



Voices of Child Health in Chicago REPORT

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REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Forty-six percent of Chicago parents were concerned that their child was a victim of bullying and 12% were concerned that their child bullied others.

Parents were most likely to seek help from teachers (53%) for help related to bullying.

Only 55% of parents said that their child's school engaged in activities to build social skills.

Bullying Prevention and Social Emotional Learning in Childhood and Adolescence

Childhood bullying — or peer victimization — is unwanted, repeated behavior directed at a child or group of children causing physical, mental, psychological, emotional and/or spiritual harm. Peer victimization can result in many short- and long-term consequences that affect health, learning and development. To understand and effectively respond to bullying, contextual factors such as peer group dynamics, modern technology and changing societal norms must be considered.¹

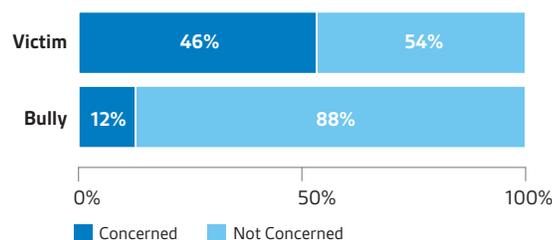
Social and emotional learning is an integral part of education and child development, and is one mechanism that schools use to prevent bullying. Through mindfulness techniques, social and emotional learning programs teach children competencies in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.² When schools incorporate social and emotional learning into their curriculum, it has been shown to decrease bullying.³

In this month's *Voices of Child Health in Chicago Parent Panel Survey Report*, we asked Chicago parents from all 77 community areas whether they were concerned their children were bullied or bullied others, along with other questions about bullying such as whether they talk to their children about bullying and whether their child's school engages in bullying prevention strategies.

Chicago Parents' Concern about Bullying

In our sample, almost half (46%) of Chicago parents were concerned that their child was a victim of bullying. About one in eight parents (12%) were concerned that their child bullied others (Figure 1). This aligns with our previously released reports where bullying was a top concern for Chicago parents.⁴ Additionally, in a 2018 survey of Chicago public school students, 47% of Chicago 8th graders, 23% of Chicago 10th graders and 14% of Chicago 12th graders reported having ever been bullied at school during the past 12 months.^{5,6}

Figure 1. The proportion of parents concerned vs. not concerned that their child was a victim or bully



 **87%** of parents talked to their children about bullying and/or cyberbullying

 **72%** of parents agreed parents should monitor their child's use of social media

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The vast majority of parents in our sample (87%) reported they have talked with their children about bullying and/or cyberbullying (Figure 1). Having an open dialogue with kids about bullying can help youth understand what bullying is, why it is harmful and how to respond.⁷ Additionally, when parents communicate with their children, meet their friends and are academically encouraging, bullying is less likely.⁸

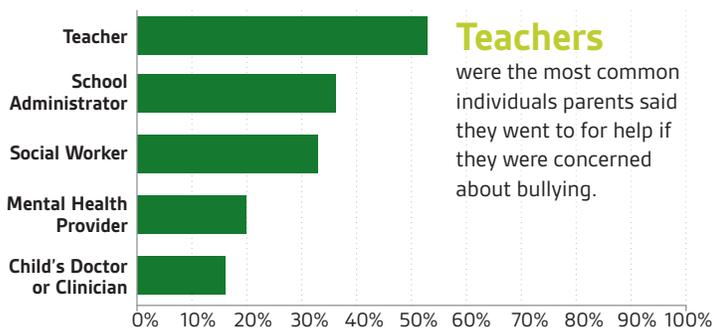
Nearly three quarters (72%) of parent respondents agreed that parents should monitor their child's use of social media platforms frequently (Figure 1). In a national survey of U.S. parents,

60% said they had personally monitored their teens' social media profile.⁹ Parents can play an effective role in preventing cyberbullying by monitoring behaviors, while still allowing their children to independently and age-appropriately use social media.

School Engagement in Bullying Prevention

In addition to parents, teachers play a valuable role in preventing, identifying and responding to bullying behavior within the classroom. Teachers were the most common individuals parents said they went to for help if they were concerned about bullying for their child. Among parents who were concerned about bullying for their child, 53% sought help from a teacher, 36% from a school administrator, 33% from a school social worker, 20% from a mental health provider, and 16% from their child's doctor or clinician (Figure 2). Overall, among parents who were concerned their child was bullied or bullied others, 81% of parents sought help in some way.

Figure 2. Most common sources of help with bullying concerns for Chicago parents who were concerned about bullying for their child



When parents were asked which bullying prevention activities they would like their child's school to engage in, about one-half of parents wish their child's school would teach parents about the warning signs of bullying (52%) and provide teachers with training about bullying prevention (51%). Our findings suggest that parents are eager to learn and be part of prevention efforts when it comes to their children's health, safety and well-being with communication, coordination and support from their child's school.

Social and Emotional Learning

Schoolwide social and emotional learning programs help to prevent bullying by promoting and enhancing students' connection to school, positive behavior and attitudes, and academic achievement.^{10,11} In our survey, only 55% of parents said that their child's school engaged in activities to build social skills that can help prevent bullying, whereas 11% said their child's school did not engage in social skills, and 34% said they were not sure.

Effective school-family partnerships promote two-way communication between parents and teachers to better incorporate classroom curriculum, instruction and practices into school, family and community activities.^{12,13} By consistently teaching and modeling social and emotional learning, parents and teachers can help foster the social and emotional competencies that help to prevent bullying among children and adolescents, as well as combat its negative effects.⁴

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HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

This report is based on data from the Voices of Child Health in Chicago Parent Panel Survey (Voices Panel). The survey is administered to a quasi-random sample of Chicago parents by Lurie Children's and NORC at the University of Chicago via internet and telephone surveys. The survey is administered to the same panel of parents three times each year. The data in this report was collected from May through July 2020. The sample consisted of 1,642 Chicago parents, step-parents or guardians who had at least one child under 18 years of age in the household (referred to as "parents" in this report). Some of these analyses are based on a subsample of 1,275 parents who had at least one child 6 years of age or older. Parents were from all 77 community areas in Chicago. In Wave 1 of the survey, 39% of the sample was Latinx, 21% was non-Latinx Black, 30% was non-Latinx White, and 9% was non-Latinx multi-racial or other race. The cumulative survey response rate was 2.24%. All analyses were conducted with statistical weighting so that the results are representative of the parent population in the City of Chicago during the time period of data collection. Survey questions are selected with the help of our Voices Panel Governance Committee. For more information about the VOCHIC Parent Panel Survey, visit luriechildrens.org/ParentPanel and our page on Open Science Framework at <https://osf.io/cjz82/>.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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Smith Child Health Outcomes,
Research and Evaluation Center

Matthew M. Davis, MD, MAPP, *Director*
Marie E. Heffernan, PhD, *Associate Director*
Tracie L. Smith, MPH, *Senior Epidemiologist*
Anne Bendelow, MPH, *Data Analyst*

Punreet K. Bhatti, MD, *Project Manager*
Mia Casale, MPH, *Data Analyst*
Colleen Cicchetti, PhD, *Expert Contributor*

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information on Voices of Child Health in Chicago, contact:

Mary Ann & J. Milburn Smith Child Health Outcomes, Research and Evaluation Center
Stanley Manne Children's Research Institute

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
225 East Chicago Avenue, Box 157, Chicago, IL 60611-2991

voicesofchildhealth@luriechildrens.org

luriechildrens.org/voices

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