Perception of Bullying and Cyberbullying Situations among Male and Female Middle and Secondary Students in a Single Gender Modern Orthodox Jewish School

by

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Acknowledgements

Dedication

Section One: Proposal Overview

The study examined student recognition of bullying and cyberbullying situations. This was a quantitative survey, analyzing the ability of middle school and high school students to recognize and identify bullying scenarios through a survey presenting such scenarios. The data was gathered by the use of an online survey submitted through Google Forms. The data was analyzed by the use of statistical regression. The following NASW Codes of Ethics are relevant to the research: 1.03 (Ethical Responsibility to Clients – Informed Consent), 1.07 (Ethical Responsibility to Clients – Privacy and Confidentiality), and 2.02 (Ethical Responsibility to Colleagues – Confidentiality).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the responses of middle school and high school students to identifying bullying and cyberbullying behaviors. The understanding of student recognition of these phenomena is limited, as is the data (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). This study would gather important information regarding student recognition, allowing a glimpse into the thought process and social framework of the students. In a world where so much social interaction takes place online, educators have a critical need to understand the social life that online platforms create, as well as the students' assumptions and understanding of those platforms (Whitty & Gavin, 2001; Vandebosch & van Cleemput, 2008).

Why concern ourselves with the question? Why does it matter that students can correctly perceive bullying situations? The simplest answer is that the best way to prevent bullying is for students to respond to it themselves. Olweus (2003) discusses the problem of the bullying circle – the wide variety of roles different students play. While some students act as defenders of the victim, far more tend to act as aids to the bully, encouraging and even participating. Many of them display feelings of regret, or belief that they defend the victim more than they really do. Perhaps, if they were better at recognizing bullying situations, more students would act to prevent bullying around

them. Educators often rely on students to help create the social atmosphere we want to have. If our students can't recognize bullying situations, then it is imperative that we adjust our educational methodology. This is even more severe a problem in a place most students spend time with absolutely no adult oversight or supervision: online.

The seemingly sudden arrival of social media has created a vast array of data, almost all of it totally opaque to the authority figures in teens' lives. Beginning on America Online and Prodigy in the early 1990's, social media platforms provided an outlet for teens and others to connect with peers across the country and across the world, totally independent of any monitoring (and indeed, in the earlier years, with total anonymity). This seemingly impenetrable shroud of secrecy persisted as children growing up in those years became "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001), engaging with social media and online interaction as a first language. Their parents, teachers, and administrators, on the other hand, were "digital immigrants" – they would always speak the language of the Internet with an awkward foreign accent (Card, 2000).

The result of this brand-new form of social interaction, existing as it did outside the purview of authority figures and parents, was a new form of bullying (Campbell, 2005). This new bullying could take place in a theatre not visible to any authority figures, and consequently had impacts whose sudden realization in the "real world" seemed inexplicable and surprising.

While the online life of teens has changed dramatically since those first days of online social media on dial-up networks (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010; Dinakar, Reichart, & Lieberman, 2011; Bucur, Renold, & Henke 1999), the sense that this world is closed to adults has not (Burgess-Proctor, Patchin, & Hinduja, 2009; Whitty & Gavin 2001). In addition, the online life (now increasingly tied to a real identity, rather than an online, anonymous avatar) is no longer divorced from the physical social life of a teen, and indeed the two may move in concert (Olweus, 2012;

Wolke, Lee, & Guy, 2017). Comments on Facebook may create a tense situation in a classroom, and a threatening text message sent from one player to another may create consequences on the court.

The current social situation has developed largely independent of the adult supervision that we commonly associate with the school environment. And while schools have made great strides in tackling the problem of bullying, there are many indications that teachers and students are still unaware of the warning signs and indicators that bullying behaviors are occurring (Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Greene, 2001). Cyberbullying, a newer and far less studied phenomenon, was even more unknown in the earlier days of teens on social media (Vandebosch & van Cleemput, 2008). Later studies showed that a large proportion of students were experiencing cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010), that cyberbullying was perceived as widespread among their peers (Sabella, Hinduja & Patchin, 2013), and that cyberbullying may be becoming fully integrated into the realm of traditional bullying, becoming effectively an extension of the classroom (Olweus, 2012; Wolke, Lee & Guy, 2017).

This study will attempt to determine whether middle school and high school students are aware of the signs of both bullying and cyberbullying. This will be accomplished through a survey, conducted anonymously, in which students responded to written descriptions of situations. Their responses will indicate whether they think a given situation qualifies as bullying. While this technique has been used with educators and professionals (Hazler et al., 2001), it has never been used with students so far as can be determined (Hinduja, 2016; Hazler, 2016).

The study was conducted using Google Forms, and with no indicators as to the name of the respondent. A link for the study was distributed to each class, and students took the survey

during school time. An opt-out option was presented to parents in advance, and to students during the session in order to ensure consent with the study.

This study was limited in that it does not address more complex and detailed areas of relevance such as: socio-economic status, levels of religious observance, racial background, regional differences, or physical size. However, since one school is being used for the study, the data will allow comparison between students who had participated in anti-bullying and bullying awareness programs in the past (run at that school for some students), as well as self-reported questions about academic and behavioral issues. Many of these determinations are very difficult to study in a purely quantitative arena, especially while maintaining anonymity in the data. By remaining limited and focused on the issue of perception of bullying situations, I can gather effective data in this area as a recommendation for future practice and training.

The NASW Code of Ethics is relevant in several areas, and the determination to maintain anonymity of the data and provide a choice for the students to participate will satisfy the relevant ethical issues.

Section Two: The Study Problem

As the Literature Review will demonstrate, several studies have shown that while awareness of and school response to bullying has improved (Carney, 2005), bullying remains a problem due to several factors that appear not to have improved. One is the poor understanding of staff and faculty, as they often either fail to properly respond to bullying situations or fail to identify bullying when it is happening (Hazler et al., 2001). Part of this failure is the lack of understanding of the many arenas in which bullying can take place, especially the social media platforms on which so many students spend their time (Griffiths, 2000). In some cases, the student properly identifies a bullying situation, but fails to report it to faculty and staff whom the students is confident will do nothing in response (Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010).

The second problem is students' failure to identify and react to bullying. Many students say they disapprove of bullying, but do not react to seeing bullying situations in front of them (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Indeed, many participate (in any of several ways), the study of bullying has been taken to new levels of sophistication through our analysis of the relationship between the bully and those students who facilitate him or her (Obermann, 2011).

In some cases, the student properly diagnoses a situation as harmful or destructive, but fails to identify it as a bullying situation (Salmivalli, 1999). The reasons for this are manifold and complex, but one clear reason may be the required reaction. If a given situation is truly bullying, then the student does in fact know what to do next. But the student may not wish to admit it – perhaps the behavior mirrors that which the student has done him- or herself, or seems too innocuous to bother with the complex process of reporting and reacting to the situation (Bradshaw et al., 2007).

The first and most important stage of improving the situation lies in identifying the degree to which students can identify bullying situations. Are they genuinely ignorant? Or willfully ignorant? Do they understand the harm that can occur in different situations? Or is their perception limited by context?

The realm of cyberbullying is of particular concern, since it is there that students and teachers both show the least willingness to react, even to aid themselves. In the last few years, rates of cyberbullying have become increasingly concerning (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004), especially as examples of suicide for that reason, termed cyberbullicide, have become prominent (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). Whereas in the past students could retreat to their homes to escape bullying, now it follows them everywhere – a large proportion of students are bullied by someone who is also bullying them at school (Wolke, Lee, & Guy, 2017). This has made recognition of cyberbullying situations, once thought of as an overblown or passing concern (Olweus, 2012), of paramount importance.

Section Three: Literature Review

A. Bullying Overview

One common theme that is noticeable throughout the bullying literature is just how difficult it is to definitively describe bullying (Arora, 1995; Schuster, 1996; Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Several attempts are made, many with similar terminology (Borg, 1999). Olweus (1993) provides this definition: "a student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students." While this definition is enormously influential in the general field of bullying studies (cited nearly 7,000 times according to Google Scholar), the very fact that so many teachers and students have difficulty identifying bullying situations (Hazler et al., 2001; Bradshaw et al., 2007) demonstrates the need for a better definition or, at least, for better education in applying that definition. In recognition of the rising trend of cyberbullying, Hiduja and Patchin (2015) define this newer phenomenon as, "willful and repeated harm inflicted through computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices."

However, the definition is not complete without other factors, which have become commonly accepted (Hazler, 1996; Olweus, 1996; Schuster, 1996; Smith & Morita, 1999), that of a power imbalance between the bully and victim. The full definition, quoted by Hazler et al. (2001), is:

> Bullying is the repeated (not just once) harming of another through words or physical attack on the school grounds or on the way to or from school. The act of bullying is unfair, because the bully is either physically stronger or more verbally or socially skilled than the victim(s). An individual or group may carry these actions out.

While wordy, this definition is also specific and detailed, and has helped create and guide several tools which have attempted to measure, inform, and combat bullying in schools.

One tool that aims to both study bullying and train students to respond to it is the BRAVE Program Student Survey, which attempts to determine important facts about bullying in school environments from a variety of different angles. The result is a robust instrument that seeks to generate a broad range of relevant responses. Beginning with a detailed description of bullying behaviors, rather than attempting a pithy or clipped definition, allows respondents to more completely understand what the instrument is asking. The definition also uses casual language (avoiding jargon) and specific examples, to ensure clarity. Questions about adult involvement, participant involvement, the spreading of rumors, name calling, distraction, frequency, and leadership all require the respondent to consider a wide variety of issues related to bullying. Included in the instrument is a self-esteem measure, noted by many researchers as an important, even critical factor is measuring the effects of bullying and the likelihood of both victimization and perpetration (Glover, Gough, Johnson, & Cartwright, 2000; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Olweus, 2012).

The primary weakness in the instrument is its age, demonstrated in the paucity of cyberbullying questions and measures. An enormous component of social life now happens online (Campbell, 2005; Juvonen & Gross, 2008), especially among teens and young adults (Schneider, O'Donnell, Stueve, & Coulter, 2011; Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, & Tippett, 2008), and any discussion of issues related to social interaction cannot ignore this vital and often totally unsupervised (Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010) area of interaction. In general, the slow response of adults to become conversant and even to acknowledge the importance of online

interaction among teens has resulted in a serious deficit of knowledge in these areas (Agatston, Kowalski, & Limber, 2007).

Another tool, directly guided by the more expansive definition discussed above, is Hazler, Miller, Carney, and Green's (2001) seminal Bullying Situations Identification Instrument, which used specific scenarios to determine students' perception of bullying situations. Specifically, the various "types of harm" become an important factor (and may indeed be connected to the poor understanding of bullying by staff discussed in Bradshaw et al. (2007). This instrument adapted the definition above to focus on repetition, intent to harm, and power imbalance between bully and victim. Though the origin of the affirmation that "sticks and stones" are more dangerous than names may have an unclear origin, it is clear from this analysis that not only are such activities more harmful than physical bullying, they are also less likely to attract the attention and intervention of a staff member.

Causes for bullying were also explored by the authors – factors such as race, religion, socio-economic status, "cleverness" and scholastic aptitude, athletic aptitude, and "being different" were all found in some way to be relevant to bullying. Reluctance of victims to tell a teacher (due to assumed lack of interest or effectiveness), and even the teachers' lower likelihood of intervention in non-physical bullying all contributed to the problem (Carney, 2005). Contradictory advice from parents (such as to endure without responding, tell a teacher, or fight back) can impact self-esteem among victims as well.

Following the increasing attention paid to bullying over the previous few decades, Espelage and Swearer (2003) wrote a comprehensive and detailed literature review, noting the difficulty in defining and assessing bullying and peer victimization. The complexity of these identifications trips up both experienced faculty and students, despite both groups' frequent commitment to

preventing bullying. The review also attempted to debunk the idea that bullies and victims were two mutually exclusive and distinct groups – in fact, a broad continuum of behaviors created the complex social interactions from which bullying has emerged. This was merely one in several attempts to map the sophisticated web of connections between bullies, victims, and others that would occupy many researchers.

The popular notion of gender distinctions in bullying (Coie & Dodge, 1998) is also taken to task by Espelage and Swearer. The perception that girls tend to use relational aggression, while boys are more likely to engage in physical aggression (Crick, 1996; Crick, Casas, & Mosher, 1997; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997), later research attempted to replicate these findings and failed to do so (Rys & Bear, 1997; Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003). The nature of bullying as far beyond personal interactions, but as part of a much larger social-ecological framework, was also discussed.

Glover, Gough, Johnson and Cartwright (2000) identified and studied several distinctions within bullying, which was commonly divided between bullies and victims. They found that the line was far more permeable, and that victims who may also bully themselves, as well as "non-participants" (who certainly do affect the situation, passive though they may be) as important to the bullying scenario as well.

Also searching for an understanding of the connections between different players in a bullying situation, Borg (1999) attempted a broad and comprehensive study of bullying in primary and secondary schoolchildren in 40 schools in Malta, studying many details of the bully-victim connection in an attempt to find consistencies. He analyzed such out-of-the-box factors as height, parents' occupation, and working or non-working mothers of both bullies and victims. He also studied the relevance of "ability stream" (academic tracking), a factor that Olweus (1996) had

argued was relevant, and found a high correlation: students in lower tracks tended to bully each other more.

Interestingly, factors like height (corresponding to physical strength or development) and socio-economic status turned out to be irrelevant, statistically speaking. Factors like gender and age were more important, especially in distinctions in the type of bullying. However, there is cause for concern about the validity of some results, since the study used an inconsistent mix of peer reporting and self-reporting. The major differences between the way bullies viewed themselves and their actions, as opposed to how their peers viewed them, shows that such reporting is subject to bias.

In the same theme, Juvonen, Wang and Espinoza (2010) noted a drop in grade point average among bullying victims; poor academic performance was predicted accurately by both peer- and self-assessment. A meta-analysis by Nakamote and Schwartz (2010) noted this phenomenon as well, showcasing the long-ranging and wide-ranging effects of bullying, far beyond the playground.

Following a different line, Graham and Juvonen (1998) attempted to analyze the perceived "why" of bullying – why do people bully, or why do they think bullying occurs? The resulting study of self-perception is important for how it reveals attitudes that may be changed with education or training. The perception that bullying is characterological also implies that it can't be changed – that the bullying behavior is in fact hopeless. The perception that such actions are behavioral instead creates hope, and the possibility that such behavior can improve.

Recognizing the larger social picture of bullying, Chapell, Hasselman, Kitchin, Lomon, MacIver, and Sarullo (2006) studied what they called "bullying continuity" – how likely a victim was to continue being a victim, or a bully to continue being a bully. While the study is

retrospective, and therefore subject to the bias of distant memory and self-reporting, there did seem to be a correlation between adult victims (to bullying in the workplace) and victimization in school. Interestingly, this study also found no gender distinction for bullying in college, very unlike elementary, middle, or high school. There was also a disturbing correlation found between bullying victimization and school shootings – many shooters had been bullied, and were seeking revenge on those they viewed as tormentors. The long-term impact, despite the study's small sample size, suggests that bullying is not merely a social problem in school, but can in fact impact the student's entire life.

In addition, extensive studying of victims found that the feeling of victimization lingered long after the bully who began it was gone. Victims in one situation were likely to be victimized in other situations (even after changing schools and moving to a new city), since they felt like (and perhaps sent social signals that they were) victims (noted also in Chapell et al., 2006). Salmivalli (1999) noted that "even if social roles are potentially changing, they sometimes become self-fulfilling prophecies: the behavior of the individual starts to resemble more and more the expectations directed towards him."

B. Bystanders in Bullying

An important layer of complexity – often ignored or downplayed in bullying intervention among teachers (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007) – is the presence and even involvement (passive or active) of bystanders. Bullying may be done privately, but it is often very public and in full view of many other students. Obermann (2011) noted that most children say they disapprove of bullying and would like to prevent it or assist a victim, but the study also found that many simply do not, and that in fact some higher incidents of self-reported "defenders" might be unreliable (so

bystanders feel better about themselves). A strange kind of moral and social turnabout seems to occur: victims are increasingly disliked, possibly to justify the bystanders' lack of intervention; victims were more likely to defend other victims, but bullies were also likely to be bystanders in other bullying situations. "Moral disengagement" is a combination of justification tools used by bystanders to avoid feeling responsible for the victim (although researchers, like Hymel, Rocke-Henderson, and Bonanno [2005], divide bystanders into several types by level of involvement).

Salmivalli, Huttunen, and Lagerspetz (1997) noted that the peer group may be more important than previously realized. While children of similar levels of aggression tend to associate with each other (Cairns, 1994), the bully him- or herself is often unpopular. However, the bully still has a big enough peer group to encourage him (especially taking into account the more complex peer group associations discussed below in Salmivalli [1999] and Obermann [2011]). In addition, the victim is often also unpopular, so the likelihood of resistance from other peer groups within the class may be lower.

Mapping the social relationships in a given class using self-reporting and peer reporting, the study noted that children in the same peer group showed similar status regarding bullying. Major differences in network size were noted for different kinds of groups (girls' groups were larger than boys'; victims and defenders had significantly smaller groups than assistant-defenders). Especially concerning was that many victims had no perceivable social network at all, and that children without such a network were nearly 50% more likely to be bullied.

Salmivalli (1999) was also concerned with participant roles in bullying behavior, and tried to demonstrate that the entire bullying phenomenon could not exist without a social structure supporting it in the form of the peer group playing various roles. The study identified specific roles beyond bully and victim: assistants (getting involved and joining the bully); reinforcers (assisting

or encouraging the bully); outsiders (not assisting, but not interfering); and defenders (attempting to stop the bullying). This leads to compelling questions about how bullying might change if students were better at perceiving it when it was occurring, and Salmivalli recommends a combination of training and counseling among students to help facilitate this.

Olweus (2003) suggested the concept of the "bullying circle," a theoretical map of a bullying situation. The victim stands in the middle, surrounded by a variety of groups, including the bully and various kinds of bystanders (discussed in Obermann, 2011 and Salmivalli, 2010). These groups range from A (the actual bullies) to G (actual defenders), with the groups between showing the continuum along which bystander reactions might travel (followers, supporters, passive supporters, disengaged onlookers, and possible but inactive defenders). This is a useful tool for understanding the layers and complexity of a bullying situation.

Furthering Olweus's work, Salmivalli (2010) points out an interesting etymological phenomenon: the Swedish word for "bullying" was originally closer to "mobbing," indicating that some cultures noted the peer network relevance long ago. Björkqvist, Ekman and Lagerspetz (1982) even hypothesized, long before the bulk of major bullying literature, that the primary motivation was ego, and the desire to be dominant among peers. This makes bullying much more about the group than a single victim. Salmivalli's (2010) finding that peers are almost always present for bullying reinforces this.

The study also found that victims with defenders recovered better and had much less anxiety, despite their victimization (in contrast to the severe long-term effects uncovered by Salmivalli, 1999 and Chapell et al., 2006). The more targeted exploration of the bully's peer group found that kids who viewed bullies as cool exhibited more bullying behaviors themselves, even if their attempts to join the bully's peer group was not reciprocated. Bystanders were strongly

impacted by a variety of factors, including the perceived power or popularity of the bully, to the later justification of the victim's dessert (yet another echo of Chapell et al., 2006).

Phillips (2007), following the lead of Salmivalli et al. (1997), studied the phenomenon of "punking," similar to bullying but with a more specific definition involving "purposeful strategies taken up and used by many boys to affirm masculinity norms of toughness, strength, dominance, and control." The emphasis on "affirming masculinity" implies a strongly social component, following popular notions of manliness. These behaviors were so frequent that most victims could not remember specific instances, and found these behaviors to be deeply ingrained in the culture of boys' interactions (and thus contained of a powerful group social element). In addition, a powerful part of this dominance was expressed through a feminizing language, intended to humiliate the victim by stripping him of his own masculinity.

Moreover, a critical part of Phillip's 2007 study (which also found expression in 2000, 2001, and 2005 studies) is the marginalization and objectification of the victims. Using misogynist or feminizing language against a male victim is often not personal – certainly unlike the victim-as-target form seen in Salmivalli (1999) – and that the victim is turned into an object, denuded of his masculinity and identity. The victim is no longer a real person, and only the bully is real, and therefore only the bully is really masculine. Again, such a distinction necessarily involves a group of boys to validate, confirm, or encourage the bully and demean the victim.

Teräsahjo and Salmivalli (2003) found that students often justify or play down bullying and its consequences, and used extensive categorization of perceptions of bullying by peers, including how it is described, discussed, and justified (called "interpretive repertoire" by Potter and Wetherell [1987]). This disconnect between what the students see and how they interpret it to

justify not intervening in bullying behavior is an important step in determining how to improve the situation – that gap must be narrowed through training and education of those very peers.

The work of the researchers discussed above is not only critical, it may hold the key to a far deeper truth about bullying: that no one is alone in a bullying situation. The wide variety of bystanders and other "stakeholders," in addition to the bully and victim, demonstrates that a meaningful change can and must occur not merely through the bully or the victim, but the population that surrounds and enables them.

C. Faculty Involvement

Taking into account the reactions (or lack thereof) of teachers and staff, Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O'Brennan (2007) focused on the critical difference in bullying perceptions between faculty and students. For many students, "telling" is the only effective solution (Smith et al., 2008), but the distinction between perceptions mean that a student has to be concerned that a report of bullying will be ignored or viewed as exaggerated. Teachers also report mixed feelings about the value of intervening at all, with a strong push for further training to ameliorate that problem.

The school noticeably suffers as a result of this disconnect. There is a massive discrepancy between student and staff perception of bullying: 67% of middle schoolers and 60% of high schoolers believed their teachers were not doing enough to prevent bullying, while 81% of staff believed they were. This kind of difference indicates a very serious problem.

Those who see bullying by their peers are also concerned about retaliatory bullying as a result of telling. This results in a bystander effect (studied more extensively by Obermann, 2011), by which students do not interfere in bullying situations, despite having stated that they disapprove of such behavior. This study specifically criticizes the lack of a clear definition of bullying for

creating the freedom to bully – without a clear definition, we can't teach either students or faculty when or how to intervene.

Glover et al. (2000) found in their study of bullying in secondary schools that the bully/victim distinction ignored a much more complex and permeable line, influenced by victims who were also bullies as well as non-participants. The confusion of these interactions, along with the reluctance of victims to tell a teacher, compounds the problem in later school years. The unlikelihood of teachers intervening in non-physical bullying and contradictory advice from parents (such as to endure without responding, tell a teacher, or fight back) can impact self-esteem among victims as well.

Hazler et al. (2001) focused on staff and faculty's ability to distinguish bullying scenarios. This study necessitated the creation of the Bullying Situations Identification Instrument. Specifically, this test was designed with "right" and "wrong" answers, allowing for an objective measure of the teacher's perception of bullying in a given scenario. This also allowed the authors to determine not only how likely a given respondent was to respond correctly, but also allowed them to see what kinds of bullying were hardest for teachers to identify – the situations that were frequently misunderstood. The study found some specific triggers – like physical confrontation – that often encourages a misdiagnosis as bullying (when the scenario is in fact aggressive play, or fighting – both distinct from bullying). In fact, the teachers in general were bad at identifying non-bullying scenarios. Even those who scored well on the identifications seemed to do more poorly in determining when bullying was not happening.

This has interesting implications when joined with Bradshaw et al., 2007 – perhaps teachers overreact on a test, but underreact in practice? This would suggest that teachers may feel reluctant to react to situations in school even when they might know, or feel, that bullying is taking place,

but are aware of the discrepancy. They then seek to make up for it in a less impactful situation – on the test.

Smith et al. (2008) also found that a large percentage of bullying victims simply never report it (similar to Juvonen & Gross, 2008). Even more severely than Schneider et al. (2011) found, Smith et al. found that cyberbullying actually goes up even as in-school bullying decreases in the older grades. A possible explanation for this was found in some of the interviews: bullying was frequently identified as being "fun" or "entertaining," with the implication that the distance creates a lower level of empathy for the bully (even in the lack of anonymity that modern social media often has). In addition, the loneliness of enduring cyberbullying without others around for support leads some victims to describe it as even worse than in-school bullying. Reporting was also far less likely among cyberbullying victims than traditional bullying.

D. Transition to Middle School and High School

Pellegrini & Long (2002) analyzed the transition from elementary to middle school, seeking a cause for the increase in bullying that seems to appear at that stage. Specifically, they noted that "bullying may be one way in which young adolescents manage peer and dominance relationships as they make the transition into new social groups." Peer affiliation also played a strong role in preventing (or encouraging) victimization (Salmivalli et al., 1997; Salmivalli, 1999). In very literal terms, "better" friends made for less bullying.

Another factor suggested bullying as a rebellion against authority, since the students are "exhibiting behavior that is antithetical to adult norms" (Moffitt, 1993). This combination of factors is especially strong as the students in middle school enter puberty and transition into a new environment, and the need for such self-expression becomes stronger.

Chapell et al. (2006), in their study of "bullying continuity," found correlations stretching far beyond middle school and even into adulthood. Many school shootings have correlations to bullying, with victims seeking revenge on those they viewed as tormentors. Likewise, Salmon, James, and Smith (1998) found a correlation of personality traits among bullies and victims. While low anxiety and high depression was a good indicator of bullying behavior among boys, high anxiety among boys correlated with being bullied. Among girls, low anxiety was a better predictor of not being bullied, while high anxiety and low depression made girls less likely to be bullies. This implies that bullies may be, as is commonly advised, just as unhappy as their victims – but in a different way, producing different "coping" skills and reactions.

Maunder et al. (2010) found that, in a study comparing staff perceptions to student perceptions of bullying, that indirect bullying – including cyberbullying – is often ignored or minimized. These "low levels" of bullying are perceived as permissible, and therefore likely to be repeated since they are nonphysical. Even physical bullying with a perceived low level of seriousness if often ignored, leading to a much larger incidence of bullying than the staff realizes.

Hepburn, Azrael, Molnar, and Miller (2012) attempted to trace suicidal behaviors among urban youth to bullying. Although very few questions dealt directly with bullying, the study found that bullying victims and even bullies themselves were far more likely to have considered or attempted suicide. This tendency remained even after controlling for factors like race, gender, and ethnicity.

Bauman, Toomey and Walker (2013) also sought a connection between bullying, depression, and suicide, and found that girls with depression were also more likely to be bullied (as well as having suicidal thoughts). Among boys, however, cyberbullying takes on a different character: it is often intended as a joke, or the degree of harm is not understood by the bully (also

found from the victim's perspective in Smith et al., 2008). The bully might even develop strong feelings of guilt upon realizing the degree of harm he has truly caused, leading to a higher degree of suicide attempts among male cyberbullies. Hinduja and Patchin (2010b) found a significant correlation between low self-esteem and both cyberbullying victimhood and perpetration.

E. Rise and Prevalence of Online Bullying

Bucur, Renold, and Henke (1999), in an analysis that reads as rather dated today but shows prescience in many important areas, noted the rapid and widespread adoption of the Internet, especially that both much older and much younger users became early adopters of the technology. While this study seems to come from a different era, it is critical to understand the rapidity and ubiquity with which social media conquered the teenage social landscape. Facebook is less than 15 years old, and has allowed non-college students to access the platform for only a decade, yet claims 1.71 billion regular users on their blog. No citation is needed to demonstrate that a teen's online presence has rapidly grown in significance and complexity.

Writing in the earliest days of the rise of online social media, Whitty and Gavin (2001) found that debates over the depth and meaning of online-only relationships were already raging, and that online anonymity was a serious source of social conflict, especially in arenas that connected to a real-life working or school environment. One can extrapolate that this would also impact today's social media, which is often tied closely to a real-life relationship or social arena (such as a class Facebook or WhatsApp group). However, the lack of anonymity in so many online social interactions (especially those connected to the aforementioned real-world social environments) removes that layer of protection bullies and victims both may have had. While some social media platforms (and their levels of anonymity and protection) seem to have stood the test

of time, others were abandoned after just a few years of prominence (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010), shifting the landscape.

This concern for anonymity was balanced with a desire or need for attention, especially from people who felt that attention was easier to acquire online than in the social world. Rollman, Krug, and Parente (2000) determined that provocative comments online tended to receive longer and quicker responses, revealing an important aspect about Internet social culture. In the battle for attention, outrage is a powerful force. While this study is quite dated, its determinations do not appear so.

In a similar vein, Suler (2004) studied the "online disinhibition effect," something that became far more familiar in more recent years on website comments showing vitriol and explicit language that the same writers would never express in public. Even before the days of such common displays on social media and YouTube comments, Suler (2004) found a profound divorcing from such social norms once the interaction was online. This kind of "freedom" online may account for the discoveries of Bauman et al. (2013), finding that the cyberbully may not even view his actions as harmful at all, an in fact shows guilt (and even a higher likelihood of suicide attempts) upon realizing the impact.

Some platforms have been so overwhelmed with abusive or bullying messages on their sites that attempts have been made to create a program that would automatically detect such comments (Dinakar, Reichart, & Lieberman, 2011; Dadvar & de Jong, 2012; Dadvar, Trieschnigg, Ordelman, & de Jong, 2013). Despite the best efforts of the researchers, however, most attempts to tackle the problem electronically have failed – often due to the complexity of language like sarcasm, which can be hard to quantify. Many popular news sites, including NPR, CNN, Popular Science, and Reuters have shut down their comments sections entirely, sending their users to social

media sites instead. Those sites often have their own systems for dealing with abusive comments, removing the onus from the news outlet itself (Gross, 2014; Montgomery, 2016).

Other concerns regarding social interactions on the Internet focused on the amount of time spent and possible psychological consequences. Even as early as Griffiths (2000), several case studies showed that extensive Internet use carried some of the signs of addiction. Social interaction on the Internet was clearly showing signs of becoming an important field of study even before the days of mass social media.

Hinduja & Patchin (2010) studied suicidal ideation for 1,963 middle-schoolers result from both bullying and cyberbullying (based on their study in 2007), terming suicide due to the latter, "cyberbullicide." They especially noted that cyberbullicide did not seem to happen in a vacuum of online bullying; most accounts were aided by factors, "such as offline mistreatment, emotional and psychological problems, academic difficulties, low self-esteem, clinical depression, a lack of a support structure…" This matches the findings of Olweus (2012), who found that cyberbullying was rarely the only type of bullying at play. Indeed, despite Olweus's 2012 study warning against the "overrated" perception of cyberbullying as a massive and new problem, Albin (2012) noted a number of cases of cyberbullicide, as well as the CDC's classification of cyberbullying as a public health problem as an argument for legislation specifically criminalizing cyberbullying behaviors.

However, there has also been some discrepancy in finding the frequency of cyberbullying: Ybarra & Mitchell (2004) found 19% of teen Internet users had engaged in or been victims of cyberbullying; Juvonen & Gross (2008), at the other end of the spectrum, found that 72% of teens had experienced cyberbullying; meanwhile, Hinduja and Patchin (2007, 2008, 2009), Agatston, Kowalski and Limber (2007), and Williams and Guerra (2007) found a range from about 15–35% of respondents reported being victimized online and 10–20% admit to victimizing others. While

the degree of cultural penetration may be debatable, cyberbullying has clearly spread deeply into teens' lives (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011).

F. Specifics of Cyberbullying

Rollman et al. (2000) showed, in their early determination of the power of outrage and provocation in garnering attention online, that bullying behavior was already manifesting in the online community. Indeed, Vandebosch and Van Cleemput (2008) provided a detailed definition of cyberbullying adapted from many of the traditional definitions (most notably Olweus, 1993) to include online interactions. Most interestingly, distinctions are made by interviewees between bullying online and teasing or joking. While in some cases the behaviors might simply be misidentified, the contrast of online interactions meant that sometimes people "perceived as more powerful in real life were the target of cyber attacks." This analysis challenges the view of bullying as a social power dynamic, discussed in Phillips (2007) and Peterson and Rigby (1999), as social interactions become less personal (bully vs. his or her immediate social circle) and more global (bully vs. the entire online community). The public arena of bullying had mutated, and with it new forms of bullying were created and needed to be addressed.

A critical question when discussing any "new" form of bullying is whether this form is different in kind or content from other forms – is it truly "new," or simply a retreat of an old problem? If it is not new, an argument may be made for treating it along with the previous forms we have identified – perhaps cyberbullying requires no special treatment? Hinduja and Patchin (2006) disagree. Where once the victim could find respite at home, the advent of cyberbullying ensures that nowhere, no social environment, is safe.

Even more disturbing is the determination of Ybarra and Mitchell (2004), who found that a survey of 1,498 Internet users (where 19% were bullied), 84% knew their bully, but only 31% in person. However, since this study was conducted in 2004, Facebook opened to teen users, and YouTube, Pintrest, Instagram, and Snapchat were founded. By 2012, Olweus found very different statistics: only 10% of his respondents were bullied or bullied others exclusively online. The advent of social media (which frequently connects accounts through several platforms and links activity to a real-life person) had shifted the online conversation from people you do not know to people you do.

Recognizing that there were some inherently new aspects of cyberbullying, Mishna, Cook, Gadalla, Daciuk and Solomon (2010) found that cyberbullying could take interesting forms, such as impersonating the victim online. In addition, the study found that many respondents believed that they were not bullies or bullying victims, despite answering the bullying situations descriptions positively. Once the word "bullied" was introduced, most believed it did not refer to their experiences.

Juvonen and Gross (2008) identified some specific behaviors related to cyberbullying, such as posting embarrassing information to public (or popularly available) websites (known sometimes as "doxing," the online release of another's personal documents). The study also noted the strong correlation between bullying at school and bullying online, as the two are often linked and anonymity is rarely a factor a noted change from the infancy of online social interactions noted in Suler, 2004). In fact, part of the stress is knowing that the victim is not safe from the bully even at home (Hiduja & Patchin, 2011). Most critically, Juvonen and Gross (2008) seek to debunk the idea that online bullying is a separate problem from school bullying:

> "The 85% overlap between online and in-school bullying experiences and the 7-fold higher risk of online incidents among repeatedly targeted youth at school suggest that cyberspace is not a separate risky environment. Rather, cyberspace seems to be used as a forum that extends the school grounds."

The ubiquity of online social interaction can itself become a factor in bullying behaviors. Sabella, Hinduja, and Patchin (2013) point out an interesting paradox. Telling teens that cyberbullying is so widespread runs the risk of making it seem normative – that everyone does it, and is therefore not a serious problem. This is similar to a point made by Olweus (2012), in which he considers the idea that cyberbullying as a uniquely harmful phenomenon is "overrated."

In contrary to concerns over normalization, Ybarra, Diener-West, and Leaf (2007) found that cyberbullying victims were far more likely to cut school, misbehave in school, or take weapons to school, while Mitchell, Ybarra, & Finkelhor (2007) found that cyberbullying victims also had significantly higher rates of depression. This seems to suggest that such similar impacts to "regular" bullying (Salmon et al., 1998) shows that cyberbullying should be treated with the same level of seriousness and attention.

On the other hand, Olweus (2012) seems concerned that cyberbullying is being reported and discussed as a massive, wide-ranging phenomenon. His studies indicate that while it is concerning, it is much more useful to consider online social interactions in the context of other bullying behaviors. He finds no evidence that cyberbullying is becoming worse over time, nor does he find evidence that a large number of victims are bullying or being bullied online exclusively. Sameer Hinduja, in a personal communication, confirmed that the Cyberbullying Research Center has not seen "a marked increase or decrease over the years." Instead, Olweus finds (in both American and Norwegian studies) that only 10% of victims or bullies are only online – making

cyberbullying, by and large, a symptom of the larger bullying problem, and not a problem in and of itself.

Finding similar correlations between cyberbullying and regular bullying, Schneider et al. (2011) studied contrasts between bullying and cyberbullying and in-school bullying in high school, and found that while in-school bullying decreased enormously over those later teen years, cyberbullying decreased only slightly. One theory suggested that major bullying activities had not in fact decreased as much as had been assumed, and were now simply taking place online.

Educational responses to traditional bullying can also be reflected in responses to cyberbullying. Campbell (2005) found that punishing cyberbullying was a common reaction, despite the well-researched determination that the "no-blame" approach was far more effective for bullies (Young, 1998). This may be reflective of the lack of understanding that cyberbullying is not necessarily a separate phenomenon from in-school bullying (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). The common appeal to punitive reactions to bullying seems, in Campbell's opinion, to be mostly to make adults feel better, perhaps about their common failure to intervene (Bradshaw et al., 2007).

Hinduja and Patchin (2013) suggest that informal social controls are more effective than formal punitive measures or the threat of arrest; while the study does not directly compare these methods, they find that social controls from parents and peers have a perceptible impact in a study of over 4000 students. This study also attempted to determine whether peer pressure could be harnessed to prevent bullying, and found that kids who thought their parents and friends would be angry were less likely to engage in cyberbullying. This indicates that as social media and online lives have become more integrated into the culture, so too has the "bystander effect" of bullying (Obermann, 2011; Salmivalli, 2010) come to impact cyberbullying as well.

Cyberbullying demonstrates other aspects that mirror traditional bullying. A study of Turkish students (Baker & Tanrikulua, 2010) found that female students were significantly more likely to be engaging in cyberbullying than male. This could be explained as an outgrowth of the tendency among female bullies to focus on exclusionary or social bullying, which is most easily adapted to the online environment, rather than the more common tendency among males to engage in physical bullying, which is not. Bauman et al. (2013) found that the bully may feel extremely guilty upon understanding the severity of his or her actions, since cyberbullying is often intended as a joke. Their study found a higher degree of suicide attempts among male cyberbullies, with this disconnect credited as a possible cause.

Noting that much research has found that girls were more likely to participate in less direct forms of bullying (Baldry, 1998; Crick, 1996; Crick, Casas, & Mosher 1997; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995), Hinduja and Patchin (2008) suggest that cyberbullying is especially suited for "female-style" bullying, removing the gender gap that has long been noted in bullying research. Another aspect that changed the "style" of bullying is that students belonging to marginal groups (racial, social, physical) do not necessarily feel that marginalization in online interactions. Targets may feel they can "turn the tables" on their tormentors in this new, more democratic space where their voices are as loud as anyone else's.

In a study of specifically female adolescent bullying victims, Burgess-Proctor, Hinduja, and Patchin (2009) found that, out of a population of more than 3,000 girls, 38.3% reported being bullied, and more than 80% of victims report knowing the bully. Even worse, only 13% told a parent, and only 7% told another adult. These numbers suggest that it is questionable whether adolescents realize when bullying is happening, as opposed to online harassment.

However, the Internet is not as lawless and uncontrolled as some seem to think; there are a variety of options for reporting and blocking online interactions with bullies. But the almost total lack of engagement with preventative tools or measures among bullying victims found by Juvonen and Gross (2008) is strange. Victims of this kind of online abuse mostly report that they have never banned or blocked anyone, not have they informed adults. This lack of reporting is mirrored in Smith et al. (2008), who found cyberbullying on the rise in the very grades that school bullying decreased. Hinduja and Patchin (2007) found that fewer than 9% of cyberbullying victims informed a teacher or adult. They also found that cyberbullying victims are concerned that online harassment may lead to serious danger in the real world.

But the disconnect between bully and victim online may be systemic. Smith et al. (2008) found that the motivations for bullies appear to change with the move online (bullying was described as "fun" or "entertaining," with the victim's distance causing a lowering of empathy). Victims also experienced a shift, feeling greater loneliness as they endured bullying without others functioning as defenders or observers (the absence of the Bullying Circle found in Olweus, 2003). And as in Juvonen and Gross (2008), Smith et al. found that cyberbullying victims were even less likely to report their experiences than traditional bullying victims.

Sticca and Perren (2012) also noted the lack of reporting among cyberbullying victims, and suggested that it may be connected to a fear of losing access to the technology on which the bullying occurred (a laptop computer, smart phone, or tablet). This conflict between reporting bullying and fearing adults responding in a way that is either unhelpful or damaging (such as causing the loss of a device) is discussed by Bauman (2010), Blake and Louw (2010), Juvonen and Gross (2008), and Mishna, Saini, and Solomon (2009).

It is also possible that students failing to report cyberbullying are simply responding to the signals of their teachers, as noted by Maunder et al. (2010). "Indirect" bullying – including cyberbullying and other nonphysical forms of bullying – is considered a lower level of bullying. In general, Agatston et al. (2007) found that students' responses to focus groups on cyberbullying (especially females) found an almost total absence of discussion of cyberbullying by staff. While it was largely experienced outside of school, cyberbullying could spill over into the school social environment as well, where students found little support.

G. Where to Go Next

A great deal of attention is focused on the bullies and their victims, and still more on the faculty and staff who are supposed to be combating the problem. But a critical problem that many students and teachers alike may not understand is that a problem cannot be combatted if it is not identified. Salmivalli's (2010) etymological point, that the Swedish word for "bullying" was originally closer to "mobbing," suggests that bullying is more complex than any of the stakeholders might assume.

Students being able to understand when they are acting as bullies or victims has repercussions for the entire peer group, as Salmivalli et al. (1997) found when they mapped the social relationships in a classroom. Children showed similar status regarding bullying with the rest of their peer group, though victims and defenders tended to have much smaller groups than others. Victims with no social network at all were nearly 50% more likely to be bullied, and Salmivalli (2010) found that victims with defenders had much less anxiety. Salmivalli and Voeten (2004) found major gender differences in defending victims from bullies – girls were more likely than boys to engage in such behavior.

Obermann's 2011 study found that even as most children say they are unhappy with bullying and disapprove of bullies' activities in school, many children fail to intervene when given the chance. The study even alleges that the levels of self-reported "defenders" may be inflated and therefore unreliable. This is reinforced by Salmivalli (1999), who explained that bullying as a concept requires a participating (or at the very least non-interfering) social structure. This even holds true when the social situation itself is transformed: Bullying victims were likely to become bullying victims even after changing schools or moving to a new city. The feeling of victimization made them seem like victims to others (noted also in Chapell et al., 2006), causing further victimization. Teräsahjo and Salmivalli (2003) also found students playing down bullying behaviors and creating excuses to justify them.

Similarly, Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, and Kaukiainen (1996) studied self- and peer-reported social status to examine bullying roles in the school's social structure. The results show that bullies consistently do not think of themselves as bullies, even among near-universal agreement of their peers. In addition, there were considerable differences tied to gender – female bullies tended to be of higher social status than male bullies, who occupied lower levels of social status (Lindman & Sinclair, 1988). This is perhaps connected to the tendency of boys to engage in physical bullying, while girls tend to engage in social and exclusionary bullying, which by nature necessitates a higher social status to be effective.

Peterson and Rigby (1999) also found that "anti-bullying activities directed and undertaken by students themselves received most approval from peers." This may reflect a failure of the staff in more than one area: not only have several studies found that staff fail to intervene (Maunder et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Carney, 2005), but this study finds that staff also vastly underestimated the size of the bullying problem in their own school.

However, Peterson and Rigby (1999) found there was a strange catch: by attacking bullying practices that were so tightly tied to the sense of masculinity among many students (Phillips, 2007), "reported peer victimization among Year 9 students appears to have increased together with greater reluctance to seek help from others." In this case, the educational attempts appear to have created an "us vs. them" attitude, with bullying and masculinity becoming a stand-in for personal masculine expression and rebellion against authority (Pellegrini & Long, 2002) – exactly what high school students want most. Stevens, de Bourdeaudhuij, and van Oost (2000) also found a correlation between increased resistance to anti-bullying programs in older grades, connected to rebellion against authority (and therefore the figures presenting those programs). This perception may color any efforts to combat bullying, and may be part of what causes students to refuse to identify bullying as such.

The above review makes it clear that there is a profound need to more effectively treat bullying, but that to do so often requires an ability to recognize bullying situations that is hard to determine. How can a student combat bullying behaviors around him or her, without being skilled at identifying them? To answer that, we must first determine whether our students possess that skill.

Section Five: Psychometrics

The measure being used for this study was generated from two sources. The first is the Bullying Situations Identification Instrument, created by Hazler and Carney (2001) for their study (Hazler, et al., 2001). In it, the authors crafted 21 scenarios describing situations in which students might find themselves. The task for teachers and administrators was to determine whether those scenarios were "bullying" per se, based on Olweus's 1993 definition: the conflict must be *repeated* over time, *intentionally* harmful to the victim, and involve an *imbalance of power* between the bully and victim. If each of these three qualifications were present, the situation would qualify as bullying. This study, cited nearly three hundred times in other literature, demonstrates the importance of studying not only specific behaviors seen in students, but the larger perception of the story of a bullying scenario.

The original BSI instrument was administered to teachers and education professionals. I determined, after extensive research and communication with the authors, that no similar study had been conducted using students as respondents. The question I wanted to answer became clear: Are students good at identifying bullying when they see it? While the answer should be clear, the BSI instrument demonstrated that educational professionals often misread situations (Hazler et al., 2001; Carney, 2005) and incorrectly attributed severity or aggression in a situation as the determining factor. If teachers were not conversant in such judgements, what was the likelihood that students were?

In addition, many schools in my area had engaged in the BRAVE program, receiving specific instruction in the nature of bullying and how to respond when it occurs. Are these seminars having an impact? Are students more likely to correctly interpret bullying situations after having gone through a BRAVE seminar? The only way to find out seemed to be a survey in the BSI style.

The original 21 scenarios were analyzed for relevant content for the respondents, a single gender modern Orthodox middle and high school with both boys' and girls' divisions (the school self-identifies as "modern" in their mission statement). Scenarios involving gang culture or sexual situations were removed due to their diminished relevance in that context. In addition, the original BSI had all 21 situations written with both male and female characters, then flipped during control trials to determine whether the gender of the respondent and the gender of the characters impacted the perception of bullying. I felt that, since the respondents would be from single-gender classrooms, seeing the bullying situation from the perspective of a character that is the same gender as the respondent would help personalize the situation. In addition, the selected scenarios all deal with single-gender situations to maintain that consistency. Ideally, I would run pilot studies as Hazler and Carney did, but the time frame and scope of the study does not allow such a luxury.

The research has also made clear that while cyberbullying may not be as divorced from traditional bullying as some earlier researchers have suggested (Olweus, 2012; Wolke et. al., 2017), it is nevertheless an important aspect of teens' lives and must be taken into account. The fact that none of the original BSI scenarios featured any online or social media situations itself gave me pause. I adapted a series of scenarios originally conceived by Patchin and Hinduja (2015), focusing on situations that students might encounter online on a regular basis. These scenarios were rewritten in the style of the BSI scenarios, and adapted to fit with the coding the original scenarios included; some of them are bullying, and some are not, based on the definition accepted from Olweus (1993). They too are single-gender scenarios, written for both male and female respondents.

To add useful data, questions were included in the beginning of the measure asking respondents whether they behave well in school and at home, and to report their general academic

standing and grade level. Finally, respondents are asked whether they had participated in a bullying prevention program in the past. Each of these questions will help place respondents in a larger context, and allow for more sophisticated analysis.

Both the authors of the BSI instrument (Halzer & Carney, 2001) and the authors of cyberbullying scenarios (Patchin & Hinduja, 2015) granted me permission to adapt their work in personal communication. I thank them for their assistance and encouragement in broadening the field of study.

Section Six: The Research Question

The primary research question addresses the awareness and perception of bullying and cyberbullying situations by students. This is a testable question, since bullying situations have been established in several areas (Hazler et al., 2001; Berne, Frisen, Schultze-Kruboltz, Scheithauer, Naruskov, Luik, Katzer, Erentaite, & Zukauskiene, 2012), and can be adapted for use with a student survey. Each situation has a "right answer" (the situation qualifies/does not qualify as bullying), which can be compared to students' responses.

Further distinctions are made using other criteria gathered: students' grade level and gender, as well as self-reporting about academic performance and classroom behavior. This allows for the use of regression analysis to distinguish by those factors. In addition, we can use the study to determine whether bullying awareness programs have a distinct and meaningful impact on this aspect of student awareness – in a way, testing their effectiveness. Some of the students in the population being studied had participated in the BRAVE program or other programs during their schooling, and their responses can provide an indication that those programs are making students more sensitive to bullying situations.

Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Are middle school and high school students capable of accurately recognizing bullying and cyberbullying situations?

Hypothesis 1: Middle school and high school students will not be capable of accurately recognizing bullying and cyberbullying situations. Based on previous studies, it is unlikely that students will have accurate perceptions regarding bullying and cyberbullying situations.

Supplementary Question 1: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by grade?

Hypothesis 1.1: The research literature shows that awareness of bullying appears to go up in later grades, and the instance of bullying appears to go down, suggesting that bullying awareness may rise in higher grades.

Supplementary Question 2: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by gender?

Hypothesis 1.2: The research literature shows that girls tend to bully in a more social style, emphasizing exclusion and social groupings to create alienation for bullying victims, while boys tend to engage in more direct and physical confrontations. The nature of this distinction suggests that girls' bullying is more deliberate and focused on a particular victim, while boys are more likely to attack any victim who happens to be present. While these are broad generalizations (and cyberbullying shows different tendencies, as will be discussed below), this difference in behavior suggests that, due to the more purposeful and directed nature of bullying behaviors among girls, girls will have higher instances of bullying awareness than boys.

Supplementary Question 3: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by situation (bullying vs. cyberbullying)?

Hypothesis 1.3: The research literature shows that students are less likely to report cyberbullying than bullying, suggesting that they are less aware of cyberbullying as a phenomenon.

Supplementary Question 4: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by behavior and/or academic performance?

Hypothesis 1.4: The literature shows that students with poorer behavior and grades tend to occupy a lower social stratum in the classroom, and are therefore more likely to be targets of bullying. This also makes them more likely to be bullies themselves. This unusual bully/victim combination creates a situation in which students who are lower achieving academically and behaviorally are more likely to have experienced bullying from both the victim's and perpetrator's perspective, and might therefore show a heightened awareness of bullying situations.

Research Question 2: Are students who have experienced bullying awareness programs better at identifying bullying and cyberbullying situations?

Hypothesis 2: Students who have been through bullying awareness programs will be better at identifying bullying and cyberbullying situations. Students who have been specifically trained in recognizing bullying situations should be better at performing that task, as teachers and other professionals have shown themselves to be.

Supplementary Question 1: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by grade?

Hypothesis 2.1: The research literature shows that awareness of bullying appears to go up in later grades, and the instance of bullying appears to go down, suggesting that bullying awareness may rise in higher grades. This may be influenced by experience in a bullying awareness program.

Supplementary Question 2: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by gender?

Hypothesis 2.2: The research literature shows that girls tend to bully in a different "style" than boys, as discussed above, suggesting that girls will have higher instances of bullying awareness than boys (since the types of bullying are more deliberate and group-oriented, implying greater planning and attention). This may be impacted by experience in a bullying awareness program.

Supplementary Question 3: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by situation (bullying vs. cyberbullying)?

Hypothesis 2.3: The research literature shows that students are less likely to report cyberbullying than bullying, suggesting that they are less aware of cyberbullying as a phenomenon. This may be influenced by experience in a bullying awareness program.

Supplementary Question 4: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by academic performance and/or behavior?

Hypothesis 2.4: As discussed above, the literature shows that there is some correlation between bullying and academic performance, suggesting that students with lower academic performance might show a higher awareness of bullying. This may be influenced by experience in a bullying awareness program.

Section Seven: Research Methodology

The nature of the research question clearly indicates the best way to conduct the research necessary to answer it. Thus, the question's focus on the recognition of bullying situations necessitates the use of bullying situations. It also necessitates the focus on student responses as the most direct way to determine the truth of the hypothesis.

Perspective: The study used a quantitative measure only. While qualitative data are extremely useful, gathering, processing, and securing such data is difficult. This would have prevented the study from gathering enough data to draw useful conclusions. Complexity and sophistication were therefore sacrificed to allow for a pragmatic approach that will provided useful data and the ability to reach completion.

Research Type: This study used correlational research, since we were attempting to determine whether students in middle school and high school could identify a situation. The further breakdown (relevant to the research sub-questions) examined whether other factors (such as gender) are also correlative to this recognition. We also examined the correlation with previous bullying prevention programming in which the student may have participated, as well as self-reported academic ability and behavior.

Context: The context of the study was a set of Jewish middle school and high school students in a modern Orthodox Jewish day school in New Jersey, with separate divisions for male and female students. Since the study was in English, it was unlikely that other groups would be able to participate. Parents received an email before the study with an opt-out option, and respondents had the option on the survey as well. All participants checked a box on the survey confirming that they agreed to participate and were aware that their participation was voluntary.

Data & Subjects: This study did not rely on existing data, but created a new data set based on responses from students. Specifically, this study was composed of Jewish day school students in middle school and high school. Distinctions in the survey that were used for later analysis included grade level, gender, whether the student had previously participated in a bullying-prevention program, whether the student viewed him- or herself as academically successful, and whether the student viewed him- or herself as a behavior issue in the classroom and outside the classroom. The survey was distributed to students in the school during school hours to encourage easy participation, though many took the survey on their phones during free time.

Measures: Using the Bullying Situations Identification instrument as a guide (Hazler et. al, 2001), the study primarily measured students' perceptions of bullying. In the BSI study, each situation was accompanied by a Likert scale of 1 to 7 to judge the severity of the bullying problem described in each scenario. But the question of whether bullying was taking place was binary (yes or no). Therefore, the study treated bullying as a "yes or no" question, with an additional survey question on each scenario on the "severity" of the bullying, answered using a Likert scale (Carney, 2005).

In addition to using bullying situations created by Hazler et al. (2001), the study included situations focused on cyberbullying. These situations were adapted from a set of situations found in Hinduja and Patchin (2015). The need to include cyberbullying is clear (Vandebosch & van Cleemput, 2008; Olweus, 2012; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Campbell, 2005; Sticca & Perren, 2013). Hazler and Carney, and Hinduja and Patchin have both given written permission to adapt their work in direct communication with the author.

Two versions of the survey, with gender-flipped names and contexts, were distributed, depending on the gender of the respondent. This is consistent with the methodology used in the original Bullying Situations Identification Instrument.

Procedures: Data was collected using a Google Forms survey. A link to the survey was given to students during class, and they were asked to answer the survey questions on their computers or smart phones. “Grade level” referred to a number between 6 and 12 (as only students in those grades were asked to fill out the survey). “Gender” referred to male or female. Respondents were asked to self-describe their level of behavior (both in school and outside of school), and to self-describe their academic standing. Students also answered whether they had participated in a bullying awareness or prevention program in the past, with the option to respond, “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know/missed it.”

The data was analyzed using statistical procedures to assess the relationships in several directions. Primarily, the goal was to determine whether students show proficiency in identifying bullying situations correctly. In addition, the other questions enabled the researcher to examine whether factors like the gender of the respondent, the grade level of the respondent, and whether the respondent had gone through bullying programs in the past each impact the student’s ability to identify bullying situations. Self-reported behavioral and academic factors were examined as well. Each of these provided useful data on which populations are most at risk, and whether bullying programs are proving effective.

Parents received an email before the study with an opt-out option, and respondents had the option to opt out at any time before or during the survey as well. Response data was and remains protected by a password, and no identifying data was collected (such as name, address, or GPA).

After the survey, respondents had the option to enter a raffle, but raffle entry data was totally disconnected from survey response data to prevent identification.

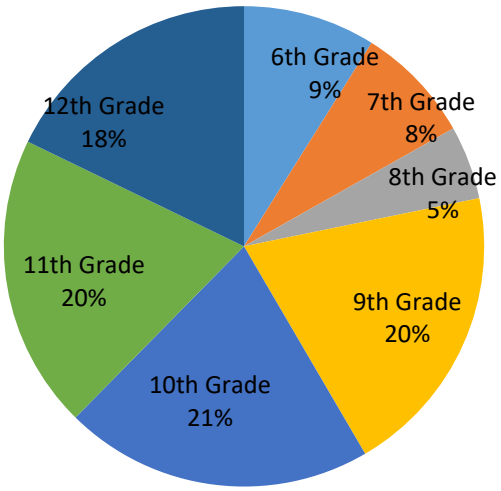
Section Eight: Results

Demographics

Overall there were 305 middle school and high school students who participated in the study: 148, 49% boys and 157, 52% girls.

The grade breakdown is shown in figure 1. There are fewer middle schoolers than high schoolers, but almost an equal number of high schoolers (around 20% for each grade).

Figure 1



When the students were asked to self-report their behavior at school, 79% (240 of the respondents) report that they behave well in school. 21% say they sometimes behave well and sometimes not, only 1% reported that they do not behave well at school. When looking at the breakdown by gender, no girl self-reported that they do not behave well at school or outside of school.

When the students were asked to self-report their behavior at home or outside of school, 71% (216) of the respondents) report that they behave well at home or at school, 29% say they

sometimes behave well, sometimes not and only 1% report that they do not behave well at home or outside of school.

When asked to self-report what percentile their grades are in, over half (52%) said they are in the top third, 41% say they are in the middle third, and only 7% say they are in the bottom third.

Overall, the respondents likely have a higher self-image of their behavioral performance and their grades than is realistic.

In terms of how many participated in a bullying program at some point in middle or high school, overall 51% said yes, which corresponded to 63% of males and 40% of females. Nearly equal amounts of boys and girls stated that they did not participate in a bullying program, whereas 35% of females stated that they don't remember/missed it, and only 14% of boys say they don't remember/missed it.

RQ1: Are middle school and high school students capable of accurately recognizing bullying and cyberbullying situations?

Each question scenario was scored as either correct or incorrect. A total score was computed based on the number of correct responses. Overall, respondents received 20-100% with an average of 57%. For the non-bullying scenarios, the respondents ranged from 0-100% and an average of 17%. For the bullying scenarios, the respondents did better, as the scores ranged from 20-100% with an average of 96%.

This shows us that respondents were more likely to label the scenario as bullying even when it was not, indicating that the respondents do not know how or when to accurately define a situation as bullying.

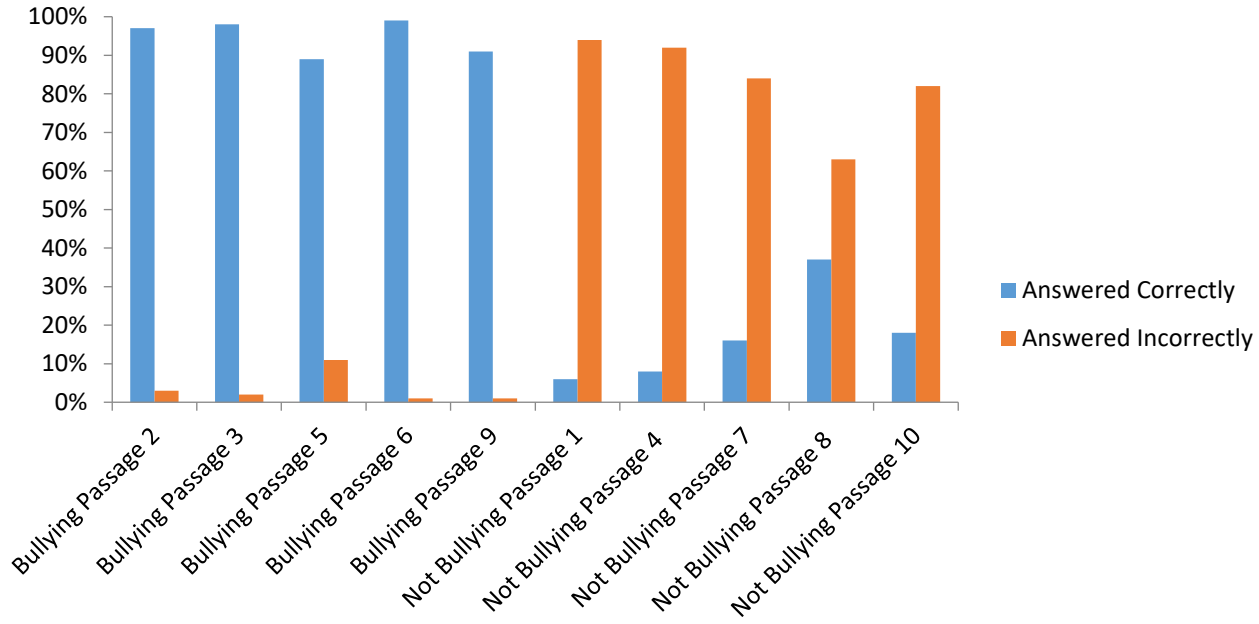
Simple frequency distributions were analyzed to determine what percentage of respondents designated the situation as bullying/non-bullying in the correct scenario.

Table 1 and Figure 2 below shows the distribution of responses for each scenario.

Table 1

Scenario	% answered correctly	% answered incorrectly	Severity Rating
Bullying Scenario 2	97%	3%	5.60
Bullying Scenario 3	98%	2%	6.09
Bullying Scenario 5	89%	11%	5.00
Bullying Scenario 6	99%	1%	6.43
Bullying Scenario 9	99%	1%	6.27
Not Bullying Scenario 1	6%	94%	4.93
Not Bullying Scenario 4	8%	92%	5.28
Not Bullying Scenario 7	16%	84%	4.89
Not Bullying Scenario 8	37%	63%	5.26
Not Bullying Scenario 10	18%	82%	4.81

Figure 2



Most of the bullying scenarios were easy to identify, with 97 or more percent of respondents answering correctly. Only 89% of the respondents answered bullying scenario 5 (in

which a gifted student tries to avoid walking into a group that regularly causes harm) correctly. Most of the respondents answered the non-bullying situations incorrectly and labeled them as bullying. The one scenario where 37% answered correctly was scenario 8 (in which angry texts between two students escalate).

RQ1: Supplemental Question 1. Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by grade?

Crosstabs and Pearson Chi-squares were conducted to determine if there were differences in the correct response based on grade level. There were significant differences for bullying scenarios: 3 and 5 and for non-bullying scenarios 1.

For bullying scenarios 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9, Pearson Chi-squares were conducted to determine whether there were observed differences in the ability to label the scenario correctly as bullying based on grade. For scenario 3 (in which a student is embarrassed by lower-level books), there were grade differences in their ability to correctly identify the scenario as a bullying situation; Chi-square (6,1) = 13.10, $p<.05$. For scenario 5, there were also grade differences in their ability to correctly identify the scenario as a bullying situation, Chi-square (6,1) = 17.91, $p<.01$.

In scenario 3, 6th grade students were the least likely to correctly identify the situation as bullying (89%) out of all grades. In scenario 5 (in which a gifted student tries to avoid walking into a group that regularly causes harm), 6th and 7th graders were least likely to identify the situation as bullying (71% and 79% respectively) than other grades.

For non-bullying scenarios 1, 4, 7, 8, and 10 Pearson Chi-squares were conducted to determine whether there were observed differences in the ability to label the scenario correctly as not- bullying. Scenario 1 (in which a student is verbally attacked for raising his hand in class too often) had significant differences based on grade level, Chi-square (6,1) = 17.47, $p<.01$. 6th grade

students were more likely to correctly identify the scenario as not bullying (21%) than any other grade. 12th grade students were least likely to correctly identify the scenario as not- bullying. In fact, not one 12th grader labeled the scenario as not- bullying.

Table 2 contains the percent who answered correctly for each scenario based on grade level.

Table 2

Scenario	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
2	93%	96%	100%	98%	98%	98%	96%
3*	89%	100%	100%	98%	98%	98%	100%
5**	71%	79%	93%	92%	86%	98%	91%
6	100%	96%	100%	100%	98%	98%	100%
9	100%	96%	100%	100%	98%	98%	98%
1**	21%	8%	7%	2%	8%	7%	0%
4	11%	8%	21%	7%	6%	5%	11%
7	36%	25%	21%	13%	13%	15%	11%
8	39%	38%	36%	40%	24%	42%	43%
10	21%	29%	29%	15%	19%	15%	14%

*=p<.05; **=p<.01

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to look at the reported severity of the situation based on grade level. The independent variable was grade level and the dependent variables was the level of severity for each scenario. The overall model was significant, Wilk's Lambda =.683, $F(60,10)=1.911$, $p<.001$.

There were significant differences based on grade in severity of the following scenarios 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10.

Table 3 below shows the average severity rating for each of the 10 scenarios.

Table 3

Scenario	6th grade	7th grade	8th grade	9th grade	10th grade	11th grade	12th grade
2**	4.86	5.21	5.21	5.85	5.92	5.77	5.45
3***	5.07	6.08	5.50	6.30	6.30	6.18	6.18
5**	4.21	4.46	4.21	5.58	5.06	5.07	5.08
6	6.07	6.33	6.29	6.62	6.49	6.50	5.36
9**	5.86	5.86	5.43	6.40	6.48	6.45	6.29
1***	3.89	4.08	4.93	5.13	5.13	5.32	4.96
4**	4.64	5.00	4.43	5.77	5.25	5.58	5.13
7	4.36	4.25	4.29	5.25	5.03	5.07	4.86
8**	4.53	5.33	4.71	5.70	5.51	5.50	4.71
10**	4.54	4.17	4.21	5.50	4.89	4.70	4.68

*=p<.05; **=p<.01; ***=p<.001

Post hoc tests were conducted to determine which grades were significantly different than the others, as demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Scenario	Grade	Different From
Non-Bullying Scenario 1	6	8-12
	7	9-12
Bullying Scenario 2	6	9-12
	7	9, 10
	10	12
Bullying Scenario 3	6	7, 9-12
	8	9-12
Non-Bullying Scenario 4	6	9-11
	7	9
	8	9, 11
	9	12
Bullying Scenario 5	6	9-12
	7	9
	8	9
Bullying Scenario 6	None	
Non-Bullying Scenario 7	None	
Non-Bullying Scenario 8	6	9-11
	12	9-11
Bullying Scenario 9	6	9-12
	7	9-11
	8	9-12
Non-Bullying Scenario 10	9	6-8, 9-12

Additionally, Pearson-product moment correlations were conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between the grade level and the amount of severity they labeled each scenario.

There was a significant relationship for bullying scenarios 2 ($r(305)=.14$, $p<.05$) 5 ($r(305)=.14$, $p<.05$) and 9 ($r(305)=.17$, $p<.01$) and non-bullying scenario 1 $r(305)=2.4$, $p<.001$. In each case there were positive correlations such that the higher the grade, the more severe they labeled the situation regardless of whether the situation was labeled as bullying or non-bullying.

RQ1: Supplemental Question 2: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by gender?

Crosstabs and Pearson chi squares were conducted to determine whether there were differences in the correct response based on gender.

Differences were found for three of the non-bullying scenarios, Scenario 7 (in which a student is caught sending out a hateful tweet), Scenario 8 (in which angry texts between two students escalate) and Scenario 10 (in which a student sends out angry messages about his former online gaming partner) based on gender. In each of those three scenarios, boys were more likely to be correct in labeling the scenario as non-bullying than girls. In all other scenarios, there were no differences in choosing the correct gender by gender. All three were also scenarios based on online situations (see cyberbullying data, discussed below). Table 5 below shows the breakdown for each of the scenarios based on gender.

Table 5.

Scenario	Gender	%Correct	sig (p<)
Bullying Scenario 2	Boy	97%	NS
	Girl	98%	NS
Bullying Scenario 3	Boy	98%	NS
	Girl	98%	NS
Bullying Scenario 5	Boy	86%	NS
	Girl	92%	NS
Bullying Scenario 6	Boy	99%	NS
	Girl	99%	NS
Bullying Scenario 9	Boy	98%	NS
	Girl	99%	NS
Non-Bullying Scenario 1	Boy	7%	NS
	Girl	5%	NS
Non-Bullying Scenario 4	Boy	11%	NS
	Girl	6%	NS
Non-Bullying Scenario 7	Boy	21%	.05
	Girl	12%	.05
Non-Bullying Scenario 8	Boy	46%	.01
	Girl	29%	.01
Non-bullying Scenario 10	Boy	25%	.01
	Girl	12%	.01

Additionally, independent samples t-tests were conducted to determine whether there was a difference in the rated severity of the scenario based on gender. There were significant differences in bullying scenarios: Scenario 2, $t(303)=-2.10$, $p<.05$; Scenario 5, $t(303)=-4.04$, $p<.001$; and Scenario 9, $t(303)=-2.97$, $p<.01$; and for non-bullying scenarios: Scenario 1, $t(303)=-3.06$, $p<.01$; Scenario 4, $t(303)=-4.45$, $p<.001$; Scenario 7, $t(303)=-3.13$, $p<.01$; Scenario 8, $t(303) = -3.33$, $p<.01$; and Scenario 10, $t(303)=-3.93$, $p<.001$. In each of the scenarios, girls rated the situation as more severe.

Table 6 displays the mean differences for each of the scenarios.

Table 6.

Scenario	Gender	Mean	SD	N	sig (p<)
Bullying 2	Boy	5.45	1.33	148	.05
	Girl	5.75	1.21	157	.05
Bullying 3	Boy	5.99	1.18	148	NS
	Girl	6.17	1.10	157	NS
Bullying 5	Boy	4.62	1.74	148	.001
	Girl	5.37	1.49	157	.001
Bullying 6	Boy	6.33	1.04	148	NS
	Girl	6.53	.99	157	NS
Bullying 9	Boy	6.07	1.20	148	<.01
	Girl	6.45	1.02	157	<.01
Not Bullying 1	Boy	4.68	1.48	148	<.01
	Girl	5.17	1.35	157	<.01
Not Bullying 4	Boy	4.87	1.76	148	<.001
	Girl	5.67	1.36	157	<.001
Not Bullying 7	Boy	4.57	1.87	148	<.01
	Girl	5.19	1.57	157	<.01
Not Bullying 8	Boy	4.92	1.91	148	<.01
	Girl	5.58	1.54	157	<.01
Not Bullying 10	Boy	4.44	1.76	148	<.001
	Girl	5.17	1.46	157	<.001

RQ2: Supplemental Question 3: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by situation (bullying vs. cyberbullying)?

A paired samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there were differences in the accuracy of bullying by situation (bullying vs. cyberbullying). The first five scenarios were non-cyber and the second five were cyber. Accuracy scores for each of the five of each type were computed. An overall non-cyber and cyber score were computed. There were significant differences in the accuracy of perception based on situation, $t(304) = 5.28$, $p < .001$. The average non-cyber score was 59.74 with a standard deviation of 10 and the average cyber score was 53.84 with a standard deviation of 17.5. Overall, middle and high school students had higher levels of accuracy in labeling non-cyber situations than cyber situations, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3.

RQ1: Supplemental Question 4: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by behavior and/or academic performance?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was a difference in accurate perception based on behavior and academic performance. There was no difference overall in the level of perception based on self-reported behavior and/or academic performance, F(2,302)=.650, *ns*.

Additionally, one-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine whether there was a difference in accurate perception based on behavior and academic performance for bullying versus non-bullying situations. For non-bullying, there was no difference, *F*(2,302)=1.91, *ns*. For bullying, there were differences, F(2,302) = 6.60, p<.01. There was a difference between those who say they sometimes behave well, sometimes not (M=92.38, SD=15.8)3 and those who say they behave well (M=97.42, SD=7.65). There were only two people who said they do not behave well, so they were removed from analysis.

Additional ANOVAs were conducted to look at whether there were differences in accurate perception of the situation based on self-reported behavior at home and self-reported grades. There

were no differences in accurate perception depending on behavior at home/outside of school or academic performance.

Research Question 2: Are students who have experienced bullying awareness programs better at identifying bullying and cyberbullying situations?

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were differences in identifying bullying and cyberbullying situations based on whether they participated in prevention programs. The overall model was significant, Wilk's Lambda =.97, $F(4, 602) = 2.66$, $p<.05$. Individual ANOVAS were conducted to determine where there were differences in identifying bullying and cyber bullying situations. There were no differences in their overall ability to identify bullying/non-bullying situations, $F(2,302) = 1.92$, *NS*. However, there were differences in their ability to accurately identify bullying, as opposed to non-bullying, situations, $F(2,302) = 3.59$, $p<.05$.

Post-hoc follow-up tests were conducted to determine where the differences lie. Those who did not participate in a bullying program at some point scored lower on their ability to correctly identify the bullying situations (M= 93.78, SD=13.62) than those who did participate in a bullying program (M=96.90, SD=9.16) and those who could not remember whether they participated in a bullying program (M=97.89, SD=6.99).

Pearson chi-squares were conducted to look at the distribution of scores for each scenario based on whether they participated in a bully program or not. Differences were only found for Scenario 9 (in which a student is embarrassed by online pictures from the locker room), chi-square (2)=6.36, p<.05. In Scenario 9 (which is bullying), those who participated in a bullying program

were more successful in identifying the situation accurately as bullying (100%) than those who did not participate in a bullying program (96%).

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were differences in the level of severity they assigned to each scenario depending on whether they participated in a bully prevention program or not. The model was not significant, Wilk's Lambda=.960, $F(20, 586)=.60$, *NS*. Therefore there were not differences in level of severity any scenario was rated based on whether they participated in a bully program.

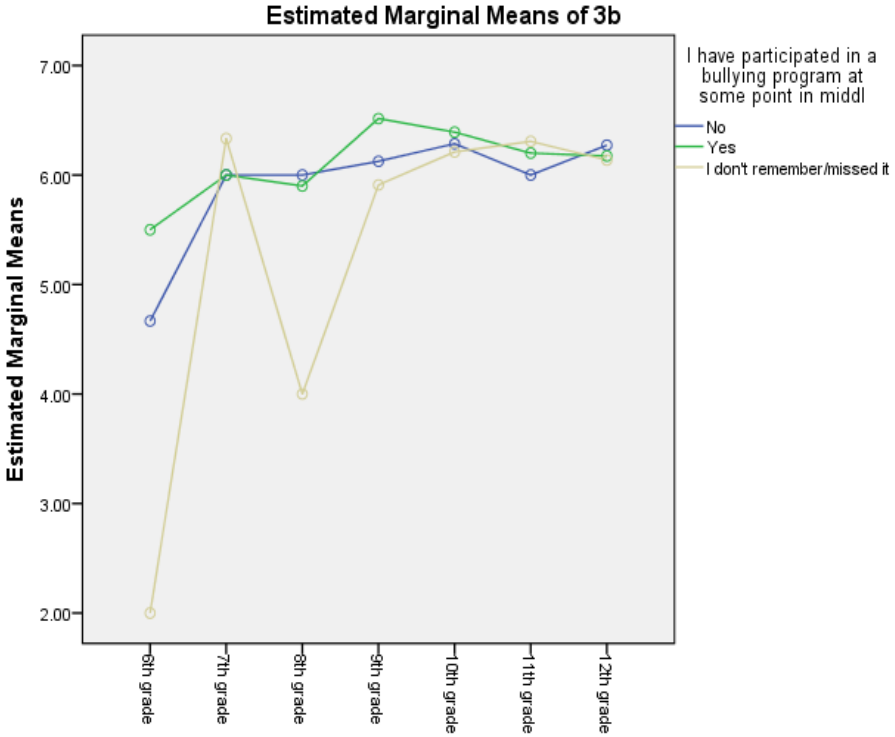
RQ2: Supplemental Question 1: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by grade?

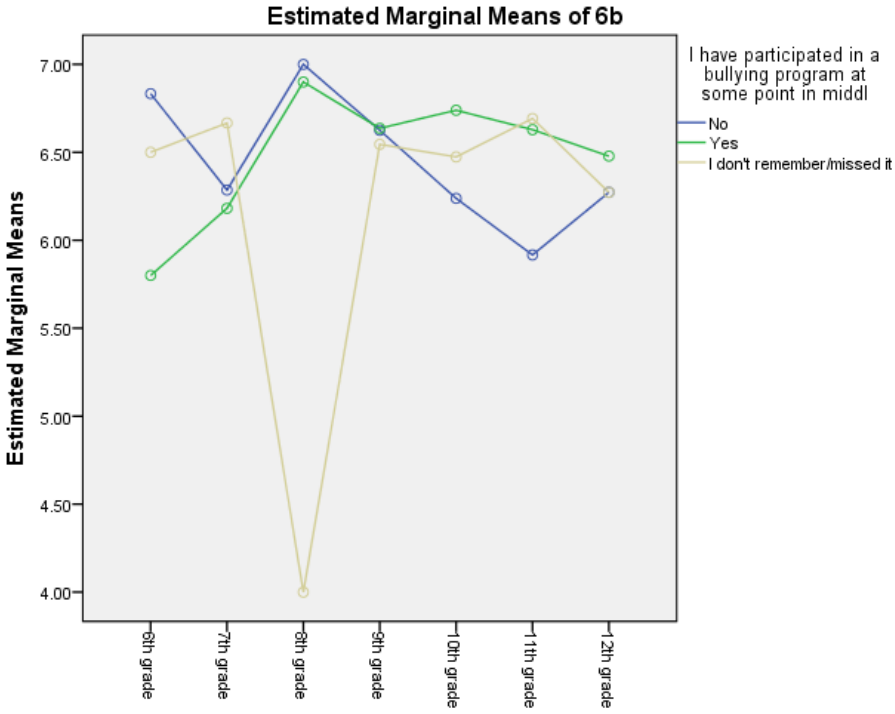
A two-way ANOVA was conducted to look at whether there was an interaction between grade level and whether or not they participated in a bullying awareness program and their accuracy in identifying bullying situations. There were no differences for overall accuracy in determining the situation, $F(12,284) = 1.20$, *NS* based on an interaction for grade and participation in a bullying prevention program; there was no interaction effect for grade and participation in a bully prevention program on the non-bullying score, F(12,284) = .92, NS; there was no interaction effect for grade and participation in a bully prevention program on the bully score, F(12,284)= .56, NS.

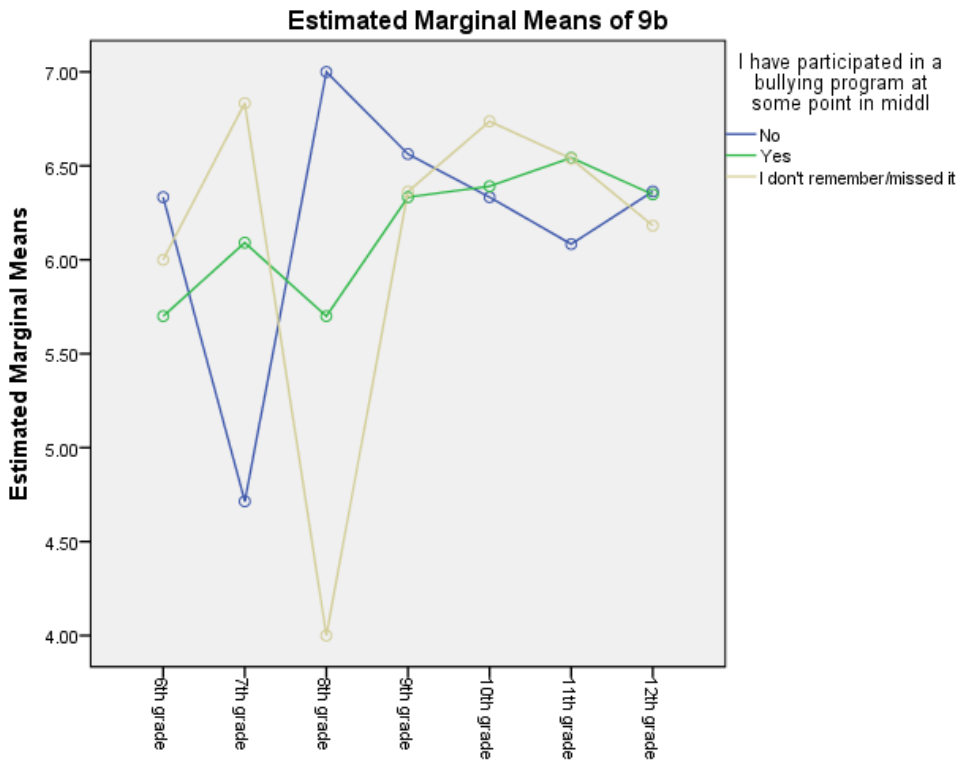
To further investigate, a two-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction based on grade and participation in bully prevention program on the level of severity that each scenario was ranked. The overall model was significant, Wilk's Lambda =.53 $F(60, 1446)=2.31$, $p<.001$).

Individual scenarios were examined and significant interaction between grade and participating in a bully prevention program were found for scenario 3 ($F(12,284)=2.30$,$p<.01$), 6

($F(12,284)=2.81$, $p<.01$) and 9 ($F(12,284) = 2.19$, $p<.05$). Figures X,Y, and Z below depict the interaction effect.







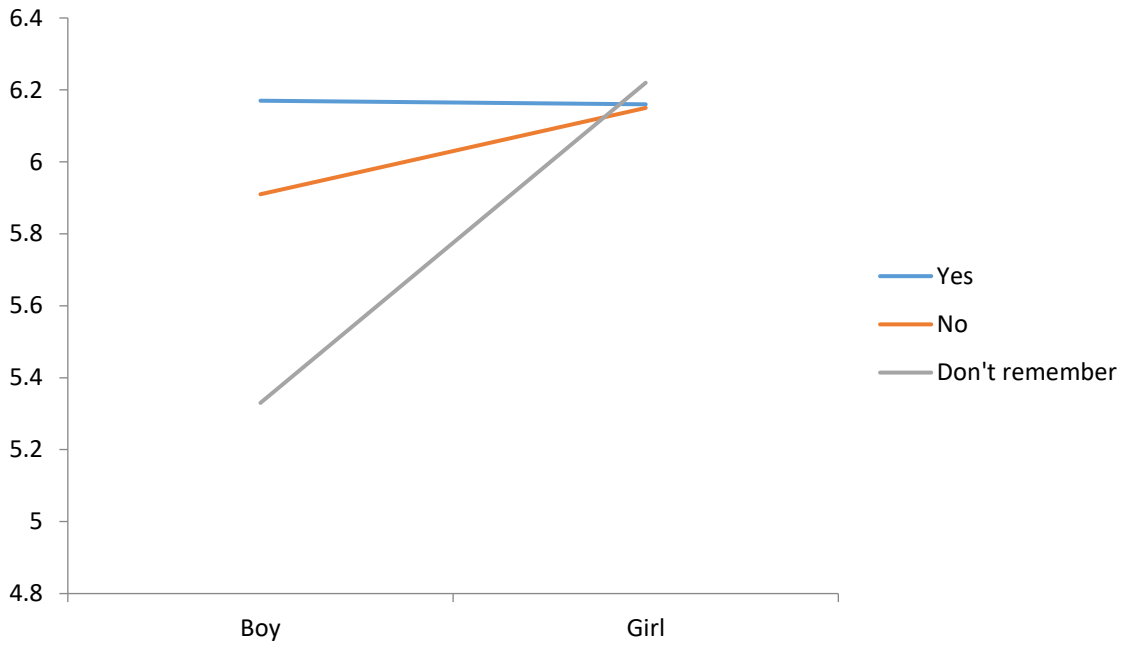
RQ2: Supplementary Question 2: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by gender?

A two-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction between whether or not they participated in a bully prevention program and their gender on their overall ability to accurately identify bullying situations, non-bullying situations and overall. The overall model was not significant, Wilk's Lambda =.97, $F(4,596) = 2.13$, *NS*.

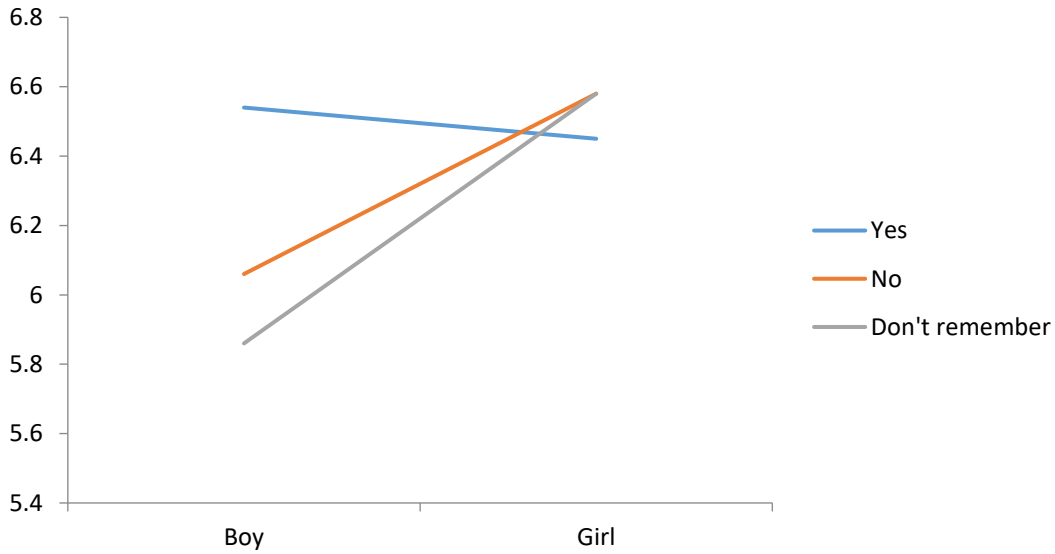
Further analysis was done to look at the level of severity that was given to each scenario. A two-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction between gender and whether they participated in a bully prevention program. The overall model was significant, Wilk's Lambda = .90, $F(8, 582) = 1.81$, $p < .05$.

Individual two-way ANOVAs were conducted as follow-up tests to determine which scenarios had the interaction. There was a significant interaction for Scenario 3, $F(2,299) = 4.33$, $p<.05$; and Scenario 6, $F(2, 299) = 4.45$, $p<.05$.

Scenario 3



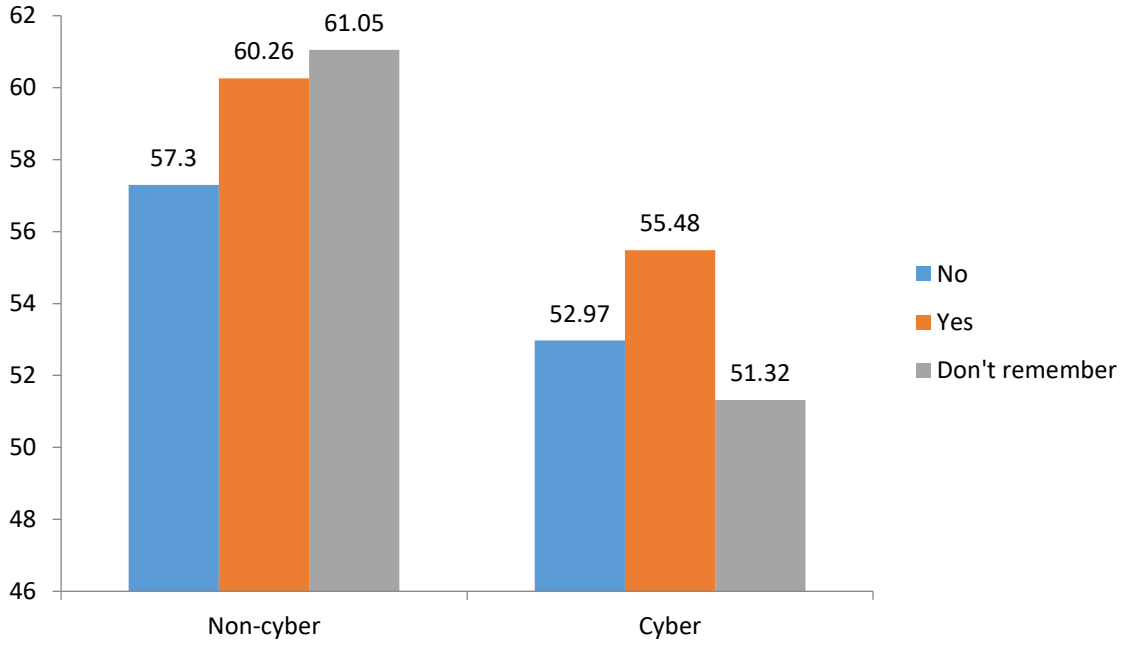
Scenario 6



RQ2: Supplementary Question 3: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by situation (bullying vs. cyberbullying)?

The sample was split based on whether they participated in a bully prevention program ("no," "yes," or "I don't remember/missed it"). A paired samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there was a distinction in accurate perception by situation (bullying vs. cyberbullying) in each of the three groups. There were no differences in the accurate perception by situation for those who had not participated in a bully prevention program, t(73) = 1.82, ns. There were differences in accurate perception for those who participated in a bully prevention program t(154) = 3.03, p<. 01. There were also differences in accurate perception for those who are not sure if they participated in a bully prevention program t(75)=4.71, p<.001. In both cases, there was a higher accurate perception for non-cyber situations than for cyber situations, as show in Figure 4.

Figure 4.



RQ2: Supplementary Question 4: Is there a meaningful distinction in accurate perception by academic performance and/or behavior?

A two-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction between whether they participated in a bullying prevention program and school behavior on accurate perception of bullying scenarios. There was no significant interaction, Wilk's Lambda = .97, F(6,592)=1.59, *ns*.

A two-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction between whether they participated in a bullying prevention program and home behavior on accurate perception of bullying scenarios. There was no significant interaction, Wilk's Lambda = .99, F(4,594)=.37, *ns*.

A two-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction between whether they participated in a bullying prevention program and academic performance on accurate perception of bullying scenarios. There was no significant interaction, Wilk's Lambda = .97, F(8,590)=.1.32, *ns*.

Section Nine: Discussion

Below is a brief outline of the scenarios of which the instrument was composed, to ease reference during this discussion. Scenarios 1 through 5 are in-person bullying, while Scenarios 6 through 10 are cyberbullying. For the purposes of most bullying research, the accepted definition of bullying (as discussed above) requires an imbalance of power between bully and victim, the intent to harm, and the repetition of such behavior. "Bullying" scenarios contained all three qualities; "not bullying" scenarios contained fewer than all three.

The actual instrument is in the last section of this paper.

Scenario 1	a student is verbally attacked for raising his hand in class too often	Not Bullying
Scenario 2	a weaker athlete gets bullied by a stronger teammate	Bullying
Scenario 3	a student is embarrassed by lower-level books	Bullying
Scenario 4	one student attacks another on the lunch line	Not Bullying
Scenario 5	a gifted student tries to avoid walking into a group that regularly causes harm	Bullying
Scenario 6	a student creates a hate group online about a new student	Bullying
Scenario 7	a mother sees that her son has sent out a hateful tweet on a fake account	Not Bullying
Scenario 8	angry texts between two students escalate	Not Bullying
Scenario 9	a student is embarrassed by online pictures from the locker room	Bullying
Scenario 10	a student sends out angry messages about his former online gaming partner	Not Bullying

RQ1: Are middle school and high school students capable of accurately recognizing bullying and cyberbullying situations?

The first question around which this study is based concerns the degree to which students can accurately identify bullying situations that may be happening around them. While the data produced by this study can be interpreted in a variety of ways, one conclusion that seems clear is

that students did not demonstrate competence in making the distinctions that bullying prevention asks of them. The hypothesis for this question was therefore confirmed.

The primary way in which this lack of comprehension is expressed in the simple "yes/no" identification of each of the ten bullying scenarios. While most students did respond correctly for bullying scenarios, they responded about as positively for non-bullying scenarios. The point is perhaps the opposite of what might have been assumed: instead of downplaying the seriousness of social or even physical conflict between students when presented with such examples, most students considered all conflict to be a form of "bullying" when asked with that term present in the question.

This is consistent with the findings of Hazler et al. (2001), whose scenarios form the basis for this study. They found that, in rating scenarios as "hard" or "easy" to diagnose (relative to how many teachers and administrators correctly responded to them), all of the scenarios that qualified as "hard" were non-bullying scenarios. This meant that even educational professionals had a harder time seeing that not all conflict between students qualified as bullying (Borg, 1999). This was especially pronounced in cases where physical violence was involved, presaging the comparatively greater difficulty this study would find in correctly diagnosing cyberbullying scenarios (something not addressed at all in the 2001 study).

The problem with this perspective is not necessarily obvious to the layperson – and is demonstrably not obvious to the student. The conflation of bullying with other forms of conflict leads to an inaccurate understanding of both bullying and other conflicts, and will prevent the proper responses from teachers, parents, and students (Hazler et al., 2001). Simply put, bullying is a pattern of behavior, not a one-time event – indeed, repetition is one of the three factors that demonstrates bullying is taking place. Singular or unique interactions between students are not

necessarily predictable, and cannot necessarily be controlled or predicted. But patterns of behavior can be predicted, and can be improved, their damage mitigated.

The most serious risk is that of overreaction. If all conflict is bullying, then all conflict will require the same severity of response. This can easily lead to a desensitizing of students, thereby preventing proper perception in the future. If everything is bullying, then nothing is bullying, and even relatively innocent (if rough) play can be misinterpreted (Hazler et al., 2001).

RQ1: Supplemental Question 1. Grade Level

One of the goals of this study was to see how awareness of bullying situations might express itself across several different axes. Male and female students, bullying and cyberbullying scenarios, and students in sixth through twelfth grades all answering the same questions allowed for a nuanced analysis of the complexities of bullying awareness.

Dividing student by grade expressed some interesting results. Most significantly was the demonstration of a continuum of bullying awareness. Middle schoolers rated both bullying and non-bullying scenarios as less severe than older high school students, with few exceptions. However, the rate does not rise consistently. Most scenarios had a peak: students in ninth grade were often rating scenarios at their highest severity of any grade. While the severity rating for students in older grades still remained higher than that of middle school students, it usually dropped after that peak. This basic pattern held true in all bullying scenarios (with only Scenario 6, which discussed attacking a new student online, showing a higher severity among sixth graders than twelfth graders). This also held true in all non-bullying scenarios except for Scenario 1 (which discusses one student attacking another over excessive class participation), in which severity rose steadily from sixth through eleventh grade, then dipped a bit for twelfth grade.

What to make of this set of rises and falls? While possible gender distinctions within this pattern will be discussed below, the revelation that ninth grade seems to be the most "bullying aware" group in school is interesting, but not especially surprising. High school freshmen tend to occupy an interesting niche in the social world of adolescence. While they were at the top of the social ladder just recently, in eighth grade, they are suddenly thrust into a new environment, a new school (even in an institution with both middle school and high school, ninth grade usually begins in a new building or with new teachers and administrators), new social rules, and new behavioral norms. While it might be hard to determine whether ninth graders are bullied more often than other grades, it is not strange that they are more sensitive to social shifts and conflicts than other grades. While they are in the exact center of our spread of grades, they are at the beginning of their new academic and social environment. Such transitional moments surely create more stress, tension, and anxiety than other grades might experience (Pellegrini & Long, 2002).

Another aspect of the teenage experience that has gone largely undiscussed until this point is the possible neurological stresses teenage brains undergo. It may not be a surprise to see that ninth graders – often at the peak of the various stressors and changes that the brain endures during these complex developmental years – show such different results than their older and younger counterparts (Guyer, Silk, & Nelson, 2016).

It should also be noted that this study was conducted toward the end of the school year (beginning in late May). It may be valuable to study whether similar reactions from ninth graders would occur in an earlier part of the year, when the anticipation of the new environment had not yet been shown up by the reality of new adolescent social pressures and the intimidation of older students. It is also conceivable that the anxiety earlier in the year would have been even worse, as

students at the end of their ninth grade year have become more comfortable in their new environments.

Whatever the precise reason, this analysis implies that there may be specific moments during adolescence when students are particularly vulnerable, or better able to absorb lessons about bullying. While the hypothesis in general is confirmed, the results are far more nuanced than expected. Finding these pivotal moments in adolescent development and perception will allow us to better tackle to problem of student perception of bullying, a problem this study has attempted to reveal.

RQ1: Supplemental Question 2: Gender

Another question this study attempted to tackle concerned differences in perception of bullying scenarios between boys and girls. The data show that while there were no significant differences between boys' and girls' responses regarding all bullying scenarios and all traditional non-bullying scenarios, significant differences do begin to appear in non-bullying online situations (Scenarios 7, 8, and 10). This confirms the hypothesis for this question, at least to some degree.

The most important implication of this is that girls are more sensitive to online social situations, and the conflicts that occur therein. While boys tend to mislabel the online scenarios as bullying more than the in-person scenarios, they did so at a lower rate than girls. This may be connected to the tendency observed in several studies that girls tend to bully in more psychological ways – that is, ways that lend themselves more easily to adaptation to online social situations. The result is that even boys have begun to bully in a "female" fashion, leading to a slow erasure of that distinction (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008).

This is further demonstrated by the comparison of severity rating between boys and girls. In every case, girls rated the scenarios as more severe, on average, than boys. While there may be

some data to suggest that girls are more likely to be impacted by bullying long-term (Bauman et al., 2013; Phillips, 2007), it is hard to explain such a broad and consistent tendency across the study. Girls show themselves to be more sensitive to conflict, and to consider it to be a more serious problem.

Another possibility is that more socially conscious female respondents have seen situations akin to the scenarios before, or have noticed how easily online interactions can become abusive or confrontational, and connected this sensitivity to the survey. In some ways, it shows that the female respondents were ahead of the curve: while their male counterparts view online social interactions as distinctly "different" than in-person scenarios, the female respondents view their online social lives as a more direct extension of their in-school social lives.

A data point like this can also crystalize concerns noted in several studies about the problems with relying on students telling teachers about bullying. Glover et al. (2000) found that many students assumed teachers would not believe reports about bullying, or would not take them seriously, while Smith et al. (2008) found that cyberbullying was far less reported than in-person bullying (58% as opposed to 70%). Meanwhile, Sticca and Perren (2012) found that students were concerned that a personal electronic device would be confiscated, and therefore would be less likely to report cyberbullying. All of these factors may impact students' experiences, and shape their responses regarding bullying situations.

RQ2: Supplemental Question 3: Bullying vs. Cyberbullying

As noted in the previous paragraph, in-person bullying and cyberbullying are not always clearly connected in the minds of students – or, indeed, in the minds of teachers or parents (Campbell, 2005). As will be shown in several areas of this study, students consistently

demonstrated the ability to identify and rate in-person bullying scenarios with more accuracy than cyberbullying scenarios. Even finding studies that have effectively researched cyberbullying has proven to be a challenge; it is no surprise that students have not become familiar with the importance of addressing cyberbullying. It is also no surprise that they rate cyberbullying as less severe than in-person bullying (Smith et al., 2008). The hypothesis for this question is therefore confirmed.

The results of one scenario stood out from the others. Scenario 8, which concerned a malicious set of texts between two students, had a correct answer rate of 38%. This is significant, since most of the rest of the non-bullying scenarios were identified correctly at a much lower proportion (most not near 20%, and often significantly lower). What is it about this scenario that so many students noted was not bullying, even as they failed to display this awareness in other scenarios?

While the rate of most grades' responses is similar (varying between 38% and 43%), tenth grade stood out. Only 24% of tenth graders identified this scenario as not bullying. This may be indicative that malicious texts are not as common among this age group (and therefore are viewed in a more severe way), or that a particular event occurred in that grade to change their attitude. It may also indicate a moment of sensitivity to this issue that can be addressed, as was discussed above.

Another aspect that should be noted is that the impact of the rush of information as a result of the interconnectivity of modern life is still poorly understood, especially its impact on the complexities of the adolescent brain (Giedd, 2012). As noted above, reaction stimuli of various kinds can change throughout adolescence, and the stimuli in many a teen's world comes from a

variety of online connections. These experiences may change their responses to online social situations, just as ongoing development changes their responses to in-person social situations.

The other aspect of distinction in Scenario 8 is the male-female distinction. While 46% of boys answered the scenario correctly, only 29% of girls did. In general, girls answered non-bullying scenarios incorrectly at a much higher rate than boys (usually double; Scenario 8 actually shows a smaller spread between female and male respondents than most). Why did female respondents demonstrate such a high occurrence of seeing bullying when it wasn't there?

Perhaps the clue lies in the particular scenario. The situation as presented includes several aspects that students may find familiar. The two students are fighting over a school event that each wanted to run, and the conflict escalates in viciousness, "including death threats." This conflict, coming as it does between two parties of equal standing, does not constitute bullying according to the accepted definition (as it lacks the necessary power imbalance). However, it does represent a social conflict that may be more common among girls than boys (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008), leading to a greater sensitivity to this kind of interaction. Perhaps familiarity, more than the technical fulfillment of the definition of bullying, is what leads students to react to the situation as presented in the study.

RQ1: Supplemental Question 4: Academic Performance and/or Behavior

Another axis that this study attempted to use to measure bullying perception was behavior. Analysis of student behavior was limited by several factors, preventing a serious and accurate measure of the subject. Maintaining strict anonymity as part of the study protocol prevented any respondent's data from being linked directly to that student's behavior records or grades. While this was a benefit to the study in other ways, it forced the researcher to rely on self-reported data,

which is not necessarily as accurate (Glover et al., 2000; Perry, Kusel & Perry, 1988; Crothers & Levinson, 2004; see Van der Wal, de Wit, & Hirasing, 2003 for another perspective on discrepancies between self-reporting and teacher reporting).

Specifically, only a tiny number put themselves in the lowest academic or behavior bracket, implying that many students have an inflated sense of their behavior or academic success, even in a totally anonymous study. Almost 80% of the respondents felt that they behaved well, and not a single female respondent stated that they did not behave well (though perhaps this is not a significant gender distinction, since barely 1% of males did). This may tie into a perception that students do not view themselves as bullies (Phillips 2007). This has been seen to persist even after interviews where bullying behavior is discussed and students are shown that their own behavior qualifies (Graham & Juvonen, 1998). While this seems to be contrary to the hypothesis, the difficulty in generating reliable, generalizable data for this question makes a clear conclusion difficult.

A critical point is masked here, disguising itself under a seemingly failed question: student self-perception may be at the absolute heart of the problem this study is meant to attack. If students do not have accurate self-perception of their academic status, and do not have accurate self-perception of their behavior, how can they have accurate self-perception of bullying – even if they are well-versed in the definition? It is difficult enough to perceive bullying behaviors accurately among one's peers (Olweus 2003); viewing such behavior in oneself is orders of magnitude more challenging.

Yet this is what we expect students to do when we ask them to fight bullying. The bullying circle is represented here by the scenarios' structure: rather than ask students to imagine themselves in the roles of the scenarios they judged, respondents were asked to imagine themselves as third-

party observers, trying to intuit motivations and intentions in others. How much more difficult must it be to see such behavior in one's own actions?

Research Question 2: Are students who have experienced bullying awareness programs better at identifying bullying and cyberbullying situations?

Since the broader awareness of bullying in schools began, many schools have run bullying prevention programs. It should be clear that effective programs create results. While this study is not meant to be a direct critique of bullying prevention or awareness programs (or the schools that participate in them), it is always necessary to question assumptions and measure results objectively. Has engagement with these programs produced measurable results?

Many of the students (51%; 63% of boys and 40% of girls) remembered having participated in some kind of bullying awareness program in the past. However, 35% of girls and 14% of boys said that they couldn't remember whether they had participated in such a program or not (or that they had missed it).

This last number is curious, because it implies that, for at least some students, the bullying awareness program had so little impact that they could not remember if they had participated. However, this interpretation is not necessarily valid, since the anonymity of the responses makes it impossible to determine whether a student who answered, "I don't know" actually did or didn't attend a program. Due to the number of grades currently in the school who did have such programs conducted grade-wide, it is likely that at least some of those students did participate, and stated that they didn't remember. Such programs are consistently run for the middle school, and a program was run for the entire girls' school when the current twelfth grade was in ninth grade.

This would exclude only those who had transferred in from other middle schools for high school, and many of those may well have run similar programs.

Interestingly, the middle school respondents represent a smaller group than the high school respondents (with only about 10-15 students from each of the boys' and girls' schools in each grade). Thus, a single "don't know/missed it" entry from a sixth grade girl, for example, can have a very impactful result – perhaps twice that of the same response from a high school student. Specifically, only one eighth grade boy, and two each in sixth and seventh grades, responded "don't know/missed it"; similar numbers appear in responses from the girls' school (with four seventh graders, two eighth graders, and one sixth). Therefore, it is important to avoid generalizing too much from those results to middle school respondents.

While those who participated in bullying awareness programs did score a bit better overall in their ability to distinguish between bullying and non-bullying situations, that distinction was not very broad. The only scenario for which differences in score were found to be significant was Scenario 9 (in which embarrassing pictures of a student are shared on social media). The ratings of severity do not show any significant distinction in any scenario. This makes it appear that, contrary to expectations, participation in a bullying awareness program did not enable students to better determine whether a scenario was bullying or not.

What is implied by this conclusion? With such an enormous proportion of students having participated in a program, shouldn't some noticeable results have come from it? Shouldn't there be a high correlation between having learned about bullying and being able to discuss bullying scenarios with accuracy?

The answer may lie in the study upon which these scenarios were based, the original BSI Instrument study. Among other results, Hazler et al. (2001) found that teachers and administrators

who thought they were skilled at identifying bullying scenarios turned out not to be. One interpretation of this phenomenon may be that studying something academically, or in the context of a one-time session, does not necessarily create the real-world connections one might expect. It may be that the bullying programs succeed in sensitizing students to the issues of bullying while failing to make the real-world connections that allow students to actually use this knowledge in their own social interactions.

RQ2: Supplemental Question 1: Grade Level

As discussed above, while many students have participated in bullying awareness programs (even likely among some who responded, "don't know/missed it"), the arrival of students from other schools for the upper grades creates a mixed group. The result of this is a heterogenous pool that allows for a contrasting view of the efficacy of bullying awareness programs. In this case, the aspect that can be studied more carefully is the contrasting impact on such programs for different grades.

Only three out of the ten scenarios demonstrated an interaction between the respondent's grade level and whether they had participated in a bullying awareness program. Such a relatively small impact suggests that grade level is not a significant factor when students have participated in a bullying awareness program. Significant effects were found for Scenario 3 (in which a student is attacked for using lower-level school books), Scenario 6 (in which a new girl is attacked in an online hate group), and Scenario 9 (in which embarrassing pictures of a student are distributed online). All three were bullying scenarios, and Scenario 6 and Scenario 9 were cyberbullying scenarios.

The graphs representing each scenario's responses tell a strange and not-entirely-clear story. While each scenario's results are different, some generally consistent ideas do emerge. The first item indicated by these results is that middle school data is messy at best. There do not appear to be clear or consistent correlations between results for "yes," "no," or "don't remember/missed it" among sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. However, results become more consistent in high school. The results of the different responses for bullying awareness programs are clustered closer together, and the severity rating is usually higher for those who had participated (though not in all cases). This indicates that middle school students (who have participated in the program more recently) are not responding to the program in a consistent way, and may not have understood the intended message. Another possibility is that they cannot connect their education to their personal circumstances.

The high school data seems to make more sense only when compared to the untidiness and inconsistency of the middle school data. While there are a number of large gaps in responses, these gaps are not nearly as large as in middle school. In addition, the "no" responses rate the scenarios as less severe than the "yes" responses in all but two cases, and one of those is extremely close. The results show a high school student body that, unlike their middle school counterparts, are more aware and consistent about what bullying means in general, and have absorbed more of the lessons from the bullying awareness program.

It is also incumbent to emphasize again the smaller sample size of middle school respondents (about a third or less of the total of high school respondents) means that any response is going to have a proportionally larger impact, and there is only so much statistical analysis can do to control for that. However, the consistency and similarity in plotting between the different

scenarios does indicate that the data is not simply bad or insufficient, but perhaps hard to interpret easily with such a small sample size.

The analysis that high school students perceived bullying situations better than their middle school counterparts should not be taken as an admission that all is right with this aspect of our education, however. While it is clear that older students appear to be better able to utilize the tools taught in the bullying awareness program, the younger students are closer to that program, and in many case are rating the bullying scenarios with a higher severity than their high school counterparts (though not consistently, as explained above). This may be more of an indication that older students have a stronger awareness of bullying and what it means across the board – not because of the bullying awareness program, but in spite of it. These results are also applicable to only three out of the ten scenarios; if the program was accomplishing its goal in impacting student perception, more significance should have appeared.

RQ2: Supplementary Question 2: Gender

Only two scenarios demonstrated a difference in severity rating by gender when controlling for those who had participated in bullying awareness programs. This implies that, contrary to expectations, gender did not play a large role in distinguishing between students' ability to recognize bullying scenarios after having participated in a bullying awareness program.

Some differences did appear, however, and those demonstrated were striking because of their consistency. Both Scenario 3 and Scenario 6 showed very similar results. Boys who had participated, not participated, or didn't remember each rated the two scenarios with consistently progressive severity ("yes" being the highest, then "no," then "don't remember/missed it"). However, all three responses were clustered close together for girls. This indicates that, while boys

are significantly impacted by the bullying awareness program, girls are not – their answers are clustered together and show little to no relevance to their answers about participation.

This is made even more obvious when looking at which of the closely-clustered answers among girls came out on top. While boys are in the same order in both scenarios ("yes" being the highest, then "no," then "don't know/missed it"), the girls' answers show no such consistency. This further indicates that the boys are being impacted by the bullying awareness program more than girls.

The difficulty is determining in which direction this impact moves. Does it show that boys are impacted more, and therefore have a better understanding of bullying as a result of their participation in the program? If they did, shouldn't the severity be even higher for those who had participated, and lower for those who did not? Equally unclear are the results for girls. Are they clustered because they have a better understanding of bullying even without participation in the program, or are their results showing that girls gain nothing from the program?

No matter the interpretation, both this analysis and the one above fails to demonstrate the significant and consistent impact we would expect to see if the bullying awareness program were effectively teaching students how to identify bullying scenarios.

RQ2: Supplementary Question 3: Bullying vs. Cyberbullying

Even today, many educators are not clued in to the idea that the internet is a fertile and important field in the opportunity both to bully and to combat bullying (Vandebosch and Van Cleemput, 2008). Even as teens commit suicide as a result of online bullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010), debates continue to rage over the character and nature of online bullying, as opposed to well-researched and better-understood "traditional" bullying. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt

that an enormous proportion of teens' social lives now occurs online (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011), and the resulting situations must be accounted for if any meaningful impact on cyberbullying is to be made.

In trying to determine whether bullying awareness programs made an impact on the perception of cyberbullying scenarios, we found that those who had not participated showed no distinction between bullying and cyberbullying, indicating students were, without training, equally skilled at distinguishing between online and in-person bullying. However, those who had participated or did not remember showed a distinctly better perception for in-person bullying, as opposed to cyberbullying. This confirms the hypothesis for this question.

This indicates that the program may in fact warp the perspectives of those who participate. Students who participated in the program show a decreased awareness of cyberbullying as a relevant problem, overemphasizing in-person bullying as a result. While this does not explain the similar results of the "don't know/missed it" respondents, it does suggest that teaching one thing (in this case, issues related to in-person bullying) can have the unintended consequence of de-emphasizing another thing (cyberbullying).

RQ2: Supplementary Question 4: Academic Performance and/or Behavior

Similar to the results above, no meaningful impact was found related to self-reported behavior or academic performance and having participated in a bullying awareness program. This is contrary to expectations, but consistent with findings elsewhere in the study. Whatever the impacts of such a program may be, it does not appear that behavior or academic performance has a meaningful impact on whether students absorb its lessons. This may be interpreted positively or negatively; since lower-achieving students have shown elsewhere to be more likely to bully or be

bullied (Salmon & Smith, 1998), this lack of significance may simply be another indication that the bullying awareness program is failing to achieve its goals.

Section Ten: Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in many ways, often by design. While a larger and more robust study might have yielded more information and a broader picture of the issues under discussion, such broadness also creates challenges – the limited time and resources available would likely have prevented the study from being accomplished.

Because of the limits in gathering data effectively, the study did not examine factors that have sometimes demonstrated relevance in the bullying and cyberbullying literature, such as: socio-economic status, hometown, level of religiosity in the home, physical size, and number of siblings.

Similarly, the original study upon which this is based, the BSI instrument (Hazler & Carney, 2001) used gender-flipped characters in their scenarios, running three separate pilot studies to determine whether the gender of the characters and the gender of the respondents was impactful. While a similarly longer process would have been beneficial, this study did not have the luxury of the time such a determination would have taken. Since all of the respondents were in single-gender classrooms, the scenarios have been gender-coded to reflect situations in which the respondents would most likely find themselves. Likewise, due to the religious and socially conservative nature of the student and parent body, scenarios addressing romantic or sexual situations, gender or sexual identity, or inter-religious conflicts were also removed in favor of more basic and generalizable scenarios.

In addition, information about behavior and academic standing were self-reported. While such data from the school was obtainable, there was no way of easily securing and anonymizing such data, and the time and difficulty involved represented a major barrier to completion of the study. The limitations of self-reported data are made clear from the results of the study: a

disproportionate number of respondents reported themselves at higher behavior levels and academic achievements than is reasonable.

Since the study was drawn from a single school of mostly homogenous students (all modern Orthodox Jewish, all living in urban or sub-urban areas, with little racial heterogeneity), the study was not able to shed light on those variations. In addition, even though many of the respondents may have been siblings or relatives of other respondents, the anonymity of the study prevented any comparative analysis on those factors.

Section Eleven: Implications

While specific parts of the research questions' original hypotheses were confirmed or not, the general expectations of the study's proposal were confirmed. Students are not adept at judging the meaning of social situations around them and how to properly respond. This shows variations depending on specific factors like context, gender, age, and other factors, but the general finding remains.

This can be "blamed" on a variety of factors: students are not sensitive to each other, teachers have failed to educate them, society is becoming more aggressive. But none of these will help us find the next step, which is to improve the situation. The fact that participation in a bullying awareness program did not show improvement in the expected (or perhaps hoped-for) proportions is also disappointing; it implies that what we thought was our best tool is blunt, at best.

Especially unpleasant to contemplate is the idea that a yeshiva, one which ought to be placing a serious priority on moral education and behavior, seems to fall so short. While there have been a variety of moral education initiatives over the years, complaints remain that moral behavior is a serious issue in yeshivas (Fried, 2008). Despite the heavy emphasis on religious education as a basis for moral and ethical behavior, we seem to be failing our students in providing a coherent picture of good interpersonal relationships.

Having spent my life as a student and teacher exclusively in yeshivas, I have noted the pride with which many teachers view the moral standing of their communities and their students. This study can, if taken to its logical conclusion, call that assumption into question. A negative correlation between religiosity and interpersonal behavior has been demonstrated elsewhere (Decety, Cowell, Lee, Mahasneh, Malcolm-Smith, Selcuk, & Zhou, 2015), though not specifically with regard to Jews. However, Fried (2008) and many others can cite anecdotal evidence (in such

preponderance that it may seem like a quantitative study!) that the pride mentioned above is misplaced.

A technical legal problem, such as students disobeying the laws of kashrut or failing to adhere to the laws of tzitzit might have a technical solution: the adherence to Jewish law, as defined by the level of observance with which the school identifies, is part of the school rules and must be followed. But moral behavior is far more abstract, and difficult to quantify. Bullying is an expression not just of one student abusing another, but of a much larger social problem in which many students make questionable moral choices in their dealings with each other (Olweus, 2003), and therefore speaks to the atmosphere and tone of the entire student community. This challenge to the school atmosphere may be similar to attempts to create "school spirit," that amorphous and hard-to-quantify feeling of positivity and community within a school, that challenges so many principals and teachers.

Section Twelve: Directions for Future Research

So far as I am aware, this was the first serious study of its kind in examining student perception of bullying situations for both bullying and cyberbullying. Much of the literature on cyberbullying in particular bemoans the degree to which this topic is so poorly understood and examined. With the online world changing so quickly, even recent studies seem terribly dated, examining now-irrelevant platforms like MySpace and America Online, or outdated terminology like "netizen." It is clear that, as a critical social meeting place as important as the neighborhood pizza shop (perhaps more important!), future research must create a better understanding of teens' online lives.

The previous section mentioned a wide variety of areas in which students can be differentiated – by socio-economic status, academic achievement, behavioral history, learning disabilities, location, physical characteristics, ethnicity – that this study was unable to address. Any one of these would serve as an excellent tool for a more complex study on this topic. The study as is points to tantalizing glimpses of important differentiations in its exploration of the distinctions in middle school and high school; would the same distinctions hold in a Sephardic school? Or a mixed-gender class? Given more time and opportunity, a wealth of valuable information is waiting to be found even within the relatively compact world of Jewish educational institutions.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this area of study is how prevalent violence, abuse, and psychological trauma seem to be among our students. It requires little research to discover that suicides among students as young as eight occur as a result of bullying (Stelloh, 2017). But it is especially disturbing when one realizes that so much of our yeshiva educations are supposedly working toward creating moral and ethical people. If we are so proud of the Torah as a guideline for moral behavior, why aren't we better at teaching our students not to bully? It is critical to us to

learn, as a community, why it seems like our moral education is falling on deaf ears. If we are suffering bullying rates that are equal or worse than non-religious counterparts, then what are we doing wrong? Where is the failure of our educational system? These are questions that can be researched, if we focus on the impact we are currently having in moral education, and compare it to the impact we want to be having.

Section Thirteen: Conclusion

Upon reflection, it has become clear to me that bullying, cyberbullying, and the wider complexities of the modern social network is an area of life that touches not only every student and teacher, but to which many are insensitive. They are unware of its multi-layered nature, of its potential for impacting student's lives, unaware of its central place in the behavioral lives of students, and unaware of how significant a role it can play in their formation as adults.

My research showed me positive signs of progress as well: many educators are more aware than ever that their students social lives are becoming increasingly complex, and that they need to keep up; more schools than ever are working with professional groups and mental health professionals to make bullying awareness a greater priority; the news media in general treats serious cases of bullying as major news, akin to violent crime. These signs help move the conversation beyond what it was years ago – "kids will be kids!" – into a new and more sophisticated level.

The reality of life and history is that educators will always, by definition, be a generation (or more) behind their students. That is a generation of cultural attitudes, of social awareness, of societal pressures, and of behavioral norms that we are "outdated." The new movement of technology is so fast and so ubiquitous that we can no longer afford to claim that the lessons of our youth are just as applicable as the lessons of theirs. We must engage more with the day to day pressures and realities of their lives, and stop imagining that we are living in the same world, and feeling the same stimuli. They are feeling the world so intensely; we are cynical or world-weary. They are seeing our mistakes; we are seeing our attempts at betterment. We are immigrants in the digital world; they are natives. And if we want to teach them better, and impact them meaningfully,

we must acknowledge what we ourselves so desperately need to learn. We must acknowledge that we must look harder, search deeper, and not be content with the status quo.

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Section Fifteen: Research Instrument

The document below will be given to male respondents.

Please answer all the questions below.

I am a boy in grade: (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12)
In school, I think that I generally (behave well) (sometimes behave well, sometimes not) (do not behave well)
At home or outside of school, I think that I generally (behave well) (sometimes behave well, sometimes not) (do not behave well)
I think that my grades are generally in the (top third) (middle third) (bottom third) in my class
I have participated in a bullying program at some point in middle school or high school (yes) (no) (I don't know/missed it)

1. Chaim had his hand up again, "I know the answer!" Baruch also raises his hand frequently, but he has a soft voice and doesn't speak out. One day, Chaim told Baruch to put his hand down, because he was "too dumb and ugly" to give the right answer. Baruch, feeling shocked and angry, started doodling on his paper. He wrote all the names he wanted to say back to Chaim, but didn't have the courage.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

2. Binyamin is a strong, tall boy, who is the star on the school hockey team. Calev, also on the hockey team, is small and never gets on the court during games. Before every game, Binyamin tells Calev, "You are a screw up and a loser. Don't let your stupidity make the team lose. Do you understand?"

Calev replies, "Yes, perfectly. Now, would you please leave me alone!" Calev tries to be tough but he knows Binyamin is the better athlete. The words "screw up" and "loser" kept repeating in his head.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

3. Jason is right up in Shimon's face, "Show everybody your books, boy!"

"No," Shimon meekly says as a crowd gathers around them in the parking lot. Shimon is mortified.

Jason keeps talking with his arms in the air, "Hey, everyone. Did you know that Shimon here is doing third grade work in high school? See his book here…this is for dummies!"

Shimon just looks at the ground. The crowd giggles and Shimon slinks silently away to his friends, once again without knowing what words to say.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

4. Natan takes a step forward, hungry for lunch. When Reuven cuts in line in front of him, Natan swallows hard and says, "Excuse me, you need to go to the end of the line." Reuven, known to be the biggest, toughest boy in school, turns around and says, "You little snot! I can go where I want,

when I want! Got that? It's losers like you that should go to the end of the line. Or better yet, just eat the garbage from that trash can over there!"
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

5. Chanan hurries out the door. He doesn't want to run into Daniel, leader of the "in group." Chanan was kicked out of this group because he was accused of ratting on a member. Now, Daniel won't leave Chanan alone. Every day Daniel ridicules Chanan and calls him names. Even though Chanan wins almost all arguments in debate team competition, he tries to avoid Daniel. The words hurt, and Chanan knows Daniel is the leader of the "in group."
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

6. Joseph has just moved to town from across the country. Sammy, one of the other boys in his new class, is jealous of Joseph and starts to worry that Joseph might steal away Sammy's group of friends. Sammy creates a "We Hate Joseph" Facebook group. He encourages other boys to post reasons why they hate Joseph on the group and why they think he should move back where he came from. Soon, the entire grade becomes aware of the group, and many others begin to post hurtful messages about Joseph. Joseph is crushed and no longer wants to go to school.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

7. Yoni's mother passes by his laptop when he steps away from for a moment. She notices that her son is logged into a Twitter account that seems to be in someone else's name – a name she recognizes as one of his classmates. The first – and so far only – tweet is hateful and mean. When Yoni comes back, he is embarrassed and says he had never done anything like this before.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

8. Two sixth-graders, Moshe and Akiva, are trading malicious texts back and forth because of a misunderstanding involving an event at school they both wanted to run. The statements escalate in viciousness from trivial name-calling to very hateful and inflammatory statements, including death threats.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

9. Efraim, a tall, skinny teenager who excels in math and science classes, feels embarrassed on the basketball court because he is not very athletic. Other more athletic boys notice Efraim's shyness. Using their phones, they secretly take pictures of Efraim changing in the locker room, then send the pictures to the class WhatsApp group. Soon enough, boys are pointing, snickering, and laughing at Efraim as he walks down the school hallways. This hurts him deeply, and the perception that his classmates have of him begins to affect his math and science grades.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

10. David loves playing video games, and has played for years with his partner, Gidon. But one day, David tells Gidon he has found a better partner and he doesn't want to play as Gidon's partner anymore. Gidon is outraged that he has been "dumped" and he begins to tell other people on the network that David is a terrible partner, and that no one should ever team up with him unless they want to lose really badly. Soon after, David 's new partner dumps him and no one on the network wants to be his partner. David feels completely hopeless and alone.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

The document below will be given to female respondents.

Please answer all the questions below.

I am a girl in grade: (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12)
In school, I think that I generally (behave well) (sometimes behave well, sometimes not) (do not behave well)
At home or outside of school, I think that I generally (behave well) (sometimes behave well, sometimes not) (do not behave well)
I think that my grades are generally in the (top third) (middle third) (bottom third) in my class
I have participated in a bullying program at some point in middle school or high school (yes) (no) (I don't know/missed it)

1. Shira had her hand up again, "I know the answer!" Dina also raises her hand frequently, but she has a soft voice and doesn't speak out. One day, Shira told Dina to put her hand down, because she was "too dumb and ugly" to give the right answer. Dina, feeling shocked and angry, started doodling on her paper. She wrote all the names she wanted to say back to Shira, but didn't have the courage.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

2. Bracha is a strong, tall girl, who is the star on the school basketball team. Sara, also on the basketball team, is small and never gets on the court during games. Before every game, Bracha tells Sara, "You are a screw up and a loser. Don't let your stupidity make the team lose. Do you understand?"

Sara replies, "Yes, perfectly. Now, would you please leave me alone!" Sara tries to be tough but she knows Bracha is the better athlete. The words "screw up" and "loser" kept repeating in her head.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

3. Leah is right up in Miriam's face, "Show everybody your books, girl!"

"No," Miriam meekly says as a crowd gathers around them in the parking lot. Miriam is mortified.

Leah keeps talking with her arms in the air, "Hey, everyone. Did you know that Miriam here is doing third grade work in high school? See her book here…this is for dummies!"

Miriam just looks at the ground. The crowd giggles and Miriam slinks silently away to her friends, once again without knowing what words to say.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

4. Gabby takes a step forward, hungry for lunch. When Ayelet cuts in line in front of her, Gabby swallows hard and says, "Excuse me, you need to go to the end of the line." Ayelet, known to be the biggest, toughest girl in the school, turns around and says, "You little snot! I can go where I want, when I want! Got that? It's losers like you that should go to the end of the line. Or better yet, just eat the garbage from that trash can over there!"

In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

5. Lisa hurries out the door. She doesn't want to run into Penina, leader of the "in group." Lisa was kicked out of this group because she was accused of ratting on a member. Now, Penina won't leave Lisa alone. Every day Penina ridicules Lisa and calls her names. Even though Lisa wins almost all arguments in debate team competition, she tries to avoid Penina. The words hurt, and Lisa knows Penina is the leader of the "in group."
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

6. Aliza has just moved to town from across the country. Rivka, one of the other girls in her new class, is jealous of Aliza and starts to worry that Aliza might steal away Rivka's group of friends. Rivka creates a "We Hate Aliza" Facebook group. She encourages other girls to post reasons why they hate Aliza on the group and why they think she should move back where she came from. Soon, the entire grade becomes aware of the group, and many others begin to post hurtful messages about Aliza. Aliza is crushed and no longer wants to go to school.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

7. Yael's mother passes by her laptop when she steps away from for a moment. She notices that her daughter is logged into a Twitter account that seems to be in someone else's name – a name she recognizes as one of her classmates. The first – and so far only – tweet is hateful and mean. When Yael comes back, she is embarrassed and says she had never done anything like this before.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

8. Two sixth-graders, Eliana and Sarah, are trading malicious texts back and forth because of a misunderstanding involving an event at school they both wanted to run. The statements escalate in viciousness from trivial name-calling to very hateful and inflammatory statements, including death threats.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

9. Avigail, a tall, skinny teenager who excels in math and science classes, feels embarrassed on the basketball court because she is not very athletic. Other more athletic girls notice Avigail's shyness. Using their phones, they secretly take pictures of Avigail changing in the locker room, then send the pictures to the class WhatsApp group. Soon enough, girls are pointing, snickering, and laughing at Avigail as she walks down the school hallways. This hurts her deeply, and the perception that her classmates have of her begins to affect her math and science grades.
In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)

10. Shoshana loves playing video games, and has played for years with her partner, Adina. But one day, Shoshana tells Adina she has found a better partner and she doesn't want to play as Adina's partner anymore. Adina is outraged that she has been "dumped" and she begins to tell

other people on the network that Shoshana is a terrible partner, and that no one should ever team up with her unless they want to lose really badly. Soon after, Shoshana's new partner dumps her and no one on the network wants to be her partner. Shoshana feels completely hopeless and alone. In your opinion, is this situation an example of bullying? (yes) (no)
Circle the number that best represents the severity of the problem described here: (Likert to 7)