



# BRNET February 2021 Newsletter

## Dear BRNET Members and Friends of BRNET:

Thank you for being a part of the Bullying Research Network! In our February newsletter, you will find updates from the network.

Be sure to check out our website at <http://cehs.unl.edu/BRNET/> for additional resources and announcements.

## Researcher Spotlight—Dr. Stephen Leff

**Dr. Stephen Leff (PhD)** is a child clinical psychologist at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, where he also serves as co-director of the [Center for Violence Prevention](#), and Professor of Clinical Psychology in Pediatrics and Psychiatry at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He received his PhD in clinical psychology from the University of North Carolina in 1996. Dr. Leff’s research has been supported through six National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants, a National Science Foundation Small Business Technology Transfer grant, a U.S. Department of Education grant, and a number of foundation awards. He is a leading expert in aggression and bullying prevention programming, relational aggression, scientific edutainment, and the community-based participatory research (CBPR) process, which integrates the perspective and feedback of community stakeholders with evidence-based best practice programming.

Dr. Leff’s work utilizes CBPR to develop and validate school- and community-based aggression intervention programs and assessment tools that are sensitive to the needs of minority at-risk youth attending urban schools. Spanning over 20 years, these programs include playground- and lunchroom-based applications, small group interventions for relationally aggressive girls within the schools ([Friend to Friend](#)), universal prevention programs for third- through fifth-grade students delivered within the classroom ([PRAISE](#)), universal prevention programs for adolescents within urban, community-based after-school settings, and a brief multimedia bullying prevention experience for middle school students ([Free2B](#)). A range of different outcome assessment tools have also been developed through this same partnership-based research process and have been validated across samples.

Dr. Leff’s work has closed critical gaps in the literature and enhanced scientific understanding of factors related to aggression, bullying, and victimization, especially within an urban school context. His work has largely focused on recognizing the importance of relational aggression (starting rumors and using social exclusion to harm one’s social standing) as well as physical aggression, emphasizing the critical unstructured school contexts in which aggression occurs (playground and lunchroom during lunch-recess), and appreciating the complexity of minority children’s aggressive behavior. His programs are among the first to demonstrate

reductions in relational aggression and improved social problem solving among high-risk youth in urban school settings, including at one year follow-up. A current 40 school randomized clinical trial led by Dr. Leff includes the testing of the Friend to Friend program through a coaching and training model (e.g., training school counselors and teachers to conduct the program as opposed to research facilitators) which if successful will allow for larger scale dissemination of the program.

Two more recent foci of his work have been to use scientific edutainment, which integrates empirical science with the latest entertainment technology, in order to make educational programming evidence-based, engaging and relevant to youth; and to begin developing a skill-building curriculum related to addressing micro-aggressions with an anti-racism lens for both adults and youth.

### Selected Recent Publications

- Leff, S.S.,** Waasdorp, T.E., Paskewich, B.S., & Winston, F.K. (2021). Scaling and Disseminating Brief Bullying Prevention Programming: Strengths, Challenges, and Considerations, *School Psychology Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2020.1851612>.
- Fu, R., Waasdorp, T.E., Paskewich, B.S., & **Leff, S. S.** (2020). Bullying perpetration among youth: The contributions of child disclosure and parent-teacher connection. *Journal of Family Psychology*.
- Leff, S.S.,** Paskewich, B., & Blum, N. (2020). Exploring Early Childhood Factors as an Avenue to Address Chronic Peer Victimization. *Pediatrics*, 145(5).
- Leff, S.S.,** Waasdorp, T.E., Paskewich, B.S., Bevans, K.B., & Winston, F.K. (2020). The Free2B Multi-Media Bullying Prevention Experience: An Exemplar of Scientific Edutainment. *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 11(679), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2020.00679>.
- Waasdorp, T. E., Monopoli, J., Johnson-Horowitz, Z., & **Leff, S.S.** (2019). Peer Sympathy for Bullied Youth: Individual and Classroom Considerations. *School Psychology Review* 48(3), 193-206.
- Leff SS,** Paskewich BS, Waasdorp TE, Waanders C, Bevans KB, Jawad AF. (2015). Friend to Friend: A Randomized Trial for Urban African American Relationally Aggressive Girls. *Psychology of Violence*, 5(4), 433-443.
- Leff SS,** Waasdorp TE, Paskewich, BS. (2016). The Broader Impact of Friend to Friend (F2F): Effects on Teacher-student Relationships, Prosocial Behaviors, and Relationally and Physically Aggressive Behaviors. *Behavior Modification*. 40(4), 589-610.

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#### **BRNET New Members!**

BRNET has a current total of 247 members from 25 countries! Welcome to the BRNET, **Dr. Lopez Castro!**

#### **New Friends of BRNET!**

BRNET has a current total of 88 Friends from 6 countries!' Welcome **Chloé Tolmatcheff!**

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Please send recommendations for potential BRNET members (i.e., faculty, researchers, and clinicians who are conducting research on bullying or related topics) to Drs. Shelley Hymel, Susan Swearer, or to [bullyresearchnet@gmail.com](mailto:bullyresearchnet@gmail.com).

*If you have recently joined BRNET and have not yet provided your information, please send the following to [bullyresearchnet@gmail.com](mailto:bullyresearchnet@gmail.com).*

- 1) contact information that can be posted on the website;
  - 2) a brief biography of you and your work;
  - 3) a list of current/ongoing projects in this area;
  - 4) an annotated bibliography of your work in this area (i.e., full reference plus a few sentences about the work), and;
  - 5) relevant web-based links you would like to share.
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### **Friends of BRNET**

Friends of BRNET is a group of graduate students, administrators, parents, and individuals who are interested in learning more about the Bullying Research Network. Friends of BRNET receive our monthly e-newsletter. If you are interested in becoming a Friend of BRNET or want to refer someone to Friends of BRNET, please email Alia Noetzel, the BRNET Coordinator, at [bullyresearchnet@gmail.com](mailto:bullyresearchnet@gmail.com) with the following information: name, title, address, and email address.

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### **BRNET Member Grant/Funding Announcements**

Receipt of funding facilitates the BRNET mission to conduct interdisciplinary research related to bullying and aggression, with particular attention being paid to the link between basic and applied research. Thus, the BRNET directors are excited to offer members a new opportunity to share grants (and other sources of funding) they have received for their research projects.

Funding varies across countries and is not limited to federal grants. If you are interested in sharing your grants or funding with other BRNET members, please send an abstract of the research funding along with the funding source to [bullyresearchnet@gmail.com](mailto:bullyresearchnet@gmail.com) and we will post the information on our website.

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### **BRNET MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **(1) World Anti-Bullying Forum—Abstract Submissions Welcome for Consideration**

The World Anti-Bullying Forum is an international and multidisciplinary forum whose purpose is to broaden our understanding of bullying, harassment, discrimination, ostracism, and other forms of violence among and against children and youth. The forum is a setting for multidisciplinary and cross-level dialogues, panels and meetings aimed at improving our understanding of bullying in all settings where children spend time and the efforts to stop and prevent it. The World Anti-Bullying Forum invites perspectives from different disciplines and areas such as (but not limited to) developmental and social psychology, sociology, social anthropology, education, gender studies, media studies, social work, health sciences, public health, childhood studies, political science, philosophy, and criminology. The World Anti-Bullying Forum also provides a platform for researchers and practitioners to present and discuss bullying in relation to societal and educational issues such as equality and equity, social emotional learning, rights and responsibilities, school climate, inclusion, exclusion, identity-based discrimination, etc.

If research-based knowledge is shared among those who work with and for children, and those who influence children's living conditions, we have a better chance of effective bullying prevention. Therefore, the World

Anti-Bullying Forum is a place for dialogue among researchers, practitioners, stakeholders and decision makers.

- Call for Abstracts Opens: February 8, 2021
- Abstract Submission Deadline: April 11, 2021
- Notification of Abstract Review Outcome: Mid May, 2021
- Opening of registration: April 1, 2021
- Deadline for accepted authors to register: June 14, 2021
- Forum dates: November 1-3, 2021

In the light of the continued uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 situation we are planning to host a hybrid (physical and digital) conference. We are closely following the development. The safety and wellbeing of all conference participants is our topmost priority. All authors of accepted abstracts will be contacted regarding physical or digital participation. Please see attached PDF for further information.

## **(2) Special Issue of the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health**

The Special Issue in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (IJERPH) will focus on cyberbullying from a lifespan perspective. The Guest Editors (Dr. Peter Smith, Professor Jorge Varela, and Dr. Christopher Barlett) welcome contributions on internet aggression generally – that is, they are not too concerned about distinctions between cyberbullying, cyber aggression, internet abuse, etc., although it is important that any empirical study make it very clear what exactly is being measured.

They are seeking to have a clear developmental perspective in this Special Issue. Contributions might be with populations outside of the school age range, for example, in colleges, workplaces, clubs, or other adult venues. Alternatively, they might be in school-aged populations, but only if developmental changes are a major part of the analysis and discussion. We will not be looking for articles on cyberbullying in school-aged children that do not have a strong developmental perspective.

Please see attached PDF for more information.

## **(3) Special Issue of the Journal of Family Violence**

Family violence and youth violence have received a significant amount of research attention over the years. A large body of research findings has substantiated a significant association between experiences in family violence, such as maltreatment and exposure to parental violence, and youth violence, such as bullying, fighting, dating violence, gang violence. In honor of the late Dr. Anna Costanza Baldry, this special issue brings together scholars from a variety of disciplines (psychology, criminal justice, social work, and health science) to explore how family violence and youth violence are interrelated.

BRNET members Drs. Hong & Espelage are guest editors of this special issue. More information can be found here: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10896-020-00197-7>.

## **(4) Virtual Colloquium: The Role of Teachers in Reducing Bullying in Schools**

The Alberti Center is offering a colloquium on **Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>** from 11:30 am-12:45pm EST and will feature Drs. Sheri Bauman and Jina Yoon presenting on the Role of Teachers in Reducing Bullying in Schools. This presentation will address teacher influences on students' peer victimization (both perpetration and victimization) and defending behaviors, based on existing literature. The presenters propose that overall teaching practices and relationships with students contribute to individual students' social behaviors and to the classroom ecology, and that positive teaching practices are the mechanism that influences peer victimization

and defending behaviors. Presenters will discuss implications for teacher training and professional development. Please see attached PDF for further information.

For any questions regarding this Special Issue, please contact Sally M. Hage, Editor of *JPHP*, at [jphp@springfieldcollege.edu](mailto:jphp@springfieldcollege.edu). Please see attached PDF for further information.

### (5) Author Exchange—BRNET Member Publications

Dr. Downes and colleagues recently published a report on social and emotional education in the EU. Please see citation and link below.

Cefai, C. Downes, P. Cavioni.,V. (2021). A formative, inclusive, whole school approach to the assessment of social and emotional education in the EU. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union/EU bookshop. <https://nesetweb.eu/en/resources/library/a-formative-inclusive-whole-school-approach-to-the-assessment-of-social-and-emotional-education-in-the-eu-2/>

Drs. Peguero & Hong recently published a book titled “School Bullying: Youth Vulnerability, Marginalization, and Victimization.” Please see citation below. Additionally, visit the following [link](#) or contact Dr. Peguero ([anthony.peguero@vt.edu](mailto:anthony.peguero@vt.edu)) for further information.

Peguero, A. A., & Hong, J. S. (2020). School Bullying: Youth Vulnerability, Marginalization, and Victimization. *Springer*.

Dr. Viejo recently published a paper in *Psicothema*. Please see attached PDF and citation below. Additionally, you may contact Dr. Viejo at [cviejo@uco.es](mailto:cviejo@uco.es) for additional information.

Viejo, C., Leva, B., Paredes, J., & Ortega-Ruiz, R. (2020). Bullying and psychological dating violence: the relation between two aggressive peer-behaviours. *Psicothema*, 32(4), 533-540. <https://doi.org/10.7334/psicothema2019.223>

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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](mailto:bullyresearchnet@gmail.com) and we will include it in our newsletter and/or on our website.

Most sincerely,



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



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