

Recommendations for Cyberbullying Prevention Methods: Offline and Online Prevention
Methods

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Purpose

The purpose of this study is to review both online and offline prevention methods in order to identify what works in preventing cyberbullying from happening to young people. Young people remain a focal point within this paper, as research shows that adolescents are the targeted group in the majority of cyberbullying situations (Wadian, Tucker, Sonnentag, & Barnett, 2016). This paper explains the role that parents, schools, and young people play in preventing cyberbullying. Research that explains the importance of a combination of efforts will be utilized, as multiple sources agree that preventing cyberbullying is a result of multidisciplinary teams that work together to address the issue (Mehari et al., 2018). In this case, teams can be technology, programs, and people. Each are needed to address a comprehensive cyberbullying management plan.

Methods

The methodology that will be used to conduct this research is a review of empirical studies, scholarly and peer reviewed articles, and websites that pertain to anti cyberbullying prevention programs available to youth. By examining the literature that already exists, the research paper will be able to make recommendations for cyber bullying prevention programs that are grounded in empirical research.

Key Findings

In order to prevent cyberbullying, both online and offline prevention programs are necessary. Adolescence is a developmentally crucial time, which is why it is the appropriate time to teach young people about the harmful implications of aggressive

behavior (Ang, 2015; Kim, et al., 2018). By learning strategies to cope with stress and anger, feeling empathy for others, and engaging in school-based curriculum, students can learn about the harmful effects of cyberbullying. When combining these techniques with preventative technology, young people and adults have the resources they need to prevent cyberbullying.

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Section 1: Introduction Statement of the Problem

Cyberbullying has been an ongoing issue within modern day society. It has become an unavoidable problem due to the accessibility of cell phones, computers, and the internet. This problem deserves more attention, because cyberbullying can have detrimental effects on victims. Research has shown that cyberbullying has regularly been associated with suicidal ideation/behavior, along with other issues pertaining to mental health (Braviolovskaia, Tesimann, & Margraf, 2018). This can impact adults and adolescents, but adolescents are more likely to be affected by the negative effects of cyberbullying (Wadian, Tucker, Sonnentag, & Barnett, 2016). This is true even if the bullying only occurred for a short duration (Linbert, 2017). It is important that young people know how to guard against cyberbullying, and from the aggressive communication that can occur online. They are a vulnerable population, and they need to be provided with tools to effectively respond.

To further explain the impact of cyberbullying on adolescents, a longitudinal study was conducted with 12-13-year-old adolescents (Fahy, Standfeld, Smuk, Cummins, & Clark, 2016). At a baseline, 42.2% of participants reported involvement in cyberbullying in the previous 12 months. Fourteen percent reported being cyber victims, 8% reported being cyberbullies, and 20% reported being cyberbully-victims in the previous year. A year later, at follow-up, researchers contacted the sample to see if there was a link between involvement of cyberbullying and future symptoms of depression and social anxiety, and mental wellbeing. Compared to uninvolved adolescents, cyber victims and cyberbully-victims were significantly more likely to report symptoms of depression. This study

emphasizes the high prevalence of cyberbullying and the potential of cyber victimization as a risk factor for future depressive symptoms, social anxiety symptoms, and below average well-being among adolescents. In short, mental health can be compromised by traumatic events such as cyberbullying. This is why it is essential to provide tools that can help young people avoid situations where they could become a victim.

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Methods

The methodology that will be used to conduct this research is a review of empirical studies, scholarly and peer reviewed articles, and websites that pertain to programs available to youth. By examining the literature that already exists, the research paper will be able to make recommendations for cyber bullying prevention programs that are grounded in empirical research.

Significance of the Study

The research in this paper will exemplify that more needs to be done to prevent cyberbullying. It is essential that offline prevention methods be implemented and offered in schools. With the tools provided by these prevention programs, adolescents and young people may be provided with resources that are better able to help them avoid situations where cyberbullying occurs. The effects of cyberbullying are much too powerful to ignore, because they threaten the mental health of those who are engaged in cyberbullying situations.

Limitations

Program evaluations on the effectiveness of cyberbullying prevention programs is limited. Therefore, more research should be conducted on the subject. It is difficult to assess whether online or offline prevention strategies are more beneficial with the research that exists now. This is partially because there is not a lot of recent information pertaining to the prevention of cyberbullying. Many sources on this subject were old or outdated, so it was difficult to include a lot of the research that currently exists in this paper. Because technology is always advancing, updated sources would be most helpful in assessing present prevention techniques.

Section II: Literature Review

This section of the paper consists of a review of empirical studies, scholarly and peer reviewed articles, and websites. Sources are analyzed to determine the prevention programs available to young people, and the possible outcomes associated with offline and online methods. This section starts with a definition of bullying and cyberbullying, and then discusses the importance of the topic. Next, the emotional implications of cyberbullying are discussed, as they are part of the reason why the issue is worth talking about, and prevention methods are needed. After that, online and offline methods are discussed generally, with the next section specifically covering online prevention techniques available to youth. After this, offline techniques are covered, and the effects of both are discussed. The next three sections talk about the role of parents, young people, and the school when it comes to prevention. This is useful as each agency has a responsibility to assist in preventing cyberbullying.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Defined

Traditionally bullying involves two people, a bully and a victim. The bully abuses the victim through physical, verbal, or other means in order to gain a sense of superiority and power (Smith, 2016). Traditional bullying has, and continues to be, a complex issue within society. This is partially because bullying can happen to anyone, in a variety of settings, making prevention strategies difficult to implement (Smith, 2016). Bullying has become even more complicated with the emergence of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is an adaptation of traditional bullying, and can be defined as electronic bullying, as it has emerged with the advancement of technology (Menesini, Nocentini, & Camodeca, 2013).

Similar to traditional bullying, cyberbullying includes a power dynamic. It can be defined as harassing and threatening by phone calls, text messages, emails, defaming websites, and

compromising photos or videos circulating on the internet (Menesini, et al., 2013). Using electronics to bully an individual yields negative consequence, and these implications are thought to be even more harmful than traditional bullying, as it is difficult for victims to escape the harassment (Menesini, et al., 2013). Victims cannot avoid the endless messages that are sent in an electronic form, as technology surrounds them in most settings. For this reason, prevention strategies are essential. That being said, it is important to find the most effective methods available.

Prevalence of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying has become a prevalent issue within society. According to Selkie, Fales, and Moreno (2016), the estimated prevalence rates of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization vary widely around the world. Estimates of prevalence ranged from 1% to 30% for cyberbullying perpetration and 3% to 72% for cyberbullying victimization. The 2016 study advises that more information is needed in order to gauge more accurate numbers for the amount of young people who are both bullies and victims. These numbers vary greatly, and one possible reason for the discrepancy is that the term cyberbullying is sometimes used as an all-encompassing term to describe behaviors that may be seen as distinct to some researchers. In addition, variability in rates of technology may contribute to variance in prevalence. These reasons aside, it's clear that there are many offenders and up to 72% of adolescents suffer from the implications of cyberbullying, which will be discussed more thoroughly in an upcoming section. It is imperative to understand that it is evident that this issue is affecting young people. It might be a lot in some places, and it might be a little in others. Depending on the circumstances, cyberbullying may be negatively affecting many.

Selkie, Fales, and Moreno (2016) explain that cyberbullying is often in the media, which

seems to continuously share new stories that highlight the frequency of cyberbullying. When watching the news, it is hard to avoid seeing high profile cases that attract attention from millions of viewers. This indicates that cyberbullying may occur frequently in the lives of adolescents, as it is often a topic of discussion in the news and the media.

Importance of Cyberbullying Prevention Programs

Cyberbullying incidents amongst adolescents needs to be addressed for multiple reasons. For one, it is notable that adolescence is a particularly difficult time for many. It is a critical period of development, as it represents the transition from childhood to adulthood (Kim, Colwell, Kata, Boyle, & Georgiades, 2018). This is also a time where mental disorders may emerge, as half of all lifetime disorders start at the age of 14 (Kim, et al., 2018). This leaves affected individuals at risk for cyberbullying, as impaired cognitive or social processes are associated with elevated susceptibility of adolescents to the severe effects of cyberbullying (Kim, et al., 2018). Additionally, cyberbullying can have severe mental health implications of its own and can cause mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (Menesini, et al., 2013). Another source confirms this, stating that cyberbullying amongst adolescents is associated with emotional problems due to the severe stress that victims experience (Kim, et al., 2018). This cannot be ignored, because mental disorders can have long lasting effects on those who have them.

Emotional Implications of Cyberbullying

As Menesini et al., (2013) pointed out, cyberbullying is thought to be even more harmful than traditional bullying to an individual's mental health. One study asserts that cyberbullying differs from face-to-face bullying, and that it may influence adolescent emotion and behavior (Fahy, Stansfeld, Smuk, Smith, Cummins, & Clark, 2016). Fahy et al., (2016) conducted a study to determine how influential cyberbullying is on mental health. The study consisted of 2,480

teenagers ages 12-13 years old, who were reportedly either victims, perpetrators, or uninvolved parties in instances of cyberbullying. Researchers gathered information from these participants at a baseline and contacted them one year later to examine any changes in their mental well-being. The study concluded that compared to uninvolved adolescents, cyber-victims and cyberbullies were more likely to report symptoms of depression a year after reportedly being involved with cyberbullying to some extent. They were also more likely to report symptoms of social anxiety than their uninvolved peers. This study shows the true issues surrounding cyberbullying, which are the emotional distress victims and bullies both experience.

Emotional issues are the main problem because they can be deadly. In particular, depression is a mental health disorder that can have serious consequences (Silva, Nunes, Ferreira, & Pissarra Da Costa, 2017). Depression can cause functional impairment issues that can interfere with an individual's life. For reference, symptoms of this disorder consist of anxiety, feelings of sadness, loss of interest in activities, and thoughts of suicide (Silva, et al., 2017). Suicidal ideation is especially important to discuss, as adolescents may experience this due to the onset of most mental illnesses, which were concluded to be especially prominent during adolescence (Kim, et al., 2018). Further, cyberbullying itself may cause symptoms of depression (Fahy, et al., 2016).

Mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression are only some of the reasons why cyberbullying prevention research is of utmost importance. There are other emotional side effects that young people face when they are victims, as cyberbullying is a multifaceted issue. In particular, puberty is a period of stress, which causes physical, emotional and behavioral changes (Cho, Kim, & Shin, 2017). Specifically, aggression is an emotion that peaks during adolescence and has been shown to be related to problematic behavior such as drug use, misbehavior, chronic

school violence and cyberbullying experiences. More importantly, researchers assert that school violence is reciprocally and closely related to cyberbullying, rather than being separate from offline school violence. As cited in Cho et al., (2017) school violence and cyberbullying both occur due to inner motives, which include ostentation of power, desire to govern or subdue others, revenge, boredom, jealousy and altering emotions. School violence and cyberbullying take place because of the tension that youth feel, and negative emotions such as aggression and anger are vented through violent acts at school. Of course, not all youth who experience negative feelings will commit violent acts in the classroom or cyberbully someone. However, Cho et al., (2017) is demonstrating another possible concern regarding the topic of cyberbullying. Incidents of cyberbullying can cause negative emotions for both the offender and the victim, and it is connected to school violence.

Online and Offline Methods of Prevention

Cyberbullying is a serious matter, and prevention is necessary to ensure that young people are protected from the harmful effects of the behavior. There are state and federal laws that are dedicated to this effort. However, at a local level, prevention techniques can be implemented in schools and at home. It is essential to review the current prevention methods that exist in order to understand what works best, and what can be done to advance them in the future.

Online Prevention Methods

Cyberbullying occurs with the use of technology, and generally occurs online, so it is reasonable to assume that prevention methods should also be accessible online. There are a number of prevention programs that can combat cyberbullying that are available electronically

(Snakenborg, Van Acker, & Gable, 2011). NetBox Blue has developed one such program, called Cyberbullying Prevention Engine and Puresight, which has child-friendly internet. Both programs block, quarantine, and report offensive emails, instant messages, and other communications on the basis of keywords or sources identified by the user. Most commercial software programs provide a third party (a parent or school administrator) with the ability to monitor a summary of any/all violations. This allows for the identification of a potential cyberbully, without administrators or parents having to manually review every electronic communication.

To provide some insight on these technology companies, Puresight's website states it provides the best available protection for children from cyberbullying that occur on Facebook, instant messengers, and other chat programs. The website boasts that they deliver a multi-layered approach that evasion-proof, offering truly effective social networking protection. Additionally, more than 15,000,000 children in 32 countries are utilizing this technology, which is protecting them from cyberbullying and its harmful effects. It is clear that technology like Puresight is being used by millions of people, which shows its accessibility and versatility. Many families are relying on this program for the individual needs of their child or children. That speaks volumes to the importance of offering online programs similar to this one.

Another online prevention program that is being utilized is called ConRed. This application follows the whole-school policy model, which implements procedures that have been proven to be successful, both at the school and community level (Del Ray, Casas, & Ortega, 2016). Interestingly, ConRed was designed to cope with three main areas that have been shown to be related to cyberbullying, which is the internet dependence, traditional bullying, and empathy. Researchers conducted a study to understand the success of ConRed in dealing with

these issues, and discovered that ConRed proved effective in preventing cyberbullying, as it successfully prevented cyberbullying for those who were not directly involved in cyberbullying but were at risk for being involved (Del Ray, et al., 2016). This is notable because by stopping people from getting involved at all, they are able to completely evade the negative effects of cyberbullying. Programs like ConRed and Puresight could easily discourage an individual from deciding to bully someone over the internet. If the young person is aware that this software is installed on the computer they are using, they would also know that their behavior was being heavily monitored. Not only is the computer not allowing them to communicate offensively, it is also recording any attempted violations to do so (Del Ray, et al., 2016). One benefit of this method is that schools and parents are not required to have explicit conversations with young people about cyberbullying. Instead of actively having conversations about offensive behavior, caregivers are able to rely on technology. The technology and software programs are able to mitigate cyberbullying, without an individual having to address the mindset of the cyberbully. That individual may have to find ways to deal with their aggression regardless, but they will know that they can't deal with it by hurting someone else electronically.

Besides technologies that prevent bullying, there are other programs that can be considered effective. KiVa is a research-based antibullying program that has been implemented around the world. The program prevents bullying by providing students with lessons and online games that can help them prevent bullying (Williford, et al., 2012). The program has been shown to reduce self and peer reported bullying and victimization significantly. It has been shown to prevent verbal, relational and physical bullying. KiVa's website states that its technology is based on the research of bullying and mechanisms. One interesting thing about this program is that it was developed at the University of Turku in Finland. Funding came from the Ministry of

Education and Culture. Its developers have been studying the phenomenon of bullying and its mechanisms for decades, which makes it clear that the people who created this technology were well-versed in bullying and how it works. This online prevention method seems qualified to tackle cyberbullying head on.

Other sources echo the sentiment that it is beneficial to let technology do some of the work, because it is able to do it consistently. Using statistical tools, machine-learning classifiers are being developed to detect problematic topics (Lieberman, Dinakar, & Jones, 2011). These learning machines, better known as Artificial Intelligence (AI) are able to learn what kind of statements are used in cyberbullying situations. Lieberman et al., (2011) state that when cyberbullying is detected, it is possible to provide a link to the young person to educational material appropriate for the potential cyberbully situation. That material would be able to encourage the would-be offender to feel empathy and warn them of possible damage to their reputation if they choose to bully other people online. Other measures could encourage reflection or could slow the spread of the potentially harmful communication. It is notable that this software is not intended to be able to catch every instance of cyberbullying and, instead, focuses on preventing as many incidents as possible. In cases where Artificial Intelligence is involved, it is hoped that the machine is able to learn what cyberbullying is, and how to continually stop it as it advances. The overall goal is to help prevent and manage the problem, if possible. Researchers also note that cyberbullying is really a people problem, and that software and computer programs cannot substitute for teaching adolescents how to have healthy relationships with others.

As this paper has advised, online prevention methods are necessary for many reasons. Though it is certainly beneficial to have conversations with young people about cyberbullying, it is difficult to ensure that they are understanding them without monitoring their behavior.

Technology allows parents and school districts to watch kids and control their interactions. Caregivers have the option to install software to stop an individual from engaging in offensive behavior online, but it is important to remember that young people have plenty of places where they can use computers without installed software. For example, they may be able to go to a friend's house, or the library to use computers that do not have restrictions on them (Snakenborg, et al., 2011). That being said, the majority of youth have accessed the internet at home.

Home usage is clearly more prominent, so it is possible that software would be an influential factor in mitigating cyberbullying. However, it should be considered that software has limited control over this issue, as it is safe to assume that it is not installed everywhere. That being said, present technology is not able to always mitigate cyberbullying. An ideal anti-bullying program would be able to detect if negative feelings were associated with an exchange, to identify a potential cyberbully. Technology opens the doors for prevention, but it is difficult to rely only on current technology programs. As computers and systems advance, it is possible that online methods are better able to "understand" what cyberbullying looks like. As Lierberman et al., (2011) mentioned, AI might play a role in technology adapting to cyberbullying and preventing it.

AI is ever changing, and its capabilities continue to increase. Good Morning America (2019) published an article detailing the way Instagram is using AI to help stop cyberbullying. According to the article, Instagram is a popular photo-sharing social media app that has more than a billion users. It now has built in technology that can detect offensive language in messages, photo, and video captions. If offensive language is detected, users will receive an alert that gives them the chance to delete their words before they are able to post anything. Instagram partnered with suicide prevention programs to create this new product, which hopefully warns

users to limit their potentially upsetting posts or communications.

As time goes on, the hope is that companies like Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube can continue to create technologies that monitor the content their users are posting. Social media is a big part of the equation when it comes to cyberbullying, so it is essential that these programs are able to keep up with the potential threats that can arise on their platforms. This will not only educate users about what is appropriate to send/say to others, but also that they care about the bigger issue, which is cyberbullying within society. They can do a lot to prevent the problem, and their abilities will only increase as time goes on.

Offline Prevention Methods

Offline prevention methods focus on education and outreach. In particular, empathy training has been shown to reduce aggressive behavior (Ang, 2015). Since adolescence is a crucial time for development, it is helpful for caregivers to spend time talking to youth and making sure they comprehend their actions. One such approach is provided through empathy training because it teaches them to understand that their behavior has consequences. By allowing adolescents to understand how others feel, they may realize they don't want to continue, or start cyberbullying behavior.

Empathy training would mean that cyberbullies would learn about how their behavior affects the victim from their perspective. The goal of this type of training is to teach the perpetrator how to vicariously experience the emotions of the victim, instead of engaging in typical responses of victim blaming (Ang, 2015). Another goal of empathy training would be to educate the cyberbully of the mental health implications of cyberbullying, like depression and suicide. Ang (2015) asserts that, by sending the message that real consequences exist, the cyberbully would understand that mental health consequences can happen to anyone, including a

peer or loved one. Adolescents tend to believe that negative things only happen to other people, and not to them. This is mainly due to egocentric thinking, but empathy training can help youth understand that cyberbullying behaviors can affect anyone, including himself or herself, and people in their own lives. Studies have been conducted that show that the effects of empathy training tend to range between small and medium (Ang, 2015).

Besides empathy training, other offline techniques such as learning to respond appropriately to stress should be utilized. Many adolescents choose to bully because of the anger and aggression they feel. When a young person believes that antagonism and hostility is an appropriate response to life stressors, they may also believe that cyberbullying is a legitimate way to achieve their goals, and they will expect positive results when cyberbullying. Prevention programs should aim to change the mindset of the cyberbully, as the individual is demonstrating that they think aggression is a justifiable reaction to a situation. Though changing someone's mindset is not easy, research shows that it is possible to modify cognitions and beliefs. When using this prevention technique, adolescents learn that cyberbullying is an action that hurts the victim, and the victim does not deserve to be hurt.

Another essential technique involves the adolescent and their caregiver or parent. Ang (2015) states that developing a strong and positive parent-adolescent bond is critical in preventing cyberbullying and cannot be overemphasized. A healthy parent-adolescent relationship is key in helping reduce the likelihood of cyberbullying. In fact, poor caregiver monitoring results in increased odds of being an internet harasser. This conclusion is consistent with findings that indicate that the relationship between adolescents and their parent is important for the adolescent's psychosocial development (Christin, Akre, Berchtold, & Suris, 2016). This means that young people who have healthy, meaningful relationships with their parent or

caregiver are less likely to engage in bullying behaviors. The importance of a stable parent-child relationship is confirmed by research which suggests that international and national literature highlights the role of parental involvement in cyberbullying prevention (Roberto, et al., 2017). Clearly, as multiple articles accentuate this point, it plays a large role in preventing cyberbullying.

Parents and caregivers are able to act as barriers to help prevent cyberbullying, but young people may need more resources. This is because adolescence is a time of chaos and stress (Cho, et al., 2017). Adolescents need barriers other than parents that can help prevent cyberbullying. To do this, young people need the opportunity to vent their frustration and express their dissatisfaction from the pressure of school, home and friends.

In summary, many offline prevention techniques address the mindset of the perpetrator. In a cyberbullying situation, the cyberbully is the individual who needs to make changes to the way they think. The cyberbully needs their own resources and strategies that are designed to assist them in changing their response. By teaching the individual about empathy, and by having meaningful conversations about how young people should handle stress can be beneficial in helping the cyberbully realize what they are doing to the victim

The offline methods presented by multiple researchers focus on strategies that target the emotional and social behaviors of the perpetrator. They tend to address the emotional issues that adolescents face (Kim et al., 2018). Arguably, it is important that young people are in engaging in conversations about the way cyberbullying can make victims feel. Because adolescence tends to be a particularly difficult time-period, individuals may not take the time to understand what other people are thinking. By explaining mental health implications of cyberbullying, kids may be better able to emphasize and understand how their behaviors are directly affecting others.

That being said, having these difficult conversations and implementing successful solutions is not an easy task. Cyberbullying is a complex problem, so the solution is just as complicated. For one, it is necessary to determine who is responsible for implementing strategies. Researchers assert that many people and agencies are responsible for preventing cyberbullying (Mehari, Moore, Waasdorp, Varney, Berg, & Leff, 2018). In particular, young people, parents, primary care providers, and school districts are potential barriers to the negative effects of cyberbullying (Mehari, et al., 2018). One person alone cannot be held accountable for resolving an issue this substantial, which is why adults and young people need to work together to accomplish this goal. Clearly, there are many offline programs and strategies available that can help young people evade incidents of cyberbullying.

Role of the School in Prevention

On top of the offline prevention strategies previously mentioned, there are also programs that can be implemented into schools to assist young people. One such program is called Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, which has been recognized as a national model according to its website. This is a school wide initiative that is designed to address the problem of bullying and create a safe and positive learning environment for all students. The program works to achieve this goal by helping students and staff increase their understanding of cyberbullying, careful supervision of students, establishing rules and consequences for any violations, and imposing limits on unacceptable behavior.

According to Olweus's website, these goals are accomplished by a comprehensive approach that includes schoolwide, classroom, individual, and community components. It is focused on long-term change that creates a healthy school climate for everyone. The program has been designed and evaluated for use in elementary, middle, junior high and high schools (K-12).

Based on these evaluations, the program has been found to reduce bullying among students, improve the social climate of classrooms, and reduce related antisocial behaviors, such as vandalism and truancy. It is clear that this model deserves recognition for its efforts to change the behavior of offenders. This has been implemented in more than a dozen countries around the world, and in thousands of schools in the United States.

Other school-wide recognized programs include iSAFE, and Sticks and Stones (Snakenborg, et al., 2011). These programs each involve a series of scripted lessons to help students discuss issues related to cyberbullying in an effort to prevent it and/or address it when it does occur. The intent of these programs is to facilitate group discussions and ways to extend learning.

In particular, according to the iSAFE website, this technology is an essential component of every school district technology plan. Because kids use websites, apps and games anytime and anywhere, the mission of iSAFE is to provide lessons that prepare students for life in the 21st century. This means that the software wants to teach young people how to adjust to the technology they are using every day. Since most people never took a class where they learned how to use technology appropriately, or how they should be interacting with others online programs like iSAFE can help.

Sticks and Stones is a resource for children and young people that may need help navigating through the online world. Their website explains what bullying and what cyberbullying is, and it gives those in need guidelines of how to protect themselves online. This is helpful because it does not target the offender, but the potential victim. It offers methods they can use to keep themselves safe, which is a great defense against cyberbullying. It also offers tips for those that believe they are being cyberbullied, advising young people to report offenses to an

adult.

Arguably, with all the different preventive methods that exist, it is necessary to consider who is responsible for implementing them. Most authorities agree that it is important for schools to develop policies on bullying and cyberbullying that address the seriousness of the problem, and the consequences for engaging in that behavior (Snakenborg, 2012). This is probably because educators spend a great deal of time with young people. Adolescents spend most of their day with teachers in the classroom, so it is natural to assume that the school should be liable for implementing prevention methods. This may be why school districts are relied on to help prevent cyberbullying. Researchers state that it is vital that schools and educators work with families to educate the community about cyberbullying and how to prevent it (Roberto, et al., 2017). One study wanted to understand high school teachers perceptions of cyberbullying, and the prevention strategies meant to deter it (Stauffer, Heath, Coyne, & Ferrin, 2012). To do this, researchers conducted their study in an urban high school. The study found that out of the 66 teachers who participated, almost one fourth of teachers indicated that cyberbullying does not have long-lasting negative effects and that it prepares students for life. In addition, fewer than half of teachers favored implementing a formal prevention program. This is a discouraging statistic, as it implies that teachers may not see it as their responsibility to intervene, or to report it to administrators.

That being said, multiple prevention programs described in the offline prevention section of this paper require the school to implement them. Programs like iSAFE and Sticks and Stones are curriculum-based programs (Snakenborg, et al., 2011). This infers that school staff does have some responsibility to educate kids about prevention methods. By utilizing some of the programs that are available, it may make it easier for staff to facilitate conversations about the content.

That way, they are not being asked to create presentations or lesson plans dedicated to the topic. Instead, they are merely utilizing content that is readily available for classroom settings. They just have to encourage open dialogue about cyberbullying and topics pertaining to that subject. The issue with this is if some teachers have the belief that cyberbullying is not a topic that deserves attention. The problem then becomes convincing teachers that the mental health implications of cyberbullying can be severe, and that it generally does not “toughen students up”. It can have devastating effects, and regardless of personal opinion, should be taken seriously. It may be necessary to introduce statistics and studies to school staff to demonstrate this.

Role of Parents in Prevention

Parents have a great deal of responsibility in cyber-bullying prevention. Technology has changed the way young people interact with each other, which requires parents to ensure that communication is happening safely (Elsaesser, Russell, Ohannessian, & Patton, 2017). Research shows that cyberbullying prevention strategies consider parent-adolescent dynamics and their relationship to community, school and society. This means that the prevention methods discussed in this paper are entangled with parents.

In the offline prevention section, it was discussed that when students have a healthy bond with their parent or caregiver, they are less likely to engage in cyberbullying behaviors (Ang, 2015). An additional source asserted that parental warmth offered to children through nurturance and affection is significantly associated with positive outcomes and behaviors (Christin, et al., 2016). Parental monitoring is connected to lowering youth’s inappropriate or risky behaviors. Studies show that when warmth and monitoring co-exist, cyberbullying is less likely to occur (Christin, et al., 2016).

In addition to this, parents should be responsible for monitoring the communication that

their children are having online. It may be beneficial for parents to ensure that they have access to social media accounts, by having the child's usernames and passwords. Though this may seem like an invasion of privacy, it may be able to protect young people from potential threats when adults are aware of what is taking place online. Kids are getting phones, laptops, and tablets in grade school, without understanding how to use them. They may not know about the dangers that exist online. Though this may be a common occurrence for young people to have advanced technology, it also allows for the possibility of cyberbullying. It can be hard to decide not to get a phone for a young person when their friends and neighbors have them, but it may help prevent cyberbullying by deciding to wait. In the meantime, parents have the opportunity to speak with their kids about what types of situations to avoid when using technology in the future (Snakenborg, et al., 2012).

Parents can also utilize resource webpages, like one offered by the National PTA. The website gives parents guidance on digital safety, and how to supervise and set limits to ensure their children have a safe and rewarding experience. Additionally, the PTA website says that parents should learn to the technology their children are using, and to take an interest in what their children are doing. This will encourage the young person to feel comfortable disclosing information to their parent, which is especially important should a threat of cyberbullying arise. The PTA states that parents need to teach their kids to make responsible decisions about using technology by exerting control and establishing guidelines.

Role of Young People in Prevention

The youth themselves play a unique role in prevention. They make up many of both the victims and perpetrators, so they are a key part of the solution too. There are things that young people can do on their own to help in prevention. Mehari, Moore, Wasssdorp, Varney, Berg, and

Leff (2018) acknowledged that there was not enough research to conclude which prevention strategies were most helpful for adolescents that wanted to prevent cyberbullying. In order to gauge what methods youth used, they conducted a study to determine what options adolescents are most likely to utilize. The study consisted of 29 adolescents, 15 parents, and 13 primary care providers who responded to semi-structured interviews about cyberbullying. Focusing extensively on youth responses, providing education and awareness, supporting the victim, and being aware of the situation were amongst the top recorded responses. Researchers explained that these responses indicate that young people are aware of the role they play in preventing cyberbullying incidents. Adolescents understand that they have the power to stop cyberbullying on their own. This is important as they are a group that is heavily affected. Ensuring that young people know how to handle these situations appropriately is a key factor in prevention. However, a small amount of those who participated in the study reported that they would not get involved in a cyberbullying situation. Twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they would simply not utilize a prevention technique. This signifies that, although the majority of youth were able to say they would take some type of action, there are still some who would not.

That being said, this issue seems to be something that is heavily dependent on adults. Much of the research included in this paper depended on adults (school administration, parents, caretakers) to speak with youth and help them understand their actions and possible consequences. Additionally, kids may rely on adults to implement prevention strategies and software like Cyberbullying Prevention Engine and PureSight (Snakenborg, et al., 2011). They might also need school prompting to talk about cyberbullying, and to view it as an issue with real consequences. Because adolescence represents a time of development, young people might not have the tools they need to understand how severe the effects of cyberbullying can be. Though

young people are always responsible for their own behavior, it is clear that adolescence is a difficult time for many. Emotional and mental tensions may account for cyberbullying to an extent. Again, this paper did not address prevention programs that directly benefit individuals who would be the victims in cyberbullying situations. Because the cyberbully is the source of the problem, they need to be targeted as the individual who needs to change and comprehend their own behavior. Cyberbullying is a community issue, and each person needs to find ways to contribute to ending the problem.

Some additional things young people can do (besides providing education and awareness, supporting the victim, and being aware of the situation) is they can check on each other, have honest conversations amongst themselves, and report any signs of possible cyberbullying, according to Stopbullying.gov.

Youth can take steps to advocate for themselves. They can stand up and let an adult know if they are witnessing a cyberbullying situation, or if they are in one themselves. They can also rely on cyberbullying software to teach them what cyberbullying is, what the emotional implication are, and what they can do to help someone who is experiencing it. With the proper guidance and resources, young people can successfully prevent cyberbullying from happening to themselves and others. The more adolescents are trusted with the responsibility to get involved with cyberbullying initiatives, the more likely they will be able to step up and do the right thing if a situation arises.

Section III: Recommendations and Conclusions

It is imperative that prevention methods are accessible and able to stop cyberbullying from happening. Offline and online prevention methods are needed to ensure that cyberbullying does not change an individual's life forever. Based on the research presented in this paper, both offline methods and online methods should be used. This is not a "one size fits all" approach, and as the research in this paper suggests, varying circumstances call for various preventative measures. For example, online prevention like software programs may not be a necessary prevention strategy at home if the child does not have access to a computer. Instead, offline strategies may be more beneficial. On the flip side, if a young person has access to technology in their home and a parent/caregiver, then online and offline prevention strategies are advised.

A combination of offline and online strategies should be implemented for prevention success. Some key offline recommendations include empathy training, which has been shown to reduce aggressive behavior (Ang, 2015). Since adolescence is a crucial time for development, it is helpful for caregivers to spend time talking to youth and making sure they comprehend their actions. One such approach is provided through empathy training because it teaches young people to understand that their behavior has consequences. Another technique that has been shown to be successful was a strong and positive parent-adolescent bond. This is a critical part in preventing cyberbullying and cannot be overemphasized (Ang, 2015). A healthy parent-adolescent relationship is necessary in helping reduce the likelihood of cyberbullying, which means that this prevention technique is recommended to help preventing cyberbullying. Ultimately, offline prevention programs should focus on changing the mindset of the cyberbully, because they are demonstrating that aggression and bullying is an appropriate response to life stressors (Ang, 2015). According to Ang (2015), all of these techniques are shown to be effective

in preventing cyberbullying. Additionally, there are online techniques that should be considered.

Even if an individual understands that cyberbullying is harmful, they still have the ability to make the choice to act inappropriately. Parents and caregivers can only do so much when trying to use reason and logic to stop someone from cyberbullying. That is where technology sets in, because it can act as another barrier in preventing cyberbullying.

Some of the programs mentioned in this paper included Puresight, whose website states that this technology delivers a multi-layered approach that is evasion-proof and that it offers effective social networking protection. This is useful because social media platforms are used by billions of people worldwide, so they are serving the population in ways that offline strategies cannot. Another popular program is ConRed, which implements procedures that have been proven to be successful at the school and community level, according to their website. This program was designed to cope with the three main areas that have been shown to be related to cyberbullying, which is the internet dependence, traditional bullying, and empathy. It was proven successful in preventing cyberbullying for those who were not directly involved for those who were not directly involved, but were at risk for being involved (Del Ray, 2016).

Programs like ConRed and Cyberbullying Prevention Engine could easily discourage an individual from deciding to bully someone over the internet. If the young person is aware that this software is installed on the computer they are using, they would also know that their behavior was being heavily monitored. Not only is the computer not allowing them to communicate offensively, it is also recording any attempted violations to do so.

KiVa was another online strategy that was discussed in this paper. It is a program that has been shown to reduce self and peer reported bullying and victimization significantly. It has been also been shown to prevent verbal, relational and physical bullying (Williford, et al., 2012).

This technology provides lessons and online games to young people that can help prevent cyberbullying, according to KiVa's website. Other initiatives are being taken by social media platforms themselves, as was mentioned by Good Morning America. Companies like Instagram created software that can detect offensive posts/messages and warn users to change their language. The paper mentioned several benefits to online prevention, which include allowing technology to do some of the work on the front end. people can go places where there is no software or program on the computer or device that controls interactions with others. AI is learning about what it considered offensive, and what is not. As time goes on, it will only continue to advance.

Technology can monitor behavior and reduce incidents of cyberbullying effectively, but not without limitations. For programs that are installed onto a computer or device, young people can simply go to a friend's house or the library to use devices that don't have restrictions on them (Snakenborg, et al., 2012). That being said, online prevention is not necessarily going to stop cyberbullying 100% of the time unless it is installed on all devices a young person uses. This is why offline and online prevention strategies should be combined together for best results.

Cyberbullying is complex, and the best solution should incorporate multiple ways to prevent it. Caregivers can talk to their children and try to understand their mindset, and they can also use online tools to promote understanding and comprehension. If both offline and online methods are showing to be effective, then it is logical to incorporate both into young people's lives.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should consider how successful offline and online prevention methods are based on who is implementing them. Because schools and parents are mainly responsible for

these techniques, they should be considered when determining how well each method is working. To really understand these methods, researchers will have to continue to examine offline and online methods, especially as technology changes.

In order to prevent cyberbullying, both online and offline prevention programs are necessary. Adolescence is a developmentally crucial time, which is why it is the appropriate time to teach young people about the harmful implications of aggressive behavior (Ang, 2015; Kim, et al., 2018). By learning strategies to cope with stress and anger, feeling empathy for others, and engaging in school-based curriculum, students can learn about the harmful effects of cyberbullying. When combining these techniques with preventative technology, young people and adults have the resources they need to prevent cyberbullying.

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