

While Bullying is Bad, Being Victimized May Also Result in Long-term Problems

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Earlier this month an article we early released demonstrated a decline in bullying trends over the past decade,([Waasdorp et al. 10.1542/peds.2016-2615](#)) which is a cause to celebrate even if the problem is far from disappearing even with the reported decline. But why is bullying so concerning? Part of the answer deals with the victimization of those bullied, and that may even include bullies themselves who act as they do because they have also been victimized. What are the longer-term problems of being victimized as a child or teenager? [Earnshaw et al. \(10.1542/peds.2016-3426\)](#) have examined this question through a longitudinal study of over 4000 youth in Birmingham Alabama, Houston Texas, and Los Angeles County, California. The authors studied this cohort to see if those who reported being peer-victimized in early adolescence (5th to 7th grade) were more likely to demonstrate depression or use substances like alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco when they reach their mid to late adolescence. Sadly the more a person was victimized, the greater the depressive symptoms in 7th grade and in turn the use of high risk substances in 10th grade. If ever you needed a reason to get on the anti-bullying anti-victimization bandwagon, this study is it.

What kinds of things are you or your community doing to prevent bullying and reduce victimization? We would love you to share what's working in your community by responding to this blog, adding a comment on our website, or sharing your thoughts on our Facebook or Twitter sites.

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