WELCOME

Professor Christina Salmivalli

KiVa: The national anti-bullying program in Finland

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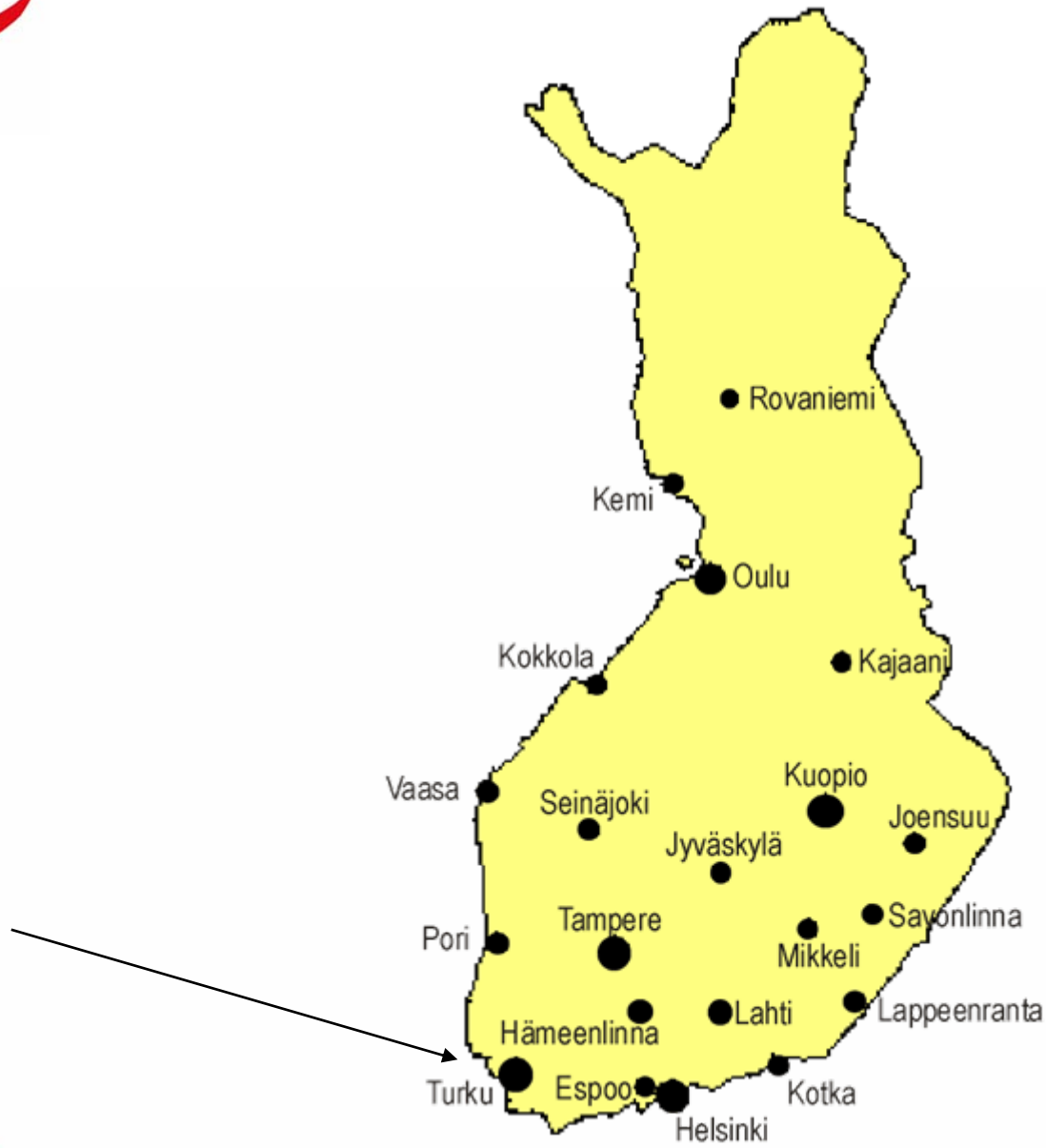
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Bullying

- Negative action(s) which are
  - intentional
  - systematic, repeated
  - targeted at someone who has difficulty in defending him/herself
    - ”imbalance of power”
  - can take many different forms
    - can be physical, verbal, indirect…
    - cyberbullying (via Internet/mobile phone)

Bullying or something else?

The difficulty in recognizing bullying

- The adult sees *a situation*, but does not necessarily know *the process*

The social architecture of bullying

- Bullying can be a strategy to gain high status and a powerful position in the peer group...
- …and it is often succesful
  - bullies are perceived as popular
  - bullying helps to maintain status (Juvonen & Galvan, in press)..
  - ..and to increase status over time (Cillessen & Borch, 2004)

The social architecture of bullying

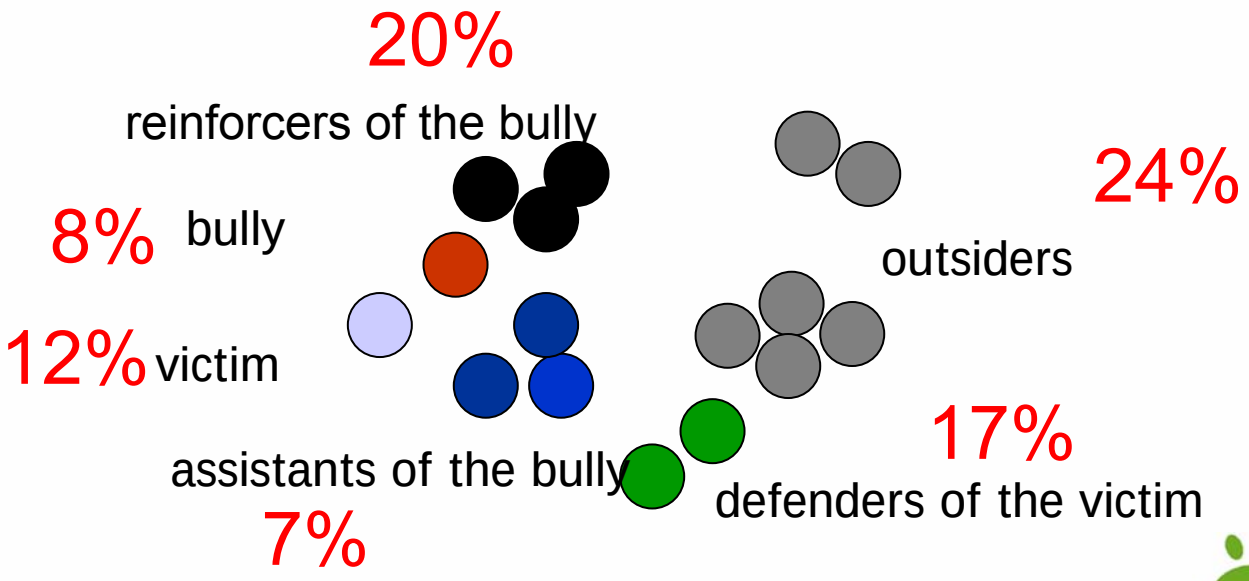
- By choosing victims who are submissive, insecure of themselves, physically weak and in a low-power, rejected position in the group...
- ... the bullies can repeatedly demonstrate their power and thus renew their high-status position without being confronted

The social architecture of bullying

- The power demonstrations need witnesses
  - in most bullying incidents, a group of peers is present

The social architecture of bullying

- Participant roles in bullying (Salmivalli et al., 1996)



The bystander paradox

- most children's attitudes are *against bullying*
- in bullying situations, bullying *appears as being accepted* as the majority of children/adolescents

WHY?

- fear of losing status

- concerns of own safety

What should an anti-bullying program offer to the students?

- Something for all students → universal interventions
- something for bullies and victims in particular → indicated interventions

KiVassa Koulussa ei kiusata

KiVa

KiVa Skola utan mobbning

KiVa program

- A school well-being project was launched by the Finnish Ministry of Education in 2006

→ A national anti-bullying program, KiVa

- Developed by the Department of Psychology and the Center for Learning Research (University of Turku)
  - Program development
  - Teacher education
  - Evaluation of program effectiveness

KiVa?

- Kiva = nice, good, friendly...
- the word is also used by swedish-speaking Finns

- KiVa = Kiusaamista Vastaan, Against Bullying

The aims of KiVa program

- To put an end to existing bullying
- To prevent the emergence of new cases of bullying
- To minimize the adverse effects of victimization

The KiVa program

- Special characteristics:
  - Both *universal* and *targeted* interventions
  - An exceptionally large amount of materials & concrete tools for students, teachers, and parents
  - Utilizing the virtual learning environment
  - Influencing the whole group

The universal intervention, for everyone

- awareness of the role the bystanders play in the bullying process
- empathic understanding of the victim's plight
- safe strategies to support and defend the victimized peers → self-efficacy for defending
  - based on common decisions in the group
  - not necessarily heroic acts of confronting the bullies

The universal intervention, for everyone

- student lessons (10 double lessons during the school year)
- an anti-bullying computer game
- a parents' guide sent to each home
- different symbols telling that our school is a "KiVa school"
  - posters
  - vests for teachers supervising the recess

Student lessons

- Themes:
  - Respect belongs to everyone
  - In the group
  - Recognize bullying!
  - The hidden forms of bullying
  - The consequences of bullying
  - Bullying and the peer group
  - Bullying and the peer group
  - What shall I do if victimized?
  - KiVa Koulu – we'll do it together!
  - Where are we now? How do we go forward?

- Discussions, short films, drama, writing tasks, group work…

Class rules against bullying

- Adopted during the school year, one after each KiVa lesson
- e.g., ”We treat everyone with respect”

KiVa -computer game

- Virtual learning environment
- During and between the lessons

Characters from the virtual school

KiVa -computer game

- **I KNOW**: learning facts about bullying, testing what has been learnt during the lessons
- **I CAN**: learning skills and strategies to support the victim/ counteract bullying
- **I DO**: applying the learnt skills to everyday life at school

Indicated, targeted at particular, identified bully-victim dyads

- Individual discussions with the victim and with the bullying children
  - two different approaches are being tested
- + utilizing prosocial, high-status peers
  - ”your help is needed”
    - setting standards for others
    - making the victim feel better
    - protecting the victimized child from further attacks

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- Individual discussions with the victim and with the bullying children **SCHOOL TEAM**
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- + utilizing prosocial, high-status peers
  - ”your help is needed” **CLASSROOM TEACHER**
    - setting standards for others
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Tackling the cases that come to attention

IS IT BULLYING?

NO → Classroom teacher talks with children involved

YES ↓

SCHOOL TEAM MEMBER(S):

Meeting with the victimized child
”I am going to help you””

Individual discussions with the bullying children

Group discussion with the bullying children

Follow-up discussion with the victimized child
”Has the situation changed?”

Follow-up discussion with the bullying children
(and the former victim):
”How do we ensure that
bullying won’t happen again?”

CLASSROOM TEACHER:

Discussion with
selected prosocial, high-status
classmates:
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two approaches tested

The two approaches tested

- 1. The ”soft” method
  - The aim is ”shared concern” about the victim’s situation, rather than blaming and sanctioning the bully, like in Pikas’ method/No blame approach
    - X must be having a hard time
    - what could you do to help X?
    - OK, try that, and I’ll meet you again next week

The two approaches tested

- 1.The ”tough” method
  - Serious discussions, such as in Olweus’ program, clearly pointing out that the bully has broken the school rules and must change his/her behavior immediately

Support in implementation

- Teacher education before implementation
  - two full days of education for teachers and school team members
- Support during implementation
  - School teams → networks; meetings during the school year (October, January, April)
  - A web-based discussion forum

The future of KiVa?

- The vision:
  - KiVa will be the national anti-bullying program used in Finnish schools
  - the dissemination starts after the evaluation phase, i.e. in 2009-2010

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KiVa

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