DEFINING BULLYING: A SPLIT-BALLOT SURVEY EXPERIMENT ACROSS THREE FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS

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Bullying as Priority

President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama meet with a group of students and parents from the Conference on Bullying Prevention in the Oval Office, March 10, 2011.
(Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)
Defining Bullying - Olweus

“A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students” (Olweus 1993: 9).
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**Sources of National Estimates of Bullying**

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<td>Now I have some questions about what students do at school that make you feel bad or are hurtful to you. We often refer to this as being bullied. You may include events you told me about already. During this school year, has any student bullied you?</td>
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"Bullying is any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm" (Gladden et al. 2014: 7).
NCVS-SCS Methods

- Household is the sampling unit; every person in the household is interviewed.
- First interview is CAPI – face to face.
- Subsequent interviews are CATI – over the phone.
- Children ages 12 to 18 who live in a sampled household are eligible for SCS interview.
Three federal agencies worked together to develop, test, and implement new measures of bullying based on the CDC Uniform Definition:

- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census
- U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics
BULLYING OPERATIONALIZATIONS

“Control”

Now I have some questions about what students do at school that makes you feel bad or are hurtful to you. We often refer to this as being bullied. During this school year, has any student bullied you? That is, has another student...

- Made fun of you, called you names or insulted you, in a hurtful way?
- Spread rumors about you or tried to make others dislike you?
- Threatened you with harm?
- Pushed you, shoved you, tripped you, or spit on you?
- Excluded you from activities on purpose?
- Destroyed your property on purpose?
- Tried to make you do things you did not want to do, for example, give them money or other things?
- Excluded you from activities on purpose?

“Experimental”

Now I have some questions about bullying at school. Bullying happens when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove or hurt another student. It is not bullying when students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way. Bullies are usually stronger, or have more friends or money, or some other power over the student being bullied. Usually, bullying happens over and over, or the student being bullied thinks it might happen over and over.

By this definition, have you been bullied at school, by another student, this school year?

Yes
No
BULLYING OPERATIONALIZATIONS

“Control Plus Follow-Up”

Now I have some questions about what students do at school that makes you feel bad or are hurtful to you. We often refer to this as being bullied. During this school year, has any student bullied you? That is, has another student....

- Made fun of you, called you names or insulted you, in a hurtful way?
- Spread rumors about you or tried to make others dislike you?
- Threatened you with harm?
- Pushed you, shoved you, tripped you, or spit on you?
- Excluded you from activities on purpose?
- Destroyed your property on purpose?
- Tried to make you do things you did not want to do, for example, give them money or other things?
- Excluded you from activities on purpose?

When you were bullied this year, did it happen over and over, or were you afraid it would happen over and over?

When you were bullied this school year, were you ever bullied by someone who had more power or strength than you? This could be because the person was bigger than you, was more popular, had more money, or had more power than you in another way?
RESULTS

Control
During this school year, has any student bullied you? That is, has another student...

- Bullied: 79.20%
- Not bullied: 20.80%

Control Plus Follow-Up
Bullied Control Group plus yes to both: Repetition AND Power Imbalance

- Bullied, yes to both follow-up questions: 16.1%
- Not bullied: 83.9%

Experimental
By this definition, have you been bullied at school, by another student, this school year?

- Bullied: 91.9%
- Not bullied: 8.1%
## Estimate Comparisons

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bullying Construct</th>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>SCS Control</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCS Control plus follow-ups</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power imbalance</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Both</strong></td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2015 YRBS</strong></td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCS Experimental</strong></td>
<td>8.1</td>
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Moving forward

NCES:
- Provides content expertise
- Supports data collection and analyses

Census:
- Conducts testing
- Collects Data

BJS:
- Provides content expertise
- Supports OMB and administrative work

Future SCS Data