Analytic Framework for School-based Antibullying Interventions -- Narrative Description

The analytic framework depicts postulated pathways through which school-based anti-bullying interventions might reduce bullying experiences and improve mental health among students. Interventions can focus on traditional (face-to-face) bullying, cyberbullying, or both. School anti-bullying interventions can be delivered to students (which may include engagement with parents and caregivers) or to teachers, counselors, school administrators and staff. Interventions directed at students can improve interpersonal and emotional skills (e.g., emotional regulation, problem solving skills, relationship skills), increase student attitudes discouraging bullying, and improve the school environment. Interventions directed to school staff may enhance adoption and enforcement of evidence-based anti-bullying policies and practices. Adoption and enforcement of evidence-based antibullying policies and practices can improve the school environment.

The adoption and enforcement of evidence-based anti-bullying policies and practices can lead directly to reduced bullying perpetration or indirectly through increased positive bystander action by students and school staff.

The combination of improved student interpersonal and emotional skills (e.g., emotional regulation, problem solving skills, relationship skills), increased student attitudes discouraging bullying, and improved school environment (e.g., non-violence social norms) can result in increased positive bystander action by students and staff, reduced bullying perpetration, reduced bullying victimization, improved mental health outcomes (e.g., anxiety, depression), and improved educational outcomes.

Increased positive bystander action (by students and school staff) can lead to reduced bullying perpetration and reduced bullying victimization.

Reduced bullying perpetration can reduce bullying victimization and reduced witnessing of bullying.

Reduced witnessing of bullying can result in reduced bullying victimization and improved mental health outcomes (e.g., anxiety, depression).

Improved mental health outcomes (e.g., anxiety, depression) can lead to improved educational outcomes.

The combination of reduced bullying perpetration, reduced bullying victimization, improved mental health outcomes (e.g., anxiety, depression), and improved educational outcomes can result in reduced morbidity and mortality and improved educational attainment.

Potential additional benefits of the intervention include reductions in other forms of violence and reductions in other risk behaviors. Potential harms of the intervention include the potential for inequities in the application of enforcement-related school policies and practices.

Potential effect modifiers include school level (elementary, middle, and high school), student age or grade, school characteristics, student characteristics, the intervention focus, duration, and intensity.