

Bullying Among Middle and High School Youth

2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Background

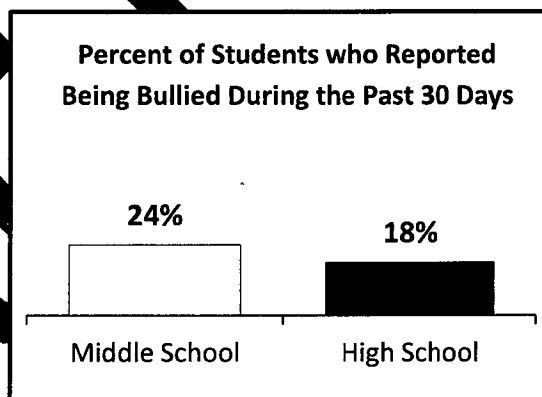
The 2015 Vermont middle school YRBS survey asks students if they have ever been bullied on school property, have ever been electronically bullied, and on how many of the past 30 days they were bullied or bullied someone else. The high school survey asks students about electronic bullying during the past 12 months, the number of days they were bullied, and the number of days they bullied someone else.¹

For the purposes of the 2015 Vermont YRBS, bullying was described as occurring when a student or group of students say or do unpleasant things to another student to make fun of, tease, embarrass, purposefully exclude or scare him/her. It can occur before, during, or after the school day; on school property, a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity. Electronic is any bullying that occurs through email, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting.¹

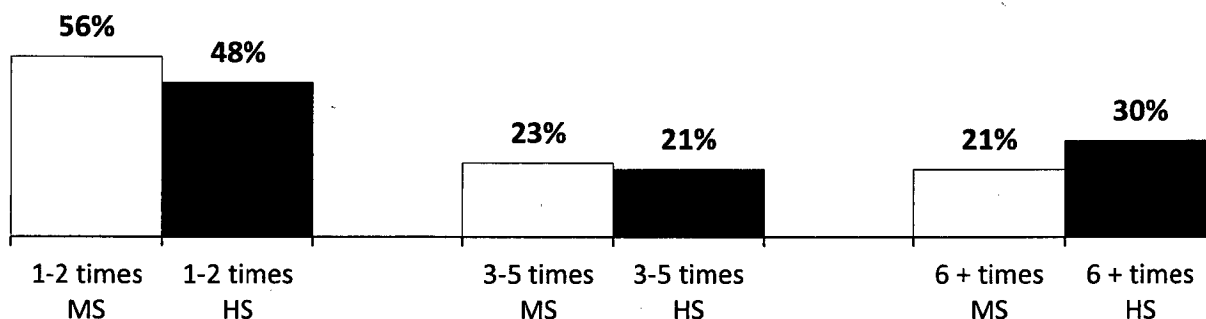
Bullying Prevalence

Nearly half (46%) of middle school students have ever been bullied at school. Since the initiation of the middle school survey in 2005, there has been a significant decrease in being bullied during the past 30 days from 27% in 2011 to 26% in 2013 and to 24% in 2015. Between 2011 and 2013 the percent of Vermont high school students who were bullied during the past 30 days significantly increased (18% to 20%). This remained unchanged between 2013 and 2015 (18%).

Of students who were bullied during the past 30 days, about 70% were bullied on 1-2 days. About 20% of middle school students and 10% in ten high school students were bullied on 6 or more days. Notably, 8% of high school students were bullied every day.



Percent of Students who Reported Being Bullied During the Past 30 Days



Electronic Bullying

Because technology use changes rapidly, less is known about cyber or electronic bullying and it is more difficult to capture those trends.^{2 3} It is believed that cyberbullying occurs less frequently.

Based on the 2015 Vermont YRBS, during their lifetime, 26% of middle school students have ever experienced cyberbullying. In the past 12 months, 16% of high school students were bullied electronically.

Bullying by Grade and Sex

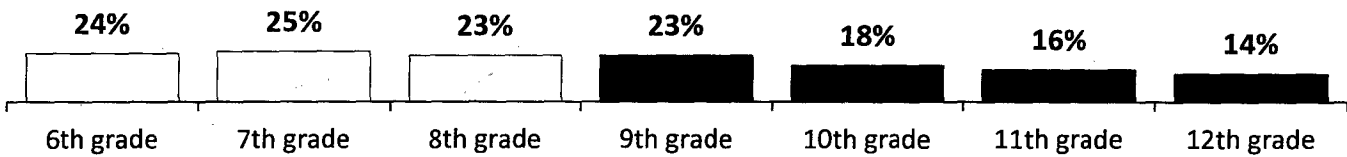
Traditional bullying and electronic bullying varies by age and sex. During the past 30 days, female students in both middle school and high school were significantly more likely than males to have been bullied (Middle School: 30% vs. 18%; High School: 23% vs. 12%). Female students were over two times more likely to have been electronically bullied compared to males.

Percent of Students who Reported Being Bullied During the Past 30 Days, by Sex



Similar to previous research, bullying was highest among younger students. Both traditional bullying and electronic bullying during the past 30 days significantly decreased after 9th grade.

Percent of Students who Reported Being Bullied During the Past 30 Days, by Grade

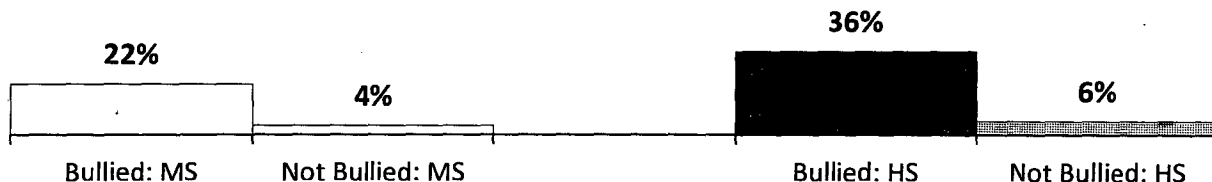


Bullying Others and the Bullying-Victim

During the past 30 days 10% of middle school students reported bullying someone else, 11% of high school students did so.

Some school bullies are also victims. During the past 30 days 22% of middle school students and over a third of high school students who bullied someone else had also been bullied themselves. Associated risks and outcomes may be even greater for these students².

Students who Bullied Others, by Having Been Bullied (a Bully-Victim) and Not Bullied During the Past 30 Days



References

1. Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) <http://healthvermont.gov/research/vrbs/2015/index.aspx>
2. Birch, S., and Frederickson, N. (2015) *School bullies: Are they also victims?* In *Educational Psychology* by Cline, T. Gulliford, A., and Birch, S. (eds) Routledge Press, UK ISBN: 1848723318
3. Roberts, S., Zhang, A., Morgan, R.E., and Musu-Gillette, L. (2015). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2014* (NCES 2015-072/NCJ 248036). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015072.pdf>

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