

Bullying boosts children's social status, study shows

By ksl.com
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SALT LAKE CITY — A new study has found that bullies are more likely to be popular.

The negative effects of bullying have been closely studied as violence in schools increases. Reports by organizations such as the Crime Victims' Institute have found that bullying in childhood can lead to alcoholism, eating disorders and depression in adulthood.

In an effort to understand the motives behind the bullying that leads to these long-term consequences, a group of psychologists at UCLA conducted a study among middle school students. The psychologists' goal was to determine if bullying increases respect among peers. The results showed that the social status of bullies is positively influenced by their acts of aggression.

"The ones who are cool bully more, and the ones who bully more are seen as cool," said Jaana Juvonen, a UCLA professor of psychology and lead author of the study. "What was particularly interesting was that the form of aggression, whether highly visible and clearly confrontational or not, did not matter. Pushing or shoving and gossiping worked the same for boys and girls."

The study, based on responses from students at 11 Los Angeles middle schools, led Juvonen to recommend that anti-bullying programs focus on the peers of the bullies, who influence social standing, as much as the bullies themselves.

Deseret News:

Helping children tame negative emotions

As bullying incidents and violence in schools increase, parents and educators are seeking ways to help children tame their negative emotions and develop empathy toward others.

Additional causes for acting out can include children's inability to understand and channel emotions. Christine Carter, author of "Raising Happiness: 10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents," suggests teaching children to tame negative emotions in the home, so they will be prepared to manage frustrations at school.

"It is important for parents to understand that emotional literacy is not an innate quality children are born with," Carter told the Deseret News. "We need to teach that literacy the same way we teach kids to read — by working with them on it."

Additional suggestions for addressing bullying can be found on government sites like stopbullying.gov and through nonprofit organizations such as No Bully.