

# Bullying 101

## Kentucky Anti-Bullying Conference

March 19, 2012

**Kevin Jennings**

*CEO, Be the Change*

*Former Assistant Deputy Secretary U.S. Department of  
Education*

# Understanding Bullying

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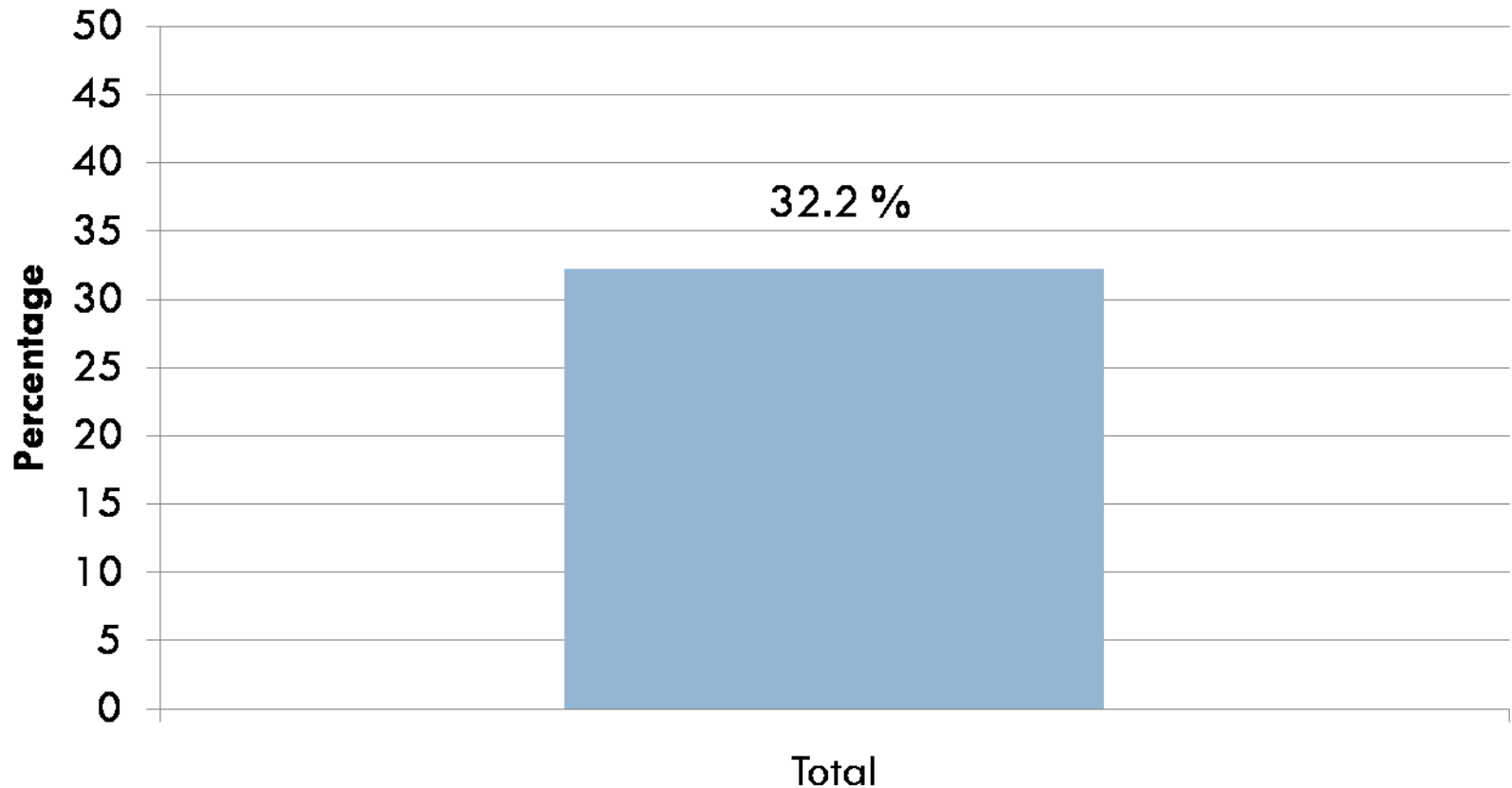
- Pervasiveness
- Roles
- Influencing Factors
- Interventions
- The “Washington Agenda”

# Pervasiveness and Impact of Bullying



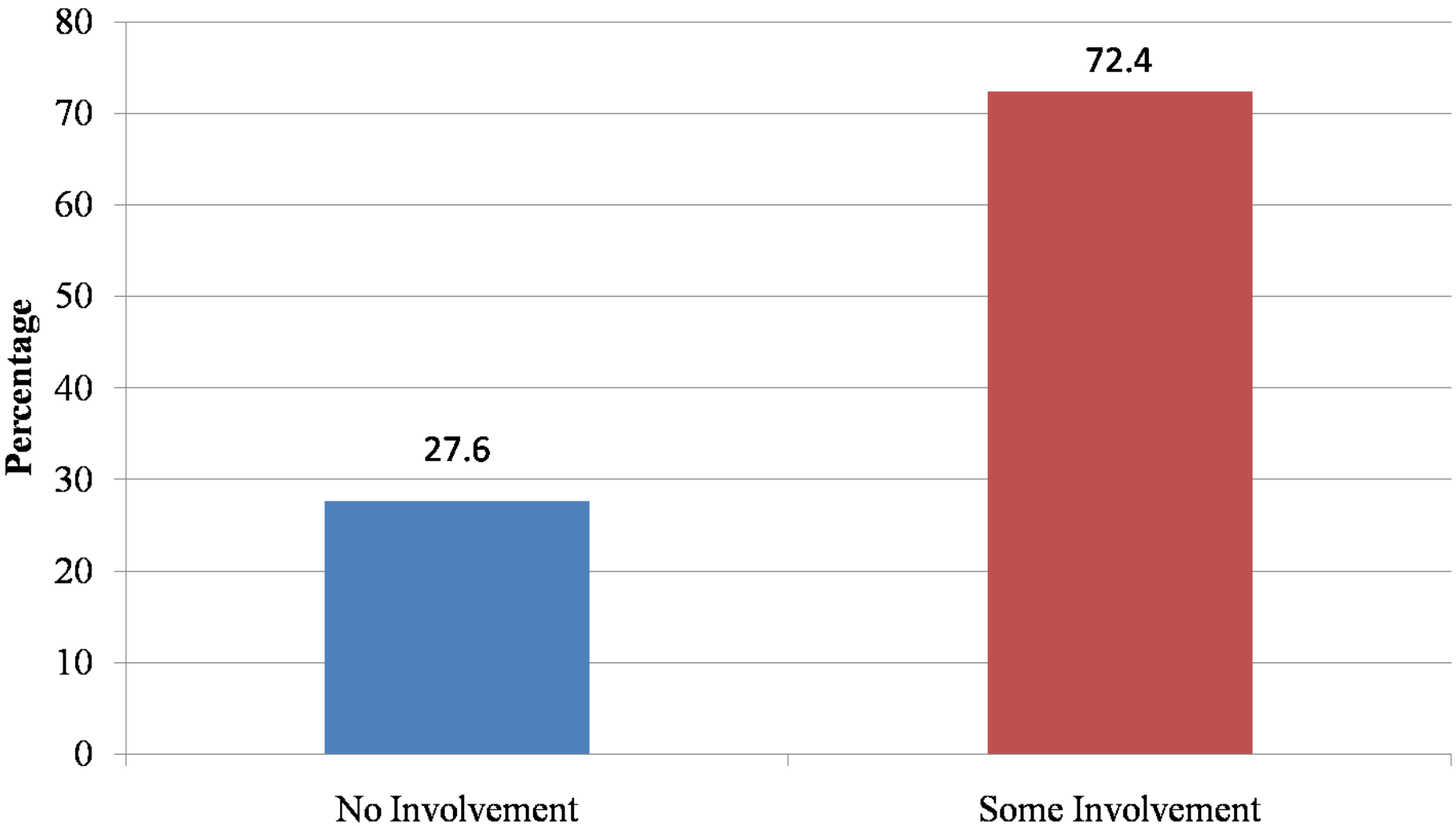
# Many Students Experience Bullying

Percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied at school and being cyber-bullied anywhere during the school year: 2007



Source: Indicators of Crime and School Safety, 2008

## Bullying Affects Most Kids

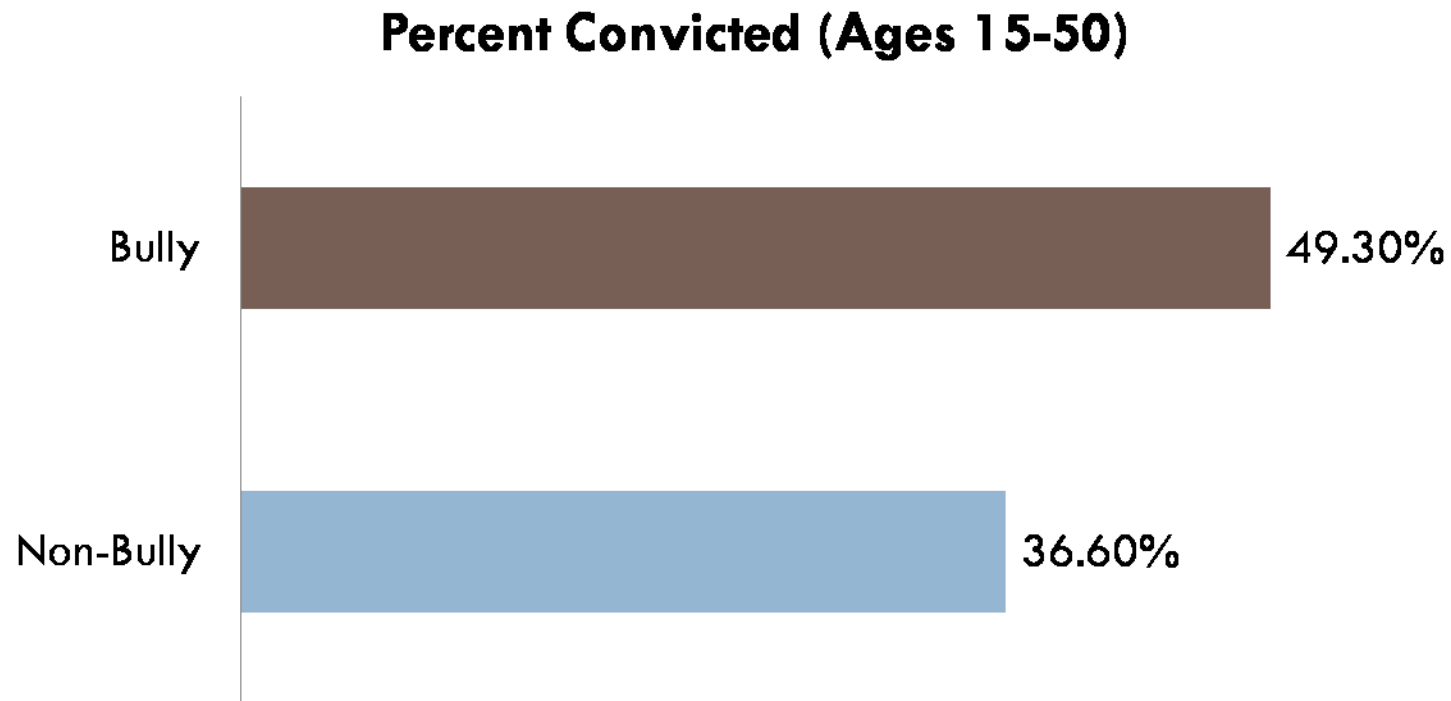


Rivers, I., Poteat, V.P., Noret, N., Ashurt, N. (2009). Observing Bullying at School: The Mental Health Implication of Witness Status. *School Psychology Quarterly*. 24:4, 211-223.

# Higher Rates of Criminal Conviction

(Ages 15-50)

- Bullies are **1.69 times more likely** to be convicted of a crime between the ages of 15 and 50.

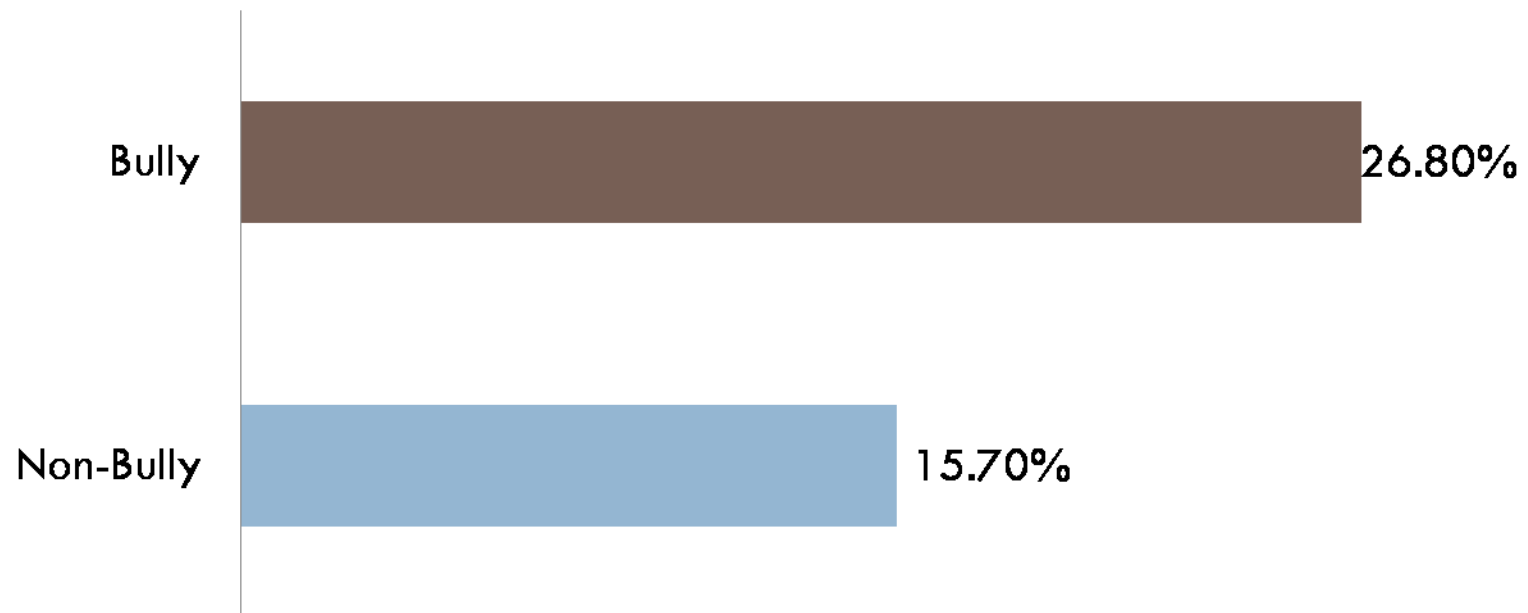


# Higher Rates of Violent Conviction

(Ages 15-50)

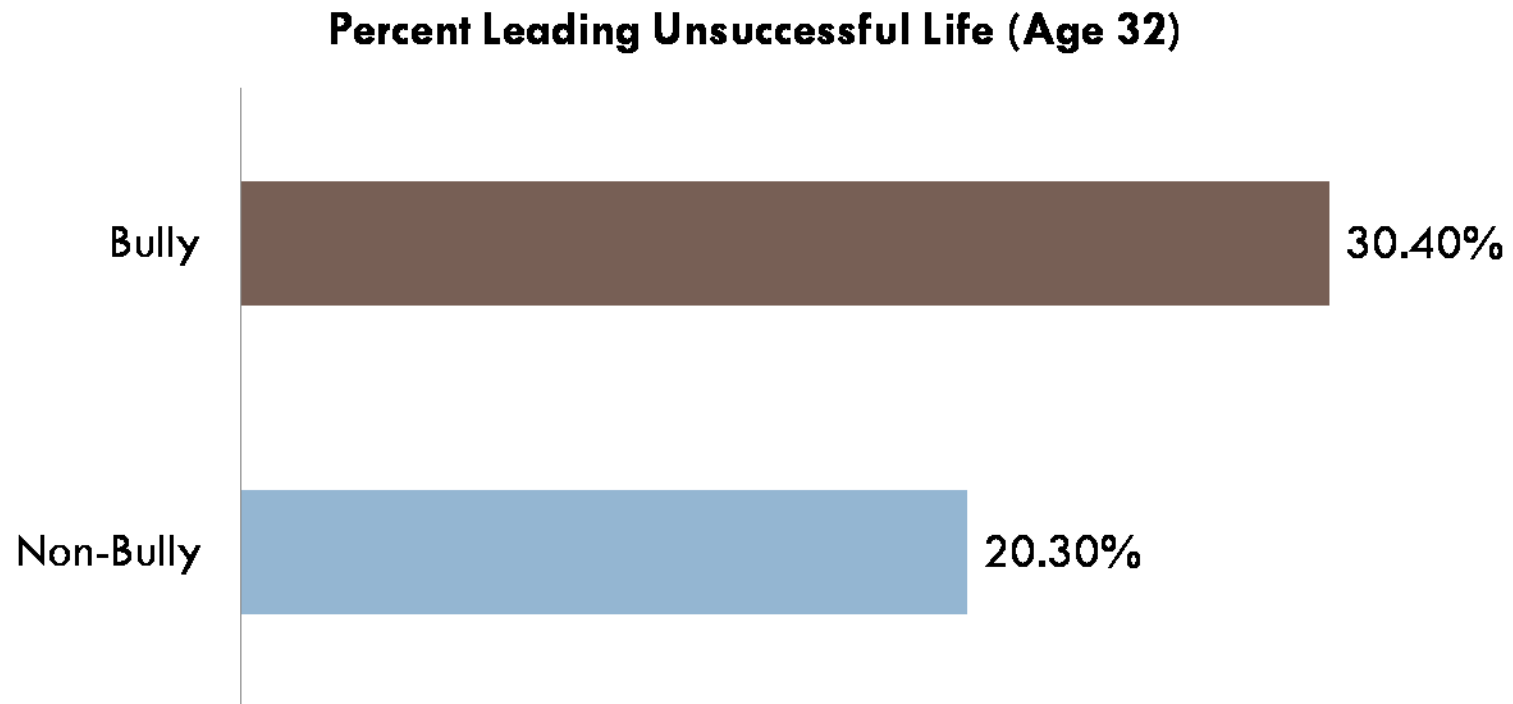
- Bullies are **1.96 times more likely** to be convicted of a violent crime between the ages of 15 and 50.

**Percent Convicted: Violent Crime (Ages 15-50)**



# Less Successful Lives (Age 32)

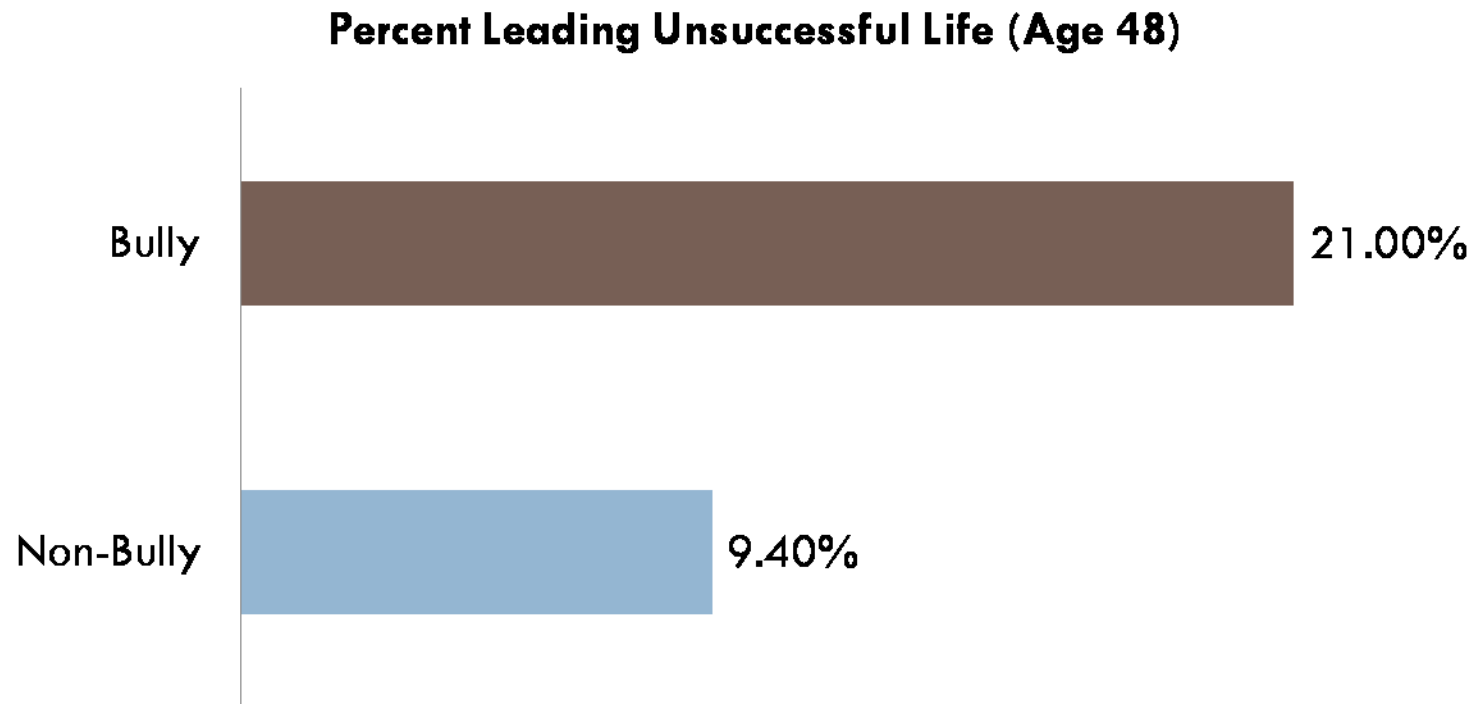
- Bullies are **1.72 times more likely** than non-bullies to lead an unsuccessful life at age 32.





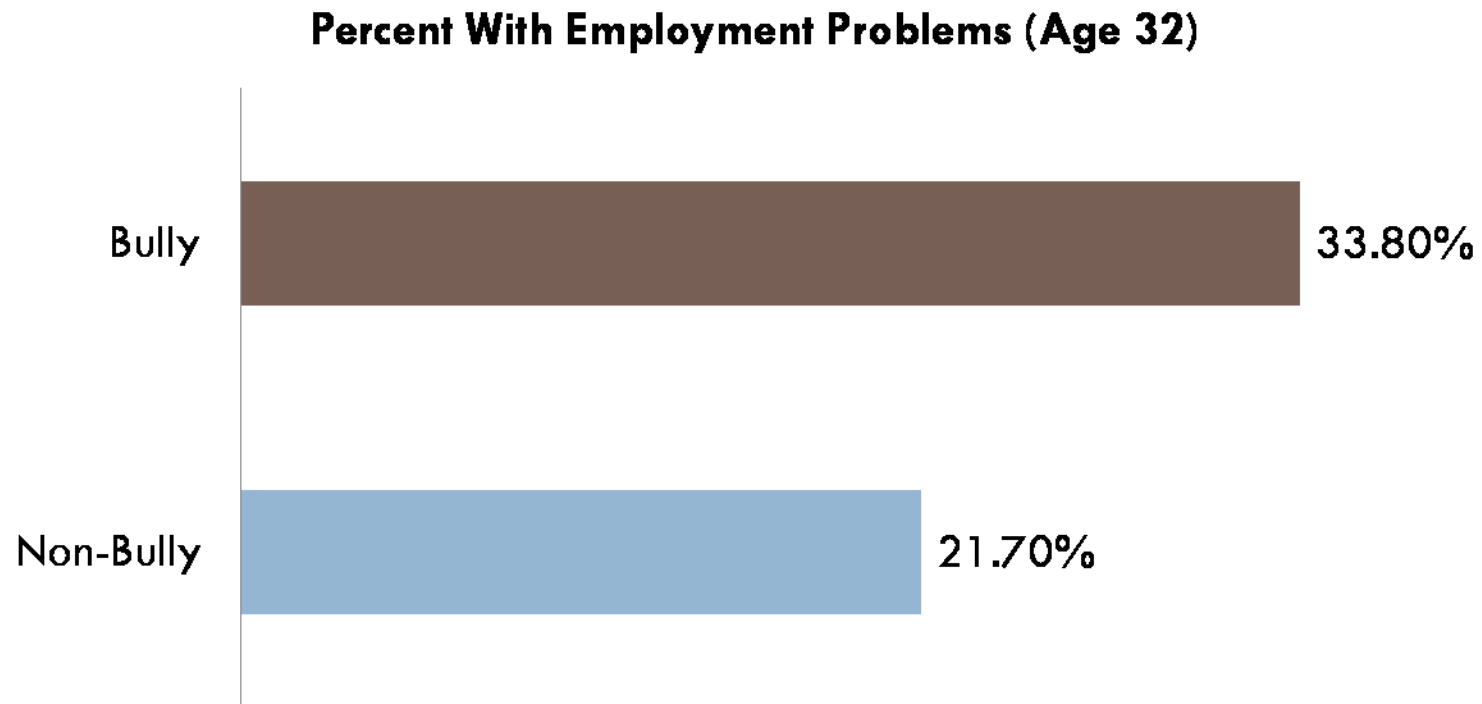
# Less Successful Lives (Age 48)

- Bullies are **2.57** times **more likely** than non-bullies to lead an unsuccessful life at age 48.



# More Employment Problems (Age 32)

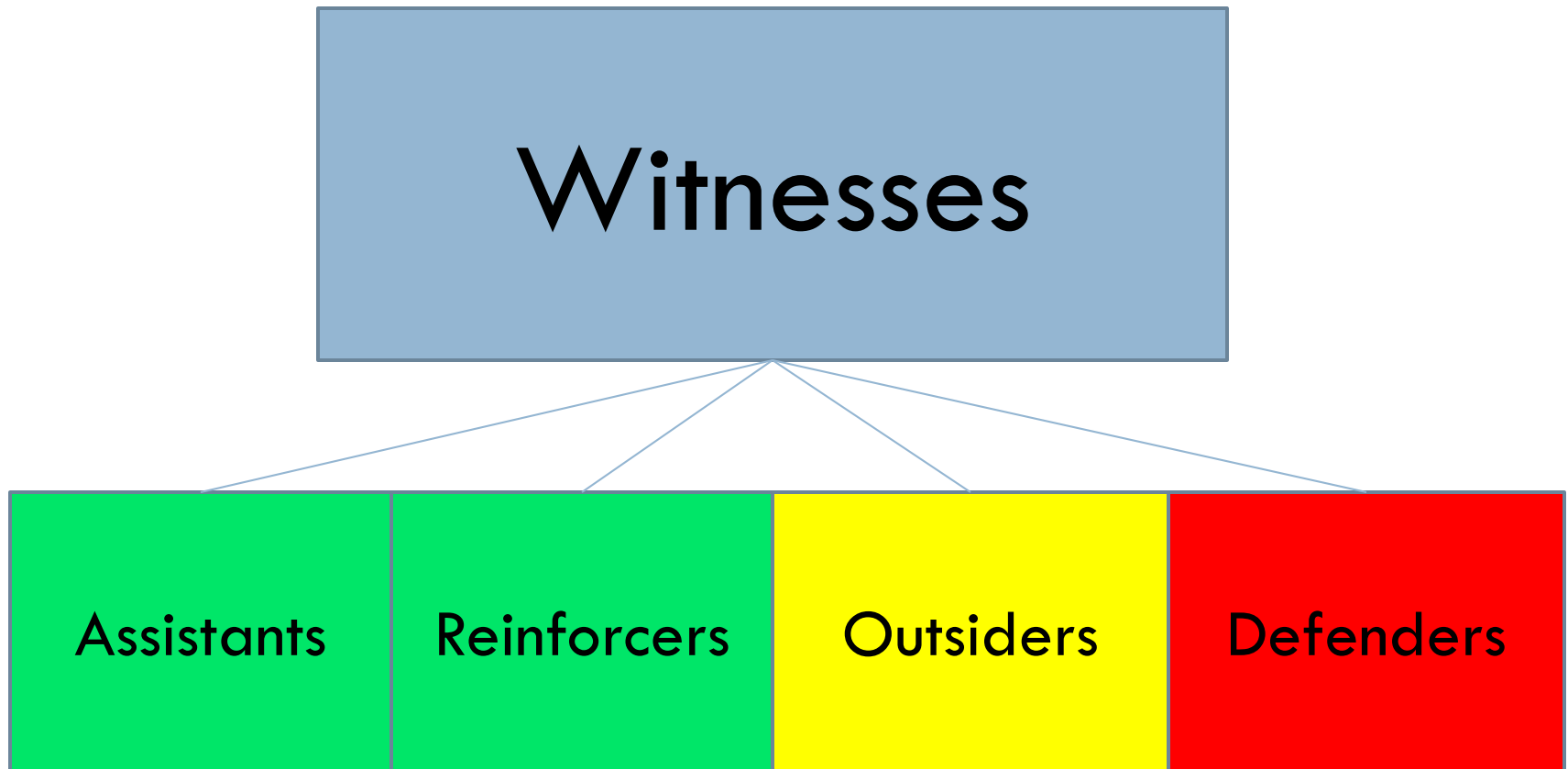
- Bullies are **1.84 times more likely** than non-bullies to have employment problems at age 32.



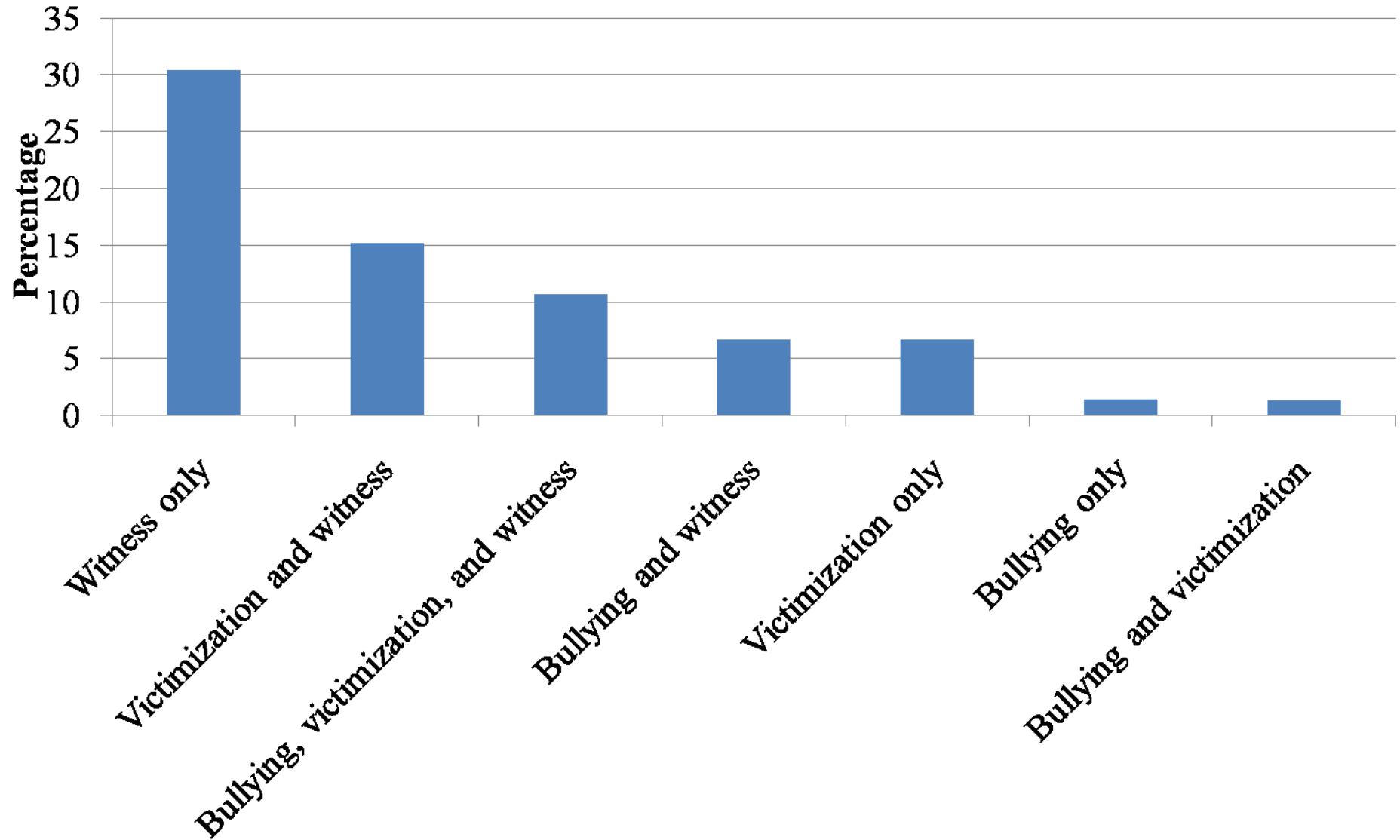
# Who Bullies, Who Gets Bullied, Who Enables: Understanding Roles in Bullying



# Role of Bystanders in Instances of Bullying



## Participant Roles Vary: Few are “Just one thing”



# Participant Roles

Bully

Witnesses

Victim

# Participant Roles

## Bully

### What Characterizes a Bully?

#### **Boys**

- **High rates of “externalizing behavior”**
  - Having behaviors consistent with **ADD, ADHD, Oppositional/Defiant Disorder, or Conduct Disorder**
  - **Being Highly Aggressive**
- **Having negative perceptions of “others”: people unlike themselves**

# Participant Roles

## What Characterizes a Victim?

### Boys

- **Low Social Competence**
  - **Lack basic social skills**
  - **Unable to easily make friends**
- **Peer Rejection**

Victim



# Participant Roles

Bully

## What Characterizes a Bully?

### *Girls*

- **Often Highly Popular**
- **Use Bullying to establish/confirm social power**

# Participant Roles

## What Characterizes a Victim?

*Girls two types:*

**1. Other Popular Girls**

**2. “Loners”**

• **Low Social Competence**

- **Lack basic social skills**
- **Unable to easily make friends**

• **Peer Rejection**

Victim

# Participant Roles

Bully

## What Characterizes a Bully-Victim?

**A bully-victim is someone who is both the perpetrator and the target of bullying behavior**

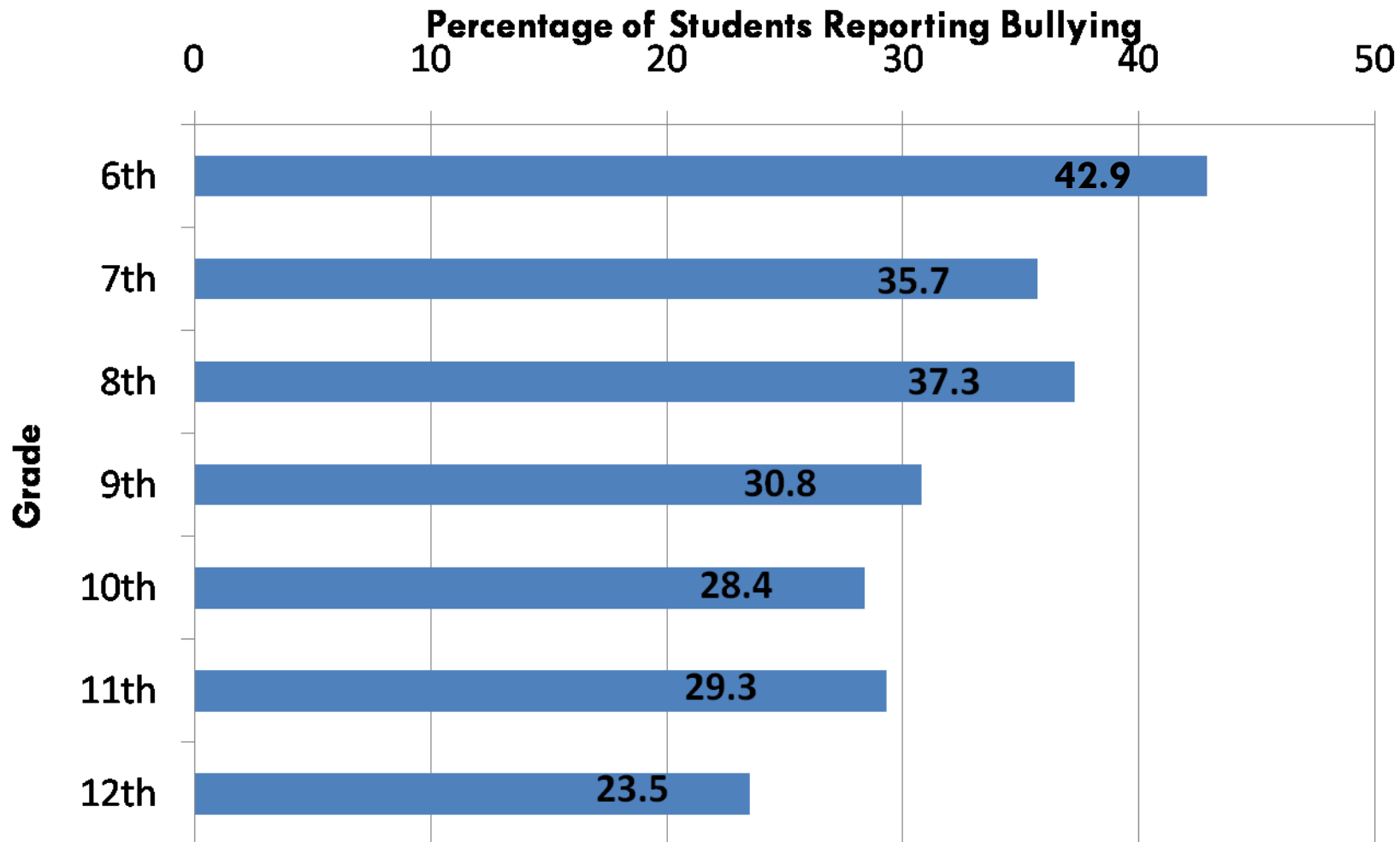
- **Bully-victims show similarly low-levels of social competency as only-victims.**
- **Bully-victims are more easily influenced by their peers than only-victims.**

Victim

# Where, When and How

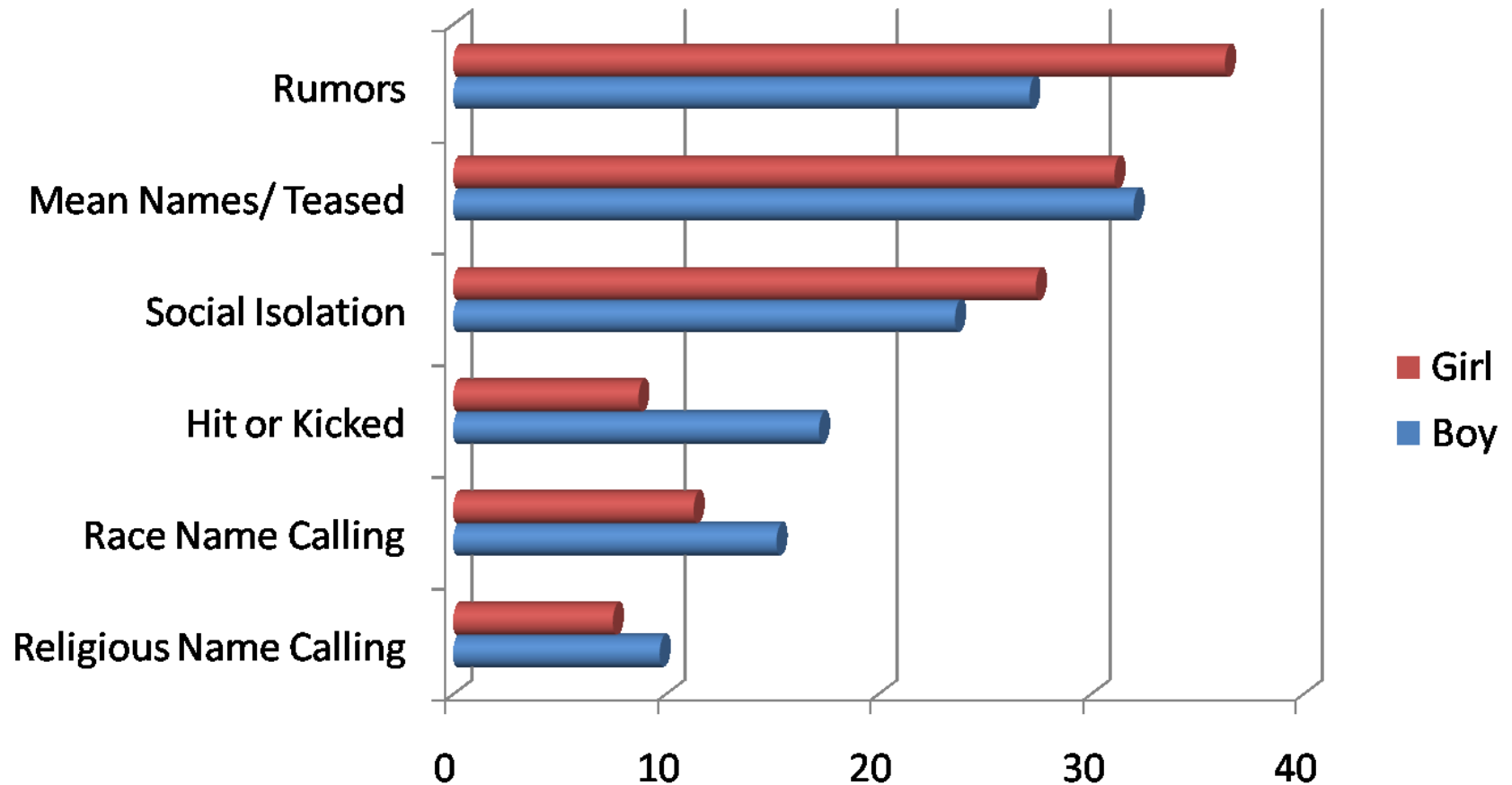


# Middle School is the Worst Period



Source: Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2008

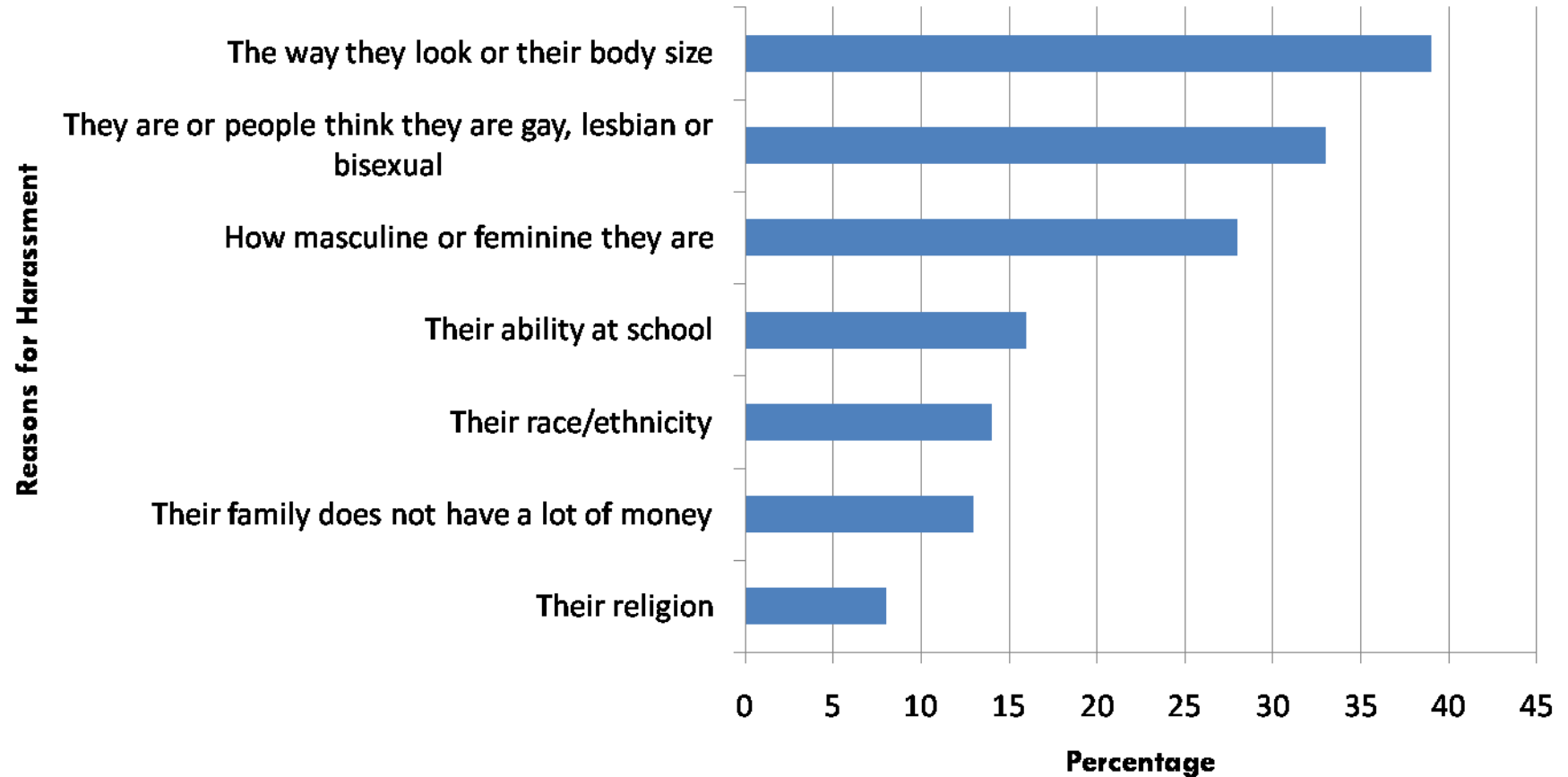
# Prevalence of Bullying Behaviors and the Roles of Gender



Source: Wang, 2009

# Some Groups are Singled Out for Harassment

Question: “At your school, how often are students bullied, called names or harassed for the following reasons?”



Source: *From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America* 2005

# Why the Problem Persists...

## and What We Can do





# President Obama

“ If there’s one goal of this conference, it is to dispel the myth that bullying is just a harmless rite of passage or an inevitable part of growing up. It’s not. Bullying can have destructive consequences for our young people. And it’s not something we have to accept. As parents and students, as teachers and members of the community, we can take steps -- all of us -- to help prevent bullying and create a climate in our schools in which all of our children can feel safe; a climate in which they all can feel like they belong.”



# Teachers and Students Make a Difference

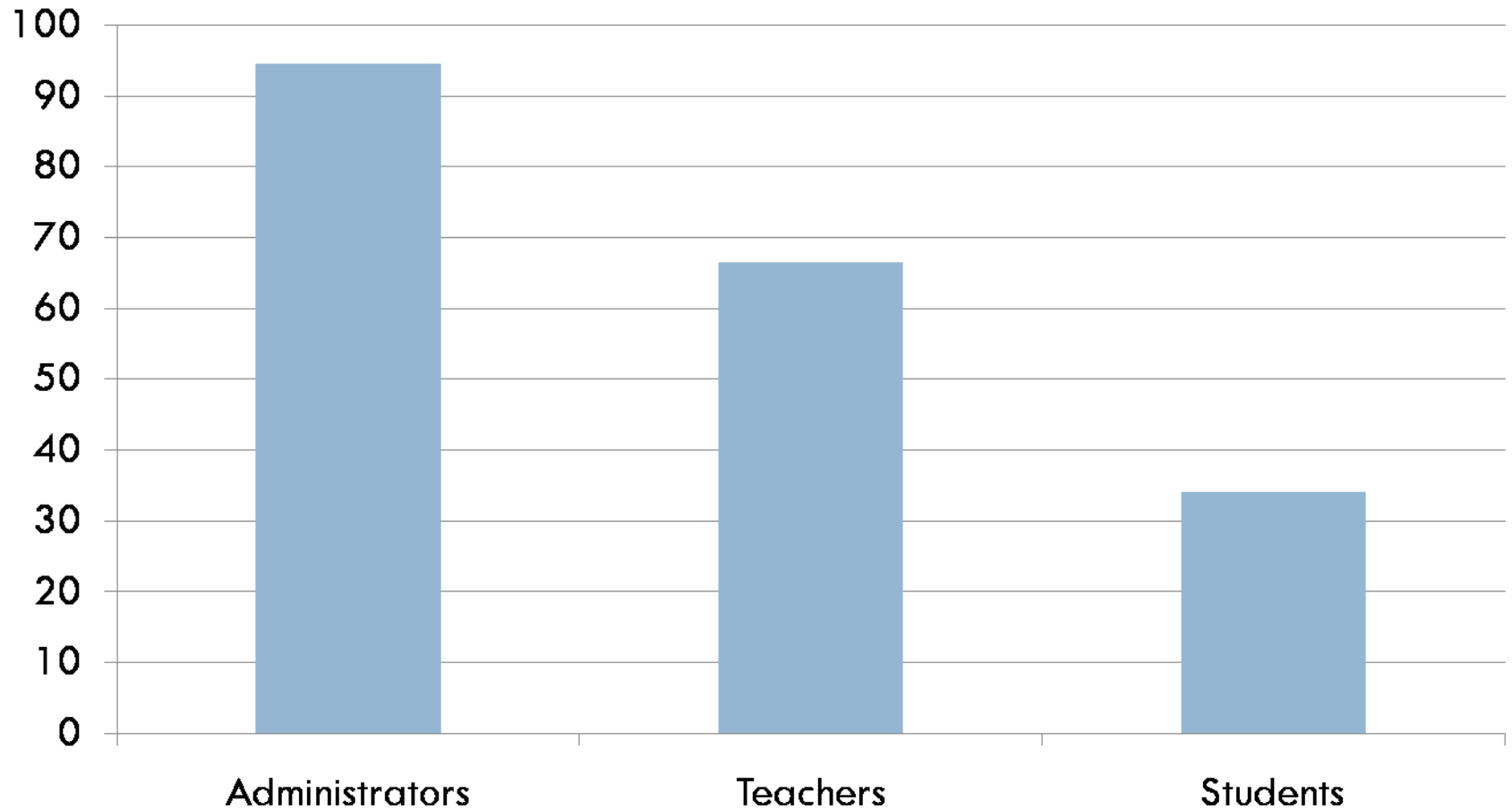


In classrooms where both students and teachers had strong attitudes and actions against bullying and aggression rates of aggression were 1/3 to 1/2 of classes where peers alone (and not teachers) had strong attitudes against aggression

Henry, D., Guerra, N., Huessmann, R., Tolan, P., VanAcker, R., & Eron, L. (2000). Normative influences on aggression in urban elementary school classrooms. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(1), 59-81.

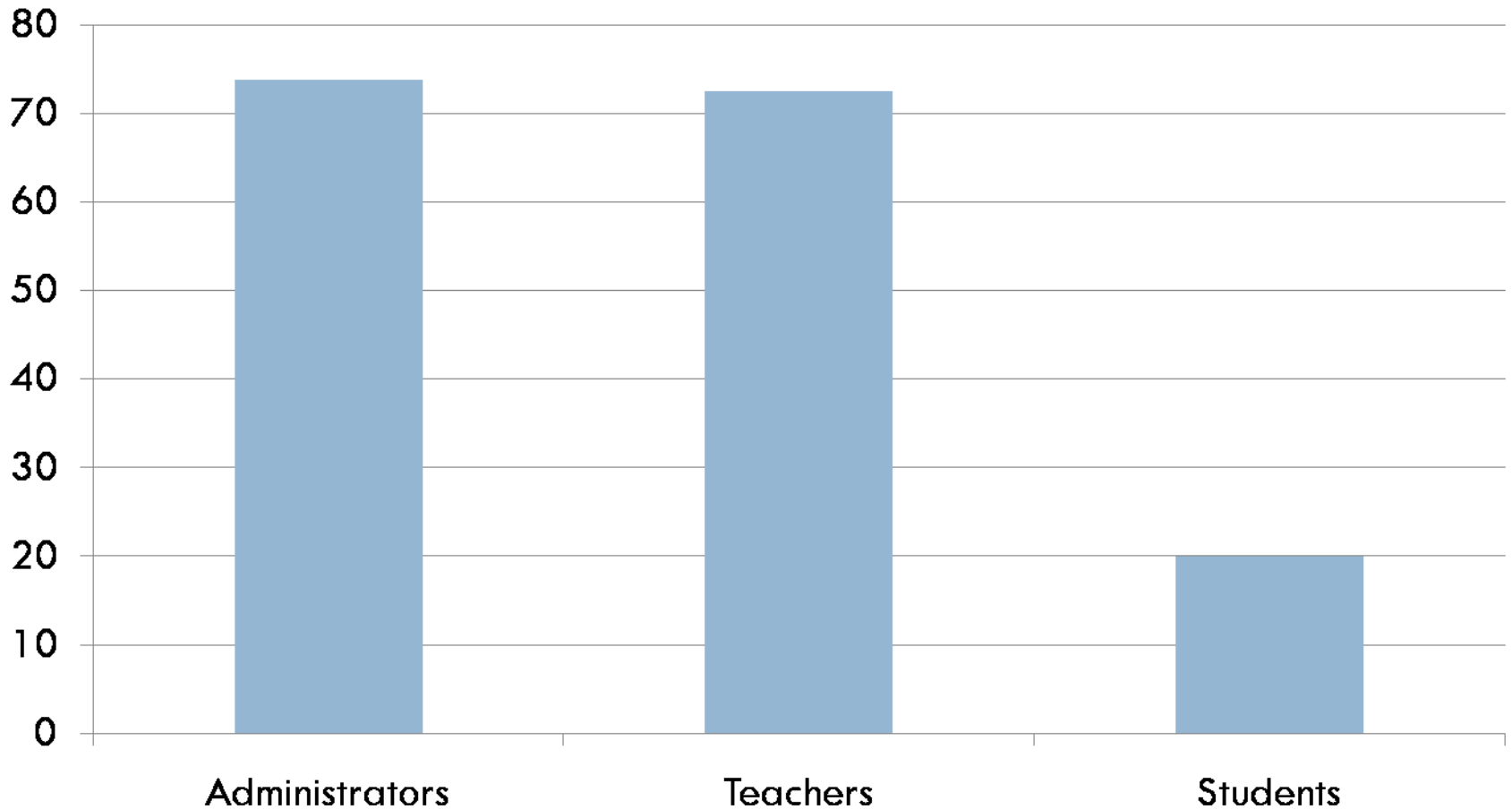
# There is Profound Disagreement among Students, Teachers and Administrators about Teachers' Ability to Deter Bullying

(Grades 6-8, % agreeing with idea that teachers can effectively deter bullying)



# There is Profound Disagreement among Students, Teachers and Administrators about Teachers' Ability to Deter Bullying

(Grades 9-12, % agreeing with idea that teachers can effectively deter bullying)



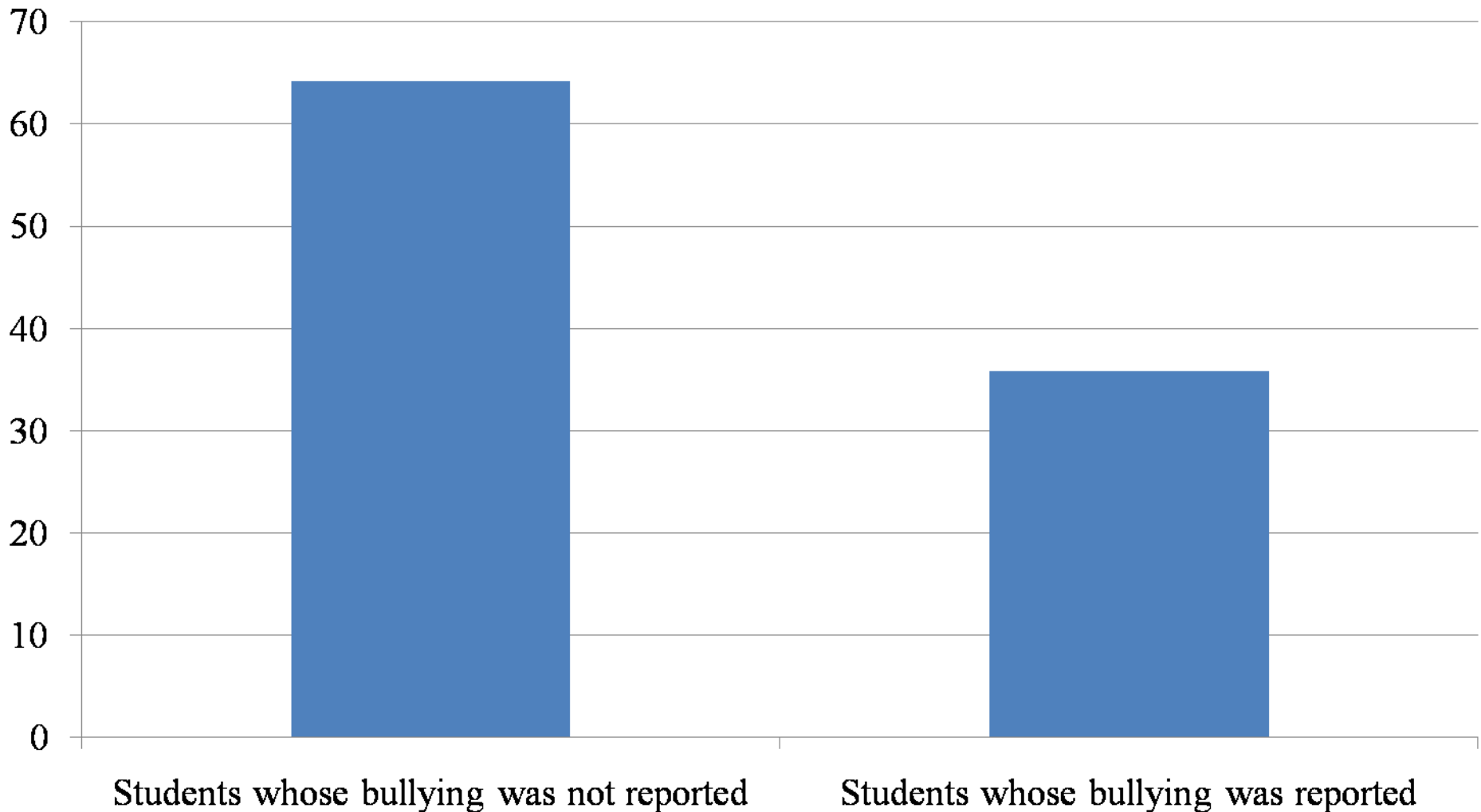
Perkins, Brian. (2007). Figure 1D and 1.1D [Tables]. *Where We Teach: The CUBE Survey of Urban School Climate*. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association

# Peer Intervention Works, but Isn't Common

- Of bullying episodes in which peers intervened, 57% of the interventions were effective (i.e., the bullying stopped within 10 seconds).
- Peers intervene in only 11-19% of all bullying incidents.

# Most Kids Don't Tell

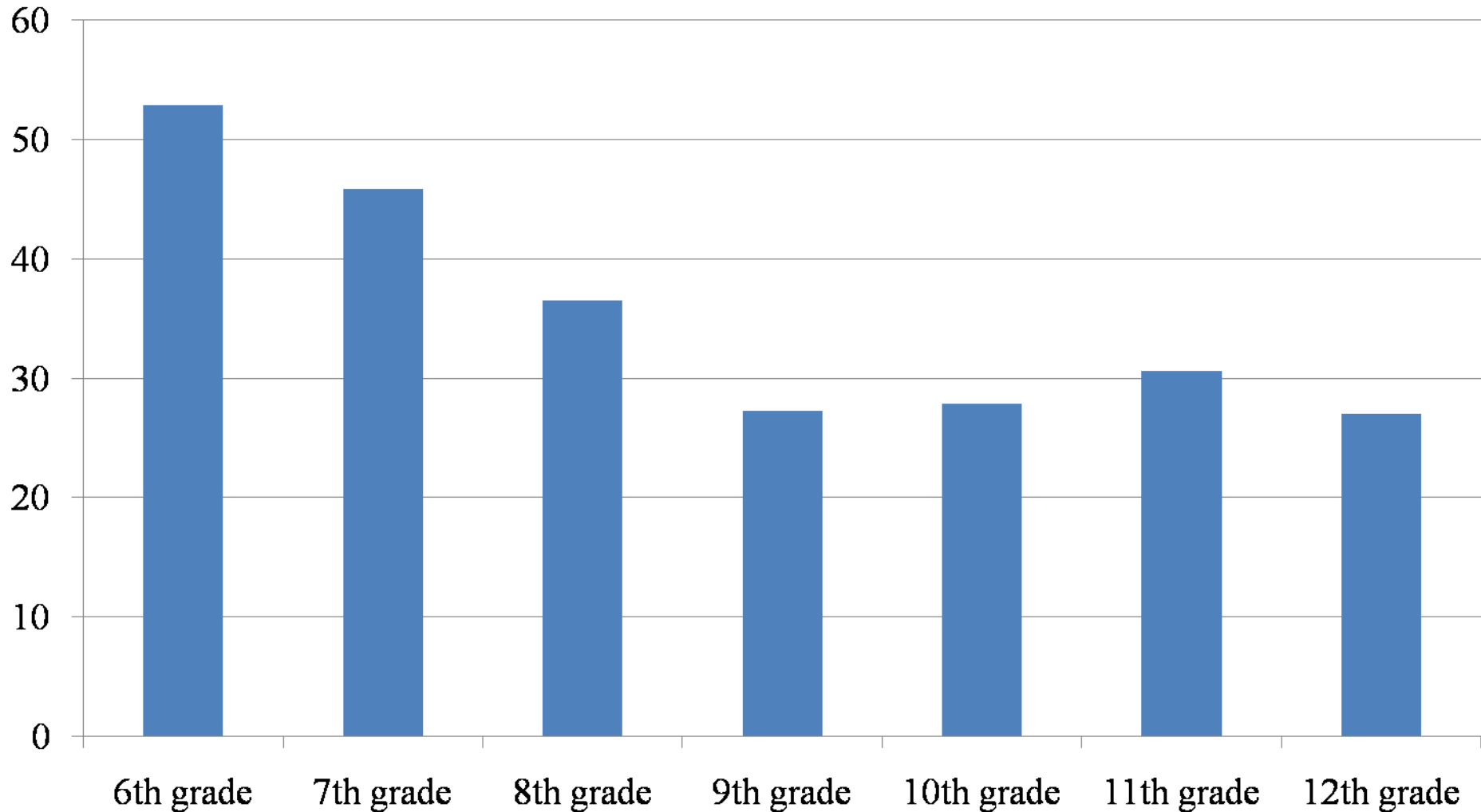
Relationship between victim of bullying and reporting of bullying according to students ages 12-18, 2007-2008



Petrosino, A., Guckenburger, S., DeVoe, J. and Hanson, T. (2010). *What characteristics of bullying, bullying victims, and schools are associated with increased reporting of bullying to school officials?* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2010- No.092). Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Education Laboratory Northeast and Islands. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

# The Older They Are, The Less Likely They are to Tell

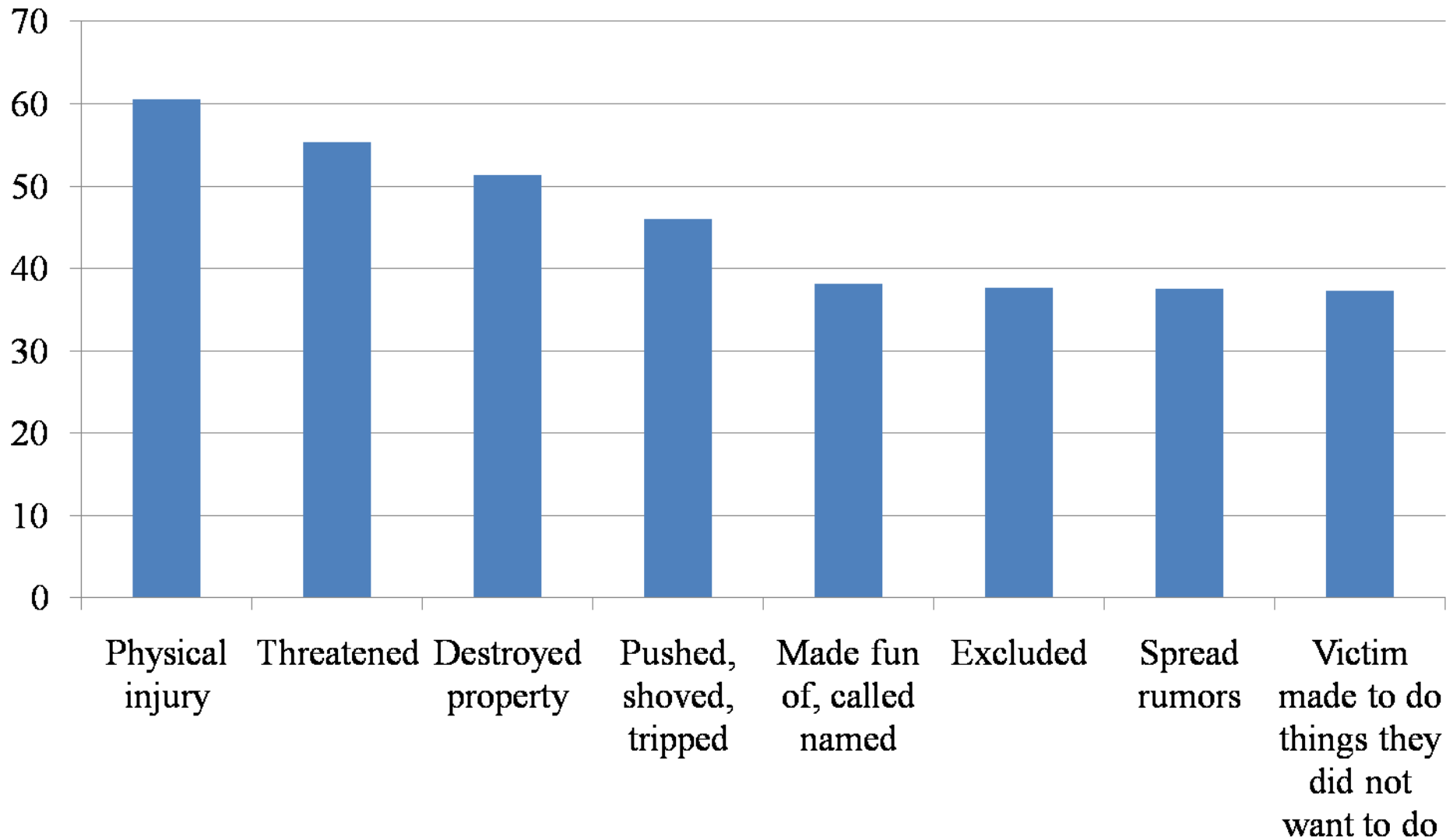
Relationship between current grade and reporting of bullying according to students ages 12-18, 2007-2008



Petrosino, A., Guckenburger, S., DeVoe, J. and Hanson, T. (2010). *What characteristics of bullying, bullying victims, and schools are associated with increased reporting of bullying to school officials?* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2010- No.092). Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Education Laboratory Northeast and Islands. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

## More Extreme Behavior=More Reporting

Relationship between type of bullying and reporting of bullying according to students ages 12-18, 2007-2008



Petrosino, A., Guckenburg, S., DeVoe, J. and Hanson, T. (2010). *What characteristics of bullying, bullying victims, and schools are associated with increased reporting of bullying to school officials?* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2010- No.092). Washington, DC: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Education Laboratory Northeast and Islands. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.



# Secretary Duncan

“No school can be a great school unless it is first a safe school.”



# Every *School* Should...

Help to educate faculty, staff & parents about bullying

Have a clear policy against bullying behaviors, and communicate this policy early and often to students, staff, and parents

Train all staff who interact with students (including bus drivers, school resource officers, school nurses, and cafeteria workers) on how to recognize bullying behaviors and intervene effectively to stop them

Ensure that all staff members take immediate action when bullying is observed.

Gather data to assess bullying, the level of staff commitment to address bullying, and parent interest and concerns.

# Every *Teacher* Should...

Initiate discussion with students and parents about expected behavior before problems arise

Closely supervise your students and be watchful for possible signs of bullying among students in your classes (sudden changes in behavior, etc)

Take immediate action if you observe or suspect bullying

Integrate bullying prevention into your curriculum in age-appropriate ways

Remember that actions sometimes speak louder than words, and be sure that you don't inadvertently model bullying behavior

# Every Student Should...

Speak up! Step in when other students are being bullied or tell a teacher what is going on

Make it clear to others that bullying is not okay.

Support bullied students – make them feel like they are not alone

Help teachers and administrators know what is going on. Work with them to find solutions.

# Every Parent Should...

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Focus on their child. Be supportive and gather information about the bullying. Don't assume they will tell you. Believe them if they do.

Utilize resources such as [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov) to become informed about bullying and bullying prevention

Work with the staff at school to find a solution to stop the bullying, for the sake of your child as well as other students. Get your child out of there if you are not convinced the school will take needed action.

# Carl Joseph Walker Hoover



**1998-2009**



Keep in Touch!

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