

## ABSTRACT

### CHILDREN'S RELATIONAL BULLYING: GENDER AND AGE DIFFERENCES

In the past, researchers assumed bullying was a behavior mainly engaged in by boys. More recently, researchers have explored different types of bullying, noting that some types appeared to be committed more by girls. Relational aggression is one type of bullying in which contradictory information exists regarding gender and age differences. The present study evaluated whether girls and seventh graders engaged in more relational bullying behavior than did boys and third graders. Three questionnaires (self, peer, and teacher) were used to obtain this information in a California school district. Differences were found in victimization between gender and grade level. Girls reported higher levels of relational victimization, as did third graders. Teacher and peer reports for relational victimization were associated. Relationally victimized children placed less importance on friends and reported having fewer friends. Implications of these results and recommended future research in the area of relational aggression were discussed.

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