

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: York St John University		
Unit of Assessment: UoA 4 (Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience)		
Title of case study: Increasing awareness of the nature and impact of peer-victimisation in adolescents and young adults.		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2002 - 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Nathalie Noret	Senior lecturer	2005 - present
Dr Anna Macklin	Senior lecturer	2006 - present
Dr Melanie Douglass	Senior lecturer	2015 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013 - 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
Peer-victimisation (e.g., bullying and sexual harassment) are frequent experiences for adolescents and young adults and are associated with poor mental health. Based on our survey research on peer-victimisation, our impact work has 1) raised awareness of the prevalence of bullying, cyberbullying, and bystander behaviour in schools, and the impact of these behaviours on adolescent mental health, and 2) raised awareness of sexual harm in young adults through our All About Respect project (launched in 2017). Our work has informed; policy development in the UK and internationally, and the creation and delivery of workshops raising awareness of bullying and sexual harm.		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
Our research on peer-victimisation focuses on experiences of bullying in school and experiences of sexual harm in university.		
School Bullying: From 2002 to 2006 [3.1] Rivers (now at the University of Strathclyde) and Noret conducted annual surveys in ten secondary schools. These surveys highlighted the nature and prevalence of cyberbullying in the context of other types of bullying. Over five years, an average of 14.9% of the total sample (N=14,166) reported being a victim of cyberbullying, rising from 13.3% in 2002 to 15.64% in 2006. Cyberbullying, however, was not the most prevalent form of bullying. In this study, verbal and relational bullying were more frequently experienced than cyberbullying, and physical bullying was the least frequently experienced. Noret conducted follow up surveys annually between 2011 and 2014 with 3,737 12- and 13-year-olds from nine schools. A similar picture was also found in this study [3.2], where bullying was more frequently experienced than cyberbullying, and bullying but not cyberbullying was significantly associated with poor mental health. Alongside this survey work, Rivers and Noret conducted a further survey with 2002 adolescents from 11 schools in 2003. This survey highlighted the prevalence of being a bystander of bullying in school, and the negative impact that being a bystander of bullying can have on poor mental health. Our survey findings highlighted that being a bystander of bullying in adolescence is significantly associated with poor mental health [3.3], and with suicidal thoughts [3.4; 3.5].		
Our survey research was among the first internationally to identify 1) the prevalence of cyberbullying (in the context of other forms of bullying), and 2) the prevalence and impact of bystander behaviour in a school bullying context. These findings suggest that cyberbullying is not the most prevalent form of bullying in school [3.1; 3.2]. When studied in the context of other forms of bullying, experiences of being bullied but not cyberbullied are associated with poor mental health [3.2]. The survey findings also highlight the impact of witnessing bullying on poor mental health [3.3; 3.4; 3.5].		

Sexual harm: Noret, Macklin and Douglass have developed the work on peer-victimisation to examine the nature and impact of sexual harm in university students. In their review of female perpetrators of sexual harm, Douglass and colleagues [3.5] highlight the prevalence of female perpetrators of sexual harassment and intimate partner violence. Furthermore, and as part of the All About Respect project, Noret, Macklin and Douglass have conducted campus surveys in 2017 (N=433), 2018 (N=193), and 2020 (N=116). These surveys have examined 1) awareness of sexual harm on campus, 2) confidence in intervening in sexual harassment witnessed (bystander self-efficacy), 3) the prevalence of sexual harm and 4) correlates with mental health. Our first survey in 2017 [5.7] (N=433, 365 females and 56 males) highlighted the prevalence of sexual harm on campus in the 2016/17 academic year. Where 60% of the student sample had experienced sexual harassment, 20% had experienced sexual assault, and 11% had experienced intimate partner violence (note: multiple answers were possible). This survey also highlighted a relationship between awareness of sexual harm and bystander self-efficacy (the confidence to intervene in problematic behaviours witnessed), where a lack of understanding of sexual harm was associated with lower bystander self-efficacy [5.7].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

The following research outputs appeared in peer-reviewed journals which are all rated as Q1 (N=5) or Q2 (N=1) journals on the Scimagojr journal rank system.

- [3.1] Rivers, I. & Noret, N. (2009). 'I h 8 u': Findings from a five-year study of text and e-mail bullying. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(4), 643-671. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920903071918>
- [3.2] Noret, N., Hunter, S. C., & Rasmussen, S. (2020). The role of perceived social support in the relationship between bullying and mental health difficulties in adolescents. *School Mental Health*, 12, 156-168. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-019-09339-9>
- [3.3] Rivers, I. & Noret, N. (2013). Potential Suicide Ideation and Its Association With Observing Bullying at School. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 53, S32- S36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.10.279>
- [3.4] Rivers, I., & Noret, N. (2010). Participant roles in bullying behavior and their association with thoughts of ending one's life. *Crisis*, 31, 143-148. <https://doi.org/10.1027/0227-5910/a000020>
- [3.5] Rivers, I., Poteat, V.P., Noret, N., & Ashurst, N. (2009). Observing bullying at school: The mental health implications of witness status. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 24(4), 211-223. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018164>
- [3.6] Douglass, M. D., D'Aguzzo, S., & Jones, S. (2020). Women as active agents: Female perpetrators of sexual harassment and domestic abuse. *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences*, 14(1), 32–49. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ebs0000171>

Supporting Grants

- [3.7] Noret, N., Macklin, A., Conroy, H., Thompson, S., Douglass, M., & Doran, J. (2019). All About Respect. Funder: *Institute of Social Justice, York St John University*, £10,498.00.
- [3.8] Streatfield, N., & Noret, N., All About Respect in the Community. Funder: *North Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner*, £11,200.00.
- [3.9] York St John Institutional bid (2018). Healthy Relationships. Funder: *HEFCE Catalyst Fund*, £39,500.
- [3.10] Noret, N. (2014). Stand Up for Us, 2014. Funder: *City of York Council*, £4,000.00.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Informing national and internal bullying policy and guidance: Our research on bullying [3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5] has been used as evidence of the prevalence of cyberbullying, and the impact

of being a bystander of bullying, in several international policy and guidance documents. Between 2014 and 2020, eleven such documents cite this research [3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5], and use these findings to raise awareness of bullying, and the impact of bullying. Our research findings on cyberbullying [3.1] are cited in UNICEF's international guide on tackling bullying and cyberbullying, to highlight the prevalence of cyberbullying. Furthermore, our research [3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5] on bystanders of bullying is cited as evidence of the mental health impact of being a bystander of bullying in two guidance documents published by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the US, in think tank documents in the US and Norway, and in government policy documents in Wales and Finland [5.1]. For example, our research findings on the mental health impact of being a bystander of bullying [3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5] is cited as evidence to support the notion of the impact of bullying for all children and young people in the Welsh government's statutory guidance on tackling bullying. This guidance is for local authorities, schools, and other professionals working with children and young people and outlines statutory requirements for tackling bullying.

Understanding bullying workshops: The findings of this research [3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4] have also informed the development of workshops focusing on the nature and prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying, and how these behaviours relate to poor mental health. Between 2013 and 2020 these workshops have been delivered to approximately 350 adolescents through school workshops, local authority wide events and sessions with organisations such as York Mind. Approximately 150 professionals have attended the workshops through events organised by the Bullying Intervention Group, National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP), and local authority-wide events. For example, Noret also presented at the Norfolk Youth Against Bullying conference in 2019 and 2020. In 2019 an illustrated infographic was created that summarised the workshop's key points and was shared in all schools in Norfolk [5.2] to raise awareness of the impact of bullying and cyberbullying. Testimonial evidence of the Norfolk events highlights the impact of these sessions: *"Her presentations always contain a wealth of up to date evidence-based information that is easy for all to understand and remember afterwards. She (Noret) has over the years influenced practice across East Anglia in terms of anti-bullying work and in particular in Norfolk where we are proud of the work we have conducted in terms of cyberbullying. In Norfolk we held anti-bullying surveys for many years and the children and young people who participated reported high levels of knowledge about cyberbullying and what to do about it"* [5.2]. Furthermore, evaluation of an NCOP workshop highlighted that all delegates reported they could apply the workshop content to their work [5.2]. Delegates also reported finding the workshop applicable to their work; *"It's good to have a session like this as a reminder of bullying and an update on current issues"*.

All About Respect: In 2017, Noret and Macklin were part of an institutional bid [3.9] which led to the development of the All About Respect (AAR) project. This is a collaborative project, connecting academics (Noret, Macklin and Douglass) with student services professionals, students, and charities. The project aims to raise awareness of sexual harm through the delivery of bystander intervention training, and evidence based campaigns.

Bystander training to tackle sexual harassment: Our research findings on the nature and prevalence of sexual harm [3.6; 5.7], the role of bystanders in a peer-victimisation context [3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5], and the relationship between awareness of sexual harm and bystander self-efficacy [5.7] have informed the development of our AAR bystander training. This training covers how to define sexual harm and bystander behaviour, and aims to empower attendees to be more active bystanders. Since the 2016/17 academic year, 254 students have attended the voluntary workshops. Since November 2020 the training has been delivered online, and to date has been completed online by a further 132 students. Evaluation surveys are completed immediately before and after the online training, and four weeks post training. This data collection is ongoing, but interim data analysis (N=10) identified that confidence in intervening in sexual harm witnessed (bystander self-efficacy) significantly increased after the workshops, and this was sustained four weeks after the workshop [5.3] see *Table 1*.

Table 1: Mean(sd) scores of self-efficacy before and after the AAR bystander training

	Time 1: Before training	Time 2: Immediately after training	Time 3: Four weeks post training
Bystander self-efficacy	$\bar{x} = 76.77$ (10.26)	$\bar{x} = 88.66$ (6.22)	$\bar{x} = 89.30$ (8.65)
$\chi^2_F=12.25, p=.002$			

Students are also provided with the opportunity to share comments on the impact of the training on their behaviour, and highlight how the training has increased their confidence in challenging inappropriate behaviour: *"I was a little scared to do this training, however I am so happy I did as I have a clearer understanding of sexual violence and what a bystander is"* and *"Really detailed and really informative, definitely worth doing as it showed me other ways to intervene if someone is in danger"* [5.3]. One student attendee also wrote a blog post on the training [5.4], and highlights how the training helped them to be more confident in intervening in problematic situations *"The training was also incredibly realistic... It is made clear from the outset that you aren't expected to be a superhero, and the training focuses on giving you techniques to diffuse uncomfortable situations without being confrontational. As someone who is not confident in their physical capabilities, this was a huge relief, and I left the training feeling as though I would actually be able to intervene in a situation that was making other people uncomfortable."*

In 2019 we started to deliver the AAR bystander training to professionals working with young people across the region, including York Samaritans (N=30) [5.5] and North Yorkshire Youth council [5.6]. Evaluations from our Samaritans training session highlighted how it led people to think differently about sexual harm: *'I totally appreciated the reinforcement of the fact that anyone of any gender can be a victim of sexual assault and that this should always be taken seriously'* and *'I really explored perceptions and helped to break down barriers regarding what sexual violence, harassment, and abuse is'* [5.5]. Adult and adolescent representatives from the North Yorkshire Youth Council also attended the AAR Bystander Intervention Training. In their impact report, North Yorkshire Youth Council highlight how they plan to *"Promote campaigns such as the 'All About Respect', Bystander Awareness project"* to ensure consistent messaging around sexual violence in adolescence [5.6]. Adolescent delegates highlighted the impact of the training on their understanding of sexual harm [5.6]; *"I found it really interesting cos we all learnt about the different things you can do whether you're a stranger or a friend in a situation where someone is in danger"* and highlight how they will use the training in their work in schools (using their school activity called KYMSGAME): *"I'm going to use the training is, when we go into schools and colleges and do the KYMSGAME I'd like to talk all about consent and no means no and then obviously what you can do as a bystander"* [5.6]

Awareness Raising Activities & Campaigning. Starting in 2017, Noret, Macklin and Douglass conducted the AAR student survey [5.7] examining awareness and prevalence of sexual harm on campus at York St John and York College. The findings were shared with student volunteers who used the findings to inform awareness-raising activities (e.g., campaigns, posters, podcasts and films). For example, our survey data on the prevalence of sexual harm and reports of seeking help have been shared on campus through posters, and social media posts as a means of raising awareness of the issue. AAR has been well received by students, academic staff, and professionals working in sexual harm as an evidence based, collaborative, intervention programme raising awareness of sexual harm on campus.

The effectiveness of AAR in raising awareness of sexual harm on campus, and available support services is evaluated through our AAR student surveys conducted in 2017 (N=359), 2018 (N=193), and 2020 (N=116) [5.7]. Findings of these surveys highlight that over this four-year period awareness of sexual harm increased. Based on a behaviour change framework, a readiness to change scale was included in the survey. This captures student scores of pre-contemplation (no awareness of sexual harm), contemplation (some awareness of sexual harm) and action (actively changing behaviour to tackle sexual harm on campus). The results highlighted that contemplative scores remained stable over this time. The mean action score increased over this time, but this change was not statistically significant. However, the results of the surveys highlight how students' scores on pre-contemplation significantly reduced over this

time [5.7]. This suggests that a lack of awareness of sexual harm has reduced over the three-year period, see *Table 2*.

Table 2: *Student and Staff mean (SD) scores on the readiness to change scales.*

	2017 (N=359)	2018 (N=193)	2020 (N=116)	
Pre-contemplative	2.48 (0.64)	2.41 (0.65)	2.28 (0.60)	$F_{(2,665)}=4.41, p=.013$
Contemplative	3.26 (0.61)	3.26 (0.63)	3.17 (0.60)	$F_{(2,665)}=1.03, p=.358$
Action	1.58 (0.79)	1.66 (0.92)	1.74 (0.84)	$F_{(2,665)}=1.76, p=.173$

Furthermore, the proportion of students who reported agreeing with the statement that the university has a *good range of educational activities/ programmes to raise awareness of, and educate about, sexual assault* increased from 18.9% in 2017 to 25.3% in 2020 [5.7].

Presentations on AAR as an intervention programme have been delivered at several regional networking events on tackling sexual harm, and delivered to other Higher and Further Education establishments including the University of York and the University of Sheffield. In February 2020 a workshop on AAR was delivered to 20 delegates from 12 different Community Colleges across the USA attending a management programme at York St John University. The feedback highlighted how delegates would use the information on the project to inform their own work on campus, for example: *"I will advocate for better campus signage, including messages on back of bathroom stall doors"*. Feedback from professionals working in preventing sexual harm [5.9] highlight the importance of the AAR project: *"I am encouraged to see that such a fantastic initiative is available for the students of York St John"* [5.9].

AAR was also a runner up in the 2019 Guardian Awards for student experience and was praised for *'improving the student experiencing by taking a collaborative, evidence based, and student led approach to tackling sexual harm on campus'* [5.10]. Student feedback on AAR integrated into the award nomination highlights the impact of AAR on the student community *"The All About Respect project has been amazing and has reached so many students across campus. It's made me feel more confident on nights out, knowing that my fellow students are aware that harassment is not acceptable on our campus or even in York. The legacy of this project will impact students for many years to come."* [5.10]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[5.1] Report: Overton report on 11 policy documents, guidelines, think tank publications and working papers from between 2014 and 2020.

[5.2] Report: NCOP Understanding Bullying Workshops evaluations; testimonial from senior educational psychologist.

[5.3] Report: Student evaluation of the All About Respect Bystander Intervention training, data from pre, post, and 4-weeks post training

[5.4] Blog: Student blog post on the All About Respect Bystander Intervention training

[5.5] Report: Evaluation of the All About Respect Bystander Intervention training delivered to the Samaritans.

[5.6] Report: North Yorkshire Youth Commission feedback on the All About Respect Bystander Intervention training.

[5.7] Report: All About Respect three-year student survey data from 2017, 2018, and 2020.

[5.8] Report: Feedback from the College Campus Leaders workshop.

[5.9] Testimonial: Representative from Re:Shape, a sexual violence charity.

[5.10] Document: Guardian Award nomination for student experience in 2019.