

BRNET June Newsletter

Dear BRNET Members:

Thank you for being a part of the Bullying Research Network. Below you will find updates from BRNET. Be sure to check our website at <http://brnet.unl.edu>.

Researcher Spotlight – Dr. Ian Rivers

Ian Rivers, PhD is Professor of Human Development at Brunel University London. He is a developmental psychologist and registered health psychologist in the UK. The focus of his research is on understanding the emotional and mental health implications of bullying for the whole school. His early research in the 1990s focused on the psychosocial correlates and long-term effects of homophobic bullying where he explored the potential consequences of victimization related to perceived sexual orientation among 116 lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) adults. Using a complex methodology involving the partialling out of variables such as bullying in adulthood and recent life-events, he compared the current mental health and well-being of former victims of homophobic bullying to three reference groups – heterosexual adults bullied at school, heterosexual adults who were not bullied at school, and LGB adults who were not bullied at school. His results demonstrated that bullying, regardless of sexual orientation (and partialling out for recent negative life events), was significantly related to poorer mental health and well-being in later years (Rivers, 2011).

Between 2001 and 2006 he undertook (with Nathalie Noret) a five year cohort longitudinal study of text and e-mail bullying. Based upon data collated from 3,000 students annually, he has shown that persistent text and e-mail bullying remains relatively infrequent, although occasional “nasty” texts and e-mails are more likely to be sent by girls rather than boys. Ian also demonstrated that the frequency of text and e-mail bullying was related positively to the uptake in online connectivity and cell-phone accessibility among youth in secondary schools (Rivers & Noret, 2010).

Most recently his research has focused on the well-being of bystanders, and he argues for a nuanced approach to understanding the dynamics of the unofficial hierarchy of school life. Based upon data collated for 2002 secondary school students, he has shown that bystanders also have elevated levels of depression, anxiety and suicide risk when compared to students who have not witnessed bullying recently. Furthermore, he has argued that feelings of powerlessness among bystanders account for a significant proportion of the variance in students’ thoughts of death and dying (Rivers, Poteat, Noret & Ashurst, 2009; Rivers & Noret, in press).

Further information about Ian’s work and publications can be found at the following website address: <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/sse/education/staff/professor-ian-rivers>

References

- Rivers, I. (2011). *Homophobic Bullying: Research and Theoretical Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rivers, I. and Noret, N. (2010). 'I h8 u': Findings from a five-year study of text and e-mail bullying. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36 (4), 643- 671.
- Rivers, I. & Noret, N. (in press). Suicide risk among bystanders of bullying behavior. *Journal of Adolescent Health*.
- Rivers, I., Poteat, V. P., Noret, N., & Ashurst, N. (2009). Observing bullying at school: The mental health implications of witness status. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 24 (4), 211- 223.
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BRNET 2012 Think Tank

Our second annual Bullying Research Network Think Tank is right around the corner! It will be held on June 21-22 at the University of Virginia. All BRNET members are invited to join us! Information on travel, lodging, scheduling, and more can be found on the BRNET 2012 Think Tank website at <http://cehs15.unl.edu/cms/index.php?s=2&p=175>. Please read this information and let us know if you have any questions. If you plan to attend the Think Tank, please **RSVP** by emailing **Crystal Haislip at chaislip@virginia.edu**. We hope to see you in Virginia!

Bullying Prevention in the Promotion of a Positive School Climate Conference

Consider joining us for the upcoming "Bullying Prevention in the Promotion of a Positive School Climate: Effective Principles and Practices" conference! The conference will be held in Charlottesville, Virginia on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, and will precede the BRNET Think Tank. Several BRNET members, including Drs. Catherine Bradshaw, Dorothy Espelage, Susan Limber, Susan Swearer, and Dewey Cornell will be speaking. More information can be found at the conference website: <http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/vcss/training/bullyingPrevention/>

Final Report from the Symposium on Youth Meanness & Cruelty

As part of the official launch of the Born This Way Foundation, The Symposium on Youth Meanness and Cruelty took place at Harvard Law School on February 29th, 2012. Generously supported by the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and hosted by the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University in partnership with the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the Symposium brought together experts, researchers, policymakers, foundation representatives, youth, and others to discuss research and findings related to bullying, meanness, and cruelty, while also emphasizing positive concepts like healthy relationships, civic engagement, and digital citizenship. We're happy to share with you the final report from the Symposium on Youth Meanness & Cruelty. The document is attached and can also be accessed on the Berkman Center's website: <https://cyber.law.harvard.edu/node/7491>. In addition to an introduction to the program overall (Section I), this report provides: high level notes from each of the sessions that took place during the Symposium (Section II), answers generated by Symposium participants in response to four driving questions that framed the discussions (Section III), and the central themes that emerged during the day (Section IV). These sections reflect the collation of immediate takeaways from the Symposium, a synthesis of central themes, and participants' feedback.

Special Double Issue from the *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*

The *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* recently released a double special issue on “Ecological Approaches to Mental Health and Educational Services for Children and Adolescents,” guest edited by Dr. Terry Gutkin. This issue has been available for **free download** through the end of May: just visit <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/hepc20/current> and click "Download full text" for any articles of interest.

Some sample articles include:

- **Ecological Psychology: Replacing the Medical Model Paradigm for School-Based Psychological and Psychoeducational Services** *Terry B. Gutkin*
- **Assessment of Ecological Factors as an Integral Part of Academic and Mental Health Consultation** *Jim Ysseldyke, Adam J. Lekwa, David A. Klingbeil, and Damien C. Cormier*
- **Contributions of Ecological School Mental Health Services to Students’ Academic Success** *Beth Doll, Rob Spies, and Allison Champion*
- **Moving From “Context Matters” to Engaged Partnerships With Families** *Amy L. Reschly and Sandra L. Christenson*
- **Response to Intervention (RTI) Services: An Ecobehavioral Perspective** *Charles R. Greenwood and Joung Min Kim*
- **Ecological Approaches to Organizational Consultation and Systems Change in Educational Settings** *Adena B. Meyers, Joel Meyers, Emily C. Graybill, Sherrie L. Proctor, and Lillie Huddleston*
- **Emerging Ecological Approaches to Prevention, Health Promotion, and Public Health in the School Context: Next Steps From a Community Psychology Perspective** *Edison J. Trickett and Hillary L. Rowe*
- **Ecological Psychology: Potential Contributions to Social Justice and Advocacy in School Settings** *Joseph M. Williams and Arie T. Greenleaf*

Free Article Download from the *Journal of Homosexuality*

For a limited time, the *Journal of Homosexuality* is offering a free download of a recent research article suggesting that coming out to supportive parents may lead to better mental health. The article can be downloaded [here](#), and the reference and abstract are below.

Rothman, E. F., Sullivan, M., Keyes, S., & Boehmer, U. (2012). Parents' supportive reactions to sexual orientation disclosure associated with better health: Results from a population-based survey of LGB adults in Massachusetts. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 59, 186-200.

Abstract: This study investigated associations between coming out to parents, experiences of parental support, and self-reported health behaviors and conditions among a population-based sample of LGB individuals using data collected via the 2002 Massachusetts Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS; $N = 177$). We explored the following two hypotheses: 1) Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals who had never disclosed their sexual orientation to a parent would report higher levels of risk behaviors and poorer health conditions than those who had come out; and 2) among LGB respondents who had come out to their parents, the individuals whose parents had reacted unsupportively would report higher levels of risk behaviors and poorer health conditions than those who had come out to parents who were supportive. Approximately two thirds of gay and bisexual (GB) males and lesbian and bisexual (LB) females reported receiving adequate social and emotional support from the parent to whom they first disclosed their sexual orientation. Among LB females, no disclosure of sexual orientation to a parent was associated with significantly elevated levels of past-month illicit drug use (AOR 12.16, 95% CI 2.87–51.54), fair or poor self-reported health status (AOR 5.71, 95% CI 1.45–22.51), and >15 days of depression in the past month (AOR 5.95, 95% CI 1.78–19.90), controlling for potential confounders. However, nondisclosure to a parent by GB males was not associated with greater odds of any of the health indicators assessed. Among GB males, those with unsupportive parents were significantly more likely to report current binge drinking (AOR 6.94, 95% CI 1.70–28.35) and >15 days depression in the past month (AOR 6.08, 95% CI 1.15–32.15), and among LB females, those with unsupportive parents were significantly more likely to report lifetime illicit drug use (AOR 11.43, 95% CI 2.50–52.30), and >15 days depression in the past month (AOR 5.51, 95% CI 1.36–22.36). We conclude that coming out may be associated with better health for LB women, and that parents who react nonsupportively when their children disclose LGB sexual orientation may contribute to children's increased odds of depression and hazardous substance use.

Dr. Espelage to Present a Webinar

On June 5-8 and June 12, Dr. Dorothy Espelage will present a webinar entitled, “Realistic Strategies for Bullying Prevention and Intervention.” Information and registration for the webinar can be found at <http://oce.illinois.edu/Programs/BullyingWorkshop>.

Bullying and Dropout Prevention

Dr. Paul Downes has recently released two articles involving bullying in the context of early school leaving prevention. Please go to <http://cehs15.unl.edu/cms/index.php?s=2&p=129-382> to view and download the articles.

Downes, P. (2011). Multi/Interdisciplinary teams for early school leaving prevention: Developing a European Strategy informed by international evidence and research. European Commission Network of Experts on the Social aspects of Education and Training (NESET). <http://www.nesetweb.eu/policy-priorities/resource-library/multiinterdisciplinary-teams-early-school-leaving-prevention>.

Downes, P. (2011). The neglected shadow: European perspectives on emotional supports for early school leaving prevention, *The International Journal of Emotional Education*, Volume 3, Number 2, 3-36.

Thank you for your involvement in the Bullying Research Network! If you have any news, information, research, suggestions for new members, or other materials that our members would find useful, please do not hesitate to email us at bullyresearchnet@gmail.com

Most sincerely,



Dr. Shelley Hymel
University of British Columbia
BRNET Co-Director



Dr. Susan Swearer
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
BRNET Co-Director