School-Based Violence Prevention Programs To Reduce Bullying and Aggressive Behaviors

Review 3

Mytton, J. A., DiGuiseppi, C., Gough, D. A., Taylor, R. S., & Logan, S. (2002). School-based violence prevention programs: Systematic review of secondary prevention trials. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, 156*(8), 752–762. PubMed abstract available at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12144364.

Objectives	Assess and quantify, through meta-analysis, the effectiveness of school-based violence prevention programs for children identified as at risk for aggressive behavior.
Studies Included	Forty-four U.S. and international studies published from 1977 to 1998
Participants in the Studies	Students in grades kindergarten through 12 (or their international equivalent) at risk for aggressive behavior
Outcomes	Violent injuries, observed or reported aggressive or violent behaviors, and school or agency responses to aggressive behaviors
Limitations of the Studies	The studies varied substantially in quality, execution, and reporting. Most provided limited methodological information, and sample sizes were often small.

Results

The studies included in this review focused on reducing some or all of the following outcomes: violent injuries, aggressive behavior (including fights and bullying), and school/agency responses to aggressive/violent behavior. School-based violence prevention programs for high-risk children modestly reduced both aggressive behaviors and school or agency actions. Of the 44 studies identified, none reported data on violent injuries. A reduction in school or agency responses to aggressive behavior with intervention was found in studies that provided data. For the 28 studies that evaluated aggressive behaviors, there was a significant reduction in aggression with the intervention. Effects on aggressive behavior were similar regardless of whether the programs focused on training in skills of nonresponse or on training in social skills or social context changes. Subgroup analyses indicated greater program effectiveness when used with older students and when administered to mixed-gender groups rather than boys alone.