

School Climate Report: Fall 2010 Elementary Schools

This report summarizes results from the Fall 2010 administration of the School Climate Bullying Survey in seven Charlottesville and sixteen Albemarle County elementary schools. A total of 3,655 students in grades 3-5 completed the survey this fall, achieving a participation rate of 95%. The purpose of this report is to provide schools with a baseline for planning that will be compared to the spring 2011 survey in reducing bullying, improving school climate, and meeting other Safe Schools/Healthy Students project goals. Information about the project can be found at www.safeschoolscville.org.

Bullying rates. The survey presents a standard definition of bullying:

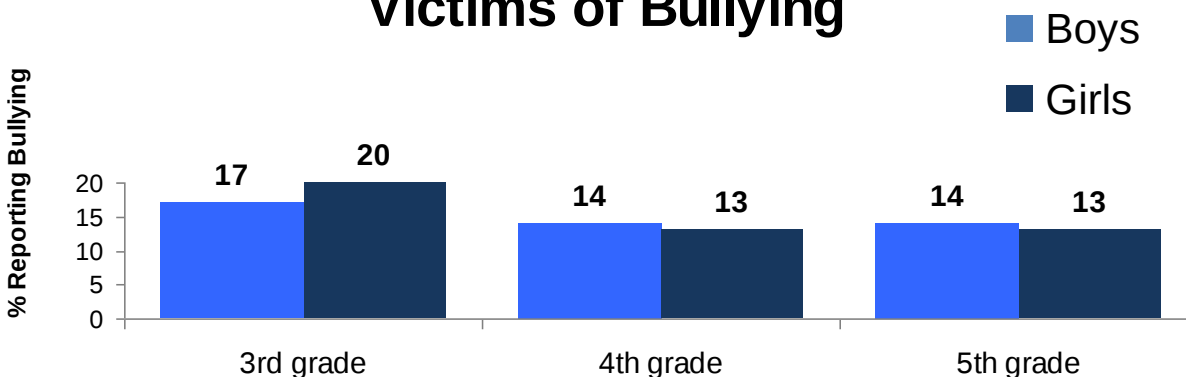
There are lots of ways to bully someone. Bullying means hurting someone on purpose who is smaller or weaker.

- *A bully can hurt you by teasing or calling you names.*
- *A bully can hurt you by hitting you or threatening to hit you.*
- *A bully can hurt you by getting others to be mean to you.*

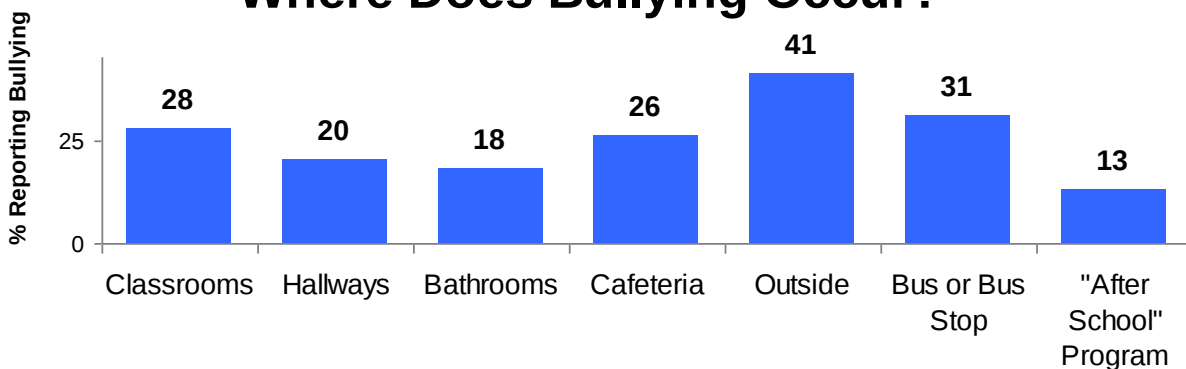
It is not bullying when two students have a fight or argument and are about the same in strength or power.

After reading this definition, students were asked whether they had been bullied at school in the past month “never,” “once or twice,” “about once per week” or “several times per week.” By convention, the total percent who report being bullied at least once per week (“about once per week” plus “several times per week”) is used as an index of bullying and reported in the charts below.

Victims of Bullying



Where Does Bullying Occur?

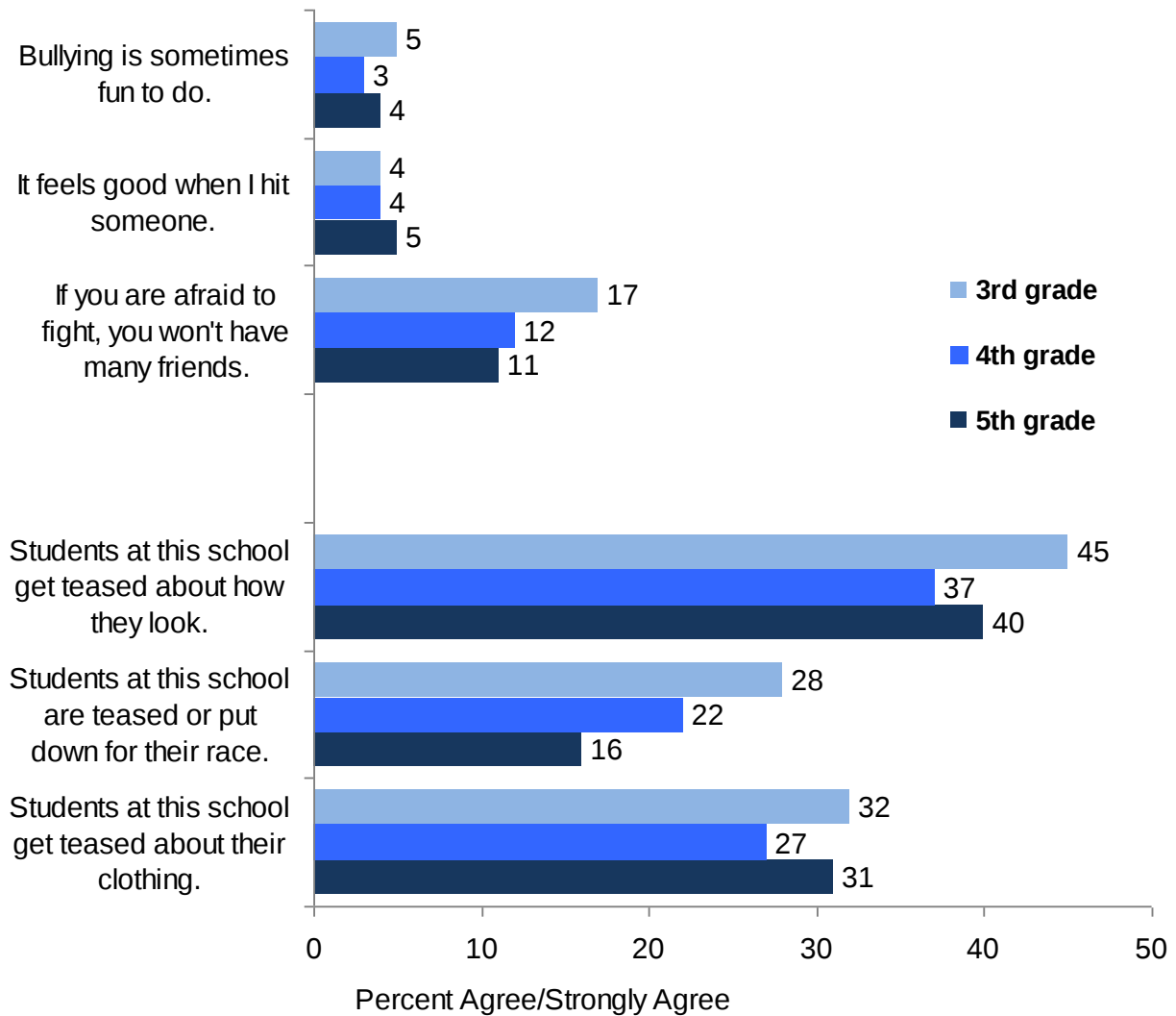


School Climate – Teasing and Aggressive Attitudes

Teasing does not always rise to the level of bullying, but it affects the quality of the school climate and influences whether students feel comfortable and accepted at school. Teasing about clothing and appearance are common problems in elementary school grades. Teasing about race, while less common, can be more serious and needs attention.

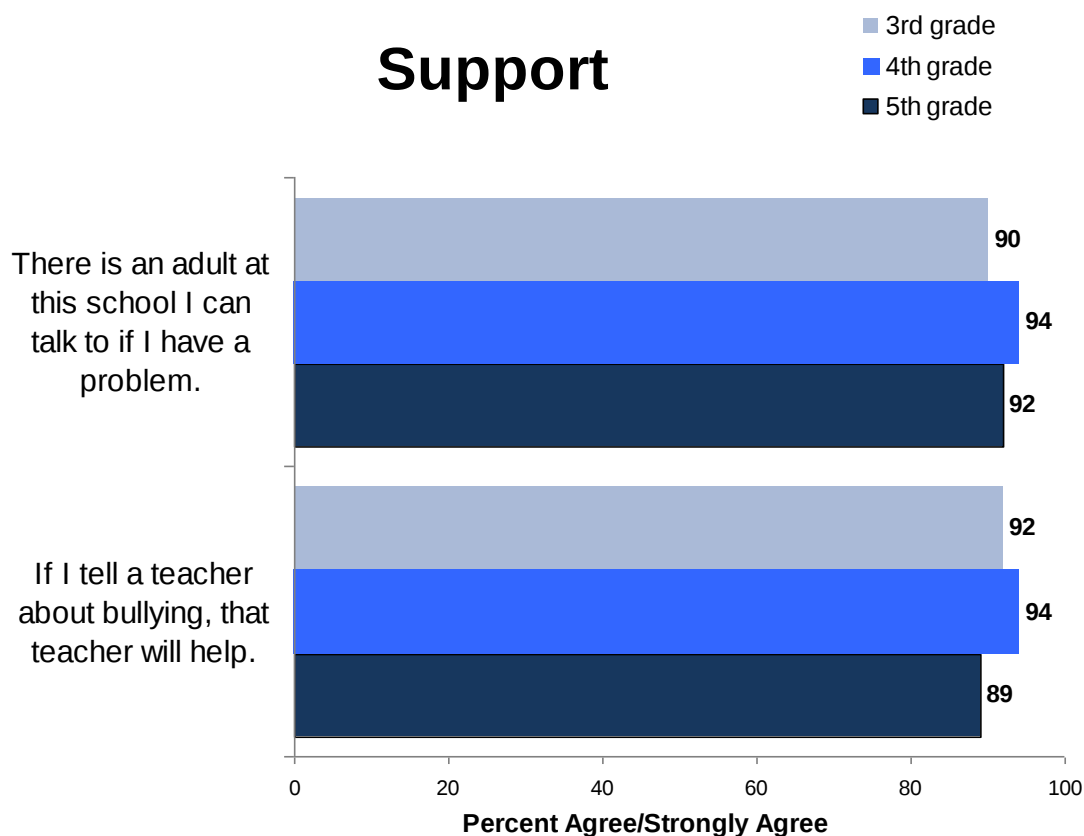
Our research has shown that the small number of students who express aggressive attitudes are at increased risk for aggressive behavior, disciplinary referrals, and bullying.

Teasing and Aggressive Attitudes



School Climate -- Help-Seeking Attitudes

Studies have shown that student willingness to seek help is a good indicator of a supportive school climate. Schools with a positive school climate tend to have fewer disciplinary problems, higher student engagement in learning, and overall higher academic achievement.



Seeking Help for Bullying

We recommend that students make an effort to stop bullying by telling the bully to stop and by speaking up when they see someone bullying someone else. However, if this does not work, and the student continues to be bullied, the student should seek help. The next set of questions asked students whether they had told anyone that they had been bullied in the past 30 days. (Note that students who had only been bullied one time are included in these results, so that the totals are higher than the results for students who are bullied on a weekly basis.)

There were 762 (21%) students who reported telling someone that they were bullied in the past month. Students most often reported that they told a family member (440 students, 12%), a friend (473, 13%), or a teacher or another adult at school (572, 16%).

Bullying Prevention Recommendations

Elementary schools should make concerted efforts to establish school cultures in which bullying and teasing others are not permitted. Here are some recommendations:

Establish bullying prevention as a school wide goal

- Discuss survey results with faculty to increase awareness of bullying.
- Increase supervision at locations where bullying is most problematic such as hallways and in car and school bus drop off/pick up areas at school.

Hold classroom meetings to discuss bullying. Topics that can be covered in these meetings

- Watch the 6-minute video “Bullying or Not?” Copies are available from the Safe Schools office or it can be downloaded from YouTube at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXXKMehgiAk>>.
- Discuss different forms of bullying and where bullying takes place.
- Ask why bullying is harmful and what can happen to victims of bullying.
- Discuss how to respond when someone bullies you, or you witness someone bullying someone.

Identify victims of bullying

- Counselors should use the peer nomination list to identify possible victims.
- Encourage students to seek help for a peer who is being bullied.
- Teach students the difference between snitching for personal gain and seeking help.

Engage parents in bullying prevention

- Share survey results with parents and encourage them to discuss bullying with their children.
- Advise parents of the school’s policy toward bullying.
- Invite parents to contact the school with concerns about bullying.
- Make presentations to parent meetings.

Caveats. Percentage differences of just a few points can be due to chance variations. Student self-report surveys are vulnerable to exaggeration, misunderstanding, and under-reporting by some students. They are also influenced by classroom conditions and student engagement in the survey process. Therefore, surveys are most useful in indicating trends within a school rather than precise measures. Student surveys should be accompanied by other efforts to assess bullying and risky behaviors, such as interviews with students, class discussions, peer nomination procedures, and reviews of discipline referrals.

This report was completed by the Virginia Youth Violence Project of the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia. The survey period for the elementary schools ended on November 1, 2010. Final data for this report were received from November 1 to November 10, and the report was completed on November 14.

Summary of Survey Results

Overall ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

12/16/2010

Total students completing the survey: (All numbers are in percent)		GENDER		Boys:	Girls:
				50.5	49.5
How old are you?	7	8	9	10	11
	0.5	26.5	32.5	33.1	0.0
What grade are you in?	3	4	5		
	33	33	34		
Are you Hispanic?	Yes	No			
	8.8	91.2			
What is your race?	Am-Indian /Alaskan	Asian	Black	White	Multi-racial
	1.6	3.6	14.7	59.7	6.1

	Never	Once or Twice	About once per week	Several times per week
By this definition, I have been bullied at school in the past month.	66.3%	21.9%	4.8%	6.9%
By this definition, I have bullied others at school in the past month.	86.0%	11.0%	1.2%	1.8%

	Yes	No
Have you told anyone you were bullied in the past 30 days?	20.8%	79.2%

If you told someone you were bullied in the previous question, whom did you tell?	
I told a friend	12.9%
I told a teacher or other adult at school	15.6%
I told a family member	12.0%

	Yes	No
I have seen bullying in the classrooms	27.9%	72.1%
I have seen bullying in the hallways	20.1%	79.9%
I have seen bullying in the bathrooms	17.9%	82.1%
I have seen bullying in the cafeteria	25.3%	74.7%
I have seen bullying outside the school building (such as on the playground or in the parking lot)	40.4%	59.6%
I have seen bullying on the bus or at the bus stop	31.1%	68.9%
I have seen bullying at the afterschool program	12.3%	87.7%

	Yes	No
Students at this school get teased about how they look	39.9%	60.1%
Students at this school get teased about their clothing	29.7%	70.3%
Students at this school are teased or put down for their race	21.3%	78.7%
If I tell a teacher about bullying, that teacher will help	90.1%	9.9%
There is an adult at this school I can talk to if I have a problem	90.5%	9.5%
Bullying is sometimes fun to do	4.0%	96.0%
If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends	12.9%	87.1%
If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you	11.3%	88.7%
If feels good when I hit someone	4.0%	96.0%

Breakdowns by Grade and Gender (Bullying Reporting)

Definition of Bullying: Bullying is defined as the use of one's strength or popularity to injure, threaten, or embarrass another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength argue or fight.

The answers below are based on the above definition of bullying	GRADE	Never			Once or Twice			About once per week			Several times per week		
		Girls	Boys	Σ	Girls	Boys	Σ	Girls	Boys	Σ	Girls	Boys	Σ
By this definition, I have been bullied at school in the past month.	3	376	392	768	131	147	278	36	31	67	60	48	108
	4	388	418	806	144	125	269	22	27	49	35	40	75
	5	408	440	848	149	106	255	28	33	61	33	38	71
Σ		1172	1,250	2,422	424	378	802	86	91	177	128	126	254
By this definition, I have bullied others at school in the past month.	3	524	518	1,042	50	73	123	7	9	16	22	18	40
	4	526	527	1,053	58	58	116	1	17	18	4	8	12
	5	532	517	1,049	76	87	163	5	5	10	5	8	13
Σ		1582	1,562	3,144	184	218	402	13	31	44	31	34	65

		Yes			No		
		Girls	Boys	Σ	Girls	Boys	Σ
Have you told anyone you were bullied in the past 30 days?	3	146	136	282	81	90	171
	4	134	115	249	67	77	144
	5	119	112	231	91	65	156
Σ		399	363	762	239	232	471

If you told someone you were bullied in the previous question, whom did you tell?				
		Girls	Boys	Σ
I told a friend	3	88	78	166
	4	83	70	153
	5	85	69	154
Σ		256	217	473
I told a teacher or other adult at school	3	109	98	207
	4	110	81	191
	5	88	86	174
Σ		307	265	572
I told a family member	3	44	92	136
	4	43	72	115
	5	43	69	112
Σ		130	233	363

Breakdowns by Grade and Gender (Bullying Locations)

	GRADE	Yes			No		
		Girls	Boys	Σ	Girls	Boys	Σ
I have seen bullying in the classrooms	3	185	152	337	407	459	866
	4	177	146	323	408	457	865
	5	185	175	360	433	440	873
	Σ	547	473	1020	1,248	1,356	2604
I have seen bullying in the hallways	3	130	125	255	458	486	944
	4	103	110	213	481	494	975
	5	145	121	266	472	491	963
	Σ	378	356	734	1,411	1,471	2882
I have seen bullying in the bathrooms	3	106	164	270	477	447	924
	4	83	118	201	500	485	985
	5	66	116	182	546	497	1043
	Σ	255	398	653	1,523	1,429	2952
I have seen bullying in the cafeteria	3	166	165	331	418	446	864
	4	165	126	291	417	476	893
	5	148	155	303	467	457	924
	Σ	479	446	925	1,302	1,379	2681
I have seen bullying outside the school building (such as on the playground or in the parking lot)	3	253	259	512	336	351	687
	4	217	240	457	368	365	733
	5	247	260	507	369	356	725
	Σ	717	759	1476	1,073	1,072	2145
I have seen bullying on the bus or at the bus stop	3	193	191	384	396	418	814
	4	193	179	372	392	425	817
	5	188	191	379	428	424	852
	Σ	574	561	1135	1,216	1,267	2483
I have seen bullying at the afterschool program	3	83	94	177	504	506	1010
	4	76	66	142	504	531	1035
	5	63	66	129	551	546	1097
	Σ	222	226	448	1,559	1,583	3142

Breakdowns by Grade and Gender (School Climate Items)

	GRADE	Yes			No		
		Girls	Boys	Σ	Girls	Boys	Σ
Students at this school get teased about how they look	3	264	272	536	323	336	659
	4	222	216	438	360	389	749
	5	252	233	485	361	377	738
	Σ	738	721	1459	1,044	1,102	2146
Students at this school get teased about their clothing	3	198	186	384	386	416	802
	4	164	156	320	415	448	863
	5	203	180	383	409	428	837
	Σ	565	522	1087	1,210	1,292	2502
Students at this school are teased or put down for their race	3	165	161	326	415	444	859
	4	131	125	256	448	474	922
	5	95	103	198	518	501	1019
	Σ	391	389	780	1,381	1,419	2800
If I tell a teacher about bullying, that teacher will help	3	541	547	1088	45	55	100
	4	554	559	1113	27	46	73
	5	554	537	1091	60	74	134
	Σ	1,649	1,643	3292	132	175	307
There is an adult at this school I can talk to if I have a problem	3	529	540	1069	58	64	122
	4	546	565	1111	32	41	73
	5	577	552	1129	38	59	97
	Σ	1,652	1,657	3309	128	164	292
Bullying is sometimes fun to do	3	20	38	58	562	568	1130
	4	16	19	35	560	586	1146
	5	16	36	52	598	574	1172
	Σ	52	93	145	1,720	1,728	3448
If you are afraid to fight, you won't have many friends	3	97	106	203	479	494	973
	4	56	81	137	523	519	1042
	5	64	69	133	548	539	1087
	Σ	217	256	473	1,550	1,552	3102
If you fight a lot, everyone will look up to you	3	79	120	199	503	481	984
	4	51	60	111	528	544	1072
	5	49	54	103	565	556	1121
	Σ	179	234	413	1,596	1,581	3177
If feels good when I hit someone	3	14	30	44	566	574	1140
	4	19	26	45	556	579	1135
	5	22	37	59	592	570	1162
	Σ	55	93	148	1,714	1,723	3437