

<https://doi.org/10.34142/2709-7986.2024.29.2.11>

## BULLYING PREVENTION AT SCHOOLS IN UKRAINE

### ПРОФІЛАКТИКА БУЛІНГУ В ШКОЛАХ УКРАЇНИ

Received: 01/08/2024

Accepted: 01/09/2024

#### Ilona KOSTIKOVA<sup>1</sup> & Natalia GUZENKO<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> DSc (Education), Ph.D. in Education, Ph.D. in Philology, Full Professor, Head of Department of Theory and Practice of the English Language, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: [ilonakostikova@gmail.com](mailto:ilonakostikova@gmail.com)ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5894-4846>

<sup>2</sup> Ph.D. Student, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: [5ws.g.natalia@gmail.com](mailto:5ws.g.natalia@gmail.com)ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9356-1784>

#### How to Cite (APA Style):

Kostikova, I., & Guzenko, N. (2024). Bullying prevention at schools in Ukraine. *Educational Challenges*, 29(2), 166–180. <https://doi.org/10.34142/2709-7986.2024.29.2.11>

#### ABSTRACT

The **purpose** of the article is to inform high school students and teachers about the problem of preventing bullying and implementing anti-bullying measures at schools in Ukraine.

**Methodology.** Theoretical research methods were used in the article: systematization; comparison of issues related to bullying prevention; comparison of different author' views regarding the implementation of anti-bullying measures; and analysis and generalization of scientific, educational, methodological, psychological, and pedagogical resources with

**Мета** статті – інформування старшокласників та вчителів про проблему запобігання булінгу, впровадження заходів протидії булінгу в школах України.

**Методологія.** У статті використано теоретичні методи дослідження: систематизація, порівняння питань, пов'язаних із запобіганням булінгу, порівняння поглядів різних авторів щодо впровадження заходів протидії булінгу; аналіз та узагальнення наукових, навчально-методичних, психолого-

© Ilona KOSTIKOVA &amp; Natalia GUZENKO, 2024

**Bullying Prevention at Schools in Ukraine** © 2024 by Ilona KOSTIKOVA & Natalia GUZENKO is licensed under **Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International**. To view a copy of the license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

the aim of systematizing approaches to bullying prevention.

**Results.** In order to deepen high school students' knowledge of anti-bullying skills, we developed and offered two lessons for students. They are "Normative and legal documents on the prevention of bullying and responsibility for it", "Foreign experience in preventing bullying", as well as two workshops for teachers, they are "Guidance to teachers on the implementation of anti-bullying measures in Ukraine", "Tips for teachers on bullying prevention according to the national programs". We believe they will contribute to bullying prevention in Ukraine.

**Conclusions.** Conclusions regarding the effective bullying prevention in Ukrainian schools indicate the need for comprehensive, systematic work. The most effective are programs that cover all aspects of school life from creating a friendly and supportive environment to raising awareness among students, teachers, and parents about the bullying problem.

It is important to involve students in the process of bullying prevention through their participation, communication, and creation of student councils that help in conflict resolution. Building interaction and empathy skills among students helps to reduce the level of aggression and bullying. Systematic training for teachers about bullying prevention, as well as the inclusion of bullying topics in school programs, contribute to the development of a safe educational environment in schools. In order to prevent bullying effectively, it is important that students collaborate actively with teachers, parents, and local communities, ensuring that bullying is prevented and countered both inside and outside schools.

**Keywords:** anti-bullying measures, awareness, collaboration, empathy skills, safe educational environment, students, teachers.

педагогічних джерел з метою систематизації підходів до профілактики булінгу.

**Результати.** З метою поглиблення знань старшокласників, навичок протидії булінгу ми розробили та запропонували для учнів два уроки, це «Нормативно-правові документи щодо запобігання булінгу та відповідальності за нього», «Зарубіжний досвід запобігання булінгу», а також два семінари для вчителів, це «Рекомендації для вчителів щодо впровадження заходів протидії булінгу в Україні», «Поради для вчителів щодо запобігання булінгу відповідно до національних програм», ми віримо, що вони сприятимуть запобіганню булінгу в Україні.

**Висновки.** Висновки щодо ефективної профілактики булінгу в українських школах свідчать про необхідність комплексної, системної роботи. Найефективнішими є програми, які охоплюють усі аспекти шкільного життя від створення доброзичливого та сприятливого середовища до підвищення обізнаності учнів, учителів та батьків про проблему булінгу.

Важливо залучати учнів до процесу профілактики булінгу через їх участь, спілкування, створення учнівських рад, які допомагають у вирішенні конфліктів. Побудова взаємодії та розвиток навичок емпатії серед учнів допомагає знизити рівень агресії та булінгу. Систематичні тренінги для вчителів щодо запобігання булінгу, а також включення теми булінгу до шкільних програм сприяють розвитку безпечного освітнього середовища в школах. Щоб ефективно запобігати булінгу, важливо, щоб учні активно співпрацювали з вчителями, батьками та місцевими громадами, забезпечуючи запобігання булінгу та протидію йому як у школах, так і поза ними.

**Ключові слова:** заходи протидії булінгу, обізнаність, співпраця, навички емпатії, безпечне освітнє середовище, учні, вчителі.

## INTRODUCTION

critical pedagogical, psychological, and social problems, which has attracted more and more attention in recent years. A large number of Ukrainian high school students face bullying both at school and online (Kostikova & Guzenko, 2021; Baldyniuk & Klymenko, 2023). The lack of special attention to this issue at schools (Guzenko, 2021), as well as the low level of teachers' awareness (Vaintraub, 2024) about ways to prevent bullying, worsens the situation at school.

Ukraine has taken certain steps in solving this problem at the state level, in particular, thanks to the introduction of various anti-bullying programs at schools and the delivery of pedagogical, psychological, social, and legal support (Ferlic & Zaporozhets, 2019). However, the effectiveness of these measures remains insufficient due to the lack of systematicity and proper awareness of students and teachers.

The **purpose** of the article is to inform high school students and teachers about the problem of preventing bullying and implementing anti-bullying measures at schools in Ukraine.

## METHODOLOGY

Theoretical research methods were used in the article: systematization; comparison of issues related to bullying prevention; comparison of different authors' views regarding the implementation of anti-bullying measures; and analysis and generalization of scientific, educational, methodological, psychological, pedagogical resources with the aim of systematizing approaches to bullying prevention.

## RESULTS

In order to deepen high school students' knowledge and anti-bullying skills, we developed and offered two lessons for students. They are "Normative and legal documents on the prevention of bullying and responsibility for it" and "Foreign experience in preventing bullying", as well as two workshops for teachers: "Guidance to teachers on the implementation of anti-bullying measures in Ukraine", "Tips for teachers on bullying prevention according to the national programs by O. Yurchyk (Yurchyk, 2015) and K. Katerynychuk, O. Matsyuk" (Katerynychuk & Matsiuk, 2020). We believe they will contribute to bullying prevention in Ukraine. Let's consider them in detail.

### *Lessons #1 & 2 for students.*

Lesson #1 for students: Normative and legal documents on the prevention of bullying and responsibility for it.

At the current stage in Ukraine, school bullying has become a painful phenomenon. The level of school violence in Ukrainian secondary schools has increased, so Ukraine should follow the developed mechanisms for preventing and overcoming the problem of bullying at school.

According to Article 1734 of the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offenses, bullying or harassment is defined as the actions of participants in the educational process, which include psychological, physical, economic, and sexual violence, including the use of electronic communications, directed against or carried out by a minor or a relative to other participants in the educational process, and which may harm their mental or physical health. Fines from 850 to 3,400 hryvnias or community service from 20 to 60 hours are provided for in this article. Liability for bullying begins at the age of 16 years old, and if the offense is committed by a person who has not reached this age, then their parents or guardians are responsible.

The Code was supplemented with an amendment, according to which administrative responsibility is established for concealing cases of bullying from teachers, school managers, or founders. This involves the imposition of a fine of 50 to 100 tax-free

minimum incomes of citizens or community service for a period of 20 to 40 hours. If the offense is committed by a minor who has not reached the age of 16 years old, such fines are paid by his/her parents.

According to the results (Katerynychuk & Matsiuk, 2020), 13.3% of students often fall into bullying situations, and 44.7% periodically face bullying. The results of the “Violence at School” study, which covered 1,236 students from 20 schools in Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Vinnytsia, and Cherkasy regions, showed that a third of them (from 24% to 37%) experienced physical or psychological violence in schools. The problem of bullying is not only related to pedagogy and psychology but also has a social dimension, as it leads to an increase in manifestations of violence, cruelty, addictions, and deviant behavior among high school students. Specifically, 67% of students in Ukraine were bullied in the previous 2–3 months (Ukrainian Institute for the Study of Extremism, n.d.; UIRE, n.d.).

The largest number of protocols for the application of Article 1734 of the Code of Ukraine regarding bullying on administrative offenses was drawn up and considered in the courts of Kyiv, Kherson, Kirovohrad and Cherkasy regions, and the least in Transcarpathia and Chernihiv region, where only one protocol was drawn up.

Regarding the criminal responsibility, actions of persons who engage in bullying, may be qualified under the relevant articles of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, such as articles 126 “Beating and assault”, articles 121, 122, and 125 “Intentional bodily harm of varying severity”, article 129 “Threat to kill” and article 296 “Hooliganism”.

The first court decision regarding cases of bullying, which was issued by the Boryspil City District Court of the Kyiv Region on February 5, 2019, related to the manifestations of psychological and sexual violence of a teenager against her peers at school through the use of electronic communications, in particular, the publication of obscene photos on Instagram. The so-called “joke” led to the imposition of a fine equivalent to 50 tax-free minimum incomes of citizens, and the payment of a court fee (Katerynychuk & Matsiuk, 2020).

According to the Unified State Register of Court Decisions in Ukraine as of December 9, 2019, courts considered 316 cases of bullying. In 123 of them, a decision was made to impose penalties:

- in 103 cases (84%) – fines (usually imposed on the teenager’s mother);
- in 10 cases (8%) – community service (however, according to the judge’s conclusion, this was rarely assigned because it was considered ineffective);
- in 9 cases – warnings that are not provided for by the sanction of the article;
- in 1 case – an obligation to apologize publicly (Katerynychuk & Matsiuk, 2020).

The issue of the age at which it is possible to bear criminal responsibility for bullying is the subject of active discussions among practitioners in Ukraine. Proponents of lowering the criminal age threshold argue their position with two main aspects. Firstly, they refer to the data of psychologists who, in the process of researching personality characteristics at different age stages, showed that the period from 11/12 to 14/15 years, when the transition from childhood to young adult occurs, is accompanied by an intensive development of intelligence and will.

This process develops minors' ability to engage in socially oriented volitional behavior in situations outlined by criminal legislation. Secondly, they believe that children from the age of 11 can understand the illegality and be aware of the social danger of such crimes as intentional murder, intentional grievous bodily harm, rape, and violent gratification of sexual passion in an unnatural way. From their point of view, these prohibitions reflect elementary rules of behavior that everyone has known since childhood.

Lesson #2 for students: Foreign experience in preventing bullying.

According to a 1999 survey conducted by researchers from the University of British Columbia among 490 Canadian students in grades 8-10, the majority of students considered bullying to be a normal part of school life (64%), and some even saw it as helpful for building resilience and motivation in solving problems (20–50%). So, the problem is partly related to students' ideas about bullying. It also turned out that the students' attitude towards the aggressor was mostly positive: from 61 to 80% of high school students noted that the aggressors enjoy popularity and authority among their peers (Stop a bully).

This contributes to the fact that students, witnessing bullying situations, not only consider it necessary to stand up for a victim, but also support a persecutor and encourage bullying (NCPS, n.d.). However, the effectiveness of peer intervention in cases of bullying is emphasized, as the conflict ends as usual ten seconds after peer intervention.

Most students reported cases of bullying to their parents, not to their teachers. In this regard, in Canada, special attention is paid to establishing communication and cooperation between the school and parents in order to provide assistance to both student-persecutors and student-victims (<https://www.bullyingcanada.ca/>).

For this purpose, information events are organized, where parents learn about bullying problems, learn to recognize if their children have become victims of bullying, receive some advice on supporting their children and actions if they have witnessed bullying, or even if their children have committed bullying. In addition, parent representatives participate in the Parents' Advisory Council, which develops anti-bullying programs together with the school.

An integral part of anti-bullying efforts in Canada is working with student-bullies and student-victims. Initiators of bullying often lack sufficient conflict resolution and empathy skills, and so a focus on helping to develop such skills becomes a priority (Pepler et al., 1997; Vaillancourt et al., 2021). Victims of bullying, because of their vulnerability, usually try to avoid conflict and isolate themselves. Therefore, working with this group of students involves increasing self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as teaching fear management skills and self-defense.

Gender specific features of bullying are also taken into account when developing and conducting anti-bullying programs. Gender analysis showed that both girls and boys engage in bullying, but they typically express it in different ways. Girls are more likely to direct their bullying behavior towards social exclusion, while boys are more likely to be physically dominant. This knowledge helps to more effectively identify cases of bullying and adapt programs to the specific needs of students of both genders.

Preventing and countering bullying in Canadian schools is crucial, as it contributes to developing a positive school atmosphere based on respect and tolerance, along with clearly defined norms of behavior for students and staff. To ensure this, every province in Canada has a Safe and Supportive Schools policy. Bullying legislation in Canada sets out procedures for punishing students who violate these rules (even witnesses who did not report the incident, under Albert Act 30). Bullying Awareness and Prevention Weeks are held annually, student codes of conduct are developed, and anti-bullying and non-violence programs are implemented in Canadian schools (<https://www.bullyingcanada.ca/>).

For the effectiveness of anti-bullying measures in Canadian schools, working groups are created, in which teachers, administrators, parents, students, medical personnel, police, and other members of a community participate. These groups develop detailed plans to respond to incidents of bullying, support victims and aggressors, implement various programs, and evaluate their effectiveness.

In order to prevent bullying, the potential of academic subjects studied in middle and high school in Canada is utilized. Lessons focus on various aspects of bullying, legislation, and school protocols, as well as prevention and response skills. Students are actively involved in the study of these topics using a variety of methods, such as discussion, analysis of literary works and films, role-playing, and the project method (Department for Children..., 2007; Konishi et al., 2024; Levchenko, 2021).

The use of such methods contributes to the development of responsible behavior for students and to the creation of a positive environment in Canadian schools. For example, students can create slogans that reflect their ideas for a safe and supportive school environment and then discuss them with teachers and administrators.

Teachers often use the case study method for anti-bullying work. For example, they can provide students with examples of bullying from their own experience or from the media and assign them a task of writing better endings for these scenarios in groups. These works are evaluated on several criteria, such as expressing empathy for a victim of bullying, strategies for responding to an incident, identified resources to support individuals, and realistic strategies for creating a tolerant environment in Canada (Public Safety Canada, n.d.).

It is also a common practice to invite guest experts such as psychologists, social workers or police officers to have classes on legislation, anger management strategies, and conflict resolution in Canadian schools. These methods reinforce anti-bullying ideas and encourage students to take responsibility for their actions.

To monitor anti-bullying work, methods of observation, questionnaires, interviews, and projects are used. In addition, anti-bullying activities extend to extracurricular activities such as Good Deeds Week and National Bullying Awareness Week in Canada's schools. During this time, students have presentations and engage in other activities aimed at contesting bullying and supporting victims (<https://www.bullyingcanada.ca/>).

An analysis of Canada's anti-bullying experience shows that the implementation of anti-bullying educational and preventive programs is a common and effective practice in schools. These programs are based on the idea of a unified attitude on bullying for students, their parents, teachers, and community members. Various participants are

involved, such as families, representatives of organizations, celebrities, public figures, and police officers. Anti-bullying programs are divided into general, corrective, and special, which are intended for all students or for aggressors and victims of bullying.

Studies of the effectiveness of such programs show that short-term correctional and special programs are not sufficiently effective. Instead, the long-term and comprehensive focus of anti-bullying programs that include all students, not just those with behavioral problems or who have been bullied, is important. The main tasks of such programs are to expand students' knowledge about bullying, change their attitudes and behavior, develop anti-bullying skills, and encourage active actions against it in schools (Public Safety Canada, n.d.).

One of the features of anti-bullying programs is the opportunity for participants to share their experiences, jointly develop strategies to overcome the problem, and implement projects in schools. This contributes to the activation of students' self-government and their inclusion in the development and implementation of school plans to prevent and combat bullying. Students create committees, conduct anti-bullying programs, report on the impact of bullying on their lives, and participate in school activities aimed at combating this phenomenon.

In schools, a lot of attention must be paid to the distribution of anti-bullying resources. Materials for students, teachers, and parents must be published on school websites, while anti-bullying posters, bulletin board, and leaflets should decorate school and classroom interiors. School districts must appoint safe school coordinators to operate special online programs, smartphone apps, and services for anonymous reporting of bullying incidents. This helps to quickly identify and respond to such incidents.

To monitor the problem of bullying, schools must regularly survey students, their parents, and teachers; keep a journal to register cases and statements that come from parents; and discuss the situation at teachers' meetings. This allows a quick response to problems that arise in a school.

Anti-bullying efforts in schools must be based on a preventive approach and involve a well-organized system of actions from various participants, including teachers, school staff, students, their parents, police, and community members. Anti-bullying work must be included in official and unofficial curricula, and is also based on the principles of obligation, comprehensiveness, gender orientation, and cooperation of all participants (Olweus, 2001).

We suggest considering the possibilities of using foreign experience in Ukrainian schools. At the state level, it is recommended to develop a comprehensive national strategy for preventing violence, which includes interdisciplinary strategies to reduce the social vulnerability of students, expanding the range of services in the field of health care, education and social infrastructure, as well as measures to protect children's rights. In this context, it is important to uphold the principles of non-violence both inside and outside schools. In addition, it is necessary to improve the legal framework regarding the sale of alcohol, cigarettes to minors, and access to psychotropic substances.

An effective strategy can be the implementation of a system of state grants to support socially active schools that work successfully to create a safe school environment. At the

regional level, it is expedient to create and support public organizations aimed at intensifying interaction between a school, family, and community in violence prevention.

Also, possible initiatives for local communities could be a creation of community learning centers, mentoring programs that involve communication with teenagers under the guidance of community representatives, as well as the creation of information and resource centers for parents.

In the school context, priorities may include the creation of school safety committees and the development and implementation of educational and preventive programs. These initiatives will be carried out together with representatives of law enforcement agencies and specialists in the field of social work, similar to the American programs "D.A.R.E." and "G.R.E.A.T." (For Educators). Therefore, the analysis of the problem of school violence will contribute to finding more effective solutions in Ukrainian schools.

Undoubtedly, analysis of the discussion frequency of the violence problem in schools indicates its growth. A good example of this is the film "Class", created in Estonia. Its scenario is based on real events that took place in Estonian schools and might be repeated in any other school. The film shows how classmates systematically mock and bully a teenager. However, when one of his former abusers tried to stand up for him, it led to a violent confrontation in the classroom that ended in tragedy.

A situation similar to the one shown in the film is also possible in Ukraine, as this situation is not exceptional. We can ask a question: How many of you have been in a situation where you have been bullied, or have you witnessed such acts without trying to do anything to counteract them? With this in mind, along with providing assistance to aggressive students and victims of violence, an important task is to create a system of measures for the prevention of school violence at school from the teachers' side.

*Workshops # 1 & 2 for teachers.*

Workshop # 1 for teachers. Some advice to teachers on the implementation of anti-bullying measures in Ukraine.

We offer teachers an overview of a number of scientific research projects and programs on school and family violence that have been implemented in Ukraine over the past decades. Particular interest is drawn to the system of propaedeutic, diagnostic, and corrective measures. The system may include a range of diagnostic methods and corrective training, as well as descriptions of psycho-hygienic and ethno-psychological principles of family violence propaedeutics.

As part of the project "Prevention of violence against children at school" conducted by the "Women's Consortium of Ukraine", an educational and methodological guide was created with the aim of disseminating information about systematic training work with students, parents, and teachers to overcome violence in school. In 2009, as part of the framework of the Polish foreign aid program in Ukraine, the project "School system of contesting aggression and violence: recommendations for teachers" was implemented. A Ukrainian research team, consisting of E. Dubrovskaya, M. Yashynska, and M. Alekseyenko (Dubrovskaya et al., 2016), conducted a study titled "Violence in school: analysis of the problem and help needed by teens and teachers in solving it." The participants of the study were schools from four regions of Ukraine, where various methods and techniques were used, including specially developed questionnaires.

From 2006 to 2011, the “School without aggression” course was held. The participants of which were 7,000 teenagers from various schools, from secondary schools to sports clubs. The course program included team games, breathing and physical exercises, acquiring practical skills to overcome aggression, and others.

The Ukrainian researchers N. Zymivets, Y. Malienko, and T. Tsyuman (Zymivets, Malienko, and Tsyuman, 2009), based on the experience of the Ukrainian Children’s Welfare Foundation, developed informational and methodological materials for teachers, practical psychologists, social educators, and other specialists working in the field of violence prevention. Their work describes the peculiarities of training specialists for social and educational activities, the model of providing social, psychological, and pedagogical services in the field of violence prevention, and the mechanisms of intersectoral interaction.

In the last decades, public organizations and state authorities have been actively involved in the prevention of school violence. For example, in 2014, the seminar “How to prevent violence in the school environment?” was held in Kyiv, organized by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the International Organization “Save the Children”, and the public organization “Women’s Consortium of Ukraine”. The participants of the seminar familiarized themselves with the algorithm of actions for organizing efforts to prevent and overcome violence against teenagers. They also discussed the issue of division of responsibilities across the levels of the management, as well as supervision and monitoring procedures. A free of charge course from the ‘Prometheus’ online platform is available (Protydiia ta poperedzhennia bulinhu).

Workshop #2 for teachers. Some advice to teachers on prevention of bullying according to the program by O. Yurchyk (Yurchyk, 2015) and according to the authors’ methods by K. Katerynchuk and O. Matsyuk (Katerynchuk & Matsiuk, 2020).

When giving advice to teachers on the prevention of violence and bullying, O. Yurchyk’s program on the main directions of personal development can be taken into account (Yurchyk, 2015).

1. Understanding one’s own value and uniqueness, as well as a holistic awareness of oneself as a subject of life through the development of the ability to introspect.
2. Development of adequate self-esteem, ability to self-determination, and self-assignment of responsibility for various life conditions.
3. Improving the skills of self-regulation of behavior and activity.
4. Awareness of one’s own place in relation to other people.
5. Understanding one’s own emotions and managing them.
6. Cultivating an attitude to dialogue as an important prerequisite for harmonious interaction with others.
7. Awareness of the needs for self-development and self-discovery, which encourage further self-realization.

An integral part of bullying prevention can be specially organized work with parents aimed at developing the skills of effective interaction with students, avoiding violence,

conflicts, and bullying. It is also important to acquaint parents with law documents about the prevention of bullying and violence, their rights and responsibilities.

O. Yurchyk's program also provides counseling for teachers in order to make them aware of their role in preventing bullying and violence among students. We believe that it is important to provide teachers with the skills to plan actions to prevent and solve problems (Yurchyk, 2015).

Various schools of psychological thought, such as humanistic, cognitive, and behavioral psychology, served as the methodological basis for O. Yurchyk's program (Yurchyk, 2015). This integrated approach enables more effective psycho-prevention of violence among students.

Moral behavior and a tolerant attitude towards all participants, trust in students and protection of their interests, as well as an individual approach to each person became important principles of the program. The principle of dialogic interaction was also taken into account, which contributed to the development of inner self-awareness and perception of oneself and the environment.

In general, the program is aimed at the development of constructive forms of behavior and communication at school, taking into account the individual characteristics of each student. One of the key principles of prevention was systematicity, which was determined by a systematic analysis of the current social situation. A single strategy of preventive activities was defined, which was based on specific directions and measures.

When implementing a preventive program to address school bullying and violence, it is possible to be guided by the principles of maximum differentiation. This involves combining various aspects of prevention efforts and applying various approaches and methods flexibly.

Undoubtedly, the work to prevent and overcome bullying requires the involvement of all participants in the educational process, including parents, school administration, students, and teachers. Conversations about bullying prevention can be held during classes, extracurricular activities, and breaks. Discussion of bullying should become a regular part of school life so that the impact of any program is sustainable. However, it is also important to establish a clear schedule of conversations and discussions, as regularity in the discussion ensures that the problem of bullying and violence among students will not be ignored.

In our opinion, short but frequent conversations within programs are effective. It is not recommended to instruct students with pronounced aggressiveness to lead their peers or younger students, as this can lead to manifestations of bullying and cruelty. Instead, so-called aggressors should be taught to analyze their feelings and the feelings of other people, to develop an understanding of individual differences, as well as constructive communication and interpersonal conflict resolution skills.

Some advice to teachers on the prevention of bullying according to the authors' methods by K. Katerynchuk and O. Matsyuk (Katerynchuk & Matsyuk, 2020) is as follows. There are a number of methods, some of which are considered particularly effective in contesting school bullying and violence. One of them is the Farst method, named after the Stockholm district. It involves comprehensive work by the teaching staff with all participants in bullying, including engaging bullies in efforts to address this problem.

Another well-known technique is KiV, a program from Finland, which consists of two parts: preventive actions aimed at addressing the causes of bullying, and strategies for dealing with its consequences. A positive feature of such methods is the division of participants into age groups (Katerynchuk & Matsiuk, 2020).

Another effective method is the Link Crew method, developed by the outstanding educator John Dewey, it has positive results and is used in the USA and Canada. According to this method, a “Team of Connections” is created from the school’s most active and influential students, who provide support to newcomers and supervise them under the guidance of a school psychologist or teacher. The Link Crew technique is considered effective in reducing incidents of school bullying and violence. Participation in this team is a full-fledged school subject for which students receive a grade (Katerynchuk & Matsiuk, 2020).

Thus, various activities became the basis of overcoming the bullying problem. They ensure a relationship between theoretical knowledge and practical skills, helping to develop an effective system for preventing bullying.

No doubt, our activities do not cancel the traditional ones, but interact with them, reflecting the dialectical relationship of integration processes. This ensures a unity of methods (theory, analysis, tests, role plays, etc.) throughout the training, which contributes to a better understanding of bullying.

A set of training methods can be implemented that complement each other. In particular, preference may be given to the following techniques: case studies, creative tasks, game methods, discussion methods, and polemic methods. The following interactive methods and exercises can be used: various types of role-playing, conversations, discussions, debates, trainings, the brainstorming method, and the method of problematic and concrete situations.

Also, some exercises can be used: “Aquarium”, “Circle of ideas”, and “Microphone”. These exercises create fundamentally new opportunities for analyzing bullying problems.

Our activities for students and teachers contribute to the systematic approach, which raises all anti-bullying activities to a new level. Thus, our suggestions have become an important tool for students and teachers. They provided a comprehensive approach to education, integrating theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Various games can be used in schools to help prevent bullying, particularly competitive games. Students can perform educational projects on the topic of bullying, which contributes to their emotional involvement in joint activities where competition serves as the main motive. The approach ensures active participation and stimulates creativity.

Additionally, action games involve solving problem situations. Students discuss these scenarios in small groups, after which a collective reflective analysis is conducted that allows for a deeper understanding and reflection of the bullying problem.

Role-playing games require students to assign roles and perform functions that contribute to problem solving. For example, students can create and present two roles in an assertive interaction. Each student can choose his/her role, and then a conflict situation is played out and assertiveness techniques are offered.

Stimulating games engage students in an unusual game context that stimulates their interest and involvement in bullying issues. Different types of games can be utilized, including those with attractive external formats (such as competitions) and games that require participants to solve integrative and creative tasks. Additionally, we can offer case studies for both students and teachers.

*For example: "Can you give an assertive answer in different situations?"*

Situation 1. You and a friend are going to class. He says, "Hurry up, lazy dude, 'cause we will be late!"

Situation 2. You answered well in class, but a classmate says, "Upstart!"

Situation 3. A classmate covers his/her nose and says, "You stink like a skunk! It's disgusting!". The whole class starts laughing.

Situation 4. A classmate smiles at your new pants and says, "Where did you find them? In the landfill?"

Situation 5. You started wearing glasses, and a classmate says, "They look stupid, four-eyes!". You feel sad.

Situation 6. You are visiting a friend. Chocolate pudding is served for lunch, and a friend says: "I need to eat quickly because you are a chocolate monster!"

Situation 7. You have lunch in the school canteen. A classmate you don't like comes up and says, "You better skip lunch, fat dude!"

Situation 8. You and several classmates play basketball. When you don't throw the ball into the basket for the third time, one of them says, "Well, you're a loser!" and everyone laughs.

Situation 9. A classmate drew a portrait of you with a funny mustache and hung it in plain sight. Everyone laughs, but you do not think it is funny.

Situation 10. You sing a song at a talent contest, and after the performance, a classmate says, "You sang like a dog on a chain." You feel sad.

## DISCUSSION

We believe that schools should pay special attention to master classes, to clearly demonstrate various methods of an individual approach to the bullying problem. Various extracurricular activities can be organized at schools: round tables, trainings, creative events, self-education through the use of digital technologies, and Internet resources.

A current debatable issue is the activities aimed at preventing cyberbullying. Various Ukrainian researchers (Tilikina, Holtzberg &, Melnychenko, n.d.) and the Prometheus educational platform recommend several useful national Internet resources that can help in preventing cyberbullying:

- The bullying prevention center provides recommendations for parents and students ([https://about.meta.com/uk\\_UA/actions/safety/topics/bullying-harassment/](https://about.meta.com/uk_UA/actions/safety/topics/bullying-harassment/));
- The site of the All-Ukrainian Company Against Cyberbullying with useful materials and videos (<http://cyber.bullyingstop.org.ua/?fbclid=IwAR2xYGh2ezSd25p2eyzbyQ2XK0MGRbd1OYC8HGyQFBS7s34treCc7V7B8sl#about-more>);

- A series for parents called “Safety of children on the Internet” [https://osvita.dii.gov.ua/courses/serial-dlya-batkiv-onlayn-bezpeka-ditey?fbclid=iwar17hqfguz8yiv43yespnxzijej8o-nuhrwojcyosrc\\_uvykfb60if9saeo](https://osvita.dii.gov.ua/courses/serial-dlya-batkiv-onlayn-bezpeka-ditey?fbclid=iwar17hqfguz8yiv43yespnxzijej8o-nuhrwojcyosrc_uvykfb60if9saeo)
- A national strategy for protecting students in the digital environment for 2021-2026 with research data in Ukraine <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ftag6UGD4n3DFxTZMyETeL45cFI-SD7p/view?fbclid=IwAR2FNxtt-Zj6JHmqojf3twbvasQV9s4SNiDqv2fR7VEkP5uGFTZ1A0dne0s>
- A presentation for students from La Strada “Anti-Bullying” [http://lastrada.org.ua/ucp\\_file.php?c=AA73bX8Y849Zdiej0EfkbFgIBGCmiH](http://lastrada.org.ua/ucp_file.php?c=AA73bX8Y849Zdiej0EfkbFgIBGCmiH)

## CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions regarding effective bullying prevention in Ukrainian schools indicate the need for comprehensive, systematic work. The most effective are programs that cover all aspects of school life from creating a friendly and supportive environment to raising awareness among students, teachers, and parents about bullying problems.

It is important to involve students in the process of bullying prevention through their participation, communication, and creation of student councils that help in conflict resolution. Building interaction and empathy skills among students helps to reduce the level of aggression and bullying.

Systematic training for teachers about bullying prevention, as well as the inclusion of bullying topics in school programs, contribute to the development of a safe educational environment in schools. In order to prevent bullying effectively, it is important that students collaborate actively with teachers, parents, and local communities, ensuring that bullying is prevented and countered both inside and outside schools.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

## FUNDING

The authors declare that this study received no specific financial support.

## REFERENCES

- Baldyniuk, O., & Klymenko, Y. (2023). Bullying as a social phenomenon of modern Ukraine. *Naukovi Chasopys National Pedagogical Dragomanov University Series 5 Pedagogical Sciences Reality and Perspectives*, 91, 17–22. <https://doi.org/10.31392/npu-nc.series5.2023.91.04>
- BullyingCanada — giving bullied kids a brighter future.* (n.d.). <https://www.bullyingcanada.ca/>
- Department for Children, Schools and Families. (2007). *Safe to learn: embedding anti-bullying work in schools.* [https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/8125/7/SAFE\\_TO\\_LEARN\\_Redacted.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/8125/7/SAFE_TO_LEARN_Redacted.pdf)
- Dubrovskaya, E., Yasenovska, M., Alekseenko, M. (2016). *Nasyilstvo v shkoli: analiz problemy ta dopomoha, yakoi potrebuti dity ta vchyteli u yii rozviazanni [Violence in schools: an*

- analysis of the problem and the help that children and teachers need to solve it]. SP "Intertekhnodruk". <https://wcu-network.org.ua/public/upload/files/schulNAS111.pdf> [in Ukrainian].
- Ferlic, K., & Zaporozhets, O. (2019). School bullying in Ukraine. *Herald of Kiev Institute of Business and Technology*, 39(1), 93–101. <https://doi.org/10.37203/kibit.2019.39.18>
- Gaffney, H., Ttofi, M. M., & Farrington, D. P. (2021). Effectiveness of school-based programs to reduce bullying perpetration and victimization: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1143>
- Guzenko, N. O. (2021). Vykhovni mozhyvosti ihrovoi diialnosti u formuvanni dosvidu moralnoi povedinky pidlitkiv [Educational possibilities of game activities in the experience of moral behavior development of teenagers]. *Pedahohichni nauky: teoriia, istoriia, innovatsiini tekhnolohii – Pedagogical Sciences, Theory, History, Innovative Technologies*, 2(106), 86–94. <https://doi.org/10.24139/2312-5993/2021.02/086-094> [in Ukrainian].
- Katerynychuk, K., & Matsiuk, O. (2020). Bulinh: pravovi ta sotsialno-psykhologichni aspekty [Bullying: legal and socio-psychological aspects]. *Slovo Natsionalnoi shkoly suddiv Ukrainy – Slovo of the National School of Judges of Ukraine*, 3(32), 113–124. [http://dx.doi.org/10.37566/2707-6849-2020-3\(32\)-10](http://dx.doi.org/10.37566/2707-6849-2020-3(32)-10) [in Ukrainian].
- Konishi, C., Chowdhury, F., Lyu, H., & MacLeod, B. (2024). School climate and bullying in Canada. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 51–71). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003414933-6>
- Kostikova, I. I., & Guzenko, N. O. (2021). Profilaktyka bulinhu v konteksti formuvannia dosvidu moralnoi povedinky starshykh pidlitkiv [Bullying Prevention for Development Senior Adolescents' Moral Behavior Experience]. *Innovatsiina pedahohika – Innovate Pedagogy*, 37, 333–336. <https://doi.org/10.32843/2663-6085/2021/37.67> [in Ukrainian].
- Levchenko, Y. (2021). Global Experience in Bullying Prevention. *Law Journal of the National Academy of Internal Affairs*, 11(1), 91–97. <https://doi.org/10.33270/04212101.91>
- Olweus, D. (2001). Bullying at school: Tackling the problem. *Observer*, 225, 24–26.
- Pepler, D., Craig, W., & Connolly, J. (1997). *Bullying and victimization: the problems and solutions for school-aged children*. Fact Sheet Prepared for the National Crime Prevention Council of Canada.
- PREVNet. (2024, July 9). Bullying for educators – PREVNET. <https://www.prevnet.ca/bullying/for-educators/>
- Prometheus. (n.d.). *Protydiia ta poperedzhennia bulinhu (tskuvanniu) v zakladakh osvity. [Antidote and prevention of bullying in educational institutions]*. [https://prometheus.org.ua/course/course-v1:MON+AB101+2019\\_T2](https://prometheus.org.ua/course/course-v1:MON+AB101+2019_T2) [in Ukrainian].
- Public Safety Canada. (n.d.). *Bullying prevention in schools*. <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/blng-prvntn-schls/index-eng.aspx>

- Tilikina, N. V., Holtsberh, K. O., Melnychenko, A. A. (n.d.). *Modul 1. Bulinh (tskuvannia) yak yavyshe, yoho formy ta uchasnyky [Bullying as a phenomenon, its forms and participants.]*  
<https://nupp.edu.ua/uploads/files/0/main/deps/ps/buling/module1/buling-iak-iavishe.pdf> [in Ukrainian].
- Vaillancourt, T., Brittain, H., Krygsman, A., Farrell, A. H., Landon, S., & Pepler, D. (2021). School bullying before and during COVID-19: Results from a population-based randomized design. *Aggressive Behavior*, 47(5), 557–569.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21986>
- Vaintraub, M. (2024). Professional Competence Development of Teaching Staff in Higher Education Institutions under Martial Law. *Educational Challenges*, 29(1), 204–213.  
<https://doi.org/10.34142/2709-7986.2024.29.1.14>
- Yurchyk, O. (2015). Teoretychni aspekty modeliuvannia protsesu psykholohichnoi profilaktyky shkilnoho nasylstva [Theoretical aspects of modeling the process of psychological prevention of school violence]. *Zbirnyk naukovykh prats «Problemy suchasnoi psykholohii» – Problems of Modern Psychology*, 29, 779–790.  
<https://journals.uran.ua/index.php/2227-6246/article/view/158399> [in Ukrainian].
- Zymivets N. V., Maliienko Yu. M., & Tsiuma T. P. (2009). *Vprovadzhennia pilotnoi modeli strukturnoi profilaktyky nasylstva shchodo ditei: uzahalnennia dosvidu proektu. Informatsiino-metodychni materialy [Implementation of a pilot model of structural prevention of violence against children: generalization of project experience. Informational and methodical materials]*.  
[https://childfund.org.ua/Uploads/Files/books\\_pdf/book\\_strukturna\\_profilaktika.pdf](https://childfund.org.ua/Uploads/Files/books_pdf/book_strukturna_profilaktika.pdf) [in Ukrainian].