Teachers' Responses to Student Bullying

by

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Abstract

This study investigated teachers' responses to student bullying. Of specific interest was whether or not teachers' responses to student bullying varied according to the type of bullying, the nature of the power differential between the students involved, teacher gender, and student gender. With a fully crossed repeated measures design, secondary school teachers' reactions (N = 133) were assessed on the same dependent variables repeatedly across six unique hypothetical bullying vignettes that varied in terms of the type of bullying (physical, verbal, and social), perpetrated by same sex peers (either female or male students) who exhibited different types of power advantages over the victimized student (physical or social). For each vignette, teachers were asked to describe their perceptions of the seriousness of the behavior, their identification of incident as bullying, their judgments of an existing rule or policy regarding such behavior, the acceptability of bullying in the absence of a rule or policy, the likelihood of intervention, and their proposed responses. Results indicated that the type of bullying involved—physical, social, verbal—was critical in determining teachers' responses to bullying. Generally, teachers were more responsive to verbal bullying than physical bullying and, in turn, more responsive to physical bullying than social bullying. In particular, verbal bullying was more likely to be perceived as serious, more likely to considered for intervention, and more likely to be reported or deferred to others, especially relative to social bullying. The discussion of the major findings considers implications for educational practice and research.
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Introduction

School bullying is now widely recognized as a significant problem for students. There is general consensus that bullying is an act of interpersonal aggression that can be physical, verbal or social in form, and that incorporates three important and unique characteristics: a repeated act of harm, a power differential, and intent to harm (Olweus, 1991; British Columbia Ministry of Education, 1999). The construct of bullying has only been studied systematically over the past 30 years, partly in response to fatalities linked to school bullying. In British Columbia, the murder of Reena Virk in 1997 and the suicide deaths of two high school students, Hamed Nastoh and Dawn Marie Wesley, in 2000 provoked by bullying amply demonstrate the seriousness of this phenomenon.

As a response to school bullying and other social and behavioral problems, in 2001 the British Columbia Ministry of Education made social responsibility a “foundational skill”, one of the key areas of student learning, in addition to reading, writing, and numeracy. Efforts to address problems of bullying and victimization have been included as part of this provincial mandate to foster social responsibility in students. As will be demonstrated in the review to follow, research has shown that bullying is a pervasive and serious problem that affects a significant number of students and impacts on students both concurrently, and over the long term. However, to date, most of the research on bullying has considered only student perspectives on the problem. Teacher perceptions and responses have received far less attention, despite related research by Wentzel (1994, 1997, 1998) showing that students’ social responsibility goals were related to their perceptions of teachers’ caring (i.e., teachers’ behavioral expectations of students and teachers’ positive interactions with students). Thus, in order to help foster social responsibility in students, it is important to understand how teachers respond to student behavior such as school bullying.
Recent research attention has been given to teachers’ reactions to bullying and the factors that influence those reactions. Indeed, teachers have been found to play a pivotal role in implementing bullying prevention and intervention school programs (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003; Olweus & Limber, 1999) and, in turn, are critical in helping reduce student bullying (Olweus, 1991; Roland, 1989). Canadian observational research has shown that bullying occurs, on average, every 7 to 13 minutes on the playground and every 25 minutes in the classroom, yet playground supervisors and classroom teachers were observed to intervene in only a small portion of these bullying episodes (4-18%), in part due to an unawareness of bullying (Craig & Pepler, 1997; Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000). In addition, teachers have reported that reactive responses were more effective in dealing with bullying than were preventative responses (Dake, Price, Telljohann, & Funk, 2003).

Although research on teacher responses to bullying has been extremely limited, a number of important factors have been identified that influence teachers’ reactions to bullying (e.g., Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Dake et al.; Yoon, 2004), as will be demonstrated in the review of literature that follows. Still, firm conclusions about teachers’ reactions to bullying are difficult, given numerous methodological and measurement difficulties that plague this small but growing literature. Extending the literature on teacher responses to student bullying, the present study examined teachers’ reactions to hypothetical bullying episodes that differed across four characteristics believed to be important in understanding bullying: the type of bullying that occurred (i.e., physical versus verbal versus social bullying), the nature of the power differential between the students involved (i.e., the bully being older, larger, more popular, etc.), student gender, and teacher gender. In doing so, this study provided insights into the factors that influence variations in teachers’ reactions to bullying across situations. It is hoped that the results of this study will inform future efforts to develop ecologically valid ways to reduce bullying.
In the chapters that follow, I begin with a review of research on the extent of bullying in schools. Against this backdrop, I review studies that considered the role of the teacher, teachers' response rates, and teachers' reactions to bullying, recognizing the many methodological issues that plague this literature. A statement of the problem, research design, research questions, and hypotheses follow this review. Next, the methodological procedures of this study are described. Finally, the results of this study are presented and discussed.
Literature Review

The Conceptualization of Bullying

Dan Olweus (1978, 1991) defined bullying as a unique form of interpersonal aggression in which a dominant student repetitively behaves in a manner meant to intentionally hurt a less physically or psychologically dominant student. Three factors were critical to Olweus' definition of bullying: (1) the power differential between bully and victim, (2) the repetitive nature of the behavior, and (3) the intent to harm. Although Olweus' conceptualization of bullying was generally accepted across studies, the three components of the definition were not always reflected in operational definitions of bullying employed in the research. In this study, the term “bullying” (used interchangeably with the term “bully/victim problem(s)”) was defined in terms of the three essential components initially identified by Olweus: the power differential, the repetitive nature, and the intent to harm.

Bullying behavior can take many forms. The act of bullying can involve physical aggression (e.g., pushing or spitting), verbal aggression (e.g., verbal threats or name-calling), or social aggression (e.g., spreading rumors or ostracism) (Ministry of Education, 1999). As well, the nature of the power differential between bully and victim, one of the essential characteristics of bullying, can involve physical power differences (e.g., size, grade, or number of students) (Olweus, 1991) or social power differences (e.g., peer acceptance, perceived popularity, or leadership skills) (Rocke Henderson, Hymel, Bonanno, & Davidson, 2002; Smith, Madsen, & Moody, 1999; Vaillancourt, Hymel, & McDougall, 2003).

Prevalence of Bullying

Over the past 10 years, scholars have become increasingly aware that school bullying is a frequent occurrence for many students. To understand the pervasiveness of bully/victim problems in schools, two main questions have been assessed: (1) how much bullying goes on?
and (2) who bullies and who is victimized? Across this literature, common incidence rate trends have been found.

*How much bullying goes on?*. Research has shown that bullying is a common school behavior among students (Bently & Li, 1995; Bonanno, Hymel, & Rocke Henderson, 2002a; Charach et al., 1995; Rocke Henderson et al., 2002). For example, as part of a comprehensive review of the problem of school violence, the World Health Organization (2000) conducted a cross-national health survey on the prevalence of school bullying for students’ 13 years of age. Many of the students surveyed in 27 countries reported bullying at least some of the time. In Canada, 37% of students reported bullying at least some of the time during the school term and 7% of students reported bullying once a week during the school term. As well, observations of Canadian elementary school children indicated that students were involved in bullying, on average, every 7 to 13 minutes on the playground and every 25 minutes in the classroom (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Craig & Pepler, et al., 2000). School bullying is clearly a pervasive problem in Canadian schools.

Rates of bullying vary depending on the type of bullying behaviour considered. In Atlas and Peplers’ (1998) classroom observation study, for example, 30% of the bullying episodes were observed to involve indirect bullying such as social manipulation and 65% of the bullying episodes were observed to involve direct bullying such as face-to-face physical or verbal confrontation. In Whitney’s and Smith’s (1993) large-scale UK study (N = 6,758), approximately half of students (11 to 16 years of age) who were ever bullied reported verbal name-calling, whereas a quarter to a third of the students who were ever bullied reported physical aggression (e.g., kicked or hit) or social aggression (e.g., social exclusion or rumor spreading). Across studies, verbal bullying is found to be more frequent, especially relative to physical bullying.

*Who bullies and who is victimized?* Studies have examined gender differences in student involvement in bullying, although findings vary depending on the methodological procedures used. Many survey studies have shown that considerably more boys report bullying other students than
girls, but that equal numbers of boys and girls report being a victim of bullying or that boys report somewhat more victimization (Beran & Tutty, 2002; Bently & Li, 1995; Bonanno, Rocke Henderson, & Hymel, 2002b; Charach et al., 1995; Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1991; Whitney & Smith, 1993). In addition, there is evidence to indicate that boys are more involved in physical bullying relative to girls (Bonanno et al., 2002b; Whitney & Smith). In contrast, when classroom observational procedures are employed, elementary age boys and girls (6 to 12 years) were observed to be equally involved in bullying as both the perpetrator and victim of bullying (Atlas & Pepler, 1998). One potential explanation for these inconsistent findings is that girls might be less likely to report bullying behavior relative to boys, owing in part to the fact that they are less likely to be involved in physical bullying. Although boys reported more bullying behavior, results across studies suggest that boys and girls were equally involved in bully/victim problems.

Large-scale survey studies on bullying have also documented grade-level differences in student involvement in bullying. Students in the junior or middle school years through to the mid-secondary-school years are more likely to report bullying others students than students in the primary school years and late secondary school years (Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1991; Whitney & Smith, 1993). In addition, these studies have shown that there is a decline in victimization over grade levels, with higher levels of victimization reported in the primary school years, although the problem continued into the secondary school years. For example, in a nationwide campaign against bullying in Norwegian schools, Olweus (1991) found that, on average, 11.6% of students in grades 2 to 6 students reported being a victim of bullying, whereas 5.4% of students in grades 7 to 9 reported being a victim of bullying. Similarly, in Nansel et al.'s (2001) nationally representative survey of US students in grade 6 through 10, bullying occurred most frequently in the 6th through 8th grade, with 10% of these students bullying other students and 7% to 13% of these students being bullied by other students on a weekly basis. In the 8th through 10th grades, 7% of students reported bullying other students and 5% to 6% reported being bullied by other students on a weekly basis. Although research
suggests that bullying tends to reach a peak somewhere between late elementary and early secondary school, an appreciable amount of bullying occurs across grade levels.

**Bullying and Psychosocial Adjustment**

*Concurrent impact.* The extent of bully-victim problems in schools becomes particularly troubling when one considers evidence suggesting an association between student involvement in bully-victim problems and psychosocial adjustment problems. Relative to noninvolved students, involvement in bully-victim problems has been found to be associated with increased psychosomatic symptoms (Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpelä, Marttunen, Rimpelä, & Rantanen, 1999; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000; Rigby, 2000), anxiety (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000; Olweus, 1991), depression (Espelage & Holt, 2001; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 1999), suicidal ideation (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 1999), and aggression (Craig, 1998; Espelage & Holt, 2001; Olweus, 1991; Nansel et al., 2001). Victimized students are more likely to report internalizing difficulties such as low self-esteem (Olweus, 1991) and loneliness (Nansel et al., 2001) than either non-involved students or students who bully others. Students who bully others are more likely to report delinquent behavior such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption compared to either victimized students or non-involved students (Espelage & Holt, 2001; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000; Nansel et al., 2001). Bully/victims, those students who are frequently involved as both bully and victim, appear to be at greatest risk, reporting more internalizing and externalizing difficulties relative to victims, bullies, or uninvolved students (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000). Although the correlational nature of these data preclude any suggestion of causal influence, they clearly demonstrate a relationship between being a bully and/or victim and poor emotional adjustment relative to non-involved students.

*Long term impact.* Longitudinal research has documented similar trends in long-term problems associated with student involvement in bullying and victimization. Among students who bully others, Olweus (1993) found that bullying behavior in grades 6 through 9 was associated with higher levels of adult criminal behavior. Among students who were victimized, various longitudinal studies
have shown increased levels of internal difficulties that include social dysfunction (Goldbaum, Craig, Pepler, & Connolly, 2003; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Wardrop, 2001; Paul & Cillessen, 2003; Rigby, 1999), loneliness (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Wardrop, 2001) low self-esteem (Egan & Perry, 1998; Olweus, 1993; Paul & Cillessen), anxiety (Paul & Cillessen; Rigby, 1999), somatic symptoms (Rigby, 1999), and depression (Olweus, 1993). Given the serious nature of bullying, and its demonstrated long-term impact, it is therefore apparent that intervention is needed.

Teachers' Responses to Bullying

Numerous authors (Besag, 1989, 1991; Olweus & Limber, 1999; Priest, 1989; Rigby, 1996; Ross, 1996; Swearer & Doll, 2001) as well as school staff members, parents, and students (Charach et al., 1995) have suggested that teachers play a significant role in intervening in bullying, given their close involvement with a large number of school-aged children. Investigations of the effectiveness of the Norwegian Bullying Prevention program, implemented nationwide in Scandinavian schools, lends support to this argument. A number of teacher factors were found to increase the likelihood that core components of the program were implemented in schools, including (1) greater teacher perceptions that bullying was a problem in their classroom, (2) greater perceptions that staff were important in dealing with bullying, (3) perceptions that it was important for teachers to know what students did during school breaks, (4) involvement in reading the program information, (5) personal victimization experience, and (6) concern for the victimized student (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). Generally, greater teacher involvement in the implementation of the program, in turn, was found to be associated with larger reductions in bullying at both the classroom and school level (Olweus, 1991; Roland, 1989). Thus, to help reduce school bullying, it is important to understand when, how, and why teachers respond to bullying.

Rate of response. Reported rates of response to bullying by teachers vary depending on the information source considered. In questionnaire studies, only 25% to 35% of junior and middle school students reported that teachers usually intervene in bully-victim problems, whereas nearly
three quarters of elementary teachers reported that they usually intervene in witnessed bullying episodes (Charach, Pepler, & Ziegler, 1995). Observational studies conducted in elementary school contexts have shown that playground supervisors only intervened in 4% to 15% of the bullying episodes that occurred on the playground, and that teachers only intervened in 18% of the classroom bullying episodes that occurred (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Craig & Pepler, 1997; Craig, Pepler et al., 2000).

In understanding these seemingly discrepant data, it becomes important to consider the degree to which teachers actually witness the occurrence of bullying. Observational research has shown that adults' intervention rates are higher when playground supervisors and teachers were in proximity to and aware of bullying episodes, but that adults are often unaware of the bullying that occurs. Specifically, Craig and Pepler (1997) found that when playground supervisors were near (within the camera frame) a bullying episode, their intervention efforts increased from 4% to 25%, although playground supervisors were near only 20% of the bullying episodes that actually occurred. Similarly, Atlas and Pepler (1998) found that when teachers were near a bullying episode in the classroom, their intervention efforts increased from 18% to 37%, although they were near only 50% of the bullying episodes that actually occurred. When teachers were in proximity of a bullying episode and looking directly at the student, their intervention rate increased to 73%. Looking at the student helped increase teacher intervention efforts because often classroom bullying was observed to take place when the teachers' backs were turned or when they were on other side of the room. Thus, classroom bullying appears to be an underground behavior that is difficult for teachers to readily observe and consequently respond to.

Teachers' reactions to bullying. Though limited, the literature on teachers' reactions to bullying includes a growing number of studies that have investigated teachers' perceptions of and responses to student bullying. Several studies have examined whether or not teachers consider bullying to be a serious incident. For example, Borg and Falzon (1989) investigated teachers' perceptions of the
severity of cruelty/bullying as one of several types of problem behavior. Specifically, they asked 844 Maltese primary school teachers (610 female, 234 male teachers) to rate the severity of 16 different problem behaviors for boys and girls. They found that teachers rated cruelty/bullying as the second most serious student problem behavior (after stealing). Cruelty/bullying was also viewed by teachers as a more serious problem for boys than girls. As well, male teachers rated cruelty/bullying as a more serious problem than did female teachers. Thus, teachers' perceptions of bullying as a serious problem appear to vary as a function of both student and teacher gender.

Several studies have also examined whether or not teachers can identify bullying behavior. For example, Siann, Callaghan, Lockhart, and Rawson (1993) interviewed 20 British teachers at two secondary schools, asking them open-ended questions about "what they understood bullying to mean" (p. 313) and "whether they thought boys and girls bullied in different ways" (pp. 314-315). Siann et al. found that all teachers agreed that bullying could be physical or psychological (a category that reflected verbal or social aggression), with the majority of teachers (n = 16) viewing boys as more involved in physical bullying and girls as more involved in psychological bullying. However, only 11 teachers mentioned that bullying involved an imbalance of power and only two teachers mentioned that bullying involved repetition. Although the external validity of these findings is questionable given the small sample of teachers interviewed, these findings suggest that teachers' conceptions of bullying do not necessarily include the characteristics that researchers emphasize in distinguishing bullying from other forms of aggressive behavior.

In a more extensive study, Hazler, Miller, Carney and Green (2001) asked 209 teachers and 42 youth counselors from the US to respond to a series of hypothetical student scenarios (derived from real student experiences) in terms of whether or not the incident described bullying and the degree of severity of the behavior. The scenarios varied in terms of the gender of the students involved, the types of aggressive behaviour described (physical, verbal, or social), and whether the essential characteristics of bullying (intent to harm, a repetitive nature, power differential) were included. They
found that, although the vast majority of adults (> 80%) identified situations that included the essential characteristics of bullying as bullying situations, less than 20% of the participants identified situations that excluded the essential characteristics of bullying as non-bullying situations. Thus, adults appeared to confuse bullying and more general aggression among students. Specifically, teachers and counsellors made uniform decisions about situations involving physical aggression or physical power differential, describing them as “bullying” and viewing such incidents as more serious than scenarios that involved either verbal or social bullying or verbal or social power differences. Consistent with Siann et al.’s (1993) findings, adult perceptions of bullying do not necessarily reflect the essential elements that researchers emphasize in their bullying definitions, including repetition, intent to harm and student power differential. Indeed, adult teachers and counselors appear to focus on physical aggression and physical power differentials as key elements in bullying. Results of these studies, however, must be interpreted with caution, as the scenarios described did not systematically vary or control for descriptive information about either the students involved or the level of harm done.

Other studies have examined teachers’ perceived responsibility and/or ability to cope with bullying situations. Boulton (1997) asked a mixed sample of 138 British preschool, junior school, and secondary school in-service and pre-service teachers (108 female, 30 male participants) to rate their attitude toward bully/victim problems, their perceived responsibility for dealing with bullying, and their self-efficacy in coping with bullying. They found that both in-service and pre-service teachers reported negative attitudes toward bullying and bullies, and positive attitudes toward victims, although participants with greater teaching experience were more likely to report negative attitudes toward victims than those with less teaching experience. In contrast to Borg and Falzon’s (1989) findings that male teachers viewed bullying as a more serious problem than did female teachers, Boulton found that female teachers were somewhat more negative toward bullying than male teachers. In addition, although Hazler et al. (2001) found that teachers over-identified physical
bullying, Boulton found that teachers were more likely to view both physical and verbal aggression as bullying (95.7% and 97.1% of teachers, respectively) relative to social aggression (47.8% of teachers).

Importantly, Boulton also found that virtually all teachers (99%) strongly agreed that they were responsible for preventing bullying, particularly in the classroom and playground (98.5% and 91.3% of teachers, respectively) as opposed to bullying that occurred outside of school (46.3% teachers). At the same time, teachers across grade levels reported little confidence in their own capacity to deal with bullying (M = 2.3 out of 5) and 87% reported wanting more training in how to prevent bullying. Notably, these findings suggest that teachers believed they were responsible for dealing with bullying but were ill equipped to do so.

More recently, Beran (2005) asked 514 Canadian pre-service teachers (346 female, 132 male teachers) in the first and second year of their teaching program to rate their perceived responsibility and preparation to cope with bullying. Consistent with Boulton’s (1997) findings that 87% of teachers wanted more training in bullying, Beran found that only 10% of pre-service teachers believed that they were prepared to deal with bullying, although reported confidence was higher among pre-service teachers in their second year of study than teachers in their first year of study. In addition, as an extension of Boulton’s findings that teachers believed they were responsible but ill equipped to deal with bullying, Beran found that female (but not male) pre-service teachers reported greater school responsibility (i.e., views that strategies implemented by other adults were needed), greater teacher responsibility (i.e., views that professional development and other teacher activities were needed), and greater concern about bullying, but also less confidence in their ability to deal with it. Thus, teachers’ perceived concern, responsibility, and confidence to deal with bullying varied as a function of teacher gender and years of experience in their teaching program.

Dake et al. (2003) asked a US national random sample of elementary teachers (N = 359) to rate their perceived confidence in dealing with bullying, the extent of bullying and violence in their
geographic area, and their reactions to and application of response strategies from the Norwegian Bullying Prevention Program. They found that over 75% of teachers reported that bullying was a problem in their own classroom but teachers also reported that the extent of bullying was greater at other elementary schools relative to their own school. These results might suggest that teachers’ were unaware of the extent of bullying at their school, supporting Canadian observational research that showed that teachers’ were unaware of the majority of bullying episodes. Although both Boulton (1997) and Beran (2005) found that teachers and pre-service teachers had low confidence in dealing with bullying, Dake et al. (2003) found that teachers reported a moderate level of confidence in dealing with bullying (M = 5.30 out of 7). It may be that certified teachers have more confidence in their ability to deal with bullying relative to pre-service teachers. These variations might also reflect actual training and support provided for teachers in their respective school districts.

Dake et al. (2003) also found that teachers rated reactive strategies (e.g., contacting parents) as more effective in reducing school bullying behavior than preventative response strategies (e.g., improved student supervision). Similarly, the majority of teachers (86%) reported employing reactive strategies, whereas only a third of teachers (31%) reported use of preventative strategies. Nonetheless, a number of factors were found to increase the likelihood that teachers would endorse a bullying prevention strategy or that these strategies would be viewed as effective. These factors included greater perceived extent of violence or bullying in their local area, greater confidence in dealing with bullying, less perceived barriers toward implementation of strategies, and demographic variables such as having a Master’s degree, having training in bullying or violence prevention activities, and fewer and longer years of teaching experience. Prominently, these results call into question the level of responsibility teachers feel in responding to bullying because teachers’ believed that reactive measures were more effective in dealing with bullying than were preventative measures. Further exploration of how much teachers take responsibility for addressing bully/victim problems is warranted.
Methodological differences make it difficult to compare findings across studies. For example, Borg and Falzon (1989) assessed Maltese teachers' perceptions of bullying/cruelty, whereas Hazler et al. (2001) assessed US youth counselors' and teachers' perceptions of bullying, Dake et al. (2003) assessed elementary teachers in the US, Beran (2005) assessed Canadian pre-service teachers, and Boulton (1997) assessed British (preschool through secondary) in-service and pre-service teachers' perceptions of bullying. Although some studies simply asked teachers about bullying generally (e.g., attitudes toward it and perceived responsibility and self-efficacy for dealing with it, as in Boulton's study, Beran's study, and Dake et al.'s study), others distinguished different forms of bullying behavior (e.g., physical, verbal and social in the Hazler et al. study and physical vs. psychological in the Siann et al., 1993 study) and found that teacher responses varied as a function of the type of bullying considered.

Only a few studies have examined the likelihood that teachers would intervene in bullying and related behaviors. Holt and Keyes (2004) asked 797 US elementary and high school teachers and teacher aides (605 female, 181 male teachers) to evaluate their perceptions of their school climate, their training in harassment intervention, and their willingness to intervene in incidents of student teasing. In contrast to Boulton (1997) and Beran (2005) who found that teachers wanted more training in bullying intervention, Holt and Keyes found that approximately two-thirds (65%) of teachers had received training in harassment intervention. Variations in the actual levels of training in bullying and related topics may account for the different results obtained. In addition, Holt and Keyes found that 73% of the teachers and aides surveyed indicated that teasing hurts and that 74% indicated that they would intervene to stop it. However, high school teachers and aides were less likely to intervene in teasing relative to primary and middle school teachers and aides (no differences were found as a function of teacher gender). As well, teachers and teacher aides’ willingness to intervene in harassment was more likely among teachers with positive attitudes toward their school climate,
and who believed that equality and less hostility was supported at their school. Thus, willingness to intervene in harassment issues varied as a function of grade level and school climate attitudes.

What determines whether or not teachers will intervene in bullying episodes? Craig, Henderson, et al. (2000) examined this issue by asking 116 Canadian pre-service teachers to respond to hypothetical bullying scenarios that varied in terms of the type of bullying (physical, verbal or social) and whether or not the teacher witnessed the incident directly. They found that pre-service teachers were more likely to label physical and verbal bullying but not social bullying as “bullying”, but only considered physical bullying to be serious enough to warrant intervention. They were less likely to consider verbal and social bullying as serious and less likely to intervene. Incidents that teachers witnessed directly were more likely to be labeled as bullying, perceived as serious, and warrant intervention. Craig, Henderson, et al. also found that female teachers (to a small magnitude) and teachers with greater empathy were more likely to identify the behaviors as bullying, were more likely to view the incident as serious, and more likely to intervene. Sex role orientation and belief in a just world did not appear to have a significant impact on teacher responses.

Extending the Craig, Henderson, et al. (2000) research, Yoon and Kerber (2003) also explored adults’ proposed responses to hypothetical bullying scenarios among 94 graduate students, the majority of whom (80%) were certified teachers. Teachers’ proposed responses were rated in terms of level of involvement from low to high, including: (1) ignoring the behavior, (2) having students talk it out, (3) discussing rules with class, (4) discussing the behavior with the student, (5) disciplining (e.g., withdrawing privileges), and (6) sending students to office or calling their parents. Consistent with Craig, Henderson, et al.’s findings, physical aggression was viewed as a more serious problem than verbal aggression, which in turn was viewed as more serious than social aggression. Extending Craig, Henderson, et al., Yoon and Kerber also found that physical aggression and verbal aggression were more likely to elicit sympathy for the victim, and more likely to warrant intervention, with greater involvement that included 50% disciplining
responses. Social aggression was least likely to engender sympathy for the victim, and least likely to warrant intervention, with less involvement that included 59% discussing student behavior responses. Across studies, then, physical aggression is most likely to be perceived as bullying, and to elicit adult intervention, especially relative to more social forms of aggression.

In a second study of 98 graduate students (83% certified teachers), using a similar methodological procedure, Yoon (2004) found that graduate students' greater perceived seriousness, self-efficacy, and empathy (but not years of experience) predicted their likelihood of intervention in bullying situations, although these variables did not predict their level of involvement in responding to bullying. The general failure to differentially predict adult level of involvement may in part be attributable to the criteria for teacher involvement used, as one might question whether “sending a student to the office” (rated as the highest level of involvement) actually reflected more involvement by teachers than “discussing the rules later with the class” (rated as the middle level of involvement). Nonetheless, these findings provide further evidence that teachers' self-efficacy, empathy, and perceived seriousness increased the likelihood that they would intervene in bullying.

Results from studies on how teachers respond to bullying or other problem behavior vary considerably in terms of the variety of response strategies proposed by school members. For example, in some studies within the bullying literature (Bentley & Li, 1995; Beran & Tutty, 2002; Charach et al. 1995; Fekkes et al., 2004), a range of school staff, including teachers, administrators, lunchroom supervisors, caretakers, parents, and/or students proposed three responses to bullying, including talking to students about bullying, disciplining the perpetrator, and/or stopping the behavior, whereas in other studies within the problem behavior literature (e.g., Warren & Christie, 1996; Martin, Linfoot, & Stephenson, 1999) teachers proposed seven response strategies to problem behavior, including (1) stopping the behavior, (2) reporting or deferring to a higher authority, (3) disciplining students, (4) gathering information about the immediate situation, (5) monitoring the situation, (6)
comforting or supporting the victim, and (7) changing the behavior with educational opportunities. Given the relative limited investigation of teachers' responses to bullying, further research is clearly needed.

Taken together, the literature on teachers' reactions to bullying suggests that teachers do view bully/victim problems negatively, especially those involving physical aggression, but that many factors influence their reactions to it. Generally, the literature to date suggests that witnessed bullying situations, particularly situations that involved physical bullying, physical power differences, and boys were perceived as more serious than situations that involved verbal or social bullying, verbal or social power differences, or girls (Borg and Falzon, 1989; Craig, Henderson, et al., 2000; Hazler et al., 2001; Yoon & Kerber, 2003), with social bullying seen as least serious and least likely to warrant a response (Craig, Henderson, et al.; Hazler et al.; Siann et al., 1993; Yoon & Kerber). Although parents, students, and other staff members believe that teachers play an important role in bullying intervention (Charach et al., 1995), how teachers intervene remain a question for future research. Teachers, particularly female teachers, believed that they were responsible for dealing with bullying, although it is clear that teachers lack confidence in addressing bullying (Beran, 2005; Boulton, 1997; Dake et al. 2003) though they do appear to have some response options available to them (Bentley & Li, 1995; Beran & Tutty, 2002; Charach et al.; Fekkes et al., 2004).

Firm conclusions about whether responses to bullying vary as a function of teacher gender are difficult at the present time, as inconsistent findings have been reported across studies. In some cases, no differences as a function of teacher gender differences have been observed (Holt & Keyes, 2004), whereas in other studies male teachers perceived bullying as a more serious problem relative to female teachers (Borg and Falzon, 1989); and in other studies female teachers perceived bullying as a more serious problem, reported more negative attitudes and greater concern toward bullying relative to male teachers (Beran, 2005; Boulton, 1997; Craig, Henderson, et al., 2000). Further research on teacher responses to bullying is clearly needed.
Statement of Problem

Teachers clearly play an important role in the socialization of children, and have the potential to play a significant role in helping students deal with problems of bullying. Understanding teacher responses to bullying, or lack thereof, becomes an important focus for research, with considerable applied significance. Based on the literature conducted to date, four factors are important to further our understanding of teachers’ reactions to bullying: the type of bullying, the nature of the power differential between the students involved, student gender, and teacher gender. Although research on school bullying has demonstrated the potential importance of each of these factors (e.g., Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Bently & Li, 1995; Bonanno et al., 2002b; Charach et al., 1995; Craig & Pepler, 1997; Hymel et al., 2002; Olweus, 1991; Nansel et al., 2001; Whitney & Smith, 1993), no study to date has examined teachers’ reactions to bullying simultaneously across these key factors. Moreover, much of the research conducted to date has considered adult responses to bullying in rather small samples of pre-service rather than in-service teachers. The goal of the present study is to extend the current literature by examining the relative impact of each of these key factors in responses to bullying among a representative sample of secondary teachers.

Research Design

The present study explored whether teachers’ reactions to bullying varied as a function of four characteristics that have been identified as important in previous literature: the type of bullying observed and whether the teacher is male or female, as well as the sex of the students involved and the nature of the power differential between them. Specifically, male and female secondary teachers were asked how they would respond to each of six different hypothetical scenarios, each involving a specific bullying situation that was directly witnessed by the teacher. Each scenario included each of the three critical elements for distinguishing bullying from other forms of aggression -- a situation in which one student who has some form of power or advantage intentionally harms another student of the same sex, and has done so repeatedly.
These hypothetical scenarios varied in terms of both type of bullying (physical, verbal and social) and the nature of the power differential between the two students involved (physical versus social power differential). Both male and female secondary teachers were asked to respond to six scenarios, describing either female student interactions or male student interactions. Given evidence that bullying often reaches a peak during the early secondary years (Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1991; Whitney & Smith, 1993), as well as evidence that secondary school teachers report less willingness to intervene in teasing relative to primary school or middle school teachers (Holt & Keyes, 2004), an examination of secondary teachers was considered an important focus in this study. The study design is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Research Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power Differential</th>
<th>Type of Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female students</td>
<td>Physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male students</td>
<td>Physical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male teachers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Female students</td>
<td>Physical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male students</td>
<td>Physical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Following each vignette, teachers were asked seven questions about their reactions to such behavior. Teacher responses to these questions were used to assess perceived seriousness of the behavior, whether or not the behavior violated a rule/policy, whether or not the behavior was acceptable in the absence of a rule or policy, whether the behavior was “bullying”, how likely the teacher would be to intervene, and how they would intervene.

*Research Questions and Hypotheses*

Based on previous research on teacher responses to student bullying, the following research questions and hypotheses were formulated. Of interest was whether or not teachers’ reactions to bullying behavior varied according to the type of bullying (physical, verbal or social bullying), the nature of the power differential (physical or social), student gender (female or male), and teacher gender (female or male). The following hypotheses were formulated from this primary research question.

1. Following previous research (Craig, Henderson, et al., 2000; Hazler et al., 2001; Yoon & Kerber, 2003), it was expected that teachers would be more responsive to physical than verbal or social bullying or power differentials. Specifically, physical bullying incidents and incidents involving physical imbalance of power were expected to be viewed by teachers as more serious and would be more likely to elicit teacher intervention. Given the exploratory nature of this study, no specific hypotheses were made regarding the type of response strategy that might be used across these situations.

2. With regard to student gender, it was expected that teachers would be more responsive to situations involving boys. Specifically, given that teachers perceive girls to be involved in “psychological” bullying and boys to be involved in physical bullying (Siann et al., 1993) and that the physical aspect of bullying was more readily recognized as a serious form of bullying that warranted intervention (Boulton, 1997; Craig, Henderson et al., 2000; Yoon & Kerber, 2003), it was hypothesized that scenarios involving boys would be perceived by teachers as
more serious and would be more likely to elicit teacher intervention. Given the exploratory nature of this study, no specific expectations were made regarding the type of strategy that might be used across situations involving boys rather than girls.

3. With regard to teacher gender, no specific expectations were made regarding how female and male teachers' might respond to the bullying situations because of the previous inconclusive evidence on teacher gender (Beran, 2005; Borg and Falzon, 1989; Boulton, 1997; Craig, Henderson, et al. 2000; Holt & Keyes, 2004).
Methodology

Participants

Participants were 133 secondary school teachers (grades 8 through 12, 56% female) from two large secondary schools in a large urban centre of British Columbia. The majority of teachers reported a European Canadian cultural heritage (56%), followed in order by Asian Canadian (19%), Canadian (15%), Mixed (5%), IndoCanadian (3%), Latin American, (1%) and African Canadian (1%).

Most participants taught mixed grades and/or subjects (87%) and, on average, they had 13.23 years of experience ($SD = 9.48$) teaching at the secondary level. In addition, half of the teachers had completed a Bachelor Degree, 29% had completed a Graduate Degree, 17% had completed a Post Bachlaureate Diploma and a few reported completion of some Undergraduate Coursework (2%), and "Other" education (1%). Although the majority of teachers reported no special workshops or coursework on bullying or related topics (55%), a smaller percentage of teachers reported at least some special training in addressing bullying within the last two years (18%), more than two years ago (15%), within the past year (7%), or within the last six months (5%), respectively.

The participants from each school did not differ in their teacher background or in their beliefs, training, and activities related to bullying among students. Results of a chi square analysis indicated no differences across schools in the highest level of education achieved, $x^2 (3, N = 131) = 2.96, p = .39$ or in their current training on bullying or related topics, $x^2 (1, N = 129) = 2.61, p = .10$. Results of three independent t-tests (corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment, $\alpha = .016$), indicated no differences across schools in reported secondary school teaching experience, (school 1 $M = 13.45, SD = 9.52$; school 2 $M = 13.10, SD = 9.52$), $t (128) = .20, p = .83$; or in their perceived importance of anti-bullying classroom activities (school 1 $M = 3.70, SD$...
school 1 $M = 1.85$, $SD = .85$; school 2 $M = 1.56$, $SD = .79$), $t_{(126)} = 1.97$, $p = .051$. Given the similarities across schools, all participants were combined into a single sample.

School staff participation was anonymous and voluntary (see Procedures section below). A total of 160 school staff (91%) returned completed questionnaires. From these participants, only certified teachers who provided complete responses to the bullying questions were included in the present study. Non-teachers (counselors, administrators, support staff, pre-service teachers, $n = 27$) were excluded. Seven teachers with missing data critical to the study were also excluded. The final sample included 133 secondary school teachers (57 male, 74 female).

**Procedures**

Following receipt of university and school board ethics approval (see Appendix A), school administrators were initially contacted regarding participation in the study. Two out of three principals agreed to invite their staff to participate as part of a professional development workshop on school bullying provided by Dr. Shelley Hymel. Prior to the start of the workshop, a brief description of the nature of the study was provided, indicating that the survey was part of the author’s Masters Thesis research, and also served as an initial “self study” for the staff and school regarding bullying. School staff members were given a written description of the study and were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary, that their responses would be considered confidential and anonymous, that their consent was implied by completing the questionnaire and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. As an incentive for participation, teachers were informed that they could place their name in a draw for one of three...
$20 gift certificates from a local bookstore and that the winners of the draw prize would be
contacted by mail.

All workshop participants were given the opportunity (first 30 minutes of the workshop) to complete the survey about bullying (to be described below). Completed surveys were collected at the end of the workshop, and school staff members were thanked for their participation. Once the study was completed, school administrators were provided with initial information about their teachers’ perceptions of bullying (at the group level only) that could be shared with the school staff. Subsequently, a summary of the results of the full study and suggestions for dealing with bullying were provided to each participating school.

Measures

Survey. Teacher beliefs, attitudes and responses to bullying were assessed using a survey developed for the purposes of this study. The survey included three major parts: (1) questions about teachers’ backgrounds (demographic information), (2) questions regarding their beliefs, training and activities related to bullying among students, and (3) their reactions to each of six (hypothetical) observed bullying between students. A sample survey is provided in Appendix B.

The demographic portion of the questionnaire addressed a range of descriptive information about the sample, including (1) current grade level taught (grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and/or 12), (2) teacher sex (male/female), (3) racial/cultural background (open-ended responses), (4) years of teaching experience (open-ended responses), and (5) educational background (Some Undergraduate Coursework/Bachelor Degree/Post Bachlaureate Diploma/Graduate Degree/Doctorate/Other).

Following this, teachers were asked to respond to a series of questions about their own attitudes and activities regarding bullying. The three questions asked about teachers’ beliefs about the importance of anti-bullying efforts in schools as well as their current level of training and involvement in such activities. Specifically, teachers were asked to indicate “How important
is it to you to do anti-bullying activities in your classroom?” on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not very important) to 5 (very important). Teachers were then asked to indicate whether or not they had been involved in any coursework or workshops regarding bullying or related topics (yes, no), and, if so, how recently (within the last six months, the past year, the last two years, or more than two years ago). Next, teachers were asked how often they engage in anti-bullying activities in their own classrooms (Yes, regularly/Yes, on occasion/Not usually/Never).

Finally, teachers were asked to respond to a series of six hypothetical vignettes (see Appendix B), each describing a bullying situation between two students. As in previous research (Craig, Henderson, et al., 2000; Hazler et al., 2001; Yoon & Kerber, 2003), hypothetical vignettes were developed to explore teachers’ responses across different types of bullying situations. Using this previous research as a guide, scenarios were created and modified over time with frequent consultation from graduate students as well as high school students regarding the clarity of presentation as well as the ecological validity of the situations included.

The six vignettes varied in terms of the types of bullying described (physical, verbal or social) and the nature of the power differential that existed between the two students (physical or social) but either involved only female or male students (see Appendix B). The type of bullying described included either physical bullying (hitting, defacing property), verbal bullying (verbal threats of violence, extortion), or social bullying (rumor spreading, exclusion from the group). The power differential between the students was described as being variations in physical power (strength, grade, number of students) or social power (peer rejection, popularity, leadership).

Regardless of the type of bullying or the type of power differential described, each vignette included reference to three other essential characteristics of bullying situations. Specifically, each vignette included a specific reference to intent to harm and to the repetitive nature of bullying based on Olweus’ (1978, 1991) definition of bullying. The intent to harm was described
as a deliberate attempt to harm another student. The repetitive nature was described when the victim experienced the aggression more than one time.

Finally, each vignette included two other contextual variables. First, given research by Craig, Henderson, et al. (2000) indicating that pre-service teachers reported greater willingness to intervene in episodes of bullying that they observed, each vignette described a situation that the teacher had witnessed directly. Second, each vignette described an incident that took place in one non-classroom location, “after class, in the hallway, outside your room”, to control for any potential bias and provide a natural setting for the bullying situation. Although there was no evidence to suggest that teachers’ reactions to bullying vary across school locations, Behre, Astor, and Meyer (2001) found that middle school teachers were likely to respond differently to violent acts in classroom versus non-classroom locations. Accordingly, context was held constant across vignettes.

To avoid variations in responses that might be attributable to unique aspects of the situation, a total of 12 different variations of the vignettes were created by systematically varying the type of bullying described as well as the nature of the power differential while holding the context and intent to harm constant. Specifically, each type of bullying behavior (hitting, defacing property, verbal threats of violence, extortion, rumor spreading, exclusion from the group) was crossed with each type of physical power differential (differences in strength, grade level, number of students) and each type of social power differential (differences in peer rejection, popularity, and leadership) across subjects.

Following each vignette, teachers were asked seven questions, presented in the same order, to describe their reactions to such behavior (see Appendix B). Questions that pertained to teachers’ perceived seriousness of bullying, identifications of bullying, and likelihood of intervention were adapted from Craig, Henderson, et al.’s (2000) Bullying Attitudes Questionnaire. Questions that pertained to teachers’ judgments of an existing rule or policy and acceptability of bullying behavior were adapted from Nucci and Turiels’ (1978) interview questions on students’ judgments toward
classroom behavior. The question that pertained to teachers’ response strategies was adapted from Rocke Henderson’s (2002) interview questions on peers’ response strategies to bullying. Specifically, teacher responses to bullying as described in each vignette were assessed using the following questions:

1. “How serious do you rate this conflict?” (rated from 1, not at all serious, to 5, very serious),
2. “Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?” (Yes/ No/ Don’t Know),
3. “If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be acceptable for students to engage in this behavior?” (Yes/ Sometimes/ No),
4. “Would you call this bullying?” (Yes/ No/ Don’t Know),
5. “How likely are you to intervene in this situation?” (rated from 1, not at all likely, to 5, very likely),
6. “Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.” (open-ended), and
7. “Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.” (open-ended).

Teachers’ open-ended responses to question 6, asking them to explain why they would intervene or not intervene, were extremely vague and uncodable and are therefore not considered in any of the analyses. Teacher responses to question 7, asking them what they would say or do in the situation were subsequently coded in terms the type of response proposed and were later rated in terms of the degree to which the teacher took responsibility for addressing the problem that occurred, as described below.

Data coding. Teachers’ open-ended responses to the question, “Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.” were transcribed verbatim, with the exception that student names were changed to initials and gendered terms were changed to gender neutral terms so that coders remained blind as to the gender of the hypothetical participants. As well, any references to the roles of perpetrator and victim were identified by
letters (P and V) so that coders remained blind as to the bullying manipulations utilized across scenarios.

Subsequently, these responses were coded in terms of the type of responses suggested, with all coding completed by the author and an independent, trained coder with graduate training in education and relevant research experience who was blind as to the hypotheses of the study. The independent rater received extensive training in how to code teachers’ responses to (hypothetical) observed bullying between students according to three coding schemes (described in the next subsection). First, the independent rater reviewed the coding schemes and practiced coding real and fabricated responses with the author, with extensive discussions regarding category distinctions. Practice coding and discussion was continued until the author and coder reached at least 80% agreement on practice items. Following training, a random selection of 25% of the actual responses obtained from teachers was coded independently by the rater and the author, providing data on inter-rater reliability for the coding. Disagreements were resolved through discussion.

The coding of open-ended responses involved three distinct levels. First, typed, verbatim transcripts of the teachers’ responses were separated into “idea units”, defined as distinct responses that reflected a unique thought, feeling and/or action (see Appendix C). Distinct idea units were separated on the transcripts with a slash (/). Interrater reliability between the author and the independent rater for the identification of distinct idea units, calculated by dividing the number of agreements by the number of agreements plus disagreements, was high (95%).

Next, each identified “idea unit” was subsequently coded into 1 of 17 different response strategies using the Response Strategy Categories coding scheme developed for the purposes of this study (see Appendix D). Specifically, teacher responses were coded into one of four major categories - Report/Defer, Intervene, No Action, or Uncodable - as well as a number of subcategories. Responses within the category of Report or Defer the Behavior to Others, were
further distinguished in terms of who the behavior was reported or deferred to, including the subcategories (a) Office, (b) Administrator, (c) Counsellor, (d) Police Liaison Officer, (e) Parent, (f) Teacher, (g) Student, and (h) Other (e.g., I would phone or email the appropriate administrator). Responses within the category Intervene were further distinguished in terms of the nature of the intervention effort suggested, including (a) Investigate the circumstances of the situation, (b) Facilitate resolution by participating students, (c) Comfort/protect victimized student, (d) Consider consequences for perpetrator, (e) Focus on unacceptability of negative behavior, (f) Focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, (g) General (Nonspecific) intervention with students (e.g., I would consider having the bully sign a contract as a consequence to the situation). Responses within the final two categories of Specify Inaction or No Action (e.g., I would not approach the students involved) and Uncodable Response (e.g., Depends on the situation) were not distinguished further. Cohen’s kappa values were calculated to measure the strength of agreement between the author and the independent rater for the response strategy measure across situations. The overall agreement for the response strategy measure was .93, ranging from 79% to 100% for each category/subcategory, which is considered Almost Perfect, demonstrating good reliability for this measure (Stemler, 2001, p.6).

Finally, teachers’ suggested response strategies were also coded in terms of Level of Responsibility, reflecting how much the teacher himself or herself took responsibility for addressing the problem (see Appendix E). Specifically, each response suggested was coded into one of four responsibility categories, including (1) No Responsibility Taken, a category that involved making no response to the situation (e.g., I wouldn’t do anything to stop the situation), (2) Minimal, Immediate Responsibility, a category that involved a reaction to the situation that was limited to the current situation or moment and/or that was non specific (e.g., I would tell the student to stop harassing her/him), (3) Defer Responsibility, a category that included addressing the problem to others (e.g., I would send the students to the Vice Principal’s office), and (4)
Take full and/or Continuing Responsibility, a category that involved initiating on-going responsibility to de-escalate the immediate situation and prevent future occurrences of such behavior (e.g., *It is important to spend time with the students to find out what is going on and set guidelines for student behavior*.). Cohen's kappa values were also calculated to measure the strength of agreement between the author and the independent rater for the responsibility measure by averaging the rater's individual items kappa values across bullying scenarios. The overall agreement for the level of responsibility categories was .84, which is considered *Almost Perfect*, demonstrating good reliability for this measure (Stemler, 2001, p.6).
Results

First considered was a descriptive overview of the sample, including information on teachers’ general perceptions of and beliefs about bullying behavior, relevant anti-bullying activities they might be involved in, as well as teachers’ overall reactions to bullying, regardless of the bullying situation considered.

**Teachers’ Beliefs and Activities Related to Bullying**

Teachers’ beliefs and activities related to bullying were first assessed by asking teachers in the present sample whether they generally viewed classroom anti-bullying activities as important. Overall, teachers in the present sample did view anti-bullying initiatives as important, with an average rating of 3.54 on a scale of 1, *not very important*, to 5, *very important*. However, only 17% of teachers reported *regularly* engaging in anti-bullying activities in their classrooms, and another 38% reported engaging in such activities *on occasion*. Forty percent of the teachers in the present sample reported that they did *not usually* engage in anti-bullying activities in the classroom and 5% never did.

Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient analyses, appropriate for use with ordinal data or interval data that does not satisfy the normality assumption, were conducted to examine the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and activities related to bullying and their years of secondary school teaching experience. Teachers’ beliefs about the importance of classroom anti-bullying activities was positively related to their reported engagement in these activities ($r_s = .56$, $p = .00$). As one might expect, the more teachers viewed classroom anti-bullying activities as important, the more they reported engaging in such activities. However, years of secondary school teaching experience was not associated with either their perceived importance of, ($r_s = .09$, $p = .28$) or engagement in, ($r_s = .02$, $p = .83$) these activities.

Two independent t-tests, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment ($\alpha = .025$), were conducted to examine whether teachers’ beliefs and engagement in anti-bullying activities varied
as a function of whether or not teachers had specialized training in bullying and teacher gender. Results showed that teachers’ with specialized training ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 1.83$) were more likely to perceive classroom anti-bullying activities as important than teachers’ without this training ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.14$), $t (119) = -2.281$, $p = .024$. However, no difference was found between teachers with training ($M = 1.83$, $SD = .78$) and teachers without training ($M = 1.54$, $SD = .84$), in their engagement of these activities, $t (124) = -1.961$, $p = .052$. As well, female ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.65$) and male teachers ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.68$) did not differ in their perceived importance of anti-bullying classroom activities, $t (121) = -.00$, $p = .99$, nor in their reported engagement in such activities (female teachers $M = 1.65$, $SD = .79$; male teachers $M = 1.68$, $SD = .87$), $t (126) = -.17$, $p = .86$. In sum, these results suggest that training in bullying or other related topics can have a positive influence on teachers’ perceptions toward anti-bullying activities, which in turn is related to their engagement in these activities. Years of secondary school experience and teacher gender did not seem to influence their perceptions of, or engagement in, these activities.

*Teachers’ Overall Reactions to Bullying*

To obtain overall descriptive results of teachers’ responses to bullying regardless of the bullying situation, the percentage and frequency of teachers’ responses, averaged across the six bullying situations for each dependent variable, were computed. Overall, teachers perceived the bullying situations as a *serious* (31%) or *very serious* (42%) problem that was *likely* (22%) or *very likely* (54%) to warrant intervention (see Table 2).
Table 2

**Descriptives on Teachers’ Perceptions of Bullying**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage (Frequency out of a possible 798)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seriousness (How serious would you rate this conflict?)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all serious</td>
<td>&lt;1 % ( 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very serious</td>
<td>7 % ( 57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately serious</td>
<td>18 % (145)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>31 % (243)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Serious</td>
<td>42 % (339)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention (How likely are you to intervene in this situation?)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all likely</td>
<td>&lt;1 % ( 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very likely</td>
<td>8 % ( 61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat likely</td>
<td>15 % (115)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>22 % (162)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very likely</td>
<td>54 % (398)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identification as “Bullying” (Would you call this bullying?)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>6 % ( 46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>12 % ( 88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>82 % (598)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule/Policy Violation: (Is there a rule or policy that governs such behavior at school?)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15 % (107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>23 % (166)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>62 % (441)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptability: (If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be acceptable for students to engage in this behavior?”)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 % ( 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>6 % ( 39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>93 % (671)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility Taken by the Teacher</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None taken</td>
<td>1 % ( 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal, immediate</td>
<td>28 % (167)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defer</td>
<td>45 % (267)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take full and/or continuing</td>
<td>26 % (157)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, the majority of bullying situations were identified as unacceptable (93%), labeled as bullying behavior (82%), and seen as being governed by a rule or policy (62%). Nevertheless, few of the teachers' proposed responses were aimed at preventing future occurrences of these situations. In particular, teachers responded to 28% of the scenarios by providing an immediate response that was limited to the current situation. In 45% of the scenarios, teachers deferred responsibility for the incident, often reporting the problem to others. In only 26% of the scenarios did teachers accept on-going responsibility for addressing the incident beyond the immediate situation to help prevent future occurrences of the situation.

However, when teachers did intervene, they proposed a broad variety of response strategies. In 61% of the incidents, the teachers reported that they would intervene directly, although in 34% of the incidents, teachers indicated that they would report or defer the situation to others (see Table 3). The nature of these efforts included investigating the circumstances of the situation (19%), providing a general (nonspecific) intervention with students (e.g., talk to students or stop the situation) (15%), focusing on the unacceptability of the negative behavior (12%), and reporting or deferring the behavior to an administrator (16%) or counselor (10%). In sum, secondary teachers in the present study perceived bullying as a serious problem and described a broad range of options for dealing with such behavior when it occurs, although few of these options were aimed at preventing the behavior from occurring again.
Table 3

*Proposed Response Strategies Across Bullying Scenarios*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response strategy</th>
<th>Percentage (Frequency out of 1812)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Report or defer the behavior to others</strong></td>
<td>34% (606)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>16% (283)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>10% (180)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>3% (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Liaison Officer</td>
<td>2% (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>1% (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>&lt;1% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>&lt;1% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervene</strong></td>
<td>61% (1102)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate circumstances</td>
<td>19% (353)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General (nonspecific)</td>
<td>15% (273)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on unacceptability of behavior</td>
<td>12% (211)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus/promote acceptable behavior</td>
<td>6% (109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider consequences for perpetrator</td>
<td>5% (87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort/protect victimized student</td>
<td>3% (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate resolution by students</td>
<td>&lt;1% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specify inaction or no action</strong></td>
<td>1% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncodable</strong></td>
<td>4% (79)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variations in Teacher Responses to Bullying

Of primary interest in the present study was whether or not teachers’ reactions to bullying varied according to the type of bullying that was observed (physical, verbal, or social bullying), the nature of the power differential that existed between students (physical or social), as well as teacher gender (male or female) and student gender (male or female). Using a repeated measures design, there were two within subject factors—types of bullying and the nature of the power differential and two between subject factors -- student gender and teacher gender.

For the within subjects or repeated measures, teachers were asked to respond to the same dependent variables repeatedly across a series of six unique hypothetical bullying vignettes that considered physical bullying (hitting and defacing property), verbal bullying (verbal threats of violence and extortion), and social bullying (rumor spreading and exclusion from the group), perpetrated by same-sex peers (either female or male students) who exhibited either physical power advantages (strength, grade, and number of students) or social power advantages (peer rejection, popularity, and leadership) over the victim, with one vignette for each type of situation. The type of bullying behavior and the nature of the power differential described were counterbalanced across the male and female student bullying situations, resulting in 12 systematic variations of the bullying vignettes (six for each student gender) that each included (1) physical bullying and physical power differential, (2) verbal bullying and physical power differential, (3) social exclusion as bullying and physical power differential, (4) physical bullying and social power differential, (5) verbal bullying and social power differential, and (6) social exclusion as bullying and social bullying (See Table 1 on page 19 for an overview of the design).

Although student gender was included as a between-subjects factor in this repeated measure design, a fully crossed repeated measures design would have included student gender as a within subject factor, manipulated across situations, with each teacher evaluating both boys and girls. However, asking teachers to respond to 12 unique bullying situations was deemed impractical, and
therefore teachers were asked to react to situations involving only one student gender. Given this incomplete repeated measures design, student gender could not be analyzed comparatively because the between subject F statistic does not take into consideration the relationship between teachers repeated responses. Accordingly, teacher responses to boys and girls were evaluated separately.

Results for the primary analyses are presented according to each dependent variable, in terms of the hypotheses generated for this study (see pp. 20-21, in Chapter 2). Specifically, teacher ratings of the incidents in terms of three dependent variables were considered: perceived seriousness, likelihood of intervention, and proposed response strategies. To this end, a series of 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (power differential) by 2 (teacher gender) mixed repeated measures ANOVA was conducted, first including responses for both boys' and girls' scenarios. Subsequently, the same analyses were conducted again, with responses for boys and girls considered separately for perceived seriousness of bullying, reported likelihood of intervention, and proposed response strategies. In cases where the Mauchly's test of sphericity was significant, Greenhouse-Geisser corrected values were reported in place of sphericity assumed values. Follow up analyses involved Bonferroni post hoc comparisons, corrected using a Bonferroni adjustment, which was calculated by dividing the total number of comparisons by the set experiment-wise error rate (.05).

*Perceived seriousness.* Across situations, teacher ratings of perceived seriousness across all bullying incidents ranged from 3.40 to 4.74 out of 5, suggesting that teachers perceived these bullying situations as *moderately serious* to *very serious*. Of interest was whether perceptions of the seriousness of the conflict varied as a function of the type of bullying observed, the nature of the power differential between students and the gender of the teacher, and whether these variations were the same when the situation involved boys versus girls.

First, a 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (type of power differential) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures analyses of variance (ANOVA) was conducted (including responses for both
boy and girl scenarios), with type of bullying and power differential as within subjects factors and teacher gender as a between subjects factor. Results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying, $F(2, 230) = 160.62, p = .000$, with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .58$). Results of Bonferroni post hoc analyses, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment ($\alpha = .016$), revealed that verbal bullying situations ($M = 4.68$) were rated as significantly more serious than were physical bullying situations ($M = 3.93$) which, in turn, were rated as significantly more serious than the social bullying situations ($M = 3.59$). All other main effects and interactions were non-significant. However, a near-significant two-way interaction was found between the type of bullying and teacher gender, $F(2, 230) = 2.91, p = .056$.

The marginal interaction observed between type of bullying and teacher gender was followed up with two, 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (nature of the power differential) repeated measures ANOVA, run separately for female and male teachers. The results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying at $p = .000$ for both female teachers $F(2, 126) = 59.70$ and male teachers, $F(2, 104) = 111.24$. Results of Bonferonni post-hoc analyses, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment ($\alpha = .016$), revealed that for male teachers verbal bullying situations were rated as significantly more serious than were physical bullying situations, which in turn were rated as significantly more serious than the social bullying situations. For female teachers, verbal bullying situations were rated as significantly more serious than physical and social bullying situations but the comparison between physical and social bullying was non-significant. The means for the interaction between type of bullying and teacher gender were presented in Figure 1.
Subsequent analyses were conducted to determine whether this pattern of results was evident for bullying involving male versus female students. To this end, variations as a function of student gender were evaluated with two 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (the nature of the power differential) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVAs, run separately for female and male students. Results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying at $p = .000$ for teachers perceived severity ratings for situations involving female students, $F (2, 122) = 101.05$, and male students, $F (2, 104) = 56.88$, with large effect sizes respectively (female students $\eta^2 = .62$, male students $\eta^2 = .52$). Results of the Bonferroni post hoc comparisons, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment ($\alpha = .016$), revealed that for female students, verbal bullying situations ($M = 4.75$) were rated as significantly more serious than were physical bullying situations ($M = 3.98$) which, in turn, were rated as significantly more serious than social bullying situations ($M = 3.58$). For male students, verbal bullying situations ($M = 4.60$) were rated as significantly more serious than both physical ($M = 3.88$) and social bullying ($M = 3.61$) whereas the comparison
between physical and social bullying was non-significant. All other main effects and interactions were non-significant.

In sum, these results suggest that teachers perceived verbal bullying situations as more serious than physical and social bullying but a further distinction between the seriousness of physical bullying situations relative to social bullying situations depended on the gender of the student and teacher involved. In particular, male teachers were more likely to perceive physical bullying situations as more serious than social bullying situations relative to female teachers but both female and male teachers were more likely to perceive physical bullying situations involving girls as more serious than social bullying involving girls.

Likelihood of intervention. Across situations, the means for teachers' likelihood of intervention ratings ranged from 3.33 to 4.78 out of 5, which indicates that teachers were somewhat likely to very likely to consider intervention across situations. Results of a 3 (bullying type) by 2 (power differential type) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVA showed a significant main effect for type of bullying, $F(2, 178) = 84.25$, $p = .000$, with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .48$). Results of Bonferroni post-hoc analyses, corrected using a Bonferroni adjustment ($\alpha = .016$), revealed that teachers were significantly more likely to consider intervention in response to verbal bullying ($M = 4.65$) than physical bullying ($M = 4.21$), and in turn least likely to consider intervention in response to social bullying ($M = 3.59$). However, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction between the type of bullying and teacher gender, $F(2, 178) = 3.49$, $p = .032$, with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .03$). All other main effects and interactions were non-significant.

The significant interaction observed between type of bullying and teacher gender was followed up with two 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (nature of the power differential) repeated measures ANOVAs, run separately for female and male teachers. Results of these analyses indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying at $p = .000$ for both female teachers $F(2,$
Follow-up, post-hoc analyses (Bonferroni, corrected using a Bonferroni adjustment, \( \alpha = .016 \)), revealed that for both female and male teachers, verbal bullying situations were more likely considered for intervention than were physical bullying situations which, in turn, were more likely considered for intervention than were social bullying situations. Further follow up analyses using independent t-tests to compare male and female teacher differences within each type of bullying could not be conducted because of the nested repeated measure design. Instead, a visual comparison was made between male and female teachers likelihood of intervention ratings across types of bullying as presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Variation in Likelihood of Intervention as a Function of Type of Bullying and Teacher Gender
Figure 2 shows a somewhat larger mean rating difference between male and female consideration for intervention in social bullying situations relative to physical and verbal bullying situations. Thus, male teachers may be less likely to consider intervention in social bullying situations relative to female teachers.

Next, variations as a function of student gender were examined with two 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (the nature of the power differential) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVAs, run separately for female and male students. For teachers responses to female students, results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying, $F(2, 90) = 60.50, p = .000$, with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .57$). Results of Bonferonni post-hoc analyses for this main effect for type of bullying, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment ($\alpha = .016$), revealed that teachers were significantly more likely to consider intervention in response to verbal bullying between girls ($M = 4.75$) than physical bullying ($M = 4.16$), and in turn least likely to consider intervention in response to social bullying between girls ($M = 3.50$).

A more complex pattern emerged for bullying involving male students, as results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying, $F(2, 84) = 28.95, p = .000$, with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .40$), a marginal interaction between the type of bullying and teacher gender, $F(2, 84) = 2.59, p = .08$, which was qualified by a significant 3-way interaction between the type of bullying, teacher gender, and power, $F(2, 84) = 3.29, p = .042$, with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .07$). All other main effects and interactions were non-significant. Generally, for male students, teachers were significantly more likely to consider intervention in response to verbal ($M = 4.56$) and physical bullying ($M = 4.27$) than social bullying ($M = 3.68$). However, this main effect was qualified by a significant 3-way interaction between type of bullying, teacher gender, and power. To follow up this interaction, 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (nature of the power differential) repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted, run separately for female and male teachers and male students.
For the situations involving male students, results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying at $p < .001$ for both female teachers $F(2, 52) = 8.18$ and male teachers, $F(2, 32) = 25.56$, but for male teachers this effect was qualified with a significant interaction between the type of bullying and the nature of the power differential, $F(2, 32) = 4.03, p = .027$. There was a large effect size for the main effect type of bullying for female teachers ($\eta^2 = .24$) and male teachers ($\eta^2 = .61$); and for the interaction between type of bullying and the nature of the power differential for male teachers ($\eta^2 = .20$). For female teachers, the interaction between type of bullying and the nature of the power differential was non-significant.

Results of the Bonferonni post-hoc analyses, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment ($\alpha = .016$), revealed that, in situations involving boys, male teachers were significantly more likely to consider intervention in verbal bullying situations ($M = 4.76$) relative to physical bullying situations ($M = 4.35$), and least likely to consider intervention in social bullying situations ($M = 3.75$). For situations involving boys, female teachers were significantly more likely to consider intervention in verbal bullying situations ($M = 4.37$) relative to social bullying situations ($M = 3.61$); the comparison between physical bullying and social and verbal bullying situations was non significant.

The interaction between the type of bullying and the nature of the power differential between male students for male teachers was followed up with simple contrasts across the type of bullying and the nature of the power differential. The contrast between physical and social bullying and physical and social power differentials was significant, $F(1, 16) = 6.19, p = .01$, whereas the contrast between physical and verbal bullying and physical and social power differential was non significant. The means for the interaction between type of bullying and the nature of the power differential between male students were presented in Figure 3.
Figure 3 verifies these contrasts and shows the variation in male teachers' responses is likely related to social situations involving a physical power differential between male students, that is, male teachers were less likely to intervene in social bullying situations that involved a physical power differential between male students, relative to physical and verbal bullying that involved a physical power differential between male students.

In sum, these results suggest that teachers' likelihood of intervention varied as a function of type of bullying, the nature of the power differential, student gender, and teacher gender. In situations involving female students, both male and female teachers were more likely to intervene in verbal bullying situations and, in turn, physical bullying situations, but least likely to intervene in social bullying situations. For male students, generally, female teachers were equally likely to respond to verbal and physical bullying situations but less likely to intervene in social bullying situations. Male teachers, however, were more likely to consider intervention in verbal than physical bullying situations, and least likely to intervene in social bullying situations.
involving male students. However, in social bullying situations involving a physical power differential between male students, male teachers were less likely to intervene relative to female teachers.

Proposed response strategies. Teachers' proposed responses to each of the bullying incidents were initially converted into proportion scores to reflect the extent to which each teacher proposed a particular strategy relative to other strategies. Specifically, the frequency with which a teacher proposed a particular strategy category was divided by the total number of responses suggested by that teacher, reflecting their relative reliance on that particular strategy. Two proposed response strategies, "facilitate resolution by participating students" and "specify inaction or no action", were excluded from the analyses because of their low frequency (<1%). Thus, seven different response strategy proportion scores were considered as dependent variables: report or defer the behavior to others; focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior; investigate the circumstances of the situation; generally intervention with students; comfort and/or protect victimized student; focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior; and consider consequences for perpetrator. Three of these variables, however, had serious violations of the Levene's test for homogeneity across groups, owing primarily to their low frequency of occurrence: comfort and/or protect victimized student; focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior; and consider consequences for perpetrator. For these three variables, square roots of values were computed but no significant differences emerged. Therefore, the original values were maintained in the analyses to accurately interpret the proportion of each response strategy relative to other response strategies.

For each of the seven response strategy proportion scores, a 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (type of power differential) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted, with teacher gender as a between-subjects factor. The results indicated significant main effects for type of bullying for most of the proposed response strategies: report or defer behavior to
others, \( F(2, 180) = 79.47, p = .000 \); focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior, \( F(1.79, 161.95) = 18.59, p = .000 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, \( F(1.52, 136.75) = 18.16, p = .000 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); consider consequences for the perpetrator \( F(1.54, 139.24) = 16.56, p = .000 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); comfort and/or protect victimized student \( F(1.48, 133.83) = 8.10, p = .002 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); and general intervention with students, \( F(1.71, 154.65) = 4.15, p = .023 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported). For effect sizes, there was a large effect for report or defer behavior to others \( (\eta^2 = .47) \), focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior \( (\eta^2 = .17) \), focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior \( (\eta^2 = .17) \), consider consequences for the perpetrator \( (\eta^2 = .15) \); a medium effect size was observed for comfort and/or protect victimized student \( (\eta^2 = .08) \); and a small effect size was observed for general intervention with students \( (\eta^2 = .04) \). The main effect for type of bullying was non-significant for investigate the circumstances of the situation.

All other main effects and interactions were non-significant, although one near-significant main effect was observed. Specifically, a marginal effect for the nature of the power differential was obtained for focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, \( F(1, 90) = 3.25, p = .07 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported), although results of Bonferroni post hoc analyses failed to reveal any significant differences between the physical \( (M = .052) \) versus social power differentials \( (M = .081) \) between students.

As a follow up to the main effects observed for type of bullying, Bonferonni post-hoc analyses, corrected using a Bonferroni adjustment \( (\alpha = .016) \), were conducted. Means for each proposed response strategy across the type of bullying are presented in Table 4. Significant differences between proposed strategies across types of bullying, as reflected in post hoc comparisons (Bonferonni) are indicated by different superscripts in the table.
**Table 4**

*Mean Proportion Scores for Proposed Response Strategies as a Function of Type of Bullying*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Strategy</th>
<th>Physical Bullying</th>
<th>Verbal Bullying</th>
<th>Social Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report or Defer to Others</td>
<td>.33&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.63&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.22&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Unacceptability</td>
<td>.15&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.04&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.19&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Acceptability</td>
<td>.05&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.01&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.13&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort and/or Protect Victim</td>
<td>.01&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider Consequences for Perpetrator</td>
<td>.10&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.02&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.01&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Intervention with Students</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate Circumstances</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For five of the seven dependent variables, proposed response strategies differed across each type of bullying. As shown in Table 4, verbal bullying incidents were more likely reported or deferred to others than physical bullying incidents which, in turn, were more likely to be reported or deferred to others than social bullying incidents. In contrast, when faced with incidents involving physical and social bullying, teachers were more likely to address the unacceptability of the negative behavior directly with students, more so than with incidents involving verbal bullying. In response to social bullying, teachers were also more likely to comfort and/or protect the victimized student or focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, especially relative to verbal bullying. In response to physical bullying, teachers were more likely to consider the consequences for the perpetrator relative to verbal and social bullying. The extent to which teacher proposed general
intervention with students or investigated the circumstances of the situation did not vary across types of bullying.

Subsequent analyses examined whether teacher responses to bullying differed depending on the sex of the students involved. Specifically, student gender was considered for each of the seven response strategy proportion scores, using a series of 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (nature of the power differential) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVAs, run separately for female and male students. For bullying involving female students and/or bullying involving male students, the results indicated a significant main effect for type of bullying for all of the proposed response strategies: report or defer behavior to others, female student $F(1.77, 92.18) = 38.17, p = .000$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported), male student $F(1.67, 60.21) = 42.20, p = .000$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior, female student $F(2, 104) = 10.12, p = .000$, male student, $F(1.70, 61.41) = 8.27, p = .001$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, female student $F(1.46, 76.11) = 9.53, p = .001$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported), male student, $F(1.63, 58.83) = 8.89, p = .001$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); consider consequences for the perpetrator, female student $F(1.75, 91.48) = 5.40, p = .008$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported), male student, $F(1.31, 47.46) = 11.69, p = .000$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); comfort and/or protect victimized student, female students only $F(1.40, 73.24) = 6.14, p = .008$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); general intervention with students, female student only $F(1.53, 79.85) = 4.27, p = .026$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported); investigate the circumstances of the situation, male students only $F(2, 72) = 9.32, p = .000$. For effect sizes for main effect type of bullying, there was a large effect for report or defer behavior to others (female student, $\eta^2=.42$, male student $\eta^2=.54$), focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior (female student, $\eta^2=.16$, male student $\eta^2=.18$), focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior (female student, $\eta^2=.15$, male student $\eta^2=.19$), consider consequences for the perpetrator (female student, $\eta^2=.09$, male student $\eta^2=.24$) investigate the circumstances of
the situation (male students only \( \eta^2 = .20 \)); and a medium effect for comfort and/or protect victimized student (female student only \( \eta^2 = .10 \)); and for general intervention with students (female student only \( \eta^2 = .07 \)).

Results of these analyses demonstrate that three of the seven proposed response strategies differed across the type of bullying for incidents involving female students and incidents involving male students. For incidents involving female students (but not for incidents involving male students), teachers proposed comfort and/or protect victimized student and general intervention with students. For incidents involving male students (but not for incidents involving female students), teachers proposed investigate the circumstances of the situation. The other four response strategies were proposed for incidents involving boys and girls, responses that included report or defer behavior to others, focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior, focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, and consider consequences for the perpetrator.

Mean proportion scores for each proposed response strategy across the type of bullying for female versus male students is presented in Table 5. Significant differences between proposed strategies across types of bullying, as reflected in post hoc comparisons (Bonferonni), corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment (\( \alpha = .016 \)), are indicated by different superscripts in the table.
Table 5

Means Proportion Scores for Proposed Response Strategies as a Function of Type of Bullying Situations Involving Female or Male Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Strategy</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Bullying</td>
<td>Verbal Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report or Defer to Others</td>
<td>.37(^a)</td>
<td>.63(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Unacceptability</td>
<td>.13(^a)</td>
<td>.03(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Acceptability</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.01(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort and/or Protect Victim</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider Consequences for Perpetrator</td>
<td>.07(^a)</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Intervention with Students</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate Circumstances</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of these analyses demonstrate that the pattern of results observed are in almost all cases similar for incidents involving female students and incidents involving male students. Indeed, the pattern of means indicated for male and female students in Table 5 are highly similar to those presented in Table 4, when male and female students were combined. The only difference here is that observed for the response *investigate circumstances of the situation*. Teachers were more likely to investigate the circumstances in social bullying situation involving boys relative to verbal bullying situations involving boys but these differences did not emerge in teacher responses to bullying situations involving girls. With this exception, it appears that teachers respond similarly to different types of bullying situations involving girls and boys.
In addition to the main effect for type of bullying, results of these analyses also revealed three other significant effects for particular response strategies as a function of student gender. All other main effects and interactions were non significant.

First, for male (but not female) students, for the response *investigate the circumstances of the situation*, there was a significant between-subject effect for teacher gender, $F(1, 36) = 5.32$, $p = .027$, which was qualified by an interaction between bullying and teacher gender, $F(2, 72) = 5.74$, $p = .005$, both with medium effect sizes ($\eta^2 = .12, \eta^2 = .13$). Results of Bonferroni post-hoc comparisons conducted to follow-up on the effect for teacher gender revealed that male teachers ($M = .26$) were more likely to investigate situations involving male students than female teachers ($M = .14$). As indicated in Table 5, this difference seems primarily the result of investigating social bullying incidents involving boys. To evaluate this possibility, a 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted on teacher proposals to *investigate the circumstances of the situation* for situations involving male students. Results indicated a significant main effect type of bullying for male teachers in situations involving male students, $F(1.45, 20.42) = 15.33$, $p = .000$ (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported), with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = .52$). Post-hoc analyses, (Bonferonni, corrected using a Bonferonni adjustment, $\alpha = .016$), revealed only that male teachers were more likely to investigate the circumstances of social bullying situations involving male students ($M = .41$) relative to verbal bullying situations involving male students ($M = .13$).

Second, also for male students, for the response of *general intervention*, there was near-significant interaction between type of power differential between students and teacher sex, $F(1, 36) = 3.06$, $p = .08$, that was qualified by a significant 3-way interaction between type of bullying, power, and teacher gender, $F(2, 72) = 3.80$, $p = .027$, with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .09$). A 3 (type of bullying) by 2 (teacher gender) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to follow up on the interaction between type of bullying, power, and teacher gender for teachers
general intervention with students response to situations involving male students. Results indicated no significant effects or interactions. However, for male teachers there was a near significant main effect for the nature of the power differential between male students, \( F(1, 14) = 4.26, p = .058 \). Post-hoc analyses (Bonferroni, corrected using a Bonferroni adjustment, \( \alpha = .016 \)) revealed a near significant \((p = .058)\) comparison between male teachers responses to social power differences between male students \((M = .15)\) and physical power differences between male students \((M = .07)\).

Third and finally, for female students, for the response focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior, a main effect for the nature of power differential was found, \( F(1, 52) = 8.72, p = .005 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported), with a large effect size \((\eta^2 = .14)\). However, this main effect was qualified by an interaction between the type of bullying and the nature of the power differential \((1.71, 89.34) = 4.42, p = .019 \) (Greenhouse-Geisser values reported) with a medium effect size \((\eta^2 = .07)\). Results of Bonferroni post comparisons for the main effect of type of power revealed that teachers were more likely to propose focusing on and/or promoting acceptable, positive behavior in response to bullying situations that involved a social power differential between female students \((M = .10)\) relative to situations that involved a physical power differential between female students \((M = .03)\). Finally, simple contrasts were conducted to follow-up the interaction observed between type of bullying and the nature of the power differential for focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior in response to bullying situations involving female students. The contrast between physical and social bullying and between physical and social power differentials were significant, \( F(1, 52) = 6.19, p = .016 \), whereas the contrast between physical and verbal bullying and between physical and social power differential was non-significant. The means for the interaction between type of bullying and the nature of the power differential for situations involving male students were presented in Figure 4.
As see in Figure 4, teachers were more likely to propose focusing on and/or promoting acceptable, positive behaviors in response to social bullying situations relative to physical and verbal bullying situations that involved a social power differential between female students.

In sum, the vast majority of teachers’ responses varied simply as a function of the type of bullying (see Table 4) and these variations were largely consistent across male and female students (see Table 5). In verbal bullying situations, teachers were more likely to report or deferred to others, especially relative to social bullying situations. In physical bullying situations, teachers were likely to focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior relative to verbal bullying situations and consider consequences for the perpetrator, especially relative to social bullying situations. In social bullying situations, teachers were likely to focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior and comfort and/or protect victimized student relative to verbal bullying situations. However, there were subtle variations in three of teachers’ response strategies as a function of student gender. Teachers proposed the comfort and/or protect
victimized student response in situations involving girls and the focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior in social bullying situations involving a social power differential between girls relative to physical and verbal bullying situations involving a social power differential between girls. In social bullying situations involving boys, male teachers were more likely to investigate the circumstances of the situation relative to verbal bullying situations involving boys.
Discussion

Discussion of Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe teachers' responses to bullying and to determine whether or not the type of bullying, the nature of the power differential, teacher gender, and student gender were important to their responses to bullying. Results of the present study contribute to our understanding of teachers' responses to bullying by extending previous literature investigating teacher beliefs and responses to bullying.

First, it was found that teachers with training in bullying or related topics were more likely to perceive classroom anti-bullying activities as important which, in turn, was related to increased engagement in these activities. These findings extend previous research indicating that teachers' perceptions of bullying are linked to their reported responses to it. For example, Dake et al. (2003) found that teachers who were less likely to perceive barriers toward implementing bullying prevention activities actually increased the chance of endorsing one of these activities. In addition, Holt and Keyes (2004) found that teachers' positive school climate attitudes were associated with their increased willingness to intervene in harassment behavior. Despite these relationships, few teachers in the present study reported engagement in anti-bullying activities on a regular basis. Results of the present study, however, do suggest that providing teachers with specialized training in anti-bullying efforts may enhance their perceptions of the importance of these activities, which are linked to increased engagement in such activities.

Descriptive analyses on teachers' responses to bullying showed that teachers proposed a broad variety of response strategies for dealing with bullying, which are consistent with teachers' proposed responses to other problem behavior (Warren & Christie, 1996; Martin et al., 1999). However, only a few of these response strategies were frequently proposed within and across situations: investigate the circumstances of the situation, report or defer behavior, investigate the situation, focus on the unacceptability of the negative behavior, and general intervention with
students. Interestingly, some of the less frequently proposed response strategies (e.g., contact parents, punish the perpetrator, promote acceptable behavior) have been recommended by many researchers in the field as effective ways to respond to bullying (Charach et al., 1995; Hazler, 1996; Olweus, 1978, Priest, 1989, Ross, 1996). Perhaps, then, teachers should employ these strategies more frequently.

Results of the present study also showed that teacher’s responses to bullying seldom reflected full and/or continuing responsibility for helping to deescalate the situation and prevent future occurrences of the behavior. Although Boulton (1997) found that the vast majority of teachers reported feeling responsible for preventing bullying in the classroom and on the playground, this was not reflected in the response strategies they proposed in the present study. Perhaps teachers believe that providing a response to bullying (rather than no response) is a form of responsibility that might help prevent school bullying. Consistent with the present results, Dake et al. (2003) found that teachers rated reactive response strategies as more effective ways to reduce bullying than preventative response strategies. Perhaps teachers’ do not propose full and/or continuing responsibility in responding to bullying because they do not perceive preventative measures as effective ways to reduce bullying. Moving teachers from reactive to preventive approaches and responses to bullying remains a challenge for educators.

In terms of the primary focus of this study, the results of this research indicated that the type of bullying involved – physical, verbal, social – is critical in determining teachers’ responses to bullying. Generally, it was found that teachers were most responsive to verbal bullying, and least responsive to social bullying. Verbal bullying was more likely to be perceived as serious, more likely to be considered for intervention, and more likely to be reported or deferred to others than physical bullying which, in turn, was more likely to be perceived as serious, more likely to be considered for intervention, and more likely to be reported or deferred to others than social bullying.
The hypothesis that teachers would be more responsive to physical bullying than verbal or social bullying was clearly not supported. In fact, the present results contradict previous research showing that physical bullying is more likely to be perceived as bullying and elicit adult intervention, though the present results do support research suggesting that social bullying is generally seen as less serious and less likely to warrant a response (Craig, Henderson, et al., 2000; Hazler et al, 2001; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). The discrepancy observed in results across studies might be explained by the severity of the aggression described in the bullying vignettes employed in this study. Garrity and Baris (1992) have distinguished mild, moderate, and severe forms of aggression as bullying. According to these authors, the verbal bullying situations described in this study involved severe forms of aggression (threat of personal harm and threat to take personal property), whereas the physical and social bullying situations involved mild to moderate forms of aggression (being shoved into a locker and defacing a school binder, extortion and gossiping, respectively). Thus, it is plausible that teachers reacted to the severity of the aggression described in verbal bullying scenarios. In future studies, then, a finer distinction in the development of bullying vignettes might be made such that both the type of bullying and the degree of severity of the aggression is controlled for or studied systematically.

Nevertheless, teachers’ proposed responses to the three different types of bullying contribute to our understanding of how teachers respond to bullying. Teachers’ most common response to physical and social bullying involved focusing on the unacceptability of bullying behavior. Albeit infrequently, in social bullying situations, teachers were more likely to focus on, and/or promote acceptable behavior and comfort or protect the victimized student, especially relative to verbal bullying situations. In contrast, in physical bullying situations, teachers were more likely to consider consequences for the perpetrator, especially relative to social bullying. These results extend Yoon and Kerber’s (2003) findings that in physical and verbal bullying situations, a higher percentage of teachers proposed a discipline response strategy relative to
social bullying situations, whereas in social bullying situations, a higher percentage of teachers proposed talking with students relative to physical and verbal bullying.

Responses to bullying in the present study also varied slightly as a function of teacher gender, with male teachers being somewhat less aware of social bullying than female teachers. In social bullying situations, especially, male teachers were less likely to consider intervention relative to female teachers. In addition, it was found that male teachers perceived physical bullying as more serious than social bullying whereas female teachers perceived physical and social bullying as equally serious. Previous research has yielded rather inconclusive evidence on the impact of teacher gender on responses to bullying (Beran, 2005; Borg and Falzon, 1989; Boulton, 1997; Craig, Henderson et al. 2000; Holt & Keyes, 2004). However, the majority of these studies simply asked teachers to report on their perceived seriousness of bullying generally. The results of this study suggest that there are subtle differences between male and female teachers’ reactions to different types of bullying such as social bullying, especially with regard to male teachers. Thus, future research is needed on male and female teachers’ perceived seriousness on different forms of bullying.

There are two other plausible explanations for the inconclusive evidence on teacher gender. First, there might be subtle differences between male and female teachers’ reactions to bullying that are not consistently detected because of the relatively small sample sizes employed across studies, especially with regard to male teachers. Indeed, the present study, considering a sample of relatively experienced, in-service secondary teachers, with a relatively even split between male and female teachers (44% vs. 56%), provides one of the most reasonable tests of variations as a function of teacher gender within this literature to date. Alternatively, it is also plausible that the subtle differences between male and female teachers’ reactions to bullying are attributable to other teacher differences rather than teacher gender per se. Thus, in future studies,
a large random sample of male and female teachers might be required in order to fully understand teachers' responses to different types of bullying as a function of teacher gender.

Contrary to expectations that teachers would be more responsive to situations involving boys, the results of this study generally suggest that teachers respond similarly to bullying situations regardless of student gender, although some of the teachers' responses to bullying were influenced slightly by whether boys or girls are involved. For situations involving girls (but not situations involving boys), teachers were likely to propose *comfort and/or protect victimized students* response across bullying situations and likely to propose *focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior* response in social bullying situations involving a social power differential. Given that previous research has indicated that teachers perceive girls to be more involved in social bullying (Siann et al., 1993) and that the impact of social aggression involves emotional or psychological harm (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Underwood, 2003), it may be that teachers perceive girls to need a more supportive response to attend to the emotional aspect of social bullying that is perceived by teachers as being more typical or expected of girls. For situations involving boys (but not situations involving girls), male teachers were likely to propose *investigate the circumstances of the situation* in social bullying situations involving boys with a physical power differential between students. Given the findings from this study that male teachers were somewhat less aware of social bullying relative to female teachers, and previous research that has indicated that teachers perceive boys to be more involved in physical bullying (Siann et al., 1993) and that the impact of physical aggression can include more immediate physical pain (Underwood, 2003), it may be that social bullying is less understood by male teachers and perceived as more unusual or atypical for boys, thereby calling for a more immediate investigation response.

Contrary to expectations that teachers would respond more to situations in which bullies wielded physical power over their victims, results of the present study failed to reveal significant
variations in teachers' reactions to bullying as a function of the power differential that exists between the students involved. Indeed, teachers responded similarly regardless of whether bullies were described as having physical (e.g., the bullying being older, larger, more popular,) advantages over their victims or social power over their victims (e.g., the bullying being more popular, or more accepted by peers). These findings contradict Hazler et al.'s (2001) finding that showed that situations involving a physical power differential were viewed as serious incidents of bullying. However, it is difficult to compare findings across studies because Hazler et al. did not systematically vary or control descriptive information in their bullying vignettes. In interpreting the findings (or lack thereof) regarding the power differential between students, it may be important to recall that Hazler et al. (2001) and Siann et al. (1993) both found that adult perceptions of bullying did not necessarily reflect the essential elements of bullying as described by researchers, including such things as power differences between students. Perhaps teachers do not react to the nature of the power differential because they do not recognize it as an essential characteristic of bullying. However, given that recent definitions of violence have been broadened to include "the intentional use of physical force or power..." (World Health Organization, 2002, p. 5), it may be important to reexamine the practical significance of the essential elements of bullying that researchers emphasize in their bullying definitions, including student power differential, intent to harm, and repetition.

Intervention Implications

Elaborating on some of the educational implications outlined in the previous section, further direction for school intervention activities is suggested within the framework of the Norwegian Bullying Prevention program, a program that has been empirically validated to reduce bully/victim problems (Olweus, 1991, 1994; Olweus & Limber, 1999). The general prerequisite of this program is that adult school members become aware of bully/victim problems and become actively involved in reducing existing problems as well as preventing the
development of new problems to help create a warm, positive school environment for all students. In this study, despite the fact that the majority of teachers did not have any specialized coursework or workshops on bullying or related topics, teachers were aware of bullying behavior and the seriousness of it, particularly direct forms of physical and verbal aggression as bullying. However, few teachers reported engagement in anti-bullying classroom activities regularly and few of their proposed responses were aimed at preventing bullying situations. Therefore, school intervention programs might want to focus their efforts on teacher awareness of indirect forms of social bullying and the importance of teachers' direct involvement in bullying prevention.

One practical prevention activity from the Norwegian Bullying Prevention Program that schools might want to consider implementing is a "whole school" disciplinary policy against bullying and other aggressive behavior (Olweus, 1994, p.1187; Olweus & Limber, 1999). In this policy, rules and regulations are objectively spelled out to allow all school members (e.g., teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, psychologists, social workers, etc.) to work together to create a system of reward for appropriate student behavior (e.g., reporting bullying behavior) and create a system of consequences that are non-hostile and non-physical for inappropriate student behavior (e.g., apologizing to the student), which are reinforced with attentive teacher supervision. District and administrative support would be needed to provide teachers with the opportunity to develop such a policy and spend more time supervising students, but the potential long-term benefits of reducing bullying and other aggressive behavior to the school community would likely outweigh these initial costs.

Limitations of this study

The applied significance of the present findings need to be considered within the limitations of this study, that include design, generalizability, and measurement.

Limitations in the mixed, correlational design of this study need to be addressed. First, the correlational nature of this study only allows for the study of relationships among the
variables considered, and does not allow for an assessment of causal influence. Experimental designs would be needed to determine causality. Nevertheless, the results of the present study shed further light on the dimensions that influence teacher responses to bullying.

Second, student gender could not be included directly as an independent variable in the mixed design of the present study because it was included as a between subject factor, although manipulated across situations. Future research of this sort would benefit from inclusion of student gender as a repeated measures variable, so that teacher responses to male versus female students could be compared directly.

The generalizability of the present sample of teachers also needs to be considered. The present study is one of the few studies to date to evaluate responses to bullying among a sample of inservice, experienced secondary school teachers, with a relatively equal number of male and female teachers participating, and a very high participation rate (91% of the entire school staff). At the same time, it is important to remember that the teachers included in the present study reflect only the staff within two urban secondary schools and might not be representative of teachers’ responses to bullying at other urban secondary schools in B.C. and beyond.

In addition, although graduate students and high school students were consulted regarding the ecological validity of the bullying situations included in the present study, these hypothetical situations may not adequately capture the social complexities of real life situations. In sum, the results of this study might only approximate how teachers respond to actual bullying incidents.

Finally, there are a few measurement limitations related to this study that need to be considered. As noted previously, one potential limitation is that the seriousness of the aggression described in bullying vignettes might have varied across types of bullying, with somewhat more serious forms of bullying being included in verbal bullying than in physical and social bullying. If so, such variations may have confounded teachers’ reactions to different types of bullying.
situations. Another limitation is that teachers’ ratings and written proposed responses to hypothetical bullying situations were employed as an indicator of observable behavior. Of concern is whether written responses to hypothetical situations accurately reflect the complexity of teacher responses in real life situations. It is also possible that teachers provided socially desirable responses to the bullying situations because of the potential negative evaluations associated with not responding to bullying. Despite these limitations, this study sheds light on how teachers respond to bullying although further research is needed.

**Future Directions**

Further research on the factors that influence teachers’ responses to bullying is needed. Given the contradictory finding that verbal bullying was considered more serious and more likely to warrant a response than physical and social bullying in the present study, future studies might need to consider the degree of severity of the aggression in bullying situations. Furthermore, given the finding that teachers do not frequently propose responses that aim to prevent bullying future research on teachers’ perceptions of preventive measures, their training in bullying prevention, their relationships with students, how much teaching time they have to focus on social behavior, and what rules and policies stipulate about bullying are warranted. Teachers’ perspectives on these issues might best be explored with a semi-structured interview procedure. Moreover, a reliable and valid survey on teachers’ perceptions of and responses to bullying is needed in order to investigate large, representative samples of male and female teachers’ responses to bullying. Finally, more direct observational studies are needed to assess whether or not teachers’ reported responses to bullying correspond with their actual behavior in schools.

In conclusion, a full understanding of when, how, and why teachers respond to bullying is important because victimized students of bullying do not have the physical or social power to protect themselves and therefore rely on other school members who have more power to help
them. It is teachers who can best serve these students because they are the most closely involved in creating a school environment that can help reduce school bullying (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003; Olweus, 1991; Olweus & Limber, 1999; Roland, 1989). We cannot expect students to develop a sense of social responsibility at school until educators stand up and take full responsibility for responding to students involved in all types of bullying.
References


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Appendix A University and School Board Ethics Approval
Appendix B Survey

1. Grade Currently Teaching:__________

2. Are you male or female? _____Male _____Female

3. How would you describe yourself in terms of cultural heritage? (e.g., Asian Canadian, IndoCanadian, European Canadian, etc.)

4. How many years of teaching experience have you had? _____elementary school years
   _____secondary school years

5. What is your educational level? (Check one box)
   □ Some Undergraduate Coursework
   □ Bachelor Degree
   □ Post Bachlaureate Diploma
   □ Graduate Degree
   □ Doctorate
   □ Other

6. How important is it to you to do anti-bullying activities in your classroom?

   

   1   2   3   4   5
   not very important important very important

7. Have you taken any special coursework/workshops on bullying or related topics?
   □ No
   □ Yes   When? □ Within the last six months
            □ Within the past year
            □ Within the last two years
            □ More than two years ago

   If yes, please describe ____________________________________________

8. Do you engage in anti-bullying activities in your classroom? (Check one box)
   □ Yes regularly
   □ Yes on occasion
   □ Not usually
   □ Never
Bullying Response Questionnaire A

1) After class in the hallway outside your room, you see Emily, a student known to be the toughest girl in school, shove Sarah up against a locker without provocation. This has happened many times before.

Please circle the number that corresponds best with your opinion for the following questions:

a) How serious do you rate this conflict?
   - 1 Not at all serious
   - 2 Not very serious
   - 3 Moderately serious
   - 4 Serious
   - 5 Very serious

b) Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?
   - 1. Yes
   - 2. No
   - 3. Don’t Know

c) If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be all right for students to engage in this behavior?
   - 1. Yes
   - 2. Sometimes
   - 3. No

d) Would you call this bullying?
   - 1. Yes
   - 2. No
   - 3. Don’t Know

e) How likely are you to intervene in this situation?
   - 1 Not at all likely
   - 2 Not very likely
   - 3 Somewhat likely
   - 4 Likely
   - 5 Very likely

Clearly state, in descriptive language, your opinion to the following questions:

f) Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________

(g) Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.

____________________________________________________________________________________
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____________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________

(pp)
2) After class in the hallway outside your room, you over heard Rachel, who’s one of the high status kids in the “in group”, say to Jane, “The fight is on after school and this time you’re dead.” This is not the first time this has happened between these students.

Please circle the number that corresponds best with your opinion for the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) How serious do you rate this conflict?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b) Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c) If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be all right for students to engage in this behavior?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>d) Would you call this bullying?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e) How likely are you to intervene in this situation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Clearly state, in descriptive language, your opinion to the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>f) Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>g) Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(vs)
3) After class in the hallway outside your room, you have over heard Becky, a student who is two years older than Jennifer, three times now say to her friend that “Jennifer sucks up to the teacher because she is such a pathetic loser.”

Please circle the number that corresponds best with your opinion for the following questions:

a) How serious do you rate this conflict?

b) Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?
   1. Yes  2. No  3. Don’t Know

c) If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be all right for students to engage in this behavior?
   1. Yes  2. Sometimes  3. No

d) Would you call this bullying?
   1. Yes  2. No  3. Don’t Know

e) How likely are you to intervene in this situation?

Clearly state, in descriptive language, your opinion to the following questions:

f) Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

   g) Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.

   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

(sp)
4) After class in the hallway outside your room, you notice Kari, one of the most popular kids in school, graffiti Jessica’s binder. You saw the same thing happen the other day.

Please **circle** the **number** that corresponds best with your opinion for the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) How serious do you rate this conflict?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Not at all serious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b) Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c) If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be all right for students to engage in this behavior?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>d) Would you call this bullying?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e) How likely are you to intervene in this situation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Not at all likely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clearly state,** in **descriptive language,** your opinion to the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>f) Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>g) Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(ps)
5) After class in the hallway outside your room, you over heard Janet and two of her friends say to Cathy, “Give me your money or I’m going to take it from you.” They are always bothering Cathy.

Please circle the number that corresponds best with your opinion for the following questions:

a) How serious do you rate this conflict?

| 1 Not at all serious | 2 Not very serious | 3 Moderately serious | 4 Serious | Very serious |

b) Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?

| 1. Yes | 2. No | 3. Don’t Know |

c) If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be all right for students to engage in this behavior?

| 1. Yes | 2. Sometimes | 3. No |

d) Would you call this bullying?

| 1. Yes | 2. No | 3. Don’t Know |

e) How likely are you to intervene in this situation?

| 1 Not at all likely | 2 Not very likely | 3 Somewhat likely | 4 Likely | 5 Very likely |

Clearly state, in descriptive language, your opinion to the following questions:

f) Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.

________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________

(g) Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.

________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
 ________________________
6) After class in the hallway outside your room, you have noticed that Sue has been by herself almost every day. Karen, known as the leader in the school, has got everyone, including the girl that Sue was a friend with, to ignore her. She has done this before.

Please circle the number that corresponds best with your opinion for the following questions:

a) How serious do you rate this conflict?

b) Is there a rule or policy that governs this type of behavior at school?
   1. Yes  2. No  3. Don’t Know

c) If there weren’t a rule or policy, would it be all right for students to engage in this behavior?
   1. Yes  2. Sometimes  3. No

d) Would you call this bullying?
   1. Yes  2. No  3. Don’t Know

e) How likely are you to intervene in this situation?

Clearly state, in descriptive language, your opinion to the following questions:

f) Explain why you would intervene or not intervene in a situation like this.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________


g) Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

(ss)
Appendix C Distinct Idea Unit Coding Scheme

Background

The purpose of this research study is to explore secondary school teachers’ reactions to bullying, that is, their reactions to acts of interpersonal aggression which include three unique characteristics: a repeated act of harm, a power differential, and intent to hurt. Specifically, teachers were asked to respond to a series of six hypothetical bullying situations that involved physical, verbal, or social bullying, perpetrated by same sex peers who exhibited either physical or social power advantages over the victim. Each participating teacher responded to situations involving either boys or girls.

For each of the six bullying situations, teachers were asked to respond in writing to a series of questions, which included providing a description of their response strategies (“Describe what you would say or do, if anything, if you saw this happen.”) Teachers’ responses to this question were typed verbatim on individual sheets. The following symbols appear on the sheets.

[V] refers to the victim

[P] refers to the perpetrator

Individual letters (i.e., A., B., C., D., E., G., J., K., M., P., R., S., or T.) refer to the names of students in the situations.

Girls/boys, gals/guys, s/he, her/him, herself/himself, her/his refer to either male or female students.

Anything in square brackets [ ] is information I have added to clarify an abbreviated response.

Your first task is to review teacher responses to the question about what they would do (response strategies) into distinct idea units. Response strategies are a description of what the teacher would say or do in the situation. Each idea unit represents distinct responses reflecting different responses or actions. Each distinct response is to be identified as a single idea unit. Two
distinct responses are to be coded as two-idea units, etc. Distinct idea units are distinguished by a slash (/) at the end of each distinct response. Grammatical distinctions are not critical; distinct responses that reflect different ideas are the focus.

**Strategies**

Ask yourself the following questions

What is/are the key responses indicated?

Is this response just an extension or continuation or elaboration of the preceding one or does it reflect a different response?

**Explanations and Examples**

In determining the number of distinct responses or idea units described, it is important to remember that a single idea unit can be captured in a single sentence or across several sentences and that several idea units can be captured within a single sentence or across several sentences. The focus is on whether or not the description includes one or several distinct or different responses, regardless of the number of sentences or words used.

Example 1

"Describe to girls/boys that trying to take money from others - is possibly a form of theft and illegal. / ..."

This sentence reflects a single response or action (describing or labeling the action as theft and illegal behavior). Therefore, one idea unit is identified with a slash at the end of the sentence.

Example 2

"I'd say to J. [V] ...people who criticize or demean others are usually very unhappy about themselves and ridicule others to make themselves feel better. Does that make sense to you? Do you think B. [P] is a happy person? / ..."
This example includes several sentences that elaborate on only one distinct action: explaining the reason for the student’s inappropriate behavior. Therefore, one idea unit is identified by a slash at the end of all the sentences.

Example 3

“Explain to B. [P] that repeating rumors or opinions [or] name calling can lead to more serious problems / and are inappropriate. /...”

In this example, two distinct actions or responses are suggested in a single sentence. First, reference is made to explaining to the perpetrator [P] that their behavior can lead to serious problems and the second is to explain that their behavior is inappropriate (not acceptable).

Therefore, two idea units are identified with a slash at the end of each distinct idea.

Example 4

“I would refer the students to an administrator / or a counselor. /”

In this single sentence two distinct actions or responses are indicated, one involving referring students to a school administrator and a second involving referring the students to a school counsellor. Therefore, two idea units are identified.

Example 5

“Explain why s/he should not do that to S. [V] / and try to determine the reason(s) why s/he repeatedly does this. / Try and work out a way to resolve the situation and prevent it from occurring. /”

In these two sentences the teacher suggests three distinct actions or responses. In the first sentence, the teacher first suggests explaining why the behavior is inappropriate or should not be done and then also suggests efforts to determine the reasons for the behavior. In the second sentence, this teacher suggests a third response of trying to work out a resolution that will prevent such behavior in the future. Thus, three different responses are described across these two sentences.
**Feelings about the situation.** In some responses, a feeling about the situation is considered rather than an action (i.e., something they would say or do). If the feeling about the situation implies a distinct response, then this idea is coded as a distinct idea unit. However, if the feeling about the situation does not provide a distinct response, then the feeling about the situation is *not* coded as a distinct idea unit but is merely considered an elaboration or unimportant detail.

Example 6

"*Talk to specific students about how they might feel about being ostracized. / This could also be great for a general class discussion. /**

This example includes two sentences that happen to reflect two distinct idea units: a response to talk to specific students about how they feel about what happened and a second response indicating that it might be effective to consider this in a classroom discussion.

Example 7

"*...take the student down to the office to talk to an administrator. I don't think much will happen though. /**

In this response the teacher suggests one response (taking the student to the office). Although the teacher also reflects on his/her feeling or opinion that this action will not likely lead to anything, there is only one response suggested, even if it is believed to be ineffective.

**Vague responses elaborated in more detail.** In some cases, a vague response is elaborated in more detail. In these instances, you need to determine whether there is only one idea presented, perhaps elaborated in greater detail, or whether there are multiple ideas, distinct actions or responses, rather than an elaboration on the same idea.

Example 8

"*I would talk to the students and ask them what happened. /*"
This sentence reflects a single response that is elaborated on that includes talking to students to ask them what happened. Therefore, one idea unit is identified.

Example 9

"I would contact an administrator, phone/email them. / "

As in the previous example, this sentence includes only one response – contacting an administrator – with the second clause merely elaborating on how the administrator would be contacted. Accordingly, it is coded as one idea unit.

Example 10

"I would contact the administrator / and offer to help formulate consequences for the perpetrator. /"

In this response, the teacher provides two separate ideas (contacting the administrator and taking responsibility for creating a disciplinary action). Therefore, two idea units are identified.

Describing the same action across contexts. In cases where teachers describe the same general action but it is implemented across distinct situations or contexts, each might be coded as a distinct “idea unit” or response. However, in cases where the context information does not suggest a distinct response, only one “idea unit” is coded, with the context information considered an elaboration or unimportant detail.

Example 11

"Focus on the destructive element in this type of behavior: a) both individuals / b) the group / c) the class etc. / “

In this example, the respondent proposes three idea units because the teacher’s response suggests that s/he will explain the harm caused by behavior across three distinct contexts: 1) with individual students; 2) with a group of students; and 3) with the class.

Example 12

"Talk to girls/boys separately [P & V] to determine what the problem is. /..."
This example reflects two distinct actions: talk to the perpetrator to determine the problem and talk to the victim to determine the problem. Therefore, two idea units are identified.

Example 13

"Discuss appropriate behavior with the student [P] in the hallway or in the classroom. /"

In this example, only one response is described (talk with the perpetrator) although this could happen in different contexts (hallway or classroom). Since the contextual information does not suggest a distinct response, only one idea unit (discuss appropriate behavior with the student in a convenient location) is identified.

Providing conditional information that would influence their action. In some responses, teachers provide conditional information (i.e., if X then Y) that determines the nature of the response. If the conditional information indicates a distinct response, then this idea is coded as a separate idea unit. However, if the conditional information suggests different responses, each is coded as a separate idea unit.

Example 14

"May ask if would be ok for me to graffiti K.'s [P] binder? if no – then don’t do it to others. /"

This example includes one response or idea unit (asking the student to take the perspective of the other), though the teacher specifies one condition under which this would work (i.e., if the student replies “no”). Since no alternative condition is specified (e.g. what would happen if the student says “yes”) only one response is coded.

Example 15

"I would watch for J.'s [V] reaction if s/he is noticeably upset I would intervene on J.'s behalf. /

As in the previous example, the teacher here specifies the conditions under which he or she would intervene but the two parts of the statement (watch for reaction; intervene on J’s behalf) are part of the same single response.
Example 16

"I would see if K. [V] seems bothered by the incident and if she is, I would make an effort to talk to her and find out what happened. / If K. is laughing with M. [P], then I would ignore the incident and assume it was just friendly teasing. /"

In this example, the teacher specifies two different responses depending on the reaction of the perpetrator. Accordingly, each is coded as a separate idea unit.

Describing the purpose for an action. In some cases, teachers describe the purpose for their action, but unless these lead to a different response, they are only considered an elaboration on a single response strategy. In some cases, teachers describe an action then a purpose. In other cases, teachers’ describe the purpose before the action.

Example 17

"...I would also ask her what had transpired between her and J. [P] to see if there was a more appropriate solution." /

In this example, the teacher describes an action and then a purpose for this action but there is only one response described (ask her what happened). Therefore, one idea unit is identified.

Example 18

"Make other staff- (administration) aware of the problem in case it occurs at a later time or location – so they are aware of the underlying problem(s)-it may be something occurring in their classroom (area). /"

Again, the teacher describes a single action or response but elaborates on the reasons for this response. Since no additional, distinct response is indicated, only one distinct idea unit is identified.

Example 19

"I would calm down or separate girls/boys by getting between them. /"
In this example, the teacher described one action (getting between them) as a means to “calm down” or “separate” the students involved. However, there is only one response indicated, and therefore, only one idea unit is identified.

Example 20

“I would call the students by name to get their attention and let them know I saw what was going on, / then I would go over to them and ask about what was happening in order to see if it was serious or not.”

In this example, the teacher describes two separate responses (calling the students by name; asking what happened) and for each provides a rationale, though only two responses are indicated.

Incomplete sentences. Some of teachers’ responses are given in point form or incomplete sentences rather than in complete sentences. In incomplete sentence responses, it is assumed that the teacher is engaging in the action. It is also assumed that the subject is referring to the behavior between students described in the bullying situation. In these instances, each distinct response listed is identified as a distinct idea unit.

Example 21

“Accept & own their behavior / and what happens when this occurs- consequences and realities of the situation.”

This example includes two distinct responses or idea units: a) ensure there is responsibility and ownership for the behaviour, and b) provide consequences for the bullying situation.

Example 22

“STOP.../ explain.../ apologize.../ ”.

This example, although cryptic, includes three distinct idea units: stop the situation; have the students explain their behavior; and get the student(s) to apologize.
Series of ideas or responses. In some cases, teachers provide a series of responses in which the first response is repeated later. Each distinct response including the repeated response is coded as a separate idea unit.

Example 23

"I would talk to the students to find out what happened / but then consider sending them to the principal for discipline. / I would find out what happened / and then maybe ask one of the counselors to intervene. / "

In this response, the teacher provides four separate responses one of which is repeated that includes talking to students to find out what happened, deferring discipline to administration, talking to students to find out what happened, and contacting a counsellor. Therefore, four idea units are identified.
Appendix D Response Strategy Category Coding Scheme

Teacher responses to (hypothetical) observed bullying between students are coded into one of four broad Response Strategy categories, each describing what the observing teacher would say or do in the situation: (1) report or defer to others, (2) intervene, (3) specify no action or inaction, and (4) uncodable. Within the first two broad response categories, further distinctions are made in terms of who the behavior is reported or deferred to and the nature of the intervention effort suggested.

Overview of response strategy categories and subcategories

1. **Report of Defer the Behavior to others**
   a. Office
   b. Administrator (Vice Principal or Principal)
   c. Counsellor
   d. Police Liaison Officer
   e. Parent
   f. Teacher
   g. Student
   h. Other

2. **Intervene**
   a. Investigate the circumstances of the situation
   b. Facilitate resolution by participating students
   c. Comfort/protect victimized student
   d. Consider consequences for perpetrator
   e. Focus on unacceptability of negative behavior
   f. Focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior
   g. General (Nonspecific) intervention with students

3. **Specify inaction or no action**

4. **Uncodable**
1. Report or defer the behavior to others

Included in this category are all responses in which the observing teacher informs the office or other unit at the school (e.g., counselling unit), sends the child to others to address discipline issues, or involves another person in the discipline and/or resolution, all of which reflect efforts to defer to others in determining the discipline and/or resolution of the problem to others and/or seek advice from others to solve the situation.

Within this category, eight subcategories are also coded, distinguishing who is contacted. When specific reference is made, responses will specify an administrator (principal or vice principal), counsellor, police liaison officer, parent, teacher (e.g., “I’d phone or email the appropriate administrator.”), or designated students such as peer mediators. Alternatively, responses may simply refer to contacting adults at the office (subcategory: office), either by sending students to the office (e.g., “Maybe escort both students to the office.”) or by notifying the office in writing (e.g., “I’d write an incident report.” “I’d document the incident.”). In cases where a specific adult or office is not identified (e.g. “Make other staff aware of the problem.”), the response is coded as other. These eight subcategories are listed below.

a. Office

b. Administrator (Vice Principal or Principal)

c. Counsellor

d. Police Liaison Officer

e. Parent

f. Teacher

g. Student

h. Other
Note. Responses may elaborate on what the other involved person needs to do but only the observing teacher’s action is coded within the response (e.g., “I would take them to the counsellor and have her/him call the students’ parents.”).

Note. Responses that inform the office and specify the adult contacted are coded within the more specific adult subcategory rather than the general “office” subcategory (e.g., “I would send the students to the Vice-Principal’s office.”).

2. Intervene

Included in this category are all responses in which the observing teacher makes some effort to intervene directly in the situation or event. Teacher intervention efforts, however, are further distinguished in terms of seven different subcategories that reflect the nature of the intervention undertaken. An overview of the subcategories and further distinctions made within those subcategories is presented below.

a. Investigate the circumstances of the situation
b. Facilitate resolution by participating students
c. Comfort and/or protect victimized student
d. Consider consequences for perpetrator
e. Focus on unacceptability of negative behavior
f. Focus on and/or promote acceptable, positive behavior
g. General (nonspecific) intervention with students

Each subcategory is explained in greater detail below.

a. Investigate the circumstances of the situation. Included in this subcategory are all responses in which the observing teacher gathers information about past, present, or future events that investigate the circumstances of the situation or circumstances of situations that follow from it.
Responses in this subcategory can include gathering information about what happened in the incident, why it happened, and/or general reference to emotional reactions to the incident but exclude an explicit or implicit reference to the impact on the victim (e.g., “I’d make sure the victim was ok.”) or on the perpetrator (e.g., “I’d explain the consequences of their behavior.”) (see category 2c and 2d below.). This can be accomplished through an implied or explicitly stated discussion or conversation with students and/or through teacher observation.

Included in this category are all responses that include gather information about the incident observed at the time of the event or responses that refer to following up on the immediate situation at a later time.

Responses in this category may include efforts to solicit student explanations about what happened (e.g., “Why did you do that?” “I’d ask the student about their relationship with the other student.”), why it happened (e.g., “Try to determine reasons why s/he repeatedly does this.” “I’d ask the student to explain their behavior.”), and/or general reference to emotional reactions to an event that exclude any explicit or implicit reference to the victim or perpetrator (e.g., “Discuss student’s needs.” “Ask what feeling were generated.”). Responses in this subcategory may also include unspecific reference to obtaining general student information (e.g., “What is your name?” “Where should you be?”) or to generally assess or make note of the incident or gather information about the incident (e.g., “I’d note student behavior.” “Record information.” “I’d gather information.” “I’d watch students to gain more information.”).

Responses in this category may also include checking in with or following up on the situation at a later time or date (e.g., “I’ll ask the student later. And if s/he is in an agitated state, it is likely s/he would need to respond to my questions, and would do so at a later time.”) or intention to monitor student behavior in future.
Note. In contrast to subcategory 2e below, Focus on unacceptability of negative behavior, which may include providing reasons to illustrate or explain the unacceptability of the observed negative behavior (i.e., to make the point), the focus in the present category includes soliciting explanations for student behavior as a way of gaining information about the immediate situation with no clear indication of the purpose of this effort.

b. Facilitate resolution by participating students. Included in this subcategory are responses in which the observing teacher calls on or encourages the participating or involved student(s) to work out a resolution among themselves. This might involve the perpetrator, the victim or both of the students involved (e.g., “The perpetrator should have a meeting with [the] student to work out her problems.” “The student should figure out a way to fix the situation” “I’d have the students talk it out.”). Also included in this category are responses that solicit suggestions from students regarding a resolution for the situation (e.g., “What resolution would you like to see happen?”).

c. Comfort and/or protect the victimized student. Included in this subcategory are all responses in which the observing teacher attempts to comfort and/or protect the victimized student. Responses in this subcategory might include an expression of empathic feelings or opinions about the situation that shows concern for the victimized student (e.g., “I’m sorry the student [P] said that to you.”) or gestures of comfort or protection directed toward the victimized student (e.g., “I’d go out of my way to say ‘hi’ to the student.” “I’d offer the student a ride.” “Are you ok?”). In addition, responses in this subcategory might include providing aid to the victimized student to comfort and/or protect him or her (e.g., “Can you help me take these down, or move that?” “I’d try to get another student in the class to play with him/her.”).

Note. In contrast to subcategory 2f below, Focus on and/or promote acceptable and/or positive behavior, where the observing teacher’s may help students learn a new skill to help resolve the current situation and/or prevent future occurrences of the behavior, in the present category the
observing teacher support includes only direct action to comfort or protect the victimized student, and does not explicitly provide skills or strategies for use in future circumstances.

d. Consider consequences for the perpetrator. Included in this subcategory are all responses in which the observing teacher takes responsibility for creating a disciplinary consequence that will or should occur for the perpetrator. Responses in this subcategory may include a specific example of a consequence that will occur for the perpetrator (e.g., “I would consider having the bully sign a contract regarding her/his dealing with other student.”) or a general reference to a disciplinary action or unspecified consequences (e.g., “There would be consequences for her/his actions.” “Restitution would be necessary.”). Responses in this subcategory may also include solicited suggestions from students regarding appropriate consequences for their behavior (e.g., “What do you think should be the consequence for your behavior?”). In addition, responses in this subcategory may include an indication that a consequence will follow if the behavior is continued (e.g., “I would tell the students that if this to happen again there would be severe consequences.”).

Note. Responses may not specify the perpetrator explicitly but this is implied in the response.

Note. Responses that refer to another adult’s involvement as the consequence to the behavior are coded as Report or Defer the Behavior to Others (category 1 above), where the focus includes deferring discipline to another person. In the present subcategory, the focus is on the teacher taking responsibility for creating a disciplinary consequence for the perpetrator.

e. Focus on unacceptability of negative behavior. Included in this subcategory are all responses in which the observing teacher communicates to participating students (perpetrators) that their behavior is negative or unacceptable or illegal. The observing teacher may also try to get the student to see how the behavior is negative or unacceptable through questions or solicited explanations from students about such behavior. Examples of different types of labels applied to negative or unacceptable behavior are listed below.
• The injustice of the behavior (e.g., "What you did was not fair to the victim.")

• How the observed behavior violates established laws, codes of conduct, rules, guidelines, standards, or policies (e.g., "That behavior is extortion." "I would remind them of the school policy against that kind of behavior." "I'd ask the student to explain the school policy against bullying.")

• The harmful aspect of the behavior (e.g., "I'd explain the effect of the behavior." "I would explain the harmful element of this behavior." "How would you feel if something like this happened to you?" "Have you thought about the ramifications of this behavior on your school reputation?")

• Characteristics of bullying behavior (e.g., "I'd explain that bullying involves non-verbal and verbal acts of aggression.")

• The inappropriateness or unacceptability of the behavior ("I'd explain why she/he should not do that." "I'd tell the student, 'we don't do that here'!" "I'd explain the seriousness of the behavior." "Possibly mention that writing on the binder may not be appropriate").

Note. Responses that provide a general unspecified reference to illustrating behavior and do not specifically refer to negative/unacceptable behavior may still be coded within the subcategory, if the negative aspects of the behavior are implied (e.g., "I'd explain the behavior." "I'd give a teacher perspective on the behavior.").

f. Focus on and/or promote positive, acceptable behavior. Included in this subcategory are all responses in which the observing teacher illustrates or makes reference to alternative, appropriate or acceptable behavior to students, either generally (e.g., "I am sure you engage in more appropriate behavior with your friends.") or with specific examples (e.g., "I would talk to both girls about proper respect for each other."). Responses may also include provision of reasons or explanations for appropriate or acceptable behavior (e.g., "I would explain appropriate behavior." "I would explain how the student should model appropriate leadership..."
The observing teacher may also try to get the student to see how the behavior is positive or acceptable through questions or solicited explanations from students about such behavior (e.g., *Is there consistency between your action and the idea that we should get along with others?*).

Also included in this category are responses in which the observing teacher promotes skill development for the involved students to help them deal with the current situation and/or prevent future occurrences of the behavior. Responses in this subcategory may include reference to on-going skill development that is beyond the immediate situation (e.g., *I would organize a workshop to enable the victim and perpetrator to gain social skills.* *I would look for empathy between students as a long-term solution.*) or general reference to teaching new skills (e.g., *I'd teach empathy.* *I'd have my class watch a movie about bullying.* *I'd have a class lesson on bullying.*)). In addition, responses in this subcategory include direct and immediate efforts to promote social skills, including telling students how they should act differently in the situation (e.g., *Just ignore the bully and make new friends.* *I'd tell the student that they should tell someone they trust if it happens again.*).

g. General (nonspecific) intervention with students. Included in this subcategory are all responses where the observing teacher provides a global (nonspecific) intervention response to the immediate situation and/or provides a miscellaneous intervention response that is not captured by any other category. Although there is general reference to an effort to intervene, the nature, focus or extent of this intervention effort are not clearly specified.

Responses in this category may include general intervention responses that stop the behavior in the immediate situation (e.g., *I'd tell the students to stop.*), separating students (e.g., *I'd ask the students to separate.*), removing materials from the situation (e.g., *I'd remove the binder from the situation.*), or diffusing the situation (e.g., *I'd diffuse the situation.* *I'd talk them out of the fight.*).
Responses in this category may include general intervention responses that call attention to the situation, although this may be implied rather than explicitly stated. Responses in this subcategory may also include calling on the students (e.g., “I’d call the perpetrator name.”) or calling on the student’s behavior (e.g., “Call the perpetrator on their actions.”), letting students know that the situation has been seen or overheard (“Possibly mention that you have noticed that s/he is writing on the binder.”), and/or a non-verbal response that catches the students’ attention (e.g., “I’d walk by the students and look directly at what they were doing.”).

Responses in this category may include a general reference to discussion, intervention, or resolution with students where no topic, focus, and/or method are otherwise specified (e.g., “I’d talk to the students.” “I’d intervene.” “I’d resolve the situation.”) or effort to pull a student or students aside where no topic and/or method for an intervention is otherwise specified within the response (e.g., “I pull the student’s aside.” “I’d tell the students to go the classroom and wait for me.”).

Responses in this category may also include other miscellaneous intervention responses that are not captured by any other category (e.g., “I’d talk to the students about the topic of bullying.” “I’d say to the student, ‘You are a loser!’”).

3. Specify Inaction or No Action

Responses in this category include explicit statements indicating that no action is offered (e.g., “Nothing.”), that there is no effort to do anything with the students involved (e.g., “I would not approach the student(s) involved.”) or indications that the observing teacher is not sure on how to respond (e.g., “Not sure what I would do.”).

4. Uncodable Response

Included in this category are all responses that are uninterpretable as an intervention and excludes any explicit reference to inaction or to what the observing teacher might say or do in the situation. Responses in this category may include ambiguous or uninterpretable responses
(e.g., "Support new perspectives." "Smile."). Responses in this category may also include descriptions of how the observing teacher feels about the situation that excludes any reference to an intervention they might say or do (e.g., "This happens all the time."). Also included are descriptions of contextual information that might influence the observing teacher's response (e.g., "Depends on the situation.").

Note. In contrast to the General (nonspecific) intervention with students category (category 2g above) that includes intervention responses that are vague (e.g., "I would talk to the students."), in the present category the whole response is vague and therefore difficult to interpret as an intervention (e.g., "Support new perspectives.").

Note. When unsure about how to categorize a response, read on, and use the context of the whole response to determine whether the idea unit can be coded within one of the other categories identified above. Use the noncodable category only when no other category is applicable.
Appendix E  Level of Responsibility Coding Scheme

Teacher responses to (hypothetical) observed bullying between students are rated in terms of how much the teacher him/herself takes responsibility for addressing the problem that occurred. Ratings of “responsibility” are intended to evaluate the degree to which the teacher took on the responsibility of disciplining students for the event observed or “does something” about what happened versus ignoring the event or deferring responsibility to others.

As outlined below, teacher responses are expected to range from

- taking no responsibility whatsoever (category 1), to
- taking minimal responsibility (category 2), to
- deferring responsibility to others (category 3), to
- taking full and/or continuing responsibility (category 4).

1. No Responsibility Taken

Responses in this category indicate that the teacher takes no responsibility for responding to the observed incident or intends to make no response to it. Included in this category are all responses in which the teacher indicates

- that he/she will not intervene or do anything (e.g., “Nothing”) or
- that he/she does not view this as a situation that requires a response, or that responding to such a situation is not considered part of his/her mandate or responsibility as a teacher (“It’s not my job to do something here.”), or
- that he/she would not approach or interact with the students about the matter (e.g., “I would not approach the student(s) involved.”).
- that he/she is not sure about how to respond (e.g., “I’m not sure what I would do.”)

Example Responses

“I wouldn’t do anything to stop the situation.”
“Nothing.”

“I would not know what to do.”

“Dealing with every squabble between students is not my job.”

“I don’t think you would have to do anything; these things happen all the time.”

“I would not know what to do.”

“It is not my place to intervene in such things.”

2. Minimal, Immediate Responsibility

Included in this category are all responses in which the observing teacher takes some, albeit minimal, responsibility for the situation by providing an immediate reaction to the event. In general, the teachers’ response acknowledges the behavior as inappropriate and/or harmful and communicates this to the students involved in some way, but the response is immediate (limited to the current situation or moment) and/or nonspecific, with no indication of ongoing concern, no indication that the teacher will do anything further about the event (though the teacher may suggest that the participants do something) and no need for the teacher to communicate further about the incident (e.g., to administrators or counselors or others who might take on responsibility).

Responses in this category may include

- a general reference to a global (nonspecific) and immediate response (e.g., I’d talk to the students.) or

- brief, direct comments to perpetrator(s) that communicate in some way that such behavior is not acceptable (e.g., “Don’t pick on her.” “Stop that.” “Quit harassing him.” “You know better than that.” “We don’t do that here.” “I see the student writing on the binder so I tell them to get out of here!”) or
• use of sarcasm or scornful comments to the perpetrator(s) to communicate the inappropriateness of the behavior observed (e.g., "Who's pathetic? I thought you were talking about yourself!"), or
• comments to the victim that acknowledge that harm may have been done ("Are you okay?" "You should report this to the vice principal.")
• a reference to the emotional impact of the situation and/or communicates some degree of empathetic feeling about the situation (e.g., "I'm sorry the student [P] said that to you." "I know [what P said to you] is not true." "How are you feeling?" "Discuss student's needs.").
• a reference to a student or students working out a resolution (e.g., "The student should figure out a way to fix the situation."), without indication that the teacher will take on any responsibility or further action in this regard but rather will leave it to the students themselves to resolve.

Within this category, the teacher may couch their arguments in terms of moral issues, school conduct codes, etc. but the degree of responsibility taken remains tied to an immediate reaction in the immediate situation and there is no indication that the teacher will take on any further responsibility regarding this incident (see Categories 3 and 4).

Beyond an immediate acknowledgement that the behavior was in some way not acceptable, there is no effort on the part of the teacher to accept ongoing responsibility to determine the history or significance of events to address the problem directly or in future, nor to take on the issue as a discipline problem.

Example Responses

"I would verbally stop B's [P] actions first, and question her/him as to why s/he is doing something like this. I would probably warn B. [P] that such actions cannot be tolerated, and will bear consequences should it happen again."

"Explain to the bully that his/her actions are punishable."
"I would tell the student to stop harassing her/him."

"I would tell the bully to respect other people's property."

"I would tell the student s/he should pick on someone his own size."

"To remind K. [P] that to ostracize a student is not acceptable."

"What you did was not fair to the victim."

"...I would ask the student if she/he would like it if I put graffiti on her/his binder-and if no, then don't do to others."

"Describe to the girls/boys that trying to take money from others is a form of theft or extortion..."

"I would tell the student that her/his behavior is against the rules because it can hurt other students."

"I would talk to the students about the importance of appropriate so that the victimized student doesn't feel left out."

"Explain to [perpetrator] that repeating rumors/opinions or-can lead to more serious problems."

"I would go up to them and tell K. [P] s/he is threatening and about to commit theft...."

3. Defer Responsibility

Included in this category are all responses in which the observing teacher defers responsibility and/or discipline regarding the event to another adult or to other designated students (e.g., peer mediators) to actually deal with the problem. By referring the problem to others, the significance of the transgression is acknowledged and the teacher takes on the responsibility of referring the incident on to others who may be in a better position to address the issues. However, the teacher himself or herself does not maintain responsibility for addressing the problem once it is referred to another. Within this category responses include informing the office (e.g., I'd send the students to the office.) or involving another adult (e.g., I'd phone the
parents.) or officials in the school (e.g., refer to school counselor, police liaison office, peer mediators, etc.). Once the issue is referred, however, the teacher does not assume further responsibility and there is no indication of effort to follow up or pursue the incident further.

Example Responses

“A very delicate situation—requires intervention from those more skilled than I”

“I would tell the administrator about the two students fighting in the hall.”

“I would send them to the vice principal’s office.”

“I would tell the administrator that this student was in the hallway harming another student.”

4. Take Full and/or Continuing Responsibility

Included in this category are responses in which the observing teacher takes responsibility for the situation by initiating some form of discipline or discussion that is aimed, not only at de-escalating the immediate situation, but also at helping the students to prevent future occurrences of such behavior and the teacher is willing to accept ongoing responsibility beyond the immediate situation.

Responses in this category may include more extensive fact-finding efforts to determine the history and significance of the event (e.g., “I would talk to the perpetrators and her/his friends about the incident to figure out why it occurred.”) with the implication that the teacher would then do something about it (though this may be implied rather than explicitly stated).

Responses in this category may also include discipline or response strategies that indicate that the teacher would assume responsibility for having the perpetrator make amends for their behavior (e.g., “I would then make her clean it up.” “She would have to replace the ruined binder.”) with the implication that the teacher would take on responsibility for assuring that these things are accomplished.

As well, responses in this category may also include further lectures or discussions about appropriate vs. unacceptable behavior (e.g., “I would take G. and friends [P’s] and T. [V] aside
to discuss personal boundaries, touching people, problem solving with boundaries because the situation has happened many times before." Such fact-finding and discussions may indeed take place immediately, but implied in the response is the fact that the teacher is willing to take whatever time it takes to sort out the situation, as opposed to a quick, immediate response or question (see Category 2). (e.g., "How long has it gone on?" "Explain why you repeatedly do this!")

In addition, responses in this category may also included concerted efforts on the part of the observing teacher to gather information about past events or future events. Implied here is an extensive effort to get to the bottom of the situation even if it takes time and effort. Responses that refer to gathering information may also include reference to gathering information in the future (e.g., I'll ask the student later.) or over time (e.g., I'd follow up and monitor the student's behavior.), again implying ongoing commitment on the part of the teacher to follow up on the incident.

Example Responses

"I would take the students aside and discuss with them the school's code of conduct."

"S/he would have to clean it up."

"Talk to students and educate them to the damage done by putting others down. I may check on 'J.' [V] to see if there are problems that no one knows about."

"I would follow up."

"I would have the bully sign a behavioral contract."

"It is important to spend time with E [P] to find out what's going on and set guidelines for student behavior."

"...Probably make some sort of arrangement for a meeting to take place [between the victim and the perpetrator]..."