



## Bullying statistics

- More than one out of every five (20.8%) students report being bullied ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- The federal government began collecting data on school bullying in 2005, when the prevalence of bullying was around 28 percent ([U.S. Department of Education, 2015](#)).
- Rates of bullying vary across studies (from 9% to 98%). A meta-analysis of 80 studies analyzing bullying involvement rates (for both bullying others and being bullied) for 12-18 year old students reported a mean prevalence rate of 35% for traditional bullying involvement and 15% for cyberbullying involvement ([Modecki, Minchin, Harbaugh, Guerra, & Runions, 2014](#)).
- 33% of students who reported being bullied at school indicated that they were bullied at least once or twice a month during the school year ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- Of those students who reported being bullied, 13% were made fun of, called names, or insulted; 12% were the subject of rumors; 5% were pushed, shoved, tripped, or spit on; and 5% were excluded from activities on purpose ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- A slightly higher portion of female than of male students report being bullied at school (23% vs. 19%). In contrast, a higher percentage of male than of female students report being physically bullied (6% vs. 4%) and threatened with harm (5% vs. 3%; [National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- Bullied students reported that bullying occurred in the following places: the hallway or stairwell at school (42%), inside the classroom (34%), in the cafeteria (22%), outside on school grounds (19%), on the school bus (10%), and in the bathroom or locker room (9%) ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- 43% of bullied students report notifying an adult at school about the incident. Students who report higher rates of bullying victimization are more likely to report the bullying ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- More than half of bullying situations (57%) stop when a peer intervenes on behalf of the student being bullied ([Hawkins, Pepler, & Craig, 2001](#)).
- School-based bullying prevention programs decrease bullying by up to 25% ([McCallion & Feder, 2013](#)).
- The reasons for being bullied reported most often by students include physical appearance, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).



## Effects of Bullying

- Students who experience bullying are at increased risk for poor school adjustment, sleep difficulties, anxiety, and depression ([Center for Disease Control, 2015](#)).
- Students who are both targets of bullying and engage in bullying behavior are at greater risk for both mental health and behavior problems than students who only bully or are only bullied ([Center for Disease Control, 2015](#)).
- Bullied students indicate that bullying has a negative effect on how they feel about themselves (19%), their relationships with friends and family and on their school work (14%), and physical health (9%) ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- Students who experience bullying are twice as likely as non-bullied peers to experience negative health effects such as headaches and stomachaches ([Gini & Pozzoli, 2013](#)).
- Youth who self-blame and conclude they deserved to be bullied are more likely to face negative outcomes, such as depression, prolonged victimization, and maladjustment ([Perren, Ettakal, & Ladd, 2013; Shelley & Craig, 2010](#)).

## Cyberbullying

- Among high school students, 15.5% are cyberbullied and 20.2% are bullied on school property ([Center for Disease Control, 2015](#)).
- Among middle school students, 24% are cyberbullied and 45% are bullied on school property ([Center for Disease Control, 2015](#)).

- The percentages of individuals who have experienced cyberbullying at some point in their lifetimes have nearly doubled (18% to 34%) from 2007-2016 ([Patchin & Hinduja, 2016](#)).
- 90% of teens who report being cyberbullied have also been bullied offline ([“Seven Fears and the Science of How Mobile Technologies May Be Influencing Adolescents in the Digital Age,” George and Odgers, 2015](#)).
- 23% of students who reported being cyberbullied notified an adult at school about the incident ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- Only 40–50% of cyberbullying targets are aware of the identity of the perpetrator ([Patchin & Hinduja, 2016](#)).
- Those who are cyberbullied are also likely to be bullied offline ([Hamm, Newton, & Chisholm, 2015](#)).

### **Statistics about bullying of students with disabilities**

- When assessing specific types of disabilities, prevalence rates differ: 35.3% of students with behavioral and emotional disorders, 33.9% of students with autism, 24.3% of students with intellectual disabilities, 20.8% of students with health impairments, and 19% of students with specific learning disabilities face high levels of bullying victimization (Rose et al., 2012).
- Students with specific learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, emotional and behavior disorders, other health impairments, and speech or language impairments report greater rates of victimization than their peers without disabilities longitudinally and their victimization remains consistent over time ([Rose & Gage, 2017](#)).
- Researchers discovered that students with disabilities were more worried about school safety and being injured or harassed by other peers compared to students without a disability ([Saylor & Leach, 2009](#)).
- When reporting bullying youth in special education were told not to tattle almost twice as often as youth not in special education ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- Successful strategies to prevent bullying among students with disabilities include ([Rose & Monda-Amaya, 2012](#)):
  - Teachers and peers engaging in meaningful and appropriate social interactions.
  - Creating opportunities to increase social competence and positive interactions.
  - Schools adopting appropriate intervention strategies that encourage social awareness and provide individualized interventions for targets with disabilities.

### **Statistics about bullying of students of color**

- 25% of African-American students, 22% of Caucasian students, 17% of Hispanic students, and 9% of Asian students report being bullied at school ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016](#)).
- More than one third of adolescents reporting bullying report bias-based school bullying ([Russell, Sinclair, Poteat, & Koenig, 2012](#)).
- Bias-based bullying is more strongly associated with compromised health than general bullying ([Russell, Sinclair, Poteat, & Koenig, 2012](#)).
- Race-related bullying is significantly associated with negative emotional and physical health effects ([Rosenthal et al., 2013](#)).

### **Statistics about bullying of students who identify or are perceived as LGBTQ**

- 74.1% of LGBT students were verbally bullied (e.g., called names, threatened) in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 55.2% because of their gender expression ([National School Climate Survey, 2013](#)).
- 36.2% of LGBT students were physically bullied (e.g., pushed, shoved) in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 22.7% because of their gender expression ([National School Climate Survey, 2013](#)).
- 49% of LGBT students experienced cyberbullying in the past year ([National School Climate Survey, 2013](#)).
- Peer victimization of all youth was less likely to occur in schools with bullying policies that are inclusive of LGBTQ students ([Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2012](#)).
- 55.5% of LGBT students feel unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, and 37.8% because of their gender expression ([National School Climate Survey, 2013](#)).
- 30.3% of LGBT students missed at least one entire day at school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and 10.6% missed four or more days in the past month ([National School Climate Survey, 2013](#)).
- For bullied LGBTQ students ([Duong & Bradshaw, 2014](#)) and bullied students in general ([Morin et al., 2015](#)), if they identify one supportive adult in the school they trust, they are less likely to face adverse consequences.
- There are less rates of LGBTQ bullying in schools with clear bullying policies that are inclusive of LGBTQ students ([Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2012](#)).
- Students were less likely to report having experienced homophobic bullying and report more school connectedness in schools with more supportive practices, including ([Day & Snapp, 2016](#)):
  - Adequate counseling and support services for students.
  - Considering sanctions for student violations of rules and policies on a case-by-case basis with a wide range of options.

- Providing effective confidential support and referral services for students needing help because of substance abuse, violence, or other problems.
- Helping students with their social, emotional, and behavioral problems, and provide behavior management instruction.
- Fostering youth development, resilience, or asset promotion.

## Bullying and Suicide

- There is a strong association between bullying and suicide-related behaviors, but this relationship is often mediated by other factors, including depression, violent behavior, and substance abuse ([Reed, Nugent, & Cooper, 2015](#)).
- Students who bully others, are bullied, or witness bullying are more likely to report high levels of suicide-related behavior than students who report no involvement in bullying ([Center for Disease Control, 2014](#)).
- A meta-analysis found that students facing peer victimization are 2.2 times more likely to have suicide ideation and 2.6 times more likely to attempt suicide than students not facing victimization ([Gini & Espelage, 2014](#)).
- Students who are both bullied and engage in bullying behavior are the highest risk group for adverse outcomes ([Espelage & Holt, 2013](#)).
- The false notion that suicide is a natural response to being bullied has the dangerous potential to normalize the response and thus create copycat behavior among youth. ([Center for Disease Control, 2014](#)).

## Interventions

- Bullied youth were most likely to report that actions that accessed support from others made a positive difference ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- Actions aimed at changing the behavior of the bullying youth (fighting, getting back at them, telling them to stop, etc.) were rated as more likely to make things worse ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- Students reported that the most helpful things teachers can do are: listen to the student, check in with them afterwards to see if the bullying stopped, and give the student advice ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- Students reported that the most harmful things teachers can do are: tell the student to solve the problem themselves, tell the student that the bullying wouldn't happen if they acted differently, ignored what was going on, or tell the student to stop tattling ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- As reported by students who have been bullied, the self-actions that had some of the most negative impacts (telling the person to stop/how I feel, walking away, pretending it doesn't bother me) are often used by youth and often recommended to youth ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).

## Bystanders

- Students need not be the targets of bullying to experience negative outcomes. Observing bullying is associated with adverse mental health outcomes ([Rivers, Poteat, Noret, & Ashurst, 2009](#)).
- Bystanders' beliefs in their social self-efficacy were positively associated with defending behavior and negatively associated with passive behavior from bystanders – i.e. if students believe they can make a difference, they're more likely to act ([Thornberg et al, 2012](#)).
- Students who experience bullying report that allying and supportive actions from their peers (such as spending time with the student, talking to him/her, helping him/her get away, or giving advice) were the most helpful actions from bystanders ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- Students who experience bullying are more likely to find peer actions helpful than educator or self-actions ([Davis & Nixon, 2010](#)).
- [The Youth Voice Research Project \(2010\)](#) found that victimized students reported the following bystander strategies that made things better: spent time with me (54%), talked to me (51%), helped me get away (49%), called me (47%), gave me advice (46%), helped me tell (44%), distracted me (43%), listened to me (41%), told an adult (35%), confronted them (29%), asked them to stop.

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