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Testing a school-wide anti-bullying program in elementary schools

Submission date
18/05/2020

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
07/10/2020

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
13/08/2021

Condition category
Other

[_] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[X] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol
Background and study aims
Many anti-bullying programs have been developed and tested for primary education. However, teachers still experience difficulties when dealing with bullying. In the current project we investigate how anti-bullying programs can better support teachers in identifying and dealing with bullying. The main aim of this studyis to examine the effectiveness of an anti-bullying intervention on elementary teachers' ability to effectively deal with bullying and children's bullying behavior.

Who can participate?
Students and teachers in grades 3-6 in the Netherlands

What does the study involve?
The study involves the PRIMA anti-bullying program for primary schools. The study aims to compare the effects of PRIMA from the viewpoints of teachers and students. The schools were randomly allocated to one of three groups. In one group, students received the PRIMA program, including the lessons for students (PRIMA-L+). In the second group, students received the PRIMA program without this curriculum (PRIMA-L-). The third group used their 'care as usual' policy, which means that they implemented nationally established anti-bullying guidelines, such as monitoring students' wellbeing at school, having an anti-bullying coordinator, and having a social safety policy.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Schools received PRIMA as a free trial, either immediately (for the first two groups) or following the study (for the third group). Students might benefiot from a reduction in bullying as a results of the study. Risks to students or teachers were not expected.

Where is the study run from?
The University of Amsterdam (Netherlands)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
April 2017 to July 2018

Who is funding the study?
Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research)

Who is the main contact?
Marloes van Verseveld, m.d.van.verseveld@hva.nl

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

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Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number
Nil known

IRAS number

ClinicalTrials.gov number
Nil known

Secondary identifying numbers
2014-01-110PRO

Study information

Scientific Title
Effects of implementing multiple components in a school-wide anti-bullying program: a randomized controlled trial in elementary schools

Study objectives
1. Bullying and victimization decrease significantly more in PRIMA schools compared to the control schools and this effect is stronger for PRIMA schools that include a student curriculum
2. The use of more universal components is related to stronger program effects.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 10/04/2018, Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of the University of Amsterdam (Nieuwe Achtergracht 129B, 1018 WS Amsterdam, the Netherlands; +31 (0)20 525 6686; w.p.m.vandenwildenberg@uva.nl), ref: 2017-CDE-8008

Study design
Interventional non-blinded cluster-randomized trial

Primary study design
Interventional

Secondary study design
Cluster randomised trial

Study setting(s)
School

Study type(s)
Prevention

Participant information sheet
Not available in web format, please use the contact details below to request a patient information sheet

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Prevention of bullying behavior in schools

Interventions
Intervention: PRIMA, a school-wide and modular anti-bullying program for elementary school, including six core program components (i.e., student curriculum, monitor report, e-learning, face-to-face training, protocols for specific bullying situations, protocols for students involved in bullying situations). The duration of the program is different for each program component. In total, the program's duration of the universal components (i.e., student curriculum, e-learning, face-to-face training) is 12 h for each school year, excluding the time needed for reading and implementing indicated measures (i.e., protocols and monitor report).

Control: 'care as usual' (i.e., regular anti-bullying activities as required by the Social Safety at School Act in the Netherlands.

After stratification of schools by school size, the number of special needs students in the school, and the urbanization level of the location of the school, schools were randomly assigned to one of the two experimental arms or the control group. In the PRIMA-L+ condition, schools received all core components of the PRIMA program, including the student curriculum. In the PRIMA-L- condition, schools received all core components of the PRIMA, except for the student lessons. The control schools carried out a 'care as usual' policy.
School staff members and teachers implement the program in the schools. One teacher or school nurse is appointed as coordinator for the PRIMA program.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome measure
Data was collected at two time points: September/October 2017 and March/April 2018
1. Self-reported victimization measured using the global item from the revised Olweus Bully /Victim Questionnaire (OBVQ)
2. Self-reported bullying measured by eight items based on the OBVQ
3. Peer-reported victimization, students were asked to nominate students who were being bullied in the past couple of months
4. Peer-reported bullying, students were asked to nominate students who bullied other children in the past couple of months

Secondary outcome measures
Peer-reported reinforcers, outsiders, and defenders. Based on the Participant Roles Questionnaire, three single items were used to identify students' participant roles in bullying situations concerning the past couple of months.

Overall study start date
18/04/2017

Completion date
31/07/2018

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Schools containing more than 50 students
2. Schools that were not already using an anti-bullying prevention program
3. Schools that were not participating in any other study in this area
4. Schools that were willing to receive additional information about the study

Participant type(s)
Other

Age group
Child

Sex
Both

Target number of participants
The 31 participating schools included a total of 174 classes representing 4,285 students in grades 3-6 who were eligible for participation in the study. Active informed consent was given by parents for the participation of a total of 3,135 students (73.2% of the initial sample, Mage = 10.00, SD = 1.21). In all groups, an approximately equal percentage of students received written permission from their parents (PRIMA-L+ condition: 70.7%; PRIMA-L- condition: 79.5%; and control condition: 69.1%). The PRIMA-L+ condition comprised 873 students (Mage = 9.97, SD = 1.23), the PRIMA-L- condition had 982 students (Mage = 10.05, SD = 1.17), and the control condition contained 1,389 students (Mage = 9.98, SD = 1.21).

Total final enrolment
3244

Key exclusion criteria
1. Grades below third grade
2. Classes with trainee teachers

Date of first enrolment
01/04/2017

Date of final enrolment
22/07/2017

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Netherlands

Study participating centre
Schools in the Netherlands
-
Netherlands
-

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Amsterdam

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Sponsor type
University/education

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ROR
https://ror.org/04dkp9463

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek

Alternative Name(s)
Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, Dutch National Scientific Foundation, Dutch National Science Foundation, Dutch Research Council (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek), NWO:Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO), Dutch Research Council, Dutch Research Council, Netherlands, NWO

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
Netherlands

Results and Publications

Publication and dissemination plan
A manuscript for publication in a scientific journal in 2020, and publication in Dutch professional-based journals (for teachers and school staff).

Intention to publish date
01/07/2020

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be available upon request from Marloes van Verseveld (m.d.van.verseveld@hva.nl). The data will be accessible in the autumn of 2020 for the promotion committee of the University of Amsterdam and will be available for the period of 10 years. Data in the available datasets is anonymised. Data with personal information has been stored separately on a secure server of the HvA and will be deleted after the completion of this study.

IPD sharing plan summary
Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol file		08/12/2014	07/10/2020	No	No
Statistical Analysis Plan		08/06/2020	07/10/2020	No	No
Abstract results	initial results presented at the European Public Health Conference		13/08/2021	No	No
Results article		01/07/2021	13/08/2021	Yes	No