



FACT SHEET **05** VICTIMIZATION AT ENTRY INTO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1 CONTEXT

Children who are victimized by their peers are sometimes chosen as victims based on characteristics that differentiate them from others. However, it seems that somewhat atypical social behaviours are the strongest predictors of victimization. Certain factors such as parenting practices or the sex of the victim can also be associated with the risk of victimization.

SOURCE

This fact sheet is a brief summary of the results presented in the following fascicle: GIGUÈRE, Claudine, Frank VITARO, Michel BOIVIN, Hélène DESROSIERS, Jean-François CARDIN and Mara R. BRENDGEN (2011). "Peer Victimization from Kindergarten to Grade 2," *Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development (QLSCD 1998-2010) – From Birth to 8 Years of Age*, Institut de la statistique du Québec, Vol. 5, Fascicule 4. http://www.iamillbe.stat.gouv.qc.ca/pdf/publications/feuillelet/fascicule_victimisation_an.pdf

Note that the QLSCD has been following a cohort of children who were born in Québec in 1997-1998.

2 HIGHLIGHTS

Between kindergarten and Grade 2, 25% to 37% of children reported, according to the behaviour under study and the year of the survey round, having often been a victim of acts such as being called names, being pushed, hit, kicked or teased by their fellow students. However, the percentages observed each year does not necessarily mean this affected the same children.

Based on data collected from the children, the cohort could be categorized into three groups according to the acts of bullying which victimized them in kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2:

- The first group comprised children who reported little or no victimization perpetrated by their peers during this period of their educational trajectory (37%).
- The second group was composed of children who were sometimes the target of many negative behaviours or often the target of certain negative behaviours on the part of their peers (53%).
- The third group comprised children who were constantly victims of bullying or aggression from kindergarten to Grade 2 (10%).

Certain children were more likely to belong in the second and third groups:

- Children presenting more behavioural problems such as physical aggression, hyperactivity or opposition.
- Children whose parents reported more negative interactions with them such as raising their voice, getting angry or using corporal punishment in reaction to a difficult behaviour.

Though the probability of constantly being a victim of bullying did not vary by sex, boys had a greater risk of being in the second group rather than the first.

Beginning in kindergarten, negative behaviours that are the basis of victimization, such as being called names or pushed around, were rather frequent.



2 HIGHLIGHTS (continued)

Association with attachment to the school

Even though the children presented a relatively high level of attachment to their school between kindergarten and Grade 2, those who were being constantly victimized seemed less attached at the beginning of their academic trajectory.

3 OF NOTE

The results obtained were based on the young children's self-assessment of victimization they experienced. It would be productive to confirm their reports using sources other than the children themselves.

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INTERVENTION PATHS

These results underline the importance of early screening of children at risk for the purposes of prevention. Interventions made in kindergarten with children at risk and their parents, or even earlier if possible, could contribute to improving their personal and interpersonal skills. It is recommended that people working in various capacities in the education system continue to systematically discourage acts of bullying and clearly communicate this to children in school.