

# Bullying in U.S. Schools

## 2012 STATUS REPORT



Assessed using data collected from  
the **Olweus Bullying Questionnaire™**

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# Bullying in U.S. Schools: Report Purpose

**THIS REPORT WAS CREATED** collaboratively by a team of people and organizations including the Hazelden Foundation; Susan P. Limber, Ph.D., at Clemson University; Dan Olweus, Ph.D., at Uni Health, University of Bergen, Norway; and Harlan Luxenberg, M.A., at Professional Data Analysts Inc. to assess the current status of bullying around the United States during the 2011–2012 school year (August 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012). Using data collected from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (OBQ), a representative sample was created based on more than 300,000 questionnaires administered to students at schools that had purchased the OBQ but had not yet implemented the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*, an internationally respected antibullying program.

The same questionnaire items were asked of all students in grades three through twelve in all fifty states and Washington DC. This consistency of questions across grades and regions provides a unique opportunity to view a snapshot of bullying behavior in our nation's schools, based on the reports of children and youth themselves. A representative sample was used from this dataset to explore the following bullying topics:

- What percent of students are bullied and/or bully others?
- What are the ways students are most often bullied?
- How long does bullying last?
- Where are students being bullied?
- How is bullying related to liking school?
- Whom do students tell about being bullied?
- How do students respond to bullying?
- Are students afraid of being bullied?
- How do students and adults respond to bullying?

We hope that this report helps teachers, administrators, parents, policymakers, and concerned citizens raise national awareness about bullying and improve school environments so every child can feel safe at school.



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# Bullying in U.S. Schools: Report Background

**DESPITE A DRAMATIC** increase in public awareness and antibullying legislation nationwide, the prevalence of bullying is still one of the most pressing issues facing our nation's youth. Bullying affects individuals across ethnicity, gender, grade, and socioeconomic status, whether they live in urban, suburban, or rural communities. Bullying can have serious effects during the school years and into adulthood. One of the best tools that schools have for decreasing the problems associated with bullying behavior is to implement evidence-based prevention programs.



One of the most widely researched and highly regarded of these programs is the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)*, developed by Dan Olweus, Ph.D. This unique program uses a comprehensive schoolwide, systems-change approach that involves teachers, students, parents, and other school and community personnel in an effort to reduce existing bullying problems and prevent future problems from occurring. The program has been used in more than a dozen countries by millions of students worldwide, receiving high accolades in the United States and abroad.<sup>1</sup>

## The Olweus Bullying Questionnaire

As part of *OBPP*, schools administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (OBQ) (Olweus 1996, 2007), typically at the same time each year to monitor and measure changes in bullying and antisocial behavior in the schools. This is an anonymous forty-item questionnaire that students in third through twelfth grades fill out about their experiences and observations related to bullying. The questionnaire has two main parts that measure a student's involvement in nine forms of bullying (as one who has experienced bullying and also as one who has bullied others). The questionnaire also includes questions about students' reactions to bullying incidents that they have observed, self-reports regarding school climate, and observations of others' reactions to bullying. The questionnaires can be administered online by using a computer or tablet, by employing an interactive whiteboard in the classroom, or by filling out a paper and pencil booklet.

The OBQ has undergone rigorous psychometric testing through the years to ensure the data collected from it can be used to understand a school's or district's prevalence of bullying and to assess the effectiveness of *OBPP*. Multiple studies have demonstrated strong consistency among subgroups of questionnaire items, with alpha reliability coefficients in the 0.80 to 0.95 range (e.g., Pellegrini 2001; Solberg and Olweus 2003; see Olweus 2013, for an overview) as well as evidence of construct validity (Kyriakides et al. 2006; Solberg and Olweus 2003) and criterion-related validity (Olweus 2009, 2012; Pellegrini 2001). Collectively, these measures provide evidence that the results of the questionnaire accurately illustrate the prevalence of bullying in schools.

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1. *OBPP* is listed as a Blueprints Promising Program by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, and a large, systematic review of anti-bullying programs worldwide concluded that "programs inspired by the work of Dan Olweus worked best" (Ttofi and Farrington 2011, pp. 41–42).

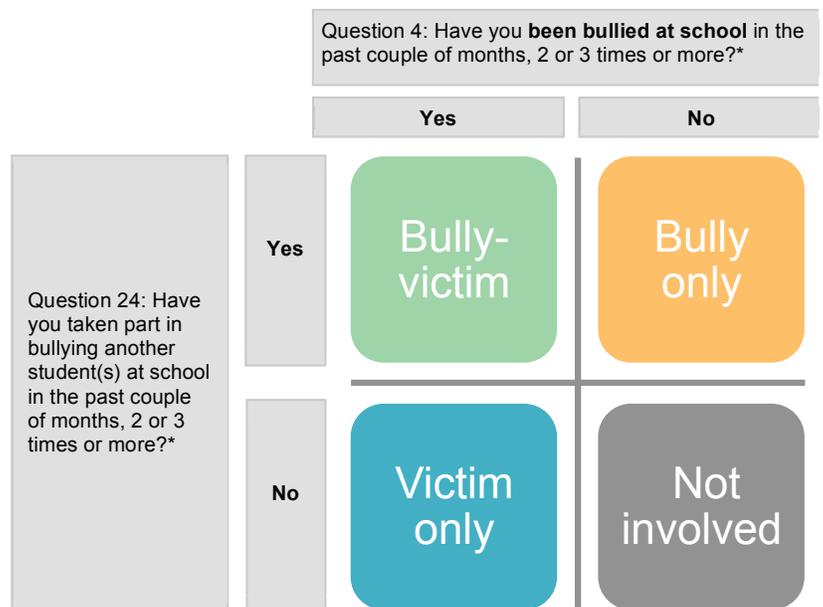
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Before students are asked about their bullying experiences, they are provided with a definition of what does and does not constitute bullying. According to *OBPP*, an individual is being bullied when he or she is the target of aggressive behavior by another student or students (for example, when others say mean things, deliberately and systematically ignore someone, physically hurt others, spread negative rumors, or do other hurtful things), when a power imbalance exists between the individuals involved, and when the bullying behavior usually happens more than once. All three conditions must be present for the actions to constitute bullying behavior. After reading a clear definition of bullying, students are asked in the OBQ’s question 4, “How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?” and later in question 24, “How often have you taken part in bullying another student(s) at school in the past couple of months?”

Based on their answers to these parallel questions, students are classified into four groups of students. If students answer “2 or 3 times a month,” “About once a week” or “Several times a week” to question 4, they are considered a victim of bullying for the purposes of the analyses. If they select these same responses to question 24, they are defined as someone who bullies others. If they select these responses to both questions, they are considered both a bully and a victim (a bully-victim). If they don’t select any of these responses on either question, they are considered neither a bully nor a victim and subsequently not involved in bullying (see figure 1).

Dividing students into these groups is helpful because students often share common characteristics within these groups (e.g., Jimerson et al. 2009). For example, students who are bullied are more likely than their nonbullied peers to experience low self-esteem, loneliness, anxiety, and depression (Cook et al. 2010; Klomek et al. 2007; Olweus 1993; Reijntjes et al. 2010). Students who participate in bullying, on the other hand, are more likely than their peers to vandalize property, to drop out of school, and to use alcohol, cigarettes, or marijuana (Byrne 1994; Haynie et al. 2001; Radliff et al. 2012). Children and youth who are involved in bullying others and also in being bullied may be at particularly high risk of internalizing problems (for example, depression) and externalizing problems (for example, antisocial behavior) (Cook et al. 2010).

It is important to note that these terms—*victim*, *bully*, and *bully-victim*—should not be used to label individual children. Wherever possible in this report, we use phrases such as “students who were bullied” and “students who bully others,” which are more appropriate terms. The shorthand terms should be used exclusively for research purposes and only when the use of longer terminology would be awkward or confusing.



**Figure 1. Bullying status**

\*Paraphrased questions

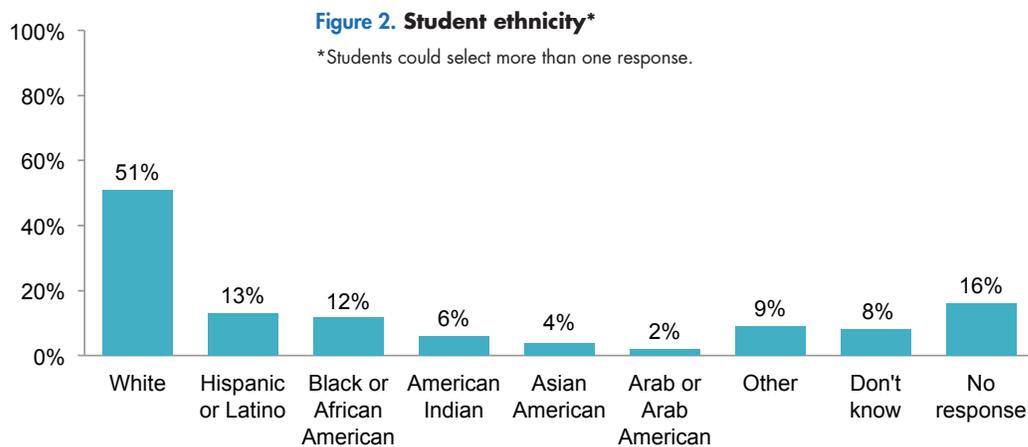
Students who participate in bullying are more likely than their peers to vandalize property, to drop out of school, and to use alcohol, cigarettes, or marijuana.

### **Characteristics of the sample**

Since 2007, the OBQ has been administered more than three million times to students across the United States. During the 2011–2012 school year, more than 300,000 questionnaires were collected from more than 1,000 schools that had purchased the OBQ but not yet implemented *OBPP*. These schools had identified a need but had not yet begun using the program. It was from this collection of questionnaires that a representative sample was drawn for this report so that these data would not be affected by *OBPP*.

A stratified random sample of 2,000 questionnaires was selected from each grade (third through twelfth) with roughly 1,000 girls and 1,000 boys in each of the ten grades for a total of 20,000 questionnaires in the sample. The sample was purposefully drawn so that the distribution of bullying status (not involved, victim only, bully only, and bully-victim) within gender and grade was consistent with the distribution for all of the 300,000 students surveyed. This means that the 20,000 student questionnaires sampled were representative of all the student questionnaires collected in the 2011–2012 school year at schools that had never implemented *OBPP* with regard to bullying status, gender, and grade.

Just over half (51 percent) of the total sample was comprised of white students, which greatly exceeded the next highest ethnicities, Hispanic or Latino (13 percent) and Black or African American (12 percent). About 16 percent of the sample did not respond to the ethnicity question, and 9 percent identified as an ethnicity not listed among the response options (see figure 2).



### **Limitations**

It is important to keep in mind that, although the sample is representative of the questionnaires collected, it was not extracted from a representative database of the national student body. Although student questionnaires were collected at schools prior to program implementation, only schools that had decided to administer the OBQ (typically an indication that they intend to implement the program) are included in the sample. Therefore, it is possible that schools that administer the OBQ (and intend to implement *OBPP*) differ somewhat from schools that do not intend to implement *OBPP*, that use another antibullying prevention program, or that do not have any antibullying program at all.

Nonetheless, because of the sheer quantity of the questionnaires, the diversity of the schools, and the reliability of the findings due to the large sample size, the authors believe the data presented in this report can be considered a reasonable representation of bullying behavior and related problems nationally. In particular, the patterns of results reported including age trends and gender differences are likely to be quite similar to what would be obtained with a large-scale nationally representative sample of students.

For a more detailed look at how student data is reported to individual schools, see a sample Olweus Bullying Questionnaire Standard Report, which can be accessed at [www.violencepreventionworks.org](http://www.violencepreventionworks.org).

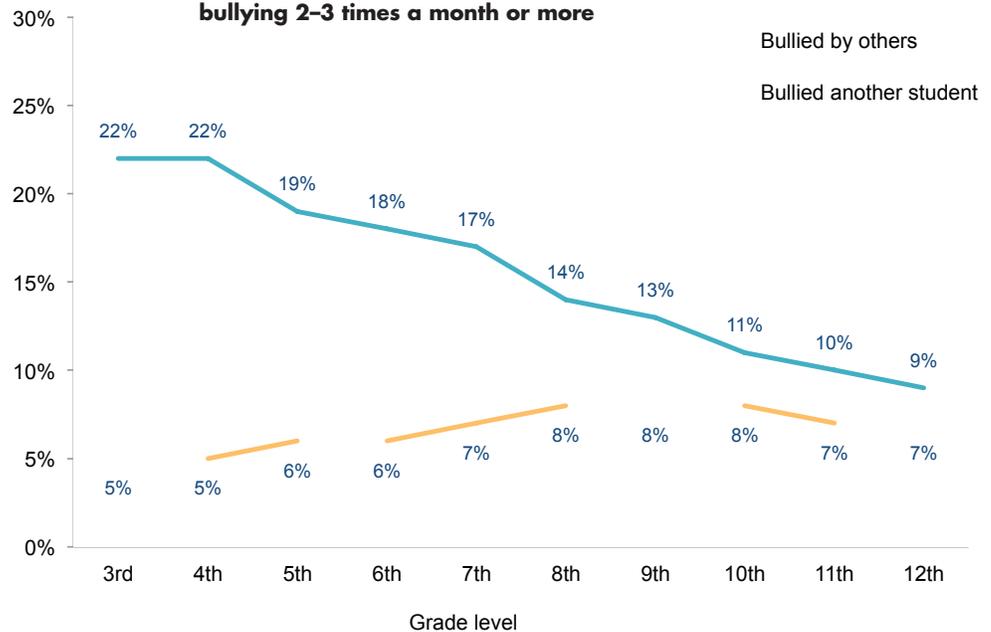
# Bullying in U.S. Schools: Report Findings

## What percent of students are bullied and/or bully others?

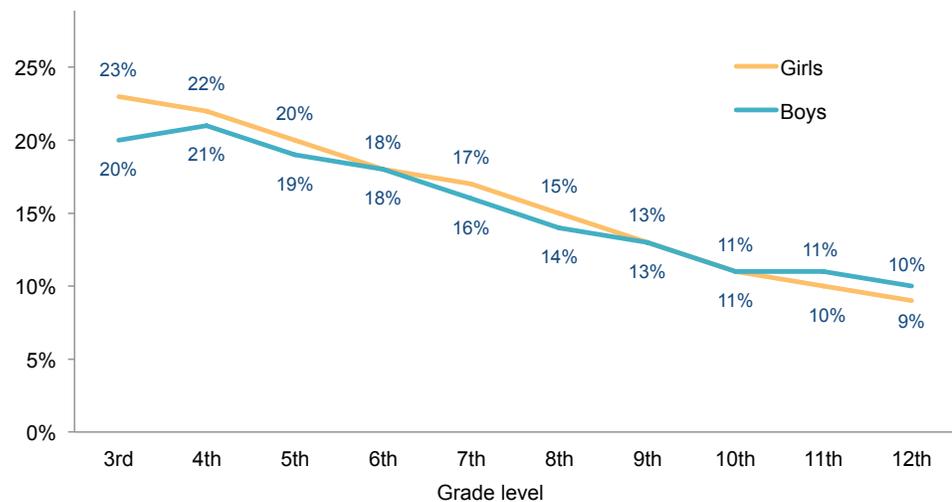
Overall, 16 percent of students report being bullied while 7 percent report bullying others. The percentage of students who report being bullied decreases steadily with increasing grade level (see figure 3). Although 22 percent of third and fourth graders report being bullied two to three times a month or more, by eighth grade, 14 percent are bullied and by twelfth grade, 9 percent are bullied. On the other hand, the percentage of students who report bullying others is more stable over grade levels, peaking in eighth through tenth grades.

A strong relationship exists between age (grade) and bullying victimization for both genders. Additionally, very little difference occurs between girls and boys in the prevalence of bullying victimization at each grade level (see figure 4). In almost all grades, the victimization rates by gender are within 1 percentage point of each other.

**Figure 3. Students who have been involved in bullying 2-3 times a month or more**

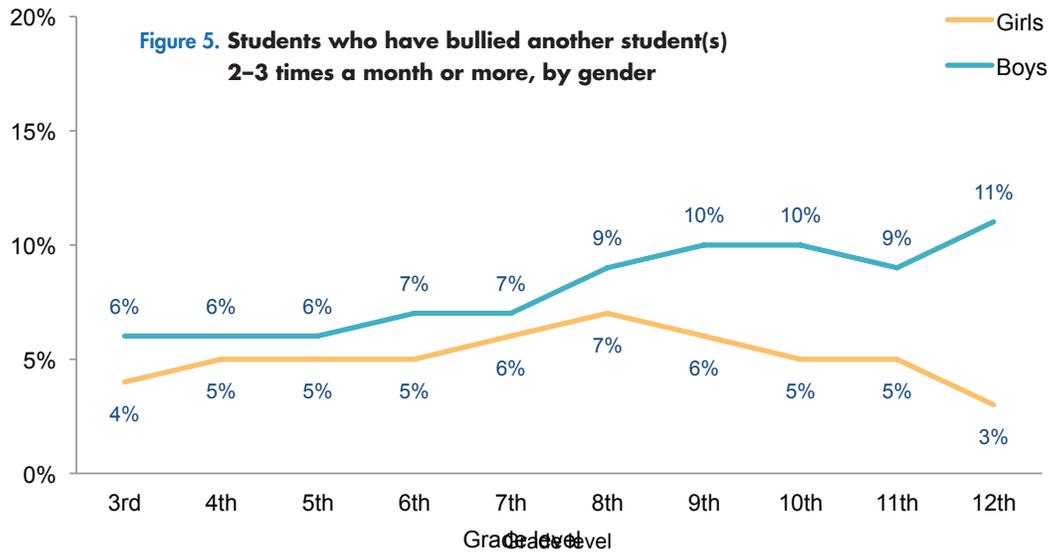


**Figure 4. Students who have been bullied 2-3 times a month or more, by gender**



**BULLYING IN U.S. SCHOOLS: 2012 STATUS REPORT**

The trends across grade for self-reported bullying behavior vary more between girls and boys (see figure 5). At every grade level, a higher percentage of boys than girls report bullying others, and this difference increases over time. Among elementary school students, there is a 1 percent to 2 percent difference between boys and girls in bullying behavior. This difference increases to 4 percent by ninth grade and peaks at 8 percent in twelfth grade. Boys consistently bully other students more than girls do, and they do so at higher rates as they get older.

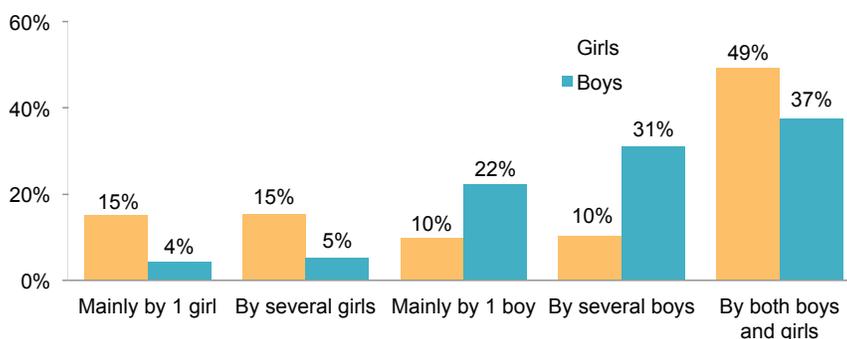


The percentage of girls who report bullying another student remains fairly constant from grade to grade, ranging between 3 percent and 7 percent. Among boys, bullying rates tend to increase with increasing grade levels. Although 6 percent of third, fourth, and fifth grade boys report bullying another student, the percentage increases as boys enter high school. Ten percent of ninth and tenth grade boys and 11 percent of twelfth grade boys report bullying another student.

Boys report that they were most frequently bullied by other boys (see figure 6); it was more common for girls to be bullied by both girls and boys. For example, among bullied girls, nearly half (49 percent) report being bullied by both boys and girls, 30 percent by girls only, and 20 percent by boys only. By contrast, among bullied boys, 37 percent report being bullied by both boys and girls, 53 percent by boys only, and 9 percent by girls only.

**Figure 6. Students who are bullied 2-3 times a month or more and who bullies them\***

\*Totals do not add up to 100% due to rounding.



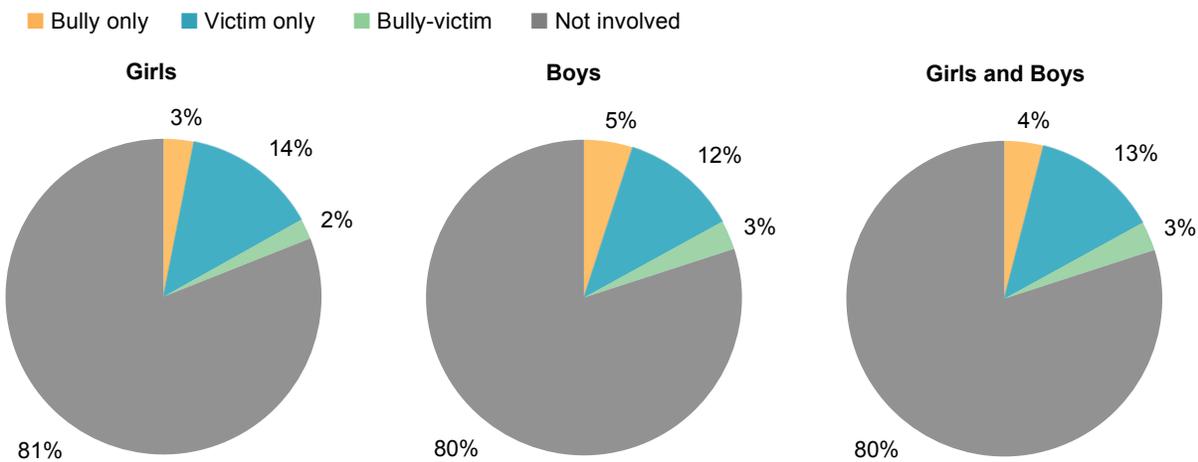
## BULLYING IN U.S. SCHOOLS: 2012 STATUS REPORT

As mentioned earlier, to get a reasonable estimate of the percentage of children and youth involved in bullying, it is useful to classify students into one of four categories:

- not involved
- victim only (bullied two to three times per month or more but did not bully others)
- bully only (bullied others two to three times per month or more but were not bullied)
- bully-victim (bullied two to three times per month or more *and* bullied others two to three times per month or more)

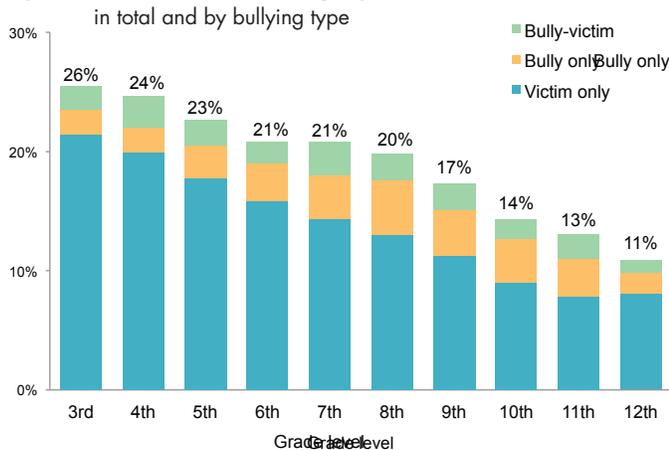
Overall, 19.6 percent of students (19 percent of girls and 20 percent of boys) in grades three through twelve were involved in bullying (see figure 7). Thirteen percent of students in grades three through twelve were only bullied by others, 4 percent only bullied other students, 3 percent reported both, and 80 percent were not involved.

**Figure 7. Students who are involved in bullying, in total and by gender**

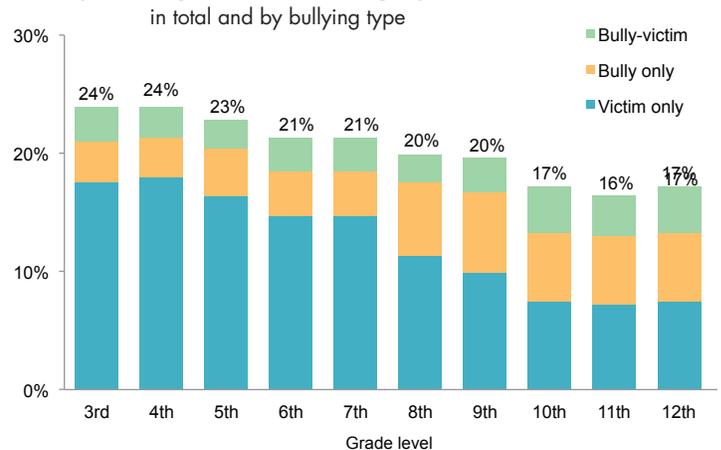


The percentage of children involved in bullying behavior is highest among third graders, with about one in four students reporting that they engage in bullying behavior, are victims of bullying, or both (see figures 8 and 9). That percentage steadily declines within each grade for both boys and girls until high school, when girls' involvement continues to decline and boys' levels off.

**Figure 8. Girls involved in bullying**



**Figure 9. Boys involved in bullying**



The vast majority of girls who report involvement with bullying are victims; only a small percentage identify as either a bully only or a bully-victim. Most boys in elementary and middle school who report involvement with bullying are victims. However, in high school this is no longer the case; in tenth through twelfth grades, there is a fairly even split among those reporting being a bully only, bully-victim, and a victim only.

**What are the ways students are most often being bullied?**

Many types of behaviors can be classified as bullying if the behaviors meet the definition presented earlier. On the OBQ, students are asked about the frequency with which they are bullied in ten different ways (see figure 10), which are summarized here:

*Verbal:* a student is called mean names or teased in a hurtful way

*Rumors:* a student is the target of false rumors or lies

*Exclusion:* a student is left out on purpose or completely ignored

*Sexual:* a student is bullied using words or gestures with a sexual meaning

*Racial:* a student’s race is the focus of the verbal bullying

*Physical:* a student is hit, kicked, or pushed

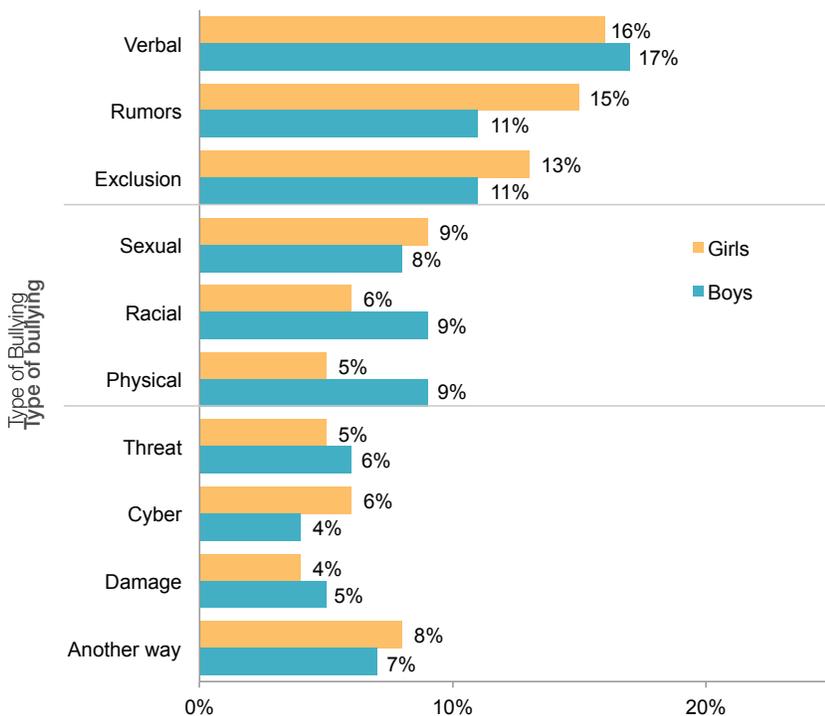
*Threat:* a student is threatened or forced to do things against his or her will

*Cyber:* a student is bullied via a cell phone or computer

*Damage:* a student has personal property taken or damaged

*Another way:* a student is bullied in any way not previously discussed

**Figure 10. Ways of being bullied for those who reported being bullied 2-3 times a month or more**



Students are most often bullied by being called mean names (verbal), having false rumors spread about them (rumors), or by being left out on purpose (exclusion).

Among both genders, being verbally bullied occurs more often than any other form of bullying with 16 percent of girls and 17 percent of boys report being verbally bullied two to three times a month or more. The spreading of rumors is the next most common way students report being bullied (15 percent of girls compared to 11 percent of boys). Another gender difference is observed for physical bullying, where 9 percent of boys report being physically bullied compared to 5 percent of girls (see also Harris, Petrie, and Willoughby 2002 for findings of similar gender differences in physical bullying among a nationally representative sample).

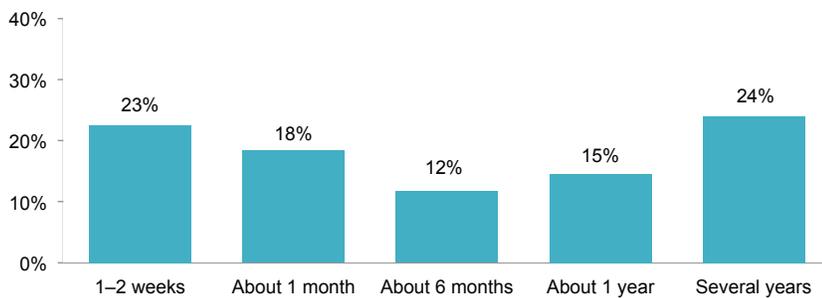
Cyber bullying ranks as the least common reported form of bullying for boys (4 percent) and one of the lowest for girls (6 percent). This low rate of cyber bullying may seem counterintuitive, because this form of bullying has received a great deal of media attention in recent years, suggesting that it is more prevalent. Cyber bullying is a serious form of bullying that needs further examination; however, this finding is consistent with empirical research suggesting that the threat of cyber bullying is exaggerated in the media (Olweus 2013) and that, although cyber bullying should be addressed, bullying resources and attention should continue to focus on more traditional forms of bullying.

Cyber bullying ranks as one of the least commonly reported forms of bullying.

### How long does bullying last?

The length of time that students are bullied varies considerably. Although approximately one-quarter (23 percent) of bullied students indicate that the bullying lasted only one to two weeks, one-quarter (24 percent) of bullied students also report that they have been bullied for several years or longer (see figure 11). More than half (51 percent) of bullied students report that the bullying has lasted six or more months, and an alarming 39 percent indicate that it has lasted for one year or longer.

**Figure 11. Girls and boys who have been bullied 2–3 times per month or more by how long the bullying has lasted**



Among students reporting they have been bullied, 39 percent indicated the bullying lasted for one year or longer.

### Where are students being bullied?

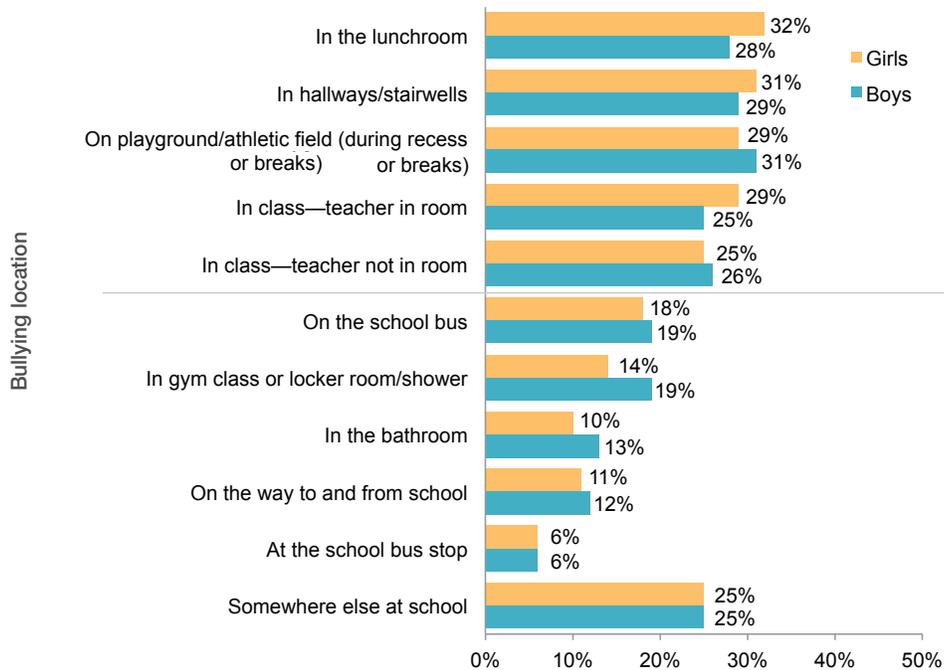
The places where boys and girls are most often bullied at school are in the lunchroom, hallways/stairwells, playground/athletic fields, and in class (with and without the teacher present) (see figure 12). In all of these locations, potential exists for many other students and teachers to be present. This finding suggests that students and educators may benefit from more training about how to observe, identify, and react to a bullying situation. Using a comprehensive bullying prevention program may help students and teachers recognize acts of bullying behavior and learn techniques for how best to help the bullied student.

## BULLYING IN U.S. SCHOOLS: 2012 STATUS REPORT

Although most locations are mentioned by similar numbers of both boys and girls, a few appear more problematic to one gender than to the other. Girls report being bullied more frequently in the lunchroom than boys (32 percent compared with 28 percent), as well as in class when a teacher is present (29 percent compared with 25 percent for boys). Boys report being bullied in gym class or the locker room/shower more than girls (19 percent compared with 14 percent).

**Figure 12. Places bullying occurred for those who were bullied 1–2 times or more\***

\*Students could select more than one location.



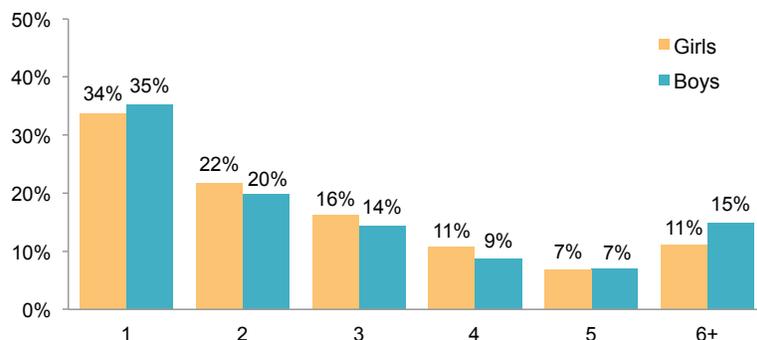
Boys and girls are most often bullied at school in the lunchroom, hallways/stairwells, playground/athletic fields, and in class.

Students who are bullied also report that the bullying typically does not occur in just one place in the school but rather happens in two or more locations (see figure 13). Only approximately one-third of bullied students report that it usually happens in only one place; 45 percent indicate it has happened in three or more locations.

**Figure 13. Number of places students report being bullied 1–2 times or more**

\*Students could select more than one location.

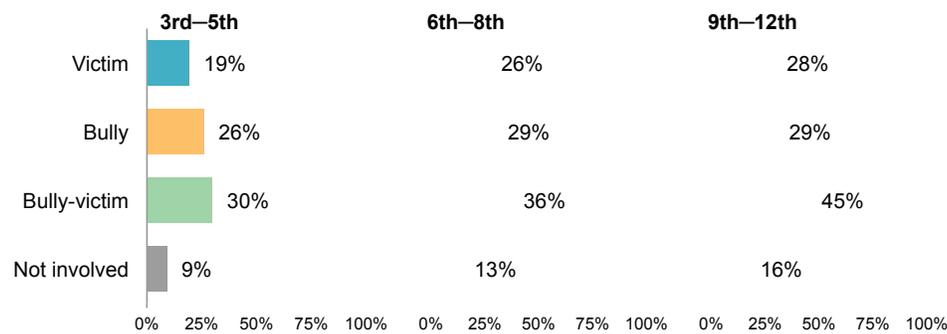
Two-thirds of students who are bullied report that the bullying happens in two or more locations.



### How is bullying related to liking school?

Compared with students who are not involved in bullying, students involved in bullying (as either victims, bullies, or bully-victims) are much more likely to dislike school (see figure 14). Students who are bully-victims are consistently about three times as likely as those uninvolved in bullying to dislike school. For students who are bullied, the proportion who dislike school dramatically rises with increasing grade levels. In elementary grades, 19 percent of students who are classified as victims and 30 percent of bully-victims dislike school. By the time they are in high school, more than one out of four students (28 percent) who are victims and nearly one out of two students (45 percent) who are bully-victims dislike school. Among those who are bullies, there is little change across grade levels in the percentage who dislike school.

Figure 14. Students who dislike school, by bullying type and grade level

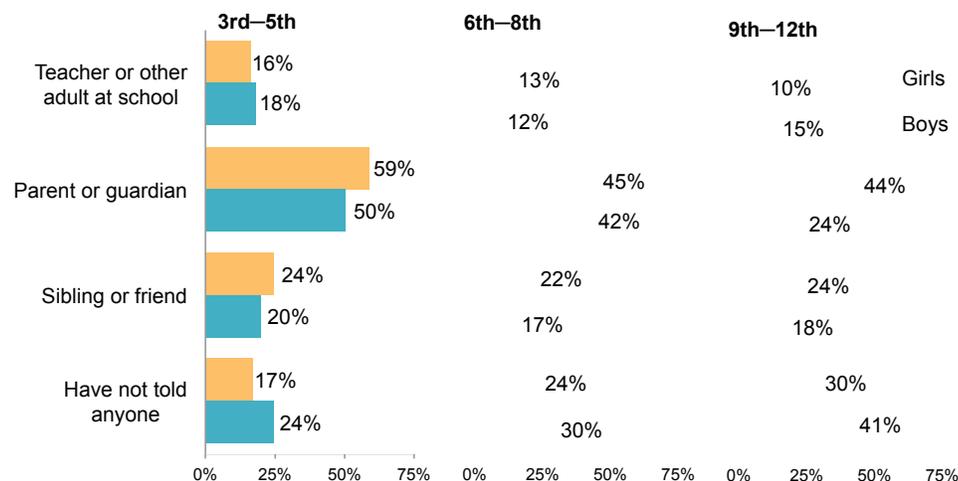


Nearly one out of two high school students who both bully other students and are bullied by others dislike school.

### Whom do students tell about being bullied?

Among both genders and across all grades, parents or guardians are the number one group in whom students confide about being bullied (see figure 15). However, girls are more likely than boys to report being bullied to parents, and both boys and girls are less likely to report bullying to a parent or guardian as they get older. A relatively small percentage of bullied students (between 10 percent and 18 percent) report their experiences to a teacher or other adult at school.

Figure 15. Students (who have been bullied 2–3 times per month or more) tell these people that they are being bullied



Parents or guardians are the people students are most likely to confide in about being bullied.

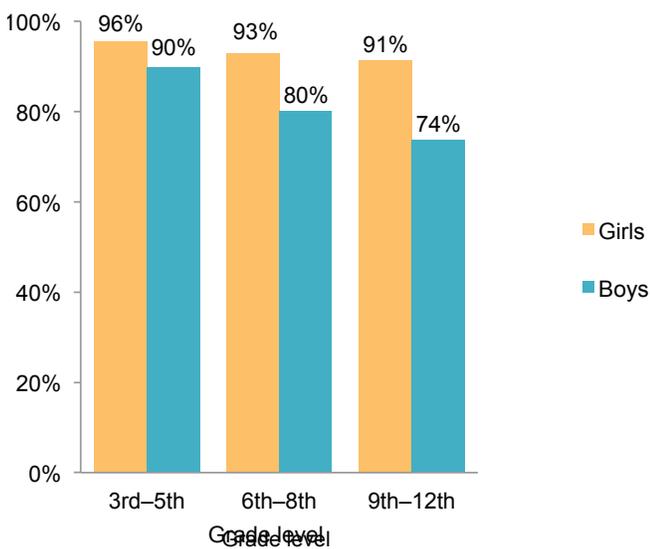
Of particular concern are the numbers of boys and girls who do not tell anyone about being bullied. Boys are more likely than girls to have told no one about being bullied. For both boys and girls, the percentage who tell no one increases substantially as they get older. For example, while 17 percent of third through fifth grade girls have not told anyone about being bullied, this number increases to 24 percent among sixth through eighth graders and 30 percent among ninth through twelfth graders. Similarly, 24 percent of third through fifth grade boys have not told anyone about being bullied, but this increases to 30 percent among sixth through eighth graders and 41 percent among ninth through twelfth graders. Ninth through twelfth grade boys are more likely to tell no one about being bullied than they are to tell a parent or guardian, sibling or friend, or teacher or other adult at school.

**How do students respond to bullying?**

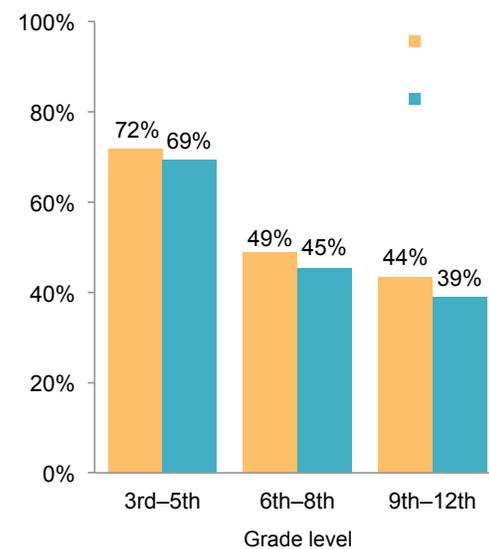
Empathy, at its core, is the ability to put oneself in someone else’s shoes. Although empirical research is needed to investigate potential effects that empathy might have on reducing the prevalence of bullying, it is nevertheless encouraging that most students in this sample do report feeling empathy for students who are bullied. Across grade levels, more than 90 percent of girls feel empathy for bullied students. Among boys, empathy rates are somewhat lower and drop more dramatically with age (see figure 16). Although 90 percent of third through fifth grade boys report feeling sorry for bullied students, this falls to 80 percent among sixth through eighth graders and 74 percent among ninth through twelfth graders.

A high level of empathy provides some indication that the vast majority of students do not approve of bullying. However, despite high levels of empathy, many students do not report helping bullied students (see figure 17). Across all age groups, girls are more likely to try to help a bullied student than boys are, but those numbers drop dramatically for both genders after elementary school. Among students in middle and high school grades, fewer than half indicate that they try to help bullied students. This disparity between empathy and action indicates that students need the right tools to help respond to bullying. Giving students tools to respond to bullying in appropriate and safe ways is an important focus of *OBPP*. One of the four simple rules students learn as part of the program is “We will try to help students who are bullied.”

**Figure 16. Students who “feel a bit sorry” or “feel sorry and want to help” when they see a student their age being bullied at school**



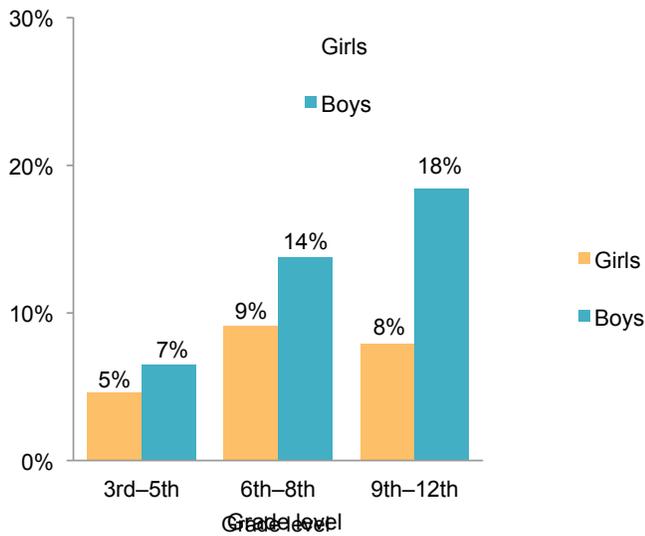
**Figure 17. Students who try to help the bullied student if they see or learn that a student their age is being bullied**



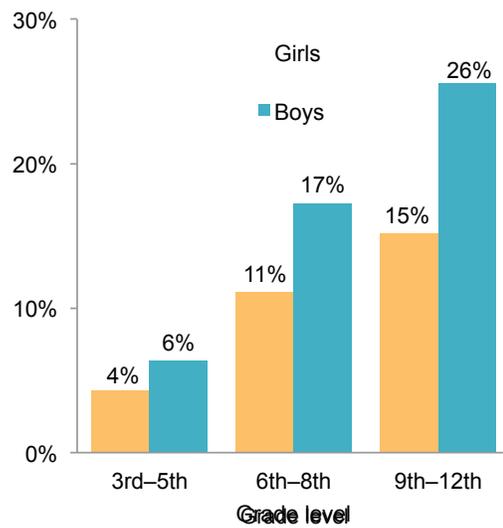
## BULLYING IN U.S. SCHOOLS: 2012 STATUS REPORT

Similar age and gender trends are seen for students who admit that they “just watch” and do not respond to bullying that they witness or are aware of (see figure 18). Boys are more likely than girls to not respond, and the percentage increases with age. Boys are also more likely than girls to admit that they could join in bullying a student whom they did not like (see figure 19), and the percentage increases markedly with age. The number of students who indicate they could participate in bullying others (see figure 19) is higher than the number classified as bullies (see figure 5, page 6). This indicates there are other students who feel willing to bully others but are not currently doing so.

**Figure 18. Students who “just watch what goes on” if they see or learn that a student their age is being bullied by another student**



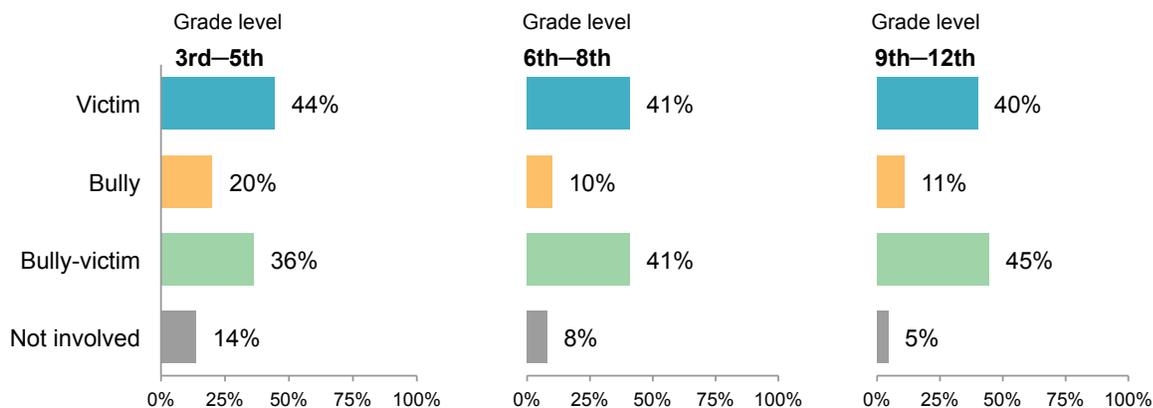
**Figure 19. Students who think they could join in bullying a student whom they do not like**



### Are students afraid of being bullied?

One of the fundamental functions of a school is to provide a safe learning environment for all students. One way to measure a safe and healthy school climate is to determine the proportion of students who are fearful while at school. Findings indicate that 14 percent of all students are often afraid of being bullied at school. Not surprisingly, students’ involvement in bullying is strongly related to their fear of bullying. In fact, 40 percent or more of students who are victims of bullying are afraid of being involved in future incidents of bullying (see figure 20). This fear can have negative effects on their learning and academic achievement.

**Figure 20. Students who are often afraid of being bullied at school**

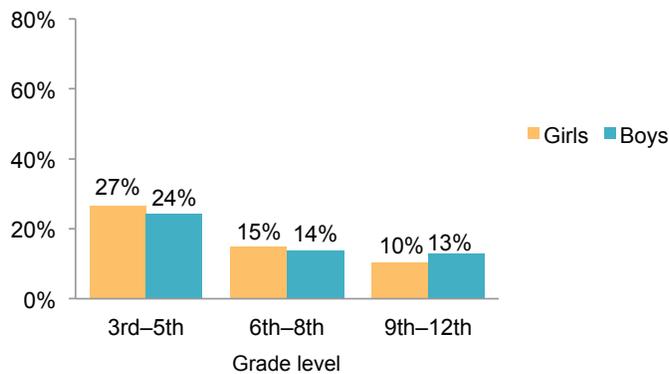


Children who have been bullied are two to four times more likely to be afraid of being bullied than children who bully others, and they are three to eight times more likely to be afraid than those who are not involved in bullying. These disparities are slightly larger for students in sixth grade and older. By high school, nearly one in two students (45 percent) who are classified as bully-victims are frequently afraid of being bullied. Some students who are not involved in bullying are also afraid of being bullied, but to a far lesser extent. In third through fifth grade, 14 percent of students not involved in bullying are afraid of being bullied, a number that decreases with age. That 14 percent of elementary school students not involved in bullying are nonetheless afraid of being bullied is a strong indicator of the omnipresence of bullying and how much it can affect even those not directly involved.

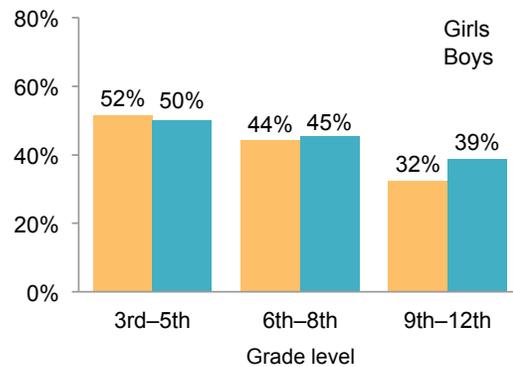
**How do students and adults respond to bullying?**

One indicator that shows how well schools are addressing bullying is the degree to which students indicate others in the school (fellow students and adults) respond appropriately to bullying. As shown in figure 21, a minority of students report that fellow students frequently try to stop bullying, although this number decreases in higher grades. Students report that teachers are much more responsive than students when they witness bullying, although this number also decreases in higher grade levels (see figure 22).

**Figure 21. Students who said that other students “often” or “almost always” try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school**

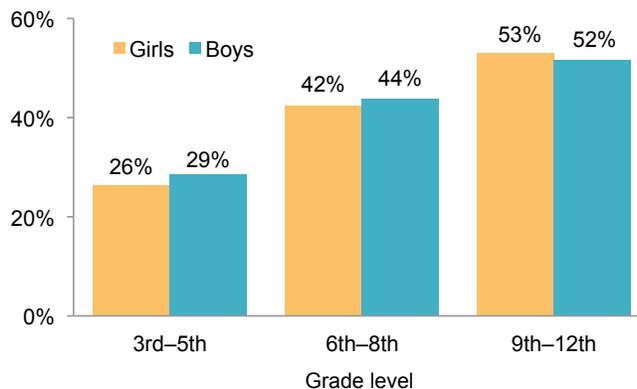


**Figure 22. Students who said teachers or other adults at their school “often” or “almost always” try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied**



Students report that high school teachers are twice as likely as elementary teachers to do little or nothing to reduce the amount of classroom bullying (see figure 23). Although bullying occurs less frequently during the high school years than when students are younger (see figure 5, page 6), nearly one in ten students are still bullied at least two or three times a month in high school grades, so it is of concern that such high percentages of students do not feel their teachers appropriately address bullying.

**Figure 23. Students who feel their teacher has done “little or nothing” or “fairly little” in the past couple of months to cut down on classroom bullying**



# Bullying in U.S. Schools: Report Discussion

**THIS REPORT** reviews key findings related to children’s self-reported observations about the nature and prevalence of bullying across the United States during the 2011–2012 school year. Some findings are worrisome but others more positive. These analyses indicate that bullying continues to affect a great number of children in all age groups, with the highest prevalence observed in third and fourth grades, where roughly 22 percent of school children report that they are bullied two or three times or more per month. Bullied students are more likely to dislike school and feel afraid of being bullied than uninvolved students. Roughly 40 percent of bullied students feel afraid of being bullied.

...

Cyber bullying, despite high media attention and elevated concerns in our communities, is not as common as many other forms of bullying. Of the students who were bullied two or three times a month or more, only 4 percent of boys and 6 percent of girls reported being cyber bullied. Although cyber bullying can be devastating to those who experience it, the small number of children it affects compared with other forms of bullying suggests it is important not to sensationalize this phenomenon. Moreover, since empirical research has shown a great overlap between those who are bullied via cyber technology and more traditional means (Olweus 2012), using resources to address more common forms of bullying will also help students who are bullied through cyber technology.

One of the positive trends to emerge from these analyses is the large proportion of students who feel empathy toward students being bullied. More than 90 percent of girls and 74 percent or more of boys across all grade levels feel sorry for bullied students. However, even though an overwhelming majority of students empathize with bullied students, far fewer report actually reaching out to help them. To teach students how to help other students who are bullied, we need to provide them with the appropriate tools and guidance. One of the best ways to help students help others, as well as to reduce the overall prevalence of bullying, is to implement a schoolwide antibullying program, such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* (e.g., Olweus and Limber 2009). According to two recent, partly overlapping, meta-analyses



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reviewing the effects of antibullying programs throughout the world (Ttofi and Farrington 2009, 2011), researchers noted that antibullying programs are an effective way to reduce victimization, with an expected reduction of 20 percent to 23 percent.

When evidence-based antibullying programs are implemented well, they have the power to restructure and strengthen the school environment by teaching everyone how to identify acts of bullying, how to react to bullying, and how to work together to reduce opportunities for bullying behavior. The results from this report show that bullying is still a major issue facing students and that further commitment is needed from schools and communities around the country to work together to stop bullying and to make schools a safe place for all students to learn.

When evidence-based antibullying programs are implemented well, they have the power to restructure and strengthen the school environment by teaching everyone how to identify acts of bullying, how to react to bullying, and how to work together to reduce opportunities for bullying behavior.

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## BULLYING IN U.S. SCHOOLS: 2012 STATUS REPORT

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The results from this report show that bullying is still a major issue facing students and that further commitment is needed from schools and communities around the country to work together to stop bullying and to make schools a safe place for all students to learn.

# Bullying in U.S. Schools: Declaration of Interests

Since 2007, Professional Data Analysts Inc. (PDA) has been providing reports for a fee to schools and school districts who use the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* about their prevalence of bullying recorded using the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire. PDA also received a small fee from the Hazelden Foundation for its work on this report.

For more information about the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* or the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire, visit [www.violencepreventionworks.org](http://www.violencepreventionworks.org) or call 1-800-328-9000.

