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A Study of Parental Understanding of and Intervention in Cyberbullying among Children in Fourth through Eighth Grade

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A STUDY OF PARENTAL UNDERSTANDING OF AND INTERVENTION IN CYBERBULLYING AMONG CHILDREN IN FOURTH THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE

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The purpose of this study was to examine parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. The theoretical perspectives such as Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, and Crick and Dodge's (1994) social information processing theory served as framework for developing the research.

An explanatory mixed methods approach was utilized to examine parents' perceptions. The data collection consisted of a 28-question survey, which was administered to 95 parents in a quantitative phase, followed by personal phone interviews which were conducted with 14 parents in a qualitative phase.

The results indicated the depth of the impact of technology on children as reported by parents. Gaming, using technology as a communication tool, utilizing technology for school, and the availability and accessibility of technology were seen to have the greatest impact on the lives of the children. Parents recognize that cyberbullying is taking place through cell phones, social networking, and e-mails. In order to prevent cyberbullying incidents from occurring, many parents indicated that they supervise their child's online activities or discuss appropriate Internet use. However, almost half of parents did not have filters and software programs installed on their computers. Parents also indicated that if they were to find out about

participation in cyberbullying incidents, a conversation would take place between the parents and child, in addition to the removal of technology.

Results from the qualitative research indicated parents' concerns regarding cyberbullying, difficulty in supervising all use of technology by children, and lack of supervision by parents of other children. The study concluded that more attention should be given to parents in school bullying programs. There is also a need to provide education to parents on how to respond to cyberbullying. Parents need to create supervisory plans that include conversations between themselves and their children and also evaluate the games and websites that their children are utilizing.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The childhood experience of bullying or being bullied has existed over many generations (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008; Froeschle, Mayorga, Castillo, & Hargrave, 2008; Snakenborg, Van Acker, & Gable, 2011; Whitney & Smith, 1993). However, the problem of cyberbullying has raised this issue to new dimensions because bullying through technology is not bound by physical space (Dehue, Bollman, & Vollink, 2008; Froeschle et al., 2008; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). Cyberbullying is the deliberate and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices carried out as an aggressive act by a group or individual against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself (Patchin & Hinduja, 2009; Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, & Tippett, 2008).

Unlike traditional bullying, which typically takes place in the schoolyard, buses, and paths to school, cyberbullying continues when children arrive home from school leaving victims feeling helpless and as though there is nowhere to go (David-Ferdon & Feldman, 2007; Goff, 2011; Heirman & Walrave, 2008; Kowalski & Limber, 2007; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). Some classic examples of what cyberbullied victims are experiencing 24 hours a day, seven days a week, are derogatory comments in the inbox of their emails, inappropriate text messages containing words and pictures, or a dedicated FaceBook page containing hurtful things and images posted for all the world to see (David-Ferdon & Feldman, 2007; Erb, 2006; Feinberg & Robey, 2008; Heirman & Walrave, 2008; Snakenborg et al., 2011). Cyberbullying is prevalent

among young people all over the world (Cross, Shaw, Hearn, Epstein, Monks, Lester, & Thomas, 2009).

A Pew Research Center study (2009) indicated that of the 93% of Internet users aged 12 to 17, 63% reported using the Internet once to several times daily, up from an 87% overall user rate in 2004 with just over half of those using the Internet at least once to several times daily. In addition to Internet usage being higher, cell phone ownership has increased dramatically. Among the 12 to 17 year old age group, usage rose from 45% in 2004 to 75% in 2009 (Lenhart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010). Due to the increase in cell phone ownership and usage, the number of text messages being sent also saw an increase from 51% in 2006 to 72% in 2009 (Lenhart et al., 2010).

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation reported that media usage, including time spent using a computer, among 8-18 year-olds increased 2.25 hours in the past five years (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010). As a result of the increase in technology usage among children and adolescents, it is critical and necessary to examine how much knowledge parents have about the technology their children are using. The purpose of this study was to investigate parents' perceptions of their roles in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

Statement of the Problem

Parental involvement within the realm of technology is very crucial in ensuring safe Internet usage and Internet education. However, "limited empirical research focuses on the role and impact of parents in this context" (Valcke, Bonte, DeWever, & Rots, 2010, p. 454). An i-SAFE America study (2005–2006) indicated that while 93% of parents felt they had a good idea of what their child was doing on the Internet, 41% of

students in grades 5–12 said they did not share with their parents what they did or where they went online. These results are staggering considering that for 74% of adolescents, the location of choice for accessing the Internet is overwhelmingly in the home and in an open family area (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Lenhart, Simon, & Graviano, 2001; Valcke, Bonte, De Wever, & Rots, 2010). As a result of having access to the Internet so readily available in the home, it may not be surprising that adolescents are generally the experts when it comes to the Internet (Lenhart, Rainie, & Lewis, 2001; Freeman, 2003; Wang, Bianchi, & Raley, 2005).

With so many homes having access to the Internet, it is mainly the young who understand the technology and utilize the various forms that are available. Due to this fact, the importance for parents to learn more about the Internet and its capabilities needs to be emphasized. Parents need to become more involved, not only in discussions regarding cyberbullying, but also monitoring their son's or daughter's use of the Internet (Snakenborg et al., 2011). "Little is known about parents' role in mediating their children's media use" (Barkin, Ip, Richardson, & Klinepeter, 2006, p. 395). In recognition of the fact that parental involvement in technology has not been the focus of extensive research, this study is seeking to add to the existing literature. With the ever-changing developments in the world of technology, gaining an awareness of parental understanding is important. This understanding can then serve as a framework for developing information for the parents where gaps are detected.

Many adolescents have not had a safe haven in the past for many reasons (Goff, 2011). Adolescents who once found safety in their homes now are forced to make the decision of removing themselves from the social circuit including popular social

networking sites such as FaceBook and MySpace as well as not using cell phones for texting (Calvert, 2002; Froeschle et al., 2008). Even teens who experience terrible cyberbullying are completely unwilling to face removal from access to the Internet and/or mobile phone (Smith et al., 2008, Vandebosch, Van Cleemput, Mortelmans, & Walrave, 2006). Strom and Strom (2005) made it clear that banning technology only leads to feelings of being "socially isolated" (p. 22). Parents need to be informed that the removal of technology is not a plausible solution to the problem for their adolescents and that other techniques need to be implemented.

Through personal interviews and data collected through a survey, the researcher intended to gain information on the parents' roles in mediating their children's media use because presently little is known (Barkin, Ip, Richardson, & Klinepeter, 2006). The following research questions guided this investigation and were answered through the surveys and personal interviews.

Research Questions

1. How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?
2. How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying?
3. What is the perception of the responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children?
4. A. What specific technologies do parents perceive their children to be using on a regular basis?

   B. What is their role in the supervision of each?

5. How do parents view their responsibility for direct intervention when they discover that their children have unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as an oppressor, a victim, or a bystander?

Definitions

Bystanders. This group of individuals includes everyone who-other than the bully and victim- is present during a bullying incident (Olweus 1978; Olweus & Limber, 2007).

Cyberbullying. Deliberate and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices, carried out as an aggressive act by a group or individual against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself (Patchin & Hinduja, 2009).

Ecology of Human Development. A theoretical perspective of human development that involves the developing person, the environment, and the evolving interaction between the two (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Flaming. "Sending rude or threatening messages, usually on discussion boards, in chat rooms, and through email" (Limber, Kowalski, & Agatston, 2009, p. 33).

Filters. Software programs that are designed to block certain content and material that parents deem offensive or objectionable (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009).

Inadvertent Cyberbully. Cyberbullies who do not mean to hurt anyone, but these individuals are careless or clueless, so someone gets hurt anyway (Aftab, 2006, 2008).

Mean Girls Cyberbully. Always mean, but not always girls. They work in groups and are especially good at attacking reputations (Aftab, 2006, 2008).

Monitoring Software. Software programs that are installed on the computer that create a history of where Internet users go and what they do (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009).

Oppressors. Carry out attacks on others, and are often characterized as popular, stronger, and seek to obtain dominance over others (Olweus 1978; Olweus & Limber 2007). Cyberbullying oppressors may post things online to make others laugh, or to purposely make others angry (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010).

Parental Mediation. Activities carried out by parents to protect their children from exposure to online dangers (Livingstone, 2007; Eastin, Greenberg, & Hofschire, 2006).

Parental Monitoring. "A set of correlated parenting behaviors involving attention to and tracking of the child's whereabouts, activities, and adaptations" (Dishion & McMahon, 1998, p. 61).

Power Hungry Cyberbully. Cyberbullies who use intimidation on their victims (Aftab, 2006, 2008).

Social Information Processing Theory. The mental processing of information that individuals engage in during specific social situations and how individuals understand how they fit into groups by paying attention to what others say about them (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Dodge & Coie, 1987).

Social Networking Sites. "Online utilities that allow users to create profiles (public or private) and form a network of friends; allows users to interact with their friends via public and private means (such as messages, instant messaging); also allow the posting of user-generated content such as photos and videos" (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008, p. 121).

Vengeful Angel Cyberbully. A cyberbully who does not recognize him/herself as a cyberbully. Instead, he/she views him/herself as protecting a friend or someone else by seeking revenge (Aftab, 2006, 2008).

Victims. Those who are bullied or targeted either for a specific reason, or just out of convenience (Olweus, 1978; Olweus & Limber 2007). Cyberbullying victimization can range from receiving an upsetting email from someone to having things posted online for others to see (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010).

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study that may influence the results include: (a) some of the newer technologies utilized by the subjects' children did not exist, (b) the sample population was derived from those who could attend a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meeting, (c) reluctance of parents to reveal that their children were oppressors, victims, or bystanders on the survey, (d) no parents indicated that their child was an oppressor during the personal interview, and (e) the number of responses on the open-ended question on the survey.

Significance of the Study

There is an apparent need to address the role that parents play as supervisors of technology, and their perceptions of their roles in responding to cyberbullying experiences and behaviors of their children. Research studies have shown the importance of parental supervision in regard to technology, and this study further contributed to the existing literature. This study is significant because of the many cyberbullying incidents that are occurring and being reported and those that are going unreported. Parents may or may not be aware of how their role as supervisors of technology could mitigate some of those incidents. The information derived from this investigation provides current and

future researchers with knowledge on how to address the significance of the supervisory role that parents play when technology is involved. Furthermore, the information gained in this study serves as a framework for offering resources to parents on cyberbullying and how they can play a significant role in the decrease of such incidents.

Theoretical Perspective

The issue of cyberbullying can be viewed through many lenses. However, there are certain theories that are very applicable to the present study. The theories that guided the research are Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, and Crick and Dodge's (1994) social information processing theory.

Summary

Unlike traditional bullying, where incidents occur face-to-face, cyberbullying presents new challenges for parents because of the usage of technology to torment others unsuspectingly (Li, 2005). One such challenge is deciding who is responsible for monitoring and preventing adolescents from bullying peers online (Shariff, 2008).

As a result of not being bound by physical space (Dehue et al., 2008; Froeschle et al., 2008; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007), it is crucial for parents to develop an understanding and an awareness of how their adolescents are utilizing technology. While the majority of technology usage is taking place in the home (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Lenhart et al., 2001; Valcke et al., 2010), access to the Internet is ubiquitous.

A disconnect between what parents think they know about how their adolescents are utilizing technology, and what is actually taking place has been identified (i-Safe, 2005). Parents need to gain a better understanding of how their adolescents are using technology, so that conversations can take place about the dangers of technology, without

the children feeling threatened that access will be removed (Smith et al., 2008, Strom & Strom, 2005; Vandebosch, Van Cleemput, Mortelmans, & Walrave, 2006). Instead of the removal of technology, it is crucial for parents and researchers to determine other strategies for parental mediation and support of adolescents involved in cyberbullying incidents, which presently has not been researched extensively (Barkin et al., 2006). In the next chapter, the literature pertinent to the study is reviewed.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. The participants in this study were parents of fourth through eighth graders in the Eastern part of the United States. This chapter presents the literature related to parental understanding of and intervention in cyberbullying by examining five major areas: (1) problems with technology; (2) cyberbullying and the roles associated with cyberbullying; (3) parents' role in supervising; (4) parental supervision of technology; and, (5) direct interventions. To conclude, the issue of cyberbullying was viewed through the lenses of Bronfenbrenners' (1979) ecology of human development in addition to the social information processing theory (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Dodge & Coie, 1987).

History of Bullying and the Evolution of Cyberbullying

The childhood experience of bullying has extended over many generations (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008; Froeschle et al., 2008; Snakenborg et al., 2011; Whitney & Smith, 1993). The first known article written on bullying dates back to 1897 (Koo, 2007). Although there was a steady flow of bullying studies over time, many years passed before the influential research of Dan Olweus, which began in Scandinavia in the 1970s (Olweus, 1978). Olweus is credited with inventing the first systemic method of studying bullying using a self-report questionnaire (Olweus, 1978).

When Olweus began his research on bullying, the primary focus was on physical harm that resulted from bullying (Koo, 2007). In the 1980s, however, the meaning of bullying was expanded to include verbal taunting and social exclusion (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz & Kaukiainen, 1992). The definition of bullying was again altered in 1999 to include more indirect ways of bullying such as unkind gestures and facial expressions (Olweus, 1999).

Over the course of two decades, studies have taken place that attempted to identify the effects of bullying, the young people who tend to engage in bullying, the most common locations for bullying, and the prevention of bullying (Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Juvonen & Graham, 2001; Olweus, 1993). As indicated from research, bullying is a global problem that has spanned the world (Accordino & Accordino, 2011; Due et al., 2005).

When a renewed interest in bullying inspired a new wave of research in the 1970s, bullying occurred most often in school and was considered a normal part of childhood (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003). Children would call each other names, have fights on the playground, and taunt one another on the school bus (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Rapp-Paglicci, Dulmas, Sowers, & Theriot, 2004). However, in their home environments, victims were essentially isolated from bullying (Twyman, Saylor, Taylor, & Comeaux, 2010).

Yet, present day adolescents have few safeguards from ongoing bullying. They cannot simply hide behind a door because youth can torment one another from the comforts of their own home, without disclosing their identities (Froeschle et al., 2008; Limber, Kowalski, & Agatston, 2009; Reeckman & Cannard, 2009). Adolescents' main

methods of communicating with their peers are through technological means--Instant Messaging (IM), text messages, social networking sites, and e-mails (D'Antona, Kevorkian, & Russom, 2009). Unfortunately for some, the only way to seek solace is to remove themselves from their social circle, which can be devastating (Reeckman & Cannard, 2009) and lead to feelings of "social isolation" (Strom & Strom, 2005, p. 22).

Similarities between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying

Similarities exist between traditional bullying and cyberbullying. Both traditional and cyberbullying can be conducted anonymously (Heirman & Walrave, 2008). With traditional bullying, the spreading of rumors or writing a nasty note in unidentifiable handwriting can be done anonymously (Heirman & Walrave, 2008). Likewise, with cyberbullying, the element of anonymity comes from not knowing who is behind the screen (Heirman & Walrave, 2008).

Additionally, having access to an audience is another similarity between traditional and cyberbullying. While traditional bullying can occur on the playground with others circling around and egging on the oppressor, the online environment provides oppressors with the opportunity to quickly distribute messages to a large number of people (Heirman & Walrave, 2008; Sabella, 2009).

The continued dissemination of these messages electronically contributes to another similarity "willful and repeated harm" (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009, p. 5). A variety of technologies are used to repeatedly threaten, embarrass, and harass others (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Williams & Guerra, 2006). In traditional bullying, the repetitive nature of bullying incidents refers to it occurring daily and over time (Limber & Olweus, 2007).

Current Problem

Although similarities exist between traditional bullying and cyberbullying, there are characteristics that set cyberbullying apart. Access to technology, technological skills held by children, and lack of adult awareness are all areas that take this form of bullying to a new level.

There is limited research on the awareness that parents have of cyberbullying and what they do with the information once they have been informed about such incidents. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to research parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

Problems with Technology

Access to Technology

Society today has more access to technology than ever before (Sabella, 2009). An Internet connection has become almost ubiquitous in homes with school-age children in developed societies (Wong, 2010). As a result, the Internet presents new challenges to parents' ability to supervise their children's usage given that 64% of online teens say they know more about the Internet than their parents, and 66% of parents agree (Pew Internet & American Life Report, 2001). In addition to children being exposed to inappropriate content, such as sexting and pornography, many adults are at a disadvantage from protecting their children because of the digital divide that exists between the parents and their youngsters (Wilson & McAloney, 2010).

Digital Divide

Children tend to be more knowledgeable and skilled in the realm of computers than their parents (Wong, 2010). However, the digital divide in many ways is a manifestation or exacerbation of existing divisions due to income, age, education level, etc. (Wong, Law, Fung, & Lam, 2009). The digital divide or digital gap does not only separate the digital haves and have-nots in society, but it is also apparent within families (Wong, 2010). Due to the "digital divide" between parents and their children who study, work, and interact in fundamentally different ways than their parents did as adolescents (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008; Tapscott, 1998), many parents may feel unable to monitor or help their children online.

Strom and Strom (2005) referred to this digital divide as a "Cyber Island" that lacks an adult presence. To increase adult presence on the island, and not be seen as intruders, adults need to make several bridges to the island showing that they are willing to collaborate with the other inhabitants of the island (Strom, Strom, Walker, Sindel-Arrington, & Beckert, 2011). Some of the bridges should include teaching children social maturity, respect, and responsibility (Strom et al., 2011).

Older authority figures may not be fully versed in the continuously changing methods of electronic social networking, therefore making them less effective in the prevention of cyberbullying (King, Walpole, & Lamon, 2007). Even though social networking sites have gained popularity among individuals 50 years and older (Madden & Zickuhr, 2011), many older adults are unfamiliar with, and less likely to, utilize social networking sites, thus leading to frequent unsupervised use of social networking by young people (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2008).

Wong et al. (2009) demonstrated in their research that parental knowledge of computer and Internet use had a predominant impact on the overall outcome of supervising and guiding their children in using the Internet. It was further apparent that mothers were more likely to provide supervision and guidance to their children in using the Internet (Liau, Khoo, & Ang, 2008). In regard to cyberbullying, it is paramount for parents to have knowledge about bullying, as well as how technology can be manipulated to play a role in bullying incidents (Lou, Shih, & Liu, 2010). Many parents do not know what to look for as they supervise their children using varying forms of technology. They are also unaware of the different software programs available specifically for the protection of children (Mendoza, 2009).

Researchers have also concluded that many adults need educated about the basics of technology and cyberbullying in general before they can even begin to work toward prevention or intervention (Jager, Amado, Matos, & Pessoa, 2010; Juvonen & Gross, 2008). Because adolescents are digital natives and their parents are often digital immigrants, adolescents have a greater working knowledge of technology and all of the possibilities that are available (Prensky, 2001; Livingstone, 2007). Adults need education because of the digital divide that currently exists between them and young people (Jager et al., 2010).

Parental Responses to the Digital Divide

Some adolescents are equipped with knowledge and methods of how to stop online aggression, but others do not know where to turn for help. Some children chose alternate solutions to the cyberbullying issue because the parents' suggestions lead to more confrontation, and the students preferred non-confrontational solutions such as

"ignoring a cyberbully, blocking a message, or changing screen names" (Strom, Strom, Walker, Sindel-Arrington, & Beckert, 2011, p. 201). "Advice from parents was not considered very helpful in dealing with cyberbullies since 60% of the students chose different solutions than those suggested by adults" (Strom et al., 2011, p. 201).

Adolescents also do not feel comfortable disclosing their experiences of cyberbullying with their parents (O'Connell, Price, & Barrow, 2004). This discomfort is not surprising considering that adolescents express the same discomfort when faced with informing adults about traditional bullying (Hanish & Guerra, 2000; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005).

In addition, if children believe that there is a possibility of losing online and phone privileges, they will keep the issue of cyberbullying a secret from a trusted adult (Agatston, Kowalski, & Limber, 2007). Furthermore, children may feel that their parents are unequipped to assist them in cyberbullying situations (Rosen, 2010; Shariff, 20008).

Often parents are unaware of the bullying that is taking place via electronic means, or they are under the impression that it is not as bad as their child makes it out to be because they are typically not present in digital environments (Dehue et al., 2008; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Willard, 2011). Keith and Martin (2005) recognized that cyberbullying is hard to detect by adults. Monitoring, as well as discussions about technology, are not conducted regularly or thoroughly within many households (Duimel & de Haan, 2007; Eastin, Greenberg, & Hofschire, 2006). This, coupled with limited understanding of technology, results in difficulty for many to even understand this new phenomenon, let alone find solutions (Keith & Martin, 2005). In addition, parental responsibility to monitor technology use by children is difficult when parents and

children relate differently to technology (Beale & Hall, 2007). Parents should not only engage in conversations with their adolescents about technology and how it is being used, but the schools should also be a part of the conversation (Froeschle et al., 2008).

Home-School Partnership

Teachers, as well as parents, need to be cognizant of the various forms of cyberbullying and knowledgeable about what actions can be taken to prevent it from escalating (Slonje & Smith, 2008). When cyberbullying incidents arise, parents should inform the school, so that a partnership can be established to address the instances of cyberbullying (Keith & Martin; Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2008; Shariff, 2008). Researchers have suggested that parents provide the school with evidence of the incidents that have taken place, in order for the schools to implement lessons and develop a school safety plan if necessary (Campbell, 2005; Keith & Martin, 2005; Shariff, 2008).

The issue of adult awareness is crucial when it comes to effective action by schools against cyberbullying (Froeschle et al., 2008). If students perceive adults to be unaware of cyberbullying, they may tend not to go to them to receive support. Slonje and Smith (2008) found it worrisome that none of the cybervictims identified in their study said they had told a teacher, and very few had told parents. To demonstrate knowledge, parents should be able to engage in conversations with their adolescents about the various forms of cyberbullying as well as the different roles that cyberbullies can assume (Hannah, 2010).

Lack of Adult Presence

Adults may be seldom present in the world of electronic communication which may contribute to cyberbullying incidents occurring (Mason, 2008). Many adults are largely unaware of their children engaging in cyberbullying or being a victim of cyberbullying (Dehue et al., 2008). Parents who are aware may limit the amount of time the adolescent can spend on the Internet (Li, 2006). To prevent cyberbullying from occurring, some parents also establish rules for their adolescents to follow (Beebe, Asche, Harrison, & Quinlan, 2004). However, even with the establishment of rules, parents need to recognize that cyberbullying can still take place, and that they need to take an active role in discussing the online dangers that exist (Mendoza, 2009).

Cyberbullying and the Roles Associated with Cyberbullying

One must consider what constitutes cyberbullying and how to identify if children have been victims. For some parents, it is easier to identify if their child has been a victim of traditional bullying. Researchers have noted some warning signs that may indicate a child is being victimized by cyberbullies or experiencing other associated problems: (a) child appears upset after being online, (b) child appears upset after viewing a text message, (c) child withdraws from social interaction with peers, and (d) possible drop in academic performance (Keith & Martin, 2005).

Signs of Bullying

With direct forms of bullying, the child may have come home with a black eye or torn clothes (Limber et al., 2009). Parents may have even received a phone call from the principal about an altercation that took place on school grounds. Indirect forms of traditional bullying, such as relational aggression, is more difficult to identify because it

involves spreading rumors and excluding others (Heirman & Walrave, 2008). Regardless, the effects are similar (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004).

Cyberbullying Specifics

Cyberbullying is a form of relational aggression; therefore, no physical abuse has taken place, but a child's attitude, self-esteem, and self-confidence level can be altered (Cross et al., 2009, Patchin & Hinduja, 2010; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Parents typically misjudge the risk of bullying and are often unaware of the problem, even if their children are undergoing the agony of victimization (Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2005; Stockdale, Hangaduambo, Duys, Larson, & Sarvela, 2002).

A defining characteristic of cyberbullying is the intensity increases when moving from the physical to the virtual space (Sabella, 2009). In traditional bullying, there exists the possibility of physical separation between the aggressor and the victim, but in cyberbullying, physical separation does not guarantee cessation of acts such as text messages and e-mails that are being sent to the victim (Limber et al., 2009). Further, when using the Internet, the abuser has a sense of anonymity and often believes that there is only a slim chance of his or her misconduct being detected (Bhat, 2008; Sabella, 2009; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Snakenborg et al.; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004).

Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) identified in their study that the majority of aggressors (84%) can identify their intended targets, while most targets (69%) indicated that the aggressor is unknown to them. Also, when bullying is technologically supported, the aggressor is not aware of the consequences of the aggression (Kowalski et al., 2008; Slonje & Smith, 2008). The screen does not allow seeing the emotional expression of the victim (Limber et al., 2009; Sbarbaro & Enyeart-Smith, 2011).

Studies suggested the anonymity provided by cyberspace results in decreased feelings of responsibility by the perpetrators and increases the extent of the actions (Holladay, 2010; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Price & Dalgleish, 2010). Accordingly, the ability to attack with relative anonymity and the lack of face-to-face interaction with the victim provides less inhibition by the aggressor in addition to decreased levels of regret, sympathy, or compassion toward the victim (Heirman & Walrave, 2008; Holladay, 2010, Mason, 2008; Strom & Strom, 2005; Willard, 2003). The lessened feelings of conscience and associated perception of power can lead to increased frequency of cyberbullying (Heirman & Walrave, 2008; Holladay, 2010, Mason, 2008; Strom & Strom, 2005; Willard, 2003).

Oppressors and Victims of Cyberbullying

Within the realm of cyberbullying, physical stature is rarely a factor. An individual may have more power just by being more technologically savvy than others (Limber et al., 2009). Via e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, or web site posts, adolescents have the ability to share instantly negative comments or photographs with large audiences of people (Alexy, Burgess, Baker, & Smoyak, 2005; Bocij, 2005; Limber et al., 2009; Mann & Sutton, 1998; Paulson, 2003).

Lenhart, Madden, and Hitlin (2005) identified that approximately one-third (32%) of all teenagers who use the Internet have been targets of a range of annoying and potentially menacing online activities. It was also identified, in the same study, that girls are more likely than boys to be targets; and, teens who share their identities and thoughts online are more likely to be targets than those who lead less active online lives (Lenhart et al., 2005). Mesch (2009) indicated that the risk of youth being bullied is higher for

adolescents who have active profiles on social networking sites and participate in chat rooms, but not in playing games online. Prior to his study, however, Mesch (2009) hypothesized that as a result of participating in chat rooms and playing online games would increase the exposure of adolescents' to unknown others and therefore increase the risk of being bullied or harassed online.

Gender and Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a problem for both boys and girls; however, multiple research findings have found girls are more like to be cyber victims and boys are more likely to be cyberbullies (Bhat, 2008; Li, 2005; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009;). In contrast, Varjas, Henrich, and Meyers (2009) found that female students were more likely to be the aggressor in cyberbullying. Other studies have shown that males were more involved in cyberbullying and bullying than females (Aricak, Siyahhan, Uzunhasanoglu, Saribeyoglu, Ciplak, Yilmaz, & Memmedov, 2008; Li, 2006).

Li (2007) reported that although boys are slightly more likely to be perpetrators of cyberbullying than girls, girls reported significantly higher experiences of cyberbullying victimization than did boys. In an earlier study, Li (2006) also discovered that females were more likely to report cyberbullying to adults than their male counterparts. Still other researchers have proved that cyberbullying occurs regardless of gender (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008). In a more recent study, girls' lifetime report of cyberbullying perpetration was significantly higher in addition to their lifetime rate of being the victim of cyberbullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010).

Not all cyberbullying incidents occur in the same manner because there are several methods of cyberbullying. Both boys and girls engage in a variety of forms of

cyberbullying (Aricak et al., 2008; Bhat, 2008; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Li, 2006). Slonje and Smith (2008) found few significant gender differences in their study of Swedish teenagers and young adults. However, Slonje and Smith (2008) found that 17.9% of those who reported being cyberbullied, 9.5% of them experienced a single type of cyberbullying, and 8.1% experienced more than one type. In the same study, 11.9% of the sample population reported cyberbullying others, 5.7% by one type and 6.2% by more than one type (Slonje & Smith, 2008).

Forms of Cyberbullying and the Means by which it Occurs

Many adults are unfamiliar with the different forms of cyberbullying that can occur. When adults consider traditional bullying, name-calling, physical aggression, and rumor spreading all come to mind (Beale, 2001). Similar to traditional bullying, different classifications have been proposed for the types of cyberbullying. Forms of cyberbullying can include: sending harassing emails and instant messages, posting negative messages on social networking sites, blogs, or other websites, verbally berating in chat rooms, and sending harassing and/or incriminating text messages, photos, or videos via mobile phones (Belsey, 2007; Bhat, 2008; Nocentini et al., 2010; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006).

Studies have indicated that the most common means of cyberbullying are via instant messages, cell phone calls, emails, and text messages. Patchin and Hinduja (2006) found that cyberbullying was most prevalent in chat rooms, computer text messages [instant messages], and email. Whereas Smith et al., (2008) identified that phone calls and text messages were the most common means of bullying. Kowalski and

Limber (2006) discovered instant messaging as the most common means for cyberbullying followed by chat rooms and emails.

Cyberbullying through massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs) is also emerging (Yang, 2012). Massively multiplayer online games refer to involving many players playing simultaneously via the internet (Barnett & Coulson, 2010). Existing research showed that participating in online gaming could both reduce the quality of existing relationships (Kraut et al., 1998) and also stimulate relationship quality (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007). Yang (2012) pointed out that conflicts "tend to escalate rapidly due to the nature of digital and visual media and gaming culture" (p. 236). The influx of teenagers playing violent games suggests that many young people may be socialized through observational learning to behave aggressively (Bandura, 1973; Huesmann, 2010) and to be rewarded for aggressive behaviors such as killing or stabbing in a virtual world (Polman, Orobio de Castro, & van Aken, 2008). On the other hand, Leung and McBride-Chang (2013) identified in their study of Hong Kong Chinese children that 93% of participants reported having formed online relationships in MMOGs. Griffiths (2010) noted that despite some concerns about computer games, a number of recent studies suggested that children and adolescents can meet friends when they go online.

Blais, Craig, Pepler, and Connolly (2008) conducted a study regarding Internet activity and its impact on relationships. It was identified that using the Internet to play games and for general entertainment predicted decreases in relationship quality with best friends and with romantic partners (Blais et al., 2008). Their findings supported previous research that confirmed that video game play could fulfill some of the needs that are

otherwise met through friendships, such as companionship, and therefore reduce the need for socialization with friends to obtain companionship (Colwell & Kato, 2003).

Blais et al. (2008) asserted that engaging in online gaming may "not only reduce the amount of time otherwise used to socialize with friends, both in face-to-face and online environments, but they may also foster ideals and values that counter good relationship-building skills" (p. 525). Chen et al. (2005) found that the majority of online gaming crimes in Taiwan included theft (73.7%) and fraud (20.2%), and that 47.6% of the offenders were young students, 63.3% between 15 and 20 years, and 8.3% under 15 years of age. Leung and McBride-Chang (2013) suggested that although children can be exposed to cyberbullying when they play MMOGs, friendships can also be formed.

Willard (2005) has classified the ways that cyberbullying may occur as flaming, harassment, cyberstalking, denigration, masquerading, outing and trickery, and exclusion. Flaming is sending angry, rude, or vulgar messages directed at someone either privately or to an entire group (Willard, 2005). Harassment is sending a person offensive messages repeatedly, whereas cyberstalking is harassment with threats of harm, and can be highly intimidating in nature (Willard, 2005). Denigration occurs when harmful, untrue, or cruel statements are posted about other people (Willard, 2005). Masquerading occurs when oppressors pretend to be someone else, and while doing so, send inappropriate material to make that person look bad or get in trouble (Adams 2007; Willard, 2005). Outing and trickery is when one befriends someone else to get personal, private information and pictures, and then they share that embarrassing information (Willard, 2005). Exclusion is when actions are taken to intentionally exclude a person from an online community or group (Willard, 2005).

As a result of the varying forms of cyberbullying that can occur, Menesini and Nocentini (2009) and Slonje and Smith (2008) have proposed adding new criteria to the definition of cyberbullying so that it includes the elements of anonymity and publicity. Just as cyberbullying can take different forms, there are also different classifications for those who initiate cyberbullying incidents.

Roles

Those who engage in cyberbullying as an oppressor typically fall into one of five categories that have been established by Aftab (2008). Parry Aftab is the founder and executive director of Wiredsafety.org which is recognized as the world's first Internet safety and help group. Parry is a United States lawyer, child advocate, and expert in all aspects of cyberlaw, cyberbullying, cybercrime, and privacy. She has created unique terms and insight describing the types of cyberbullies including: the vengeful angel, the inadvertent cyberbully, the power hungry, revenge of the nerds, or the mean girls (Aftab, 2006, 2008).

The vengeful angel is the vigilante of cyberbullies; trying to right wrongs against others using their technology skills to bully the bully (Aftab, 2006, 2008). This group of bullies does not believe that they are bullies (Aftab, 2008; Sabella, 2009). Vengeful angels work alone, but may share some of their activities and motives with close friends who they perceive as being victimized by the person they are cyberbullying (Aftab, 2008).

Inadvertent cyberbullies do not associate themselves as being bullies, which is similar to vengeful angels (Aftab, 2006). However, when victims of cyberbullying retaliate and become bullies themselves, they are considered inadvertent cyberbullies

(Aftab, 2008). Inadvertent cyberbullies may be pretending to be tough online; but, when they lash out, they do not do so intentionally (Aftab, 2008). This group responds without thinking about the consequences of their actions (Aftab, 2008). The cyberbullies are also largely unaware of the detrimental effects that their victims suffer from as a result of being victimized.

The power hungry cyberbully uses intimidation and his or her power to win control over others (Aftab, 2006, 2008). He or she wants to see his/her victims sweat (Aftab, 2006). This group of bullies is seeking a reaction from the victim. Often times simply ignoring this group of bullies will result in a cessation of the bullying (Aftab, 2008).

Revenge of the nerds is recognized as a subset of the power hungry cyberbullies (Aftab, 2006, 2008). Revenge of the nerd bullies are typically victims of face-to-face bullying and use technical skills to attack the physical bully (Aftab, 2008).

Cyberbullying by "mean girls" occurs typically with girls, and involves bullying for entertainment or because the bully is bored (Aftab, 2006, 2008). They bully to promote their social statuses (Aftab, 2008). Mean girl bullies tend to operate in groups and are recognized as being very immature (Aftab, 2008).

Effects of Cyberbullying

The effects of cyberbullying are similar to those of traditional bullying (Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Price & Dalgleish, 2010). Victims of cyberbullying have reported feeling emotional distress, feelings of frustration, and anger or sadness (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Ybarra, Mitchell, Wolak, & Finkelhor, 2006). These consequences affect the victims both at home and in school. In addition, being a victim of cyberbullying can

result in violence, injury, and even death (Meadows, Bergal, Helling, Odell, Piligian, Howard, & Lopez, 2005; Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002).

While the effects of cyberbullying vary from individual to individual, it is important to understand that the consequences can be serious in nature (Juvonen & Gross, 2008). Researchers have found that cyberbullying has similar negative effects as traditional forms of bullying, but some are more pronounced such as increased anxiety, social withdrawl, and suicidal ideation (Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Price & Dalgleish, 2010). Bonanno and Hymel (2010) identified that a minimum of one student attempts suicide each month because of bullying. Adolescents spend a great deal of time communicating through electronic means, and these very means can cause a significant amount of pain, more emotional and social than physical (Adams & Lawrence, 2011).

Suicidal Ideation

Several studies have shown a link between suicidal ideation and experiences with bullying in and around school and the neighborhood (Carney, 2000; High, 2007; Marr & Field, 2001.) A recent study has shown that adolescents who are bullied are at significant risk for depression and suicide (Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2008). However, suicidal ideation is experienced by both oppressors of bullying and the victims (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Oppressors and victims of bullying are at an elevated risk for suicidal thoughts, attempts, and completed suicides (Baldry & Winkel, 2003; Mills, Guerin, Lynch, Daly, & Fitzpatrick, 2004; Rigby & Slee, 1999; van der Wal, de Wit, & Hirasing, 2003).

Those youth who do fall victim to suicide as a result of bullying are part of a phenomenon recently termed cyberbullicide--suicide indirectly or directly influenced by

experiences with online aggression (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009; Marr & Field, 2001). In recent years, several adolescents have died by suicide as a result of being bullied. Ryan Patrick Halligan (Moreno, 2011a), Phoebe Prince (Moreno, 2011b), Megan Meir (Backus, 2009; Hewitt, Truesdell, Morrissey, & Breuer, 2008; Moreno, 2011c), and John Walker Hoover are just a few of the many (High, 2007).

Studies conducted around the globe have demonstrated that adolescents involved in bullying incidents may experience suicidal ideation. Finnish children between 14 and 16 years of age indicated that amongst boys who were bullied at least once per week, 4% had severe suicidal ideation compared to 1% of boys who were not bullied (Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, Marttunen, Rimpela, & Rantanen, 1999). In the same study, among the girls who were bullied at least once per week, 8% had severe suicidal ideation, compared to 1% who were not bullied (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 1999).

In the Netherlands, van der Wal, de Wit, and Hirasing (2003) uncovered that 13% of boys directly bullied and 18% of boys indirectly bullied suffered from suicidal ideation. Roland (2002) studied Norwegian eighth graders and discovered that boys who were bullied suffered from suicidal ideation 2.5 times more than non-bullied boys, while bullied girls experienced those thoughts 4.2 times more than non-bullied girls. In addition to the above-mentioned studies, other studies have shown that there is a strong relationship between bullying and suicidal ideation (Baldry & Winkel, 2003; Kim, Koh, & Leventhal, 2005; Mills, Guerin, Lynch, Daly, & Fitzpatrick, 2004; Roland, 2002; Seals & Young, 2003).

In the United States, Hinduja and Patchin (2010) surveyed students in sixth through eighth grades and reported that 20% of the respondents seriously thought about

attempting suicide (19.7% of females; 20.9% of males), while 19% reported attempting suicide (17.9% of females; 20.2% of males). Their results further support the notion that cyberbullying is in fact correlated with suicidal ideation (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). In addition, Hay and Meldrum (2010) indicated that bullying and cyberbullying can lead to self-harm and suicidal ideation.

Students also experience a feeling of being unable to trust anyone, even their closest friends, which results in low self-esteem (Dempsey, Sulkowski, Nichols, & Storch, 2009; Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). As a result of being victimized, adolescents also suffer from lowered academic achievement (Hall, 2006; Reiff, 2006; Willard, 2007).

Absenteeism and Academics

Students who have been cyberbullied may be physically present in school, but they are unable to give their full attention to academics (Limber et al., 2009). As a result of being unable to devote full attention to academics and not having a desire to attend school, students who are cyberbullied are more likely to have lower grades and higher absenteeism rates than those students not involved (Kowalkski, Limber, & Agatston, 2008). Students may find it difficult to attend school and face their peer groups after receiving mean messages or comments while in the safety of their own homes (Limber et al., 2009, Hinduja & Patchin, 2007).

Victims of cyberbullying are not only affected in school. The effects transpire into all aspects of life including the home. Victims have reported feeling angry, sad, and embarrassed (Beran & Li, 2005) and were affected at home and school and with friends (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006).

Adult Awareness

Cyberbullying is more prevalent than adults are made aware. Li (2006) conducted a survey of 264 students from three junior high schools in Canada and it showed that almost half of the students were bully victims and about one in four had been cyberbullied. Bully victims are those who are initially bullied and then retaliate making them perpetrators of bullying. Youth may be especially reluctant to tell adults about incidents occurring online if they are concerned about parents restricting their use of these increasingly popular forms of social contact (Froeschle et al., 2008; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

Adolescents have refrained from telling an adult about bullying incidents because they believed that they needed to learn to deal with it themselves, they felt that the bullying would get worse, or felt too ashamed to speak about the experiences and lacking confidence in the adult's ability to help them (Accordino & Accordino, 2011; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005). Snakenborg et al. (2011) suggested in their research that parents may benefit from education in dealing with cyberbullying issues when they are presented with them. It is not enough for parents to be technologically savvy; they must also engage in conversations with their children about appropriate technology use, and have strategies in place to prevent cyberbullying (Magid, 1998; Mason, 2008; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008; Sabella, 2009). By listening, responding, and engaging in conversation, parents and adolescents can create a positive, respectful environment.

Parents need to have an awareness of the types of activities that are taking place online and with other means of technology (Slonje & Smith, 2008). This attentiveness

includes knowing what websites their children visit frequently, being familiar with whom their friends are both on and off line, monitoring cell phone usage, and even implementing a safe usage policy in the home. Sharples, Graber, Harrison, and Logan (2009) found that most of the parents they surveyed (66%) indicated that they had measures in place to prevent their children from visiting websites in which they disapprove. Some parents volunteered that these measures included saving instant messenger conversations without a child's knowledge, password protecting certain websites, placing the computer in a shared area of the home, and discussing e-safety with their child.

Differences in Technology Use

Parents are using technology for different reasons than their teens. Adults are more likely to use the Internet to review purchases, buy products, and look for health-related information (Lenhart, Rainie, & Lewis, 2001). In contrast, adolescents use the Internet for playing online games and collecting information (Huang, 2002; Liu, 2003). Parents need to become more aware of the activities in which their adolescents are engaging, as well as more knowledgeable about the applications that are offered through technological advances.

The 2005-2006 National Assessment Center (NAC) parent survey of more than 4,000 respondents identified 93% of parents stating that they know "some" or "a lot" about where their children go and what they do on the Internet. Yet only 42% of high school students and 62% of middle school students stated that they share where they go and what they do on the Internet with their parents. Also, 81% of high school students consider their Internet skills to be superior to their parents, suggesting the need for

Internet safety education for parents (Carlson, 2006). There is a large disconnect between what the parents think they know and what their children are actually sharing with them (Mendoza, 2009). Within the family environment, it is important to engage in conversation about technology and engage in opportunities for co-viewing the applications that are being used with various forms of technology (Mendoza, 2009).

Family Environment

Resiliency among those involved in bullying incidents should be examined. Some researchers may question if children who are more resilient are less likely to be involved in bullying incidents. Resilience can be viewed through the lens of the family environment. "Warm family relationships and positive home environments help to buffer children from the negative outcomes associated with bullying victimization" (Bowes, Maughan, Caspi, Moffitt, & Arseneault, 2010, p. 809).

Family environment factors are positively associated with bullying behaviors which include parental physical discipline, a lack of adult supervision, neighborhood safety concerns, and a deficiency of positive adult role models (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). The relationships that children have with their parents can be tumultuous and easy-going, and the attachments they have can be identified as insecure or secure (Mendoza, 2009). A secure attachment would be characterized as a receptive parent with physical and emotional availability to the child, and an insecure attachment would be characterized by either anxious, ambivalent, or avoidant relationships (Cooper, 2011). Monks, Smith, and Swettenham (2005) found that bullies tended to have insecure attachments, while most victims appeared to have a secure attachment.

The secure or insecure nature of attachment can impact not only the child-parent relationship, but also the child‘s peer relationships. While parents may always be available for their children to discuss important issues and provide a stable support system for their children, attachment needs become more frequently satisfied by peers as individuals move from childhood to adolescence (Nickerson & Nagle, 2005). Crick and Dodge (1994) explained that past events such as the experience of early attachments and rejection may have an impact on future social information processing and behavior. They believed that past events are stored in long-term memory. Then the memories are "integrated with other memories into a general mental structure that guides the processing of future social cues" (Crick & Dodge, 1994, p. 78).

Bullying is also a family issue, as the family environment has a major impact on the way children view the world, and this includes the development of both violent and victimizing behaviors (Bandura, 1973). Taking the opportunity to view the family environment can be a good indicator of whether a child will be a participant in bullying incidents. Espelage, Bosworth, and Simon (2000) concluded that a lack of adult supervision is positively associated with bullying behaviors in addition to parental physical discipline, neighborhood safety concerns, and a lack of positive adult role models. Furthermore, Marini, Dane, Bosacki, and YLC-CURA (2006) also identified that a lack of adult supervision was positively associated with bullies, yet only for males.

While the family environment needs to be considered, relationships within the family need to be considered as well. When a child is born, a certain attachment is formed between the parent and child. The attachments in early life provide a foundation

for future behaviors. If an insecure attachment is formed throughout childhood, bullying may become a problem (Monks et al, 2005; Wilson, 2007).

Attachments with the Family

Attachment theory involves internal representations or working models of close attachment relationships that begin in infancy and are incorporated into one's personality, attitude, and behaviors in relationships throughout someone's life (Bowlby, 1988). According to attachment theory, aggression can develop in three ways: children may act aggressively as a reaction to the negative relationship with the caregiver, aggression may serve as a way of getting attention from a neglectful caregiver, and, children who develop an anxious or insecure attachment often find it difficult to develop positive relationships with others and could use aggression as a defense mechanism against a perceived threat (Greenberg, Speltz, & DeKlyen, 1993). If the family provides a safe, sensitive, and responsive environment for a child, a secure attachment style is more likely to develop (Bowlby, 1969). However, if the family setting is insensitive and/or inconsistent, an insecure attachment style is more likely to be formed (Bowlby, 1969).

Monks et al. (2005) indicated that bullies tended to have insecure attachments, while most victims appeared to have a secure attachment. However, there are other contributing factors that can determine participation in bullying incidents. Wilson (2007) identified some evidence that attachment was related to bullying, but determined that age and gender were better predictors of the behavior than attachment. In contrast, Marini et al. (2006) found that bullies, victims, and bully/victims were found to have a lower maternal attachment than that of uninvolved students, with bully/victims having the lowest level of maternal attachment. Parents need to work hard to establish secure

attachments, and this establishment can be achieved by becoming actively involved in the types of technology that adolescents are utilizing (Mendoza, 2009; Mesch, 2009).

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in preventing cyberbullying needs to be researched because there is limited research on the effects of parental knowledge and their understanding of cyberbullying. Further, the role that parents assume in monitoring the Internet use of their children is a relatively new research theme (Valcke et al., 2010). Because cyberbullying most often takes place outside of the school, parents need to have an understanding of how adolescents are using technology (D'Antona, Kevorkian, & Russom, 2009). Furthermore, recent research studies have indicated that the usage of the Internet is a home-based activity (Lee & Chase, 2007; Mumtaz, 2001) making it even more important for parents to play an active role in the supervision of their children while they are using technology.

Parents' Role in Supervision

Parents are expected to create a peaceful, respectful, and safe environment for their children (Valcke et al., 2010). Parent involvement has a key role in anti-bullying initiatives (Coloroso, 2003; Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Olweus & Limber, 2007; Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Shek (2005) suggested that parenting quality includes parental behavioral control such as parental monitoring, knowledge, expectations, discipline, and parental psychological control. By establishing a respectful environment in which children feel comfortable raising questions about Internet usage, parents will find it easier to guide their children (DeRycke, 2007; Fleming, Greentree, Cocotti-Muller, Elias, &

Morrison, 2006; Valkenburg, 2002; Van Kolfschoonten, 2004). A respectful, open environment was also suggested when discussing Internet safety (Youn, 2008).

Monitoring and regulating are considered by some parents as one of the characteristics of a good parent, however, not all parents view having strict rules as important (Wang, Bianchi, & Raley, 2005). Setting and enforcing rules can play a significant role in determining whether a child will become a victim of bullying, or even a bully.

Baldry and Farrington (1998) found that parents of bullies and victims lacked responsiveness toward their children while Bowers, Smith, and Binney (1994) characterized parents of bully/victims as neglectful with little or no monitoring of their children's activities. Current research tends to support previous research findings that family variables such as parental involvement are associated with children's involvement in bullying (Espelage, Bowworth, & Simon, 2000; Haynie, Nansel, Eitel, Crump, Saylor, & Yu, 2001; Jankauskiene, Kardelis, Sukys, & Kardeliene, 2008). Wang, Iannotti, and Nansel (2009) found higher parental involvement equated to students being less involved in all types of bullying. A certain level of supervision is necessary when children are utilizing technology to ensure that bullying incidents are not taking place (Sabella, 2009).

The role of supervisor has changed dramatically for parents, now that technology is accessible to many children from a young age (Sabella, 2009). The Internet poses challenges to parents who want their children to take advantage of online resources but also want to protect their children from questionable content (Wang et al., 2005). As a result, supervision of children is important especially when technology is involved in

order to reduce the risks of possible online dangers, as well as negative physical and psychological effects (Wang et al., 2005).

Supervising children can occur in many different forms. Parents can be very direct or very discreet with their supervising techniques. Those techniques that would be more direct in regard to technology would be sitting with your children each time they use technology. Mesch (2009) referred to this type of supervision as evaluative mediation. Evaluative mediation referred to having open discussions of issues related to Internet use, evaluation of content, and joint creation of rules regarding the amount of time for Internet use (Mesch, 2009). An example of less direct supervision would be installing hardware or software onto the computer. The installation of filters and/or monitoring software and viewing the website history of your children was identified by Mesch (2009) as restrictive mediation. These methods would be considered more discreet in nature because children may be unaware that adults are checking their history.

Parental Monitoring

Parental monitoring can also reduce the probability that a youth will bully online by as much as 50% (Mason, 2008). Parental monitoring can be defined as: "(1) parents have knowledge of the friends with who their children spend time; (2) parents have knowledge of their children's whereabouts when they are away from home; and (3) parents know what their children do with their free time" (Shillington et al., 2005, p. 4). This definition of parental monitoring focuses primarily on the outcome of monitoring, parental knowledge, rather than the active parental strategies for obtaining that knowledge. Other definitions exist for parental monitoring and have been tested by a variety of survey instruments. Barber, Maughan, and Olsen (2005) explored patterns of

parenting throughout adolescence. Parental knowledge and monitoring were combined for the purpose of this particular study. Some of the questions included in the survey were: "How much does your father or mother *really* know about: (1) Where you go at night; (2) Where you are most afternoons after school; (3) How you spend your money; (4) What you do with your free time; and (5) Who your friends are" (Barber, Maughan, & Olsen, 2005, p. 10).

Similar questions were included in the study conducted by Lenciauskiene and Zaborskis (2008), which also measured parental monitoring. In both studies, the questions being asked resemble questions focused more on knowledge about their adolescent rather than monitoring. Eaton, Krueger, Johnson, McGue, and Iacono (2009) agreed, on the other hand, that the term parental monitoring should only be used in reference to active parenting behaviors. Dishion and McMahon (1998) defined parental monitoring as "a set of correlated parenting behaviors involving attention to and tracking of the child's whereabouts, activities, and adaptations" (p. 61). They also asserted that: "monitoring of the child by parents is one component in the constellation of effective child-rearing practices" (Dishion & McMahon, 1998, p. 66).

Fulkerson, Pasch, Perry, and Komro (2008) utilized the definition created by Dishion and McMahon (1998) in their study, and asserted that the purpose of parental monitoring was to prevent the child's involvement with alcohol, drugs, and delinquent and risky behaviors. Furthermore, Pokhrel, Unger, Wagner, Ritt-Olson, and Sussman (2008) also measured parental monitoring as active parental behaviors.

Evidence exists proving that the activities that parents have carried out to protect their children have been successful. Some studies have reported children whose parents

monitored their online activities were less likely to engage in dangerous and risky behaviors such as sharing personal information, searching for inappropriate sites, and participating in online conversations with strangers (Rosen, Cheever, & Carrier, 2008; Spears, Seydegart, & Zulinov, 2005).

Parental Mediation

Parental mediation refers to the activities that are followed through by parents to protect their children from exposure to online dangers (Eastin et al., 2006; Hannah, 2010; Livingstone, 2007). There is evidence of such an effect: some studies have reported children whose parents monitored their online activities were less likely to disclose personal information, less likely to seek out inappropriate sites, and less likely to conduct chat conversations with strangers (Rosen et al, 2008).

Parents need to have an open line of communication with their children about their technology activity because of the atrocities that have happened as a result of cyberbullying (Fleming et al., 2006; Youn, 2008). Dehue et al. (2008) identified that parents were unaware of the harassments taking place even though they established rules for their children. In general, parents are unfamiliar with modern communication media and as a result are unaware of their children engaging in cyberbullying or being cyberbullied (Dehue et al., 2008).

Differences within Parental Supervision

Mothers and fathers may utilize different techniques for supervision. In some adolescents' lives, one parent over another has more knowledge of what their child is doing while online. Some research indicated that mothers have a greater knowledge about their children's lives (Bumpus, Crouter, & McHale, 2001; Waizenhofer, Buchanan,

& Jackson-Newsom, 2004). However, Bjornstad and Ellingsen (2004) found that in regard to the Internet, fathers tend to play a more active role than mothers. Wang et al. (2005) indicated that fathers were more likely to check the websites their children visited than the mothers. Liau, Khoo, and Ang (2008), however, refuted those findings and suggested in their study that mothers have a better awareness of their adolescents' Internet use than fathers.

Parents' monitoring and supervision of their children's Internet usage is part and parcel of parenting style covering the spectrum of children's activities, and reciprocal influence has been found to exist between parenting style and the parent–child relationship. It was commonly believed by parents that they themselves, rather than teachers, played a more important role in the Internet behavior of young children (Cheng, 2004; Valcke, Schellens, Van Keer, & Gerats, 2007).

Parental Monitoring, Age, and Gender of Adolescent

A direct relationship can be found between parental monitoring and the age of the child or adolescent. According to Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber (1984), the number of hours of parental monitoring decreases with the age of the adolescent. For example, this research reported a 10.1 year old was unsupervised an average of 0.78 hours per day while a 16.3 year old was unsupervised an average of 2.06 hours per day. However, gender research by Laird, Pettit, Dodge, and Bates (2003) supported that while there is in fact a decline in parental monitoring, it is most likely to be found true for girls, but not for boys.

Regardless of gender, Tynes (2007) suggested three key strategies for satisfactory supervision. First, Tynes (2007) suggested maintaining an open and honest dialogue;

second, helping children protect their privacy online; and third, developing an exit strategy. It is imperative for parents to engage in conversations with their children on how they are using technology and what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate conduct (Sabella, 2009). Sabella (2009) further suggested that parents help their children gain an understanding about the use and misuse of technology, teach them how to make informed decisions about how they are using technology, and assist them in policing themselves as they use different forms of technology.

Parental Supervision of Technology

Parents have a duty of serving the role of guardian (Wilson & McAloney, 2010). However, when technology is involved, adults are not as sure what types of supervision are acceptable and lack an understanding of how best to guide their children (Wilson & McAloney, 2010). Not only are adults unsure about their role of supervising technology, but their perception of implementation is different from that of their children (Hasenbrink, Livingstone, & Haddon, 2008). Studies have shown that there is a difference between how children believe their technology use is supervised and the reports that parents give. Shephard, Arnold, and Gibbs (2006) identified that 67% of parents reported some sort of supervision of their children's use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Staksrud and Livingstone (2009) reported that parents' attempts to resolve the dilemma of wanting children to be competent in the new technological world while simultaneously controlling their Internet use by either ignoring the risks or restricting children's online opportunities were unsatisfactory. Research has demonstrated that there is a link between parental knowledge of adolescents' activities

and positive adjustment in adolescents (Waizenhofer, Buchanan, & Jackson-Newsom, 2004).

Methods of Supervision

In general, parents' methods of supervising their children involved setting rules about usage, actively discussing the Internet experience with their children, sharing experiences of using the Internet, and engaging in close monitoring. Parents also needed to understand more about children's perceptions of online risks and help them to develop coping strategies (Staksrud & Livingstone, 2009). Byron (2008) noted that shielding children from all potentially risky situations on the Internet may be harmful in itself, preventing children from gaining vital skills in judgment, risk identification and risk assessment, as well as depriving them of the opportunity to learn from mistakes. Supervising technology usage is linked to participation in bullying incidents. Ample research demonstrates the link between family functioning and bullying with factors such as poor supervision and lack of attention in the home (Ary, Duncan, Biglan, Metzler, Noell, & Smolkowski, 1999; Oliver & Oaks, 1994).

If children are left unsupervised and are receiving little or no attention, then they will seek other ways to get the attention that they are craving (Park, Kim, & Cho, 2008). In addition, if children know they are not being supervised, then they think that their poor behavior will go unnoticed and they will suffer no consequences. Wong (2010) showed that parental knowledge of computer and Internet use had a predominant impact on the overall outcome of supervising and guiding their children in using the Internet.

Some research studies show that parents are supervising their children while using technology. Dehue et al. (2008) discovered that more than half of the parents always or

usually set rules for their children about the frequency with which they were allowed to use the Internet (60%) and about what they were and were not allowed to do on the Internet (80%). Nevertheless, many parents did not know that their child was engaged in bullying or was a victim of cyberbullying. The percentage of parents reporting that their child was engaged in bullying on the Internet or via text messages was considerably lower (4.8%) than the percentage of children reporting to be engaged in bullying on the Internet or via text messages (17.3%). The percentage of parents who reported that their child was being bullied on the Internet or via text messaging was also much lower (11.8%) than the percentage of children who reported being bullied (22.9%). Wang et al. (2005) also found that the majority of parents report regulating their teenage children's Internet use, but parents report more monitoring (61%) than teens report (38%).

Benefits of Parental Supervision

Parental supervision certainly has its benefits. Amato and Fowler (2002) found that a high level of parental monitoring (e.g., supervising children's activities, restricting the amount of television, or the types of television programs children watch) combined with other parenting practices was associated with better grades in school and lower levels of deviance among young children and adolescents. Parental monitoring was also associated with fewer delinquent behavior problems in early adolescence (Pettit, Laird, Dodge, Bates, & Criss, 2001). Magid (1998) recommended parental involvement and monitoring of children's Internet use to ensure safe and appropriate online navigation. Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) also stressed that general monitoring and positive caregiver--child relationships may be more important factors in Internet safety as global parental

monitoring is significantly related to a decrease in the likelihood of being an online aggressor.

In relation to supervision, parents must also consider the locations in which their children utilize technology and how convenient access is to technology. Patchin and Hinduja (2006) found that a substantial number of adolescents used their computers in the privacy of their own bedrooms, thereby reducing or even eliminating the presence and supervision of a parent.

Effective, Direct Interventions

Parents may be unfamiliar with appropriate interventions that can stop cyberbullying incidents from occurring. Denying access to technology is not the answer. Children rely on technology not only as a means of social communication, but also to complete schoolwork (Jones, 2006). Denying access would cause more harm than good (Lou, Shih, & Liu, 2010). Parents hold positive views of technology and are aware of its importance (Lou et al., 2010). Wong (2010) identified that about 70% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that technology enhanced the interest of their children in learning and discovering new things, and about 69% considered it as an essential tool for everyday life. Turow and Nir (2000) also identified that parents believed that children need computer/Internet access and skills to do well in school.

Hong and Eamon (2009) suggested that practitioners get involved in educating parents. They stated that, "practitioners can assist parents in becoming appropriately involved in children's lives, providing supervision, learning non-physical and less- harsh parenting practices" (Hong & Eamon, 2009, p. 615). It is also suggested that the practitioners work directly with the perpetrators of peer victimization to teach social

skills and in addition to more assertive behaviors among the victims and bystanders (Hong & Eamon, 2009).

It is difficult to go through a day conflict free, especially when tackling issues over technology (Sabella, 2009). However, when children witness verbal arguments between their parents, they see that exchange as an appropriate method of communicating. Chapman and Dehle (2002) believed that practitioners can play a role in teaching parents how to learn positive methods to resolve disagreements by teaching communication and problem-solving skills. If children witness problem-solving and positive interactions taking place between adults, they may be more likely to demonstrate the same behaviors.

Wong (2010) conducted a study in which 17 methods of supervisory techniques were identified. The 17 methods were divided into four broad categories: setting rules, involvement, restriction, and close monitoring (Wong, 2010). After analyzing these strategies, it was suggested that positive outcomes may occur if parents are more involved in their children's online activities, adopt an authoritative parenting style, conduct better family communication, spend more family time together, and have a positive attitude toward the Internet (Wong, 2010). Staksrud and Livingstone (2009) expressed that parents needed to understand more about children's perceptions of online risks and help them to develop coping strategies.

Wong (2010) further suggested that parents needed to take an active role in closing the gap in the digital divide. Communities and the government could become involved and offer support to parents whose technological skills are lacking. However,

parents also need to take the initiative and seek out opportunities for learning more about the technology applications that their children are utilizing.

Resources

Parents need to be aware of the resources they have access to in order to prevent cyberbullying incidents. Not all measures require being technologically savvy, but they do require knowing how to utilize the tools. Some recommendations include: (a) saving evidence by printing out emails, or saving the communications that took place; (b) reporting techniques, which includes knowing when to ignore, block, or react in a responsible manner; (c) tracking strategies, such as tracing emails and text messages; (d) controlling options, such making a request to the social networking site to remove the offensive material from the site; and (e) reporting methods, which includes contacting the necessary authorities (Kowalski et al., 2008).

Filters and Software

Options exist for parents on how to supervise what their children are doing online. Filters, as well as monitoring software, are two common supervisory techniques that are being utilized (Froeschle et al., 2008; Hasenbrink et al., 2008). Filters allow parents to block certain websites that they find objectionable or offensive, and monitoring software programs create a history of where Internet users go and what they do. Of those who have implemented these strategies, approximately 65%-75% of parents reported that they check the Internet sites that their children have visited, about two-thirds reported that they closely monitor their children's media use, a little more than 50% use some sort of technical filtering software, and about 45% use monitoring software (Elias, 2007; Lenhart

& Madden, 2007). However, even with those monitoring systems in place, only about 33% of teens believed that their parents monitored their online activities (Lenhart, 2005).

Filters tend to be used more by parents who go online often and/or are parents of middle school-age children (Lenhart, 2005). By utilizing filters, parents can block certain content and material that they find offensive or objectionable (Froeschle et al., 2008). Monitoring software allows parents to view the websites that their children are visiting and what they are doing by viewing the log that has been created with the software (Froeschle et al., 2008). Some parents may view the utilization of filters and software programs as restrictive mediation (Greenberg, Rampoldi-Hnilo, & Mastro, 2001). Mesch (2009) described restrictive mediation as those practices that do not involve the child's input whatsoever and is a decision made entirely by the parent.

If parents are uncomfortable installing software onto their computers, keeping track of the viewing history of their children, or blocking certain sites from viewing, there are other strategies that can be employed to reduce inappropriate behavior while using technology. Parents need to consider the location of the technology in their homes. Lenhart and Madden (2007) reported in their study that about 70% of teens identified that the computer they use at home is in a public place or family area. By keeping the technology in a public place, the children will know that they are being watched and the types of activities in which they engage are also being monitored (Froeschle et al., 2008).

Engaging in Conversation

Sitting down and discussing what children are doing on the Internet is another strategy that could be implemented. Parents should demonstrate an interest in what their children are doing, and by engaging in an informal discussion could aid in teaching the

parent what new technologies are available. Approximately 68% of parents have reported using this method (Lenhart et al., 2001; Smith, 2007). Parents can take direct actions in implementing parental mediation by sitting with their children and engaging in conversations as their children are using technology in addition to creating rules for use.

In addition to having informal conversations about what children are doing on the Internet, it is also important to establish rules for using technology and engage in open discussion (Mesch, 2009). According to Lenhart and Madden (2007), 85% of parents reported that they have rules about what Internet sites their children can view, 85% of parents reported that they have established rules for what personal information their children can share over the Internet, and 69% of parents reported that they have rules about the amount of time their children can spend online. However, the creation of rules for technology use can be viewed as restrictive mediation, if no input about the rules is sought from the child who must follow them (Mesch, 2009; Nathanson, 2001). By actively participating in the creation of rules, this involvement would be seen as evaluative mediation (Mesch, 2009).

Theoretical Perspective

Bullying is an act of aggression, and research on aggression shows that this behavior is learned through observational learning (Green & Piel, 2010). Bandura (1986) found that children are more likely to model aggression when the model is rewarded or escapes punishment for the aggressive act than when the model is punished. Sawyer, Mishna, Pepler, and Wiener (2011) suggested that an ecological framework be utilized in their study of parents' perspectives of bullying because bullying dynamics often extend beyond the children who were bullied or who bully others. Those affected include peers,

teachers, the school community, and parents (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Mishna, Wiener, & Pepler, 2008).

Ecological Theory

Urie Bronfrenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Theory has five nested layers of systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem with the individual situated in the center of the systems. The ecological model stated that behavior is influenced by the interactions within and among these systems (Bronfrenbrenner 1979, 1994). According to the Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) if the relationships in the immediate microsystem break down, the child will not have the tools to explore other parts of his environment because the layers are interrelated.

Peer victimization results from the complex interplay between the individual, his or her relationships with others, the community, and broader society, which can be understood within an ecological framework (Hong & Eamon, 2009). There are many ways to configure the risk factors as they relate to particular behaviors, so it is important to identify and understand how these factors can inform intervention and prevention efforts (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Gorman-Smith, Tolan, & Henry, 2000). An explanation of the five layers of systems is described below.

Microsystem

The microsystem is the innermost layer which includes the direct settings in which individuals develop (Barboza, Schiamberg, Oehmke, Korzeniewski, Post, & Heraux, 2009). Parents are included in the microsystem, in addition to the emotional support from parents and friends (Barboza et al., 2009).

The most immediate influences on peer victimization occur within microsystems. These microsystems include individuals and groups of individuals with whom children interact: family, peers, and teachers (Barboza et al., 2009; Hong, Cho, & Lee, 2010). Within these microsystems, the interactions constantly shape the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Parental involvement is seen as an influence within the microsystem that focuses on an individual's most immediate environment (Barboza et al, 2009). The parent-child relationship, parenting practices, and peer victimization can also be included in the microsystem level (Hong et al., 2010; Hong & Eamon, 2009).

Coinciding with Bronfenbrenner's theory, Patterson and Bank (1989) developed a theory in which they believed that harsh parenting practices result in children's internalizing the belief that they are unworthy of love and affection. This belief can lead to children's expecting and accepting abuse from others, such as peers. Additionally, if children are seeking affirmation that they believe should be present, but they cannot seem to locate it, they will resort to seeking that attention in inappropriate places (Addison, 1992). These deficiencies show themselves especially in adolescence as anti-social behavior, lack of self-discipline, and inability to provide self-direction (Addison, 1992). Overly protective childrearing practices also provide few opportunities for children to learn appropriate social skills for responding to peer aggression.

Choi and Chae (2000) indicated in their research that elementary school students who lack appropriate parental supervision and care are at risk of acting aggressively toward peers. Both perpetrators and victims are more likely to have parents who are less accommodating to their needs, compared to children who are victimized and then become perpetrators. Children in the latter group tend to have parents who are less involved in

childrearing than children in the general population. Doh (2000) also indicated that when children have a strong emotional bond with both parents, they are less likely to experience peer victimization. Barboza et al. (2009) supported this by asserting that students who have a difficult time discussing their problems with parents are more likely to engage in bullying behaviors. They indicated that the odds of bullying are 7% higher among individuals who lack emotional support from their parents (Barboza et al., 2009).

Schools should take an initiative to include parent education opportunities that enhance prosocial parenting practices (Doh, Kwon, Park, Hong, Hong, & Hwang, 2003). The implementation of these programs has been successful in improving the relationship between the parent and the adolescent (Doh et al., 2003). Practitioners should assist parents in becoming appropriately involved in children's lives, providing supervision, learning non-physical and less- harsh parenting practices (Hong & Eamon, 2009).

Mesosystem

The mesosystem involves the interaction of two or more microsystems in influencing behavior (Barboza et al., 2009; Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The mesosystem show the "linkages between microsystems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 227). For example, interactions in the family environment may influence interactions within the peer group (Eamon, 2001). If there is a lack of a parent-child relationship, this absence could result in the development of ineffective social skills, which could contribute to peer rejection and bullying (Orpinas & Horne, 2006). Also, within this system, the joint contributions of parents and teachers could prevent or lessen physical and/or psychological damage from bullying (Barboza et al., 2009).

The parent/teacher collaboration could be especially helpful if the adolescent's grades are suffering as a result of being bullied. Schools need to create ways to encourage parents to stay involved in their adolescent's life (Hong et al., 2010). Schools can create networks for parents and also provide activities for parents so that they can stay abreast of their adolescent's academic and social life at school (Hong et al., 2010).

Exosystem

To understand peer victimization, the ecological model also requires examining interactions at the exosystem level (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). In the exosystem, the individual is not directly included, but will be significantly impacted (Barboza et al., 2009). This system is seen as the relationship of one or more settings that do not involve the individual as an active participant, but highlight events that occur that affect the developing person (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

For example, parents' working hours can influence child behavior since parents have less time to monitor and form attachments and positively interact with their children in the home (Han, Waldfogel, and Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Hong & Eamon, 2009). With more parents in the workforce, supervision of any sort can be lacking (Eamon, 2001). Baek and Hwang (2006) revealed that a lack of parental attachment and supervision, which are related to peer aggression in the school, are common in two-earner Korean families. These findings also are consistent with attachment theory, suggesting that parents must have the time and energy to form positive attachments with their children, which assists children in developing appropriate social behavior (Bowlby, 1977). Additionally, if parents fail to consistently supervise their children's behaviors, behavior problems frequently result (Spiegler & Guevremont, 2003). Other exosystem factors that

relate to bullying include specific teacher and parent training to reduce and prevent bullying (Barboza, et al., 2009).

Macrosystem

The macrosystem refers to the culture or subculture in which the developing child exists (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and also factors affecting the welfare of the individuals in a most distant and least direct manner (Barboza et al., 2009). The role of media would be considered a factor within the macrosystem because it reflects cultural or subcultural values and attitudes (Barboza, et al., 2009).

There is a growing need for adults to take an active role in knowing what their adolescents are doing on the Internet. Accordino and Accordino (2011) suggested how crucial it is for schools to provide methods for improving student-parent relationships. They explained that in middle school a major aspect of a good relationship is positive and open communication (Accordino & Accordino, 2011). Especially at a time when most adolescents have access to technology, it is crucial for adults to be cognizant of the applications their children are using both positively and negatively and have a way to communicate about those applications.

Chronosystem

The chronosystem is the final layer within the ecological framework. This layer "represents the effect of time on the behavior and on the context in which that behavior takes place" (Barboza et al., 2009, p. 103). Societal attitudes toward bullying may change over time, in addition to behaviors that adolescents exhibit. These changes in attitudes can be placed in the chronosystem. Barboza et al. (2009) stressed the importance of changing the components of the chronosystem over time when creating

ecologically informed interventions, so that there is continuous enhancement of the welfare of individuals and their relationships.

As a result of so many factors contributing to the participation in cyberbullying, the ecological theory was used to guide this study. Participation in cyberbullying could be a direct result of failed or tarnished relationships with others. Analyzing the ecological framework provides readers with a better understanding of how relationships and interactions with others can positively and negatively effect behaviors that are displayed.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory also plays a significant role in cyberbullying. Pictures, text messages, and emails can be disseminated to many viewers instantly (Froeschle et al., 2008). Individuals who receive the messages can choose to delete the message or continue to pass it along to others. Without realizing it, by receiving and sending the messages, observational learning is taking place.

According to Bandura (1977) there are four components to observational learning: attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation. Cyberbullies learn their behavior by seeing it happening and then reproducing the behavior. The motivation for cyberbullies varies; at times cyberbullies cannot identify why they have chosen to victimize others (Vandebosch & Van Cleemput, 2008), sometimes perpetrators just think it is fun or funny (Scaglione & Scaglione, 2006). Furthermore, Willard (2007) explained that cyberbullying has become an "entertainment activity" (p. 47). The social learning theory posits that children learn behaviors from their environment and the behaviors can then be reinforced in different ways (Bandura, 1977). As long as there are foreseen

benefits to the negative behaviors that children demonstrate, the children will continue to act in those negative ways (Powell & Ladd, 2010). In addition, if children witness negative behaviors within their own family structure, they will imitate those same behaviors. Aggression is learned from observing and imitating role models, especially people with whom the learners have close and frequent contact and who accepts and reinforces aggression (Bandura, 1973).

Research by Olweus (1993) suggested that group bullying can also be explained by Bandura's social learning theory. Studies have shown that children and adults may behave more aggressively after viewing someone else act aggressively. As a result of cyberbullying being seen as an anonymous act of violence, lack of consequences from teachers and parents further increases the desire to act aggressively (Powell & Ladd, 2010). There is also the decreased sense of responsibility that needs to be taken into account (Powell & Ladd, 2010). Because the perpetrator cannot see the faces of the victims, they do not fully realize the harm that they are causing (Strom & Strom, 2005).

Social Cognitive Perspective

A social cognitive perspective is used to understand and predict this form of aggression. This framework suggests that an individual's cognitions about a social event play a central role in one's aggressive behavior and the stability of that behavior over time (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Huesmann, 1988; Huesmann & Eron, 1984). Theories of aggression suggest that normative beliefs, or cognitions about the acceptability of any given behavior, act as a general guide for behavior (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997; Werner & Nixon, 2005; Zelli, Dodge, Lochman, & Laird, 1999). Normative beliefs are part of a database-like structure that stores an individual's organized knowledge. This structure

comprises stored schemas, scripts, and beliefs believed to have been learned early and increasingly reinforced over time until they become permanently encoded in memory (Bandura, 1977). Normative beliefs influence behavior by imposing limits on the degree to which the individual approves or disapproves of the particular behavior concerned. A number of studies show that beliefs supportive of aggression influence actual aggressive behavior (e.g., Huesmann & Guerra, 1997; Slaby & Guerra, 1988).

Social Information Processing

Social information processing refers to the mental processing of information in which individuals engage during specific social situations and how individuals understand how they fit into groups by paying attention to what others say about them (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Dodge & Coie, 1987). Crick and Dodge (1994) suggested that children engage in six mental steps before enacting social behavior. These include attending to a particular social situational cue, encoding and interpreting that cue, clarifying the desired goal, evaluating and selecting possible responses from memory, and finally enacting the chosen response. Biases can occur at any stage in this social information process, thus leading aggressive children to interpret their social world more aggressively (Waas, 1988), to generate more aggressive ways of responding in social situations (Quiggle, Garber, Panak, & Dodge, 1992), and to evaluate aggressive behaviors more favorably than their nonaggressive peers (Perry, Perry, & Rasmussen, 1986).

Technology allows its users to hide (Goldman, 2012). In a face-to-face conversation, the participants in a conversation can use nonverbal cues to form impressions. However, when technology is involved, impressions are formed with little

regard to the nonverbal cues (Walther, 1992). Knowing that these impressions are formed with few nonverbal cues can be harmful considering Mehrabian (1971) noted that 93% of the meaning in a verbal message can be found in the associated nonverbal communication. By not seeing the facial expressions and body language of others, some adolescents may misconstrue statements that are shared with them through social networking sites. Walther (1992) believed, however, that those who exchange information through technology--mediated conversations have the ability to encode and decode messages using cue systems that are available in the technology they are using. Walther's comments suggest that users of technology do in fact exchange nonverbal cues through the content, style, and timing of their responses in their communications (Madlock & Westerman, 2010).

Not all researchers agree that communication through technology can be easily understood. Baruch (2005) argued that emails, chats, and text messages could be easily misunderstood and misinterpreted because the messages did not contain the tone of the words used, eye contact, or other nonverbal behaviors found in regular face-to-face interactions. As a result of misunderstood comments, "messages considered by the sender as innocent humor can trigger an escalating spiral exchange of e-mail bullying" (Baruch, 2005, p. 361).

Research Design and Instrumentation

Throughout the literature review, the significant role that parents play in regard to supervising the use of technology of their adolescents was demonstrated. The studies that the researcher reviewed were a mix of quantitative studies and mixed method studies. Quantitative studies were more plentiful in the area of parental perceptions of cyberbullying (Liau, Khoo, & Ang, 2008; Livingstone, 2007; Lou et al, 2010; Sharples et

al., 2009; Wong, 2010). Only one qualitative study could be located on the parental perceptions of cyberbullying, and their monitoring techniques (Sawyer, Mishna, Pepler, & Wiener, 2011). In a different study, personal interviews with parents were conducted after a four year longitudinal study was conducted with the adolescents (Laird, Pettit, Dodge, & Bates, 2003). A large proportion of studies on how parents monitor technology were taken from the adolescent's perspective (Laird et al., 2003; Lee & Chae, 2007; Li, 2010; Pokhrel, Unger, Wagner, Ritt-Olson, & Sussman, 2008). However, both types of studies offered insight on how parents view their role in the supervision of technology, as well as the role that they play in relation to cyberbullying incidents.

The researcher utilized a mixed methods study design to fully answer the research questions. Mixed method designs have the ability to provide in-depth information pertaining to participants' viewpoints on a certain topic, which in this case is how parents view themselves as supervisors of technology (Turner, 2009). By using a mixed methods design, the researcher was able to draw connections from previously conducted studies on parents and their supervision of technology, add to the existing literature, and present new findings through conducting personal interviews with parents of adolescents. The qualitative piece was important to include because the way parents define and conceptualize bullying can influence whether and how they respond or intervene (Sawyer et al., 2011).

All of the studies that were reviewed used different survey instruments to answer the proposed research questions. As a result, the survey instrument was created by the researcher who piloted the study to a group of parents who were not part of the dissertation sample population and who had children in fourth through eighth grade.

They included some questions that were part of published survey instruments as well as questions developed by the researcher. Permission to adapt existing surveys had been obtained.

Once the surveys were administered, and the data analyzed, personal interviews took place. The purpose of conducting individual interviews was to expand on items in the survey related to the research questions. Interviews were used in this survey to provide in-depth information pertaining to participants' experiences and viewpoints of a particular topic, the parents' role in supervising technology usage among their fourth through eighth grade children (Turner, 2009).

A general interview guide approach was taken with the interviews. This approach was more structured than an informal interview, but provided some flexibility in the line of questioning (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). This approach allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions to each participant based on the information that they shared, but still allowed the researcher to be in the "driver's seat" (Turner, 2010, p. 755). The researcher assumed that the participants had different experiences to share, so it was important to have some flexibility and a degree of freedom in getting information from the participants (McNamara, 2009).

At the conclusion of each interview, the information obtained was coded. Priori codes were established prior to the interviews taking place. However, the researcher was open to identifying additional codes that emerged during the data analysis as encouraged by Creswell (2007). The codes were classified into emerging themes. The emerging themes informed the researcher of what direction parent education needs to head in terms of supervision and technology.

Summary

The review of literature is comprised of several major components: The history of bullying, problems associated with technology, an overview of cyberbullying, the role parents play in supervision, interventions that can be utilized, and the theoretical framework through which to examine the factors of cyberbullying. The limited amount of research that exists points to the importance of the role of parents in supervising technology and preventing cyberbullying (Bumpus & Werner, 2009; Liau et al, 2008; Liau et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2005).

Parents need to have an awareness of the role they serve when technology is involved. Part of this role includes knowing how to address cyberbullying with their children. Furthermore, parents need to be aware of the various forms of parental mediation that can be utilized, as well as the appropriate terminology to be used in discussions. Technology is constantly being updated and inevitably changing, and one way that parents can continue to stay up-to-date on what their children are doing in cyberspace is to engage in some form of supervision of technology.

Research needs to be conducted to enhance our understanding of the factors that affect how parents understand, recognize, and respond to bullying incidents (Sawyer et al., 2011). This research will then serve as a guide to inform education and intervention with the aim of increasing parents' knowledge and ability to respond effectively to bullying incidents (Sawyer et al., 2011).

Chapter III describes the methodology and data collection process for determining how parents view their role as supervisors of technology, their current levels of

understanding as it relates to cyberbullying, and how they intervene once they are aware of cyberbullying incidents.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate parents' perceptions of the role that they as parents/guardians play in the supervision of their children's use of technology as well as their responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Parents' and guardians' current understanding of cyberbullying, their supervision of the current technology use of their children, and their responses to experiences of cyberbullying in the lives of their children were examined. There was a need for this study because there is limited research on parents' and guardians' perspectives of cyberbullying. Research points to the importance of the role of parents and guardians in supervising technology and preventing cyberbullying (Liau et al., 2008; Liau et al., 2005; Wang et al., 2005; Mason, 2008; Bumpus & Werner, 2009).

The research in the present study focused on parents and guardians with children in grades four through eight. Quantitative data were collected in the first phase of the data collection, and participants were asked to complete a survey that was administered at the conclusion of a Parent Teacher Organization meeting. The 28-item survey consisted of Likert rating scale type questions, multiple choice type questions, and short answer questions. Qualitative methods were used in the second phase of data collection by conducting follow-up interviews. Both surveys and interviews were used to answer the following research questions:

1. How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?

2. How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying?
3. What is the perception of the responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children?
4. A. What specific technologies do parents perceive their child to be using on a regular basis?

   B. What is their role in the supervision of each?
5. How do parent view their responsibility for direct intervention when they discover that their child has unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as an oppressor, a victim, or a bystander?

Review of Current Research on Parents and Cyberbullying

Surveys have been administered to parents/guardians, teachers, and students and used extensively in bullying and cyberbullying research (Craig, Bell, & Leschied, 2011). Through the data collected from prior surveys, there is a significant indication that there is a need for parent education about the risks associated with online communication (Juvonen & Gross, 2008), a need to assist parents who feel that they are ill-equipped to respond to cyberbullying (Hannah, 2010), and a need for an understanding of the critical role that adults play in preventing bullying incidents from occurring (Siegle, 2010). Research studies discussed previously in the review of literature served as a framework for the current study in exploring more deeply the role that parents play in the supervision of technology that children in grades four through eight are utilizing.

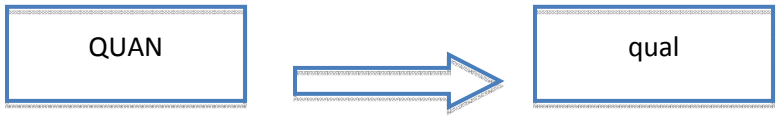
Study Design

Mixed methods research is considered an emerging, innovative research strategy that is used across disciplines and combines qualitative and quantitative data collection (Simpson, 2011) because it provides "richer detail than either method can generate alone" (p. 1592). Hesse-Biber (2008) identified that the two methods inform one another to provide a more layered, multipronged approach to research. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009) asserted that mixed methods typologies help provide "more credibility to the field of education in general and the social and behavioral sciences" (p. 272). In addition, the information gained from the personal interviews would strengthen the data received from the surveys. Creswell (2009) explained this model as the sequential explanatory design. In this model, the quantitative portion comes first followed by the qualitative piece (Creswell, 2009). The data gathered were utilized in a descriptive analysis to answer the research questions. The following sections describe in detail the procedures for data collection. It begins with an explanation of the research design, and then moves into a discussion of how the study sites were selected and how the sites were contacted. Details about the participants as well as the study sites will follow. The procedures for data collection and data analysis will conclude the methodology section.

Research Design: Explanatory Mixed Methods

An explanatory mixed methods design, or QUAN-qual model was utilized in this study (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). In this model, the quantitative data were collected and analyzed first. This analysis was followed by the collection of the qualitative data, which were used to explain or elaborate on the quantitative results (Gay et al., 2009). Mertens (2005) refers to this type of data collection as sequential form. Sequential form

is the process of "one type of data providing a basis for collection of another type of data" (Mertens, 2005, p. 292). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2006) added that sequential mixed designs answer "exploratory and confirmatory questions chronologically in a pre-specified order" (p. 22). The model in Figure 1 was applied to this study.



QUAN	**QUAN**		**qual**	**qual**
Data Collection	Data Analysis	Data Collection	Data Analysis	Interpretation of Entire Analysis

Figure 1. Mixed methods design sequential explanatory model. The quantitative data is collected first and then analyzed, followed by the collection and analysis of the qualitative data (Creswell, 2009, p. 209; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 85).

In the sequential explanatory model the researcher "connects the data between the two phases" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 85). McMahon (2007) discovered in her study that the usage of the sequential explanatory mixed methods design revealed how the opinions of respondents may change based on the type of research methods used. The survey she implemented consisted of closed-ended questions and did not allow deviation from the choices offered (Hesse-Biber, 2010). By utilizing the qualitative component, the participants were able to answer the questions and elaborate on their feelings about the topic (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Surveys as a Quantitative Research Methodological Approach

In quantitative research, a survey provides a numeric description of opinions of a particular population (Creswell, 2009). Surveys generally take on the form of a questionnaire, which is a collection of survey questions (Gay et al., 2009). In this study, data were collected during the fall of 2012 from parents who had children enrolled in grades four through eight at one of the test site locations. The survey consisted of 28 questions. The construction of the survey was based on a number of published survey instruments, in addition to questions constructed by the researcher. Each of published survey instruments contained elements that were useful to the present study. In addition, the survey instruments were used in studies in which parents were the sample, which is why they were utilized in the present study. Permission to adapt the instruments was obtained through e-mail (Appendix B).

Survey Description

The survey (Appendix C) designed for this study was a researcher-developed survey. The survey consisted of five parts:

1. Parents' Demographics. This section contained three multiple-choice questions regarding sex of the participant, marital status of the participant, and the grade level of the participant's child. The demographic information was used to identify the characteristics of the sample (Creswell, 2009).
2. Your Child and Technology. This section consisted of 6 Likert rating scale and checklist items. "Likert scales provide a range of responses to a statement or series of statements" (Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011, p. 19). A

Likert rating scale measurement can be a useful and reliable instrument for measuring self-efficacy (Maurer, 1998). These items were used to answer the question: How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?

3. Understanding of Bullying. This section of the survey consisted of two checklist type items. The checklist items required the participants to place a check mark next to any statement that they felt applied to the question. The items were used to answer the question: How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying?
4. Role in Supervision. This section contained four items. One of the items was multiple-choice, and the other three were Likert scale items. A Likert scale coded as Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4), and Always (5) was used to help determine the parents'/guardians' perceptions. The items were used to answer the question: What is the perception of the responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children?
5. Supervisory Methods. This section consisted of eight items, which were designed to answer the two-part question: A. What specific technologies do parents perceive their child to be using on a regular basis? B. What is their role in the supervision of each? A Likert scale coded Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4), and Always (5) was used to help determine parents'/guardians' perceptions in three of the items, while three of the items were multiple choice, and the remaining two items in

this section were checklists. The participants could only make one choice for each of the multiple-choice questions. For the checklist items, the participants marked as many statements as they felt were applicable.

6. Intervention. The five items in this section were used to answer the question: How do parents view their responsibility for direct intervention when they discover that their child has unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as an oppressor, a victim, or a bystander? A Likert scale coded Very Unlikely (1), Unlikely (2), Likely (3), and Highly Likely (4) was used to help determine the parents'/guardians' perceptions in one of the items, while multiple choice items were used for two, a checklist was used for one item, and the final question allowed the participants the opportunity to write a written response.

Data Analysis of Survey

Each multiple-choice question, checklist item, and Likert-rating scale was analyzed using SPSS software. The open-ended questions were coded and analyzed in order to identify common and reoccurring themes among the participants' answers.

Interviews as a Qualitative Research Methodological Approach

Qualitative data were collected through personal interviews with the participants. The researcher attempted to acquire at least 12 interviews in order to gain enough information to detect a median as suggested by Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006). In addition, a sample size of at least 12 was sought because when collecting qualitative data, the sample should not be so small as to make it difficult to achieve data saturation

(Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Furthermore, it is important to not have too large of a sample size because it would make it difficult to make a deep analysis of the data (Sandelowski, 1995).

The personal interviews were conducted by telephone. Participants demonstrated interest in participating in the phone interview at the conclusion of the paper and pencil survey. Each participant was given a contact sheet with his/her survey. Participants were instructed to place their contact information on the sheet if they were interested in being contacted for a personal phone interview. The additional sheet was not stapled to the survey, and participants were informed that when the surveys were turned in, there would be a separate envelope for the contact information forms. The participants were contacted, and a telephone interview was arranged with each interested individual. If participants were available for their personal interview at the time of the first call, the interview took place (Appendix D). Twenty participants indicated interest in participating in the personal phone interview. All 20 individuals were contacted, and 12 of the interviews took place when the researcher contacted them the first time. Eight voicemails were left, and of those, two additional participants returned the phone call. The researcher contacted the other interested individuals once more, and left another voicemail. The phone calls went unreturned for a second time, so the researcher assumed they were no longer interested. Those who returned the phone call made arrangements for a more convenient time for both the researcher and the participant to conduct the interview. Permission to tape record the interview was asked, and each interview participant granted permission for recording.

The purpose of conducting individual interviews was to expand on items in the survey related to the research questions. Personal interviews were chosen over focus groups because of the nature of the information that may be shared during the course of the conversation may be very personal and confidential. The phone interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes and were digitally recorded, and the information was transcribed verbatim.

General Interview Guide Approach

A general interview guide approach was taken with the interviews. This approach is more structured than an informal interview, but provides some flexibility in the line of questioning (Gall et al., 2003). This approach allows the researcher to ask follow-up questions to each participant based on the information that they share, but still allows the researcher to be in the "driver's seat" (Turner, 2010, p. 755). The participants would have different experiences to share, so it was important to have some flexibility and a degree of freedom in obtaining information from the participants (McNamara, 2009). Once data saturation was reached, the personal interviews concluded.

At the start of each interview, each participant was informed that the duration of the interview would be approximately 15 minutes. If they were unable to give that amount of time, they were given the opportunity to say so. The research questions were used as a guide when creating the interview questions. The researcher wanted to provide the interview participants with an opportunity to expand on their thoughts regarding cyberbullying, and also elaborate on the information that was received from the survey questions.

Each of the questions provided the participants the opportunity to go into detail with their responses. The questions were created so that the researcher could ask follow-up questions to garner further details. The interview questions allowed the participants to speak both from personal experience and also from hypothetical situations.

Participants were also informed that due to their participation in the interview they would be entered into a raffle to win one of 20 books that were donated by various authors on the topic of bullying. Raffling books was chosen over gift cards because the researcher felt that those who had agreed to participate in the interviews were genuinely interested in the topic of bullying. By rewarding the participants with books, the researcher felt that the parents would appreciate learning more from current researchers in the field, parents of bullied children, and survivors of bullying.

Participants

At each participating site, parents/guardians were invited to attend the regularly scheduled Parent Teacher Organization Meeting at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. Those parents/guardians who attended the meeting were presented with statistics on cyberbullying by the researcher. The meetings were open to every parent/guardian who has a child in grades four through eight. Gay et al. (2009) identified that it is often difficult to find adults willing to participate in a study; however, with the seven tests utilized in the current study, the researcher had a sample size of 95, which was only slightly lower than the desired sample size of 100.

Purposive Sampling

With many different test sites, the sample was identified as purposive sampling, which is "the process of selecting a sample that is believed to be representative of a given population"

(Gay et al., 2009, p. 136). Purposive sampling also "groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question" (Qualitative Research Methods, 2005, p. 5). It has been determined that purposive sampling is most successful when "data review and analysis are done in conjunction with data collection" (Qualitative Research Methods, p. 5).

Convenience Sampling

The sampling for the qualitative portion of the study was a convenience sample. A convenience sample is "the process of whoever happens to be available at the time" of the study (Gay et al., 2009, p. 134), and are willing to participate (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). In addition to being a convenience sample, the interview participants were also identified as nested participants because they were considered a subset of the larger group that completed the survey (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2010).

Participants who completed the survey were asked to provide their contact information if they were interested in participating in a personal phone interview. These individuals were contacted within two days of the completion of the study. Arrangements were made via phone as to when the interview would take place.

Official written permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and the superintendent or other school officials of the participating school districts (Appendix A).

Anonymity was maintained throughout the study. The identity of the participants in the personal interview was coded, and each participant was given a pseudonym to protect his/her identity. The gathered data were not shared with other participants or

those not related to the research. All paper copies of surveys, transcribed interviews, and consent forms will be contained in a locked area for three years and then shredded to destroy all traces of the data collection.

The Settings

Six school districts in an Eastern state of America were chosen to participate in this study based on their ongoing commitment to anti-bullying efforts that had recently been highlighted in the public news. The three counties included in the study were representative of school districts that exist in the Eastern state. Each participating district is described by location, population, grades served, and current bullying programs or procedures that are in place.

School District A

School district A is located approximately 18 miles Northeast of a large city within the state. It is comprised of one elementary center (grades k through 3), one upper elementary school (grades 4 and 5), one middle school (grades 6 through 8), and one high school (grades 9 through 12). In addition to the upper elementary building, the middle school was also utilized in this study. The upper elementary building has about 283 students receiving educational services, and the middle school educates about 447 students. The middle school in school district A has provided useful information about bullying and cyberbullying on its school web site for parents to read at their convenience. The principal and guidance counselor have designed the current bullying program that is implemented at the middle school. The principal believed that the program would expand in the 2012-2013 school year based on parental and staff feedback.

School District B

School district B consists of one Early Learning Center (pre-K and K), one primary school (grades 1 through 3), one middle school (grades 4 through 8), and one high school (grades 9 through 12). Approximately five square miles are served by this school district. For the purpose of this study, the middle school was used as the test site. There are approximately 640 students enrolled in the middle school. School district B has an online reporting system in place and a telephone hotline to report bullying incidents.

School District C

School district C is located approximately 35 miles South of a large city within the state, and encompasses approximately 35 square miles. The district has one learning center, which is used for head start, four elementary schools (grades K through 5), one middle school (grades 6 through 8), and one high school (grades 9 through 12). The middle school, which has about 616 students, was used as a testing site for the study. The guidance counselor offers support with a bully-proofing program. At the time of the study, the school was in its second year of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Teachers, parents, and the administrator are all members of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Committee.

School District D

School district D is the largest district in one of the counties in the Eastern state of America. This district has a resident population of more than 49,000, and covers approximately 95 square miles. This school district lies about 30 miles Southeast of a large city within the state. Within the district are six elementary buildings (K through 5),

three middle schools (6 through 8), and one high school (9 through 12). One of the three middle schools was a test site for the study. The district has implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. At this particular middle school, teachers, parents, and the administrator are members of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Committee. They meet prior to the start of the school year to analyze the data received from the Olweus questionnaire from the previous school year. The Parent Teacher Organization at this building meets monthly throughout the school year during the day. Meetings typically take place at 10 a.m. The timing of these meetings is unlike any of the other test sites, which typically meet one evening per month.

School District E

School district E contains four elementary buildings (K through 5), one junior high school (6 through 8), and one high school (9 through 12). The junior high school was used as test site for the study. This school district has implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, and there are links provided on the district web site for community members to gain more information. In addition, the bullying and cyberbullying policy is located on the homepage for the district. The Parent Teacher Organization meets monthly throughout the school year in the evenings.

School District F

School district F has five elementary schools (K through 6), one junior high school (7 and 8), and one high school (9 through 12). The district services approximately 4,100 total students. One of the elementary schools was chosen to participate in the study. There are approximately 500 students enrolled in this particular elementary school. This district has implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in grades

K through 6. The parents from this test site have a parent committee that plans anti-bullying events and engages in professional development to learn more about bullying. They have read and shared books, and they have also hired different presenters to come to the school to bring an awareness of bullying to the attention of the staff and students. To encourage parents' participation in the Parent Teacher Organization, this school offers babysitting services to the parents in attendance. The committee meets every month throughout the school year in the evenings.

Procedure for Data Collection

Pilot Study for Survey

The researcher-developed questionnaire for the survey was reviewed by a group of parents who were not part of the sample population and who had children in fourth through eighth grades. The pilot group consisted of a group of people who were known by the researcher. The purpose of the review by the group of parents was to ascertain clarity and appropriateness of the survey prior to administering it (Gay et al., 2009). Gay et al. (2009) suggested, "having three or four individuals complete the questionnaire will help identify problems. Choose individuals who are thoughtful, critical, and similar to the intended research participants" (p. 181). Secomb and Smith (2011) asserted that "performing a pilot study can assist by examining frameworks and processes therefore drawing attention to problems before a study begins" (p. 31). An added benefit of conducting pilot studies is that they enable study methods and data collection processes to be examined prior to the study (Reed, Newby, Coul, Jacques, Prescott, & Gray, 2007). Conducting pilot studies within mixed methods studies is particularly important, so that the researcher has the opportunity to think through and justify his/her theoretical and

methodological decisions and make adjustments if necessary (Secomb & Smith, 2011). Furthermore, the purpose of the pilot group was to check for clarity and also to ensure that the tape recording mechanism works.

The 14 individuals who agreed to participate in the pilot study reviewed the survey and interview questions during June and July of 2012. The pilot study was conducted in private settings with each of the 14 participants. Participants were instructed to note "issues of both commission and omission" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 181).

After completing the survey, the researcher solicited comments and feedback regarding the survey directions and specific survey items. The responses were hand-recorded and repeated back to the participants to ensure correctness in the recording. The researcher reviewed the additional comments and notes that were written on the surveys by the participants on the pilot surveys. The researcher reviewed the comments and the hand-recorded notes. The survey instrument was revised to include some of the suggested changes to the directions and specific items. At the conclusion of the pilot study, the participants were given a note of appreciation.

Several revisions were made based upon feedback from the pilot study participants. These revisions are as follows:

- A definition of cyberbullying was added at the beginning of the survey, to eliminate any misconceptions about the formal definition of cyberbullying.
- Question 3- "Circle the grade levels that you currently have a child enrolled. If there is more than one child, circle the grade level of the child who spends more time using technology." was revised to "Circle

the grade levels that you currently have a child enrolled. If there is more than one child, only circle the grade level of the child who spends more time using technology."

- Questions 4 and 5- The choice of 1-2 days a week was changed to 1-2 times a week.
- Question 8- The option of iPad was added to the iPod.
- Question 17- The word adolescent was revised to child.
- Question 18- Choice D "No, my child does not send instant messages" was revised to include texts. It now reads "No, my child does not send instant messages, or texts."
- Questions 20 and 21 were switched because it seemed more appropriate to ask about how often parents read their child's e-mails prior to asking them how often they sit with the child while he/she uses technology.
- Questions 24 and 25- A third choice was added to their multiple-choice item- C. We do not have Internet access.
- Question 26- The word adolescent was revised to the word child.
- Question 27- An additional choice of Nothing, kids will be kids was added to the answer selection.

Participant Selection

An administrator from each participating district was contacted for site approval (Appendix A) and asked to provide information regarding when the Parent Teacher Organization met and when it would be possible to elicit participation in the study. The districts agreed to participate in this study to gain a better understanding of how parents

view themselves as supervisors of technology and to find out how their role as a supervisor has changed with the knowledge of learning about their child's participation in cyberbullying incidents. This information is helpful to schools because schools can take an active role in providing education to parents on how to engage in meaningful conversations with their children about technology use.

Procedure for Administering the Survey

The survey used to collect data was based on a number of published survey instruments, in addition to questions constructed by the researcher. Permission to adapt the instruments was obtained (Appendix B). The questionnaire included 27 multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question (Appendix C). The survey consisted of six sections, one for each of the research questions. The survey included Likert-scale, checklist, multiple-choice, and open-ended items.

The researcher met with each group of parents/guardians at a Parent Teacher Organization meeting at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. At this meeting, parents/guardians were informed that their participation was strictly voluntary. They were assured that their participation or non-participation would not affect their standing within the school or the PTO group. Participants were presented with a consent form (Appendix E). Participants were also given time to read over the consent form before making a final decision. Parents and guardians were provided with an opportunity to leave the room during an intermission if they did not wish to participate. Those who returned to the room after the intermission signed the consent form and completed the survey. Those who wished to further participate in the study by answering questions in a phone interview were instructed to leave their contact information on a sheet that was

provided to them at the same time as the survey (Appendix F). By not placing their contact information on the survey instrument, anonymity was maintained. Additional surveys were also left with the Parent Teacher Organization President for parents/guardians who were unable to attend the meeting. Those who were unavailable were given one week to complete and return the survey to their child's school. The researcher returned to each test site to retrieve the additional questionnaires.

Procedure for Follow-up Interviews

The interview questions were piloted by the same individuals who piloted the survey instrument. The pilot group saw no need for revisions with the interview questions. The researcher contacted 20 participants who expressed a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview on the contact information form that was issued with the survey. Fourteen of the contacted individuals were available for phone interviews. Twelve of the participants were available at the time of the first phone call. Two additional participants returned the phone call, and set up a convenient time for the interview to take place. The other six individuals were called again by the researcher, and the researcher left a voicemail. However, the participants did not return the phone call, so the researcher assumed they were no longer interested in participating. The researcher scheduled and conducted the personal phone interviews. The purpose of conducting individual interviews was to expand on items in the survey related to the research questions. Prior to beginning the interview, each participant was asked for his/her permission to audiotape the interviews. If permission was not granted, the researcher had the questions typed out and was prepared to take written notes. However, each participant granted permission to record.

Each phone interview lasted approximately 15 minutes. Participants from each school district were invited to participate in the phone interview, and there was representation from each of the school districts. Those who participated in the personal interview were entered in a raffle to win one of 20 books that were donated by various authors. Participants were informed that when they signed up for the personal phone interview, their names would be entered for a chance to win one of the twenty books that were donated. The contributing authors included, Shawn Edgington, Sue Limber, Jodee Blanco, Judge Thomas Jacobs, Richard Guerry, Gabrielle Ford, and Megan Hall. Each of the contributing authors was either a researcher in the field of bullying, a survivor of bullying, or a parent of a bullied child. Each author donated between one and four books. Once all interviews were completed, the names were drawn, and the 14 winners were contacted. Each of the participants was awarded a book for their participation. The researcher delivered the books to the schools, which were then sent home to the parent/guardian.

Data Analysis

The researcher, through the use of Microsoft Word and highlighting, which aided in analyzing and interpreting the responses, organized the interview transcripts. Themes were developed from key words and phrases pertaining to the parents'/guardians' perceptions of the role that they play in the supervision of their children's use of technology as well as their response to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

Frequency statistics were performed for the demographic information relating to sex, marital status, and the grade in which the child was enrolled. Frequency statistics

were also run for questions 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 27. Scoring for the Likert-scale questions was based upon the number that was circled. Each item received a score ranging from one to seven. Scoring was calculated as follows:

1. Questions 4 and 5 were scored one to seven. If a one was chosen, it was given a value of 1, seven was given a value of 7, 2 = 2, 3 = 3, 4 = 4, 5 = 5, 6 = 6.
2. Questions 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, and 22 were scored one to five. If a one was chosen, it was given a value of 1, five was given a value of five, 2 = 2, 3 = 3, 4 = 4.
3. Question 26 was scored one to four. If a one was chosen, it was given a value of 1, four was given a value of 4, 2 = 2, 3 = 3.

Descriptive statistics were also performed for each item to determine the mean score for each item.

The open-ended questions were independently examined by the researcher, and a category scheme was created for coding purposes. All open-ended responses were tabulated by frequency across participant responses. A content analysis of the participants' responses was used to determine emerging themes. The emerging themes were supervision, technology skills, communication, impact of technology, and bullying/cyberbullying.

A typological analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data from the interviews. Typological analysis follows a nine-step process (Hatch, 2002). Typological analysis began by dividing the data into categories based on predetermined typologies (Hatch, 2002). The typologies were generated from theory. The typologies that were

identified were supervision, technology skills, communication, impact of technology, and bullying/cyberbullying. The following step in the typological analysis was to read the transcripts from the interviews as well as the open-ended responses marking entries that related to each category (Dellbridge & Lubbe, 2009). After recording the main ideas on a summary sheet, the researcher then looked for patterns and themes within the typologies (Hatch, 2002). The data were then color-coded and reviewed (Hatch, 2002). The researcher chose to focus on one typology at a time and used different colors to represent each theme. A separate file was used for each typology (Dellbridge & Lubbe, 2009).

The researcher then looked to see if the patterns that were identified were supported by the data. In this step, the researcher sought to identify if the coded entries fit into the categories that were predetermined. The entries that were not coded were also examined to determine if they were relevant to the study and if they contradicted the findings. Next, the researcher looked for relationships among the identified patterns (Hatch, 2002). The relationships were then turned into one-sentence generalization statements, and data excerpts were selected to support the generalizations that were made (Hatch, 2002).

Summary

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate the parents' perceptions of the role that they as parents play in the supervision of their children's use of technology as well as their responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. The quantitative data for study were solicited through a survey administered during the fall of 2012 school year. The survey consisted of 28 items, mainly Likert scale statements and questions, and consisted of six

parts. Personal phone interviews took place during the fall of 2012 as well, and served as a follow-up to the information that was obtained in the survey.

All data collected were for analysis purposes only. The data collected from the survey were analyzed through SPSS, and the responses from the interviews were analyzed through Microsoft Word. The results of this study are described in detail in Chapter IV along with the research findings from the data analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter reports the results of an explanatory mixed methods study of parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. A two-phase data collection process was used. The first phase was the completion of a 28-question survey by parents from six different test sites (N = 95). The survey included questions regarding demographics, Likert-scale questions, checklist items, multiple-choice items, and an open-ended response question. In the second phase, interviews were conducted with parents (N = 14) who indicated at the time of the survey a willingness to participate in the personal phone interview. Data were collected to answer the following questions:

1. How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?
2. How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying?
3. What is the perception of the responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children?
4. A. What specific technologies do parents perceive their children to be using on a regular basis?

   B. What is their role in the supervision of each?

5. How do parents view their responsibility for direct intervention when they discover that their children have unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as oppressors, victims, or bystanders?

Creswell (2002) described the explanatory mixed methods design as one that begins with collecting quantitative data and then collecting qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. The quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed and presented separately. This study used the explanatory mixed methods design to report the results of the data collected (Creswell, 2002).

The Settings

Seven sites within an Eastern state of the United States were utilized in this study. The study sites were spread out among three counties in the Eastern state, and were representative of public school districts that exist in the state. The test sites included Test site A, which was an upper elementary school with students in grades 4 and 5, and within the same district, the middle school was also included in the study. Students in grades 6 through 8 attended this school. Test site B included a middle school where students in grades 4 through 8 attended. Test sites C and D were also middle schools; however, the grade levels that attended these schools were grades 6 through 8. Test site E was a school building that also included sixth through eighth graders, but it was considered a junior high school within the school district. The last test site was an elementary school, which included students from grades k through 6.

Each of the test sites has implemented a bullying program into their school. Six of the test sites have adopted the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and the remaining

test site has implemented a program created by the administrators and school guidance counselor.

With the adoption of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, schools are to create committees that include school personnel as well as community members. It is paramount to the validity of the program that the schools incorporate the community in their anti-bullying initiatives as well. Another cornerstone of the Olweus Program is surveying the students each year regarding the effectiveness of the program. The survey addresses all aspects of bullying including the roles that students may play in face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying situations ranging from oppressors, victims, or bystanders to these incidents. The program created by the school district itself has incorporated similar elements to the Olweus Porgram, however, students do not complete a survey on the effectiveness of the program. The district that has implemented its own program does involve the community in its school-wide efforts and parents also are a component of the program's success.

In addition, each test site has printed as well as online resources available for the parents/guardians to read at their convenience. Furthermore, each test site reported frequently seeking feedback from the parents on how the school could better improve the implementation of the bullying programs.

Quantitative Analysis Subjects

The sample for the quantitative portion of this study included 95 parents/guardians from seven test sites. Test site A had three individuals attend the PTO meeting, and all three willingly participated in the survey. At a second school within Test site A, eight individuals attended the meeting, seven participated in the survey. The

eighth attendee did not complete the survey because she completed the survey at the previous meeting. At both meetings, all participants were women. Overall, for Test site A there was a 100% response rate. Test site B had 17 women in attendance. Of those, 13 women participated in the survey resulting in a 74.4% response rate. Test site C had 28 women in attendance at the meeting. There were 26 completed surveys for this test site, resulting in a 92.8% response rate. Test site D had 16 women and men attend the meeting. However, only 7 participants completed the survey, which resulted in a 43.8% response rate. Test site E's meeting took place during their Open House event. While there were more than 200 people in attendance at the Open House, 45 people stopped by to hear statistics about cyberbullying. Of those 45, 22 participants completed the survey. Test site E yielded a 48.9% response rate. The final test site, Test site F had 35 men and women present. Of those in attendance, several were unable to participate because their child was in a grade level less than fourth grade. Seventeen people completed the survey for a 48.6% response rate. For all of the test sites there was an overall 62.5% response rate. Table 1 illustrates the number in attendance at each test site and the number of participants.

Table 1

Test Site Demographics (N = 95)

Test Site	Number in Attendance	Number Participating in Survey	Percentage of Respondents
Test Site A – 1	3	3	100.0
Test Site A – 2	8	7	100.0
Test Site B	17	13	74.4
Test Site C	28	26	92.8
Test Site D	16	7	43.8
Test Site E	45	22	48.9
Test Site F	35	17	48.6
Total Overall	152	95	62.5

Note. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Participant may have completed the survey prior to the meeting.

Demographics

Of the participants, 85.3% of the participants were female, and 14.7% were male. In regard to marital status, 90.5% of the participants were married, 6.3% were separated or divorced, 2.1% were widowed, and 1% was a single parent/guardian.

The sample was asked to indicate the grade level of their child. The sample identified that 17.9% of the children were in fourth grade, 14.7% of the children were in fifth grade, 30.5% of the children were in sixth grade, 22.1% of the children were in seventh grade, and 14.7% of the children were in eighth grade. Although most of the

participants' children were in sixth grade, there was a good representation from each of the grade levels the researcher sought to include in the study. Table 2 provides a description of the demographic distribution of the participants.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 95)

Characteristic	N	%
Respondent's Sex		
Male	14	85.3
Female	81	14.7
Grade Level Respondent's Child is Enrolled		
Fourth	17	17.9
Fifth	14	14.7
Sixth	29	30.5
Seventh	21	22.1
Eighth	14	14.7

Note. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

The participants provided additional information about the types of social networking accounts that their children had or did not have and also the location of the home computer. The participants also indicated whether they have established rules regarding Internet use in the home and if a Google search has been conducted within the past year. The significance of conducting a Google search is that parents may or may not be aware of postings on the Internet about their children or postings that have been uploaded by their children.

The majority of participants (67.4%) indicated that their child did not have a MySpace or Facebook account, whereas, 23.2% stated that their child did have a

MySpace or Facebook account, and they assisted in creating the account, and 7.4% of the participants noted that their child has a MySpace or Facebook account and it was set up with no parent assistance. Participants identified the location of their home computer as the bedroom (13.7%) and a family area (86.3%). The majority of participants (72.6%) also indicated that they have not conducted a Google search of their child's name within the past year, but they do have established rules regarding Internet use in the home (86.3%).

Participants also informed the researcher of their child's participation in bullying incidents. Participants indicated that 7.4% of their children were oppressors of bullying, 29.5% indicated that their child was a victim of bullying, and 45.5% indicated that their child was a bystander in bullying incidents. The majority of participants (55.8%), however, identified that their child has had no participation in bullying.

Survey

All 95 participants completed the 28-question survey, which was created by the researcher with permission from previous researchers (Appendix B). Data were collected during the fall of 2012 from parents who had children enrolled in grades four through eight at one of the test site locations. The survey consisted of five parts: Parents' Demographics; Your Child and Technology; Understanding of Bullying; Role in Supervision; Supervisory Methods; and Intervention. The survey consisted of Likert-scale questions, multiple-choice questions, checklist type questions, and two open-ended questions. The survey was designed to assess parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

Descriptive Statistics of Survey Sections

The following information provides the descriptive statistics for each section of the survey. The sections are: Your Child and Technology, Understanding of Bullying, Role in Supervision and Supervisory Methods, and Intervention. Each section reveals significant information as it relates to the research questions that were designed to be answered through the survey. In addition, each section includes a table, which highlights the statistics that were calculated through the usage of SPSS software. The findings for each section of the survey will be described in the order in which they appeared on the survey beginning first with Your Child and Technology, followed by Understanding of Bullying, then Role in Supervision and Supervisory Methods, and last Intervention.

Your child and technology. Descriptive statistics were performed for each of the 28 questions on the survey. The survey was broken into five categories, one category for each research question. The first section asked participants to consider their child and technology. The specific question that the researcher sought to answer was: How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children? In this section, participants were asked to use a Likert-scale, Never (1); About once a month (2); Every few weeks (3); 1-2 times per week (4); 3-5 times per week (5); About once per day (6); Several times per day (7), to comment on how often their children use the Internet for various purposes including talking with friends, meeting new people, looking things up for school, and playing games. In a similar Likert-scale question, participants were asked to identify how often certain technology tools were utilized by their children while on the Internet. These tools included MySpace/Facebook, e-mail, instant messenger, and search engines including Google and Yahoo!.

Purposes for using technology. According to the majority of participants, 69.5% stated that their children never use the Internet for meeting new people, and 37.9% stated that their children never use the Internet for talking with friends. However, when asked to comment about the frequency that their children are playing games on the Internet, 17.9% indicated about 1-2 times per week, 20% indicated 3-5 times per week, 27.4% said about once a day, and 18.9% stated several times a day. The frequency of playing games was higher than what the participants indicated for the frequency of utilizing the Internet for school.

Using the Internet 1-2 times per week for school-related tasks was the most frequently chosen answer (27.4%), followed by 3-5 times per week (20%), once a day (14.7%), and several times a day (12.6%). Slightly over 3% of participants indicated that their child never uses the Internet for school related purposes (3.2%), slightly over 4% indicated that their child never plays games on the Internet (4.2%). It was of particular interest to the researcher that a higher percentage of children do use the Internet to play games than do their schoolwork, and it appeared that it was also a higher percentage of children who never used the Internet for games compared to schoolwork, as well. Furthermore, almost one-fourth of participants indicated that their children are on the Internet to play games at least once per day, while only about 15% of parents reported that their children are doing schoolwork on the Internet once per day. Moreover, parents also indicated through their responses that 18.9% of their children are playing games on the Internet several times per day, while only 12.6% of the children are using the Internet for schoolwork several times per day. This statistic was interesting to the researcher especially because many teachers are now posting their homework assignments on the

Internet for students to complete, and schools are also providing students with login codes to different educational activities to complete at home, such as Math 24, Raz-Kids, Skill Tutor, and Sum Dog.

Technology tools that are utilized and owned by children. With technology tools, the majority of participants (67.4%) indicated that their child never uses MySpace or Facebook, and 50.5% of participants indicated that their children did not use e-mail or instant messenger (68.4%). However, using search engines such as Google and Yahoo! seems to be where most participants think that their children spend their time. About 23% of participants indicated that their child uses search engines 1-2 times per week, 25.3% stated 3-5 times per week, 12.6% indicated about once a day, and 18.9% reported that their children used the search engines several times per day. An examination of Table 3 provides descriptive statistics for the frequency of the technology tools used while on the Internet and the types of activities in which the child is engaged.

Participants indicated on a checklist the types of technology that their children use and/or own. The most commonly identified technologies were iPad/iPod (71.6%), gaming systems (65.3%), and a computer device with access to the Internet (91.6%). The technologies that were identified as not used or owned by the participants' children were smart phones (74.7%), Facebook (68.4%), Twitter (94.7%), Skype (70.5%), MySpace (97.9%), and Blogger (98.9%).

Table 3

Frequency of Use for Different Technology Applications (N= 95)

	Percentage of Respondents						
	Never	About Once a Month	Every Few Weeks	1-2 times/ Week	3-5 times/ Week	About Once/ Day	Several Times/day
Talk with Friends	37.9	8.4	4.2	12.6	10.5	13.7	12.6
Meet New People	69.5	15.8	7.4	5.3	1.1	1.1	0
Look Things Up For School	3.2	7.4	14.7	7.4	20.0	14.7	12.6
Play Games	4.2	3.2	8.4	17.9	20.0	27.4	18.9
Use MySpace/ FaceBook	67.4	4.2	2.1	5.3	3.2	11.6	6.3
E-Mail	50.5	18.9	7.4	8.4	6.3	4.2	4.2
Instant Messenger	68.4	4.2	4.2	7.4	4.2	3.2	8.4
Search Engines (Google, Yahoo)	7.4	5.3	7.4	23.2	25.3	12.6	18.9

Note. Percentages in each row may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Understanding of bullying. In this section of the survey, the researcher sought to identify the participants' knowledge of bullying and cyberbullying. The research question that was focused upon was: How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying? Participants used a checklist to identify words that they associated with cyberbullying. The majority of participants associated cell phones (81.1%), e-mail (78.9%), Facebook (96.8%), and sexting (81.1%) with cyberbullying. Words that participants did not associate with cyberbullying included face-to-face interactions (75.8%), worse than traditional bullying (61.1%), dramatic (76.8%), a one-time message (83.2%), and slam books (84.2%). Slightly more than half of the participants did not associate the word repeated with cyberbullying (51.6%). This was a surprising statistic because the word repetition is included in the definition of cyberbullying. Table 4 reveals the descriptive statistics for the words that participants associated with cyberbullying.

Table 4

Words Respondents Associated with Bullying (N = 95)

	Percentage of Respondents	
Word	Yes	No
Cell Phones	81.1	18.9
E-Mail	78.9	21.1
Slam Books	15.8	84.2
FaceBook	96.8	3.2
Sexting	81.1	18.9
One-Time Message	16.8	83.2
Repeated	48.4	51.6
Not An Issue	1.1	98.9
Dramatic	23.2	76.8
Worse Than Traditional Bullying	38.9	61.1
Face-To-Face	24.2	75.8

Note. Percentage in each row may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Role in supervision and supervisory methods. In the third and fourth sections of the survey, the researcher assessed how participants viewed their role in supervision of technology and the type of supervisory methods that were implemented. The questions that were to be answered in these sections of the survey included: What is the perception of responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children and also What specific technologies do parents perceive their child to be using

on a regular basis, and what is their role in supervising those technologies? Through the usage of Likert-scale questions, Never (1); Rarely (2); Sometimes (3); Often (4); Always (5), participants indicated the degree that they monitor their children's online activities, the frequency of reading their children's e-mails, the frequency of checking where their children have been while on the Internet and using other technologies, and the frequency of discussing Internet safety with their child as well as appropriate usage of the Internet. Forty percent of participants indicated that they often monitor their children's online activities, 35.8% often checked the history of their children's online activity, and 40% of participants indicated that they often discuss Internet safety. Thirty percent of participants indicated that they never read the e-mails of their children, but 45.3% of participants indicated that they often sit with their children while they use technology. About 44% of participants indicated that they often discuss appropriate use of technology with their children. It is reassuring that 40% of parents stated that they are actively monitoring their children's online activities. However, that left 60% of parents left unaccounted. Among those children who communicate with their friends via e-mail, 30% of their parents are not reading what is being sent. Table 5 depicts the data gathered for the frequency of supervision and monitoring and the frequency of the varying types of supervisory methods.

Approximately one-third of the participants (31.6%) indicated that they monitor their children's account on a social networking site. Sixty-three percent indicated that their child did not have a social networking account. Of the 31.6% of participants that monitor the social networking, 25.3% of them are friends with their children and their children are aware of the friendship, and 21.1% of the participants have access to the

username and password. This data points to the fact that parents are unaware of the types of postings that their children are placing on social networking accounts because they are not friends with their children on the social networking websites, or they may not have access to their children's usernames and passwords.

Table 5

Percentage of Frequency of Supervision and Monitoring and Types of Supervisory Practices (N = 95)

	Percentage of Respondents				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Degree of Monitoring Child's Online Activities	1.1	6.3	18.9	40.0	33.7
Check History of Online Activity	5.3	11.6	24.2	35.8	23.2
Discuss Internet Safety	2.1	9.5	30.5	40.0	17.9
Read Child's Email	30.5	10.5	17.9	14.7	13.7
Sit With the Child While He/She Uses Technology	2.1	6.3	44.2	45.3	2.1
Discuss Appropriate Use Of Internet	4.2	7.4	27.4	44.2	16.8

Note. Percentages in each row may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Fifty-five percent of the participants indicated that they monitor the text messages and instant messages that their children send. Twenty-eight percent of participants indicated that their children's phone does not have texting capabilities. Of the 55% of participants who indicated that they monitor the texting and instant messaging of their children, 38.9% of participants review the texts with the knowledge of the children, 24.2% review the texts without the knowledge of the children, and 11.6% of the participants limit access to whom their children can text message or instant message. Table 6 demonstrates a summary of the descriptive statistics for the types of supervisory methods that are utilized with social networking and text messaging.

Table 6

Percentage of Supervisory Methods Utilized with Social Media and Text Messaging (N = 95)

	Percentage of Respondents	
	Yes	No
Friend of My Child on Social Networking Site With the Knowledge of the Child	25.3	74.7
Friend of my Child on Social Networking Account Without The Knowledge of the Child	0.0	100.0
Have Access to Child's Username and Password	21.1	78.9
Review Child's Text Messages/Instant Messages With the Knowledge of the Child	38.9	61.1
Review Child's Text Messages/Instant Messages Without the Knowledge of the Child	24.2	75.8
Limit Access to Who the Child Can Text or Instant Message	11.6	88.4

Note. Percentages in each row may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Intervention. The final section on the survey asked participants to consider the types of interventions that are implemented at home. This section of the survey was designed to answer the question: How do parents view their responsibility for direct interventions when they discover that their child has unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as an oppressor, a victim, or a bystander. Participants answered multiple-choice type questions, a Likert-scale question, and also a checklist type item. Of important significance, participants indicated that 7.4% of their

children were oppressors of bullying, 29.5% indicated that their children were victims of bullying, and 45.5% indicated that their children were bystanders in bullying incidents. The majority of participants (55.8%), however, indicated that their children have had no participation in bullying. About half of the participants indicated that they do not have filters installed on their computers (51.6%) and about half of them do not have monitoring software installed on their computers (49.5%).

If participation in cyberbullying incidents was brought to the attention of the participants by their children, 64.2% of the participants indicated that it would be highly likely for them to remove access to technology. Participants identified on a checklist ways that parents/guardians can help stop or prevent cyberbullying. The majority of participants indicated that they would remove the computer or cell phone (72.6%), tell the parents of the other children involved (70.5%), inform the school (63.2%), inform the police (43.2%), and talk to their own children about cyberbullying (94.7%). Waiting until an issue arises to discuss cyberbullying seems to be a misconception among the participants in this study. Almost 95% of parents indicated that they would engage in conversation with their children if the parents were made aware of participation in cyberbullying incidents, whereas 44% indicated that they presently engage in discussions regarding appropriate use of technology. Table 7 illustrates the descriptive statistics for the interventions that parents indicate they believe will prevent or stop cyberbullying.

Table 7

Percentage of Interventions Implemented by Respondents (N = 95)

	Percentage of Respondents	
	Yes	No
Remove Computer or Cell Phone Privileges	72.6	27.4
Tell the Parents of Other Students Involved	70.5	29.5
Tell the School	63.2	36.8
Tell the Police	43.2	56.8
Talk to Own Children About Cyberbullying	94.7	5.3
Nothing, Kids Will be Kids	0.0	100.0

Note. Percentages in each row may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Summary of Quantitative Data

Evaluating parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported response to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders produced some information. Data were collected through a 28-question survey, which consisted of checklist type questions, Likert-scale questions, and multiple-choice items. The descriptive statistical analysis identified that the majority of parents identified their children as not participating in

bullying incidents, while almost 45% of others identified their children as bystanders in bullying incidents.

Participants indicated the various monitoring strategies that they implement at home. The majority of participants identified that they do monitor text messages that are sent between their children and their friends, however, some of them inform their children that they are monitoring what is taking place, while others just take the liberty of viewing the messages without the knowledge of the children. The quantitative data received from the survey delineates many significant pieces of information in regard to the parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Fewer parents identified their children as having social networking accounts, but those that did acknowledge the accounts, utilized the same strategies as the text messages. Some parents informed their children that they were viewing what was taking place, while others did not share that information.

The forms of intervention that are taking place in the homes varied amongst the participants. However, when parents were aware of participation in cyberbullying, the majority of participants indicated that they would remove access to the technology whether it was a cell phone or a computer. Parents consistently indicated that they would inform the parents of children involved in the bullying incidents and talk to their own children about cyberbullying.

Overall, the information reported in the quantitative section represented the parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported response to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors,

victims, or bystanders. These perceptions were examined in more detail through the qualitative data analysis, which consisted of open-ended questions on the survey and personal phone interviews. The data from the qualitative analysis is presented next.

Qualitative Analysis

Open-Ended Questions

Participants were asked to respond to two open-ended questions that were included on the survey. The first open-ended item was designed to answer the research question, "How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?" Parents were asked to explain the answer they selected that related to the impact that use of technology has on the life of their children. The participants had the option to circle 1 = none, 2 = little, 3 = moderate, and 4 = significant. In the space provided on the survey, participants then had the option to explain their rating.

The second open-ended item asked participants to share any specific concerns they have about cyberbullying. This question provided participants the opportunity to discuss topics that were not mentioned in the survey or to elaborate on concerns that were previously identified in the survey. Participants were given an entire page, so they did not feel that their responses had to be kept to a certain length.

Open-Ended Question One

The impact of technology on the life of the child. Participants were asked to explain their choice of the impact that the use of technology has on the lives of their children. Only 1.1% of participants indicated that technology has no impact on the life of their children. However, 48.4% indicated that technology impacted their children's lives

significantly, 31.6% indicated that technology impacted the lives of their children moderately, and 18.9% indicated that the lives of their children were impacted a little by technology. Table 8 provides a description of the impact of technology on the life of the child.

Table 8

Percentage of Impact of Technology on the Life of a Child (N = 95)

Percentage of Respondents			
None	Little	Moderate	Significant
1.1	18.9	31.6	48.4

Note. Percentages in each row may not add to 100 due to rounding.

In the space that was provided on the survey, the most frequently reported items by participants included gaming, technology as a communication tool, the usage of technology for school-related functions, and also the availability and accessibility of technology as having the greatest impact on their children's lives. A detailed examination of the themes that emerged in the responses provided by the participants is listed below.

Gaming. A few participants noted that gaming in one form or another had a major impact on the life of their son or daughter. Parents mentioned the usage of X-box and how their sons and daughters are frequently playing with friends that they know, in addition to friends they have never met. One parent commented that her son "would be on his gaming system 24 hours a day if she allowed him." Another parent even

mentioned that the gaming system in her home is used as a reward/punishment. Furthermore, other parents remarked that the extended use of gaming decreases the amount of physical activity that the children are engaging in and also that some children are spending more time participating in online gaming and less and less time engaging in face-to-face interactions. To reduce this problem in one home, a parent wrote that she only allows her children to play games for 15 minutes at a time for up to one hour a day. Although some parents viewed the usage of gaming systems as hindering the amount of social interactions taking place between their children and their peers, other participants noted that technology is used as a communication tool for their children.

Technology as a communication tool. Children are using technology as a communication tool for their friends and family members. Some of the parents indicated that their children have the ability to communicate with family members who live a great distance away by using Skype and e-mail. Other parents mentioned the usage of cell phones as a way for their children to communicate with their friends. One parent even stated that technology is "omnipresent in her son's life, and he can't imagine life without it." Another parent observed that:

> even with cyberbullying taking place via social media sites, children refuse to quit participating on the sites. This attachment to the technology has created a feeling of dependence on the technology. I feel uneasy about this dependence that is being demonstrated by so many children when it is not being used appropriately. Especially when so many children are being impacted negatively by the various technologies.

Technology is also being used as a communication tool between the home and school. Both students and their parents have the ability to check assignments, grades, and attendance online. Schools are providing their students with greater amounts of access to technology, not only for communication purposes, but also for assignment completion.

School-Related Technologies. Parents reported that children are making heavy use of technology applications for school purposes, although earlier in the survey it was noted that using technology for gaming was more frequent. Several of the participants indicated that their children use the Internet to assist them in locating information for research projects and also to complete homework. One parent also indicated that her son could study independently for math and spelling using a variety of apps that he has downloaded. Another parent discussed the ways in which her daughter uses Microsoft products such as Word and PowerPoint to complete schoolwork.

Overall, all parents interviewed expressed their amazement at how much the teachers are incorporating technology into their teaching, and how their children utilize what they learn in school at home. Some local school districts have adopted bring your own device policies which allow students to bring anything from Ipads to Ipods to school in order to complete assignments and to utilize the technologies to which the students already have access.

Availability and accessibility of technology. Participants consistently remarked that their children are expected to use the omnipresent technology that surrounds them. Participants also mentioned in their responses that the children use technology everyday in one form or another. A participant further explained that "technology is a part of children's lives on a daily basis from computers to cell phones to gaming systems. Some

form of technology is used everyday, some several times a day." Another participant also wrote that her daughter has "a significant amount of technology at her disposal, and she uses it frequently."

It was noted by the researcher that the survey participants feel overwhelmed by the amount of technology to which their children have access; however, they all admitted to providing their children with the various forms of technology that are causing these feelings. Children asking for more access to varying forms of technology contributed to the parents' feeling overwhelmed. One participant indicated in her response that she did not think carefully about the repercussions of providing her children with access to so many different types of technology. She assumed that they would eventually become bored with it and turn their attention elsewhere. However, instead she found that her children continually asked for more and more forms of technology. Table 9 reveals the most reported items that appeared to have the greatest impact on the life of a child.

Table 9

Most Reported Items that had the Greatest Impact on the Life of a Child

Gaming
Technology as a Communication Tool
Usage of Technology for School-Related Functions
Availability and Accessibility of Technology

Open-Ended Question Two

Concerns about cyberbullying. In the second open-ended question, participants were given the opportunity to share any specific concerns they have about cyberbullying.

The question was reviewed as a stand-alone question and was used to strengthen the data received in the survey. The responses contributed to the overall understanding of how parents feel that technology has impacted their lives as parents, and has made them more conscientious of the role they play as supervisors of technology. Participants identified access to technology, being unaware of bullying incidents, supervising and monitoring technology, prevention, the role of the parents, and children not being aware of the consequences as the biggest areas of concern.

Parents in this second open-ended question were focused more on the need for responsibility on the part of other parents than any problems with their children or other children. In fact, all the parents who responded to this question brought some similar concerns in this regard. It was mentioned repeatedly that parents provide and restrict access to technology. They can set up practices within the home to maintain control over when various forms of technology can be utilized. However, even with policies in place, "parents may not be informed of bullying incidents, and once they are may not have the knowledge on how to handle the situation." Participants also suggested that parents may know that their children are using the technology, however, they may not necessarily be aware of what the purposes are for each form of technology. As a result, "parents may be unaware of bullying incidents that are taking place." Furthermore, if bullying situations do come to fruition, parents may not have the necessary tools to deal with the incidents.

Due to the parents supplying access to technology, the majority of participants agreed that "parents have a responsibility to supervise and monitor technology to some degree." While the supervisory measures vary greatly, there should be practices in place that are familiar to both the parent and the child. "Parents should discuss cyberbullying

prevention with their children who are and who are not currently using technology." Participants further suggested that "recognizing that problems can occur with the usage of technology, and taking precautionary measures can assist the children in understanding how to respond to cyberbullying, and how to address it if incidents should arise." Parents should engage in conversations with their children about the consequences of cyberbullying. Children should be aware of what can happen as a result of their participation in cyberbullying as an oppressor, victim, or bystander. The consequences will vary depending on the role that is played, but parents indicated that there are consequences nonetheless.

Access to technology. Children use technology at school, at home, and even in public spaces that offer free wireless connections. Many participants mentioned that children are using technologies daily and that there is no escape from it. "Instead of running from it, parents need to embrace that their children are going to have access to the technology, and it is impossible to shelter them from the world of technology." One participant mentioned that she was "frightened as to the ease of access kids have to the Internet." She indicated that her child had several e-mail addresses of which she was unaware. Another participant repeated that she was frightened at how easy and "clean" it is for children to insult their peers online, and further explained how children can spew hateful insults anonymously and across the planet.

As parents begin to think more critically about technology, they need to recognize that "yes, technology is everywhere, but they need to teach their children about when using it is and is not appropriate." Before granting access to various forms of technology, parents need to "gain an understanding on how to evaluate the quality of the different

forms of technology and the reasons for its use." By gaining an understanding of the different forms of technology and their uses, it is possible that parents will also become more aware of cyberbullying and how to identify if their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

Awareness of bullying incidents and participation in cyberbullying. Participants mentioned that they might be unaware of participation in cyberbullying. Even with supervision sometimes the signs of being bullied are overlooked and go unrecognized.

A participant concluded:

> It is not only the children who may be unaware of the impact of their actions. Parents too, may be unaware of their child's involvement in cyberbullying incidents. This can occur because parents are not checking on what their children are doing while on the Internet and using social media.

One parent mentioned that she was concerned that she could be missing signs that her child has been a victim of cyberbullying. She explained that she wouldn't know what to look for to identify if her child has been a victim and how she should approach the topic with her daughter.

Opting to supervise and monitor may not always yield the desired information. A parent commented that even though she often supervised her child's online activities, her daughter was involved in cyberbullying. "Somehow my daughter was able to hide what was taking place, and I felt helpless."

Supervising and monitoring. Many participants agreed that it is difficult to monitor the use of technology all of the time. One participant wrote "parental monitoring

and guidance is key to safety with technology." Some participants indicated that they currently monitor all activity that their children engage in when using technology, and they do not have any concerns about it. However, others feel that they constantly need to monitor the time that is spent on Facebook and on the Internet. A few participants indicated that they were not involved because they considered monitoring children's use of technology to be the responsibility of their spouse.

Prevention. Various methods of prevention can be implemented in homes with children who are users of technology. Several parents have installed software on their computers; however, even with the implementation of those programs inappropriate content is still accessible. One participant stated that, "parent education and outreach is key to preventing cyberbullying from occurring." It was also stated that, "making children aware of the effects of cyberbullying is critical, so that they know what can happen as a result of their actions." One participant expanded upon this statement by expressing the need to share the latest research and techniques with each other, and also with the children. "Children should hear real stories of cyberbullying incidents and the consequences of those incidents." Some participants indicated their appreciation for having places to go to seek assistance on dealing with cyberbullying incidents and also somewhere to go just to ask questions. A few parents also mentioned that the willingness of their children to engage in conversations about these issues is also imperative to preventing cyberbullying from occurring. It was echoed by many participants that both parents and their children need to know that it is a team effort to prevent cyberbullying incidents.

Parent perspective on the role of parents. When using various forms of technology, "parents need to model good digital citizenship, so that their children gain an understanding of what the behavioral expectations are, and what will happen as a result of meeting those expectations." Within these expectations, children should learn how to respond if they are bystanders or victims of cyberbullying, and also how not to become bystanders in cyberbullying incidents. There was some mention among a few of the participants about sharing the effects of cyberbullying with children being crucial to a child's understanding of cyberbullying, and why it should not be taken lightly. Another issue that was recognized by some of the participants is that parents should increase their supervisory practices, which could include conferring with other parents to check in on the activity of their children.

The importance of child awareness of consequences. The most common response was that parents need to be the ones to educate their children about the consequences that come along with acting inappropriately online and what constitutes inappropriate activity. "It is not enough that Internet safety is taught at school. The same message needs to be repeated at home." Some children do not realize that when they post something to the Internet it can stay there permanently. Children are unaware of the digital footprints that are left every time something is posted on the Internet.

Another issue that was recognized was that children are possibly unaware of the effects of cyberbullying, and the consequences that can come as a result of participation. One parent wrote that:

> some children don't understand the consequences of posting derogatory and spiteful comments on Facebook. They don't realize that it goes beyond their

circle of friends. My child knows that the Internet has no boundaries, but I don't think he really grasps the concept.

There are so many dangers present on the Internet, and parents indicated that they have tried to explain these dangers to their children. However, "some children have not grasped that people may not be what they represent themselves to be and fall victim to different consequences. Some of the children who have access to technology are too innocent for their own good."

When given the opportunity, parents revealed many concerns that they have about cyberbullying. Some of these same concerns resurfaced during the personal phone interviews that were conducted. Table 10 illustrates the specific concerns that parents have about cyberbullying.

Table 10

Specific Concerns about Cyberbullying

Access to Technology
Unawareness of Bullying Incidents
Supervising and Monitoring Technology
Prevention
The Role of Parents
Children being Unaware of the Consequences of Technology Misuse

Interviews

Fourteen people were interviewed by the telephone. The purpose of the interview was to gain a better understanding of the parents' perceptions of cyberbullying and also to elaborate on the responses given in the survey. Each telephone interview lasted approximately 15 minutes. Participants from each school district were invited to participate in the telephone interview at the time the survey was administered. Interested participants provided their contact information to the researcher. The researcher called each interested candidate and received 14 participants. The interview participants each received a participant number. The numbers were assigned in the order in which the participants were interviewed. These numbers will be utilized throughout the following section of analysis. The researcher selected participant quotes based on their relevancy to the results.

Demographics of the Interviewed Parents

The 14 participants indicated their willingness to participate in the personal phone interview at the time that the survey was administered. Twenty parents expressed interest in the personal phone interview; however, the researcher was ultimately unable to contact six of them. Of the 14 participants, all of them were female. The interview participants represented each test site. Common themes became evident as the interviews progressed. Several of the interview participants expressed their concerns of technology and cyberbullying. Other common themes that surfaced throughout the interviews were monitoring, supervision, and prevention. Within those broad categories, many subtopics also presented themselves such as the usage of software and/or filters, obtaining or

having access to passwords, engaging in discussions, checking the history of sites visited, and the location where the technology is located.

Concerns Associated with Technology

Participants were asked a series of questions that allowed them to identify the role they believe parents should play concerning technology, the concerns that they have in regard to supervising their children when they are utilizing technology, awareness of participation in cyberbullying incidents, and specific interventions that should be implemented to keep their children safe. Each participant was asked the same questions, however, some of the initial responses lead the researcher to ask follow-up questions.

Participants were given an opportunity to share additional comments that related to cyberbullying, and it was at this time that participants shared their concerns associated with cyberbullying and technology. The most frequent responses focused on the themes of monitoring technology, knowledge of participation in cyberbullying incidents, and supervision and prevention strategies. Each theme will be explained in detail in the following section.

Lack of Paying Attention to Details

Although parents and their children are both using technology, parents may not always be cognizant of what their children are doing with the varying forms of technology. Even if parents are aware of the technologies that their children are utilizing, they may be unaware of bullying that is taking place via technology.

Parents may be in close proximity to their children as they utilize different forms of technology. Some parents make decisions about supervision based on the ages of their children. Parents may offer their child more autonomy as they get older or show their

ability to be more responsible while using technology. Half of the interview participants (N = 7) mentioned that they were concerned about becoming lax in monitoring technology as closely as they should. Participant 5 further commented that, "there is no way to monitor everything 100% of the time." Participant 1 stated "not all parents pay attention as I do or there may be parents who are more vigilant than I am." Having these inconsistencies is a concern because there are a lot of things that the kids can get in to. Participant 4 mentioned that:

> one of her child's friends uses the Internet when his parents are either sleeping or not around. She does not like that this child engages in these activities unsupervised and makes her question what her own son is doing while he is with this particular friend.

She makes it a point to send activities with her child to do with this friend when he is invited to visit his home. She commented, "I prefer to invite this friend over to my house instead of sending her child to the other house, so that she can supervise what is taking place."

Participant 2 explained that, "parents don't realize the full capacity of what their children are capable of." In addition, this participant mentioned, "parents aren't looking for the underlying bullying that goes on when cyberbullying occurs. The kids are picking up on these innuendos, but the parents don't recognize them, and therefore, don't see the problem occurring." She further pointed out that "when cyberbullying is taking place there are no outward signs such as rolling of the eyes, like there would be in traditional, face-to-face bullying." Not only are some parents unaware of the signs of cyberbullying,

some are also unaware of the uses of different types of technologies that children are utilizing.

Knowledge

Children are given numerous opportunities to interact with technology. They utilize technology at home and in school. Parents are also using technology at home and in their workplace. However, the ways in which technology is being utilized by parents and their children varies. Participant 6 noted that in her home her children know more about technology than she does. They tell her things that she has never heard about before, and even though she tries to stay abreast of the updates to technology, she still believes that children know more than their parents do. This was especially disconcerting to her "because the parents are the individuals supplying the technology to the children. Myself included, adults need to make a more conscious effort to learn the things that technology is being used for."

Knowledge of Cyberbullying Participation as a Perpetrator, Victim, or Bystander

Participants were given the opportunity to inform the researcher of their knowledge about cyberbullying participation by their children. The researcher wanted the participants to expand upon their knowledge of the incidents and how they were handled.

When asked whether their children or their children's friends had ever participated in cyberbullying, the majority of participants indicated that their child, their child's friend, or another relative had been a participant, and many stated that they were unaware of any participation in cyberbullying. Participant 6 informed the researcher that she doesn't think there is enough out there for people to know what to do if a

cyberbullying situation arose. The cyberbullying incident that she was aware of did not happen during school hours, and therefore, she stated that she "did not know how parents are supposed to get involved."

Gaming. Engaging in cyberbullying while gaming was mentioned twice. Both of the participants provided the researcher with a detailed description of the cyberbullying incident that occurred. The first incident, shared by Participant 4, revolved around another child having access to the password on another child's gaming account. The friend tapped in and changed the password of another child and proceeded to delete and change some of the saved information. Participant 4 then said that her son thought it was totally wrong for the one child to change the information on the game, but he also faulted the other child for sharing the information with his friend. Participant 4 was proud of her son:

> for thinking about both perspectives of this situation. My son did not side with his friend, and believe that he was the only victim in the situation. My son was able to discern that his friend was also at fault for sharing personal information. I did not need to pull this from my son. I think the many conversations that we have about gaming have really sunk in.

Participant 10 stated that she was unaware that her child could play X-box Live with strangers. However, her son later brought it to her attention that one individual kept harassing him for personal information. Even though her son was warned against sharing personal information, he did it anyway because he did not realize what he was doing was wrong. The parents reported what had occurred to the Internet service provider, and

when the individual tried to contact her son again he was prompted to get offline immediately.

Texting. One of the forms of cyberbullying that was mentioned during the interviews was texting. Participant 7 revealed that her son was a victim of cyberbullying through text messaging. Participant 7 explained that her son had shown interest in a girl who owned a cell phone. She informed the researcher that her son did not own a cell phone at the time; however, the girl and her friend were texting messages back and forth about inappropriate activities that were supposedly taking place between the young lady and her son. Participant 7's son went to the authorities to report what was taking place, which was against the girl's wishes. However, Participant 7 was pleased with the way her son handled the situation.

> I was proud of my son for doing what he knew was right. He reported the incident even though he liked this girl. As a result of going, the girl did not wish to be friends with my son anymore, but in the end, my son felt good about what he did.

Facebook. Other participants mentioned becoming aware of cyberbullying incidents through Facebook. Participant 8 indicated that she saw her niece engaging in cyberbullying. She was unsure of her niece's role in the incident because "if you perpetuate the discussion online or through Facebook, then I am not sure which role you are playing in cyberbullying. Are you the victim, or the oppressor?" She acknowledged that her niece was engaging in the conversation, and that it eventually took on a life of its own. Participant 8 stated that she wanted to jump into the conversation and tell them to

leave her niece alone. However, she refrained and left it up to her niece's parents to resolve the issue.

Participant 12 informed the researcher that she and her friends have seen girls rating each other on Facebook, but have not really thought that much about it. Participant 12 did not find it necessary to report this behavior to the school because she felt that it wasn't that bad. "Girls can be harsh, but when I was younger and people talked about me, I just diverted my attention."

Participant 11 responded differently when she became aware that her daughter was a victim of other girls calling her names and taunting her online through Facebook. Participant 11 responded to the name calling by taking her daughter out of school, and requesting a homebound tutor for her daughter to complete the school year. She explained that the cyberbullying stopped once she pulled her daughter out of the school. Participant 11 now closely monitors all interactions that take place over the computer and cell phones as a result of cyberbullying. Her daughter regained some of the confidence that she lost during the cyberbullying ordeal. After some time away from school, her daughter realized that she was stronger than the girls who were bullying her. Once she came to that realization, she was ready to go back to the traditional school setting to complete her high school education. Participant 11 continues to monitor her daughter's interactions on the Internet, in addition to the Internet usage of her other children. Although the above situations were handled differently, they each occurred on Facebook, indicating that some children are experiencing cyberbullying through the social network website.

Monitoring

Six participants mentioned monitoring during their personal telephone interviews. They noted the importance of parents monitoring what their children are doing while on the Internet, in addition to having an awareness of what sites their children are looking at, talking to them about cyberbullying, and discussing what to do if they feel like they are being bullied. Parents should also address with their children who they should go and talk to and what steps should be taken if they feel like cyberbullying is taking place. Participant 5 expressed the frequency that she monitors her child's online activity, but she still feels inadequate because her child knows more than she does about current technology applications. She explained, her child takes her I-phone out of her hand and shows her how to use it. She is worried about monitoring a child who knows more than she does. Even if children are showing their parents some of the different uses for their devices, parents can still monitor what is taking place during these teachable moments.

Supervision

Supervising the usage of technology can be completed in a number of ways. Some parents adopt supervising strategies that are very direct, and sometimes seen by the child as invasive, like checking the Internet or cell phone history. Other parents choose to implement supervisory practices that do not seem as intrusive, such as specifying the location of technology devices within the home.

Checking history. One method of supervision that was implemented by interview participants in their homes was checking the history of websites. Three participants mentioned that they engaged in performing checks of their child's Internet history, as well as their cell phone usage history. Participant 2 explained that she "checks

his messages frequently just to make sure that he is not hiding something from us that we don't know about." Participant 8 stated that she "checks the history of the sites visited from time to time," and Participant 12 informed the researcher that she "does not sit with her child all of the time, and prefers to give him freedom." However, she makes her son aware that she can check up on him when she wants to, at any given time. Participant 7 explained that she told her children to "have no expectation of privacy." As long as she "was paying the bills," she could do what she wanted as far as checking cell phones messages and emails. Some of the participants were discreet in their checks, while others chose to be more deliberate. Regardless of the way checking the history was conducted, the parents felt comfortable with how they were supervising technology.

Location of technology. The location of technology could affect whether children have the ability to engage in cyberbullying. Participant 3 indicated that, "while in their home their son is closely monitored, and the technology is in a location that is always supervised." However, "once the child goes to a friend's house, or when they are in another location outside of the home, the placement and supervision of the technology is a concern." Four interview participants, participants 6, 7, 13, and 14 mentioned that the "computers are located in a central location." Participant 7 elaborated by stating that "the computer is right off the kitchen, and in the living room." This parent set the child's computer up across the room from her own, so that she "could always watch" what her child is doing while she is working in her space. Participant 12 offered that she chose to "set her home office up in close proximity to the home computer, so that she could closely monitor the interactions that are taking place between her children and their friends."

Prevention

A variety of preventative measures exist for parents to implement in order to thwart cyberbullying from occurring. The majority of participants mentioned that they have discussions with their children about technology. Participants also indicated the implementation of filters and software on their home computers. Lastly, participants pointed out that they have access to their children's passwords.

Discussions. Engaging in discussions was one of the most mentioned preventative measures implemented. Many of the participants stated that they either participated in discussions or the school engaged their children in discussions about cyberbullying and Internet safety. Many of the participants also confirmed that the "discussions are ongoing." Many of the children informed their parents during their conversations that some of the topics that were being discussed at home were also reviewed in school. Participant 1 expressed her satisfaction that the school was "discussing scenarios that have happened with the kids." She went on to say that "maybe the schools are making a better effort than when I was in school." "Through the implementation of the ---- at school, I know that my child is engaging in discussions at school," Participant 8 added.

Some of the parents mentioned that they address sexting in their conversations. They especially bring it up when it appears on the news. "These kinds of things come up and kids don't realize how vulnerable they are when they do something like that," Participant 2 stated about addressing sexting with her child. In addition, forming close relationships was also mentioned. "By forming a close relationship with your child,

he/she will feel comfortable coming to you and discussing anything. When you have a bond with your child, he/she will come to you right away if there is a problem."

Participant 2 indicated that the conversations about appropriate technology usage should be discussed "when the devices are first given." Furthermore, this parent believed that:

> conversations should be brought up in elementary schools more so than in junior high and high school. The conversations need to take place earlier, so that children have a better understanding of how to use the devices appropriately, and what the consequences are for inappropriate use.

Participant 2 further commented, the parents are the ones providing the technology, so they need to be the ones to educate their children on how to use the devices. This can and should be done through discussion.

Participant 6 explained that the conversations that take place in her family focus on the reasons why certain technologies are not permitted. She indicated that her children "have mostly stopped asking for the devices. However, they are still asking for cell phones." She demonstrated her frustration by stating that, "parents feel like they are socially crippling their children because they are taking a stand against having all of this technology." Participant 6 further stated that, "as a parent you feel parental pressure to give into the demands of your child." These parental pressures, which she assimilated to peer pressure, "make her feel uneasy about the devices she is inevitably going to have permit her children to have access to."

In regard to gaming, Participant 10 stated that she "went over the consequences of sharing passwords and other important information with others." This took place after

someone tapped into his friend's account. Her son "acknowledged that he knew what was permissible to share with others, and what was supposed to be kept private." Parents can also implement filters or software programs on their computers, which would aid in the amount of information being shared by children using technology.

Filters and software. Installing filters and software programs onto the computer was also mentioned by many of the interview participants. Some of the participants shared their dissatisfaction with the filters that are utilized at school, while others mentioned the implementation of filters and software at home. A few also mentioned that they do not have any filters or software programs installed on their computers.

Participant 7 expressed her dissatisfaction with the filtering that takes place at school. "The filters either filter out too much or not enough. The bad guys know how to get around the filtering systems anyway." A few participants mentioned their lack of knowledge about implementing filters and software, but did indicate that they would "like to learn how to put them onto their computers." Comments such as "I don't really even know how to filter sites, and other stuff," "I am aware of the software and parent settings, for the X-box and cell phone, but we have not installed anything on the computer yet," and "I don't know about filters, but I do know that I turn the computers off at 10 p.m." were stated during the interviews. Participant 13 explained that she was a professor who taught computer courses and she did not have the filters and software installed on her computers because she:

> did not find it necessary. After reviewing safety guidelines with my children, they know what is acceptable and what is not. I believe that I can trust my

children, and that I do not need to supervise them with filters and software programs.

In addition to filters and software programs, parents have also required their children to provide the passwords for any account that necessitates one.

Password protection. Many of the participants indicated that they have access to their child's passwords for e-mail addresses and gaming systems. Some of the participants identified that they keep a logbook with all of the passwords listed. Participants 3, 4, 7, and 9 stated that the "logbook is kept right next to the computer." Participant 8 noted that she:

> does not know the passwords for her child's account, although I did at one time. Presently my child is not willing to share his phone messages with me, and sometimes I forget about even asking about it. I do pay the bills for my son's access to technology, but I do not find it necessary to press the issue. He has been using technology devices long enough and if he gets in trouble with it then it will fall on him, and not be a reflection on me.

Throughout the interviews the participants provided insightful information about their perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported response to events in which their children have been involved in cyberbullying as oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Table 11 depicts a summary of the emergent themes gathered from the personal phone interviews that were conducted.

Table 11

Emergent Themes Gathered from the Interviews (N = 14)

Emergent Theme	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Concerns about Technology and Cyberbullying	12	85.6
Lack of Paying Attention to Details	7	50.0
Knowledge	10	71.4
Monitoring	6	42.9
Supervision	5	35.7
Checking History	3	21.4
Location of Technology	3	21.4
Prevention		
Discussions	6	42.9
Filters and Software	7	50.0
Password Protection	6	42.9

Summary of Qualitative Data

The qualitative data added substantial insight into the quantitative data discussed earlier. Participants were provided with the opportunity to share their insights on what they see as areas of concern that are associated with technology. Participants also shared their experiences with cyberbullying, and how they work to prevent incidents from occurring.

Qualitative data were obtained through two open-ended questions on the survey in addition to personal phone interviews. Many themes emerged as a result of the questions that were asked. Through the open-ended questions, participants gave in-depth responses

about the impact that technology has on the life of the participant's children. It was revealed in the quantitative portion of the data that technology has a significant impact on the life of children. In the qualitative section, participants elaborated on what they thought impacted the life of their children the most. Gaming, technology as a communication tool, using technology for school-related functions, and the availability and accessibility of technology emerged as the most commonly reported items. Some of these same concerns were echoed throughout the interviews that took place.

In the second open-ended question, participants shared their concerns associated with cyberbullying. Through their responses it became evident that the parents are very focused on the need for responsibility on the part of parents. Participants expressed the significant role that parents play in the supervision and monitoring of technology. This was seen as more important than problems taking place with their children or other children.

In addition to the impact that technology has on the life of children, access to technology was mentioned as a concern, as well as being unaware of cyberbullying incidents and participation in those incidents. The interview participants were asked a series of questions which allowed them to explain their concerns about technology and how they view themselves as supervisors of technology. The themes that emerged from the personal interviews included ways in which cyberbullying is taking place, the methods parents are utilizing for supervising and monitoring, and preventative practices that are in place. Each of the emergent themes provided the researcher with tangible information to elaborate on the data that were obtained in the quantitative section.

Interview participants acknowledged that cyberbullying incidents took place through texting, gaming, and Facebook. By indicating their awareness of incidents, parents recognized that cyberbullying is taking place across a variety of technology devices. The methods of supervision that were reported included checking the history of frequently visited websites, and placing the technology in a high-traffic area. Participants also identified the preventative strategies that they have in place at their homes. In the quantitative data it was identified by the majority of parents that they would remove access to technology if they became aware of participation in cyberbullying incidents. The majority of parents who completed the survey also indicated they would talk to their children about cyberbullying. In the interviews participants reported engaging in conversations, installing filters and software programs, and knowing the passwords to their children's accounts as methods of prevention.

The information presented in the qualitative section represented the parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported response to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. The qualitative data supported the findings that were found in the quantitative section, in addition to providing a more in-depth look at the perspective of parents and how they view themselves as supervisors of technology.

Summary

The findings in this chapter represented the responses from the 95 survey participants and 14 interviewees to answer the questions set forth at the beginning of this research study on parents' perceptions on cyberbullying as it relates to supervision. The surveys provided an overall description of the attitudes and perceptions of parents and

guardians. The open-ended questions provided a more detailed description of the impact technology has on the lives of children and also the concerns that parents have regarding technology. The interview participants provided additional insights into the concerns of technology and how parents play a role in the monitoring and supervising of technology usage among their children. Chapter V provides a summary and discussion of the data collected to answer each of the research questions, and recommendations for how this information may impact how parents supervise technology usage among their fourth through eighth graders.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Cyberbullying has taken the issue of bullying to new dimensions (Dehue et al., 2008; Froeschle et al., 2008; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). While a great deal of research has been done on cyberbullying in general, there is a shortage of research on the role of parents in cyberbullying. Parental involvement within the realm of technology is very crucial in ensuring safe Internet usage and Internet education, and as such, the researcher deemed it appropriate to conduct a study regarding the parents' perspectives of their role in supervision as it relates to technology. This study explored and analyzed the parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. To collect data that would assist in the examination of parents' perceptions, an explanatory mixed methods approach was employed.

The quantitative phase was utilized to obtain the perspectives of parents of their role of supervision through a survey that was created by the researcher with some aspects that were researcher created and some that were adapted with permission from previous studies. The survey was administered at the conclusion of each test site's Parent Teacher Organization meeting. There were 95 participants from seven different test sites within an Eastern state in the United States. Data collected from parents (N = 95) were used to conduct a descriptive statistical analysis of the parents' perceptions on their role as supervisors of technology.

In order to implement a mixed methods study, the researcher invited those parents who took the survey to also participate in a one-on-one telephone interview. During, the qualitative phase, which followed the quantitative analysis, the researcher utilized a personal telephone interview protocol with parents (N = 14). Participants who volunteered were contacted and interviewed shortly after their participation in the survey. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a greater depth of insight into parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Responses from the interviews were analyzed and results used to explain or elaborate further on the quantitative analysis.

The findings of this study were reported and summarized as they related to each of the research questions.

1. How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?
2. How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying?
3. What is the perception of the responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children?
4. A. What specific technologies do parents perceive their children to be using on a regular basis?

   B. What is their role in the supervision of each?

5. How do parents view their responsibility for direct intervention when they discover that their children have unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as oppressors, victims, or bystanders?

Chapter V presents a summary and discussion of this study's findings. The purpose of the study was to evaluate parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. A summary of the findings as they relate to each of the research questions begins the chapter. A discussion of the findings as they relate to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model follows. Then, recommendations for increasing parental understanding and intervention in cyberbullying incidents are presented. Limitations of the present study and recommendations for further research are presented next. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary and reflection of considerations by the researcher.

Summary of Research Findings

The researcher developed 28-question survey used for the quantitative phase was divided into five sections: Your Child and Technology; Understanding of Bullying; Role in Supervision; Supervisory Methods; and Intervention. These sections were designed to solicit information from participants in order to answer each of the research questions. The survey included Likert-scale questions, checklist items, multiple-choice items, and open-ended response question. The interview questions were used to solicit in-depth information related to each of the research questions.

Summary of the Findings Related to the First Research Question

How do parents/guardians describe the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children?

Questions on the survey were utilized to obtain parents'/guardians' perceptions of the overall impact of technology on the lives of their children were based on Likert-scale questions, checklist items, and multiple-choice items. The Likert-scale questions were worded and scored on a range of (1) Never to (7) Several Times/Day for how often the child does certain activities while on the Internet. The same rating scale (1) Never to (7) Several Times/Day was also used to determine how often children use certain technology tools while on the Internet. The final Likert-scale question that was utilized was scored on a range of (1) None to (4) Significant in relation to how much of an impact the parents perceived technology to have on the life of the child. Parents also indicated on a checklist the types of technology that their child uses or owns.

This study did indicate parents' perceptions that technology does in fact impact the lives of children in grades four through eight. Almost half of the participants indicated on the survey that technology impacted their child's life significantly (48.4%) compared to only 1.1% of participants who indicated that technology had no impact on the lives of their children. The most frequently reported items that contribute to the impact that technology has on the life of the child by participants were gaming, technology as a communication tool, the usage of technology for school-related functions, and also the availability and accessibility of technology.

The majority of parents in this study reported that their children are avid users of technology. Many of the parents indicated that their children were heavily equipped with

devices. For example, parents indicated that 71.6% of their children owned iPads/iPods, and 91.6% owned a computer device with access to the Internet, which can be used for multiple purposes. While the parents did not think that their children were using the Internet to talk to friends or meet friends through social networking, many believed that their children were playing Internet games during the day. It was indicated through the survey that a large percentage of the children are playing games either once a day (27.4%) or several times a day (18.9%). While a large percentage of parents indicated that their children used technology for school assignments, a larger percentage indicated that their children used the Internet more for games than schoolwork.

Qualitative Findings Related to the First Research Question

Through the open-ended questions on the survey, and also through personal telephone interviews, parents explained the impact that technology has on the life of their child. Listed below are the significant findings from the qualitative data that support the findings from the quantitative data analysis.

Gaming

It was mentioned by a few parents on the open-ended question that gaming has been a contributing factor to children engaging in less physical activity as well as fewer face-to-face interactions. The gaming systems allow gamers to talk and play with friends the children know and also ones they have never met. One participant indicated that to alleviate the lack of face-to-face social interactions, she only allows her child to play Internet games for 15-minute increments and up to one hour per day. Other parents use the gaming system as a reward or punishment. It was also mentioned by one participant that her child would spend 24 hours a day on his game if she would allow him.

Communication Tool

A few parents acknowledged that their children are using technology as a means for communicating with not only their friends, but also with family members. The communication takes place with cell phones, Skype, and e-mail. One concern expressed by one of the participants was that the amount of communication taking place via technology has caused the children to have grown a dependence on the technology, and even if they are impacted negatively by the technology, they will not give it up.

School-Related Technologies

A few parents also expressed positive responses to the fact that their children in grades four through eight can now study for tests on their own, and also complete assignments independently. This assignment completion can be accomplished through the use of different applications that are downloaded and also through different tutorials that are offered online. In addition, parents are impressed at how their children are able to utilize what they learn in school, and come home to apply it to assignments.

Availability and Accessibility

On the survey, many parents expressed how astounded they were in regard to the amount of access to cell phones, computers, and games that children have. Likewise, many of the parents commented how much technology surrounds our everyday lives. Although many parents are overwhelmed by the amount of technology that exists, they revealed that they keep providing more and more to their children because they do not want to socially isolate their children by withholding the latest technology devices.

Summary of the Findings Related to the Second Research Question

How much do parents understand the terminology related to bullying and cyberbullying?

Two checklist type items appeared on the survey that evaluated parents' understanding of bullying and cyberbullying terminology. The first checklist asked participants to identify words that they associated with cyberbullying, while the other checklist asked participants to indicate the bullying experiences in which their children has been oppressors, victims, or bystanders. In the personal telephone interviews, participants explained any known incidents of cyberbullying participation.

The majority of participants associated cell phones, e-mail, Facebook, and sexting with cyberbullying. On the other hand, words that participants did not associate with cyberbullying included face-to-face interactions, worse than traditional bullying, dramatic, a one-time message, and slam books. Slightly more than half of the participants did not associate the word repeated with cyberbullying. The majority of participants did not believe that cyberbullying was worse than traditional bullying. This may go back to the demographics that most parents (55.8%) indicated that their children have not been involved with cyberbullying incidents.

Qualitative Findings that Support the Second Research Question

Mishna et al. (2009) indicated in their research that children allow peer victimization to continue because they are fearful that their parents will remove access to technology. Indeed, many parents who participated in the study did indicate that they would remove access to technology if it were discovered that their children were active participants in cyberbullying, which may contribute to the low participation rate in

cyberbullying incidents as an oppressor (7.4%) and a victim (29.5%) that was indicated by the survey participants.

In the interviews, participants provided the researcher with descriptions of cyberbullying incidents that their children, or someone else that they know has participated in as an oppressor, victim, or bystander. The specific kinds of cyberbullying discussed by parents had taken place through gaming, text messaging, and Facebook.

In regard to gaming, one child had access to another child's password. This child proceeded to delete and change some of the saved information on the account. The participant who shared this example explained that her son thought it was wrong for the information to be changed, but he also faulted his friend for sharing his password information. The participant was proud of her son for thinking about both perspectives in this situation. Another interview participant did not realize that her son could play his X-box Live with strangers. However, it was brought to her attention when her son informed her that an individual kept harassing him for personal information. This story indicated that some parents are largely unaware of what is going on through gaming. With a high percentage of children engaging in gaming, 20% 3-5 times per week, 27.4% about once a day, and 18.9% several times per day, parents should have more awareness about who their children can communicate with when playing games and what kinds of games the children are playing.

Another participant explained that her son was a victim of cyberbullying through texting. A girl that he liked and some of her friends were texting false stories. The boy reported the cyberbullying to the authorities even though it was against the girl's wishes.

This participant was also proud of the way her son handled the situation because even though he liked the girl, he did what was right.

The cyberbullying issue that took place via Facebook led the interview participant to question the roles involved in cyberbullying. She questioned about when an individual perpetuates the discussion online or through Facebook if you are the victim or the oppressor. This participant's niece was engaging in the conversation, but it eventually took on a life of its own. The participant wanted to jump into the conversation, but she left it up to her niece's parents to resolve the issue. All of these examples confirmed that cyberbullying is taking place through different technologies.

Summary of the Findings Related to the Third Research Question

What is the perception of the responsibility of parents/guardians in general to oversee the use of technology of their children?

Likert-scale questions on the survey were used to answer this research question. This scale ranged from (1) Never to (5) Always. The survey evaluated the degree that parents monitor their child's online activities, the frequency of checking where the child has been while on the Internet, and the frequency of discussing Internet safety.

When questioned about the amount of time that is being spent monitoring the technology that their children are using, 40% of survey participants indicated that they often monitor their children's online activity, and 33.7% indicated that they always monitor their children's online activity. Thirty percent of the participants indicated that they never read their children's e-mails, but 35.8% of participants stated that they check the history of their children's online activity. While almost 90% of participants indicated that they are sitting with their children while they use technology, when broken into

categories 45.3% indicated that they often sit with their children while they use technology, and 44.2% sometimes sit with their children while they are using technology. Considering the number of employed parents, one would wonder how anyone could always sit with children while they use technology.

Of those children who utilize text messaging and instant messaging, 55% of the parents indicated that they monitor the text messages and instant messages that their children send. Among the 55% who oversee the messages being sent, 38.9% of the parents review the messages with the knowledge of their children, 24.2% review the messages without their children's knowledge, and 11.6% of the participants have enabled limited access to who their children can text message or instant message. Sixty-one percent of survey participants indicated that they discuss appropriate use of Internet either often or always, while a slightly lower percentage of survey participants (58%) indicated that they either often or sometimes discuss Internet safety.

Qualitative Data Supporting the Third Research Question

The qualitative data that was collected supported the quantitative findings. Survey participants indicated that they are sitting with their children while using technology on an "often" or "sometimes" basis. The majority of interview participants acknowledged the difficulty of monitoring the use of technology all of the time. While some of the interview participants indicated that they currently monitor all activity that takes place on the Internet, others indicated that it was their spouse's job to oversee such activity. Statements such as this, could have contributed to the 2.1% of parents who never sit with their children while using technology, or the 6.3% who rarely do.

Role of the Parents from a Safety Standpoint

Over half of the participants stated on the survey that they currently engage in discussions about appropriate use of the Internet and Internet safety. However, several of the interview participants suggested that many parents lack an understanding for the technology, so they are unable to communicate effectively with their children about it.

It was suggested by interview participants that parents form partnerships with other parents who do have an understanding of the various technology applications, and can report back to the other parents. Regardless of whether the parents have an understanding of the technology or not, they can teach their children how to respond if they are bystanders or victims of cyberbullying and also how not to become bystanders in cyberbullying situations.

Summary of the Findings Related to the Fourth Research Question

What specific technologies do parents perceive their children to be using on a regular basis? What is their role in the supervision of each?

In the fourth section of the survey, parents answered checklist type questions and also Likert-scale questions. The Likert-scale ranged from (1) Never to (5) Always and indicated the parents' frequencies of reading their children's emails, the frequency of sitting with their children while they use technology, and the frequency of discussing appropriate use of the Internet.

The most commonly identified technologies that the children used or owned included iPads/iPods (71.6%), gaming systems (65.3%), and a computer device with access to the Internet (91.6%). Although the majority of participants indicated that their children did not have social networking accounts (63%), of those who did (31.6%),

25.3% of the parents are friends with their children on the social networking sites with the knowledge of their children. In addition to the friendship, 21.1% of the participants indicated that they have access to the username and password to the social networking account.

The participants informed the researcher that 73.7% either often or always monitor their children's online activities, which is lower than the approximate 90% of parents that indicated that they sit with their children while they use technology. This discrepancy in percentages indicates that there is a disconnect between sitting with children while they are using technology and actively monitoring what children are doing while utilizing technology. The percentage of participants who indicated that they monitor the children's online activity is higher than the 59% of participants who often or always check the history of online activity.

Discussions about Internet safety and appropriate use of technology are often taking place between parents and their children, with 40% discussing Internet safety and 44.2% discussing appropriate use of Internet. There are more discussions taking place regarding appropriate use of technology than Internet safety with 61% of discussions taking place either often or always compared to 57.9% taking place either often or always.

Qualitative Data Supporting the Fourth Research Question

In the interviews, some participants explained that they check the history of websites that their children visit as well as the cell phone histories. This fact coincided with the quantitative findings. Some of the interview participants reviewed the histories on cell phones and the computer with the knowledge of their children, while others

explained to their children that they should have no expectation of privacy. Although devices' histories were being checked, one interview participant mentioned her concern for supervising technology once her child leaves her home and goes to a friend's house.

Many of the parents also strategically placed the technology devices that were utilized in the home. Computers were located in the same space as the home office, or in a high traffic area. The location of technology devices and reviewing the history of websites viewed and messages sent can assist parents in the supervision of technology usage. These strategies can also be implemented to prevent cyberbullying incidents from occurring.

Summary of the Findings Related to the Fifth Research Question

How do parents view their responsibility for direct intervention if they discover that their children have unwillingly experienced or purposely participated in cyberbullying as oppressors, victims, or bystanders?

The fifth section of the survey included multiple-choice questions, checklist items, and a Likert-scale question. The Likert-scale ranged from (1) Very Unlikely to (4) Highly Likely and identified the parents' likelihood of removing access to technology if it was discovered that their children have participated in cyberbullying as oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

Some of the precautionary methods for preventing cyberbullying are not being utilized by the majority of participants in the current study such as the installation of filters and monitoring software. Over half of the participants, 51.6%, reported that they do not currently have these programs installed on their computers. If participation in

cyberbullying was brought to the attention of the parents, more than half, 64.2% indicated that they would most likely remove access to the technology.

Other methods that participants identified as ways that they could help to stop or prevent cyberbullying included from the highest percentage to the lowest: talk to their own children about cyberbullying (94.7%), remove the cell phone or computer (72.6%), tell the parents of the other children involved (70.5%), inform the school (63.2%), and inform the police (43.2%).

Qualitative Data Supporting the Fifth Research Question

During the personal interviews, participants shared many suggestions on how to prevent cyberbullying from occurring. Many of their responses, however, were suggestions that other parents should be doing. Participants also indicated methods that they currently have in place to prevent cyberbullying.

Parent Recommendations for Prevention of Future Cyberbullying

The interview participants suggested that parent education and outreach is key to preventing cyberbullying from occurring. An interview participant further commented that there is a need to share the latest research and techniques not only with each other, but with the children as well. Children should hear real stories of cyberbullying incidents and the consequences of those incidents. Furthermore, making children aware of the effects of cyberbullying is critical, so that they know what can happen as a result of their actions. This sharing of effects should take place during discussions about Internet safety and appropriate use of technology.

A few parents believed that at times it appeared that the children are unaware of the consequences of posting things onto the Internet, and as a result adults need to take

the time to educate them. Parents need to be the ones to educate their children about the consequences that come along with acting inappropriately online and what constitutes the inappropriate activity. Consistent messages need to be shared at school and at home.

Checking Internet History

The interview participants varied in their methods of checking the history of their children's online activity. One identified that the history is checked frequently to make sure that the child is not hiding anything from his parents. Another participant stated that she checks the history from time to time, and the last participant preferred to give her child freedom, and not sit with him all of the time. However, she did make it clear to her child that she can check up on him whenever she wants. Another participant further stated that she told her children to have no expectation of privacy. As long as she was paying the bills, she could check on them as frequently as she saw fit.

Discussions

Those participants who indicated that they are engaging in discussion with their children stated that the discussions are ongoing. The children frequently inform their parents that the topics they are discussing have been discussed in school during class meetings. Parents indicated their satisfaction with the way schools are approaching the topic of cyberbullying, and indicated that there are conversations taking place both at home and in school. Several of the interview participants noted the importance of engaging in discussion with their children especially when events take place on the news. By forming positive relationships with your children early, and engaging in open discussions, it is believed by one parent that the child will feel comfortable coming to the

parent and discussing anything. When the parent has a bond with his/her child, he/she will come to the adult right away if there is a problem.

It was also mentioned by one interview participant that the conversations need to start early in elementary school, not when the children are in junior high school. When the conversations take place earlier, the children will have a better understanding of how to use the devices appropriately and what the consequences are for inappropriate use.

Filters and Software

Many participants expressed their lack of knowledge about filters and software programs, but did acknowledge that they would like to learn how to install them onto their home computers. Some indicated that they are aware of the software programs that can be installed on the computers, but they have yet to get around to installing them. However, the same participants did mention that they do have parental settings set on the gaming systems.

Password Access

In the present study, some of the participants had access to their children's passwords, and others did not. Some participants noted that they keep a logbook of all of their children's usernames and passwords next to the computer. One participant did not find it necessary to press the issue with her son about having his password information because if he gets in trouble with the technology it will fall on him, and not reflect upon her as a mother.

The descriptive statistical analysis that was performed for each of the five research questions, as well as the qualitative data analysis, provided an in-depth look at how parents perceive their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and

their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, and bystanders.

Discussion of the Findings in Relation to Theory

The following is a discussion of the findings, acquired through surveys and interviews. Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model was used as the theoretical framework for this study. Connections between Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model and the responses received on the surveys and through interviews will be presented next.

Microsystem

The innermost layer within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model is identified as the microsystem. It is within this layer that parents can play a significant role in the prevention of bullying incidents. While Bronfenbrenner (1994) did not address bullying, the researcher was able to make connections between Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model and the events that occur in bullying situations and also prevention practices that can mitigate bullying incidents from occurring. The most immediate influences on peer victimization are within the microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). It is within these microsystems that interactions are constantly shaping children (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Parenting practices and peer relationships are considered two of the most important interactions that take place within this system (Hong & Eamon, 2009). In the present study, it was interesting to see that parents focused on other parents more than other people's children.

Participants also indicated that they are lacking in some areas of supervision. Parents admitted that they did not check the history of their children's online activity, sit

with their children while they used technology, or read their children's e-mail as much as the parents indicated that they discussed Internet safety and appropriate use of the Internet. These supervisory practices would fall into the microsystem because they each involve the parents working directly with their children. If the relationships in the immediate microsystem break down, the children will not have the tools to explore other parts of his environment because the layers are interrelated (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The main responsibility of supervising technology falls on the parents, and the amount of supervision plays a key role in the development of the child (Sabella, 2009). Participants in this study spent a considerable amount of time discussing how they feel they cannot supervise the use of technology at all times. They found it to be a very difficult, overwhelming, and daunting task. Many participants stressed that parents are the ones who need to show their children appropriate interactions with technology.

Cole (2001) identified that 91% of parents "kept an eye on" what children do online. The current study reported similar results with about 91% of parents sometimes, often, or always sitting with their children while they use technology. However, more active monitoring strategies appeared less common in previous studies. In the United Kingdom, Livingstone, and Bober (2004) found that only 32% of parents surveyed reported using the Internet with their children. In the present study, parents identified if they were friends with their children on social networking accounts and 74.7% reported that they were, and 74% of parents reported that they often or always monitor their children's online activities.

Sabella (2012) described a continuum of supervision methods that parents can implement in their homes ranging from low monitoring such as reviewing the browser

history to high monitoring, which included using key logger. Key logger allows an individual to track the keys that are being used on the keyboard in a covert manner. It was explained; however, that technological solutions to guarding kids are never a replacement for human intervention (Sabella, 2008). Even if parents are monitoring online activity, the element of engaging in discussion is crucial.

Parents are aware of these ever-changing technologies, and their communication patterns indicate these shifts. In the present study, parents indicated that they are handling the situations in different ways, such as removing technology and engaging in conversations with other parents, and they are also cognizant that cyberbullying is taking place in different formats.

In the present study, 48.4% of parents had filters installed on their computers and 50.5% had monitoring software. A few parents indicated that they did not have software and filters installed on their computers because they were unaware of how to do it, but they would like to learn how to put these things onto their computers. As technology continues to evolve and be updated, there may be new forms of preventative measures created.

Other Levels within Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

The mesosystem in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory highlights the "linkages between microsystems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 227). School and home each represent one of the microsystems that the child is a part of, and the relationship between school and home is of extreme importance in this level. A few different participants mentioned their satisfaction with how the school deals with cyberbullying and also how the school provides informational sessions for the parents to attend. In addition, many participants

noted that in their conversations with their children, the children stated that they had discussed similar topics in school during their bullying meetings. By addressing concerns in school, it puts the parents at ease at home.

The exosystem consists of interrelationships between two or more microsystems or settings, but the individual is contained in one (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). One relevant exosystem factor is the exposure to bullying through websites and games types that children are playing (Hong & Espelage, 2012). Parents should develop an awareness of the types of games that their children are playing and examine the types if interactions that are taking place through the websites and games (Hong et al., 2010).

The macrosystem refers to the culture or subculture in which the developing child exists (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The forms of technology that children are using are constantly changing. New and updated models are being introduced and new applications are being created. Every commercial that is seen on the television and Internet advertising new technologies shows children one more way they can connect with their peers. The means of communicating are expanding, and so must the level of communication between parents and their children. The school culture in which the students are immersed is also part of the macrosystem. Each of the test sites in the current research study has implemented an anti-bullying program, and each of the test sites addresses the issue of bullying through class meetings. Hong and Eamon (2009) suggested that the school setting is a relevant place for addressing bullying. The macrosystem level should also include some reference to cultural attitudes and values (Hong & Eamon, 2009). This idea can be accomplished by utilizing some of the

interview participants' suggestions of sharing real stories of cyberbullying incidents with children.

The chronosystem is the final layer within the ecological framework. This layer represents the effect of time on the behavior and on the context in which that behavior takes place (Barboza et al., 2009). The chronosystem encompasses both individual and environmental change (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Gaming has become a popular leisure activity (Trepte, Reinecke, & Juechems, 2012). With children participating in a variety of online games, some of them aggressive in nature, it may lead to more cyberbullying taking place (Yang, 2012).

All of the layers within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model are impacted by cyberbullying. It was identified that parents have a presence at each of the levels.

Implications of the Data

Findings from the study shed insight on parents' perspectives of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Some of the information that was obtained through the surveys was inconsistent with the data obtained in the personal interviews.

Participation in Bullying Incidents

Survey responses by participants indicated that about half of the children were not participants in cyberbullying incidents as oppressors, victims, or bystanders. However, many of the interview participants shared experiences of cyberbullying that either their child or another child they knew had been a cyberbullying oppressor, victim, or bystander. This research inconsistency of low reporting of cyberbullying in the survey

and high reporting in the qualitative data may suggest that parents may be less likely to reveal cyberbullying on a survey than in an interview. This level of reporting could be because cyberbullying incidents are complex and, while parents can discuss them with awareness in person, they are not quite sure that they fit into a simple survey question. This finding may also suggest that those who volunteered to participate in the interview wanted to share their experiences of cyberbullying with someone who was unattached to the situation.

On the survey, participants indicated that 7.4% of their children were oppressors in cyberbullying incidents, however, not one interview participant indicated that their child was the oppressor. Likewise, 45.5% of survey participants indicated that their child was a bystander, and this also went largely unreported during the interviews. The majority of interview participants indicated that their child was the victim in cyberbullying incidents during the personal interview. On the survey, 29.5% of parents indicated that their child was a bystander. It is interesting to note that not one parent identified their child as having been an oppressor in cyberbullying. This lack of identification may be something that parents are not willing to reveal or something of which they are largely unaware. Also, possibly parents who volunteered to participate had fewer problems with their children in terms of cyberbullying. Walrave and Heirman (2011) identified in their study that children with a computer and Internet connection in their bedroom are more likely to cyberbully than those with less private computer access. Participants in the current study indicated that 13.7% of the children have a computer in their bedroom. Walrave and Heirman (2011) also noted that previous experience with cyberbullying, especially as a victim, was found to be a key predictor of perpetration.

Those participants that disclosed that their children were victims in cyberbullying incidents should be especially mindful of the interactions that take place via technology with their children.

Supervision and Monitoring

Considering the number of employed parents, one would wonder how anyone could always sit with children while they use technology (Hong et al., 2010). In the surveys, it was indicated that parents are monitoring their children often (40%) and always (33.7%). Survey participants also indicated that they are sitting with their children while they use technology sometimes (44.2%) and often (45.3%). This discrepancy in percentages indicates that there is a disconnect between sitting with a child while he/she is using technology and actively monitoring what a child is doing while utilizing technology.

Gaming

In the present study, parents indicated that their children are gaming quite a bit. Despite that gaming has become a major leisure time activity around the globe (Trepte et al., 2012), parents may be largely unaware of what is going on through gaming. One interview participant mentioned that she was unaware that her son could communicate with strangers on his X-box Live. Allowing gamers to communicate is one of the new features that exists on gaming systems. Cyberbullying can occur through online gaming when children share their passwords with others, when children exclude others from playing, and when slandering others (Yang, 2012).

In addition, when participating in online gaming it is possible for gamers to conceal their identity, which may lead children to believing that they are not responsible

for their online behavior (Yang, 2012). Some of the interview participants explained that they have reviewed appropriate conduct while playing games, and also the importance of not sharing passwords. However, parents need to realize that they can disable the function that allows their children to communicate with others, and they can also set up controls to limit who their children can play and communicate with while on the gaming system. Although some parents have filters and software installed on their computers, none of the parents mentioned utilizing parental controls on gaming systems.

Limitations of this Study

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate parents' perceptions of the role they play in the supervision of their children's use of technology as well as their response to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Parents' and guardians' current understanding of cyberbullying, their supervision of the current technology use of their children, and their response to experiences of cyberbullying in the lives of their children were examined.

The current study had several limitations. The first limitation that may have had an impact on the results of this study was having females as the majority of participants. This presence is probably because women are more likely to attend PTA meetings in general, such as the ones where the survey was generally distributed. As a result, this study had a lack of gender balance. It would be interesting to see how a majority of fathers would also respond to the issue of cyberbullying.

The second limitation was the fact that some of the newer technologies utilized by the subject's children didn't exist. In addition, some of the terminology has changed. Some outdated forms of technology were included, such as MySpace. At the time of

survey creation, the forms of technology that were not included did not seem to be as popular. If some of the newer forms of technology had been included on the survey, it may have demonstrated a higher usage rate of technology among children.

The third limitation was that parents seemed reluctant to reveal that their children were oppressors, victims, or bystanders on the survey. However, they were readily willing to discuss their children's experiences as victims or bystanders in the interviews. This reluctance might indicate that focus groups and interviews help parents to open up about the cyberbullying experiences of their children. The absence of any parent admission of having a child who was an oppressor may mean that research in this area might best be done with parents whose children have been involved in cyberbullying episodes as oppressors. However, there would be a number of significant human subjects challenges to locating these parents and conducting research.

The fact that no parents indicated that their child was a cyberbullying oppressor is a signal of a potential problem. Other kinds of research might be needed to explore the experiences of parents whose children have been oppressors.

The final limitation of the study was the relatively small number of responses on the open-ended questions on the survey. Because the last question was a separate page on the survey, it may have been overlooked by participants.

Recommendations for Increasing Parental Understanding and Intervention in Cyberbullying Incidents

Current research studies have indicated the importance of parental supervision and parental monitoring. Parental restrictive mediation, which has been shown to decrease the amount of time children spend online, was found to reduce cyberbullying

risks (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, & Olafsson, 2011; Rose et al., 2008). To prepare parents to engage in conversations with their children and to have a better foundation of knowledge on what to address with their children, four recommendations are made.

First Recommendation: Focus on Parents in Bullying Programs

First, based on the data the researcher obtained concerning parents' worries about other parents, the researcher would recommend a greater awareness of the need to really focus on parents in bullying programs. It was mentioned throughout the study that parents are concerned with how others are addressing the issues of cyberbullying, technology, and supervision.

Soliciting the help of the school to assist in educating parents on cyberbullying would be recommended, especially when the students are younger, and parents tend to participate more in school programs. Byron (2010) has indicated the strong need to start educating children at an early age about online safety and digital citizenship. Having parents as active participants in these presentations would show the students that their parents are aware of the technologies that are being used, and that they want to know how to keep their children safe while the technologies are being utilized.

Beale and Hall (2007) suggested, as a result of their findings about cyberbullying, that schools should sponsor workshops designed to enlighten parents about the nature and forms of cyberbullying. If parents are unaware of the scope of cyberbullying, then schools will be unable to address the issue from its core (Beale & Hall, 2007). Aftab (2005) also recommended that schools provide parents with education. Parents should be encouraged to discuss cyberbullying with their children and let the school become involved in the discussion as well (Aftab, 2005). Furthermore, schools realize that

cyberbullying often takes place off school grounds, and as a result it makes it difficult for them to intervene. If schools supply information to parents that will assist them on how to monitor their children's use of technology more closely, it will help the schools address the problem with a more direct response (Beale & Hall, 2007). Furthermore, research studies have also suggested the direct teaching of values education, empathy training, and the use of drama in the curriculum at school, which should then be modeled at home (Campbell, 2005; Mason, 2008) can decrease incidents of bullying.

In addition to the schools, there are also national organizations such as PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, which hosts online events as well as local community events to make parents aware of bullying incidents. Their website supplies parents and students with resources on how to deal with bullying and also how to intervene as a bystander. The Cyberbullying Research Center (http://cyberbullying.us) is another website that provides up-to-date information for parents and students on cyberbullying. Justin Patchin and Sameer Hinduja, two researchers who have conducted extensive research on cyberbullying, provide resources on their website, as well as the locations of their speaking engagements.

These organizations and researchers have recognized that it is difficult for parents to attend school events, and as a result have provided resources on the Internet. Parents can organize their own events to educate other parents after reviewing the information that is provided. PACER, as well as the Cyberbullying Research Center, want parents to utilize the resources that they have created.

Second Recommendation: Suggestions for how Parents Should Respond if Their Child is an Oppressor, Victim, or Bystander

Next, parents need to develop ways to discuss cyberbullying incidents with their children if they discover their children's involvement as oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Parents need to be cognizant of signs that their children have participated in cyberbullying incidents. Some examples include a child who generally loves being on the computer, suddenly resists using it and disables communication features, or does not communicate with friends via social networking sites. Other children may appear upset after playing an online game. Carpenter (2009) has suggested that parents need to tune in and watch for unusual behavior or responses that happen in conjunction with computer use.

Children as Oppressors

Prior to using technology, children should be clear of the guidelines that parents have in place for appropriate Internet use. Englander (2012) suggested that parents discuss social networking sites with their child. Children should know that their profiles are never truly private, and their information can be copied and distributed easily (Englander, 2012). If the behavioral expectations are not met, then the children should know the consequences of their actions (Carpenter, 2009; Englander, 2012).

When a parent is informed that his/her children have been an oppressor in cyberbullying incidents, the parent may not know how to handle the situation. When the incident is reported to the parent by the school or another parent, it is important to listen to all of the facts, and inform the other party that the issue is being taken seriously (Aftab, 2012). When the issue is addressed with the child, do not prejudge, and keep calm

(Aftab, 2012). It is important to allow the child to explain the incident and how it occurred (Aftab, 2012). Parents should acknowledge that a mistake has been made, and that the child and parent will work together to ensure that the mistake does not happen again (Englander, 2012).

Children as Victims

Aftab (2012) has also suggested that parents should give their children hugs if they have been cyberbullied. Children need to hear that their parents are not going to make matters worse. Parents need to engage in conversations about the ways that cyberbullies can attack their victims. If the children feel that they have been bullied, they will have a better understanding of how to explain the situation (Carpenter, 2009). After the parent and child have determined if the child knows the oppressor several options exist. The child can ignore what has taken place, the sender can be blocked from contacting the child, the sender can be warned through the social network or Internet Service Provider, and the parent and child can also decide to report the incident to the Internet Service Provider (Aftab, 2012). If the bullying persists, the police can and should be contacted (Aftab, 2012). It is crucial for parents and their children to learn how to keep evidence of any cyberbullying that has taken place (Englander, 2012). Children or their parents need to take screen shots of the messages, or save the e-mails, so that they can be provided to the appropriate authorities. Parents must also remind their children that if a message is sent to them, not to respond (Englander, 2012). By sending a message in retaliation, it is just feeding the fire (Englander, 2012).

Children as Bystanders

When children inform their parents that they were bystanders to a cyberbullying incident, it is important for parents to obtain all of the details regarding the incident. The parent needs to find out how his/her child responded to the incident. For example, bystanders can either choose to stop forwarding the message, or they can continue to pass it along (Carpenter, 2009). Bystanders have different motivations for responding the way that they do, and parents should identify those motivations. Cappadocia, Pepler, Cummings, and Craig (2012) identified in their study that biggest reason bystanders chose to intervene was because no one deserved to be bullied. The biggest reason for not intervening as a bystander was that the child did not want to get involved (Cappadocia et al., 2012). Knowing how the child handled the situation will help the parent explain the effects of his/her participation.

Third Recommendation: Evaluation of Games and Websites by Parents

The third recommendation for parents is to evaluate the sites and games on which their children wish to participate to be sure that the site is secure to prevent strangers from contacting their children. Parents should also develop an understanding for how other individuals can access their children's passwords and utilize the passwords to alter saved information.

In many ways, the advent of widespread use of technology came before important thinking about how it should be used and controlled. Parents do not feel in control, but are not sure how to regulate their children's technology use. Children are pressuring them to keep buying more forms of technology.

O'Keefe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) encouraged parents to evaluate websites and games with their children where no age stipulations have been specified. They further supported parents engaging in active conversations between parents and their preadolescents and adolescents (O'Keefe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Allowing the children to explain why the game or website will be of benefit to them or is of particular interest to them, may assist the parents in gaining a better understanding of the purpose of the technology. Parents need to establish a way to evaluate the quality of and reasons for the use of games and websites that children show an interest in. Furthermore, by engaging in active conversations, it may help to close the knowledge and technical skills gap that exists between parents and their children.

Parents who feel they are unequipped to discuss technology with their children should enlist the help of their children. They should ask their children how to do certain things and explain the purpose of certain applications. By opening up the lines of communication, healthier, more positive relationships can be formed (Accordino & Accordino, 2011). In addition to the conversations, parents also need to research the games themselves.

In the study it was indicated that about half of the participants (51.6%) did not have filters on their computers, and about half of the participants (49.5%) did not have monitoring software installed on the computers. It should be recognized by parents that there are shortcomings with filters and software packages (Walker, 2012). Youth can inevitably find a way around them (Nigam & Collier, 2010; Walker, 2009). Even if filters and software programs are installed on the computer, it is essential to maintain a positive parent-child relationship with regard to online safety issues (Walker, 2012).

There is a "growing consensus among Internet-safety experts that blocking social media might actually have a negative effect on student safety" (Nigam & Collier, 2010, p. 24) because it might lead to missed opportunities to teach Internet safety in context. Rather than relying on blocking, parents need to talk about safety and take responsibility for monitoring use.

Fourth Recommendation: Creating a Supervisory Plan that Includes Conversations Between Parents and Children

Fourth, parents expressed that they have difficulty monitoring and supervising technology all of the time. Parents need to educate themselves on the types of software programs that are available to them, so that they can offer their children some freedom while using technology, but also maintain some control on how the technology is being used. Parents and their children should also have frequent conversations about how the children can best be protected while they are using various forms of technology.

Helping Children Respond to Bullying

Children need to know how to respond if a bullying situation arises, and they also need to know how to engage in conversations with a trusted adult. Youth interviewed by Blumenfeld and Cooper (2010) stressed the importance of treating their conversations confidentially. The youth stated that he/she wanted adults to "make it easy and confidential to report" (Blumenfeld & Cooper, 2010, p. 125). Some schools have implemented bullying tip lines where parents and students can anonymously call in bullying incidents that are taking place. Other schools have also implemented the use of links on their school website to anonymously report bullying incidents. The school

administrator who receives the messages and reviews takes on the responsibility of evaluating the severity of the problem and deciding how to proceed.

In addition, youth who participated in a focus group in Illinois described the traits a trusting adult should possess so that these youth felt comfortable disclosing cyberbullying incidents (Madigan, 2010). The focus group identified "trustworthiness; does not exhibit favoritism; shares background or similar youth experiences; and willingness to learn about the circumstances before judging" (Madigan, 2010, p. 7). Focus group participants in Kowalski et al. (2008) delivered a similar message. They urged adults to not blame the victim in cyberbullying situations (Kowalkski et al., 2008).

By engaging in honest, open conversations with a trusted adult the children can take ownership over some of the practices that are put into place. By soliciting input from the children, parents and their children will be able to form more of a partnership, rather than a decision made solely by the parents. Parents are aware of the need for rules and consequences, but it will take some effort on their part to figure out how to implement their rules (Bumpus & Werner, 2009).

The researcher has suggested four recommendations based on the findings in the research:

- The need to focus on parents in bullying programs.
- How parents should respond to cyberbullying.
- The need for evaluation of games and websites by parents.
- The creation of supervisory plans that include conversations between parents and children.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study described parents' perceptions of their role in supervision of their children's use of technology and their reported responses to events in which their children are cyberbullying oppressors, victims, or bystanders. This study builds upon the work of existing cyberbullying research, and provides a new realm of research possibilities in regard to parental involvement and understanding as it relates to technology. Three recommendations for future research are made to extend the research in the domain of parental supervision and intervention as it relates to technology.

First, a similar study should be conducted to target parents in other school districts and in other locations throughout the United States. The participants of this study did come from different areas within the same Eastern state, so it would be valuable to see the similarities and differences that emerge from different states.

The second recommendation for future research calls for a comparison of the results by grade level of the children. The data received from each grade level four through eight should be analyzed separately, so that practical interventions can be implemented by the parents at home for each specific grade level. By stratifying the results, more tailored interventions can be implemented as a result of certain technologies being used by certain aged children.

Third, the future research should include the perceptions of the students whose parents are participating. A study of students' perceptions could give further credibility to the types of supervision that is currently in place, participation in cyberbullying, and also interventions that are in place. In addition, students would also have the opportunity to provide information on what their main concerns are about cyberbullying and also the

role they believe their parents should play in supervising their use of technology. Students would also have the opportunity to share how they believe their parents should respond should they be informed that their children have participated in incidents either as oppressors, victims, or bystanders. Input from the students will allow the children to gain a sense of ownership over the preventative measures that are developed to target youth of their same age, and would hopefully make the children more agreeable to the implementation of the prevention strategies.

Summary and Reflection of Considerations

The results of this study indicated that parents have concerns about cyberbullying, and while some are doing what they can at home, others are left feeling overwhelmed and unsuccessful at protecting their children while they use technology. Protecting youth while they use technology is a complicated process. Many helpful strategies can be employed, but it must be recognized that the different children and different parents have varying needs. It is essentially up to the individual families to identify what strategies best meet their needs.

This study began with a pilot study with a group of parents who had a child in fourth through eighth grades. These parents provided input to the researcher to make the survey and interview questions easier to understand. The administrators of the participating school districts demonstrated their commitment to anti-bullying efforts by providing their buildings' parents an opportunity to participate in this study. With the data that were collected, district administrators will: (1) get a first hand look at the concerns of the parents; (2) develop ways that they can assist parents in becoming

supervisors of technology; and, (3) how to educate parents on how to respond if their child is a cyberbullying oppressor, victim, or bystander.

Responses from the participants in this study reflected findings that were similar to previous research and were consistent with the findings of Byron (2010). Parents indicated the need for educating their children about online safety. Byron (2010) explained the importance of starting these conversations at a young age, so that children have an understanding of online safety and also so they understand the implications of digital citizenship. Several participants mentioned that it is the parents' responsibility to educate their children and this responsibility should not be postponed until after the child has received access to their own technology devices.

The most common and consistent themes that emerged in this study were gaming, technology as a communication tool, the usage of technology for school-related functions, and also the availability and accessibility of technology as having the greatest impact on their children's lives. Parents also discussed incidents of cyberbullying that occurred through gaming, texting, and social networking. This indicates that parents are aware of the problem. These parents engaged in conversations with their children and were pleased with how their children responded to the situations. However, while these parents openly discussed the cyberbullying incidents, others were not as forthcoming, which may indicate that children are hiding their participation in bullying incidents, or that parents do not feel comfortable discussing the incidents.

Some of the main concerns that became evident in this study were access to technology, being unaware of bullying incidents, supervising and monitoring technology, prevention, the role of the parents, and children not being aware of the consequences.

Suggestions were identified on how to alleviate these concerns, and many of them involved the parents.

Parents identified that the most challenging aspect of technology is the supervision and monitoring that is being given to the children while using technology. Supervising and monitoring will be an ongoing problem and it is of significant importance that it will continue to be addressed. Parents must make a concerted effort to implement supervisory and monitoring practices in order to protect their children while utilizing technology. Furthermore, parents need to identify what their role is as supervisors of technology and what they believe is the best way to respond if they determine that their children have participated in cyberbullying as oppressors, victims, or bystanders.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sample Letter to District Administrator for Site Approval

My name is Emily Scheinberg. I am a doctoral candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I am in the process of locating schools that would be willing to participate in my dissertation study. I am interested in finding out more about the parents' perspective of cyberbullying and how they view themselves as supervisors of technology.

To administer the anonymous survey, I would attend one of the PTO/PTA meetings and give an overview of what cyberbullying is, and then give those in attendance at the meeting the option of completing the survey. There will be no identifying factors on the survey, nor will there be any information about the school district included on the survey.

If this is something that you are interested in learning more about, I would love the opportunity to discuss this further.

I greatly appreciate your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Emily Scheinberg

Doctoral Candidate

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

412-443-3965

APPENDIX B

E-mail Communication for Permission to use Survey Instrument

From	Jonathan King <jking@isafe.org>
To	Emily Scheinberg-powell <escheinberg-powell@gatewayk12.org>
Cc	Jeff Godlis <jgodlis@isafe.org>
Date	10/28/2011 18:30
Subject	RE: Parent Survey

Message contents

Emily, You have permission to use our questions for your survey. Let me know if you need additional support. Jonathan King Chief Strategy Officer i-SAFE Inc. 760-603-7911 x14 jking@isafe.org -----Original Message----- From: Emily Scheinberg-powell [mailto:escheinberg-powell@gatewayk12.org] Sent: Friday, October 28, 2011 5:37 AM To: Jonathan King Subject: RE: Parent Survey Thank you, I appreciate it! On 27/Oct/2011 17:46 Jonathan King <jking@isafe.org> wrote .. > Emily, > > I put your request in front of my legal department. I will keep you > posted. > > Jonathan King > Chief Strategy Officer > i-SAFE Inc. > 760-603-7911 x14 > jking@isafe.org > > > > -----Original Message----- > From: Emily Scheinberg-powell > [mailto:escheinberg-powell@gatewayk12.org] > Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2011 8:30 AM > To: Jonathan King > Subject: RE: Parent Survey > > Hi Jonathan, > > Yes, if that is at all possible. It would be great if I could use the > questions that I mentioned to as part of a survey that I would administer. > Some of the wordings may be changed/altered so that I can get answers > to my research questions. > > Thanks, > Emily > > On 27/Oct/2011 10:47 Jonathan King <jking@isafe.org> wrote .. > > > Emily, > > > > > Thanks for the email. I want to make sure I understand your question. > > > You are asking to license my parent survey questions to use in your > > > own survey for which you will manage. Is this correct? > > > > > > Jonathan King > > > Chief Strategy Officer > > > i-SAFE Inc. > > > 760-603-7911 x14 > > > jking@isafe.org > > > > > > > > > -----Original Message----- > > > From: Emily Scheinberg-powell > > > [mailto:escheinberg-powell@gatewayk12.org] > > > Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2011 7:00 AM > > > To: Jonathan King > > >

Hello Emily,

Yes, you have my permission to adapt my parental survey for your dissertation study. As mentioned previously, please send me a copy of your study as I would love to hear about your findings.

Best wishes on your dissertation process.

Dr. WL

Mickie Wong-Lo, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Special Education Undergraduate Program Coordinator
Northeastern Illinois University
Department of Special Education
M-Wong-Lo@neiu.edu
773-442-5595

On 2/9/12 7:00 PM, "Emily L Scheinberg-Powel"
<e.l.scheinberg-powel@iup.edu> wrote:

>Hi Dr. Wong-Lo,
>
>
>I just wanted to confirm that I have your permission to adapt your
>survey instrument for my dissertation study.
>
>
>Thanks,
>Emily Scheinberg
>

Absolutely.
Good luck with your study. I look forward to reading your results.
All the best...

Timothy Eagen

On Feb 9, 2012, at 8:02 PM, Emily L Scheinberg-Powel <e.l.scheinberg-
powel@iup.edu> wrote:

> Hi Tim,
>
>
> I just wanted to confirm that I have your permission to adapt your
survey instrument for my dissertation study. I will be sure to cite you
as a source, and provide you with a copy of my findings.
>
>
> Thanks,
> Emily Scheinberg

You can do whatever you like. Good luck and stick with it. You can do it!

Dustin Springer

Rough House Music

"The Way You Want It!"

----- Reply message -----

From: "Emily L Scheinberg-Powel" <e.l.scheinberg-powel@iup.edu>

Date: Thu, Feb 9, 2012 6:50 pm
Subject: Your dissertation
To: "Dustin Springer" <dspringer@kc.rr.com>

Hi Dr Springer,

I just wanted to confirm that I had your permission to adapt the survey that you used in your dissertation.

Thanks,
Emily

APPENDIX C

Survey Questions for Paper and Pencil Survey

Survey

Directions: Some of the questions are multiple choice. Please give only one answer for each question. If you are unsure of an answer, please select what you think is the best answer. Please be honest and answer every question to the best of your ability.
Thank you again for your participation in this survey.

Definition of cyberbullying: Deliberate and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices, carried out as an aggressive act by a group or individual (Patchin & Hinduja, 2009).

Demographics

1. How would you describe yourself?

   A. Male
   B. Female

2. How would you describe yourself?

   A. Married
   B. Separated or divorced
   C. Widowed
   D. Single

3. Circle the grade levels that you currently have a child enrolled. If there is more than one child, circle the grade level of the child who spends more time using technology.

   4th 5th 6th 7th 8th

Your Child and Technology

4. How often does your child do each of the following while on the Internet?

	Never	About Once a Month	Every few weeks	1-2 days a week	3-5 days a week	About once a day	Several times a day
A. Talk with Friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Meet new people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Look up things for school	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Play games	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. How often does your child use each of these technology tools while on the Internet?

	Never	About Once a Month	Every few weeks	1-2 days a week	3-5 days a week	About once a day	Several times a day
A. MySpace or FaceBook	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. E-mail	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Instant messenger	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Search engines (Google, Yahoo)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. Does your child have a MySpace or FaceBook account?

A. Yes, he/she has an account that I helped them set up
B. Yes, he/she has an account that they set up without adult assistance
C. No, he/she does not have an account.
D. I am unsure whether my son/daughter has an account.

7. Have you conducted a Google search for your child's name in the past year?

A. Yes
B. No

8. Place a check next to the types of technology that *you* use or own.

____ I-pod/I-pad ___ Smart Phone ____ FaceBook Account

___ Twitter account ____Gaming system ___ Skype access

___ MySpace Account___ Blogger ___ Computer with Internet

9. How much of an impact do you think that the use of technology has on the life of your child?

None	Little	Moderate	Significant
1	2	3	4

Explain:

Understanding of Bullying

10. Place a check next to the words that you associate with cyberbullying.

___ Cell phones ___ e-mails ___ Slam books

____ FaceBook ___ Sexting ___ One time message

____ Repeated ___ Not an issue ___ Dramatic

___ Worse than traditional bullying ___ Face-to-face

11. There are 3 kinds of participation in bullying experiences. A child may be a victim, an oppressor, or a bystander. Check the bullying experiences that your child has been a participant in or observed. (Check all that apply)

____ Oppressor _____ Victim _____ Bystander

Role in Supervision

12. Where is the computer in your home that your child uses most often to access the Internet?
    A. Their bedroom
    B. In a family area (kitchen, den, family room)
    C. We do not have Internet access in the home

13. How would you describe the degree that you monitor your child's online activities?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

14. How often do you check to see where your child has been while on the Internet?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

15. How often do you discuss Internet safety with your child?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

Supervisory Methods

16. I monitor my child's account on a social networking site.

A. Yes
B. No

17. If yes, how do you monitor your child's account on a social networking site? (Check all that apply).

___ I am a friend of my child's social networking site with their knowledge
___ I am a friend of my child's social networking site without their knowledge
___ I have access to my adolescent's username and password
___ I supervise my adolescent's online activities
___ Other (Please specify)_____

18. I monitor my adolescent's text messaging or instant messages.
A. Yes
B. No

19. If yes, how do you monitor your adolescent's text messaging or instant messages? (Check all that apply).

___ I review my adolescent's text messaging or instant messaging logs with their knowledge.
___ I review my adolescent's text messaging or instant messaging logs without their knowledge.
___ I limit access to who my adolescent can text message or instant message.
___ Other (Please specify) _____

20. How often do you read your child's emails?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

21. How often do you sit with your child while they use technology?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

22. How often do you discuss appropriate use of the Internet with your child?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

23. Have you established rules regarding Internet use in the home?

A. Yes
B. No

Intervention

24. Do you have a filter installed on the computer that your child uses to access the Internet? (Filters are software programs that are designed to block certain content.)

A. Yes
B. No

25. Do you have monitoring software installed on the computer that your child uses to access the Internet? (monitoring software programs are installed on the computer to create a history of where Internet users go and what they do.)
A. Yes
B. No

26. How likely are you to remove access to technology if you find that your adolescent has participated in cyberbullying as an oppressor, a victim, or a bystander?

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Highly Likely
1	2	3	4

27. What do you think parents can do to help stop or prevent cyberbullying? (Check all that apply.)

___ Remove computer or cell phone privileges from bullies at home
___ Tell the parents of the other students involved
___ Tell the school
___ Tell the police

___ Talk to their children about cyberbullying
___ Other _____

28. In the space provided, please feel free to share any specific concerns that you have about cyberbullying. (Use the back or another sheet if needed)

APPENDIX D

Questions for Personal Interviews

What roles do you think parents should play in preventing cyberbullying?

What are your primary concerns about the role of adults as supervisors?

Has your child or any of your children's friends been a victim, oppressor, or bystander in cyberbullying incidents? How did you handle the situation?

Have you had any conversations with your child about the dangers of technology? What issues came up during the conversation?

Do you know of any preventative strategies that you use or will use to keep your kids safe online?

Do you have any other comments or thoughts about cyberbullying that you would like to share?

APPENDIX E

Informed Consent Form

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Department of Professional Studies in Education
Davis Hall, Room 303
570 S. Eleventh Street
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1087

724-357-2400
Internet: *http://www.iup.edu*

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask. You are eligible to participate because you are a parent of a child in grades four through eight.

The purpose of this study is to understand parents' perception of their role in supervising technology, their familiarity with cyberbullying, and their response if their child has been involved with cyberbullying (i.e.- victim).

This survey has 29 questions, and will take approximately 15 minutes to answer. Your name is not required.

At the end of the survey you have the opportunity to volunteer for a personal telephone interview with the researcher at a later date that will be convenient for you. If you agree to an interview, you will have the opportunity to win a free book on bullying. If you choose to participate in the interview, your survey will require you to place your name on the document, so your survey will no longer be anonymous.

There will be no monetary compensation awarded for your participation. In addition, there will be no repercussions from your school should you wish to not participate.

The information gained from this study may help us to better understand parents' perspective of cyberbullying and how we can support parents to better understand cyberbullying.

If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by notifying the researcher Emily Scheinberg. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence and will have no bearing on your child or his/her participation in cyberbullying. The information obtained in the

study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement on the following page, and return to Emily Scheinberg, the primary researcher. Please sign the first copy, and keep the second copy for yourself.

Project Director:

Ms. Emily Scheinberg
Doctoral Student, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Department of Professional Studies in Education
Education
Davis Hall
570 South Eleventh Street
Indiana, PA 15705
Phone: 412-443-3965
E-mail: GCZQ@iup.edu

Dissertation Advisor:

Dr. Beatrice Fennimore
Professor and Dissertation Advisor
Department of Professional Studies in

Davis Hall, Room 303
570 South Eleventh Street
Indiana, PA 15705
Phone: 724- 357- 3023
E-mail: bzfennim@iup.edu

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM:

I have read and understand the information on the form and I consent to volunteer to be a subject in this study. I understand that my responses are completely confidential and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I have received an unsigned copy of this informed Consent Form to keep in my possession.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Signature

Date

Phone number or location where you can be reached

Best days and times to reach you

I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.

_____ _____

Date **Investigator's Signature**

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

APPENDIX F

Contact Information Form

Contact Information for Personal Phone Interview

Only write your contact information if you are interested in participating in a personal phone interview with the researcher, Emily Scheinberg.

Thanks!

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Best Time to be Reached: _____