

Chapter # 9

STRENGTHENING COLLABORATIONS AMONG SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY TO PREVENT CYBERBULLYING

Michelle Dusko Biferie¹ & Johanna Sam²

¹PhD Candidate, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education, University of British Columbia, Canada

²PhD, Michael Smith Health Research BC Scholar and Associate Professor, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education, University of British Columbia, Canada

ABSTRACT

The most promising anti-cyberbullying interventions are rooted in high quality interactions across individual, school and family spheres. This literature review uses Epstein's school-family-community spheres of influence theory to identify areas for improvement and future research in school and community relations to address cyberbullying. Articles were selected from Google Scholar, EBSCO, and PsychInfo and published between 2010 and 2025. The most effective approaches to engaging with youth rely on building trust in adults and for youth to share their knowledge and lived experiences. School authorities and teachers advocated increasing their knowledge and understanding of cyberbullying interventions, clearer policies, and prioritizing student safety and increased communication between all stakeholders. School counsellors, nurses and psychologists expressed the need for inter-and-intra professional collaboration. Studies showed that parental involvement in the design, planning and implementation of initiatives reduced cyberbullying incidents. There was a dearth of studies that explained how collaborations should occur and the responsibilities of all stakeholders. The most salient recommendations were: 1) schools need to create a welcoming environment for parents; 2) parents should adopt the educational and monitoring habits recommended by the school; 3) communities and community agencies need to allocate resources to supporting families in navigating digital spaces safely.

Keywords: cyberbullying, youth, parents, school-family-community spheres.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying is the abuse of power to cause harm in digital settings (Lan, Law, & Pan, 2022). Behaviours such as impersonating another person online, posting humiliating photos in public online forums, name-calling and posting racist or sexist comments are just some examples (Lan et al., 2022). Possible outcomes of cyberbullying include anxiety, depression, poor academic performance, school truancy, difficulties with relationships and even suicide (Hendry, Hellsten, McIntyre, & Smith, 2023; Froeschle, Crews, & Lim, 2011; Lan et al., 2022). Fifty-two percent of Canadian youth aged 13 to 18 years have engaged in cyberbullying or witnessed it online (Hango, 2023). This review will speak to cyberbullying generally, rather than focusing on any particular form.

Much research has identified the psychological characteristics of adolescent cyberbullies and cybervictims. Cyberbullies tend to have a high need for social dominance and popularity goals (Villarejo-Carballido, Pulido, de Botton, & Serradell, 2019).

Cyberbullies' family life tends to be unstable and is marked with emotional and physical violence (Zheng, Fan, Huang, Lan, & Wang, 2025). Cybervictims' families tend to be more permissive about digital technologies (Elboj-Saso, Íñiguez-Berrozpe, Cebollero Salinas, & Bautista Alcaine, 2023). Research on parenting styles and cyberbullying is mixed. Some studies illustrate that authoritarian parenting is linked with cyberbullying; often, parents who espouse more violent orientations to problem-solving will participate in cyberaggression with their adolescent children (Zheng et al., 2025). Other studies demonstrate that authoritarian approaches reduce cyberbullying (Dehue, Bolman, Völlink, & Pouwelse, 2012). A lack of knowledge of what constitutes cyberbullying among parents facilitates cyberbullying behaviour and victimization (O'Moore et al., 2013; Fekolkin, 2016).

Social characteristics influence cyberbullying behaviour. Having a racialized or non-heterosexual identity, lower socio-economic status, female gender, neurodivergence, mental health challenges and exposure to violence in the home are significant risk factors for cybervictimization (Pennell, Campbell, & Tangen, 2020; Ronis & Slaunwhite, 2019; Kenny, Merry, Brownbridge, & Urquia, 2020; Stone, Saggars, Campbell, & Yates, 2025). School-level factors that are highly correlated with cyberbullying include the lack of supervision of students, poor classroom management techniques, school indifference concerning cybervictimization, student use of phones at school, poorer school climate, lack of social and school connectedness, and weaker school-family relations (O'Moore et al., 2013). This review will explore the literature on how school, family and communities address child and youth mental health as it relates to cyberbullying exposure.

Over the past 20 years, in North America and Europe, there have been significant efforts in creating anticiberbullying initiatives, especially at the school level. The most promising interventions are rooted in socio-ecological understandings of cyberbullying that explore interactions of influences across individual, school and family spheres (Cross et al., 2015b). Whole school approaches incorporate specific programming at each and intersecting levels. This approach is highly dependent on school and family collaboration and a focus on creating environments that reduce engagement in cyberbullying. Typical strategies involve improving school climate, community involvement and modelling pro-social behaviours (Cross et al., 2015b). School, family and community partnerships are a shared responsibility and a reciprocal process that engage stakeholders to enable parents to actively support their children (National Center on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments).

As the success of whole-school approaches to cyberbullying depends on the quality of school and family relations, this literature review will use Epstein's school-family-community spheres of influence theory to identify areas for improvement and future research on cyberbullying in relation to school, families, and community contexts. This review will discuss necessary conditions for collaborations among family, school and community to address cyberbullying to answer the following research question: What are the gaps and areas of future research in school-community relations as articulated by Epstein's theory on school-family community spheres of influence as it pertains to school-community approaches to dealing with cyberbullying among adolescents? An elaboration of Epstein's theory is in order.

1.1. Theoretical Approach

Epstein's theory on the school-family-community spheres of influence explains how students thrive when school-family-community mutually reinforce one another. This theory highlights the interdependency of school-family-community relations. Authentic school relations create the following conditions: 1) Family-like schools, 2) School-like families, and 3) School and family-like communities (Epstein, 2010). 1) Family-like schools welcome all

families, create ways to engage hard-to-reach families (often those experiencing systemic oppression), and make all children feel special and cared for; 2) In school-like families, parents receive support from the school to reinforce learning and positive behaviours that occur at school; 3) Communities create events, settings and services that benefit families so they can support their children's healthy development and include recognition of student success and achievement (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Epstein developed the Framework of Six Types of Involvement for Comprehensive Programs of Partnership and Sample Practices more commonly used in discussions about school-community-relations resulting from the sphere of influence theory (Organizing Development, n.d.). However, the choice to refer to the school-family-community spheres of influence theory was motivated to focus on the interdependency and mutual reinforcement (or mutual undermining activity; Epstein, 2010). Because of the sensitive nature of the issue, the emphasis of this review is to explore areas where schools, families and communities need to become aware of the interdependency and need for mutuality in responding to cyberbullying among youth. A discussion of the methodological approach is needed to ground the review in empirical approaches.

2. METHODS

Search terms included "school community relations", "school community collaboration", "school community cooperation", "school family", "school teacher," "school community", "school staff" AND "cyberbullying", "cyberaggression". The underlying notion of Epstein's theory is the interconnectedness of school, family and community and thus, the search terms focused on articles that emphasized this interconnectedness, as opposed to activities related to only schools or families or communities. Cybervictimization was not used as a term to avoid the identification of articles that discussed individual-level factors, which are not the focus of this review. Articles were selected from Google Scholar, EBSCO, and PsychInfo and published between 2010 and 2025 to reflect this topic's interdisciplinary nature and the relevance of digital technologies and platforms on which cyberbullying occurs. Based on this search, 152 articles were identified. Opinion pieces, government reports, and lay literature were excluded because this review focuses on scholarly debates about community and school relations in addressing cyberbullying. Original, global and empirical research in English regardless of methodology were also included in addition to literature reviews and scoping reviews. This review focuses on the body of research in highly industrialized countries where the majority of this research is produced. Articles about cyberbullying among adolescents were included. Abstracts and research methods were read for relevance. Articles that did not directly answer the research questions were excluded. This approach yielded 37 articles for the review after duplicate articles were removed.

3. RESULTS

The results section outlines gaps in research in the following categories 1) school; 2) parents and families; 3) community and cultural level factors. The school results are further detailed by discussing research as it relates to students and peers and school professionals (e.g., teachers and school authorities, school counsellors, psychologists and nurses).

3.1. School: Students and Peers

Many youths believe that cyberbullying cannot be prevented, reflecting perceived limitations in adult support or school policies (Parris, Varjas, & Meyers, 2014). Studies on youth disclosure of cyberbullying incidents is mixed with some claiming that up to 33% of youth disclose cyberbullying incidents to an adult (Byrne, Vessey, & Pfeifer, 2018) and others claim the number is as high as 60% (Villarejo-Carballido et al., 2019). This perception challenges the development of family-like schools as outlined in Epstein's theory, which are meant to create environments where all students feel supported, valued, and cared for. Students limited trust in the school staffs' ability to intervene effectively undermines the school's role in building safety and resilience.

Youth are more likely to confide in peers about cybervictimization explaining why peer-to-peer interventions show promise in promoting resilience among youth (O'Moore et al., 2013). Such programs enable youth to connect with their peers and acknowledge them as experts in digital technologies leading to significant reductions in cyberbullying, at least over the short term (Froeschle et al., 2011; Couvillon & Ilieva, 2011; Cross, Lester, Barnes, Cardoso, & Hadwen, 2015). These findings suggest that school-led interventions must also activate peer networks to be effective.

Other initiatives gaining the attention of school authorities are programs that foster inter-generational collaboration across student, family, and school spheres (Froeschle et al., 2011). These programs employ train-the-trainer approaches where community leaders train youth to lead workshops and educational forums for schools and families (Cross et al., 2015a). In summary, the most effective approaches to engaging with youth involves providing opportunities for connecting with others to share their knowledge and lived experience (Villarejo-Carballido et al., 2019; Cross et al., 2015a; Pennell et al., 2020). These findings align with Epstein's emphasis on mutual reinforcement within the school-community sphere, as youth-led strategies are most effective when recognized and supported by school staff and families.

3.2. School: Teachers and School Authorities

Many teachers and school authorities (e.g., principals, vice principals) voiced concern over their knowledge about cyberbullying, as well as their willingness and confidence to support students through one-on-one support or participation in implementing antibullying programs (Fekolkin, 2016). School authorities, in particular, expressed a lack of knowledge about the nature of cyberbullying and related interventions or programs (Pennell et al., 2020). Other challenges included insufficient time, heavy workloads, limited support from school authorities and districts (Young, Tully, & Ramirez, 2016), along with role confusion and diffusion (Zhu, C., Huang, S., Evans, R., & Zhang, 2021).

Teachers expressed the need for more training to support their students and guidance from school authorities on following cyberbullying protocols and fostering positive communication channels between families to build trust (Graves et al., 2022; Bell, Keles, Furenes Klippen, Silvia Caravita, & Fandrem, 2025). Some teachers, however, believed that principals and families should address cyberbullying on a case-by-case basis (Young et al., 2016). School districts felt frustrated from lack of direction from local or national legal frameworks and encouraged schools to tailor anticyberbullying initiatives to local circumstances (Young et al., 2016).

Likewise, because of the place-less nature of cyberbullying, school authorities expressed confusion over their jurisdictional power to intervene in cyberbullying cases. There was confusion surrounding when to involve the police and legal proceedings (Bell & Fandrem, 2025). Principals were unfamiliar with laws or school district policies

concerning cyberbullying, if they even existed; some areas and school districts have no cyberbullying policies (Young et al., 2016). In light of the lack of clarity around appropriate protocols for cyberbullying, many schools resort to technological solutions, such as, blocking access to specific websites and banning phones altogether, which do not address the underlying reasons for cyberbullying (Parris et al., 2023).

When surveyed on school approaches to cyberbullying, school authorities and teachers expressed the importance of increasing their knowledge and understanding of cyberbullying and interventions, advocating for clearer policies, and prioritizing student safety in their schools (Bell et al., 2025). They also emphasized the importance of home-school collaborations and increased communication between all stakeholders, including the larger community and school neighbourhood residents, to reduce cyberaggression and promote positive student development (Bell et al., 2025).

These gaps undermine the establishment of family-like schools as conceptualized by Epstein (2010) given schools should not only care for and protect students but also act as trusted sources of guidance during cyberbullying incidents.

3.3. School: School Counsellors, Psychologists and Nurses

The research on school counsellors, psychologists and nurses all highlighted their professional involvement in reducing cyberbullying in schools to the extent that professional designations and credentials allow. These school support staff provide multiple avenues for addressing cyberbullying: 1) one-on-one counselling to victims and their families; 2) helping perpetrators learn new and adaptive skills to cope with their interpersonal difficulties through psychotherapeutic techniques; and 3) educating both students and staff on risk factors for cyberbullying and its detrimental effects on development and positive rehabilitative approaches (Paolini, 2018; Yosep, Hikmat, & Mardhiyah, 2023; Elbedour et al., 2020). As frontline mental health professionals, their work contributes significantly to building family-like schools—environments where students feel safe, understood, and individually supported.

School counsellors, in particular, are well positioned to increase communication between school and parents; counsellors are encouraged to increase their visibility, approachability and connections with students to enhance relationships with all stakeholders and to promote trust between school and families (Su et al., 2021; Paolini, 2018). Thus, counsellors are uniquely positioned to foster school-like families by bridging communication between schools and home. Studies have shown that because of these support staffs' professional obligations, they are optimally prepared to link students with mental health and other supports available in the community (Byrne et al., 2018). Additional contributions to school efforts to combat cyberbullying includes participation in the development of anticyberbullying school and school district policies (Paolini, 2018). These approaches entail planning, designing and delivering train-the-trainer and peer support programs, as well as the development of prevention and intervention programs and conducting risk assessments of the school climate and individual students (Byrne et al., 2018). Studies also indicate the need for school counsellors, school psychologists and nurses to adopt trauma-informed, culturally-sensitive and spiritually-inspired care. Other studies recommend that school counsellors, school psychologists and nurses be actively involved in crisis management through the management of abusers, victims and bystanders and the documentation of cyberbullying incidents (Su et al., 2021).

To the extent that these suggestions are taken under advisement of school authorities or even adopted by schools is questionable considering resource constraints, priorities, staff shortages and staff over-work. Studies on the role of school counsellors and nurses indicated

role confusion and diffusion of responsibilities highlighting overlapping professional boundaries especially concerning their collaboration with teachers (Su et al., 2021; Byrne et al., 2018) and lack of support from school authorities (Su et al., 2021). Like teachers and school authorities, counsellors, nurses and school psychologists spoke of the importance of collaboration with families and the school community, however, most of the work of these professionals involves implementation of interventions based on high-risk approaches (Yosep et al., 2023; Elbedour et al., 2020). Also, like teaching staff, these support staff complain of a lack of training in dealing with cyberbullying and youth (Byrne et al.; Zhu et al., 2021) and the need for inter-and-intra professional collaboration (Paolini, 2018; Elbedour et al., 2020). It should be noted that the search terms yielded only a total 5 studies on the role of nurses, school psychologists, and counsellors in curbing cyberbullying in schools illustrating the need for more research on this topic. The work of school counsellors, psychologists, and nurses contributes meaningfully to family-like schools, school-like families, and school- and family-like communities, but their impact is limited by role ambiguity, insufficient training, and systemic under-resourcing. Strengthening their capacity to collaborate across spheres is essential for implementing effective interventions that promote student well-being and resilience in the face of cyberbullying.

3.4. Parents and Families

Family dynamics and family-school relations can complicate approaches to cyberbullying in schools despite support from students and school counsellors that often act as mediators in conflicts. Cyberbullies have unique challenges, including parental denial about their child's engagement in cyberbullying (Bell & Fandrem, 2025). Many parents of cyberaggressors may struggle with their own emotional difficulties and are often mistrustful of school authorities' attempts at restorative actions (Zhu et al., 2021). In contrast, cybervictims' families have been found to hold schools responsible for cybervictimization and, at times, excessively persistent in seeking resolutions, according to school authorities. Likewise, such parents reported having to 'fight for the school's attention' for the school to address cyberbullying incidents (Bell & Fandrem, 2025). These challenges illustrate the fragility of school-like families; Epstein's concept where families and schools work together to reinforce student development. Such responses erode opportunities for mutual accountability and hinder the development of shared intervention strategies.

Regardless of students' cybervictimization status, studies have shown that schools should be sensitive to parental concerns and show empathy, understanding and humility to work with families to address cyberbullying incidents (Fekolkin, 2016; Zhu et al., 2021). When parents believe in teachers and school authorities' competence to address cyberbullying, they were more willing to take teachers' advice and participate in antibullying interventions (Fekolkin, 2016). Parents were more likely to believe and trust teachers when they demonstrated knowledge and skill in managing cyberbullying or aggression at school (Fekolkin, 2016). Schools should also be flexible, taking into account parents' busy schedules, and tailor approaches accordingly.

Studies elaborated that interventions involving parents in the design, planning and implementation of school-based antibullying initiatives reduced cyberbullying incidents at school (Zhu et al., 2021). Having shared goals and effective communication strategies that encouraged parents to participate were noted as promoters of parental involvement (Stamatis & Nikolaou, 2016). These types of partnerships align closely with school- and family-like communities, where schools, families, and even community services share responsibility for student safety. However, most initiatives to address school-based cyberbullying were simply educational programs. These programs were directed at parents and encouraged increased

monitoring of online activities and identification of behavioural changes associated with cybervictimization or cyberbullying with advice on how to best support affected youth (Lan et al., 2022). Other interventions incorporated high-risk approaches such as family counselling or psychotherapy for victims and their families led by the school counsellor, school psychologist. Other interventions recommended school linkages to specialized mental health services (Dailey & Roche, 2025; Paolini, 2018).

3.5. Community and Cultural Level Factors

While discussed sparingly, many studies reiterate the need for greater community involvement in helping youth deal with cyberbullying. Studies advocate for more community linkages with schools, enabling students to engage in pro-social activities and supporting various community-based work in their neighbourhoods while providing respite from online time (Dailey & Roche, 2025). These studies reflect Epstein's concept of school- and family-like communities, where community agencies, service programs, and neighborhood organizations collaborate with schools and families to create environments that promote youth well-being beyond the school. Although most studies highlighted in this review indicated the need to involve the community (e.g., community agencies, services programs), there was a dearth of research on how to proceed in garnering community support. Additionally, most school and community based antibullying initiatives are short-term interventions (less than 5 months) whose effects diminish with time (Lan et al., 2022). Programs that use train-the-trainer models, where community leaders equip youth to lead cyberbullying workshops for peers, parents, and school personnel, exemplify Epstein's third sphere, school- and family-like communities, in practice (Cross et al., 2015a). Through these collaborative initiatives, all three sphere are mutually strengthened, reflecting the interdependent system that Epstein's theory describes. However, the few studies about how schools and families can effectively engage community partners did not meet the review criteria, suggesting a critical need to explore this interrelationship in greater depth. The interdependency of these spheres is vital for creating lasting, culturally sensitive, and responsive programs that empower youth, engage families, and build resilient communities. Addressing the challenges educators face in responding to cyberbullying requires a coordinated focus on all three of Epstein's spheres. Building family-like schools demands training and clear policies; supporting school-like families requires equipping caregivers to respond to cyber harms at home; and cultivating school- and family-like communities necessitates multi-stakeholder collaboration rooted in shared values. Only when these spheres work in mutual reinforcement can school systems implement trust-based, effective cyberbullying interventions that truly support youth safety, mental health, and long-term resilience.

4. DISCUSSION

The research on school-family cooperation in reducing cyberbullying incidents among adolescents reiterates the need for parental and community involvement. However, only one article elaborated on the challenges and pitfalls of engaging multiple stakeholders. There was also a dearth of studies that explained how such collaboration should occur and the expected responsibilities of all stakeholders. Using Epstein's concept of the spheres of influence, an exploration of the intersection of individual, peer, school, and community factors will follow.

4.1. “Family-Like Schools”

A significant limitation is the dearth of research on the involvement of school staff other than teachers despite the requirement for the entire school to be involved in whole-school approaches (Hellfeldt, López-Romero, & Andershed, 2019). Other staff, such as school counsellors, nurses, school custodians or administrative staff, received little mention despite their importance to the social ecology of the school (Yosep et al., 2023). For example, studies show that custodians significantly promote student welfare (Scott, 2007). The school’s capacity to be a ‘family-like school’, to garner support from parents in responding to cyberbullying, is severely curtailed if schools cannot foster and utilize each staff member’s time and talent.

Recommendations to build change-promoting collaborations among school staff and parents involve inviting parental participation before conversations about cyberbullying and having shared expectations. Because of the sensitivity and potential legal implications, it is also essential to foster caring relationships with all families to reduce the perception of ‘singling out’ families. Expectations around the efficacy of anticyberbullying initiatives are important, especially if complacency exists among students, school staff and parents.

The creation of shared expectations, goals and approaches occurs when all parties understand that their efforts are for the betterment of students’ lives. Reiterate the need to promote psychological safety at school as a deterrent to cyberaggression and also as a means to foster resilience for those affected may be sufficient to begin to build collaborations between all stakeholders. Language has to be clear, concise and understandable to all families and families should be invited to co-construct shared goals.

Appropriately delivered education can enable stakeholders to contribute to shared goals and to divide responsibilities accordingly. Incorporating pre-service training on cyberbullying, including risk assessments and identification mitigation, and crisis management for nurses, school psychologists, and school counsellors, would prepare future professionals to implement and help sustain anticyberbullying initiatives, policies and protocols. Requiring continuing professional training on cyberbullying mitigation strategies could be required as a condition of employment for support and teaching staff. As a lack of knowledge and confidence among school staff were identified as jeopardizing parental involvement and education (Fekolkin, 2016), building knowledge among school staff should be a main priority prior to collaboration and involvement with parents.

While effective communication is essential to establishing shared goals, managing expectations and dividing or sharing responsibilities, a dearth of findings elaborated on how best to communicate about cyberbullying within and outside the school community. Related findings on school-community communication point to the need for consistent and clear communication within the school community, respecting differences of opinion and negotiating outcomes (Bell & Fandrem, 2025). However, in light of the unclear and poorly understood school district or school policies, school staff and families may have difficulties doing so. Schools, school districts, government families and the larger community must conceptualize whole-school approaches to cyberbullying that are rooted in evidence and that promote safety and a positive school climate, including school connectedness (Bell et al., 2025). Some solutions include communicating the seriousness of the issue, especially with resistant school authorities and parents. Sharing the lived experiences of students impacted by cyberbullying and bringing in experts may foster common ground for constructive discussions among all stakeholders. In order for schools to be ‘family-like’, the principal must coordinate activities and communicate empathically with a consistent message that encourages feedback and that is delivered in a culturally appropriate manner. These

approaches create a warm atmosphere where parents feel that each child, parent and family are valued and cared for.

Bell and Fandrem (2025)'s study investigated parental beliefs in addition to the barriers and facilitators of cooperation among parents, school staff, and community stakeholders to combat cyberbullying in Norwegian contexts. Using reflexive thematic analysis of parental interviews, and guided by bioecological theory, Bell and Fandrem (2025) identified practical steps for successful school-family- and community anticyberbullying collaboration. Their findings are summarized in the table below.

Table 1.
Bell and Fandrem's practical actions on cyberbullying reduction initiatives with schools, families and community.

Focus Area	Practical Actions for Schools & Educators
1. Communication	- Schedule regular parent–teacher meetings focused on online safety. - Use multiple formats (e.g., emails, school apps, translated letters, phone calls). - Create safe, open channels for parent feedback and reporting concerns. - Offer workshops on cyberbullying, digital behavior, and school response protocols.
2. Parent Education	- Provide plain-language guides (with translations) on parent rights and policies. - Use real-life examples or role-playing to increase parent confidence.
3. Staff Training	- Train school staff in: • Cyberbullying detection and intervention • Trauma-informed approaches • Culturally responsive communication. - Reinforce consistent and empathetic adult responses.
4. Clear Roles & Follow-Up	- Define clear staff responsibilities when cyberbullying occurs. - Use incident tracking systems to ensure accountability and follow-through. - Create individualized support plans for involved students (victims and aggressors).
5. School–Community Culture	- Embed parent and community collaboration in school planning. - Include parent/community reps in anti-bullying or digital safety committees. - Partner with local agencies (e.g., youth services, cultural groups, law enforcement).
6. Equity & Inclusion	- Actively include immigrant, minority, and underrepresented families. - Translate all communication materials; provide interpreters at meetings. - Regularly collect feedback from diverse parents to improve inclusion.

(adapted from Bell, M., & Fandrem, H. (2025). “It Takes a Village”: Parental Experiences with Cooperation to Overcome Cyberbullying in Norwegian Schools. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-024-00277-y>)

Schools should develop a detailed understanding of their students, families, district policies, and local community resources to effectively implement anticyberbullying interventions. Most interventions are expected to require faithful implementation of programmatic antibullying approaches often without attention to the school context, resulting in limited effectiveness (Casas, Del Rey, & Ortega-Ruiz, 2018; Hortigüela Alcalá, Fernández Río, González Calvo, & Pérez Pueyo, 2019; Lan et al., 2022). Likewise, most programs do

not account for the ethnic and cultural diversity within schools, school types (e.g., charter, private, public) or the underlying causes of cyberbullying such as systemic oppression, racism, or sexism (King, 2024) that disproportionately affect marginalized groups (Ronis & Slaunwhite, 2019). Addressing these concerns must become a priority if schools favour whole-school approaches. Furthermore, interventions that are strength-based over deficit-focused would motivate more effective school-family and community partnerships, as deficit thinking in partnerships tends to exasperate victim-blaming and hegemonic systems (Gillies, 2023).

4.2. “School-Like Families”

Attention should also be paid to involving 'hard to reach' or reticent families to not further exasperate existing social inequalities through the differential participation of more affluent and high-resourced parents. Parental involvement and engagement should include efforts to reduce language and cultural barriers while embracing students' and parents' funds of knowledge. Adopting school-family relation principles of democratic engagement and parental empowerment will encourage parental participation from marginalized communities. To create balanced partnerships with families requires social justice and strength-based approaches in the implementation of sensitive programming around cyberbullying.

4.3. “School and Family-Like Communities”

Equality of parental and student engagement should be fostered to promote reciprocal relations between school staff, parents, and the community. Creating cyberbullying initiatives that enable parents to raise their concerns and enable students to provide their expertise through lived experiences and technological understandings with school staff is essential. However, current conceptualizations perceive parents and students as passive recipients of knowledge; the interventions with the best results empower parents to reinforce what students learn in school about cyberbullying (Lan et al., 2022). Although beyond the scope of this chapter, school-community partnerships could involve families and students in designing, delivering, implementing, and evaluating digital literacy and cybersafety programs.

5. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future research on school-community relations and cyberbullying needs to consider schools' power dynamics, the staffs' specific roles and how best to mobilize staffs' respective expertise or power to shape whole school anticyberbullying approaches. These factors affect how anticyberbullying policies are implemented, resulting in youths' perceptions of safety and support. Understanding these interdependencies through case studies could identify staff roles and tasks for consistent support which has been shown to improve resilience among youth (Anderson-Butcher, Cash, Saltzburg, Midle, & Pace, 2004).

Studies should also examine how schools and communities negotiate sensitive issues like cyberbullying, emphasizing inclusive methods like Participatory Action Research (PAR) to co-create strategies that reflect shared values across all stakeholders. This inclusive approach can strengthen students and families' sense of belonging, safety and resilience by ensuring that support systems reflect the lived realities and values of all stakeholders. Without full parental engagement, interventions may lack crucial context and continuity at home. PAR can improve youth mental health by promoting more consistent support networks across home and school environments.

Another critical gap lies in professionals' limited training to respond to digital harms in trauma-informed or equity-focused ways. Future research should assess the efficacy of professional development programs using pre/post evaluation designs, with a focus on outcomes such as student safety perceptions, reduced incidents, and increased staff intervention efficacy.

Similarly, empowering schools to incorporate inclusive practices into anticyberbullying work is essential as interventions may fail to address the structural biases that disproportionately expose marginalized youth to cyberbullying. School case studies that integrate equity-diversity- and inclusion principles and enhance the resilience of marginalized youth by creating more affirming environments.

Parental involvement in anticyberbullying initiatives must also be aligned with health equity principles. Future studies could apply an intersectional framework to analyze how socioeconomic status, race, and immigration status shape parent engagement in anticyberbullying initiatives at school. Longitudinal designs would be particularly useful to examine how parent-school relationships evolve over time and influence youth outcomes such as emotional regulation and digital coping skills.

Lastly, there is a pressing need to develop school-family-community models that include trusted community partners, especially in under-resourced or politically disengaged areas. These partnerships can fill support gaps, making interventions more effective and relevant, while enhancing students' safety and long-term wellbeing.

6. CONCLUSION

Future research should promote collaboration among students, schools, families, and communities using culturally responsive, equitable, and strength-based approaches. Effective anticyberbullying efforts require respectful stakeholder engagement and shared responsibility. For schools to apply Epstein's 1) Family-like schools, 2) School-like families, and 3) School and family-like communities, a welcoming environment for cooperative parental involvement is needed. Likewise, parents should adopt the educational and monitoring habits recommended by the school and attempt to instill habits that are consistent with the school approaches to reinforce students' learning. Lastly, parents and community agencies should allocate resources to help families navigate digital spaces safely. Schools, families, and communities should address their respective concerns and expectations while centering youth in initiatives to enhance knowledge transfer and youth resilience.

REFERENCES

- Anderson-Butcher, D., Cash, S. J., Saltzburg, S., Midle, T., & Pace, D. (2004). Institutions of Youth Development: The Significance of Supportive Staff-Youth Relationships. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 9(1–2), 83–99. https://doi.org/10.1300/J137v09n01_07
- Bell, M., & Fandrem, H. (2025). "It Takes a Village": parental experiences with cooperation to overcome cyberbullying in Norwegian schools. *International Journal of Bullying Prevention*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42380-024-00277-y>
- Bell, M., Keles, S., Furenes Klippen, M. I., Silvia Caravita, S. C., & Fandrem, H. (2025). Cooperation within the school community to overcome cyberbullying: A systematic scoping review. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 1–16. doi:10.1080/00313831.2025.2476504
- Byrne, E., Vessey, J. A., & Pfeifer, L. (2018). Cyberbullying and social media: Information and interventions for school nurses working with victims, students, and families. *The Journal of School Nursing*, 34(1), 38–50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1059840517740191>

- Casas, J. A., Del Rey, R., & Ortega-Ruiz, R. (2018). The ConRed program: Educating in cybercoexistence and cyberbullying prevention by improving coexistence projects in schools. *Reducing Cyberbullying in Schools*, 203-211. doi:10.1016/b978-0-12-811423-0.00015-8
- Couvillon, M. A., & Ilieva, V. (2011). Recommended practices: A review of schoolwide preventative programs and strategies on cyberbullying. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 55(2), 96-101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2011.539461>
- Cross, D., Lester, L., Barnes, A., Cardoso, P., & Hadwen, K. (2015a). If It's about me, why do it without me? genuine student engagement in school cyberbullying education. *International Journal of Emotional Education*, 7(1), 35-51. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1085606.pdf>
- Cross, D., Barnes, A., Papageorgiou, A., Hadwen, K., Hearn, L., & Lester, L. (2015b). A social-ecological framework for understanding and reducing cyberbullying behaviours. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 23, 109-117. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2015.05.016>
- Dailey, S. F., & Roche, R. R. (2025). The SHIELD framework: Advancing strength-based resilience strategies to combat bullying and cyberbullying in youth. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 22(1), 66. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22010066>
- Dehue, F., Bolman, C., Völlink, T., & Pouwelse, M. (2012). Cyberbullying and traditional bullying in relation with adolescents' perception parenting. *Journal of Cybertherapy & Rehabilitation*, 5(1), 25-33.
- Elboj-Saso, C., Ñíguez-Berrozpe, T., Cebollero Salinas, A., & Bautista Alcaine, P. (2024). "Listen to me!" The role of family supervision and parental phubbing in youth cyberbullying. *Family Relations*, 73(3), 1568-1587. <https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12968>
- Elbedour, S., Alqahtani, S., Rihan, I. E. S., Bawalsah, J. A., Booker-Ammah, B., & Turner Jr, J. F. (2020). Cyberbullying: Roles of school psychologists and school counselors in addressing a pervasive social justice issue. *Children and youth services review*, 109, 104720. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2019.104720>
- Epstein, J. L. (2010). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3), 81-96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171009200326>
- Fekolkin, R. (2016). *Family-school cooperation on online safety mediation: A case study* (Master's thesis, Luleå University of Technology, Luleå, Sweden). Retrieved from <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1028992/FULLTEXT02>
- Froeschle, J. G., Crews, C., & Li, J. (2011). A school and technology based program: Healing families affected by cyberbullying. Retrieved from <https://manifold.counseling.org/system/resource/5/a/4/5a45f846-059f-4a5c-bfbc-f2ceb0b37728/attachment/a6b63eb0a8d23724b89dbbc6cd207315.pdf>
- Gillies, C. (2023). Anti-Indigenous deficit racism and cultural essentialism in K-12 education: We want you to recognize there's a problem. *Journal of Critical Race Inquiry*, 10(2), 68-88. <https://doi.org/10.24908/jcri.v10i2.16251>
- Graves, K. A., Romero, M., Rose, C., Mirielli, L., Ousley, C., Milarsky, T. K., & Simpkins, E. (2022). Call to action: The impact of cyberbullying in the COVID Era. *Journal of Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Leadership in Education*, 7(1), 1. doi: <https://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.ctle.07.01.1105>
- Harris, A., & Goodall, J. (2007). *Engaging parents in raising achievement: Do parents know they matter?*. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alma-Harris/publication/268268329_Engaging_Parents_in_Raising_Achievement_Do_Parents_Know_They_Matter_A_research_project_commissioned_by_the_Specialist_Schools_and_Academies_Trust/links/0046352afb73a282a1000000/Engaging-Parents-in-Raising-Achievement-Do-Parents-Know-They-Matter-A-research-project-commissioned-by-the-Specialist-Schools-and-Academies-Trust.pdf
- Hendry, B. P., Hellsten, L. A. M., McIntyre, L. J., & Smith, B. R. (2023). Recommendations for cyberbullying prevention and intervention: A Western Canadian perspective from key stakeholders. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1067484. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1067484>

- Hellfeldt, K., López-Romero, L., & Andershed, H. (2020). Cyberbullying and psychological well-being in young adolescence: The potential protective mediation effects of social support from family, friends, and teachers. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(1), 45. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17010045>
- Hango, D. (2023, February 21). *Online harms faced by youth and young adults: The prevalence and nature of cybervictimization*. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00003-eng.htm>
- Hortigüela Alcalá, D., Fernández Río, F. J., González Calvo, G., & Pérez Pueyo, Á. (2019). Effects of a cooperative learning intervention program on cyberbullying in secondary education: A case study. *Qualitative Report*. doi:10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3862
- Yosep, I., Hikmat, R., & Mardhiyah, A. (2023). Nursing intervention for preventing cyberbullying and reducing its negative impact on students: a scoping review. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*, 16, 261-273. <https://doi.org/10.2147/JMDH.S400779>
- Kenny, K. S., Merry, L., Brownbridge, D. A., & Urquia, M. L. (2020). Factors associated with cyber-victimization among immigrants and non-immigrants in Canada: A cross-sectional nationally-representative study. *British Public Health*, 20(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-09492-w>
- King, T. (2024). Bullying and health inequalities for children and adolescents with disability. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, 8(2), 90-91.
- Lan, M., Law, N., & Pan, Q. (2022). Effectiveness of anti-cyberbullying educational programs: A socio-ecologically grounded systematic review and meta-analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 130, 107200. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2022.107200>
- O'Moore, M., Cross, D., Valimaki, M., Almeida, A., Berne, S., Deboutte, G., ... & Stald, G. (2013). Guidelines to prevent cyberbullying: A cross-national review. In P. Smith & G. Steffgen (Eds.), *Cyberbullying through the new media* (pp. 136-161). Psychology Press. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203799079-12/guidelines-prevent-cyberbullying-mona-moore-donna-cross-maritta-valimaki-ana-almeida-sofia-berne-gie-deboutte-hildegunn-fandrem-dorit-olenik-shemesh-tali-heiman-marjo-kurki-marta-fulop-efthymia-efi-sygkollitou-gitte-stald>
- Organizing Engagement. (n.d.). *Framework of six types of involvement* PDF. Retrieved from <https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Why-NNPS-Six-Types.pdf>
- Paolini, A. (2018). Cyberbullying: Role of the school counselor in mitigating the silent killer epidemic. *International Journal of Educational Technology*, 5(1), 1-8. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1182235.pdf>
- Parris, L. N., Varjas, K., & Meyers, J. (2014). "The Internet is a mask": High school students' suggestions for preventing cyberbullying. *Western Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 15(5), 587-592. doi: 10.5811/westjem.2014.4.20725
- Pennell, D., Campbell, M., & Tangen, D. (2020). What influences Australian secondary schools in their efforts to prevent and intervene in cyberbullying? *Educational Research*, 62(3), 284-303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2020.1795701>
- Ronis, S., & Slaunwhite, A. (2019). Gender and geographic predictors of cyberbullying victimization, perpetration, and coping modalities among youth. *Canadian journal of school psychology*, 34(1), 3-21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0829573517734029>
- Scott, K. A. (2007). The big men in blue: Cstodians in three American schools. *Ethnography and Education*, 2(2), 239-255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457820701350772>
- Stamatis, P. J., & Nikolaou, E. N. (2016). Communication and collaboration between school and family for addressing bullying. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*, 5, 99-104. <https://www.academia.edu/download/101376691/2245.pdf>
- Stone, B., Saggars, B., Campbell, M. A., & Yates, C. (2025). Neurodivergent students' views on internet threats: A call for research. In T. Touloupis, A. (Loisos) Sofos, & A. Vasiou (Eds.), *Students' online risk behaviors: Psychoeducational predictors, outcomes, and prevention* (pp. 45-86). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

- Su, Y. W., Doty, J., Polley, B. R., Cakmakci, H., Swank, J., & Sickels, A. (2021). Collaborating with families to address cyberbullying: Exploring school counselors' lived experiences. *Professional School Counseling*, 25(1), doi:10.1177/2156759x211053825
- Villarejo-Carballido, B., Pulido, C. M., de Botton, L., & Serradell, O. (2019). Dialogic model of prevention and resolution of conflicts: Evidence of the success of cyberbullying prevention in a primary school in Catalonia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(6), 918. doi:10.3390/ijerph16060918
- Young, R., Tully, M., & Ramirez, M. (2017). School administrator perceptions of cyberbullying facilitators and barriers to preventive action: A qualitative study. *Health Education & Behavior*, 44(3), 476-484. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198116673814>
- Zheng, G., Fan, Y., Huang, J., Lan, J., & Wang, Y. (2025). Parenting in context: A systematic review of family factors and cyberbullying perpetration among adolescents. *Child & Family Social Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.13281>
- Zhu, C., Huang, S., Evans, R., & Zhang, W. (2021). Cyberbullying among adolescents and children: A comprehensive review of the global situation, risk factors, and preventive measures. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9, 634909. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.634909>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Dr. Jenna Shapka for reviewing this manuscript and Dr. Bathseba Opini for reviewing earlier versions.

AUTHORS' INFORMATION

Full Name: Michelle Dusko Biferie

Institutional affiliation: University of British Columbia, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education

Institutional address: Neville Scarfe Building, 2125 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z4, Canada

Short biographical sketch: PhD Candidate, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education, University of British Columbia.

Full Name: Johanna Sam

Institutional affiliation: University of British Columbia, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education

Institutional address: Neville Scarfe Building, 2125 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z4, Canada

Short biographical sketch: Michael Smith Health Research BC Scholar and Associate Professor, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education, University of British Columbia.