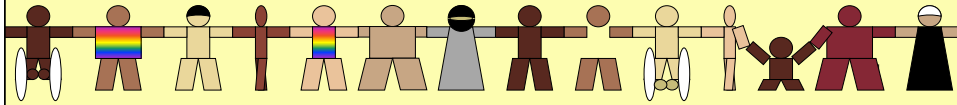


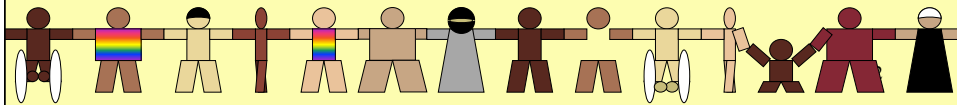
Findings from the 2014 Midland Park School Climate Student Survey



***Dr. Paula
Rodríguez Rust***

***Sociologist
Diversity Educator
Bullying Prevention Specialist***

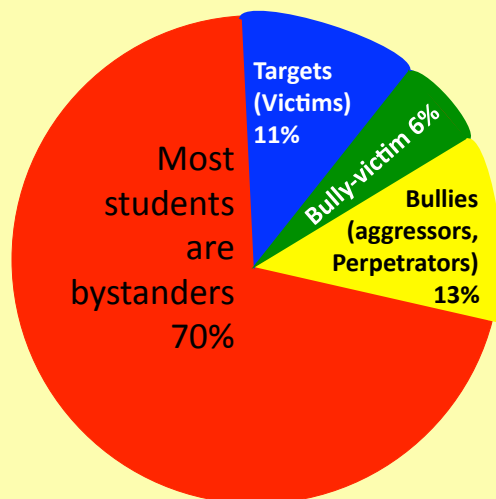
***www.spectrumdiversity.org
spectrumdiversity@comcast.net***



Context: National Statistics

3

Bullying Statistics: Targets, Bullies, & Bystanders

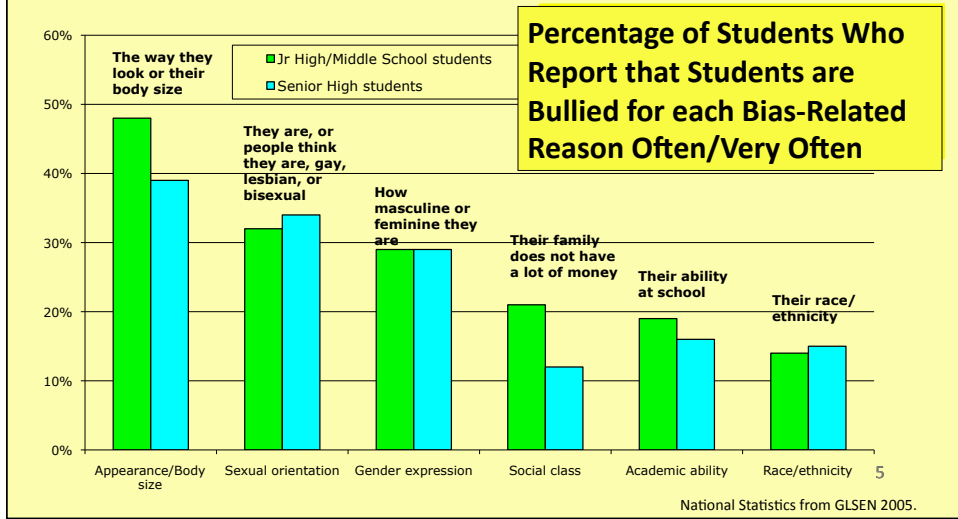


- The term “target” is preferred over the term “victim.”
- The “Target-Perpetrator” or “Bully-victim” is an individual who is both a bully and a target. Usually a target who in turn bullies others or retaliates by bullying. These students are at special risk, socially and emotionally.
- Most students are bystanders.

4

NICHD study, self reports by students of moderate or frequent

Bullying Statistics: Prevalence of Bias-Based Bullying



Midland Park Overview of Major Findings

Response Rates

GRADE	NUMBER	RESPONSE RATE
2 nd	60	91%
3 rd	57	78%
4 th	78	85%
5 th	65	81%
6 th	70	80%
7 th	43	43%
8 th	35	44%
9 th	21	25%
10 th	29	34%
11 th	17	20%
12 th	11	14%

7

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

- The vast majority of students report that they have noticed very positive changes since the previous year. For example, they have noticed teachers trying harder to address bullying, taking bullying more seriously, and talking about bullying more.
- Notable increases have occurred since 2011 at all grade levels in the percentages of students who say they feel “safe” upon entering school each morning.
- In 2014, 73%-97% of students in each grade feel that all or most of their teachers care about them, which is a very positive finding.

8

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

- In each grade, 67%-86% of students say that they have at least four friends, indicating a high degree of social integration (a protective factor against bullying) among students.
- Compared to 2012, in 2013 higher percentages of students in many grades reported that they have a trusted adult in school and in 2014, this increased again in many grades.
- In many grades, there have been substantial decreases in the percentages of students who say that they frequently hear other students make derogatory comments about other students' appearances, or make comments that are offensive to gay people, or people with intellectual or physical disabilities.

9

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

- Among the problems that students in grades 2-6 are most concerned about are (50% or more):
 - Social exclusion
 - Mean name-calling
 - Rumor-telling
 - Perception that some students "get away with" more than others.
- Concerns about mean name-calling decrease after sixth grade.
- Social exclusion continues to be a concern through seventh grade
- Rumors and the perception that some students get away with more than others continue to be concerns through middle and high school.

10

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

- Students are becoming concerned about mean texting at younger ages; the percentage of fourth graders who say that mean texting is a problem increased from 7% in 2012 to 26% in 2014.
- 14% of second graders talk to other people frequently online. This increases to 57% by eighth grade.
- 28% of fourth graders talk to “strangers” online at least “occasionally.” This increases to 60% by seventh grade (the 2013-2014 cohort of eighth graders has a multi-year history of unusually low rates of communicating with “strangers” online)
- 71% of seventh & eighth graders have social networking pages; among 7th graders, this increased from 58% in 2013.

Examples of Detailed Findings

Percentage of Students Reporting Fewer than Four Friends

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS			
2013											
2014											

Because of the low response rate in grades 9-12, findings for individual high school grades are unreliable, so grades 9-12 have been collapsed.

Having fewer than four friends is a **risk** factor; the *lower* the percentages in this table, the better.

13

Percentage of Students Reporting Fewer than Four Friends

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS			
2013	42%	28%	15%	16%	19%	22%	22%	21%			
2014	33%	25%	23%	21%	14%	21%	20%	20%			

No substantial change from 2013.

In 2014, the grade levels in which students are most likely to have none, or only one friend, are the middle school grades; 7% of seventh graders and 9% of eighth graders reported having no friends, or only one friend.

14

Percentage of Students Who Say They Have a Trusted Adult at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS			
2013	86%	85%	88%	89%	64%	76%	80%	83%			
2014	87%	79%	91%	95%	81%	59%	74%	85%			

Having a trusted adult is a **protective** factor; the *higher* the percentages in this table, the better.

15

Percentage of Students Who Say They Have a Trusted Adult at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS			
2013	86%	85%	88%	89%	64%	76%	80%	83%			
2014	87%	79%	91%	95%	81%	59%	74%	85%			

At first glance, the pattern here suggests that trust in adults has increased among sixth graders, but decreased among seventh graders. However...

16

Percentage of Students Who Say They Have a Trusted Adult at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS			
2013	86%	85%	88%	89%	64%	76%	80%	83%			
2014	87%	79%	91%	95%	81%	59%	74%	85%			

The pattern observed here indicates a **cohort effect**. Since they were in fifth grade in 2011-2012, the students who were in seventh grade in 2013-2014 have consistently reported lower trust in adults than any other cohort. Parents of students in this cohort can help by encouraging their children to identify an adult in school to whom they could go if they were having a problem in school.

17

Percentage of Students Who *Pro-Actively* Say Upon Entering School, They Feel Safe

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS
2011	36%	24%	30%	23%	23%	24%	15%	15%
2012								
2013								
2014								

Note: This question provided students with a checklist of multiple feelings that they might have upon entering school; this chart indicates the percentages who checked “safe,” so this chart gives the percentages who pro-actively volunteer the information that they feel safe at school. *When asked directly how safe they feel in school, much higher percentages in each grade (73%-90%) say that they do feel safe while at school.*

18

Percentage of Students Who *Pro-Actively* Say Upon Entering School, They Feel Safe

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS
2011	36%	24%	30%	23%	23%	24%	15%	15%
2012	34%	40%	38%	35%	26%	30%	20%	14%
2013	59%	54%	39%	45%	31%	32%	31%	37%
2014	55%	47%	64%	58%	57%	36%	34%	39%

In every grade, the percentage of students who pro-actively report that they feel safe upon entering school each morning has increased substantially since 2011. In many grades, this percentage has *doubled*, for example, from 30% to 64% in fourth grade, and 15% to 39% in eighth grade.

19

Grade 2-6 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Fighting, hitting, pushing	20%	41%	21%	11%	20%
Mean Name-calling	44%	43%	60%	67%	71%
Leaving each other out	65%	57%	60%	71%	75%
Gangs	--	---	19%	14%	9%
Prejudice (race, religion)	--	---	21%	16%	32%
Appearance pressure	--	---	29%	24%	48%
Exclusive "clubs"	58%	33%	47%	43%	42%
Mean text messages	--	---	26%	21%	40%
Rumors	40%	39%	71%	56%	77%
Teachers Not Fair	--	---	13%	13%	32%
Some get away with it	67%	59%	50%	52%	60%
Teachers say mean things	15%	14%	10%	13%	26%

20

Grade 2-6 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	
Fighting, hitting, pushing	20%	41%	21%	11%	20%	
Mean Name-calling	44%	43%	60%	67%	71%	
Leaving each other out	65%	57%	60%	71%	75%	
Gangs	--	---	19%	14%	9%	
Prejudice (race, religion)	--	---	21%	16%	32%	
Ap	The question about gangs, in a district with no measurable gang problem,					%
Ex	serves as a reference point against which to compare findings about the level of					%
Me	student concern about other issues in school. In general, findings less than 10%					%
Ru	indicate there might be some students with individual concerns, but do not					%
Te	indicate school-related climate issue, and findings of 20% or less indicate low					%
	levels of concern among students.					%
Some get away with it	67%	59%	50%	52%	60%	
Teachers say mean things	15%	14%	10%	13%	26%	

21

Grade 2-6 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Fighting, hitting, pushing	20%	41%	21%	11%	20%
Mean Name-calling	44%	43%	60%	67%	71%
Leaving each other out	65%	57%	60%	71%	75%
G	Mean name-calling is a concern through-out elementary school, but				
Pr	particularly among fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. This is a typical				
Ap	finding in school districts throughout New Jersey, and indicates an				
Ex	issue to be addressed, but is not an issue unique to Midland Park.				
M	Among second and third graders, concerns about "fighting" usually				
Ru	do not reflect actual aggression, but rather the fact that students are				
Te	still learning to recognize physical personal space.				
Some get away with it	67%	59%	50%	52%	60%
Teachers say mean things	15%	14%	10%	13%	26%

22

Grade 2-6 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Fighting, hitting, pushing	20%	41%	21%	11%	20%
Mean Name-calling	44%	43%	60%	67%	71%
Leaving each other out	65%	57%	60%	71%	75%
<p>Ga Social exclusion is a concern through-out elementary school, but particularly Pre among fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. This is an issue to be addressed, but is Ap not an issue unique to Midland Park.</p>					
Exclusive "clubs"	58%	33%	47%	43%	42%
Mean text messages	--	---	26%	21%	40%
Rumors	40%	39%	71%	56%	77%
<p>Teac Rumor-spreading is an issue that is becoming an increasing concern Som to students throughout New Jersey, according to findings of this Teac survey in multiple school districts.</p>					

Grade 2-6 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Fighting					%
Mean	<p>Concerns about appearance pressure and mean text messaging</p>				
Leaving	<p>increase sharply between fifth and sixth grades, indicating that</p>				
Gangs	--	---	19%	14%	9%
Prejudice (race, religion)	--	---	21%	16%	32%
Appearance pressure	--	---	29%	24%	48%
Exclusive "clubs"	58%	33%	47%	43%	42%
Mean text messages	--	---	26%	21%	40%
Rumors	40%	39%	71%	56%	77%
<p>Concerns about text messaging among fourth graders increased</p>					
Teachers say mean	<p>from 7% in 2012 to 26% in 2014, so this is an emerging issue in</p>				
Students say mean	<p>younger grades.</p>				
Teachers say mean	15%	14%	10%	13%	26%

Grade 2-6 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Fighting, hitting, pushing	20%	41%	21%	11%	20%
Mean text messages	--	---	26%	21%	40%
Rumors	40%	39%	71%	56%	77%
Teachers Not Fair	--	---	13%	13%	32%
Some get away with it	67%	59%	50%	52%	60%
Teachers say mean things	15%	14%	10%	13%	26%

Concerns about some students “getting away with more than others” are high in school districts throughout New Jersey; this is a very typical finding, and does not reflect an issue unique to Midland Park. Students are often unaware of the circumstances that might impact the degree of discipline received by other students, including disabilities that the school must take into consideration when determining discipline.

25

Grade 7-12 Students' Perceptions of Problems at School

	7 th	8 th	HS		
Appearance Pressure	16%	20%	18%		
Social Exclusion	43%	12%	17%		
Name-calling	25%	20%	27%		
Racism/Religious prejudice			7%		
Anti-LGBT prejudice	16%	9%	8%		
Physical aggression	13%	12%	4%		
Gangs	7%	0%	2%		
Unwanted photography	14%	15%	8%		
Hurtful posting	16%	24%	14%		
Adults insulting students	8%	6%	10%		
Adults disrespecting each other	11%	3%	4%		
Rumors	41%	33%	30%		

Frequency of Derogatory Language among Students

- Less than 10% of students in most grades report that they frequently hear their peers make comments that are derogatory on the basis of race/ethnicity, religion, or gender
- In grades 6-8, 21%-37% of students say they frequently hear peers make insulting comments about someone's appearance; **down from 34%-41% in 2013 and 43%-61% in 2011**
- In grades 6-12, 45%-57% of students say they frequently hear peers call each other "dumb," "retard," "stupid," etc. ; **down from 57%-86% in 2011**
- In grades 6-11, 28%-37% of students say they frequently hear peers use the word "gay" as an insult (i.e., "so gay"); **down from 49%-82% in 2011**

27

Has this happened to you... (percent saying often, weekly, daily, or more than once a day)?

Students were asked about 17 different experiences. Most experiences were reported by less than 10% of students. Only these three were reported by non-negligible percentages of students, and these percentages indicate typical age-related issues. The fact that an issue is typical does not mean it does not have to be addressed, but it does indicate that these issues are not unique to Midland Park; these are issues facing schools throughout New Jersey.

	<i>Verbal Name-calling</i>		<i>Hurtful Exclusion</i>		<i>Appearance Denigration</i>	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
2 nd grade	15%	5%	17%	8%	6%	3%
3 rd grade	11%	13%	8%	18%	4%	9%
4 th grade	11%	13%	6%	4%	6%	5%
5 th grade	22%	10%	14%	3%	16%	7%
6 th grade	32%	32%	19%	18%	20%	18%
7 th grade	14%	30%	15%	17%	11%	12%
8 th grade	12%	17%	17%	17%	9%	3%
HS	10%	10%	6%	12%	7%	5%

28

**Do Adults Intervene when Bullying Happens?
Are Adults Able to Effectively Stop Bullying?
(Sometimes/always/often)**

	<i>Often/Very Often</i>		<i>Effective: Able to Stop Bullying</i>	
	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
2 nd grade	---	---	91%	100%
3 rd grade	---	---	89%	89%
4 th grade	66%	72%	87%	85%
5 th grade	63%	63%	89%	87%
6 th grade	59%	53%	75%	74%
7 th grade	41%	50%	67%	76%
8 th grade	46%	48%	74%	70%
HS	47%	47%	84%	83%

29

**Students' Reports of Feelings of
Increased Safety Compared to Last Year**

	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th		
Much safer	54%	50%	37%	24%	26%	21%		
Somewhat safer	23%	27%	39%	32%	29%	30%		
Little safer	15%	12%	7%	12%	15%	20%		
Not safer	8%	12%	17%	32%	29%	29%		

In each grade, 68%-92% of students report that they feel at least a little safer this year compared to last year, as a result of their teachers' efforts to address bullying, and many of these students say they feel "much safer."
(Many students who don't feel "safer" already felt "safe.")

30

Changes Students Have Noticed in Teachers' Attitudes about Bullying

	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	HS
Teacher trying harder	53%	52%	42%	24%	37%	31%
Teachers taking bullying more seriously	19%	39%	15%	17%	29%	30%
Teachers watching more closely	15%	33%	16%	20%	14%	29%
Teachers talking about bullying more	25%	38%	34%	22%	26%	34%
Have not noticed any of these changes	26%	21%	35%	37%	26%	21%

High percentages of students in all grades noticed that teachers are trying harder to address bullying

Conclusion: Implications

IMPLICATIONS

- Parents and School Should Work Together to Ensure that:
 - Students know how to be safe online, including the use of social networking sites and withholding identifying information from “strangers” online
 - Each student can identify an adult at school whom they trust, to whom they could go if they had a problem with another student.

33

IMPLICATIONS

- Parents and School Should Work Together to Ensure that:
 - Students are discouraged from using language that is derogatory to others.
 - Students know that harmful social exclusion and rumor-telling are forms of bullying
 - Each student has friends in school who can be supportive

34

IMPLICATIONS

- Parents and School Should Work Together to Ensure that:
 - Students might not be aware of the disciplinary consequences given another student, and that there might be circumstances that parents and students are not aware of.
 - The word “bullying” is not used for incidents that involve other types of hurtful behavior that are not bullying.

35

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT YOUR SCHOOL TO DO?

- Take all forms of hurtful behavior by students seriously, whether or not the behavior is bullying, and whether or not it is legally defined and reportable as bullying
- Teach students that they share responsibility for creating a school climate that is safe and respectful for all
- Encourage students to tell an adult if they know of someone who is being hurt by someone else
- Respond to all reported incidents with *appropriate* remedial or disciplinary consequences
- Implement strategies to create a positive school climate to discourage bullying and other hurtful behaviors
- Teach all students to respect diversity, and to be able to disagree with others respectfully

36

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S PROCEDURES?

- School personnel must protect the confidentiality of all students. The school cannot provide you with information about discipline given another student.
- The school's jurisdiction is limited. If an incident occurred off campus, your recourse might be with law enforcement, and not through the school
- "Tough on Bullying" means appropriate, not extreme, responses; remedial responses are often more effective
- School staff are required to report certain types of incidents within the district, and at the state level.

37

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- Be familiar with your district's anti-bullying policy
- Know that bullying today is different than it used to be; take it seriously. Listen/talk about it.
- Tell your son/daughter what to do if s/he is bullied (tell an adult). Do not give advice that will put your child in a difficult situation in school (e.g. do not advise to "hit back")
- Teach your son/daughter what to do if someone else is bullied (tell an adult, stand up for them, help them walk away, etc.)
- Teach about cultural diversity; teach the difference between Respect and Agreement
- If you learn of a situation or incident in the school, tell a member of the school staff immediately

38

THANK YOU
Have a Safe, Happy,
Productive
and Respectful
School Year

39