

**Report**

# PILOT EVALUATION OF DISABILITY ANTI- BULLYING (DIAL) TRAINING FOR ELEMENTARY SPECIAL AND GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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2023

## **Impact on Teacher Self Efficacy, Attitudes toward Bullying, and Student Outcomes**



# INTRODUCTION

**Bullying is a pervasive problem among American school-aged children, with over 20% of students reporting being bullied at school, according to recent national reports.**

Youth involved in bullying (i.e., victims, perpetrators) experience higher rates of depression, social anxiety, and low self-esteem, which could contribute to academic and behavioral challenges.

Students with disabilities are particularly affected by bullying, both as victims and as perpetrators, and this disproportionate involvement persists over time.

Given the high risk of bullying involvement for students with disabilities and the negative effects of bullying on psychosocial outcomes, it is important for teachers to have the knowledge, self-efficacy, and skills to recognize and respond to bullying, especially among students with disabilities.



The current study evaluated the Disability Anti-buLLying (DIAL) online professional development training program for K-5 educators to assess its impact on teacher and student outcomes related to bullying and associated psychosocial factors.

# THE INTERVENTION



The DIAL PD consists of four online modules focused on informing general and special education elementary school teachers about how to effectively recognize and respond to bullying, with a specific emphasis on students with disabilities.



## Target Population

General and Special Education Teachers



## Intervention

Online Professional Development:

- Module 1.** Understanding bullying
- Module 2.** Examining risk characteristics
- Module 3.** Establishing school-wide and classroom prevention
- Module 4.** Individual prevention



Evidence-based frameworks and prevention strategies used within the DIAL training have the potential to facilitate the following outcomes for teachers and students.

### Potential Teacher Outcomes

- Knowledge of bullying experiences of students with and at risk for disability identification
- Competency and skills to intervene to assist when bullying occurs
- Improved teaching effectiveness
- Greater job satisfaction
- Decreased teacher stress
- Greater self-efficacy
- Better classroom management skills
- Greater confidence level working with students with disabilities

### Potential Student Outcomes

- Decrease in prevalence gap of bullying/victimization incidents of students with disabilities vs. without
- Improved school connectedness and climate
- Improved teacher-student relations
- Decreased academic and behavioral difficulties
- Increased academic engagement (standardized tests and grades)

# Participants

# METHODS



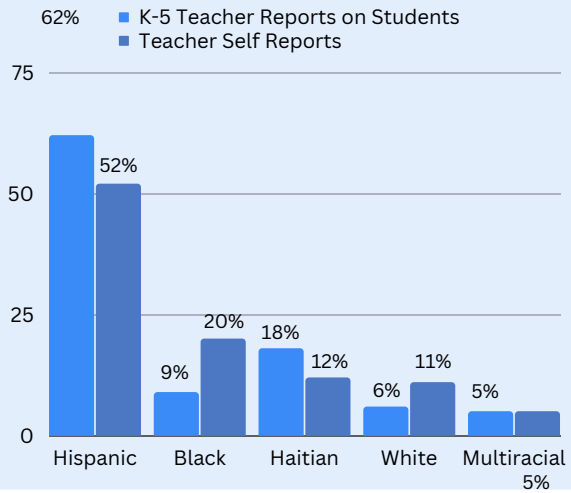
## Overview

To evaluate the DIAL training, three surveys were completed before the teachers received the DIAL training (pre-test) and after they received the training (post-test): (1) students in the 3rd-5th grade completed self-report surveys about their experiences (student self-report); (2) teachers completed surveys about their K-5th grade student's behaviors (teacher report on students); and (3) teachers completed surveys about their own experiences (teacher self-report).

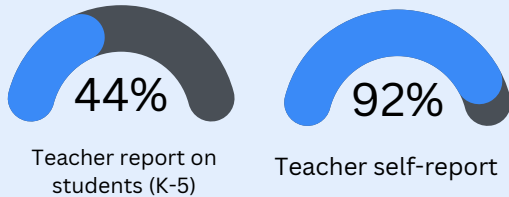
## Participants

	Intervention	Control
<b>284</b> Student self-reports (3-5th grade)	<b>164</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>472</b> Teacher reports on students (K-5th grade)	<b>276</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>65</b> Teacher Self Reports	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>

## Race/Ethnicity



## Percent identified as female



## Measures - Teacher Self-Report

- Student Engagement
- Classroom Management
- Instructional Strategies
- Normative Attitude
- Avoidance Attitude
- Maladaptive Attitude
- Job Dissatisfaction
- Students Intervene
- Staff Intervene
- Aggression Problems
- School Commitment
- Positive Interactions
- Prevention PD

## Measures - 3-5th Student Self-Report

- Classroom Experience
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Peer Victimization
- Prosocial Behaviors
- Staff Intervene
- Student Intervene
- Classroom Climate

## Measures - Teacher Report on Students

- Behavior Risk
- Social Cognition
- Social Anxiety
- Conflict
- Bullying

## Analysis

- Linear regression models for each outcome to estimate the effect of DIAL on post-scores while adjusting for pre-scores.
- Mediation models examining teacher attitudes and behaviors as a mediator of student outcomes

# RESULTS



**Compared to the control condition, the training had a positive impact on several student and teacher outcomes at follow-up.**

<b>Student Self Report Grades 3-5</b>	<b>Teacher Report on Students</b>	<b>Teacher Self Report</b>
<p>Increased student's self-reported prosocial behaviors</p>	<p>Potential indirect reduction in social anxiety by reduction of teacher maladaptive attitudes.</p>	<p>Increased teachers' self-efficacy for implementing effective instructional strategies</p>
<p>Peers were less likely to intervene in instances of bullying</p>		<p>Reduced teachers' maladaptive attitudes</p>
		<p>Reduced teachers' avoidance attitudes towards bullying</p>



# CONCLUSIONS

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This pilot study demonstrated that elementary school teachers participating in the DIAL PD increased their self-efficacy in relation to implementing instructional strategies while reducing their maladaptive and avoidant attitudes towards bullying.

## Where do we go from here?

**1**

It is imperative for general education teachers to receive targeted professional development opportunities to intervene and prevent bullying among students with disabilities.

**2**

The training can be coupled with any bully prevention intervention, including commercially developed curricula, as well as home grown approaches, to create a comprehensive program.

**3**

Scale the program to incorporate the training into the larger school climate improvement or bully prevention plan in schools.

**4**

Identify potential moderators that may enhance the effectiveness of the intervention to better support teachers in the implementation of the professional development.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We would also like to extend a special thank you to our community partners for their support and collaboration in this important initiative.

Their dedication to promoting inclusivity and preventing bullying among students with disabilities has been essential in the development and implementation of this program. We are deeply grateful for their contributions and look forward to continuing our work together.

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