Mean girls get the blues? Bullying perpetration, its antecedents, and outcomes in boys and girls

Tina Kretschmer (University of Groningen) & Albertine Oldehinkel (University Medical Centre Groningen) • ISSBD 13.07.2016
What is (not) known?
Two types of bullies
Facet of aggressiveness: low self-control, low peer status, disadvantaged family background
Facet of popularity: controlled, family risks largely absent

Less known about bullies than victims
Linked to offending, APD, IPV, substance use, possibly also depression, suicide ideation

Developmental variation
Decreases over time - when is a good time to assess it?

What about gender?
Boys bully more than girls
Different social functions for boys and girls
Study Aims

Model developmental trajectories of bullying perpetration
Examine prediction of bullying development by individual and social factors
Test prediction of maladjustment and substance use by bullying development
Explore gender specificity in associations
Methods & Strategy
TRacking Adolescents’ Individual Lives’ Survey (TRAILS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Range</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
<th>T5</th>
<th>TG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.1 years (2230)</td>
<td>13.6 years (2149)</td>
<td>16.3 years (1816)</td>
<td>19.1 years (1881)</td>
<td>22.3 years (1778)</td>
<td>~25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent</td>
<td>Adolescent</td>
<td>Adolescent</td>
<td>Adolescent</td>
<td>Young adult</td>
<td>Young adult</td>
<td>Young adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>Sibling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TRAILS Next
- Young adult
- Child
Latent growth model to capture bullying development between T1 and T4

- Parent-CBCL: Child cruel, mean, bully towards others
- Parent-CBCL: Child cruel, mean, bully towards others, child bullies others a lot
- Parent-CBCL: Child cruel, mean, bully towards others, child bullies others a lot
- Self-YSR: I bully others a lot
- Self-YSR: I bully others a lot
- Self-ASR: I bully others a lot
- Peer nomination: How bullies others
- Peer nomination: How bullies others
- Parents: Self-control
- Parents: Family dysfunction
- Peers: Popularity & Rejection
- Self: Maladjustment & Substance use
Latent growth model with shifting indicators
Bullying

Parent CBCL 1

Peer nomination

Parent CBCL 2

Self YSR

Peer nomination

Parent CBCL 1

Parent CBCL 2

Self YSR

Intercept

Self-control

Family dysfunction

Popularity & Rejection

Withdrawal/Depression (+)

Anxiety/Depression

Somatic Complaints

Delinquency (+)

Aggression (+)

Smoking (+)

Alcohol use

Cannabis use (+)

Hard drug use (+)
Bullying

Parents: Self-control
Parents: Family dysfunction
Peers: Popularity & Rejection

Withdrawal/Depression (+)
Anxiety/Depression (+)
Somatic Complaints
Delinquency (+)
Aggression (+)
Smoking
Alcohol use
Cannabis use
Hard drug use
Developmental variation
Great variation in initial levels and decrease, decrease over time significant

Antecedents
- Low self-control - high initial levels, no link with decline
- High peer rejection - high initial levels, greater decline

Correlates
- High initial levels - increasingly withdrawn, delinquent, and aggressive; tobacco and cannabis user, more likely to use hard drugs
- Greater decline - greater decline in withdrawal, anxiety, delinquency, and aggression

What about gender?
Associations between initial level and correlates only present for girls
Please note that the paper is forthcoming in Development & Psychopathology.

1. How do we deal with variation in measurement in longitudinal studies?

2. Do we need a gendered approach to bullying?