"BULLY PREVENTION: ARE YOU PROMOTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUR CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS?"

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University of Illinois Anti-Bullying Program

- **Indiana University Teen Conflict Survey (Bosworth, Espelage, & Simon, 1999; Espelage et al., 2000, 2001)**

- **University of Illinois Bullying Research Program**
  - **INTERVIEW STUDY (Espelage & Asidao, 2001)**
  - **EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE STUDY (Espelage, 1998)**
  - **SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS STUDY (Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003; Espelage, Green, & Wasserman, 2007; Espelage, Green, & Polanin, in press)**
  - **SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DATING VIOLENCE, & BULLYING STUDIES (Holt & Espelage, 2003; Holt & Espelage, 2005; Espelage & Holt, 2006)**
  - **ATTRIBUTION, COPING STYLES, & BULLYING (Kingsbury & Espelage, 2006)**
  - **THEORY OF MIND, EMPATHY, & BULLYING (Espelage et al., 2004; Mayberry & Espelage, 2006)**
  - **HOMOPHOBIA, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, & BULLYING (Poteat & Espelage, 2006; Espelage et al., 2008)**
  - **Sexual Orientation, Bullying, & Mental Health Outcomes (Espelage, Aragon, Birkett, & Koenig, 2008; Poteat, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009; Birkett, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009)**
  - **CDC Federally-funded Grants:**
    - **Bullying & SV Overlap (2007 - 2010)**
    - **Randomized Clinical Trial of Middle School Second Step Program (Committee for Children, 2008) in Reducing Bullying & SV in 36 schools (2009-2013)**

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Social-Ecological Perspective
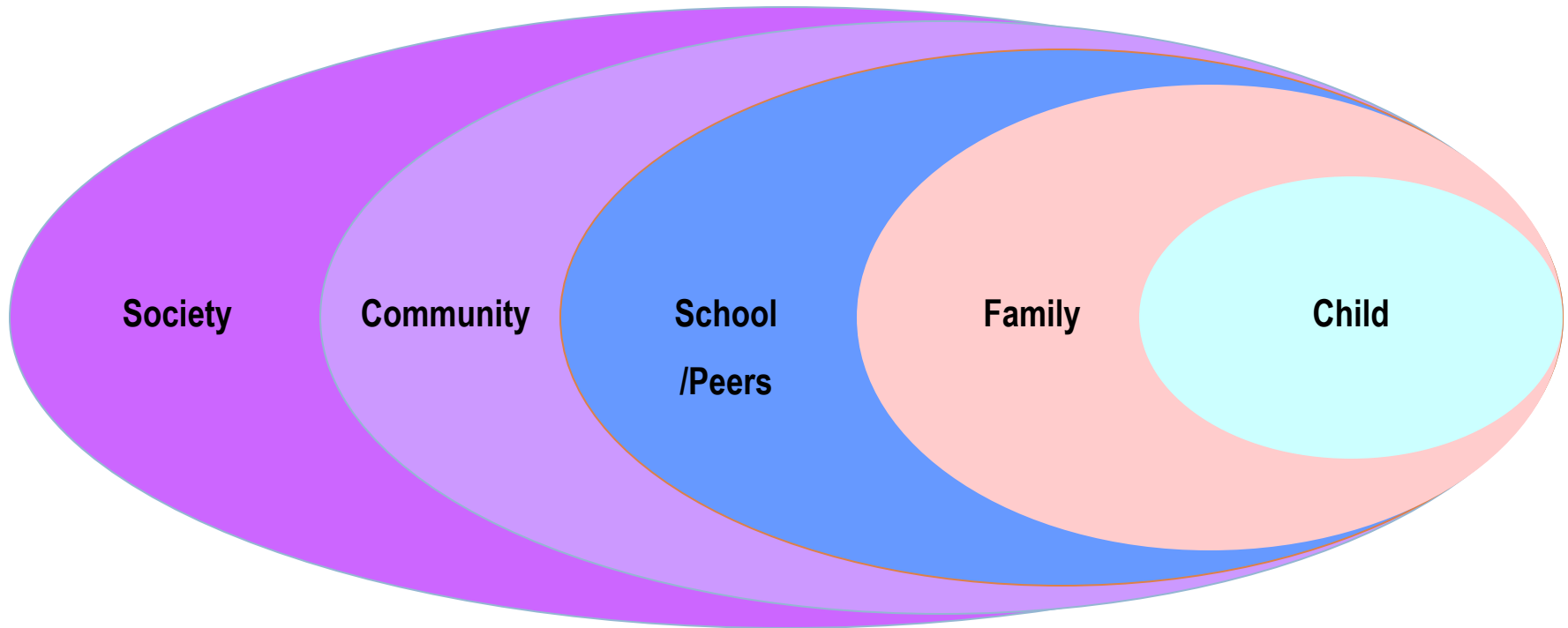
(Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Swearer & Doll, 2001; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Espelage & Horne, 2007)

Definition of Bullying (Swearer, 2001)

☐ Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over.

   ❑ Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
   ❑ Spreading bad rumors about people
   ❑ Keeping certain people out of a "group"
   ❑ Teasing people in a mean way
   ❑ Getting certain people to "gang up" on others
   ❑ Use of technology

Bully/Victim Continuum

☐ Bully – reports bullying others

☐ Victim – reports being bullied by others

☐ Bully-victim – reports bullying others & being bullied

☐ Bystander – reports observing others being bullied

☐ No Status/Not involved – does not report any involvement with bullying

Bullying Prevalence

- Among 3rd – 8th graders:
  - 15% Chronically Victimized
  - 17% Ringleader Bullies
  - 8% Bully-Victims
  - 60% Bystanders
    - Only 13% intervene to help victim
      (Espelage & Swearer, 2003)

Cyber-Bullying

"Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others."

(Bill Belsey: www.cyberbullying.ca)

http://www.in.com/videos/watchvideo-psa-on-cyberbullying-from-the-national-crime-prevention-council-2398263.html

Cyber-Bullying Prevalence

- National Statistics (Lifetime):
  - 10% - 33% youth (ages 11 to 19) have been the target of aggression/bullying online
  - 15% perpetrate the aggression/bullying online
  - 15% have been victims of sexual solicitation online (asked to talk about sex, perform a sexual act, or provide personal sexual information)

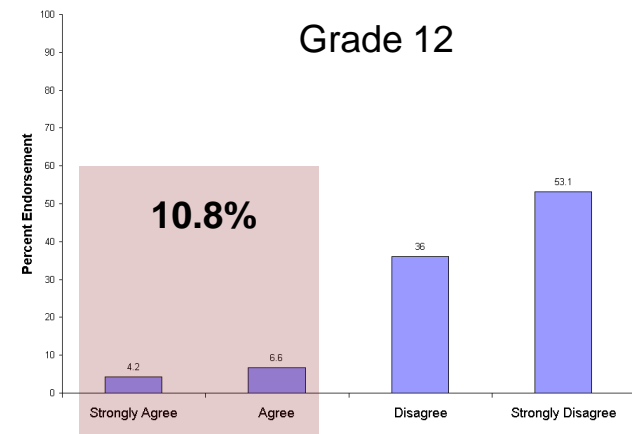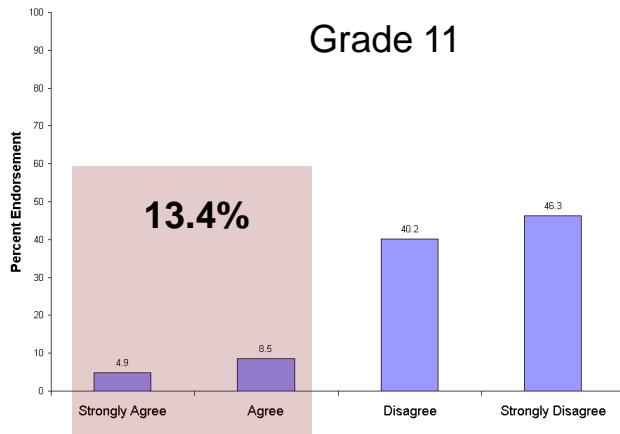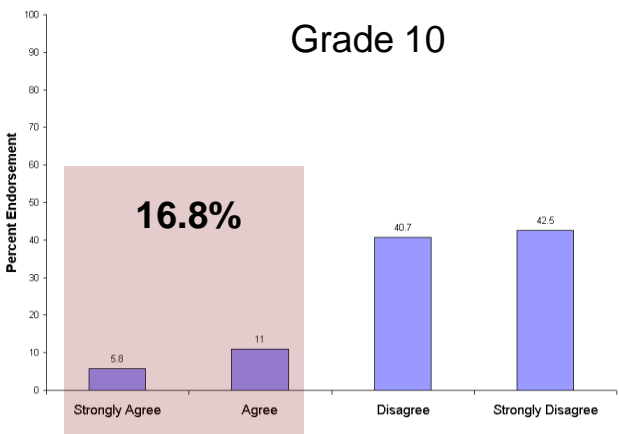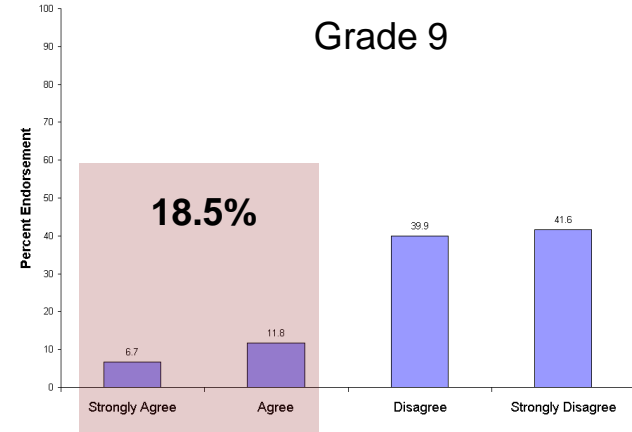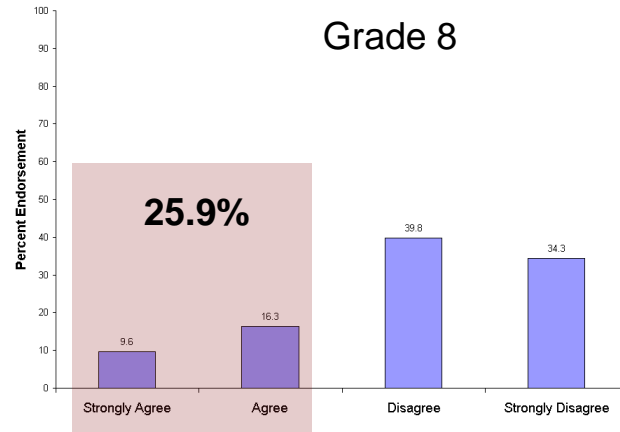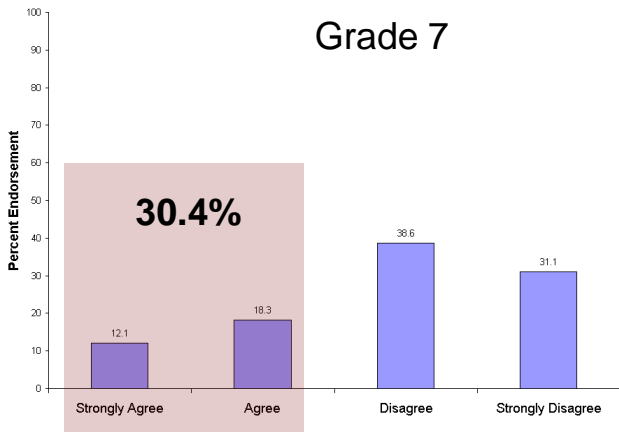   (Finn, 2004; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004)

Cyber-Bullying Prevalence

- Illinois Middle School Students
  - Online Victimization in Last Year:
    - 14.9% received rude comment
    - 7% had rumor spread about him/her
    - 2% threatened by a student
    - 11% received rude text message
      - 13% girls; 7% boys
    - 6% received sexually related text
    - 1% received sexual picture text
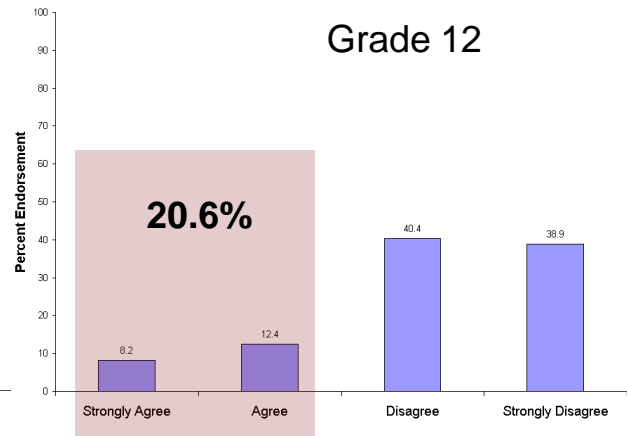   - 1-3% rarely did someone solicit sex online

Openness to friends and schools (Poteat, Espelage, Koenig, 2009)

- To what extent are heterosexual youth willing to remain friends with lesbian and gay peers after disclosure?
  - This would reflect a removal of an already existing support system
  - This may differ from befriending someone already known to be gay or lesbian
- To what extent are heterosexual youth willing to attend school with lesbian and gay students?
- We expected gender and grade differences

"I would not remain friends with someone that came out to me"

Grade 7 — 30.4%

Percent Endorsement: Strongly Agree 12.1, Agree 18.3, Disagree 38.6, Strongly Disagree 31.1

Grade 8 — 25.9%

Percent Endorsement: Strongly Agree 9.6, Agree 16.3, Disagree 39.8, Strongly Disagree 34.3

Grade 9 — 18.5%

Percent Endorsement: Strongly Agree 6.7, Agree 11.8, Disagree 39.9, Strongly Disagree 41.6

Grade 10 — 16.8%

Percent Endorsement: Strongly Agree 5.8, Agree 11, Disagree 40.7, Strongly Disagree 42.5

Grade 11 — 13.4%

Percent Endorsement: Strongly Agree 4.9, Agree 8.5, Disagree 40.2, Strongly Disagree 46.3

Grade 12 — 10.8%

Percent Endorsement: Strongly Agree 4.2, Agree 6.6, Disagree 36, Strongly Disagree 53.1

"I would rather attend a school without lesbian and gay students"
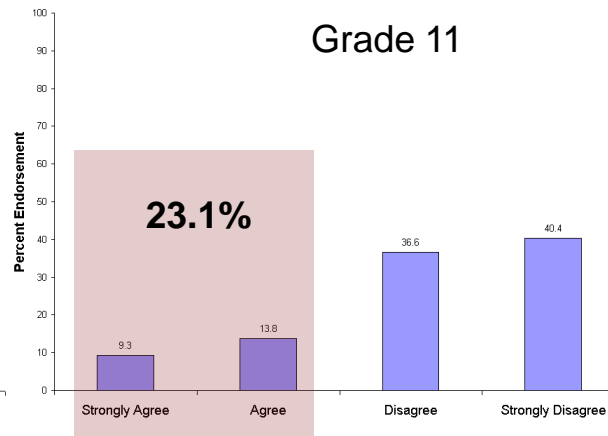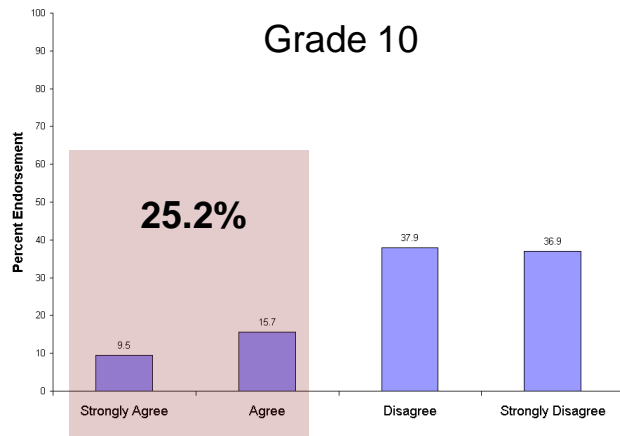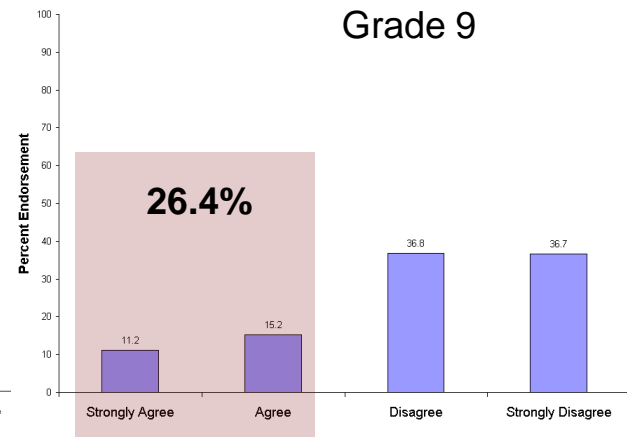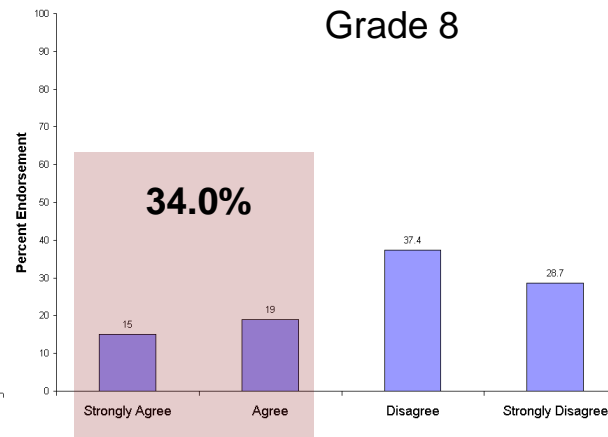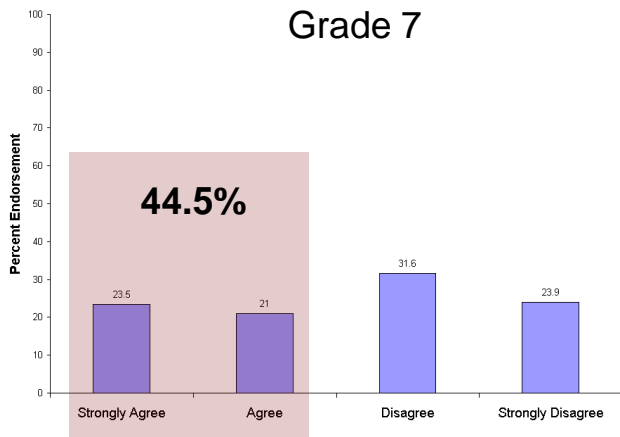
Individual Correlates of Bullying Involvement

- Depression/Anxiety
- Empathy
- Delinquency
- Impulsivity
- Other forms of Aggression
- Alcohol/Drug Use
- Positive Attitudes toward Violence/Bullying
- Low Value for Prosocial Behaviors
  - For review (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Espelage & Horne, 2007)

Family & School Risk Factors

FAMILY

- Lack of supervision
- Lack of attachment
- Negative, critical relationships
- Lack of discipline/ consequences
- Support for violence
- Modeling of violence

SCHOOL

- Lack of supervision
- Lack of attachment
- Negative, critical relationships
- Lack of discipline/ consequences
- Support for violence
- Modeling of violence

For review (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Espelage & Horne, 2007)

Sibling Bullying

- Sibling bullying is tied to school-based bullying in many countries (Espelage & Swearer, 2003 for review)

- Study of 779 middle school students, association between bullying perpetration and sibling aggression perpetration was strongly associated (girls $r = .52$, boys $r = .42$; Espelage & Stein, in prep)

Bullying Prevention –
Meta-analysis (Merrell et al., 2008)

- Evaluated effectiveness of 16 bullying efficacy studies across some six countries (six studies in US).

- Only two of six US studies published.

- All showed small to negligible effects.

- Small positive effects found for enhancing social competence and peer acceptance, and increasing teacher knowledge and efficacy in implementing interventions.

- Reality—No impact on bullying behaviors.

- *Farrington & Tfoti (2009) – programs that are effective in European country include parents, use of multimedia, and target teacher's competence in responding to bullying.*

The Ship Has Sailed
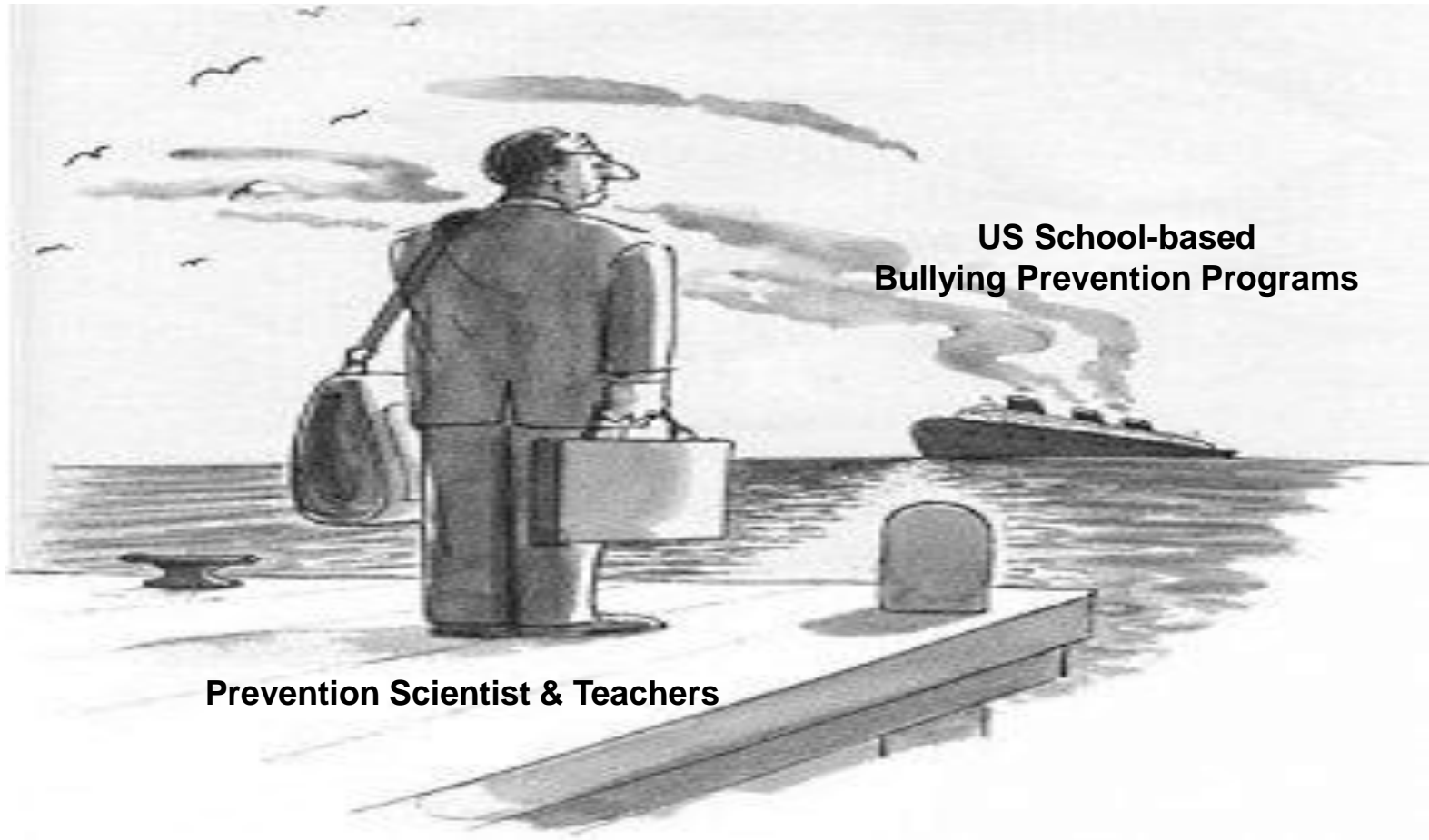
US School-based
Bullying Prevention Programs

Prevention Scientist & Teachers

Bullying Prevention –
Why little success in US schools?

- ❑ Majority of the programs fail to recognize that bullying co-occurs with other types of aggression and other risky behavior (delinquency, AOD).

- ❑ Overlapping risk and protective factors need to be targeted in school-based programs in order to address spectrum of problem behavior (Cataliano et al., 2002).

- ❑ Very few programs target the shift in peer norms that are promoting bullying – **the peer group.**

- ❑ Focus on universal/primary programs, need more at secondary or tertiary level.
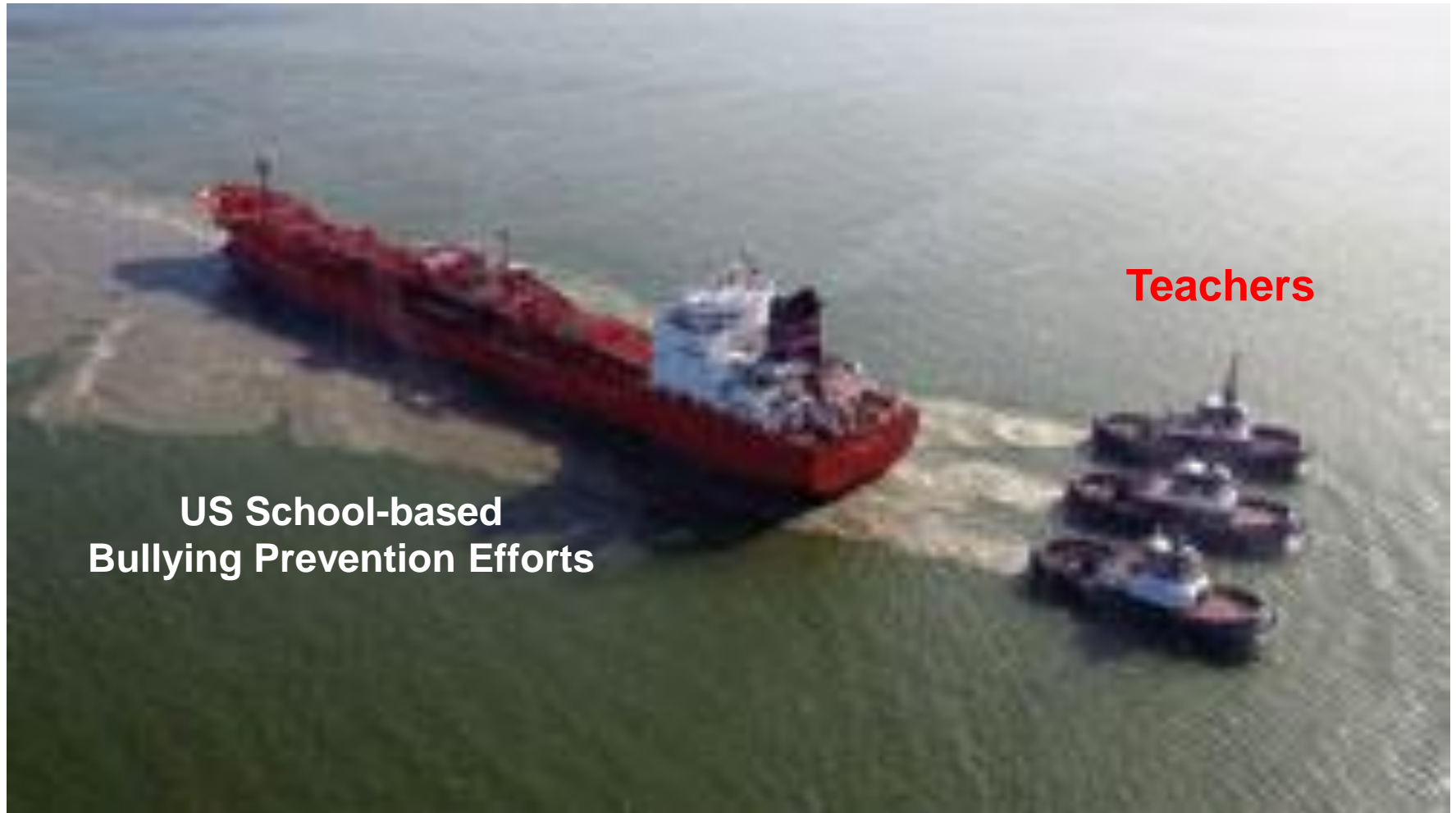
Bullying Prevention –
Why little success in US schools?

- All programs fail to address the extent to which demographic variables (such as gender and race) impact efficacy.

- Need to recognize that adults are modeling much of the bullying behaviors we see in children and adolescents.

- Need to consider how classroom management skills and implementation levels impact a program's effectiveness.

- Need to seriously consider how to motivate schools to engage in a serious conversation about bully prevention.

- REALITY– Social science MUST inform the next generation of prevention efforts; by contributing to modifications, enhancements, implementation issues, and must infuse INNOVATION into basic and applied scholarship.

Developmental Science: Research for Consideration

- ❑ Sibling Bullying

- ❑ Childhood trauma history & Efficacy of Programs

- ❑ Multiple Forms of Victimization

- ❑ Parental & Cultural Attitudes that Promote Retaliation

- ❑ Teacher-student relations

- ❑ Teacher, Administrator, & Paraprofessional Attitudes & Behavior

- ❑ Integration of Bullying Prevention into Curriculum

- ❑ Use of technology to advance basic and applied prevention efforts.

Looking Toward the Future