



A Prevention Approach to Bullying News Media: Partnering with Journalists

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BACKGROUND

- Bullying remains a public health issue for teens and is related to negative health outcomes
- News stories about bullying often focus on tragic cases
 - Leaves teens feeling fearful and hopeless
- An alternate approach may be to promote bullying prevention in news media

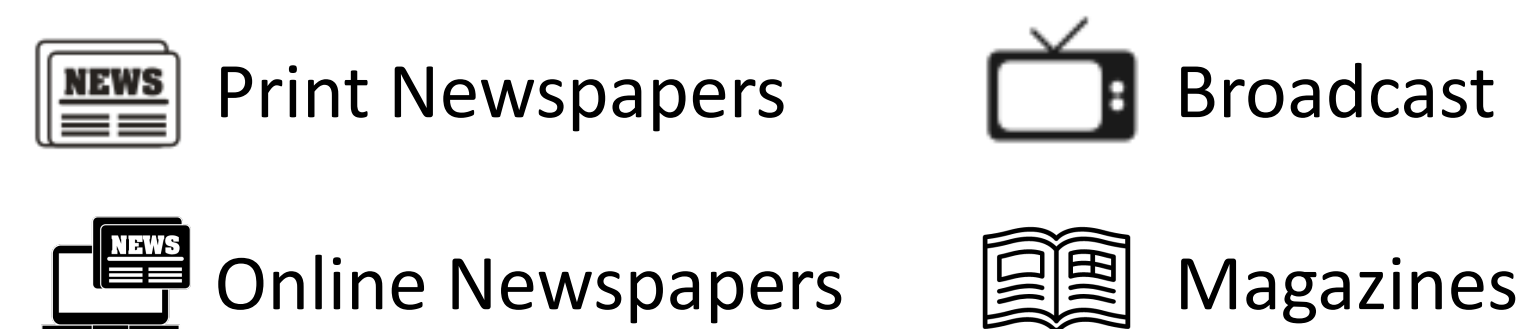
The purpose of this study was to understand perspectives of journalists on incorporating prevention information in news stories about bullying and cyberbullying.

METHODS

This study was approved by the University of Wisconsin-Madison IRB.

Settings and Subjects

- Identified journalists who had covered youth-focused topics by reviewing published stories on bullying and cyberbullying in:



- After informed consent, participants were interviewed over WebEx

Semi-Structured Interview



Analysis

- Qualitative thematic analysis was utilized by three coders utilizing the constant comparative approach

Journalists are open to incorporating prevention information in news stories on bullying and interested in collaborating with pediatricians and researchers to create guidelines

RESULTS

Journalists identified 3 key considerations about reporting on bullying in the news

- 1) Some aspects of reporting are out of journalists' control, such as the need to report details of a bullying incident, which may be inherently fearful

"It's hard because you're, it's the media, you're spreading the news about these things."

- 2) Many journalists proposed a solution to have a balance between details of the bullying incident and prevention information

"So you have to balance that. You have to find a way to address the situation in a sensitive manner and also find the compelling way to tell that story."

- 3) Journalists indicated interest in creating guidelines to identify practical ways to include prevention information in reporting

"Back when suicide was such a weird topic to report on, and now there's a template for how it's done. You know that could be what to do for cyberbullying."

CONCLUSIONS

- Journalists would like to write a news article that accurately describes the bullying incident and included prevention information to help adolescents and their families
- Guidelines would help ensure that news articles on this topic address both the details of what happened and bullying prevention information



ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

Participant Demographics

- N = 20
 - 70% Female
 - 80% Caucasian
 - Average Age = 42.7 years
 - 55% staff journalists
 - 60% worked with national news organizations
 - 70% worked for print and online newspapers

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