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*Editor's Note: The following research will be released at the Society for Prevention Research ([www.preventionresearch.org](http://www.preventionresearch.org)) annual meeting, May 31-June 2, 2006, Hyatt Regency, San Antonio, TX.*

## **BULLYING: DO SCHOOL PROGRAMS WORK?**

*Papers explore stopping bullying and anti-social behavior*

Bullying in schools has been around for many years. But today, in schools across the country, children are taking special conflict-resolution classes or being trained as youth mediators. Classrooms and even entire schools are incorporating techniques to create peaceable schools. The programs are designed to give children new skills to avoid trouble before it begins. Spurred by concerned parents, some schools are using similar programs to end the long-tolerated practice of bullying, often by teaching children the skills they can use to cope with bullies.

- **Can conflict resolution programs reduce antisocial behavior in schools, and what methods work best?**
- **Are children better able to resist bullying if they've been taught specific skills?**
- **Do these programs work best for elementary, middle school, or high-school students?**

Two papers being presented at the Society for Prevention Research (SPR) Annual Meeting on June 2<sup>nd</sup> will explore these questions:

Researchers from Vanderbilt University will review more than 25 years' worth of evidence on whether conflict resolution programs actually reduce the number of reported discipline problems and antisocial behavior in schools. Their analysis examined 32 studies of programs at the elementary, middle school, and high-school level. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the programs as well as their effectiveness across different age groups.

Another group of researchers from the University of Denver will present a paper evaluating the impact of selected modules of the Youth Matters curriculum on bullying behaviors in Denver schools. The study compared the amount of bullying in schools that provided no training and in schools where students had taken modules that taught them to recognize the warning signs of bullying and the behavioral skills to disengage or defend themselves from a bully. The study found the program's effectiveness varied by age group and ethnic makeup of the student body. The authors will explore the relationship between the level of violence and academic performance.

*Sources: Wendy Garrad, M.A., Mark Lipsey, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University; Jeffrey Jenson, Ph.D., William Dieterich, Ph.D., Anne Powell, MSW, University of Denver.*