



# Evidence-based prevention of school bullying: Case Kiva antibullying program

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# Finland and bullying?

## Situation before KiVa™

- Bullying a big concern in society since 1990's  
→ Changes in legislation
  - 'Right for a safe school environment' (1999)
  - 'Each school should have their own policy...'  
(2003)
- National trend data: **No changes** in ten years in the annual prevalence survey (School Health Promotion Study)





# 'Each school should have their own policy...'

- Each school develops their own policy...??

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## RESOURCES?? EFFECTS?

- **Evidence-based prevention of bullying is needed**





# Taking action at the national level in Finland

- The Finnish government decided that bullying prevention is a priority
- Contracts with the University of Turku
  - development and initial evaluation of KiVa (2006–2009)
  - diffusion of KiVa to Finnish comprehensive schools (since 2009)

Ministry of  
Education  
and Culture



Ministère de  
l'Éducation et  
de la culture





# KiVa™ antibullying program: Special features

- Both *universal* and *indicated* actions
- Theory-based (influences whole group)
- Evidence-based (evidence of effectiveness)
- Concrete and easy to use materials (not merely a "philosophy")
- Utilizing ICT: virtual learning environments





# Contents of KiVa™

## UNIVERSAL ACTIONS

- Annual online surveys
- Staff meeting
- Kick-off
- Student lessons
- Online KiVa games
- Parents' newsletter, guide and Back-to-School night
- Posters, vests

## INDICATED ACTIONS

- Tackling the cases coming to attention
  - KiVa team
  - Classroom teacher





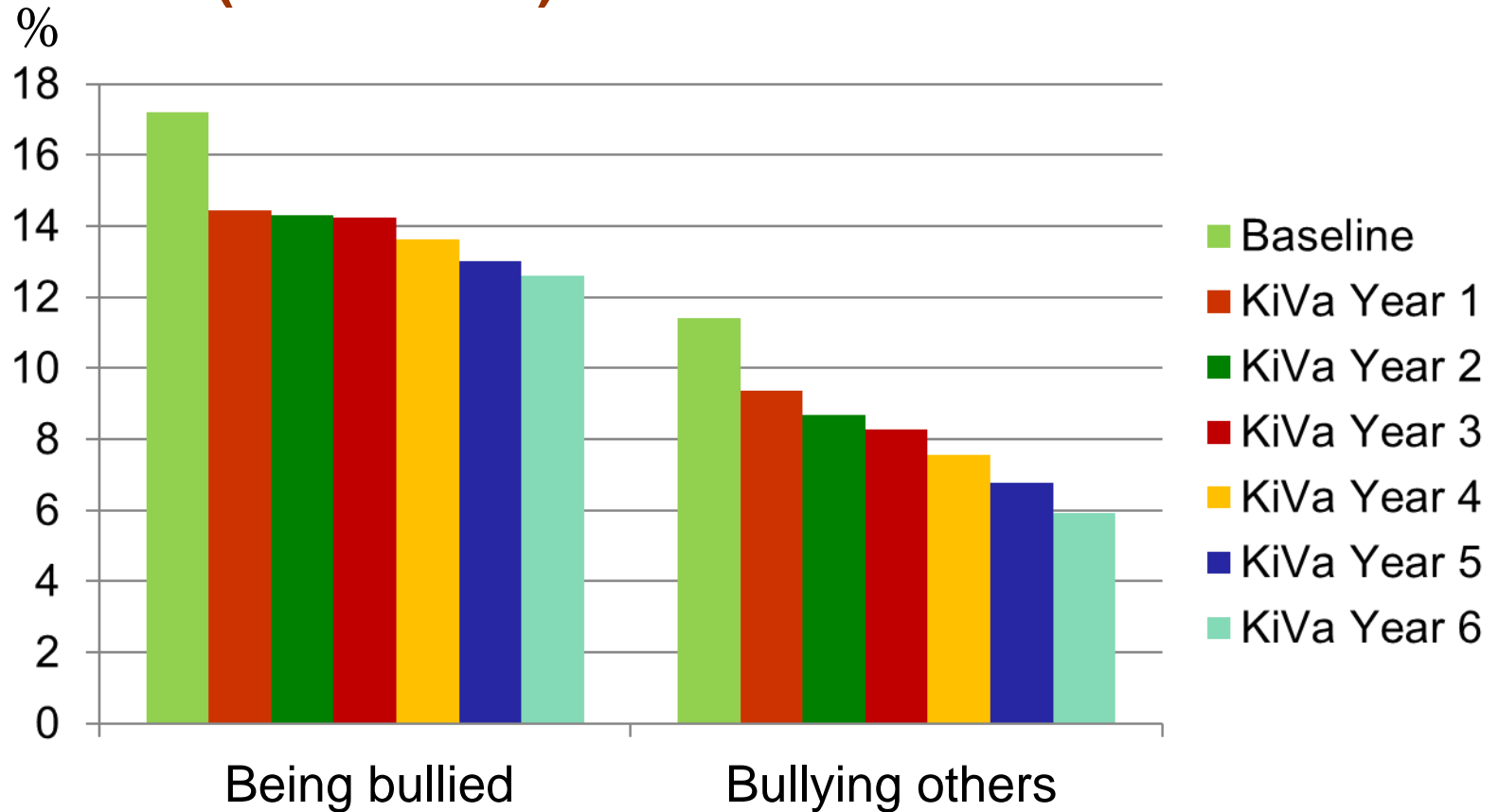
# KiVa™ is evidence-based antibullying program

- Randomized controlled trial 2007–2009
  - 117 intervention and 117 control schools
  - Around 30 000 students (grades 1–9, 7–15 year old)
- First year of nationwide implementation (2009–2010)
  - 880 Finnish schools (cohort longitudinal design)
  - Around 150 000 students (grades 1–9)
- KiVa annual survey since 2009





# Percentages of children being bullied and bullying others (2009–2015)







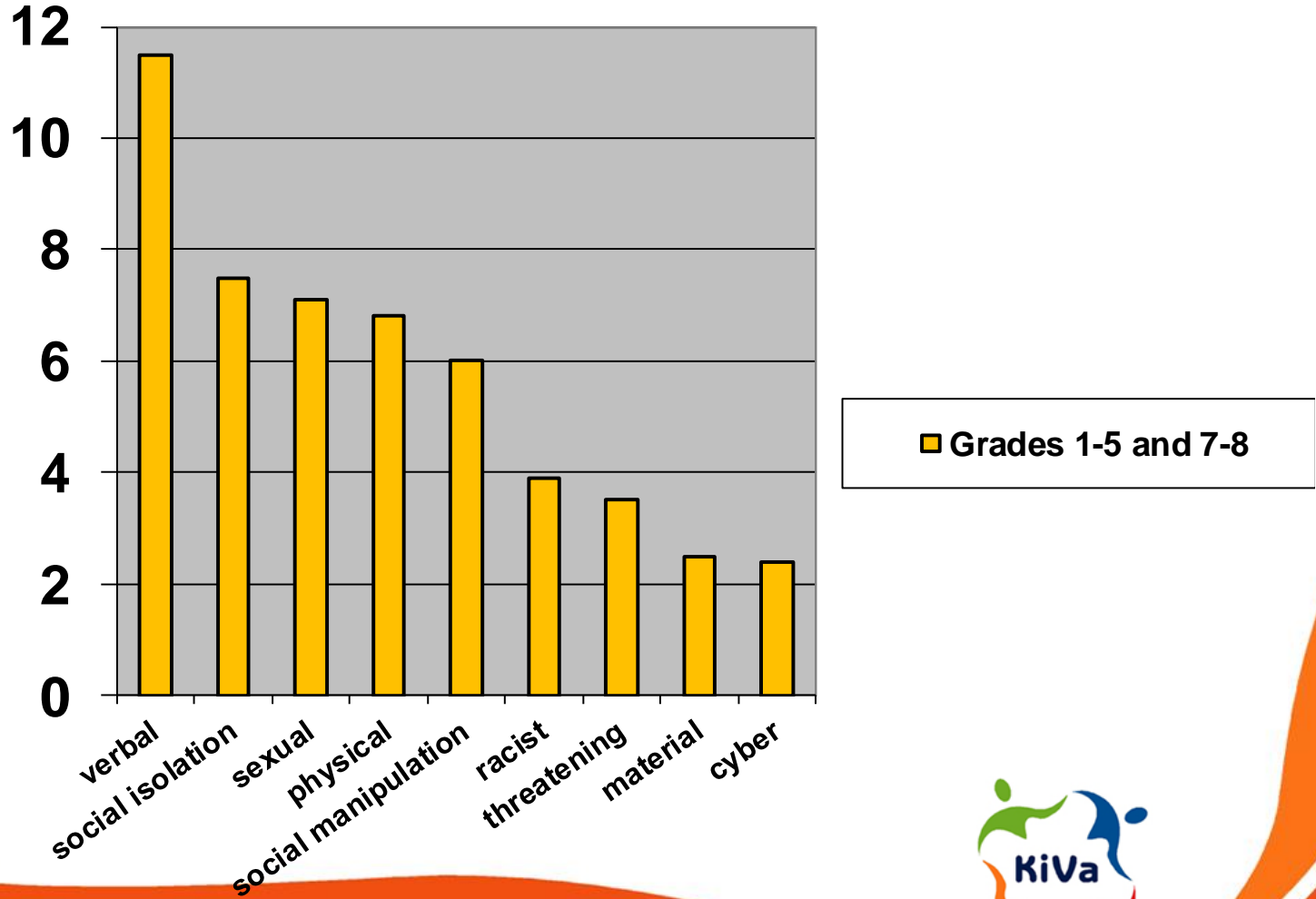
# Effectiveness of KiVa™ antibullying program

- KiVa was effective in reducing bullying and victimization, during the first nine months of implementation and the broad roll-out (Kärnä, et. al. 2011; 2011; 2013)
- KiVa reduced students' anxiety and depression (Williford et. al. 2011)
- KiVa had positive effects on school liking and academic motivation and improved students' well-being (Salmivalli, Garandeanu & Veenstra, 2012)
- The effects generalize to multiple forms of victimization, also to cyberbullying (Salmivalli, Kärnä & Poskiparta, 2011; Williford et. al. 2013)



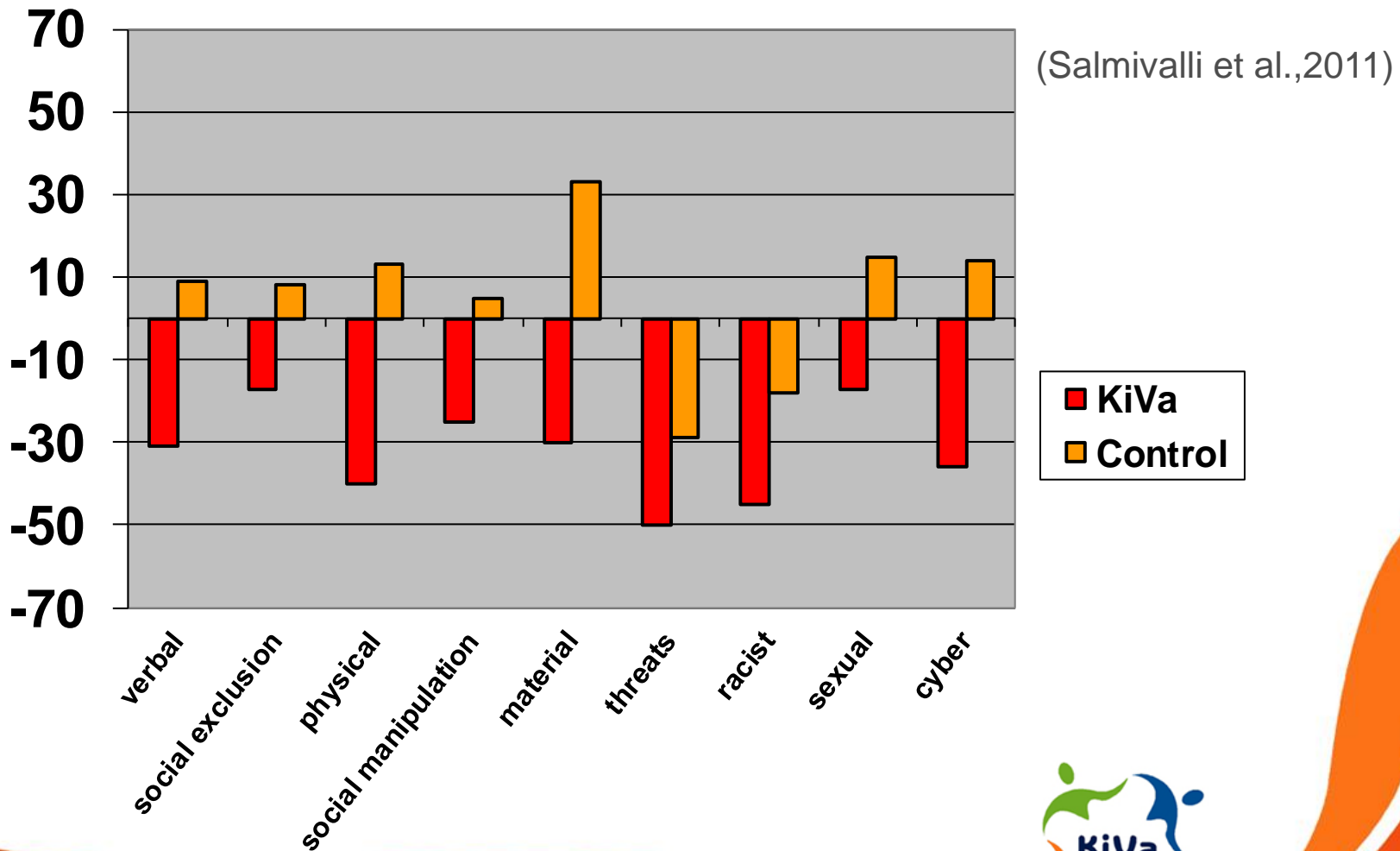


# Forms of bullying: Prevalence of targets bullied in different ways (%), N = 21880





# Changes in being bullied by different forms during one school year





# High quality implementation

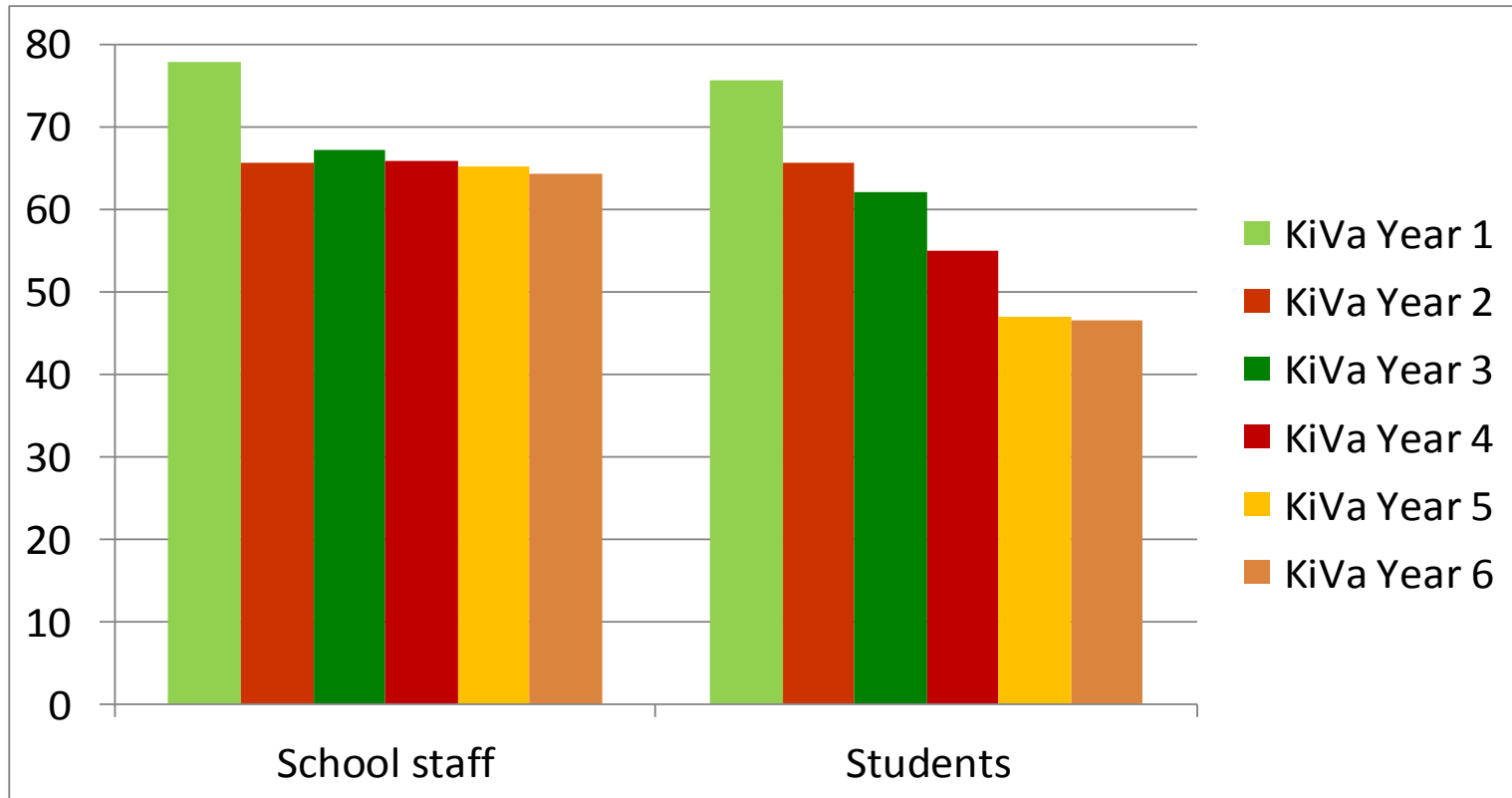
- Principal support for the KiVa antibullying program predicts the implementation adherence (Ahtola et al., 2013).
- The more teachers delivered KiVa lessons and the higher their quality the more bullying was reduced in the classroom. (Haataja et al., 2014)





# Decrease of implementation after the first year: Delivery of the lesson reported by the school staff and students (2009–2015)

%





# KiVa™ antibullying program going international

- International evaluations and implementation outside Finland
  - The Netherlands, Italy, Wales, Estonia, Delaware
  - First results are promising (Hubbard et. al. 2016; Hutchings & Clarkson 2015; Nocentini & Menesini 2016; Treial 2015; Veenstra 2015)
- Several awards
  - European Crime Prevention Award 2009, Social Policy Award for the Best Article, Society for research on Adolescence, 2012, national awards (2008, 2010, 2011, 2012)
- Blueprint since 2015





## Conclusion

- KiVa is an example of how commitment from part of politicians, researchers, and educators can make a difference in the lives of numerous children and youth.
  - Development, implementation, effectiveness, sustainability
- Future questions for research
  - KiVa works - Under which conditions?
  - By which mechanisms?
  - Where? When? How? With whom?
  - Quality of implementation? Sustainability?





**Ready to act?**







More information: [www.kivaprogram.net](http://www.kivaprogram.net)  
Contact: [kiva@kivaprogram.net](mailto:kiva@kivaprogram.net)





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