

Nicole Werner, Ph.D.

Department of Human Development

Overview of Research Program

Study risk and protective factors associated with social and emotional development.

Develop and evaluate research-based prevention programs for children and families.

Overview of Research Program

- Aggression and bullying
 - Gender differences in aggression
- Development & evaluation of prevention programs for children and families

Relational Aggression

- Attempts to harm others through damage & manipulation of social relationships
 - Giving a friend the “silent treatment”
 - Spreading rumors about a disliked peer
 - Social exclusion
- Preferred form of aggression & bullying among girls

Relational Aggression: Q & A

- How prevalent is it?
 - Don't know exactly, but it's more common than physical aggression.
- Should we be concerned about it?
 - YES. Both aggressors & victims are at-risk.
- Why do kids (especially girls) use it?
 - It's effective.
- Can we prevent it? How?

The Ophelia Project

- Community-based, nonprofit organization based in PA, with sister chapters across the U.S.
- Mission is to foster the positive development of children and families through awareness, education and advocacy

Creating a Safe School[®] (CASS): A Prevention Model

CASS Training Team
CASS Consultant

Level 1:
School

- Awareness
- Policy
- Procedures

Level 2:
Child

- Awareness
- Changing norms
- Learning skills

Level 3:
Family

- Awareness
- Building connections

Creating a Safe School[©] (CASS): A Prevention Model

Selling a process, not a program

Evaluation

- The process...
 - How successful were schools in mobilizing their efforts to change the social climate?
 - What challenges did they face and how were they addressed?
 - What role did the CASS consultant play?
- The outcomes...
 - Assessment of aggression, victimization, & normative beliefs
 - Assessment of school staff, teacher & parent attitudes

Bullying in Washington State

- SHB 1444 – “anti-bullying law”
- School districts must adopt or revise policy & procedures for addressing harassment, intimidation, & bullying

Bullying in Washington State

- Opportunity to:
 - Work with schools to conduct needs-assessments & to examine existing policy, procedures, and programs
 - Study the process of policy development
 - Evaluate the impact of new policies on HIB across the state