

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: York St John University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 4 (Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience)</p>
<p>Title of case study: Bullying, Cyberbullying and E-Safety in Children and Young People: the impact of research by the Unit for Child and Youth Studies, York St John University</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Bullying has for many years been acknowledged as a serious problem in schools (Smith & Brian, 2002). Research has shown that being a victim of bullying can have serious and long-term negative effects on psychological well-being (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). This case study outlines the impact of survey-based work, undertaken in schools by the Unit for Child and Youth Studies, exploring school engagement, bullying and wellbeing, which has identified and increased awareness of cyberbullying. This knowledge has been integrated into the development of government policy, as well as school and local authority interventions, on cyberbullying and e-safety more broadly.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The underpinning research for this case study was generated from a number of school surveys exploring bullying in schools. In line with government policy on bullying and best practice highlighted by numerous research studies, the research unit has, over the past ten years, conducted a number of school based surveys, exploring the nature, prevalence and impact of bullying experiences in children and young people. The survey research first commenced at York St John University (YSJU) in 2002 led by Prof. Ian Rivers, now at Brunel University. From 2005, the survey work has been led by Nathalie Noret. The surveys explored the nature, prevalence and effects of bullying in secondary schools across the City of York. Over a five-year period from 2002-2006, 14,283 pupils from Years 7, 8 and 9 (ages 11 to 14 years) completed the survey. It was these extensive data that contributed to the four publications (2008-2010) that form the basis of this case study.</p> <p>In 2009 the survey work was developed further and an e-safety survey was developed and conducted in one school. This work was again led by Noret, with additional data analysis by Paul McGivern (now a PhD student at the University of Derby). The aim of this survey was to explore wellbeing and behaviour in school along with pupils' use of technology and e-safety, and led to the 2011 article.</p> <p>From 2011, the earlier surveys were updated and re-launched by Noret in collaboration with the Anti-Bullying Strategy Group at the City of York Council, as the <i>Stand Up For Us</i> survey. The surveys now include both secondary and primary schools across the city, with the aim of the project being to explore pupils' behaviour and relationships in school and in relation to aspects of their well-being. To date, the newer survey has been completed by 5,174 pupils from Years 7, 8 and 9.</p> <p>These surveys underpin our research on the occurrences of bullying and cyberbullying in schools. Until 2005 cyberbullying had been defined for research purposes as having received nasty or threatening text messages or emails. At that time, only one other study (Campbell, 2005) had been conducted, and that was in Canada; no similar study had been conducted in the UK. Results of the City of York survey (from 2002-2006) identified that in that 5 year period an average of 14.9% of the total sample reported being a victim of cyberbullying, and that the prevalence rates for cyberbullying rose from 13.3% in 2002 to 15.64% in 2006. The rise in cyberbullying was particularly noticeable in females. It was further identified that cyberbullying was the second most prevalent form of bullying reported by pupils. The most common cyberbullying reported consisted of text messages, which included some element of name calling. Gender differences could be identified in the types of messages received, with more females reporting receiving messages calling them names and more males reportedly receiving more 'death threat' text messages.</p>

3. References to the research

Publications

- Rivers, I. & Noret, N. (2009). 'I h 8 u': Findings from a five-year study of text and e-mail bullying. *British Educational Research Journal. iFirst Article*, 1–29.
- Rivers, I., Poteat, V.P., Noret, N., & Ashurst, N. (2009). Observing bullying at school: The mental health implications of witness status. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 24(4), 211-223.
- Rivers, I. and Noret, N. (2008). Well-being among same-sex- and opposite-sex-attracted youth at school. *School Psychology Review*, 32(2), 174-187.
- Rivers, I. & Noret, N. (2010). Participant roles in bullying behaviour and their association with suicide risk. *Crisis: Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention*, 31,(3),143-148.
- McGivern, P. & Noret, N. (2011). Online Social Networking and E-Safety: Analysis of Risk-taking Behaviours and Negative Online Experiences among Adolescents. *Reinvention: A Journal of Undergraduate Research*, British Conference of Undergraduate Research 2011 Special Issue.
<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/reinventionjournal/issues/BCUR2011specialissue/mcgivernnoret>
- Rivers, I., & Noret, N. (2013). Potential Suicide Ideation and Its Association with Observing Bullying at School. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 53, S32- S36.

Supporting Grants

- **£14,550.00** Stand Up for Us 2013 & Year 10 Wellbeing Survey, *City of York Council* (2013)
- **£8,800.00** Stand Up for Us 2012, *City of York Council* (2012)
- **£2,500.00** Stand Up for Us 2011, *City of York Council* (2011)
- **£8,721.92** Stand Up for Us 2011 Project, York St John University, Research Project Funding (2011)
- **£1,600.00** E-safety in Adolescence, The British Psychological Society, with Dr Anna Macklin & Paul McGivern (2010)
- **£3,711.95** Evaluation of the Securus Monitoring Software, Securus Software Ltd (2007)

4. Details of the impact

Survey data on bullying were first reported at the 2005 British Psychological Society (BPS) conference, receiving wide media coverage. Subsequently, at the 2006 BPS Annual Conference, the presentation highlighted the prevalence of cyberbullying in the form of offensive or threatening text messages in a representative sample of secondary school pupils. Up to this point cyberbullying had received little academic or media attention in the UK and was, relative to other forms of bullying, not well understood. The presentation was one of the first in the UK to highlight the risks experienced by children and young people when using technology. Findings from this study were then cited in the UK Commons Parliamentary Select Committee report on bullying.

The 2006 presentation of this YSJU work attracted a wealth of media attention resulting in articles on the research in for example the *Guardian*, Sky News, the *Daily Mail* and the *Telegraph*, and radio interviews with regional stations including Real Radio and Radio York. It was also important that those data be reported back to children and young people in an accessible and interesting manner. Interviews were accordingly conducted for the CBBC children's 'Newsround' website and *Cosmogirl* Magazine. Such media coverage raised public awareness of the issue of cyberbullying. This contributed to a number of discussions with teachers and youth workers, leading to the development of interventions to attempt to address the issue in schools. The evidence from the research and the dissemination of the findings continue to feed into national, regional and schools' anti-bullying work to this date.

Noret was then invited to present these findings at a DfES seminar on Cyberbullying, which brought together academics, practitioners and children and young people to discuss the issue. Following this Noret contributed to the development work of the Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCFS) Cyberbullying Taskforce in London. This taskforce wrote and disseminated guidance on how to tackle cyberbullying in schools and other child and youth based organisations,

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involving youth organisations from the voluntary sector and internet providers. This guidance is still available on the 'Childnet' website, clarifying what cyberbullying actually is for professionals working with children and young people, and providing key points on how to tackle this form of bullying, such as through the integration of cyberbullying into a schools' anti-bullying policy.

Since 2006, Noret has regularly been invited to present at e-safety and anti-bullying events organised by the national organisations 'The Anti-Bullying Alliance', the 'Bullying Intervention Group', and 'Grids for Learning'. These events involve providing information and running workshops on cyberbullying for teachers and other professionals working with children and young people, to enable interventions to be designed; including practical advice and guidance on identifying cyberbullying, what to do to support children and young people if they are being cyberbullied, and how schools can integrate cyberbullying into their anti-bullying policies. In total, Noret has presented at over 100 national and regional events on cyberbullying and e-safety in London, Yorkshire, the North East and Norfolk. Many of these events were training days, to enable practitioners to take on board the key messages and integrate these into their work. These events were attended by representatives from Local Authorities, the teaching profession, social workers and other practitioners working with young people. In addition, some of the workshops were with children, young people, and parents, to raise awareness of the issue of cyberbullying and offer key messages about online safety to help address the issue.

In 2010, Noret became a member of the City of York Council's Anti-Bullying Steering Group, advising on key findings from the survey and contributing to the development of intervention strategies to tackle all forms of bullying in schools. Following the 2002-2006 surveys, the Council has asked Noret to run annual surveys in York primary and secondary schools to explore the nature and prevalence of different forms of bullying. Every participating school receives a report, plotting its data against the citywide data, to assist schools in identifying key areas requiring attention. Key statistics from the surveys now form part of the City of York Council's five-year Children's Plan and these survey data provide a means to continually evaluate the achievement of different aims by the Council to improve the well-being and behaviour of children and young people across the City. Whereas in the 2002- 2006 surveys cyberbullying was the second most prevalent form of bullying reported by pupils in the Citywide survey, in the most recent secondary school survey (2013) cyberbullying is now the least prevalent form of bullying reported.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

The following sources can corroborate the impact of the cyberbullying research. Individual users/beneficiaries who can be contacted by the REF team include:

To comment on the impact of the survey work and feedback to schools:

1. The City of York Council - Behaviour Attendance Safety, Education department
2. The City of York Youth Council - <http://www.yorkyouthcouncil.co.uk/>

To comment on the impact of the training provided:

3. The Bullying Intervention Group – <http://www.bullyinginterventiongroup.co.uk/>
4. The Northumberland Grid for Learning – Example of the training provided - http://ngfl.northumberland.gov.uk/esafe/antibullying_conference.html

5. Media Coverage

- http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_4860000/newsid_4865000/4865092.stm
- <http://news.sky.com/home/article/1217255>
- http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_4860000/newsid_4865000/4865092.stm

6. Citations in Commons Parliamentary Select Committee report on Bullying & Policy Guidance <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmmeduski/85/85.pdf>