Scope and Sequence
The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

What Is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?
The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) is the most researched and best-known bullying prevention program available today. With over thirty-five years of research and successful implementation all over the world, OBPP is a whole-school program that has been proven to prevent or reduce bullying throughout a school setting.

OBPP is used at the school, classroom, and individual levels and includes methods to reach out to parents and the community for involvement and support. School administrators, teachers, and other staff are primarily responsible for introducing and implementing the program. These efforts are designed to improve peer relations and make the school a safer and more positive place for students to learn and develop.

What Are the Goals of OBPP?
The goals of the program are
• to reduce existing bullying problems among students
• to prevent the development of new bullying problems
• to achieve better peer relations at school

For Whom Is OBPP Designed?
OBPP is designed for students in elementary, middle, and junior high schools (students ages five to fifteen years old). All students participate in most aspects of the program, while students identified as bullying others, or as targets of bullying, receive additional individualized interventions.

With some adaptation, the program can also be used in high schools, although research has not measured the program’s effectiveness beyond tenth grade. In addition, classroom support materials are not currently available for high school students. Chapter 17 of the program’s Schoolwide Guide talks about adapting the program for use in a high school setting.

Because OBPP is not a curriculum, its core principles, rules, and supportive materials could be adapted for use by any program that children and youth attend on a regular basis, such as after-school programs, camps, or community youth programs. The core principles and rules could be integrated into these existing programs’ policies and routines. Although research has not measured OBPP’s effectiveness in these settings, with appropriate staff training, these nonschool programs may help prevent bullying and
help students understand that bullying is not just a school issue, but one that spills over into all areas of their lives and into their communities as well.

**What Are the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Materials?**

**Schoolwide Guide (Order No. 0542)**

The approximately 130-page Schoolwide Guide, with accompanying DVD and CD-ROM, provides step-by-step instructions on how to implement the program in the entire school setting. The Schoolwide Guide is used mainly by your school’s Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee (BPCC), the group that is established to guide schoolwide implementation. Ideally, every person in leadership at a school and all members of the school’s BPCC should have their own copy of this guide.

**Teacher Guide (Order No. 0541)**

The approximately 150-page Teacher Guide, with accompanying DVD and CD-ROM, serves as the primary program implementation tool for teachers and other classroom support staff. It highlights the important role teachers play both in the classroom and in schoolwide efforts in preventing and addressing bullying. All the resources teachers need to implement the program, except for the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire, are provided in this guide or on the accompanying DVD and CD-ROM.

Ideally, every teacher should have a copy of this guide. If this is not possible, we recommend that each Teacher Guide be shared among no more than three teachers.

School leadership and each member of a school’s BPCC will also need to have a copy of the Teacher Guide, because it includes much more in-depth information about bullying and the various components of OBPP.

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The power of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program lies in staff and students using common language to address bullying situations.

A message is carried out to students saying bullying will not be tolerated here.

— A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR
Olweus Bullying Questionnaire

The Olweus Bullying Questionnaire is administered to all students in grades 3–12 before the program begins and at regular intervals (ideally each year) from then on. The questionnaire is available in both English and Spanish. School leadership and members of the BPCC oversee the implementation of this questionnaire. The questionnaire is available in two options:

Option 1: Scannable Questionnaire with Reports
(Order No. 292130—Package of thirty questionnaires with scanning services)
(Order No. 292330—Package of thirty Spanish questionnaires with scanning services)

A scannable questionnaire can be administered to students and then shipped to Hazelden Publishing for processing. The resulting data is presented in reports with graphs/tables and narrative text explaining the results. A comparison of the data to a national database and graphs that can be inserted into PowerPoint slides for use in school presentations are also included. The scannable questionnaires are sold in class sets of thirty. Current pricing is $1.00 per student. For an additional cost, schools can obtain a Trends Report that shows changes in a school’s data over two administrations of the questionnaire.

Option 2: Reproducible Questionnaire with Manual Entry (Order No. 7301)

Schools photocopy the questionnaire for use. Then they must hand-enter the results into the CD-ROM reporting software. This option is most often chosen by small schools, where hand-entry of data would not be difficult. An estimate of time taken to enter one child’s data is approximately 1.5 to 2 minutes. In this option, you will not receive narrative text, graphs for PowerPoint slides, or the comparison to a national database.

What Are the Components of the Program?

OBPP is not a classroom curriculum. It is a whole-school, systems-change program at four different levels. On the next page are the program components for each of these levels. Each component is discussed in detail in the two guides.

I think schools really find OBPP attractive because it’s schoolwide.
It involves all school staff, students, and even parents in bullying prevention.

— PREVENTION SPECIALIST
What Are the Effects of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?

OBPP has been more thoroughly evaluated than any other bullying prevention/reduction program so far. Six large-scale evaluations involving more than 40,000 students have documented results such as:

- **average reductions of 20 to 70 percent in student reports of being bullied and bullying others.** Peer and teacher ratings of bullying problems have yielded roughly similar results.
- **marked reductions in student reports of general antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy.**
- **clear improvements in the classroom social climate, as reflected in students’ reports of improved order and discipline, more positive social relationships, and more positive attitudes toward schoolwork and school.**

For students in grades 4–7, most of these positive results can be seen after only eight months of intervention work, given reasonably good implementation of the program. For students in grades 8–10, it may take somewhat more time, maybe two years, to achieve equally good results.
Using OBPP will also help you meet portions of many federal mandates or programs you are probably already administering, such as Safe and Drug Free Schools, school connectedness, high-stakes testing, juvenile delinquency prevention, school dropout prevention, school health programs, suicide prevention, and the promotion of developmental assets.

New research has also shown that there is a positive link between bullying and student achievement. Preventing bullying may help your school make positive improvements in statewide student achievement assessments/No Child Left Behind requirements as well.²

What Is the History behind the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?

Although bullying problems among students have been around for centuries, it wasn’t until the early 1970s that Dr. Dan Olweus initiated the first systematic research study in the world on these problems. The results were published in a Swedish book in 1973 and in the United States in 1978 under the title Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys. For a considerable period of time, up to the early 1990s, there was very little attention to and research on the topic of bullying outside of Scandinavia.

In 1983, after three adolescent boys in northern Norway committed suicide, most likely as a consequence of severe bullying by peers, the country’s Ministry of Education initiated a national campaign against bullying in schools. In that context, the first version of what has later become known as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program was developed.

The program was carefully evaluated in a large-scale project involving 40,000 students from forty-two schools followed over a period of two and a half years.³ The program has since been refined, expanded, and further evaluated with successful results in five additional large-scale projects in Norway. Since 2001, as part of the Norwegian government’s plans for the prevention and reduction of delinquency and violence among children and youth, OBPP has been implemented on a large-scale basis in elementary and lower secondary schools throughout Norway.

At our school, we have seen amazing results after the first year—increased attendance, increased student achievement, and decreased incidents that lead to suspensions.

— ELEMENTARY MATH AND SCIENCE COORDINATOR
Dr. Olweus has for a long time seen the phenomenon of bullying in the context of human rights. As early as 1981, he proposed enacting a law against bullying in schools. He argued that it is a fundamental human right for a student to feel safe in school and to be spared the repeated humiliation implied in bullying. In the mid-1990s, these arguments led to legislation against bullying by the Swedish and Norwegian parliaments. Similar legislation has been adopted in more than thirty states (at the date of this publication) in the United States and in several other countries.

During the 1990s, Dr. Olweus worked closely with American colleagues, notably Dr. Susan P. Limber, now at Clemson University in South Carolina, to implement and evaluate the program in the United States, also resulting in positive though somewhat weaker outcomes. Since then, hundreds of schools in most every state in the United States have used the program, and the number is growing. Additional studies of these efforts are being conducted. Summaries of and citations to current research may be found at www.clemson.edu/olweus.

Is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program a Nationally Recognized Program?

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program has received recognition from a number of organizations, including the following:

- Blueprints Model Program, Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, University of Colorado at Boulder (www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/model/programs/BPP.html)
- Model Program, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov)
- Effective Program, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice (www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org)
- Level 2 Program, U.S. Department of Education (www.helpingamericasyouth.gov)

Note: “Level 2” programs have been scientifically demonstrated to prevent delinquency or reduce the risks and enhance protection from delinquency and other child and youth problems using either an experimental or quasi-experimental research design, with a comparison group.
What Type of Support Is Available as You Implement the Program in Your School?

Since OBPP is a program that is implemented throughout the entire school setting, implementation takes a concerted effort on everyone’s part, but the rewards will be significant. It is important that schools that implement OBPP feel supported in their efforts. The following resources are available to help schools with implementation:

• **Certified Olweus Trainers**
  To aid in program implementation, schools are strongly encouraged to contract with an outside certified Olweus trainer or have a staff member certified as an Olweus trainer. This person will have a wealth of knowledge about the program and will be available for ongoing consultation via regular telephone and/or Internet contact (or in person, whenever possible). A certified Olweus trainer may also know of other schools in your region that have successfully implemented the program and could serve as a resource to you.

• **Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Web Site**
  http://www.clemson.edu/olweus
  This Web site provides background information about the program, implementation strategies, training information, current evaluation research, and other related resources.

• **Hazelden Publishing Web Site**
  http://www.hazelden.org/olweus
  This Web site provides background information about the program and specific information about purchasing program materials.

How Long Does It Take to Implement the Program?

You should plan to spend approximately four to six months in preparation before implementing OBPP in your school. This preparation is done in consultation with your certified Olweus trainer.

On the next page is an optimal timeline for schoolwide implementation of OBPP, assuming a program launch at the beginning of the fall semester. (Alternatively, but somewhat less optimally, the program could be launched just after winter break, with the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire administered the previous fall and staff trainings held in the winter.)
Although this timeline provides a general framework for program implementation, it is important for each school to implement the program at its own pace and with integrity. Your school’s certified Olweus trainer will help your Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee consider a timeline that best fits your school’s needs.

**What Do Students Learn in Classroom Meetings?**

The *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* is not a curriculum. However, regular classroom meetings are held with students, during which key concepts about bullying and related topics are discussed. Among the topics for discussion are

- What is bullying?
- What are the different forms bullying can take?
- What are the different roles students can take in a bullying situation?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Dates for Fall Launch</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Late winter/early spring</td>
<td>Select members of the BPCC and an on-site program coordinator.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March/April</td>
<td>Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April/May</td>
<td>Hold a two-day training with members of the BPCC; have the committee meet every two weeks to work out the details of program implementation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/June</td>
<td>Input data (if using the manual entry version) or obtain data (if using the scannable version) of the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire; review data from the questionnaire.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August/September</td>
<td>Conduct a one-day training with all school staff. Also hold your school kick-off event(s) with students and parents.</td>
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| Beginning of the fall semester, following the one-day staff training | Plan, schedule, and launch other elements of the schoolwide program:  
  - Introduce school/class rules against bullying.  
  - Begin class meetings.  
  - Increase supervision; review and coordinate your supervisory system.  
  - Initiate individual interventions with students.  
  - Start regular staff discussion groups (scheduled before the school year starts).  
  - Hold parent meetings. |
• What are possible consequences of bullying for the student who is bullied? How may bullying affect bystanders? Why is there reason to be concerned about students who bully?
• What are the four school rules about bullying?
• What should you do if bullying happens to you?
• Who should you talk to if you see or experience bullying?
• What should you do when you see bullying happen? How can you support someone who is being bullied?
• What are some positive ways to include students who are often excluded in activities?
• What are some ways you can resist peer pressure to participate in bullying others?

Meeting National Academic Standards with the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Educators may find it helpful to know that implementation of OBPP will help meet national health education standards for grades K–8 (see below).

Health Education Standards (Grades K–2)
• identifies and shares feelings in appropriate ways
• knows ways to seek assistance if worried, abused, or threatened (physically, emotionally, sexually)

Health Education Standards (Grades 3–5)
• knows characteristics needed to be a responsible friend and family member
• knows behaviors that communicate care, consideration, and respect of self and others
• understands how one responds to the behavior of others and how one’s behavior may evoke responses in others
• knows strategies for resisting negative peer pressure
• knows the difference between positive and negative behaviors used in conflict situations
• knows some nonviolent strategies to resolve conflicts
• knows behaviors that are safe, risky, or harmful to self and others
Health Education Standards (Grades 6–8)

- understands how peer relationships affect health
- knows appropriate ways to build and maintain positive relationships with peers, parents, and other adults
- understands the difference between safe and risky or harmful behaviors in relationships
- knows techniques for seeking help and support through appropriate resources
- knows potential signs of self- and other-directed violence
- knows the various possible causes of conflict among youth in schools and communities, and strategies to manage conflict

Implementation of OBPP also may help to meet other standards related to writing and communication skills, among others.
Notes


