Frequently Asked Questions

Why survey students about bullying?

Before beginning a bullying prevention program, you will want to find out as much as you can about bullying in your school. Whether you use this information to select an intervention approach that is the best match for your school, or to guide your implementation of a bullying-prevention program you have already selected, using a reliable method to survey students about their experiences with bullying can help your school’s efforts by:

- Increasing awareness on the part of school staff and parents about bullying problems at school;
- Providing building-specific information critical to planning your bullying prevention effort;
- Providing a baseline from which to measure progress of school initiatives for reducing bullying;
- Motivating adults to help change the school climate—so that school is a safer place where students are free to learn.

What is the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire?

The Olweus Bullying Questionnaire is a standardized, validated tool for assessing bullying problems in schools. It comes in three administration formats (online, scannable and an older, data-entry version) and is available in Spanish; consult your Certified Olweus Trainer to determine which version will best meet your school’s needs. The OBQ is an anonymous student-report questionnaire for students in grades 3-12. It is a multiple-choice, pencil-and-paper questionnaire: the OBQ-online and scannable versions have 42 questions (2 that can be school specific); the BVQ has 39. The questions provide information about:

- How frequently are students bullying/being bullied?
- What type(s) of bullying are most common?
- Where does bullying occur?
- How often do students report bullying?
- How do students feel about bullying?
- How often do students observe adults and peers responding to bullying?
The questionnaires also serve as an initial means of raising students’ awareness about what bullying is and looks like by providing a consistent definition and asking about specific behavior.

**What is the process for administering the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire?**

The OBQ is administered to all students (grades 3 and up) within a school no earlier than 6-8 weeks after school begins (or alternatively, in the spring, 6-8 weeks after winter break). This provides a snapshot in time of students’ bullying experiences. It should be administered at the same time annually to monitor changes in school climate and effects of school-wide bullying prevention efforts. The basic procedures for administering each version vary only slightly:

1. Brief school/district administration to obtain sign-off permission to purchase and administer the questionnaire.
2. Select/purchase the version most appropriate for school (OBQ scannable or online, or BVQ).
3. Identify the target date and time of day to administer the questionnaire to all students in the school (grades 3-12).
4. Decide who will oversee the administration of the questionnaire in each classroom (typically the teacher) (or the computer lab teacher, if you are using the online version).
5. Brief staff about the purpose and procedures involved, including alternative plans for administering to students who need special help or who ‘opt out’ of participation, or who are absent.
6. Notify parents about the questionnaire, and obtain parental consents as required by your school/district. Prepare for any parent concerns or questions.
7. Organize materials for each classroom, based on the number of students enrolled in each.
8. With the online version, all of this organization will be done through the online survey Website. The Website will prompt you to identify the total number of surveys needed and how many of them should be in Spanish. This can be determined the day of administration, if desired. Once this is determined, the Administrator can print passwords for students. Distribute passwords to students when they are in the computer lab.
9. Administer the questionnaire to all students on the same day. The online survey should be administered in a computer lab, if possible, to ensure that all students take the survey on the same day. If you can’t get all students surveyed on the same day, try to have all classes in the same grade and adjacent grades take the survey in
Surveysing Students about Bullying: Using the OBQ & BVQ

one day.
10. For the scannable or BVQ surveys, make a plan for collecting the questionnaires once completed and bundling them by each classroom.
11. Submit questionnaires for scanning/analysis (OBQ) or enter questionnaire data into the analysis software (BVQ).
12. Submission of the online surveys can be done online. Schools should follow the directions outlined on the online survey Website.
13. The report for the OBQ scannable and online versions will be available online. The school will receive an email notifying them when the report is ready. Generally it takes 4-6 weeks for the scannable report and 5-7 days for the online report.
14. The OBQ report is much more comprehensive than the BVQ report. It includes a 72-page report with tables and graphs, along with a comparison to a national average, and PowerPoint slides of the graphs for presentations with stakeholders. The BVQ report only includes tables and graphs.
15. Obtain and interpret results and use for planning school bullying prevention efforts.
16. Share findings/selected results with members of the school community (staff, parents, administration, other).
17. Re-administer questionnaire to students on anniversary date to measure change/effects from program implementation.

How are the OBQ-scannable version and the BVQ version administered to students?

Generally, classroom teachers oversee administration of these versions of the questionnaires. The teacher explains to students that participation is voluntary and reads an introductory statement that explains the purpose of the questionnaire, ensures the anonymity of their responses, and includes a clear definition of bullying.

Students are asked to mark the response that most closely matches their experience; students may skip questions they feel they really can’t answer. However, to be able to score their survey, students must answer the question about their grade level and gender. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers.

Each question is read to students in grades 3-5, or to any other students unable to read the items for themselves. Following the introduction, the questionnaire is self-administered by students in grades 6-12. Students will need between 45-60 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Be sure students are not rushing through the online survey version.
Once students have completed the questionnaire, the OBQ-scannable and BVQ surveys are collected by the classroom teacher and bundled together (usually into an envelope or folder) and collected for data entry and analysis. Students electronically submit their OBQ-online version for processing.

What happens once the paper-versions of the questionnaire are completed?

- Immediately collect all questionnaires
- Check for completeness and make sure the cover sheet for each classroom is completed. Keep all questionnaires bundled by classroom.
- Ship bundled OBQ scannable questionnaires, using instructions provided about how to package, label and ship boxes.
- If using the BVQ version, enter data one classroom at a time into the BVQ-Stat program. The program will automatically run pre-set analyses that can be easily printed as a Word Document.
- Print and review results (OBQ or BVQ). Consult a Certified Olweus Trainer for assistance in interpreting the information with your staff or BPCC.
- Use these results to identify needs within your school, to make adaptations to supervision or other procedures, and to shape your school's bullying prevention efforts based on findings.
- Plan to share findings with district administrators, staff, parents, students, and others as appropriate.

How is the OBQ-online version administered?

1. Once the OBQ-online version is purchased, Hazelden will send the contact person listed on the order, an email with a User ID and password. These will allow the person to enter the online survey Website, where they can set up the survey.

2. Optional Step: If the person who purchased the surveys is not the same person or persons that will be coordinating the administration of the survey at the school buildings, the purchaser will need to Add Administrators on the Website. There are instructions on the Website on how to do this. Once people are added as Administrators, they will be able to set up the surveys for administration for their particular building.
3. The Administrator fills out a School Header Sheet that includes school contact information, as well as, the number of surveys to be administered, including the number of English and Spanish surveys. At this point, the Administrator can also add content for two additional questions, and suppress certain questions, if desired (the questions on the ethnicity of students, and questions that ask about bullying with sexual meaning).

4. The Administrator will print out passwords for the students and cut them a part for easy distribution to students. The Administrator will also print out administration instructions for the computer lab staff.

5. Students should take the OBQ-online survey in a computer lab, so all students can fill out the survey in one day. If you can’t get all students through the computer lab in one day, you will want to make sure to survey all students in the same grade on the same day, and adjacent grades, if possible.

6. The teacher in the computer lab should read through the instructions with students prior to the students taking the survey. Make sure students don’t rush through the survey and click answers without thoroughly reading and considering each question.

7. Once a student is done with the survey, they can go back and review/change their answers. Once they click on the “Submit” button, however, they will not be able to make any changes. Student surveys are electronically sent for processing once submitted.

8. Once the surveying is done, the Administrator can check to make sure all surveys have been submitted by checking on the OBQ-online version Website. If all surveys are completed, the Administrator can click a button to send all of the surveys in for processing electronically.

9. It generally takes 5-7 business days for the OBQ-online survey report to be ready. The Administrator will receive an email notification when the report is ready.

Note: The survey report for the online version and scannable version are the same. For this reason, a school could do the online version one year and the scannable version the next year. However, a school cannot use both online and scannable surveys for the same administration.
**Is there anything else we need to do?**

Schools using either version will need to create a school ID and to designate codes for each participating classroom.

- **Classroom ID codes are not** "tracked" but assist with data entry and consist of the grade number and a letter (A-Z). A building administrator should assign and keep a confidential log of ID codes for each classroom. Instructions and cover sheet information come with the questionnaires.

- **School ID codes are required for all format versions of the questionnaire.** The BVQ requires 4 digits (we recommend you use the last 4 digits of your school’s state or federal ID number). The OBQ scannable version requires that you use the school's 12-digit NCES federal identification number in order to submit data for analysis. If you do not know this number, you can obtain it from the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics Website: [http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/index.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/index.asp)

The Website is easy to use, begin by entering your school name (e.g. enter "King" for ML King Elementary), city and state and use the "NCES School ID" number. If your school does not HAVE an NCES ID, contact your Certified Olweus Trainer or Hazelden Publishing representative for instructions.