

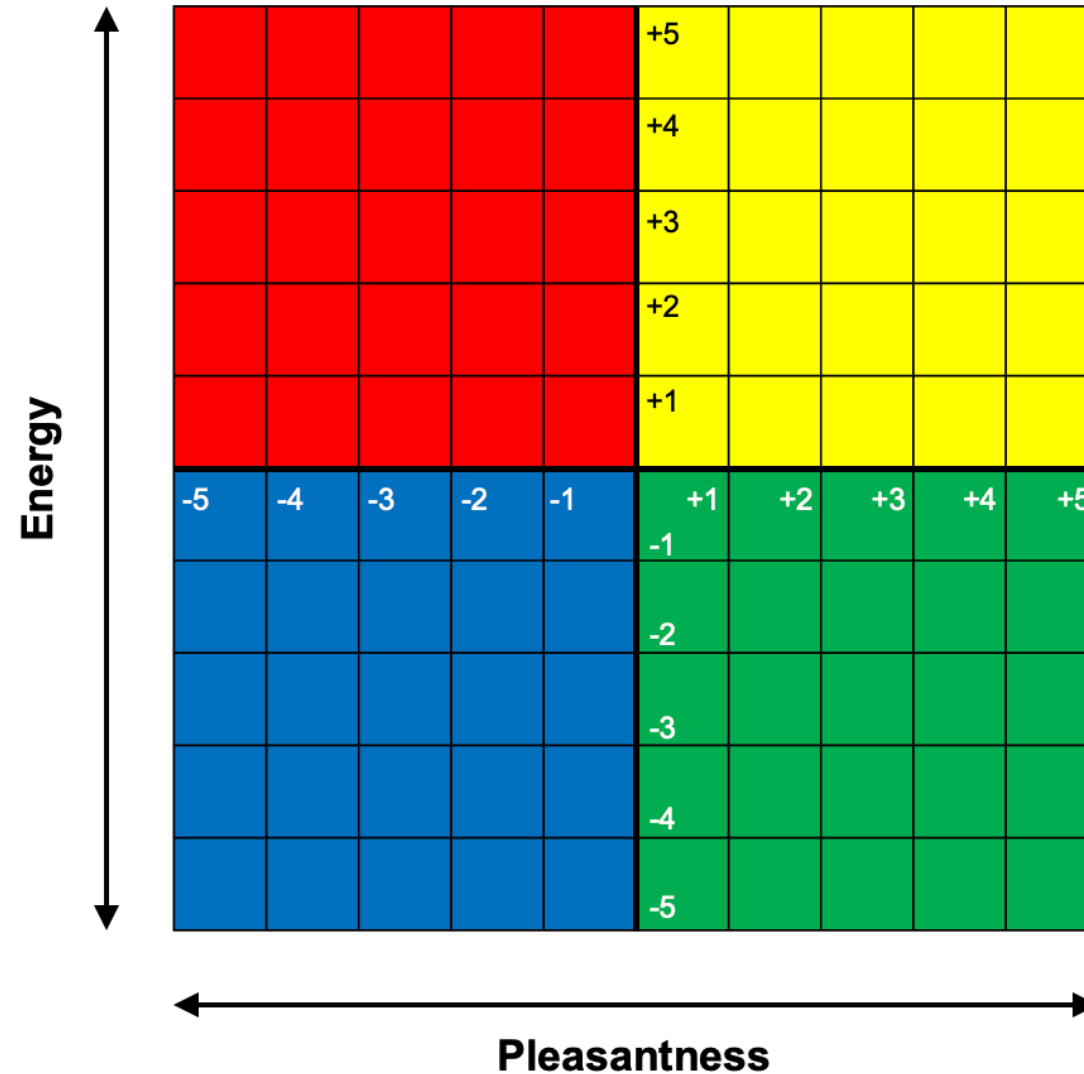
We Are All Connected: How Schools and Families Can Support Children's K-12 Peer Relationships

Diana Divecha, Ph.D.

March 7, 2024

Yale *Center for Emotional Intelligence*

How are you feeling?



How are you feeling?

enraged	panicked	stressed	jittery	shocked	surprised	upbeat	festive	exhilarated	ecstatic
livid	furious	frustrated	tense	stunned	hyper	cheerful	motivated	inspired	elated
fuming	frightened	angry	nervous	restless	energized	lively	enthusiastic	optimistic	excited
anxious	apprehensive	worried	irritated	annoyed	pleased	happy	focused	proud	thrilled
repulsed	troubled	concerned	uneasy	peevd	pleasant	joyful	hopeful	playful	blissful
UNPLEASANT ←					→ PLEASANT				
disgusted	glum	disappointed	down	apathetic	at ease	easy going	content	loving	fulfilled
pessimistic	morose	discouraged	sad	bored	calm	secure	satisfied	grateful	touched
alienated	miserable	lonely	disheartened	tired	relaxed	chill	restful	blessed	balanced
despondent	depressed	sullen	exhausted	fatigued	mellow	thoughtful	peaceful	comfy	carefree
despair	hopeless	desolate	spent	drained	sleepy	complacent	tranquil	cozy	serene

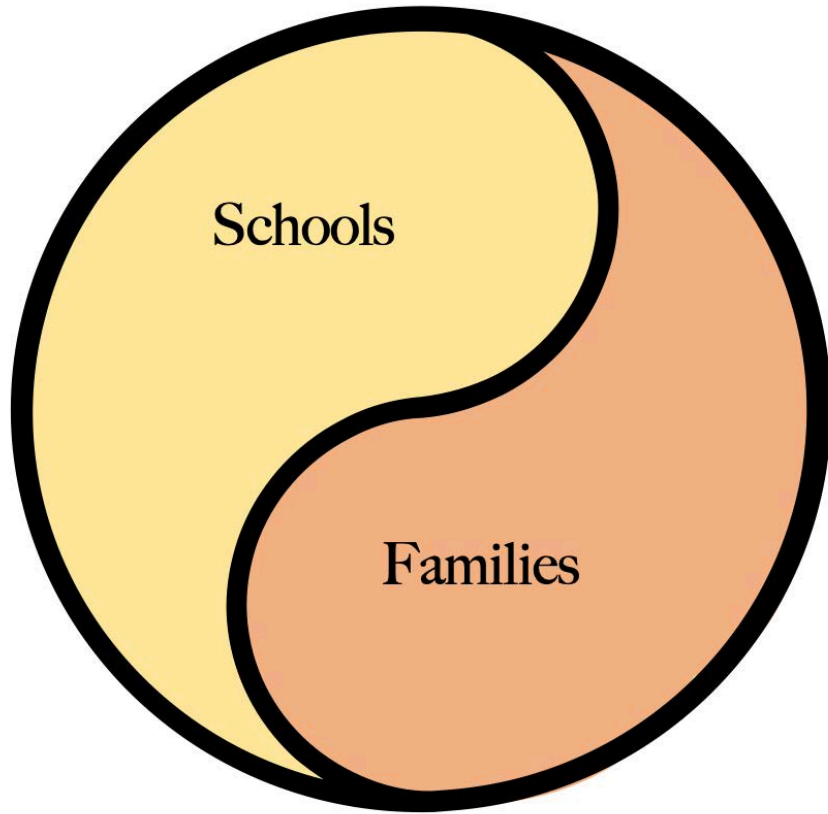








1. Emotional pain is real
2. Daily contact is mandated
3. Stress interferes with learning
4. Both parties need help
5. Collaboration required between schools and families



Overview

Kids' peer relationships matter, and they have a typical developmental arc.

Two big challenges to good relationships

What schools and families can do – together and separately – to better support kids' relationships

Friendship matters

for children and teens

- Fosters self-esteem, wellness in youth
- Protective against bullying involvement





for the lifespan

- Resilience in disasters
- Lower stress
- Better coping
- Better physical health
 - Lower risk for heart attack, stroke and death
 - Lower blood pressure, BMI
- Later life happiness and satisfaction



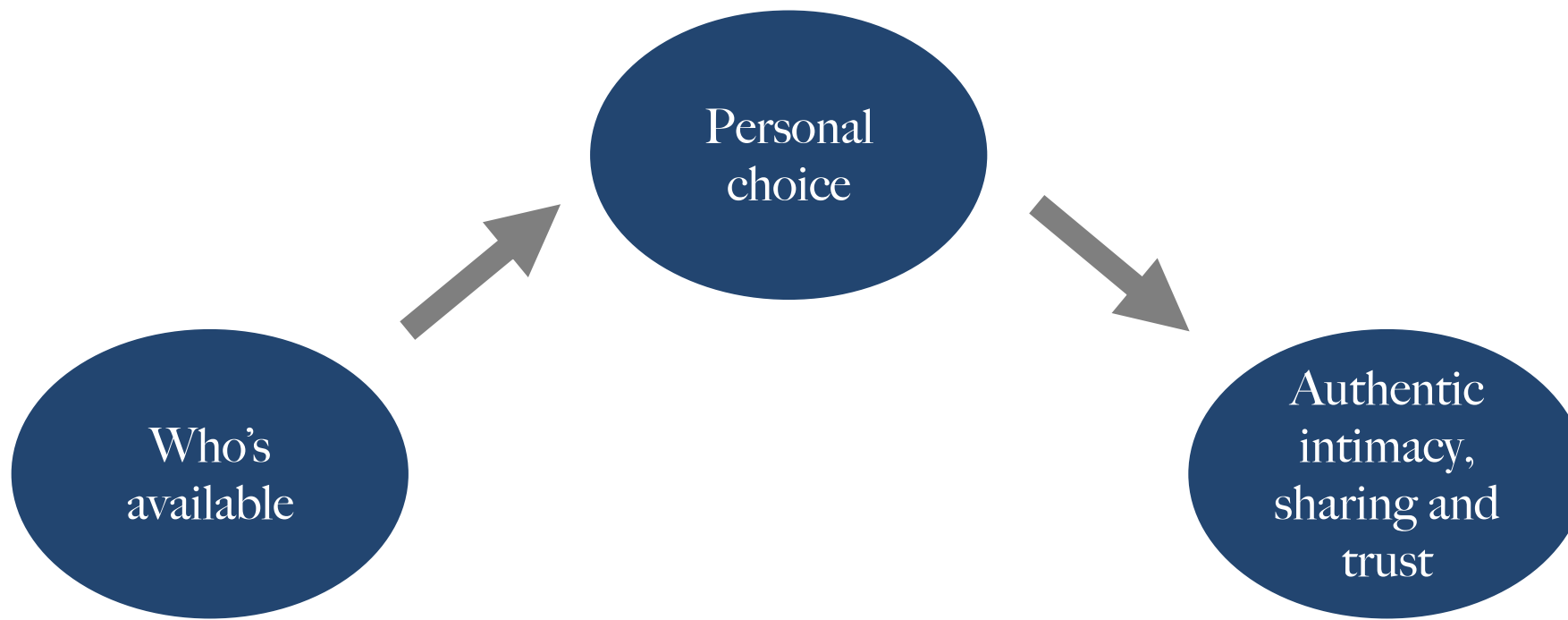
Friendship development





Friendship development





Relationship problem #1
Kids are lonely

THE HILL

Teens are spending less time than ever with friends

BY DANIEL DE VISÉ - 06/07/23 6:00 AM ET



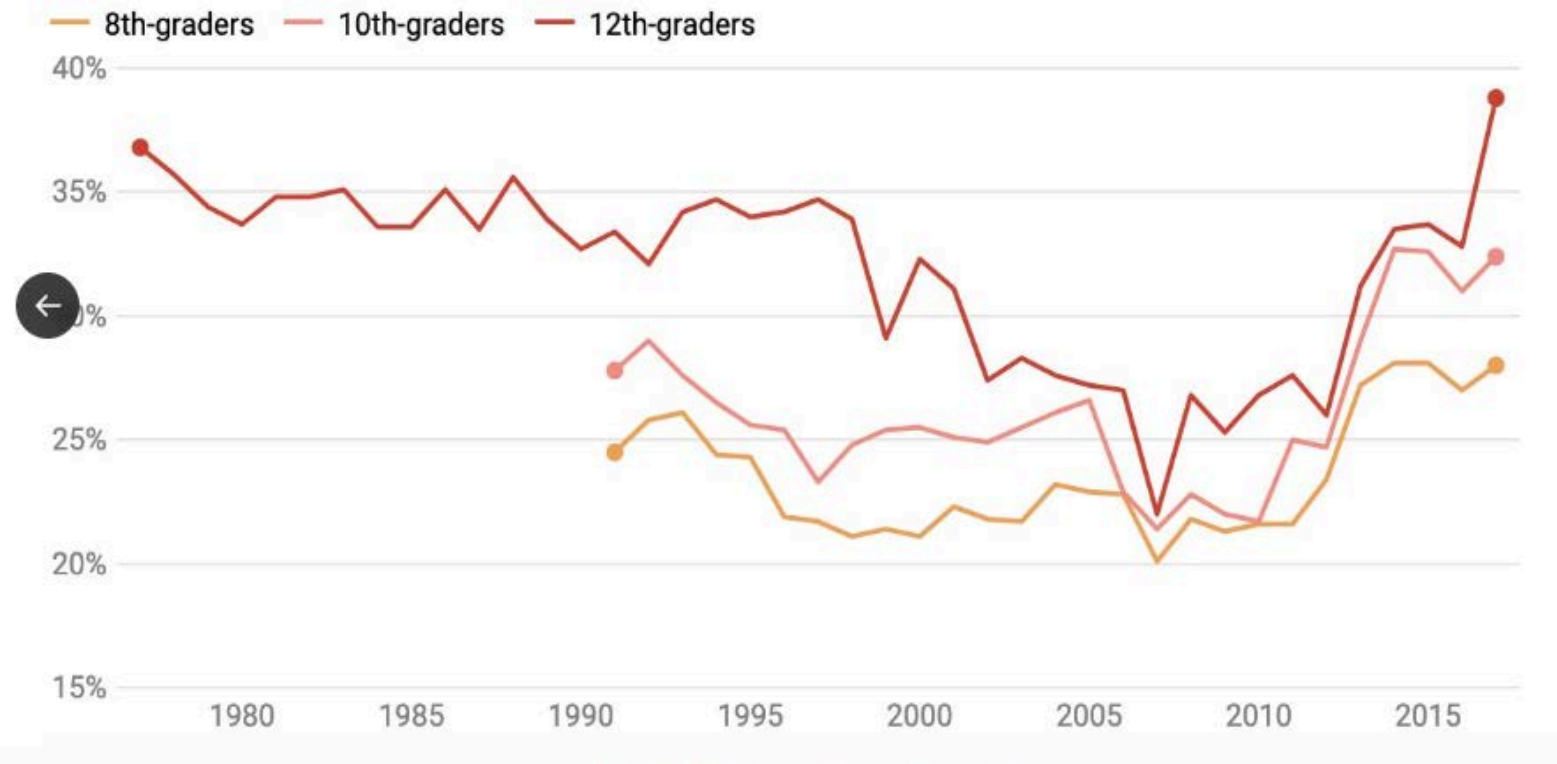
SHARE



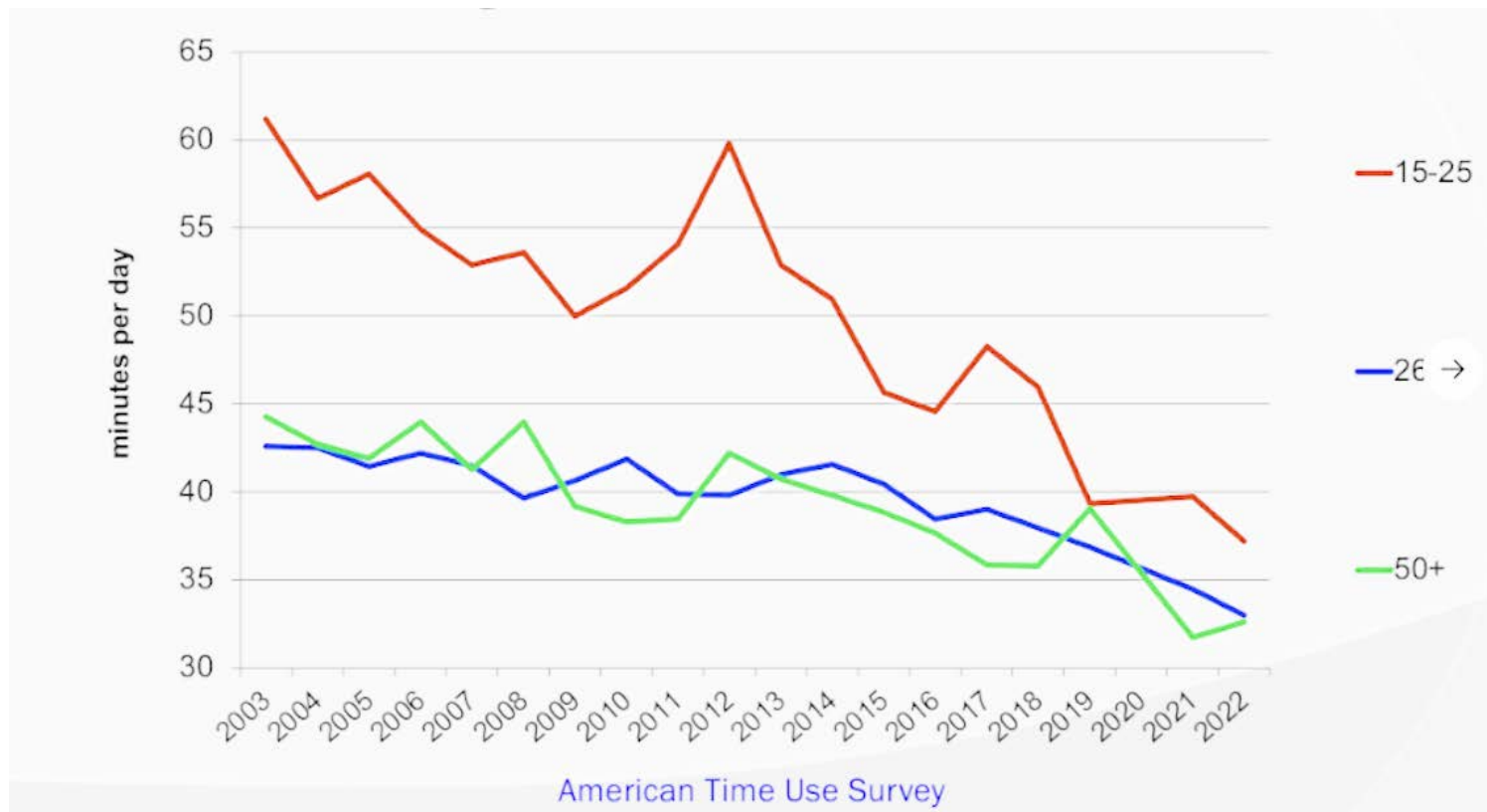
TWEET



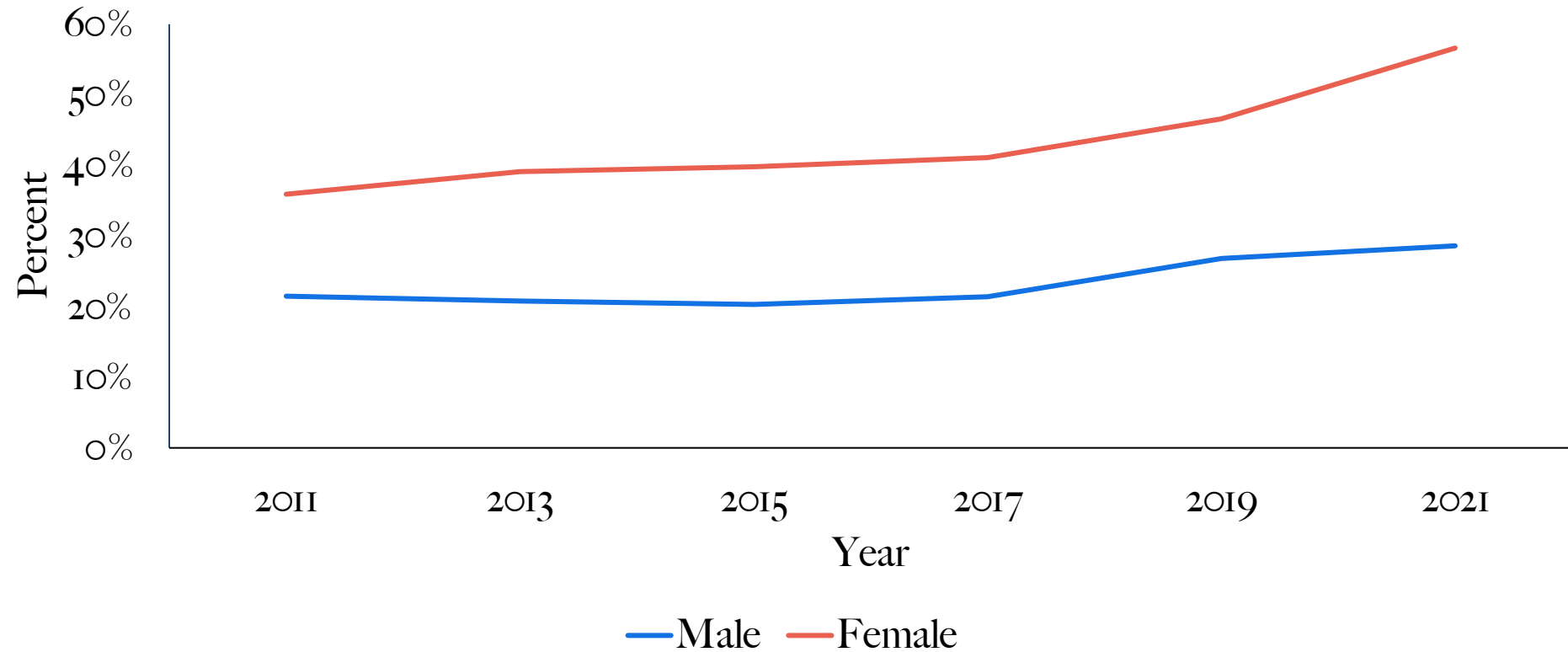
Loneliness rates among teens



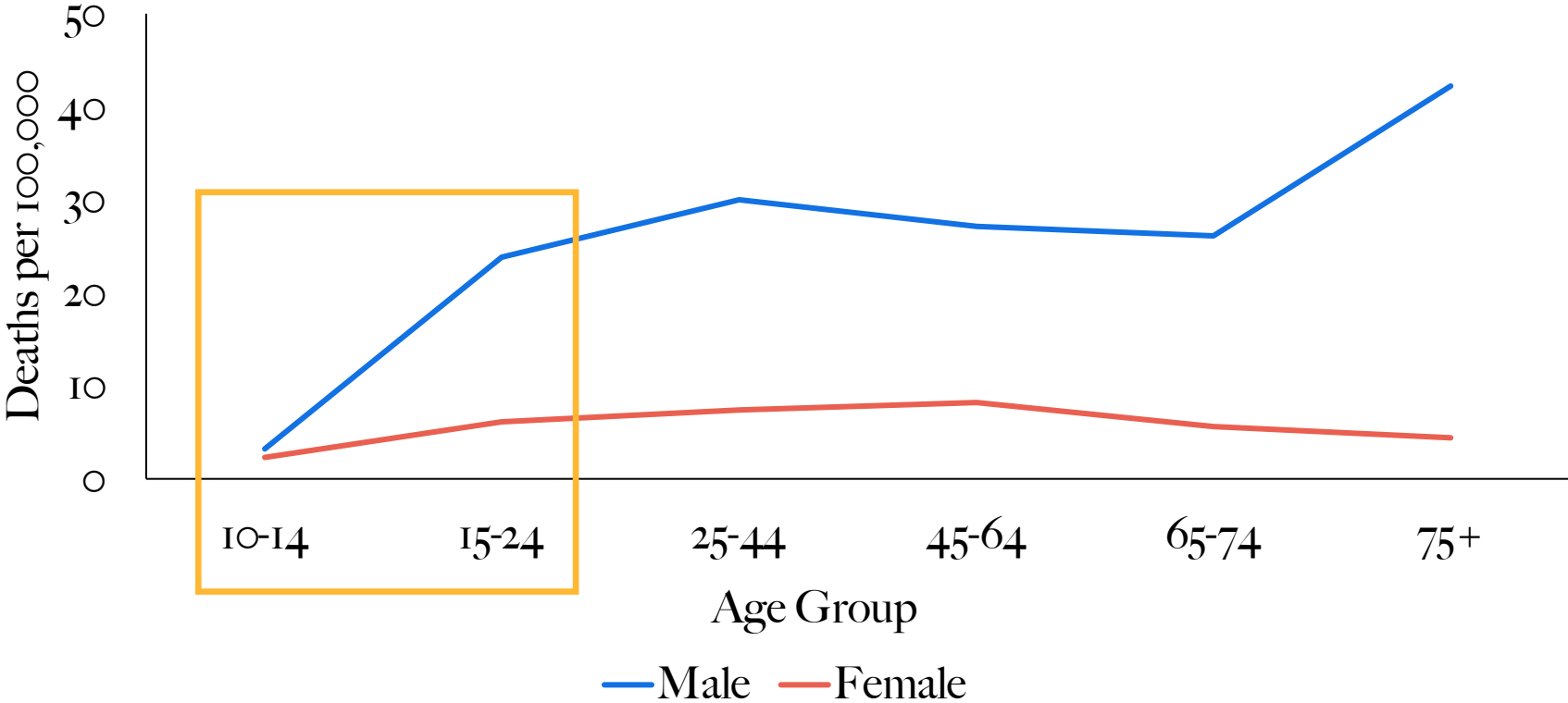
Time socializing in person



High school students who felt sad or hopeless



Suicide rates by age group in 2021



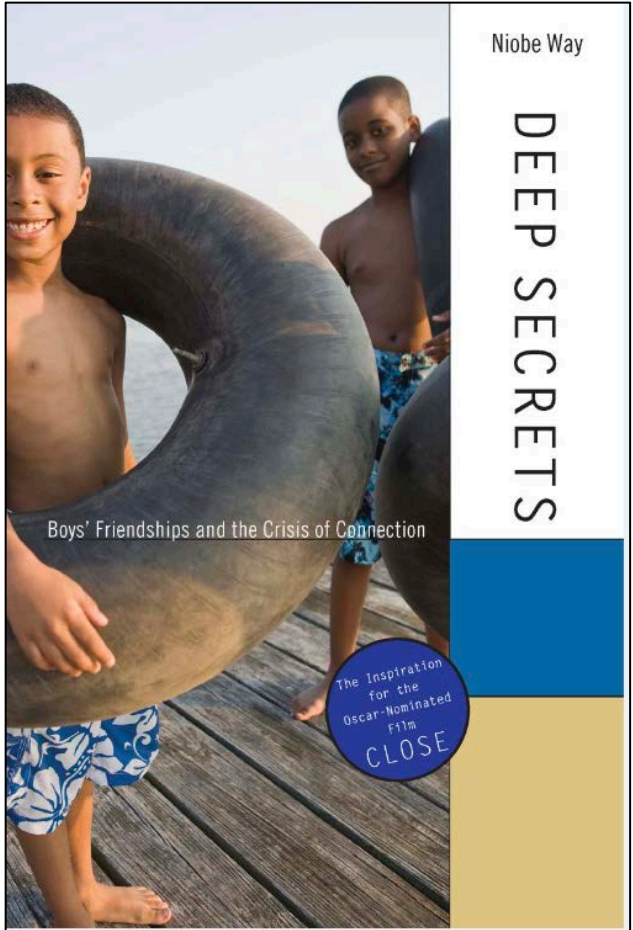
”If I had to describe what it’s like to be a teenage boy in one word, I’d say ‘lonely.’”

—a teenage boy

80% of teens boys say they want more emotional support.

Nearly all of these boys were watching their dads for emotional guidance.

—Brendan Kwiatowski, Ph.D.



re.masculine

225 posts 15.4K followers 1,199 following

Brendan Kwiatkowski PhD

@ 100M+

Education

🧠 Learning about emotions, masculinity, & myself

🇨🇦 Teacher, researcher, speaker... more

remasculine.com

Relationship problem #2
Peer abuse

Bullying

- Intentional aggression
- Repeated/pattern
- Power imbalance
- Physical, verbal, psychological, social, or educational
- In-person or online; on- or off-campus; AR and VR (cyberbullying)



What is it *not*?



Targets of bullying

Ages 6-17 (short-term effects):



Ages 18-50 (long-term effects):

- Immune and health problems
- Anxiety; self-blame
- Depression; self-harm
- Suicidality
- Borderline personality disorder psychotic experiences
- Lowered self-esteem
- Academic problems; school absence
- Somatic disorders
- Social problems; loneliness

- Poor health
- Anxiety and panic disorders
- Depression
- Psychosis
- Suicidal attempts/completion
- Lower educational and economic achievement; earn less than peers by age 50; employment problems
- Socially isolated, poor relationships, lacking in support; agoraphobia

Bullies/bully-victims

Ages 6-17 (short-term effects):



Ages 18-50 (long-term effects):

- Delinquency; alcohol use
- Poor relationships; loneliness; bullying in 6th grade predicts dating violence in 8th grade
- Aggression
- Self-harm; suicidality
- Anxiety and depression
- Health problems
- Poor school adjustment and academic achievement

- Criminality
- Dating and partner abuse
- Psychopathology: Adult antisocial personality disorder; Psychiatric and pain disorders; Suicidality (m); Agoraphobia (f); substance use/abuse
- Lower educational achievement
- Financial & employment problems; unemployment
- Housing problems
- Impaired social relationships
- Poor health

Witnesses

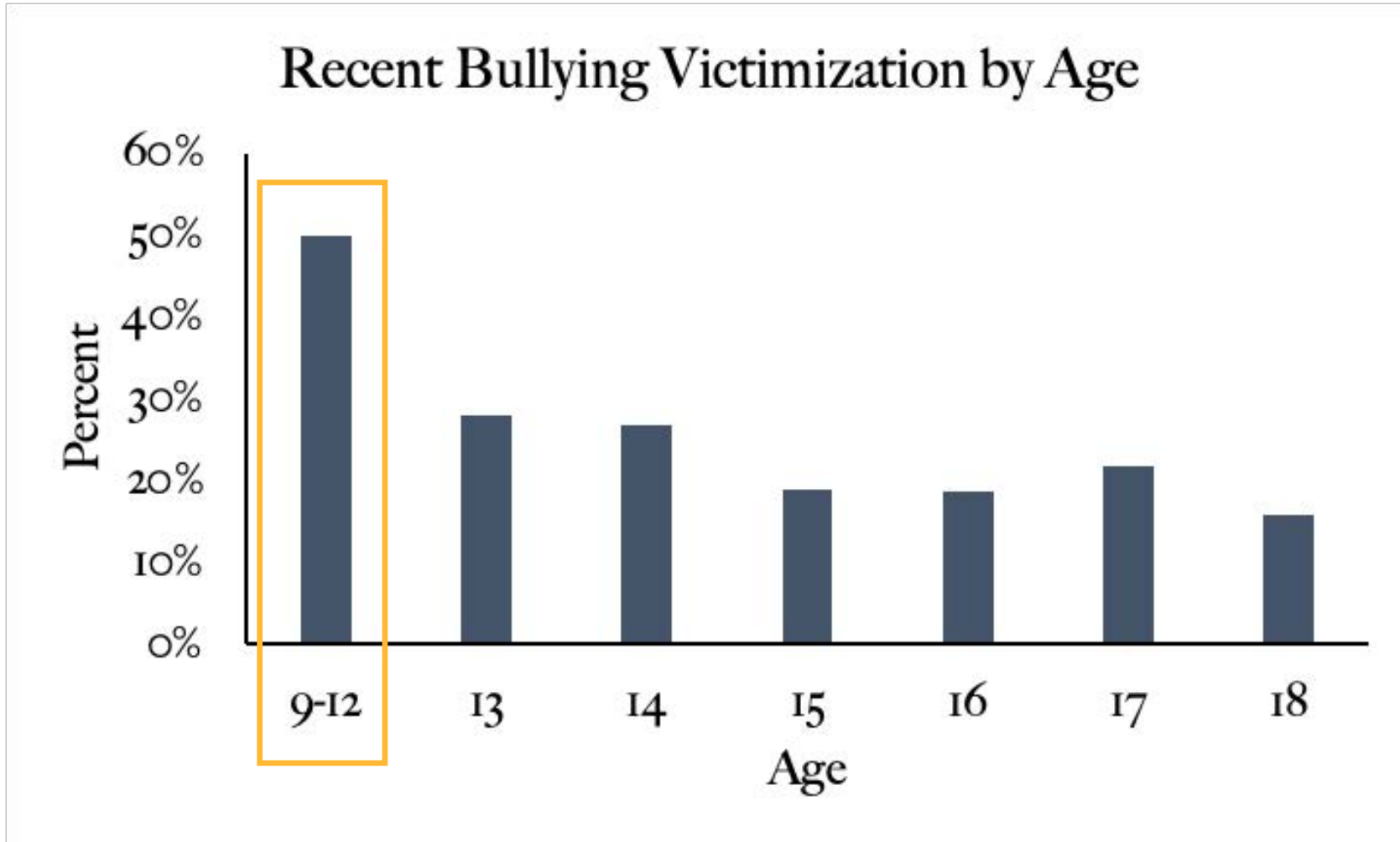
Ages 6-17 (short-term effects):

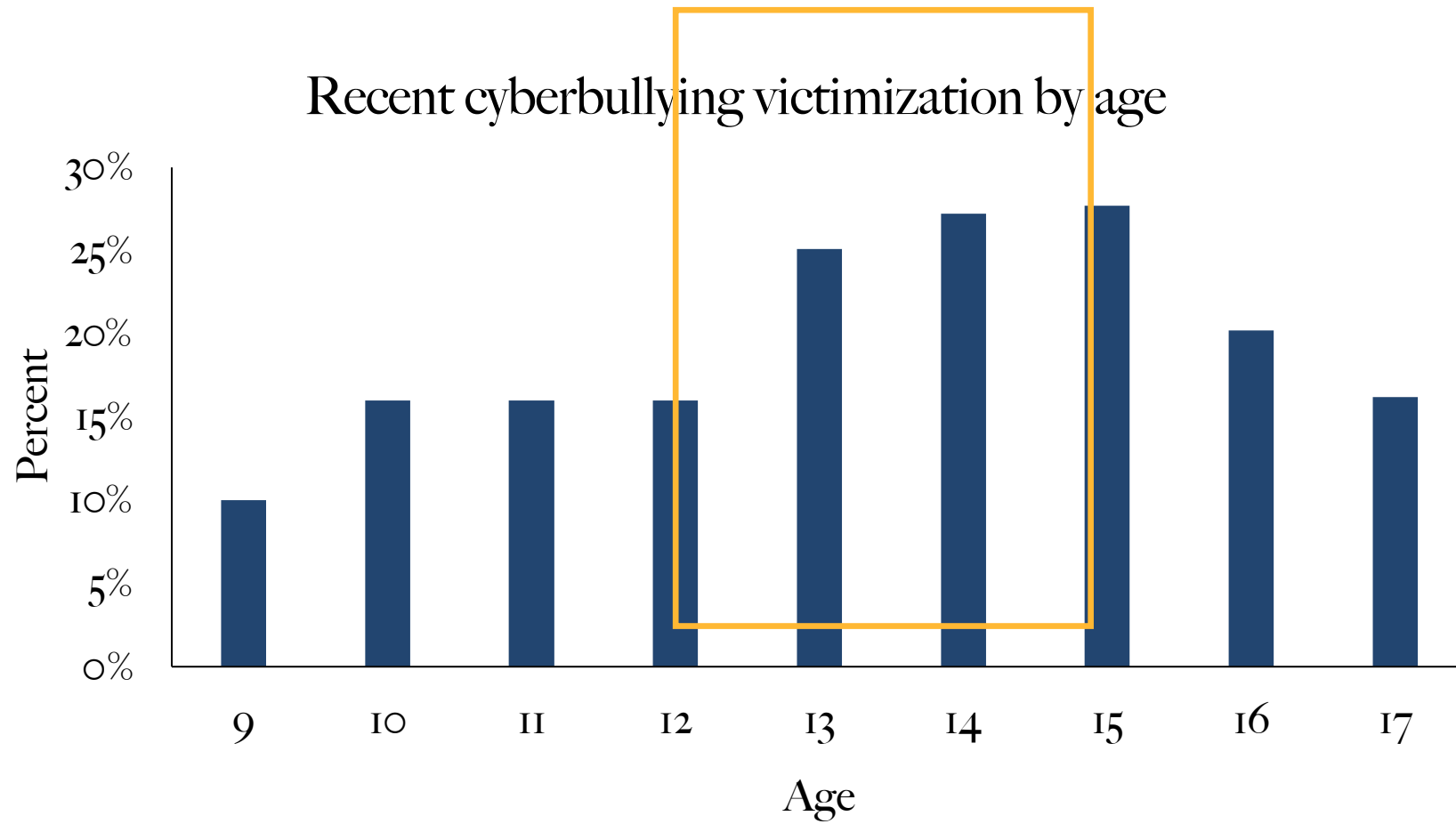


Ages 18-50 (long-term effects)

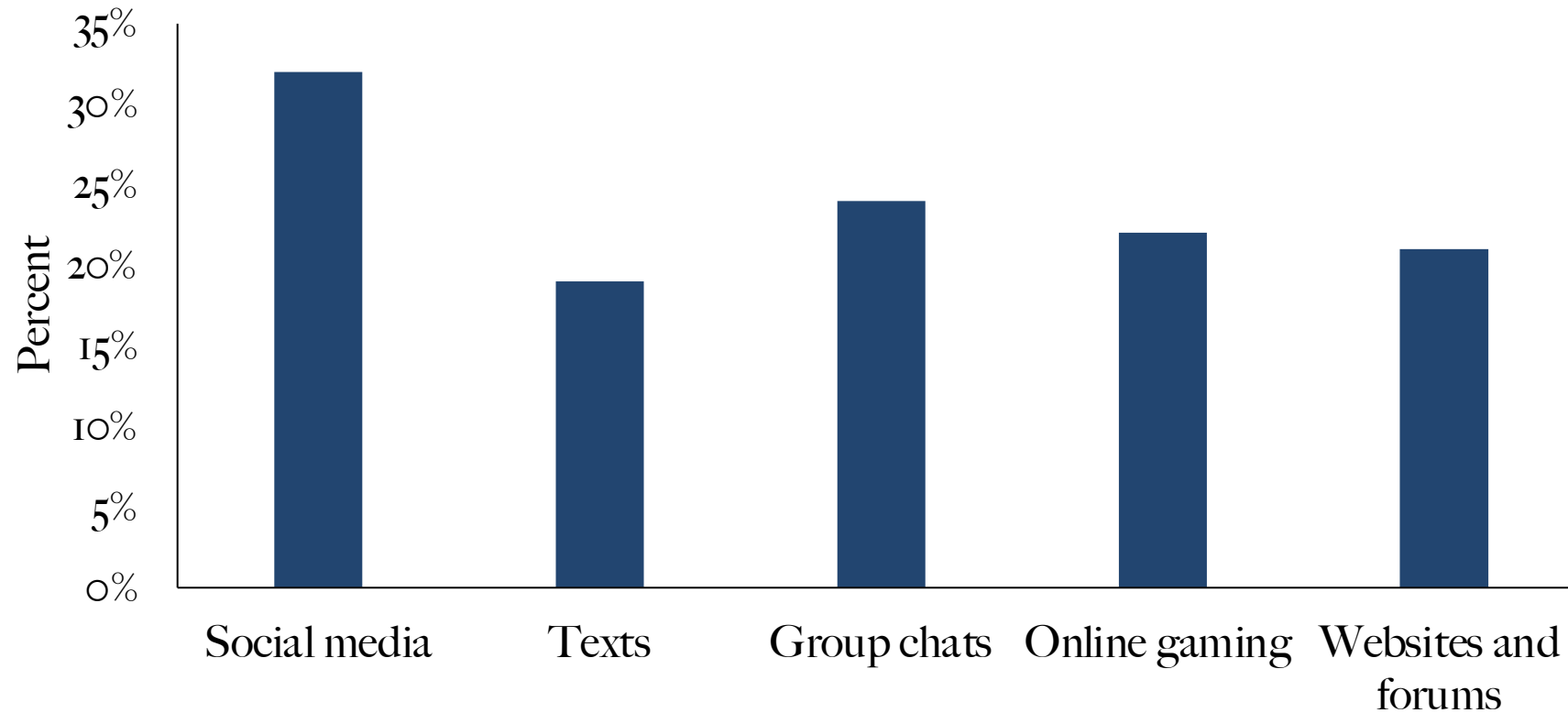
- Varied reactions
- Co-victimization; trauma symptoms
- Anxiety and insecurity; substance use
- Activation in social pain processing regions of brain, especially in empathetic teens
- Empathic distress, anger, fear
- Symptoms of trauma

- Unknown

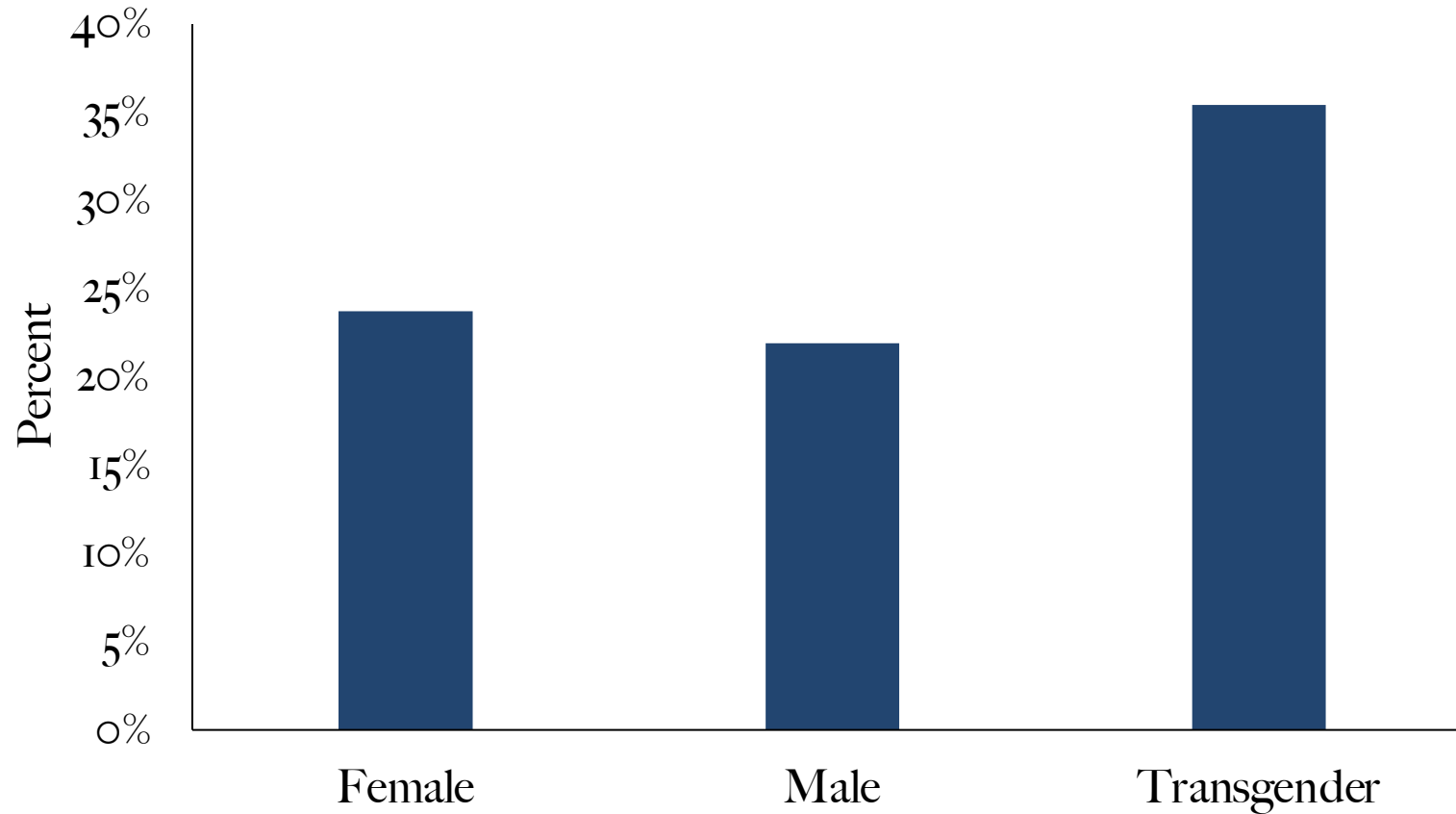




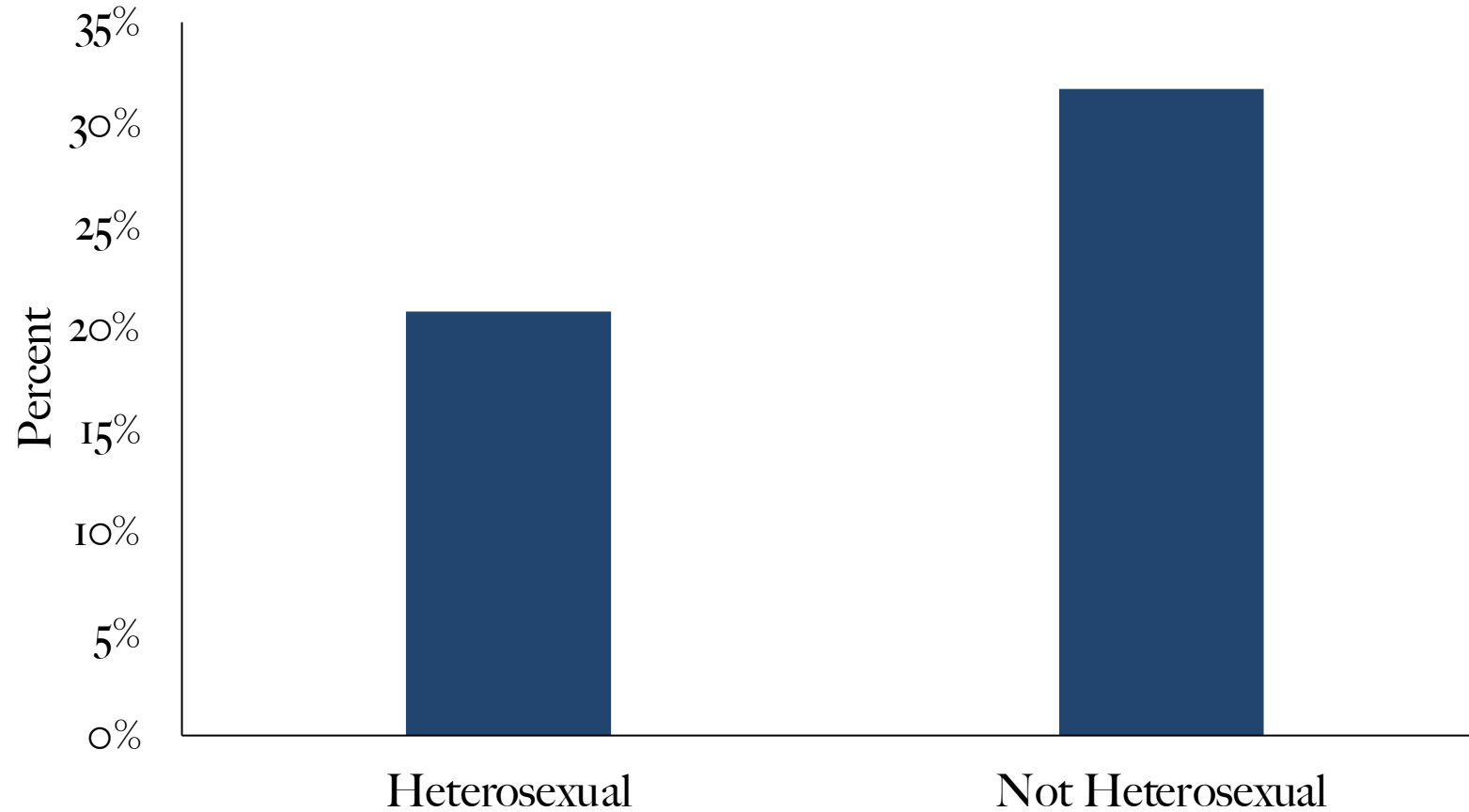
Where children say they're being cyberbullied



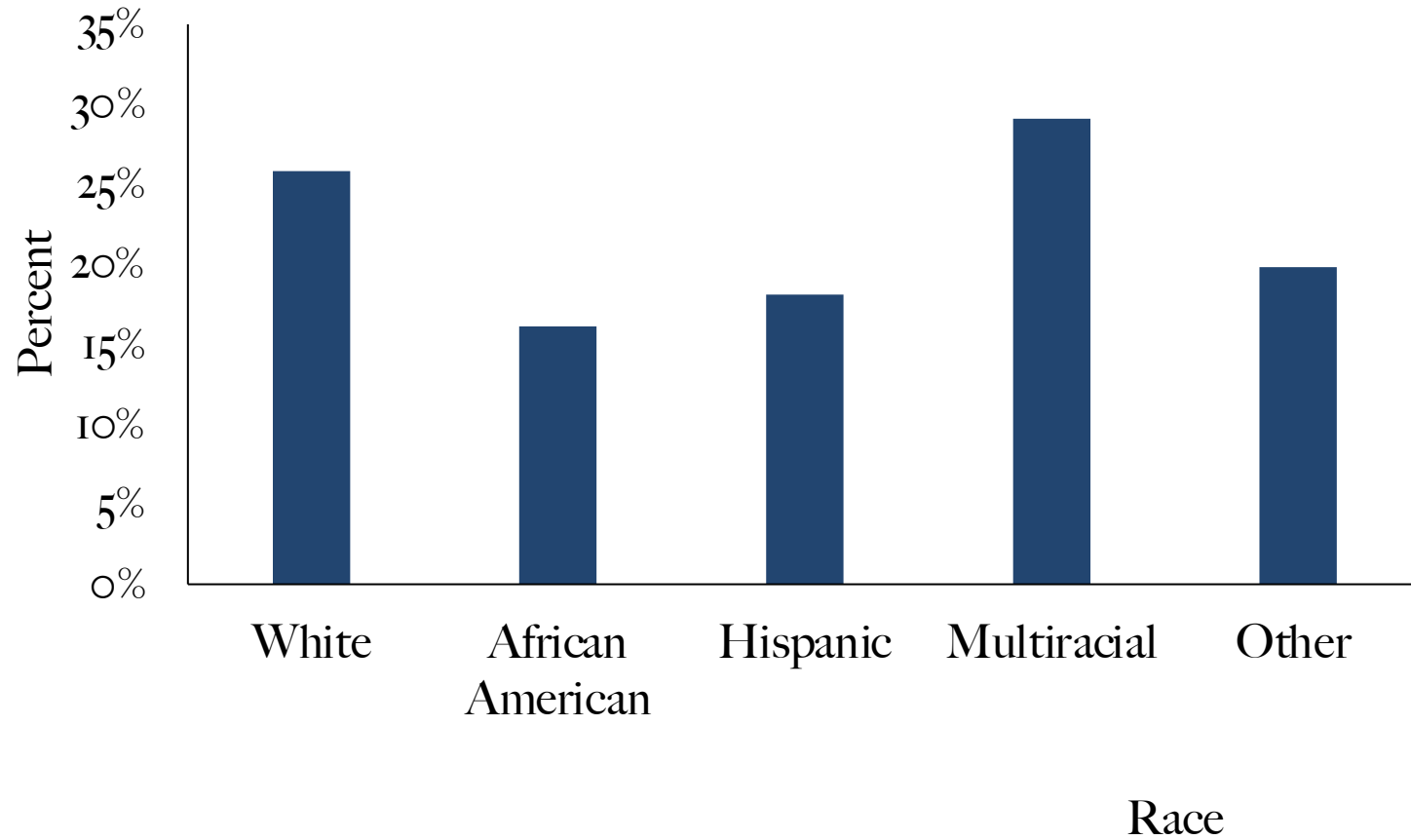
Recent cyberbullying victimization by gender



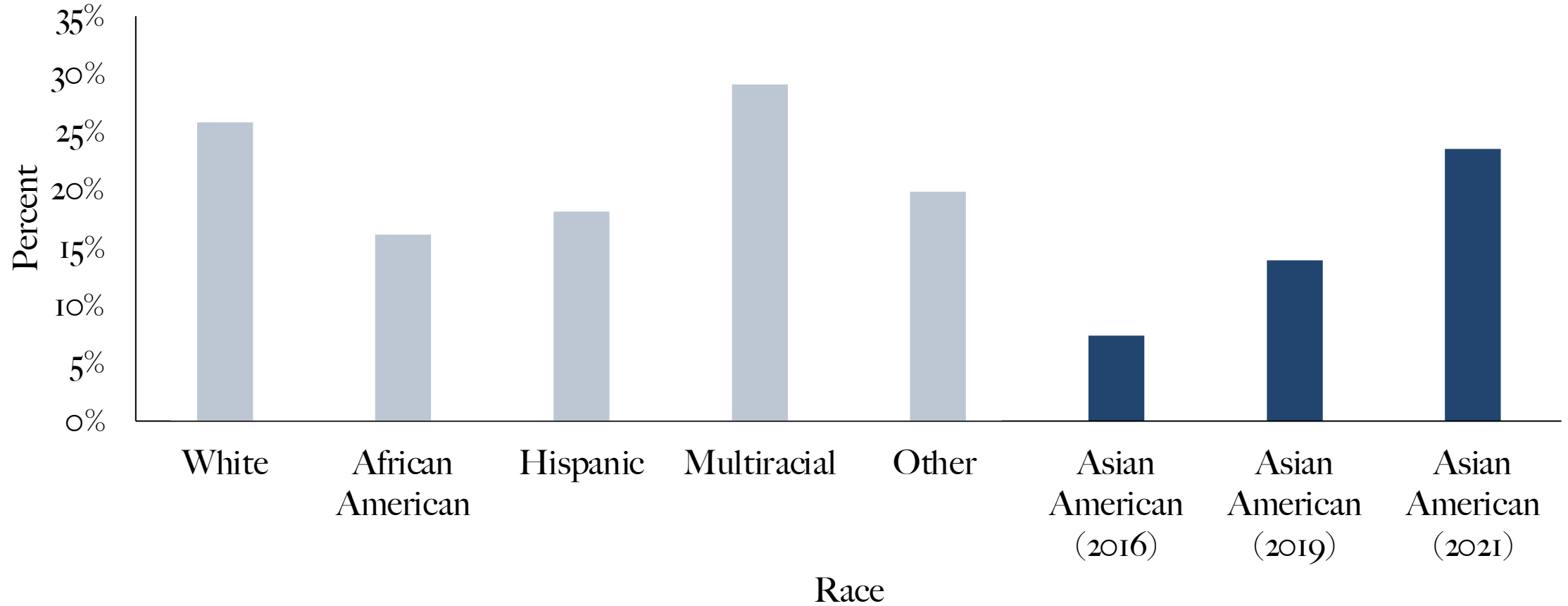
Recent cyberbullying victimization by sexual orientation



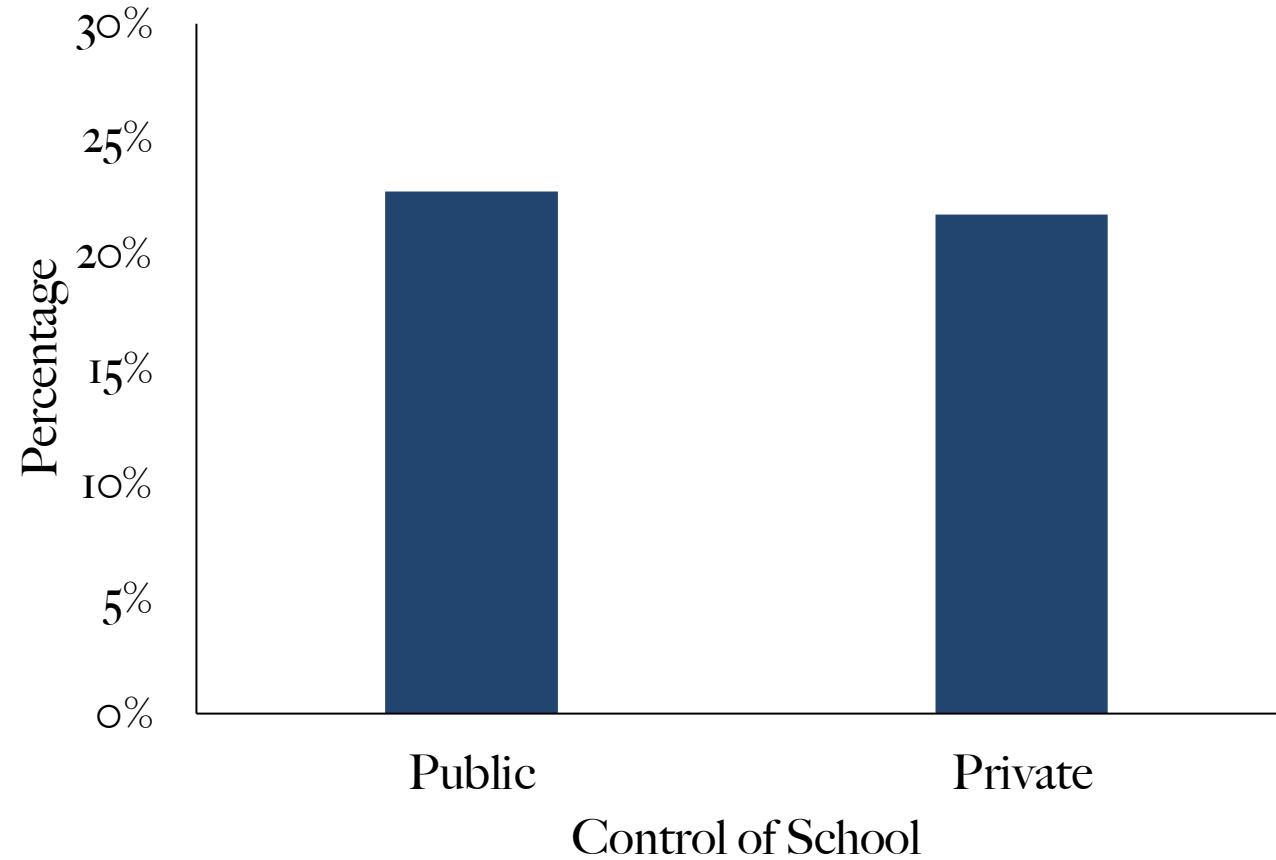
Recent cyberbullying victimization by race



Recent cyberbullying victimization by race

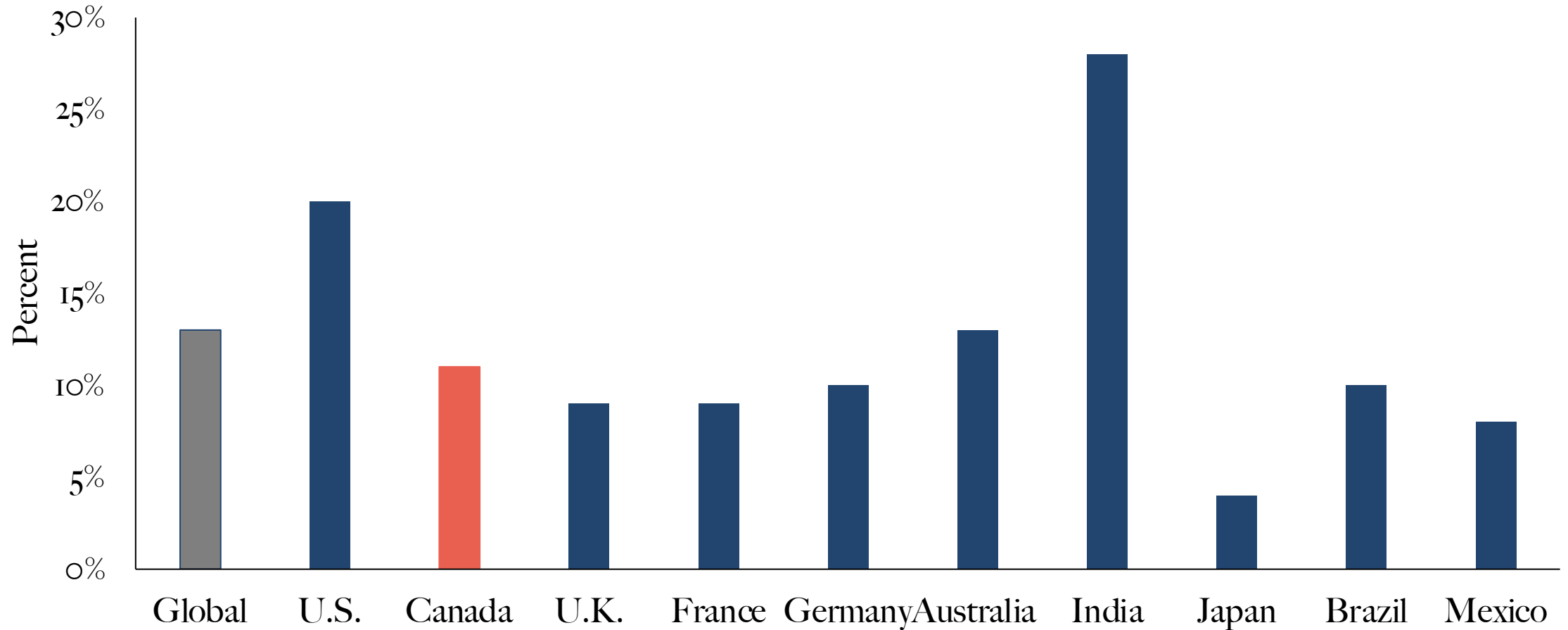


Bullying rates in private vs. public schools, 2021



How does Canada fare?

Percent of children reporting stalking, harassment, and physical threats online



89% of Canadian teachers see cyberbullying as a topic of concern.

--www.safecanada.ca/bullying-in-canada

30% of U.S. adults are bullied at work

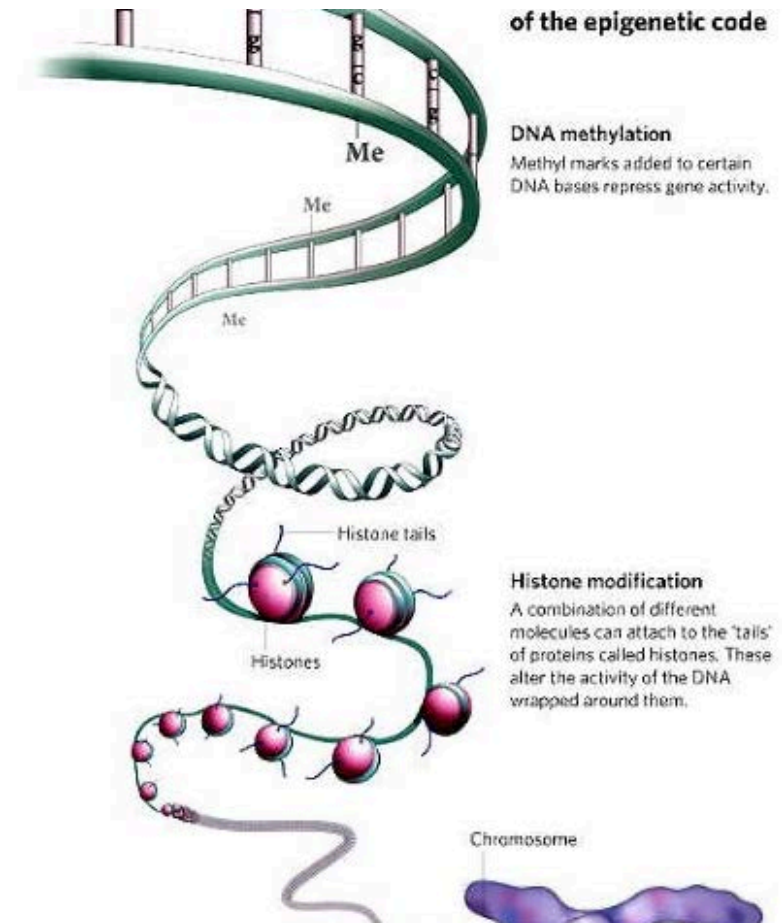
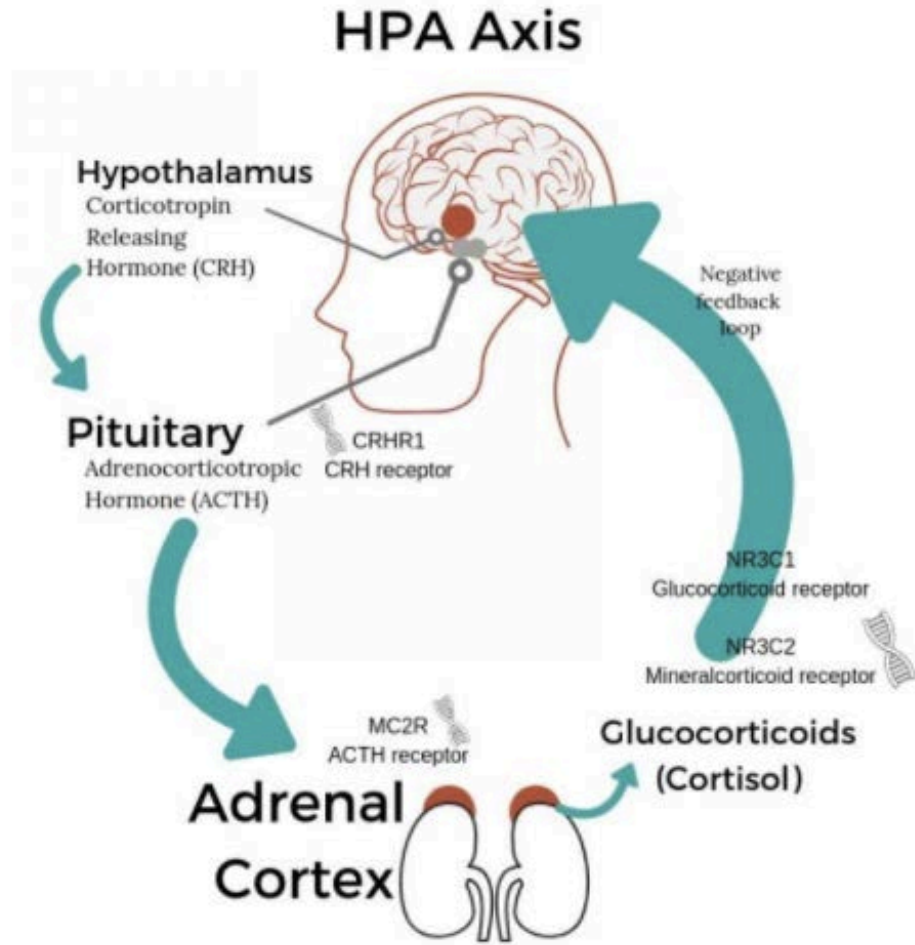


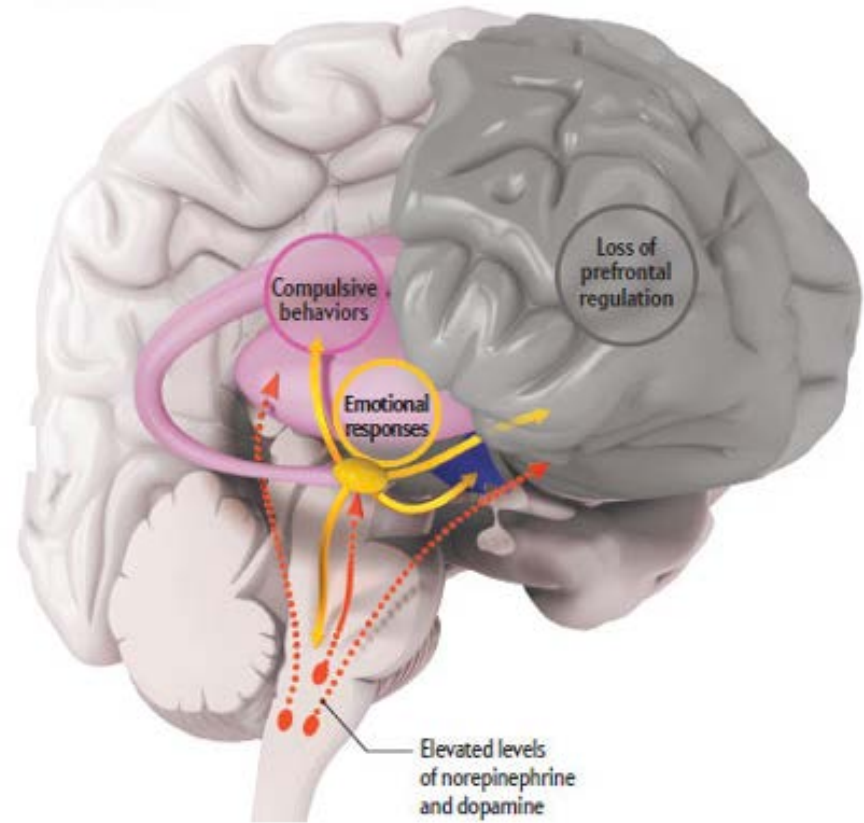
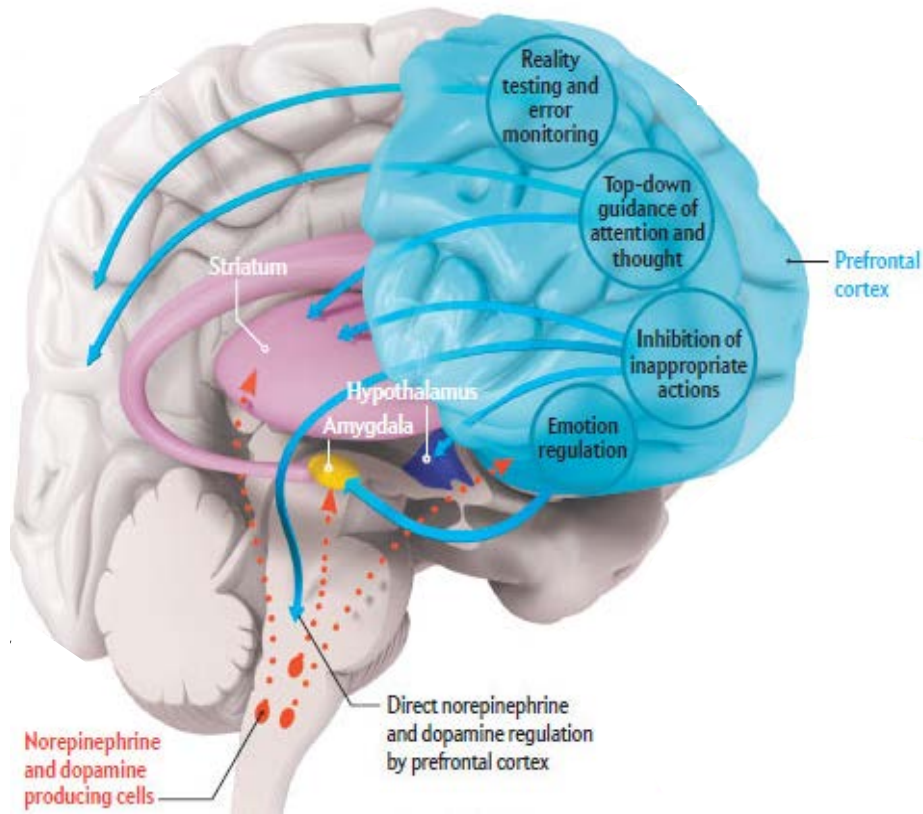
20% of seniors in group settings are bullied

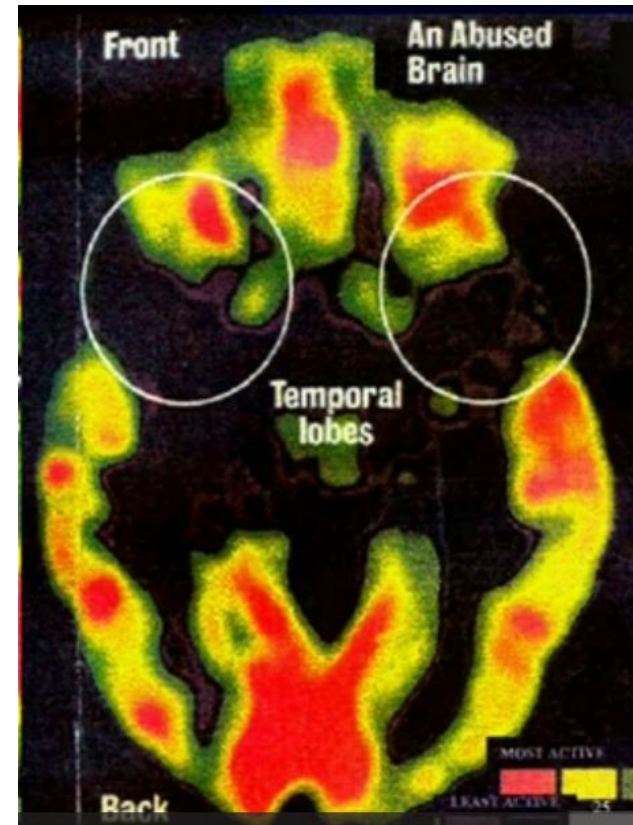
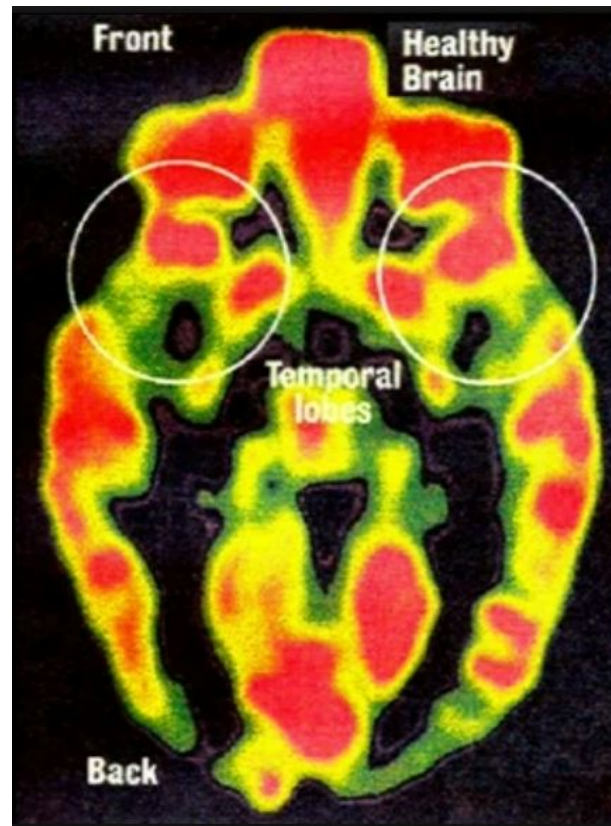




Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis



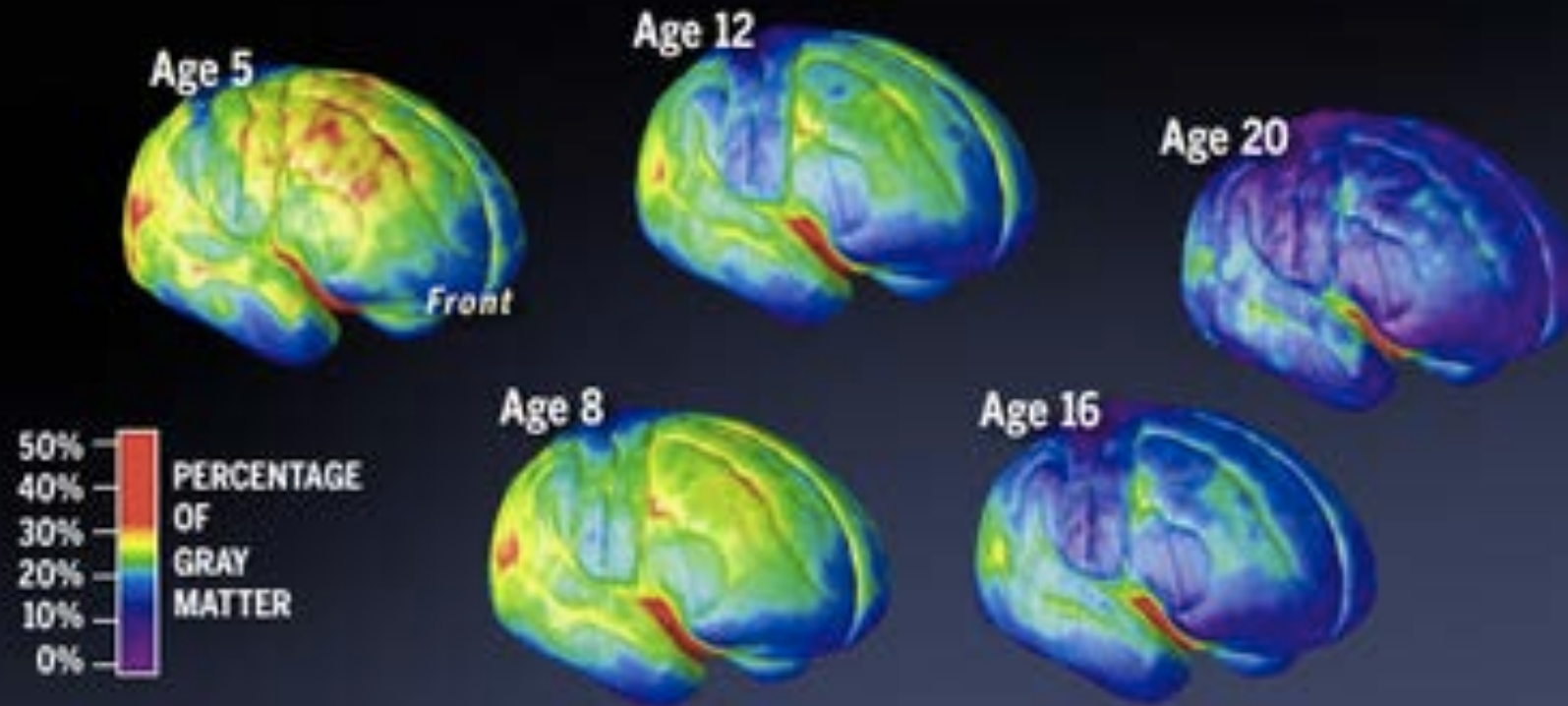




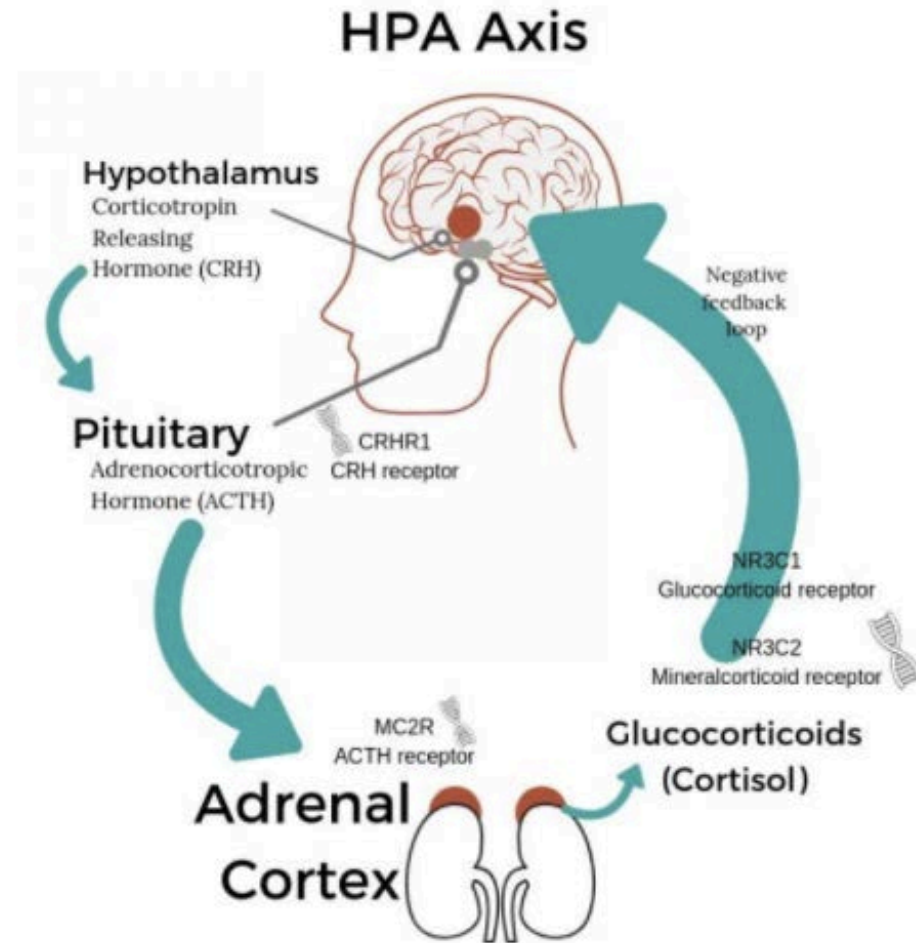
Middle school is an especially sensitive period for development.

Time-Lapse Brain

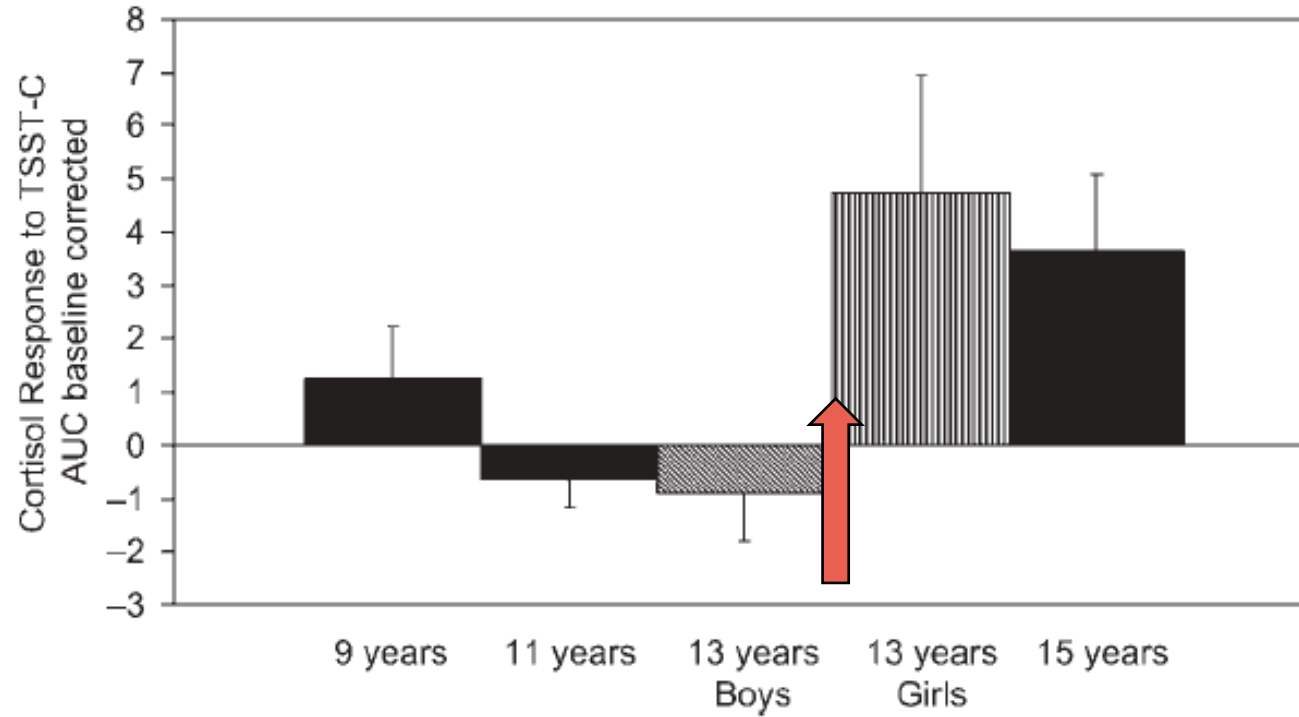
■ Gray matter wanes as the brain matures. Here 15 years of brain development are compressed into five images, showing a shift from red (least mature) to blue.



Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis

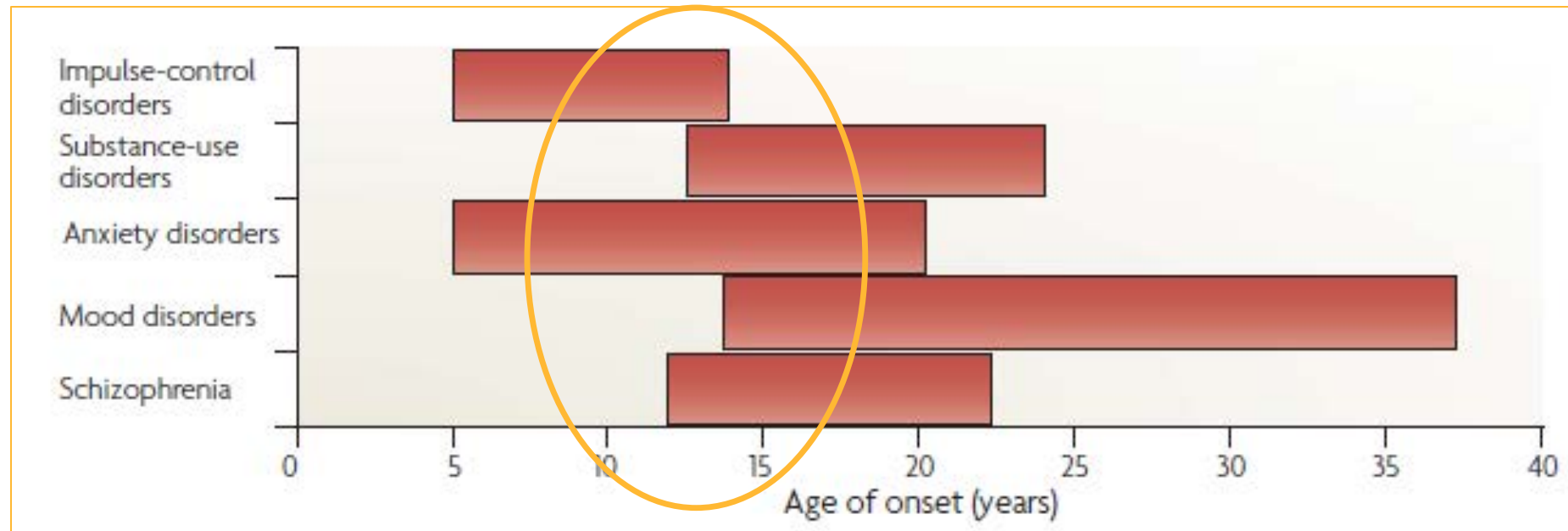


Social sensitivity to peer evaluation spikes



Kids' cortisol levels when they're doing a task and think they're being watched by peers

A period of vulnerability

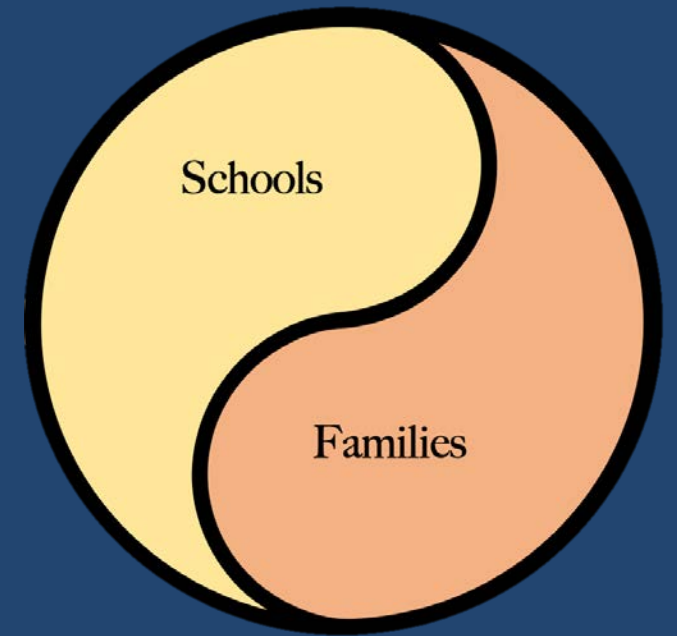


Bullying is:

- A form of youth violence
- Trauma
- Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)

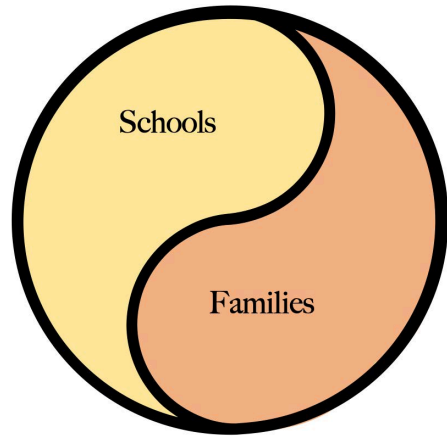


How can schools and families work together to support positive peer relationships?





Scaffolds and Guardrails



Model psychological wellbeing

Emotions are respected

Emotions are regulated to accomplish goals

Emotions are “right sized”

Use lots of strategies

Distress can be tolerated/supported

Normalize and repair conflicts

Model your own healthy, warm, relationships

Be a “Trusted Adult” to kids

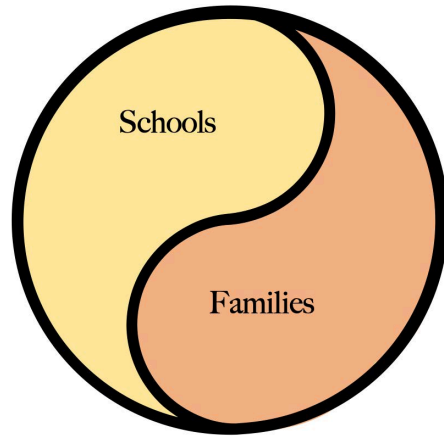
Learn to have conversations



More than half of middle school kids say there's no adult to turn to when they're worried.







Model psychological wellbeing

Emotions are respected

Emotions are regulated to accomplish goals

Emotions are “right sized”

Have lots of strategies

Distress can be tolerated/supported

Normalize and repair conflicts

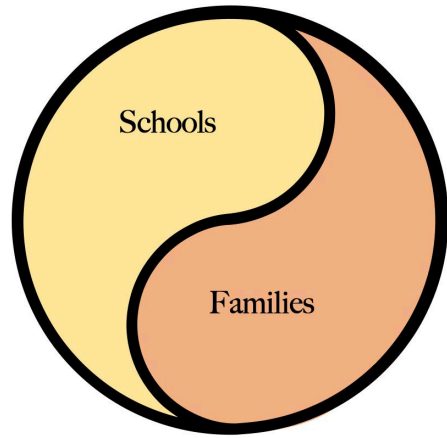
Model your own healthy, warm, relationships

Be a “Trusted Adult” to kids

Learn to have conversations

Prioritize youth wellbeing

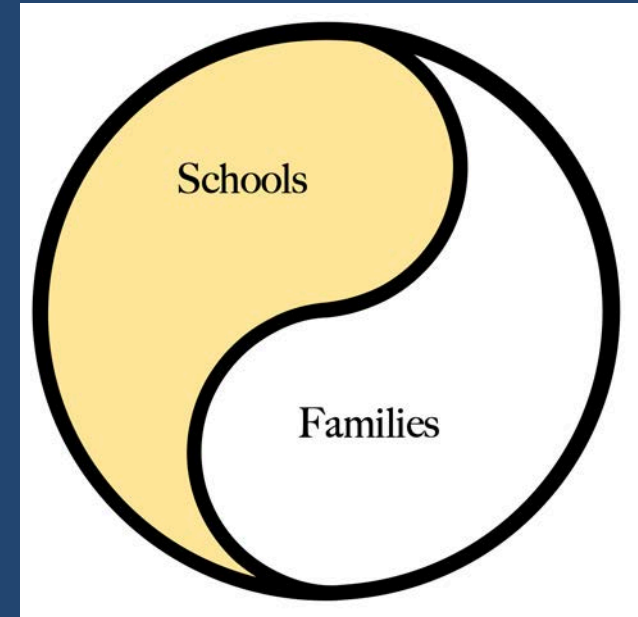


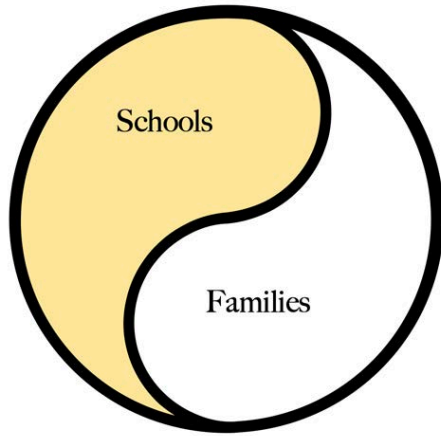


Clear definitions of out-of-bounds behavior – PLAN for dealing with
“Ornery” contracts for online behavior; social media; phone use



What can schools do?





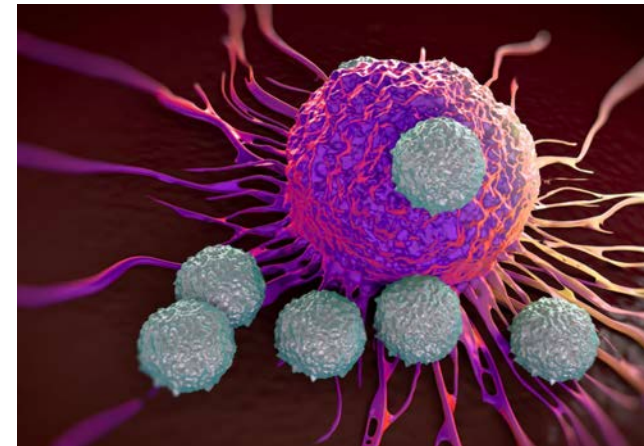
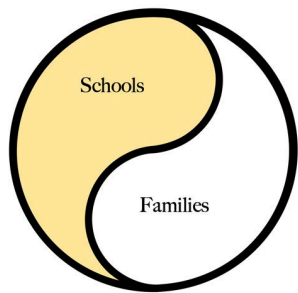
Foster a positive school climate



Create a positive school climate

Positive school
climate

- The “feel” of the place
- Consciously cultivated norms
- Quality of teaching, learning, relationships
- How developmentally wise
- People care for each other and act on that





HOME

ABOUT ▾

STUDENTS ▾

PARENTS ▾

WEST VANCOUVER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Code of Conduct

At WVSS, we endeavor to:

1. Treat other people with consideration.
2. Act in a positive, honest, and straightforward manner.
3. Respect others regardless of differences.
4. Promote the general welfare of our school.
5. Put a personal best effort into our work.
6. Respect public and personal property.
7. Attend all classes on time
8. Respect authority and adhere to classroom, school, and district rules.
9. Understand that it is the responsibility of the bystander to report and prevent incidents of harassment and bullying.

We Want To Feel.....

- Comfortable

By being treated the way we want to be treated and vice versa

- Included

By participating and by welcoming others

- Safe

By not judging others and taking care of others

- Confident

By being ourselves and not being judged for it

- Happy

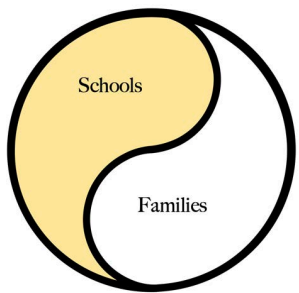
By receiving the respect we deserve and need

14

If we are not feeling any of the words listed we can



- All students' healthy development
- Lower rates of bullying, aggression, victimization, feeling unsafe





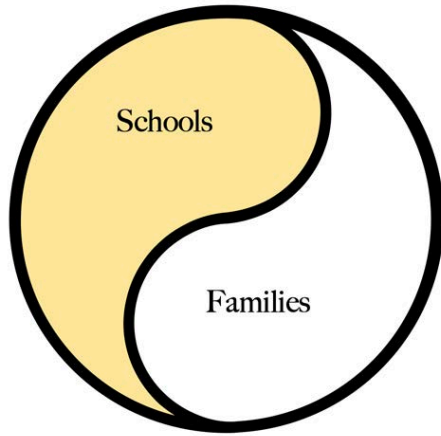
Yale *Center for Emotional Intelligence*



Developing a Positive School Climate
Top Ten Tips to Prevent Bullying and Cyberbullying

Sameer Hinduja, Ph.D. and Justin W. Patchin, Ph.D.





Foster a positive school climate

Embed SEL into curriculum



REGISTERED REPORT |  Full Access

The state of evidence for social and emotional learning: A contemporary meta-analysis of universal school-based SEL interventions

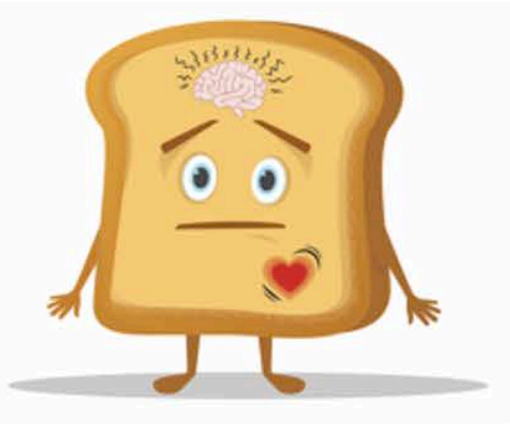
Christina Cipriano , Michael J. Strambler, Lauren H. Naples, Cheyeon Ha, Megan Kirk, Miranda Wood, Kaveri Sehgal, Almut K. Zieher, Abigail Eveleigh, Michael McCarthy, Melissa Funaro ... [See all authors](#) 

First published: 13 July 2023 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13968> | Citations: 2

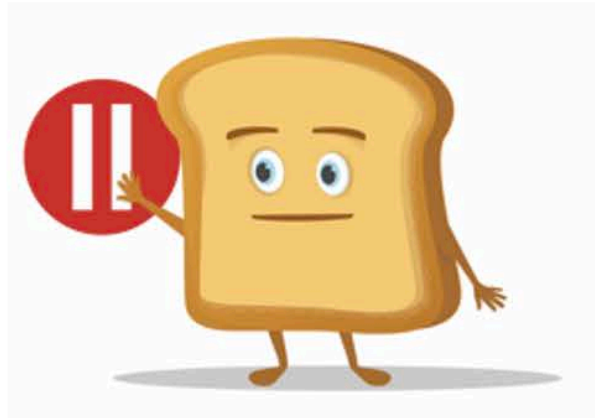
Significant gains in:

- academic achievement
- school climate and safety
- peer relationships
- skills, attitudes, behaviors
- school functioning

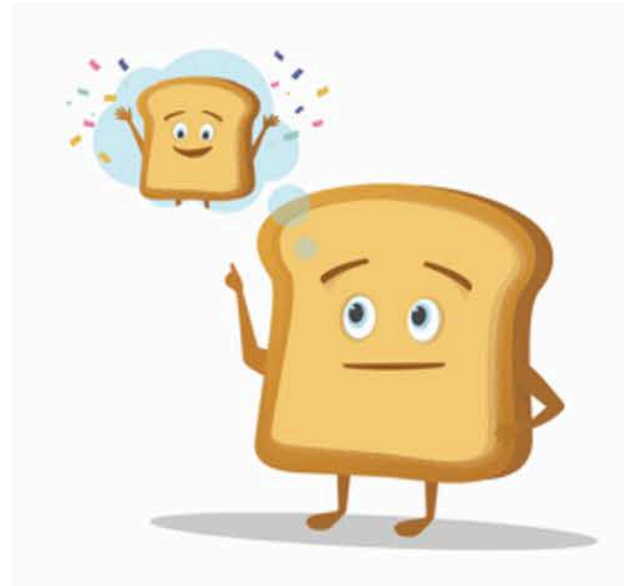
Meta-moment



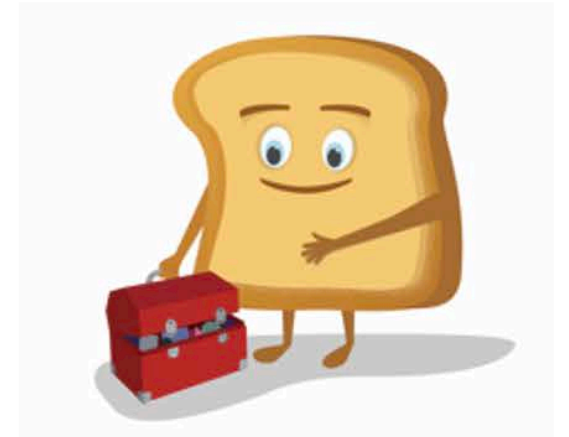
Sense



Pause



See Your *Best Self*



Strategize



International Journal of Bullying Prevention
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-019-00019-5>

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



Rethinking School-Based Bullying Prevention Through the Lens of Social and Emotional Learning: a Bioecological Perspective

Diana Divecha¹ · Marc Brackett¹

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

Abstract

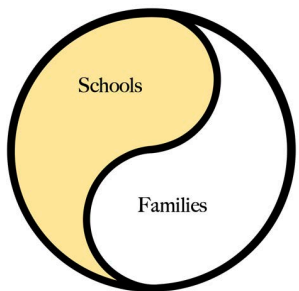
This article makes the case for shifting the national focus from bullying prevention to the systemic integration of evidence-based practices of social and emotional learning (SEL) into US school programs and policies. Several meta-analyses demonstrate that SEL is a promising approach for reducing a range of disruptive behaviors in schools. The data also show that SEL enhances school engagement and climate, interpersonal relationships, well-being, and academic achievement. We critically analyze existing approaches to bullying prevention in the USA and, from a bioecological perspective, describe their limitations, in addition to the importance of emotions in the organization of children's development. We discuss why schools should address the social and emotional development of children and adults in order to decrease harmful behaviors, form positive relationships, support psychological health, and offer more effective education. The bioecological perspective provides a framework for successfully integrating whole-school, evidence-based approaches to SEL, including statewide adoption of SEL standards and increased focus on school climate.

Keywords Bullying prevention · Social and emotional learning · SEL · Emotional intelligence · Education policy

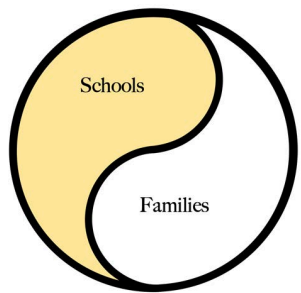
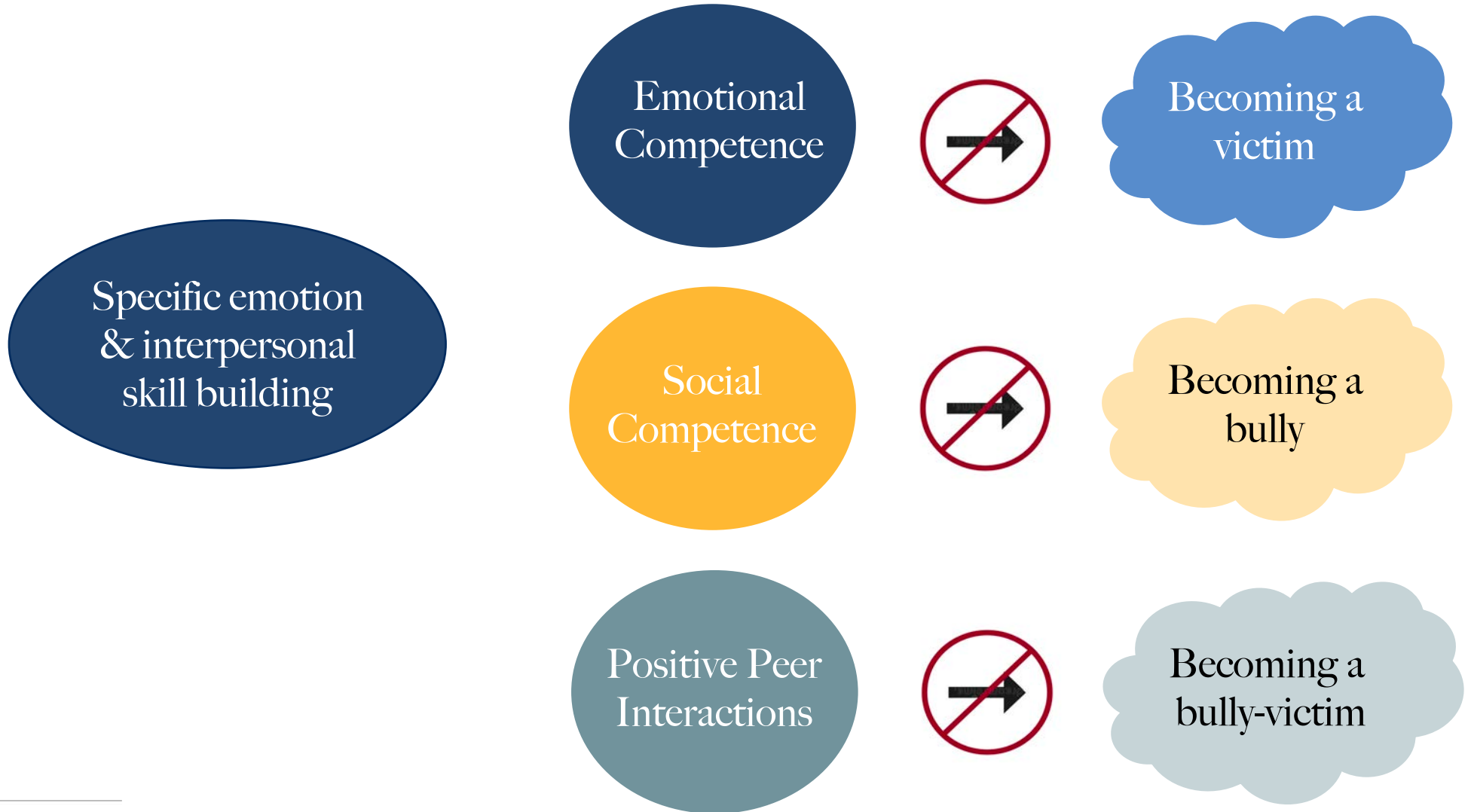
Positive school
climate

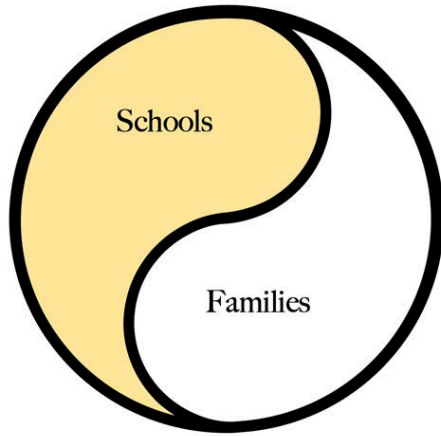
+

Specific emotion
& interpersonal
skill building



Emotional and social skills prevents bullying





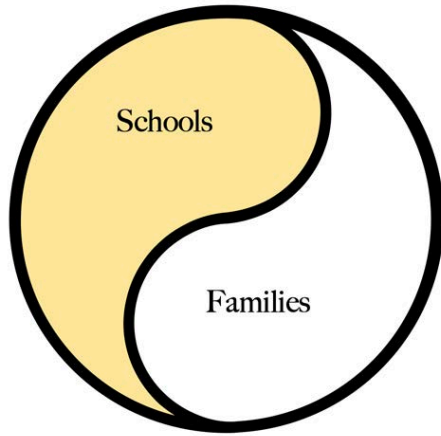
Foster a positive school climate

Embed SEL into curriculum

Reduce homework

Later school start times for high school

More proactive mental health professional consultants



What if bullying happens?

What's the plan?



PROVINCIAL STANDARDS FOR CODES OF CONDUCT ORDER

Authority: *School Act*, sections 85(1.1) 168 (2) (s.1)

Board establishes codes of conduct for the schools in their district and insure implementation. This should involve employees, parents, students.

Code of conduct includes statement about what is acceptable behavior, and unacceptable behavior, “including bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, threatening or violent behaviors while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment.”

Code of conduct includes “statements about the consequences,”...and “steps to prevent retaliation....”

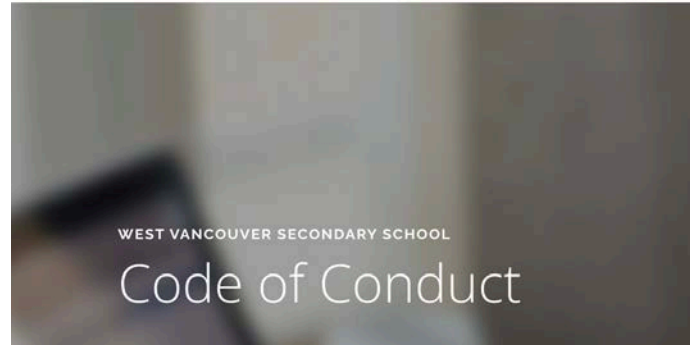
Right to “an education free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, intimidation and other forms of violence.”

You can find all of your rights/expectations at prevnet.ca





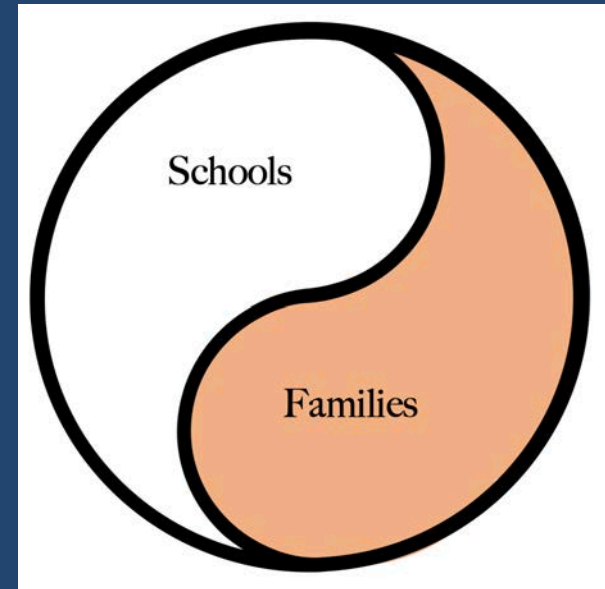
HOME ABOUT ▾ STUDENTS ▾ PARENTS ▾



3. Abusing others physically, verbally, or psychologically. This includes fighting, bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation, threatening or violent behaviours, extorting, or showing intolerance towards others because of their race, culture, dress, or other perceived differences while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school environment.



What can families do?



Families

- Warmth
- Structure
- Autonomy Support

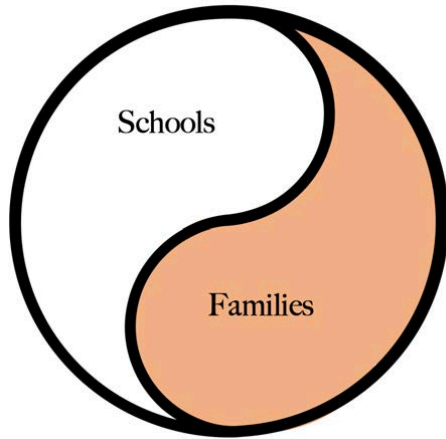
- Rejection
- Chaos
- Coercion
- Harshness
- Sibling bullying



Child Outcomes

- Less bullying/cyberbullying
- Better social skills
- More connections to friends' parents
- Well-adjusted
- Creative, intellectually curious, intrinsically motivated to achieve
- Self-reliant, self-confident, takes initiative
- Better emotion regulation

- More bullying, aggression
- More susceptible to being a target



Support friendships in different ways at different ages

Foster in-person time

Make your home a welcoming place for kids

Know your children's friends

Foster friendships in multiple venues



Network with other parents







Canada

Canadian children experience cyberbullying largely on par with global rates—yet their parents act on it less often than other parents, and Canadian children are the least likely to seek help when it happens to them.



Find your own calm self

Gently elicit the story, note the details

Problem solve

Ensure the child's safety

Something the child can handle?

Problem solve with immediate school
personnel

Go up the administrative ladder

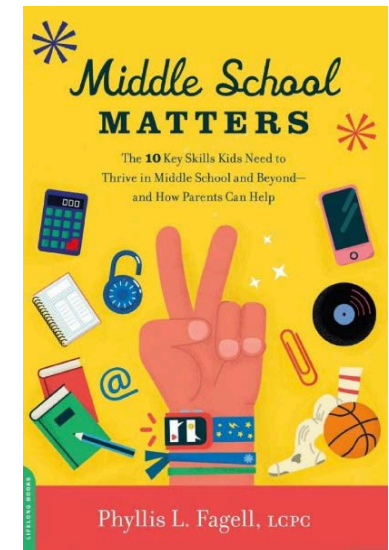
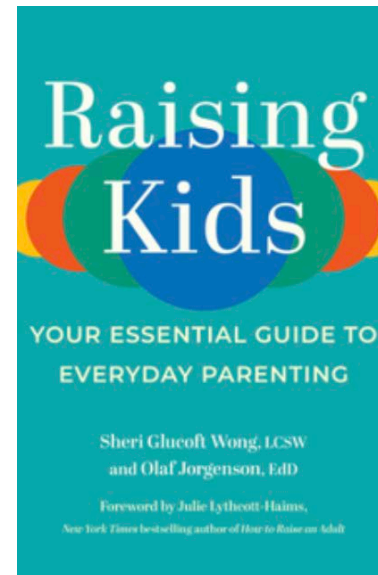
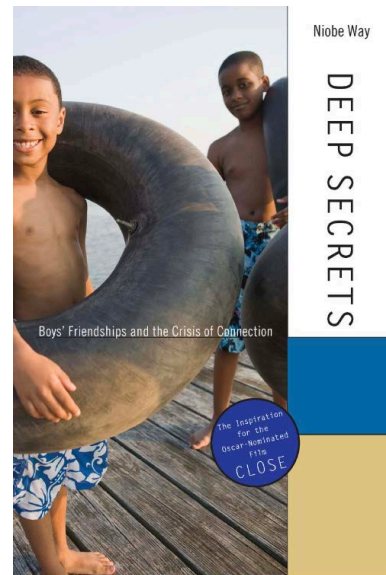
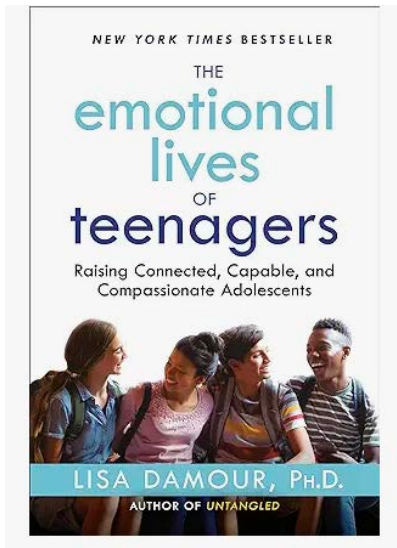
Know when to pull the plug



Additional resources



Cyberbullying.org





Thank you

dianadivecha@gmail.com



developmentalscience.com

DEVELOPMENTAL SCIENCE

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