



PEERS LAB, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## PEERS LAB BEYOND THE HURT PROJECT

SPRING 2016

### The Beyond the Hurt Project

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In collaboration with the Canadian Red Cross' Respect Education program, the PEERS Lab conducted a 2-year pilot evaluation of the **Beyond the Hurt (BTH) Bullying Prevention Program**.

#### The BTH Program

BTH is a school-wide program that promotes healthy relationships. BTH aims to reduce peer bullying and victimization, and improve the school climate and knowledge and awareness of bullying. It is designed to complement schools' ongoing healthy relationship initiatives and strategies to respond to and prevent peer bullying. The BTH Program focuses on grade 7 to grade 11 youth in junior high and high schools across Canada.

The BTH Program aims to reduce:

- **Peer aggression** (e.g., pushing or hitting other youth).
- **Peer victimization** (e.g., being excluded from a group or activities by other youth).

Peer aggression and victimization can negatively affect youths' social, emotional, and academic development.

The BTH Program also promotes youths' help seeking behaviours and bystander intervention:

- **Youth's help seeking behaviours** (e.g., asking friends, family, or school staff for help when needed).
- **Bystander intervention** (e.g., helping youth who are being bullied).

#### How Does BTH Work?

- Provides professional development (PD) training for school staff.
- Trains older youth as youth facilitators to engage in cross-age mentoring.
- Supports all youth to be engaged in promoting healthy relationships in their school.



#### Bystander Intervention

Bystanders can make a difference! Most Canadian youth (~80%) witness some form of peer bullying. These youth do not always have the skills or resources needed to help those being bullied (PREVnet).



#### Cyberbullying

In Canada, 87% of youth have a cell phone by Grade 10. One in 3 Canadian youth have reported being the victim of cyberbullying (PREVNet).

### PD Workshops for School Staff

School staff are trained to recognize different forms of bullying and strategies they can use in their classrooms and school to prevent bullying and promote healthy relationships.

### Training for Youth Facilitators

The BTH program trains older youth as youth facilitators to plan and facilitate workshops about bullying and its consequences. These workshops are presented to younger youth at their school or at feeder schools.



## OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOPS

### Youth Facilitators:

- To increase awareness and knowledge of different types and consequences of peer bullying.
- To promote leadership, competence, and presentation skills.
- To create and deliver school-wide social action projects that target the reduction of bullying.

### Youth Workshop Recipients:

- To increase knowledge and awareness of types and consequences of bullying.
- To empower youth to be effective as bystanders who can speak out to prevent peer bullying.
- To promote healthy peer relationships.
- To improve school connectedness among youth and school staff.

### Social Action Projects:

- The youth facilitators and other youth work in collaboration with school staff to create and implement school-side social action projects.
- Social action projects include bullying prevention posters and National Bullying Week and Pink Shirt Day activities.

## The BTH Research Project

### Overview of the BTH Project

The BTH Project was a 2-year pilot evaluation of the Canadian Red Cross' BTH program. This project was conducted in collaboration with 7 junior high and 3 high schools.

Data were collected in the Fall and Spring of two school years (2014-2015 and 2015-2016). Participating youth and school staff completed surveys on peer bullying and victimization, school climate, and strategies and initiatives used in their school to prevent bullying.

### Implementation of the BTH Program in the Schools

During the 2014-2015 year, 3 junior high and 2 high schools received the youth facilitator training and staff PD workshops. In 2015-2016, the other 4 junior high schools and 1 high school received the training and workshops.

### Project Participants

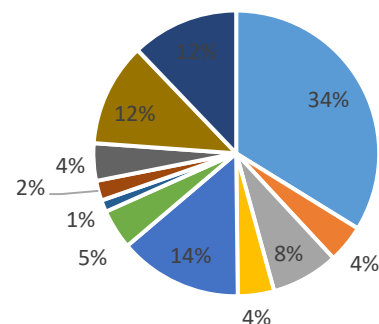
There were **1766 youth** (56% girls) from 7 junior high schools (27% in grade 7; 25% in grade 8; 29% in Grade 9) and 3 high schools (19% in grade 10) who participated in this project. A few grade 11 and 12 youth were also involved in this project as youth facilitators. About half of the youth were girls (56%).

There were also **300 teachers** (59% females) who participated.

Youth were from **ethnically diverse backgrounds**. About 46% of youth self-identified as an ethnic minority and 13% said they spoke a language other English at home "More than half the time" to "All the time".

### Ethnicity of Youth

- Caucasian/Canadian
- Arab/West Asian
- South Asian
- South East Asian
- East Asian
- Black African
- Latin
- Aboriginal
- Eastern European
- Western European
- Multiple Ethnicity



About 8% of youth self-identified as a **sexual minority** youth (e.g., bisexual or asexual).

**Selected Year 1 Findings:  
Peer Victimization & Aggression**

**Peer Victimization**

We asked youth about their experiences of different forms of peer victimization:

- **relational** (e.g., other youth excluded them from activities or told lies about them),
- **physical** (e.g., hit or pushed by other youth), and
- **cyber** (e.g., had unwanted pictures of themselves posted online).

Youth rated how often in the past month they were victimized: “never” (0), “once or twice” (1), “once a week” (2), “once a day” (3), or “several times a day” (4).

On average, youth reported low levels of peer victimization in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015.

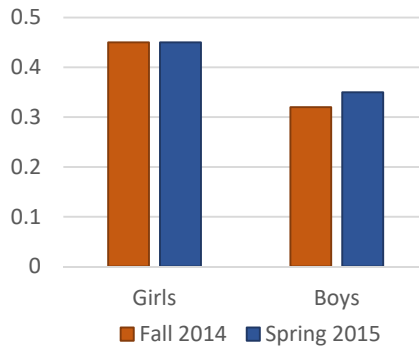
**Gender Differences**

On average, girls reported more relational and cyber victimization but less physical victimization in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 than boys.

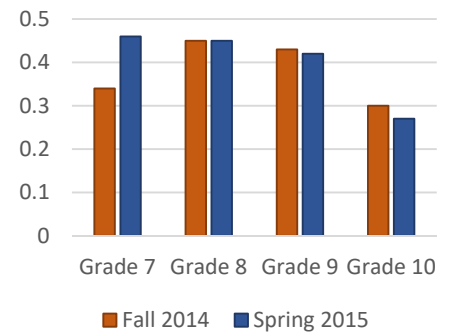
**Grade Differences**

On average, youth in junior high reported more relational and physical victimization than youth in high school.

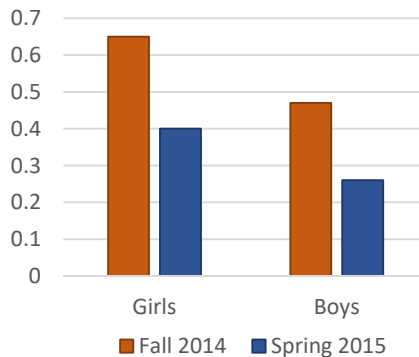
Relational Victimization



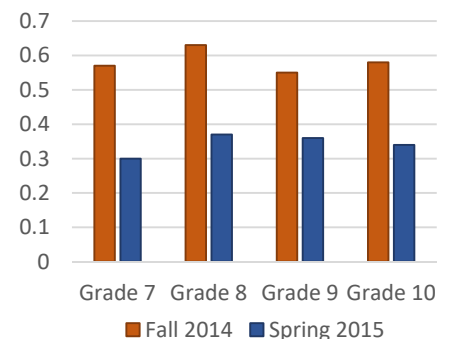
Relational Victimization



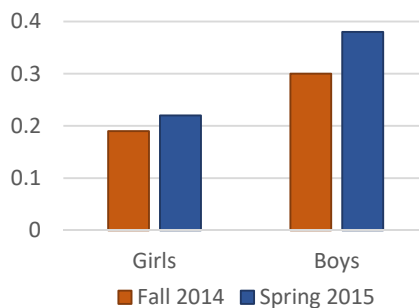
Cyber Victimization



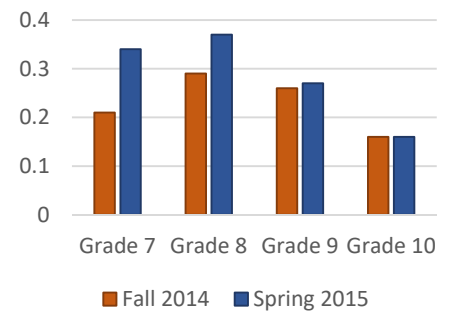
Cyber Victimization



Physical Victimization



Physical Victimization



**Spotlight On: Cyber Victimization**

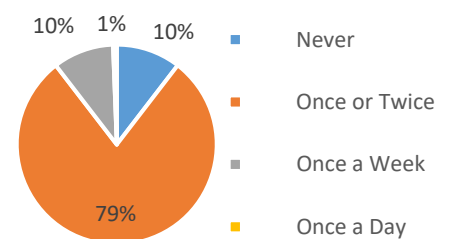


Unlike traditional forms of bullying, cyber bullying can continue via text messages, email, and social media even when youth are not at school.

We found that 90% of youth reported having a cell phone and 79% of youth reported accessing social media sites.

In Fall 2014, 90% of youth said they had experienced cyber victimization.

Cyber Victimization



## Peer Aggression

We also asked youth how often in the past month they had aggressed against other youth using relational, physical, or cyber means.

On average, youth reported low levels of peer aggression in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015.

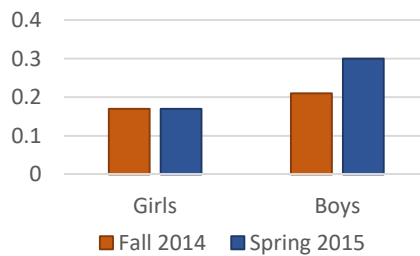
## Gender Differences

On average, boys reported engaging in more relational and physical aggression than girls.

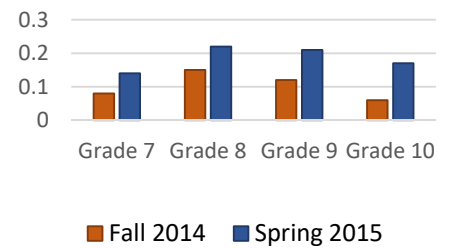
## Grade Differences

On average, youth in grade 7 reported using less relational and physical aggression than youth in grades 8, 9 and 10.

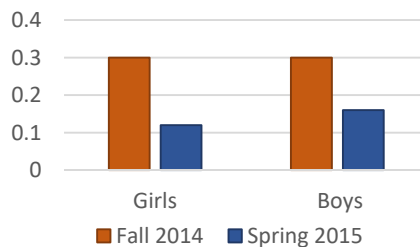
Relational Aggression



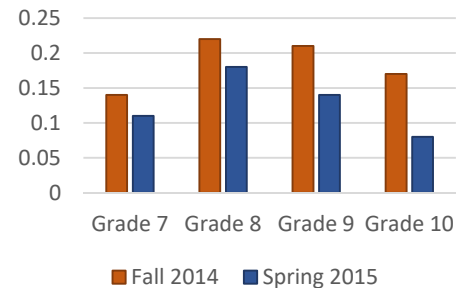
Relational Aggression



Cyber Aggression



Physical Aggression



## Peer Victimization and Aggression, and Mental Health

One goal of the project was to examine how peer victimization and aggression were related to youth mental health. We asked youth how often in the past month they experienced symptoms of **anxiety**, such as unwelcome thoughts or worries, and **depression**, such as feelings of prolonged sadness.

On average, youth reported low levels of anxiety and depression. However, youth who experienced more symptoms of anxiety and depression in Fall 2014 experienced more peer relational, cyber, and physical victimization in Spring 2015 (Halabi & Hoglund, 2016).

Similarly, youth who perpetrated more cyber aggression and girls (but not boys) who perpetrated more relational and physical aggression in Fall 2014 experienced more symptoms of anxiety and depression in Spring 2015 (Langford, Hosan, & Hoglund, 2016).

## How Information From This Project Will Be Used

The information gathered from this project will help the Canadian Red Cross improve the BTH Program.

Data from this project is also being used to support student research activities. These activities include Undergraduate Honours Theses and student conference presentations, such as at the Society for Research on Adolescence in March, 2016.

## Thank You!

We extend our deepest gratitude to the youth, parents, teachers, principals and other school staff who graciously participated in this research project.

We also thank all the undergraduate students and staff at the Red Cross who committed their time to this project.

Stay tuned in Fall 2016 for a summary of our findings over the 2-years of this study.

Have a wonderful summer!

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Bully Free Alberta

[humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/14842.html](http://humanservices.alberta.ca/abuse-bullying/14842.html)

### Canadian Red Cross

[redcross.ca/respected](http://redcross.ca/respected)

### Kids Help Phone

[kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/Home.aspx](http://kidshelpphone.ca/Teens/Home.aspx)

### PREVNet: Canada's Authority on Research and Resources for Bullying Prevention

[prevnet.ca/](http://prevnet.ca/)

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