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The Bullying Project

What South Australian children and young people have told us about bullying

Commissioner for Children & Young People

Thank you to all the children and young people who engaged with the activities so readily and shared their experiences, insights and suggestions with me.

Thank you to the Government, Catholic and independent schools, and flexible learning providers that supported the scheduling of these consultations and were available during the sessions to experience the wisdom of children and young people.

Thank you to CCYP Strategic Engagement and Participation Officer, Jodie Evans, who co-facilitated each session and captured each and every suggested solution with an unrelenting commitment to impartiality and integrity.

Throughout this report we have used unedited ideas and responses of the children and young people who participated in this project.

Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders People

The SA Commissioner for Children and Young People acknowledges the unique contribution of Aboriginal people's culture and heritage to South Australian society. Although participant details were not recorded specifically in relation to their cultural identity or background, a significant number of children and young people who took part identified as Aboriginal. For the purposes of this report the term 'Aboriginal' encompasses South Australia's diverse language groups and also recognises those of Torres Strait Islanders descent. The use of the term 'Aboriginal' in this way is not intended to imply equivalence between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, though similarities do exist.

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Chapter One

Commissioners Message

In 2017 I met with over 1400 children and young people in South Australia who shared with me what is important to them and what they want to see changed to make life better in South Australia.

The top five priorities asked of me were:

1. Keep listening to kids
2. Help poor kids
3. Make sure everyone gets an education
4. Help stop bullying
5. Create opportunities to be involved and make decisions

The issue of bullying was raised in the context of what children and young people want to see changed and what they wanted me to prioritise in my work. They also discussed it in the context of the importance of friendships, acceptance, equality and wellbeing.

I heard about the impact of bullying in schools, workplaces and sporting clubs. I heard that it is a complex issue.

I heard that children and young people have some really good ideas about what needs to be done to help stop bullying. I heard about the importance of kindness and that children and young people want adults to be more responsive. They specifically wanted me as their Commissioner to do something to help stop bullying.

Before I could 'do something' to stop bullying I needed more detailed information directly from children and young people on bullying. I therefore embarked on a "bullying project" to find out what bullying looks and sounds like in 2018.

I wanted to be clear about what 'it' is they wanted me to stop. I wanted to be able to inform decision makers what children and young people consider bullying is and to find out if they had ideas about solutions for schools, parents and themselves to prevent and respond to bullying.

This report seeks to place the views of children and young people front and centre in developing solutions to bullying. At the moment bullying – especially in relation to young people – is taking up a lot of airtime: on the radio, print and online media, at schools, communities and in all houses of Parliament. However, the discussion is missing one vital element, the voices and views of children and young people and what they think the solutions are.

Helen Connolly
Commissioner for Children and Young People

Introduction

The South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People is an independent statutory position, established under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* ("the Act").

The Act sets out the Commissioner's role including her responsibility to promote and advocate for the rights and interests of all children and young people in SA and to promote the participation of children and young people in the making of decisions that affect their lives. The Act specifically requires the Commissioner to advise and make recommendations to Ministers, State authorities and other bodies (including non-Government bodies), undertake or commission research and prepare and publish reports on matters related to the rights, development and wellbeing of children and young people at a systemic level.

A key objective of The Commissioner for Children and Young People is to position children and young people's interests, development and wellbeing front and centre in public policy and community life and to advocate to decision makers to change laws, policy, systems and practice in favour of children and young people.

The Commissioner's advocacy includes direct representation of the views and opinions of children and young people and protection of their rights and interests.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognises that all children and young people have rights and should respect the rights of others. State authorities are required to give effect to the UNCRC as well as any other international human rights instrument affecting children and young people.

The rights set out in the UNCRC are an additional safeguard of their safety and development and support children's capacity to make decisions and act autonomously. The articles cover three main themes:

- Participation Articles have at their core the idea of children and young people as active contributors and citizens.

- Provision Articles cover the basic rights of children and young people to survive and develop, be supported by their parents, or have alternative care arrangements, healthcare, water, education and environment.

- Protection Articles relate to responsibilities to protect children and young people from exploitation, discrimination, mistreatment and where necessary rehabilitation.

Statutory authorities must, when interacting with children and young people, ensure their fundamental rights are protected. Working towards the realisation of children's rights requires Government and community to:

- respect and treat children's rights as important as adults' rights

- protect rights and take action where children's rights are violated

- fulfil rights and take action to ensure children and others are aware of their rights

Bullying has been recognised by The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child as a form of 'mental violence'.[1] This type of 'mental violence' can affect children's health, wellbeing, safety and security. Furthermore, if children and young people cannot spend time with their friends and enjoy themselves, this can also violate their right to leisure and play. Bullying on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status can impact on young people's feeling of safety and mental health. Online bullying can infringe young people's right to privacy and violate their right to protection from attacks on their reputation. Bullying also affects young people in the workplace.

In the Commissioner's work she listens to the views of children and young people, collaborates with them and represents their diverse voices in the public arena with a special focus on those who struggle to have their voices heard. Much of her advocacy is directed by the experiences and issues that children and young people talk about and have asked her to focus on.

Through her conversations with children and young people it is obvious there are no easy solutions to bring about real change in the way communities respond to bullying. An effective framework should involve the collaboration of governments, organisations, schools, parents and importantly children and young people, who can work together to build best practices for responding to and preventing bullying.

This report incorporates the direct input of children and young people's views and experiences of bullying and their suggestions to prevent and respond to it. Ultimately, in order to shape an appropriate response to this issue, the most important perspectives are those of the children and young people themselves.

Much of her advocacy is directed by the experiences and issues that children and young people talk about and have asked her to focus on.
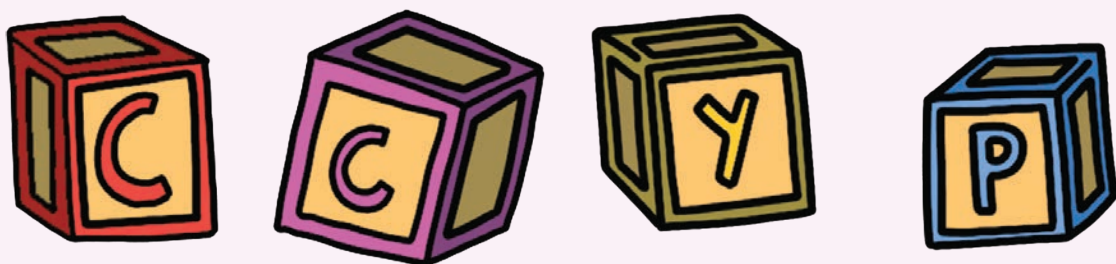
1. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment on the Rights of the Child (No13), 2011

Reflections from the Commissioner

At the start of this project I believed that the most effective interventions to stop bullying would need to involve children and young people and be grounded in a restorative approach. At the end of the project I am now more than ever convinced that doing something proactive about bullying requires the insights and input of children and young people.

Through the direct involvement of children and young people in the development of solutions to prevent and respond to bullying, I have captured a variety of views and experiences that to date have not been systemically included in the development of a multifaceted anti-bullying strategy.

This bullying project is the start, but we must continue to include children and young people, consult them and co design with them to ensure solutions make sense and will be used by those they are designed for. We need to enable children and young people to play a leading role in resolving the issue and have them involved in advocating for a culture that doesn't accept bullying. Children and young people have helped me better understand their experiences of bullying, the reasons why they think their peers bully and how they think it should be addressed.

By taking the time to speak to them respectfully, listen to them attentively and ask questions to understand their perspective I have been rewarded with extraordinary insights.

I have learned that:

*   Children and young people's views and descriptions of bullying behaviour are consistent across school sectors, school types and locations.

*   Children and young people describe most bullying as negative interactions about issues related to belonging and identity, intimate personal information, physical appearance, "slut shaming", intelligence, race, sexuality and family slurs.

> " I am now more than ever convinced that doing something proactively about bullying requires the insights and input of children and young people."

* Children and young people describe bullying behaviour as incorporating verbal abuse, physical acts and emotional/psychological behaviour. Bullying behaviour is influenced by gender, age and socio-educational factors.

* Children and young people describe bullying as occurring most frequently face to face, while bullying through technology – phone, text, and social media is generally in addition to face to face interactions.

* Children and young people describe face to face bullying as occurring at school, in public spaces and at sporting facilities.

* Children and young people across age groups, genders, school sectors and locations overwhelmingly spoke about empathy for the bully.

* Children and young people identified bullying behaviour as a combination of individual situations, peer relationships, and relationships at home.

In the discussions directly focussed on solutions I have been told about a range of possibilities at community, school and individual levels. Children and young people told me they are concerned about bullying. They believe that there should be consequences for serious bullying, but most importantly they want a range of responses to address underlying causes of bullying to change the bully's behaviour and to support victims.

The following ideas represent the findings that I think have policy implications for the development of a comprehensive whole of community anti-bullying strategy for South Australia.

1. Whilst there must be consequences for bullying behaviour that impact on others, a focus on punishment alone can be ineffective and create more negative outcomes. Effective responses need to be situational, child specific and have a restorative focus.

2. Community responses to bullying must include strategies to increase adults' awareness of the impact of their behaviour on children's bullying.

3. Children and young people acknowledge that the roles of bully, victim and bystander are interchangeable and therefore responses to bullying should involve all children and young people.

4. Children and young people require specialised assistance at school to learn the practical skills to challenge bullying behaviour amongst friends.

5. Effective anti-bullying strategies should involve children and young people in the design and delivery of a range of peer led intervention programs.

6. Strategies to address bullying need to take into account social contexts and cultural differences of children and young people to ensure appropriate and measured responses that are relevant to specific groups.

7. Bullying occurs across multiple online and offline environments, therefore effective bullying strategies should focus on supporting the development of skills and strategies that are effective in any setting.

Recommendations from children and young people

1

Children and young people said they want to be taught how to have difficult conversations with their friends and understand how to support each other.

They recommend that:

- Children and young people are taught skills so they can better prevent bullies and support their friends.

- Leadership roles are created for students to run groups to support children who have been bullied or who are using bullying behaviour, to teach them how to better treat each other.

- More opportunities are developed for peer support, starting in primary school and continuing in secondary school.

2

Children and young people said that they want to be more involved in anti-bullying programs.

They recommend that:

- There are opportunities in schools and the community for children and young people to have an active role in leading and running anti-bullying programs.

- Awareness raising programs be delivered by people who have had personal experience with bullying to make it more relatable.

- Programs in schools are delivered by people who use interesting and enjoyable approaches because students will learn more this way.

3

Children and young people said that having relationships with friends is an important part of bullying prevention.

They recommend:

- Activities and groups based on interests, across year levels are introduced to build friendships.

- Support for student-led 'getting to know you' opportunities, for children to understand each other and make friends with those they might not normally connect with.

- Children are taught skills to develop friendships because sometimes they find this difficult.

4

Children and young people said they wanted teachers to be more supportive in their responses to bullying.

They recommend that:

- Teachers watch students more closely and ask if they are okay, rather than waiting for students to tell them there is a problem.

- Teachers should always take bullying seriously.

- Practical and positive communication skills are taught as part of everyday learning, not just as part of a program or event.

5

Children and young people understood how worried parents and carers are about bullying and how difficult it is for them to help their child whether they are bullied or a bully.

They recommend that:

- Parents listen to what their child is saying and try not to respond to issues with suggestions from their childhood.

- Parents do practical things like check in daily, watch their children's grades and monitor friendships and online activities.

- Adults take responsibility for their own behaviour and how it impacts on children, including not judging each other at school drop off, arguing at sporting events and disrespecting others on social media.

6

Children and young people said that being kind is a more effective strategy than exclusion or punishment.
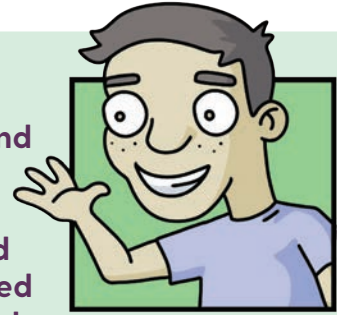
They recommend that:

- Parents and teachers show kindness through their words including kindness to the bullies.

- Kindness is something that needs to be taught. Kindness has power.

- Learning how to treat others with kindness, respect and acceptance is important in preventing bullying.

7

Children and young people felt that when bullying does happen there needs to be support available for everyone involved.

They recommend that:

- More counselling be made available for children in primary and secondary school.

- Counselling is provided by people who are neutral, trustworthy and trained.

- Parents need support too, so they can learn more about how to help their children if they are a victim or a bully or someone who wants to help.

Context globally, nationally and locally

Bullying is a global issue. It happens at all ages, in all settings and in various forms (physical, verbal and online). However, most of the research over the past 40 years has centred on pupil to pupil bullying in the school setting.[2] This may be why the focus of the public, media and politicians appears to be seen predominantly as an issue relating to children and young people.

The majority of research about school bullying has focussed on the effects of bullying on individuals in the classroom, the consequences of bullying from the victim's perspective, the pervasiveness of bullying and the identification of who the bully is likely to be. Some of this research directly includes children's perspectives, but more often it refers to teachers and parents' perspectives on bullying.[3] There is little research that asks children and young people about their views on how to address bullying.

A desktop review of media articles (including news reports and talk-back radio) collected by the Commissioner for Children and Young People since 1 January 2018 reveals there are approximately one to two media reports relating to bullying every week.[4] This review identifies significant community concern and discussion from experts, politicians and parents about bullying and what should be done to prevent bullying. Much of this contemporary commentary from community, media and politicians is focussed on a legislative response to the issue, including new laws and new punishments as a response to bullying behaviour. Whilst there are examples in the community of children and young people taking direct action to address bullying these were not prevalent in the media articles.

Government at State and Federal level have recognised that bullying is an issue affecting children and families. Much of their focus has been on school based bullying, resulting in requests from the then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull writing to every school Principal in March 2018, urging them to do more to target bullying and violence in schools. Specific policies and actions required in response to this request are unclear.

The Government of South Australia is taking bullying seriously and recognises that bullying has a significant impact which can take many different forms. The Government states it is committed to developing a 'coordinated and multifaceted anti-bullying strategy; to address bullying of young people in schools that involves parents, educators and the broader community.' The Government is seeking to use a range of responses to tackle bullying, including support and education. It is also considering if this will include a legislative response to reflect the views of some in the community who feel current laws need to be strengthened.[5]

2. Smith P., Sundaram S. et. al., *Bullying, Cyberbullying and Student Wellbeing in Schools: Comparing European, Australian and Indian Perspectives*, 2018 Cambridge University Press.

3. Ibid.

4. The number comes from CCYP's collection of media reports on children and young people as reported in all South Australian media and The Australian Newspaper.

5. Attorney-General's Department, 'Discussion Paper Advisory Roundtable on Bullying in South Australia', Attorney-General's Department, 25 September 2018

There are others in the community including young people, who feel that criminalising or punishing bullying will have little preventative impact, and are therefore calling for a more restorative approach to bullying.

Changes can be implemented both within policy and legal instruments, as well as through educational initiatives like workshops, training and open discussion about the effects and causes of bullying. This places the focus on acceptance, knowledge and empowerment, rather than on punishment and isolation.

There have also been some positive initiatives at the national level in Australia. The Australian Government has developed the National Safe Schools Framework which aims to foster educational communities that are safe from harassment, aggression, violence and bullying. Significantly, the framework also recognises the importance of student participation in school anti-bullying and violence strategies.

Projects like these are vital in developing an anti-bullying culture arising from a genuine sense of communal responsibility.

Project approach and methodology

At the core of the project was a commitment to the UNCRC Article 12 which states children and young people have a right to have a say on all issues that affect them and for their views to be taken seriously. By improving children and young people's participation in decisions that impact on them we gain valuable insight and an increased likelihood of the solutions developed being accepted and implemented.

The project methodology was child and youth focussed, participatory, safe and engaging. The focus was on achieving the critical outcome of children and young people informing adult decision makers on practical solutions for schools, parents and peers to address bullying. This outcome was in direct response to requests from children and young people to the Commissioner to stop bullying.

The project used a cooperative and collaborative approach to engagement and learning and included consultations with experts in addition to desktop research.

Specifically we:

- Consulted adult expert stakeholders to get their feedback and endorsement on the:

    - proposed design of the consultation sessions with children and young people

    - advice on ages best able to manage the topic and activity design

- Undertook desktop research on bullying, including:

    - a review of Australian laws to address bullying

    - consideration of jurisdictional legal responses in other countries (and any evidence of the effectiveness of these laws) (Appendix i)

    - an overview of the positions held by those in the media, government, law and stakeholders on bullying

    - current anti-bullying programs in South Australian schools

    - current anti-bullying policies in organisations.

- Interviewed Principals, schools and organisations involved in responding to bullying.

- Facilitated workshops with children and young people at schools or Flexible Learning Options (FLO) environments.

Participant workshops

Each workshop with children and young people was an opportunity to engage effectively and meaningfully. A number of principles and methods were used to support this:

- We worked with schools/agencies staff that had existing relationships with children and young people to minimise the risk of participants' discomfort or distress and could provide follow up if required.

- We conducted a risk and needs assessment before each session on cultural factors, age, group dynamics and communication needs.

- All communication to participants was clear and informative, including the aims and objectives of the workshop and what will happen with the information they share.

- We managed the expectations of participants' level of influence on recommendations and future strategies.

- Participation and engagement was voluntary and participants could opt out at any time.

- It was explained that personal stories should not be shared and there was no 'naming and shaming'.

- To respect anonymity we only asked participants for their age and gender.

All materials were colourful, inviting and carefully designed, reflecting our belief that the process is important and should demonstrate respect for participants and their contributions.

Participants were able to contribute as much or as little as they wanted and could choose to keep their responses to themselves or share amongst some or all of the group.

Both parents and children and young people provided consent to participate. Each workshop used the same activities to ensure consistency in approach and data collection.
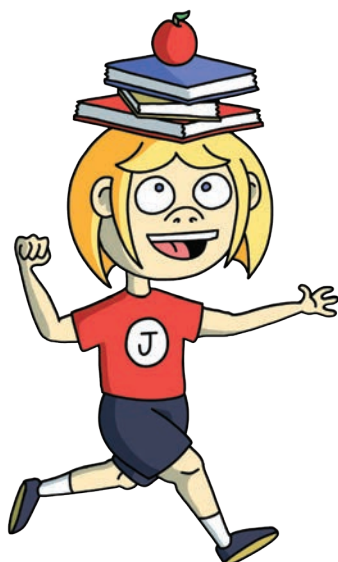
Children and Young People describe bullying in 2018. (Appendix ii)

In the first activity participants were introduced to "Jessie", a fictional cartoon character who is a bully, They were given a comic book style work sheet that asked :

- What does Jessie say?

- What does Jessie do?

- Where does Jessie say/do this?

- Why might Jessie say/do this?

Participants were told the reason for using a fictional character was to enable them to give their thoughts and opinions without sharing any personal stories or information about other people they might know. Students completed individual sheets but were encouraged to talk as a group to the extent they wanted. This allowed for safe discussions about a sensitive topic.

We acknowledged that not all participants had direct experience of bullying so we asked them to 'imagine' what a bully might say and do as well as tell us about where the bully might say and do these things and why they might act this way. It is therefore also important to acknowledge that the results in relation to this activity are in response to these instructions. Participants were encouraged to decide on Jessie's age and gender, and many provided this in their written responses.

What doesn't work, according to children and young people? (Appendix iii)

The second activity in the session was a fast paced activity with children and young people verbally responding in front of the group to the same question.

"In response to bullying what are you told to do, that you think doesn't work?"

This activity allowed participants to shift their thinking from describing the problem to thinking about solutions and so ensured participants did not dwell on ineffective or failed responses.

Solutions to bullying that might work, according to children and young people

In the final activity participants were asked to think about their 'what doesn't work list' and come up with possible solutions to stopping bullying.
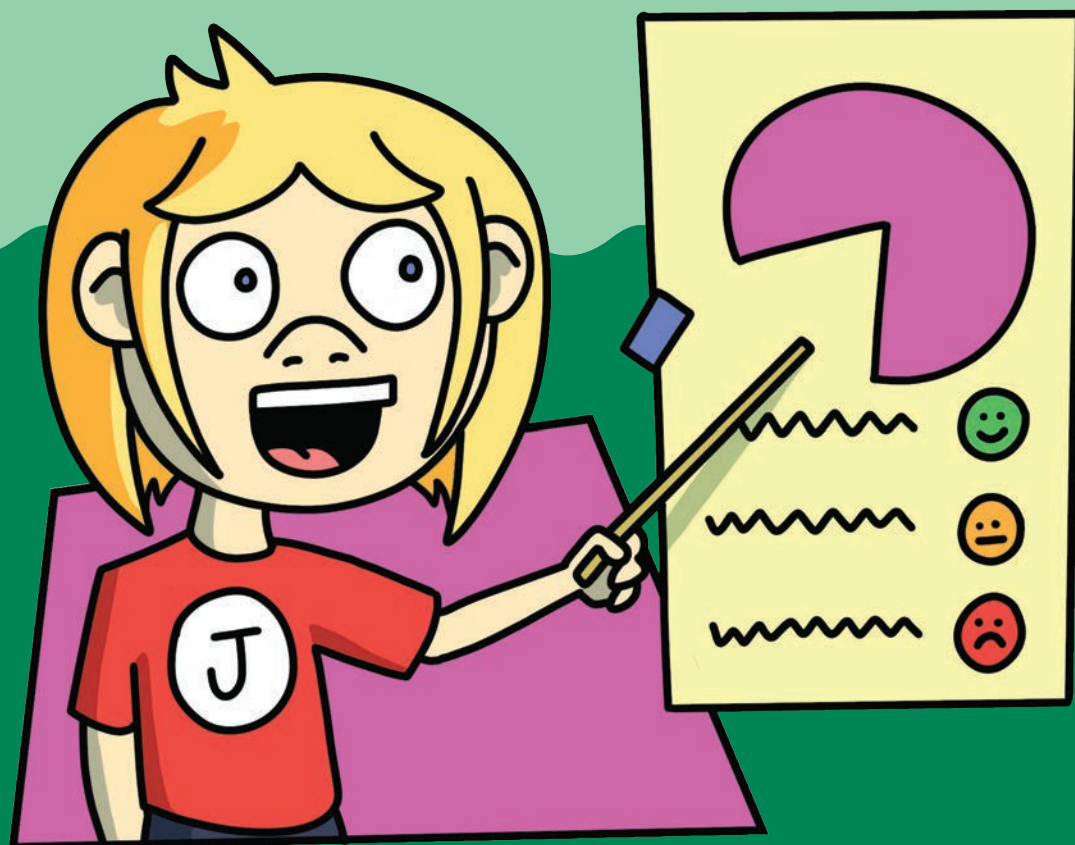
Participants were asked to develop three toolkits, in response to the following questions:

· What can schools do differently to help stop bullying?

· What can parents and carers do to help stop bullying?

· What can kids do to help stop bullying?

This activity included individual written work and group discussion.

Chapter Two

Understanding bullying as reported by children and young people

The Bullying workshops involved 283 participants with the "Jessie" activity receiving 274 responses. The variation in numbers arose because some participants chose not to complete a response sheet or completed it with a peer.

During the activity, four questions were asked:

· What does Jessie say?

· What does Jessie do?

· Where does Jessie say/do these things?

· Why might Jessie act this way?

The responses tell us about "Jessie", a fictional bully, and provide an insight into perceptions of bullying as expressed by participants in their own words.

Responses to the "Jessie" activity were transcribed and converted to an electronic format which provided the basis for the analysis in this section.

The data analysis used mixed methods research software for analysing qualitative research to digitally code responses according to the words and/or descriptions provided by each participant.

A code was assigned to words, actions, locations or causes in line with the participants' answer. Multiple codes were used within questions, allowing for comprehensive data capture. Where participants recorded a particular theme multiple times throughout their answers, this

was only recorded once to ensure accurate comparison across all participants.

The codes assigned to each response were developed from a sample group and continuously refined through multiple cycles of coding. Consistency in the application of codes was given significant attention. Coding checks were rigorous to prevent any misrepresentation or assumption influencing the results. This method ensured final themes accurately reflected the participant's responses.

Participants were asked to provide their age and gender on their response sheet. This demographic data was recorded, along with publicly available data on the school as well as any gender assigned to "Jessie".

Participants discussed "Jessie" in unique ways, reflecting differences in individual and group perceptions of bullying. The themes discussed are those most commonly recorded.

Factors such as the participants' age, gender and Australian Curriculum's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) were considered in analysing the type of bullying behaviour the participants perceived. Whilst specific bullying themes were consistent across particular ages and genders, individual school environments influenced how issues were perceived by participants, as well as idiosyncratic behaviour or language.

Important to the analysis was the gender of "Jessie". Male participants were more

likely to describe "Jessie" as male and rarely discussed "Jessie" as female. Female participants were just as likely to describe "Jessie" in respect of both genders. This distinction suggests that male participants are more likely to think of other males when describing bullying rather than perceiving it equally across the genders. Similar gendered distinctions were also able to be made according to the language and behaviour described.

What does Jessie say?

Participants described things "Jessie" might say in detail. Reponses have been categorised according to the dominant theme conveyed. What "Jessie" says was categorised into eight major themes. Swearing and strong language was a feature of the responses but not coded as a separate theme as it was used in conjunction with others.

The eight themes identified in order of prevalence were:

- Belonging and worthiness

- Physical appearance

- Intimate personal information

- Slut shaming

- Intelligence

- Race

- Sexuality

- Family slurs

Belonging and worthiness

Belonging and worthiness was the most common theme recorded by participants. This theme represents a variety of descriptors which relate to either a sense of belonging or a sense of worthiness. Responses from participants ranged from those who attacked likeability and ability, to those related to the validity of the victim in a social setting or in their existence:

- "Jessie might say things to degrade a persons self-worth e.g. you mean nothing or you worthie (worthy) piece of sh**."

- "You're worthless and always will be" "Everyone hates you!"

- "You're not worthy of having friends like us, we are too good for you"

- "You don't even have any friends, why are you even alive"

Belonging and worthiness was most often recorded by younger participants and generally decreased as the participants aged, resurging in the middle high school years before continuing to decline. Female participants across each age group were more likely to identify this theme than male participants.

Physical appearance

Physical appearance was the second most frequent theme recorded by participants. The theme captures statements with regards to appearance, physical features and weight. Participants responses commonly used language focusing on being 'fat' or 'ugly', and used statements aimed at particular features or characteristics:

- "Jessie calls people out on the way they look. "Your ugly" "you fat useless cow""

- "Why would you wear that you look FUGLY"

- "you're a shortie" "you have a frogface'"

- "Sarcastic comments about intelligence and appearance such as 'she's so smart' or 'Your makeup looks so nice'"

Physical appearance was a significant feature across all age groups reflecting a common insecurity. It was most frequently identified by younger primary school aged participants (ages 10-11) and reappeared significantly in lower and middle-secondary years (ages 13-15). Females were almost twice as likely to record body image as a theme than males. Whilst female participants were more likely to focus on a specific feature, all genders and ages were very specific about the person's features where this theme was recorded.

Use of intimate personal information

Use of intimate personal information was the third most frequent theme recorded by participants. The theme covers statements and words that indicated intent to use personally specific information known about someone as the subject of bullying behaviour. It includes specific power play tactics such as jokes, telling of secrets, or trying to get the victim to do something:

- "Mean comments on things people might be self consios (conscious) about."

- "Cat calling 'flash us something' and we will leave you alone."

- "Saying anything hurtful when they get the chance, e.g. accidentally walk into them."

- "Your not depressed you want attention"

- "'What is that?' – usually said like a rehorical (rhetorical) question and a rude attitude. Maybe followed by joking"

Comments about personally specific information were recorded most often by participants aged 13-17, peaking in upper secondary. In younger age groups the theme was mostly associated with simpler language such as name calling. As participants aged, language became more complex and reflected social competition. Personally specific information was recorded almost equally by both female and male participants, although there was some variation between how the theme was identified between genders. Comments related to wanting attention were recorded entirely by female participants, whilst comments trying to get the victim to do something based on information available to them were twice as likely to be associated with a male bully.

Slut shaming

Slut shaming was a significant theme recorded by participants and generally involved the use of words such as 'slut' and 'whore', and included abbreviations and comments that alluded to sexual promiscuity:

- "Jessie gossips to other and continues to call someone a Slut and makes up stories to make this person seem like a Slut to others."

- "Slut (although you are completely innocent)"

- "You probably slept with everyone on this street you Slut "

- "why are you wearing that skirt you're just asking for it"

Slut shaming was significant at 13 years of age and peaked in upper secondary years for both genders. Younger participants were more likely to provide less detail suggesting that the phrase was used more as a derogatory term. Older participants generally provided more detailed comments with female participants providing greatest detail.

Whilst slut shaming was equally attributed to a male and female bully, female participants were more than twice as likely to mention slut shaming as male participants. The theme increases in use across both age and gender being recorded mostly by older female participants.

Intelligence

Intelligence was a significant theme recorded by participants and refers to a lack of intelligence, using descriptors such as 'dumb' and 'retarded', or 'nerd' and 'geek'. Statements about a lack of intelligence were used independently and in conjunction with attacking a sense of belonging or worth:

- "Oi get out nerd, leave the school you don't belong here!"

- "Your stupid!"

- "Jessie says things in the classroom like "that's a dumb example" once you said something."

- "You're a dumb Slut."

Comments on intelligence were most often identified by younger participants and remained a constant but less significant feature across older ages. Comments on intelligence did not appear to be associated with gender.

Race

Race was recorded by a number of participants. Responses classified as race-related generally involved a derogatory term or comment of a racist nature. In a number of instances they were self-identified as racial slurs and self-censored by participants:

- "Uses racial slurs to increase white supremacy and degrade other cultures"

- "Jessie picks on students for their culture and/or religion – "you're part of ISIS""

- "You have no rights you aboriginal, why are you even here."

- "calling peoples cultures "bull sh**". Calling African people brownies"

- "Bit*h I hate your country. You're a terrorist. Go back to your country."

Racism as a theme rose steadily across ages with the bulk of responses in upper-middle secondary years with most in the older ages. Racism was identified twice as often by male participants than females and was more commonly attributed to a male bully than a female.

Sexuality

Sexuality was recorded as a theme most often as offensive remarks with regards to sexual orientation and included a mix of slurs such as 'gay' and 'faggot':

- "Jessie calls people gay, lesbian, homo, bi."

- "That's pretty gay."

- "LGBTQ+/MOGII (?) slurs (faggot, tranny etc)."

- "You're a faggot!"

Sexuality was overwhelmingly identified

by 14 to 16 year old participants, and rarely appeared outside these age groups. Comments on sexuality were most often attributed to a male bully and as likely to be recorded by a male as a female respondent. Sexuality was the least recorded of all themes for female participants.

Family slurs

Family was recorded by a number of participants and accounted for statements that were generally more personal, relating to a specific individual. The family theme included statements regarding general family circumstances and background. The depth and strength of the statements varied.

- "Jessie could talk about your family if they are going through struggles."

- "It's not my fault your mom doesn't love you."

- "Does your family even care about you? Your parents don't love you."

- "You're a bit*h just like your mother."

Family was primarily identified by younger participants who used it as a method of differentiation. Older participants used family insults in more offensive and stronger terms. Family appeared at similar rates for female and male participants.

What does Jessie do?

Participants discussed in detail the types of things that Jessie might do including specific behaviours or actions. We have described these general themes as

- verbal abuse
- physical acts
- emotional/psychological behaviour.

The frequencies of these three themes were similar.

Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse was the most frequently recorded 'thing' that "Jessie" did. Verbal abuse as an act of bullying was used to describe spoken or written abuse including the use of social media, whether directly or indirectly aimed at the recipient:

- "Spread rumours and/or truths about people that are degrading to them. Bringing their self-esteem down and hurting their reputation in school."

- "Is passive aggressive and sarcastic subtly stabs you. 'Remember when left me alone to hang out with your boyfriend, that was great'"

- "Put people down with his rude and disrespectful words whenever someone walks past."

- "Talk behind back, Send screenshots of conversations, pretending to be "concerned" for you"

Verbal abuse was identified at similar rates across genders with a slightly higher rate of identification amongst female participants. Verbal abuse had a higher rate of association with a female bully than with a male bully. This was explained by a number of the participants who wrote "Girls are more verbal".

Verbal abuse was recorded across all age groups and tended to increase with the rise in age of participants, and was most common amongst 13 to 17 year olds. The data showed difference between genders in the primary ages. Males were less likely to identify verbal bullying at a younger age, this

spiked at age 13 increasing to a comparable rate to females from age 15.

A breakdown across the ICSEA revealed that verbal abuse was similar across school environments and so didn't appear to be affected by the socio-educational advantage of the school.

Physical acts

Physical acts were recorded by a large number of participants. The behaviours included use of body or force, physical proximity, direct pushing, shouldering and hitting:

- "Jessie is always pushing people around. She is always pushing my friends around."

- "He shoves you into lockers if he does not get what he wants."

- "Gets very physical when you stand up for yourself." "Gets up in our face. Makes himself look bigger than you."

- "Punch. Start figts (fights) by pushing and throwing you to the ground."

Physical behaviour was recorded most frequently by younger participants, and slightly declined for the older participants. Physical behaviour was identified by both male and female participants, although a marginally higher number of male participants. Where the participant had identified the bully as male there was a higher rate of reporting of physical bullying. Some participants identified the distinction between the genders:

- "more social for females and more physical for males."

Female participants recorded physical

bullying more between the ages of 14 and 16.

Physical behaviour was affected by the socio-educational advantage of a school. Generally participants that attended a school with a lower ICSEA value had a higher rate of identification of physical behaviour than those who attended a school with a higher ICSEA value.

Emotional/psychological behaviour

This description includes behaviours intended to cause emotional and/or mental harm and is described as behaviours that are subtle, manipulative, controlling or cause others to react. Behaviours ranged from humiliation and exclusion to staring and gossiping:

- "She gives you dirty looks, sneers & stares."

- "Makes other people not be friends with you – manipulation makes threats and lies."

- "Give them looks when they see them around the school. Laugh at them. Talk under their breath. Abuse them mentally, emotionally."

- "Jessie follows people around from the start to the end of the day, stalking them and making them feel uncomfortable."

Emotional and psychological behaviour was recorded across all ages. Behaviour such as humiliation was more commonly recorded by younger participants, while behaviour such as manipulation was recorded more frequently by older participants.

Female participants recorded emotional and psychological bullying more than male participants.

Males recorded emotional and psychological bullying at low levels until age 13 where the rate of identification spikes, before continuing to decline. Females recorded it across all age ranges with the highest recorded at age 17.

Emotional and psychological behaviour was also impacted by ICSEA values. Participants that attended a school with a lower ICSEA value generally had a lower level of recording this behaviour. The most advantaged schools recorded the highest rates of students attributing emotional and psychological behaviour to the bully.

Where might Jessie say/do these things?

Participants were asked to consider where Jessie might be saying and doing the things they recorded. Responses were provided in detail with many recording specific places. Many participants provided detail on the links between a location and a theme, behaviour or cause. This was most prevalent in relation to who else might or might not be in their space.

Over a third of participants answered this question in relation to who was present at the time. They described behaviour that was away from others, attention and/or behaviour deliberately in front of others.

Behaviours that were described as 'away from others' were those described as being away from adults including teachers.

- "Jessie does things when no adults or good friends are near."

- "At the Park (when your alone)"

- "Jessie acts in a private place. (Bathroom – school). Where there are no grownups. (School yard.)"

- "Jessie may say these things at school at recess or lunch or after school when there are no teachers around."

Behaviours in front of others were mostly around peers and involved embarrassment:

- "At places where no one else will find out or a big croud (crowd) if to cause more embassrasment (embarrassment) and humiliation."

- "In front of people to get a laugh. With his friends to feel more superior."

- "Jessie does this on social media in group chats so she can humiliate the bully."

- "In Public / In the market In front of Adults. In School / In Classroom. In front of kids."

Behaviours away from others were recorded mostly by participants below the age of 14. On the other hand behaviours deliberately in front of others tended to be described more often by older participants and more commonly by female participants.

Participants more frequently recorded bullying as something that happened in person rather than being technology based. Where participants recorded the behaviour as likely to occur through technology, in more than 90% of instances they described it as also happening in person. This reflects the group conversations that bullying through technology is in addition to face to face bullying.

In person was the most significant place recorded by participants with technology references secondary:

"Mostly real life face to face Bullying as that is more effective and insulting to the person who is being Bullied."

Where technology was recorded, it included social media, phone calls and messages. The most commonly identified social media platforms were Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram, however all three were generally spoken about together, with participants indicating that whatever might be said or done on one could be across all:

– "In public social media, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Kik."

– "Jessie might say things on social media like Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook where friends or family from school can see, so those bystanders might join in."

Face to face bullying behaviour was recorded more frequently and in more detail than behaviour through technology. In person it included three main settings: school, public spaces and sport.

School was the most prevalent setting, and generally a space inside the school was also referred to with playground and yard spaces being the most commonly identified setting. This was followed by class and classrooms, lunch and recess spaces and the school's bathrooms.

– "School. On the oval @ lunch or in the class room when a teacher isn't looking."

– "In the classroom to the teacher. In the bathroom when your alone."

– "At school in the yard at recess and lunch, even during class lessons."

Many of the participants recorded that public spaces were a location for bullying. Public spaces were those that are generally accessible by the public and included an array of spaces from carparks to food courts and shops, and even local streets and parks:

– "Around school in the carpark or near the bus stop during after school times."

– "public places, city, parks just in general when hanging out."

– "At school, shopping centre, train station"

– "Public places shops sporting club local oval."

A number of participants recorded that bullying occurred during sporting activities.

– "Even during her club sports she is getting into fights and putting others down and always dishing out negativity and discouragement."

– "On the basketball court when you keep missing the shot and get payed out about it because you can't get it in."

– "On the netball court when you are winning and the other team are being to pushy and you get the blame."

Almost half of all participants that talked about 'in person' bullying, discussed multiple locations either within or outside of a school environment.

"Some bullies in 2018 are bullies in most places rather than just at school or sport."

Why might Jessie act this way?

Participants' responses showed significant empathy for the bully, acknowledging a range of reasons behind the behaviour. Three main themes were identified:

· Individual reasons

· Peer relationships

· Relationships at home

The majority of participants recorded more than one theme. Individual reasons were most frequently recorded. The vast majority of these responses centred on an empathetic understanding across all ages, genders and environments with only one participant describing bullying as being exclusively for fun. Individual reasons included insecurity, depression, fear, anger and a desire to feel better:

– "Jessie could be going through tough things behind closed doors. Taking her anger out on who they believe the easiest victim is."

– "Because they feel insecure about themself (themselves) They aren't good at dealing with differences."

– "Because he is a scared of being bullied."

– "Insecure – may be stressed about school. He may be repeating something someone has said to him. May be struggling with his own problems. Someone may be bullying him. Upset about something else and taking frustration out on someone else because its easy."

Peer relationships were described as pressures arising out of social situations and were not frequently associated with malice or intent. Many participants described the bully as being influenced by friends as well as bullying others in an attempt to gain friends. Students also talked about bullying behaviour as a desire to exert control as well as a reaction to social situations:
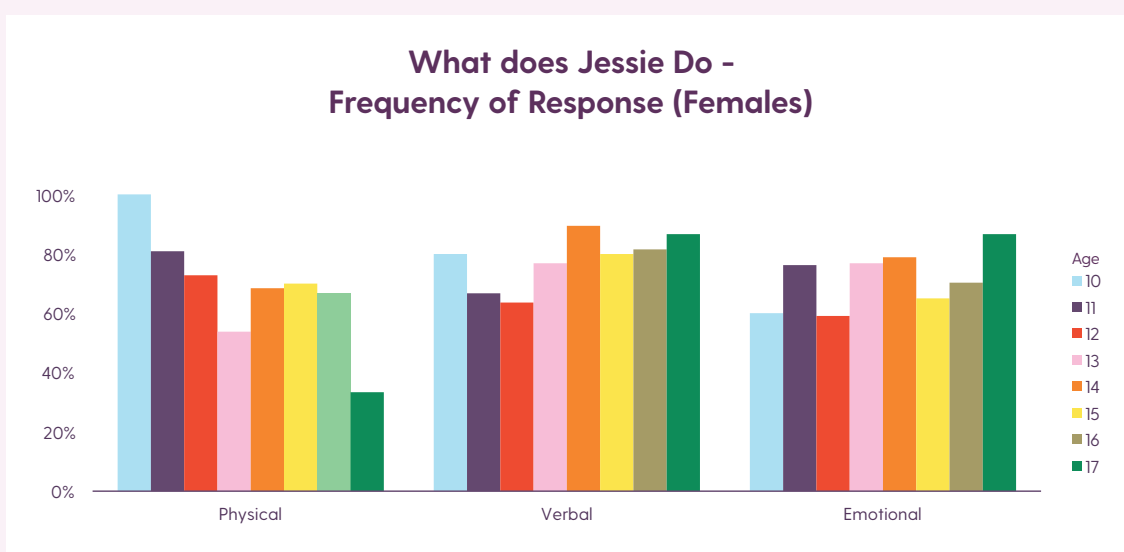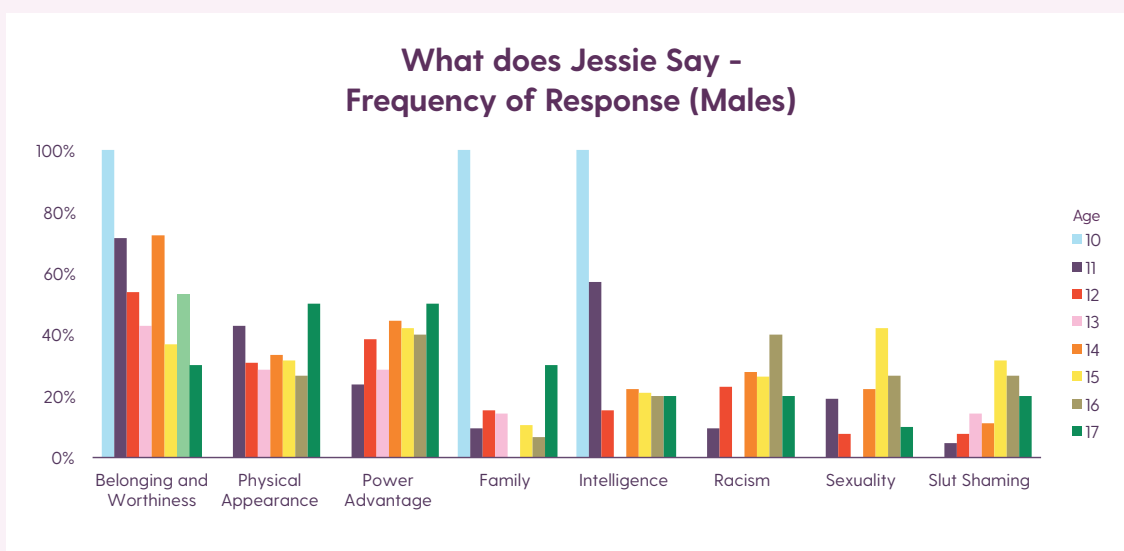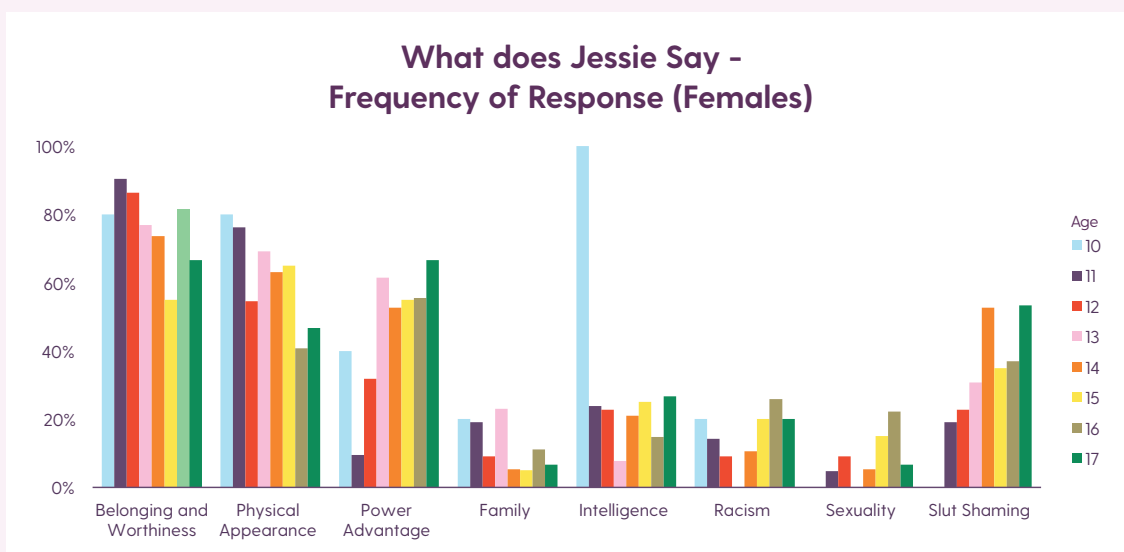
– "Jessie could be going to school and then be getting bullied himself, so he reacts the same way."

– "Possibly because Jessie want's to look good in front of her friends."

– "Jessie is popular because people respect him because of the power he has over other kids."

Participants described the influence of relationships at home as a reason why the bully might act in a particular manner. They expressed concern about trouble in the home environment outside of "Jessie's" social or school life.

Many participants recorded the impact of adult role models and how they influence the behaviour of bullies. Responses included upbringing and treatment of the bully at home:

– "Because Jessie gets bullied at home and wants to feel in power."

– "Parents bully other people in front of him."

– "Something has recently happened to his family and he wasn't happy about it so now he makes himself feel better by putting others down."

Graphical representation of responses

What does Jessie Say – Frequency of Response (Females)

What does Jessie Say – Frequency of Response (Males)

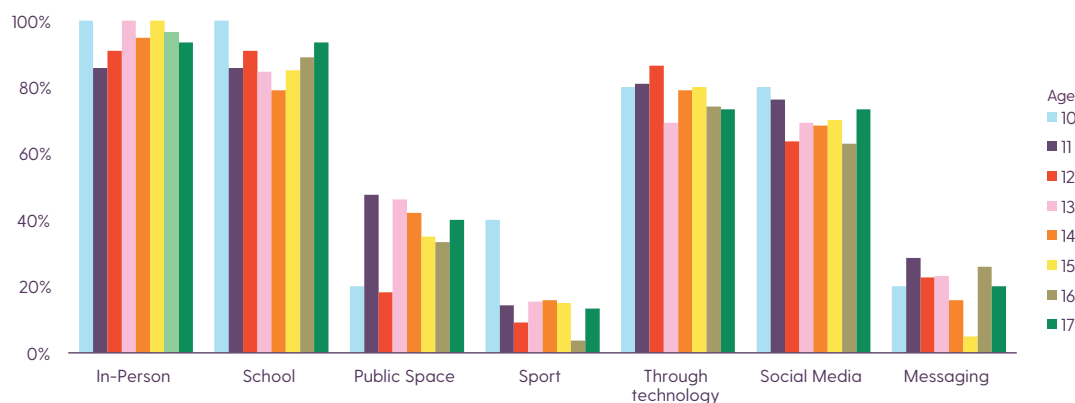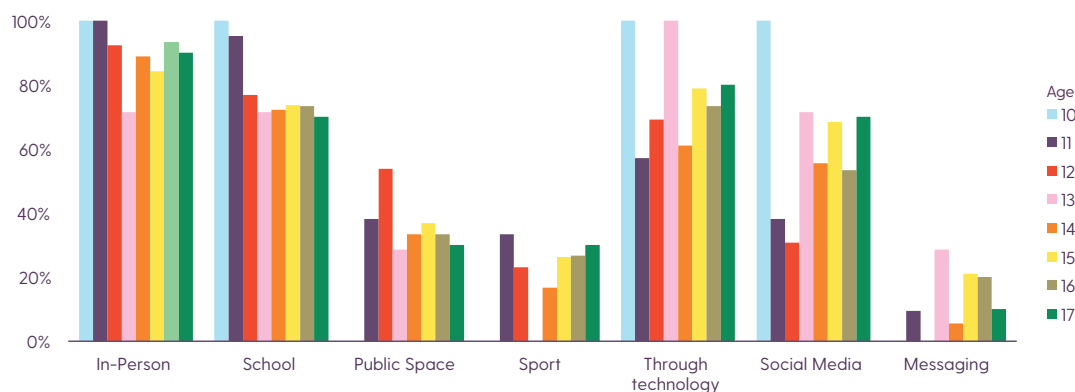**What does Jessie Do – Frequency of Response (Females)**
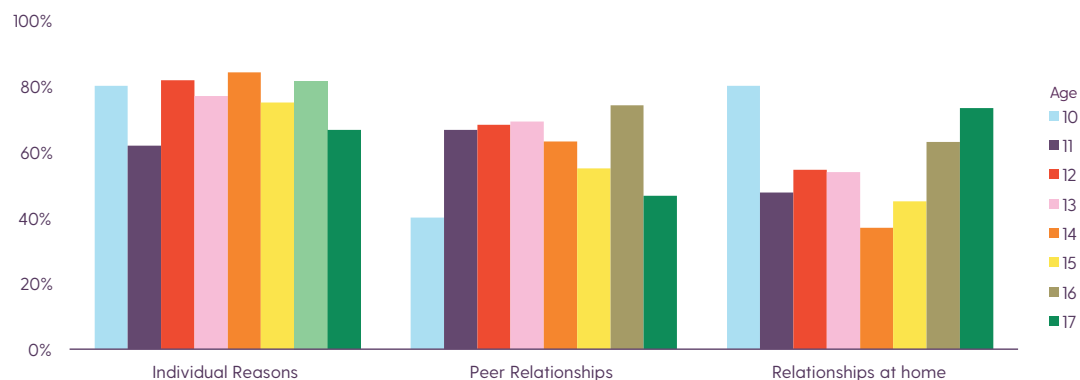
What does Jessie Do –
Frequency of Response (Males)
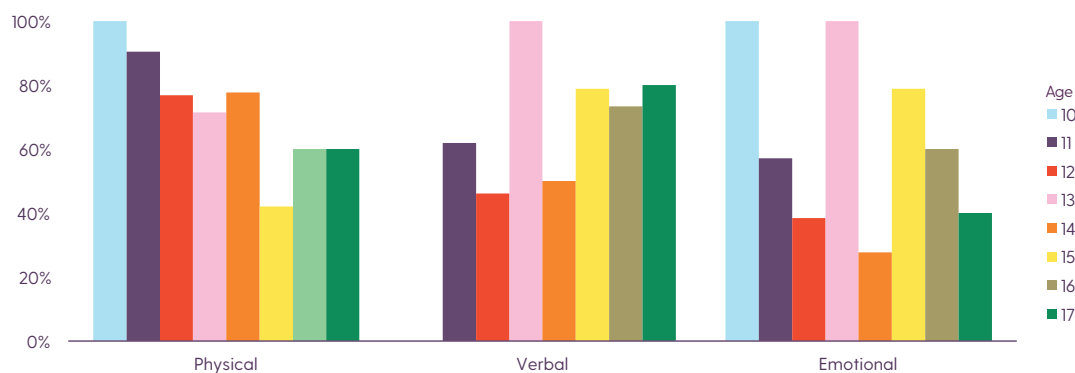
Where might Jessie do / say these things –
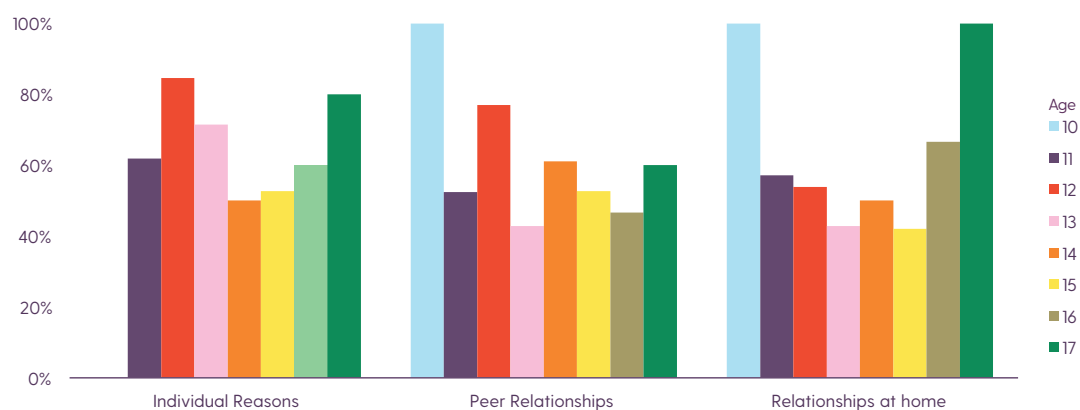Frequency of Response (Females)

Where might Jessie do / say these things –
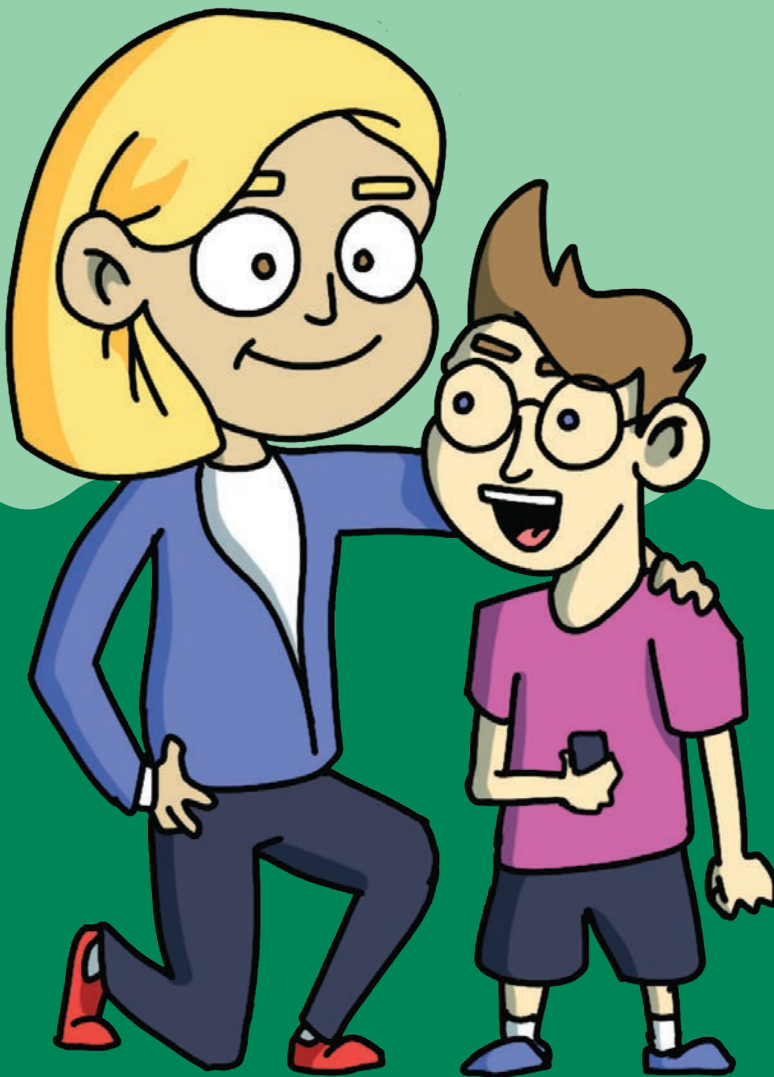Frequency of Response (Males)

Why might Jessie act this way - Frequency of Response (Females)

Why might Jessie act this way - Frequency of Response (Males)

Chapter Three

What children and young people want to tell us about bullying.

To support participants to come up with their own solutions to bullying, a number of open-ended questions were asked as discussion starters. These answers have been collated and those with greatest consistency and frequency across groups are presented here. They provide insight into children and young people's views and experiences.

Is bullying getting worse?

Participants were asked if they think bullying is getting worse, if it is happening more and if the severity has increased. Participant responses were varied; some said it is worse, others said it is better and most said it is just different. What was clear is that bullying has changed and if adults have a better understanding of this they will be better equipped to respond.

- "talking to your parents doesn't always work as school bullying has changed over the years so they don't really understand as they haven't been to school for a long time so they don't know how it feels."

Participants told us what is different about bullying today, related to its '24/7' nature, which is a result of social media and technology. Participants said this change had provided more methods and anonymity that makes it easier to bully. Those participants who felt bullying was worse discussed this in relation to the severity of the impact on their mental health as a result of increased bullying:

- "I personally think it's getting worse. Because people are getting more jealous easily. Social media is not helping because they judge your photos, gossips to their friends, they laugh at you".

- "bullying is getting worse in my opinion because people are more scared to speak up about problems."

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"**Talking to your parents doesn't always work as school bullying has changed over the years so they don't really understand...**"

Secondary Student

Many participants questioned the impact of media and publicity around bullying and the extent to which this reflected actual increases in bullying or the perception of bullying.

- "you hear about the massive problems on the News and think it's getting huge".

There was however a sense that there is less physical bullying than there used to be and much more verbal or, as one participant explained, it is:

- "becoming much less face-to-face, going online. Indirect bullying – less violent, more sbutle – harder to see' (secondary)".

It's everyone's problem

Participants said bullying is a societal problem that comes from the way we promote toughness and portray aggression and conflict as being 'cool'. Using bullying behaviour is often associated with strength and popularity, with politicians and public figures being cited as examples.

Given the strength of messaging around this, participants were critical of any solutions that focus only on child to child bullying. They described these types of solutions as overly simplistic and said they don't capture the different roles of adults and children in relation to bullying and the different environments in which it takes place.

They wanted it understood that bullying is everyone's problem and solutions need to be multi-dimensional.

- "bullying can really take place anywhere and doesn't just happen with children."

In particular participants spoke about the impact of parents talking about children in negative ways and behaving rudely to other parents. They said adults should have more awareness of the impact of their actions and words on the children around them. Participants were also attuned to the impact of workplace and social media bullying on their parents.

- "adults can still get bullied from social media or from employers from work."

- "my mums boss was mean to his staff"

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"**Could act like a good kid towards teachers, but act like a meanie towards students.**"

Primary Student

Participants suggested we look at anti-bullying responses that develop strong inclusive communities.

- "where different, more positive, images of how people act towards each other are portrayed in movies and books."

- "coaches team, everyone coming together to enjoy something they like"

Who are bullies?

Participants were asked if children who bully are always bullies, if bullies are liked by others, and if bullies know they are being a bully.

There was a consensus among participants that children cannot simply be placed into a bully or victim category.

Participants felt it was important to understand that:

- "Jessie can be both bully and the bullied."

- "it is often bullied individuals who bully."

Responses from participants indicated that children who bully aren't always bullies. We heard that children might bully in certain circumstances or towards particular children. Participants also talked about the complex situation when the person who is doing the bullying is your friend.

Participants spoke about bullies being popular amongst their peers. They explained that children who bully usually do have friends. They told us that:

- "Bullies can still be good friends at the same time that they bully."

- "The bully is popular – people give them attention, making them more powerful."

- "People are often scared to be bullied so they act as a friend to the bully making bully seem popular."

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

" **People are often scared to be bullied so they act as a friend to the bully making bully seem popular.**"

Secondary Student

We also heard that sometimes children who bully are well liked by teachers and that adults might be surprised by which children bully, explaining:

- "Teacher like them: sometimes because they would think that they have great potential."

- "Jessie could be a good kid that sucks up to teachers. This makes it extremley hard for other students to go to a teacher and tell them that they are being bully because the bully is so loved."

- "could act like a good kid towards teachers, but act like a meanie towards students."

Participants were divided on whether bullies know they are being bullies. Some said that the influence of their environment meant they know no better, and sometimes there is a fine line between making a joke, showing off and trying to fit in.

- "Some people don't know they are a bully but are just trying to fix their own hurts."

- "Jessie doesn't know they are a bully, they think they're being funny."

Participants felt it was really important that efforts were made to help the bully to understand their behaviours and the impact they have on others.

We want to know how to help

Participants told us that the bully may be bullied themselves, may be provoked, or may act out of fear. Participants had significant empathy towards the bully and explained that the relationship between individual bullies and their peers is complex. Many participants said that the bully does not have the skills to communicate their feelings or resolve their issues without harmful behaviour. When developing responses they need to look at the behaviours rather than the person.

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

" **Jessie doesn't know they are a bully, they think they're being funny**"

Secondary Student

- "Jessie's friends need to encourage her to do the right thing and show her she is loved and cared for and she doesn't need to continue to bully others to find joy."

Participants said they did not know how to intervene when their friend is being a bully. They said they would like to help and feel guilty for not doing anything, but don't know how to approach the situation.

Many participants described not having the skills to resolve conflict situations. They want to learn how to de-escalate situations and respond in ways that support the bully to choose different behaviours.

Participants spoke about wanting to have the skills to respond, to find solutions, to both individual behaviour and motivations. They want the skills to build strong peer group relationships and more broadly, create positive school and community environments.

Include us in the solutions

Participants spoke about the importance of hearing what they have to say about bullying and its impact, and the positive effect of including children and young people in the development and implementation of solutions.

- "having a student speak to another student will be more effective than a teacher speaking to a student"

Children and young people spoke about the positive influence of peers and the opportunities for them to be included in strategies to respond to bullying.

Peers as mediators in minor incidents being able to act as a broker to help solve interpersonal problems were frequently mentioned. Participants acknowledged the importance of giving children and young people skills to do this.

- "kids can spread the awareness of bullying"

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"Having a student speak to another student will be more effective than a teacher speaking to a student"

Secondary Student

- "Help people find there voice – bullying wotn stop but teaching people to use there voice will help them deal with bullying"

Others said that student leaders could have a specific role in responding to and resolving school bullying incidents. Some suggestions included having peer led groups to help children who have issues with each other to find effective ways to communicate.

Participants spoke about workable solutions being grounded in joint efforts, involving children, young people, teachers, parents coaches and others.

KYS

Participants provided different insights into 'Kill Yourself' and 'KYS' telling us they don't mean the same thing. A number of participants mentioned the distinction between the abbreviated form and the words. Participants said 'KYS' is often used outside of a bullying context and has become a pop culture reference.

- "Oh I have a maths test KMS" (KMS = Kill myself)."

Children and young people identified that when 'KYS' is used in the bullying context it

is viewed as something that emphasises an existing bullying focus, similar to the use of offensive language.

- "You're so ugly you might as well kill yourself."

- "xxx shes so annoying can she just go kill herself."

Participants were less likely to perceive bullying taking place with only the words 'Kill Yourself'. Instead they were more likely to think of bullies as also saying other things or using it in conjunction with other put downs. 'Kill Yourself' was also not always seen by participants to convey an intent to hurt, and some felt that there were more hurtful things that bullies say. Participants explained:

- "Go kills yourself. It is not the worst sentence in the world."

- "Kill yourself. (You can make it sound good or as a joke) but can be harmful."

Participants said that both the abbreviation and words can cause harm and be used aggressively. However any response to this should take into account the nuances of both 'KYS' and 'Kill Yourself'. Participants highlighted that only focussing on the words is not the solution. The solution has to include understanding the motivations and intentions of the bully and working to address this.

Punishment – it's complicated

Participants told us that punishment 'doesn't work' as a solution to stopping bullying. Punishment doesn't get to the 'root' of the problem nor does it teach children how to treat others respectfully.

Children and young people said that punishment from adults doesn't take into account the situation or what is happening

Create environments in which students value and rely on the individual qualities of those in their classes and wider community. BUILD EMPATHY!

to the child. We heard that often children don't understand why they are being punished. Participants also identified the impact of suspension and exclusion, which can be seen as a good thing by young people, particularly if that was their intention. Participants said in this situation punishment can be a reward.

In some situations, punishment can even have an escalation effect due to the fact that punishment could make a bully feel more angry, inferior or isolated:

- "Physical punishment is not the answer because the ' bully' would lash out and might do the same with others"

- "it teaches the children that it's the write way"

Participants acknowledged that punishment is complicated and sometimes there needs to be a consequence for unacceptable behaviour. Participants said for consequences to be effective they should be personalised and given by people who the child has a relationship with.

Some of the practical suggestions that participants did make included:

- "parents should take away priveliges."

- "Ban students to using phones during class, take phones."

- "in school suspension"

Many of those we consulted suggested that consequences that restrict access to friends and social life are more effective as this is important to young people. Restricting access to school is not as effective.

Chapter Four
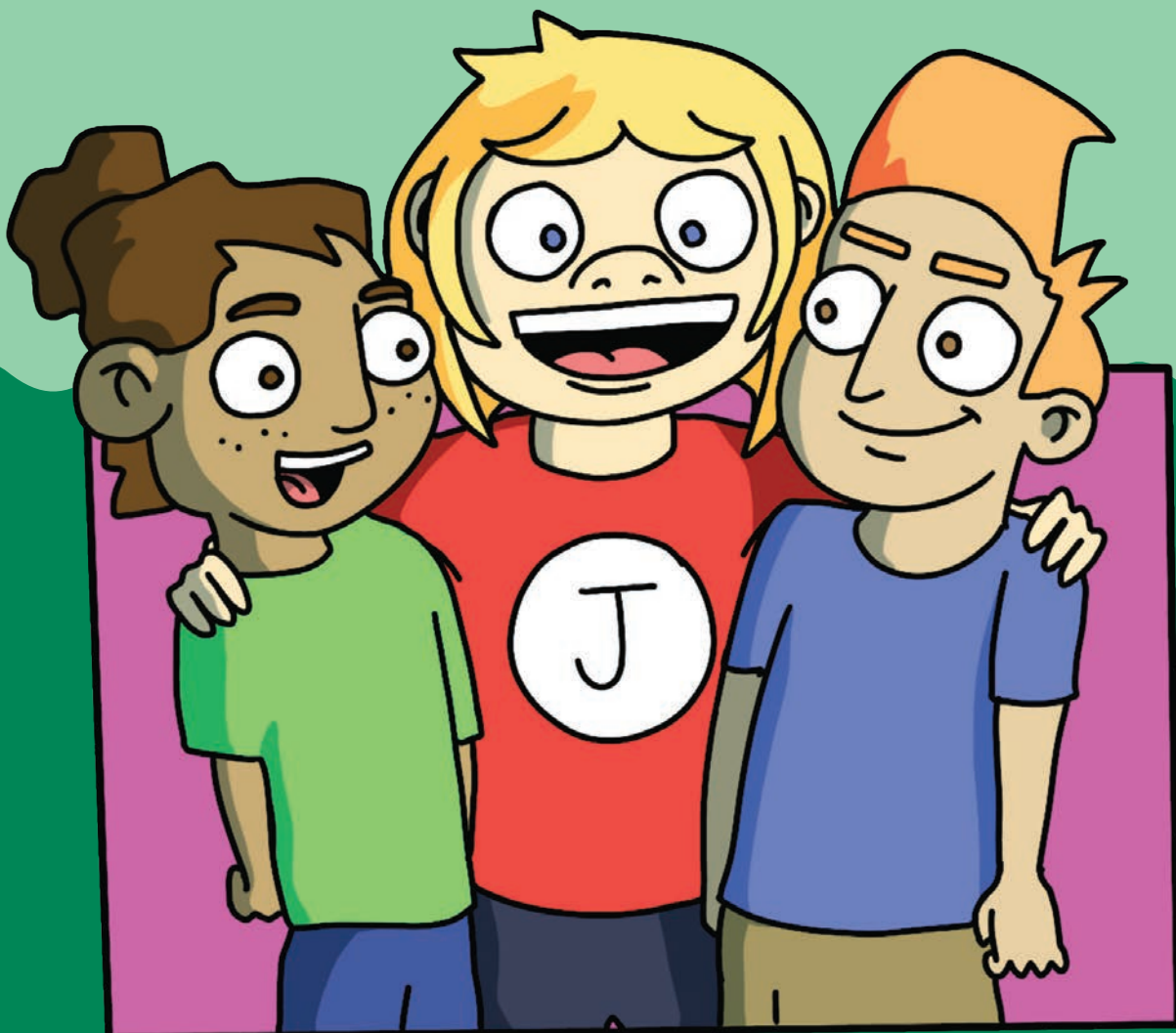
Solutions recommended by children and young people

In the workshops, participants were asked to come up with solutions to prevent and respond to bullying. Children and young people told us about solutions that apply in the community, school and on individual levels. We have captured participants' views and experiences and their practical ideas.

Respectful Relationships

That's what friends are for

Participants said that quality friendships are a key to preventing bullying, and for developing resilient and confident children and young people. Many participants said friends can be both a protection against bullying and a support for someone who is being bullied. These statements convey their thoughts:

– "not only does not having friends make you more vulnerable it makes you an easier target".

– "if someone is alone getting bullied become their friend and they'll be seen as less of a target."

Participants suggested schools can support the development of friendships through providing opportunities for children to develop broad friendship networks. A number of these suggestions included more integration across year levels so if there are potential issues there are other friends within the school environment they can connect to.

– "more integration between year levels so you can make more friends in case something happens between your main friends."

Participants spoke about the art of making friends, suggesting that for some children it's not easy. They suggested that to help stop bullying, schools could guide children on how to make friends, how to be a good friend and how to maintain good friendships. Participants spoke about how children of all ages need to learn how to share, care and be friendly to others not just in the early years.

Other suggestions included the introduction of friendship benches and programs aimed at developing friendships based on interests rather than age or year level. They acknowledged that these things would need to be done carefully, and not highlight a child's need, sadness, loneliness or vulnerability.

– "when you feel sad because you have been bullyed you go to the bench and there will be someone on duty and then you get to play with them."

– "a program that allows people without friends to make friends so they're not alone. However keep the program anonymous to not advance bullying."

Other suggestions included 'introductory getting to know you activities' and 'reflection days' to provide opportunities for more children to meet each other, understand each other, and make friends with others that they might not normally talk to.

- "is important as one of reasons for bullying is because you dislike people"

- "on days like this you get to know people better and one may like people as they understand them better."

Participants also spoke about friends challenging the bullying behaviour of their friends. To do this they need skills to name bullying behaviour and explain the impact this has on them. Participants told us that with the right support and skills they can respond to bullying behaviour.

- "kids should stand up for kids being bullied."

- "don't be a bystander, step in and stand up for the victim."

Other solutions involved supporting peers in leadership positions and organising support groups for bullies to learn new behaviour, control their emotions and understand their actions.

According to children and young people, developing social skills and the confidence to connect with each other are the foundations of anti-bullying strategies.

Bullies have parents too

Participants understood how difficult it is for parents and carers to effectively respond to bullying. Many suggestions focussed on developing and maintaining a positive, open and caring relationship between parents/carers and their children, in order for bullies to change.

- "Bullies can change, they just need good role models for them to follow."

Participants spoke about parents having an open mind to the possibility their child is a bully and they may need to help them. They want parents and carers to understand:

- "their kids aren't perfect!"

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"don't be a bystander, step in and stand up for the victim."

Secondary Student

Bullying is getting worse because of social media. People can say whatever they want behind a screen. It's not as scary.

- "just because your child is crying or sad doesn't mean that they are the victim"

Participants said that parents/carers should try to understand and look for signs of bullying. We heard that some of the signs parents should look for as indicators of being either a bully or bullied include:

- "staying in room for too long or not interacting with family."

- "changes in mood or behaviour."

- "starting to separate from friends."

- "a bully to brother or sister."

Participants cautioned parents not to jump to conclusions about these signs, but use them to have more conversations, as there may be other reasons for some behaviour. It is important for parents/carers to:

- 'have a good relationship with their kids and need to ask their children how their school-life, friends and their school in general'

- 'Talk to there child and communicate with them

- 'Help your kids by listening to their problems'

There was a lot of care shown for the bully and the positive role of parents to help them understand the impact of their behaviour. Participants understood the need for children to talk about what is happening in their life.

- "involve yourself in your childs life."

- "have a talk to their child why she's bullying the victim."

- "get to the ROOT of the issue."

- "that making someone feel upset can have real repercussions."

Participants said that, if they tell their parents about bullying, they want support but not an over-reaction that might embarrass them.

- "Parents usually make situations worse usually or don't fix at all. This is because the embarrass the victim/their child and it will have more for the bully to talk about."

They also acknowledged parents/carers refer to their own childhood strategies and initiatives, as a solution, and many of these are no longer considered appropriate. Participants said parents and carers need to listen to what their child is saying and jointly solve the issue, rather than reacting from their own perspective.

Participants suggested some practical things that parents might be able to use to help support their children. These included 'check in regularly', 'watch their grades', 'monitor online interactions', 'check in with friends', and was aware of 'social pressure'.

Teachers matter

The importance of teachers and their role in students' lives was discussed. In particular the individual actions of teachers were directly associated with how well participants believed their school responded to bullying.

Participants expressed concerns stating how important it is that teachers take bullying seriously. There was a concern that some teachers minimised behaviour which added to the problem.

- "not take student complains as a joke."

- "stop thinking its funny

Many participants wanted teachers to pay more attention, trust students, keep a closer eye and be actively engaged in checking on students' wellbeing explaining that teachers

- "need to ask student if they are good or okay."

- "pay more attion to students and there convos."

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

" **Teachers need to listen to both sides of the story and put themselves in their shoes.**"

Secondary Student

The importance of teachers being neutral, when responding to issues relating to bullying, suggesting that:

- "Teachers need to stop taking sides, judging people and jumping to conclusions."

- "Teachers need to listen to both sides of the story and put themselves in their shoes."

Participants suggested that teachers can have an unintentional effect on what children think is okay:

- "sometimes a teacher can make a joke about a student which can start the bullying."

They also wanted teachers to be more proactive in responding to what was happening, rather than waiting for children to report. They saw a role for teachers and others in the school environment to support and coach students to approach and respond to the bully in an appropriate way.

Adult role models

Many participants suggested that bullying is learnt from negative influences and adult role models, rather than being an inherent behaviour, and therefore solutions need to address this.

Significant numbers of participants expressed views suggesting that children learn to bully at home.

- "children learn to be bullies from their role models, in particular, their parents. Parents inflict their morals from raising their child, and when kids are young they absorb information like a sponge."

- "bullys learn bullying from how they were brought up."

- "the bully's parents can be bullies too."

Participants spoke about parents' influence on children's behaviour. They provided many examples of their poor role modelling through openly judging each other at school drop off, arguing with each other at sporting events and disrespecting others on social media.

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"Educate your children on how to treat their peers and also don't be afraid to discipline them, watch your actions as well as they will take after you."

Secondary Student

- "parents teach Jessie how to be a bully by their behaviour."

- "parents b**ching about other parents and their kids influences the kids to be the same."

- "bullys learn to be bullys maybe through their parents. The bully may see their parents treating others like rubbish so they think its ok."

Whilst participants strongly believed that bullies can change, they felt they just need positive role models to teach kindness, values, morals and respect.

- "Educate your children on how to treat their peers and also don't be afraid to discipline them, watch your actions as well as they will take after you. Make sure you act how you want your child to act".

Encouraging Environments

Positive and safe environments

Participants actively engaged in identifying solutions that schools could implement to create positive, safe learning environments.

Many suggestions focussed on structured and supervised activities including sporting and other activities at lunch time, with a different activity offered each day. This message extended to activities like:

- "lunch movies and chess club"

Participants said these group activities should have open and flexible membership so that children and young people could attend when they needed it. Signing up for something for a whole term was not preferred. To be effective as a response to bullying, participants stressed the importance of these group activities being interest-based, rather than age, gender or year level specific.

Participants suggested library and music rooms should be open during break times and gave strong support for more supervised activities.

- "provide more indoor teacher supervised 'safe spaces' to allow somewhere where people can feel fully relaxed."

- "interest fuelled groups for people to mingle instead of fight."

Raising more awareness of bullying at a school and community level was also considered a good approach. This could include special events that have opportunities to promote positivity and develop friendships. We heard these must be student driven and led across age ranges to build relationships and should be relevant to what is happening in the school.

- "national bullying day."

- "feel good Friday"

- "an opportunity to raise money for student counselling."

- "bullying statement at assembly."

Participants said that school based anti-bullying activities, events and programs, and even one to one support, could be led by children and young people. We were told on many occasions:

- "we can set up chat fourums for where anonymous students can help people."

- "kids can spread the awareness of bullying."

- have a special group of students to look out for kids who are getting bullied."

- "Kids need to know it is cool to speak up against others. It's cool to say something when your friends are being bullied."

Participants said that for schools to be encouraging environments they also need to be physically safe. Participants emphasised the role of children and young people in using their experience and knowledge of their environments, to identify what can be done to create more physically safe spaces.

Specific examples included:

- "have some people roam the oval and check out the people who are playing."

- "keeping an eye on one of the bullies or an area where people are bullied often."

- "put little kids on duty with older buddies."

- "under covers kids to report to teachers if he is doing something bad."

They also saw more visible involvement of teachers as important.

- "more teachers in every area of the school during morning, recess, lunch and after school."

- "bus stops have teachers there morning/after school."

- "to watch people and listen in on what students are saying to other students."

Participants spoke about creating opportunities for anonymous reporting of bullying. Participants were concerned about fear of repercussions for reporting and thought anonymity would be a good way to resolve this. They felt that an 'anonymous' system could support more students to come forward, increase awareness of the type of bulling in the school, and support the school to have a better response.

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"Create a good community within the classroom where the class feels like a team, who are all equal and support each other"

Secondary Student

- "have an anyamous box with name and why they should be talked too."

Participants also wanted schools to create environments that value students' skills and create classroom specific strategies that involve more teamwork and relationship building.

- "Create a good community within the classroom where the class feels like a team, who are all equal and support each other. This would help the victims have a network of people with them a bully have less reason to lash out."

Personal Support

Acts of Kindness

Participants said solutions to bullying need to be underpinned by whole of community values and morals. They said solutions should include guidance on how to act, how to treat others, and how to respect people and environments. Most importantly they should have a focus on teaching kindness, 'sharing', 'dignity', 'manners' and how to 'be nice and friendly'.

Parents and teachers need to show kindness through their words and actions and this should include being kind to bullies. Participants explained that strategies based on kindness may be more effective than ignoring or punishing a bully.

Many participants raised the issue of 'difference' as a reason for people being bullied. To change this, participants suggested teaching children at a younger age about diversity, including race, gender orientation and disability. Others thought it would be good if children and young people could lead activities to celebrate diversity within school and relate these directly to rights,

"**To teach them what kindness looks like and how good it feels to be nice**"

Primary Student

Parents and caregivers should have time to listen to their children and ask them if they feel safe at school and what is happening at school.

values and morals. Participants told us if children felt better about themselves they would be less likely to bully and be more confident to stand up to bullying if needed.

- "help the bully be kind"

- "to teach them what kindness looks like and how good it feels to be nice"

- "be inclucive to everyone from any shape/size, cultural background"

- "understand that being different is ok, and you don't need to be bulled for that"

Programs

Participants suggested that anti-bullying programs should teach children and young people how to have difficult conversations to support the bully to change their behaviour. They should be practical and interesting and teach participants new skills and techniques they can use.

Strategies could include young people who have been bullied sharing their stories on the effects of bullying. Participants explained the need for programs to be more tailored to specific situations and individual schools.

For instance if racism is a focus of bullying within a particular school, then this should be the focus of the bullying program. Participants said that one size does not fit all and that anti-bullying solutions need to be relatable and be based on bullying from their perspective. Participants said that programs and strategies should be developed by students and implemented in their schools.

- "make programs by kids for kids."

- "get them involved with coming up with solutions themselves."

Participants suggested that schools should have a key person to work with the bully to change their behaviour, support children who have been bullied and implement anti-bullying strategies, including helping parents to support their children.

Participants said programs need to develop more understanding of bystander behaviour, the consequences of being a bystander and their role in preventing bullying. These programs need to be relatable to those who have never experienced bullying, so they

VOICE OF THE YOUNG PERSON

"**A catchy song on not bullying and defending yourself.**"

Primary Student

can empathise with the victims' feelings and understand their role in prevention and the actions they can take to support their peers.

Participants suggested these programs need to include information on 'the consequences of bullying', 'depression' and 'mental health', including 'suicide'. Participants said that this must start early, in primary school and continue throughout their schooling.

They also suggested counselling should be available at school for primary and secondary students. Participants said these counsellors must be qualified, neutral and someone they can trust. In addition many participants spoke about the value of support groups for bullies and victims. They said, in support groups the bully can learn how to change their behaviours and the bullied can be supported to deal with their situation, reduce their isolation and both can learn new ways of acting and solving problems.

A number of participants focussed on creating positive environments which supported children to feel good about themselves. Some suggestions included:

- "compulsory resilience and self-defence classes."

- "positive education classes, using affirmations and motivational quotes."

- "pets in school."

- "meditation."

- "yoga lessons."

- "a catchy song on not bullying and defending yourself."

- "design a superhero that will stop bullying so little kids look up to them."

Participants were confident that if leaders, principals, teachers and parents listened to children and young people, respected their views and expertise in designing and implementing programs, then we would have kinder, safer schools and communities.

- Creating a Environment where the parents and child can talk to their parents by going out together as families to build a trusting and caring relationship.

Appendices

Jurisdictional Law Responses

Australian law has progressed at a different pace to other jurisdictions with respect to anti-bullying laws applicable to children and young people. This research briefly explores the laws that have been enacted in South Australia, Victoria and other overseas jurisdictions. It will also look at the effectiveness of anti-bullying laws in the United States, being a jurisdiction with well-established anti-bullying laws.

Current laws in South Australia

South Australia does not currently have a legal definition of bullying or a specific anti-bullying law to address it. Bullying behaviour encompasses a broad range of conduct; however it most often includes a power imbalance and repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical or psychological harm[1]. Therefore, bullying can be at varying levels of severity and can range from 'normalised' social behaviour to that which is life endangering. For all types of bullying behaviour to be encompassed, a law would need to be very broad and flexible enough to adapt to the range of conduct that bullying encompasses, as well as the different mediums and circumstances in which bullying occurs.

Some existing laws already cover certain aspects of bullying conduct, usually when the behaviour is at a serious level and falls under a provision of the criminal law. For the conduct to be considered criminal it must satisfy all the prescribed elements of the particular offence. This includes physical as well as mental elements, such as intent if it is stipulated in the offence. On top of this it must meet the sufficient severity under the relevant provision. For this reason current criminal laws are only likely to cover conduct which falls at the extreme end of bullying behaviour and would not be capable of encompassing lower level conduct.

In both state criminal law and commonwealth legislation, only children from 10 years old are capable of being prosecuted. Between the ages of 10 and 14 children are presumed *Doli Incapax* or incapable of forming criminal intent; however this is a rebuttable presumption providing that the prosecution can prove that the child was aware of the gravity of their actions.

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1. See: Australian Human Rights Commission, What is bullying? Violence, Harassment and Bullying Fact sheet at <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/what-bullying-violence-harassment-and-bullying-fact-sheet>, Bullying NO Way! Definition of bullying at: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>. National Centre Against Bullying, Definition of bullying at: <https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-parents/definition-of-bullying/>

Summary of current South Australian and Commonwealth laws capable of covering bullying behaviour

South Australian Law	Types of behaviour
Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (South Australia)	
s 19AA—Unlawful stalking	Repeated behaviour: that interferes with property, publishes or sends offensive material to the other person, communicates in a way that arouses fear or apprehension in the other person; or keeps a person under surveillance, acts in a way that could cause fear or apprehension. The person committing the act must intend to cause serious physical or mental harm or intend to cause serious apprehension or fear.
s 19—Unlawful threats	Behaviour where a person: threatens to kill or endanger, or cause harm, with intent to arouse a fear that the threat will be carried out (or the person is recklessly indifferent as to whether such a fear is aroused or not).
s 257—Criminal defamation	Acts of publishing material, knowing it to be false (or being indifferent to this) with intent to cause serious harm or being indifferent as to this.
s 13A—Criminal liability in relation to suicide	Aids or abets or counsels the suicide of another (whether successful or not).
Commonwealth Law	**Types of behaviour**
Crimes Legislation Amendment (Telecommunications Offences and Other Measures) Act (No 2) 2004	Uses a carriage service (telecommunications) in a way that is menacing, harassing or offensive.
Cybercrime Act 2001	Intentional unauthorised access to or modification of data, where restricted (by being held on computer / password protected system).

Victoria's Bullying Law

Victoria's law is the only anti-bullying law that could affect children and young people in Australia outside of workplace bullying laws and general State and Commonwealth criminal law. The law is capable of criminalising bullying behaviour.

Victoria's anti-bullying provisions are contained under the Crimes Act 1958 with the scope of the stalking offence broadened[2]. It provides for a wide range of behaviour, from using abusive and offensive language or performing abusive or offensive acts, to acting in any other way that could reasonably be expected to cause physical or mental harm. However there must be an "intention of causing physical or mental harm to the victim, including self-harm, or of arousing apprehension or fear in the victim for his or her safety or that of any other person."[3]

The maximum penalty for the offence of "stalking" is 10 years imprisonment. The Act also allows for victims to apply for a Personal Safety Intervention Order.

New Zealand

New Zealand (NZ) does not have a law specifically addressing bullying. However the Harmful Digital Communications Act (2015) (the Communication Act) was enacted to prevent harm caused by digital communication. Consequently this Act can be applied to cyberbullying actions. An offence in the Communication Act is committed when someone is in breach of an order or makes a digital communication with intent to cause harm, which would cause harm to an ordinary reasonable person in the position of the victim and that causes harm to the victim[4]. In determining if a communication would cause harm the court has significant flexibility and can consider things from the characteristics of the victim to language and repetition.

The Communication Act also permits the court to make a range of orders and interim orders in relation to digital material, including orders to take down or disable access to material, cessation of conduct and orders for public apologies[5]. In deciding whether to make an order, the court must take into account the harm caused or likely to be caused, the context and purpose of communication, and if it was intended to cause harm as well as a number of other factors. The Communication Act also establishes a body with powers to investigate and deal with complaints of harm from digital communications[6].

A little over a year after the Communication Act came into force it was reported that there had been 89 criminal charges, and despite teenagers' high use of social media, only one charge had been reported to the youth court. Most offenders were aged between 20 and 40[7].

2. Crimes Act *(Vic)* 1958 with the insertion of sections 21A(2)–21A(2)(g) in 2011.

3. Section 21A(2)(g) of *Crimes Act (Vic)* 1958.

4. Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015 (NZ), ss. 21–22.

5. ibid., ss. 18–20.

6. ibid., s. 8.

7. T Shadwell, National News: *Cyber bullying prosecution figures released by Justice Minister Amy Adams,* Stuff.co.nz, Fairfax Digital, 10 November 2016, viewed 29 June 2018. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/86311431/cyber-bullying-prosecution-figures-released-by-justice-minister-amy-adams>.

The Communication Act's offence is similar to the Australian Commonwealth's offence of using a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence[8]. This law could also be applied to cyberbullying actions having recently been used to charge a 13 year old Queensland teenager[9]. The Communication Act is notably different in relation to the reasonable harm requirement for the offence, in allowing for a range of court orders to be made and in its establishment of an investigative authority. These elements mean the Communication Act is able to provide more avenues of recourse to individual victims and provide a means of intervention and harm prevention.

The United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom there is no specific criminal response to bullying behaviour. General criminal provisions could apply to specific bullying behaviours such as theft and assault, similar to Australia. There are a number of different responses to bullying mixed in legislation across the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom. Any legislation that can be taken to apply to bullying in the United Kingdom has focused on the schools. There are a number of applicable laws which place an obligation on schools and school staff. These include:

-   The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and The Education Act 2002: This legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland places a requirement on all state schools to have behaviour policies that include measures to prevent all forms of bullying among students.

-   The Equality Act 2010: Places a duty on all school staff in England, Wales and Scotland to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

-   Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004: Requires local authorities and schools to give extra help to all children and young people with additional support needs, including for bullying.

-   Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016: This law has a purpose to address bullying in grant-aided schools[10]. It requires that policies to prevent bullying are enacted and imposes record keeping obligations. It defines bullying as repeated use of verbal, written or electronic communication, or any other act by pupil(s) with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm.

These laws differ from South Australia's Education Act (1972)[11] and the Education Regulations (2012)[12] in their level of specificity; however some parallels can be drawn on student behaviour requirements in the Education Regulations and existing requirements for student wellbeing policies.

8. Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cwlth), s. 474.17.

9. M Rigby, Cairns teen charged for using Snapchat to repeatedly 'threaten' another girl, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 5 April 2018, viewed 29 June 2018. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-05/cairns-girl-charged-for-using-snapchat-to-threaten-teen/9622698>.

10.Grant-aided special schools are schools that are supported financially by the Northern Irish Government and are distinct from financially Independent schools which set their own curriculum and admission policy. Most special schools are grant-aided and include those which provide education for children who have additional support needs because of complex or long-term factors.

11. Education Act 1972 (SA).

12. Education Regulations 2012 (SA).

Canada

In Canada there is no specific criminal law response to bullying. As in Australia and other jurisdictions, criminal code provisions may apply to certain bullying behaviour. A handful of small towns in Canada have however passed bylaws[13] which allow bullying to be punished by a fine and/or a court ordered anti-bullying course. In these instances a default on the fine may result in the offender facing gaol time – although it is unclear whether there are any cases of this occurring. These bylaws are very rare and are also very limited in their application and where they can be enforced.

Laws at a provincial level are largely varied with a number of provinces having no legislative response to bullying. There are a number of provinces that define bullying in their education Acts and have relevant provisions. In Nova Scotia, for example, a definition for bullying is provided and listed as unacceptable behaviour, allowing the school to take action against a student (such as suspension or removing from class)[14]. The same law also requires schools to take action and enforce reporting obligations and to develop policies[15]. Under Alberta's Education Act, students are required to refrain from and report bullying behaviour[16] In another province, Manitoba, the law

provides for a definition and an obligation on schools, students and others to report or take action on bullying. There are also a number of provinces that require schools to have a procedure in place for students and others to report bullying incidents.

These provisions are similar to South Australia's *Education Regulations* which allow head teachers to suspend, exclude and expel students for acting in a manner that threatens the wellbeing of students by way of actions such as bullying.[18] The education laws in Canada however are more comprehensive in providing a definition for bullying and where they create obligations.

United States of America

In the United States (US) there is no federal law on bullying, however all states have anti-bullying laws.[19] These laws vary significantly in their structure from mandated school policies to legal definitions and criminal sanctions.[20] Criminal sanctions under state laws can apply to both students and staff, depending on the state and the obligations that the law imposes. As of 2015, seven states had bullying laws encouraging criminal sanctions of school personnel by mandating procedures to report bullying.[21]

13. See for example: City of Regina bylaw no. 2006 – 38, Town of Eston "Anti-Bullying" bylaw no. 2 – 2013.

14. Education Act 1995-96 (Nova Scotia), c. 1, s. 3.

15. Ibid., s. 26.

16. Education Act 2012 (Alberta), c. E-0.3, s. 31.

17. The Public Schools Act C.C.S.M. c. P250 (Manitoba), s. 47.

18. Education Regulations 2012, r. 44.

19. StopBullying.gov, Laws & Policies, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, 8 September 2017, viewed 7 June 2018, <https://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/index.html>.

20. Cyberbullying Research Center, *Bullying Laws Across America*, Cyberbullying Research Center, August 2017, viewed 12 June 2018, <https://cyberbullying.org/bullying-laws>.

21. D Cornell & S Limber, 'Law and Policy on the Concept of Bullying at School', *American Psychologist*, vol. 70, no. 4, 2015. p. 341. See also for example Missouri state bullying law: Mo. Rev. Stat §167.117.1.

More commonly, states have modified or have created new provisions in their education acts, criminal code or juvenile criminal code[22] to expressly address bullying behaviour.[23] This type of legislative approach most closely reflects the objectives of the *Statutes Amendment (Bullying) Bill 2017* previously in the South Australian Parliament.

Importantly, anti-bullying laws in the US have generally not had the intention of criminalising bullying behaviour, addressing other areas such as staff training. The US Department of Education (DOE) in its review of state anti-bullying laws and policies identified 11 key components of anti-bullying laws and the need to included model policies for schools and local education authorities.[24] Table 1 shows the identified components.

These components provided the basis for which state legislation was reviewed by the DOE for comprehensiveness and strength through a legal analysis. In determining the expansiveness of state anti-bullying laws the DOE reviewed 16 components[25] of which, sanctions for bullying behaviour (such as those in a criminal code) were only one of the 16 components. For sanctions, a rating was given depending on whether the legislation included no consequence,

stipulated only punitive consequences or provided for punitive consequences and supportive interventions.[26]

Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Laws in the United States

Studies into the effectiveness of anti-bullying laws in the United States are limited and have largely focused on their varied quality; with a majority of laws seen as quick fixes with little to no effect on student bullying rates due to a lack of evidence-based practices.[27] The general consensus from most studies has thus been that legal and policy approaches strongly rooted in law, do not provide adequate protection for all bullied students and a more comprehensive approach is needed.[28]

The comprehensiveness of anti-bullying laws in the US was assessed by the DOE analysis of 16 components of anti-bullying laws; with intervention, prevention and support strategies[29] accounting for over half of all analysis components. Each component was ranked from 0 to 2 with a higher ranking indicating a more inclusive, prescriptive and accountable component. The sum of these rankings provided an overall rating of the law, the higher being more comprehensive.[30]

22. For example, legislators passed a law that criminalizes cyberbullying in North Carolina: N.C.G.S.A. §14–458.1. A crime of harassment, intimidation, or bullying among students was created in Idaho: I.C. §18–917A.

23. U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, *Analysis of State Bullying Laws and Policies*, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, 2011, pp. 1 – 81. See also: D Cornell & S Limber, p. 341.

24. U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, p. 6.

25. ibid., pp. 9 – 11.

26. ibid.

27. D Olweus, 'Bullying in school: Evaluation and dissemination of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program', *American journal of orthopsychiatry*, vol. 80, no.1, 2010, p. 132.

28. D Cornell & S Limber, p. 333.

29. Including ensuring teachers were trained, counselling was available and that there were remedial interventions for aggressors.

30. For more information see U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, pp 7 – 14.

Table 2. Summary of US Department of Education key components of anti-bullying laws

Key Component	Component Summary
Purpose Statement	Outlines the bullying and declares it unacceptable.
Statement of Scope	Covers location of conduct: school, school events/transport, school technology, or otherwise creates disruption to school environment.
Specification of Prohibited Conduct	Specific definition of bullying that includes cyberbullying, a non-exclusive list, harm – direct or indirect, not limited to physical harm: can be verbal or non-verbal.
Enumeration of Specific Characteristics	Acts based on actual or perceived characteristics (provides examples) but bullying does not have to be based on any particular characteristic.
Development and Implementation of LEA (Local Education Authority) Policies	Local education authority policies: directs LEA's to develop a policy prohibiting bullying through a collaborative process with all interested stakeholders.
Review of Local Policies	Provisions for review.
Components of LEA Policies	A: Definitions B: Bullying reporting procedures C: Investigation and responding requirements D: Written records procedure E: Sanctions requirement (graduated range of consequences and remedial interventions) F: Referrals procedure (counselling services etc.)
Communication Plan	Includes plan for communicating the policies.
Training and Preventive Education	Includes provision for training for all school staff, encourages implementation of age-appropriate and community prevention programs.
Transparency and Monitoring	LEAs reporting requirements and public availability of data.
Statement of Rights / Recourse	Does not preclude victims from seeking other remedies.

The states with the most comprehensive laws all had intervention, prevention and support strategies implemented and present in their anti-bullying laws.[31]

In instances where papers were able to find a correlation between anti-bullying laws and reduced bullying rates, this correlation existed in jurisdictions with comprehensive laws as identified by the DOE components.[32] One detailed analysis found that the application of general anti-bullying laws had little to no benefit, except where laws had a high comprehensiveness rating according to DOE analysis. The same paper also concluded that for a law to be effective in reducing bullying rates, it needed to have all components of the DOE analysis[33] present, and not just a focus on punitive measures.[34]

One study that found a correlation between lower rates of bullying following the enactment of anti-bullying laws[35] was limited in its methodology. The paper used reported data provided by principals and not students. Although the paper attempted to address this, it has been noted in the US that there is a significant influx of attention on bullying reporting prior to laws being enacted and that reporting, including identification metrics change with the law and do not remain consistent after enactment, leading to a perceived reduction in the reported rate of bullying.[36] Additionally the data was not analysed on a state basis and did not factor in social trends, implemented prevention strategies or the decades long decline in bullying rates across the US.[37]

Analyses which focused on specific cohorts showed unchanged rates of bullying for at-risk groups after anti-bullying laws were enacted. One study of anti-bullying legislation and policies found that there was no moderating effect from legislation on bullying based on weight-based disparities.[38] This same study found that anti-bullying legislation had no effect on gender based disparities, except in states where there was a high level of compliance with the DOE analysis.[39]

Another research paper found anti-bullying laws on their own had little to no effect on identified lesbian, gay and bisexual bullying rates regardless of the DOE analysis.[40] The authors went on to suggest that a lack of association showed that policymakers cannot pass anti-bullying laws and declare that the problem is solved. [41] The paper concluded that the most important factor explaining reduced rates of bullying, cyberbullying and suicidal thoughts in this cohort was a state's broader commitment to equality. [42]

31. ibid., p. 42.

32. Mark Hatzenbuehler et al, 'Associations Between Antibullying Policies and Bullying in 25 States', *JAMA Pediatrics*, vol. 169, no. 10, 2015. pp. 1-8.

33. B Bass & J Sabia, 'Do anti-bullying laws work? New evidence on school safety and youth violence', *Journal of Population Economics*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2017, pp. 473-502.

34. ibid., p. 496.

35. D Nikolaou, 'Do anti-bullying policies deter in-school bullying victimization?', International Review of Law and Economics, vol. 50, issue C, 2017, pp. 1-6.

36. I Kalman, 'What We're Not Being Told About Anti-Bullying Laws', Psychology Today, 11 February 2016, viewed 15 June 2018. < https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/resilience-bullying/201602/what-we-re-not-being-told-about-anti-bullying-laws>.

37. Waasdorp et al, 'Ten- year Trends in Bullying and Related Attitudes Among 4th- to 12th- Graders', *Pediatrics,* vol. 139, no. 6, 2017, pp. 1 – 8.

38. M Hatzenbuehler et al. M Ramirez, 'Anti-bullying Policies and Disparities in Bullying: A State-Level Analysis', *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, vol. 53, no. 2, 2017, pp. 184-191.

39. ibid., p. 185.

40. A Waldman, 'Are Anti-Bullying Laws Effective?', *Cornell Law Review Online*, vol. 103, 2018, pp. 135 – 154

41. ibid., p. 150.

42. ibid., p. 154.

This is Jessie

This is Jessie
Jessie is your age
Jessie is a bully.

What does Jessie say?

What does Jessie do?

Where does Jessie say/do these things?

Why might Jessie act this way?

What you are told to do in response to bullying that doesn't work?

The second activity asked participants to tell us the things they are currently told to do by adults in response to individual instances of bullying that doesn't work.

The results across ages, gender and school sector were consistent; participants found it easy to provide an extensive list of what they believe does not work. There were few variations or contradictions.

We went through this activity quickly so we could move participants onto the main purpose of the workshop and remain focussed.

The most common responses that participants say doesn't work have been matched in the table below against information found on a range of bullying websites that give advice on how to respond to bullying.

What participants say doesn't work as a response to bullying:

- "In reception when we were learning about bullying they said 'stop it', 'I don't like it', but it doesn't work and makes it worse"

- "Kids don't understand why they are being punished only that they are"

- "Punishments don't work they oppress the child and singles them out"

- "Changing schools doesn't work because there is a bully everywhere even at work"

- "Telling parents – doesn't work – sometimes they go too far or they don't understand or know"

- "Reporting – escalates the issue / Report it on social media, it notifies the bully"

- "Block them – doesn't work – don't want to because they are close to the person so don't want to cut them out coz they care about them."

- "Blocking, makes it worse – all your friends can see, so everyone knows that you have done it."

Most common response suggested by help sites and adults	What participants say doesn't work as a response to bullying
Tell someone/talk to someone	We had 65 responses that say this doesn't work. This included: - Tell teachers/Reporting to principal – 26 - Tell Parents – 18 - Tell Friends – 9 - Tell Others – 11
Ignore, walk away or say STOP	We had 96 responses that say this doesn't work. This included: - Ignoring/moving away/avoid – 54 - Assertive 'I' statements -27 - Getting friends to speak on your behalf - 10
Talk to the bully	We had 30 responses that say this doesn't work. This included: - confronting the bully and defending self – 14 - Talking to bully – 6
Try to stay positive	We had 16 responses that say this doesn't work. This included: - Think positive/be brave/ self-talk – 10
Strategies to deal with online bullying	We had 46 responses that say this doesn't work. This included: - Blocking/unfriending – 16 - Reporting – 19

https://bullyingnoway.gov.au

https://au.reachout.com

https://www.ncab.org.au/

Other Common responses reported by children and young people, not identified on help websites.

- Retaliation, bully back/threats – 36
- School based response e.g. suspension, exclusion – 9

Bullying Project Overview

CCYP facilitated face to face consultations with children and young people aged 10-19 years across the greater Adelaide Region.

Sessions were held in school and non-school environments with small groups The sessions were interactive and used activities to facilitate discussions.

This infographic provides a breakdown of the participants who responded in the activity.

The Respondents

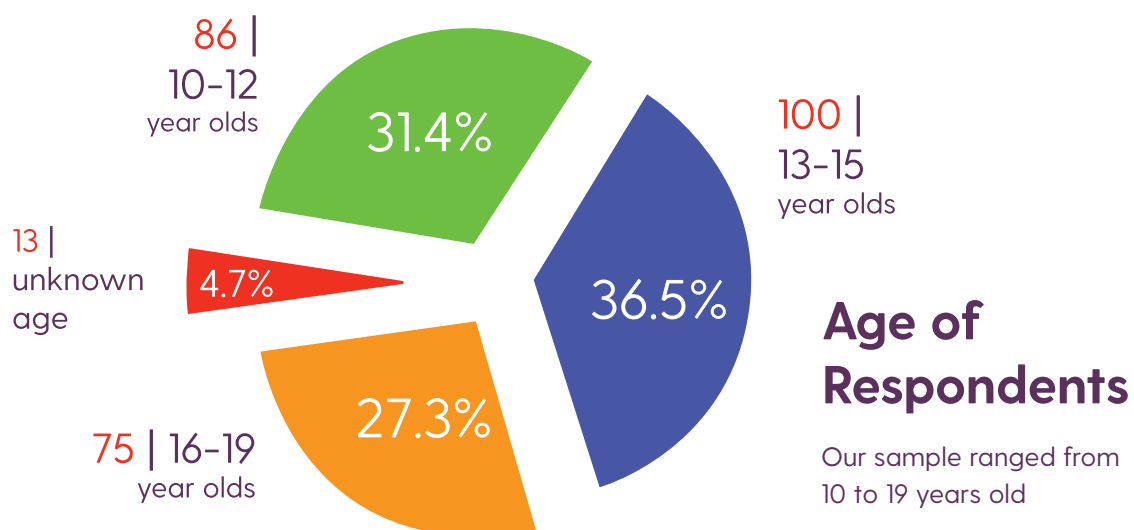A breakdown of our sample of children and young people

284 Participants

274 Activity Sheets Completed
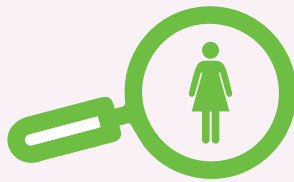
108 Male

147 Female

? **19 students** did not provide a gender

86 | 10–12 year olds

100 | 13–15 year olds

13 | unknown age

75 | 16–19 year olds

31.4%

36.5%

27.3%

4.7%

Age of Respondents

Our sample ranged from 10 to 19 years old

Perception of Jessie

We asked our sample to decide what gender Jessie is

47.8% identified Jessie as a male

Of those participants that identified Jessie as a male:

51.9% were male

41.2% were female

6.8% were unknown

26.6% identified Jessie as a female

Of those participants that identified Jessie as a female:

80.8% were female

15% were male

4.1% were unknown

Male and female students at 16 years old were the only age group to identify Jessie more times as female than male.

students at 16.y.o. identified Jessie as:

38.1% as female

33.3% as male

28.5% as no gender

Places

7 catholic schools

4 flexible learning Environments

4 independent schools

6 government schools

Consultations took place in:

School Types

4 primary schools

8 secondary schools

5 combined Schools

Locations

Geographical location of consultations

1 CBD

6 North

4 South

6 West

3 East

Educational Advantage

How our data compares to the ICSEA's set average

ICSEA

index of community

socio-educational advantage

average: 1000

12 schools: 924 – 1030

SET average: 1016

8 schools: 1030 – 1160

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- Charles Campbell College
- Dominican School
- Emmaus Christian College
- FAME Flexible Learning Centre
- Hallett Cove School
- SYC Flexible Learning Centres
- Immanuel Primary School
- Ocean View College
- Our Lady of Mt Carmel Primary School
- Our Lady of Scared Heart College
- Pulteney Grammar School
- Roma Mitchell Secondary College
- St Augustine's Parish School
- St Joseph's School Tranmere
- Trinity College Gawler
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