

Strong Schools Safe Kids (2010-2014)

Aim

Strong Schools Safe Kids aimed to develop and test ways to build staff, student and parent capacity to effectively implement evidence-informed action to prevent and manage social aggression and bullying behaviours in a 'real world' school setting.

By developing a school capacity building intervention, this project aimed to provide a safer school environment that would reduce social aggression and ameliorate its effects on the mental and emotional health of young people.

Methods

This five-year project involved initial comprehensive research and environmental/situational analysis before progressing to a mixed methods phase that involved the collection of longitudinal data from eight case study schools to observe how they implemented the proposed implementation process and capacity building tools over four years.

Phase 1: Evidence synthesis on research findings (review and update the guidelines by conducting a review of current research into school-based bullying prevention interventions)

Phase 2: Environment and situational analysis (interviews conducted to determine the perception of stakeholders about the current policy and climate in education systems to support bullying prevention interventions, needs and capacity supports provided to schools, and how these supports could be strengthened to increase the capacity of schools to address social aggression and bullying behaviours among students)

Phase 3: Mixed methods with target audience (case studies conducted to provide an in-depth understanding of the processes schools' use to plan, prepare and implement whole-school interventions to address social and emotional learning and bullying behaviours amongst students)

Phase 4: Consultation with stakeholders

Results/Findings

This project has helped contribute to the knowledge base around context and adaptation, and the identification of factors affecting implementation, to progress the development of effective interventions that yield optimum outcomes for school communities. A key output of this research was the development and testing of mechanisms that assist schools to take evidence-based action to enhance social and emotional learning and prevent social aggression and bullying behaviours, and effectively implement these into real world practice.

Who was involved?

Chief Investigators: Donna Cross, Rob Nairn, Anjie Brooks, Liz Healy, Sharyn Burns, David Mander, Lydia Hearn, Natasha Pearce

Associate Investigators: Michelle Bishop, Helen Thompson

Child Health Promotion Research Centre Team: Narelle Alderman, Helen Monks, Shane Thompson, Kaashifah Bruce, Therese Shaw, Henri Quintilian

Publications

Pearce, N., Cross, D., Monks, H., Waters, S., Erceg, E., Falconer, S. 2011. Current evidence of best practice in whole-school bullying intervention and its potential to inform cyberbullying interventions. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counseling*, 21(1):1-21.

Pearce, N., Cross, D. & Alderman, N. (2015). *Strong Schools Safe Kids Project: Final Report to Healthway*. Child Health Promotion Research Centre, Edith Cowan University: Perth, Australia.