### KiVa antibullying program: Nationwide scale-up and international implementation

Professor Christina Salmivalli
INVEST Research flagship / Psychology ,University of Turku, Finland

INSPIRE webinar, April 20, 2021







### KiVa antibullying program

www.kivaprogram.net

The development started in 2006

Evidence-based program to

- prevent bullying,
- address bullying cases, and
- monitor the situation

Widely implemented in Finland & beyond

### Randomized controlled trial of KiVa (2007-08, 2008-09)

#### CHILD DEVELOPMENT



Child Development, January/February 2011, Volume 82, Number 1, Pages 311-330

A Large-Scale Evaluation of the KiVa Antibullying Program: Grades 4-6

Antti Kärnä University of Turku

Marinus Voeten Radboud University Nijmegen

Todd D. Little University of Kansas Elisa Poskiparta, Anne Kaljonen, and Christina Salmivalli University of Turku

This study demonstrates the effectiveness of the KiVa antibullying program using a large sample of 8,237 youth from Grades 4-6 (10-12 years). Altogether, 78 schools were randomly assigned to intervention (39 schools, 4,207 students) and control conditions (39 schools, 4,003 students). Multilevel regression analyses revealed that after 9 months of implementation, the intervention had consistent beneficial effects on 7 of the 11 dependent variables, including self- and peer-reported victimization and self-reported bullying. The results indicate that the KiVa program is effective in reducing school bullying and victimization in Grades 4-6. Despite some evidence against school-based interventions, the results suggest that well-conceived school-based programs can reduce victimization.

Bullying is a common problem in schools, affecting the lives of a large number of students. It is commonly characterized as systematic abuse of power (Smith & Sharp, 1994). More specifically, bullying is defined as repeated aggressive behavior against a victim who cannot readily defend himself or herself (Olweus, 1999). Victims of bullying often experience insecurity and various forms of psychosocial maladjustment, such as depression and anxiety; they sometimes even exhibit self-destructiveness (for meta-analyses, see Card, 2003; Hawker & Boulton, 2003). For a number of victims, their experiences continue to affect their lives later on in the forms of depression, low self-esteem, and difficulty in trusting other people (Isaacs, Hodges, & Salmivalli, 2008; Olweus, 1994). Not only are victims at risk: Compared to other children, bullies often become

Nansel et al., 2004; Olweus, 1993a, 1993b). The need to intervene effectively in bullying is thus clear and urgent. Accordingly, numerous antibullying programs have been initiated by researchers, practitioners, and governments. The present study is the first evaluation of a new antibullying program, designed for national use in Finnish comprehensive schools.

#### Antibullying Programs

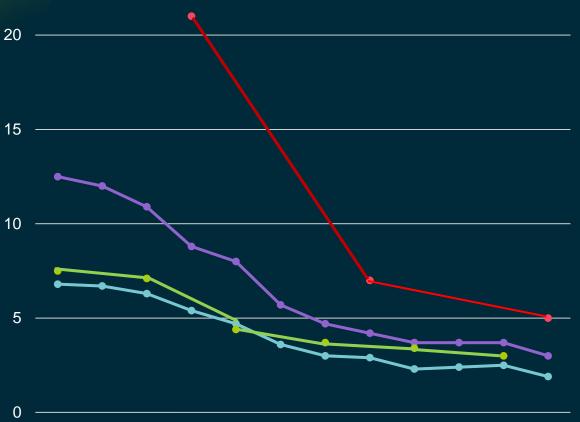
Several whole-school intervention programs have been developed to reduce bullying in schools (for reviews, see Baldry & Farrington, 2007; Farrington, & Ttofi, 2009; Ferguson, San Miguel, Kilburn, & Sanchez, 2007; Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, & Isava, 2008; J. D. Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004; P. K. Smith, Ananiadou, & Cowie, 2003; P. K. Smith, Penler, & Righy, 2004; Vreeman

- Significant reductions in the prevalence of students bullying others & those being bullied by others
- Numerous other positive effects





### Students who bully others, middle schools (grades 8-9) in Finland, 2009-2019



Finnish Juvenile Delinquency Survey (past year)

KiVa Student Survey (2-3 times/month) School Health Promotion Study (weekly) KiVa student survey (weekly)







## No evidence-based strategy works without proper implementation







### **Implementation**

- Putting an idea, policy or program into action
- Thinking of KiVa, four aspects of implementation can be distinguished
  - How Finnish government implemented their bullying prevention strategy
  - How we, as program developers, disseminated KiVa into Finnish schools and internationally
  - How school personnel implement the program in their schools
  - How students and parents implement KiVa







### Disseminating KiVa into Finnish schools

- Stakeholder meetings
- Media event in MoE → publicity
- Sending a letter to each and every school providing basic education in Finland
  - Support from MoE:
  - Schools that would adopt the program during the three first years (2009, 2010, 2011) were provided the materials and preimplementation training free of charge
  - KiVa was **recommended**, but not imposed (!), by the ministry







### Helping schools implement Kiva with fidelity and sustainability

- teacher manuals and other concrete materials
- parents' guide; material for home-school collaboration
- newsletters sent to schools four times a year
- school-based feedback based on annual online surveys for students and school personnel
- pre-implementation training
- newsletters sent to schools 4 x /year
- KiVa days a two-day biennial conference for schools







### International partners and certified Kiva trainers

- International partners since 2013
- Train the trainer -course 2 x /year in Turku, Finland
- Booster trainings











### Implementation of KiVa across years: types of schools (Sainio et al., 2020)

### Sustainable antibullying program implementation 7 Scand J Psychol (2018) 0.8 0.7 0.6 Persistent, 43% 0.5 —>← Tail-offs, 20% Drop-offs, 24% 0.3 0.2

Fig. 1. Latent class analyses (LCA) on 1,771 schools that started KIVa program 2009-2010 based on responding to student survey across years.

#### Four

### IMPLEMENTATION SUSTAINABILITY







### Implementation of KiVa across years: types of schools (Sainio et al., 2020)

### Sustainable antibullying program implementation 7 Scand J Psychol (2018) 0.8 0.7 0.6 0.5 —>← Tail-offs, 20% Drop-offs, 24%

Fig. 1. Latent class analyses (LCA) on 1,771 schools that started KNa program 2009-2010 based on responding to student survey across years.

#### Four

Years 1 and 3 seem "critical"







### Implementation of KiVa across years: types of schools (Sainio et al., 2020)

### Sustainable antibullying program implementation 7 Scand J Psychol (2018) 0.8 0.7 0.6 Persistent, 43% — Awakened, 14% 0.5 —>← Tail-offs, 20% Drop-offs, 24% 0.3 0.2

#### Four

#### PREDICTING PERSISTENCE:

- School size (large)
- Initial victimization (low)
- Initial coordination (high)











#### Different Approaches to Address Bullying in KiVa Schools: Adherence to Guidelines, Strategies Implemented, and Outcomes Obtained

Eerika Johander 1 . Tiina Turunen 1 · Claire F. Garandeau 1 · Christina Salmivalli 1,2

Accepted: 14 October 2020
© The Author(s) 2020

#### Abstract

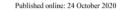
We examined the extent to which school personnel implementing the KiVa® antibullying program in Finland during 2009–2015 systematically employed the program-recommended approaches (confronting or non-confronting), used one or the other depending on the bullying case (case-specific approach), or used their own adaptation when talking to perpetrators of bullying, and whether they organized follow-up meetings after such discussions. In addition to investigating adherence to program guidelines, we tested how effective these different approaches were in stopping bullying. Finally, we tested the contribution of follow-up meetings and the number of years KiVa had been implemented in a school to the effectiveness of the interventions, using reports from both school personnel and victimized students. The data were collected annually across 6 years via online questionnaires and included responses from 1221 primary and secondary schools. The school personnel were more likely to use the confronting approach than the non-confronting approach. Over time, rather than sticking to the two program-recommended approaches, they made adaptations (e.g., combining the two; using their own approach). Two-level regression analyses indicated that the discussions were equally effective, according to both personnel and victimized students, when the confronting, non-confronting, or a case-specific approach had been used. The discussions were less effective when the personnel used their own adaptation or could not specify the method used. Perceived effectiveness was higher in primary school and when follow-up meetings were organized systematically after each intervention, but unrelated to the number of years KiVa had been implemented.

Keywords KiVa antibullying program · Indicated actions · Bullying · Intervention · Long term · Implementation fidelity Outcome · Confronting · Non-confronting · Follow-up

Over the past decades, growing awareness of the negative outcomes of school bullying (Reijntjes et al. 2010) has in many countries led to normative regulation, such as schools being required to have a policy, or an action plan against bullying (Salmivalli 2018). School personnel are thus faced with a demand to do something to address bullying. At the same time, numerous antibullying programs have been developed and evaluated in different parts of the world (Gaffney et al. 2019). Such programs often combine preventive actions (such as student lessons or improved supervision) with targeted interventions (i.e., procedures for intervening

in actual bullying cases, such as discussions with the students involved). Evaluation studies have, however, mainly estimated the effects of whole programs (without distinguishing prevention from intervention components), and the few studies that have compared the effectiveness of different approaches in targeted interventions only assessed short-term effectiveness on the basis of a single student informant (Garandeau et al. 2014, 2016). Consequently, we know little about the relative effectiveness of different approaches used when a case of bullying has already occurred, and even less about how school personnel implement guidelines provided to address such cases. The present study investigates the extent to which school personnel implementing the KiVa® antibullying program (Kärnä et al. 2011a) in Finland employ the program-recommended approaches (confronting vs. non-confronting) when discussing with bullying perpetrators, how this changes over a period of 6 years, and how effective the chosen approaches (whether program-recommended or something else) are

Shandong Normal University, Jinan, China





### IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY







Eerika Johander

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> INVEST Research Flagship, Department of Psychology and Speech-Language Pathology, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

- As years go by, schools are increasingly likely to move from evidence-based methods to other approaches...
  - ... despite the fact that schools where implementation fidelity is higher, in other words, where evidence-based methods are followed, efforts to tackle bullying are more successful in putting an end to it, according to both students' and school personnel's responses to annual surveys
  - Johander et al., 2020 Prevention Science







# Resources are typically given to develop new strategies, approaches, and programs, rather than support implementation of the ones that already exist and are proven effective







### Implementation is IMPORTANT

We need to invest in it; we need to study it





