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Getting even with aggression : a counselling group for perpetrators and victims of adolescent male bullying

GETTING EVEN WITH AGGRESSION:
A COUNSELLING GROUP FOR PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS OF
ADOLESCENT MALE BULLYING

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ABSTRACT

The intent of this project is to provide information and offer a new and innovative intervention to male adolescent bullying. Adolescent bullying continues to be a pervasive problem in Canadian communities. Significant barriers continue to exist in combating the problem of adolescent bullying, and thus, creative solutions are required. This project provides information regarding prevalence, etiology, characteristics, and interventions relating to adolescent bullying. Within this project, a sample counselling group program manual is provided that is based on the literature examined in this project. This sample counselling group manual is designed to support both victims and perpetrators of bullying within the same counselling group by providing an opportunity for educational interaction between these two populations. In providing opportunities for bullies and victims of bullying to interact together and learn from each other within a therapeutic setting, the goal of the proposed group is to support bullies and victims to become more empathetic and respectfully assertive with each other. Exercises from the manual will increase empathy and assertiveness through increasing self-awareness and the awareness of others and can be delivered within a school or community setting.

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CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

Rationale and Importance

The issue of adolescent bullying has existed for many years. Although the most common forms of bullying have remained quite constant, in recent years there has been a surge in violent reactions by victims of bullying. A report by the United States Secret Service (as cited in Dake, Price, Telljohan, & Funk, 2004) investigated the characteristics of students involved in school shootings in the United States found that of 37 different school shootings, two thirds of them involved attackers who felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others prior to the incident. The issue of bullying has developed from a schoolyard neighbourhood problem to a North America-wide social issue and represents a problem in need of answers. Closer to home, the Government of Alberta (2005) has posted on their website that approximately 1 in 10 children have bullied others, and as many as 25% of children in grades four to six have been bullied. Bullying occurs once every 7 minutes on Alberta playgrounds, and once every 25 minutes in classrooms (Government of Alberta, 2005).

Bullying can have drastic and pervasive effects on victims. For example, victims of bullying often report various school-related problems such as disliking school, being truant, and dropping out (Sharp, 1995). It is estimated that 160,000 students stay home from school every day in the United States to avoid the constant taunting and torment of bullies (Vail, 1999). Bullying is such a pervasive problem in schools that even the students who witness bullying are affected. Students witnessing bullying often report being severely distressed by the experience as they become fearful that they too will

become the target of bullies (Zigler & Pepler, 1993). Victims of bullying often feel lonely, unhappy, and frightened, leading them to feel unsafe and inadequate (Government of Alberta, 2005). The Government of Alberta also reported that victims of bullying could develop phobic, anxious, somatic, and depressive symptoms such as becoming shy, oversleeping, developing stomachaches, headaches, panic attacks, insomnia, and nightmares.

As it is clear that adolescent bullying is a widespread problem in North America with serious implications for victims and bystanders, effective interventions for adolescent aggression and bullying would be extremely beneficial for both individuals and communities. However, as is the case with most social issues, there are barriers to the development and implementation of programs and interventions to circumvent this problem. Bullying is often normalized through myths or rationalizations that bullying is a natural character-building part of childhood and adolescence (Government of Alberta, 2005). Also, some may view bullying as an unchangeable facet of human (particularly male) competitiveness (Government of Alberta, 2005). Some school administrators may fear implementing bullying interventions within their schools out of concern that they might draw negative attention toward their school, possibly reducing enrolment. Parents may be apprehensive about accessing resources to support their children affected by bullying because of feelings of shame or embarrassment. Also, with rising health care costs and continued scarcities in government resources, costs continue to be an issue in providing bullying interventions. Due to the negative impact bullying has on the lives of adolescents, combined with the difficulty in combating bullying, the treatment of

adolescent bullying emerges as an important area of focus in improving the lives of adolescents. This project provides an additional resource in addressing adolescent bullying within the context of a community treatment or school setting.

Statement of Interest

Accompanying the preceding description of the importance of this topic, my personal experiences with and interest in adolescent bullying provides much of the motivation behind the undertaking of this project. I grew up in a diverse socioeconomical and multicultural area of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Throughout my childhood and adolescence, I was involved in several community activities, including playing organized team sports by age four. Within this experience, I was exposed to many forms of male adolescent behaviour. I was always keenly aware of the differences among my peers of those who chose prosocial ways of behaving versus those who began to assume violent, and even predatory, patterns of behaviour. I remember noticing this divergence the most in junior high school, as my peers began to form new groups of friends and adjust their behaviours according to new sources of reinforcement. During this period, I noticed my peers starting to develop more competitive and aggressive characteristics. On one particular night when I was 14 years old my general awareness became more specific. A friend and I were walking home, and I was attacked without warning by another youth. Since the youth and the friend he was with were under the influence of drugs, it is possible that their decision making abilities were compromised. However, it later came out that the primary motivation for the attack originated from their perception that it would somehow increase their reputation and popularity. I was severely injured in the

attack, and the incident resulted in the perpetrator being convicted of aggravated assault. While I was not consciously aware of it until now, when I look back, my career path, education, and this project have all likely been influenced by this event.

As I became interested in how peer groups defined behaviours and how behaviours defined peer groups, I became increasingly intrigued by the peers in my community that had become popular by becoming violent and aggressive. While I was unaware at the time, this is likely when I first became interested in learning about bullies. I have been working with children, adolescents, and families dealing with behaviour difficulties for the past 12 years, and my interest in this area remains strong to this day. I have continued to develop my knowledge and experience relating to adolescent aggression and bullying through my education, professional development opportunities, and experience working with organizations such as McMan Family and Community Services' family intervention program, the Edmonton Young Offender Centre, and the Parents Empowering Parents Society. Within this work, I created and facilitated a support group for adolescents dealing with issues related to addiction, and I created and facilitated a successful antibullying presentation that has been presented over 100 times across Alberta. With this blend of life experience, work experience, and education, the focus of this project is a natural culmination to my Masters in Counselling Psychology Program.

Overview of the Project and its Structure

The primary objective of this project is to provide information that assists in the development of interventions to reduce or stop male adolescent bullying. A review of

literature has been conducted as part of this project to gather pertinent research related to developing interventions to address this topic. Chapter 2 describes the methods used to gather the research utilized in this project.

An initial rationale for this project was provided in the previous section of this chapter, and is built upon in the sections that follow. Literature identifying the prevalence of adolescent bullying is identified in chapter 3. To create a rationale for the need for interventions to address adolescent bullying and this project, this information is combined in chapter 3 with descriptions of the effect of adolescent bullying on individuals and the community. As a need for interventions is identified for adolescent bullying within chapter 3, a rationale for the use of counselling groups as an intervention with this population is also provided within chapter 3, and a sample counselling group manual created within this project is introduced.

Building on the rationale provided in chapter 3, chapter 4 utilizes the literature found using the methods described in chapter 2 to identify effective group counselling interventions to address adolescent bullying. These interventions will be related to the sample counselling group included in this project. Chapter 4 also provides a foundation for the sample counselling group provided in this project and leads into a general overview of the sample counselling group in chapter 5.

Chapter 6 provides the reader with a synopsis of this project, which includes a summary of the literature review, a description of strengths and limitations of the literature review and sample manual, areas for future research, and the conclusion. This chapter closes the rationale and literature review portion of the project that provides the

foundation for the proposed sample group manual and leads into the presentation of the sample counselling group manual provided in this project.

The sample counselling group manual found in Appendix A includes a table of contents, preamble, preface, eight lesson plans, pre and postgroup meeting plans, and facilitator notes. This sample counselling group manual is intended to provide the reader with an example of what a counselling group to address the issue of adolescent male bullying might look like, utilizing the literature cited in this project.

Key Terms Used

Adolescent Egocentrism: "Type of egocentrism in which adolescents have difficulty distinguishing their thinking about their own thoughts from their thinking about the thoughts of others" (Arnett, 2001, p. 85).

Bully: Person who engages in the act of bullying (see definition of bullying). For the purposes of this project, bullies are assumed to be male and in the developmental stage of adolescence.

Bullying: "A form of aggression that is hostile and proactive, and involves both direct and indirect behaviours that are repeatedly targeted at an individual or group that is perceived as weaker" (Elinoff, Chafouleas, & Sassu, 2004, p. 888).

Conduct Disorder: "Childhood disorders that can appear by age nine and are marked by persistent acts of aggressive or antisocial behaviour that may or may not be against the law" (Carson, Butcher, & Mineka, 2000).

Counselling Group: Group counselling that focuses on interpersonal process and problem-solving strategies that stress conscious thoughts, feelings, and behaviour (Corey & Corey, 2006).

Heterogeneous Group: Counselling group with diverse membership consisting of group members with diverse challenges, difficulties, and treatment goals (Corey & Corey, 2006).

Imaginary Audience: "Belief that others are acutely aware of and attentive to one's appearance and behaviour" (Arnett, 2001, p. 445).

Personal Fable: "A belief in one's personal uniqueness, often including a sense of invulnerability to the consequences of taking risks" (Arnett, 2001, p. 447).

CHAPTER TWO: METHODS

This chapter outlines the research methods that were used to complete this

project. A general synopsis of the research reviewed is provided, along with a description

of the search terms and databases explored to gather research for this project.

This project explored what the literature revealed about the following subjects

related to adolescent bullying: (a) epidemiology and etiology, (b) definitions,

(c) individual and community consequences, and (d) recommended interventions.

The literature review primarily utilized the PsychInfo database, along with

Internet resources such as Google Scholar. Search terms used included, but were not

limited to: adolescents, bullying, group counselling, bullying prevalence, causes of

bullying, and aggressiveness. Various combinations of these search terms were used

together to access the literature utilized in this project.

This project explored studies and materials from peer-reviewed journal articles,

books, and websites that examined the impact and treatment of adolescent bullying. This

project did not involve human subjects. Some of the material in the appendices of this

project was originally part of an assignment in one of my past courses. However, the

material included in the appendices has been substantially expanded, redesigned, and

revised to serve as an intervention resource to therapists working with adolescents

experiencing bullying-related issues.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW OF ADOLESCENT BULLYING

Adolescent bullying is experienced by many people, yet much ambivalence and variation remains in how bullying is viewed and how it is defined. With so many adolescents taking experiences of bullying with them to adulthood, perhaps it is this widespread experience of bullying that creates so much variation in how it is viewed. Some adults may rationalize their past or present bullying behaviour by viewing bullying as something that builds character. Conversely, some adults may turn a blind eye to bullying, therefore reacting with a coping strategy of avoidance as they may be triggered by painful and traumatic memories of their own childhood experience of bullying. With the experience of bullying being so common in North American culture, one's orientation to bullying will likely be consciously or unconsciously affected by one's own experience or witnessing of bullying.

The following section provides a general overview of adolescent bullying, which includes definitions, characteristics, prevalence, and causes of bullying. This is followed by a discussion of the individual and community impacts of bullying. This chapter then turns toward an examination of the effectiveness of group counselling with adolescents experiencing issues related to bullying. Within this examination, the appropriateness of group work with adolescents and the ability of counselling groups to reduce bullying and aggression are addressed. The information provided in this chapter creates a foundation for a description of recommended group counselling processes and interventions found in chapter 4.

Overview of Bullying

Adolescent bullying can be experienced in a variety of forms and in a variety of

settings. Given this diversity, some background information describing definitions,

characteristics, and prevalence of adolescent bullying is required before interventions can

be explored.

Definition of Bullying

As might be expected with a social construct that has been present for a

significant period of time and experienced by a large and diverse range of individuals,

there are a variety of definitions of bullying that can be found within the literature.

Olweus (1993), considered by many to be a preeminent and pioneering researcher in the

area of adolescent bullying, offered a definition of bullying that continues the be the

foundation of most contemporary definitions of bullying. Olweus identified bullying as

having occurred when an individual "is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative

actions on the part of one or more students" (p. 9). Olweus also added that an "imbalance

of strength" (p. 10) must be present between two individuals for the term bullying (p. 18)

to be used to define a behaviour or event. While a large amount of research has taken

place since the work of Olweus, many similarities to Olweus's original definition remain.

For example, Elinoff et al. (2004) defined bullying as "a form of aggression that is hostile

and proactive, and involves both direct and indirect behaviours that are repeatedly

targeted at an individual or group that is perceived as weaker" (p. 888). Elinoff et al.'s

definition recognized Olweus's concept of bullying victims being exposed to negative

actions over time within the context of an imbalance of power, while also describing the

forms of behaviour bullying may take (i.e., direct and indirect behaviours). While there are many definitions of bullying available in the literature, there seems to be a general focus amongst researchers on the presence of an imbalance of power between aggressors and victims and on repetition of bullying behaviour toward the same victim.

While frequency of bullying and imbalances of power are important in defining bullying once bullying is suspected, the behavioural and emotional characteristics of bullying might be more recognizable to an outside observer (i.e., school staff, parents, coaches, and counsellors). These characteristics are described in the next section.

Characteristics of Bullying

Bullying behaviours typically take one of two forms: direct or indirect behaviours (Elinoff et al., 2004). Direct behaviours include physical or verbal attacks (Elinoff et al., 2004), while indirect bullying behaviours involve purposeful actions to get others not to socialize with the victim. Indirect behaviours often lead to social exclusion or damage to an individual's status or reputation (Crick & Gropeter, 1995). These indirect behaviours could include threats, insults, name-calling, spreading rumours, and writing hurtful graffiti (Rivers & Smith, 1994). In North American culture, through media portrayals or in general individual stereotypical views, characteristics of bullying are often thought to reflect moral insensitivity on the part of the bully. Specifically, Rigby (2004) isolated the abuse of power that is commonly demonstrated by bullies as being the main factor that accounts for bullying being widely regarded as a moral issue. That is, the possession of power over another suggests vulnerability on the part of those with less power. The purposeful self-serving exploitation of this vulnerability by bullies contravenes popular

North American values such as justice and equality, therefore making bullying a moral issue. The direct and indirect behaviours that characterize bullying occur with alarming frequency in North American culture, as described in the following section.

Prevalence of Bullying

As mentioned in Chapter 1, but it is worthy of repeating, approximately 1 in 10 children in Alberta have bullied others, and as many as 25% of children in grades four to six have been victims of bullying by their peers (Government of Alberta, 2005). This rate of bullying in Alberta is similar to national results found by the Canadian Council on Learning (2008), which indicated 38% of adult males and 30% of adult females in Canada disclosed having experienced occasional or frequent bullying during their school years. In addition, the same study found that 47% of Canadian parents reported that they had a child who had been bullied and 16% indicated that this bullying was a frequent occurrence. The Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) indicated that among Canadian students in grades 6 through 10, between 2% and 8% of students reported being bullied at least once a week. Between 4% and 10% of students indicated that they bullied others at least once a month, and 19% to 24% of students reported being both a victim and a perpetrator of bullying.

It might be surprising to some to learn that Canada has the ninth highest rate of bullying among 13 year olds based on a CCL 2008 report examining bullying in 35 countries. It might also be surprising to learn that bullying, in some shape or form, occurs once every 7 minutes on Alberta playgrounds, and once every 25 minutes in classrooms (Government of Alberta, 2005). The result of this rate of bullying is that one in seven

Alberta adolescents aged 11 to 16 becomes a victim of bullying (Government of Alberta, 2005). With an awareness of the alarming frequency of adolescent bullying in Canada, it is clear that bullying is a widespread problem in our schools, playgrounds, and communities. In working to address the issue of adolescent bullying, a logical first step is to identify possible causes of this phenomenon.

Causes of Bullying

Given the aforementioned prevalence and diversity of bullying behaviours, it appears it is extremely difficult for researchers to isolate variables that directly affect bullying. Several theories have been proposed in the literature to explain the causes of bullying. Some of these theories identify psychological processes in bullies, some emphasize the role victims of bullying play, some identify environmental determinants of bullying, and others describe combinations of all of these and various other perspectives.

As there is a seemingly infinite array of factors affecting adolescent bullying, any attempt to identify causes of this phenomenon will involve a decision around which specific factors are the most important. In identifying important causes of adolescent bullying, this section focuses on the following important factors: biological predispositions, interactions with caregivers, interactions with peers, social cognitive ability, school experiences, and common traits of victims of bullying. This section places a heavy emphasis on the research of Ken Rigby (2004) who, in his work analyzing why bullying occurs in schools, identified five major theoretical causal factors of bullying. Each of these factors is described next.

Biological Predispositions

As is the case with most behavioural phenomena, amongst researchers there is an ongoing nature/nurture debate purporting to account for the causes of adolescent bullying. There are credible accounts of adolescent bullying in the literature that identifies both biological and environmental causal factors (Bowes et al., 2009; Rigby, 2004). Rigby, in his "bullying as a developmental process perspective" (p. 291), identified that adolescents have a biological drive to bully. Rigby's perspective identified adolescent bullying behaviours as beginning early in childhood when children begin to assert themselves at the expense of others in order to gain social dominance. From an evolutionary perspective, Rigby explained the motivation to bully as originating from bullies placing a high value on achieving dominance over others to ensure that the strongest prevail. To the extent that aggressive behaviour might assist with the acquisition of materials such as food, clothing, or status items, this perspective is supported by Olweus (1993), who described a material benefit component to bullying.

In addition to assisting in the acquiring of material possessions, one might suspect that biological factors relating to bullying has a relationship with mate selection and, therefore, procreation. Literature supporting this suspicion was not found using the research methods described in the methods section (see chapter 2). However, one might assume that humans are similar to many other mammal species where male dominance is rewarded with choice in partnering with the opposite sex and mating success. Given the complex and evolving nature of human interaction, one might question whether male dominance continues to be an attractive trait in the eyes of females. While this topic is beyond the scope of this paper, further research in this area may uncover useful

information related to adolescent bullying as adolescents are at an age where they are discovering their sexuality.

While children may be born with certain evolved biological predispositions toward aggressive behaviour, their interactions with their environment also plays a major role in their psychological development. Given the extended period of time humans spend with their caregivers it is logical to examine the role caregivers play in influencing adolescent bullying behaviour.

Interactions with Caregivers

There is a variety of research in the literature that examines the relationships between bullies and their environments (Bowes et al., 2009; Myron-Wilson, 1999; Rigby, 2004). As children are born and begin their developmental trajectories, their caregivers generally exert the greatest influence over their environments. Stemming from the negative environments he described bullies as being typically brought up in, Olweus (1993) identified bullies as carrying a heightened degree of hostility toward others. However, this begs the question: what constitutes a negative environment that will increase the likelihood of becoming a bully? Myron-Wilson (1999) tested the popular hypothesis that the more children perceive their parents as being restrictive, the more likely they are to become involved in bullying. Myron-Wilson utilized self-reports, parent reports, and teacher reports to measure the relationship between parenting (i.e., emotional warmth, overprotection, and rejection) and becoming a bully or victim of bullying, and she did not find support for this hypothesis. In fact, she found restrictive parenting to be correlated more with becoming a victim of bullying—victims were among the respondents who experienced the least amount of rejection from parents. Bowes et al.

(2009) found similar evidence in their research, which indicated that child maltreatment—the maltreatment that one might expect to occur within the context of restrictive parenting—may increase the likelihood of becoming a victim of bullying.

Finding evidence that secondary bullies (i.e., followers of the primary ringleader bully) often come from a negative environment, Myron-Wilson's (1999) writings supported Olweus's (1993) claim regarding the childhood environments of bullies. Specifically, secondary bullies in Wilson's study with a sample size of 1,000 viewed their parents as being low in warmth and high in neglect. Dodge (2002) identified that parental and family social interaction processes are fundamentally related to antisocial and aggressive behaviour. Within these interaction processes, Dodge found harsh discipline and psychological control to be highly correlated with aggressive behaviour. While it is generally accepted in the literature that authoritarian and permissive-indulgent parenting styles are correlated with aggressive behaviour in children (Carson et al., 2000), there is conflicting evidence in the literature linking specific parenting styles to bullying behaviour. Perhaps role modelling of bullying behaviour by parents is more important than parents' treatment of their children. Bowes et al. (2009) found childhood witnessing of domestic violence to be a strong predictor of bullying behaviour, particularly the witnessing of domestic violence by age 5. While one might contend that authoritarian parents are role modelling a form of violent behaviour toward their children, perhaps there is something different in how children's schemas are affected by witnessing parental violence carried out on each other or on other adults, rather than on children themselves.

While caregivers exert a large amount of control over their children's environments, children begin to spend more time away from their parents' care as they approach adolescence. As adolescents begin to develop socially, they often begin spending more time with peers. With this, peers begin to exert increasingly more influence over adolescents' environments and behaviours.

Interactions with Peers

Olweus (1993) identified three specific psychological factors underlying bullying behaviour that relate to bullies' behaviour toward peers. First, bullies have a strong need for power and dominance. That is, they have a strong desire to be in control. Secondly, many bullies have developed a degree of hostility toward their environments, which leads them to derive a false sense of satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering on others. Third, Olweus described a benefit component to the behaviour of bullies in which they are able to obtain things of material value, such as money and cigarettes, through aggressive behaviour. Each of Olweus's three variables—control, hostility, and material benefits—is reviewed next.

Control. Olweus (1993) described that a primary motivation for bullies' treatment of peers comes from their need for power, dominance, and control. There are many ways in which bullies exert this power, dominance, and control over their peers. Rigby (2004) described this in his "bullying as an outcome of individual differences" (p. 289) perspective. In this perspective, Rigby explained that bullying occurs because power imbalances exist between students, and some children enjoy dominating others who are less powerful. To demonstrate this power, bullies often look for and exploit the external

deviations of peers, such as objectionable body odour, excess weight, hair colour, short height, feminine mannerisms, poor athletic performance, and so on.

While the exploitation of external deviations may characterize many interactions between bullies and peers or victims, Olweus (1993) described that the presence of external deviations amongst peers does not provide the motivation for bullies to exert dominance over peers. Olweus described a common misconception among researchers that bullying occurs because of external deviations between individuals. That is, bullying occurs because victims tend to have distinctive physical attributes that are outside of the expected norm of what people should look like (e.g., being obese, having red hair, having freckles, being too tall, being too short, or wearing glasses). Downplaying the role of external deviations, Olweus pointed out that if one looks close enough, it is possible to find external deviations on most any person. Olweus also pointed out that it is easy to overlook those students with external deviations who are not bullied. When one accounts for these factors, it emerges that external deviations play a much smaller role in the origin of bullying than generally assumed (Olweus, 1993). Card and Hodges (2008) provided support for Olweus's claim in their assertion that external deviations such as being short, obese, or wearing glasses are inconsistently related to victimization. Card and Hodges stated that physical weakness is the only physical characteristic that clearly places children at risk for victimization.

Hostility. Highlighting the negative environments he found many bullies to have grown up in, Olweus (1993) concluded that many bullies have developed a degree of hostility toward their environments, which leads them to derive a false sense of

satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering on others. Rigby (2004) identified a similar pattern of behaviour in his "bullying from the perspective of restorative justice" (p. 295) perspective. Within this perspective, Rigby identified that bullies tend to mishandle their emotional reactions to the distress they cause others by not experiencing appropriate feelings of shame. Rigby described that bullies do this by attributing unworthy guilt-alleviating characteristics to those they victimize. Examples of this may include situations where bullies highlight external deviations of peers (e.g., clothing, hair, or athletic performance) and rationalize their behaviour with the thought that they are doing victims a service by helping them learn how to fit in.

While Rigby's (2004) bullying from the perspective of restorative justice explanation for the cause of bullying may shed some light on the hostility bullies tend to demonstrate towards their peers, his description conflicted with the purely proactive definition of bullying proposed by Sutton, Smith, and Swettenham (1999a). If one ascribes to a definition of bullying that focuses purely on a proactive motive to bullying rather than a reactive or retributive motive, then one may question the validity of claims that bullying occurs out of a bully's desire to get even with others whom they hold responsible for creating their negative environment. Perhaps bullying that occurs as a result of a negative environment occurs through a process of displacement. Within this hypothesis, a bully may take hostility from his negative environment and discharge it on less threatening individuals than those who elicited his feelings. As bullying toward individuals unrelated to the bully's negative environment might be viewed as proactive,

perhaps this hypothesis bridges the gap between reactive and proactive accounts of adolescent bullying toward peers.

Material benefits (secondary reinforcers). Olweus (1993) described a benefit component to the behaviour of bullies in which they are able to obtain things of material value such as money and cigarettes through aggressive behaviour. While other factors described in this section may account for an initial motivation to bully, the secondary reinforcement provided by the acquisition of material goods may strengthen bullying behaviour (Olweus, 1993). Also, as the possession of certain goods (e.g., jewellery, mp3 or music players, clothes, cars, and so on) have come to be associated with status in North American culture, one might hypothesize that these articles may come to be viewed as symbols of power and dominance by bullies and others associated with a bully. In their description that power is associated with positive affect, attention to rewards, and automatic information processing, Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson (2003) provided support for the relationship between symbols of status and the experience of power and dominance over others.

With this relationship between power and dominance and the acquisition of symbols of status, it becomes clear that dominant individuals possess specific skills and abilities that facilitate the acquisition of symbols of status and power and dominance. While these skills and abilities might be assumed to be physical in nature, one might suspect that social and cognitive skills are just as important in attaining symbols of status and power and dominance over others. This possibility is discussed further in the following section.

Social Cognitive Ability

Cognitive abilities of bullies can also play an important role in bullies' success in achieving power and dominance over others. Sutton et al. (1999a) argued that descriptions of children who bully as lacking in social perspective-taking skills have been erroneously based on research involving conduct-disordered children who appear to be bullies. As it has been shown that aggressive conduct-disordered children have an increased likelihood of attributing hostile intent to the actions of others (Feldman & Dodge, 1987), Sutton et al. asserted that conduct-disordered children with perspective-taking deficits might often be misconstrued as being bullies. Dodge (1991) articulated this misconception in his assertion that conduct-disordered children are typically involved in reactive aggression as they act out in reaction to the perceived hostile intentions of others, while bullies are characterized by being involved in proactive aggression. On this basis, an observer might misconstrue the aggressive actions of a conduct-disordered adolescent as being proactive because the perceived hostile intentions of others are not witnessed by the observer.

In a study to assess bullies' understanding of cognitions and emotions, Sutton et al. (1999a) identified representatives from each role (bully, reinforcer, assistant, defender, outsider, and victim) and tested each representative's social cognition performance. The results showed that bullies scored significantly higher on total social cognition scores than any other group, other than outsiders against whom bullies still scored higher but the difference was less significant. These results indicate that cognitive ability plays a role in equipping an individual with the ability to bully. Sutton et al.'s results have also shown that bullying is influenced by the presence of peers to provide reinforcement for the

demonstration of power and dominance. If bullies have above average social cognition skills, one might hypothesize that these skills would also include the ability to perspective take and feel empathy. Yet, bullies tend not to use these skills. One might inquire as to why bullies repeat their aggressive behaviours after witnessing the suffering incurred by their victims. Perhaps the answer to this question lies in bullies' abilities to rationalize their behaviours, such as in Rigby's (2004) restorative justice description where bullies attributed unworthy guilt-alleviating characteristics to those they victimize. It is in challenging this rationalization that many antibullying programs seek to intervene by promoting empathy in bullies.

School. School climate can influence bullying by affecting how students relate to each other and form peer groups within a school (Rigby, 2004). Rigby's fourth perspective of bullying, known as "bullying as a response to peer pressures in the school" (p. 294), focused on how individuals are influenced by small social groups as well as overall school climate. Schools where aggressive behaviours commonly occur between students may result in the socialization of new students into adopting aggressive relations with other students (Rigby, 2004). A hierarchy often exists between social groups within a school where one group perceives itself as being more dominant than another group (Rigby, 2004). In asserting their dominance, groups may act out against less dominant groups or individuals (Rigby, 2004). From this perspective, acts of bullying are sustained by an individual's connection with a group, and could be described as peer pressure or allegiance to a group, rather than because of individual motives. While this perspective shares many similarities with Rigby's bullying as a sociocultural phenomenon

perspective, this perspective is different in that it focuses on the continuation of aggressive behaviour through the maintenance of an aggressive school climate.

A second school-related perspective Rigby (2004) put forth to explain why bullying occurs focused on different levels of power within social groups. Specifically, this perspective, known as bullying as a sociocultural phenomenon, focused on historical or cultural differences between social groups such as gender, race, ethnicity, or social class (Rigby, 2004). This perspective is similar to Rigby's bullying as an outcome of individual differences perspective, with the main difference being that the sociocultural phenomenon perspective focused on bullies feeling superior due to an association with a dominant group. An example of this might be found in schools where athletes (sometimes referred to as jocks) are ascribed superior status over less athletically inclined, academically gifted students (sometimes referred to as nerds). Students accepted into the jock peer group may bully those in the nerd group to solidify their identity as a jock by rejecting the identity of a nerd. According to the bullying as a sociocultural phenomenon perspective, males may bully males who do not possess the stereotypical masculine qualities due to a culturally prescribed definition of male superiority. In a similar fashion, members of dominant cultures may behave aggressively toward members of less dominant cultures, or individuals of a higher socioeconomic class may behave aggressively toward members of a lower socioeconomic class.

As less dominant groups tend to be victimized by bullies more than dominant groups, it is important to recognize the victim characteristics that contribute to the likelihood of bullying occurring. This is discussed in the following section.

Victims of bullying. In analyzing various causes of adolescent bullying, one should not overlook the role bullying victims play in their victimization. Within the literature, two fairly clear and consistent bully victim trait patterns emerge, each of which is explained next.

Passive victim. Olweus (1993) characterized the passive bullying victim as generally being more anxious, insecure, sensitive, and quiet than other students. In addition to these traits, Olweus described that the passive victim tends to suffer from low self-esteem and have a negative view of him or herself and his or her situation. Passive victims have an anxious or submissive reaction pattern and are unlikely to react or retaliate if they are attacked or insulted (Olweus, 1993). In their research on personal traits that lead to victimization, Egan and Perry's (1998) findings were similar to Olweus's description of the passive victim. Based on research with 189 third through seventh grade girls and boys, Egan and Perry provided longitudinal evidence that supports the theory that bullies are more likely to select targets that are physically weak, exhibit internalizing behaviours, lack prosocial skills, and have low self-worth and perceptions of social competence.

Aggressive victim. The aggressive victim tends to be hyperactive and emotionally disregulated, displaying both internalizing and externalizing behaviours (Pope & Bierman, 1999). As the behaviour of aggressive victims is likely to annoy peers and provoke potential aggressors, their rate of victimization increases (Pope & Bierman, 1999). As the unwillingness to react or retaliate was mentioned as being one of the factors that contributes to a passive victim's victimization, one may wonder why the

acting out that occurs in the context of the aggressive victim's externalizing behaviour does not deter potential bullies. The answer to this question was found in research on the peer ecology of bullying victims.

Bullying victims and peers. Although the passive victim and the aggressive victim have some different personality traits, for different reasons they both share a difficulty in building positive peer relationships (Olweus, 1993). As it has been shown in research that friendships reduce victimization, children who fail to establish a reciprocated best friend are more victimized than those who have a reciprocated best friend, and the number of friends a child has is negatively associated with victimization (Hodges & Perry, 1999; Ladd & Burgess, 1999). Card and Hodges (2008) provided further evidence in their description that acceptance and rejection are robust correlates of victimization. Card and Hodges asserted that low peer acceptance and high peer rejection predict increases in victimization because children who are rejected are likely seen as easy targets, and aggressors may receive positive reinforcement (and limited punishment) for targeting these children. This is not to say that passive or aggressive victims do not have any friends. However, the literature has shown that it is the quality of friends one has that accounts for the protective effect of friendships, and both passive and aggressive victims tend to have friends who lack the characteristics needed to play a protective function (Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1999).

With an awareness of the personality characteristics of bullies and victims, it becomes clearer how these personality characteristics often combine to form a cycle of abuse that continues until someone or something intervenes to change the cycle. Bullies

often possess superior social cognition skills and utilize social situations to demonstrate their physical dominance, social dominance, or both their physical and social dominance over their victims (Sutton, Smith, & Swettenham, 1999b). The combination of a bully's superior cognitive and physical abilities over the aforementioned inferior abilities of the passive and aggressive victim creates a situation where bullies are able to have their needs met at the expense of victims' social, emotional, and sometimes physical well-being. This negative impact experienced by victims of bullying can be, and often is, traumatizing to the individual.

So far, within this chapter, a definition of bullying has been provided, along with a description of characteristics of bullying. Information describing the prevalence of bullying indicated an alarmingly high rate of bullying in North America and in Alberta particularly. The various causes of bullying were provided, which included a discussion on biological predispositions, interactions with caregivers, interactions with peers, and social cognitive ability. As the difficulty in isolating a few specific causes of adolescent bullying became apparent along with the alarming prevalence of occurrences of bullying, the enormity of the issue emerged. A few important areas remain in understanding the importance and complexity of adolescent bullying. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the impact of adolescent bullying on individuals and the community, followed by information on intervention.

<center>Impact of Bullying on Individuals and the Community</center>

Bullying can, and often does, have drastic and pervasive effects on victims and communities. While victims of bullying typically experience a wide range of

psychological, emotional, and physical (i.e., somatic) symptoms, perpetrators and witnesses of bullying experience many of these symptoms as well. This section outlines how bullying affects individuals and communities.

Impact of Bullying on Victims

The Government of Alberta (2005) described victims of bullying as often feeling lonely, unhappy, and frightened, leading them to feel unsafe and inadequate. This finding was similar to the findings of Hawker and Boulton (2000), who found victims to exhibit higher levels of depression, school failure, and lower levels of self-esteem. Victims of bullying also typically lose confidence and even feel physically ill (Government of Alberta, 2005). The Government of Alberta indicated on their website that victims of bullying could develop phobic, anxious, somatic, and depressive symptoms, such as becoming shy, developing stomachaches, headaches, panic attacks, and insomnia, as well as oversleeping, exhaustion, and nightmares. Citing research from the European Journal of Health, the CCL (2008) described that victims of bullying are 1.7 to 1.75 times more likely than nonbullied students to experience psychological symptoms such as loneliness, nervousness, petulance, and symptoms of depression (i.e., difficulty sleeping, tiredness, and helplessness).

Impact of Bullying on the Bully

As much of the attention on the effects of bullying is typically oriented toward victims, considerably less attention is focussed on the effects of bullying on the bully. As the bully seemingly acts on his own free will to inflict suffering on his victim while the victim is forced to experience the negative effects of bullying, it may seem somewhat

unjust to concern oneself with the effects of bullying on the bully. However, the bully

also experiences adverse symptoms as a result of his behaviours. The CCL (2008)

described that perpetrators of bullying suffer from higher rates of substance abuse,

aggressive behaviour, and poor academic achievement. However, while those symptoms

are highly correlated with bullying behaviour, it may be difficult to determine whether

they are symptoms of bullying or causes of bullying behaviour toward others.

Impact of Bullying on the Community

Between 6% to 8% of students in Canada stay away from school and are more

likely to drop out of school because of bullying (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008).

Bullied individuals report having difficulty concentrating on their school work, and

obtain lower levels of academic achievement than their nonbullied peers (Canadian

Council on Learning, 2008). Bullying also consumes the time and resources of mental

health assistance, special education programs, and other social service providers, while

contributing to the costs associated with managing substance abuse, aggressive

behaviour, and delinquency in Canada (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008). A report

by the United States Secret Service (as cited in Dake et al., 2004) investigating the

characteristics of students involved in school shootings in the United States found that of

37 different school shootings, two thirds of them involved attackers who felt persecuted,

bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others prior to the incident. As the severe

impact adolescent bullying has on individuals and the community is apparent, the need

for interventions becomes clear.

Intervention

Given the widespread damaging effects bullying has on individuals and the
community, it is clear that effective interventions aimed at reducing adolescent bullying
would contribute to an increased quality of life for a significant number of people. Many
researchers recommended widespread interventions to adolescent bullying involving
community members, school officials, staff members, and of course children and
adolescents (Dake et al., 2004; Olweus, 1993). While all-encompassing approaches to
adolescent bullying, such as the whole-school approach, typically produce the best results
(Dake et al., 2004), the need exists for many small, effective interventions within these
larger school and community interventions. One such smaller intervention that has been
shown to be effective in addressing the issue of adolescent bullying is group counselling.
The following section outlines the effectiveness of group counselling in addressing the
issue of adolescent bullying.

Effectiveness of Group Counselling for the Treatment of Adolescent Bullying

While there are a variety of orientations and interventions that endeavour to
reduce adolescent bullying, there is evidence that group counselling could be an
efficacious and cost-effective mode of intervention for both victims and perpetrators of
adolescent bullying. Several studies have been conducted that identify the overall
efficacy of counselling groups for this population (Kimber, Sandell, & Bremberg, 2008;
Shechtman, 2001, 2003). The following section provides a rationale for utilizing
counselling groups with aggressive adolescents. This section also provides a rationale for

the use of counselling groups to reduce adolescent aggression and bullying, as well as research supporting its effectiveness in doing so.

Rationale for Utilizing Counselling Groups with Adolescents

There are some primary characteristics of group therapy that suit the specific needs of adolescents. This section describes how developmental factors such as adolescent egocentrism can restrict adolescent learning and self-awareness, and how group counselling can provide adolescent-specific goals to meet their needs. Yalom and Leszcz (2005) simplified the therapeutic group experience into 11 therapeutic factors: instillation of hope, universality, imparting information, altruism, the corrective recapitulation of the primary family group, development of socializing techniques, imitative behaviour, interpersonal learning, group cohesiveness, catharsis, and existential factors. Of these 11 therapeutic factors, Shechtman (2007) identified group cohesiveness, catharsis, and developing socializing techniques to be the most significant factors related to an adolescent population. Shechtman commented that while the first of these three factors is also significant for adult populations, the third (developing socializing techniques) is the most significant for adolescent populations as they work through the central developmental task of building relationships. As adolescents work through this central developmental task, their success is affected by their ability to understand themselves and others. Adolescents' ability to gain this understanding is heavily influenced by what is known as adolescent egocentrism.

Adolescent Egocentrism

Adolescents present with unique skills and challenges that are related to their individual personalities and stages of cognitive development. As children mature, they

begin to develop the ability to think abstractly (Arnett, 2001). In middle childhood, children begin to gain some metacognitive skill, and continue to develop metacognition and perspective-taking abilities throughout adolescence (Arnett, 2001; Broderick & Blewitt, 2006). As adolescents refine these skills, their inexperience creates some specific developmental characteristics that can affect their performance in group work. One of the most important of these characteristics is known as *adolescent egocentrism.*

With the ability to think about their own thinking through metacognition, most adolescents also possess the social cognitive abilities needed to be able to think about the thoughts of others (Arnett, 2001). Arnett posited, "When these abilities first develop, adolescents may have difficulty in distinguishing their thinking about their own thoughts from their thinking about the thoughts of others, resulting in a distinctive kind of adolescent egocentrism" (p. 85). As adolescent egocentrism may increase adolescents' sensitivity to the scrutiny of others, adolescent egocentrism can affect adolescents' perceptions of themselves. As such, adolescent egocentrism emerges as an important developmental factor to remain aware of when constructing and implementing counselling groups for adolescents.

Adolescent egocentrism, as Elkind (1985) indicated, has two aspects. The first is known as the imaginary audience. In this aspect, adolescents overemphasize the amount of time others spend thinking about them, as they confuse their own thoughts with the thoughts of others. As adolescents are increasingly thinking about their own thoughts, they also become aware of how they might look to others. As a result, they mistakenly assume that others are thinking about them as much as they are thinking about

themselves. Arnett (2001) asserted that this exaggeration makes adolescents much more self-conscious than they were in prior stages of development.

The second aspect of adolescent egocentrism is known as the *personal fable* (Elkind, 1985). This aspect is built on the imaginary audience, and leads adolescents to assume that the existence of a perceived scrutinizing audience must suggest that there is something special and unique about him or her. Arnett (2001) suggested that the personal fable might be the source of adolescent anguish, where an adolescent feels that others are unable to understand him or her due to the other's inability to understand his or her unique experience.

To the extent that the imaginary audience and the personal fable affect one's perceptions of group experiences, one might suspect that adolescent egocentrism would influence a group member's mood and behaviours, and, therefore, their performance in group counselling. For example, the perception of a scrutinizing audience might increase the anxiety of a group member, therefore increasing moodiness and resistance. Also, as group members feel their experience is special and different than that of other group members or facilitators, they may demonstrate resistance to learning and activities offered by the group because they feel the experiences do not apply to them. With this, one might conclude that an ability to deal with adolescent egocentrism is an important component of group counselling for adolescents.

Corey and Corey (2006) posited that group counselling presents adolescents with unique opportunities to address features of egocentrism and other developmental challenges. In providing a forum to hear similar stories and experiences from others,

group counselling may help adolescents with a history of bullying or victim behaviour to disprove their personal fable. In being exposed to a supportive environment, group counselling may also help those adolescents with a history of bullying or victim behaviour to disprove their perception of a scrutinizing imaginary audience. As both of these aspects of adolescent egocentrism are reduced, it is hypothesized within this project that adolescents with a history of bullying or victim behaviour may become less self-protective (resistant) and, as a result, more amenable to change (Arnett, 2001).

Adolescent-Specific Treatment Goals

Corey and Corey (2006) identified several goals that group counselling is well-suited to helping adolescents to achieve. I believe many of these goals are also applicable to helping those with a history of bullying or victim behaviour. Corey and Corey described that group counselling supports adolescents to identify and experience conflicting feelings and to discover that they are not unique in their struggles. This relates to bullying treatment goals in that bullies and victims can be encouraged to gain empathy through exploring and confronting the rationalizing thoughts they use to cope with the effects of their behaviours on others. As bullies and victims may feel isolated within their personal fables, a group context can help them to be aware of and learn from the experiences of others.

Corey and Corey (2006) also described that adolescents can question their own values within a counselling group and learn to communicate with peers and adults. Identifying that adolescents need to learn how to label and verbalize their feelings, Corey and Corey described group counselling as an effective forum for adolescents to learn how to give and receive feedback from others. Given the stage of personality development and

reality testing most adolescents find themselves in, Corey and Corey posited that

adolescents can help one another within a group context through their shared struggle for

self-understanding.

Why Group Counselling Works for Aggressive Youth

Shechtman and Ben-David (1999) outlined three reasons why groups are

recommended for treatment of aggressive children or adolescents. The first reason is that

group therapy may be less threatening than individual therapy. While some adolescents

with self-esteem issues and social anxiety may feel threatened by a group dynamic, Corey

and Corey (2006) characterized adolescents in general as being more concerned with

friendship issues than younger children. While a group dynamic might elicit anxiety, one

might also assume that the same anxiety would be present in the direct attention provided

in the initial stages of one-to-one counselling. Also, if anxiety is present, a group

dynamic provides the anxiety-reducing opportunity to benefit from the therapeutic

process of a group (through vicarious learning) while taking a less prominent role in the

group. The perception of this possibility may increase an adolescent's willingness to

engage in a therapeutic process over having to be the focus of attention during one-on-

one counselling. Taking into account the developmental stage of adolescents, Corey and

Corey indicated that a group setting is more relevant to the interests of adolescents than

one-on-one counselling with an adult. Shechtman (2007) explained that groups are the

treatment of choice for adolescents because the peer group is an important source of

support to adolescents.

The second reason Shechtman and Ben-David (1999) provided for why groups

are recommended for treatment of aggressive children or adolescents is that, if designed

and facilitated properly, groups may become a source of modeling positive values and norms. Shechtman (2007) outlined the importance of role modelling in facilitating empathic understanding, genuineness, and respect between group members. Shechtman asserted that children learn quite well from effective modelling, particularly from a respected authority figure.

Identifying a third reason for why groups are recommended for treatment of aggressive children or adolescents, Shechtman and Ben-David (1999) described that groups provide an important context for interpersonal interaction and psychoeducation. In a study conducted by Shechtman and Gluk (2005) to investigate the perceived critical therapeutic factors in children's groups, participants found the construct of relationship-climate to be the most common factor (47%). Participants perceived other factors such as other- versus self-focus (25%), emotional awareness-insight (19%), and problem definition-change (9%) as being less important in affecting outcomes. Shechtman (2007) identified group climate and cohesiveness to be the most important factors in children's groups. As adolescents orient themselves towards peers and relationships, a group setting provides an opportunity to learn social skills through linking behaviours with outcomes within the real life context of interacting with peers.

Group counselling works well for aggressive youth in providing them with an intervention that is less threatening than individual counselling (Shechtman & Ben-David, 1999). Group counselling also offers adolescents an opportunity to learn through role modelling within a setting that attends to their social and relationship-oriented interests.

Rationale for Utilizing Counselling Groups to Reduce Aggression and Bullying

Elinoff et al. (2004) believed adolescents dealing with issues related to bullying might benefit from individual or small group work geared toward their specific difficulties. Within their belief in the benefits of group work with this population, Elinoff et al. posited, "It is important to determine the specific difficulties that are maintaining the individuals' behaviours" (p. 894).

Bully Goals

Shechtman and Ben-David (1999) identified the goal of increased bully self-awareness as being an integral factor in helping bullies recognize that change is necessary, therefore increasing motivation to change and participate in group activities. To increase bully self-awareness, Shechtman and Ben-David highlighted the goals of self-recognition of feelings and identifying the dynamics that lead to aggression as being important features of group work in helping bullies to recognize the negative aspects of their aggression. Taking into account causal factors related to bullying, Elinoff et al. (2004) stated that aggressive students might need to learn problem-solving strategies or self-control techniques.

Shechtman (2007) identified four central areas of deficit that a counselling group can and should address with aggressive children. The first deficit is that aggressive children are unclear about how to handle anger. The second is aggressive children tend to have issues around power struggles. Third, they are typically unaware of the consequences of their actions. Fourth, these children typically do not know how to solve problems or control themselves.

Given the skewed perspective of individual experience created by adolescent egocentrism, it is suspected that adolescent egocentrism might create barriers to reducing these areas of deficit. It is hypothesized that group counselling could provide unique opportunities for adolescents to increase self-awareness and problem-solving strategies, while accounting for the aforementioned four areas of deficit and barriers created by adolescent egocentrism. Evidence supporting this hypothesis follows in the "evidence group counselling can be effective in reducing aggression and bullying" section found later in this chapter.

Bullying Victim Goals

Rodkin and Hodges (2003) proposed that the development of friendships with well-adjusted peers is an important factor in helping victims to better deal with bullies. Rodkin and Hodges explained that the quality of an adolescent's friends (i.e., willingness to provide support) has a direct relationship with an adolescent's propensity to be bullied. Based on this assertion, Elinoff et al. (2004) posited that victimized students might benefit from social skills training that might improve their ability to develop and maintain quality relationships. Elinoff et al. also proposed that assertiveness training may be helpful in assisting adolescents to problem solve and appear less vulnerable. In developing these friendships and effectively confronting bullies, Rodkin and Hodges proposed that increased conflict resolution skill acquisition is an important goal to pursue in supporting victims of bullying. In their assertion that prosocial and socially skilled behaviours (i.e., assertiveness and effective conflict management) predict lower levels of victimization over time, Card and Hodges (2008) provided further support for the aforementioned factors related to bullying victimization. Given the social nature of group

work, one can hypothesize that group work offers a variety of opportunities to work on social skills. Evidence supporting this hypothesis is presented in the "evidence group counselling can be effective in reducing aggression and bullying" section found later in this chapter.

Friendships. With the identified importance of friendship as a protective factor against bullying established, Shechtman (2007) described general outcomes in group work with adolescents showing increases in self-esteem and intimacy in group members. Shechtman contended that the intimacy experienced through the disclosures and processes of group work creates a willingness on the part of group members to trust others, meeting an essential requirement for friendship. Also, in her experience, Shechtman has found that the overall experience of group work increases group members' self-esteem, therefore facilitating the necessary confidence to seek out and maintain friendships. Corey and Corey (2006) described that group counselling is especially suitable for adolescents because:

> Adolescents can identify and experience their conflicting feelings, discover that they are not unique in their struggles, openly question those values they decide to modify, learn to communicate with peers and adults, learn from the modeling provided by the leader, and learn to how to accept what others offer and to give of themselves in return (p. 330).

It is hypothesized that all of the factors that make group counselling suitable for adolescents would facilitate avenues for interventions to reduce aggression and bullying. As social skills and friendships are hypothesized to influence aggression and bullying,

group composition can also be expected to play a role in facilitating the development of social skills.

Group Composition

In terms of treatment in reducing aggression and bullying in this project, creating a homogenous group comprised primarily of aggressive adolescents could be counterintuitive (Horne, Stoddard, & Bell, 2007). Horne et al. described that providing these aggressive adolescents with an environment to interact with each other may lead to increased opportunities for expressed violence and aggression. Related to these concerns, Dishion, McCord, and Poulin (1999) cautioned that when conducting bullying prevention group counselling with children or adolescents, the facilitators should consider creating groups that include both aggressors and victims of aggression as participants. The primary reason for this being that a diverse group of bullies and victims would create a dynamic where group members could learn from each other's diversity (Shechtman, 2007).

Evidence Counselling Groups can be Effective in Reducing Aggression and Bullying

Identifying the benefit of having adolescents with diverse social skills and behaviours in groups to balance the behaviour of aggressive children, Shechtman (2007) cited evidence that aggression reduction-focused group counselling of this nature is as effective as individual counselling, with the benefit of reduced cost per client. Elinoff et al. (2004) identified that adolescents may benefit from small group work geared toward their specific difficulties. Evidence for this claim can be found in data collected from the Social and Emotional Training Program (Kimber et al., 2008). This program delivered intervention exercises within a classroom setting to 41 classes of students in Sweden,

ranging from grades one to nine. The exercises were administered by teachers once a

week over an entire school year and focussed on the development of the following five

functions: self-awareness, managing one's emotions, empathy, motivation, and social

competence. For senior students in the study, significant effects were obtained for the

areas of body image, psychological wellbeing, and relations with others.

Elinoff et al. (2004) related that counselling groups can be an effective way to

help victims of bullying to improve social skills and assertiveness, while helping

aggressive adolescents learn problem-solving strategies and self-control techniques.

Horne et al. (2007) indicated that counselling groups are a common form of group

intervention for working with bullying and aggressive behaviours. Horne et al. described

that, due to their nature, counselling groups are particularly effective in assisting

members with adjustment issues and the prevention of possible future dysfunction. Horne

et al.'s findings were also supported by Kimber et al. (2008) findings, which have shown

a positive effect for psychological wellbeing and a general positive effect on bullying as a

result of a group program.

Heterogeneous Groups

While the idea of grouping bullies and victims into the same group (i.e.,

heterogeneous group) might be received by some with a degree of scepticism, Shechtman

(2001, 2003) has documented evidence supporting the effectiveness of such a group in

reducing aggression. Shechtman (2003) administered an intervention to groups consisting

of aggressive and nonaggressive children from 32 elementary schools in the northern part

of Israel. Shechtman's (2003) analysis in this study referred to results obtained from the

most aggressive member of each group as well as each child who was treated individually

(14 third graders, 11 fourth graders, 12 fifth graders, and 14 sixth graders). Aggressive

children were identified by a separate questionnaire. From the same classes, a matching

population of boys ranked as highly aggressive were included in a control group; these

boys received no treatment. Using self- and teacher-reports and utilizing a quasi-

experimental design, Shechtman (2003) found significant differences between control

and experimental groups of children on measures of aggression reduction when using a

heterogeneous counselling group intervention composed of aggressive and nonaggressive

children. Specifically, these studies demonstrated a reduction of aggression as measured

by pre and postscores on self- and teacher-reports in treatment and intervention groups,

with control groups exhibiting increased aggression or remaining the same.

Related to outcomes showing reduced aggression, group counselling has also

shown effectiveness in helping adolescents to increase empathy—a construct found to

reduce aggression (Shechtman, 2006). Through the promotion of increased empathy and

reduced aggression, group counselling has been shown to be effective in improving

adolescents' relationships with friends (a construct found to reduce victimization), as

measured by Shechtman, Friedman, Kashti, and Sharabani's (2002) study. In their study,

Shechtman et al. measured the impact of group counselling on adolescents' intimacy with

a close friend. Results of their study, which was comprised of a population of 174

residential and day students from seventh and ninth grade classes from a residential

school in Israel, showed a significant effect in intimacy growth with a close friend among

participants in the study.

Utilizing the rationales provided for the use of counselling groups with adolescents in reducing bullying and aggression, a sample group has been created within this project to demonstrate what a counselling group consisting of bullies and victims could look like. This sample group is briefly discussed in the next section and is described more specifically in the chapters to follow.

Group Counselling Proposal

Building on the research described in this and the following chapter, a proposal has been created within this project for a counselling group that addresses the issue of adolescent male bullying. A large portion of this group is based on the research and writings of Dr. Zipora Shechtman (2001, 2003, 2006, 2007; Shechtman & Ben-David, 1999; Shechtman & Gluk, 2005; Shechtman et al., 2002). Zipora Shechtman is a professor in the faculty of education at Haifa University in Israel. She has vast experience in working with children and adolescents on issues related to aggression and bullying, and she has published a wide body of research on this topic. Shechtman has experience in conducting groups with children and adolescent males that combine both perpetrators and victims of bullying in the same group. The work of Anita Roberts was also utilized within this sample group for its focus on issues related to male gender as they relate to aggression. Within this work, Roberts relied on her experience, psychological theory, and on role-plays to provide exercises to help children and adolescents process issues related to bullying.

Consistent with the research cited in this and the following chapter, this group is designed to support both victims and perpetrators of bullying within the same counselling group by providing an opportunity for educational interaction. In providing opportunities

for bullies and victims of bullying to interact together and learn from each other within a therapeutic setting, the primary goals of the proposed group are to support bullies and victims to become more self-aware, empathetic, better problem solvers, and respectfully assertive with each other. The sample group provides lesson plans for a pregroup meeting, eight sessions, a postgroup meeting, and support materials. More specific information regarding recommended group processes and interventions to be utilized in this sample group is provided in chapter 4. A more in depth overview of the group manual is provided in chapter 5 of this project.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

With the research presented in this chapter, it is clear that the prevalence and pervasiveness of adolescent bullying presents significant challenges to both individuals and communities in Canada. Common definitions of bullying identify a proactive nature to aggressive behaviour, where weaker individuals are exposed repeatedly to direct or indirect aggression by more dominant individuals. Several causes of bullying were identified in this chapter to explain why bullying occurs. Within this explanation, Rigby's (2004) five theoretical causal factors of bullying were discussed and causal factors related to both perpetrators and victims of bullying were identified. What emerges in this analysis of causal factors is an awareness that a complicated array of influences interact to create a developmental trajectory towards bullying. With this, it is extremely difficult to isolate specific developmental conditions that make bullying behaviour more likely.

With the negative effects of bullying on individuals and communities described in this chapter, a need for effective smaller interventions within greater school and

community interventions was described. Group counselling was proposed as being one such smaller scale intervention. The effectiveness of group counselling for adolescents with issues related to bullying was identified, and research supporting the use of a heterogeneous adolescent group consisting of both perpetrators and victims of bullying was provided. While there are some similarities between counselling groups for adolescents and adults, it was identified that adolescents are at a developmental stage where they are working through a central developmental task of building relationships. As such, it was identified that group work was especially suited to adolescents, as they present as being somewhat preoccupied with social interaction, which groups provide. Having established the need for interventions to reduce adolescent bullying, and having identified research describing the appropriateness and effectiveness of counselling groups in reducing adolescent bullying, the following chapter builds on this discussion by describing recommended group counselling processes and interventions for this population in more specific detail.

CHAPTER FOUR: GROUP COUNSELLING INTERVENTIONS FOR MALE

ADOLESCENTS

This project focussed on providing a rationale and plan for an adolescent

counselling group that supports both victims and perpetrators of bullying within the same

counselling group. The previous chapter served as a foundation for the need to offer such

a group and the merits of working with victims and bullies within the same group. This

chapter builds on the previous chapter in providing the framework for how group

counselling can be used to support adolescent bullies and victims. Within this framework,

a general description of the initial stage, transition stage, working stage, and termination

stage of group work with this population is provided. Along with a description of these

common stages of group development, issues and barriers created by adolescent

resistance and egocentrism are discussed in this chapter.

Interventions for Male Adolescents Presenting With Bullying-Related Issues

Taking into account the writings of Corey and Corey (2006) and Shechtman

(2007), developing and implementing effective interventions for male adolescents

presenting with bullying-related issues requires extra care and attention. While

highlighting the overall importance of maintaining an adolescent's motivation for change,

Shechtman indicated that an effective change process for this population requires the

completion of a whole therapeutic cycle, consisting of: "creating a strong client-therapist

alliance; then exploring their emotions that lead to aggression; looking at the

consequences of their behaviour and enhancing insight into their motives and acts; and

finally working on behaviour change" (p. 168). While the completion of a whole

therapeutic cycle is necessary, Shechtman identified some barriers in working with bullies and victims that should be attended to.

Barriers to Learning

Over and above typical issues related to adolescent maturity (i.e., imaginary audience and personal fable), Shechtman identified several barriers to the acquisition of new skills that are specific to adolescents presenting with bullying-related issues. These barriers include: established patterns of aggression, secondary gratification, lack of emotional empathy, difficulties in connecting with emotions, skill deficits in coping with anger, issues relating to power struggles, lack of awareness of consequences of actions, and skills deficit in solving problems or controlling behaviour. As such, Shechtman asserted that interventions aimed at helping this population should focus on maintaining client motivation while following a whole therapeutic cycle that reduces the aforementioned barriers to the development of new skills.

Group Developmental Stages

Within the context of working through the aforementioned barriers within a whole therapeutic cycle, Shechtman (2007), based on the work of Corey (1981), identified four stages to work through when running a group with this population: initial stage, transition stage, working stage, and termination stage. A description of these stages is provided in the following section.

Initial Stage

Shechtman (2007) described increased verbal self-expressiveness as being the primary goal in group work with adolescent males. This task is particularly important for bullies and victims as their behaviours might suggest that they use other less effective

means of communicating and problem-solving. For example, bullies may use physical or verbal aggression to convey their emotions, while victims may use avoidance or passive strategies to communicate. With a more diverse repertoire of self-expression skills, it is hypothesized within this project that adolescents presenting with bullying-related issues may become more open to new and effective ways of behaving.

In working to support adolescent males to become more verbally self-expressive, Shechtman (2007) described that a number of conditions must be in place. To begin a process of increased self-awareness and verbal expressiveness within the initial phase of a group with adolescents, trust must begin to develop amongst group members and between group members and the facilitator (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). Developing this trust is expected to be particularly challenging within a group consisting of both bullies and victims, such as the sample counselling group proposed within this project. To facilitate trust within the initial stage, Shechtman specified that the group leader must actively provide structure to group sessions by: utilizing activities that build relationships, developing a language of feelings, establishing constructive group norms, and providing group members with a sense of security. To build relationships and gradually make members comfortable with their new group setting, activities in the initial stages should consist of group work where adolescents are divided into pairs or threesomes (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). With each exercise, pairs and threesomes should be switched so group members can gain familiarity with the entire group (Shechtman, 2007). As adolescents gain familiarity and comfort with each other, it is expected that they will become more comfortable in disclosing information about

themselves. However, while group members may gain comfort in habituating to each other's presence, the other essential component to their ability to disclose information about themselves with each other lies in their ability to communicate.

As adolescents may have a limited vocabulary in expressing feelings and emotions, it is essential that a language of feelings be developed within the initial stage of a group (Shechtman, 2007). In her writings, Shechtman identified that adolescents presenting with issues related to bullying may have specific difficulties with expressing emotions. Shechtman proposed therapeutic games, cards, bibliotherapy, and describing photos as being excellent ways to help adolescents develop vocabulary that describes feelings and emotions. As adolescents begin to disclose more personal information, it is important that group norms are identified to ensure safety within the group (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). Within the development of group norms, a culture of therapeutic climate, which most adolescents are unfamiliar with, must be created (Shechtman, 2007). Given the maturity level and ease with which power struggles can arise within an adolescent population consisting of bullies and victims, care and attention from the facilitator is required in the initial stage when establishing and implementing rules and expectations.

Shechtman (2007) encouraged facilitators to discuss rules with group members in the first session and to have group members create the rules for the group. Within a group where bullies and victims are creating these rules together, it is possible that more assertive members of the group would dominate rule setting. While the facilitator should ensure that rules around confidentiality and conduct between group members are

incorporated, Shechtman encouraged facilitators to create an opportunity for group

members to anonymously submit concerns and corresponding group norms. Following

this, Shechtman proposed that the group members discuss the submitted concerns and

agree on some expectations for group members. Then, if these norms are broken, the

group's proposed and agreed upon norms can be referred to. As these norms are upheld,

Shechtman proposed that group members would feel a sense of safety. Within this feeling

of safety, Shechtman asserted that group members become more willing to utilize their

increased feeling and emotion vocabulary to verbalize their feelings and emotions and

thereby gain a new level of self-awareness. As group members begin this process of

verbalizing emotions and increasing self-awareness, they progress into the transition

stage of the therapeutic cycle.

Transition Stage

As adolescent counselling groups progress out of the initial stage into successive

stages of transition, working, and termination, Shechtman (2007) described client

resistance as being an important area for processing and intervention. Resistance in a

counselling group that includes bullies and victims might entail a member trying to gain

control over facilitators or other group members. Resistance might also include avoidance

behaviours such as trying to change topics or acting out. Since no writings have been

done on bullying and victim group treatment in relation to resistance, I have relied upon

the work of Hurley (1984) to address the type of resistance group facilitators might face

when helping bullies and victims heal.

Hurley (1984) identified three forms of adolescent group member resistance that

commonly occur. The first form is referred to as resistance in the service of defining

group structure (Hurley, 1984). This resistance is aimed at testing limits, provoking the leader, and defining issues of trust, safety, and control. Typical behaviours created by this form of resistance include forms of avoidance such as laughing or giggling, distracting, and threatening. Since the group proposed in this project combines victims and bullies, it is important that facilitators recognize and attend to forms of limit testing from both bullies and victims. Given the difference in personalities of bullies and victims, it is likely that certain forms of resistance may be more common to either bullies or victims. Given the aforementioned concerns bullies have with control and dominance, one might suspect that bullies would exhibit externalizing behaviours in testing limits and defining group structure. Examples of this could be: making jokes, insulting the facilitator or other group members, grandstanding, and drawing attention away from others. Due to the bullies' predicted increased visibility and disruptive effect, bully resistance may be more likely to be processed than victim resistance.

Another common form of resistance within an adolescent group is known as resistance employed to regulate group tension (Hurley, 1984). Generally, this form of resistance is triggered by group members' disclosure, because disclosure may exceed an individual's sense of security. As an individual's sense of security is exceeded, counteracting forces in the form of disrupting or distracting are activated within that individual to ease the tension. One might suspect that this form of resistance may initially be more prevalent amongst victims in the group, as they would be predicted to start the group feeling quite insecure amongst the bullies in the group. This might take the form of a group member creating a passive disturbance, such as a body noise, to break the tension

after a disclosure from another member. It may also be demonstrated through group

members talking amongst each other and disengaging from the group process. As the

group progresses and bullies gain self-awareness, it is likely that bullies will become

aware of their own insecurities and respond by disrupting or distracting in an effort to

avoid disclosures or vulnerabilities that might exceed their sense of security. As it is

suspected that one's sense of security is related to one's level of maturity, the evolving

nature of adolescent maturity is likely to make this form of resistance an especially

important area for processing in adolescent counselling groups such as the one proposed

in this project.

A final form of resistance, addressed by Hurley (1984), is commonly experienced

in adolescent counselling groups in the form of resistance to deal with separation and

termination. In this form of resistance, adolescents commonly act out in active or passive

ways to protest the end of the group. For example, in a group composed of bullies and

victims, some adolescents who have experienced progress may demonstrate signs of

regression (i.e., bullying or acting out behaviour) to demonstrate a need to continue their

relationship with the facilitator. Some group members may have experienced social

acceptance within the group, perhaps for the first time in their life, and they may act out

in response to feeling betrayed by the facilitators with the ending of relationships that

accompany the ending of a group. Furthermore, with group members' experiences of the

imaginary audience and personal fable, this betrayal may be intensified as they feel others

are witnessing this betrayal, and that their experience is uniquely more difficult than that

of other members of the group.

Through processing the three previously described forms of resistance, it is

hypothesized within this project that adolescent verbal self-expressiveness can be

increased and opportunities for increased self-awareness can be created. This can be done

by utilizing the language of feeling developed within the group to facilitate group

member descriptions of feelings regarding: group structure and processes, disclosures

from other group members, and the ending of the group. As they describe their feelings,

group members can link these feelings to past experiences and gain greater awareness of

why they feel and behave the way they do. As group members further develop their

language of feeling vocabulary and increase their self-awareness, they can become more

equipped to identify their qualities and shortcomings. With this comes a greater ability to

identify goals to work toward in the working stage of the therapeutic group counselling

cycle.

Working Stage

The third of four group developmental stages is a stage described by Corey and

Corey (2006), which occurs when group members are focused on identifying their goals

and concerns and are willing to work both within and outside the group to address these

goals and concerns. This stage is known as the working stage (Corey & Corey, 2006). It

is suspected that bullies, within the sample counselling group in this project, might reach

the working stage having gained awareness that their behaviour causes suffering for

themselves and others. Through this awareness, they may then begin the process of

setting and working toward prosocial goals. Victims might reach the working stage

having begun the process of identifying the role their behaviour plays in their

victimization. In the working stage, they may begin setting and working toward goals to

develop more assertive and pro-social behaviour. In the working stage of the proposed

group, both victims and bullies are predicted to begin the process of working toward their

goals by gaining awareness and comfort with each other outside of the group setting

(Shechtman, 2007). This might include attempts to engage each other (i.e., other bullies

and victims) in casual social interactions or activities. While Shechtman encouraged this

interaction as an important learning process, it should be noted that some risk,

particularly to victims of bullying, is likely to be present in this interaction. However, it is

expected that this interaction might be particularly useful to bullies, as they may begin to

normalize associations with victims as their empathy increases. As victims normalize

their interactions with bullies, it is expected that their self-confidence will increase and

that they will become less of a target for future bullying behaviour.

As focus is placed on goals and concerns within the working stage, Shechtman

(2007) asserted that adolescent group member interaction within this stage is used to

enhance the release of emotions, and to increase self-confidence, self-understanding, and

behaviour change. Within this release of emotions, Shechtman described that the primary

goal of the working stage is to process adolescents' emotions and behaviours to assist

them in extracting meaning and integrating the resulting knowledge to improve

functioning. Thus, in a group for adolescent bullies and victims, it is necessary to include

opportunities in the group design for bullies and victims to process their behaviours

toward each other, the emotions that contribute to their behaviours, and the emotional

consequences of their behaviours. As group members process these areas, they will gain

awareness of their own feelings and the feelings of others. While direct methods of

processing generally occur in the working stage of adult counselling groups, Shechtman warned that direct methods require cognitive and affective qualities that many adolescents do not possess. Therefore, indirect and creative methods of processing that reduce cognitive demands and anxiety are recommended as being better suited for an adolescent population (Gladding, 2005; Thompson & Rudolph, 2000).

Within the working stage of the proposed group composed of bullies and victims within this project, it is hypothesized that bullies will gain a greater recognition of why they bully. With this knowledge, it is hypothesized that bullies can learn to identify the emotional needs bullying satisfies and work to have those needs met in ways that do not cause suffering to others. Improved recognition of the feelings of others within the working stage is suspected to reduce bully rationalizations for aggressive behaviour, therefore increasing bullies' abilities to be empathetic. With respect to victims, self-awareness is suspected to increase victims' awareness of emotions and behaviours that increase their likelihood of being bullied. This may include an awareness of having low self-esteem, which is suspected to reduce one's ability to be assertive or set boundaries. An awareness of the feelings of others may help victims to improve their self-esteem by understanding issues that bullies are dealing with. Recognizing that the behaviour of bullies is affected, not only by the behaviour of victims, but also by a bully's difficult experiences and emotions, may help victims to externalize bullying behaviour. Also, understanding that other victims feel the same way may help victims to normalize their feelings, therefore increasing their self-esteem. As group members progress through

identifying and working toward goals in the working stage, they begin to approach the termination stage of the therapeutic cycle.

Termination Stage

Shechtman (2007) commented, "The more successful a group is in the working stage, the more difficult it is to end the intervention" (p. 118). Yet, as articulated by Yalom and Leszcz (2005), termination is an integral part of the therapy process and an important force in the process of change. Shechtman described that a successful termination process with adolescent group members requires several sessions and involves the following tasks: "Dealing with feelings of loss and separation, evaluating one's growth inside and outside the group, identifying areas in need of continued work, and developing plans for continuing without the group" (p. 110). Thus, in the proposed group project, facilitators need to ensure an adequate amount of time is available to bring the group to a healthy and successful conclusion.

There is some debate among counsellors about how much honesty should be encouraged between adolescent group members within the termination session. While it is generally agreed that closure should be encouraged in the termination session through feedback and saying goodbye to each other, Corey and Corey (2006) cautioned against feedback between group members being too positive. Corey and Corey asserted that overly positive feedback might send an inaccurate or distorted message to the receiver. Corey and Corey focused on the importance of continued work beyond the end of the group, and utilized honest feedback between group members as a way of encouraging this continued work.

On the other side of this debate, Shechtman (2007) valued positive, and sometimes even inaccurate, feedback between group members at the end of a group as a means of promoting a sense of trust in adolescents' selves and in others. Shechtman asserted that the positive memories gained from positive feedback at the end of a group could serve as a source of encouragement and support during difficult times that occur following the group. Also, Shechtman did not trust all adolescents to be able to offer accurate feedback constructively. Accurate feedback is encouraged within the working stage of the group, since adequate time and opportunity exists within this stage to process feedback. However, in the final group session, there is no time to process feedback and Shechtman felt there was too much risk in allowing adolescents to offer honest feedback without time to process negative comments. Therefore, Shechtman proposed the integration of highly structured activities in the termination stage to ensure group members leave the group with a positive experience.

Related to Shechtman's (2007) focus on a positive final experience in the ending of a group, she explained that it is essential that adolescents are able to generalize learning and skills developed within the group to their lives outside of the group. Shechtman posited that a positive experience in the final session or sessions of a group contributes to an adolescent's willingness to refer to group experiences in the future. Shechtman also encouraged the use of exercises such as role-playing in the final session or sessions of the group to help adolescents generalize learning across settings. This strategy is utilized in the group proposed in this project, where group members are

challenged in the final session to role-play a scenario they are likely to face in the future that utilizes skills and learning developed within the group.

Given that adolescents are a vulnerable population having yet to reach full adulthood, special considerations should be taken in closing adolescents' relationships with the facilitator (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). As the supportive nature of the facilitator may satisfy developmental needs for attachment that may not be present elsewhere in an adolescent's life, adolescents may have more difficulty in terminating a relationship with a facilitator than an adult typically would (Shechtman, 2007). It is expected that facilitators be required to process the aforementioned resistance to deal with separation and termination, in which adolescents act out in active or passive ways to protest the end of the group (Hurley, 1984).

Group Counselling Proposal

As outlined in appendix A, the group counselling proposal for this project deliberately and carefully paid attention to the stages of group process described in this chapter. Furthermore, while following these stages of group process, the group counselling proposal for this project was designed to account for the various barriers to learning described in this chapter. With these accommodations, it is predicted that the sample group proposed in this project is especially suited to meet the needs of adolescents dealing with bullying related issues.

Summary

Adolescents presenting with issues related to bullying present with a wide variety of characteristics to account for in developing and implementing an effective intervention

to suit their needs. It was identified in chapter 3 that adolescents present with an orientation toward relationships and social interactions, making group interventions particularly well suited for this population. This chapter provided a framework describing how group counselling can be applied as a valid and effective intervention option for this population.

This chapter described the importance of utilizing a whole therapeutic cycle with adolescents presenting with issues related to bullying behaviour. While outlining the necessary stages to work through in utilizing a whole therapeutic cycle (i.e., initial stage, transition stage, working stage, and termination stage), this chapter also identified how group counselling strategies could address barriers created by adolescent egocentrism and resistance. While the counselling group proposed in this project pursues the goal of changing behaviours through the processing of emotions and increasing of self-awareness, we were reminded in this chapter of Shechtman's (2007) contention that adolescents are particularly sensitive to criticism and social rejection. This chapter identified that care should be taken while challenging adolescents within processing exercises.

In identifying a therapeutic group cycle within this chapter to follow with a group of adolescents consisting of both victims and bullies, the overall theme of ensuring safety to group members continues to be paramount. Given the inherent vulnerability that comes with adolescence, and the varying degrees of aggressiveness and submissiveness that characterize the personalities of bullies and victims, it is apparent that each stage of a therapeutic cycle with this diverse population must ensure safety to each group member.

While the exact definition of safety might be subject to many interpretations, one can conclude that physical safety should be ensured, and psychological stressors should not exceed group member's abilities to cope. However, one of the predicted strengths of the group proposed in this project is its ability to create opportunities for members to recognize and process their anxieties in the moment, as they experience them. If anxiety could be referred to as an energy that fuels behaviour, then a group consisting of victims and bullies can be expected to increase anxiety and therefore behaviours amongst its group members. However, it is expected that these behaviours will create substance for processing and increased self-awareness, therefore opening a door to the adoption of new prosocial behaviour alternatives.

Having identified in chapter 3 a need for an intervention to address adolescent bullying and an overall rationale for the use of group counselling as such an intervention, this chapter built on the previous chapter in providing the framework for how group counselling could and should be used to support adolescent bullies and victims. Within chapters 3 and 4, a sample group based on research identified in this project was introduced. Chapter 5 provides a general overview of this group manual, which can be found in Appendix A.

CHAPTER FIVE: GROUP MANUAL OVERVIEW

Building on the literature reviewed in this project, Appendix A provides a sample group manual that provides an example of what a counselling group for male adolescents dealing with bullying could look like. The sample group manual consists of lesson plans for a pregroup meeting, eight sessions, and a postgroup follow-up meeting. The sample group primarily utilizes the work of Shechtman (2007), who recommended the inclusion of both victims and perpetrators of bullying in the same group, and Roberts (2001), who placed the primary focus on male socialization and a need for dominance as major reasons why males bully others. Given the issues with safety that may arise and given that it is a common and recommended practice to utilize two facilitators in group counselling (Corey & Corey, 2006), it is recommended that two facilitators conduct this sample group. As such, descriptions of the group manual are based on the assumption that two facilitators will be delivering the program. Through increases in self-awareness, empathy, and assertiveness, the general goal of the sample group is to reduce or stop incidences of bullying in the lives of group members.

Group Membership and Screening

Following Dishion et al. (1999) and Shechtman's (2003) findings that group work for aggressive adolescents is most effective with a heterogeneous group consisting of both aggressors and victims of aggression, perpetrators as well as victims of bullying should be chosen for the group. While at first glance it seems that combining aggressive and submissive individuals in the same group might pose a risk to submissive group members (this risk is addressed in the forthcoming safety section of this chapter),

research has shown that bullies and victims present with therapeutic needs for which the

presence of each population produces symbiotic opportunities (Shechtman, 2003). That

is, aggressive individuals require role modelling and practise in feeling empathy and

perspective-taking, which can be provided by more emotional group members.

Meanwhile, victims of bullying require some of the assertiveness skills and social

abilities often employed by bullies. As group members interact with each other, it is

hypothesized that opportunities will be created for each of these populations to learn their

different but related skills, in order to reach their goals within a supportive and safe

environment.

Screening Procedure

Group screening involves an interview approach that includes facilitators, parents,

and the prospective group member. The three primary goals of the screening interview

are to determine the prospective group member's level of motivation for participating in

the group, the prospective group member's history with bullying and aggression—is he a

bully or victim, or does he pose a threat to other group members—and to begin building a

bond between the prospective group member and the facilitators (Corey & Corey, 2006).

All group members should be males, between the ages of 11 to 14 years of age. This age

range was chosen to combine individuals who regularly interact together within in a

Junior High School population.

Motivation

The group member's motivation for participating in the group should be

determined through an informal process within the interview. The facilitators should ask

the prospective group member how he feels about being in the group and what he hopes

to achieve by being in the group. As a means to assess for situations where parents are forcing their adolescent to attend the group, the facilitators should ask the prospective group member's parents the same questions: How do they feel about their child being in the group? What do they hope their child will get out of the group? Given the age of prospective group members and the nature of the group topic, it might be expected that some disparity would exist between parents' and group members' enthusiasm for attending the group. Cases should be assessed on an individual basis, and adolescents who are unwilling or being forced into the group by their parents should be contraindicated.

History

A primary feature of the sample group proposed in his project is to utilize the differences of group member experience through combining bullies and victims in the same group. While all group members are expected to participate in the same exercises, steps should be taken in the early stages of the group to reduce anxiety by reducing victims' exposure to bullies (pairing victims together in early exercises). With this, it is essential that bullies and victims be identified within the screening process.

In screening aggressors and victims for the group, the Peer Relations Questionnaire (PRQ; Rigby & Slee, 1993) should be utilized. The PRQ is a comprehensive research questionnaire suitable for individuals aged 8 to 18 years, and it takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. The questions on the PRQ relate specifically to the following bullying-related areas: social well-being, perceptions of school environment, prevalence of bullying (frequency of being bullied), reported consequences of being bullied, perceived abilities relating to bullying, tendencies to bully

others, and beliefs about bullying. The PRQ is a standardized assessment tool that was

used in the largest bullying survey ever conducted in Australia. Within this survey,

38,000 primary and secondary students filled out the PRQ, producing a large sample and

increased reliability. Satisfactory internal consistency for the PRQ was demonstrated

through scales with alphas greater than 0.70 (Rigby & Slee, 1993). Copyright laws

regarding the PRQ should be adhered to, and test booklets and scoring sheets should be

purchased and ordered in advance of the group screening.

Safety and Risk Assessment

In combining bullies with victims together in the same group, one can

hypothesize that a heightened level of risk is present, which may jeopardize the physical

and emotional safety of group members. To assess risk for the likelihood of group

members being victimized by aggressive group members, it is recommended that the

Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) be used within the screening interview (Pearson

Education Inc., 2009). This standardized test identifies social skills performance in the

areas of cooperation, empathy, assertion, self-control, and responsibility. The SSRS also

incorporates a problem behaviour scale measuring externalizing problems, internalizing

problems, and hyperactivity. This test requires 10 to 25 minutes to administer. Copyright

laws for using this tool should be observed and it is recommended that a test package be

purchased at a cost of $25.00 (Canadian). Results from responses on the subset of

questions in the SSRS measuring internalizing and externalizing behaviours should be

closely monitored to determine the potential risk of aggressive group members.

In addition to completing the SSRS, group members are also required to agree to

a brief background check, signing a release of information form allowing group

facilitators to consult with school staff and police. Facilitators should combine

impressions derived from the presession screening interview, SSRS, PRQ, and

background information checks, to gain an awareness of whether aggressive potential

members pose a risk to other group members, and whether submissive potential members

(i.e., victims of bullying) are strong enough, and not too traumatized, to engage in the

group.

<center>Ethical Issues</center>

This group should be conducted in an ethical and legal manner, in accordance the

Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists (Sinclair & Pettifor, 2001). An ethical code of

conduct should be provided for the group, as indicated and provided in Appendix A. The

group facilitators should have an understanding of issues related to aggressiveness and

victimization and must be qualified in understanding and executing the principles of

group dynamics and group processes. Potential group members should be screened in a

fair and culturally sensitive manner, and group member selection should be based on the

criteria identified in the group membership and screening portion of this chapter.

Included in the screening portion, individuals should be provided with the following

information suggested by Corey and Corey (2006): information on the nature, purposes,

and goals of the group; confidentiality and exceptions to confidentiality; facilitators

theoretical orientation; group services that can be provided; the roles, rights, and

responsibilities of group members and facilitators; and the qualification of the facilitators

to lead the group. Following the provision of this information, prospective group

members are provided with an informed consent form to sign (see Appendix B).

Facilitators should be vigilant to ensure that dual relationships do not exist between themselves and group members, with the exception of situations where a group member is also a client of a facilitator. In situations where group members have a relationship with each other prior to the beginning of a group, a determination of the appropriateness of their inclusion in the group should be made on a case-by-case basis. Individuals should be excluded in any situation where group members are members of the same family, have a prior bully–victim relationship, have a significant power imbalance present in their relationship, or are fearful that another group member would violate them inside or outside of the group.

Multicultural Diversity

As this group should be offered to individuals of various cultural backgrounds, it is essential that the facilitators cater to multicultural diversity. In an effort to circumvent any possible culture-related misunderstandings, the facilitators should clarify what needs can and cannot be met within the group during the screening and pregroup meetings (Corey & Corey, 2006). The facilitators should also resist the temptation to make assumptions based on race, ethnicity, or culture without verifying those assumptions with individual members (Corey & Corey, 2006). The facilitators should ensure that group norms are indicated in a culturally sensitive manner, with an understanding that individuals from some cultures are not comfortable with certain practices—for example, being assertive, being independent, being emotional, and so on (Corey & Corey, 2006). To ensure clients have as much information as possible before proceeding with the group, during the prescreening process the facilitators should explore important cultural issues

with clients that are predicted to come up during the group. The facilitators should make

an effort to be aware and knowledgeable of various cultural practices of group members.

Mandated Clients

With the topic and population of this group, it is predicted that some members of

the group will be mandated to attend the group. These members should be advised as to

the limits of confidentiality in their specific situations. While all group members should

be advised that confidentiality will be broken in situations where the withholding of

information violates the safety of the client or someone else, mandated clients' progress

may also be subject to inquiries by probation officers, social workers, judges, or any

other person or agency that has legal access to the clients' progress.

Group Safety

Given the topic and composition of the group, it is necessary to address safety

concerns for group members. As this group purposefully combines aggressive

adolescents with adolescent victims of bullying, it is essential that physical and

psychological group safety is maintained. Prior to the start of the group, the local police

detachment should be advised of the nature of the group and the meeting times over the

duration of the group to ensure a quick response should a physical altercation arise. Also,

facilitators are encouraged to monitor group members arriving and leaving the group to

ensure the safety of group members. It is recommended that parents be instructed to drop

off and pick up group members from the front door of the building to ensure easy

monitoring. A facilitator should be at the front door 15 minutes before the group starts to

supervise arrivals, and a facilitator should also be at the front door after the group ends

until all of the students have connected with their guardians. It is expected that conflicts will arise within group activities; these conflicts should be treated as processing and learning opportunities. With this, it is important that prospective members be made aware of this during screening interviews as part of their informed consent process.

Group Structure

A pregroup screening occurs approximately one month prior to the commencement of the pregroup meeting. The pregroup screening consists of an informal 20-minute interview that includes the prospective group member, parents, and facilitators. The prospective group member is asked how he feels about being in the group, and what he expects to gain from being in the group. The prospective group member's parents are also asked how they feel about their child being in the group, and what they expect their child to get out of attending the group. Following the interview, the prospective group member will fill out the SSRS and the PRQ.

Lesson plans for a pregroup meeting, eight sessions, and a postgroup meeting are included as Appendix A in this project. The pregroup meeting can be used as part of the screening procedure to assess the level of comfort of prospective group members, and to ensure no prior bully or victim relationships are present. Corey and Corey (2006) explained that pregroup sessions are beneficial in allowing group members to meet each other before the group starts. Also, in providing a forum for group members to get a feel for the group and ask questions, the pregroup session might help members to reduce their levels of anxiety before starting the group.

The postgroup meeting allows for group members to reflect on their progress and recommit themselves to their goals. Group members are asked to fill out the PRQ, which along with providing informal monitoring of group member progress, serves as a postmeasure of group member progress. Group members are also given another opportunity to process feelings regarding the ending of the group.

Eight Sessions

The eight lesson plans (i.e., sessions) provided in the sample group are intended to guide the group members through the four stages of a whole therapeutic cycle: initial stage, transition, stage, working stage, and termination stage (Shechtman, 2007). The initial stages are focussed on creating trust and developing a language of feeling (Shechtman, 2007). Within the initial stage, small group work is utilized. Bullies are paired with bullies, and victims with victims, to increase comfort and reduce anxiety.

Through the transition stage, group members are provided with information on bullying, and they are encouraged to disclose more information about their experiences. Opportunities to process emotions and resistance are provided, and group members are encouraged to begin the development of goals for the working stage.

Within the working stage, group members are encouraged to process their emotions and increase self-awareness through exercises that shed light on male socialization. Accompanying increases in self-awareness, group members work on exercises that increase empathy and assertiveness skills. Group members are given the opportunity to generalize their learning through practicing skills in simulated real life scenarios.

The termination stage begins in the sixth session. While group members are in the working stage in session six, the facilitators are expected to make them aware that the end of the group is approaching. With this, group members are given an opportunity to begin processing their feelings regarding the ending of relationships they have developed in the group. Group members are given an opportunity to continue processing their feelings regarding the end of the group as they checkout in session seven. Session eight and the postgroup session give group members the opportunity to conclude relationships and leave the group with a positive experience.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This chapter focused on providing a general overview of the sample group manual, provided in appendix A. Within this overview, topics described included: group membership and screening, ethical issues, and group structure. The next, and final, chapter of this project presents a summary of the literature presented. Strengths and limitations of the literature reviews and a sample group manual are presented, along with suggestions for future research ideas.

CHAPTER SIX: SYNOPSIS

The literature review and the sample group manual provided in this project (see all Appendices) are intended to serve as resources to those supporting male adolescents dealing with issues related to bullying. The literature review provided in this project serves the dual purpose of providing information on adolescent bullying and providing a rationale for the development of the sample group in this project. The sample group provided serves as an example of what an intervention utilizing the research cited in this project can look like. This chapter includes a summary of the literature presented in this project, a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the literature review and the sample group program, and implications for future research. A comprehensive list of references is provided at the end of this chapter.

Summary of the Literature Review

Bullying is defined within this project as: "A form of aggression that is hostile and proactive, involving both direct and indirect behaviours, that are repeatedly targeted at an individual or group that is perceived as weaker" (Elinoff et al., 2004, p. 888). Bullying behaviours typically take one of two forms: direct or indirect behaviours (Elinoff et al., 2004). Direct behaviours include physical or verbal attacks, while indirect bullying behaviours involve purposeful actions to coerce others not to socialize with the victim. Indirect behaviours often lead to social exclusion or damage to an individual's status or reputation (Crick & Gropeter, 1995). Indirect behaviours can include threats, insults, name-calling, spreading rumours, and writing hurtful graffiti (Rivers & Smith, 1994).

Canada has a high prevalence of bullying, ranking 9th highest among 35 countries examined in the 2008 CCL report. Approximately 1 in 10 children in Alberta have bullied others, and as many as 25% of children in grades four to six have been victims of bullying (Government of Alberta, 2005). Bullying, in some shape or form, occurs once every 7 minutes on Alberta playgrounds, and once every 25 minutes in classrooms (Government of Alberta, 2005).

There are many causal factors that contribute to becoming a perpetrator or victim of bullying. These factors include biological predispositions, interactions with caregivers, interactions with peers, and social-cognitive ability. In his "bullying as a developmental process perspective" (Rigby, 2004, p. 291), Rigby identified that adolescents have a biological drive to bully. Rigby's perspective identified adolescent bullying behaviours as beginning early in childhood when children begin to assert themselves at the expense of others in order to gain social dominance. From an evolutionary perspective, Rigby explained the motivation to bully as originating from bullies placing a high value on achieving dominance over others to ensure that the strongest prevail. Dodge (2002) found harsh discipline and psychological control on the part of caregivers as being highly correlated with aggressive behaviour, and Bowes et al. (2009) found childhood witnessing of domestic violence to be a strong predictor of bullying behaviour.

Olweus (1993) identified three specific psychological factors underlying bullying behaviour that relate to bullies' behaviour toward peers. First, bullies have a strong need for power and dominance. That is, they have a strong desire to be in control. Secondly, many bullies have developed a degree of hostility toward their environments, which leads

them to derive a false sense of satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering on others.

Third, Olweus described a benefit component to the behaviour of bullies in which they

are able to obtain things of material value, such as money and cigarettes, through

aggressive behaviour.

Cognitive abilities of bullies can also play an important role in bullies' success in

achieving power and dominance over others. Sutton et al. (1999a) argued that

descriptions of children who bully as lacking in social perspective-taking skills have been

erroneously based on research involving conduct-disordered children who appear to be

bullies. As it has been shown that aggressive conduct-disordered children have an

increased likelihood of attributing hostile intent to the actions of others (Feldman &

Dodge, 1987), Sutton et al. asserted that conduct-disordered children with perspective-

taking deficits might often be misconstrued as being bullies. In research by Sutton et al.,

it was shown that bullies scored significantly higher on total social cognition scores than

any other population group in the experiment.

Bullying can, and often does, have drastic and pervasive effects on victims,

communities, witnesses, and perpetrators. As such, an effective intervention to reduce or

stop adolescent bullying is required. Group counselling is known to be an effective

intervention with an adolescent population and in addressing the issue of bullying

(Shechtman, 2007). Within utilizing group counselling to address adolescent bullying,

many researchers suggest that a heterogeneous group consisting of both perpetrators and

victims of bullying is most effective (Dishion et al., 1999; Horne et al., 2007; Shechtman,

2003, 2007). A sample counselling group based on the information provided within the

literature review was introduced. Within this sample group, it was suggested in chapter 4 that adolescents dealing with issues relating to bullying work through a whole therapeutic cycle consisting of initial, transition, working, and termination stages.

Strengths and Limitations of the Literature Review and the Sample Group Manual

In developing the literature review and sample group counselling manual for this project, the breadth of the issue of adolescent bullying becomes apparent. With this, there are some decisions that must be made in making this project manageable. Within the decisions made around which literature to utilize, some limitations regarding this project emerge.

Literature Review Strengths and Limitations

A major limitation of the literature review provided in this project was the use of dated information. While efforts were made combine dated research with more current research, the reality remains that many areas of contemporary bullying research are rooted in the research of pioneering researchers in the field, such as Dan Olweus. However, one might also interpret the continued emergence of dated research into current literature as being a positive aspect. As researchers are generally searching for truth within their fields, the continued reflection of the field toward relevant past research suggests that some truthful findings regarding bullying have emerged.

Adolescent bullying continues to be a subject that fosters ambivalence amongst community members, policy makers, and parents. With the high prevalence of adolescent bullying in Canada described in the literature review in this project, it is likely that most Canadians have been exposed to bullying in one way or another. However, in the absence

of sensational incidents of bullying that catch the attention of the media, bullying remains an easy issue for policy makers to avoid. One of the strengths of the literature review provided in this project was that it provided a rationale for why the issue of adolescent bullying should be addressed. While providing a rationale for why this issue should be addressed, this project also goes one step further and offers a sample group counselling program to address the issue of adolescent bullying.

Sample Group Program Manual

The intent of this sample group program manual (see Appendix A) is to offer a new and innovative intervention to male adolescent bullying. Given the necessary ethical considerations in running such a group with clients, it is necessary that the activities within the group be based on preexisting peer-reviewed research. As such, the innovation of this proposed sample group program manual likely lies more within the combination of the proposed activities rather than within the originality of the activities themselves. A major strength of this program manual is that each of the proposed interventions has been chosen based on supporting research found in bullying literature. Most of the interventions chosen for this manual were selected based on the following specific primary view: the frequency and severity of male adolescent bullying can be reduced through increased adolescent self-awareness and self-acceptance. Depending on one's orientation to the etiology of bullying, this may be viewed as being a strength or limitation.

A major limitation of this proposed sample program manual is that it has not been tested with actual participants. As such, there are no data to confirm its efficacy. Related

to this limitation, there is no proof that the proposed combination of screening methods and safety precautions would be effective in maintaining the safety of clients. Given the likelihood, or perhaps necessity, that conflict arise within this purposely chosen population of aggressive and submissive clients, it essential that there is a high level of confidence in the proposed screening methods and safety precautions before the this program is utilized with clients.

Given that there may be limitations in the proposed sample program that are related to safety, the major trade off and strength of the program is that adolescents are given the opportunity to practice effective skills in a realistic environment. It is documented in the literature on group counselling that generalization across settings is an essential aspect of group members retaining learning from their group experience (Corey & Corey, 2006). On this basis, one can predict that the more realistic one's learning environment is to one's own environment, the easier it is to generalize that learning to one's own environment. Identified bullies and victims should be given the opportunity to learn about themselves and each other, while learning skills to deal with bullying within a setting that is similar to their everyday environments. With this, a major strength of this counselling group program is that it is likely to earn the respect of group members for addressing issues related to bullying in a way that confronts the issues, while reducing barriers to generalizing learning to adolescent environments.

<div align="center">Areas of Future Research</div>

Specific to this project, it would be useful to conduct the sample counselling group plan with both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. While there is some risk

in combining bullies and victims within the same group, it is hypothesized that the risks outweigh the rewards. Conducting the sample group in three trials with groups consisting of one heterogeneous group (bullies with victims), and two homogeneous groups (all bullies and all victims), would provide empirical data to guide best practice in this area.

Beyond working primarily with the adolescents that experience bullying, it might also be important to include other influences that affect bullying behaviours. Given the research linking parenting style to childhood and adolescent bullying behaviour (Dodge, 2002; Myron-Wilson, 1999), it might be useful to explore interventions that include parents within adolescent bullying treatment. While including parents might require more resources than most programs can provide, an intervention that simultaneously works with adolescents and parents on bullying related issues might increase the probability that conditions that created the bullying behaviour are changed and the skills to combat bullying behaviour are maintained. More research in this area would be beneficial.

Given the diverse effects of bullying within a community, another important area for future research would be to solicit input on this group program from a variety of stakeholders. Starting with the group members themselves, it is important to gather feedback on group member experiences within the group, and beyond the conclusion of the group. Data gathered tracking group member outcomes at the end of the group and beyond could provide important information on the effectiveness of the group.

Information gathered from other stakeholders could also assist in determining the effectiveness of the group. An example of this might be interviewing school staff associated with group members following the conclusion of a group, to assess for

observed changes in group members. School staff might also be able to quantify group benefits in terms of money saved in reduction of property damage or instructional hours increased due to reductions in suspensions. School staff might also be able to account for changes in overall school climate. In some cases, consultation with the police prior to and following the delivery of a group may identify changes in community violence as a result of community members attending a group.

In addition to utilizing a wide range of stakeholders in monitoring the outcomes of the group, it would be beneficial to subject the counselling group proposal to the scrutiny of experts in the field prior to conducting the group. Following feedback from experts, future research should include running a pilot version of the group before making the group available to a larger population.

Closing Remarks

In completing this project, my intention has been to (a) provide important information on the causes, forms, and prevalence of adolescent bullying; (b) identify necessary issues to address, and recommend skills required to intervene in, adolescent bullying; and (c) provide an example of what an intervention utilizing the research cited in this project can look like.

Having worked closely with adolescents for over 10 years in a variety of settings ranging from schools to a youth closed custody correction centre, it is clear to me that adolescent bullying continues to be a prominent issue in the minds of adolescents. As social networking and cell phone technologies are becoming increasingly more predominant means of adolescent communication, adolescents are gaining increasingly

more exposure to each other. With this comes their increased ability to affect and dominate each other through new forms of bullying, such as cyberbullying.

As bullying continues to evolve, it may seem difficult for stakeholders, policy makers, and parents to keep up with the monitoring of adolescent bullying behaviours. However, regardless of the form bullying takes, I believe bullying continues to originate from the same primary source: feelings of insecurity, vulnerability, and low self-esteem. By virtue of the developmental period in which adolescence occurs, it will likely remain a period where individuals learn from mistakes as they experiment with different personalities and behaviours. However, I believe, the more we can help youth feel secure in who they are, the more accepting they become of the differences of others, the better they become at being assertive with others who take advantage of them, and the less they feel the need to take advantage of others.

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Appendix A

Group Therapy Lesson Plans

Getting Even with Aggression

<u>Pre-Group Meeting</u>

Group Orientation

Note: This manual was created as a sample only. The intention in creating this manual was to show what a counselling group based on the research cited in this project can look like. As such, to provide the necessary context for this manual, it is strongly recommended that chapters 1 through 6 of this project be examined prior to reading this section.

SESSION : Pre-Group Meeting

Title of today's session: Group Orientation

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Make photocopies (one group package per member).
- Bring flipchart paper, one piece of paper per member, one pen per member, felt pens, tape.
- Coloured paper to place under chairs to identify groups.

Objectives for today's session:

1. Explore members' expectations (Corey & Corey, 2006).
2. Clarify goals and expectations of group (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007).
3. Provide information on group processes and answer questions (Corey & Corey, 2006).
4. Begin building group cohesion (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Welcome	#1 Group members are welcomed to the group and provided a brief overview of what to expect from the group.	• Read included "welcome message" to group. • Give each group member a group package consisting of the following attached handouts: group ethics,

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			description of group processes and limitations, rule acknowledgement/ agreement contract, and goal sheet.
15 – 25 mins.	Group member introductions and description of expectations	#2 Group members are asked to introduce themselves and are given the opportunity to describe their expectations for the group.	• Start at one end of the circle and ask individuals to introduce themselves, asking individuals to "tell the group your name, age and something interesting about yourself, then describe one expectation you have for this group." • Record each person's expectations on a flipchart.
20 mins.	Discussion of expectations/nature of group processes	#3 Facilitators explore the "group processes and limitations" handout aloud to the group. The floor is then opened for a general discussion on what to expect from the group. • Rationale: This will help to make it clear what group members can expect to gain from the group, and what the group cannot provide. This will hopefully give members more knowledge to make an educated decision on whether they would like to proceed in the group.	• A facilitator reads and processes the "group processes and limitations" handout with members. • Facilitators provide a description of what needs can and cannot be met within the group, as well as a general description of group processes. • Compare the facilitator-provided description of what needs can and cannot be met within the group to the group members' identified expectations on the flipchart. • Process needs that are not able to be met by the group with individuals, and confirm members' commitment to the group in light of discrepancies between the needs of members and limitations of the group. • Address any

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			cultural/diversity issues that may affect group members' participation. If group members are reluctant to join the conversation due to cultural reasons or other reasons, take steps to engage them in a culturally sensitive and age appropriate manner.
10 mins.	Break		
20 mins.	Behaviour expectations	#4 Group members are asked to come up with concerns they have regarding the group and expectations they would like to put in place for group member behaviour (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). Group works together to develop a code of conduct.	• Each individual is asked if there are any concerns they have regarding the group and if there are any behaviour expectations they would like to put in place for group members to address those concerns. • Proposed group member behaviour expectations are written down on a flipchart titled "code of conduct". • Facilitators will propose necessary behaviour expectations that are not mentioned by group members. • Proposed behaviour expectations will be agreed upon by group members, and the flipchart sheet containing the code of conduct will be posted at each meeting. • Group members are also given pieces of paper to anonymously write down concerns and behaviour expectations they would like to be put in place. All provided pieces of paper are handed in by all participants

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			to preserve anonymity. Responses will be examined by facilitators before the next session, and behaviour expectations will be revisited within the group in the next session. • Have group members sign contract in group package agreeing to abide by the agreed upon behaviour expectations, in the presence of each other.
20 mins.	Check-out	Group members will be given the opportunity to voice their feelings regarding the group. Rationale: Will begin the process of developing a language of feeling in the group (Shechtman, 2007). Dividing members into groups of two will minimize anxiety while facilitating the development of relationships between group members (Corey & Corey, 2006).	• Group members will be divided into groups of two (will have a colour under their chair that matches another member's colour). They will be asked to describe how their thoughts about the group so far, and to describe any concerns they have regarding the group (5 mins.). • Group will come back together, and group members will describe each other's feelings and concerns about the group. • Group will process feelings and concerns regarding the group.
3 mins.	Session evaluation	Circulate session evaluation form, and ask group members to fill it out. (Task is repeated at the end of each session).	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Did the group members engage with each other as hypothesized? Are there members that are not	

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		appropriate for the group? • Did group cohesiveness begin to occur? • Are group members' expectations reasonable? If not, what can be done to prevent disappointment/ frustration? • How effective was I (or, were we) in engaging the group and building a relationship with group members? If more than one facilitator: How well did we work together? Did our styles complement one another?	

Getting Even
with Aggression

Pre-Group Meeting

Welcome

I (we) would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to the Getting Even with Aggression group. I (we) recognize that many of you have not participated in a group of this nature before, so I (we) would like to take a moment to acknowledge that many of you may be feeling a bit nervous or apprehensive about being here today. Please know that it is normal to be feeling a bit nervous about participating in a new experience such as this, and that the other members of the group are likely feeling the same way. As most of you may be unsure of what to expect in participating in this group, part of the purpose of this pre-group meeting is to orient you to the nature and expectations of this group. We will be here tonight for about an hour and a half, and we will take a 10 minute break about half-way through. We will spend the first part of our session tonight talking about your expectations for the group and describing and discussing the needs that this group is capable of meeting. After the break we will have a discussion about rules and expectations, and we will take some time to talk about your feelings regarding being in this group.

Before we begin, I (we) would like to take this opportunity to tell you a bit about myself. (Provide details regarding facilitators' orientation, experience, and passion for the subject matter.)

Getting Even
with Aggression

1

Pre-Group Meeting
Group Package
(Bring to all group activities)

GROUP ETHICS

All group members will be afforded and subject to the following ethical standards by the group facilitators, as outlined by the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* (Sinclair & Pettifor, 2001):

General respect:

- No degrading comments about others.
- No harassing others.
- Do not discriminate against others.
- Treat others fairly.
- Ensure that group members grant informed consent to participating in the group.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure informed consent is not given under conditions of coercion, undue pressure, or undue reward.
- Only necessary information required to ensure continuity from one session to the next will be collected.

Responsible caring:

- Avoid doing harm to group members.
- Do not carry out any activity within the group unless the probable benefit is proportionately greater than the risk involved.
- Create and maintain records that are sufficient to support continuity and appropriate coordination of activities.
- Be careful not to engage in activities in a way that could place incidentally involved persons at risk.
- Do everything possible to stop or offset the consequences of actions by others when these actions are likely to cause serious physical harm or death.

Sources:

Sinclair, C., & Pettifor, J. (2001). *Companion manual to the Canadian code of ethics for psychologists*. Ottawa, ON, Canada: Canadian Psychological Association.

Getting Even
with Aggression

2

Pre-Group Meeting
Group Package
(Bring to all group activities)

Group Processes and Limitations

Congratulations on having the courage to take action in preventing aggression and bullying! Aggression and bullying affect many individuals in a variety of negative ways, and by enrolling in the Getting Even with Aggression group, you have courageously taken a positive step toward improving your own life, and the lives of those around you. If you have not participated in a group of this nature before, you may be wondering what to expect. This group will be both challenging and rewarding. However, what you get out of the group will depend on the effort you are willing to put into the group.

Some of you have been victims of bullying, some of you have bullied others, and some of you have been both victims and bullies. This group will help you to gain an awareness of why bullying occurs and will urge you to identify the role bullying plays in your life. In doing this, you may be challenged to become more aware of your feelings, needs, thoughts, and fears. Through an awareness of how your relationship with bullying has developed and continues to be maintained, this group will urge you to re-examine your relationship with bullying and to consider alternative ways of handling conflict situations and associating with others.

While much can be gained from active participation in this group, there are some limitations to what the group can provide. The Getting Even with Aggression group will support aggressive individuals in developing empathy and perspective taking skills in becoming more sensitive to the needs of others. Also, this group will support victims of bullying to be able to effectively deal with aggressive individuals and bullying situations. However, success in this endeavour will depend on each individual's willingness to engage in group activities with facilitators and other group members. With the subject matter of this group, it can be expected that conflicts may arise within the group. These

Getting Even
with Aggression

conflicts may be uncomfortable, yet will be important in helping group members to develop the necessary skills to change their relationships with bullying and aggression. Throughout the eight weeks of the group, every step will be taken to support group members as they work through emotions and challenging exercises toward their goals. Your journey will require courage and hard work. However, your courage and hard work will be rewarded with a new sense of self-awareness and confidence.

Welcome to the group!

Getting Even
with Aggression

3

Pre-Group Meeting
Group Package

Acknowledgement and Agreement to Follow the Group
Code of Conduct

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the

behaviour expectations agreed upon by the Getting Even with Aggression group

in the pre-group session, and understand that in signing this form, I am agreeing

to follow this code of conduct.

_____   _____
Group member signature   Date

Getting Even
with Aggression

4

Pre-Group Meeting
Group Package

(Bring to all group activities)

Goals

Please use the following space to identify goals you would like to work toward within the group.

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Getting Even with Aggression

Session 1

Welcome and Introduction to Aggression/Bullying

SESSION #: 1

Title of today's session: Welcome and Introduction to Aggression/Bullying

Advance preparation required for this group session:

Bring the following items:

- Flipchart paper
- Felt pans
- Masking tape
- Copies of session evaluation (one per member)
- Copies of "The definition and impact of bullying" handout (one per member)

Objectives for today's session:

1. Develop/increase group cohesiveness (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2001, 2007).

2. Identify adolescent aggression/bullying as a problem worthy of effort in changing (Shechtman, 2001).

3. Identify group member goals (Corey & Corey, 2006).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Shechtman, Z. (2001). Prevention groups for angry and aggressive children. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 26*(3), 228–236.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
5 mins.	Ice Breaker (Whisper game, a.k.a. Broken Telephone)	• Fun exercise designed to help group members to interact and relax. Activity will help individuals to gain comfort with each other, therefore increasing group cohesiveness.	• Group sits in a circle. One member whispers a short sentence in the next person's ear. That person whispers the sentence in the next person's ear, continuing around the circle until it reaches the last person. The last person repeats the sentence out loud, and it is compared to the original sentence.
20 mins.	Check-in/ Welcome	• Facilitators welcome the group members, and reaffirms the code of conduct agreed upon in the pre-group meeting. • Facilitators add new behaviour expectations submitted anonymously by group members to the code of conduct. • Each member is then asked to describe how they are feeling about starting the group today.	• A facilitator posts the agreed upon behaviour expectations on the wall, works with the group to add and debrief new (anonymously submitted) behaviour expectations, and reminds group members to read them over again and to remember the contract they signed. • Facilitators ask, "How are you feeling about being in the group today?" • Go around the circle, and each member is given some time to talk about how they are feeling about the group. • A facilitator identifies a common theme (if one emerges in the responses) to promote group cohesiveness.
10 mins.	Introduction to aggression/ bullying	• Facilitators ask group to define bullying. • A facilitator will read a brief statement (handout) titled "The Definition and Impact of Bullying" that outlines the definition of bullying, frequency of	• A facilitator asks the group, "Think for a moment about what bullying means to you. Now I would like you to raise your hands and share with the group what you think bullying is." (Flush out details and process).

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		aggression/bullying, and effects of aggression/ bullying. Rationale: This will introduce and orient group members to the focus of the group, and prompt them to begin thinking about bullying and aggression related subject matter.	• Facilitators then circulate and reads the prepared statement about aggression/bullying to group members (hands out the included "The definition and impact of bullying" handout).
10 mins.	Aggression/ bullying initial experiences and processing reactions to handout	• Have group members discuss their initial reactions to the handout in pairs and ask them to describe to each other how aggression/bullying has affected their lives. • Rationale: individuals will begin to get used to talking about aggression/bullying in a comfortable situation of only having to talk to one other person (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). Individuals will begin to connect with other members of the group (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007). • Individuals may begin to make disclosures, which can increase group cohesiveness (Corey & Corey, 2006).	• Individuals will be assigned partners by the facilitators. Facilitators will partner group members identified as being aggressive (bullies) together, and victims together. The rationale behind this being that group cohesiveness will be increased in the initial stage by associating members with like-minded individuals. Also, it is hypothesized that like-minded individuals will feel more comfortable talking about their experiences with one another.
10 mins.	Debriefing	• Group members return to group circle and are asked to describe what it felt like to talk about aggression/ bullying. • Rationale: Helps members	• Going around the circle, group members are asked to describe the emotions brought about by talking about aggression/bullying. • Help members to identify new goals or adjust existing

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		to gain comfort with the subject matter before addressing aggression/ bullying matters directly. This will also convey apprehensions group members may have regarding this subject matter, allowing for further processing and member comfort.	goals if opportunities present themselves (group members were asked to bring the goal sheet they started at the initial pre-group screening to all group activities).
10 mins.	Break		
15 mins.	Exercise #1: Identify different types of bullying, violence, or discrimination members are aware of	• Group members are asked to come up with as many types of bullying, violence, or discrimination as they can. • Rationale: Group will work together, increasing cohesiveness, while identifying examples and situations of discrimination/ bullying for later exploration.	• Use flipchart paper and make a list of all types of bullying, violence, or discrimination members come up with. • Some possible answers on list: verbal violence, physical violence, racism, homophobia, shunning or exclusion (relational violence), ageism. • This list will be referred to again in Session 3, Exercise #3.
15 mins.	Exercise #2 Processing feelings regarding types of bullying, violence, or discrimination identified in Exercise #1	• Have a discussion with group members regarding how they feel about the noted types of bullying, violence, or discrimination. Copy down group feelings on flipchart paper with the heading, "group feelings regarding bullying, violence, or discrimination". This list will be referred to again in Lesson 3, Exercise #3. • Rationale: This will help to begin a language of feelings within the group (Shechtman, 2007).	• Go through the different types of bullying violence, or discrimination and get group member feedback on how each one makes them feel • Put the group feelings up next to the list made in Exercise #1

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Check-out	• Group members are asked to describe how they are feeling about today using one feeling word. Group members are also asked to compare their experience today to their thoughts about the group prior to the beginning of the group. • Rationale: One feeling word check-out used to help members to begin the process of developing a language of feelings (Shechtman, 2007). Comparing their experience today with previous thoughts may help members to realize that new experiences can be stressful, but often are not as bad as they previously thought.	• Ask group members to "describe, using one feeling word, how you are feeling about your experience today, and compare your initial vision of what you thought the group experience would be like with your experience today."
3 mins.	Session evaluation	• Group members fill out session evaluation form.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Did the group increase cohesiveness? • Were member interactions appropriate? • Were the exercises effective in achieving lesson objectives? • Were there any culture-related issues that arose? • How effective were the facilitators in executing the exercises and supporting members to process their experiences?	

Getting Even with Aggression

Session 1

The Definition and Impact of Bullying

The issue of teenager bullying and aggression has existed for many years. Although the most common forms of bullying have remained the same for many years, in recent years we have witnessed a surge in violent reactions to bullying. A report by the United States secret service (as cited in Dake, Price, Telljohan, & Funk, 2004) investigating the characteristics of students involved in school shootings in the United States found that of 37 different school shootings, two thirds of them involved attackers who felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others prior to the incident. With the extensive media coverage of school violence resulting from bullying over the past decade, the issue of bullying has developed from a schoolyard neighbourhood problem to a North America-wide social issue for which many people are looking for answers. Closer to home, the Government of Alberta (2005) has indicated that approximately 1 in 10 children have bullied others, and as many as 25% of children in grades four to six have been bullied. The Alberta Government has indicated that one in seven Canadian teenagers aged 11 to 16 are victims of bullying, with bullying occurring once every seven minutes on the playground, and once every 25 minutes in the classroom. Elinoff, Chafouleas, and Sassu (2004) defined bullying as being a form of aggression that is hostile and proactive, involving both direct and indirect behaviours that are repeatedly targeted at an individual or group that is perceived as being weaker. According to Elinoff et al., bullying behaviours may be physical or verbal and include social exclusion.

Bullying can and often does have drastic effects on victims. In addition to prompting violent reactions from victims, bullying also contributes to a number of other

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school-related problems such as disliking school, being truant (skipping school), and dropping out (Sharp, 1995). It is estimated that 160,000 students stay home from school every day in the United States for the sole purpose of avoiding the constant taunting and torment of bullies (Vail, 1999). Bullying is such a pervasive problem in schools that even students who merely witness bullying are affected. A student witnessing bullying often reports being severely distressed by the experience as he or she becomes fearful that they too will become the target of bullies (Zigler & Pepler, 1993). The Government of Alberta (2005) indicated that victims of bullying feel lonely, unhappy and frightened, leading them to feel unsafe and inadequate. In addition to this, individuals can lose confidence, and even feel physically ill. Specifically, the Government of Alberta indicated that victims of bullying could become shy, and often suffer from stomachaches, headaches, panic attacks, insomnia, oversleeping, exhaustion, and nightmares.

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Sources:

Dake, J. A., Price, J. H., Telljohan, S. K., & Funk, J. B. (2004). Principals perceptions and practices of school bullying prevention activities. *Health Education & Behavior, 31*(3), 372–387.

Elinoff, M. J., Chafouleas, S. M., & Sassu, K. A. (2004). Bullying: Considerations for defining and intervening in school settings. *Psychology in the Schools, 41*(8), 887–897.

Government of Alberta. (2005). *Bully free Alberta*. Retrieved May 6, 2008, from http://www.bullyfreealberta.ca/bullying.htm

Sharp, S. (1995). How much does bullying hurt? *Educational and Child Psychology, 12*, 81–88.

Vail, K. (1999). Words that wound. *American School Board Journal, 186*, 37–40.

Zigler, S., & Pepler, D. J. (1993). Bullying at school: Pervasive and persistent. *Orbit, 24*, 29–31.

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<u>Session 2</u>

Exposure to Disclosure, and Goals

SESSION #: 2

Title of today's session: Exposure to Disclosure and Goals

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Tennis ball (for discussion)
- Extra goal sheets
- Session evaluations

Objectives for today's session:

1. Continue development of group cohesiveness and safety (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2001, 2007).
2. Work through feelings (resistance) around being in the group and hearing disclosures (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007).
3. Continue the development of a "language of feelings" within the group (Shechtman, 2007).
4. Confirm and document goals on goal sheet (Corey & Corey, 2006).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Elkind, D. (1985). Egocentrism redux. *Developmental Review, 5*, 218–226.

Shechtman, Z. (2001). Prevention groups for angry and aggressive children. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 26*(3), 228–236.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Check-in activity	• Having now completed one session, each member is asked to describe how they are feeling about being here today, and how they feel about completing the rest of the group. • Facilitators summarize the general feeling of the group. • Rationale: Allows group members to vent any frustrations around being in the group. Allows group members to identify optimism for being in the group. Will provide information to facilitators around remaining areas of group resistance for further processing. May create group cohesiveness as members share similar concerns or optimism. Sharing of similar concerns or optimism may reduce group member experiences of the "personal fable" (Elkind, 1985).	• A facilitator asks the group, "Having now completed the first session, describe how you are feeling about being here for the second session, and how you are feeling knowing that we have six more sessions to follow. I will go first" (Facilitators express their thoughts). • A facilitator holds a tennis ball while asking the check-in question and expressing his or her thoughts, and then passes it to another member when he or she is finished to signify the next person's turn to speak.
10 mins.	Review/ process last session (Session #1)	• Going around the circle, members are asked to identify one thing about bullying that remained with them from last session, and to identify one thing that they would like to share about themselves. • Rationale: Links learning	• A facilitator asks, "Please identify one thing about bullying that you remember from our last session, and please share one thing about yourself that would be good to have the group know. I'll start …" (Facilitator expresses something he or she remembers about bullying from last session,

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		from last session to current session. Begins process of self-disclosure among group members in a free and general way. This is hypothesized to allow group members to gain comfort with self-disclosure while promoting group cohesiveness.	and one thing about him or herself). • A facilitator holds a tennis ball while asking the review/process question and expressing his or her thoughts, and then passes it to another member when he or she is finished to signify the next person's turn to speak.
20 mins.	Exercise #1 Processing Disclosure	• Facilitators lead a discussion focusing on members' reactions to sharing something about themselves with the group. What are the risks in sharing things about yourself with the group? What are the benefits to sharing things about yourself to the group? What is required of group members to ensure that risks involved with disclosures are minimized and benefits are maximized? • Rationale: This exercise is hypothesized to lay the foundation for later disclosures by building trust between group members as they acknowledge the vulnerabilities involved in self-disclosure. As facilitators are vigilant to ensure that group members have a positive experience in this exposure to disclosure exercise, it is hypothesized that group members will identify the	• Facilitators begin the discussion by asking, "What was it like to share something about yourself with the group?" After processing the feelings involved with this experience, a facilitator asks: - "What are the risks in sharing things about yourself with the group?" - "What are the benefits to sharing things about yourself with the group?" - "What is required of group members to ensure that risks involved with sharing one's feelings are minimized and benefits are maximized?" • It is essential that the group facilitators ensure that group members feel safe during this exercise. If group members show resistance to the exercise, then process the resistance and work to identify the origin of the resistance. **Do not proceed to exercise #2 until resistance is processed and group members have gained some trust in each**

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		group as a secure and safe place to express their feelings. This exercise will challenge group member perceptions of both the "imaginary audience" (Elkind, 1985) and "personal fable". This exercise will also continue the process of establishing a language of feelings within the group (Shechtman, 2007).	**other.** This determination will be made informally by the group facilitators monitoring group cohesiveness and the verbal/nonverbal responses of the group members.
10 mins.	Break		
10 – 15 mins.	Exercise #2 Goals	• Have group members take out their goal sheets and have them identify two goals they want to accomplish in the remaining sessions of the group. • Facilitators circulate through the room to provide assistance. • Rationale: Setting goals will help group members to focus on their own needs and self-awareness. Waiting until session two to work on goals is hypothesized to allow sufficient time for group member comfort/trust and some learning to occur around bullying, facilitating more productive goals.	• Ask Group members, "As we have now learned a bit more about bullying and ourselves, I would like to ask the group to take out your goal sheets so we can add or clarify goals. I would like you to identify and write down two goals you would like to commit to achieving over the duration of the group. Please try to make your goals as specific and measurable as possible. After we write them down, I would like to ask the group's permission for us to have a discussion about our goals where we share our goals with each other provide feedback for each other." • If group members show resistance to sharing their goals, the return to processing their resistance and revisit discussion on the vulnerabilities associated with sharing things about one's self with other group members. • Ensure that group members

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			have some space to write. • Ensure that all group members feel comfortable with the exercise.
20 mins.	Goal Processing	• Facilitators lead a discussion where group members share their goals with the group. Facilitators assist group members in making their goals as specific and measurable as possible. • Rationale: Having group members declare their goals to the group will elicit further commitment to achieving those goals (Corey & Corey, 2006). Creating a forum for members to give feedback on each other's goals may provide a forum for group members to begin to support each other, and therefore take more ownership of the group.	• Ask group members to share their goals with the group: "Who would like to share their goals first?" • If group members show resistance to sharing their goals, the return to processing their resistance and revisit discussion on the vulnerabilities associated with sharing things about one's self with other group members.
10 mins.	Check-out	• Going around the circle group members are asked to describe one thing that sticks out for them about today's group.	
3 mins	Session evaluation	• Have group members fill out session evaluation.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Did the group increase cohesiveness? • Were member interactions appropriate? Was resistance effectively processed? • Were the exercises effective in achieving lesson objectives?	

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		• Were there any culture-related issues that arose? • How effective were the facilitators in executing the exercises and supporting members to process their experiences?	

Getting Even with Aggression

<u>Session 3</u>

Types of Bullying and Discrimination, and the Male Code

SESSION #: 3

Title of today's session: Types of Bullying and Discrimination, and the Male Code

Advance preparation required for this group session:

Bring the following items:

- Paper
- Colouring markers
- Flipchart paper
- Masking tape
- Copies of session evaluation (one per member)
- Lists completed in Session #1 (Exercises #1 and #2)

Objectives for today's session:

1. Identify various types of discrimination/bullying (Roberts, 2001).
2. Gain awareness and understanding of the male code (Roberts, 2001).
3. Gain insight as to why bullying/discrimination occurs (Roberts, 2001).
4. Begin the process of processing group members' emotions and behaviours (Shechtman, 2007).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Roberts, A. (2001). *Safe teen: Powerful alternatives to violence*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: Polestar.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
15 mins.	Check-in activity	• In five minutes or less, draw a picture using your wrong hand that best describes how you are feeling about being at group	• Provide colouring materials and a piece of paper. • Ask group members, "I would like each of you to take these colouring

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		today. • Go around the circle and have each person describe their picture. • Rationale: Allows the more visual members the opportunity to express themselves. Using the non-dominant hand mitigates group members' insecurities around drawing ability.	materials and, using your wrong hand, draw a picture that describes how you are feeling about being at group today. You have 5 minutes." • Ask each group member to describe his picture.
15 mins.	Review/ process last Session (Session #2)	• Go around the circle and ask each person to identify two things they remember most from the last session, and to describe how they feel about last session.	• Ask group members one at a time, "Please identify two things you remember most about last session, and describe how you feel overall about last session."
10 mins.	Exercise #1 Code exercise (Roberts, 2001)	• Group members are asked four questions to bring out aspects of the male code. • Rationale: Awareness of the existence of the male code may help individuals to release emotions through acknowledging their vulnerabilities. Awareness of the existence of the male code may help members understand why they bully others or why others bully them. Awareness of the male code and why it exists allows individuals to understand that it can be changed.	• Ask the following four questions one at a time, and make a list of member responses under each question: 1. What are some good things about being a guy? 2. As guys, who or what influences you (how do you know how to be a guy)? 3. What are guys expected to do or be good at (what do guys get respect for)? 4. What are guys expected not to do? • When exercise is finished, ask the group if they would agree that the four lists they made comprises what could be called the "Guys code" of behaviour.
10 mins.	Break		
15 mins.	Exercise #1	• Continue exercise started	

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
	continued	before the break.	
20 – 30 mins.	Exercise #2 The emergence of male aggression/ bullying	• With the identified male code in front of the group, ask the group, "What sorts of things do guys do to each other when they see another guy not fitting in with the code?" • Rationale: Members will identify for themselves the punishments guys impose on each other for going outside the code. They will be able to compare these punishments to the types of bullying, violence, or discrimination identified in Session #1, Exercise #1 and see how commonly guys bully or discriminate against each other. When this is related to the feelings they described in Session #1, Exercise #2 regarding bullying, violence and discrimination, it is hypothesized that members will begin to examine their own feelings and behaviours regarding why they bully others, and why they allow themselves to be bullied. It is hypothesized that this exercise will elicit a release of members' emotions.	• Ask: "Is there anyone here who is the perfect guy, and can fit in with every expectation we put on our lists?" If yes, then process how it is possible to be perfect when the expectations on the list have conflicting demands. If no, then ask: "But are we expected to fit in with every expectation we listed in our lists?" If yes, then say: "So what that means is that no one here is a perfect guy. That means that, if someone wanted to, they could point out a flaw in each and everyone's manhood" • Process feelings involved with disclosing insecurities to other males. Ask: "What sorts of things do guys do to each other when they see another guy not fitting in with the code?" • Copy down the group's answers on what males do to other males who do not fit in the code, then bring out the list completed in Session #1, Exercise #1 and compare the two lists. Circle answers on the Session #1, Exercise #1 list as they match the answers given in this exercise. • Refer to the list of group feelings compiled in Session #1, Exercise #2 regarding types of bullying, violence,

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			or discrimination.
			• Process reasons why males need to call out other males who do not fit in the code. Is it because males have a desire to feel power over other males? What feels good about having power, and what feels bad about having power taken away?
			• Get a group consensus as to whether they feel the code is changeable.
			• If the code is changeable, how can we change it?
			• What would it take for someone to change? (For males to become more secure in themselves and feeling good about themselves such that they do not need to gain power over other others to compensate for their insecurities)
5 – 15 mins.	Debrief/ Check-out	• Go around the circle and have members describe something they learned today, how they feel about today, and a goal to work toward for next session. • Have group members copy their identified goal to their goal sheet.	• Say to group members, "Let's go around our circle for our check-out today and describe something we learned today, and a goal to work toward for next session."
3 mins	Session evaluation	• Have members fill out session evaluation.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Were the exercises effective in achieving lesson objectives? • What are the group relationship dynamics? In particular, how are identified bullies and	

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		victims interacting? • Do the victims feel safe? If not, what can be done to create safety? • How effective were you in executing the exercises and supporting members to process their experiences? • Are the facilitators effectively working together?	

Getting Even with Aggression

<u>Session 4</u>

Power & Male Adolescent Self-esteem

SESSION #: 4

Title of today's session: Power & Male Adolescent self-esteem

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Session evaluations
- 9 Pieces of paper with names of animals on them
- 1 hat

Objectives for today's session:

1. Continue processing the male code and feelings associated with power (Roberts, 2001; Shechtman, 2007)

2. Increase empathy and assertiveness (Roberts, 2001)

3. Continue disclosures, increase self-awareness, and increase group cohesiveness (Corey & Corey, 2006; Shechtman, 2007)

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Roberts, A. (2001). *Safe teen: Powerful alternatives to violence*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: Polestar.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

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Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Check-in activity	• "Animal Line-up" • Rationale: This will promote teamwork through a fun exercise. Also, the focus in this exercise on size and non-verbal communication	• Write down the names of different types of animals onto pieces of paper and put them in a hat (one for each group member). Group members each pick an animal (keeping it to themselves).

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		will address the theme of power and powerlessness addressed in this session.	They are challenged to line up on a line and place themselves in order from smallest to largest, without talking (using only actions). They are given a time limit of one minute, and that must not step off the line.
10 mins.	Review/ process last session (session #3)	• Ask group members to describe one thing about the male code that stayed with them over the week since the last session. • Rationale: This will refresh members' memories of the discussion last session regarding the male code and power.	• A facilitator asks, "To review last session, I would like to go around the circle and have each of us identify one thing about the male code that stayed with you over the week." • Review discussion that took place in previous session around power (as a male what feels good about having power & what feels bad about losing power).
30 – 40 mins.	Exercise #1 Processing power	• Divide group members into groups of two and ask them to identify an example in their lives of when they took someone else's power, and when someone else took their power. • Bring the whole group together after each question and discuss/process members' responses. • Rationale: Members are divided into like pairs to provide some safety while members prepare their examples for the larger group. It is hypothesized that this exercise, in conjunction with the code	• Say to group members, "Today I would like us to continue our discussion on power from last session. I will now divide you into groups of two (like pairs: identified bullies with bullies and victims with victims), and I would like you to identify to your partner an example from your life where you have taken someone else's power." • Then bring group together and discuss/process responses. Ask: -"How did it feel to take someone else's power?" - "How might the person who lost power have felt?" -"How might have others who were watching felt?" • Say to group members, "I

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		exercise in the last session, will help group members to acknowledge the relationship between males' desire for power and males' self-esteem. It is also hypothesized that this exercise will help members identify a relationship between their own losses of power and their desires to replace or compensate for that power. As they do this, it is expected that this exercise will help members to develop empathy for those that lose power, and awareness for those that take power.	would like you to get back in your pairs and describe to each other an example from your life of where you have had your power taken away by someone else." • Then bring group together and discuss/process responses. Ask: -"How did it feel to have your power taken away?" -"How did it feel to have others see your power being taken away?" -"How does it feel right now to be talking about having your power taken away?"
10 mins.	Break		
30 – 40 mins	Exercise #2 Empathy and assertiveness.	• Having identified in the previous session that the code is changeable, and that males punish other males for going outside the code out of feelings of insecurity (taking others' power because they feel they have lost their power), begin to identify ways that group members can keep their power from others (bullies) who try to take it, and identify ways we can gain power (feel good about ourselves and increase/preserve self-esteem) without taking power from others. • If the group was not able to identify in the previous session that the code is	• A facilitator addresses group: "Building on our discussion about power before the break, I would like us to consider the following questions …" • Ask the group the following questions, and process reactions: • "When we are feeling low in power and we go and take someone else's power to make ourselves feel good, how might that other person feel? How does that make us feel?" • "How can we get power (feel good about ourselves) without taking it from someone else (making someone else feel bad)?" • "How can we keep our power if someone else tries to take it

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		changeable and that we punish others for going outside of the code out of our own insecurity, then process resistance and continue processing these aspects of the code. • Rationale: Having identified that males feel good when they experience increases in power, we can begin to brainstorm and develop effective coping strategies for maintaining one's power (being assertive), and finding new forms of power that do not involve taking someone else's power (relationships, activities, etc.). It is hypothesized that questions that elicit feelings of empathy will provide the motivation required to seek out new sources of power and therefore change aggressive/submissive behaviour.	(how can we be assertive without escalating a situation)?"
10 mins.	Debrief/ Check-out	• Ask group members to describe one difference between how they are feeling at the end of the session today compared to how they felt when they arrived for the session.	• Say to group members, "Moving toward the end of our session today, it is evident that we have talked about a lot of important things. With this, it seems that we have learned a lot about ourselves and each other. For our check-out today, I would like us to go around the circle and have each of you describe one difference between how you are feeling at the end of the

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			session today compared to how you felt when you arrived for today's session."
3 mins.	Session evaluation	• Circulate session evaluation form, and ask members to fill it out.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Are group members understanding and identifying with the male code and the importance of male power? • Did group members disclose experiences with the code and increases/losses of power? If not, then why (lack of trust/group safety, have not experienced increases/losses of power or bullying, member too traumatized to acknowledge experiences, etc.) • How effective were facilitators in processing emotions around gains/losses of power? • Have issues related to power triggered any emotion in the facilitators? • Are there any power issues between facilitators and group members, or between facilitators?	

Getting Even
with Aggression

<u>Session 5</u>

Understanding Perspectives

SESSION #: 5
Title of today's session: Understanding Perspectives

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Playing cards (aces of hearts and aces of clubs) under each chair
- Flipchart paper and 8 different coloured markers
- 1 Hat and eight numbers
- Copies of Billy Wolfe article (1 per member)
- Session evaluations (1 per member)
- 1 Prize

Objectives for today's session:

1. Aggressors (bullies) to gain understanding of victims (Roberts, 2001).
2. Victims to gain understanding of aggressors (Roberts, 2001).
3. Link cognitions and behaviours to the male code and gain in self-awareness (Roberts, 2001; Shechtman, 2007).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Roberts, A. (2001). *Safe teen: Powerful alternatives to violence*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: Polestar.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Check-in	• Group members draw numbers out of a hat. Go in order 1 through 8, with members describing one high point and one low point of their past week and how they are feeling about being in group today.	• Put numbers 1 through 8 in a hat, and each member draws a number. • Ask members: -"What was one high point and one low point your past week?" -"How are you feeling about coming to group today?"

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
15 – 25 mins.	Review/ process last session (Session #4)	• Group members are split into two teams of four, and challenged to see which group can come up with the biggest list of things they learned about themselves in the last session. Each person on each team is given a different coloured marker to write his self-learning on the list. • Rationale: Hypothesized that competition might urge members to dig deeper in self-reflection to make further disclosures.	• Playing cards are placed under each chair. Aces of hearts on one team and aces of clubs on another. A prize is given to the team with biggest accurate list. • Eight different coloured markers are needed. Each member's chair will have a different coloured marker for the member to write his learning on his team's list. • Group members or facilitators will be free to challenge identified learning that appears made-up, and team members will lose one point for each learning on the list that turns out to be untrue or made up.
10 mins.	Goal adjustment/ monitoring	• Brief discussion of learning and goals. • Each member's description of what he learned in the last session will be linked to his identified goals on his goal sheet. Goals will then be clarified or adjusted.	• In the group circle, go around and identify individuals' learning on the list, and relate learning to that group member's goals on his goal sheet. • Group members' learning from last session can be identified on his team's list by colour.
10 mins.	Break		
5 –10 mins.	Exercise #1 Bibliotherapy story (Shechtman, 2007)	• A handout of a short story describing a situation where someone had been bullied is handed out, and the group reads together. • Billy Wolfe article can be utilized for this exercise. • Rationale: Reading through	• Hand out the article/story to group members and read through the article with group members aloud.

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		this article with group members is hypothesized to evoke emotions among group members as they relate to various aspects of the article.	
15 – 20 mins.	Processing and identification	• Each group member around the circle is asked to share their initial feeling about the story/article, and to identify the character or role that most resembles themselves (bully or victim). • Rationale: This activity will reveal group members' self-perceptions of being either a bully or victim.	• Go around the group circle and ask members" -"What are your initial feelings about the story/article?" -"Which person or role do you most closely identify with and why?"
20 mins.	Exercise #2 Feelings lists	• Ask the group to work together to come up with lists of possible emotions and feelings that that group members believe contributed to each persona/character's behaviour. • If members are willing, ask if any group members have ever felt these feelings in a bullying situation, and a discussion can occur around individuals' experiences with these feelings. • Rationale: This activity will help victims to become aware of bullies' feelings, and bullies aware of victims' feelings. It will also encourage members to learn perspective-taking abilities and increase capacity for empathy as they hear other each other's stories and feelings. This exercise will	• Ask, "What were the characters in this story feeling?" • Encourage bullies to list some feelings of the victim character (Billy Wolfe), and victims to list some feelings of the bully character(s) (Facebook kids, kids in yellow car, boys in woodshop class, etc.). • Support and challenge members to get down to the core feelings of the characters (What feels good about bullying? Why do we bully? Why do we let people bully us? Why are we afraid of bullies?). • Ask group members: -"Was Billy's power taken away?" -"Why did the other kids take his power?"

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		also continue the development within the group of a language of feelings, and it will also reduce adolescent perceptions of the imaginary audience and personal fable.	-"How could he have kept his power?"
5 – 15 mins.	Check-out/ homework/ session evaluation	• Each member around the circle will be asked to describe one thing they would like to do differently over the next week after reading the Billy Wolfe story. • For next session, group members are given homework to write a recount of a personal experience of being a victim of bullying, or bullying someone else. • Rationale: activity will encourage group members to generalize their learning to other settings over the week. Homework will link this session to the next session by prompting group members to relate their learning and emotion from today's session to the next session. Also, this assignment will facilitate the process of linking emotions related to bullying to the member's own experiences, opening conversations in later sessions to individual experiences.	Tell group members, "Lets get into our circle for our check-out. I would like us to go around the circle and describe one thing each of us would like to do differently over the next week after reading the Billy Wolfe story." • Then tell members, "For homework for next week, I would like each of you to write down a description of an experience you had where you bullied someone else, or were bullied by someone else."
3 mins.	Session evaluation	• Have members fill out session evaluation.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Were the exercises effective in achieving lesson objectives? • Are group members identifying and working	

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		toward goals? • How effective were you in executing the exercises and supporting members to process their experiences?	

Getting Even
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Session 5
Bibliotherapy Article

The New York Times
A Boy the Bullies Love to Beat Up, Repeatedly

Ángel Franco/The New York Times

By DAN BARRY

Published: March 24, 2008

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark.

This Land
Dan Barry takes readers behind news articles and into obscure and well-known corners of the United States.

All lank and bone, the boy stands at the corner with his younger sister, waiting for the yellow bus that takes them to their respective schools. He is Billy Wolfe, high school sophomore, struggling.

Moments earlier he left the sanctuary that is his home, passing those framed photographs of himself as a carefree child, back when he was

5. And now he is at the bus stop, wearing a baseball cap, vulnerable at 15.

A car the color of a school bus pulls up with a boy who tells his brother beside him that he's going to beat up Billy Wolfe. While one records the assault with a cellphone camera, the other walks up to the oblivious Billy and punches him hard enough to leave a fist-size welt on his forehead.

The video shows Billy staggering, then dropping his book bag to fight back, lanky arms flailing. But the screams of his sister stop things cold.

The aggressor heads to school, to show friends the video of his Billy moment, while Billy heads home, again. It's not yet 8 in the morning.

Bullying is everywhere, including here in Fayetteville, a city of 60,000 with one of the country's better school systems. A decade ago a Fayetteville student was mercilessly harassed and beaten for being gay. After a complaint was filed with the Office of Civil Rights, the district adopted procedures to promote tolerance and respect — none of which seems to have been of much comfort to Billy Wolfe.

It remains unclear why Billy became a target at age 12; schoolyard anthropology can be so nuanced. Maybe because he was so tall, or wore glasses then, or has a learning disability that affects his reading comprehension. Or maybe some kids were just bored. Or angry.

Whatever the reason, addressing the bullying of Billy has become a second job for his parents: Curt, a senior data analyst, and Penney, the owner of an office-supply company. They have binders of school records and police reports, along with photos documenting the

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bruises and black eyes. They are well known to school officials, perhaps even too well known, but they make no apologies for being vigilant. They also reject any suggestion that they should move out of the district because of this.

The many incidents seem to blur together into one protracted assault. When Billy attaches a bully's name to one beating, his mother corrects him. "That was Benny, sweetie," she says. "That was in the eighth grade."

It began years ago when a boy called the house and asked Billy if he wanted to buy a certain sex toy, heh-heh. Billy told his mother, who informed the boy's mother. The next day the boy showed Billy a list with the names of 20 boys who wanted to beat Billy up.

Ms. Wolfe says she and her husband knew it was coming. She says they tried to warn school officials — and then bam: the prank caller beat up Billy in the bathroom of McNair Middle School.

Not long after, a boy on the school bus pummelled Billy, but somehow Billy was the one suspended, despite his pleas that the bus's security camera would prove his innocence. Days later, Ms. Wolfe recalls, the principal summoned her, presented a box of tissues, and played the bus video that clearly showed Billy was telling the truth.

Things got worse. At Woodland Junior High School, some boys in a wood shop class goaded a bigger boy into believing that Billy had been talking trash about his mother. Billy, busy building a miniature house, didn't see it coming: the boy hit him so hard in the left cheek that he briefly lost consciousness.

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Ms. Wolfe remembers the family dentist sewing up the inside of Billy's cheek, and a school official refusing to call the police, saying it looked like Billy got what he deserved. Most of all, she remembers the sight of her son.

"He kept spitting blood out," she says, the memory strong enough still to break her voice.

By now Billy feared school. Sometimes he was doubled over with stress, asking his parents why. But it kept on coming.

In ninth grade, a couple of the same boys started a [Facebook](#) page called "Every One That Hates Billy Wolfe." It featured a photograph of Billy's face superimposed over a likeness of Peter Pan, and provided this description of its purpose: "There is no reason anyone should like billy he's a little bitch. And a homosexual that NO ONE LIKES."

Heh-heh.

According to Alan Wilbourn, a spokesman for the school district, the principal notified the parents of the students involved after Ms. Wolfe complained, and the parents — whom he described as "horrified" — took steps to have the page taken down.

Not long afterward, a student in Spanish class punched Billy so hard that when he came to, his braces were caught on the inside of his cheek.

So who is Billy Wolfe? Now 16, he likes the outdoors, racquetball and girls. For whatever reason — bullying, learning disabilities or lack of interest — his grades are poor. Some teachers think he's a sweet kid;

others think he is easily distracted, occasionally disruptive, even disrespectful. He has received a few suspensions for misbehavior, though none for bullying.

Judging by school records, at least one official seems to think Billy contributes to the trouble that swirls around him. For example, Billy and the boy who punched him at the bus stop had exchanged words and shoves a few days earlier.

But Ms. Wolfe scoffs at the notion that her son causes or deserves the beatings he receives. She wonders why Billy is the only one getting beaten up, and why school officials are so reluctant to punish bullies and report assaults to the police.

Mr. Wilbourn said federal law protected the privacy of students, so parents of a bullied child should not assume that disciplinary action had not been taken. He also said it was left to the discretion of staff members to determine if an incident required police notification.

The Wolfes are not satisfied. This month they sued one of the bullies "and other John Does," and are considering another lawsuit against the Fayetteville School District. Their lawyer, D. Westbrook Doss Jr., said there was neither glee nor much monetary reward in suing teenagers, but a point had to be made: schoolchildren deserve to feel safe.

Billy Wolfe, for example, deserves to open his American history textbook and not find anti-Billy sentiments scrawled across the pages. But there they were, words so hurtful and foul.

The boy did what he could. "I'd put white-out on them," he says. "And if the page didn't have stuff to learn, I'd rip it out."

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Source:

Barry, D. (2008, March 24). A boy the bullies love to beat up, repeatedly. *The New York Times.* Retrieved January 9, 2010, from http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/24/us/24land.html

Getting Even with Aggression

<u>Session 6</u>

Assertiveness, Empathy, and Beginning to Acknowledge the End

SESSION #: 6
Title of today's session: Assertiveness, Empathy, and Acknowledging the end.

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Session evaluations
- Facial expressions sheets
- Flipchart paper and markers

Objectives for today's session:

1. Support victims to gain confidence and assertiveness skills (Roberts, 2001).

2. Support bullies to further develop empathy skills (Shechtman, 2001).

3. Begin processing feelings around the group ending (Corey & Corey, 2006).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Roberts, A. (2001). *Safe teen: Powerful alternatives to violence*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: Polestar.

Shechtman, Z. (2001). Prevention groups for angry and aggressive children. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 26*(3), 228–236.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Check-in	• Bring a sheet with many facial expressions on it for each member, and ask each member to circle the facial expression that best describes how they are feeling today, and to describe why they are feeling that way.	• Tell members: "I am going to pass around a sheet with many facial expressions. I would like you to circle the expression that best describes how you are feeling today. Then I would like us to go around the circle and describe why the expression you chose

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		• Rationale: This will provide both a verbal and visual description of how members are feeling. This will begin a focus on recognizing non-verbal cues, with is essential in being assertive. This exercise will also increase a language of feelings within the group.	describes how you are feeling."
10 mins.	Review/ process last session	• Have a brief discussion about the Billy Wolfe story discussed in the last session. • Revisit the feelings aroused by the story, and ask group members how they have been affected by these feelings over the week since last session. • Rationale: This will prompt members to revisit feelings of empathy toward victims of bullying.	• Ask members: -"In the week since our last session, what has remained with you about the Billy Wolfe story we discussed in the last session?" -"How has the story affected how you feel and behave toward others?"
30 – 40 mins.	Group status, and acknowledging the approaching end of the group.	• Begin a discussion with the group around the current status of the group, and their feelings about the group ending after two more sessions. • Ask the group to describe how they are feeling about this being the third last session. How is this feeling different or the same from how they initially thought they would feel about the group ending? What have group members been able to accomplish and learn so	• Tell group members "As this is now our sixth of eight sessions, I want to take a moment to have a discussion about the fact that the group will be ending after two more sessions." • Ask the group the following questions and process their responses: -"How are you feeling about this being the third last session?" -"How are your feelings about the group ending different or the same from how you initially thought

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		far in the group? What do they still want to accomplish? • Rationale: As this is the third last session, this exercise is intended to encourage group members to begin preparing for the group to end. Also, this exercise is intended to help members to identify their progress from the pre-group meeting to the present session, and to identify areas for continued development.	you would feel at the beginning of the group?" -"What have you been able to learn or accomplish so far in the group?" -"What do you still want to accomplish before the group ends?" • Ask group members to look at their goal sheets to identify and monitor their progress, and to adjust their goal sheets to accommodate new goals.
10 mins.	Break		
30 – 40 mins.	Exercise 1 Assertiveness Circle (Roberts, 2001)	• Group members are asked to gather in a small area and participate in three exercises that elicit feelings of power over/power under, and insecurity/confidence. • Rationale: This exercise is meant to mildly elicit some of the feelings felt in bullying situations. It is hypothesized that this will give victims the opportunity to begin to confront their anxieties around bullying in a situation where they have built some trust with identified bullies. Through debriefing these exercises, ideas will come out around how to be assertive with bullies (keep one's power) while not being aggressive (trying to take the bully's power and escalating the	• Group members are asked, "I'd like you all to come to the middle of the room to work through a few exercises. In the first exercise I want you to walk amongst each other in any direction and just stare at the ground. You can still see where you are going, no pushing and shoving." Ask members to concentrate on their physical reactions. Process feelings and emotions. • "This time, I would like you to make eye contact with each other as you walk by each other." • Debrief, process, and compare to first exercise. • Ask: -"Was this easier or harder than the last exercise?" -"How did it feel to make eye contact? What made it feel

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		situation). Also, it is hypothesized that bullies will be able to help victims to be assertive, while further developing empathy for victims.	good/uncomfortable? (process responses) -"Did you do anything to make yourself feel more comfortable (laugh, make jokes, intimidate others)? -"Did anyone feel threatened like they were losing their power? How did that feel?" (process responses) • Ask those who tried to intimidate (bullies who took other's power): -"Why did some of you try to intimidate others?" (Process responses) -"How do you think the people you were trying to intimidate might have been feeling?" • "In the next exercise I would like you to keep making eye contact, but this time no laughing, talking, smiling, or facial expressions (just keep a straight face)." • Ask: -"Was this easier or harder than the last exercise?" -"What was easier or harder about it?" -"Why is it harder to make eye contact without being able to make facial expressions or talk?" -"Did anyone feel a loss of power?"(process responses) -"Did anyone feel a gain in power?"(process responses) • Then have a general discussion debriefing the

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			exercise. Ask the following questions:
			-"Did anyone notice themselves or anyone else feeling uncomfortable in any of these exercises?"
			-"Did anyone want to leave any of these exercises? For those of you who did want to leave, this is what we can refer to as our 'inner child side'. This is the side of us that protects us by making us leave uncomfortable or dangerous situations. We need this side of us to keep us safe."
			-"Did anyone notice themselves or anyone else behaving aggressively in any of these exercises? This is what we can call our 'fighter side'. This side can protect us as well by doing whatever it takes to defend ourselves."
			-"As we encounter situations where we feel that someone is going to take our power, we typically react in one of these two ways to protect ourselves. Often in these situations we become concerned with losing power, protecting our power and taking the other person's power. What are some ideas around how we can keep our power without taking the other person's power?" (Make a list of responses, will be referred

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			to again in session 7).
10 mins.	Check-out	• Ask group members to repeat the check-in exercise used at the beginning of this session. • Rationale: They will be able to visually compare the difference or similarity of the expression they circled at the beginning of the session to the one they chose at the end of the session. This may serve as a visual reminder of how they feel when they become engaged and aware of their own thoughts and feelings.	• Ask members: "For our check-out today, I would like you to take out the facial expressions sheet we used at the beginning of today's session, and I would like you to circle the expression that best describes how you are feeling at the end of our session today. Then I would like us to go around the circle and describe why you chose the expression you did, and why it is different or the same than the expression you chose at the beginning of the session."
	Session evaluation	• Hand out session evaluation	
	Facilitator debriefing questions.	• Did bullies and victims exhibit characteristics in the assertiveness circle that were consistent with being bullies or victims? • Are there any safety concerns arising out of the assertiveness circle (i.e., Group members becoming aggressive with each other). • How are group members reacting to the acknowledgement of the ending of the group? • How are the facilitators feeling about their interactions with the group, each other, and the upcoming end to the group?	

Getting Even with Aggression

<u>Session 7</u>

Assertiveness and Protecting One's Power

SESSION #: 7

Title of today's session: Assertiveness and Protecting One's Power

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Hat
- Enough pieces of paper for each group member
- Pencils/pens
- Session evaluations
- List (how to keep our power during conflicts) from session 6: exercise 1

Objectives for today's session:

1. Continue processing the upcoming end of the group.

2. Group members learn a skill (being solid) to effectively keep their power when someone (a bully) is trying to take it.

3. Teach group members to be assertive in a way that does not escalate a situation.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins.	Check-in	• Ask group members to describe how they are feeling today knowing that this will be our second last session.	• A facilitator says, "As you are aware, today is the second last time we will meet. As have had many experiences together, we have grown together and developed relationships with each other. With this in mind, I would like us to begin our group today with each of us commenting on how you are feeling about this being the second last time we will meet."
10 mins.	Review/ process last session.	• Have a short group discussion about the "inner child side" and "fighter	• A facilitator says, "I would like us to do a quick recap of what we talked about when

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		side" discussed in last session. Revisit discussion on how we can keep our power during conflicts without taking the other person's power (refer to list made in session 6: exercise 1).	we last met. From our discussion last time:" -"What two sides of us can we typically observe when we are faced with a confrontation (child side and fighter side)?" -"What are the characteristics of each side, and how can these sides of us be useful and harmful to us?" -"Did anyone think of any other ideas to add to our list from last session on how to keep one's power when others are trying to take it?" (Pull out and re-examine list from session 6: exercise 1).
20 – 30 mins.	Exercise #1 Role-play exercises (Roberts, 2001)	• Run a series of role-plays showing the inner child side, the fighter side, and what is known as a "solid" side.	• Say to group, "Today we are going to work through a couple of role plays that are going to show the inner child side and the fighter side in action. To do this, I'm going to ask a member of the group to come up and help me out" (Choose the most dominant bully in the group).
		Role-Play #1: • Facilitator fighter, group member fighter.	• In this first role-play, create a character for the volunteer and a scenario for the role-play. Set 2 chairs up one behind the other, and the facilitator sits in the chair that is in behind. • Say, "I'm going to set up a scenario for the role-play. Me and [group member] are in math class. [Group member] is pretty confident

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			within the school. He is tough, has lots of friends, is on a sports team, has a girlfriend, and a lot of people got his back. I (the facilitator) am new to the school, and I am just trying to figure who is who, and where I fit in amongst the other guys. In this first role-play, me and [group member] are going to demonstrate our fighter sides. The rules for the role-play are: you can't physically touch anyone, but you can say whatever you want, and you stop the role-play when the facilitator says stop."
		Role-Play #2: Facilitator fighter, group member inner child side.	- A facilitator starts by tapping the back of the volunteer's chair, and then tries to escalate the situation. Stop role-play when it is clear that a fight would happen. - Ask the following questions to debrief: -"Would this situation be over if a teacher intervenes?" (No). -"How long would it take for the rest of the school to find out about this situation?" (About 5 minutes). -"How would this dispute typically be settled?" (A fight) - Keep same group member up, and ask him to play a different role.

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			• Say, "In this next role-play I am going to demonstrate my fighter side again, and I would like you [group member] to demonstrate your inner child side, you are scared of me." Make it clear to the group that the group member is just playing a role. The rules will remain the same as in the first role-play.
		• Role-Play #3: Facilitator "solid": group member fighter.	• Start by tapping back of group member's chair, bully the group member and get him to leave the room.
			• Ask the following questions to debrief:
			-"Is this situation over?" (No).
			-"Do I (the bully) want this situation to happen in private, or in a place where others can see it?" (Where others can see it).
			-"Knowing what we now know about the code, what does my character want everyone who sees this exchange to see that I have?" (Power).
			-"In this last role-play was (group member) an easy source of power for me, or a hard source of power?" (Easy)
			-"If I am the type of guy who needs to go around taking other people's power to make myself feel good about myself, when I come to school tomorrow,

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			who's power am I going to take?" (Group member's)
			• Keep same group member up, and let him know that this is his opportunity for pay back. Turn the chairs so that they are one behind the other and facing away from the rest of the group.
		• Role-Play #4. Facilitator is fighter, Group member is solid.	• Say, "In this next role-play [group member] will have an opportunity for pay back. In this next role-play [group member] will demonstrate his fighter side and I'm going to do my best to try and deal with him. In this role-play I want you, [Group member], to be yourself— you are no longer playing a role—and I want you to try and bully me and take my power. Again, no physical contact. But if you think you would do something physical, make the gesture without touching me, and I will react accordingly. We want to make it as real as possible. Also, in this role-play I'm not going to stop it, you can go on as long as you want, and end it whenever you want."
			• [Group member] bullies the facilitator and facilitator is solid (see handout). Role-play goes on until [group member] says he is finished. If group member makes a motion to hit the facilitator, stop and debrief.

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			• Ask the following questions to debrief:
			-"Is this situation over?" (It could be, most likely).
			-"Did anyone lose respect for my character, did I back down? (No).
			-"Did I have to fight to get your respect?" (No).
			-"Is that a pretty good deal for a guy to be able to keep everyone's respect, without having to fight, when someone is bullying you?" (Yes).
			- "What I was doing in this last role-play is what we call being 'solid'. Was I an easy source of power, or a hard source of power?" (Hard).
			- "Was I trying to take [group member's] power?" (No).
			- "Was I giving up my power?" (No). "Being solid is about keeping your power without taking someone else's power." (Give handout on being solid to the group, and read through with group).
			• Have same group member be solid, with facilitator playing fighter side.
			• Say "In this next role-play I am going to ask [group member] to be solid with me as I demonstrate my fighter side.
			• Have group members come up and participate in role-plays with each other where they try being solid for

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
			themselves in the next exercise.
10 mins	Break		
20 - 30 mins.	Role-play exercise (group members)	• Give group members the opportunity to participate in the role-plays and practice being solid with each other. • Rationale: As group members practice with each other, victims and bullies will simulate real life scenarios. This will promote the generalization of skills from the artificial setting of the group, to real life situations.	• "Now that you have all seen the inner child side, the fighter side, and the solid side, I want to give you the opportunity to try the solid side for yourselves. I will ask you to come up in front of the group two at a time to participate in the role-play. I want you to each stand at one end of the room, and walk toward each other and very softly bump shoulders. Then face each other, one of you will demonstrate his fighter side and try to take the other person's power, and the other person will be solid. Then, you will switch roles, and the other person will be solid. The same rules apply as in the demonstration role-plays." (Begin by matching victims with victims and bullies with bullies. Then, as confidence increases, begin matching bullies with victims). • Process feelings experienced during the role-plays, and process resistance to role-plays. Process bullies' feelings of not being able to gain power from their partners, and process victims' feelings regarding being able to keep their power. Relate experiences to previous discussions about the "male code".
15 mins.	Check-out	• Have a discussion about	• Say, "As most of you are

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		feelings regarding this being the second last group. • Do "fear in a hat exercise" http://wilderdom.com/games /PsychologicalExercises.htm l • Rationale: Will continue with increasing language of feelings. Will identify whether group members are having difficulty detaching themselves from the facilitators. Will increase empathy/perspective taking skills. Will reduce perceptions of the imaginary audience/personal fable.	aware, this is the second last time we will be meeting. I would like each of you to comment on how you are feeling about the group ending after the next time we meet." • "With our comments regarding the ending of the group in mind, I would like us to end today with an exercise known as the fear in a hat exercise. For this exercise, I would like each of you to write a personal fear anonymously on a piece of paper, and then put it in this hat. Then I would like each of you to randomly select and read someone else's fear to the group, and explain how the person might be feeling." • Process feelings/fears.
	Session evaluation	• Hand out session evaluation.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Are there any group members that are suspected to be having a difficult time with the ending of the group? • Are there any group members that are suspected to be having a difficult time detaching themselves from the facilitators? • Are there any unresolved issues among group members that need to be processed to ensure group members a positive memory of the group? • Is there any counter	

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		transference emerging due to facilitators' emotions regarding the upcoming end of the group? • Are there any safety issues arising from the role-plays?	

Getting Even
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Role-Play

Skills for Being "Solid" (Roberts, 2001, p. 60)

"The Male Code" (Roberts, 2001, p. 222)

There are several unwritten rules that males tend to hold each other accountable to. The male code demands that men be physically powerful, tall, muscular, adept at physical feats and physical work, athletic and sexually appealing. The male code demands that a man should be sexually active, confident, and competitive. Winning, athletically, physically and sexually, is expected, and losing is not tolerated.

As males are socialized to fall in line with the male code, they become concerned about issues related to power. Losses of power are cast in a negative light and serve as a negative experience for males, while gains in power are generally pleasurable experiences for males and are looked at in a positive light. When males experience confrontations (when power is up for grabs), males are typically aware of two possible outcomes: they can either lose their power, or, they take someone else's power. In an attempt to keep their power within a confrontation, males will typically be aggressive towards other males. This often results in conflicts escalating and becoming violent. However, another option exists! It is possible for males to keep their power without trying to take another person's power. Instead of acting out aggressively toward another male during a confrontation (taking another male's power), males can end a confrontation

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while keeping the respect of everyone who is watching by simply just keeping their

power. This can be done using a skill known as being "solid".

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Being Solid

In being solid, your goal is to end the situation by giving the other person (who is trying to take your power) nothing to work with. Someone who is trying to take your power will try anything to get a reaction out of you in order to escalate the situation. If you say or do the smallest thing, the person trying to take your power can feel empowered, provoked, and justified in escalating his behaviour. However, if you can stand your ground without being aggressive, you become a hard source of power. If you become a hard source of power, the person trying to take your power will likely look for someone else (an easier source of power) to get his power from. The male code can make it hard to resist the temptation to act out aggressively when someone tries to take your power; however, showing that your behaviour cannot be affected by the behaviour of someone else can demonstrate the truest form of strength.

<u>Skills For Being Solid</u>

- **Eye contact**
- **"I statement" (e.g., I'd like you to leave me alone), no more than three times. Then you are finished speaking and remain completely quiet for the rest of the confrontation.**
- **Calm face**
- **Calm voice**
- **Arms at your side, hands visible**
- **Firmly planted feet**

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It is important to use good decision-making skills in choosing when it is a good time to be solid. In a situation where you are dealing with someone who is trying to take your power who you know you will never see again, it is better to use your child side and walk away from the situation. However, if you are in a confrontation with someone that you are likely to see over and over again (like in the school scenario we used in the role-play), then it will be useful to protect your power in a way that does not escalate the situation by being solid. In being solid with others, it is important to remember that some individuals who try to take your power may not have a conscience. As such, they may become physically aggressive even if you do nothing to provoke them. It is important to remember that it is okay to use your child side and leave the situation, or, you might have to use your fighter side to defend yourself if you can't leave the situation. Regardless of the situation, it is always important to talk to someone (i.e., parent, teacher, principal, etc.) about any situation where you are being bullied.

Source:

Roberts, A. (2001). *Safe teen: Powerful alternatives to violence*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: Polestar.

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Session 8

Review and Farewell

SESSION #: 8

Title of today's session: Review and farewell

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Bring yarn/rope
- Bring copies of group final evaluation (one per member)

Objectives for today's session:

1. Reflect on learning and personal growth (Corey & Corey, 2006).
2. Support group members to confront anxiety-provoking situations through the role-plays, and experience a sense of accomplishment.
3. Process feelings regarding the end of the group (Corey & Corey, 2006).
4. Support group members to have a positive final experience in the group (Shechtman, 2007).

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Shechtman, Z. (2007). *Group counselling and group psychotherapy with children and adolescents: Theory, research, and practice.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 – 20 mins.	Check-in	• Go around the circle, and ask each group member to describe one good thing about their week, one bad thing about their week, and one sentence indicating how they are feeling today about this being the last session.	• Tell group members, "For our check-in today, I would like us to go around the circle and describe one good thing about your week, one not so good thing about your week, and one sentence describing how you are feeling about this being our last session." • Identify themes and process feelings.

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
15 mins.	Review of Session #7	• Group members are asked to write down the three main things that stick out in their minds about Session #7, and they are invited to share them with the other members as we go around the circle. • Rationale: This will refresh members on the content of the last session, and give facilitators an idea of what issues are most prevalent in the minds of members following last session.	• "To review last session, I would like each of you to take out the list you brought with you of three things that stuck out for you about last session. If you did not bring this list, then think back to last session, and describe three things that stuck out for you." • Ask each member why these things stuck out for them. • Group members were given this task as homework at the end of last session, and they are to arrive with the three things they most remember about last session already written down. If they have not completed homework, ask them to verbally describe what they remember about session 7.
35 – 45 mins.	Exercise #1 Transferring group learning to life outside of the group	Exercise #1: Role-play • Group members will be divided into groups of two, and they will be asked to act out a scenario that they think will occur in their lives after the group ends where they will be required to utilize skills/knowledge learned in the group. • Rationale: It is hypothesized that this exercise will help to generalize learning by allowing members to put skills into action (Shechtman, 2007). It is also hypothesized that this exercise will generalize learning beyond the	• "For this exercise, I am going to divide you up into groups of two. I would like each of you to work with your partner to come up with a role-play that simulates a situation you are likely to face in the future that requires you to use the skills you learned in the group. That means that each group of two will perform 2 role-plays, where each person will have a chance to demonstrate his skills". • Process each group member's experience on performing his role-play. • Facilitators should divide members into groups based on projected opportunities

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		conclusion of the group. This exercise may serve as a final test where individuals face their fears, and experience a sense of accomplishment.	for members to apply necessary skills. It is hypothesized that victims and bullies should be paired together to create an opportunity to practice assertiveness skills (victims) and empathy skills (bullies). • Care should be taken in partnering individuals to ensure success and the building of confidence.
10 mins.	Break		
25 mins.	Consolidation	• Discussion on what individuals have learned, how they have been affected by the group (have their goals been met?), and how they are feeling about the group ending (initial perceptions vs. current feelings regarding the group). • Rationale: This will allow group members to consolidate learning while processing feelings regarding the group ending.	• Going around the circle, individuals are asked to rate their success in reaching the goals outlined on their goal sheets. "Rate your success in reaching your identified goals on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being no success and 10 being extremely successful." • They are also asked to think back to their initial perceptions of the group and to compare them to their current feelings. "Now, as the group is ending, compare your initial perceptions of the group with how you feel about the group now." • Then ask members to describe how they are feeling about the group ending. "Let's go around the circle and describe our feelings about the group ending." • Have general discussion/ debriefing about the ending of the group.

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
10 mins	Check-out	• Yarn exercise. • Rationale: Will symbolize that all members have a connection based on their involvement in the group, even though members are different than one another and pursuing different goals. Will provide group members with positive feedback, leaving them with a positive memory of the group and therefore increasing the likelihood that they will revisit learning and memories of the group later in life (Shechtman, 2007).	• A facilitator explains exercise. "I would like us to start by standing in a circle. I will start with this spool of yarn, and pick one person in the group. I will tell that person what I will remember most about him when the group ends, and what I most respect about that person's accomplishments in the group. Then I will toss the spool of yarn to him, and he will repeat my actions with another member of the group." Repeat until each member has a turn and is holding a piece for the rope. Remark on how all members will be connected by this common experience just as each member is holding a piece of the rope.
5 mins.	Group evaluation	• Members are given the group final evaluation form to fill out.	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Were the exercises effective in achieving lesson objectives? • Do group members feel that they have achieved something in the group? In your opinion, have members moved to a new or higher stage of change? • How do you feel about the group ending? (Facilitators debrief)	

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Session 8: FINAL EVALUATION

We would like your feedback on your overall group experience. This information is voluntary and will be kept confidential. We appreciate your honesty and ask that you do not put your name on this sheet to ensure that your responses remain anonymous. Your feedback will help us improve our group counselling services. Please fill out the form and return it to your group facilitators.

Date: _____ No. of sessions attended: ____ Group facilitators: _____

For numbers 1 to 8, please circle the number along the scale that best represents your counselling experience:

Not Applicable N/A	Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Neither Agree or Disagree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1

1. I made progress toward my personal goals in group counselling.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

2. I am able to effectively deal with confrontations.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

3. I can better understand my problems/issues.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

4. I can better communicate my thoughts and feelings.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

5. I am more sensitive to, and accepting of, differences in others.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

6. I feel that I can better handle my feelings and behaviour.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

7. I have healthier relationships with others.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1

8. I am satisfied with my overall group counselling experience.   N/A 5 4 3 2 1
   (If you disagree, please explain):

9. What were the best features of this group?

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10. What didn't you like or how might the group be changed?

11. How could the group facilitators improve?

12. Further comments on any of the above scales or about your group experience.

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<u>Post-Group Meeting</u>

1-Month Follow-up

SESSION : Post-group Meeting

Title of today's session: 1 Month Follow-up

Advance preparation required for this group session:

- Bring PRQs (One for each member).
- Pencils (One for each member).

Objectives for today's session:

1. Identify successes and areas for continued improvement.
2. Reorient group members to learning that took place in the group, and recommit group members to continued change and self-development.
3. Process feelings regarding the end of the group.
4. Gather data regarding the overall effectiveness of the group.

Additional resources for facilitators:

Corey, M. S., & Corey, G. (2006). *Groups: Process and practice groups* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rigby, K., & Slee, P. T. (1993). Dimensions of interpersonal relation among Australian children and implications for psychological well-being. *Journal of Social Psychology, 133*(1), 33–42.

Shechtman, Z. (2001). Prevention groups for angry and aggressive children. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 26*(3), 228–236.

PLAN

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
20 mins.	Check-In	• Group members are asked to sit in a circle and check-in with each other. Each person is asked to describe how they are feeling about being together again, and how they have been doing since the end of the group.	• A facilitator welcomes everyone back to the group, and acknowledges the possibility that a lot may have happened between the end of the group and now. The facilitator sets the tone for the session by describing that, "Our meeting today is

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		• Rationale: This will reacquaint everyone with each other and identify members who have had difficulty detaching themselves from the group. This will also re-establish a language of feeling within the group (Shechtman, 2007). Group members may also disclose areas where they have had setbacks and areas where they have had successes.	not about evaluating how people are doing. But rather, it is to reflect on the past month since the end of the group, and to work through any issues that have come up since the end of the group." • "Now I would like to go around the circle and have each of you describe how you are feeling being back with the group." • A facilitator says, "Now I would like to go through the circle again and have each of us give a brief description of how the past month has been." (Process and identify themes that are emerging).
40 mins.	Goal sheets, and areas for continued work.	• Group members are asked to take out their goal sheets and to take a moment to evaluate their success in meeting the goals they identified for themselves in the group. Facilitators give each member an opportunity to acknowledge goals they have achieved, and goals they are still working toward. • Rationale: This exercise creates an opportunity for group members to celebrate successes while acknowledging areas for continued work. Also, addressing their written goals might re-orient group members toward learning that took place in the group	• A facilitator asks group members, "Please take out your goal sheets you were asked to bring with you. I am going to ask each of you to look at the goals you set for yourself in the group, and to take a moment to identify goals you have achieved, and goals you are still working toward. Now, I would like us to go around the circle and have each of you identify goals you set for yourself that you have achieved, and goals you are still working toward." • Process feelings involved in positive and negative experiences. Identify behaviours group members demonstrated that contributed to success, and empower group members to

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		while they were actively working on their goal sheets (Corey & Corey, 2006). Acknowledging these goals one more time in front of others may prompt group members to recommit themselves to change (Corey & Corey, 2006).	feel confident in being able to achieve goals they are still working toward. Convey the importance of continued work and a continued process of self-development. Support group members to develop skills to maintain their own behaviour.
10 mins.	Break		
30 mins.	Administer post PRQ or Peer Relations Questionnaire (Rigby & Slee, 1993).	• Have group members complete a post measure of group effectiveness by completing the PRQ. • Rationale: PRQ was administered during the screening interview. Post-group data can be compared with pre-group data to assess the effectiveness of the group in addressing the following bullying-related areas: social wellbeing, perceptions of school environment, prevalence of bullying, reported consequences of being bullied, perceived abilities related to bullying, tendencies to bully others, and beliefs about bullying.	
15 Mins	Check-out	• Go around circle one last time, asking group members to identify one thing they want to continue to work on, and one change they have made that they are proud of. • Rationale: Commits group members to continued	• A facilitator asks, "For our last check-out, I would like us to go around our circle one last time. I would like each of us to identify one thing you would like to continue to work on after the group ends, and one change you have made that you are proud of."

Length of Time Required	Goal or Theme	Activity	Instructions/ Notes of Interest
		work beyond the end of the group, while ending the group on a positive note with a feeling of achievement (Shechtman, 2007).	• Facilitators offer final words relating positive remarks around the performance of group members, and the courage it took to complete the group process. • Facilitators offer words of encouragement for the future.
5 Mins.	Session evaluation	• Hand out our session evaluation	
	Facilitator debriefing questions	• Did group members work through detachment issues that may have been present? • Are their any safety concerns regarding issues that have arisen since the last session of the group? • Have facilitators worked through their own issues regarding detachment from the group?	

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Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent

Getting Even with Aggression is an eight-week counselling group that is designed to assist male adolescents aged 11 to 14 with issues related to aggression and bullying. The goal of the group is to help aggressive adolescents and victims of bullying to effectively deal with issues related to aggression and bullying. Group members will be supported and sometimes challenged as they work toward increased self-awareness in exploring their feelings and behaviours related to aggression and bullying. Group members reserve the right to leave the group at any time; however, group facilitators may be required in some circumstances to inform referring agencies/individuals of group members' decision to leave the group. Facilitators will keep all group records and group discussions confidential except in situations where the withholding of information puts a group member or another party at risk of physical harm, or in situations where outside individuals have a legal right to access group records. Group members will be strongly encouraged to keep all matters discussed within the group confidential, however, the confidentiality of group participants cannot be guaranteed. Parents can access records regarding their child at any time, and can consult with facilitators regarding their child's progress. Group members and parents must agree to a background check and be willing to participate in the survey procedures.

One of the Group facilitators has completed a bachelor degree with a major in psychology, and is in the final stage of completing a master's in counselling psychology degree in December. This facilitator has 11 years experience working with children and families, and aligns himself with a cognitive behavioural approach to counselling.

Group members will be responsible for participating in the initial screening procedures, attending all group sessions, participating in all group exercises, and treating other members with respect.

Signing this consent form acknowledges an awareness and understanding of the preceding information and expectations, and grants informed consent to participation in this group.

_____   _____
Participant   Date

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian   Date

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Appendix C

Release of Information Form

Release of Information

I hereby consent to the release of all pertinent information pertaining to

_____ from the following persons/agencies.

_____

_____

_____

_____

For the following purposes

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____   _____   _____
Participant   Date   Expires

_____   _____   _____
Parent/Guardian   Date   Expires

_____   _____   _____
Parent/Guardian   Date   Expires

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Appendix D

File Information Form

File Information

Date: _____   **Session number:** _____

Client:_____

Participation level ____   **Role (Bully or Victim)**_____
(1 lowest – 5 highest)

New Goals identified:

Interactions with group members:

Interactions with facilitators:

New self-awareness:

New skills learned:

General comments: