement with this study.

Decision to quit at any time:

Individual students do not have to participate in this study, and if they do decide to take part in this study, they may quit at any time.

Rights and Complaints:

If you are not satisfied with the way this study is performed, you may discuss your complaints with Robyn Bratica. In addition, you may contact the office of the Vice President for Research, 70 Lower College Road, Suite 2, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island, telephone: (401) 874-4328.

You have read the Consent Form. Your questions have been answered. Your signature on this form means that you understand the information and you agree to participate in this study.

Signature of School Principal

Signature of Researcher

Typed/printed Name

Typed/printed name

Date

Date

Appendix B:

Informational Form Given to Parents of Students

The University of Rhode Island
Department of Psychology
10 Chafee Road

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I would like to ask your permission for your child to participate in a study of the ability of children to correctly identify different forms of aggression as well as positive social behavior. The project is titled, "Gender and Developmental Differences in the Identification of Aggression," and is a thesis project being conducted as part of the requirements for obtaining a Master of Arts degree. Specifically, I will be examining the ability of third and fifth grade students to correctly differentiate between relational aggression, overt aggression, and pro-social behavior. This study will also examine with the frequency of peer victimization among third and fifth grade students.

What will be done:

This study will include approximately 120 boys and girls from elementary schools in Rhode Island. Students who participate will watch a series of cartoon videos, and students will be asked to respond to written questions related to these videos. These questions will ask students to describe the behaviors of the characters in the videos, and will also ask students to identify the frequency with which they are placed in similar situations as the characters in the videos. The time required of students to complete this session should be no more than 30-45 minutes.

Risks or discomfort:

I will do my best to accommodate your child's schedule to prevent them from missing important school lessons, but I do anticipate that children will miss a small amount of class instruction to participate in this study. Your son or daughter is not expected to experience significant discomfort as a result of participating in this study. Your child may feel slightly uncomfortable answering some of the questions related to their own experiences of peer victimization, but he or she does not have to answer any questions that they do not wish to answer.

Benefits of this study:

Although there will be no direct benefit to your child for taking part in this study, the researcher may learn more about the ability of children to differentiate between different forms of aggression and between aggression and pro-social behavior. Furthermore, the researcher may learn more about the frequency at which students report experiences of peer victimization.

Confidentiality:

All information will be held as confidential as is legally possible. Only the researcher will see the questionnaires. No names will be on any of the questionnaires. Instead, names will be replaced with identifying numbers. Each child will be informed that his or her answers will be kept confidential. However, if it is revealed to me that a participant in the study is doing something that is potentially dangerous to himself/herself or to someone else, I am required by law to investigate this and possibly report it. This will be made clear to any child who participates in this study. The chances of this occurring are small, however, it is important that you be informed of the limits of confidentiality before you make your decision about involvement with this study.

Decision to quit at any time:

Your son or daughter does not have to participate in this study, and if they do decide to take part in this study, they may quit at any time.

Rights and Complaints:

If you have any questions or complaints about this study feel free to contact me, Robyn Bratica, at 774-573-9216. In addition, you may contact the office of the University of Rhode Island Vice President for Research, 70 Lower College Road, Suite 2, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island, telephone: (401) 874-4328.

At this time, if you do NOT want your child to participate in this study, please sign and have your child return this form to school at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sincerely,

Robyn Bratica
Doctoral Student in School Psychology
University of Rhode Island

I do NOT wish for my child to participate in the study.

Signature of Parent

Typed/printed Name

Date

Appendix C:
Demographic Questionnaire

What is your age? _____

When is your birthday? _____

What grade are you in? _____

Are you a boy or a girl? _____

Please circle one:

I am: White/Caucasian African-American Asian

Hispanic/Latino Native American Unsure

Other

Appendix D:

Study Survey/Questionnaire

(Note: This example is specific to participating boys; female students received the same survey/questionnaire, with “girls” substituted for “boys” as necessary)

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

¹ All images from the website Stop Bullying Now! (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)
<http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids/webisodes/default.aspx>

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat you how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat you how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat you how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat you how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met Lasa and Raven, how often do other kids treat you how Lasa and Raven were treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met Lasa and Raven, how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Lasa and Raven were treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat you how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat you how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat you how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Josh was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat you how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met Milton, how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Milton was treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how Milton was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met Mrs. F,
how often do other kids treat you how Mrs. F was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met Mrs. F,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Mrs. F was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat you how Josh was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met Josh,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Josh was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met Melanie,
how often do other kids treat you how Melanie was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met Melanie,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Melanie was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

**In this cartoon you met Milton,
how often do other kids treat you how Milton was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

**In this cartoon you met Milton,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Milton was treated?**

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat you how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met K.B.,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how K.B. was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends

In this cartoon you met Melanie,
how often do other kids treat you how Melanie was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

In this cartoon you met Melanie,
how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Melanie was treated?

- 1) Everyday
- 2) More than once a week
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Less than once a week
- 5) Never

“What did you see in this cartoon?” (Please circle your answer)

- 1) I saw children being nice to each other**
- 2) I saw a child starting a fight, pushing or hitting other children, or threatening to hurt other children**
- 3) I saw a child try to keep another child out of his or her group of friends**

In this cartoon you met Lasa and Raven, how often do other kids treat you how Lasa and Raven were treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

In this cartoon you met Lasa and Raven, how often do other kids treat boys in your class how Lasa and Raven were treated?

- 1) Everyday**
- 2) More than once a week**
- 3) Once a week**
- 4) Less than once a week**
- 5) Never**

Bibliography

- Bacchini, D., Esposito, G., & Affuso, G. (2009). Social experience and school bullying. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 19*, 17-32.
- Barter C., & Renold, E. (2000). 'I wanna tell you a story': exploring the application of vignettes in qualitative research with children and young people. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 3*(4), 307-323
- Boivin, M., Vitaro, F., & Poulin, F. (2005). Peer relationships and the development of aggressive behavior in early childhood. In R. E. Tremblay, W. W. Hartup & J. Archer (Eds.), *Developmental Origins of Aggression* (pp. 376-397). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Closson, L. M. (2009). Aggressive and prosocial behaviors within early adolescent friendship cliques. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 55*(4), 406-435.
- Cohn, A., & Canter, A. (2003). *Bullying: Facts for schools and parents*. National Association of School Psychologists.
- Crick, N. R., Casas, J. F., & Mosher, M. (1997). Relational and overt aggression in preschool. *Developmental Psychology, 33*(4), 579-588.
- Crick, N. R., & Grotpeter, J. K. (1995). Relational aggression, gender, and social-psychological adjustment. *Child Development, 66*(3), 710-722.
- Dake, J. A., Price, J. H., & Telljohann, S. K. (2003). The nature and extent of bullying at school. *Journal of School Health, 73*(5), 173-180.
- Embry, S. L., & Luzzo, D. A. (1996). The relationship between name-calling and

- peer beliefs among elementary school children. *Elementary School Guidance & Counseling*, 31(2), 122-131.
- Eslea, M., & Rees, J. (2001). At what age are children most likely to be bullied at school? *Aggressive Behavior*, 27, 419-429.
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A.-G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, 39, 175-191.
- Gifford-Smith, M. E., & Brownell, C. A. (2003). Childhood peer relationships: Social acceptance, friendships, and peer networks. *Journal of School Psychology*, 41, 235-284.
- Grotpeter, J. K., & Crick, N. R. (1996). Relational aggression, overt aggression, and friendship. *Child Development*, 67, 2328-2338.
- Guerin, S., & Hennessy E. (2002). *Aggression and Bullying*. Malden, MA: BPS Blackwell.
- Harlow, L. L. (2005). *The Essence of Multivariate Thinking*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Hilarski, C., Dulmus, C. N., Theriot, M. T., & Sowers, K. M. (2004). Bully-victimization related to gender and grade level: Implications for prevention efforts. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work: Advances in Practice, Programming, Research, and Policy*, 1(2-3), 5-24.
- Hoover, J. H., Oliver, R., & Hazler, R. J. (1992). Bullying: Perceptions of adolescent victims in the Midwestern USA. *School Psychology International*, 13(5), 5-16.
- Kupersmidt, J. B., Buchele, K. S., Voegler, M. E., & Sedikides, C. (1996). Social

- self-discrepancy: A theory relating peer relations problems and school maladjustment. In J. Juvonen & Wentzel, K. R. (Eds.), *Social Motivation: Understanding Children's School Adjustment* (pp.66-97). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kwon, K., & Lease, M. (2007). Clique membership and social adjustment in children's same-gender cliques: The contribution of the type of clique to children's self-reported adjustment. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 53(2), 216-242.
- Lounsbury, J. W., Gibson, L. W., & Saudargas, R. A. (2006). Scale development. In F. T. L. Leong & J. T. Austin (Eds.), *The Psychology Research Handbook* (pp. 125-146). London: Sage Publications.
- Melzer-Lange, M. D., Cohen, R. W., Grossberg, P. M., Matthews, C. K. B., Heuermann, W., Kocs, K. J., Hale, L. J., & Gilmore, C. (2005). Bullying prevention: Wisconsin takes a stand. *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, 104(1), 57-61.
- Monks, C. P., & Smith, P. K. (2006). Definitions of bullying: Age differences in understanding of the term, and the role of experience. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 24, 801-821.
- Mullen, B., Brown, R., & Smith, C. (1992). Ingroup bias as a function of salience, relevance, and status: An integration. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 22, 103-122.
- Naylor, P., Cowie, H., Cossin, F., de Bettencourt, R., & Lemme, F. (2006).

Teachers' and pupils' definitions of bullying. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, 553-576.

- O'Brennan, L. M., Bradshaw, C. P., & Sawyer, A. L. (2009). Examining developmental differences in the social-emotional problems among frequent bullies, victims, and bully/victims. *Psychology in the Schools*, 46(2), 100-115.
- Orpinas, P., Horne, A. M., & Staniszewski, D. (2003). School bullying: Changing the problem by changing the school. *School Psychology Review*, 32(3), 431-444.
- Ostrov, J. M., Ries, E. E., Stauffacher, K., Godleski, S. A., & Mullins, A. D. (2008). Relational aggression, physical aggression, and deception during early childhood: A multimethod, multi-informant short-term longitudinal study. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 37(3), 664-675.
- Pellegrini, A. D., & Long, J. D. (2002). A longitudinal study of bullying, dominance, and victimization during the transition from primary school through secondary school. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 20, 259-280.
- Peterson, J. B., & Flanders, J. L. (2005). Play and regulation of aggression. In R. E. Tremblay, W. W. Hartup & J. Archer (Eds.), *Developmental Origins of Aggression* (pp. 133-157). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Pope, A. W. (2003). Developmental risk associated with mutual dislike in

- elementary school children. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 102, 89-110.
- Seals, D., & Young, J. (2003). Bullying and victimization: Prevalence and relationship to gender, grade level, ethnicity, self-esteem, and depression. *Adolescence*, 38(152), 735-747.
- Smith, J. D., Schneider, B. H., Smith, P. K., & Ananiadou, K. (2004). The effectiveness of whole-school antibullying programs: A synthesis of evaluation research. *School Psychology Review*, 33(4), 547-560.
- Tremblay, R. E., Nagin, D. S., Seguin, J. R., Zoccolillo, M., Zelazo, P.D., Boivin, M., Perusse, D., & Japel C. (2004). Physical aggression during early childhood: Trajectories and predictors. *Pediatrics*, 114(1), e43-e50.
- Underwood, M. K. (2003). *Social aggression among girls*. New York: Guilford Press.
- United States Department of Health and Human Servicesa. Stop Bullying Now! [Motion picture]. United States: United States Department of Health and Human Services.
- United States Department of Health and Human Servicesb. *Who created this site*. Retrieved September 20, 2008, from <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp?area=meetpanel>
- U.S. Census Bureau (2008). State & county quickfacts: Rhode Island. Retrieved March 30, 2009, from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/44000.html>.
- Varjas, K., Meyers, J., Bellmoff, L., Lopp, E., Birckbichler, L., & Marshall, M.

(2008). Missing voices: Fourth through eighth grade urban students' perceptions of bullying. *Journal of School Violence*, 7(4), 97-114.

Wood, J. J., Cowan, P. A., & Baker, B. L. (2002). Behavior problems and peer rejection in preschool boys and girls. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 163(1), 72-89.