HANDBOOK OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND SCHOOL SAFETY

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

SECOND EDITION

EDITED BY
SHANE R. JIMERSON
AMANDA B. NICKERSON
MATTHEW J. MAYER
MICHAEL J. FURLONG

ROUTLEDGE

Handbook of School Violence and School Safety

The *Handbook of School Violence and School Safety: International Research and Practice* has become the premier resource for educational and mental health professionals and policymakers seeking to implement effective prevention and intervention programs that reduce school violence and promote safe and effective schools. Its 44 chapters cover the full range of school violence and safety topics from harassment and bullying to promoting safe, secure, and peaceful schools. It also examines existing school safety programs and includes the multidisciplinary research and theories that guide them. Examinations of current issues and projections of future research and practice are embedded within each chapter. This volume maps the boundaries of this rapidly growing and multidisciplinary field of study. Key features include:

Comprehensive Coverage—The 44 chapters are divided into three parts: Foundations (chapters 1–18); Assessment and Measurement (chapters 19–24); Prevention and Intervention Programs (chapters 25–44). Together they provide a comprehensive review of what is known about the types, causes, and effects of school violence and the most effective intervention programs that have been developed to prevent violence and promote safe and thriving school climates.

Evidence-based Practice—Avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach to prevention and intervention, the focus throughout is on the application of evidence-based practice to address factors most commonly associated with school violence and safety.

Implications for Practice—Each chapter bridges the research-to-practice gap, with a section delineating implications for practice of the foregoing research.

Chapter Structure—To ensure continuity and coherence across the book, each chapter begins with a brief abstract and ends with a table showing the implications for practice.

International Focus—Acknowledging the fact that school violence and safety is a global concern, this edition has increased its focus on insights learned from cross-national research and practice outside the USA.

Expertise—The editors and authors are experienced researchers, teachers, practitioners, and leaders in the school violence field. Their expertise includes their breadth and depth of knowledge and experience, bridging research, policy, and practice and representing a variety of international organizations studying school violence around the world.

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Dedicated to

our families, who remind us of the importance of our efforts and inspire us everyday:
Gavin & Taite Jimerson
Kathryn O'Brien

Brian, Ethan, and Alex Nishiyama

Solanger Frota-Mayer
(Matthew's loving, patient, and understanding wife)

The Furlong family four score strong

and to all the those who are victims of violence at school, the dedicated professionals who promote school safety through efforts to prevent acts of violence and provide support for victims of violence, and the scholars who inform our understanding of important facets of school violence and school safety. Through bringing the best of science to professional practice, it is hoped that the information presented in this handbook serves as an impetus to prevent school violence and promote safe and effective schools around the world.

Contents

Preface

The *Handbook of School Violence and School Safety: International Research and Practice* offers an international analysis of school violence and school safety, which provides a foundation (conceptually, empirically, and practically) for implementing and examining prevention and intervention programs to reduce school violence. The *Handbook of School Violence and School Safety: International Research and Practice* shares insights from scholarship around the world, to advance our collective understanding of (a) theoretical and empirical foundations for understanding school violence, (b) relevant assessment and measurement, and (c) research-based prevention and intervention for school violence. Leading scholars and practitioners from numerous countries provide information about their attempts to prevent school violence, which in many cases includes innovative approaches to theory, assessment, and intervention. The information included in the chapters provides fundamental information of interest to scholars, practitioners, and other professionals.

The following provides a brief description of the information that is included in each section of the handbook:

Theoretical and empirical foundations for understanding school violence. Chapters in this first section of the handbook provide important information regarding conceptual foundations related to specific issues, reviews relevant scholarship, and also identify areas where future research is needed. This information is essential in establishing a solid foundation for engaging in research as well as implementing school violence prevention and intervention programs around the world.

Assessment and measurement of school violence. Chapters in this section identify and discuss important aspects related to assessing and measuring school violence and school safety. Reviewing previous research, including measures used, and identifying convergence and discrepancies as well as related implications are each invaluable in advancing both the science and practice regarding school violence.

Research-based prevention and intervention for school violence. Chapters in the third section provide an overview of numerous efforts around the globe to implement prevention and intervention programs to address school violence. Authors detail the conceptual foundations underlying the particular programs, delineate the specific strategies incorporated in the programs, report results of research related to the effectiveness of the strategies, and identify limitations and areas of need for further scholarship.

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Handbook of School Violence and School Safety:

International Research and Practice

(Second Edition)

Edited by

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Section I

Foundations of School Violence and Safety

1

Conceptual Foundations for Understanding Youth Engaged in Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

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Abstract

In efforts to address violence that occurs at school, it is important to consider the conceptual foundations informing our understanding of youth who engage in antisocial and aggressive behaviors. Careful consideration of the developmental trajectories, characteristics, and contexts associated with antisocial behaviors reveals that there is no single profile associated with aggressive behavior. This chapter emphasizes developmental, contextual, and mental health factors that inform our understanding of youth who engage in antisocial and aggressive behaviors, with an emphasis on research-derived models describing how antisocial and aggressive behaviors emerge from the developmental process. A central tenet of this chapter is that youth engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors have many needs that community and school-based professionals may address. A summary table highlights practical implications derived from the conceptual and theoretical literature.

Although news media often popularize high-profile incidences of school violence, evidence indicates that schools are among the safest places for youth. Over the past two decades, the safeness of schools has been corroborated by two major, national studies—the Indicators of School Crime and Safety (e.g., Dinkes, Kemp, & Baum, 2009) and the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS; e.g., Eaton et al., 2009)—which reveal favorable trends regarding crime, safety, and harm indicators related to youth in the United States. These studies indicate that severe forms of youth victimization (e.g., assault with a deadly weapon) have declined at school, while use of school-based safety and security measures have increased. Nevertheless, concurrent with these favorable trends, two unfavorable trends have surfaced. First, the prevalence of

youth possessing weapons at school persists at a high and stable rate, as 27% of males and 7% of females in grades 9–12 reported carrying a weapon on campus within the last 30 days (Eaton et al., 2009). Second, mild forms of youth victimization (e.g., bullying) are becoming increasingly prevalent at school. For example, during the 2007–2008 school year alone, 1.5 million nonfatal, school-based crimes of violence or theft were reported among 12- to 18-year-old students, while 32% of secondary students and 43% of sixth-grade students reported experiencing bullying at school (Dinkes et al., 2009). Taken together, these emerging trends suggest that, despite much positive headway, there is still ample reason to be concerned about school violence.

The sporadic occurrence of high-profile incidences of school violence, paired with the increasing prevalence of milder forms of violence on campus, has resulted in magnified attention from educators on the origins of antisocial and aggressive behaviors among youth. Educators are primarily concerned about the nature of such behaviors given that any form of violence—and even the potential for it—is antithetical to the nurturing and educational mission of schools and, by extension, the positive development of students. Moreover, educators desire to understand the origins of such behaviors so they can utilize empirical knowledge to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of intervention efforts—aiming to reduce the prevalence and curb the severity of current cases, while preempting the genesis of new cases. These aims, reduction and prevention, are especially important in light of developmental scholarship suggesting that the majority of severe violent behaviors exhibited in adulthood are the fruits of antisocial and aggressive behaviors engendered throughout childhood or adolescence (van Domburgh, Loeber, Bezemer, Stallings, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 2009). Such violence can have far-reaching effects, harming both perpetrators and innocent victims, as well as exacting costs on society as a whole. For example, the monetary costs to society for youth criminal behaviors are especially great, as longitudinal findings estimate that some youth can cost up to $177,000 to $542,000 in public funds over a decade (Welsh et al., 2008). These and other ominous costs have rocketed professional interest in school violence to new heights during the past two decades, making it a global concern (e.g., Jimerson, Swearer, & Espelage, 2010).

The first step toward addressing school violence and ameliorating its menacing effects is to carefully consider the characteristics and contexts of youth who engage in antisocial and aggressive behavior. This chapter addresses these vital considerations, with an emphasis on developmental, contextual, and mental health factors. Specifically, the first section provides an overview of aggressive conduct patterns as delineated in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (American Psychiatric Association [APA], *DSM-IV-TR*, 2000); the subsequent sections explore research-derived models regarding the emergence of antisocial and aggressive behaviors from human developmental processes; and the final section explores the interface of such behaviors within school contexts.

Diagnosis of Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

Aggressive behaviors are one of the most common reasons for referral of children and adolescents to mental health professionals (Sugden, Kile, & Hendren, 2006). Such behaviors may have different origins (e.g., impulsivity, affective instability, predatory) and be linked with several different mental health diagnoses (e.g., bipolar disorder, anxiety, autism; Sugden et al., 2006). The disorder of particular interest to the development of antisocial and aggressive behaviors, and thus to school violence, is conduct disorder (CD). Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) is often a precursor to CD; however, ODD also predicts mood and anxiety disorders. The following section reviews the nature of CD, its subtypes, and related aggressive and antisocial behaviors.

Conduct Disorder: Diagnosis, Prevalence, and Comorbidity

Conduct disorder encompasses a pervasive and persistent pattern of aggressive, deceptive, and destructive behaviors (APA, 2000). Youth who meet diagnostic criteria for this disorder (see Table 1.1) usually present challenges in school environments, and are likely to have poor academic performance and exhibit other negative life outcomes (e.g., school dropout, early pregnancy, substance abuse). Recent scholarship estimates the lifetime prevalence of CD at 9.5%, with a significantly higher rate in males than females (12% and 7%, respectively) and a median age-of-onset of between 11- and 12-years-old. Furthermore, recent scholarship suggests that having a diagnosis of CD is a significant risk factor for a plethora of other psychiatric diagnoses—suggesting high comorbidity with mood, anxiety, impulse control, and substance abuse disorders (Nock, Kazdin, Hiripi, & Kessler, 2006)—as well as speech and language disorders and learning disabilities (Benner, Mattison, & Nelson, 2009). Overall, such findings indicate that there can be many shared characteristics among youth with CD diagnoses (Achenbach, 1998).

Subtypes of Conduct Disorder and Related Aggressive and Antisocial Behaviors

Whereas there appear to be similarities among individuals diagnosed with CD, current diagnostic criteria (see Table 1.1) promote identification of a variety of aggressive and antisocial youth. As only three of fifteen criterions are required within the last year, with one symptom endorsed in the last six months—the result is a plethora of possible symptom constellations. Furthermore, given different developmental trajectories have been shown to lead to aggressive and antisocial behavior, much attention has been focused on identifying subtypes of CD and their associated developmental pathways (e.g., Loeber, Pardini, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Raine, 2007). Specifically, one way of identifying subtypes via the current diagnostic system is by using the age criterion (i.e., 10 years old) as the specifier for distinguishing between childhood- and adolescent-onset types (APA, 2000). Although this age-based distinction may seem arbitrary, it has been supported by growth mixture models from longitudinal studies and has demonstrated clinical utility, as childhood-onset cases have developed substantially poorer outcomes than adolescent-onset cases (Moffitt et al., 2008).

Several additional subtypes of CD have been proposed, yet the distinctions between *overt* (e.g., public fighting) versus *covert* (e.g., vandalism) and *reactive* (e.g., defensive responses) versus *proactive*

Table 1.1 DSM-IV-TR Criteria for Conduct Disorder

A repetitive and persistent pattern in which the rights or societal norms or rules are violated as manifested by the presence of at least three of the following criteria in the past 12 months (with at least one criterion present in the past 6 months).
Aggression to people and animals, for example, bullying, threatening, or intimidating others, initiating physical fights, using a weapon that can cause serious physical harm to others (e.g., a bat, brick, broken bottle, knife, gun), being physically cruel to people or animals, or has stolen while confronting a victim (e.g., mugging, purse snatching, extortion, armed robbery), or has forced someone into sexual activity.
Destruction of property, such as having deliberately engaged in fire setting with the intention of causing serious damage, or has deliberately destroyed others' property (other than by fire setting).
Deceitfulness or theft, for instance, has broken into someone else's house, building or car, having often lied to obtain goods or favors or to avoid obligations (i.e., "cons" others) or has stolen items of nontrivial value without confronting a victim (e.g., shoplifting, but without breaking and entering; forgery).
Serious violation of rules such as, staying out at night despite parental prohibitions (beginning before age 13 years), running away from home overnight (at least twice while living in parental or parental surrogate home or once without returning for a lengthy period), or is often truant from school (beginning before age 13 years).

(e.g., goal-directed acts) subtypes appear to have the strongest internal and external validation (Connor, 2002). However, Nock and colleagues (2006) recently used latent class analysis to identify five subtypes of CD present in their nationally representative sample (i.e., Rule Violation, Deceit/Theft, Aggressive, Severe Covert, and Pervasive), providing more differentiation than preexisting dichotomous subtypes—allowing for distinctions between both type and severity of symptoms. Despite these and similar scholarly advances regarding subtypes, relatively few changes have been proposed for the new CD diagnostic criteria in the fifth edition of the *DSM* (see http://www.dsm5.org). One consideration is the addition of a callous and unemotional specifier, suggesting the presence or lack of psychopathy underlying the CD (Lynam et al., 2009). Ultimately, such variance among existing, tentative, and proposed subtypes suggests that youth diagnosed with CD can exhibit a variety of problematic aggressive and antisocial behaviors, have varying levels of genetic and biological risk, and possess differing neurocognitive profiles (Moffitt et al., 2008).

Pathways to Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

A review of the relevant research literature and theories indicates there is no singular developmental trajectory leading to long-term antisocial and aggressive behavior, but that such behavior evolves through periods of quiescence and dynamic growth (Patterson &Yoerger, 2002). Developmental and ecological models of antisocial and aggressive behavior focus on family, peer, and school contexts as the primary settings in which these behaviors evolve. The following section briefly overviews the major perspectives accounting for the development of harmful behaviors among youth.

Social Learning Theory Models

Social learning theory posits that (a) learning is a social as well as internal process, (b) behavior is goal directed and eventually becomes self-regulated, and (c) reinforcement and punishment have direct (i.e., behavioral) and indirect (i.e., cognitive) effects (Bandura, 1986). The *social learning model* emphasizes the importance of antecedents and consequences of behaviors occurring in daily social exchanges between children and others in their social milieus (e.g., parents, siblings, and school staff; Patterson &Yoerger, 2002). For example, if children's home environments are characterized by parenting styles that include inconsistent discipline and coercion (i.e., positive and negative reinforcement, paired with physical or verbal aggression), such patterns of interaction are likely to become cyclical and reinforced, resulting in parents modeling inappropriate problem-solving methods and inadvertently teaching aggressive behaviors. The *social development model* integrates social learning theory, control theory, and differential association theory, focusing on how both prosocial and antisocial developmental pathways—influenced by biological and environmental risk and protective factors—underlie all social behavior (Catalano & Hawkins, 1996). This model emphasizes transitional periods (i.e., preschool, elementary, middle, and high school), acknowledging that certain factors have stronger or weaker influence on social development during sensitive periods (e.g., the family is primary during preschool), and that outcomes from these periods are influential in shaping subsequent developmental manifestations.

Social Information-Processing Model

Rather than placing primary influence on external modeling and reinforcement, the social information-processing model focuses on the role of social cognitions in shaping various antisocial behaviors (Crick & Dodge, 1994). This model hypothesizes that flaws in processing social information (i.e., encoding, interpretation, generation of possible responses, selection of a response,

and enaction of behavior) lead to antisocial and aggressive behaviors. Such information processing flaws have been identified in habitually aggressive children, who tend to concentrate more on hostile or aversive social cues, have memory difficulties that interfere with their processing of social information, and interpret cues from their preexisting aggressive schema (Zelli et al., 1999). As a result, these youth often seek only self-interested goals, retaliate against persons presenting obstacles to obtaining such goals, generate few prosocial solutions for accomplishing their goals, and tend to appraise their aggressive solutions as more effective than prosocial solutions (Calkins & Keane, 2009; Carlson & Cornell, 2008).

Persistence/Desistence Models of Aggression

Another way of conceptualizing the origins of youth's antisocial and aggressive behaviors is by distinguishing between *life-course persistent* (i.e., aggressive behaviors exhibited from childhood through adulthood) and *adolescent-limited* trajectories (i.e., aggressive behaviors exhibited between ages 14 and 17; Moffitt, 1993). Youth within these categories have been shown to have distinct differences in etiology, developmental course, prognosis, and severity of harmful behaviors. Specifically, *life-course persistent* aggression is believed to begin with neurological impairment—caused by genetics, maternal drug exposure, or traumatic brain injury, among other things (Moffitt, 1993)—that has detrimental effects on language-based verbal skills and executive functioning (Moffitt, 1990). Deficiencies in these areas often lead to a host of deleterious outcomes, including poor academic performance, impaired social-information processing, and impulsive behavior, which, in turn, place the child at risk for more negative outcomes, such as substance abuse, school dropout, and gang membership. On the other hand, *adolescent-limited aggression* involves those youth who engage in antisocial behaviors between early adolescence and young adulthood, primarily as the result of social influences grounded in reinforcement and punishment contingencies. This perspective also hypothesizes that such harmful behaviors exhibited by youth may be part of a natural quest for obtaining maturity and autonomy—seeking a pathway into adulthood (Moffitt, 1993). Overall, contemporary longitudinal research continues to support the distinction between life-course persistent and adolescent-limited aggression, showing that childhood-onset leads to significant impairment in educational, social, behavioral, and vocational domains (Bradshaw, Schaeffer, Petras, & Ialongo, 2010; Odgers et al., 2008); however, even adolescent-limited aggression patterns tend to indicate poorer outcomes (e.g., lower graduation rates, higher unemployment, more incarcerations; Loeber et al., 2007).

Transactional-Ecological Developmental Model

Similar to the previously described models, the *transactional-ecological developmental model* is a framework for understanding the dynamic processes by which children and contexts shape each other (Sameroff, 2009). Specifically, this model posits that all human development is an adaption that is shaped at three primary levels: the (a) *genotype* (i.e., genetic and biochemical makeup), (b) *phenotype* (i.e., phenomenological experience and current developmental expressions), and (c) *environtype* (i.e., multilevel nested environments; Sameroff, 2000). These three levels interface via transactions—or multilevel interactions throughout time—continuously taking place among them. To take a simplified example, a child's biological makeup (genotype) may predispose him to poor decision-making skills, while the family environment (environtype) may be characterized by chaotic or volatile interactions, and thus the child may behave (phenotype) in a manner that further elicits negative responses from within the given context. As a result, over time, this dynamic interplay may serve as a pathway for developing antisocial or aggressive behaviors. However, this perspective allows for different developmental pathways—or combinations of risk and protective factors—to lead to similar developmental expressions (i.e., *equifinality*), while

allowing that initially similar developmental pathways may lead to divergent developmental expressions (i.e., *multifinality*; Gutman, Sameroff, & Cole, 2003). In this way, no particular constellation of personal or environmental variables determines antisocial or aggressive behaviors among youth; rather, children and contexts both influence each other, forming interactive feedback loops throughout time that fuel human development and ultimately manifest in such harmful behaviors (Sameroff, 2009).

Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors and the School Context

The boundaries between antisocial or aggressive behaviors and typical behaviors are often first met within educational contexts when youth's behavior exceeds acceptable norms. As a result, schools are also the most likely setting for providing intervention to remediate such behaviors. To facilitate the best interventions possible, it is imperative for school personnel to be equipped with an accurate understanding of how harmful behaviors develop, as described above, and how such behaviors interface with various elements in school systems. The following section focuses on the latter, describing how schools react to antisocial and aggressive behaviors and how these reactions influence such behaviors—and vice versa.

Common Educational Practices Associated with Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

Common educational practices utilized by schools may have unfavorable influences on the development of students' antisocial or aggressive behaviors. Specifically, methods employed by schools to identify students with disabilities impact how school personnel address the needs of youth manifesting antisocial and aggressive behaviors. For example, given that students classified with emotional disturbance (ED) are reported by teachers to have higher rates of substantive threats and fighting at school (e.g., Bradley, Doolittle, & Bartolotta, 2008; Kaplan & Cornell, 2005), students exhibiting antisocial or aggressive behaviors may be hastily classified with ED, without full consideration of their constellation of presenting problems. Students exhibiting such behaviors may also, sometimes, be excluded from disability consideration altogether, because they are deemed to be "socially maladjusted," despite no diagnostic or legal definition for this term (Olympia, Farley, Christiansen, Pettersson, & Clark, 2004). Moreover, students identified with both learning disabilities (LD) and antisocial or aggressive behaviors are disproportionately more likely to be served under the LD category only, unless the behaviors become a primary focus for intervention, in which case they are also at risk for exclusion from services (Morrison & D'Incau, 2000). These discouraging trends suggest that many students manifesting antisocial or aggressive behaviors may be inappropriately classified for special education services, resulting in missed opportunities for appropriate intervention. To remedy this situation, school professionals must diligently attend to the nuances of the identification process, making sure to link all assessment information—despite the resulting classification status—to appropriate prevention and intervention services.

Once a youth engages in antisocial or aggressive behaviors, the disciplinary reactions of school officials, teachers, parents, and others may facilitate more or less favorable outcomes (Caspi, Elder, & Bem, 1988). Because school disciplinary systems address only rule-violating behaviors, and because zero-tolerance policies are common, school personnel may often ignore extenuating circumstances surrounding youth exhibiting harmful behaviors (Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006), resulting in high rates of school exclusion (i.e., suspension and expulsion) for such students. School exclusion, although a popular and modern practice, has been shown to have negative effects on many students exhibiting antisocial and aggressive behaviors, resulting in increased perpetration of offending behaviors (Hemphill, Toumbourou, Herrenkohl,

McMorris, & Catalano, 2006). While protected by additional safeguards, students in special education who exhibit antisocial and aggressive behaviors may be disproportionately subject to exclusionary practices, given suspension and expulsion rates of students classified with ED (i.e., 64%) are three times higher than those of students in other disability categories (Bradley et al., 2008). Thus, the discipline trends of particular schools, as well as the disciplinary zeitgeist of school systems in general, may unintentionally serve as a contextual risk factor contributing to continued misbehavior. However, given the transactional nature of human development, common educational practices are not the only forces shaping students' behavior; individual protective and risk factors also play a key role in shaping how students interface with school contexts (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990).

Individual Characteristics Associated with Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

Students exhibiting antisocial and other harmful behaviors at school often show early signs of aggression, defiance, victimization, academic failure, and peer rejection (White & Loeber, 2008). Such youth may also show deficits in (a) social behaviors, (b) cognitive and affective empathy, (c) self-regulation, (d) generation of prosocial solutions, (e) conflict resolution, and (e) work habits (Calkins & Keane, 2009; Campbell et al., 2010; Dodge, Coie, & Lynam, 2006; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004). Moreover, such children typically do not often engage in teacher-pleasing behaviors (e.g., working neatly and quietly; Bradley et al., 2008), and they tend to disproportionately endorse aggressive behaviors as a means to positive social outcomes (Carlson & Cornell, 2008). Recognition of these and other risk factors is imperative, given the recent developmental scholarship indicating the predictive power of certain personal characteristics with particular future-life outcomes. For example, personal risk factors such as hyperactivity, fearlessness, and low prosocial behaviors in Kindergarten have been shown to predict deviant peer group affiliation twelve years later (Lacourse et al., 2006).

In contrast, protective—or resilience—factors may counterbalance some of the aforementioned risk factors, facilitating more prosocial outcomes for such students. For instance, personal characteristics such as sociability, problem-solving ability, planning ability, and internal locus of control are likely to help children establish better relationships with parents, teachers, and other critical adults. In turn, such relationships are likely to result in students making increased positive life-course decisions and having more positive perceptions of their self-control, cooperation, self-efficacy, cognitive abilities, and social problem-solving ability (Clarke & Clarke, 1994; Elias & Branden, 1988; Jessor, Van Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin, 1995; Rutter, 1979). Thus, when working with children exhibiting antisocial and aggressive behaviors, the challenge for school systems and professionals is to minimize the effect of personal risk factors by maximizing and emphasizing the development of personal protective factors. But beyond personal factors, schools may also shape students' behavior through both group and schoolwide influences.

Group Influences Associated with Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

The influence of social or peer affiliations in students' development of antisocial and aggressive behaviors is pivotal (Dodge et al., 2006). Specifically, peer social clusters are highly influential given that they create and maintain group behavioral norms that may be transmitted into adulthood, even following group affiliation changes. Thus, research has found that peer social networks, and even brief experiences that facilitate a similar in-group sentiment, can profoundly influence negative behaviors such as aggression, bullying, and ostracism (Nipedal, Nesdale, & Killen, 2010). However, the opposite is also true, as group influences have been demonstrated to shape positive student behaviors in both academic and social realms (Farmer et al., 2010). Within the school context, classrooms serve as quintessential group settings, where students and teachers

create and negotiate a climate that influences academic, behavioral, and social adjustment of all students within the group. For this reason, teachers' skills and personal characteristics can serve as settings events—or risk and protective factors—for students' development of antisocial and aggressive behaviors (Farmer et al., 2010).

Some common risk factors for students struggling with such behaviors include teachers lacking strategies for addressing students' developmental delays (La Paro, Pianta, & Cox, 2000), as well as an increase of negative teacher-attention that hampers the development of positive student-teacher relationships (Blankemeyer, Flannery, & Vazsonyi, 2002; Reinke & Herman, 2002). In contrast, some common protective factors for such students include teachers employing effective instructional techniques (e.g., classwide and peer tutoring), reinforcement of student strengths and behaviors, early intervention for learning problems, and positive regard for students and student-teacher relationships (Farmer et al., 2010; Scott, Nelson, & Liaupsin, 2001). Thus, such findings indicate that teachers can play a significant role as classroom architects who shape an environment that can, in turn, exacerbate or curb students' development of antisocial and aggressive behaviors.

Schoolwide Influences Associated with Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

Schoolwide influences can also help to exacerbate or curb students' development of antisocial and aggressive behaviors. A disorderly school environment—characterized by vague rules and expectations, low academic achievement, and high antisocial behaviors—is likely to be an especially potent risk factor for students who need clear expectations and structure (Gottfredson, 1989; McEvoy & Welker, 2000), resulting in high suspension and expulsion rates for such students (Civil Rights Project, 2000). Furthermore, school environments characterized by ambiguous sanctions, punitive teacher attitudes, poor teacher-administrator cooperation, and use of physical safety restrictions (e.g., metal detectors, high fencing, etc.) are associated with problem behaviors and alienation among students (Mayer & Leone, 1999). Also, schools with higher rates of suspension, as discussed above, often have higher student-teacher ratios, more negative teacher attitudes and lower expectations of students, and poorer academic performance (Ostroff, 1992; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982). In such schools, school personnel spend more time on discipline-related matters and therefore pay significantly less attention to issues of school climate (Bickel & Qualls, 1980), which affect all students' development. A reciprocal cycle is thus established, in which schools with poorer climates and environments serve as contextual risk factors for developing antisocial and aggressive behaviors, while students exhibiting such behaviors shape even poorer school climates and environments, and so on. Considering this situation, recent scholarship suggests that schools combine elements of social emotional learning with schoolwide positive behavioral support programming, to better support students with interrelated needs in both social-emotional, behavioral, and academic domains (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010).

Concluding Comments Regarding Youth Exhibiting Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

Youths engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors represent a heterogeneous group of students. Given that both the presence and potential for school violence hampers the educational environment, it is imperative that educators and scholars are equipped with current empirical information that will help them better understand, intervene with, and prevent antisocial and aggressive behaviors among youth (implications for practice are delineated in Table 1.2). This chapter provided a brief overview of such timely information, focusing on (a) the relation of

Table 1.2 Implications for Practice: Towards an Understanding of Youth Engaging in Antisocial and Aggressive Behaviors

1.	Youth engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors represent a diverse group; there is no single profile, thus, education professionals should aim to identify risk factors and facilitate healthy adjustment among all students.
2.	Many youth engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors face numerous challenges in multiple settings (e.g., at home, with peers, at school), and thus, have many needs to be addressed.
3.	Each of the theories recognizes the importance of early identification and intervention to address the needs of youth engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors; thus, early antisocial and aggressive behaviors warrant serious attention to provide appropriate early interventions to address both behavioral and underlying emotional problems.
4.	There is no single theory to explain the patterns of antisocial and aggressive behaviors among youth; thus, education professionals are encouraged to consider the transactional-ecological developmental perspective, which better models the complex interplay among factors influencing antisocial and aggressive trajectories.
5.	Applied research focusing on the interface of antisocial developmental patterns and the schooling process has the potential support screening, prevention, and intervention efforts.
6.	School policies, practices, and relationships have important influences on the well-being of youth engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors; thus, it is essential to carefully consider school factors in efforts to address problem behaviors.
7.	Intervention plans emphasizing skills students need in order to behave in a more appropriate manner, or plans providing motivation to conform to required standards, are generally most effective.
8.	The school is a premier social setting which affords the opportunity to systematically screen for youth with antisocial behavioral patterns.
9.	Schools are generally among the safest places for youth and provide an important context to promote their well-being and address their needs (e.g., academic, cognitive, social, emotional, and mental health).

antisocial and aggressive behaviors to the psychiatric diagnosis of conduct disorders and its subtypes, (b) the various and interrelated pathways for conceptualizing the origins of students' antisocial and aggressive behaviors, and (c) the multiple factors influencing the development of such behaviors as they interface with school contexts. With such information, it is imperative to recognize that youth exhibiting antisocial and aggressive behaviors have significant needs, and that the most efficient and effective approach toward helping such students is early identification and intervention services. Moreover, universal-level prevention programs aimed at enhancing the social and cognitive competence of *all* youth are especially warranted—to promote schoolwide well-being and academic success, while simultaneously reducing the potential for school violence. Ultimately, such efforts will facilitate the development of healthier children, families, schools, and communities.

Note

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2

Making the Case for an International Perspective on School Violence

Implications for Theory, Research, Policy, and Assessment

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Abstract

Based on review of empirical data on school violence internationally, the present chapter proposes a global perspective. Cross-country comparisons could help gain a perspective on how extreme the school safety situation is in a given country. Further, a cross-cultural perspective of school violence provides a rich source of insights about effective policies and interventions. Theories advanced to explain school violence in one culture can inform and stimulate comparative research in other countries to examine theoretical issues such as the relative influence of student characteristics and school context on victimization and perpetration of school violence. Finally, the chapter proposes an international study on school violence, discusses conceptual and methodological challenges in such a global collaboration, and suggests ways to overcome these challenges.

Concerns about school violence are shared around the world. Although lethal shootings in the United States have attracted most of the international media coverage (Herda-Rapp, 2003), reports from other parts of the world reveal that school violence is a serious global problem (Due et al., 2005; Due, Merlo, Harel-Fisch, & Damsgaard, 2009). Time and again the public in countries with cultures as diverse as Japan, Jordan, Brazil, Norway, Israel, Malaysia, the United States, and Ethiopia are alarmed by acts of senseless violence in their schools. Data suggest that an array of violent acts occur across all segments of U.S. society and in many countries across the globe,

including decapitations in Japan, hangings in Norway, and group stabbings in Israel (Kachur et al., 1996; Smith et al., 1999).

Akiba, LeTendre, Baker, and Goesling (2002) also put forth a global perspective stating: "… school violence is a global phenomenon that affects one of the core institutions of modern society to some degree in virtually all nation-states" (p. 830). Based on the current review of empirical data on school violence internationally, we strongly support a global perspective on these phenomena.

This chapter is based on a review of numerous empirical studies and publications that examine school violence in a wide range of countries (e.g., Akiba et al., 2002; Akiba, 2008; Chen & Astor, 2009a; Currie et al., 2004; Eslea et al., 2003; Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Obeidat, 1997; Ohsako, 1997; Smith, 2003; Smith, Cowie, Olafsson, & Liefooghe, 2002; Smith et al., 1999). The chapter discusses the potential contributions of international and cross-cultural perspectives and presents a range of questions and challenges that should be addressed by international studies. Finally, this chapter includes recommendations for a conceptual and methodological framework to design an international monitoring system for school violence.

Why an International and Cross-Cultural Perspective?

There are many reasons for advocating a perspective on school violence that incorporates the examination and comparison of multiple national and cultural contexts.

Raising National Awareness and Providing International Context

One important function of examining school violence in different countries is to develop cross-country comparisons. Such comparative data could be used to gain a perspective on how extreme the school safety situation is in a given country. Such international comparisons have a strong impact on the public within countries and greatly facilitate policy creation surrounding school violence in specific counties.

For instance, Menesini and Modiano (2003) report that comparative research showed that school violence in Italy was reported at a higher level than in other European and Western countries (being about as twice as high as in England and almost three times higher than in Norway). The authors claim that there was a major response by newspapers and television programs to these data that brought about awareness of the problem in Italian schools. These cross country comparisons prompted school principals and staff to become more interested in Italian-based interventions and to study school safety issues in-depth. This type of narrative has been repeated in other countries across the globe when the media has reported high rates of school violence compared with other countries (Astor, Benbenishty, Vinokur, & Zeira, 2006).

From a different perspective, in the United States, Akiba and associates (2002) examined the data of an international study (TIMSS) and made the argument that many other countries are experiencing either similar or higher levels of school violence than the United States. This kind of global contextualization helps countries situate their standings independent of media stories associated with school violence.

Creating a Global Inventory of Interventions and Policies

A cross-cultural perspective of school violence provides a rich source of insights about policies and interventions. In a recent special issue of *Educational Researcher* on school safety (Mayer & Cornell, 2010), Astor, Guerra, and Van Acker (2010) provided examples as to how learning from empirical approaches developed around the world could improve school violence research.

Countries across the globe could learn from each other's experience in terms of the effectiveness of policies and interventions (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2007). To illustrate, the United States has invested billions of dollars in recent decades to address school violence. In fact, rates of serious school violence are on a steady decline for more than a decade (Dinkes, Kemp, & Baum, 2009). During this period many interventions were created and evaluated, and major policy guidelines were put in place in order to prevent school violence. Similar progress has been made in other countries (e.g., Australia; Slee, 2006). Further, international collaborations were created to develop training programs to build capacity in schools to prevent school violence (for instance, VISTOP, http://vistop.org/). The wealth of knowledge accumulated in these countries can help inform other countries which are facing similar issues.

To illustrate, the awareness to school violence in France has increased significantly in recent years. Dissatisfaction with current levels of violence, existing policies, and interventions has led to a new national initiative to address this social problem, headed by a school violence scholar, the president of the International Observatory of School Violence, Eric Debarbieux. As an important step in this national effort, an international scientific advisory board was assembled. The aim is to tap into the lessons learned in other countries and to examine their relevance to the French context.

The deliberations in this international advisory board highlight the complexity of transporting interventions and policies from one context to another. As the recent burgeoning literature on translational science amply demonstrates, interventions and policies developed and proved effective in one context may not translate well to other contexts (Brekke, Ell, & Palinkas, 2007; Glasgow & Emmons, 2007). For instance, evidence-based interventions that were developed in the United States to address school violence in urban schools with a large number of minority African American and Latino/a students may not be successful when implemented in French urban schools with a large number of Muslim North African students or with a significant proportion of Roma children. This challenge requires international collaboration to identify the factors that promote transporting school safety interventions and policy from country to country.

Understanding why certain cultures endorse or reject specific interventions may provide insights as to the likelihood of success of programs transported from another context. For example, mediation programs are mentioned in almost every U.S. national school safety report. By contrast, Olweus and Smith's anti-bullying programs are common in Europe, the United States, and Australia. Programs of restorative justice are common in Australia and New Zealand. Zero-tolerance policies and the use of electronic security (i.e., video cameras, sensors, metal detectors, and professional guards) are more common in the United States and England (e.g., Taylor, 2010).

An important step toward clarifying some of these issues would be systematic reviews that would compare the relative success of specific school violence programs across contexts. Thus, for instance, Farrington and Ttoti (2009) reviewed the literature on the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs across many countries. The findings indicate a wide variability in the outcomes of these programs. For instance, of ten U.S studies included in the analysis only half had strong effect sizes and close to half were more marginal. It is helpful to have these outcomes seen from a comparative interventional perspective. How is the cultural and social context of the country associated with the relative success of the program? The review suggests that programs implemented in Norway seem to work best. This could be related to the long Norwegian tradition of bullying research. It could also be associated with the fact that Scandinavian schools are of high quality, with small classes and well-trained teachers, and there is a Scandinavian tradition of state intervention in matters of social welfare.

Theoretical Issues Amenable to a Global Perspective

An international perspective can contribute significantly to theories of school violence. On the most basic level, theories advanced to explain school violence in one culture can inform and stimulate comparative research in other countries. For instance, Yoneyama and Naito (2003) advanced the theory on factors contributing to bullying by examining Japanese literature on school factors that contribute to *ijime* (bullying). Their analysis connects aspects of the role and structure of the Japanese educational system and characteristics of bullying behavior. They identified a relationship between class in Japan as a social group and the fact that most bullying behavior is carried out by a group of classmates against individual students. Also, they analyzed role expectations of Japanese teachers and showed how teacher-student interactions contribute to both teacher and student bullying behaviors. Such hypotheses and theoretical propositions advanced in the Japanese context should inform and enrich theory development in other countries that may differ in specific characteristics of their educational systems. For instance, one might expect to find different patterns of bullying (i.e., more individuals bullying other individuals) in educational systems that emphasize more individualistic ethos rather than the collectivistic ethos of the Japanese system.

The following sections present examples of how an international perspective can contribute to exploration of important theoretical issues.

The Relative Influence of Student Characteristics on Victimization and Perpetration of School Violence

An international perspective is needed in order to determine whether student characteristics are universally associated with school violence, or the nature of the relationships is sensitive to social contexts. To illustrate this issue the following sections will examine briefly two basic characteristics: gender and age. Smith, Madsen, and Moody (1999) reviewed the literature on bullying and demonstrated a clear decline in victimization as students grow older. These findings were replicated in several studies conducted in Western countries (Craig & Harel, 2004) and in Asian cultures (Chen & Astor, 2009a, 2009b). Still, the question remains whether this pattern is true in other parts of the world. The volume edited by Ohsako (1997) provides indications based on research in countries such as Ethiopia and Malaysia this age pattern may not hold in non-Western cultures.

Age may be connected to cultural norms surrounding bullying. For example, where the culture emphasizes the importance of seniority and age, older students may be more involved in bullying their younger peers. According to the accounts of Terefe and Mengistu (1997), school authorities view this form of bullying as normative and accept this kind of behavior. However, readers are cautioned not to make national or cultural interpretations without a convergence of data that is representative, qualitative, and otherwise empirically sound. Hypotheses about different national norms in non-European and Anglo/English-speaking cultures should be tested in future international research.

International studies may also shed new light on the relationships between gender and school violence. Currently, there is broad consensus that males are both perpetrators and victims of physical violence in school to a greater degree than females. Findings from several European countries regarding gender differences related to relational and indirect violence seem to be less consistent (see recent reviews and studies by Currie et al., 2004; Salmivalli & Kaukiainen, 2004; Tapper & Boulton, 2004). For instance, Craig and Harel (2004) noted that whereas males tend to bully others more than females in most counties surveyed in the Health Behaviors in School-aged Children study (HBSC; Currie et al., 2004), patterns of gender differences in bully victimization are far less consistent. The picture is even more complicated with regard to the interaction

between age and gender. Benbenishty and Astor (2005) reported that the gap between victimization rates of males and females *grows* with age. In contrast, Craig and Harel (2004) concluded that in most of the 24 countries surveyed in the HBSC study, the trend was in the opposite direction and gender gaps were smaller among older students.

The Relative Influences of Multiple Contexts on School Violence

The questions as to similarities of effects across countries and cultures are not limited to student personal characteristics. In recent years, there have been calls urging scholars to move from a focus on individual characteristics of victims and bullies, such as age and gender, to an understanding of how contexts, both within and outside of school impact school violence (Akiba et al., 2002; Benbenishty & Astor, 2005; Chen & Astor, 2009a,b; Furlong & Morrison, 2000; Yoneyama & Naito, 2003). These approaches help examine how external contexts in which a school is embedded interact with internal school and student characteristics to influence levels of victimization in schools. These layered and nested contexts include the *school* (e.g., structural characteristics, social climate and policies against violence), the *neighborhood* (e.g., poverty, social organization, crime), students' *families* (e.g., education, family structure), *cultural* aspects of student and teacher population (e.g., religion, ethnic affiliation), and the *economic*, social, and political makeup of the country as a whole. An international system of research will help clarify both theoretically and practically the role of these nested contexts.

As an example, Akiba and colleagues (2002) utilized international survey data (TIMSS) on student victimization in 37 countries to test theoretical assumptions about the nature of school violence in different countries. They tested two sets of national-level variables: (a) known predictors of crime (both general and juvenile) and (b) factors related to the educational system itself. Their investigation demonstrated that factors inherent in the educational system (e.g., academic achievement, school climate, teacher-child relationships) are more strongly correlated with school violence than general crime, basic national economic conditions, and demographic characteristics. Additionally, secondary analyses by Akiba (2008) revealed that the same variables (witnessing a friend victimized and being the victim of theft) predict fear of being victimized in eighth graders in all participating countries. The author notes that whereas individual predictors of student fear (e.g., gender) were relatively consistent, school predictors varied more across the countries studied. Somewhat in contrast, recent research (Due et al., 2009; Elgar, Craig, Boyce, Morgan, & Vella-Zarb, 2009) suggests that between-countries differences in prevalence rates of school violence may be connected to levels of income inequality in the country.

Such conflicting international findings may help refine a theory on the "spill over" of political and community violence into schools (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005). For instance, Akiba and associates (2002) noted variable levels of association of different types of school victimization (e.g., sexual assaults) to community crime. This pattern was also found in a study in Israel (Khoury-Kassabri, Benbenishty, Astor, & Zeira, 2004) in which more severe types of school victimization were related to poor neighborhoods, compared with mild/moderate types of victimization.

A Proposal for a World Wide Study of School Violence

Based on a review of reports on school violence from across the world and the above analysis, Benbenishty and Astor (2008) recommended a proactive research agenda for an international perspective on school violence and suggested a worldwide study to monitor school violence. Such a study would follow examples of international studies on academic achievements (e.g., TIMSS) and health behaviors (HBSC) and would utilize standardized measures and methods to serve as a platform for global learning and monitoring of school violence over time.

The proposed study would address the multiple perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and whenever possible, parents. Each of these constituents should be asked questions about aspects of school victimization and climate that are relevant to their specific roles and manifestations of problems in the school community in addition to a set of questions that will be identical for all participating schools. This ecologically sensitive approach could help illuminate multiple perspectives, as well as facilitate analyses addressing nested systems.

The suggested international study would provide a detailed picture for each participating country. Due to the use of standardized and highly congruent instruments across participating countries, meaningful comparisons would be facilitated. These comparisons could include prevalence rates for a wide array of school violence behaviors and school climate measures, as well as comparisons across sub-groups of students, staff, and parents. Furthermore, the interrelationships between the different perspectives of the various members of the school community would be compared across countries, to identify settings in which significant congruence or discord is more pronounced.

Such an international collaboration would provide an excellent opportunity to address theoretical questions presented in earlier sections, such as the role of multiple contexts in determining school violence. In order to be able to test these hypotheses, sampling and analysis could be conducted from both student- and school-level perspectives. This design would enable the measurement of school and neighborhood level variables, facilitating tests of hypotheses on the role of contexts in explaining levels of school violence. Further, this approach could also create a foundation for examining how different countries vary in homogeneity of levels of violence in their schools. Thus, among other advantages, such a design would allow examination of what is similar and different in schools high or low on school violence across the world (Astor, Benbenishty, & Estrada, 2009).

Conceptual Considerations and Challenges in an International Study on School Violence Definitions, Connotations, Interpretations, and Meanings

When cross-cultural comparisons are made, very often, different forms of violence are inappropriately compared. The two most used terms in the English literature are "bullying" and "school violence." In many publications, they are often used interchangeably, even though they are not conceptually or theoretically the same. There is a pressing need to either distinguish between what is school violence and bullying, or better explain the relationship between the two terms. As Devine and Lawson (2003) noted, bullying is more often used in European countries whereas school violence is a term used more often in the United States. School violence is a general term that may include many different aspects of victimization. It is practically impossible to compare reports that use "school violence" as a generic term without providing the kinds of specific behaviors that are included under this term. Bullying, on the other hand, has had a quite precise theoretical definition (e.g., Olweus, 1991), to the point that it could allow direct international comparisons. Hence, the World Health Organization conducted a cross-national study of Health Behaviors in School-Aged Children (HBSC) that uses and defines the term "bully" (e.g., Currie et al., 2004). Nevertheless, most current, large-scale international research does not strictly use commonly agreed upon definitions of bullying (e.g., that the bully have asymmetrical power over the victim, that the bullying event be part of a large repeating pattern of events, etc.). Yet, inferences are made about bullying. Benbenishty and Astor (2005) argued that bullying is a specific subset of school violence that could overlap with a wide array of school violence behaviors (e.g., sexual harassment, weapon use, school fights). However, those behaviors may not be considered bullying if they do not conform to the formal definition of bullying. Furlong and colleagues also make this similar and important point (Furlong, Morrison, & Greif, 2003; Greif, Furlong, & Morrison, 2003).

Review of the literature suggests that most international studies employ diverse meanings, measures, and understanding of which behaviors should be included in the term bully (Benbenishty & Astor, 2003). This could have a dramatic impact on the interpretation of cross-national comparisons. For example, Harel, Kenny, and Rahav (1997) asked Israeli students whether they were "bullied." The questions (in Hebrew) stated that they were being asked about *hatrada* (harassment), *hatzaka* (teasing), and *biryonoot* (mainly physical bullying). Each of these words in Hebrew has quite a specific meaning. The direct word for bullying in Hebrew strongly implies physical force exerted by a strong, well-built student (an antisocial "thug"). The overall term "bullying" in Japan has a strong connotation of social isolation, impurity, and shame. To a large extent, the set of behaviors, connotations and cultural interpretations the Japanese associate with "ijime" seem distant from the Israeli term "biryonoot" for bully. How might data on students in different cultures with different connotations for the word bullying be synthesized and integrated in order to respond to questions about bullying?

Indeed, Smith Cowie, Olafsson, and Liefooghe (2002) studied school children (ages 8–14) from 14 countries and found significant differences in the ways the term "bullying" was understood in the different countries. Similarly, a study among parents of school-aged children in five countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, England, and Japan) found clear differences in the ways the term was understood by parents. Cultures also varied on the extent to which the term "bullying" used in everyday language resembled the scientific definition of the term (Smorti, Menesini, & Smith, 2003; Smith & Monks, 2008). In a recent review, Swearer Espelage, Vaillancourt, and Hymel (2010) analyzed how such differences in definitions and conceptualizations negatively affect efforts to learn from research on how to implement bullying interventions in schools.

One potential solution is to use the same scientific definition, and agreed upon instruments, across many countries. The World Health Organization uses the Health Behavior in School-aged Children (HBSC) instruments that provide the definition of bullying to the respondents. This effort could be coupled with smaller qualitative studies that aim towards understanding the social and cultural meanings of the term bullying in each of the participating countries. It should be noted, however, that policy makers and the public in different countries are likely to have diverse understandings and interpretations of the same concept, regardless of formal scientific definitions. Hence, Israeli policy makers presented with findings on high levels of bullying would probably have a different image of the problem compared with South African, Brazilian, Canadian, or Japanese policy makers considering similar findings.

An Operational Solution: Using Self-Reports of a Wide Range of Specific and Concrete School Violence Behaviors

Based on the above analysis, the authors propose using self reports as the primary source of information on victimization, perpetration, and school climate (see a discussion of the merits of self-report on school victimization in the report from the Surgeon General, Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Further, in order to reduce variability in cultural definitions and interpretations, these self reports should focus on specific behaviors and refrain as much as possible from using loosely defined abstract labels (such as bully) that may have different meanings and connotations in different countries. Hence, asking students whether larger or stronger students pushed them is probably understood more similarly across cultures than the question of whether or not they were bullied.

The work by Furlong and associates (e.g., Furlong, Chung, Bates, & Morrison, 1995; Furlong, Greif, Bates, Whipple, Jimenez, & Morrison, 2005) provides a good example of the suggested approach. The California School Climate & Safety Survey contains questions about victimization linked to an extensive list of concrete and specific victimization types. The merits of this approach were clear when the instrument was utilized in the first National Study of

School Violence in Israel. Translation of the specific and concrete behaviors in the instrument and the comparisons with available U.S. data were relatively straightforward, especially when compared to parallel attempts to translate terms such as "bully" (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005).

Further, the analyses of the findings showed the advantages of using this wide range of victimization types. The detail-rich instrument yielded a complex and nuanced picture and highlighted the multifaceted nature of school victimization. It enabled analysis and description of which forms of victimization are more frequent in Israeli schools and which behaviors are relatively rare. The findings in Israel were comparable with data in Furlong and colleagues' studies in Southern California (Benbenishty & Astor, 2005) that examined differences in prevalence rates and structure of victimization.

Furthermore, the findings that included a wide range of behaviors showed that various aspects of victimization have different patterns of association with student characteristics, such as gender and age, and with school context variables, such as poverty in the school neighborhood. Without the large number of behaviors examined, it would not have been possible to ascertain how forms of school violence were related to each other and to other social phenomena in the Israeli context. These patterns may or may not be similar across cultures. Thus, school violence studies should examine the prevalence of a wide range of victimization types.

Psychometric Challenges in Comparing across Contexts

Using the same instrument across different contexts is not without challenges. In order to interpret differences across contexts in a valid manner, it is important to examine scale comparability across contexts. It is common to examine several aspects of such comparability: (a) to what extent the *structure* of the instrument is similar (e.g., to what extent the same items create similar factors across the different settings); (b) to what extent each of the individual items in the scale have the same relationship to the full scale score, across settings (scalar equivalence, van de Vijver and Poortinga, 2005; Waller, Compas, Hollon, & Beckjord, 2005); and (c) to what extent the scores generated by a measure have similar precursors, consequents, and correlates across the various settings (functional equivalence, Knight, Little, Losoya, & Mulvey, 2004).

Establishing scale comparability is a complex process and a discussion of the psychometric issues is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, the authors caution against over-reliance on methodological considerations, at the expense of understanding the real complexities involved in comparing across nations and cultures. To illustrate, factor analyses of self reports of victimization in schools in two countries may reveal two different structures—in one country items are grouped into two factors pertaining to severe and moderate victimization, and in the other country they align with two other factors—direct vs. indirect types of victimization. From a strictly methodological point of view, these findings may be interpreted as reflecting low structural equivalence that reduces the value of the comparison. From a more conceptual and theoretical point of view, these findings may tell an important story on two cultures that have different ways of experiencing and interpreting interpersonal behaviors in school.

Including a Focus on Staff-Initiated Victimization

Studies of school violence across the world differ in whether they include staff victimization of students. Studies on prevalence of school violence in the U.S. rarely address victimization by staff. Although there have been state and federal mandates to survey school staff, few if any have asked about staff maltreatment of students. The extensive work by Hyman and associates (e.g., Hyman, 1990; Hyman & Perone, 1998) on the role of staff in inducing trauma among students is the exception rather than the norm. Similarly, a review of reports from 24 European countries

Table 2.1 Summary of Implications for Practice and Policy

- Cross country comparisons are important because they could provide:
  - Context and perspective to understand local data on school violence
  - A rich source of insights about policies and interventions proven effective
- Evidence-based programs and interventions do not always translate across country contexts, and transferability should be examined carefully
- Global perspective could contribute to theory and help identify the role of individual characteristics and school contexts which influence school violence
- A world wide study of school violence should be designed. This collaborative study should:
  - Address the multiple perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and whenever possible, parents
  - Design sampling and analysis from both student- and school-level perspectives
  - Use self-report of a wide range of specific and concrete violent behaviors and perceptions of school cli mate and policies
  - Include a focus on staff-initiated victimization

reveals minimal reference to staff victimizing students (Smith, 2003). In contrast, reports from other parts of the world address the role of staff vis-à-vis school violence. Staff may play direct and indirect roles in victimizing students. The international literature reveals how teachers' behaviors may actually promote bullying of certain students by their peers (Yoneyama & Naito, 2003). Other studies, mainly from developing countries, present teachers as one of the main sources of victimization of students. Hence, in places like Malaysia, Ethiopia, Brazil, and other countries in Latin America, teachers may use physically and verbally aversive discipline measures (e.g., Salas, 1997).

The potential contribution of including staff-initiated violence in studies of school violence has been clearly demonstrated in Israel. As described in Chapter 16 of this volume and in a series of papers (Benbenishty, Zeira, & Astor, 2002; Benbenishty, Zeira, Astor, & Khoury-Kassabri, 2002; Khoury-Kassabri, Astor, & Benbenishty, 2008), representative findings on staff violence contribute to better theoretical understanding of the phenomenon and to efforts to address this problem that affect so many students, especially students in more vulnerable groups in society. In conclusion, given that staff may play such an important role in victimizing, as well as protecting students, reference to staff-initiated violence and more protective behaviors of staff should be included in international comparisons of school violence.

Concluding Comments

School violence is a global phenomenon. A review of the literature from across the world shows both the similarities across diverse cultures and many different patterns that reflect the unique characteristics of cultural and national contexts. This richness provides unique opportunities for comparisons and mutual learning that can facilitate examination and development of theories of school violence, and can help expand the repertoire of effective interventions. In the present chapter the authors propose a collaborative study that will bring together researchers and policy makers from across the world and employ methods and instruments that will help further theory and global efforts to reduce school violence. The authors' call for an international study of school violence was accepted by the International Observatory of School Violence in its annual meeting in Lisbon (2008). Since then, however, the first steps toward realizing this mission revealed major practical obstacles. Language barriers in combination with major discrepancies between

developing and developed countries in access to resources are formidable challenges. There is a clear need to form a global collaboration, perhaps through the United Nations or World Bank, in order to address this significant global social problem of school violence.

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3

Developing Safe, Supportive, and Effective Schools

Facilitating Student Success to Reduce School Violence

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Abstract

A safe and effective school framework aligns school safety, student support, and academic achievement across individual, classroom, school, and ideally, community levels. The risk and protective factors for academic, social, and behavioral problems are often intertwined; thus, interventions that target one domain frequently impact other domains. This chapter describes a comprehensive three-level approach to align student support, school safety, and academic achievement. The first section provides an overview of the connections between and among student support, school safety, and academic achievement. The second section provides the conceptual underpinnings for implementing and a comprehensive approach. The final section provides a brief description of how to apply this model to students and schools that have different needs and strengths. Creating safe, supportive, and effective schools will reduce school violence.

Aligning Safety, Support, and Achievement

Although student support, school safety, and academic achievement are often discussed independently, they are interactive and often interdependent. For example, school safety is one correlate of attendance and academic achievement (Barton, 2003; Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2009; Osher & Kendziora, 2010) and the school environment plays an important role in preventing childhood depression (Herman, Reinke, Parkin, Traylor, & Agarwal, 2009). Analyses of data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) suggest

that youth who are failing, skipping, and doing poorly in school or feel disconnected from school, are at higher risk of early health risk behavior (Blum, 2001). The Add Health data also show that teenagers report substantially stronger feelings of connectedness when they get along with each other, pay attention, and hand in assignments on time (Blum, 2001).

While some school safety approaches focus on threat assessment or physical safety, a comprehensive approach emphasizes and addresses the social and emotional as well as the physical aspects of safety. For example, students may miss school due to fears for their physical safety and of emotional ridicule or threat (Garbarino & deLara, 2002), including being bullied or harassed by students and staff for their gender, sexual orientation, appearance, and/or disability. Social and emotional threats appear to be far more common than physical attacks (Bear, Webster-Stratton, Furlong, & Rhee, 2000). Feeling emotionally safe, which often depends on whether students ask for help and acknowledge mistakes (Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999), is critical to learning (Osher & Kendziora, 2010; Osher et al., 2008). This climate of safety can contribute to students seeking help for themselves and others, and in doing so, reducing the risk of violence (Osher & Dwyer, 2005).

Effective schools foster and support high academic and behavioral standards making achievement within these schools both a collective and individual phenomena. Collective components of achievement involve the characteristics of the school community, including its culture, structure, human resources, and student members. These factors vary considerably across schools. Individual components comprise both student and adult characteristics. Adult characteristics include the knowledge, skills, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of school-based staff. Beliefs and attitudes include adults' sense of their role (e.g., Does a teacher view student support as part of their role), as well as teacher beliefs and attitudes towards students and each other (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Osher et al., 2008). Capacity to meet the many challenges that adults face requires ongoing training and support of skills and practices. Training should be focused, support skill mastery and necessary attitudinal change, and be delivered in a manner that develops or enhances the capacity of school staff and families to collaborate and employ effective strategies and approaches. Adults should be prepared to be both interpersonally and culturally competent. Administrative support is vital, including the moral, logistical, and technical support needed to implement these approaches effectively (e.g., principal leadership, monitoring, and coaching).

Student characteristics consist of academic and social-emotional skills as well as behavioral and psychological characteristics. Behavioral characteristics include preparedness, attendance, attentiveness, and school engagement (e.g., time on task; Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994). Psychological characteristics include motivation, psychological engagement, and perseverance, the absence of which has been related to dropping out (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel, & Paris, 2005). Bryk and Thum's (1989) analysis of the effects of high school organization on dropping out found that absenteeism was higher in schools with more discipline problems and where principals reported teacher problems. In addition, the number of students dropping out is lower when they feel safe, academic emphasis is greater, faculty are interested in and engaged with students, students feel that discipline policies are fair, and there is less internal differentiation among students.

These adult and student factors both contribute to s,chool climate, which contributes to behavioral and academic outcomes. For example, research examining the effects of high school organization on dropping out has shown that school dropout rates are lower when students perceive themselves as having more positive relationships with their teachers (Lee & Burkam, 2003).

Because students need appropriate support to facilitate learning and address the barriers to learning, successful schools often have high levels of academic emphasis in combination with student support (Adelman & Taylor, 2000). This may be true in schools that serve students

challenged by multiple risk factors (Ancess, 2003; Pianta & Walsh, 1996; Shouse, 1996). Academic emphasis includes instructional leadership, effective pedagogy, well-trained teachers, and an explicit focus on teaching and learning. Student support includes (a) connecting positively with adults, (b) supporting prosocial student interactions in an inclusive school community, (c) teaching and supporting the development and use of social emotional learning (SEL) skills, (d) employing positive behavioral supports, and (e) providing students with effective opportunities to learn. Successful schools provide students and staff with the support necessary to promote high achievement and the intensity of support is varied to address student and school needs. Connecting resources maximizes the chances for success by aligning school and community student support resources.

Conceptual Basis for a Three-Level Approach to Align Safety, Support, and Achievement

The conceptual roots of a comprehensive approach are grounded in a variety of disciplines, frameworks, and fields related to children's learning and behavior, which are described in Table 3.1. Although the models that come out of the described knowledge areas are distinct, the models and empirical data that ground them can be aligned (e.g., Dryfoos, 1990). For example, school-related transactions take place in nested environments (e.g., home, community, school, and classroom), and change over the life span as does the importance of social fields. Developmental epidemiological approaches can study the impact of interventions among populations over time (Kellam, Rebok, Wilson, & Mayer, 1994). Similarly, a public health model can integrate both promotion of positive youth development and prevention of problems (Davis, 2002).

Research suggests that risk and protective factors underlying problem behavior predict positive youth development, suggesting that an approach that reduces risk and enhances protection is likely to enhance youth wellness, while reducing future problem behaviors (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004; Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002). Further, although the intellectual foundations of work in positive youth development is not necessarily based in behavioral theory, the behavioral principles of reinforcement and social learning can be aligned with youth development approaches (Bandura, 1995). This does not mean that a hodgepodge approach be taken; the nuances and specifics of each framework must be addressed. For example, a focus on risk factors alone does not produce high quality outcomes (Pittman, 1991), but research on risk and protection suggests that an exclusive focus on developmental assets will not eliminate the impact of risk factors (Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999). Further syntheses of research from different paradigms will help coordinate problem solving and help schools better predict and prevent individual and system failures.

In addition to the above considerations, there are a number of relevant fields of inquiry. They include research on school effectiveness, which examines school effects, improvement, reform, and size (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000); school safety, discipline, and violence prevention (Gottfredson et al., 2000; Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; U.S. Public Health Service, 2000); and research on instruction, curriculum, and assessment, identifying effective approaches to working with students (Marzano, 2003). Other fields include research on consultation and team problem solving, where interventions are implemented through training, modeling, and ongoing coaching (Kratochwill & Bergan, 1990), as well as research on cultural competence, culturally responsive teaching, and multicultural education. This latter research examines the nature of disparities among youth of diverse cultural backgrounds and identifies what works in the education of children of color (Osher, Cartledge, Oswald, Artiles, & Coutinho, 2004; U.S. Public Health Service, 2001). There is a good deal of convergence across these areas on five matters:

Table 3.1 Disciplines, Frameworks, and Fields Related to Children's Learning and Behavior

Field	*Description*	*Research*
Public Health	Focus on population-based approaches to problems, prevention, and includes early and intensive interventions.	Davis, 2002; World Health Organization, 2002
Prevention and Developmental Science	Identifies risks and protective factors, including those that mediate and moderate outcomes.	Kendziora & Osher, 2004
Positive Youth Development and Social Emotional Learning	Includes research on social competence, and highlights the importance of promoting resilience, social and emotional learning, and developmental assets.	Catalano et al., 2004; Cicchetti, Rappaport, Sandler, & Weissberg, 2000; Greenberg et al., 2003
Behavioral Research in Special Education and Psychology	Contributes to the development of positive behavior supports, functional behavior analysis, and classroom management techniques.	Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995
Mental Health Services and Treatment Research	Identifies effective approaches and therapeutic interventions for mental health disorders.	Burns & Hoagwood, 2002
Life Course/Social Field Theory	Highlights the key role of social fields, natural raters, and how each of these changes throughout people's life course.	Kellam & Rebok, 1992
Ecological Theory	Emphasizes the importance of focusing on multiple-person systems of interactions, which may include an immediate setting (e.g., school), interrelations among major settings (e.g., home-school), other social structures that influence what goes on in these settings (e.g., presence of a system of care), and overarching institutional patterns (e.g., community resources).	Brofenbrenner, 1977
Transactional Analysis	Indicates that developmental outcomes are the result of ongoing dynamic interplay among child behavior, adult responses, and environmental variables that may influence both the child and those who interact with him.	Sutherland, 2000; Sutherland, Wehby & Yoder, 2002

1. Numerous school factors matter, which include the following: (a) teacher beliefs and expectations, (b) relationships with students, (c) leadership; (d) collaboration and coordination, (e) academic press, and (f) a commitment to doing what is necessary to help students succeed (e.g., Ancess, 2003; Osher, Woodruff, & Sims, 2002).
2. Students benefit from and need high-quality teaching and effective social support that engages them in the learning process. Effective instruction includes the ability to connect with students, manage the classroom, engage students at the zone of proximal development, and help them regulate their behavior (Ancess, 2003; Osher, Sandler, & Nelson, 2001; Osher et al., 2010).
3. Rigid and inflexible approaches to discipline do not work and disproportionately harm students of color and students with disabilities, and positive and relational approaches to discipline do the opposite (APA, 2006, 2008; Osher et al., 2001; Sugai et al., 2000; U.S. Public Health Service, 2000).
4. Culture matters and must and can be addressed (Allen & Boykin, 1992; U.S. Public Health Service, 2001).

5. Change is hard, takes time, and requires facilitation, trust, and support (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

This convergence of literature supports the comprehensive framework, which is presented in the next section.

Student support is key for a comprehensive approach of student safety and achievement. This support can be understood from both a risk and asset-based perspective. From a risk perspective, student support addresses barriers to learning as well as factors that set the stage for or reinforce behavioral problems (e.g., alienating environments, bullying, punitive discipline, and inappropriate pedagogy). From an asset-based perspective, student support provides youth with the personal resources and social capital needed to help them succeed in school, handle problematic situations, meet the schools' behavioral expectations, and learn. Some interventions focus on risk and protection and aim at decreasing problem behaviors, and others focus on development of assets that provide building blocks for health development; however, they can be aligned. Prevention efforts that target risks are most successful when they are coordinated with explicit attempts to enhance children's competence, connection to others, and ability to contribute to their community (Greenwood, Terry, Utley, Montagna, & Walker 1993; Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2001). For example, Durlak and Wells' (1997) meta-analysis of 177 primary behavioral and social prevention programs among youth under age 18 showed improved assertiveness, communication skills, self-confidence, and academic performance as well as reduced internalizing and externalizing problems. Moreover, Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger's (2011) analysis of 207 SEL programs found positive effects on SEL skills, behaviors, attitudes, and academic achievement.

A Comprehensive Framework for Student Support, Safety, and Achievement

Supportive schools as conceptualized in this chapter provide students with social, behavioral, and mental health support that facilitate achievement and address barriers to learning (Osher, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2004). Student support can be conceptualized as having four dimensions, each of which involves a cluster of attributes: (a) connection within caring schools, (b) social-emotional learning, (c) positive behavioral supports, and (d) engaging and appropriate learning opportunities (Osher et al., 2004, 2008). These four dimensions are interactive and interdependent.

There is some overlap between and among dimensions, both in terms of what each dimension includes, as well as the impact of some interventions across multiple dimensions. For example, there is a connection between helping students regulate their behavior (dimension 2) and teaching them the skills necessary to meet the schools' behavioral demands (dimension 3); however, there are differences. The second dimension explicitly targets SEL and focuses on internalization, application, and generalization of SEL skills. Skill instruction under the positive behavioral supports dimension, on the other hand, focuses on meeting the schools' behavioral demands. SEL, when taught and reinforced at school and home, is far more likely to be generalized and internalized than behavior modifications requiring token reinforcements (Greenwood et al., 1993; McConnell, Missall, Silberglitt, & McEvoy, 2002). Effective interventions may cross multiple dimensions or combine interventions that cross multiple dimension. For example, the Child Development Project involves the first, second, and fourth dimensions (Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000), and BEST combines Second Step (second dimension) with EBS (Effective Behavioral Support; third dimension; Sprague et al., 2001).

This section explores the four dimensions, illustrating how they can be addressed for all students, some students who are at a greater level of risk, and for a smaller number of students who are at an even greater level of need.

The Four Dimensions of Violence Prevention–Intervention

Dimension 1: Belonging, Connection, and Care

The first dimension involves feelings of belonging at school, connection to students and adults, and caring school environments. Resnick and his colleagues (1997) called this phenomenon "connectedness," and included within it an adolescent's perception of safety, belonging, respect, and feeling cared for at school. Other researchers have pointed to the importance of bonding to the school (Hawkins & Weis, 1985), sense of community (Battistich & Horn, 1997), and school membership (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989) and linked them both to positive as well as negative academic and behavioral outcomes (McNeely & Falci, 2004; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002; Metz, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999).

Schools, particularly large ones, can be alienating places, which students, particularly those who are socially disadvantaged or are not doing well, experience as uncaring (e.g., Page, 1991). Successful schools are often places of connection and engagement for all students (e.g., Bensman, 2000; Jimerson, Campos, & Greif, 2003; Maeroff, 1999; National Research Council, 2004). Osterman's (2000) review of research on student belongingness found that it influences achievement through its effects on engagement. Resnick, Harris, and Blum's (1993) multivariate analyses of data on 36,000 seventh to twelfth graders found that school connectedness was the most salient protective factor for both boys and girls against the acting out behaviors and was second in importance after family connectedness for internalizing behaviors (e.g., withdrawal, despondence, and panic, that are frequently associated with depression and anxiety disorders). Further analyses of the Add Health data (Blum, 2001) suggest that adolescents who feel connected to adults at school are less likely to use alcohol or other substances, experience less emotional distress, attempt suicide less, and engage in less deviant and violent behaviors. School connectedness was the only school-related variable that was protective for every single outcome measured (Resnick et al., 1993).

Research suggests that students who believe that they are cared for put more effort into their schooling, which, in turn, positively affects their learning (Smerdon, 1999). In a meta-analysis of over 100 studies Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), found that the quality of teacher-student relationships drove other aspects of classroom management. Teachers who had high quality relationships with their students had 31% fewer discipline problems, rule violations, and related problems over a year's time than did teachers who lacked high quality relationships with their students. This finding is supported by a set of studies that range from preschool through high school. They suggest that supportive relationships between teachers and students promote student engagement, positive attitudes, and a sense of belonging toward school, motivation, and academic achievement (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Connell, Halpern-Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usinger, 1995; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; National Research Council, 2004; Sinclair, Christenson, Lehr, & Anderson, 2003; Wentzel, 1997, 1998; Wentzel & Wigfield, 1998).

Dimension 2: Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

The second dimension involves support for students' ability to regulate their emotions, as well as their social and academic behavior by developing their social and emotional skills. Effective SEL programming helps students develop skills that enable them to recognize and manage their emotions, understand and appreciate others' perspectives, establish positive goals, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations effectively (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003; Lemerise & Arsenio, 2000). Wilson, Gottfredson, and Najaka's (2001) meta-analysis of 165 studies of school-based prevention found that self-control or social competency programming that employed cognitive-behavioral and behavioral instructional

methods consistently was effective in reducing dropout, nonattendance, conduct problems, and substance use. Analyses by Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walberg (2004) suggest that that SEL positively contributes to school related attitudes, behavior, and performance:

1. attitudes include: (a) stronger sense of community (bonding), (b) more academic motivation and higher aspirations, and (c) positive attitudes toward school;
2. behavior includes: (a) understanding the consequences of behavior, (b) coping effectively with middle school stressors, (c) more prosocial behavior, (d) fewer or reduced absences, (e) more classroom participation, (f) greater effort to achieve, (g) reduction in aggression and disruptions, (h) lower rate of conduct problems, (i) fewer hostile negotiations and better conflict resolution skills, (j) fewer suspensions, (k) better transition to middle school, and (l) increased student engagement at school; and
3. performance includes: (a) increased grades and achievement, (b) more students on track to graduate, and (c) fewer dropouts.

These relations are supported by Durlak et al.'s (2011) meta-analysis, which found modest effect sizes on academic related attitudes, prosocial behavior (and reduction of antisocial behavior), and academic achievement.

Dimension 3: Positive Behavioral Approaches

The third dimension involves reducing inappropriate use of punitive responses and the use of positive behavioral supports. Schools sometimes emphasize punitive measures to manage student behavior, and teachers may use disapproval more frequently than approval as a consequence for student behavior (Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991). Educators may respond to student behavioral problems in a reactive, negative, and harsh manner, which includes hostile adult responses, disciplinary referrals, punishment, segregation, and removal from the school environments (Mayer, 2001; Noguera, 2003). These responses are often disproportionately applied to students of color and students with emotional and behavioral disabilities (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000). These negative responses can also affect the learning process; students with behavioral problems are provided with lower levels of instruction, praised less, and called upon less frequently than other students (Gunter & Denny, 1998; Sutherland, Wehby, & Yoder, 2002; Van Acker, Grant, & Henry, 1996).

In fact, what Gunter and his colleagues have conceptualized as a negative-reinforcement cycle (Gunter, Denny, Jack, Shores, & Nelson, 1993) reduces a student's opportunity to learn (Gunter & Coutinho, 1997; Osher, Morrison, & Bailey, 2003), which is dependent on instructional time and task engagement (Greenwood, Seals, & Kamps, 2010). These ongoing transactions contribute to a self-sustaining cycle of classroom disruption and negative consequences (Dumas, Prinz, Smith, & Laughlin, 1999; Farmer, Quinn, Hussey, & Holohan, 2001; Osher et al., 2002) that includes academic failure and forced segregation with antisocial peers, which may reinforce problem behavior (Dishion, McCord, & Poullin, 1999; Maag, 2001; Murphy, Beck, Crawford, Hodges, & McGaughy, 2002; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985).

Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) can be employed at a schoolwide level. For instance, PBS as a universal intervention may include: clearly identifying a limited number of schoolwide behavioral rules, stating them positively, displaying them visibly, and structuring the school environment so that students meet behavioral expectations. PBS as a more intensive intervention may be in the form of functional behavioral assessment or school-based wraparound services. Positive supports also include the physical structure of the school (e.g., its size, layout, and lighting), as well as administrative practices.

This dimension is based upon research grounded in applied behavioral analysis and environmental design that demonstrates: (a) how teacher and schools can proactively reduce the incidence of problem behavior and respond in a proactive manner, (b) the ineffectiveness of punishment as an intervention, (c) the impact of environment, and (d) how schools can successfully use alternatives to punishment. For example, results of a study by Sutherland, Alder, and Gunter (2003), which examined the impact of an intervention aimed at increasing the opportunity to respond (OTR) for fourth graders with EBD, suggest that increased rates of OTR contributed to increased rates of students' correct responses, increased task engagement, and decreased disruptive behavior. This research has demonstrated inefficiencies of inconsistent and punitive school and classroom management systems including: (a) punitive and inconsistent school and classroom behavior management practices, unclear, invisible, or unachievable rules and expectations regarding appropriate behavior; (b) lack of adequate supervision and monitoring of student behavior; (c) failure to effectively correct rule violations and reward adherence to them; and (d) failure to individualize consequences (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991; Osher et al., 2010; Walker et al., 1996).

Dimension 4: Academic Engagement and Support

The fourth dimension includes what schools do academically to ensure that every child succeeds. This dimension can be conceptualized as having technical, cultural-structural, student-specific, and contextual dimensions. These dimensions interact with each other as well as with the other three dimensions. For example, in schools that lack community and positive behavioral supports, it is more likely that the enacted curriculum will be a curriculum of control (Knitzer, Steinberg, & Fleisch, 1990) or teaching for order (what some call defensive teaching), where teachers lower the academic press and accept disengagement as long as it is not disruptive (Murphy et al., 2002).

Three Additional Factors to Promoting Student Success

Technical Factors

Some students may learn regardless of the quality of the academic opportunities, whereas others require effective instruction or additional academic supports. Technical issues consist of the quality of organization, sequencing, presentation, and pacing of the curriculum as well as the manner in which learning is regularly assessed and feedback is provided. This includes the management of instructional time (Greenwood et al., 2010), and the extent to which students are actively involved in learning (Murphy et al., 2002; Osher et al., 2010). Technical issues also include the efficient and appropriate use of effective instructional strategies such as advance organizers, mastery learning approaches, homework and practice, direct instruction, peer tutoring, curriculum based assessment, and cooperative learning.

School Cultural and Structural Factors

Successful schools are ones in which: (a) there is a teacher community that focuses on learning, (b) individual teachers have high expectations for all students and believe that all students can learn and that they as teachers can teach them, and (c) teachers as a group believe that they are collectively accountable for student success (Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1995; Murphy et al., 2002; Stewart, 2008). Teachers in these schools do not blame students or their families, for student failure. To facilitate student success, educational professionals must provide a supportive context and there needs to be a culture of problem solving rather than blame or avoidance,

and principal leadership that supports a supportive school culture (Murphy et al., 2002; Quinn, Osher, Hoffman, & Hanley, 1998). For example, it is harder for teachers to maintain high standards for every student, have community among themselves, and feel collective responsibility for learning in large schools and in schools that track students (Metz, 1997). Structural factors also include efficient school and community systems that connect students and families to prevention and treatment resources (Blechman, Fishman, Fishman, & Lewis, 2004; Osher, 2002; Rappaport et al., 2002).

Student-Specific Factors

For learning to take place, teachers must engage and connect with students (National Research Council, 2004). Students learn best when learning is active, aligns with their experiences and goals, and builds upon their strengths. This includes using multiple modalities for learning, and scaffolding the learning process so that there is an appropriate balance between challenge and support (Moll & Greenberg, 1990). Effective instruction and assessment requires cultural competency, both in content and delivery, to successfully address student epistemology, student language proficiency, cultural world views, cultural communication and socialization styles, and student life context and values (Solano-Flores & Nelson-Barber, 2001).

Addressing Different Levels of Student Needs

Effective intervention should address the nature and intensity of student needs, and a three-level public health approach provides a way for organizing supportive resources. Because student needs are related to environmental factors that place them at risk, as well as the presence of protective factors and assets in the community, the percent of students in a school who require early or intensive interventions will vary (Scales & Leffert, 1999). The three levels of intervention are interactive. Universal approaches and interventions create a schoolwide foundation. When a strong foundation is in place, it is easier to identify students who require early intervention, making it more likely that these interventions will be effective. Similarly, universal interventions reduce the incidence of problem behavior in the school population. This means that fewer students will be available to tease or harass other students, induce their participation in problematic activities, or reinforce students who act in an antisocial manner (Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). Further, a reduction in problematic behaviors at a universal level will free adults to teach and connect with students, while reducing the likelihood that they will respond to students in a counter-aggressive manner, which would reinforce inappropriate behaviors.

All children require connection, need self-regulation, and benefit from effective, engaging instruction and positive behavioral support. However, what is done to support individual students—both the intensity and type of intervention—differs as a function of student strengths, assets, and needs. The following paragraphs illustrate how these supports can be implemented.

There are some common characteristics of interventions at each level. Universal interventions include both promotion efforts that build assets and protective factors (e.g., connection to adults in the school) and risk targeted interventions that address risk factors (e.g., behavioral problems in the classroom). As in the case of adding fluoride to water to prevent tooth decay, universal interventions or primary prevention efforts, are provided to everyone in a population whether it is a grade or the school—even though everyone may not require them. This is important because no matter how effective screening for risk factors is, there will always be false negatives (Derzon, 2001), and the purpose of primary prevention is to reduce the incidence of a problem (e.g., tooth

decay) in a population. However, universal interventions will be insufficient to protect all children, hence the need for early and intensive intervention.

Early interventions include both selective and indicated interventions. Selective interventions are for individuals who, although they are not displaying early warning signs, are members of a population that research suggests are at higher risk for a particular problem (e.g., a child who was exposed to violence). Indicated interventions address the needs of students whose behavior indicates that they are at higher risk than other children (e.g., a child who exhibits early warning signs). Early interventions are often provided within group contexts, focusing on one ecological domain (e.g., the school) or one dimension (e.g., reading). Compared to intensive interventions, early interventions are less time consuming. Because early interventions should take place before an intensive problem manifests itself, it important to intervene in a nonstigmatizing manner, build upon strengths, and avoid self-fulfilling prophecies, where teachers, staff, students, or parents confound information about a risk of a bad outcome happening (or a label) with a belief in its inevitability, and act on that belief (Weinstein, 2002). This is particularly the case for selective interventions, where there are no or insufficient data to definitively support conclusion that a youth may develop a serious problem.

Intensive interventions should be individualized and focus on multiple ecological domains (e.g., family and school) as well as dimensions (e.g., academics, self-regulation, and behavior). To be effective, they must be strength-based, capacity building, address multiple risk factors, linguistically and culturally competent, child and family driven, monitored in an ongoing manner, and intensive and sustained.

Caring and Connection

While social connection is a universal need, some students may find it harder to connect with others due to temperament, learning or behavioral disabilities that affect their thought processing, cultural differences, and prior attachment issues. Some students are also more vulnerable to teasing or harassment due to such individual characteristics. Small classes where teachers have more opportunity to connect with individual students and small schools where every adult is expected to connect with and follow some of the students provide a platform to support social connections. Programs like the Child Development Program, which intentionally builds a school community, extend this connection at a classroom level. However, some students could still require more intensive efforts at connection; for example, to help their transition into high school or to prevent their dropping out of school (Felner, Ginter, & Primavera, 1982; Osher et al., 2003). The more students experience risks in their lives, the more it is important to engage families in a family-driven, respectful, and culturally competent manner (Osher, 2000; Osher & Osher 2002; Osher et al., 2004). Families and Schools Together (FAST), exemplifies such an approach for families (McDonald & Sayger, 1998).

Self-Regulation and SEL Skills

All students require self-regulation and SEL skills, but some students require additional support in developing these skills. Just as most students need to learn how to read in school, they must also learn how to interact appropriately with peers and adults and how to address academic challenges (e.g., frustration) and interpersonal conflicts (e.g., teasing). Effective SEL programs are developmentally appropriate and cover all age ranges. They aim at developing five core competencies: self-awareness, interpersonal and social awareness, self-regulation and management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. There are many good programs that address universal needs in a developmentally appropriate way and they can be found in *Safe and Sound:*

An Educators Guide to Social and Emotional Learning Programs (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003). However, some students require more intensive interventions; for example, those who have experienced trauma or struggle with depression or ADHD. In other instances, students may have an inability to control anger when provoked, cannot express their feelings, or have particularly tough times handling failure or group pressure. A good example of an early intervention is Aggression Replacement Therapy, which is provided in a group context and includes skill streaming, anger control training, and moral reasoning training (Feindler & Gerber, this volume; Goldstein & Glick, 2010). Some students, such as those experiencing an anxiety disorder or depression, may need more support than group counseling can provide. Some may benefit from cognitive-behavioral treatments where they learn to deal with fears by modifying the way they think and behave, others may require medication, and some may require both types of treatment (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2005). Schools are rarely solely involved with medication management, hence, cross-agency collaboration and coordination is very important.

Positive Behavioral Supports

All students can benefit from schoolwide systems and school-community members that support a positive and proactive approach to discipline. This strategy is likely to include the articulation of positive behavioral expectations, teaching students desired behaviors, and providing procedures to encourage appropriate behavior and discourage inappropriate behaviors. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Effective Behavioral Support (EBS), and Achieve are models that provide schoolwide strategies (Knoff & Batsche, 1995; Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Quinn et al., 1998; Sugai et al., 2000). However, some students (sometimes estimated as less than 15 to 20%; Sugai et al., 2000) require more intensive support, which is provided in small groups (e.g., a planning center) or individually (e.g., functional assessment) (Quinn et al., 1998; Scott & Eber, 2003). Like universal approaches, these approaches are useful because adults use data to identify and respond to what they may be doing to create or reinforce student behavior problems, as well as what supports can be put in place to address problems (Gable, Quinn, Rutherford, & Howell, 1998; Osher et al., 2004). An even smaller number of students require very intensive support, such as school-based wraparound, which might include a classroom aide (Scott & Eber, 2003). Wraparound and other effective intensive behavioral interventions must be youth and family driven, implemented in a culturally competent manner, and when school-based, address the concerns and training needs of school staff (Poduska, Kendziora, & Osher, 2008; Quinn & Lee, 2007; Woodruff et al., 1999).

Providing Effective Academic Support

All students require opportunities to learn. They learn best when schools provide them with effective, well-designed learning tasks that are presented in a meaningful manner and actively engage them. Effective teachers commonly draw upon the following technique to enhance their instruction: (a) set and communicate explicit learning goals; (b) connect learning to student experiences; (c) present new content multiple times and through a variety of modalities; (d) provide opportunities for practice, and additional challenges after students master content; (e) employ a quick pace; monitor student progress; (f) provide ongoing feedback to students; and (g) recognize efforts and celebrate progress (Howell & Nolet, 2000; McTighe & O'Connor, 2005). Effective interventions that facilitate this process include Class-wide Peer Tutoring (Greenwood et al., 1993) and Success For All (Slavin & Madden, 2001), which enable children to practice new skills and experience meaningful academic success. Although all students can benefit from

effective instruction, some students will require group support that targets their linguistic background, and others may require individualized supports that address their specific learning disabilities or problems. Interventions will be most effective when they leverage student strengths and assets (e.g., interests and parental support) and align with the student's experiences and goals. Traditional approaches to addressing the needs of students (and teachers) involve tracking, pull-out, and separate classes. Research (Brunello & Checchi, 2007; Oakes & Lipton, 1994) suggests that such approaches are counterproductive, and techniques that bring needed support into the classroom include: teaming special and regular educators, employing assistive technology, and leveraging service learning to scaffold learning and engage students (Muscott, 2000; Quinn et al., 1998).

Given the numerous demands on educators, it is important to recognize that challenges are likely in aligning, safety, support, and achievement. Among the most salient is the disproportionate emphasis of school evaluation on test scores. Within the context of high-stakes testing, too often, resources are only invested in those programs that purport to directly impact student achievement. Thus, many factors related to school safety and student support are ignored. Limited resources must be invested wisely. As discussed previously in this chapter, safety and student support are essential features in facilitating student achievement. Table 3.2 briefly delineates important implications for implementing comprehensive plans to promote student safety, support, and achievement.

Each school and community has unique values, needs, and strengths, which will affect how schools move forward. For some schools the starting point may be universal youth development,

Table 3.2 Implications for Practice: Comprehensive Plans to Promote Student Safety, Support, and Achievement

1.	Understand that student safety and student support are essential features in facilitating student achievement.
2.	Implement strategies and programs that promote student support.
3.	Utilize efficient and appropriate use of effective instructional strategies such as advance organizers, mastery learning approaches, homework and practice, direct instruction, peer tutoring, and cooperative learning.
4.	Carefully consider the quality of organization, sequencing, presentation, and pacing of the curriculum as well as the manner in which learning is regularly assessed and feedback is provided.
5.	Promote a school community that has high expectations for all students and is collectively accountable for student success.
6.	Develop a school context where learning is active, aligns with student experiences and goals, and builds upon their strengths.
7.	Implement effective intervention to address the nature and intensity of student needs.
8.	Establish a school culture that reflects caring and connectedness to promote school engagement and active participation among students.
9.	Provide programs that help students learn how to interact appropriately with peers and adults and how to solve academic problems and interpersonal conflicts, including: self-awareness, interpersonal and social awareness, self-regulation and management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.
10.	Organize schoolwide systems and school-community members that support a positive and proactive approach to discipline.
11.	Apply effective, well-designed learning tasks that are presented in a meaningful manner and actively engage students.
12.	Recognize that some students will require group support that targets their linguistic background, and others may require individualized supports that address their specific learning needs.

for others, comprehensive behavioral approaches, and still for others intensive mental health support. Thus, no single strategy or program can be systematically implemented in all schools. This presents challenges for administrators and school personnel in determining appropriate strategies that align appropriately. Selection criteria can be found in Safe, Supportive, and Successful Schools Step by Step (Osher et al., 2004). This chapter provides a conceptual foundation for educators to build upon in promoting safety, support, and achievement at school.

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