

Peer supporters promoting positive bystander behavior

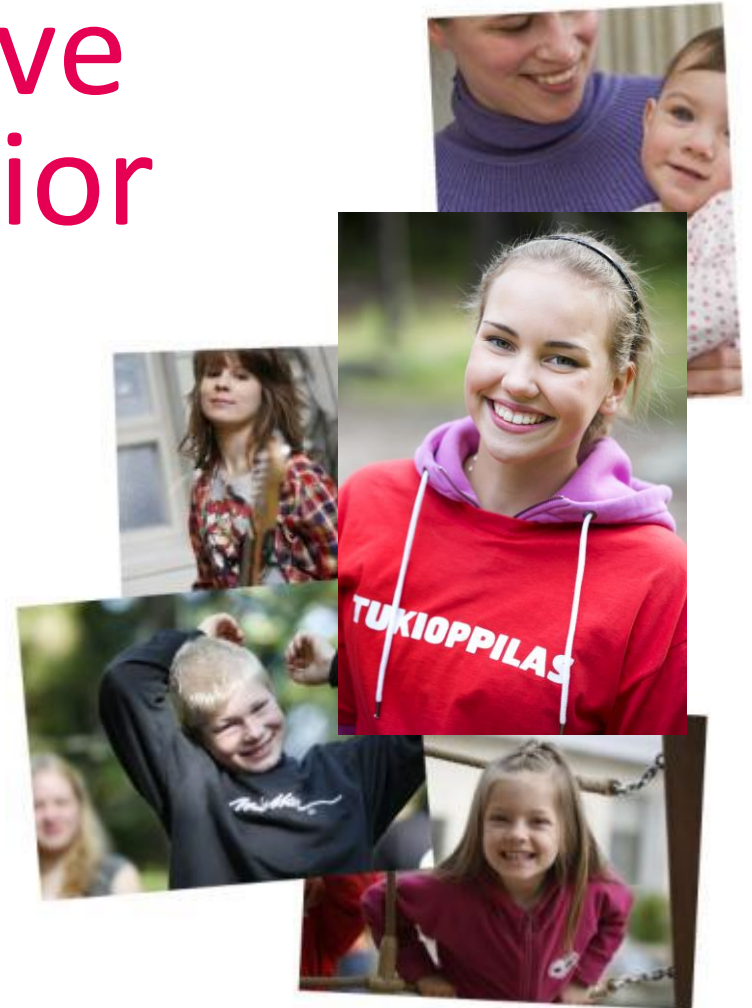
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THE MANNERHEIM LEAGUE
FOR CHILD WELFARE



Peer support schemes in Finnish education

Comprehensive schools

Upper secondary schools

ECE

Basic education grades 0-6

Basic education grades 7-9

General

Vocational



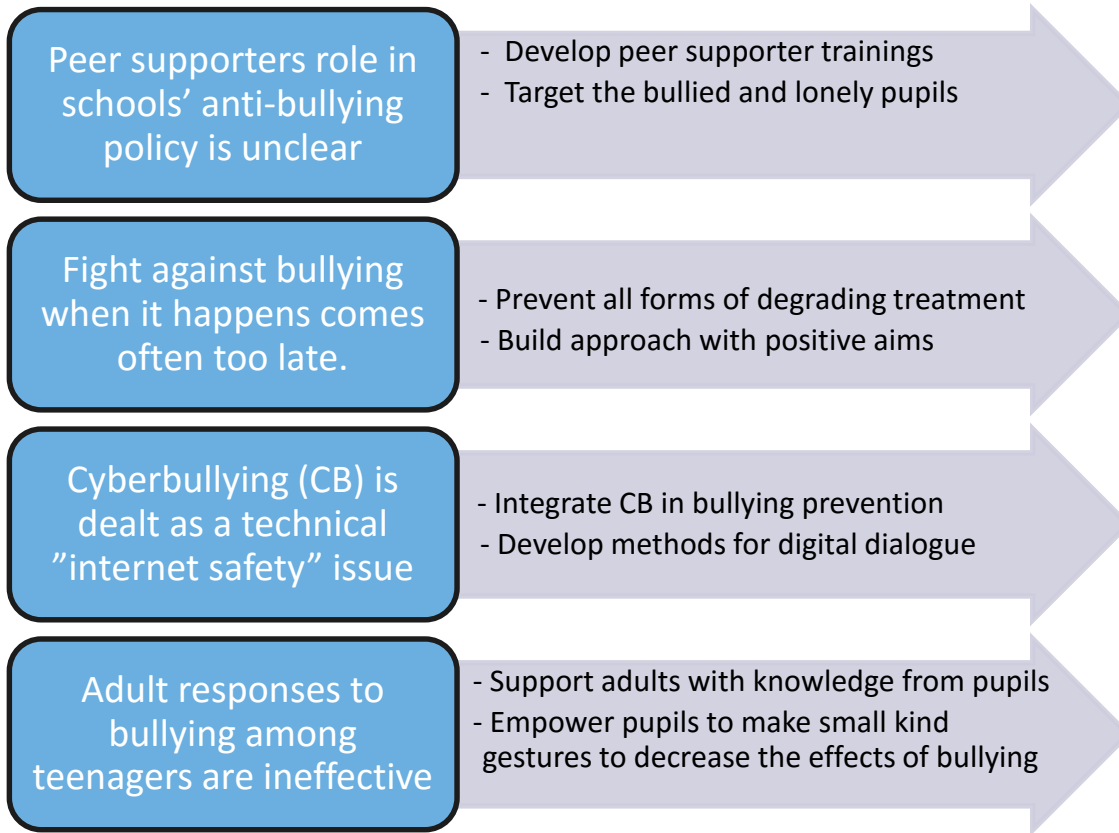
Peer Support Network in Finland



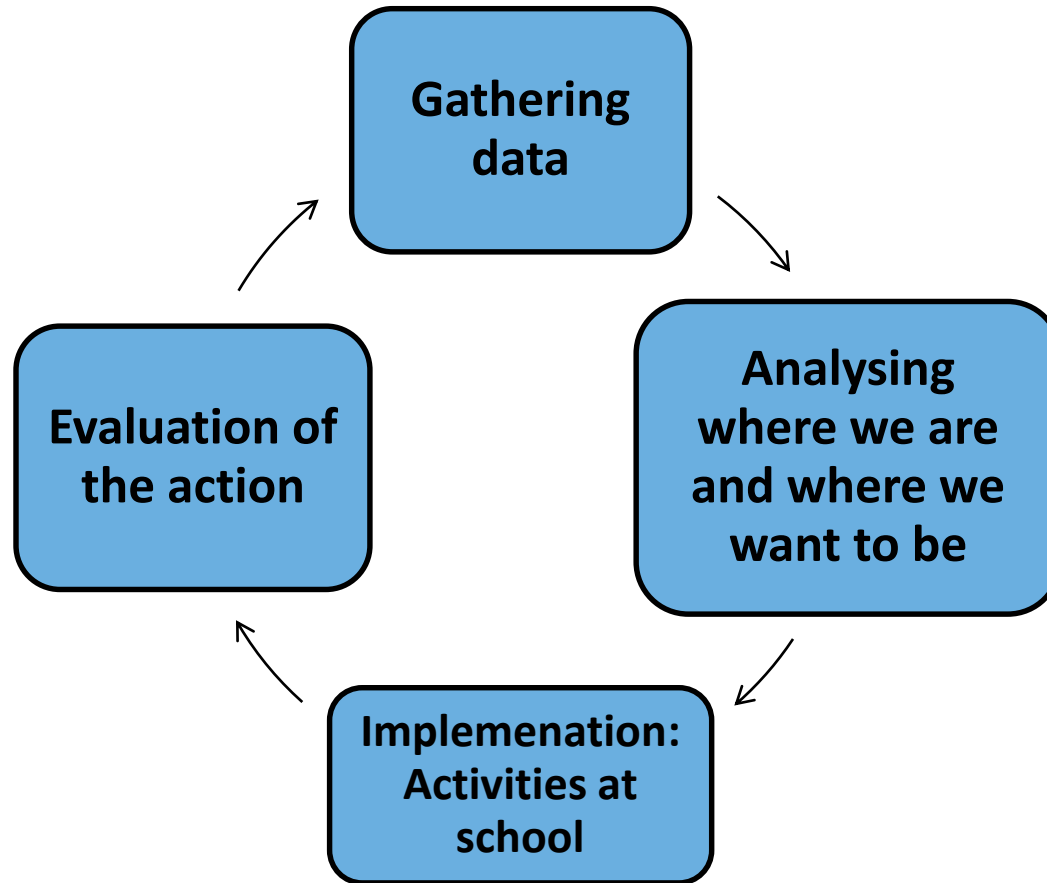
Grades 7-9
90% of schools



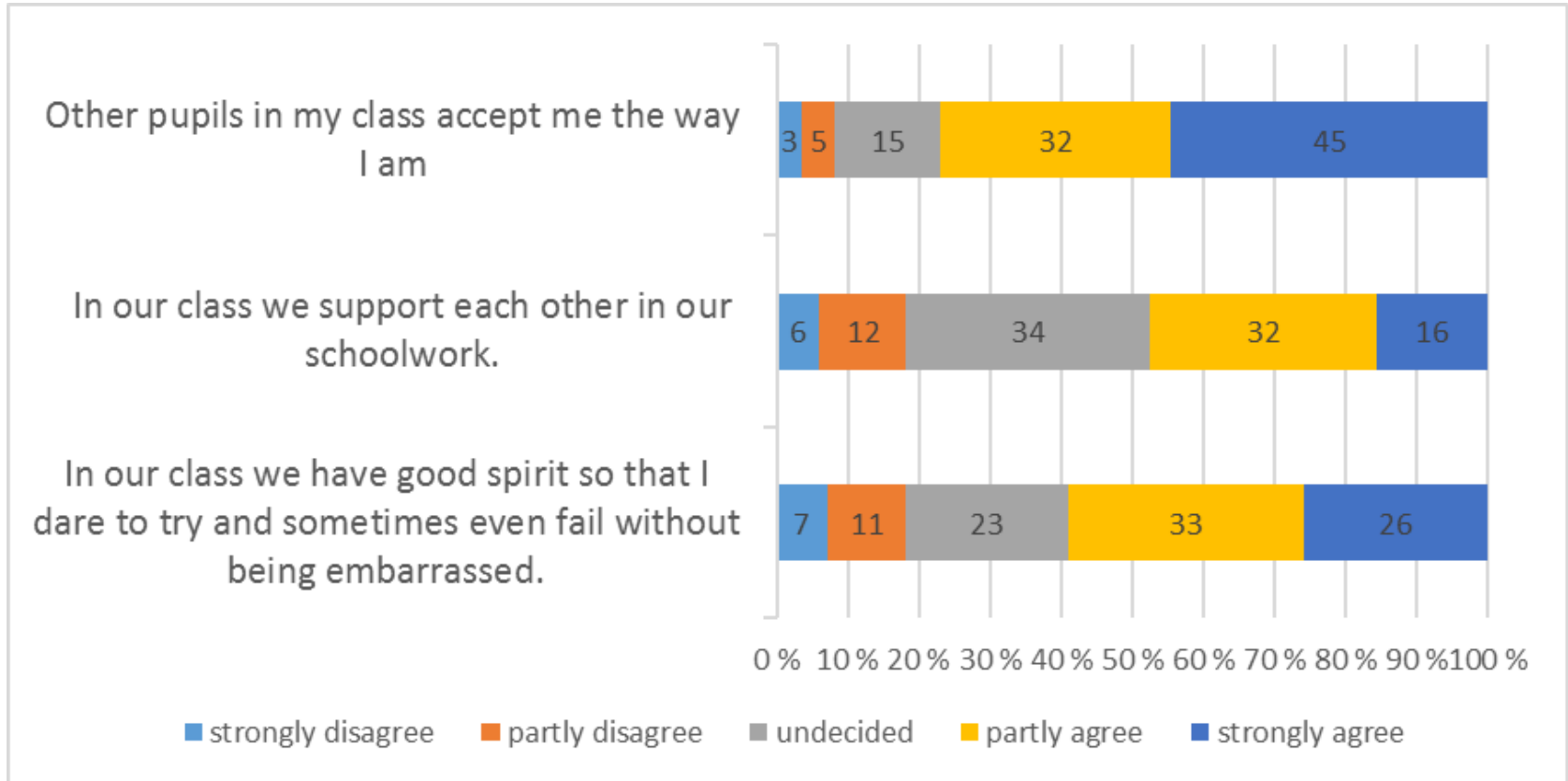
Challenges and project aims



Building a process of participation



Peer relations

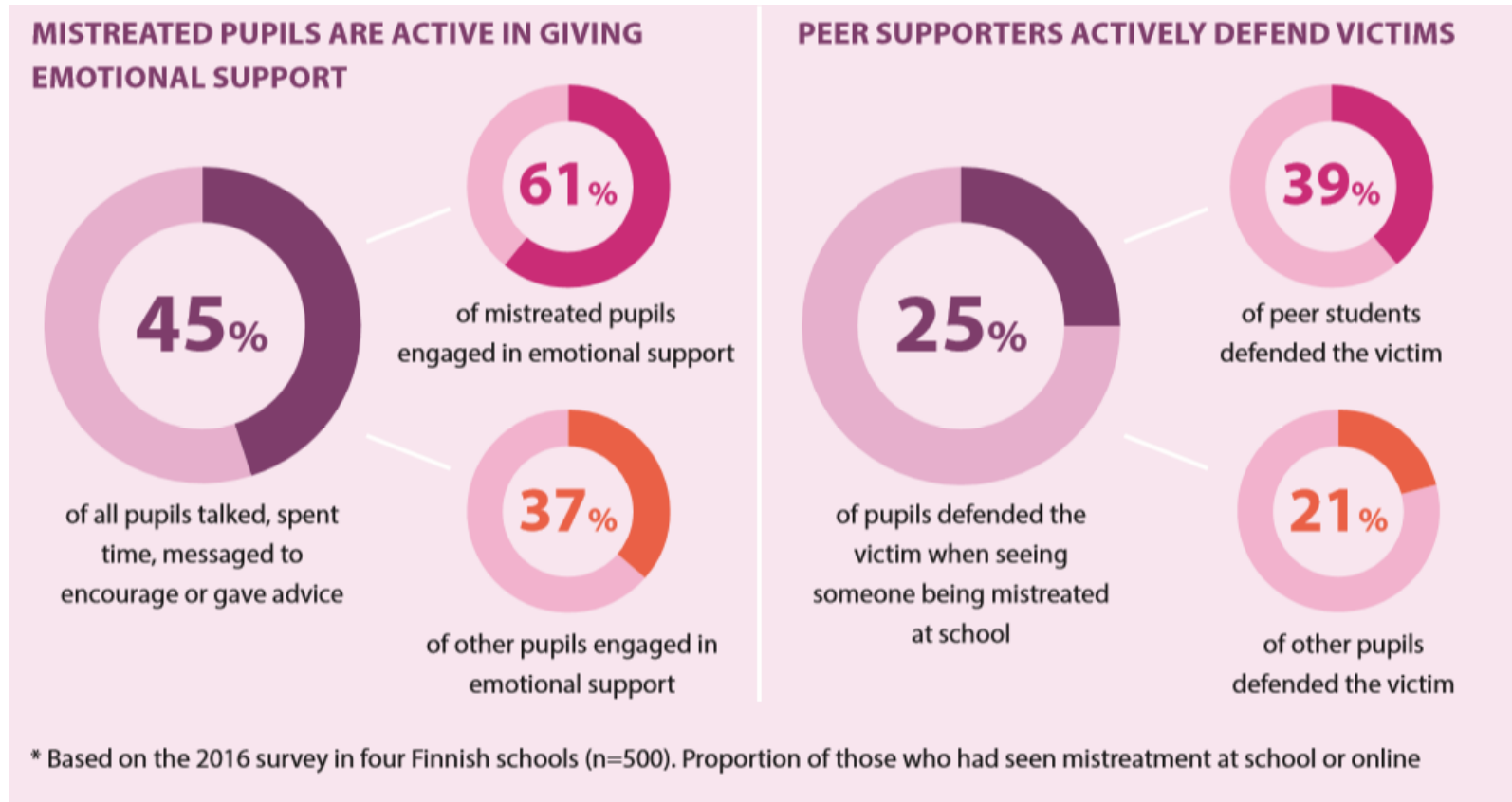


What have other pupils done after you being mistreated?

WHAT HAVE OTHER PUPILS DONE AFTER SEEING YOU BEING MISTREATED? (N=177)

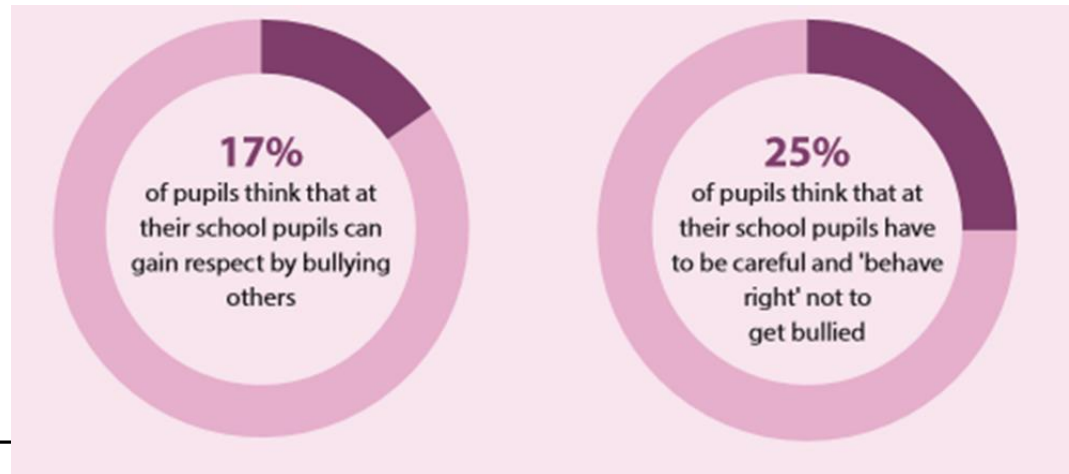
	I experienced..	...and it helped me	change during the project (who experienced it)
<i>Talked, sat down or spent time with me.</i>	57%	70%	+22%
<i>Messaged me to encourage me.</i>	53%	65%	+23%
<i>Gave me advice.</i>	55%	58%	+26%
<i>Helped me get out of the situation.</i>	51%	67%	+19%
<i>Told the person(s) to stop.</i>	50%	56%	+27%
<i>Helped me to tell an adult.</i>	41%	47%	+25%
<i>Told an adult.</i>	41%	39%	+21%
<i>Did something else.</i>	12%		+11%
<i>Did nothing.</i>	31%		-28%

Differences in bystander behaviour



Pupil workshop on survey results

- Qualitative knowledge about the youth perspective
 - How to interpret the results?
- > pupils are allowed to discuss and interpret the results, not just participate in planning the actions. (eg. bullying online/offline)



Workshops for teachers

- Shared understanding of where to focus when promoting wellbeing and participation at school
- Dialogue between school staff and pupils
- > *“Pupils have probably understood the question wrong?”*

Training for peer supporters

Implementation:
Activities at
school

Social and emotional skills, empathy skills

- Listening and communication skills
- Case-example of active bystander behavior
- What confronts me in different situations?
-> How to foster everyone to show support through small friendly gestures?

How to create a positive atmosphere for the whole school?

- How to facilitate a group?
- Evaluation of peer support actions
- Lectures about active bystander behavior

Creating a culture of “inviting everyone to join”

Implementation:
Activities at
school

- Theme days, break activities, parties etc. are important in promoting good atmosphere and lifting the status of peer supporters
- The goal of all efforts is to increase the feeling of community and participation
- Focus on the objectives of peer support work:
 - What kind of new actions we should do -> Why we are doing what we do as peer supporters?

How we should plan the action so that it improves the atmosphere at school?

Re-survey for pupils

Sydän-Laukaan koulu /Peer relations

Most progress:

At our school you have to 'behave right' in order not to get bullied

-23%

26% → 20%

In our class we support each other in our schoolwork.

+ 21%

36% → 44%

At our school it has been taken care of that no-one is left alone.

+18%

47% → 56%

Our class spirit is so good that I can fail without feeling embarrassed

+14%

53% → 61%

Evaluation of the actions

Qualitative evaluation

Feedback from pupils at the evaluation workshop:

- **The atmosphere at the whole school has improved:**
 - Pupils are allowed to participate more at all levels: both learning and extracurricular activities
 - Pupils from different grades cooperate more
- **More and more pupils participate in different activities organised by peer supporters**
- **There is widespread interest in becoming a peer supporter**

Lessons learned from youth

- **Online and offline bullying are mixed in the same picture**
 - **Pupils are very aware of hidden norms at school that teachers may not be aware at all**
 - **Targeting all mistreatment, not just bullying**
 - **Clear structures and processes at school are important**
 - Anti-bullying policy
 - Training and coordination of peer support work
 - Enough opportunities for peer supporters to be active at school
- ! Pupils don't rely on structures -> the most important thing is the relationship between school staff and pupils**

Outcomes

- **Materials for peer support work:**
 - Youth participation in bullying prevention – methodology material
 - Inspirational material for schools about how to combine adult-led antibullying work and peer support scheme
 - Updated training material for peer support work about bullying prevention
 - Trainings for peer support coordinators and KiVa teams
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www.mll.fi/peersupport



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