

Use Stimulus Funds to Purchase the *Olweus*[®] *Bullying Prevention Program*

Introduction

Due to the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), an unprecedented amount of stimulus funding (\$105 billion) is being made available to K-12 schools and other educational organizations across the country. Certain categories of these funds could possibly be used to purchase program materials and training for the *Olweus*[®] *Bullying Prevention Program* (OBPP).

For further information about OBPP visit www.olweus.org. For specific information as to the status of OBPP as an evidence-based program, see: www.olweus.org/public/awards.page

These federal funds are being allocated to state educational agencies (SEAs), which often are the department of education in each state. SEAs will allocate the funds to local educational agencies (LEAs), which often are school districts, but include private schools as well. In many cases, school districts will have significant decision making power about how these funds are to be used, but each state may also have specific guidelines and may dictate how the funds will be allocated.

In order to determine how stimulus dollars are being distributed to schools, for what purposes, and if such funds can be used to support OBPP, it is important to check with your state department of education or local school district leadership, particularly in the areas of special education or Title I.

There are four main principles behind the funding of ARRA. The following is how the use of OBPP can help meet these principles.

Principle 1: Spend funds quickly to save and create jobs.

More than 600 trainers throughout the country are available to work with schools on short notice to implement OBPP. In addition, Clemson University, the training arm of OBPP, offers regular Training of Trainer events throughout the country. These trainings can result in quick, effective implementation of OBPP in school districts. Moreover, Hazelden, the publisher and sole distributor of OBPP, can ship program materials to schools rapidly, and the step-by-step guidance in the program materials will help schools implement the program in an efficient manner.

Principle 2: Improve student achievement through school improvement and reform

By addressing bullying (peer abuse), schools will be creating a more positive school environment, which research shows is more conducive to learning and academic success. Through the use of OBPP, school staff will also improve its ability to teach students about bullying and violence prevention in general. Outcome studies have also shown reduced substance abuse and anti-social behaviors in schools that have implemented OBPP.



Principle # 3: Ensure transparency, reporting and accountability

Through the use of the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire® and the report that comes with the questionnaire, school administrators have a strong tool to measure and report on the levels and types of bullying at their schools, and the overall success of *OBPP*. Data from the survey results are used by staff to plan specific interventions for the school. Results from the questionnaire provide a level of accountability that other programs often do not have. Further, a certified Olweus trainer consults with the school for a year, providing guidance and coaching to ensure the program is implemented with fidelity to achieve program success.

Principle 4: Invest one-time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the “funding cliff.”

Except for the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire®, the *OBPP* program does not require ongoing purchases for students. A school will only need to make a one-time purchase of *OBPP* materials for their Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee and professional teaching and counseling staff. Once established, *OBPP* becomes part of a school’s regular routine and training schedules. Because of the preventative nature of *OBPP*, this program can reduce the risk of future liability cases involving harm caused by bullying incidents.

Specific Funding Available for OBPP

There are two main areas of ARRA funding that schools may be able to use to fund *OBPP*. These are:

- Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Part A of Title I funding

Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

ARRA is providing \$ 11.3 billion nationally in this category of funding to schools. Schools that already receive IDEA funding will receive this additional stimulus funding on top of what they currently receive in their annual allotment, based on the same formulas. Fifty percent of these funds were given to state educational agencies on April 1, 2009. The other fifty percent will be distributed by September 30, 2009. The funds must be obligated to specific school activities by September 30, 2011.

When deciding to advocate for IDEA funds to pay for *OBPP*, schools must demonstrate how *OBPP* will specifically benefit students with disabilities academically, behaviorally, and mentally. Research shows that children with disabilities are at greater risk of being bullied or becoming a bully than their peers. See Appendix A and B for more information about bullying and children with disabilities, and bullying in relation to academic achievement.

The following page shows criteria for this funding and how the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* meets these criteria:



<p>IDEA Part B—Section 611 Authorized activities—Funds reserved under subparagraph (A) may be used to carry out the following activities:</p>	<p>The <i>Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)</i>:</p>
<p>For support and direct services, including technical assistance, personnel preparation, and professional development and training.</p>	<p>A core component of <i>OBPP</i> is training all educators, administrators, counselors, and adult school staff in knowing how to prevent bullying or intervene when bullying happens. <i>OBPP</i> requires a two-day training for each school’s coordinating committee, and a one-day training for all educators and administrators. All adults in the school, including ancillary staff (playground supervisors, bus drivers, custodial and cafeteria staff, etc.) are to be trained. Core <i>OBPP</i> materials are used at these trainings. If desired, school districts can also send representatives to a Training of Trainers event to become certified Olweus trainers for their district. This training will increase the school staff’s ability to address behaviors that impact children with disabilities and the school’s ability to sustain the program over time.</p>
<p>To assist local educational agencies in providing positive behavioral interventions and supports and appropriate mental health services for children with disabilities.</p>	<p><i>OBPP</i> is a positive behavioral intervention tool that is consistent with the principles and guidelines of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). For more information about how <i>OBPP</i> fits with the principles of PBIS, see Appendix C.</p> <p><i>OBPP</i> provides clear guidelines and training in how to prevent bullying and how to intervene in bullying situations when required. Bullying prevention strategies are needed to maintain the well-being and mental health of all students, but especially children with disabilities.</p>
<p>To support capacity building activities and improve the delivery of services by local educational agencies to improve results for children with disabilities.</p>	<p><i>OBPP</i> helps schools build the capacity to address bullying in a school wide, evidence-based, consistent, and positive manner. Further, <i>OBPP</i> helps schools implement bullying prevention and intervention strategies that have shown, on average, a reduction in bullying behaviors by fifty percent or more, if the program is implemented with fidelity.</p>
<p>To provide technical assistance to schools and local educational agencies, and direct services, including supplemental educational services as defined in 1116(e) of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 on the sole basis of the assessment results of the disaggregated subgroup of children with disabilities, including providing professional development to special and regular education teachers, who teach children with disabilities, based on scientifically-based research to improve educational instruction, in order to improve academic achievement to meet or exceed the objectives established by the State.</p>	<p>Certified Olweus trainers provide technical assistance to schools for a full year after the initial school wide committee training. Technical assistance is available from <i>OBPP</i> program directors after that period of time. Research shows that, if bullying is addressed systematically, bullying prevention efforts have a positive effect on improving a school’s environment and students’ academic success.</p> <p><i>OBPP</i> is the most researched, scientifically-based bullying prevention program available today, having over 35 years of research. Children with disabilities may be fragile physically or emotionally, or have mental health issues. Unaddressed bullying behavior directed at these children may cause additional harm—physically, emotionally, or by increasing mental health difficulties.</p> <p>The <i>OBPP</i> program provides clear guidance for teachers on how to improve classroom management, educational instruction, and intervention strategies that involve bullying. The program also provides clear guidance on how the school should be working with concerned parents to bring bullying to an end.</p>



The Department of Education, in its fact sheet on ARRA and funding for Part B of IDEA, provides these examples of how the stimulus funding could be used:

1. *Establishing data systems and using data for improvement*

A core part of *OBPP* is the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire® that schools administer before and after implementation of the program. This questionnaire, and its accompanying seventy two-page report, provides a data system that schools can use to develop plans for school improvement. Given on a yearly basis, this questionnaire helps administrators identify areas of bullying prevention that are working well and areas where improvement is needed. This data can be provided as feedback to educators, families, students, and the community as a whole.

2. *Increasing teacher effectiveness*

It is difficult to be an effective teacher when children feel unsafe or the school environment is a negative one. Children who don't feel safe in school can't concentrate on learning. Children who bully, if not stopped, can come to believe that any behavior is appropriate in the classroom. *OBPP* trains teachers how to effectively establish a positive learning environment where all students can learn. *OBPP* also trains teachers how to identify bullying situations and how to intervene effectively.

Specifically, the ARRA guidelines suggest that stimulus funds be used to provide professional development for special education and general education teachers, utilizing *evidence-based school wide strategies* in reading, math, writing, science, and other subject areas. Further, the ARRA guidelines suggest the use of *positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities*.

OBPP is the most evidence-based school wide strategy being used today to provide positive behavioral supports that can improve outcomes for all students—especially for students with disabilities.

3. *Improving results for all students*

It cannot be overemphasized that when children do not feel safe in school, they will have difficulty doing well academically. A positive school environment is necessary for academic achievement. *OBPP* provides the principles and tools to create a positive school environment where learning can happen. Hazelden sales representatives will work with you to put together a plan that provides long-term success for schools.

Part B of IDEA stimulus funds will most likely be managed and allocated at the school district level by the superintendent and the director of special education. Contact these people to find out if funds can be used to support *OBPP*. For more information on the use of ARRA funds in Part B of IDEA, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/idea.html>



Part A of Title I Funding

Title I funding is designed to help increase the performance of schools that have high concentrations of students from families that live in poverty; the purpose of this funding is intended to help improve teaching and learning for students who are most at risk of failing to meet state academic achievement standards. ARRA is allocating \$ 10 billion nationally in stimulus funds for schools that qualify for Title I funding. Fifty percent of these funds were given to state educational agencies on April 1, 2009. The other fifty percent will be distributed in summer and fall of 2009. The funds must be obligated to specific school activities by September 30, 2011.

Research shows that the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* is effective in addressing the violence rates and overall student environment in economically disadvantaged schools. Here are the criteria for Title I funding, and how the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* meets these criteria:

Part A of Title I: Authorized activities—Funds reserved under subparagraph (A) may be used to carry out the following activities:	The <i>Olweus Bullying Prevention Program</i> (OBPP):
<p>LEAs are expected to use their Title I, Part A ARRA funds to implement evidence-based strategies that will help build sustainable capacity for improving teaching and learning in Title I schools, recognizing that the amount of funds available will support interventions at a level of intensity that was not always possible in the past.</p>	<p><i>OBPP</i> is the strongest, most evidence-based program available today to address the overall school environment and violence prevention. By addressing the underlying issues that prevent students from achieving academic potential, Title I schools can raise students' performance. The <i>OBPP</i> program is designed to be easily sustained over time.</p>
<p>Coordination and integration of Federal, State, and local services and programs, including programs supported under this Act, violence prevention programs, nutrition programs, housing programs, Head Start, adult education, vocational and technical education, and job training.</p>	<p><i>OBPP</i> is a program specifically designed to address one of the most serious and pervasive violence prevention issues in our nation's schools. <i>OBPP</i> is also a good fit for coordination with substance abuse prevention programming, school dropout programming, suicide prevention, and other safe schools efforts.</p>
<p>Professional development necessary to assist teachers, pupil services personnel, other staff, and parents in identifying and meeting the comprehensive needs of eligible children.</p>	<p><i>OBPP</i> is a comprehensive program that provides professional development for all school staff, as well as educational opportunities for students' parents. The <i>OBPP</i> program is designed to meet the needs of the whole child.</p>
<p>Shall include assistance in identifying and implementing professional development, instructional strategies, and methods of instruction that are based on scientifically-based research and that have been proven effective in addressing the specific instructional issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement.</p>	<p>Research shows that if bullying is addressed, there will be a positive effect on a school's environment and students' physical and mental health and academic success. <i>OBPP</i> is the most researched, scientifically-based bullying prevention program available today, with over thirty-five years of research. See Appendix B for more information.</p> <p>The <i>OBPP</i> program provides clear guidance for teachers, administrators, and staff on how to improve their classroom management, educational instruction, and effective intervention strategies around the issue of bullying for purposes of improving a school's overall environment.</p>

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<p>Part A of Title I: Authorized activities—Funds reserved under subparagraph (A) may be used to carry out the following activities:</p>	<p>The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP):</p>
<p>Institute and fully implement a new curriculum, including providing appropriate professional development for all relevant staff, that is based on scientifically-based research and offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students and enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress.</p>	<p><i>OBPP</i> views “relevant staff” as any adult on the school campus that comes into contact with students. Bullying prevention and intervention training is also conducted for playground supervisors, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, administrative assistants, office workers, substitute teachers, and adult volunteers. Many of these adults have supportive relationships with students.</p>
<p>A local educational agency may receive funds under this part only if such agency implements programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in programs assisted under this part consistent with this section. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.</p>	<p>Parents have a core role in the implementation of <i>OBPP</i>. They serve on the school’s coordinating committee and participate in school wide parent meetings and kick-off events, as well as classroom-level parent meetings.</p> <p><i>OBPP</i> materials provide a variety of resources that can be used to educate parents about bullying and the important steps they can take to help address this issue. Parent materials are available in Spanish and English.</p>

Part A of Title I stimulus funds will most likely be managed and allocated at the school district level by the superintendent and the director of Title I. Contact these people to find out if funds can be used to support *OBPP*. For more information on ARRA and Title I funding, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/title-i.html>

The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF)

There is a third stimulus fund that schools will be receiving —the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). States apply for the \$ 53.6 billion which, when funded, is managed through the state’s governor to the state’s SEA, and then on to the local school districts. Most of this money is to be used to avoid staff layoffs, and to modernize or repair schools. A portion of the money is to be used to address public safety, which may or may not be seen as having a direct link to bullying prevention in your community. Another portion of the funding is to be used to improve academic achievement and strengthen teacher effectiveness. As stated earlier and as outlined in Appendix C, the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* does have an impact on both academic achievement and teacher effectiveness.

School districts may or may not be interested in or able to use SFSF funds to fund *OBPP*, but it may be worth your time to investigate.

For more information on the SFSF funds, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/stabilization-fund.html>



Appendix A: Bullying and Children with Special Needs*

What is bullying?

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Often, it is repeated over time. Bullying can take many forms, such as hitting, kicking, or shoving (physical bullying); teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying); intimidation through gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying); and sending insulting messages by text messaging or e-mail (cyber bullying).

What is known about bullying among children with disabilities and special needs?

There is a small but growing amount of research literature on bullying among children with disabilities and special needs. This research indicates that these children may be at particular risk of being bullied by their peers. For example, the research tells us the following:

- Although little research has been conducted on the relation between learning disabilities (LD) and bullying, available information indicates that children with LD are at greater risk of being teased and physically bullied (Martlew and Hodson, 1991; Mishna, 2003; Nabuzoka and Smith, 1993; Thompson, Whitney, and Smith, 1994).
- Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are more likely than other children to be bullied. They also are somewhat more likely than others to bully their peers (Unnever and Cornell, 2003).
- Children with medical conditions that affect their appearance (for example, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and spina bifida) are more likely to be victimized by peers. Frequently, these children report being called names related to their disability (Dawkins, 1996).
- Obesity also may place children at higher risk of being bullied. In a study of children between the ages of eleven and sixteen, researchers found that overweight and obese girls (ages eleven through sixteen) and boys (ages eleven through twelve) were more likely than peers, who were not overweight, to be teased, made fun of, and experience relational bullying (for example, being socially excluded). Overweight and obese girls were also more likely to be physically bullied (Janssen, Craig, Boyce, and Pickett, 2004).
- Children with hemiplegia (paralysis of one side of their body) are more likely than other children to be victimized by peers, treated as less popular than their peers, and have fewer friends (Yude, Goodman, and McConachie, 1998).
- Children who have diabetes and who are dependent on insulin may be especially vulnerable to peer bullying (Storch et al., 2004).
- Children who stutter may be more likely than their peers to be bullied. In one study, 83 percent of adults who had problems with stammering as children said that they had been teased or bullied; 71 percent of those who had been bullied said it happened at least once a week (Hugh-Jones and Smith, 1999).

*This document is adapted from Tipsheet: Bullying Among Children and Youth with Disabilities and Special Needs. Stop Bullying Now Campaign, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov).



Can bullying of children with disabilities be illegal?

Yes. Bullying behavior often is “disability harassment,” which is illegal under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. According to the U.S. Department of Education, disability harassment is “intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student’s participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the institution’s program” (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). This behavior can take different forms, including verbal harassment, physical threats, or threatening written statements. When a school determines that disability harassment may have occurred, staff must investigate the incident(s) promptly and respond appropriately.

Disability harassment can occur in any location that is connected with school: in classrooms, the cafeteria, hallways, on the playground or athletic fields, or on a school bus. It also can occur during school-sponsored events (Education Law Center, 2002).

What if the bullying or harassment does not stop?

If your school district does not take reasonable, appropriate steps to end the bullying or harassment of a child with disabilities, the district may be violating federal, state, and local laws. For more information about these legal rights, contact:

The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

Phone: (800)-421-3481; or Web: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs

Phone: (202) 245-7468; or Web: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html>

References and Resources

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Appendix B: Bullying, Academic Achievement, and Children's Health

Consequences for Children Who Are Bullied

Bullying may seriously affect the psychosocial functioning, academic work, and health of children who are targeted. In general, children who are bullied show the following:

- Higher rates of physical health problems
- Higher rates of mental health problems
- Higher rates of avoiding school or being absent from school
- Less class participation
- Lower academic achievement

Studies indicate that children who are frequently bullied report three times as many headaches and two times as many problems sleeping as their non-bullied peers, as well as abdominal pain, listlessness, skin problems, and bed-wetting. They are also three times as anxious, five times more unhappy, and four times more depressed as their non-bullied peers (Fekkes, Pijpers, and Verloove-Vanhorick, 2003).

Children who are bullied are more likely to report wanting to avoid school and therefore have higher school absenteeism rates (Rigby, 1996).

Bullied children also report more suicidal ideation than their non-bullied peers (Rigby, 1996). Suicide is a relatively rare event, but quite a number of cases have been linked to persistent bullying.

Research has found that, for some individuals, the impact of being bullied as a child can persist into adulthood. Adults who were bullied as children are more likely to have lower self-esteem and higher rates of depression (Olweus, 1993).

For some victims, bullying experiences are related to higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (A. Morrison and T. Peterson, 2003).

In a study conducted by the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education of school shootings, it was found that three-fourths of the attackers felt persecuted and bullied prior to the incident.



Consequences for Children Who Bullying Others

Research has found that children who bully are more likely to be involved in other antisocial, violent, or troubling behaviors. Individuals who bully are more likely to do the following:

- Get into frequent fights (Nansel et al., 2003)
- Be injured in a fight (Nansel et al., 2003)
- Steal and vandalize property (Olweus, 1993)
- Drink alcohol and smoke (Nansel et al., 2001)
- Be truant and drop out of school (Byrne, 1994)
- Report poorer academic achievement (Nansel et al., 2001)
- Perceive a negative environment at school (Nansel et al., 2003)
- Carry a weapon (Nansel et al., 2003)

Boys who bully are at risk for engaging in later criminal behaviors. In a longitudinal study in Norway, 60 percent of boys who were identified as bullies in middle school had at least one conviction by the age of 24, and 35 to 40 percent had three or more convictions (Olweus, 1993).

Consequences for Children Who Are Bystanders

We should also be concerned about bullying because of its effects on bystanders who may feel afraid, guilty, and, over time, may have diminished empathy for children who are bullied. For *all* students, bullying may interfere with learning and create an environment of fear and disrespect. In schools where bullying is unaddressed, students perceive the adults as uncaring or not in control of behavioral issues.



Appendix C: A Comparison of PBIS and OBPP

What is PBS or PBIS?

School wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) or Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a systems approach to establishing the social culture and individualized behavioral supports that are needed for schools to achieve social and academic success for all students.

Schools that utilize PBIS are asked to define three to five school wide expectations for students' social behavior, such as: be respectful, be responsible, be safe, be kind, be a friend, respect yourself and others as well as people's property, and so forth.

PBIS recommends that schools provide a continuum of school wide instructional and positive behavior supports, which include these three levels:

Level one: Primary Prevention

Create school and classroom systems that address the behavior and academic success of students and staff.

Level Two: Secondary Prevention

Create positive behavioral systems of support for students who demonstrate at-risk behaviors.

Level Three: Tertiary Prevention:

Create specialized and individualized positive behavior supports for students who are demonstrating high-risk behaviors.

For more information about the PBIS model, visit www.pbis.org.

What do PBIS and the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* have in common?

PBIS and *OBPP* have the following in common:

- Both programs focus on positive ways to address negative social behaviors
- Both programs are school wide, systems change programs
- Both programs provide a means for data collection and use data for targeting strategic interventions
- Both programs recommend that schools create a leadership team and implement school wide planning
- Both programs are multi-year in length, requiring commitment from those who are involved
- Both programs provide training for all educators and ongoing learning
- Both programs use positive reinforcement
- Both programs establish predictable negative consequences for bad behavior
- Both programs use class time to focus on appropriate behaviors
- Both programs establish suspension or expulsion as a last resort



Does PBIS address bullying?

PBIS developers have created two guides to addressing bullying, but neither guide is research-based in terms of stopping bullying behaviors.

How could PBIS and the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* work together?

Schools that want to use both programs together should consider the following:

- Establish a single leadership committee that would lead efforts with both PBIS and *OBPP*.
- Create Staff Discussion Groups (a concept in the *OBPP* model) or Professional Learning Communities (a concept in the PBIS model) to educate staff about bullying and establish ongoing training in both programs. Time spent in these areas can be used to accomplish the objectives of both programs.
- Use Class Meetings (a concept in the *OBPP* model) or class instruction time (a concept in the PBIS model) to educate students. The time spent in these areas can be used to accomplish the objectives of both programs. PBIS relies on faculty “teaching” appropriate behaviors; the *OBPP* Class Meeting is a forum for teachers to facilitate discussions about bullying behavior and other issues, which affect the school environment, among classmates.

