Implementing prevention programs to limit cyber-bullying in junior and intermediate grades

By

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A research paper submitted in conformity with the requirement
For the degree of Master of Teaching
Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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IMPLEMENTING PREVENTION PROGRAMS TO LIMIT CYBER-BULLYING

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2016
Abstract

In this study I explore the benefits of current proactive cyber-bullying prevention programming used in elementary educational communities. In recent years cyber-bullying has become a new phenomenon due to quickly advancing digital world we live in. The purpose of the research is to question: How is a sample of junior-intermediate teachers teaching about cyber-bullying as a component of their formal curriculum, and what outcomes do they observe from their students both inside and outside of the classroom? My data consisted of two semi-structured interviews with teachers from Trillium Lakelands District School Board and York Region District School Board, both with many years experiencing dealing with proactive prevention of cyber-bullying and community building. The findings highlighted the importance of proactive programming, educating students of the negative effects of cyber-bullying, benefits of building a community, and increased presence of authoritative figures, such as, police and administration to aid in the prevention of cyber-bullying in educational communities among junior and intermediate students.

Keywords: Cyber-bullying, curriculum, prevention, restorative
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge and thank a number of people who have been a support and inspiration through this journey. To produce something like this truly takes a community and I was fortunate with an incredible group of people who encourage and inspired me throughout the process.

Thank you to both my participants, Heather and Joanne. I would like to take the time to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to participate in my interviews. I finished each interview with such reflective and insightful thoughts as you took the time to answer each question thoughtfully and passionately. You are both clearly dedicated to your careers and care deeply about each child you meet.

Thank you to the staff and faculty of the Master of Teaching program here at OISE. Being surrounded by the resources, knowledge and people that are contained in this building has been an incredible learning experience. Thank you to Dr. Angela MacDonald-Vemic and Dr. Eloise Tan, my research supervisors, for your continued support throughout this process.

Next, I would like to thank my Associate Teachers, Georgina Solomon, Maria Andrade and Rebeka Ly. I couldn’t have done it without your guidance. Your enthusiasm, encouragement, critiques, motivation, patience and expertise were foundational pieces to this research paper and to my development of confidence as a new teacher. You have all helped me realize my potential as a learner, researcher, and educator.

Thank you to the Junior/Intermediate graduating class of 2016 – a community of incredible teachers. Your constant support, encouragement and inspiration were a key
factor in completing this paper. We are colleagues for life, and I hope our paths continue
to cross throughout our careers.

    Thank you to my friends and family. Your love, support and encouragement were
so needed and appreciated during these last two years. Thank you to my three brothers,
Ryan, Kevin and Jeffrey. Finally, thank you to my parents, Marie and Alex; you are two
people who I continue to look up to and always able to count on for support.
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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction to the Research Study

Amanda Todd was a 15-year old girl from British Columbia who took her own life in 2012 as a result of relentless cyber-bullying (National Post, 2012). Following her death, a heart-wrenching flashcard video created a month prior by the teen went viral. She expressed the pain she went through and how others treated her because of a photo she shared with someone online that she felt she could trust (National Post, 2012). This tragic event only begins to display the experience of numerous teens who have taken their own lives due to cyber-bullying. John LeBlanc (2012) reported between 2008 and 2012 there were 41 suicide cases linked to cyber-bullying in Canada.

A universal definition of cyber-bullying does not yet exist, however, the Ministry of Education defines cyber-bullying as

“bullying by electronic means, including “(a) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; (b) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the Internet; and (c) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals” (Department of Justice, 2015; Ministry of Education: Health and Physical Education, 2015; p. 229).

Cyber-bullying also involves “the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is
intended to harm others” (Baht, 2008, p. 54). Cyber-bullying is a prevalent issue in today’s society, as illustrated by Murphy et al. (2012) suicide is ranked as the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10-24. Bullying at school is widespread and a major issue that affects many students. All genders, social classes and ages are affected by cyber-bullying (Smith, 2013). According to research done by the Government of Canada (2014), 1 in 10 teens claim to have experienced being bullied online. Moreover, more than one-third of Canadian teens on social media have seen mean or inappropriate comments about someone they knew. Experts have reported that cyber-bullying appears to be increasing in severity and prevalence, and is progressively involving more vicious behaviours and deadlier outcomes than in previous years (Kowalski, Limber, Limber & Agatson, 2012; Hoff & Mitchell, 2009).

The media constantly addresses these concerns and the ultimately tragic endings students of varying ages are taking to end their lives. Cases such as 15-year old Amanda Todd, Jenna Bowers, Courtney Brown and 17-year old Rehteah Parsons are a few examples of young teen victims of cyber-bullying choosing to end their lives (Auld, 2013). Leah Parsons, mother of young 17-year old Rehteah Parsons, states, “the online world can be very desensitizing and [she] feel[s] that empathy for others is lost” (Woods, 2014). With the increase of technology and the digital world we live in, cyber-bullying is beginning to affect youth more and more (Baht, 2008).

The new Health and Physical Education curriculum (2015) provides teachers with new information on how to proactively introduce prevention programs into the curriculum that can assist educators dealing with the issue of cyber-bullying. One in four students stated that within a three-month span, they had been involved in cyber bullying,
being either the perpetrator and victim (Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, Gadalla & Dacuiik, 2012). The school system, teachers, and administrators have traditionally not seen cyber-bullying as an issue as relevant to them because it is not necessarily visible in a traditional classroom (Smith, 2013). Some of the factors that facilitate cyber bullying among children include the anonymity afforded by technology, the impracticality of consistently monitoring children’s devices and the range of communication media they are using (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013; Chibbaro, 2007).

In the research conducted thus far, it is apparent that some schools are taking the initiative to begin the implement preventative programs into their classrooms. Most school boards in North America have anti-bullying policies and programs. Specifically the Trillium Lakelands Distract School Board (TLDSD) and York Region District School Board (YRDSB) encourages incorporating policies, awareness campaigns, and counseling to promote bully prevention and also intervention programming (Chibbaro, 2007). The TLDSB and YRDSB has created a Caring, Safe and Accepting Schools Team to help “foster a safe, inclusive and positive school climate. The purpose of this team is the development, annual review and implementation of the school code of conduct, the bullying prevention and intervention plan and the progressive discipline plan” (Trillium Lakelands District School Board, 2014). Bill 13 subsection 170(1), specifically, of the Accepting Schools Act, is designed to “establish and provide annual professional development programs to educates teachers and other staff of the board about bullying prevention and strategies for promoting positive school climates” (Government of Canada, 2012). Speaking to current research, it shows that 1 in 4 students will experience bullying in schools, yet only a minority of teachers feel prepared for responding to
bullying occurrences. Currently, by encouraging educators to become trained and increase their level of competence, approaches to prevent these actions from occurring could help to discourage this negative behaviour (Rivers & Noret, 2010).

Certainly, parents are beginning to pro-actively ensure that their children are not abusing their online privileges and it is not only the responsibility of the teachers and educators in schools to prevent cyber-bullying. Although it can be challenging for parents to keep up with technological advances, it is imperative to ensure Internet safety for their children (Baht, 2008).

Due to the fact that cyber-bullying is a relatively new phenomenon, with little history to learn from, schools and school boards are only recently beginning to implement online safety and ways to discourage cyber-bullying into their prevention policies, programs, and curriculum (Ferguson, Miguel, Kilburn & Sanchez, 2007; Stauffer, Heath, Coyne & Ferrin, 2012; Couvillon & Ilieva, 2011). Current programs have proved to be ineffective in changing students’ behaviour throughout time (Ferguson et al., 2007). In several studies conducted, it is evident that teachers view cyber-bullying outside the purview of their responsibilities, schools are struggling with how to regulate students’ use of devices and anti-cyber bullying policies are not translating into school-based practices (Baht, 2008; Chibbaro, 2007; Hinduja & Patchin, 2012).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to learn how a sample of educators in TLDSB and YRDSB are implementing preventative cyber-bullying programs as a component of the formal curriculum. By interviewing educators who are working first hand with
preventative and proactive rather than reactive, programs, I hope the findings can inform continued educational programming around cyber-bullying in schools and classrooms more broadly.  

From this study I hope to learn what effective methods educators are using to proactively prevent cyber-bullying in their communities. I anticipate addressing the programs already enforced in schools to raise awareness and prevent cyber-bullying but also to observing ways in which educators are building a pro-active community to help cope with current bullying situations and to prevent future individuals from participating in cyber bullying.

1.3 Research Questions

The primary question guiding this research study is: How is a sample of junior-intermediate teachers teaching about cyber-bullying as a component of their formal curriculum, and what outcomes do they observe from their students both inside and outside of the classroom?  

Subsidiary questions include:

1. How do these teachers conceptualize cyber-bullying and what indicators of it do they observe in their classrooms and school?

2. How do these teachers connect the topic of cyber-bullying to the formal curriculum? Where do they see it aligning with the official curriculum?

3. What instructional strategies and approaches do these teachers enact to teach about cyber-bullying?

4. What resources and factors support these teachers work in this area?
5. What challenges do these teachers encounter and how do they respond to these challenges?

1.4 Background of the Researcher

My first experience hands on as an educator with this topic was while I was teaching figure skating lessons. A young girl at the club was continuously texting inappropriate and negative messages to another young girl who was in the same classroom as her at school. This also began to translate to the ice surface causing tension between not only the two skaters but among other individuals in the club who felt uncomfortable. After discussion with myself and the other coach, both skaters and their parents, the final decision was for the skater who was bullying the other skater to switch clubs to help create a welcoming and positive environment where everyone felt welcome. I felt this was the best decision to create a comfortable environment for everyone who was involved. Not only was it unfair to the two girls involved in the situations it was also unfair to the other skaters who were losing coaching time while myself and the other coach were constantly having to deal with situations.

I also worked with a young girl in grade 3 who did not necessarily ‘fit-in’ with her peers. She was constantly teased and she would retaliate to try to seek revenge because she did not know any other coping strategies. I observed that not much was being done inside the classroom to stop this behaviour on both sides. There were, from my understanding, no programs put into place at this school to teach students about the consequences of cyber bullying. It opened my eyes to how little was being done in this school and made me very anxious to want to do something about it. As I volunteered as a mentor for this little girl for two years I began to discuss with her the importance of being
nice to others and respect for others and ourselves. I do believe that I could have made an impact in her life and I hope I am able to do that to others.

As a new teacher this topic is extremely important to me because I want to ensure I am, to the best of my ability, creating a positive and welcoming environment for all my students who walk through the doors of the school and also within my community. With technology continuously advancing it is important for me to continuously be aware of any situations that may arise in my classroom to the best of my knowledge. I want to ensure I am incorporating awareness, methods and prevention strategies into my teaching. It is not only important to me to ensure my students are knowledgeable about cyber bullying and how it can be prevented and why it should be eliminated but also other educators around me. I envision being able to educate both adults and students about prevention programs to ultimately reduce cyber bullying around the world. By incorporating cyber bullying into the curriculum and making it mandatory that educators educate their students from elementary school through high school I do believe there could be a decline in the amount of tragic endings we see. Cyber bullying is a genuine concern and with little history behind this developing phenomenon, prevention programs need to be mandatory. With the technological advances and society constant use of electronics and staying connected at all times cyber bullying is so influential on the social standards of individuals. I hope I am able to expand by breadth of knowledge as I continue to research this topic and become well educated on prevention programming.

1.5 Overview

Chapter 1 includes the introduction and purpose of the study, the research
questions, along with my involvement with this topic and study. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature discussing cyber bullying and prevention. Chapter 3 provides the methodology and procedure used in this study including information about the sample participants and data collection instruments. Chapter 4 identifies the participants in the study and describes the data as it addresses the research question. Chapter 5 includes limitations of the study, conclusions, recommendations for practice, and further reading and study. References and a list of appendixes follow at the end.
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature in the areas of cyber-bullying, prevention programs and what educators and school personnel are doing to implement these programs. More specifically I review themes related to programs that have already been put into place as well as ideas or educational information available on bullying and cyber-bullying. I start by reviewing the literature in the area of what cyber-bullying is and I consider the differences between it and traditional bullying. Next, I review research on what we know about students’ feelings on cyber-bullying and some signs the bullying may be occurring. I then review what educators are currently doing in response to cyber-bullying and examine whether there is a possibility for more proactive approaches. Finally I focus on what we do not know about cyber-bullying and prevention programs and questions that have arisen throughout my review of the existing literature. In particular, I highlight the idea that the vast majority of the literature that exists today was conducted by researchers rather than educators, meaning the educators’ voices have not been heard (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011).

Cyber-bullying—a fairly new phenomenon—involves the use of electronic communication to bully a person (Baht, 2008). With recent technological advances such as text messaging and social media platforms, cyberbullying can occur virtually anywhere. These new social forums provide bullies an opportunity to remain anonymous when being destructive and pose many challenges for educators and school administrators to provide a safe school environment (Myers, 2011). Mason (2008) expresses that both traditional and cyberbullying are “unacceptable antisocial behaviour
that can undermine the quality of the school environment, affect students’ academic and social outcomes, cause victims emotional and psychological trauma, and, in extreme cases, lead to serious violence” (p.323). Smart phones are devices that allow access to all social media forums and are commonly possessed and operated by children during school hours. Although smart phones might be necessary for a child to have so they may communicate with their parents, they are then available to be used at anytime for cyber-bullying without supervision.

Most studies on traditional bullying found to date focus on the severely negative impact it has on young individuals and their social development (Hoff & Mitchell, 2009). While traditional bullying and cyberbullying may have many similarities, the effects of cyber-bullying on social development have not been extensively studied. Given that many of today’s adolescents are being raised in environments where phone calls and human interaction are replaced with text messaging and social media updates, it is imperative that more work is done in this area. While it may seem safe to conclude that the effects would be similar to traditional bullying, the often public and “always on” nature of current social media platforms means that most victims can no longer find any form of reprieve even in their own homes (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). The cyber-world is borderless and goes beyond the schoolyard (Diamanduros et al., 2008).

School-wide programs have been shown to be effective in preventing cyberbullying in classrooms and school environments (Pearce, Cross, Monks, Waters & Falconer, 2011, Cross, Waters & Hamilton, 2011; Rigby & Slee, 2008). Educators can make students more aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying and the implications this
behavior has on both the victim and the bully’s lives. Wolfer, Schultze-Krumholz, Zagorscak, Jakel, Gobel & Scheithauer (2014) discovered that

“when students are educated concerning the consequences of their behaviour, encouraged to reflect their virtual activities, and guided to train behavioural alternatives, these preventative actions – embedded within a structured and comprehensive program – unfold their full effectiveness and evidentially reduce cyber-bullying behaviour”. (p. 885)

This demonstrates that educating students through programming about the consequences cyber-bullying can have is beneficial to reduce cyber-bullying from happening. Students see this as a valuable tool to assist in developing preventative actions to dissolve actions of cyber-bullying from taking place (Wolfer et al., 2014).

2.1 Types of Bullying

To be bullied is described by Olweus (1991, 1993) this way: “a person [who] is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more other persons” (p.412). Traditional bullying may include verbal, physical or relational forms of aggression to another individual (Wang, Nansel & Iannotti, 2010). Often there is an intention to harm the victim, a power differentiation between that individual being bullied and the individual carrying out the bullying where the bully exerts his or her physical power over a weaker or smaller individual (Olweus, 1991; Atlas & Pepler, 1998). Shariff, Crump, Yoder, Galczynski, Bleakney & Natanblut (2005) describe cyberbullying more generally as bullying that can be “conveyed by
adolescents and teens through electronic media such as cell-phones, websites, web-cams, chat rooms, and email” (p.459). An example of cyber-bullying could involve a mean and threatening text message sent from one individual to another. Traditional bullying however is usually physical and takes place face-to-face. It is imperative that educators and school personnel are doing their best to stop this behaviour.

2.1.1 Similarities and Differences

Similarities illustrate that it is apparent that both bullying and cyber-bullying are associated with malicious intent and harassment by typically aggressive individuals who seek pleasure by mistreating others (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). Both are regarded as mistreatment that involves “harmful behaviour of a repetitive nature” (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006, p. 152) and have the potential to “damage a young person’s feelings, self-esteem, reputation and mental health” (Government of Canada, 2014). Ybharra & Mitchell (2004), claim that both online and offline bullying can stem from an individual with aggression.

However, traditional bullying is limited to times when physical proximity is possible, cyberbullying can affect an individual anywhere at anytime. Cyber-bullying is seen as a more pervasive extension of traditional bullying. The difference between traditional bullying and cyber-bullying largely comes down to the use of electronic devices. According to Patchin & Hinduja (2006), cyber-bullying is defined as “willful and repeated harm inflicted through the medium of electronic text” (p.152). It is not just the fact that it is difficult for victims to find a time of escape from cyber-bullying, but the Internet can be used completely anonymously and can lead to more aggressive or

Aggression does not necessarily mean physical aggression and can be both elusive and subtle, regardless of the form of bullying educators need to be aware and alert when these actions are taking place in their classroom environment (Rivers & Smith, 1994). Educators who are aware of cyber-bullying have the ability to create a safe environment for their students where they feel comfortable being themselves without the fear of others attacking them in the classroom or on social media (Baht, 2008).

2.2 The Impacts of Cyber-bullying on Students’ Feelings

Since the cyber-world can be accessed virtually anywhere at any time, Shariff et al. (2005) suggests that the learning environment of a victim is negatively impacted. There is urgency for immediate attention towards cyber-bullying. Immediate attention may reduce negative consequences and future problems. Countless students who are bullied do not feel comfortable sharing their victimization with others, and instead prefer to keep what is happening to themselves—an unfortunate decision that can make matters worse as the feeling of isolation is exacerbated (Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins, 2008). Therefore it is important to realize that teachers cannot wait for the problem to be brought to them and need to be vigilant to ensure they see the signs that a student is in trouble. Students are not speaking out and instead internalizing their fears till their breaking point (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013).

Current literature has found that traditional bullies are typically male, however, when it comes to cyberbullying, there is no difference between males and females. It is
more likely however that they are in high school rather than middle or grade school (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Cyber-bullying causes a decrease in remorse felt by bullies towards their victims (Green-Forde, 2013). Further research conducted by Slonje, Smith & Frisen (2012; 2013) have found that up to 70% of traditional bullies felt remorse for their actions while only 42% of the bullies who used cellular devices and computers felt remorse for what they did, concluding that cyber-bullying presents less of an opportunity for bullies to feel any empathy towards the other individual. It is important to increase this statistic and show bullies the harm and pain they are causing others when choosing to take part in cyber-bullying.

2.3 What Are Teachers Doing?

Currently, the literature is fairly sparse when focusing on prevention programs being implemented in schools and among educators. The majority is based on reactive rather than preventative methods. Research has found that schools and teachers tend to typically address cyber-bullying in a reactive, rather than proactive, manner (Diamanduros, Downs & Jenkins, 2008), and this approach can be detrimental for cyber-bullied students.

Recent literature presents findings that school psychologists are typically the ones addressing the issue of cyberbullying (Myers, 2011). Diamanduros et al. (2008), explain that school psychologists are in a unique situation as they are looked to for promoting awareness, assessing severity, developing and planning prevention programs as well as implementing programs. While it is important that school psychologists assist educators in dealing with cyberbullying, it is the teachers in the classroom who are in a unique
position to prevent cyberbullying from becoming a prevalent issue in their classrooms before it begins (Diamanduros et al, 2008).

Cyberbullying is typically addressed as an educator sees fit and not incorporated into the current curriculum. Recommendations for prevention are made by Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins (2008) for educators to use at their own disposal but it was not mandatory in TLDSB and YRDSB until the revised Health and Physical Education curriculum was recently released (Ministry of Education, 2015). Some examples of prevention strategies and resources are to provide teachers with formal workshops, online information tools and brochures that can be used as effective tools to train educators and school personnel to deal with any situations that may surface (Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins, 2008). However, these are all suggestions and it does not necessarily mean school personnel and educators will use the resources and tools provided at their fingertips. As Myers (2011) suggests, school personnel are encouraged to become leaders in advocating how individuals can become empowered to not stand around and allow this behaviour to be acceptable and not turn a blind eye. Students need to feel comfortable to stop cyberbullying and bullying in general if they observe or experience the negative conduct. The issue with these suggestions are just that, they are merely suggestions and not mandatory to be incorporated into the curriculum and classrooms.

2.4 Teachers Beliefs about Bullying

Teachers who are female and educate younger children have been found to express more concern about cyber-bullying in their classrooms (Eden, Heiman & Shemesh, 2012). The researchers also found that special education teachers felt stronger
about confronting cyber-bullying than those who taught in mainstream classrooms (Eden et al., 2012). When teachers are faced with cyber-bullying in their classroom, according to research conducted by Stauffer et al. (2012), approximately 50% felt they were likely to “report incident to school administrators” (p. 361) however only 20% would “talk with the cyber-bully” (p. 361) and 30% would “talk with the victim” (p. 361).

2.5 What Could Teachers Be Doing?

Stauffer et al. (2012) determined strategies for teachers to implement in order to eliminate or discourage cyber-bullying from happening in their education community. A few suggested strategies teachers felt could be implemented include, educating the students, limiting access to electronics in the classroom, educating the parents and getting the support from parents (Stauffer et al., 2012). Anti-bullying programs are often found effective and are frequently associated with a decrease in bullying and victimization that occurs (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Programs that are more intense are typically more effective, such as school-wide policies, programs, meetings (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Educators could be working alongside other school personnel to create effective programs for their school to eliminate or decrease to amount of cyberbullying taking place.

Research suggests school psychologists and teachers need to collaborate to create classroom presentations, activities, and conversation about cyberbullying that the teachers can carry out or co-lead with other educators and/or school personnel (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Chibbaro, 2007). Policies being developed require drawing on high-quality evidence-based programs that have been proven effective. Ttofi and Farrington
PREVENTING CYBER-BULLYING (2011) found that most research done to date has been developed for school-wide antibullying policies, and while it is difficult to prove the effectiveness of these programs definitely, the evidence seems strong that these programs can be valuable and successful.

Educators need to involve parents to help provide successful programs crucial to address problems and concerns within the school community (Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins, 2008; Chibbaro, 2007). Parents have access to some great resources for themselves to become leaders and their children. The Government of Canada (2014) Get Cyber Safe provides parents with ideas to address this issue such as talking with your child about cyberbullying, knowing what is happening online and the online behaviour your child is taking part in, knowing passwords, setting some ground rules and restrictions for their safety. This is important for parents of bullies, victims and bystanders. Teachers, students and parents all need to work together to keep an open line of communication and continue to educate each other with any new information about the issues of cyber-bullying and what everyone can do together to eliminate the action from occurring in their communities. Leah Parson—the mother of Rahtaeh Parson who was sadly a fatal victim of cyberbullying—expressed what she and others feel is a large reason for many students’ increased willingness to direct harmful messages towards their fellow classmates. She stated “we live in a digitized would that is not going to change. The online world can be very desensitizing and I feel that empathy for others is lost” (The Canadian Press, 2014).

While cyberbullying cannot always be prevented, it is important to be aware of the signs of someone being bullied such to prevent such tragic cases. Some of the signs include: unexpectedly stops using their device, or appears nervous around the use of their
device, becomes withdrawn from family and friends and begins losing interest in things
they used to show interest too, avoids being online or discussing what they do online,
becomes secretive about things they do online, and begins to frequently call home from
school pretending to be ill (Hinduja & Patchin, 2015). These are simply just a few of the
warning signs to look for if you suspect your child or someone you know if being cyber-
bullied.

When students were asked whether they would report if they were cyber-bullied
“less than 18% responded “Probably yes,” and over 80% answered “No” (Li, 2010,
p.380). Here are the signs – A student who fears using a computer, does not want to
share what they are doing online, internalizes their emotions, etc. may all be indications
the student is being in some way harassed (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013).

Hinduja and Patchin (2007) have identified some further warning signs educators
can look for, including, the student may suddenly stop using their computer, may appear
to be anxious when they receive a message or email, seem upset or frustrated when using
electronic devices and may become visibly uncomfortable about going to school or
hanging out with friends and they may even completely avoid talking about what they are
doing while they use a computer. Signs such as these are ways students are showing
without verbally telling anyone that something may be going on. School personnel need
to pay attention for warning signs to assist those students who feel they do not have a
voice or are uncomfortable confronting an adult (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007).

Educators need to feel comfortable in identifying these situations and to feel that
they have the tools to approach a student to ask if they are being bullied and respond
appropriately considering Li (2010) states, almost 50% of students “did not think the
school would or could do anything to stop [the bullying] (p.380). Although these are reactive forms in regards to cyberbullying, it would be careless to believe all prevention programs will work perfectly and completely eliminate cyberbullying.

2.5.1 Health and Physical Education Curriculum Document

The revised 2015 Health and Physical Education curriculum first introduces students to the risks of technology in Grade 4 under Personal Safety and Injury Prevention C1.2 and C1.3, where they learn to “identify risks associated with communications technology (e.g. Internet and cell phone use, including participation in gaming and online communities and the use of text messaging), and describe precautions and strategies or using these technologies safely” and “describe various types of bullying and abuse (e.g. social, physical, verbal), including bullying using technology, (e.g., via e-mail, text messaging, chat room, website), and identifying ways of responding appropriately” (Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 140). Students in Grade 5 are then taught to “continue to ask for help until [you] get the help [you] need” (p. 156) from an adult they feel comfortable trusting (Ministry of Education, 2015). The release of the new curriculum begs the question, how will teachers respond to the ministries revised expectations?

2.6 Challenges Teachers Face

While this research demonstrates that there is a range of challenges teachers face, it is still unclear how they are beginning to respond to these. Cyber-bullying has only newly been researched, the literature tends to focus more on what educators can do and recommendations to control this behaviour once cyberbullying has become an issue in their classroom. Literature is slowly beginning to address prevention programs for
educators to use (Myers, 2011; Shariff, 2008; Slonje, Smith & Frisen, 2013; Pearce et al, 2011; Ferguson et al, 2007).

2.6.1 Appropriate Timing

The longer a teacher puts off discussing the negative effects of cyber-bullying to their classroom and in their school community the effectiveness of the program will decrease (Beale & Hall, 2007). Students need to understand that the Internet and social media is a public space and although something may be in a private message, there is potential for this information to get out to others. Informing students at an early age about the consequences and enforcing these rules could deter young individuals from choosing to take part in negative behaviour happening in this predominantly virtual world (Ferguson et al, 2007; Beale & Hall, 2007). Providing students with practical criteria for what truly is out of line on the Internet may help students understand what is and is not okay to post online or send to others and what crosses the line.

2.6.2 Technology

Should cellular phones be banned? Should the wifi in the schools block the use of social media? Technology can be a threat in the school but since the students are already using it, it may be best to incorporate it as a beneficial tool. Using different ways to teach cyberbullying may help to get the message across to more students. Technology can be used as an instructional tool if educators show students safe ways to use the Internet and understand the consequences that go along with the misuse of technology (Cramer & Hayes, 2010). Technology is a privilege - not a necessity.
2.7 Gaps in Literature

It is important to realize that since cyber-bullying is a new topic and there are many gaps in our current knowledge. It is important for parents to understand “what to look for, as well as, “talk the talk”” (p.11) if they want to be successful in protecting and monitoring their children’s online activity (Beale & Hall, 2010). The majority of the literature on the subject is speculative in nature as there has not been sufficient time to perform detailed studies of a variety of programs and their effectiveness. This problem is intensified by the fact so many children who are being bullied suffer in silence (Li, 2010), and so it is incredibly difficult to get accurate information not only on the effectiveness of programs, but the number of students affected in the first place.

An easier problem to solve, but still requiring further analysis is how many teachers are currently implementing programs to prevent cyberbullying and the nature of these programs. Once this is determined, it would be important to determine to what extent cyberbullying can be prevented (i.e. do certain methods lower the number of students being bullied, all else being equal). Also, since it is not possible to prevent in all cases, we would want to investigate the effectiveness of various reactive methods being used by teachers.

In general, the studies that have been presented to date tend to have limited sample sizes and rarely account for the different demographics of the students affected beyond male/female.
2.8 Conclusion

In this literature review I looked at research on cyber-bullying, prevention programs, and ways in which educators and school personnel deal with this phenomenon. This review highlights the increase in the number of cyber-bullying events taking place, and the attention being paid to the problem by researchers and educators. It also shows that attention has focused on programs that could potentially help address ways to eliminate or decrease cyber-bullying. Is also raises questions about what programs are pro-actively preventing cyber-bullying and whether or not educators are being preventative or reactive.

This literature review also points to the need for further research in the areas of what constitutes an effective program and what educators are incorporating into their classrooms. Future research needs to include new policies being developed so educators must incorporate prevention programs into the curriculum rather than have the choice to address the issue if it becomes a predicament. The significance of this study is to identify further research that needs to be conducted, to determine what educators are pro-actively doing to prevent cyber-bullying in their communities and to discuss how they are implementing these programs effectively.

Very little literature to date has explored clear and specific programs that are being put into place by educators, and examined their effectiveness across a variety of regions, genders and age groups. It is essential that more studies are performed in order to get a better sense of what can be done to prevent the issue of cyber-bullying from negatively impacting more students’ lives. I will begin to unravel strategies current
educators are using to proactively prevent cyber-bullying from taking place in their educational communities.
Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the research methodology. I begin by reviewing the research approach and procedure, followed by a summary of the interviews conducted as a data collection methodology. I continue by describing participant sampling criteria, procedures and a brief bio about each participant. I will then describe the methods I will use to analyze the data. Finally, I conclude with a summary of important methodological decisions and reasons why I chose to make these decisions to help explore the research purpose and answer my research questions.

3.1 Research Approach & Procedure

This study was conducted in order to examine the possibility of integrating proactive prevention programs as a component of formal curriculum to limit cyber-bullying. The nature of my research is based on qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews with TLDBS and YRDSB educators and in-depth literature review.

For my literature review I focused on past cyber-bullying cases and programs introduced by school boards. I will conduct two or three face-to-face interviews with a teacher and a guidance counselor who are in the front lines of proactively preventing cyber-bullying in their communities. Once the interviews have been completed I will analyze and transcribe my data accordingly.

In terms of the value of qualitative research, I turn to Creswell (2013) who stated, “the key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from the participants and engage in the best practices to obtain that information” (p. 47). I believe
that the combination of literature review and semi-structured interviews will meet these best practice guidelines. The literature review will allow me to develop and discuss a framework of understanding for cyber-bullying as a broad problem for educators everywhere. The semi-structured interviews, on the other hand, will provide valuable insights into the unique problems faced by currently practicing educators by using open-ended questions and allowing participants to lead the discussion down routes that a literature review alone might not cover.

3.2 Instruments of Data Collection

I conducted two semi-structured informal interviews using recording devices to ensure all data is accurately collected. I asked open-ended questions to ensure responses with depth in their explanations and to uncover unique perspectives that a literature review alone might be not include. Interviews began with questions to get to know the participant, build rapport and develop a more comfortable relationship.

The freedom of semi-structured interviews allowed the participants to elaborate and give more detail to areas, which they find are most important about cyber-bullying, areas that I may not have considered before beginning the interview portion of the research. Interviews in this fashion allowed for questions to be asked throughout the interview and allowed the participant to expand on areas they felt necessary.

Semi-structured interviews allowed for reflective practice and participants to evaluate and reflect on their personal teaching preparation and performance (Thornsen & Devore, 2013).

A few questions asked were:
1. Can you tell me what teaching position you have and how long you have been teaching?

2. What does cyber-bullying mean to you?

3. How do you incorporate cyber-bullying prevention within the curriculum and cross-curricular programs?

3.3 Participants

Here I review the sampling criteria I established for participant recruitment, and look at a range of possible approaches to educator recruitment. I have also included a subsequent section for short bios of the participants.

3.3.1 Sampling Criteria

I will sample two educators who:

- Are middle school teachers

- Are from the TLDSB and YRDSB

- Actively implementing cyber-bullying prevention programs

- Demonstrate leadership, commitment and/or expertise in cyber-bullying

I chose to sample these participants because they are actively and effectively using proactive cyber-bullying prevention programs in their formal curriculum to help eliminate cyber-bullying in their schools and/or communities. Middle school teachers from the TLDSB and YRDSB are important to focus on because these boards pride themselves by taking whole school approaches from caring, safe and accepting schools (Toronto District School Board, 2014 & York Region District School Board, 2015). It was important that these teachers demonstrate leadership, commitment and/or expertise
because I wanted to ensure these teachers have a breadth of knowledge in the area and have demonstrated positive influences and their methods are well developed to further help other teachers and educators.

3.3.2 Sampling Procedures

To recruit participants I relied on convenience sampling and purposeful sampling by contacting principals, school boards and/or educators who I had been in previous contact with. I contacted, specifically, staff who are working for safe schools at the board level and instructional teachers in charge of enacting the safe schools and anti-bullying mandate.

Being immersed in a teaching community, I was able to rely on existing contacts as well as develop new contacts to recruit the most knowledgeable participants in cyber-bullying throughout the TLDSB and YRDSB. I provided my name and contact information rather than ask individuals to provide me with contact information of suitable participants to ensure educators were volunteering and not feeling as though they were obligated to participate. The strengths of convenience sampling is that it is quick and can save time and effort however, a limitation is that it may not represent the population (Creswell, 2014). Purposeful sampling includes participants because they are able to “purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2014, p.156).

3.3.3 Participant Bios

I researched this topic in an Ontario context by interviewing two elementary teachers: one from Trillium Lakelands District School Board and one from York Region District School Board. Both were female and caucasian. The participants have been in
the field of education for many years and have established effective teaching strategies to use in their daily classrooms. Heather and Joanne, both continue to have the drive to grow as educators and constantly add to their wealth of knowledge. Both have experienced cyber-bullying in their school communities and dealt with various situations.

3.4 Data Analysis

After completing my interviews and collecting my data I began reading and rereading the transcribed interview data using my research questions as an interpretive lens. I focused on identifying categories of data and then interpreting themes. Once themes were discovered I began coding my data and chunking common themes together, which was done by using coloured highlighters. According to Huberman and Miles (1994), researchers should identify recurrent themes and report how many times they occur in the data. I wrote key words and bracketed important quotes throughout the data and composed a detailed description with sub themes for each major theme. I also found it important to review the divergence in the data and any ‘null data’ recorded or lack thereof.

Once I transcribed the interviews and completed the process of identifying significant themes throughout, I began the meaning-making process. This was guided by the themes I identified as important to the topic of cyber-bullying and focused particularly on root causes and the effectiveness of proactive approaches versus reactive approaches in the presentation of cyber-bullying. I compared the responses received by the interviewees against the findings of the literature review to determine to what extent the approaches and successes of individuals align with the analyses of past research.
3.5 Ethical Review Procedures

To ensure that the privacy of the participants is kept confidential, all transcripts and correspondence have been kept private and locked. The ethical review procedure I followed was taken directly from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning Masters of Teaching program. The letter of consent was provided and the terms of the research project were reviewed before the formal interview took place.

Once the interview was transcribed, the participant was given a chance to review the document and given a copy of the agreement for their records. Both participants were told they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point until the day it was submitted and were offered a copy of the findings if they choose. Participants have the right to chose not to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable answering.

A pseudonym was given to each participant to ensure confidentiality. Only the researcher and the participant themselves are aware of the original names and all institution names have been removed from the transcripts. There are no known risks to participants involved in the study. The benefit of the participation in this project was to allow educators to explain in detail their own teaching practices that involve the use of proactive prevention of cyber-bullying and share their own effective experiences in hopes of educating other teachers and school personnel about prevention cyber-bullying techniques beneficial in their communities.

The data will be stored in a secure computer for five years and my course instructor and I will be the only one with access to the files. Any identifying information or details about the participants will be excluded from the data.
3.6 Methodological Limitations and Strengths

There are a few limitations associated with this study. The first limitation of my study is the small number of participants I was able to interview. Educators are from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board and the York Region District School Board and that also constricts the a variety of range of teachers from different school boards. Only studying teachers in Ontario—let alone only two school districts—constitute a potentially significant geographical limitation.

I also only interviewed educators among elementary grades, limiting the age range studied. Since I was only able to interview adults their may be a bias towards an adult standpoint on the issue of how effective their programs are. Not having the ability to interview students and receive feedback about their experiences of cyber-bullying is likely a limiting factor of the research and its ability to reach definite conclusions about the effectiveness of cyber-bullying prevention programs.

A time constraint is another factor that could have prevented my research from being more thorough, learning about more instructional approaches, looking at more demographics and school boards to eliminate bias, and identifying changes to the problem over time.

A final limitation involves the lack of research currently published about this new phenomenon.

A direction for future research may be to cross-analyze practices among various age groups and various school boards as a school board such as the Catholic school board may be able to incorporate cyber-bullying lessons into the religion course.
3.7 Conclusions

In Chapter 3, I will have reviewed the research approach and procedure, my instruments of data collection, and shared a few questions asked in the interviews. I have discussed my participants and their backgrounds in the education system and explained my data analysis and how I coded my interviews. I have also discussed my ethical review procedures and limitations and strengths to my research. Next, in chapter 4, I report the research findings from the interviews.
Chapter 4: FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The findings for this study were assembled from the two interviews conducted with experienced teaching professionals. Both participants incorporate proactive prevention programs for cyber-bullying and were open to discussing how they implemented these practices in their own classrooms as well as their plans for further development of similar programs in the future. In order to ensure all participants remain anonymous, pseudonyms, Heather and Joanne, have been given and the names of schools have not been disclosed in this study. This chapter will provide thorough descriptions of all data collected from both interviews and the point of view from both participants when necessary.

Following the completion of both interviews and a close analysis of the transcripts I was able to identify four key interconnected themes. These themes—and their subthemes where appropriate—will proceed as follows: students’ age and grade, technology, authoritative roles and resources and programming strategies and protocols.

4.1 Cyber-bullying Indicators

4.1.1 Students’ Age and Grade

4.2 Impacts of Increasing Use of Technology

4.2.1 Digital World

4.2.2 Digital Classroom

4.3 Authoritative Roles and Resources

4.3.1 Police Presence

4.3.2 Visible Administrative Support


4.4 Programming Strategies and Protocols

4.4.1 Community Building and Restorative Circles

4.4.2 School-wide Protocols

4.4.3 Integrated Curriculum Prevention Programming

4.4.5 Empathy

4.1 Cyber-bullying Indicators

4.1.1 Students’ Age and Grade

The age and grade of students at which cyber-bullying begins to present itself is extremely important in order develop the most effective prevention programming.

Following both interviews, both Joanne and Heather, who teach junior and intermediate grades indicated that in their experience cyber-bullying was most prevalent around grades five to eight. Joanne also mentioned that police have indicated cyber-bullying begins “in grade 7 and 8” and she agrees “that’s a fairly common starting time”.

In connection with my literature review, the Ministry of Education (2015) first introduces students to the risks of technology in Grade 4 under Personal Safety and Intervention C1.2 and C1.3, coinciding with the early years of both participants’ observations in their years of teaching. Given the responses from both participants, this age would seem to align well with taking preventative measures against cyber-bullying before it begins.

4.2 Impacts of Increasing Use of Technology

Technology is not only changing in our personal lives and the world around us but
it is also rapidly changing classrooms. It seems inevitable that devices will continue to increasingly surround our daily activity. From both interviews conducted I was able to gain a better understanding of how my participants effectively used devices in their classrooms and taught students how to use them effectively. Both the digital world and the digital classroom are changing rapidly and it is important for teachers to be well informed about the technology being brought into their classrooms.

4.2.1 Digital World

As the digital world rapidly expands and new technology is introduced into our society monthly and daily it is difficult to always keep up with the new trends. This in turn leads to issues for individuals who are not necessarily familiar with online safety. Participants both felt that the world is rapidly changing and it is fundamental they prepare students with ways to behave in society with regards to technology.

Joanne admits she needs to be aware of how our students are seeing the world and prepare teaching resources for them, both so they have access to information about cyber-bullying and awareness of their digital footprint. She believes continuing to inform students of ways to responsibly use technology and its potential negative repercussions can be beneficial to helping students understand why they should not cyber-bully someone.

Baht (2008) supports the idea that with the increase in technology and the digital world we live in, cyber-bullying is beginning to affect youth more and more. It is imperative teachers keep up to date on the latest technology and social media, such as Instagram, Snapchat, etc. Challenges can arise because in this day and age students are so connected to their phones but Heather feels that if she stays up to date with how
students are using these apps and online sites, she can better understand how to educate
the students in terms of how to properly and responsibly use them.

4.2.2 Digital Classroom

Another major obstacle teachers may encounter is the use of cellular devices in this
fast evolving digital world. Cellular devices can both inhibit and distract students from
learning. They however, can also be a beneficial tool in classrooms depending on how
they are used and if they are used effectively.

In her interview, Joanne indicated the rules surrounding the use of cellular devices.
She discussed how with her class she would come up with the rules of the school year in
order for the students to understand she shared their appreciation of the potential
beneficial uses of mobile devices and that they had a voice in what they believed with fair
and unfair. One rule she passionately advocated and which has now has turned into a
school-wide policy is a “let me see your device" approach.

In this approach, if an adult in the school asks to see a student's phone at any time
during class, a student must show them the phone immediately to ensure proper use for
that specific task at hand. If a student was misusing their device for purposes outside of
the learning, their phone was immediately taken away for the day. A second time caught
would lead to the phone being taken away and speaking with the principal or vice-
principal. Obviously, this has worked in her school and students realize that although it
is their own personal device they are not to be using it for personal or social media–
related uses during class time.

It is impractical to be constantly checking students' devices and the range of
communication media always at their fingertips (Bonanno & Hymel, 2013; Chibbaro,
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2007). Heather agrees that it is impractical to have your eyes on every single student device at all times which is a valid concern. Joanne's "let me see your device" approach seems to be a sufficient middle ground to make students think twice before they use their devices to bully another individual, especially during class time.

All in all, it is clear that personal technology devices can be a beneficial tool for other subjects without the concern of students using their devices to bully if teachers make a point of showing students how important it is to recognize safe ways to use the Internet and help them gain a better understanding of the consequences that align with misuse (Cramer & Hayes, 2010).

4.3 Authoritative Roles and Resources

There are multiple resources available to teachers to educate them on bullying in the schools as well as support available in the assistance of educating young individuals. For instance, police presence in the school and visible administrative support for teachers and students to prevent and assess unfortunate cyber-bullying instances. With the opportunity to learn from valuable resources—developed from other teachers' past experiences—teachers are able to better focus on how to integrate cyber-bullying prevention into the curriculum and allow for authoritative personnel to delve deeper into real-life scenarios and the legal consequences that could follow.

4.3.1 Police Presence

Both participants discussed an approachable and useful police support in their schools. Heather specifically speaks of a Values, Influences and Peers (VIP) police officer while Joanne mentions her school's two community officers. In both schools, it is
clear that the students are familiar with the police officers in the school community. Joanne explains how “they become a contact person the child feels that they can go to if they have something happen, and they don’t feel comfortable speaking with an adult in the school”. Not only are they there to deal with situations that arise, but they also teach the students about the legal consequences of partaking in cyber-bullying activity. They are also there to share stories of how cyber-bullying has affected other individuals in negative ways. By sharing these stories, Heather feels the students become more engaged in finding ways to eliminate the horrific act of online assault.

Students are ultimately able to have a better understanding of the matter and this opens many new doors for teachers to teach about cyber-bullying as a component of their formal curriculum. Joanne, for instance, integrated a prevention program into her media literacy and health lesson and eventually developed the lesson into a written and oral communication assessment.

There is no literature I found with regards to police presence in schools that support the teaching of cyber-bullying prevention. Police, in my literature research, were typically only involved in situations where cyber-bullying had already taken place. They were there to mediate, resolve and deal with legal issues.

The significance of police presence is that both participants found the police who came in on a regular basis—to teach lessons to the students and familiarize themselves with the community so students felt comfortable speaking with them—have always had a positive outcome. In their experiences, these police work diligently to support teachers in the attempt to deter students from partaking in illegal behaviour.
4.3.2 Visible Administrative Support

Another valuable resource for teachers to use is the administrative support around them. Educators don't necessarily need to be present in order to proactively prevent cyber-bullying but they are also there as support in a time of need.

A major theme uncovered during my data analysis was the visibility of administrative support as a resource for educators. They do not necessarily play a prominent role in the prevention of cyber-bullying but make themselves available in times of need. While this can be useful, in my opinion significantly more can be done by administration to become active participants in preventing—rather than reacting to—cyber-bullying and one of the biggest changes that can be made in schools is to address this gap.

Currently, according to both participants, the administration does not appear to play a prominent role in the prevention of cyber-bullying. According to Joanne, only once a case of cyber-bullying has been identified is it brought to the attention of administrators. This approach lies in direct contrast that of teachers, who are actively including proactive cyber-bullying lessons into their daily curriculum. In order to resolve this imbalance between school authorities, Heather and Joanne recommend that both teachers and administrators be encouraged to expand their professional development by attending workshops to enhance their understanding of cyber-bullying prevention and on how to take a more proactive role in their schools.

Trillium Lakelands District School Board required teachers to receive Restorative training (a program designed to assist teachers in leading therapeutic discussions amongst the class) as an initiative for how to manage situations that are related to all forms of
bullies bullying, and any other conflicts. Joanne displays a dedication to using this practice in her classroom and shows how effective it can be. She shares that she believes, “there is something calming about restorative circles everyday because it’s really calming. There is consistency for them and me. They know regardless of what situation happened, the same process would be taken. I think there’s comfort in that”. Restorative circles appear to be efficient in getting to the bottom of situations and allowing students to express emotions before problems arise; they create a better sense of community.

Administrators in the school environment can also act as support system for the students. If they are visible to the students and coexist with teachers as an approachable and caring adult, the students are more likely to feel safe (Stauffer et al., 2012). Although administrators tend to have less of a role in teaching students the prevention of cyber-bullying, their main role appears to be helping teachers with the challenge of fully investigating and addressing the incident as immediately as possible.

4.4 Programming Strategies and Protocols

When asked questions regarding effective strategies used by the participants in their classrooms to prevent cyber-bullying, both participants provided answers that aligned with current literature. These were inclusive of community building and restorative circles, integrated curriculum prevention programming, teacher guidance and fostering empathy.

4.4.1 Community Building and Restorative Circles

Community building and restorative circles emerged as major methods both participants deemed beneficial to assist in preventing cyber-bullying in their classrooms.
Joanne exhibited this when she mentioned that her class does restorative circles every morning, and discusses how her class uses them:

“We have a restorative circle every morning, where we pass a talking stick, and we give ourselves a rating on a scale of 0-5. Just so that everyone has that constant connection with each other, and they know how each other is feeling. We share a lot of information, so that when problem solving is needed, they’re used to it. They’re used to sitting down and talking things out […] I think that overall, is just creates a sense of trust.”

Clearly, Joanne exemplifies dedication to ensuring her students feel a sense of safety and respect in her classroom. Restorative circles are not only used prior to bullying incidents but also used when bullying takes place. For example, Joanne had an incident where a student took a photo of another student making a bunch of faces and took those photos and created captions of her saying sexual things. Joanne explains the situation “was dealt with very seriously by the school, by administrators, and then the police came in”.

There was another situation a few years ago between students from two different schools. Restorative circles were used in this case to allow both sides to express their feelings and talk it out with adults present. The students were able to share how they’ve been harmed, what happened and what they’ve thought about since that happened with the stakeholders of the situation. It gives a chance for kids to make things right, and to be able to move on with dignity and to be able to face that person again.

Heather also has a similar approach in the sense that she is a firm believer in community building not only at the beginning of the school year but also throughout. She commits to “have students learn in a safe and caring environment” and believes in
using “Tribes, a community building program within [her] classroom, which develops our four community agreements (Right to Pass, No Put Downs, Attentive Listening and Mutual Respect) and continuously offers a variety of activities and lessons to reinforce these agreements”. This highlights the notion that a safe environment where the students feel as though they are connected to a community are beneficial instructional strategies and approaches that allow teachers to teach about cyber-bullying effectively. Heather stated that “it doesn’t take a teacher very long in their career to see the need to help students develop effective conflict resolution skills” in order to help these students deal with any situation that may arise.

Ferguson et al. (2007) and Beale and Hall (2007) find that by informing students at an early age about consequences could deter them from choosing to partake in this negative behavior. Both educators also commit to professional development and are continuously going to workshops in order to further educate themselves on community building and anti-bullying strategies to use in their classrooms and in their schools. By gaining further knowledge they are then able to help other teachers in their school community to also put these techniques into practice.

4.4.2 School-wide Protocols

Although each teacher may enforce cyber-bullying differently in their classrooms, it is important to also review school-wide policies in place to prevent cyber-bullying among the school community. Both educators make it apparent that there are prevention strategies and protocols outlined in the students’ agendas. Although the schools provide these, Joanne mentioned that the agenda is “not really addressed as an isolated protocol. It’s more about just general respect, and times where students aren’t following respectful
behavior. Then it’s given as an example” rather than having any specific protocols addressing cyber-bullying.

Currently many school boards have policies put in place to foster safe, caring, inclusive environments for the students to learn (Trillium Lakelands DSB, 2013 & York Region DSB, 2015). Trillium Lakelands DSB (2013) specifically has a 5 Step Bully Response Strategy. They recognize that bullying does occur and how important it is for teachers to tell children that they must report these incidences as well as to ensure they know that support is always available.

York Region DSB commits to educate staff and students how to recognize, respond and resolve bullying incidences, communicate a strong message to students, parents, and educators that bullying is “everyone’s problem and everyone’s responsibility” (York Region DSB, 2015), and to trust the Board Anti-Bullying Strategy put in place.

These school-wide protocols coincide with the support schools are provided with from local police departments, such as the VIP program in Heather’s school and the community officer in Joanne’s school.

4.4.3 Integrated Curriculum Prevention Programming

Since both Joanne and Heather are dedicated to implementing proactive prevention programs for cyber-bullying in their classrooms, the programming is weaved within the curriculum. Both Joanne and Heather respectfully make connections to cyber-bullying in literacy while teaching about character traits and feelings. Heather uses strategies such as, poetry or diary entries and Joanne also encourages students to express what that character may be feeling by connecting it to how they might feel in that situation.
Similarly, strategies that Heather and Joanne find to be beneficial to help their students to recognize how taking part in cyber-bullying can negatively affect others around them. Heather further articulated she encompasses proactive prevention cyber-bullying techniques in drama through the use of facial expressions and portraying a variety of recess situations that could occur in order for students to understand the best way to deal with cyber-bullying if it may occur while students have access to their phones throughout the school day. This is a clear example of how teachers can connect the topic of cyber-bullying to the formal curriculum although not mandated by the Ontario government, answering one of my subsidiary questions.

Comparable to recent changes in the Health and Physical Education curriculum document, students are taught in earlier years about the importance of online safety and identifying the risks associated with misuse. However, in no other curriculum documents is it required to teach about cyber-bullying or communications technology. This is a concerning issue because it does not necessarily mean teachers will be using resources or tools provided by the Health and Physical Education document to weave this prominent issue into other aspects of the curriculum.

Participants felt that they typically had to use their own resources to integrate teaching about cyber-bullying into the curriculum. Certainly, with programming, in terms of what resources we could use to teach our students about digital footprints, and so on. I think it should be part of the curriculum. I think that would be the number one support, for our government to say, “This is really important, you have to teach it”. This connects to the question of where teachers see cyber-bully prevention aligning with the official curriculum and how it should be incorporated into the formal curriculum.
Heather feels this would help to further support the education system.

4.4.4 Empathy

Developing a comprehensive anti-bullying program to create an empathetic classroom environment is necessary in order to allow the students to feel safe and discourage bullying of any sorts. A program such as the restorative circles program Joanne has increasingly used in her classroom from a board wide professional development program, addresses the issues of emotional and physical feelings before the bullying takes place.

Comparable to Joanne, Heather also uses techniques to provide a safe, caring classroom environment by allowing students to enact a variety of scenarios to work through and develop a positive problem solving approach. If students are able to recognize the influences cyber-bullying has on everyone and the positive impact providing anti-bullying encouragement and fostering empathy has, school communities will begin to be able to continue to eliminate cyber-bullying.

Another approach Joanne uses is celebrating the success of students standing up to bullies. She uses a “wait a minute approach”, in which she tells students who encounter a situation, “when you get frozen, and you know it’s not right, and in your guy it’s wrong, just say, “Wait a minute,” then everyone will look at you, because you’ve just said that. This gives you the second to collect your thoughts and say, “I don’t think he would have felt very good hearing you say that” or “Not okay, don’t talk that way”, something simple”.

It was clear through my research that cyber-bullying presents less of an opportunity for students to feel empathy towards another individual opposed to typical face-to-face
bullying (Slonje, Smith & Frisen, 2012; 2013, Woods, 2014). Undoubtedly, it is important to demonstrate to students the significance empathy can have on an individual. Evidence from both participants shows that there is success to celebrate when others are able to display empathy for others and stand up for their peers.

The previous instructional strategies and approaches discussed clearly enlighten future educators on how the use proactive prevention strategies to help discourage the decision to partake in cyber-bullying activity in any manner.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined four themes and nine sub-themes that were established subsequently examining data collected from two interviews I conducted with my participants. The first theme is cyber-bullying indicators partnered with students’ age and grade. This is important to examine when cyber-bullying becomes more prominent among youth. Impacts of increasing use of technology are accompanied by sub-themes digital world and digital classroom. The third theme investigates the authoritative roles and resources looking more in depth into police presence and visible administrative support. Finally, the theme programming strategies and protocols overarches community building and restorative circles, school-wide policies, integrated curriculum prevention programming and lastly, empathy.

In general, these themes and sub-themes I analyzed relate to each other as the participants both addressed them when asked how they create and support an integrative proactive cyber-bullying approach in their classrooms and school communities. Both Heather and Joanne spoke about techniques and approached they found were most
effective, particularly specific tactics and resources they used. Joanne and Heather consistently focused on similar approaches and they had comparable support from their respective schools and community police officers. This may stem from the fact that both participants are at the forefront of integrating prevention for cyber-bullying into their curriculum rather than following through with reactive actions.

Themes, such as, community building exercises and having safe and caring environments appeared numerous times together throughout the data. This may be the case because in order to have a classroom environment where students feel safe and respected, community building needs to take place. Joanne made this particularly clear as she spoke about the consistent use of restorative circles and educating students on being open with each other and expressing how you are feeling.

Another stand out theme was how imperative the community police officers can be to sustaining a school that has zero tolerance for cyber-bullying. Joanne and Heather explicitly state how essential their presence in the school is. This closely connects back to creating a safe and caring environment for the students. With these officers constantly in the schools, students are able to develop relationships with them and familiarize themselves with another authoritative figure who they feel comfortable confiding in. Additionally, the police officers are available to help in the teaching of online safety and the consequences that follow if anyone is to partake. Both participants were grateful to have them as a resource on hand for not only the students but also supporting other educators.

Following my analysis, I have found that my findings have some connections to my literature review in my study. The Ministry of Education (2015), and both
participants illustrate that a proactive approach is beneficial for students in the long run. Introducing online safety in Grade 4 and beginning to inform students on how to protect themselves is valuable. My findings begin to indicate that schools should be starting to use the proactive approach early in a school year but also early in grades. Both participants mentioned they felt Grades 5-8 experience the most cyber-bullying so if they are well informed before this age it will deter them from this behaviour.

With these considerations in mind, there appears to be a push to continue to develop and create multiple ways to weave lessons on cyber-bullying into the curriculum. This study, in particular, has examined how teachers a proactively preventing cyber-bullying in their classrooms and methods they use to inform students about this emerging phenomenon. The next chapter will further explore approaches highlighted in this chapter. I will discuss broad and narrow implications, recommendations, and areas for further research.
Chapter 5: IMPLICATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the how educators are proactively integrating cyber-bullying prevention techniques in the curriculum. The main research question posed by this research study was: how is a sample of junior-intermediate teachers teaching about cyber-bullying as a component of their formal curriculum, and what outcomes do they observe from their students both inside and outside the classroom? Subsidiary questions included: 1) How do these teachers conceptualize cyber-bullying and what indicators of it do they observe in their classrooms and school? 2) How do these teachers connect the topic of cyber-bullying to the formal curriculum? Where do they see it aligning with the official curriculum? 3) What instructional strategies and approaches do these teachers enact to teach about cyber-bullying? 4) What resources are available to support teachers’ work in this area? 5) What challenges do these teachers encounter and how do they respond to these challenges?

To explore this topic I conducted two semi-structured interviews with educators from Trillium Lakelands District School Board and York Region District School Board. The themes that emerged from an analysis of the interviews and material on the subject included: cyber-bullying indicators (students’ age and grade), impacts of increasing use of technology (digital word and classroom), authoritative roles and resources (police presence and visible administrative support), and programming strategies and protocols (community building and restorative circles, school-wide protocols, integrated curriculum prevention programming and empathy).

This chapter will serve to summarize the main focus of the study and the ways in
which it can be connected to the key findings. It will continue with a discussion of broad and narrow implications for the educational community and my own teaching practices, followed by recommendations for other educators, their practice, administrators, and other educational professionals. Next, I will focus on areas for further research and finally concluding comments.

5.1 Overview of Key Findings and Their Significance

My findings have shown that techniques and approaches used by educators who are at the forefront of proactive cyber-bully prevention use community building exercises and have safe, caring classroom environments. The presence of community police officers was an essential finding and was consistently present in the classrooms of educators that successfully prevent cyber-bullying and sustain a school that has zero tolerance for cyber-bullying.

The Ministry of Education (2015), and both participants have found that a proactive approach to cyber-bullying prevention is beneficial for students in the long run. The Health and Physical Education (2015) curriculum document introduces online safety in Grade 4, and as participants both stated they felt cyber-bullying began around grades 5-8. This validates that this is an important age to introduce the consequences linked to cyber-bullying both as a perpetrator and a victim.

Another important finding of my research is that educators need to be advocates for the students in their community. Both Heather and Joanne felt it necessary to develop a strong sense of community and belonging in their classrooms to create empathy for others in order to discourage the act of cyber-bullying. They believe this is necessary
because if they are able to teach the children how to treat others with respect and kindness, with an awareness of the negative effects of treating people wrongly, they are able to build a safe environment.

One possible issue in systematically preventing cyber-bullying appears to be that educators are not mandated to take professional development courses outlining the benefits of proactive prevention programming. Instead, they are able to incorporate and introduce the issue of cyberbullying as they see fit or if they feel it is necessary or warranted without educational professional development. This can often lead to a more reactive approach, only introducing the idea of cyber-bullying to students in response to a specific instance. My findings strongly suggest that the reactive method is not as beneficial to the students as proactively building a safe and caring community from day one to ensure students feel comfortable, accepted and valued.

5.2 Implications

After two years researching ways in which educators are proactively preventing cyber-bullying in their school communities, I have come to realize how essential community building truly is. Additionally, after spending time interviewing my two participants and analyzing their data, I have a larger understanding of the challenges educators can face in order to put a stop to cyber-bullying. The discussion below will outline broad implications that relate to the educational community, along with narrow implications that relate to myself as a teacher and as a researcher.

5.2.1 Broad Implications

The prevention of cyber-bullying in schools should be seen more holistically that it
seems to be today. For this to happen, it is imperative for administration to be seen by students as collaborating with teachers in the cultivation of a safe and caring environment. Furthermore, having police officers coexist with both administration and teachers helps to foster an environment, which can be seen as collaborative, professional and nurturing of each other and the students, they are responsible for. This collaboration on a regular basis, not just for a specific program or initiative, exhibits to students that these adult professionals are consistently working together for the betterment of the school environment, making it a safe and inclusive place to learn, grow and, if need be, go for help. These interactions do not always have to be specific sections of core curriculum but evident in daily or frequent connections that are witnessed by the students as the norm rather than the exception.

Building community is not always something that happens naturally and people’s core principles and values can factor in to the success of these endeavours. To ensure that community building occurs in an effective way, the best approach is to implement mandatory professional workshops, which will provide educators with the tools and skill-building resources they require to effectively help in building strong communities. While there will remain differences in how this is most effectively done depending on demographics, personalities and other individual circumstances, it is absolutely possible to provide resources, tools and support networks to be consistently effective in all schools. Development of mandatory professional educational opportunities with participation from other experts (police, mental health, medical professionals, etc.) could provide a network for learning and a system for trust and ongoing collaboration, which will further enhance support of the immediate school and the students within. Information
on how other teachers have seen success in their classrooms and the free exchange of ideas will allow the best solutions to be found and implemented by all, and for these solutions to evolve over time as the technology shifts and classroom behaviours continue to change.

5.2.2 Narrow Implications

The broad implications as discussed also influence my own teaching practices and me as a future researcher. As a beginning educator I need to help pave the way to inclusive classroom environments free from cyber-bullying in this quickly emerging digital world. With a vast variety of students it is important to create ground rules around respecting others, the environment and ourselves. Not all students come from the same background, value system or family lifestyle. Every student is unique, has something to offer to the whole and I realize this is what creates a beautiful classroom.

I need to be aware of how students are treating others in the classroom and on the schoolyard. Understanding that while students are outside the classroom, they are still my responsibility and I need to protect and educate them on respectable behaviour in the schoolyard and beyond. Furthermore, I should try to be conscious of potential issues arising in the classroom or out in the schoolyard and to remediate them before they erupt into something further. To facilitate this, I need to make it a priority to create a trusting space where all students feel they can openly communicate with me to achieve solution based problem solving.

I have come to the understanding that one of the greatest privileges of teaching is building those relationships between myself as a teacher with my students. It is imperative to create a community from day one to ensure my students feel as though they
can talk about their feelings and ask questions without fear of being judged. This philosophy and practice leads to me being an advocate for my students and for the school. I also want to build on one key suggestion from Joanne—the use of restorative circles. Not only in my classroom, but having a space at lunchtime where, if students need to talk, they are welcome to join together to build a stronger community. By doing so, I hope to further educate others how bullying and social isolation can hurt both the victim and the perpetrator. As they grow and mature, students need to better understand how it can feel to be victimized, the symptoms of victimization and why there are legal consequences that coincide with negative and hurtful actions.

As a classroom teacher, not only will I utilize circles to build community, but will weave this learning into my curriculum. The methodology I use will depend on context and may consist of doing skits in Drama, creating posters and commercials in Media Literacy, writing passages from a victim and perpetrator’s perspective in Literacy. All methods will be focused on creating a sense of empathy as well as learning about, identifying and helping reduce the veil of secrecy surrounding this societal problem.

Older students can build their learning by completing research and building evidence and statistics on the frequency of reported cases of bullying, unreported but identified cases, identifying and studying schools with anti-bullying initiatives, asking inquiry questions on how to lower the statistic of students’ cyber-bullied and formulating suggestions for ongoing identification and programming.

By taking these actions, students will ultimately learn to show respect and empathy towards others as they move from elementary to postsecondary school. They will acquire personal and practical skills to use technology in a respectful manner without
harming others. Prior to this study, I was unclear how to integrate cyber-bullying prevention into my pedagogy without having stand-alone lessons. I now understand how to integrate techniques into my daily practice and how it is much more than just teaching students about cyber-bullying (the act) rather than how to be a well rounded, empathetic and caring individual (the philosophy).

As a researcher, I plan to continue to study effective strategies to create the best possible environment for all. My research does not end here because while I have found some excellent examples and strategies to use, I believe my own strategies will continue to evolve as I enter my career as a teacher. My research has provoked a curiosity and desire to continually develop as an educator and put myself at the forefront of community building and anti-bullying education.

5.3 Recommendations

It is important for educators to recognize the importance of preventing cyber-bullying from taking place in their school communities to ensure a safer environment for students to learn. Through interviews, Joanne and Heather made it clear that by promoting a community that does not tolerate cyber-bullying, students develop more empathy, respect and tolerance towards others and develop healthier means to share their feelings, frustrations and fears with their peers. Educators are able to create this environment by incorporating community building and collaboration into their classrooms, not only periodically, but continuously throughout the entire year.

Community circles are one effective strategy educators can use to demonstrate to students the importance of empathy toward others and treating our peers with respect. A
more consistent and approachable police presence or community officer in the school with whom the students develop a positive relationship and are comfortable around can help decrease the amount or instances of cyber-bullying taking place.

The following are recommendations that educators, elementary board level personnel, and administrators can implement in order to build community and create a safe welcoming space.

5.3.1 Educators

Educators are at the forefront of proactively preventing cyber-bullying from taking place because they are interacting with students every day. My major recommendation is for educators to be building community to make the students feel comfortable. Educators need to familiarize themselves with the digital world and how technology is rapidly changing in the digital world and the digital classroom.

By educating themselves, they are better able to inform their students about online safety and the negative effects cyber-bullying can have on youth more and more frequently (Baht, 2008). A suggestion from Joanne to co-construct rules surrounding the use of cellular devices with your class can give voice to the students to share what they also believe to be fair and unfair. Technology devices can be beneficial tools for educators but it is essential that extra steps be taken to guide students on safe ways to use the Internet and understand consequences associated with misuse.

5.3.2 Elementary Board Personnel

Along with educators, board personnel also need to implement substantive policies around cyber-bullying. The 2015 Health and Physical Education curriculum has paved the way for educators to begin to integrate online safety strategies for students beginning
in grade 4 and consistently re-examining and developing a better understanding of how to protect individuals online.

My recommendation would be that Boards mandate all educators’ attend professional development sessions each year to familiarize themselves with new technology and practical skills for protection and detection. Trillium Lakelands Board does require teachers to participate in Restorative training, but this is only mandated infrequently.

Given the speed and reach of our digital world, these issues need to be consistently addressed and I strongly recommend instituting a policy of annual attendance rather than only once every few years. A policy that all educators and schools must be proactively preventing cyber-bullying from taking place will discourage students from taking part in this harmful and illegal behaviour. Furthermore, if the board supports educators and allows time in the school day for community building, this provides educators with the ability to strategize and enhance these programs with supportive community partners as well as helping to create more positive classroom environments in a broader sense.

5.3.3 Administrators

Although administrators are not in classrooms with students every day, they play a vital role in establishing how effectively their school community is run. By ensuring police officers are consistently maintaining a positive and regular appearance around the school, Heather and Joanne have found that students are less likely to take part in cyber-bullying activities on the school grounds. Police officers are able to help support and educate students about the legal consequences connected to cyber-bullying.

Not only should administration be using other resources but they should also be
ensuring a clear presence around the school themselves. If students and administration are able to develop a positive, trusting relationship with each other, students are more likely to feel comfortable sharing their concerns and feelings with the adults in the school.

A final recommendation for administration is to create a cyber-bully awareness day at the beginning of the school year, apart from bully awareness week that takes place the third week of November and then ensure that this topic is regularly touched upon in classroom and whole school activities. Assemblies, activities and workshops around the school can set a tone for the school year that allows students to understand that cyber-bullying will not be tolerated in their community.

All in all, the recommendations above are possible suggestions that the educational community can choose to implement that have been shown to create a safe community that proactively prevents cyber-bullying from ever taking root. It is important to realize that given the small sample size of participants in this research study, the recommendations are only a few of the possible suggestions that may be considered for integration.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

While it is difficult to make generalizations based on two participants, my literature review and analysis of data provided determined that students seem to strongly benefit from a positive sense of community building an anti-bullying school environment. Furthermore, if educators spend quality time building community, empathy and a continuing growing knowledge of the effects of cyber-bullying, it is less likely to take
place in their classroom. However, more research needs to be conducted in regards to parental involvement.

Since the research project was small scale and only addressed two educators, I was unable to explore the involvement of parents in students’ education of online safety and how persistent they are with seeing what is happening on their child’s technology devices. In the future, a qualitative study should be done by interviewing parents of students between grades four and eight to determine their involvement. A quantitative study could also accompany the interviews with surveys to gain a larger sample size with less open-ended questioning.

Additionally, this study only observed one educator from Trillium Lakelands District School Board and one educator from York Region District School Board. Future research should examine more school districts to determine their policies for educators training on cyber-bullying in Ontario. Future educators would benefit from understanding how all school districts deal with cyber-bullying. School districts can learn from each other by collaborating ideas and professional development programming that works. An analysis of each school board can help to develop an exceptional programming across Ontario.

Apart from parental involvement and a range of school boards, mental health workers or people who have expertise in identifying children who may be being bullied. These professionals are another resource educators could have access to if they suspect bullying and learn for what to look for. It would be naïve for me to believe that cyber-bullying would be completely eliminated; therefore, educators also need to know what signs may appear. Educators are trained to deal with cyber-bullying in a reactive way.
Finally, by further researching these three issues, educators can continue to develop effective proactive programming to benefit the wellbeing and education of these students in a time where they are constantly connected to the digital world.

5.5 Conclusion

I have learned an incredible amount through the process of my research. Having the opportunity to research educators who are experienced in the field of proactively preventing cyber-bullying has been truly humbling. This study has allowed me to learn practical strategies I can implement within my current and future classrooms in order to provide support to my students and my co-workers to discuss this issue openly and facilitate a proactive approach to this societal problem.

Learning about these strategies has broadened my thinking and provided some initial tools, approaches and strategies that I am comfortable utilizing and enhancing in future classroom environments. I am convinced that community building and restorative circles, combined with positive, frequent police presence will create safer environments and change some stereotypical thinking around police figures and the role they play.

Additionally, these methods will begin to produce positive, trusting relationships between persons of authority and the young minds we are charged with nurturing. This open communication and wrap around community approach will grow and the respectful, inclusive and empathetic culture we want to instill initially in primary school and ultimately as students become global consumers will become part of the fabric of our daily lives. Trusting environments that are intolerant of all types of bullying and degradation will be the end result.
After conducting this research I am convinced I will strive to create a safe and empathetic learning environment for my students and make that a priority in conjunction with all other subject material in the curriculum. It is my intent to weave prevention techniques into various parts of the curriculum such as Health, Drama and Literacy for example. Strategies and tactics from both of my research topic participants will assist me to become a better educator and to provide better support for my students all around.
References


doi:10.1080/01411920903071918


Toronto District School Board. (2014). Caring and Safe Schools: Prevention and
PREVENTING CYBER-BULLYING


Appendix A - Consent Letter

Date:

Dear ________________.

My Name is Katherine Malcolm and I am a student in the Master of Teaching program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). A component of this degree program involves conducting a small-scale qualitative research study. My research will focus on proactive prevention programs aimed at combatting cyber-bullying in the Ontario School Boards. I am interested in interviewing teachers who implement prevention education cyber-bullying into the formal curriculum. I think that your knowledge and experience will provide insights into this topic.

Your participation in this research will involve one 45-60 minute interview, which will be transcribed and audio-recorded. I would be grateful if you would allow me to interview you at a place and time convenient for you, outside of school time. The contents of this interview will be used for my research project, which will include a final paper, as well as informal presentations to my classmates and/or potentially at a research conference or publication. You will be assigned a pseudonym to maintain your anonymity and I will not use your name or any other content that might identify you in my written work, oral presentations, or publications. This information will remain confidential. This data will be stored on my password-protected computer and the only people who will have access to the research data will be my course instructor Dr. Eloise Tan. You are free to change your mind about your participation at any time, and to withdraw even after you have consented to participate. You may also choose to decline to answer any specific question. I will destroy the audio recording after the paper has been presented and/or published, which may take up to a maximum of five years after the data has been collected. There are no known risks or benefits to participation, and I will share with you a copy of the transcript to ensure accuracy.

Please sign this consent form, if you agree to be interviewed. The second copy is for your records. I am very grateful for your participation.
Sincerely,

Katherine Malcolm

Email: katherine.malcolm@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Instructor’s Name: Dr. Eloise Tan
Contact Info: eloise.tan@utoronto.ca
Consent Form

I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.

I have read the letter provided to me by Katherine Malcolm and agree to participate in an interview for the purposes described. I agree to have the interview audio-recorded.

Signature: ________________________________________

(Please place an X on the line if you agree the conditions described in this consent form)

Name: (printed) ______________________________________________

Date: ______________________________________
Appendix B - Interview Protocol

Interview Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. The study aims to learn about proactive prevention techniques for cyber-bullying in middle schools in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board and York Region District School Board. The interview should take approximately 45-60 minutes and I will ask you a series of questions about cyber-bullying, your thoughts, experiences, and techniques to prevent this new phenomenon. I want to remind you that you may choose to not answer any question you do not feel comfortable answering. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background

4. Can you tell me about your educational background?
   a. What grades and subjects do you teach?
   b. What grades and subjects have you taught in the past?
   c. How long have you been a teacher?
   d. What disciplines did you pursue?
   e. What are your teachables?

1. Can you describe your school for me?
   a. Size?
   b. Demographics?
   c. Program priorities?
   d. What kind of protocols or programs do you have in place to support students who have experienced cyber-bullying? What kind of policies do you have when faced with the
perpetrator of the cyber-bullying?

e. Does your school have a school-wide bully prevention policy?

1. You agreed to participate in this interview because you are committed to preventing cyber-bullying within your classroom. Can you explain to me how you have developed this interest and commitment?

   a. What is your experience on cyber-bullying prevention?

   b. How long have you implemented proactive cyber-bullying techniques in your classroom?

   c. What personal, professional, and educational experiences helped develop your interest and commitment, and prepared you for this work?

5. Do you have any programs in your school community to educate students on the negative effects of cyber-bullying?

**Teacher Beliefs**

1. What does cyber-bullying mean to you? What does cyber-bullying typically look like? What behaviours do you associate with it?

2. What responsibility do you believe schools and teachers have for addressing cyber-bullying and why?

3. What do you think are some of the reasons why cyber-bullying continues to be so prevalent among children and youth? What do you believe schools can do to minimize these incidences?

4. What do you believe are some of the greatest challenges to preventing and minimizing cyber-bullying?

5. In your experience, at what age does cyber-bullying seem to be most prevalent?
Teacher Practices

1. What direct strategies do you use in your classroom when implementing cyber-bullying prevention? Do you have any examples of an activity you use?

2. How do you incorporate cyber-bullying prevention and awareness within the curriculum and cross-curricular programs? Can you give me a specific example of how you address cyber-bullying in your formal curriculum (learning goals, instructional strategies, outcomes you observe, and assessment)? (Looking for subjects, grades and policies)

3. What subject do you find the most effective to implement cyber-bullying prevention programs? Why do you find this subject the most effective?

4. What steps do you take proactively to minimize and prevent incidences of cyber-bullying?

5. What do you do to prevent cyber-bullying when students are asked to use devices in the classroom?

Supports, Challenges, and Next Steps

1. Do you have support or feedback from your school community?

2. What resources and instructional tools do you use in order to introduce cyber-bullying prevention in your classroom?

3. Once you’ve implemented your programs, what outcomes do you observe inside and outside the classroom and school regarding bullying behaviour? How do the students react to these programs? What kind of feedback do you get from your students?

4. What challenges do you encounter (if any) and how do you respond to those challenges?
a. How might the education system further support you in meeting these challenges? What range of factors and resources support you in implementing a cyber-bullying education program?

1. What advice, if any, do you have for beginning teachers committed to implementing a cyber-bullying prevention education program in their teaching?

2. Any further comments? Thank you!