Bullying, cyberbullying, and mental health in young people

# Details

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## Topics

## Sample

Pupils from grades 7–9 (n=1214; 52.7% girls) from 9 public schools and 1 of 4 private schools in a main city in northern Sweden.

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* Stepping up awareness and empowerment
* Other
* Creating a safe environment for children online
* High-quality content online for children and young people

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Current laws regarding harassment and abuse need to be expanded to also include digital arenas

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

Objective: To investigate the factors associated with exposure to in-real-life (IRL) bullying, cyberbullying, and both IRL and cyberbullying and to explore the relationship between these types of bullying and mental health among 13–16-year-old Swedish boys and girls.
Methods: Data was derived from a cross-sectional web-based study of 13–16-year-old students in northern Sweden ( n=1214, response rate 81.9%).
Results: The combination of IRL- and cyberbullying was the most common type of bullying. A non-supportive school environment and poor body image were related to exposure to bullying for both genders but the relationship was more distinct in girls. All types of bullying were associated with depressive symptoms in both boys and girls and all forms of bullying increased the likelihood of psychosomatic problems in girls.
Conclusions: Cyberbullying can be seen as an extension of IRL bullying. A combination of IRL- and cyberbullying seems to be particularly negative for mental health. Interventions should focus on improved school environment and body image as well as anti-violence programmes. Gender aspects of bullying need to be acknowledged.

# Outcome

"Main findings are that school-environment factors were strongly associated with exposure to bullying and IRL bullying as well as online exposure. All types of bullying increases the likelihood of depressive symptoms in both boys and girls and all types of bullying were also associated with psychosomatic problems in girls. The combination of IRL and cyberbullying seems to be particularly negative for poor mental health." (Authors, 396-397) (IRL = "in real life")