

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT DAN OLWEUS

Dan Olweus, who was born in Sweden, took his doctoral degree at the University of Umeå, Sweden, in 1969. From 1970 up to 1995 he was professor of psychology at the University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway. Since 1996 he has been research professor of psychology, affiliated with the Research Center for Health Promotion (HEMIL) at the the same university. For nine years (1962-70), he was director of the Erica Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden, a training institute for clinical child psychologists.

For approximately 30 years, Dan Olweus has been involved in research and intervention work in the area of bully/victim problems among school children and youth. Already in 1970, he started a large-scale project which is now generally regarded as the first scientific study of bully/victim problems in the world. (Published as a book in Scandinavia in 1973, and in 1978 in the USA under the title *Aggression in the schools: Bullies and whipping boys*.) In the 1980s, he conducted the first systematic intervention study against bullying in the world which documented a number of quite positive effects of his "Bullying Prevention Program" (e.g., Olweus, 1991, 1992, 1994; Olweus & Limber, 1999). Towards the end of the century, Dan Olweus and his research and intervention group at the University of Bergen have conducted several new large-scale intervention projects, again gaining good results. One of these studies forms part of an international project on bully/victim problems comprising researchers from Japan, England, the Netherlands, the USA, and Norway.

Olweus is generally recognized as a pioneer and Founding Father of research on bully/victim problems and as a world leading expert in this area both by the research community and by the society at large (e.g., described with terms such as 'the world's leading authority' by the British newspaper "The Times" and several other international newspapers). The book *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do* (Olweus, 1993) has been published in 15 different languages. The leading position of Olweus is also documented by the fact that he is, and has been for a number of years, the most cited Norwegian/Scandinavian researcher in psychology and education according to several independent analyses of citation frequency (according to the Social Citation Index and the Science Citation Index).

Olweus has received a number of awards and recognitions for his research and intervention work. For his general research on aggression, Olweus received the award for "outstanding aggression research" by the International Society for Research on Aggression (ISRA), which consists of some 500 leading aggression/violence researchers from all over the world. For the period of 1995-96, Olweus was elected president of the same Society. In year 2000, the "Spirit of Crazy Horse" award was conferred on him for "bringing courage to the discouraged" by the US Reclaiming Youth International organization, as an appreciation of his efforts to research and combat bullying. Recently, he was given an award for "outstanding publication and dissemination activity" by the University of Bergen, and in 2002, he received the "Nordic Public Health Prize" ("Nordiske folkehelseprisen") by the the Nordic Minister Council (Nordiska Ministerrådet) for his important achievements with regard to public health in the Nordic countries. In 2003, Dan Olweus was given the award for Distinguished Contributions to Public Policy for Children by the international (mostly US) research organization Society for Research in Child Development.

As another indication of the international recognition and impact of his work, Olweus was invited to spend a year at the prestigious Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS), Stanford, USA (which he did in 1986/87). Dan Olweus has given invited and keynote addresses about his bully/victim and aggression research at a number of international congresses or meetings including conferences of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), of the International Society for Research on Aggression (ISRA), and at the International World Congress of Psychology. He has given invited lectures at about 30 US universities, including Stanford, Harvard, Yale, and Berkeley and a number of English universities including Oxford, Cambridge, and London.

Olweus's intervention program against bullying has gained both international and national recognition. Among other things, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program was recently selected as one of 10 "model programs" (only 10 out of more than 500 programs could be approved) to be used in a national violence prevention initiative in the USA (in 1999-), supported by the US Department of Justice (OJJDP; see Olweus & Limber, 1999). One of the criteria for the selection of the model programs was that the program had been exposed to rigorous, scientific evaluation (with positive and long-term results). The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is the only model program of non-US origin, and the only one directed at bully/victim problems in school (only three of the Blueprint programs are school based). The program has also been recognized as a Model Program by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). Furthermore, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program was the only program against various forms of "problem behavior in school" that could be recommended for continued use by a Norwegian expert committee evaluating 55 different programs in current use in Norwegian schools (in year 2000). The Olweus Program is now being implemented on a large-scale basis in Norwegian elementary and junior high schools, in a government-initiated national initiative.

Olweus's research and intervention work has played a key role in the partly dramatic changes that have occurred in many countries (such as Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Germany, Australia, and Japan) over the last 15-year period: from viewing (being exposed to) bullying as a natural part of school life and growing up to a pressing social issue which must be taken seriously and be systematically addressed by the schools/school authorities and society at large.

Publications:

Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers the book can be ordered directly from: Marketing Department, Blackwells, 108 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1JF, United Kingdom, or from Blackwells, c/o AIDC, P.O.Box 20, Williston, VT 05495, USA, phone: 1-800-216-5222)

Olweus, D. (2001). *Olweus' core program against bullying and antisocial behavior: A teacher handbook*. Research Center for Health promotion (Hemil Center). Bergen, Norway. (Can be ordered from Dan Olweus at : Olweus@psyhp.uib.no)

Olweus, D., & Limber, S. (1999) *Blueprints for violence prevention: Bullying Prevention Program*. Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA. (Can be ordered from Institute for B.S., fax: 1-303-443-3297; see also www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints).

