Peer Victimization in Middle Childhood: Characteristics, Causes, and Consequences of School Bullying

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Abstract

This paper focuses on a particular type of peer victimization commonly identified as school bullying. In the past, myths and inaccurate assumptions coupled with the lack of empirical data on the long term effects and stability of peer victimization have presented serious obstacles toward a greater understanding of bullying. Recent research, however, suggests that the number of students affected is much higher than previously believed, the range of behaviours involved more severe, and the consequences long-lasting; in many cases, the maladjustment for both victims and bullies can extend well into adulthood. Clearly, peer victimization is a complex and multi-dimensional aspect of school life that needs to be understood in greater depth and taken much more seriously because of the associated consequences. This paper will provide an overview of four central aspects of bullying, namely, the myths, characteristics, causes, and consequences.

Introduction

While it is true that most young school age children at one time or another engage in such inappropriate conduct as aggressive behaviour, the frequency and intensity of these tendencies are usually within the expected range of behaviour for this age group (see Vitaro, Tremblay, Kerr, Pagani & Bukowski, 1997). Furthermore, as children develop into adolescents, these anti-social acts occur at a decreasing rate, thus necessitating little intervention. However, a significant number of children, for a variety of reasons, do not acquire the self-regulation necessary to engage in socially acceptable behaviour, and hence, may continue to exhibit anti-social and aggressive behaviour towards their peers, particularly in a school setting. In fact, the middle childhood period (6 to 12 years of age), which spans for most of the elementary school years, is of
great importance in that it is during these early social exchanges that patterns of non-normative aggression and victimization becomes quite apparent, and difficult to ignore.

Victimization, the net effect of aggressive behaviour, has recently come under closer scrutiny. The results appear to indicate that victimization shares a number of similar characteristics with aggression (see Egan & Perry, 1998; Hodges, Malone, & Perry, 1997; Schwartz, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1997). In fact, non-normative peer-aggression and victimization behaviour have come to be regarded with a great deal of concern because they appear to have similar developmental trajectory and stability (see Connell & Farrington, 1996; Farrington, 1993; Loeber & Hay, 1997).

Recent research has made it abundantly clear that with an early onset, both aggression and victimization tend to be stable and quite likely result in an increase in anti-social behaviours leading to maladjustment (see Egan & Perry, 1998; Hodges, et al., 1997; Schwartz, et al., 1997). A particular type of peer-aggression commonly identified as bullying involves both aggression and victimization. In fact, seldom have these two behaviours been intertwined in a more complex fashion than in bullying behaviours. Bullying can be defined as the abuse of physical and psychological power for the purpose of intentionally and repeatedly creating a negative atmosphere of severe anxiety, intimidation and chronic fear in victims (Marini, 1996, 1997). Bullying is a particular type of childhood peer-aggression which can have immediate as well as long-term social and educational consequences (Olweus, 1993a; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Education is a fragile process, easily disrupted by fear, anxiety, and other by-products of poor conflict resolution. Learning is enhanced by a positive atmosphere, one which is free of the anxiety associated with experiencing or witnessing anti-social behaviours. Schools where students resolve these inevitable conflicts through non-physical means are more likely to become safe and inviting (Ainsworth, 1995; Purkey & Novak, 1996). In contrast, schools where bullying occurs frequently can become uninviting for a significant number of students.

Attitude towards bullying is slowly changing from indifference to appreciation of the depth of the problem and its impact on students. In the past, the general assumption has been that the number of children affected by bullying was relatively small and the consequences short-lived. Hence, the effects of bullying were thought to be minimal and temporary. Incidences were usually played down and thought of as occasional occurrences of minor consequence. This assumption was further underscored by the existence of numerous myths and mis-perceptions typically represented in the prevailing attitude that bullying was a "childhood rite of passage." Given this attitude, the usual reaction was to endure it, on the part of a student, and ignore it, on the part of an adult (Rigby, 1996; Rigby & Slee, 1991; Ziegler & Rosenstein-
Manner, 1991). Although these myths and attitudes are slowly changing, they are by no means disappearing, despite the research which has indicated their negative effects. Such attitudinal difficulties and myths associated with bullying present obstacles to gaining a greater understanding of its nature and extent.

Recent findings make it abundantly clear that bullying is a serious social and educational problem (see Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996; Perry, Perry, & Kennedy, 1992; Smith & Sharp, 1994). In fact, we believe that bullying is one of the most underrated social problems of childhood (Marini, 1998). The increased concern comes from studies which suggest that the number of students involved is alarmingly high. Depending on the type of instrument used to assess the behaviour, the students thought to be involved, either as bullies or victims, are reported to be as high as 40% (see Austin & Joseph, 1996; Smith & Sharp, 1994). However, most studies report that those who are regularly victimized range from 10% to 20% (Pepler & Craig, 1994; 1995). For example, from our own research (Marini, Spear, & Chambers, 1997; Marini & Spear, 1996; Spear, 1995), we have found that about 12% of the participants reported being bullied on a regular basis. Although conceptual and methodological variations have produced a wide range of results, the emerging pattern of data appears to suggest that about 20% of the student population is involved in bullying as victims, bullies, or both.

In addition to the higher than expected number of students involved, research has also suggested that the range of anti-social behaviours is broader than previously recognized and can be severe, covert, and difficult to identify. For instance, although the typical one-to-one physical bullying is still a cause for concern, increasingly there are different types of bullying taking place, such as verbal and emotional bullying, which can be much more difficult to detect (Crick, 1995).

Research on the consequences of bullying has highlighted the impact of this type of aggression. For example, Olweus' extensive work (1993a, 1993b, 1994a, 1994b) has made it quite clear that the consequences are long-lasting. In many cases the maladjustment can extend past the school years and well into adulthood, for both bullies and victims (see Olweus, 1993a; Pepler & Craig, 1995; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

The purpose of this paper then is to highlight some important issues about peer victimization by providing an overview of four critical aspects of bullying, including some of the myths, defining characteristics, causes, and consequences.

**Myths and Other Commonly Held Views about Bullying**

Myths constitute an important aspect of bullying (see Rigby, 1996; Rigby &
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Slee, 1991). Left unexamined, they have a way of perpetuating themselves. More importantly, however, it can be argued that, to the extent that they are still held, these myths may influence how bullying is perceived and managed (see Rigby, 1996; Rigby & Slee, 1991). Rigby (1996) outlined some of the most commonly held myths and mis-perceptions related to bullying. For instance, according to one view, myths asserting that bullying does not exist, or, if it does exist, it is of little consequence are the most persistent and are still held by many people (see Rigby, 1996). Examples of this type of myth may be given voice in views such as; “There is little or no bullying in our school”; “Bullying does very little harm”; or “Words do not hurt.”

Other types of myths relate to the fact that bullies do not mean anything by their behaviour and that the victims somehow bring the aggression upon themselves. Examples of this type of myth may be given voice in views such as; “Bullies are just fooling around”; “Boys will be boys”; “Children just like to talk”; or “Victims are sometimes so annoying and crybabies, it’s no wonder they get picked on.”

Finally, there are myths indicating a sense of acceptance and resignation that everyone has to go through some form of bullying in their lives. Examples of this type of myth can be found in views such as; “Everyone gets beaten up once in a while.” In addition, there appears to be also a resignation to the existence of aggression as part of human nature, and that bullying is part of growing up, a “Childhood rite of passage.” Rigby’s work (1996) with Australian students reflects the notion that myths and distorted views are widespread and without boundaries. Given the influence of attitudes over actions, the power of these myths cannot, and should not, be underestimated. One of the first steps in combating myths is to examine the current research related to bullying, including its characteristics, causes, and consequences.

**Characteristics of Bullying, Bullies, and Victims**

**Characteristics of Bullying**

There are a number of characteristics that distinguish bullying from other forms of aggression often used to settle general school conflicts. For example, most school conflicts involve students of equal power, both in physical strength and number. In addition, disputes are usually about specific items or issues. Conflicts of this type are common and rather frequent in schools, and by and large, do not have long duration. In contrast, bullying tends to involve the use of aggression in a more systematic fashion. While at times it may be difficult to differentiate the two types of conflicts, there are at least three defining characteristics of bullying behaviour which are worth emphasizing, namely,
(a) the power differential, (b) the repeated pattern of aggression, and (c) the creation of intimidation and fear in the victims.

**Power differential between the bully and victim.** The issue of power is quite central to the definition of bullying (Olweus, 1993a; Pepler, 1996; Pepler & Craig, 1995; Smith & Sharp, 1994). The source of power can take many forms, including greater physical strength, superiority of numbers, the use of a weapon, and in cases of psychological bullying, knowledge of the victim's vulnerabilities. A psychological tender spot such as physical appearance, perceived intellectual differences, and other potential weaknesses can be a potent weapon in the hands of a bully and a very tempting target to exploit. It is for this reason that psychological bullying, in the form of relational aggression, can be so devastating, just as devastating as physical aggression (see Crick, 1995). Whether it is physical or psychological, a major characteristic of bullying is the existence of a power differential between the bully and victim (Olweus, 1993a; 1994a).

**Repeated over time.** Acts of bullying are seldom isolated events, but rather tend to form a pattern of aggression. Hence, victims may get picked on at a particular time of day such as recess, on their way to the lockers, or in a washroom. In many cases, the same students are victimized by multiple bullies. Because it sets up expectations and anticipation of future attacks, bullying induces a sense of powerlessness which can result in severe damage to the victims' sense of self (see Olweus, 1993a; 1994a).

**Creates anxiety, intimidation, and fear.** In cases where greater physical or psychological power is repeatedly abused, the experience of bullying can create a heightened sense of fear, anxiety, and intimidation in the victims. The greater power and control, which the bullies have over their victims, can result in feelings of powerlessness.

Since bullying tends to be chronic in nature, the most worrisome aspect of the relationship between bullies and victims is that left untreated, bullying will not sort itself out naturally or spontaneously, as most people seem to assume. Rather, it demands appropriate forms of intervention which must address the imbalance of power (see Marini, Cooper, Ostaniewicz, & Feldman, 1999).

**Types of Bullying**

While there are a number of general characteristics associated with bullying, there are also specific types of the behaviour which must be examined. This section will focus on two general conceptual continua along which four different types of bullying can be identified. One of the dimensions can be labelled as the *overt to covert* continuum and is related to the directness of the
attacks. Overt bullying is usually characterized by open and direct attacks on the victims, while covert bullying involves indirect and secretive forms of attack (Smith & Sharp, 1994; Rigby, 1996).

The second continuum can be labelled *types of aggression*, and varies along the dimensions of physical and psychological forms of aggression. These two continua may be conceptualized as orthogonal to each other, intersecting in such a way as to identify four distinct types of bullying, namely, overt-physical, overt-psychological, covert-physical, and covert-psychological. The conceptualization of bullying in such a manner permits the designing of a framework which offers greater clarity in differentiating the various types, provides a behaviourally based means to describe them, and facilitates the design of interventions which can be more precise and specific to particular types of bullying (Marini, Spear, Bombay, & Kartasinski, 1999).

**Overt-physical bullying.** Overt-physical bullying is the most familiar type of bullying known to most people. The predominant behaviour involved is in the form of physical aggression where bullies use direct and open attacks on the victim with an intent to produce harm. For example, the victim may be physically assaulted by being pushed, punched or kicked. He or she may also have their hair pulled, be spat upon, and have their property taken. In some cases, weapons are used in the assault.

**Overt-psychological bullying.** Overt-psychological bullying is also quite common, however, there seems to be very little, if any, physical contact between the bully and the victim. In this type of bullying, the aggression tends to be more verbal, social and emotional in nature. For example, a student may be put down, teased, or insulted. The victim may also be ridiculed, taunted, or threatened. In general, this type of overt bullying is characterized by visible abuse, which may take many forms, and the aggression tends to be direct and openly displayed. In some cases, there is no verbal exchange, intimidation is carried out by the use of menacing glances, or by displaying particular hand signs. On the surface these behaviours may appear harmless, but to the victim is a reminder of the threatening presence of the bully.

Overt bullying, whether physical or psychological, represents a set of aggressive behaviours often used in carrying out bullying attacks. In terms of identification, the development of an effective detection system can go a long way in determining their occurrence and facilitate their reporting.

**Covert-physical bullying.** On the other end of the overt-covert spectrum, another form of attack can be found in a type of bullying that is predominantly covert in nature. In general, covert bullying involves more secretive and indirect forms of aggression. These attacks can, again, be both physical and psychological.
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Covert-physical bullying best describes what goes on in a bullying situation involving a group of students. In cases where the structure of the group is fluid and unorganized, a dominant bully may dare a passive bully to carry out acts of physical aggression such as picking a fight with a targeted victim. In the ensuing attack the original instigator does not participate, making identification of all of those involved very difficult. In addition to using a dare as a method, an active bully may also directly order a more passive bully to carry out certain attacks.

In its more organized forms, this type of covert-physical bullying describes quite accurately what goes on in gang situations where members are required to carry out certain attacks in order to be initiated into a gang. Once part of the gang, passive bullies, who usually occupy the lower part of the hierarchy, may be coerced into carry out attacks to prove their worth or loyalty to the gang. In many cases, it could be that they are required and, hence, directly ordered to bully someone as part of their role as "lieutenants." In this type of bullying, the main culprit is the instigator of the attack, but not the actual participant. This, of course, has a great deal of implication regarding schools attempting to find out what is really going on. Given the code of secrecy which some of the more passive members of the gangs subscribe to in order to remain in the group, it makes the job of school personnel very difficult.

Covert-psychological bullying. Covert-psychological bullying may involve the most secretive forms of aggression. For example, a bully may embark on a deliberate campaign of attacking the victim's reputation by systematically spreading rumours and attributing their origins to unidentifiable sources. In addition, the bully may send unsigned notes and letters containing disturbing messages. He or she may also make obscene phone calls and post signs with special meaning to the victim. At a social level, this covert aggression can involve an orchestrated campaign to systematically and intentionally separate the victim from the peer group. This type of ostracism can result in exclusion and social isolation (Olweus, 1994b). This social isolation is a very powerful force and, in some cases, may lead victims to remain in bullying situations even though they are treated very badly (Pepler & Craig, 1995).

In terms of detection, overt bullying is easier to identify, than the covert aggression, which can be insidious and difficult to detect and deal with. Similarly, in terms of effects, psychological bullying does just as much damage; in fact, it may do more damage. For it may be quite easy to see the effects of a punch thrown at someone's nose than a venomous word. Perhaps, the old adage "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me" may not apply to acts of bullying.

A controversial aspect of bullying is related to the increased
likelihood of its occurrence in an atmosphere where competition is tolerated, encouraged, and even highly valued. In such situations, bullying tends to be condoned and even socially acceptable. For example, sports events where aggression can bring many rewards are quite vulnerable to the development of possible bullying situations. However, sporting events are not the only activity vulnerable to bullying. Other highly competitive situations such as academic endeavour which by intent and very nature become exclusionary can make others feel inferior and cause distress. It can be argued that, while most people may not consider it bullying, exclusion of students from certain activities in the name of competition appears to provide the context for bullying to take place. In many cases, the pursuit of winning can come at the expense of others and provide the "justification" for exclusionary practices and even maltreatment.

Characteristics of Participants

This section will focus on some of the characteristics of the two main participants in bullying, namely, the bully and the victim. In general, students who are typically labeled as bullies tend to display signs of under-control, as observed by their aggressive behaviour. Children who are typically labeled as victims, display signs usually associated with over-control, as seen by their anxious and withdrawn mannerism (Barkley, 1997). However, it is worth emphasizing that both participants present a very complex set of characteristics which resist simple description. In fact, it is becoming increasingly clear that both bullies and victims are much more heterogeneous than originally thought (Olweus, 1993a; Smith & Sharp, 1994).

Some of the characteristics of bullies appear to be mirror images of those of the victimizers. Hence, if the bully embodies the "powerful" persona, then the victim tends to embody the "powerless" other. For example, many victims tend to be physically weaker than other students in their age group; whereas bullies tend to be physically stronger (Olweus, 1993a). Similarly, some victims tend to be not well liked, are usually isolated from their peer group, and feel lonely; whereas the bully tends to have more "hangers-on", particularly in the early years, and does not claim to feel lonely. Lastly, the victims typically are anxious and insecure, and are unable to assert their point of view; hence, they become subservient; the bully is, on the other hand, able to behave with apparent confidence and dominate the victim and situation (Boulton & Underwood, 1992; Hoover & Hazler, 1991; Olweus, 1993a).

Characteristics of Bullies

What is striking about bullies is that, as a group, they tend to be students who do not like to play by "the rules" or respect the norms of their community, be it their school or neighbourhood (Marini & Auld-Cameron, 1991; Olweus,
This inability or unwillingness to adhere to rules leads bullies to exhibit a range of anti-social behaviours, from mild to severe. Hence, for example, bullies are likely to show an unwillingness to accept other students' suggestions or ideas and do not tend to negotiate constructively during play. In addition, a typical bully lacks empathy and social skills, which are fundamental to the initiation and maintenance of functional social relationships (Marini, 1997).

There is considerable support for the notion that bullies may not be a homogeneous group, as previously thought. For instance, researchers have suggested a differentiation between the proactive and the reactive bully, or secure and anxious bully (Smith & Sharp, 1994). There are further suggestions indicating a division between those who are predominantly bullies and those who are both bullies and victims (Olweus, 1993a). The evolving differentiation may provide a better understanding of bullying and highlight the need to conceptualize the bullies not as a homogeneous group, but rather as a quite heterogeneous group.

### Characteristics of Victims

The characteristics of the victims seem to revolve around issues related to powerlessness, lack of physical and psychological strength, social isolation, loneliness, insecurity, low self-esteem, and submission. However, as was the case with bullies, victims also appear to be a heterogeneous group. For example, while most victims seem to share the same characteristics, according to Olweus (1994b), there are two types of victims; the submissive and the provocative. The submissive or passive victim tends to be insecure. These individuals tend to be unable to assert themselves and fall into a submissive reaction pattern which makes them an easy target. For instance, when bullied, these children typically react by withdrawing and crying which seems to aggravate their situation. For bullies, this type of reaction tends to provide high drama and great theatrical value. Unfortunately, in many cases, victims feel abandoned not just by their peers but also by their family members who insist that they either stand up for themselves or not be so sensitive.

The provocative or active victims, on the other hand, are likely to be anxious and have problems with their concentration. They tend to react in an aggressive manner and can be characterized as hyperactive. It has been suspected that their behaviour causes tension and irritates the students around them (see Barkley, 1998). These behaviours appear to encourage bullies to target these children and pick on them as their victims (Olweus, 1993a). For instance, it appears that some children who suffer from attention deficit disorders and therefore have a limited capability to inhibit their actions may inadvertently say or do things which may provide the bully with the
“justification” for their attacks. Since they tend not to take responsibility for their actions, bullies are quite likely to routinely capitalize on opportunities to pick on children who are in some ways different from the larger group.

**Causes of Bullying**

The causes of bullying are multiple, complex, and difficult to disentangle. It is quite likely that there are a number of interdependent factors which eventually lead to bullying; some are related to the environment or context while others are related to individual characteristics (Boulton & Smith, 1994). For instance, in some cases there are a number of contextual factors that can permeate across all the primary socializing agents such as the family, the school, and the community. Two of the more pervasive factors are the lack of respect for social rules and the opportunities for acts of bullying to take place. It could be, for example, that there is a general lack of respect in a child’s environment, beginning in the home and continuing at school, and ending in the larger community. This lack of respect may manifest itself in a number of ways, ranging from lack of consideration for individual boundaries to poor role models. There are other contributing factors, including a lack of supervision, an atmosphere of secrecy and, most importantly, lack of properly applied sanctions (Olweus, 1993a).

There are a number of factors related to family functioning which may lead to bullying, including, (a) lack of warmth, (b) little involvement on the part of parents in the lives of their children, (c) lack of limits on aggressive behaviour, and (d) poor role models for the management of conflicts. In addition, when handling the inevitable parent-child conflict, the family uses harsh and inconsistent punishment often delivered in a corporeal, aggressive, and hostile manner.

At the individual level, bullying is quite likely to be caused by cognitive and social factors such as a difficult temperament, poor attachment to the primary care giver, and difficulties with self-regulation (see van Ijzendoorn, 1997). Bullies may have deficits in a number of general domains (Pepler, 1996). For instance, deficits in the cognitive domain can lead bullies to exhibit varying degrees of cognitive distortion, the more apparent form of which is a readiness to blame others and an unwillingness to take responsibility for their actions. In fact, depending on the severity, cognitive distortion may lead bullies to exhibit a number of other deficits predominantly expressed in the social domain. This form of social myopia may manifest itself as (a) a disposition for hostile attribution bias, (b) an inability to perceive the impact of their own behaviour accurately, and (c) an inability to perceive accurately others' behaviour and feelings, including the distress caused by bullying (Schwartz, et al., 1997). Hence, it is common for bullies to mis-identify the
intention of other students and attribute to them negative motives which may be inaccurate. This hostile attribution is quite likely to be the impetus for physical confrontations, the impact of which is also inaccurately perceived.

As mentioned in the Introduction, there is growing interest in understanding the possible developmental pathways of this type of peer-aggression (Marini, 1997; Marini & Case, 1994; Pepler, 1996; Pepler & Slaby, 1994). For example, there seems to be an increased appreciation for the importance of understanding the normal course of cognitive and social development (Case & Okamoto, 1996; Marini & Case, 1994) as well as understanding deficits in social development (Marini & Auld-Cameron, 1991; Selman & Demorest, 1984). Given that continuity in anti-social behaviour from childhood to adolescence and into adulthood is a generally accepted developmental trajectory, it is important to strive for greater clarity in terms of the more specific cognitive and social mechanisms involved in the development of bullying behaviour (see Connell & Farrington, 1996; Farrington, 1993; Loeber & Hay, 1997). Recent research on physical and psychological aggression has provided a unique opportunity to gain greater understanding of the complexity of bullying and to reassess the impact of this type of childhood aggression on the lives of victims, bullies and their schools (Craig, 1996; Crick, 1995; Crick, & Dodge, 1994; Crick, & Grotpector, 1996).

Consequences of Bullying

The consequences of bullying can be severe and long-lasting and may contribute to maladjustment not just in the school years, but well into adulthood for both bullies and victims (see Olweus, 1993a). Direct experience of either physical or psychological bullying carries with it many short-term as well as long-term consequences (for an excellent account of the experience of bullying, see Hobin, 1996).

Consequences for Victims

It is not unusual for some victims to develop a range of somatic complaints, including: headaches, stomach aches, and even vomiting (Olweus, 1993a). On the academic front, there can be severe consequences as well where, because of the poor learning environment, school performance deteriorates, and in many cases may result in the students’ dropping out of school (see Marini, Cooper, et al., 1999).

There are other consequences for the victims in terms of their social relationships. For example, since they tend to be anxious and socially awkward, victims are likely to have fewer opportunities to interact with peers. Victims may find it difficult to begin and sustain relationships, therefore,
perpetuating the negative cycle of social isolation. Faced with an inescapable environment of threats and fears, and having limited support at home or at school, this subgroup of victims has a difficult time normalizing their lives. Some are not able to overcome the pain and suffering and, without the support, succumb to the battle and seek refuge in life-ending behaviours such as serious drug abuse and suicide (Smith & Sharp, 1994).

In the long run, victims seem to improve, for a number of reasons. First, they outgrow the bullying situation as they leave school. Second, and more importantly, they are more likely to seek out assistance and seem to react well to intervention such as therapy. Third, some victims use their ordeal as an impetus to escape the long reach of the bullying experience and do well with their lives (Olweus, 1993a).

Consequences for Bullies

While it may appear that the victim is destined to suffer, the future does not look rosy for the bully either. In fact, some of the latest research points to the long interaction with the police, judicial system, mental health agencies, and other social organizations (Connell & Farrington, 1996; Olweus, 1993a). The long-term outcome for bullies varies, depending on the type of intervention. Those without any correction tend to continue to be aggressive and violent and many undertake criminal activities. They grow up having few friends and are likely to abuse alcohol and other drugs (Offord, 1989; Smith & Sharp, 1994). Although bullies and their families are difficult partners in any intervention program, the severe consequences associated with bullying could prove a primary motivator for everyone to become involved in prevention programs (Kazdin & Kendall, 1998).

Conclusion

Bullying is a particular type of peer aggression commonly, but not exclusively, encountered in schools; hence, it is both an educational and a social problem. Since it is characterized by a power imbalance between the bully and the victim, bullying typically results in a negative pattern of anti-social behaviour, leading to short as well as long-term consequences for both the victims and the victimizers (Olweus, 1993b). As a result of recent findings, the long-held myths about bullying are slowly disappearing. The realization that the number of students affected is rather high and the range of behaviours involved severe, the consequences must no longer be ignored. Most educators and parents are seeking prompt, broadly-based and effective interventions based on compassion for the victim and understanding for the victimizer.
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