

The Target Bullying Intervention Program

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UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

Prevention in the Schools: Using Partnerships to Reduce Bullying

- Target Bullying: Ecologically-Based Prevention and Intervention for Schools.
- Working with school personnel, students, and parents since 1999.
- A partnership between individual schools and/or districts and the University of Nebraska - Lincoln School Psychology Program.
- Researchers provide yearly feedback to participating schools.
- Elementary, Middle, and High Schools.
- University researchers work in tandem with school personnel, students, and parents.



Bullying Intervention Program

- Background: Partnership with a middle school principal; extended downward to elementary schools.
- We live in a punishment-oriented society.
- But... Research shows that children under age 12 react strongly to positive feedback and scarcely respond at all to negative feedback.
- Anna C. K. van Duijvenvoorde, Kiki Zanolie, Serge A. R. B. Rombouts, Maartje E. J. Raijmakers, and Eveline A. Crone. Evaluating the Negative or Valuing the Positive? Neural Mechanisms Supporting Feedback-Based Learning across Development. *The Journal of Neuroscience*, 17 September 2008.
- Research also shows the zero tolerance approaches are not effective (APA's Zero Tolerance Task Force)





If you don't help stop bullying, who will?

Parents, teachers, school administrators, health care professionals, law enforcement officers—we all have a responsibility to prevent bullying. To find out how you can help stop it, Log on to www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov

STOP BULLYING NOW

A campaign by the Health Resources and Services Administration, the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, and the Department of Health and Human Services

**Lessons Learned:
CBS Sunday
Morning**



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Premise behind the Bullying Intervention Program

- The social-cognitive perceptions of all participants in bullying interactions are as critical as are the aggressive behaviors, because the perceptions and cognitions of participants serve to underlie, perpetuate, and escalate bullying interactions (Doll & Swearer, 2005; Swearer & Cary, 2003).
- We must intervene at the cognitive level in order to prevent bullying behaviors.



Bullying Intervention Program (Swearer, 2005)

- Alternative to in-school suspension.
- Currently being implemented in a large middle school—three middle schools next year.
- Parents can choose the consequence for bullying behavior for their child: typical in-school suspension or the bullying intervention program.
- Parental consent and student assent obtained.
- Three hour intervention: one-to-one cognitive-behavioral session with a counselor, school psychologist or school social worker.



Bullying Intervention Program (Swearer, 2005)

- Three components:
 - (1) ASSESSMENT
 - (2) PSYCHOEDUCATION - Bullying Awareness
PowerPoint, Quiz, *BullyBusters* Worksheets,
Bullying Video.
 - (3) FEEDBACK - Parent, School, Student
- Parental perceptions of bullying and
session assessed (*Bully Survey-Parent
Version; Treatment Evaluation Inventory*)
in addition to:



Cognitive-Behavioral Assessment



- Self-Report Questionnaires (approx. 1 hour)
 - *The Bully Survey-Youth* (Swearer, 2001)
 - *Children's Depression Inventory* (CDI; Kovacs, 2001)
 - *Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children* (MASC, March, 1997)
 - *How I Think Questionnaire* (HIT; Barriga et al., 2001)
 - *Thoughts about School* (Song & Swearer, 2001)
 - *Harter Self-Concept Scale* (Harter, 1985)
 - *Bullying Intervention Rating Profile* (Witt & Elliot, 1985)



Psychoeducation

- 30 minute PowerPoint Presentation.
- Quiz over presentation.
- PSYCHOEDUCATION: Worksheet Activities (from *Bully Busters*, Newman, Horne, & Bartolomucci, 2000) 1 hr.
 - Stop Rewind, Play it Again
 - Jump into my Shoes
 - Lend a Hand
 - Are you up to the Challenge?
 - Vacation Time
 - Relaxation Time
- Watch and discuss Bullying Video ("Stories of Us," "Let's Get Real," or "Bully Dance").



Video Resource: Stories of Us--Bullying



- www.storiesofus.com
- *Stories of Us* is a unique series of educational resources. Students collaborate in brainstorming the subjects, develop the scripts and perform all key roles. Every word of dialogue is their own. The *Stories of Us* videos are compelling as they draw upon the collective experience of the students, holding a mirror to their reality with such authenticity that some students watching them are convinced they are real.
- U.S. filming occurred in fall 2007 in Illinois and Nebraska.



Video Resources

"Bully Dance" video

Bullfrog Films

Box 149

Oley, PA 19547

(610) 779-8226

Web: www.bullfrogfilms.com



Video and training resource

- "Let's Get Real" video and curriculum guide
- www.groundspark.org
- Running Time: 35 minutes
Format: VHS and DVD - Special features include director's interview, clips from other RFAP films, chapter-by-chapter version of the film corresponding to the curriculum guide.

A PROGRAM OF **GROUNDSPARK**



Feedback Session

- EVALUATION:
- Write Bullying Intervention treatment report (3-5 pages)
- Recommendations based on data (data-based decision-making!)
- Share with school and parents during a face-to-face solution-oriented meeting
- FOLLOW-UP (End-of-year): Track office referral data for bullying incidents for students who participate in the intervention and compare with students who did not participate in the intervention.



Participants

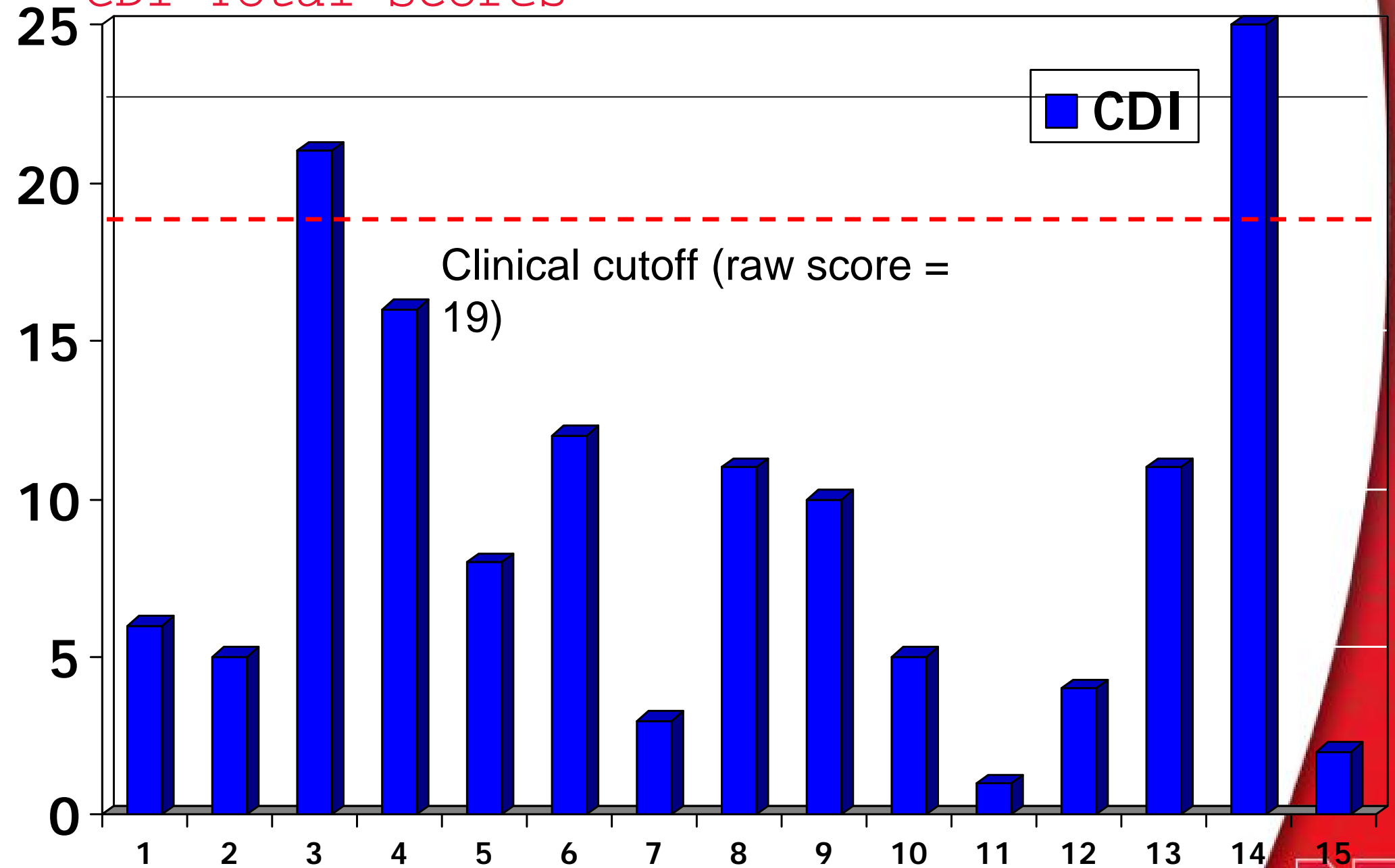
- 15 participants, grades sixth through eighth
- Mean age = 12.27 years; range = 11 – 14 years)
- 93.3% Caucasian & 6.7% Latino/Hispanic.

Bully/Victim Status (per self-report)

Bully	20%
Victim	13.3%
Bully/Victim	46.7%
No Status	6.7%
Bystander	13.3%

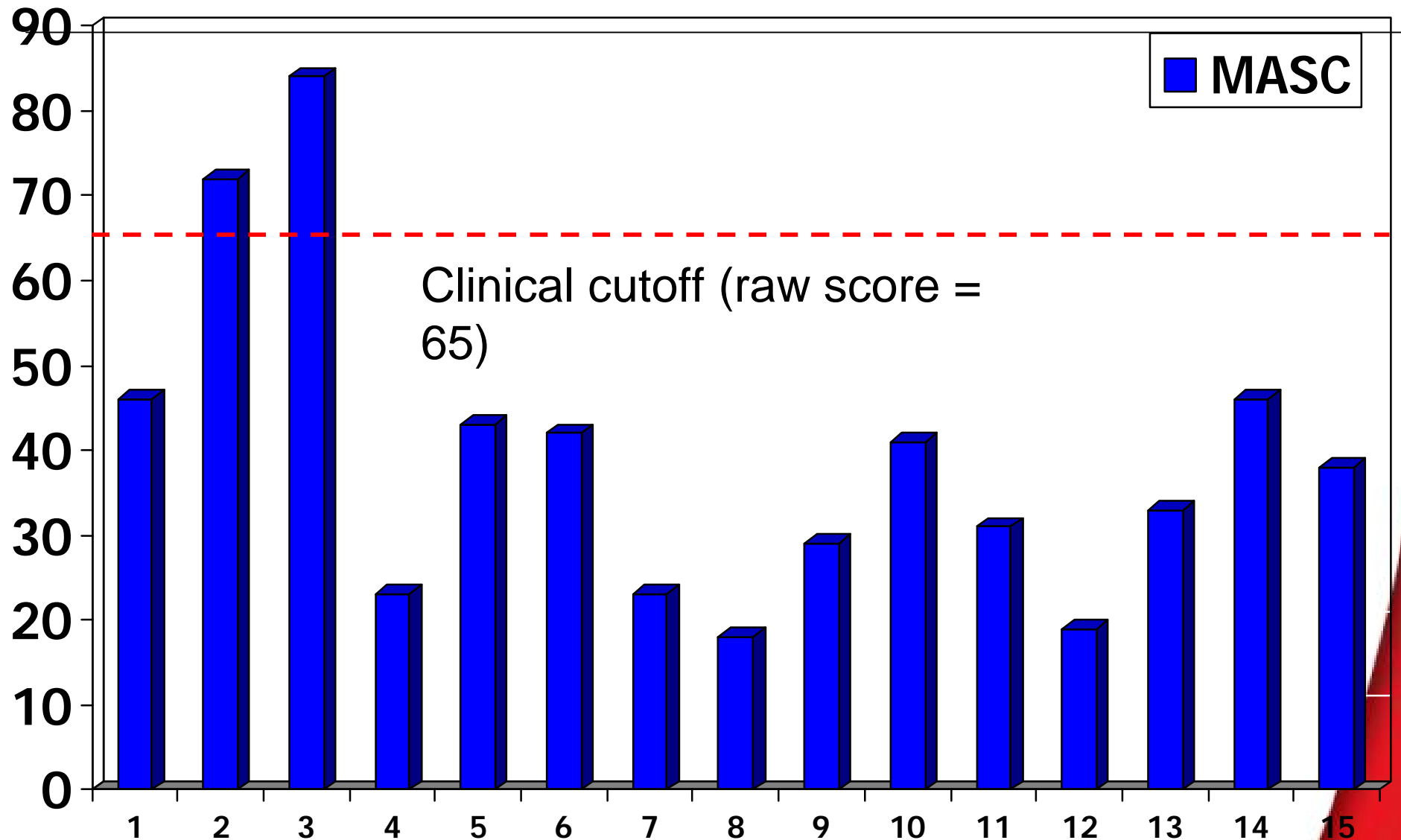


CDI Total Scores



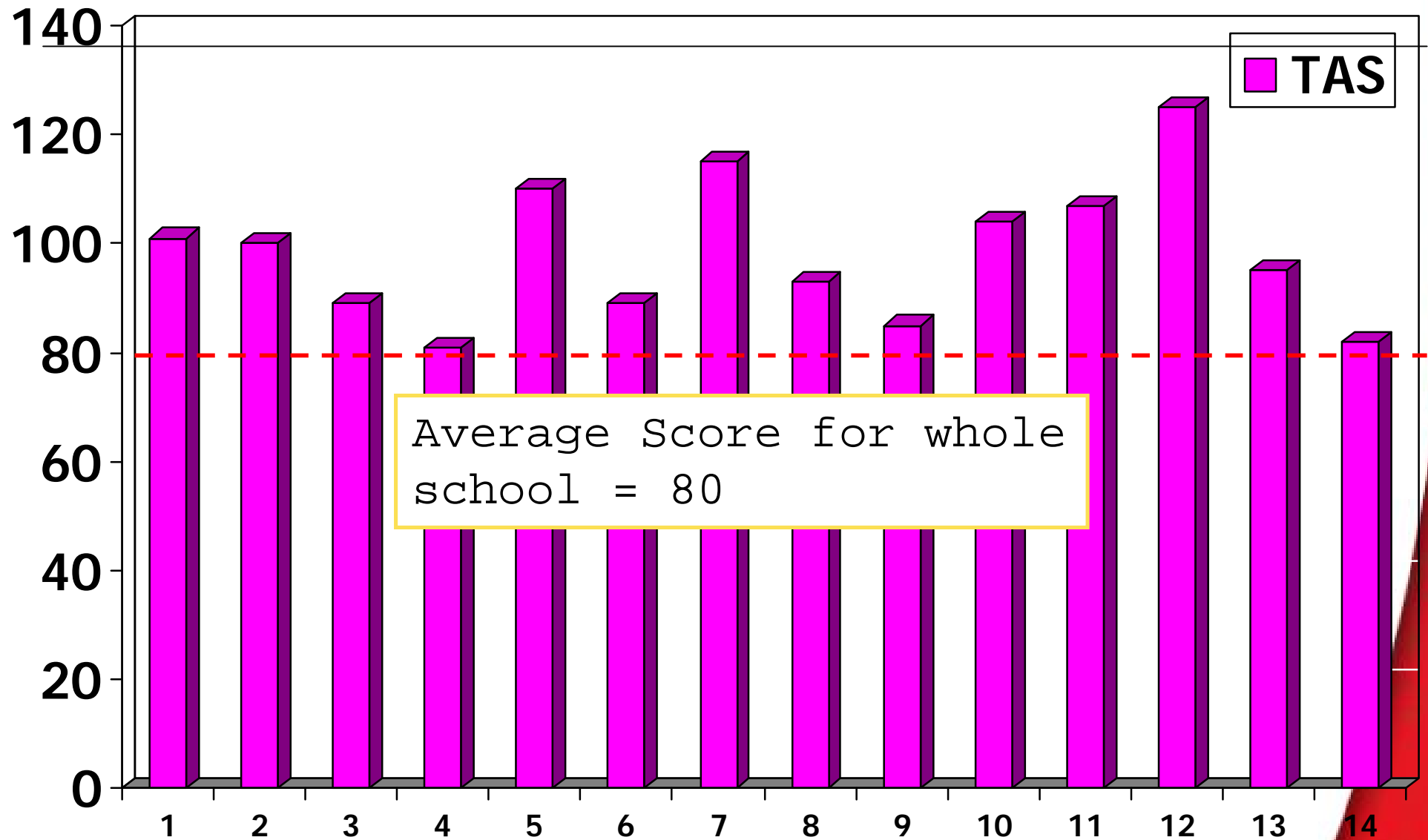
- Two students were identified as experiencing clinical

MASC Total Scores



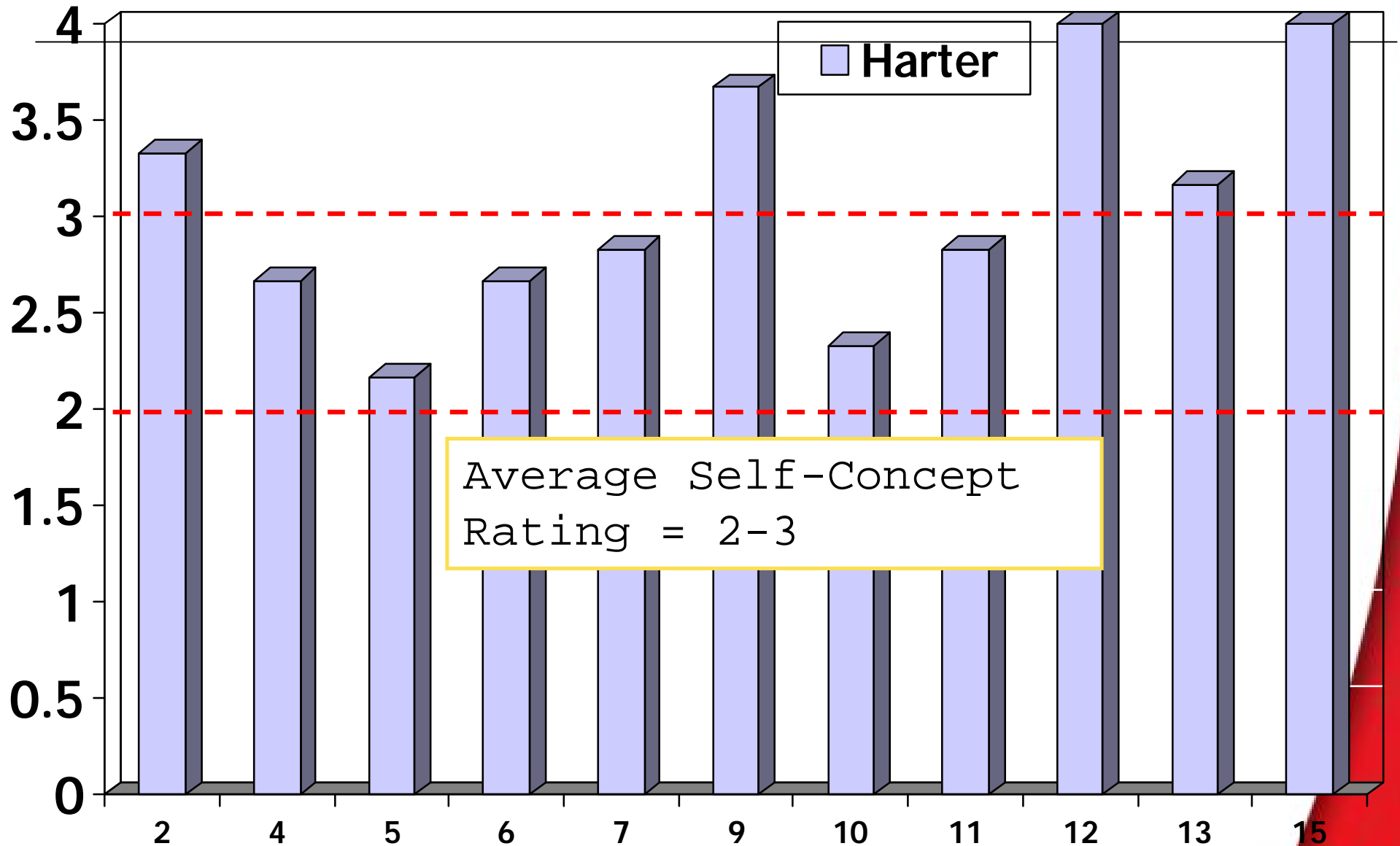
- Two students were identified as experiencing clinical symptoms of anxiety

TAS Total Scores



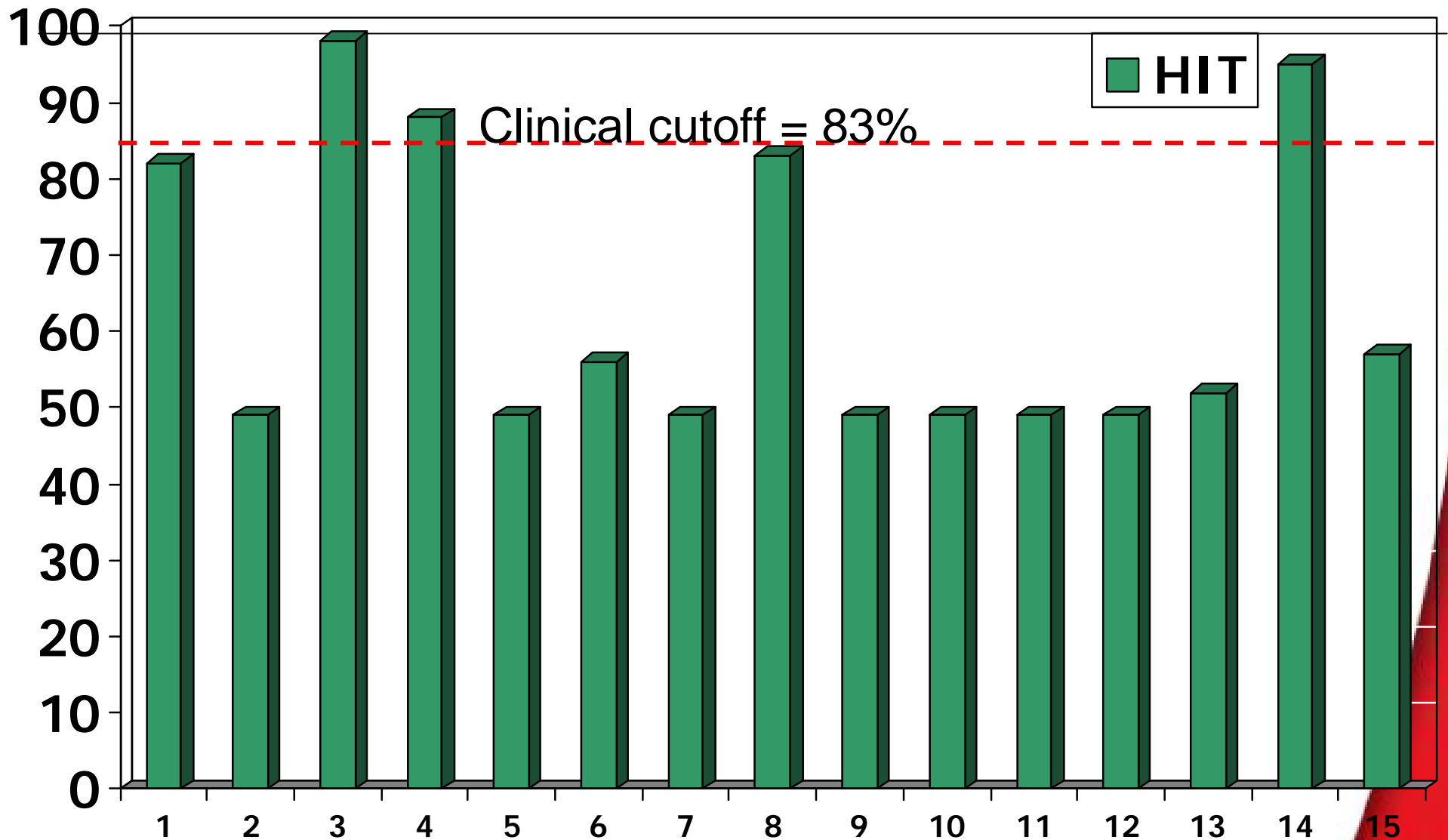
- All students reported more positive perceptions of school climate compared to the mean of their peers

Harter Self-Concept Total



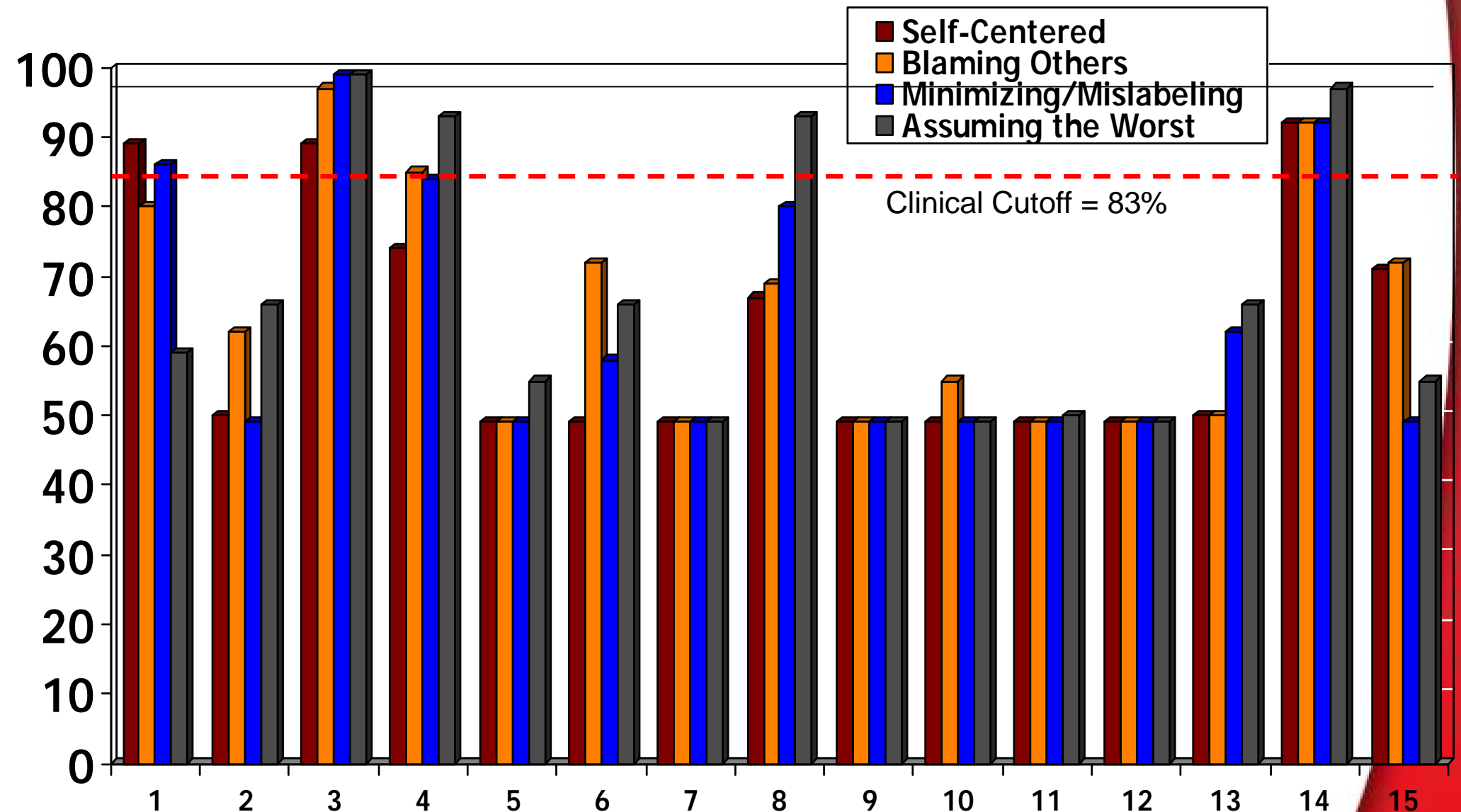
- Five students reported higher than average self-worth while none reported lower than average self-

How I Think Questionnaire (HIT) Total Scores



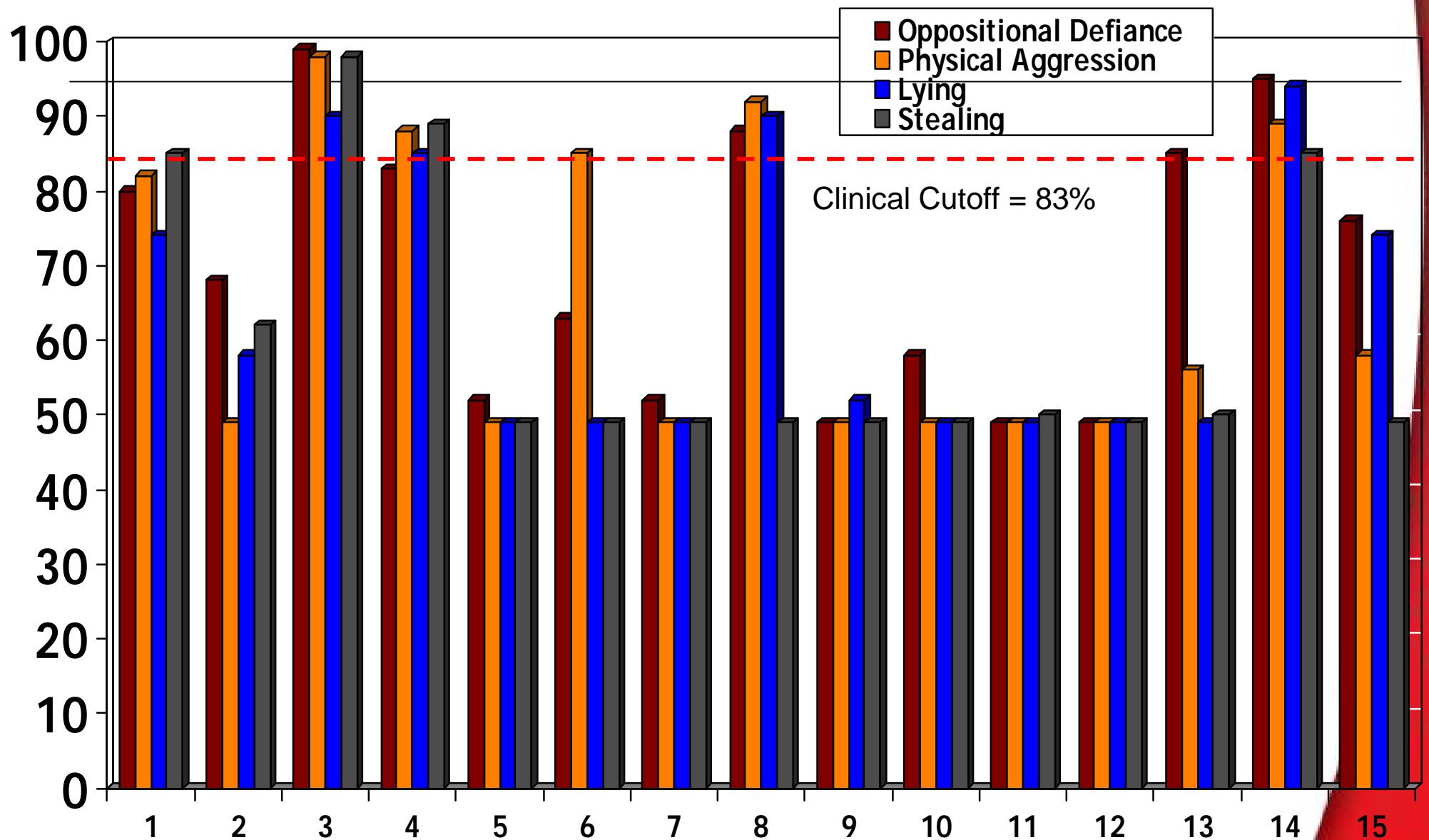
- Three students indicated clinical levels of cognitive distortions as indicated by the HIT.

HIT - Cognitive Distortions Subscales



- Several cognitive distortions were apparent at the clinical level following the HIT assessment

HIT - Behavioral Referents Subscales



- Several clinically significant behavioral referents were apparent

Summary of Cognitive-Behavioral Data

- Depression scores varied greatly
- Anxiety scores varied greatly
- Participants reported positive perceptions of school climate
- Participants endorsed average to above average self-concept
- Participants endorsed a range of Cognitive Distortions and a range of Behavioral Problems
- Varied profiles support the need for **individualized intervention for bullying**



Participant Feedback

- **Students referred to the Bullying Intervention Program reported:**
 - “You’re going to see a whole new me from now on.”
 - “What I’ve been doing probably made the other girl feel really bad and lonely.”
 - “I’m not a bully, they accuse me of things just to bring me down because I’m at the top of the food chain.”
- **In a recent parent feedback session:**
 - “I am so grateful for the bullying intervention program. This program helped my child and wasn’t focused on punishment.
 - “I’m going to share this report with my daughter’s therapist!”
- **The school staff reported:**
 - “This has opened her eyes to what she’s been doing and she’s become more aware of her actions.”



BIP Case Example: Background Information

- 12 year-old Biracial female; 6th grade
- Currently lives with adoptive parents and brother
- Referred for physical as well as verbal bullying
 - Two Office Disciplinary Referrals (2010-2011)
 - Threw a textbook at a peer who was making "annoying noises" in class; punched in the arm and threatened him
 - Pushed and kicked a peer who was in "her spot" during recess; injured to the extent he could not remain at school
- Prior efforts to address the bullying
 - Suspensions, safety plan



BIP: Assessment and Psychoeducational Components

- Measures Administered
 - The Bully Survey
 - Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children
 - Children's Depression Inventory
 - How I Think Questionnaire
 - Self-Perception Profile for Children
 - Thoughts About School
 - Children's Intervention Rating Profile
- PowerPoint Presentation
 - Pre- and Post-Quiz
- *Stories of Us*
- Bully Busters activities
 - *Bully? Who, Me?*
 - *Bullies at Work*
 - *Framing the Bully*



Assessment Results

- The Bully Survey
 - Self-identified as a Bystander, Victim, and Bully
 - Self-reported victimization
 - One or more times a week
 - Endorsed several settings (e.g., classroom, hallway, cafeteria)
 - Self-reported bullying behaviors
 - Bullied boys of different ages
 - Multiple settings (e.g., recess, gym, hallway, classroom) one or more times a day
 - Attacking, pushing and shoving, threatening
 - Reported that her behavior towards others sometimes made her feel bad or sad



Assessment Results (Cont.)

- MASC
 - "Above Average" Social Anxiety score (T-Score=61)
- CDI
 - "Much Above Average" on the Interpersonal Problems subscale (T-Score=67)
 - Anhedonia "Slightly Above Average" (T-Score=58)
- HIT
 - Endorsed "You can't trust people because they will always lie to you," "I can't help losing my temper a lot", and "I have tried to get even with someone"
 - However, suspect protocol based on True



Assessment Results (Cont.)

- Self-Perception Profile for Children
 - Social Acceptance
 - Medium perceived competence
 - Behavioral Conduct
 - Low perceived competence
- Attitudes Toward Bullying Scale
 - "Lots of kids are afraid of bullies"
 - "Students who are bullied do not tell teachers or other school staff about it"
 - "Bullies have many friends"

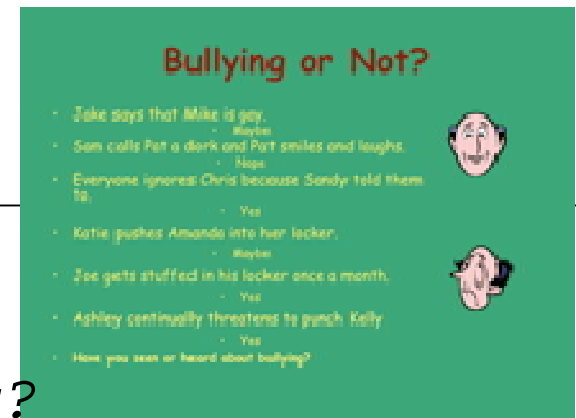


PowerPoint

- Pre- and Post-Quiz
 - *What do you think a bully is?*

"A person who is mean to other people because maybe they are being bullied or hurt somewhere and want to take it out on someone"

- Discussion topics
 - Defining a bully
 - Examples and non-examples
 - Bullying myths
 - Reasons for bullying
 - Feelings, Consequences, and Solutions



Bully Busters Activities

- *Bully? Who, Me?*
 - Identified own bullying behaviors and involvement
- *Bullies at Work*
 - Discussed different types of bullies
- *Framing the Bully*
 - Defined bullying and characteristics of bullies



Follow-Up Meeting

- Solution-oriented feedback meeting
- Purpose
 - Share assessment results
 - Make appropriate recommendations
 - Emphasize the maintenance of treatment gains and the continuous monitoring of behavior
- In attendance
 - Therapist, mother, counselor, principal, student
 - Parent and counselor complete Treatment Evaluation Inventory and Parent and Teacher versions of the Bully Survey



Treatment Acceptability

- Treatment Evaluation Inventory
 - Total scores of 99 (out of 105) for both parent and counselor
- Children's Intervention Rating Profile (Witt & Elliot, 1985)
 - Mean item rating of 4.5 (on a scale of 1-5)



Bully Survey- Parent and Teacher

- Used to validate student responses on the Bully Survey
 - All confirmed student's bullying status
 - Similarities in reasons why Becky bullied others
 - e.g., Other students irritating her or talking about her
 - Student and counselor agreement in frequency (one or more times a day)
 - Student and parent agreement in specific types of bullying
 - Attacking; pushing and/or shoving



Recommendations

1. Individual Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
 - Instruction on emotional regulation strategies
 - Address and monitor internalizing symptoms
 - Interpersonal problems, social anxiety, and low behavioral self-competence
2. Self-Monitoring Intervention
3. Adult Involvement and Support
 - Prompts to utilize adaptive strategies, "check ins"
4. Positive Reinforcement System
5. Home-School Communication
6. Continue Safety Plan



Reactions to the BIP

- Parent and counselor ratings
 - ❖ Treatment Evaluation Inventory (Kazdin, 1980)
 - General reactions to the BIP “very positive”
 - Both found the intervention to be “very acceptable” for the student’s behavior
 - Mother stated she will provide a copy of the report to her daughter’s counselor
- Student reaction
 - “I think it helped me realize the things that can happen when you are a bully”
 - No office disciplinary referrals since



Conclusions

- Both the student, parent, as well as school staff found the BIP to be favorable
- Results from the BIP assessment component supported the association between internalizing symptoms and this particular student's bullying behaviors
- Overall improvement in behavior
 - Becky has not had to use her safety plan and has not received additional office referrals since participating in the BIP



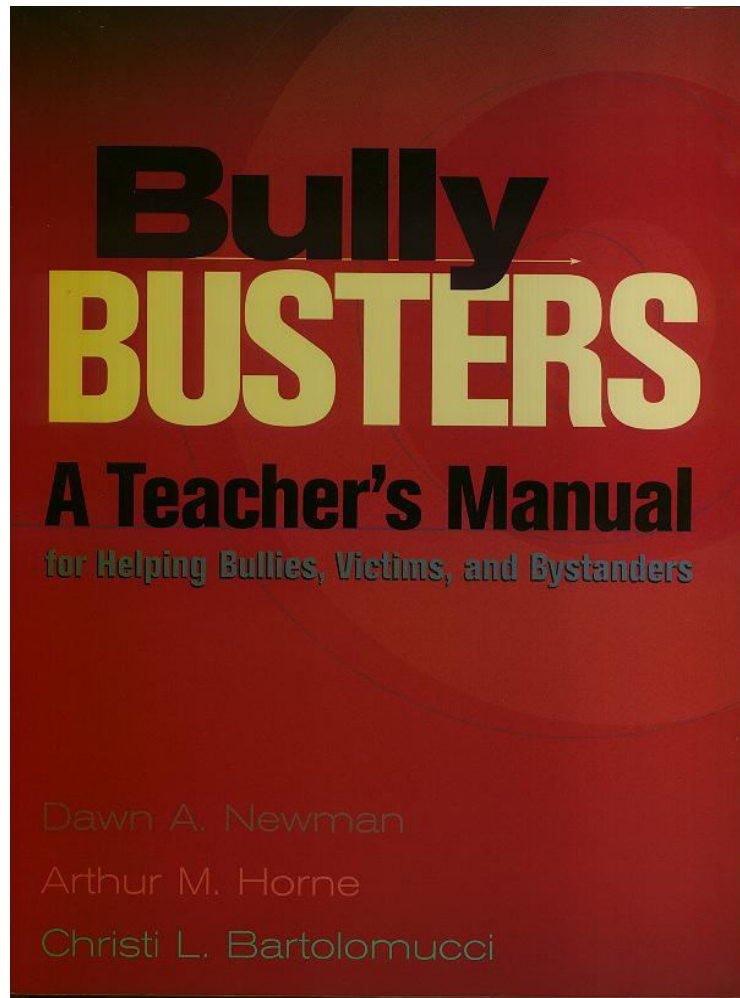
When to use the Bullying Intervention Program?

- In a typical school building, 10% of students will bully others.
- Directly intervene with these 10%!
- If your rates of bullying are higher, then the BIP should be used in conjunction with a whole-school approach* like *Bully Busters*; *Bully-Proofing your School*; *Steps to Respect*; *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*.
- Use when a student has received consistent disciplinary referrals for bullying behaviors.

*That have empirical support!



BULLY BUSTERS



Order from: www.researchpress.com



Bully Busters (Newman, Horne, & Bartolomucci, 2000)

- Intervention and prevention program designed specifically for the middle and elementary school years.
- Classroom-level program addresses the essential components of the school ecology that are responsible for change.
- Focus on teacher education and training.
- Differing implementation methods facilitate the needs of different school ecologies.



Steps to Respect (Committee for Children, 2004)

- Research-based program; research-based modules
- Includes school-wide implementation support
- User-friendly
- Grades 3-6
- *Developmental Psychology* article: found that playground bullying reduced by 25%; *Journal of Educational Psychology* (2009), found a 31 percent decrease in bullying and victimization and a 70 percent reduction of destructive bystander



Order Information

Steps to Respect: A Bullying Prevention Program

Committee for Children
568 First Avenue South, Suite
600

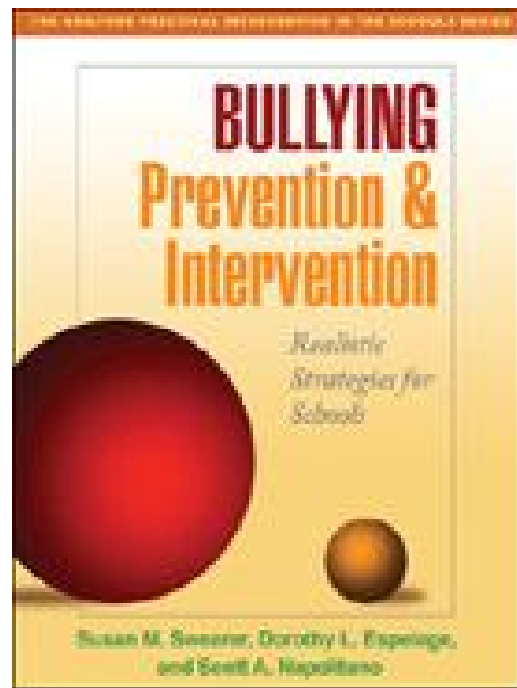
Seattle, WA 98104-2804
(800) 634-4449, ext. 6210

<http://www.cfchildren.org>

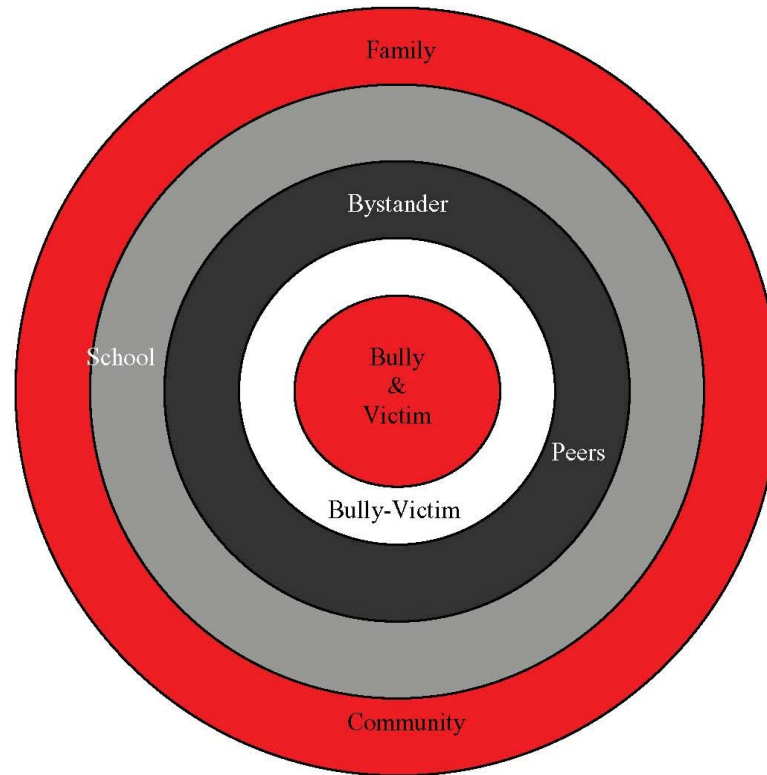


Bullying Prevention and Intervention: Realistic Strategies for Schools

- By Susan M. Swearer, Dorothy L. Espelage, and Scott A. Napolitano
- Published by The Guilford Press (2009)



Target Bullying Survey and Intervention System: Ecologically-Based Prevention and Intervention



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