

Chapter 11

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Bullying Experienced by Children Who Stutter: Coping Responses and Preventive Work

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize the reader with the phenomenon of school bullying. The first section defines bullying and outlines the consequences experienced by children who stutter when they are bullied by peers. Additionally, the authors report results of research conducted in different countries worldwide regarding teasing and bullying of children who stutter. Later in this chapter, various forms of interventions to counteract bullying associated with stuttering are also presented. Selected programs are described in more detail, along with examples of activities which can be applied.

What is bullying

Bullying has been identified as a significant problem in the school setting and is now considered a serious physical and mental health problem (Moore et al., 2017). Since the now well-known groundbreaking work of Olweus (1993; 1997) and colleagues (Olweus et al., 2007), there appears to be consensus that bullying is defined by the following three core elements: an intention to cause harm, the repetitive nature of the aggression, and a power imbalance between the victim and the perpetrator(s) (Gaffney, Ttofi, & Farrington, 2019; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014; PrevNet, 2020). Typically, the victims of bullying are less powerful than the perpetrator(s) and feel that they cannot easily defend themselves (Gafney et al., 2019). Despite the “repetitive nature”, research suggests that even one bullying event that causes deep social pain can have long-term harmful consequences when it is re-lived by the victim (Chen, Williams, Fitness, & Newton, 2008).



Bullying can be categorised as both direct and indirect (Rigby, 1999). Physical and verbal bullying are considered direct forms, whereas social- and cyber-bullying are considered indirect forms (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009). Bullying behaviors can occur in many contexts, for example in schools, in the workplace, between siblings, and, as previously mentioned, online (Gafney et al., 2019). Girls have been identified as more likely to be involved in the indirect forms, while boys are more likely to engage in (and experience) direct forms of bullying (Björkqvist, 1994). In the school context, bullying is a complex social phenomenon, that often does not happen between the bully and victim in isolation (Salmivalli, 2010). For example, individuals can be involved in bullying, not only as bullies, victims, or bully-victims, but also as bystanders, defenders, or reinforcers (Zych, Farrington, Llorent, & Ttofi, 2017).

A level of variability can be observed in prevalence estimates of bullying across studies, likely due to differences in measurement strategies or the definitions of bullying used (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). A meta-analysis of eighty international studies carried out by Modecki et al. (2014) cites prevalence rates of 34.5% of children engaging in bullying perpetration and 36% being victims of bullying. Earlier, Wang, Iannotti, and Nansel (2009) provided a breakdown of types of bullying experienced by students. According to their study, while 20.8% of school-age students reported being physically bullied, 53.6% were bullied verbally, 51.4% were victims of relational bullying, and 13.6% were cyber-bullied.

Despite these numbers, bullying can often “fly under the radar”, with many cases going unnoticed and the prevalence of bullying often being underestimated. This can be caused by the victims of bullying not disclosing it due to shame, fear of repercussions or limited language proficiency (Novick & Isaacs, 2010). It could also be due to the lack of teacher training, and teachers’ inability to identify bullying behaviors in their classrooms (Oldenburg, Bosman, & Veenstra, 2016).

Consequences of Bullying

Far from being just a social issue, it is now clear that bullying deleteriously affects physical and mental health. A recent systematic review of 165 articles conducted by Moore et al. (2017) identified statistically significant relationships between being bullied and adverse psychosocial and physical health outcomes. The strongest links identified were between bullying and the mental health problems of depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. The authors concluded that there is a causal relationship between being a victim of bullying and mental health problems and substance abuse. Bullying can also lead to increased absenteeism from school, school-related anxiety (Rothon, Head, Klineberg, & Stansfeld, 2011), poorer memory (e.g. Vaillan-

court et al., 2011), and cognitive function (e.g., Lupien et al., 2007). These findings highlight the need for schools to implement effective bullying interventions.

Frequency and Nature of Bullying Related to Stuttering

Canada and the United States

In general, research suggests that pupils with disabilities or special education needs are at a higher risk of being bullied. Readers are referred to a review of 32 studies of students with a range of disabilities who come from a multitude of countries in which English is the primary language (Rose, Monda-Amaya, & Espelage, 2011). Evidence suggests that this is the same for children who stutter.

Focused research into bullying experienced by children who stutter began in 1998. Using the *Teasing and Bullying Questionnaire* (TBQ), Langevin, Bortnick, Hammer, and Weibe (Langevin et al., 1998; Langevin, 2002) investigated the frequency and nature of bullying experienced by children who stutter (CWS). The questionnaire asked about being bullied about stuttering as well as other things (e.g., hair colour, weight). In 2013, author Langevin updated the 1998 study using a retrospective file audit of 44 CWS who ranged in age from 6 to 13 years (41 males; mean age = 9.34 years, SD = 1.58). These unpublished findings showed that 65% of the sampled children were bullied about their stuttering, with 52% being bullied once a week or more. This is in comparison to 59% and 56%, respectively, in the 1998 sample. Ninety-seven percent were upset when they were bullied about their stuttering with 35% being upset all of the time. This is in comparison to 81% and 35%, respectively, in the 1998 sample. The greater percentage of bullying associated with stuttering and its impact in the 2013 sample as compared to the 1998 sample may be due to more CWS being willing to disclose their experiences of being bullied.

In both studies the most frequently experienced types of bullying were, in order, having one's stutter imitated or made fun of and being called names. It was also found that CWS were most frequently bullied about their stuttering on the playground followed by in the classroom. These latter findings have implications for developing prevention programs/strategies for CWS. For example, it is important to note that playground bullying most often occurs out of sight of playground supervisors. Finally, in both studies it was found that CWS were also bullied about other things. In total, 77% of participants were teased/bullied about stuttering and/or other things.

Blood and Blood have consistently found that adolescents who stutter are at higher risk of being bullied than their non-stuttering peers (2004; Blood et al., 2011). The highest estimates occurred in the 2007 study in which CWS were at significantly higher risk of experiencing bullying (61%) compared to their peers who did



not stutter (22%). The CWS also showed higher levels of reported anxiety, likely related to communication fears or negative communication feedback from peers. This heightened anxiety was again present in the Blood and Blood (2016) study, in which people who stutter obtained higher scores on social interaction anxiety and *Fear of Negative Evaluation Scales* compared to non-stuttering controls. Further, in Blood et al. (2011) stuttering students also reported lower self-esteem and a less optimistic life orientation compared to their peers. Further still, a negative correlation was found between high victimization and high self-esteem or high life satisfaction. In addition to being bullied, CWS have been assigned negative labels such as being more insecure, shy, anxious, fearful or less likely to communicate compared to their fluent peers (Blood et al., 2001; Blood et al., 2008); labels which have also been used when describing children who are likely to experience bullying (Espelage & Holt, 2001; Garrett, 2003).

Japan

A 2019 study by Kikuchi et al. also showed that CWS were at a high risk of being bullied and tended to remember the unfriendly exchanges with their peers. Kikuchi asked a group of CWS (aged 3 to 12 years) whether peers had asked why they spoke the way they did, whether their speech was imitated and/or laughed at, and finally whether they felt unhappy about their experiences. Findings show that over two thirds of the children had at some point experienced being questioned, imitated, or laughed at. Being questioned was a more frequent occurrence compared to being laughed at or imitated. Consistent with the Langevin Canadian data described above, most of the children reported feeling unhappy following these events.

Poland

A study of bullying experienced by Polish children who stutter (P-CWS) compared to their typically developing peers (TDC), and to a group of children with other speech and language disorders (Other SLD) was undertaken in 2013 (Langevin et al., 2016). In total, 245 children (157 male, 88 female) participated in this study. Participants (aged 7 to 13 years; mean = 10.24 years, SD = 1.57) were sampled from 7 out of the 16 provinces of Poland. Of the 245 children, there were 75 CWS (55 males), 73 Other SLD (52 males), and 97 TDC (50 males). Of the Other SLD children, 15% had specific language impairment; the remainder had phonological disorders. A Polish version of the *Teasing and Bullying Questionnaire -TBQ* developed by Langevin et al. (1998) was used. The *TBQ-CS* (Revised version, Langevin, 2002) was translated into Polish by Węsierska and Wesierska in 2013.¹ This process in-

¹ A Polish version of the *Teasing and Bullying Questionnaire -TBQ* is available on the Fundacja Centrum Logopedyczne website: www.fcl.org.pl

cluded a back translation by a fluent Polish-English speaker. To make the questionnaires for the Other SLD and TDC groups relevant, the word “stuttering” was replaced with the word “talking”.

Results showed that 73% of the CWS reported having been teased about their stuttering. In comparison, only 6% of TDC and 18% of Other SLD children reported being teased about their talking. In addition, 51% of CWS reported being bullied about other things, compared to 46% of the TDC and 38% of Other SLD children, indicating that, in general, children who stutter tend to be more exposed to bullying. In terms of occurrence of bullying within the week, most CWS children reported less than two occurrences per week with 9% reporting being bullied most days, with no children reporting being bullied every day. This pattern was similar for the TDC and Other SLD groups. CWS were clearly upset with being bullied about their stuttering, with only 9% responding that bullying didn’t upset them at all; the majority (44%) indicated that they were upset some of the time, 25% indicated they were upset most of the time, and 22% were upset all of the time. Children were also asked where bullying occurred most frequently. The options provided were: in the classroom, in school hallways, on the school playground, and on their way to and from school. In this study, the children reported being most frequently teased about their stuttering in the hallways, followed equally by in the classroom and on the school playground. Teasing least occurred going to or from school.

Precursors to Bullying Experienced by Children Who Stutter

Research into the social environment of preschoolers who stutter suggests that the predilection for peers to treat children who stutter differently begins early. Ezrati-Vinacour et al. (2001) showed that by age 4, children were aware of a difference between stuttered and fluent speech, and preferred fluent speech. Research by Langevin et al. (2009; 2010) found that typically fluent preschool peers teased, mocked, or ignored preschoolers who stutter. In reaction to these negative experiences, the preschoolers who stuttered talked less; they also withdrew from, and, avoided communication situations. Negative perceptions towards children who stutter can also continue into later school years and adolescence. A report by Evans et al. (2008) showed that, when middle-school pupils were shown a video recording of a student who stutters, they agreed that the recorded pupil would be teased for his speech. In their investigation of stuttering directed at children, Logan et al. (2008) found that characters who stuttered were exposed to teasing, name calling and bullying by other, most likely, fluent characters.



Need for Intervention

The consistency of findings across studies conducted with children and adolescents who stutter is notable: 61% of CWS in the United States reported being bullied in Blood and Blood (2007), compared to 65% of Canadian children (reported above), 66.6% of Japanese children (Kikuchi et al., 2019) and 73% of Polish children (Langevin et al., 2016). These findings support earlier conclusions that children who stutter appear to be bullied more often than their typically developing peers, both about their speech and also about other factors unrelated to their way of speaking. Additionally, the Polish findings indicate that CWS can be more likely to experience bullying compared to children with other speech and language difficulties. Findings clearly show that bullying intervention programs and stuttering education programs are needed in the school settings in Poland. Furthermore, these findings also highlight the need to create a supportive school environment for children who stutter, in order to ensure they can develop to their full potential in physical and mental health, social interaction, and academic achievement.

Bully Interventions

Bradshaw (2015) recommended that a 3-tiered public health approach be used in bullying prevention programs in schools. Tier 1 involves using a universal approach that targets all children within a specific setting. Universal classroom or school-wide programs are widely used in bullying prevention across Europe, the United Kingdom and North America (Bradshaw, 2015). Tier 1 programs include those that focus on improving the school climate, improving attitudes about bullying, and in particular, changing the behaviors of bystanders. Tier 2 involves a selective intervention for specific children, for example, children who bully, children who are victimized, or children who have not responded well to the Tier 1 universal intervention. Bradshaw cites social skills or emotion-regulation training as examples of Tier 2 selective intervention. Tier 3 involves an indicated/targeted intervention with individual or small groups of students. Bradshaw suggests that this level often addresses mental and behavioral health concerns, and may include family members to support the children. Bradshaw further indicates that the needs of 80% of students can be met with universal programs, with selective and indicated interventions meeting the needs of 10–15% and 5% of students, respectively.

Today, there exists a plethora of school-based bullying intervention programs. Many are based on the pioneering work of Olweus (1993; 1997; Olweus et al., 2007). In a meta-analysis of 100 school-based bullying prevention programs, Gaffney et

al. (2019) found them to be effective in reducing bullying perpetration and victimization by 19–20% and 15–16%, respectively. In contrast, however, much less attention has been paid to bullying interventions for students with disabilities or other exceptionalities such as speech and language disorders that may not be characterized as a “disability”. Stuttering is one such exceptionality, which is described or categorized as a disability by some, but not by others.

A 2015 special issue of *Remedial and Special Education* focused on the involvement of students with disabilities in bullying. The goal of the issue was to do so from “a social dynamics perspective that situated risks for being a victim and/or perpetrator, within a person-in-context framework” (Farmer et al., 2015, p. 263). In the person-in-context framework, students with disabilities are considered in terms of the social system in which they function, and how their characteristics fit within that system. In addition to calling for a national research program into disability and peer victimization, Farmer et al. (2015) build on the 3 tier system described above, suggesting that each of these tiers can involve individual, classroom, and whole-school interventions. They also give further examples of interventions that could be used in each of the tiers. There is much to be learned from this body of research, and others reported on in that special issue.

Bullying Intervention Associated with Stuttering

With regard to stuttering, the majority of work has focused on improving attitudes toward children who stutter. As Langevin (2000) stated, “to the extent that attitude influences how one thinks, feels, and what one does, attitude change is fundamental to behaviour change” (p. 6). Together, positive attitude and behavior changes have the possibility to create a more inclusive, safe, and socially nurturing school environment for children who stutter. Work has involved Tier 3 and Tier 1 approaches. What follows are examples of work done in Canada, the United States, Africa and Poland. This is not an exhaustive review of work underway in many countries; rather it is a snapshot of activity in selected environments. Perhaps a database that simply registers in-process attitude change and bullying prevention work from around the world would create opportunities for more discussion, learning, and potential collaborations.

Tier 1 Universal Programs

Weidner et al. (2018) investigated the effectiveness of the *Attitude Change and Tolerance (InterACT)* program (Weidner, 2015). *InterACT* aims to improve attitudes by



increasing children's knowledge of stuttering and tolerances of observable differences. It also addresses other conditions, for example wheelchair use. *InterACT* is composed of two 30-minute lessons. In each lesson children view a puppet video, participate in a guided discussion, and complete a colouring activity. *InterACT* was administered in six different preschool classrooms over a three-week period. The *Public Opinion Survey of Human Attributes – Stuttering/Child (POSHA-S/Child)* (Weidner & St. Louis, 2014) was administered before and after the intervention. Weidner et al. reported statistically significant improvements in stuttering attitudes. More specifically, they noted improvement in children's perceptions of, and reactions to, children who stutter. The program was also implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Poland. Positive findings in these countries were also reported (Weidner et al., 2020; Węsierska & Weidner, 2022).

In an earlier feasibility study, Langevin and Prasad (2012) investigated the effectiveness of *Teasing and Bullying: Unacceptable Behaviour (TAB)* (Langevin, 2000). TAB is a universal bullying intervention program that addresses attitudes toward bullying in general and attitudes toward children who stutter. Drawing from the work of Olweus (1993) and others, Langevin included components to be completed by children in their schools, as well as take-home activities in which the children teach their parents about what they learned in each unit. TAB consists of 6 units. Five units address bullying in general, and one unit is devoted to education about stuttering. TAB used a video to stimulate discussion about bullying and its impact, and conflict resolution. A girl who stutters and a boy who does not stutter co-narrated the video. Unfortunately, the video is no longer available; however, in its place Langevin has made available the script for the video (see Langevin, 2000). The script contains the dialogue for the narrators and a classroom scene in which a boy who stutters is being teased about his stuttering and a girl is being teased about her weight. This is followed by a conflict resolution session between the perpetrator and the victims, and, finally, a class discussion in which the students discuss rules and consequences for classroom management and reduction of bullying. Other units in TAB address how it feels to be bullied; they also address strategies for dealing with teasing and other kinds of bullying, and strategies for building positive relationships and self-esteem.

Langevin and Prasad (2012) used the *Peer Attitudes Toward Children who Stutter Scale (PATCS)* (Langevin, 2009; Langevin & Hagler, 2004; Langevin et al., 2009) and the *Pro-victim Scale* (Rigby & Slee, 1991; Slee & Rigby, 1993) to measure changes in attitudes toward children who stutter and bullying. In total, 608 children in grades 3 to 6 (mean age 9.7 years) participated. Statistically and practically significant change in pre- and post-test scores indicated that TAB has the potential to be effective in improving attitudes toward children who stutter – both for students

in general, and in particular, in children who do not know someone who stutters. More specifically, results suggest that after being involved in the TAB intervention, children who do not know someone who stutters may be more inclined to associate with children who stutter, resist social pressure that intends to limit social interactions with, or ostracize, children who stutter, and experience less frustration due to interruptions in communication caused by stuttering. Historically, children who do not know someone who stutters are inclined to have more negative attitudes toward those who stutter than children who do know someone who stutters (Langevin & Prasad, 2012).

With regard to attitudes toward bullying, findings indicated that TAB has the potential to reduce approval of bullying in the whole group; however, more powerfully in the group of children who had no involvement in bullying. The latter group of children, which comprises the majority of children in the student body, also had statistically significant improvements in support for victims. Students were also asked whether or not they liked TAB and what they liked about it. Langevin (2015) reported that the majority of participants liked the TAB program, with, as expected, children who bullied providing the fewest number of positive responses.

Tier 1 work is also underway in South Africa (Mallick et al., 2018). Mallick and colleagues describe methodology for a randomized control trial using the South African specific *Classroom Communication Resource* (CCR). The CCR aims to change peer attitudes of grade 7 students toward CWS. *The Stuttering Resource Outcomes Measure* (SROM), a modification of the *Peer Attitude Towards Children Who Stutter* (PATCS) will be used to measure outcomes. The CCR is comprised of a social story, role-play, and a semi-structured teacher-led discussion (Mallick et al., 2018).

Tier 3 work in General and in LOGOLab workshops in Poland

Tier 3 work is the most common work done to change class climate, peer attitudes and responses to children who stutter. This most often involves a classroom presentation on stuttering, given by the CWS with support from the SLT. In some cases, the CWS may elect to have the presentation given solely by the SLT. Extensive Tier 3 work has been done in Poland through the LOGOLab workshops at the University of Silesia. In developing these workshops, we drew from the work of Bennett (2006), Chmela (2006), Langevin (2000), Murphy (1998), Murphy et al. (2013) Murphy and Quesal (2002), Węsierska and Krawczyk (2017), Yaruss et al. (2004), and Yaruss et al. (2018).



LOGOLab workshops

The main purpose of the *LOGOLab* workshops is to build a supportive environment around a child who stutters (Bauszek et al., 2020; Fatyga et al., 2019; Hutnik et al., 2020; Jagieła et al., 2020; Jasek et al., 2020; Węsierska et al., 2019). This is done through activities with the parents/guardians of children who stutter, the children themselves, peers, siblings, cousins close to the child (from home, school and other environments in which the child who stutters participates), and significant adults – teachers and speech-language therapists as selected by the children and their parents/guardians. We next present brief descriptions of each type of workshop along with its key aims, as well as conclusions or outcomes from participants collected at the end of the cycle of workshops.

Anti-bullying workshops for parents or caregivers of children who stutter

Discussion Topics. Discussion in workshops for parents/caregivers focuses on three broad areas: (a) bullying, (b) supporting growth in foundational skills and capacities, and (c) stuttering.

- a) **Bullying:** The goal of the discussions about bullying is to facilitate parents' readiness to establish a cooperative and supportive environment for the child. Discussions also intend to empower parents, so that they will feel effective in helping their child to deal with existing or future bullying issues.

Topics addressed include the following:

- bullying, its determinants and relevant participants;
 - risk factors of being the target of teasing and/or bullying and possible signs that determine if the child is already experiencing bullying;
 - ways of communicating with the child so that they will be ready to share their own experiences;
 - ways of supporting the child to cope with difficult situations and difficult people in and out of school; and
 - collaborating with others – a speech-language therapist, teacher, school staff, etc.
- b) **Foundational skills and capacities.** The underlying goal of these parent/caregiver discussions is to facilitate parents' understanding that a child's social adjustment is a process with changes taking place over time as the child ages and becomes involved with new people in different situations and endeavors.
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Topics discussed include:

- how to stabilize self-esteem, openness and acceptance of self (including stuttering), and how to help children know their own strengths and weaknesses; and
- allowing children to take the initiative in various activities, enabling them to take responsibility for their own behavior, for example, by deciding with whom, and on what terms, the child wants to talk about personal issues, including bullying.

Parents carefully analyze how these factors could support their child in coping with bullying.

c) ***Stuttering***

Two main issues are addressed:

- discussing with their child the goals that the child wants to address in stuttering therapy; and
- people (i.e., peers, family, adults) with whom the child wants to discuss stuttering.

Conclusions from Previous Workshops

Parents who participated in the workshops indicated that they gained an understanding of the following:

- the need to openly communicate with their child about stuttering (eliminating the conspiracy of silence and avoiding taboo topics);
- the importance of using non-judgmental, empathetic listening;
- the need to act as the child's facilitator, and as an advocate in contact with other adults (but without unnecessary assistance or an overprotective attitude); and
- manifesting proactive attitudes and behavior towards other people in the child's environment through sharing the acquired knowledge and any information about potential bullying.

Workshops for a group of children who stutter

Discussion Topics. The workshops for children, on the other hand, primarily aim to cover the following two broad areas: (a) basic knowledge of bullying, and (b) practical strategies that children can use to deal with bullying at school.

- a) ***Knowledge about bullying.*** The goal of these discussions and activities are two-fold: firstly, to explore the extent of children's knowledge about teasing and bullying, and, secondly, to improve their understanding of these phenomena.



Topics for discussion address the following:

- the explanation of what bullying is, including cyberbullying;
- how extensive bullying is – who is involved, and the meaning behind the concepts of ‘a bully’, ‘a victim’ and ‘by-standers’;
- how peers react; and
- why children don’t tell adults about bullying.

b) *Practical strategies to deal with bullying*

The main issues include the following:

- readiness to share personal experiences of bullying;
- children’s readiness to ask for help;
- detecting any signs of potential harassment in their peer environment; and
- improving children’s competencies to use strategies to deal with bullying in real-life situations.

Conclusions from Previous Workshops

Children who participated in these workshops reported that they understood:

- that being a victim of bullying is not their fault and that they are not the only ones experiencing it;
- that building appropriate vocabulary to describe this phenomenon is important in asking for support;
- the dynamics of the bullying processes, so that they can read the possible intentions of the bully and the role of by-standers, and not be inhibited if they needed to ask for help or leave when the situation became threatening to them; and
- that talking about bullying and educating oneself and others about it are vital to changing attitudes toward bullying and stuttering, as well as taking responsible action.

Workshops for friends, school mates and/or siblings of CWS

Peer education is an extremely important aspect of creating a supportive environment for the CWS. The ideal option would be to conduct workshops for the entire class or school (i.e., Tier 1 work). However, this may not always be feasible, depending on the individual child and his/her classroom/school environment or the extent of support or resources available to the child. A helpful strategy is to create a small circle of trusted peers who will be the support group for the stuttering child. The CWS themselves should decide who they will invite to the sessions. The stuttering children’s guests should be specially selected from their group of peers in school and in extracurricular activities. Siblings, cousins, and other friends should also be considered for inclusion.

Discussion Topics. During the workshop activities, CWS and their peers discuss (a) attitudes toward stuttering and other differences, and (b) bullying and building a chain of support in the environment of the CWS.

a) *Attitudes toward stuttering and other differences*

Topics discussed include the following:

- the phenomenon of being different and why it causes negative reactions. Discussions address the fact that being different doesn't mean being worse or less than other people, the advantages of being different, and being unique as a valued characteristic; and
- basic facts about stuttering.

b) *Understanding bullying and building a chain of support in the environment*

The following main issues are addressed:

- teasing and bullying – its features, people involved, types, forms of reaction;
- how it feels to be bullied;
- adequate behavior patterns in response to bullying (e.g., among potential by-standers); and
- encouraging anti-bullying attitudes among children.

Conclusions from Previous Workshops

In these workshops for friends, siblings etc., the CWS were perceived as experts by their peers given that they have previously participated in the workshops for CWS. They were given the vocabulary necessary to describe the concepts and phenomena discussed, and through practice they became more readily able to talk openly about their stuttering. This gave them the opportunity to be actively engaged in promoting acceptance and understanding of stuttering and in desensitizing their peers to the phenomenon of stuttering. These workshops also provide the opportunity for peers to become more sympathetic, empathetic and supportive of CWS, as well as to be desensitized to the disruption in communication caused by stuttered speech. Their active participation also enables peers to feel more ready to become part of the CWS support system.

Webinar for teachers and school speech-language therapists of children who stutter

Discussion Topics. Discussions in the webinar for teachers and SLTs of CWS focus on three broad areas: (a) stuttering, (b) the experience of children who stutter at school, and (c) effective support for helping a student who stutters to deal with teasing and bullying.



a) *Stuttering*

The purpose of this part of the webinar is to establish a common foundation of knowledge and address popular myths about stuttering.

The topics addressed include the following basic facts about stuttering:

- multifactorial cause of stuttering – basic facts about the etiology of stuttering;
- incidence and prevalence – who and how many people stutter;
- natural recovery and potential risks for persistency in stuttering;
- therapy goals in advanced stuttering, and the main types of stuttering intervention for school-age children; and
- potential negative impacts of stuttering on the child's quality of life.

b) *Children who stutter at school*

The next two parts of the webinar are discussion panels with the participation of the so-called 'double experts' (specialists: SLTs, psychologists and/or leaders of the self-help movement for PWS, who are at the same time individuals with personal experience of stuttering). The main goal of the second part of the webinar is to increase the attendees' awareness of the real school experiences of children who stutter.

The topics discussed include:

- various psychological/emotional challenges faced by CWS in schools (such as anxiety, frustration, avoidance);
- disruptive or limited interpersonal contacts;
- negative reactions from peers and school staff to stuttering and experiences of school bullying;
- decreased academic performance and increased negative attitudes towards learning and school; and
- lowered self-esteem and self-confidence, and the deterioration of physical and mental health as potential long-term negative consequences.

Engaging double-experts in the discussion panel allows for webinar participants to learn about stuttering and bullying from personal stories as well as from rich professional experiences provided by these double-experts.

c) *Supporting students who stutter at school*

The last part of the panel discussion aims to develop practical solutions and to propose effective strategies in the support of children who stutter in educational settings.

Two main strategies for supporting students are presented:

- *Education*: to promote (a) an atmosphere of acceptance for differences, (b) an understanding of the principles of good communication, (c) the dissem-
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ination of information on school bullying and ways to deal with it, and (d) desensitization to stuttering;

- *Building a therapeutic team*: to establish collaboration with parents and professionals, with the main goal of building an environment of acceptance and support.

To strengthen the key messages of the webinar, children who stutter were asked to make video recordings with the most important information they would like to pass on to their teachers and speech-language therapists.

Conclusions from Previous Workshops

LOGOLab webinar participants also received special handouts with basic information such as facts about stuttering and bullying, suggested forms of support, and recommended sources of evidence-based materials. A preventive poster (*Your student stutters: this is a challenge but you have the potential to support him!*) and a leaflet (*Bullying!*) were prepared for this occasion. A video-recording of this webinar with a poster and a flyer is available in the open access online system: (www.logolab.edu.pl).

Discussion and conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to discuss bullying experienced by children who stutter, within the context of research into bullying of non-stuttering children. The chapter first outlined the definition of bullying, along with its different types and the different roles of the participants involved. Discussion of the frequency and nature of bullying experienced by CWS followed. New data from Poland and Canada were included. A review of intervention work followed, with a focus on the work done to change attitudes and create supportive environments for CWS, presented within the context of a tier system of intervention recommended by Bradshaw (2015). Practical information was also provided in the form of examples of workshops and webinars. In a series of practical scenarios found in the appendices, the authors suggest ways of approaching the topic of bullying and stuttering with a variety of groups in the environment of the child who stutters: starting with the child themselves, discussing the subject with his or her parents, friends (both close friends and the classroom) as well as the child's teachers and school SLTs.



Key take-home messages from this chapter

About bullying itself:

- Bullying has been identified as a serious problem in the school setting. It can be categorised as both direct and indirect and may be carried out physically, verbally, socially, and online.
- Bullying can often go unnoticed and the prevalence of bullying has often been underestimated.
- Bullying can have consequences on the victim's physical and mental health outcomes.

About bullying in children who stutter:

- Pupils with disabilities or special education needs are at a higher risk of being bullied – children who stutter can be one such group.
- Bullying of children who stutter may begin very early in their school career and continue into later school and adolescence.

About interventions in bullying of children who stutter:

- The majority of work in interventions has focused on improving attitudes and creating a more inclusive, safe, and socially nurturing school environment.
- Speech-language therapists have an important role to play in stuttering intervention with school-age children (e.g., by helping them implement strategies to deal effectively with inappropriate emotions and thoughts related to stuttering).

About targeting different people in the CWS environment with bullying interventions:

- With regards to CWS, intervention involves two steps: (1) providing basic knowledge of bullying, and (2) practical strategies that can be applied by children to deal with bullying at school.
 - The effectiveness of intervention activities is highly dependent on the extent of cooperation from the child's environment, especially the closest family members. The involvement of parents in the therapy process is crucial. Interventions should aim to facilitate the parents' readiness to establish a cooperative and supportive environment for the child.
 - It is important to educate the peers of the child who stutters. Here, the interventions also have two goals: (1) changing attitudes toward stuttering and other differences, (2) understanding bullying and building a chain of support in the environment of the CWS.
 - Teachers are yet another group in the child's environment who may need help in understanding stuttering and bullying. Interventions, in addition to providing facts
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about stuttering and ways of supporting children who stutter at school, should raise awareness about the real school experiences of children who stutter.

Test yourself

1. Why do you think it is important to work on the self-perception and beliefs of a child who stutters, in the context of that child being bullied?
2. Who are the people in the stuttering child's environment who need to be included in bullying interventions? How can they be included in dealing with bullying?
3. A child who stutters is ready to share information about stuttering with his/her class. How would you prepare with this child to open up to his or her peers?
4. Can you propose different forms of activities which can be used by children who stutter, their peers, parents, and teachers to address the topic of bullying in stuttering. How would you structure these activities, what would you talk about with the different groups, how would you approach each group differently?

Multiple-choice questions

1. Physical and verbal bullying are considered as:
 - a) hybrid forms of bullying
 - b) indirect forms of bullying
 - c) direct forms of bullying
2. Girls have been identified as more likely to be involved in:
 - a) verbal bullying
 - b) social and cyberbullying
 - c) physical bullying
3. In Bradshaw's (2015) 3-tiered public health approach used in bullying prevention programs in schools, Tier 1 targets:
 - a) an individual child who needs support
 - b) a small group of children
 - c) all children within a specific setting
4. The *Attitude Change and Tolerance (InterACT)* program (Weidner, 2015) is an example of:
 - a) Tier 1 intervention
 - b) Tier 2 intervention
 - c) Tier 3 intervention



Suggested reading

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Appendix A

Scenario of a class presentation on stuttering

Everything that smart-kids should know about stuttering – a scenario of a presentation for classmates on stuttering, prepared and delivered by a student who stutters and his SLT

1. A presentation for classmates can be based on questions from a survey developed by the student who stutters, with support from their SLT. Examples of questions are:
 - *What is stuttering?*
 - *Do you know any famous people who stutter?*
 - *Why do people stutter – what causes stuttering?*
 - *What are the symptoms of stuttering, what do people do when they stutter?*
 - *How does stuttering make people feel?*
 - *How can people who stutter make their talking easier; what happens in stuttering therapy?*
 - *How should other people respond, to make it easier for a person who stutters to speak?*
2. Questionnaires could be completed in advance by students and others in the student's environment (e.g., individuals of different ages and backgrounds, with different socioeconomic status, who were chosen by the child). Alternatively, a classroom discussion based on these questions could be carried out with no prior data collection.
3. After presenting the results from the last question (how others can respond to make communicating easier for a PWS) or during the brainstorming of responses to this question, students' answers should be noted and commented on by the SLT.
4. As a summary of the presentation, all students would be invited to take a quiz: *Stuttering facts and myths.*



Appendix B

Scenario based on TAB

Elements of the TAB program to be used in a classroom-based anti-bullying program

The aim of this intervention is to help children develop a problem-solving approach to teasing and bullying. It consists of the following elements.

1. Introduction and “Meet Olivier: TAB’s mascot”
 2. Brainstorm and work on Bullying/Differences/Teasing webs – discussion on similarities between teasing and bullying.
 3. Classroom activities in six groups – each group is assigned a question (within each group one person is chosen to record and report the outcomes of the discussion):
 - What is bullying, and what kind of teasing might upset students?
 - Why do you think a person teases and bullies?
 - How does it feel to be teased and bullied?
 - How can you help a student to stop bullying?
 - What could you do if you were being teased and bullied? What would be the best and the worst things to do?
 - What could you do if you or a classmate were being teased or bullied?
 4. Discussion on gathered ideas.
 5. “Why students don’t talk about bullying” – working in pairs with a worksheet followed by a whole group discussion on collected ideas.
 6. “Tattling or telling to get help?” Activity sheet – working in pairs and whole class discussion.
 7. Introducing “Rules for working it out” – an introduction to different ways of responding to teasing and other kinds of bullying:
 - Students role play each segment of the “Rules for working it out” activity sheet;
 - Class discusses the fouls (inappropriate/unhelpful/unsupportive behaviors) used and rules broken;
 8. Working on strategies for resolving conflicts:
 - Review of the “Strategies for resolving conflicts” poster
 - “Choosing strategies to resolve conflicts” – working in small groups with an activity sheet;
 - “Is this strategy suitable?” working in pairs with an activity sheet
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9. Learning the Three-finger “I can speak up” strategy (note: this replaces the 5 finger strategy originally discussed in TAB):
 - Discussing the content of the Three-finger strategy:
 - a) Say the person’s name...*Steven*
 - b) In an assertive voice say...*Stop*
 - c) Tell the person/group what you want them to stop doing...*Grabbing my backpack!*
10. Working in pairs with a three-finger strategy activity sheet followed by whole class discussion.
11. Putting the strategies to work – building the mountains of self-confidence:
 - Whole class discussion on self-confidence
 - Working with the “Building mountains of self-confidence” activity sheet;
 - Building mountains of self-confidence through a role-playing activity in small groups.

Appendix C

Scenario of a webinar for teachers and/or SLTs of CWS

Your student stutters: this is a challenge, but you have the potential to support him!

1. Welcoming the webinar participants, and presenting technical information (the program and content of the webinar, how to ask questions, information on webinar handouts and materials provided for participants).
2. Introduction of webinar special guests: ‘double experts’ (a group of individuals who stutter and who represent the environment of professionals: speech-language therapists, psychologists, researchers, and/or leaders of self-help support movements or groups for PWS).
3. The first module of the webinar is presented by the organizers (theoretical introduction to the subject): *Stuttering – facts and myths*.
4. Discussion panel – part one: with the participation of ‘double experts’: discussion of the most important facts and myths related to stuttering.
5. The second module of the webinar (theoretical introduction): *Children who stutter at school – challenges and difficulties faced by these students*.
6. Discussion panel – part two: *The situation of children who stutter at school – comments made on the basis of the webinar guests’ personal and professional experiences*.
7. The third module of the webinar (theoretical introduction): *Basic facts about teasing and bullying at schools with regards to stuttering*.



8. Discussion panel – part three: *How to support a student who stutters in dealing with school bullying, and how to build a supportive community in the school setting – practical tips for teachers and school SLTs.*
9. Question and answer session – addressing questions that have not been answered earlier during the preceding parts of the discussion panel.
10. Summary of the topics discussed during the webinar: collecting the discussed guidelines and supplementing them with recommendations of useful sources (handouts, films, websites containing reliable materials).
11. A special bonus from stuttering children – short video-recordings made by children who stutter with messages about what they expect from their teachers and SLTs, as well as what they want to convey to them.

[A video of the Polish version of the webinar which was implemented using this scenario is available on the website: www.logolab.edu.pl]