

What is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?

The *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*, or *OBPP* for short, is the most researched and best-known bullying prevention program available today. It was developed by Dan Olweus, Ph.D., of Norway. *OBPP* has over 35 years of research behind it and has been implemented throughout the world, in countries such as the United States, Canada, England, Mexico, Iceland, Germany, Sweden, and Croatia, in addition to Norway.

OBPP is recognized by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence as one of only 11 Blueprints Model Programs and by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as a Model Program – two of the highest honors a prevention program can attain. It has also received numerous awards from other organizations dedicated to addressing the issue of bullying and violence among children.

KEY AUDIENCES

OBPP is designed for students in elementary, middle, and junior high schools (students age 5 to 15 years old). All students participate in most aspects of the program. Students who bully others, and students who are bullied, receive additional individualized interventions.

OBPP is used at the school, classroom, and individual levels and includes methods to reach out to parents and the community for involvement and support. School administrators, teachers, and other staff are primarily responsible for introducing and implementing the program. These efforts are designed to improve peer relations and make the school a safer and more positive place for students to learn and develop.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY BEHIND THE OLWEUS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM?

Although bullying problems among students have been around for centuries, it wasn't until the early 1970s that Dan Olweus initiated the first systematic research study in the world on these problems. The results were published in a Swedish book in 1973 and in the United States in 1978 under the title *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*. For a considerable period of time, up to the early 1990s, there was very little attention to and research on the topic of bullying outside of Scandinavia.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the program are:

- to reduce existing bullying problems among students
- to prevent the development of new bullying problems
- to achieve better peer relations at school

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF THE OLWEUS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM?

- Average reductions by 20 to 70 percent in student reports of being bullied and bullying others. Peer and teacher ratings of bullying problems have yielded roughly similar results.
- Marked reductions in student reports of general antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy.
- Clear improvements in the classroom social climate, as reflected in students' reports of improved order and discipline, more positive social relationships, and more positive attitudes toward schoolwork and school.