A close-up photograph of several children's faces, focusing on their eyes and expressions. The image is slightly blurred, creating a sense of depth and intimacy.

INVESTIGATING THE PREVALENCE AND IMPACT OF PEER ABUSE (BULLYING) ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAMAICA'S CHILDREN

July 2015

Study commissioned by
Child Development Agency
An Executive Agency of the
Ministry of Youth and Culture

Conducted by
PSearch Associates Co. Limited

Funded by:
UNICEF Jamaica

Prepared by: Child Development Agency / MEYI

Study Objectives...

- The ultimate aim of the study was to contribute to the considerable reduction of incidences of peer abuse within the education system, community spaces, residential facilities and familial environments through:
 - Identifying and assessing the intervening variables that contribute to bullying,
 - Developing profiles of both the bullies and their victims, and
 - Informing an integrated response mechanism involving various stakeholders that will bring awareness to the issue at a national level, and implement programmes to reduce instances of peer abuse

Defining Bullying...

- Bullying is generally understood to include four (4) key elements – aggression or hostility, repetition of the negative behaviour, intent to harm and a power imbalance
- This research defined bullying among students to be “when one student is troubled, attacked or made fun of repeatedly by another student(s)”
 - Exclusions included teasing that is done in a playful and friendly way, and fights/arguments between children of equal strength

Methodology...

- Mixed methods approach employed in collecting data
- The concept of ‘bullying’ was defined in a culturally sensitive manner to limit confusion and/or perceived irrelevance
- A nationally representative sample of students was taken across all six (6) MOE Regions
 - Schools were stratified by type
 - Children were selected based on alternating grade levels
 - Teachers and Administrative Staff were sampled only from the same schools as the students surveyed
- The collection, collation, and analyses of qualitative and quantitative data were conducted by the research consultants aided by statistical software such as SPSS

Respondents' Demographics...

- A total of 1,867 students from 70 public schools were surveyed
 - 49.8% were studying at the primary level; 26.2% were at the secondary/high school level
- 57.7% of the sample were females with the remaining 42.3% being males
- The parishes of St. Andrew, St. James, Clarendon, and St. Catherine accounted for the majority of survey respondents
- A total of 174 teachers, Administrative Staff, and other representative [school] staff from 61 of the 70 schools surveyed were also included in the study

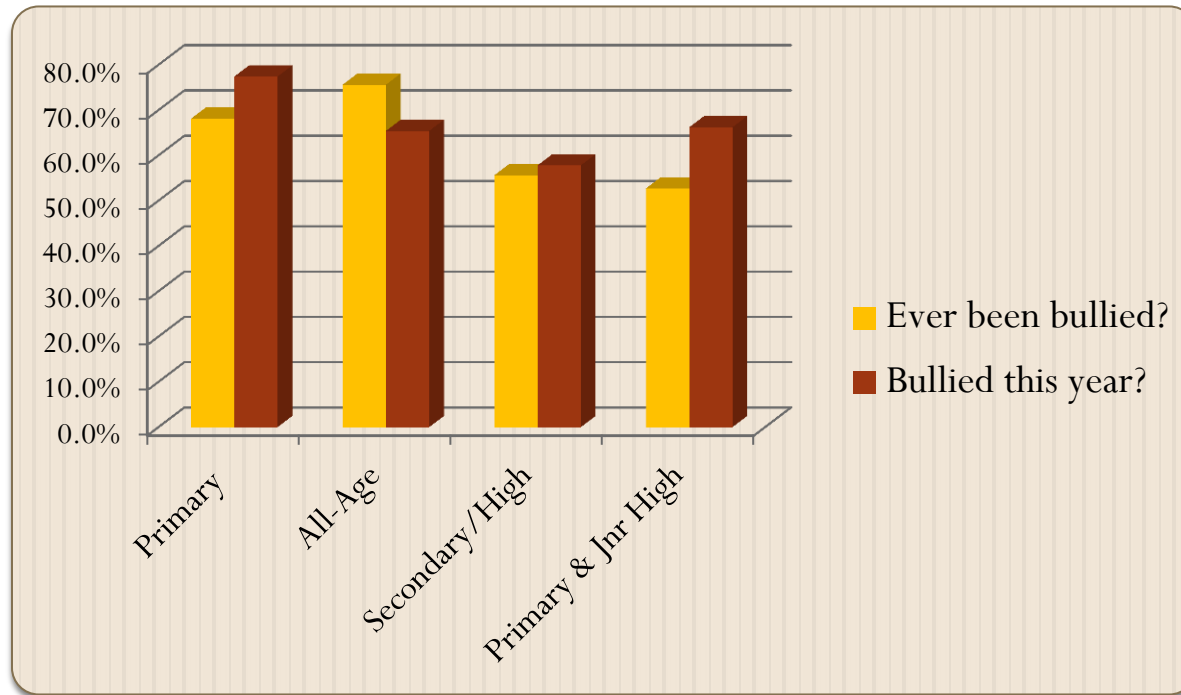
Qualitative Findings...

- Bullied children tend to be seen as “different” in some way; they are also loners, shy, from sheltered homes, or living with disabilities
- Bullies are thought to be those who are insecure, physically stronger, academic underachievers, lack love and are seeking it, or victims turned perpetrators
- “Ragging”, though widely accepted, was considered to often fall within the ambit of peer abuse
- ‘Reprisal’ bullying was seen as a justifiable response by some children

Qualitative Findings... (Cont'd)

- Bullying is widely viewed as a precursor to gang violence and more serious crimes
- Talking (with Teachers, Police Officers, other children, etc.) was favoured as the response thought to be most effective in responding to bullying. However, the response of teachers was sometimes seen as ineffective and/or insufficient
- However, fighting back was largely considered to be the best way for children to defend themselves against bullies

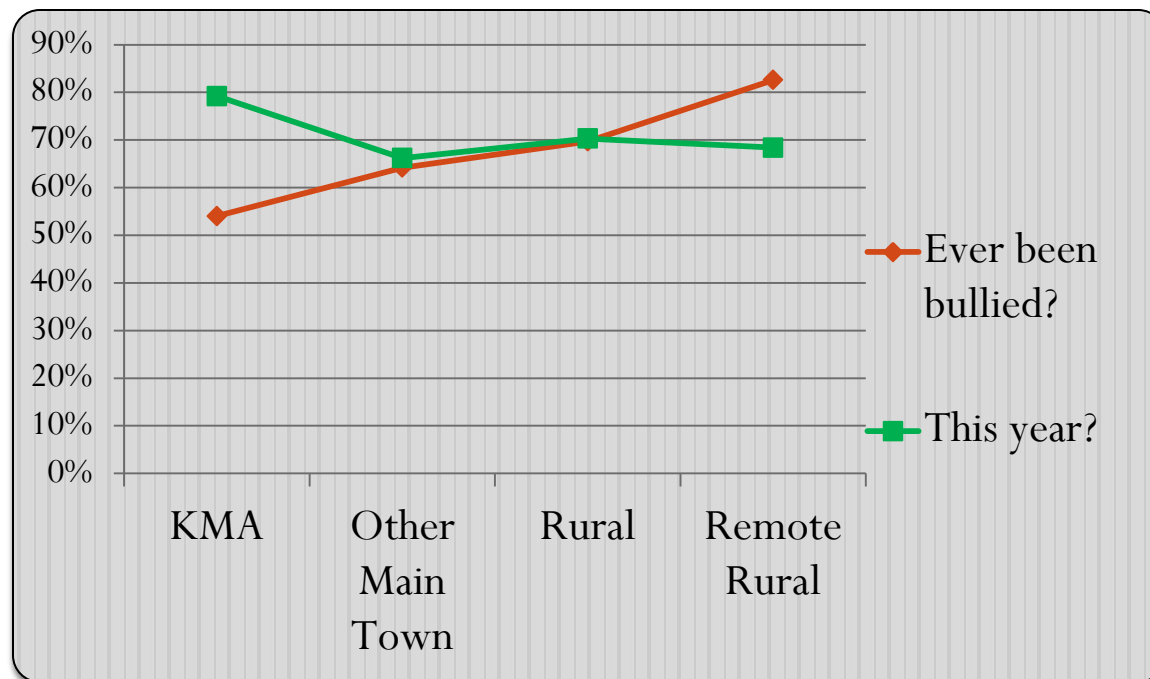
Survey (Quantitative) Findings... (Cont'd)



Prevalence of bullying

- The highest reports of bullying were mainly found amongst the lower grade levels.

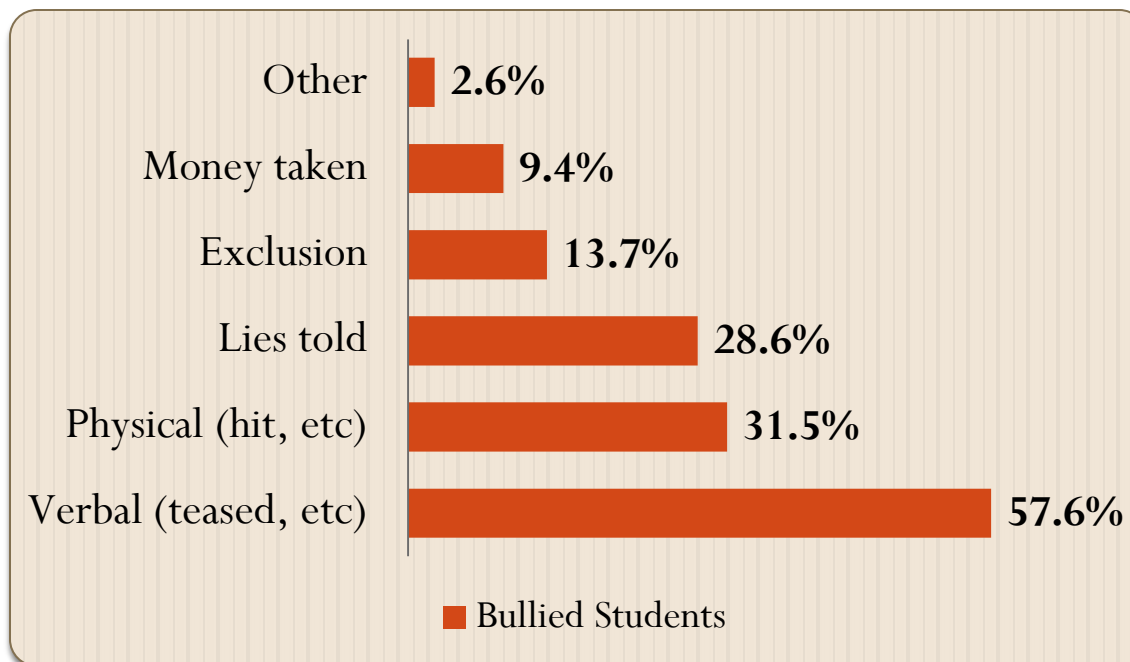
Survey (Quantitative) Findings... (Cont'd)



Bullying prevalence by Region

- Rural and remote rural schools reported higher incidences of ever being bullied

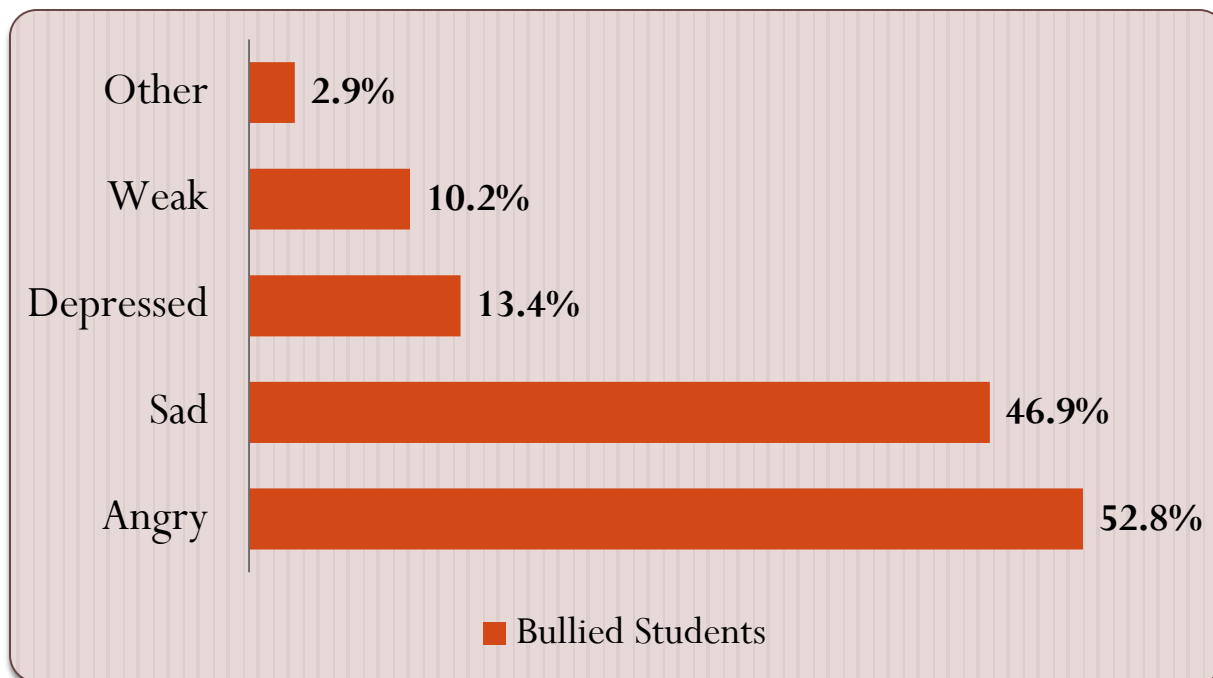
Survey (Quantitative) Findings... (Cont'd)



Methods of bullying

- The most prevalent way in which children reported being bullied was being teased or called names (57.6%)
- Some children reported experiencing more than one forms of bullying

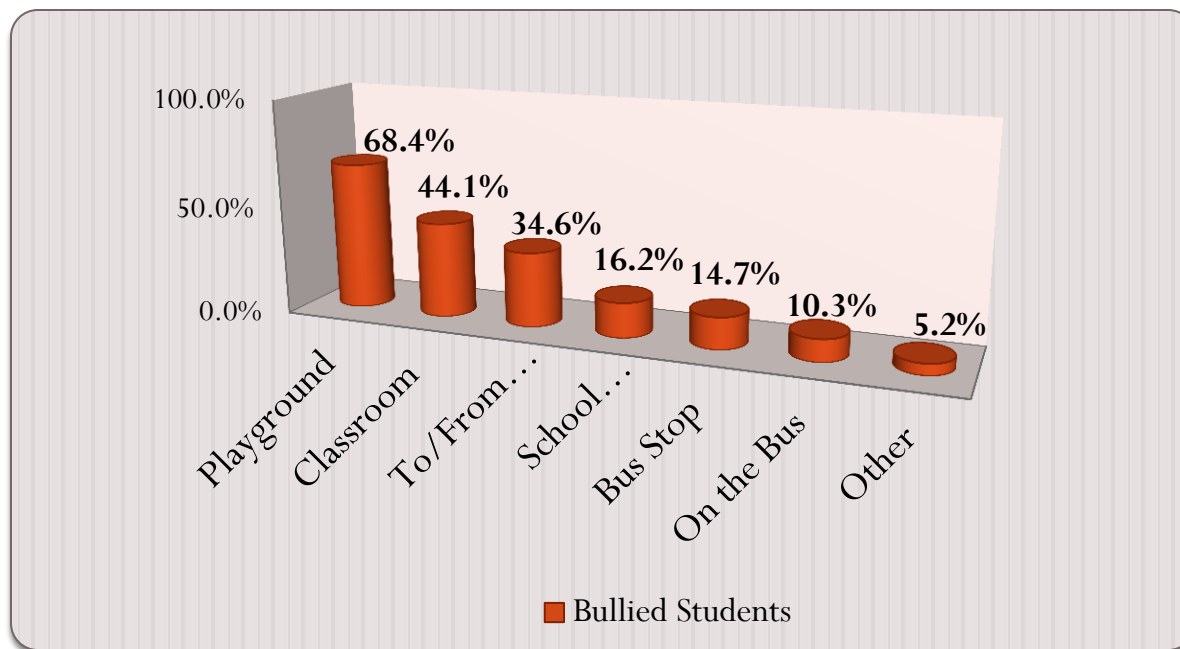
Survey (Quantitative) Findings... (Cont'd)



Emotional response to bullying

- The 'ripple effect' of being bullied was evidenced by the fact that 24.7% of bullied respondents indicated that they fear going to spaces other than areas at school where they have been bullied

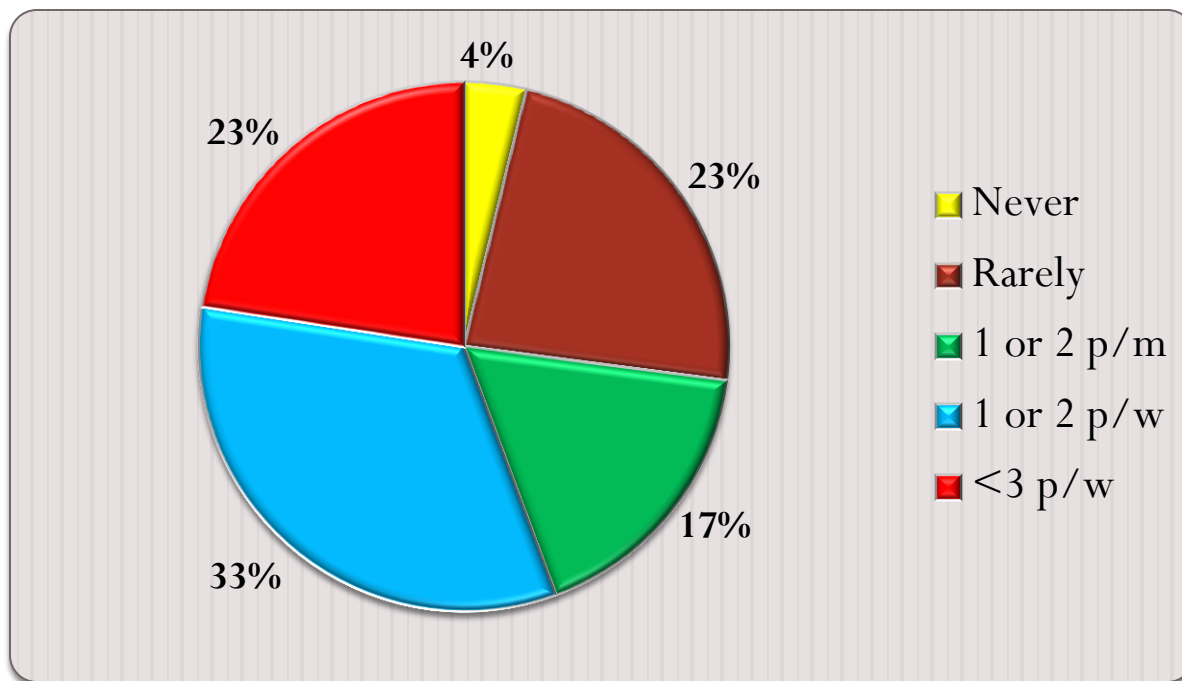
Survey (Quantitative) Findings... (Cont'd)



Locations where bullying is frequently experienced

- 1 in 4 children who have been bullied face their abusers while travelling to and/or from school

Survey (Quantitative) Findings... (Cont'd)



Frequency of reports received by teachers

- Teachers were more inclined to suggesting a more even spread between one-off incidents and more sustained ones

BULLYING IS WIDESPREAD

6 in 10 students say they have been bullied at some point in their lives

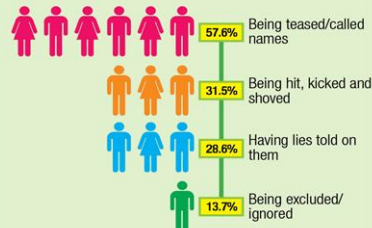


65%
*65% of students surveyed – of which 68.9% female and 62.9% male



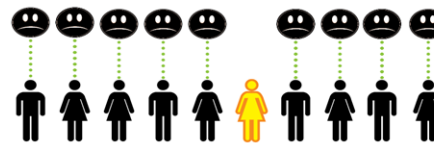
STUDY ON THE PREVALENCE AND IMPACT ON BULLYING IN JAMAICA, 2015

Children say the most prevalent types of bullying are:

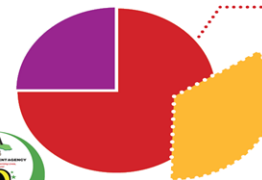


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BULLYING DOESN'T HAVE BLIND EYES



9 in 10 students have seen a child being bullied at school



While 75% of bullied students report it, only 34% found that this made a difference.



STUDY ON THE PREVALENCE AND IMPACT ON BULLYING IN JAMAICA, 2015

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Full report can be accessed at: <http://www.cda.gov.jm/news/>

BULLYING SPOILS THE FUN



Close to 70% of all bullying takes place on playgrounds.

More children at rural schools reported being ever bullied than in the Kingston and Metropolitan Area.

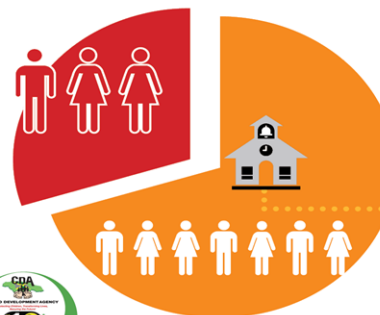


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BULLIES AND FEAR

Almost 30% of students surveyed fear going to school because of bullying.



1 in 4 children who have been bullied face their abusers while travelling to and/or from school.



STUDY ON THE PREVALENCE AND IMPACT ON BULLYING IN JAMAICA, 2015

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Initiatives to address Bullying

– Safe Schools Programme

- Developed to assist schools in managing youth violence, anti-social behaviour, truancy and children at risk
 - School resource Officers are placed in schools – highly trained law enforcement officers equipped with additional training to deal with at risk youth and youth violence
 - Deans of Discipline position added to the school structure – responsible to detect and treat with matters of discipline and at risk youths, including bullying
 - Schools mandated to establish a Security and Safety Committee – comprising internal and external partners with responsibility to develop and implement a security and safety plan

Initiatives to address Bullying - Safety and Security Policy Guidelines

- The manual was developed in 2008 and revised in 2015 to include a definition of bullying, types of bullying and the response of the schools in treating with both bullies and victims.
- The MEYI has established the Safety and Security School's Unit to facilitate a coordinated approach to safety and security
- The Ministry has also developed a number of policy documents to treat with safety and security in schools
- Ongoing training for Deans of Discipline in areas including: human trafficking, bullying, cyber bullying and gangs.

Initiatives to address Bullying - Partnerships

- Ministry of Justice – training and certification of teachers in Restorative Justice
- Non- Government Organisations, Universities and colleges to support teacher training in school based behaviour change intervention programme:
 - CARIMENSA; Jamaica Theology Seminary; Peace and Love in Schools (PALS); Children First; Eve for Life; and Jamaica Aids Support for Life.
- UNICEF – funding support trained teachers from 56 pilot schools to utilize the School Wide Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support framework to manage behaviour and create a culture of discipline in schools (see video)

