

Summary of Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation *

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) recommends school-based anti-bullying interventions to reduce bullying experiences and improve mental health among students.

The CPSTF recommendation aligns with and supports strategies and approaches described in [CDC's Technical Package](#) for the prevention of youth violence and associated risk behaviors. Technical packages are designed to help states and communities use the best available evidence to prevent violence.



Major Findings *

The CPSTF recommendation is based on evidence from 69 studies included in a systematic review and meta-analysis published in 2021.¹ Evidence shows interventions lead to the following small, but meaningful student outcomes:

- Reductions in bullying perpetration (35 studies) and victimization (32 studies)
- Improvements in anxiety, depression, and well-being (20 studies)
- Reductions in cyberbullying perpetration and victimization (5 studies)

What are School-based Anti-bullying Interventions? *

School-based anti-bullying interventions intend to prevent bullying experiences among students inside and outside of school. Interventions provide one or both of the following:

- Group education sessions for students that aim to enhance interpersonal and emotional skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, empathy, emotional awareness, and regulation)
- Training and consultation for school staff to support the delivery of student sessions and implementation of anti-bullying policies and practices

Interventions may focus on traditional face-to-face bullying, cyberbullying, or both.

Why is This Important? *

- In 2019, about one in five high school students reported being bullied on school property, and more than one in six reported being bullied electronically within the previous year.²
- Students who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or female or not sure of their sexual identity, experienced bullying at school or electronically within the previous year more than others.²
- Exposure to bullying is related to adverse effects on academic achievement, employment status, social relationships, physical health, and short- and long-term mental health for victims, bullies, youth who witness bullying and bully-victims.³⁻⁶

Learn More

***Read a complete summary of the systematic review and CPSTF finding.**

www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/violence-prevention-school-based-anti-bullying-interventions

CDC, Division of Violence Prevention

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/dvp.htm

StopBullying.gov

stopbullying.gov

References

- ¹Fraguas D, Diaz-Caneja CM, Ayora M, Duran-Cutilla M, Abregu-Crespo R, et al. Assessment of school anti-bullying interventions: a meta-analysis of randomized clinical trials. *JAMA Pediatrics* 2021;175(1):44-55.
- ²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2019. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report--Surveillance Summaries* 2020;69(SS1).
- ³David-Ferdon C, Vivolo-Kantor AM, Dahlberg LL, Marshall KJ, Rainford N, et al. A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2016.
- ⁴Wolke D, Lereya ST Long-term effects of bullying. *Archives of Disease in Childhood* 2015;100:879-85.
- ⁵Singham T, Viding E, Schoeler T, et al. Concurrent and longitudinal contribution of exposure to bullying in childhood to mental health: the role of vulnerability and resilience. *JAMA Psychiatry* 2017;74(11):1112-9.
- ⁶Doumas DM, Midgett A. Witnessing cyberbullying and internalizing symptoms among middle school students. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education* 2020;10(4):957-66.

Established in 1996 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) is an independent, nonfederal panel of public health and prevention experts whose members are appointed by the director of CDC. CPSTF provides information for a wide range of decision makers on programs, services, and other interventions aimed at improving population health. Although CDC provides administrative, scientific, and technical support for CPSTF, the recommendations developed are those of CPSTF and do not undergo review or approval by CDC. Find more information at www.thecommunityguide.org.