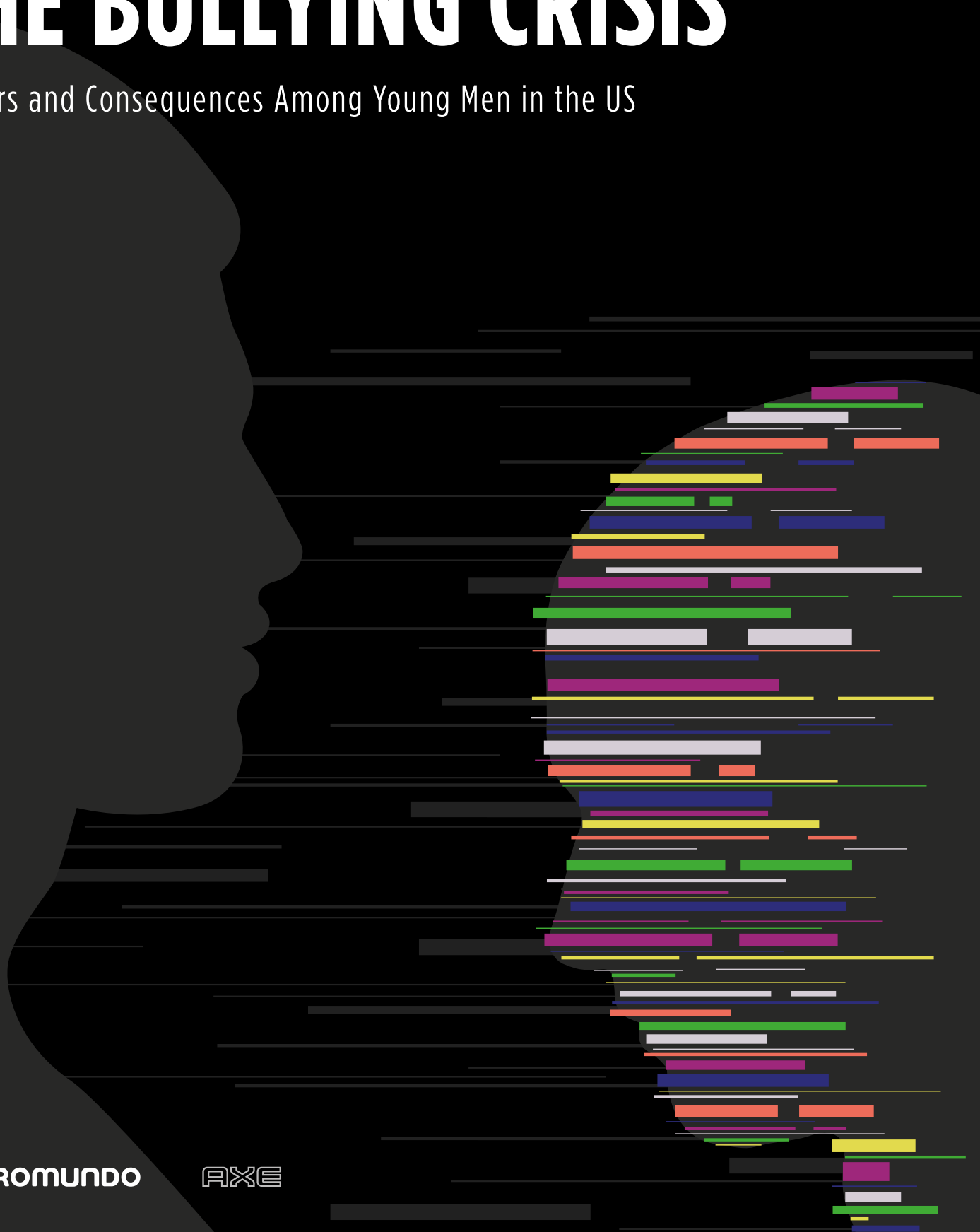# THE BULLYING CRISIS

Drivers and Consequences Among Young Men in the US

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THE BULLYING CRISIS: DRIVERS AND CONSEQUENCES AMONG YOUNG MEN IN THE US

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With support from Axe, Promundo-US led this research in collaboration with partners in the US.

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THE BULLYING CRISIS

Drivers and Consequences Among Young Men in the US

2018

PROMUNDO　　AXE

Forewords

It's easy to look at the bullying epidemic in the United States (US) and despair. The report in your hands and on your screen tells us just how common it is, and how — as social media grows in influence — new forms of bullying are emerging. Nearly two-thirds of young men said they have ever bullied, and nearly one in five have done so in the past month. Nearly as many tell us they have been bullied in various forms: verbally, online, and physically. We also know that bullying has tremendous costs – particularly in terms of mental health. All of this sits alongside the enormous scope of online abuse and harassment that women and girls face every day.

If the bad news is how common bullying is and how pernicious it is, the good news is that with this study and other emerging research, we increasingly know what drives it. First and foremost, we find that harmful, restrictive ideas about manhood are the main drivers. Young men who believe that the only way to be a man is to be tough, to be heterosexual, and to fight rather than negotiate are far more likely to bully and to have been bullied.

While it may sound impossible to change ideas about manhood, the fact is that we know how. Engaging young men and young women in critical discussions about where these ideas about manhood come from and the harm they cause is one way. Celebrities and influencers who speak out against harmful ideas of manhood are another.

Brands – like Axe – that influence young men every day are yet another path toward change. We're pleased to partner with Unilever's Axe in its efforts to promote new ideas about manhood — particularly the notion that there is no single, right way of being a man. Together with Axe and other partners, we're spreading that simple message: Manhood is not predicated on being tough or violent. It's about connection and concern, not coercion. It's about being your authentic self, not performing a bad imitation of a movie avenger. It's about respect for others, and standing up for others, not revenge. That's the manhood we at Promundo-US and Axe believe in.

Gary Barker
President and CEO, Promundo-US

Thank you for reading *The Bullying Crisis: Drivers and Consequences Among Young Men in the US.*

As a brand that's stood alongside young men for over three decades, Axe has a responsibility to understand guys and the issues that they face. To do this, we teamed up with Promundo-US to establish the areas where guys need help the most. Why? Because if we understand their issues, we're in a better position to help them express themselves, creating a better world for everyone.

This year, we expanded our partnership with Promundo-US to focus on one of today's biggest challenges facing guys: Bullying. This research report spotlights the realities of being a young man in the US today, the daily struggles that young men face when it comes to bullying, and how bullying impacts their individuality and identity.

What most people know about the causes and negative impact of bullying is just the tip of the iceberg. This research helps to dig deeper. It's a huge issue that's growing even further – now, three in four guys have been bullied for the way they look – and it's being amplified by the rise of social media, which has given way to anonymity and trolling. We found that bullying is intrinsically linked to individuality and that this directly affects guys' masculinity and their lives – both online and offline. For example, nearly half of young men have thought about changing their appearance to avoid being bullied.

We want to fight bullying and create a world where everyone can look, feel, and be who they want to be, without any limits on self-expression.

Let's call bullying out and beat it for good.

Rik Strubel
Global Vice President of Axe / Lynx

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1 Executive Summary

WHY THIS STUDY?

How common are experiences of bullying in the social and online lives of young men in the United States (US)? How do masculine norms, young men's empathy, and other factors influence these dynamics? What are the consequences?

Building on prior research by Promundo-US and Axe, Unilever's leading male grooming brand, and in line with a burgeoning field of bullying research, this study explores how young men use, experience, witness, and intervene to stop multiple forms of physical, social, and online bullying using a nationally representative sample in the US. In addition, this report explores young men's attitudes about masculinity in relation to their bullying behaviors, tests associations between empathy and bullying, and documents patterns of men's cyberbullying, all in an effort to grow this knowledge base.

WHY BULLYING?

Without a doubt, men and boys' bullying takes many forms, with significant harmful impacts on men and boys themselves, as well as girls, women, and gender and sexual minorities.

In a 2017 study by Promundo-US and Axe, the precursor to this study, upwards of one-third of young men in the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), and Mexico reported using verbal, physical, and/or online bullying behaviors in the month prior to data collection (Heilman, Barker, & Harrison, 2017). Across contexts, being bullied has been shown to negatively impact mental health, the ability to perform work, relationships with peers or colleagues, and long-term relationships (Gini & Pozzoli, 2006; Munroe, n.d.; Samnani & Singh, 2012; Swearer & Hymel, 2015).

WHO PARTICIPATED?

This study draws upon a nationally representative sample of young men aged 18 to 24 residing in the United States.

A pilot study was conducted in December 2017 with 100 respondents. The pilot study data were used to make minor adjustments to the survey to ensure accessibility for respondents and to assess the feasibility of the survey's length. Once the survey was revised based on the results of the pilot study, the full study sample of approximately 1,000 respondents was sought out in January 2018. The final sample consisted of 1,068 men. The sample was selected to be representative of young men from all income, educational, and ethnic groups – as well as from urban and rural settings – across all geographic regions of the United States.

WHAT DID WE FIND?

First, the report presents the prevalence and patterns of bullying behaviors among different groups of young men across the country.

Patterns of general bullying

General bullying experiences and practices are divided into "direct bullying" – referring to forms of physical and verbal bullying - and "indirect bullying" – referring to forms of social and relational bullying. Significant proportions of respondents reported using and experiencing direct forms of bullying. Respondents also almost universally reported witnessing all forms of direct physical and verbal confrontation and social and relational forms of bullying measured in this study. Respondents reported high rates of using and experiencing indirect bullying – involving hurting someone's reputation or relationships – as well. Encouragingly, however, men in the study seemed very willing to step in on behalf of or defend those targeted by bullying. Nearly three-fourths of participants reported having intervened on behalf of someone being insulted because of the way they look or dress.

Data also show that direct bullying occurs in relation to one's appearance, with three-fourths of respondents reporting that they had been verbally bullied because of the way they look or dress. The findings also demonstrate that making fun of someone because of their race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation was frequent. In fact, a total of 448 men in the sample reported being made fun of because of their sexual orientation, a significantly higher number of respondents than those self-identifying as gay, bisexual, or another non-heterosexual sexual orientation.

Patterns of cyberbullying

Meaningful proportions of young men reported being targeted by bullying online, and many men also revealed their own cyberbullying behaviors. Posting unflattering images of someone on the internet without their approval was the most frequent form of cyberbullying. As many as one in 10 men had experienced at least one form of cyberbullying in the previous month alone. Among young men willing to share their direct experiences of being targeted by recent cyberbullying, the most common forms were negative comments about one's appearance and hurtful or mean jokes, rumors, or gossip. Even though young men were not very likely to report doing it themselves, the young men's responses demonstrate that cyberbullying is occurring all around them. Many young men said that they intervene to stop these online behaviors when they see them, though there is room for encouraging greater bystander intervention. Respondents were most likely to report having intervened to stop bullying related to sexual orientation and appearance.

On one hand, the vast majority of young men revealed that they had seen bullying in their online lives as well as "away from the keyboard." On the other hand, comparatively fewer men in the sample said that they had used any bullying behaviors, online or offline, recently or early in their lives.

Second, the report explores the influence of various drivers of bullying activity, seeking to understand why bullying persists.

Gender attitudes

Many young men hold restrictive ideas about how to "be a real man," and these ideas show strong links to bullying behaviors. A 2017 study by Promundo-US and Axe, the predecessor to this study, demonstrated that many men in the US, UK, and Mexico can be said to be "in the Man Box" – meaning they espouse more rigid, harmful ideas about what men should believe and how they should behave (Heilman, Barker, & Harrison, 2017). After accounting for variations due to age, relationship status, and working status, this study found that being in the Man Box is associated with a lower likelihood of experiencing general bullying but a greater likelihood of using both general bullying and cyberbullying. Moreover, those men who are in the Man Box are less likely to intervene to stop both general bullying and cyberbullying situations. In other words, men who believe that "being a man" should imply self-reliance, aggressiveness, toughness, and other restrictive characteristics are more likely to be bullies.

Empathy

Young men in the study show broad – though not universal – empathetic traits. Deeper statistical analysis reveals that even if overall empathy rates are relatively

high, having higher levels of empathy is significantly linked with a higher likelihood of intervening to stop bullying.

In terms of bystander intervention, young men's ideas and intentions are sometimes at odds with one another. Many report that they would *not* do anything for fear of retaliation, and simultaneously say that they would intervene in many positive ways. This contradiction and uncertainty present an opportunity for greater coaching, encouragement, and social norms shifts around safe bystander intervention approaches and options.

Bullying-supportive attitudes

Young men in the study generally did not look favorably on bullying, but those who did tended to follow up their attitudes with harmful actions. The study demonstrated clearly that attitudes justifying bullying – for instance, believing that "picking on others is fun" or that "people who look weird or look different are asking to be teased" – were statistically linked with being a bully.

Finally, the report investigates the consequences of bullying experiences on young men's health and well-being.

Self-esteem

Young men's self-esteem is relatively high but demonstrates strong links with their experiences of bullying. In fact, the only category linked with an increase in men's self-reported life satisfaction was intervening to stop general bullying. Experiencing both general bullying and cyberbullying was linked with a decrease in life satisfaction. The desire to change one's appearance and to be more confident in real life showed multiple strong links to cyberbullying behaviors.

Depressive tendencies

All four manifestations of general bullying and three of the four manifestations of cyberbullying show strong associations with young men's depressive tendencies: The more bullying they encounter or use, the greater these tendencies become.

Overall well-being

In the majority of domains, as young men's interactions with bullying increased, their well-being scores decreased at statistically significant levels. For general bullying, this relationship held true for experiencing and using bullying; for cyberbullying, this relationship held true for experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop bullying.

This report demonstrates that bullying is a predominant feature of young men's online and offline lives and that various bullying experiences have strong and important links with negative health and well-being outcomes.

However, many young men also shared that they had intervened to stop bullying when they saw it, with nearly three-fourths of participants reporting that they had stepped in on behalf of someone who was insulted because of the way they look or dress, for example. Even as proximity to bullying was nearly universal among respondents, one can rightly draw hope from young men's willingness to intervene, their high reported rates of empathy, and the statistical linkages that emerged between these two factors. Just as strongly as young men's restrictive ideas about masculinity prompt them to bully others, their empathetic traits and beliefs prompt them to stop bullying when they see it.

These findings continue to build the evidence base on the widespread scope and negative consequences of bullying for young men. They also shed new light on the drivers and consequences of these behaviors and therefore the policy and programming avenues that may mitigate further harm.

For instance, the findings demonstrate that witnessing bullying in one's social or online life is associated with negative health outcomes, in some cases of equal or greater magnitude to those experienced by victims. This finding calls for increased, multi-component bullying prevention campaigns and policies with a broader focus on the harmful environment created for everyone when bullying behaviors are prevalent. Beyond this recommendation, results urge future programmers and policymakers to explore new research and solutions addressing the gamut of bullying experiences and also to devote particular attention to transforming young men's harmful gender norms and amplifying their empathetic traits and abilities. Bullying dynamics are multifaceted and enormously harmful; as such, any prevention and response mechanisms need to be equally nuanced and multifaceted. The struggle to end the harms of bullying is undeniably difficult, but this gender-transformative approach calls on everyone to play a role.

2 Why This Study?

How common are experiences of bullying in the social and online lives of young men in the United States? How do masculine norms, young men's empathy, and other factors influence these dynamics? What are the consequences?

Building on prior research by Promundo-US and Axe, Unilever's leading male grooming brand, and in line with a burgeoning field of bullying research, this study explores how young men use, experience, witness, and intervene to stop multiple forms of physical, social, and online bullying using a nationally representative sample in the US. The study presents the prevalence and patterns of all of these behaviors among different groups of young men across the country, tests the influence of various drivers of bullying behavior, and explores the consequences of these bullying experiences on young men's health and well-being.

While new and existing research continues to establish and expand the knowledge base on young men's bullying behaviors, certain gaps remain. Knowledge is growing, for instance, about why young men's bullying happens. Study participants in the latest Annual Bullying Survey conducted in the UK by Ditch the Label (one of the largest anti-bullying charities in the world) said that the most common reasons for someone's subjection to bullying include their appearance, interests or hobbies, grades, household income, perceived "manhood," family issues, and other identity factors (including disability, race, cultural identity, and religion) (Ditch the Label, 2017). Researchers have also demonstrated that across contexts, bullying is a result of a power imbalance between those bullying and those being bullied, and is built upon threats, fear, control, and domination (Athanasiades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010; Carrera, DePalma, & Lameiras, 2011). Despite bullying's clear, significant consequences, research also shows that many boys dismiss their acts of bullying as a joke (Athanasiades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010). Furthermore, of course, young men's experiences of bullying sit alongside the many prevalent forms of abuse and harassment that women and girls face in the United States.

This report explores young men's attitudes about masculinity in relation to their bullying behaviors, tests associations between empathy and bullying, and documents patterns of men's cyberbullying, all in an effort to grow this knowledge base.

Evidence demonstrates that the forms of bullying predominantly used by men and boys differ from those predominantly used by women and girls; however, data connecting young men's attitudes about gender with their bullying behaviors are rare. Bullying is, demonstrably, a common act and experience among young people of all genders. However, research suggests that men and boys are more likely to use many – if not all – forms of bullying (Basile et al., 2009; Ditch the Label, 2017). This report seeks to understand why this is the case, drawing focus to young men's attitudes about masculinity and their levels of empathy as possible risk and protective factors for their bullying behavior. Furthermore, the report seeks to update prevalence estimates for men's use of bullying in online spaces, exploring young men's reports of using, experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop forms of cyberbullying such as masquerading, outing and trickery, flaming, and denigration (see "Definitions of Bullying" on page 17).

Without a doubt, men and boys' bullying takes many forms, with significant harmful impacts on men and boys themselves, as well as girls, women, and gender and sexual minorities.

In a 2017 study by Promundo-US and Axe, the precursor to this study, upwards of one-third of young men in the US, UK, and Mexico reported using verbal, physical, and/or online bullying behaviors in the month prior to data collection (Heilman, Barker, & Harrison, 2017). Across contexts, being bullied has been shown to negatively impact mental health, the ability to perform work, relationships with peers or colleagues, and long-term relationships (Gini & Pozzoli, 2006; Munroe, n.d.; Samnani & Singh, 2012; Swearer & Hymel, 2015). In the following sections, this study builds upon these emerging findings by:

- Presenting prevalence and patterns of direct, indirect, and online bullying among different groups of young men across the country;

- Testing associations between respondents' gender attitudes, empathy, and bullying-supportive attitudes and their experiences of bullying; and

- Exploring the consequences of these bullying experiences on young men's health and well-being.

DEFINITIONS OF BULLYING

The term "bullying" can refer to a wide range of behaviors, and as such, no universal definition exists. This report has sought to establish a new definition of cyberbullying, presented later in the report. Bullying actions are presented in three categories throughout the report: direct general bullying, indirect general bullying, and cyberbullying. The report uses the term "general" to refer to offline activity. This box presents the direct language used in this study's questionnaire to assess these three categories of bullying.

Forms of ***direct general bullying*** explored in the study include:

- Shoving, pushing, or blocking someone's way

- Destroying, stealing, or sabotaging someone else's property

- Hitting a peer, classmate, or co-worker with a fist or beating someone up

- Calling someone mean names or insulting someone because of the way they look or the way they dress

Forms of ***indirect general bullying*** explored in the study include:

- Spreading false gossip or rumors about someone

- Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their hobbies or interests

- Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their sexual orientation

- Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of the way they look or the way they dress

- Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of their race or ethnicity

Forms of ***cyberbullying*** explored in the study include:

- Masquerading
  - Hacking into someone's email or social media accounts to post mean/embarrassing things

- Outing and Trickery

  - Posting unflattering images of someone on the internet, without their approval, that made them uncomfortable

  - Sharing private information about someone, or sharing secrets they told, online

  - Screenshotting and reposting a message someone wrote, without their permission, on social media

  - Posting a photo or video online to make fun of someone because of their [appearance/sexual orientation/hobbies or interests/race or ethnicity]

- Flaming

  - Making negative comments about someone's appearance on social media

  - Sending negative direct online messages or posting comments that criticize or tease someone because of their [appearance/sexual orientation/hobbies or interests/race or ethnicity]

- Denigration

  - Posting hurtful or mean jokes, rumors, or gossip targeting someone, specifically online

3 Study Sample and Methods

3.1 WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY?

This section briefly introduces the study participants and selection procedure, followed by a conceptual model of study topics.

This study draws upon a nationally representative sample of young men aged 18 to 24 residing in the United States. This age range was selected for multiple reasons. A literature review by the study's authors indicated that a preponderance of bullying research focuses on school-aged children. A less explored life stage is early adulthood, a time when young men are navigating educational, professional, and personal transitions and interacting with peers in a wide range of school, workplace, and social settings (including online). Data were collected using an online platform coordinated by TNS, a Kantar company. Using Facebook as a tool to recruit participants, survey links were visible as advertisements on user newsfeeds, thus ensuring that participation was voluntary. A pilot study was conducted in December 2017 with 100 respondents. The pilot study data were used to make minor adjustments to the survey to ensure accessibility for respondents and to assess the feasibility of the survey's length. Once the survey was revised based on the results of the pilot study, the full study sample of approximately 1,000 respondents was sought out in January 2018. The final sample consisted of 1,068 men, which included a "boost" sample of 68 African-American men in order to ensure accurate representation.

The sample was selected to be representative of young men from all income, educational, and ethnic groups – as well as from urban and rural settings – across all geographic regions of the United States.

As shown in Figure 1, the sample was approximately even in terms of participant age, with 36 percent of participants aged 18 to 20, 31 percent aged 21 to 22, and 33 percent aged 23 to 24.

FIGURE 1. **AGE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS**

33%
23-24 years old

36%
18-20 years old

31%
21-22 years old
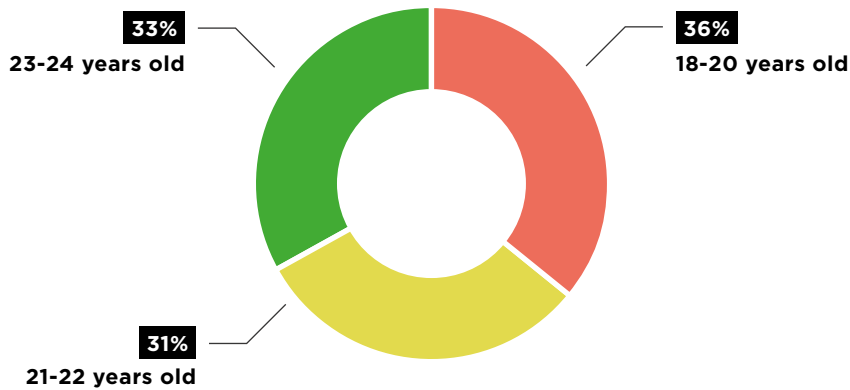
Participants were evenly distributed across the United States, with approximately 361 identifying as living in the Southern US, 321 in the Western US, 225 in the Midwestern US, and 161 in the Northeastern US.

Ethnic distribution indicated that the majority of the participants identified as White/Caucasian (n=681); followed by African-American (n=203); Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino (n=95); Asian (n=37); mixed-race (n=26); Native American (n=15); other (n=10); and Pacific Islander (n=1).

FIGURE 2. **LOCATION AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS**
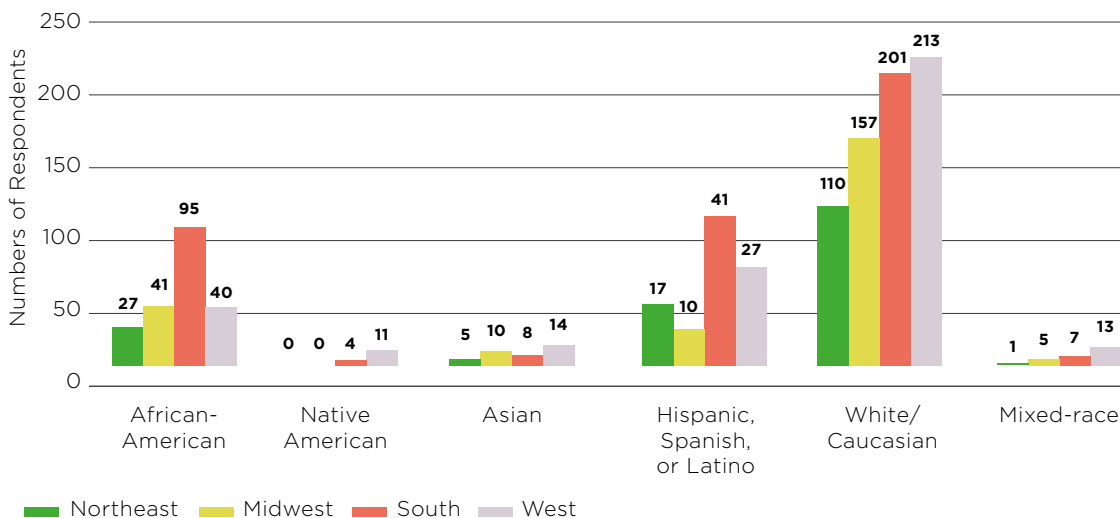
Figure 2 shows participants' location and ethnicity. The highest proportion of participants identifying as White/Caucasian came from the Western US. The highest proportion of African-American participants were from the Southern US.

In terms of working status, a plurality of the participants reported being full-time workers (35 percent). Some 77 percent of the sample indicated that their annual income before taxes was anywhere from $0 up to $50,000, with the remaining 23 percent reporting incomes higher than $50,000. For education, 59 percent of participants reported that their highest level of education was up to a high school diploma. Table 1 presents data on participants' highest level of education completed, working status, and annual household income before tax.

TABLE 1. **SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANTS**

	Number of participants	% of sample
Highest level of education completed		
Up to high school diploma	600	59%
Any post-secondary education	407	40%
Other	15	1%
Working status*		
Not working	137	13%
University student	307	29%
Working part time	238	22%
Working full time	373	35%
Other	13	1%
Annual household income before tax		
Up to $50,000	818	77%
$50,001 to $100,000	154	15%
More than $100,000	93	8%

* Respondents chose a single category that they thought best reflected their working status.

In addition, respondents were asked for their current relationship status. An approximately even number of participants identified as single (n=504) and as in a relationship or married (n=559).

3.2 CONCEPTUAL MODEL

While it would be impossible to analyze every possible driver, characteristic, and consequence of young men's bullying behavior in one study, this report includes multiple such measures, prioritizing underrepresented themes of investigation (as previously described). The key domains of analysis in the report are shown in Figure 3, which presents a general conceptual organization of the report's principal themes. Drivers and associations appear on the left, with arrows indicating that these factors may be linked to patterns of young men's bullying behavior. Consequences of bullying appear on the right, with arrows indicating possible relationships between bullying experiences and consequences in these domains. Demographic characteristics are examined throughout the study.

FIGURE 3. **CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR STUDY MEASURES**

DRIVERS & ASSOCIATIONS

CONSEQUENCES

Gender attitudes (Man Box)

Empathy

Bullying-supportive attitudes

BULLYING

General bullying: *Direct & indirect*

Cyberbullying

Self-esteem

Depressive tendencies

Overall well-being

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
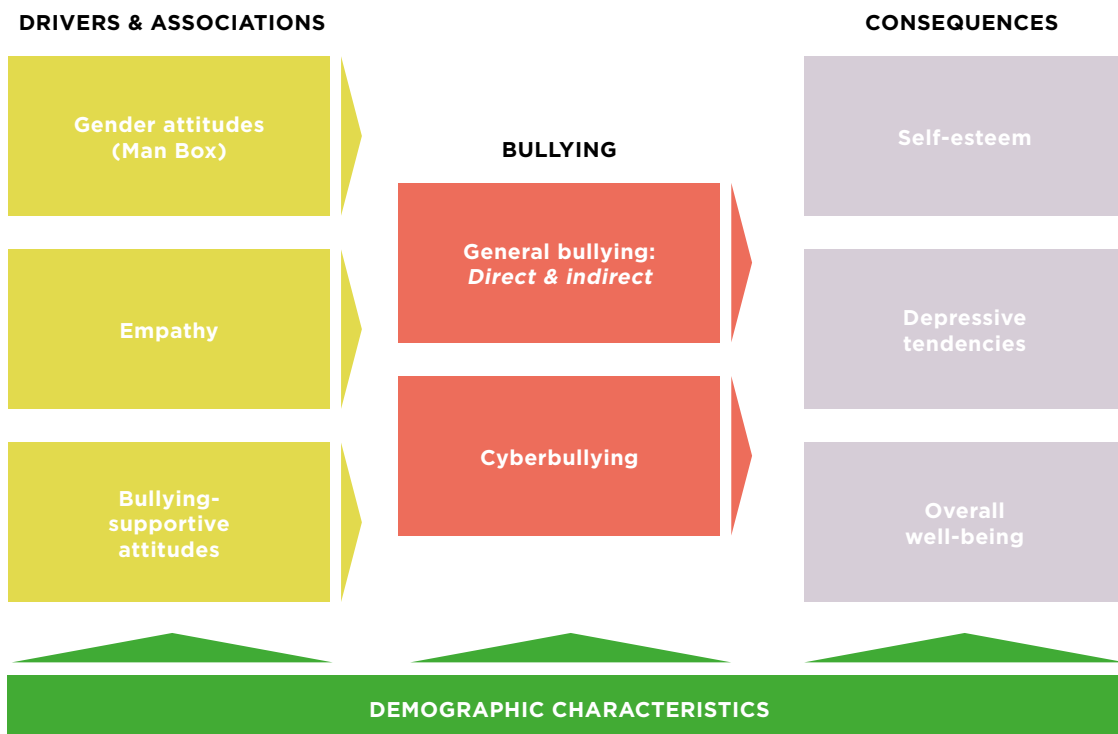
The specific questionnaire items, measures, and analytical approaches used for all of these topics – drivers and associations, forms of bullying, and consequences – are presented one by one, in detail, in the appendix on page 56. Please use the relevant sections of the appendix as helpful guides in interpreting all tables and figures presented in the report.

4 **Findings**

Report findings are presented in four main sections:

4.1 **Patterns of General Bullying,** which presents comparative rates of using, experiencing, witnessing, and intervening in cases of direct and indirect bullying in offline settings.

4.2 **Patterns of Cyberbullying,** which presents comparative rates of using, experiencing, witnessing, and intervening in cases of cyberbulling.

4.3 **Drivers and Associations,** which tests for meaningful relationships between respondents' gender attitudes, empathy levels, and bullying-supportive attitudes and their likelihood of reporting various bullying behaviors.

4.4 **Consequences,** which explores links between bullying behavior and various factors related to respondents' health and well-being.

WHICH MEASURES ARE USED IN THIS REPORT?

The specific questionnaire items, measures, and analytical approaches used in sections 4.1 through 4.4 are presented in detail in the appendix on page 56.

Please use the relevant sections of the appendix as helpful guides in interpreting all tables and figures presented in the following sections.

4.1 PATTERNS OF GENERAL BULLYING

This section first presents patterns of using and experiencing general bullying, followed by patterns of witnessing and intervening. Next, it discusses important differences among demographic groups in terms of their general bullying experiences and practices. Detailed definitions of the measures used in this section are presented in section 6.2.

4.1.1. Using and Experiencing

General bullying experiences and practices are divided into "direct bullying" – referring to forms of physical and verbal bullying as defined in Tables 2 and 3 – and "indirect bullying" – referring to forms of social and relational bullying as defined in Tables 4 and 5.

Direct General Bullying

Significant proportions of respondents reported using and experiencing direct forms of bullying.

Respondents experienced various types of physical bullying. This report uses the term "direct bullying" as shorthand for acts of physical and verbal confrontation in young men's offline lives. Overall, 63 percent reported being shoved, pushed, or blocked, with 16 percent experiencing this form of physical violence in the previous month. Even more alarming, 55 percent said their property had been destroyed, stolen, or sabotaged at least once. In terms of using bullying, a significant proportion – 32 percent – reported that they had ever shoved, pushed, or blocked someone's way, with 5 percent having done so in the previous month. Other forms of physical violence were also prevalent: One-third of the sample reported experiencing some physical beating, and 21 percent reported ever using such physical violence.

TABLE 2. DIRECT GENERAL BULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EVER EXPERIENCED OR USED BULLYING

Form of bullying	Experienced bullying		Used bullying	
	1-2 times	More than 2 times	1-2 times	More than 2 times
Shoving, pushing, or blocking someone's way	37%	26%	24%	8%
Destroying, stealing, or sabotaging someone else's property	35%	20%	15%	6%
Hitting a peer, classmate, or co-worker with a fist or beating someone up	22%	11%	14%	7%
Calling someone mean names or insulting someone because of the way they look or the way they dress	24%	51%	23%	17%

TABLE 3. DIRECT GENERAL BULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EXPERIENCED OR USED BULLYING IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH

Form of bullying	Experienced bullying in the previous month	Used bullying in the previous month
Shoving, pushing, or blocking someone's way	16%	5%
Destroying, stealing, or sabotaging someone else's property	10%	2%
Hitting a peer, classmate, or co-worker with a fist or beating someone up	3%	2%
Calling someone mean names or insulting someone because of the way they look or the way they dress	5%	5%

Data also show that direct bullying occurs in relation to one's appearance. Three-fourths of the young men reported that they had been verbally bullied because of the way they look or dress, and 40 percent said they had called someone mean names or insulted them because of the way they look or dress. This extremely high prevalence of bullying may reflect the impact of masculine norms restricting men from showing that they care about their appearance and the expectation that they must meet cultural standards of physical attractiveness. This report will analyze direct links between attitudes on masculinity and bullying behaviors in a later section.

Indirect General Bullying

Respondents reported high rates of using and experiencing indirect bullying – involving hurting someone's reputation or relationships.

According to study respondents, the landscape of bullying behaviors extends beyond direct physical and verbal acts to include other, more social and relational components. This report uses the term "indirect bullying" as shorthand for acts of social and relational bullying in young men's offline lives, including acts of social isolation. Among the respondents, 76 percent reported ever experiencing someone spreading false gossip or rumors about them, and 32 percent said they had ever used this form of bullying. Additionally, 66 percent of respondents reported that someone had ever made fun of them because of their hobbies or interests, with 33 percent having ever done this (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. **INDIRECT GENERAL BULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EVER EXPERIENCED OR USED BULLYING**

Form of bullying	Experienced bullying		Used bullying	
	1-2 times	More than 2 times	1-2 times	More than 2 times
Spreading false gossip or rumors about someone	29%	47%	22%	10%
Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their hobbies or interests	27%	39%	23%	10%
Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their sexual orientation	15%	27%	7%	4%
Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of the way they look or the way they dress	21%	20%	11%	4%
Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of their race or ethnicity	13%	11%	4%	1%

Respondents also reported experiences of bullying related to the way they look or dress. A total of 41 percent of young men reported ever experiencing social exclusion based on the way they look or dress. Again, self-reported use of bullying was low; only 15 percent of young men reported deliberately ignoring or excluding others because of their appearance.

TABLE 5. **INDIRECT GENERAL BULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EXPERIENCED OR USED BULLYING IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH**

Form of bullying	Experienced bullying in the previous month	Used bullying in the previous month
Spreading false gossip or rumors about someone	24%	4%
Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their hobbies or interests	21%	8%
Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their sexual orientation	13%	2%
Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of the way they look or the way they dress	8%	3%
Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of their race or ethnicity	6%	1%

The findings demonstrate that making fun of someone because of their race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation was frequent.

Among respondents, 42 percent reported being made fun of because of their sexual orientation, although only 11 percent reported having used this form of bullying. Additionally, 24 percent reported they had been deliberately ignored or excluded because of their race or ethnicity, and 5 percent reported using this form of bullying.

Many men report being bullied due to sexual orientation, regardless of what their sexual orientation is. So, what's happening here?

A total of 448 men in the sample reported being made fun of because of their sexual orientation, a significantly higher number of respondents than those self-identifying as gay, bisexual, or another non-heterosexual sexual orientation. This finding reinforces that social discrimination and devaluing of sexual minorities continue to fuel bullying behaviors directed at members of all sexual orientations (Swearer et al., 2008), with particular but not exclusive risk to those with gay, bisexual, or queer sexual orientations. This finding builds on other research showing that men and boys' use of violence and bullying often punishes gender nonconformity. Some research finds that boys who are considered shy, bookish, honor students, artistic, musical, theatrical, nonathletic, "geekish," or weird are most at risk for bullying (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003), a finding that sits alongside widespread evidence and history of homophobic bullying, violence, and hate crimes. Because bullying behaviors so often serve to protect a heteronormative, patriarchal ordering of society based on rigid ideas about what makes a "real man," this study also analyzes the links between young men's attitudes about masculinity and their bullying behaviors in a later section.

4.1.2. Witnessing and Intervening

Evidence shows that having witnesses or "bystanders" nearby can influence bullying behaviors in multiple directions.

On one hand, bystanders often provide a motivation for bullies who seek admiration from their audience (Unnever, 2005). On the other hand, bystanders can reinforce social norms that reject bullying, intervene to halt bullying behaviors, and help report cases of bullying after the fact. Some studies have shown that bystander intervention can be effective in reducing the likelihood of bullying or harassment occurring (Labhardt et al., 2017; Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012).

Bystander intervention campaigns, programs, and messages may be an important entry point for changing bullying behaviors, given that young men report being proximate to bullying behaviors at very high levels. On average, young men in the sample reported having witnessed at least one bullying event in their life (mean, on scale from zero to two: 1.13; standard deviation: 0.58), and almost half reported stepping in to help at least once on behalf of someone being bullied (mean: 0.77; standard deviation: 0.54).

Direct General Bullying

Respondents reported regularly witnessing all forms of direct physical and verbal confrontation measured in this study.

By and large, forms of direct general bullying were common experiences among young men in the study. Eighty percent of respondents reported having witnessed someone being shoved, pushed, or having their way blocked at least once. Similarly, 60 percent reported having witnessed someone hitting a peer, classmate, or co-worker with a fist or beating someone up. Sixty-three percent of the young men reported having seen others destroy, steal, or sabotage someone else's property, and 87 percent had witnessed others calling someone mean names or insulting the way they look or dress.

TABLE 6. **DIRECT GENERAL BULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EVER WITNESSED OR INTERVENED**

Form of bullying	Witnessed		Intervened	
	1-2 times	More than 2 times	1-2 times	More than 2 times
Shoving, pushing, or blocking someone's way	36%	44%	36%	21%
Destroying, stealing, or sabotaging someone else's property	34%	29%	33%	14%
Hitting a peer, classmate, or co-worker with a fist or beating someone up	28%	32%	23%	15%
Calling someone mean names or insulting someone because of the way they look or the way they dress	21%	66%	33%	41%

Encouragingly, however, men in the study seemed very willing to step in on behalf of or defend those targeted by bullying.

For example, in terms of physical bullying, some 57 percent of men reported intervening when they saw someone being shoved, pushed, or having their way blocked; 47 percent reported intervening when someone's property was being destroyed, stolen, or sabotaged; and 38 percent reported stepping in to defend a peer, classmate, or co-worker who was being hit or beaten up. For verbal bullying, an even higher percentage of respondents said they stepped in – nearly three-fourths reported having intervened on behalf of someone being insulted because of the way they look or dress.

Indirect General Bullying

As with direct bullying, proximity to social and relational forms of bullying was nearly universal among study respondents.

Witnessing indirect general bullying behaviors was very common among young men in the study. A total of 85 percent reported witnessing false gossip or rumors being spread, 71 percent witnessing someone being made fun of because of their sexual orientation, and 57 percent witnessing someone being deliberately excluded because of the way they look or dress.

TABLE 7. **INDIRECT GENERAL BULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EVER WITNESSED OR INTERVENED**

Form of bullying	Witnessed		Intervened	
	1-2 times	More than 2 times	1-2 times	More than 2 times
Spreading false gossip or rumors about someone	17%	68%	37%	36%
Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their hobbies or interests	27%	48%	32%	26%
Making fun of, teasing, or trying to embarrass someone because of their sexual orientation	21%	50%	29%	31%
Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of the way they look or the way they dress	22%	35%	23%	15%
Deliberately ignoring or excluding someone from a social event because of their race or ethnicity	17%	27%	19%	15%

Data show encouraging, if complex, rates of intervening to stop someone else's indirect bullying behavior. For instance, 73 percent of men reported that they stepped in when false gossip or rumors were being spread about someone. Some 60 percent of men had stepped in when someone was being made fun of because of their sexual orientation, and 58 percent had done so when someone was made fun of because of their hobbies or interests. A smaller proportion, 38 percent, intervened when someone was being deliberately ignored or excluded from a social event because of the way they look or dress, and only 34 percent stepped in when someone was excluded because of their race or ethnicity.

4.1.3. Differences Among Groups

Statistical calculations demonstrate which demographic groups are more or less likely to experience, use, witness, and intervene to stop all forms of general bullying.

TABLE 8. **DIFFERENCES BY GROUP: GENERAL BULLYING**

	Experiencing	Using	Witnessing	Intervened
Age				
18-20	*0.75**	0.30	1.08	0.70
21-22	*0.79**	0.31	1.13	0.74
23-24	*0.88**	0.32	1.20	0.87
Working status				
Not working	*0.64**	0.30	*1.20**	*0.85**
University student	*0.93**	0.25	*1.0**	*0.60**
Working part time	*0.82**	0.34	*1.15**	*0.81**
Working full time	*0.88**	0.33	*1.22**	*0.85**
Relationship status				
Single	0.76	0.29	*1.06**	*0.70**
In a relationship or married	0.85	0.33	*1.21**	*0.83**

Table 8 presents the average scores of respondents experiencing, using, witnessing, and intervening to stop general bullying, by age group, working status, and relationship status, using a zero-to-two scale as described in section 6.2. The table marks statistically significant relationships with an asterisk and bold, italic text.

The important differences among groups include:

- **For <u>experiencing</u> general bullying:** The data show that the older men in the sample (aged 23 to 24) were more likely to have ever experienced general bullying than men in younger age groups, though this is likely attributable to these men's additional years to potentially experience bullying behaviors. Relationship status was not associated with differences in experiencing bullying.

- **For <u>using</u> general bullying:** The data show no differences in the use of general bullying among different demographic groups.

- **For <u>witnessing</u> general bullying:** Current university students were least

likely to report witnessing general bullying, compared with young men who were not working, working part time, or working full time. Men who were in a relationship or married were more likely to report being witnesses than those who were single. Age was not associated with differences in being a witness of bullying.

- **For intervening to stop general bullying:** University students were less likely to report intervening in bullying situations than young men who were not working, working part time, or working full time. Men who were in a relationship or married were more likely to report intervening to stop bullying than those who were single. Age was not associated with differences in intervening.

BULLYING PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS

Interest in bullying prevention has increased dramatically in recent years.

The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) approach to working with men is "shaped by the idea that men who have status with other men are in a particularly powerful position to influence the way men and boys view and treat women and girls" (Aronson and Kimmel, 2004). Its approach challenges men who have credibility with other men to use their status and power to repudiate any definition of masculinity that equates being a man with being sexist, disrespectful, or violent toward women or with bullying other men.

The MVP approach is one of few bullying prevention approaches to directly address gender attitudes as a component of bullying prevention work in the US (Heilman with Barker, 2018). Initiatives aiming to prevent bullying could benefit from additional focus on transformations of harmful masculine norms, including strategies such as:

- Engaging men and boys – and women and girls – in discussions about how traditional gender norms and gender non-conformity are connected with perpetration and experiences of bullying;

- Explaining, illustrating, and discussing the direct connection between the perpetration of bullying and power, control, and social acceptance, being careful to do so in a way that invites self-awareness rather than placing blame;

- Providing participants with a safe space to practice nonviolent, healthier ways to navigate peer groups and social dynamics; and

- Discussing ways that participants can foster group settings and peer networks that value healthy expressions of masculinity and embrace rather than punish individual differences.

The 2018 Promundo report, *Masculine Norms and Violence: Making the Connections,* includes additional analysis of the links between gender attitudes and bullying. The report is available at www.promundoglobal.org/making-the-connections.

4.2 PATTERNS OF CYBERBULLYING

Various forms of bullying and harassment are prevalent in online spaces.

Applying the same distinction used for general bullying, cyberbullying is perhaps primarily *indirect* rather than face-to-face; the act is further facilitated by the invisibility and anonymity offered by many online spaces. Also, as studies show, the person using cyberbullying does not usually see the victim's reaction, creating a moral disengagement that likely makes it easier to bully online (Hymel, Rocke-Henderson, & Bonanno, 2005). This section first presents patterns of using and experiencing cyberbullying, followed by patterns of witnessing and intervening. Then, it discusses important differences among demographic groups in terms of their cyberbullying experiences and practices. Detailed definitions of the measures used in this section are presented in section 6.2.

A NEW DEFINITION OF CYBERBULLYING

The ways in which people interact in online spaces is constantly evolving, and as such, an accurate universal definition of cyberbullying is difficult to pinpoint. Most definitions available in the literature are 10 to 15 years old, reflecting an initial wave of interest in online bullying behavior at a time when the relevant technologies were very new. The authors of this report felt that such definitions were outdated, often making direct reference to obsolete technology. Instead, the report draws its focus to a new definition of cyberbullying behavior:

This report defines young men's cyberbullying as any action undertaken deliberately and persistently online - including in social media and mobile apps - in order to inflict pain, humiliation, intimidation, social isolation, or other harm upon someone else.

4.2.1. Using and Experiencing

The internet can be a cruel place, with young men often culpable of – and targeted by – cyberbullying.

Meaningful proportions of young men reported being targeted by bullying online, and many men also revealed their own cyberbullying behaviors. Posting unflattering images of someone on the internet without their approval was the most frequent form of cyberbullying, experienced by 44 percent of the sample, followed by making negative comments about someone's appearance on social media, experienced by 42 percent of the sample. Table 9 provides more details on the frequency of participants experiencing or using cyberbullying.

TABLE 9. **CYBERBULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EVER EXPERIENCED OR USED CYBERBULLYING**

	Experiencing bullying		Used bullying	
	1-2 times	**More than 2 times**	**1-2 times**	**More than 2 times**
Masquerading				
Hacking into someone's email or social media accounts to post mean/embarrassing things	27%	8%	5%	2%
Outing and Trickery				
Posting unflattering images of someone on the internet, without their approval, that made them uncomfortable	30%	14%	12%	3%
Sharing private information about someone, or sharing secrets they told, online	22%	14%	4%	1%
Screenshotting and reposting a message someone wrote, without their permission, on social media	16%	12%	9%	5%
Flaming				
Making negative comments about someone's appearance on social media	24%	18%	10%	3%
Denigration				
Posting hurtful or mean jokes, rumors, or gossip targeting someone, specifically online	25%	15%	9%	2%

As many as one in 10 men had experienced at least one form of cyberbullying in the previous month alone. Table 10 shows young men's reports related to using and experiencing cyberbullying in the previous month. Young men were particularly unlikely to report using various forms of cyberbullying – at rates that suggest underreporting. Among young men willing to share their direct experiences of being targeted by recent cyberbullying, the most common forms were negative comments about one's appearance and hurtful or mean jokes, rumors, or gossip.

TABLE 10. **CYBERBULLYING: FREQUENCY OF HAVING EXPERIENCED OR USED CYBERBULLYING IN THE PREVIOUS MONTH**

	Experienced bullying in the previous month	Used bullying in the previous month
Masquerading		
Hacking into someone's email or social media accounts to post mean/embarrassing things	3%	1%
Outing and Trickery		
Posting unflattering images of someone on the internet, without their approval, that made them uncomfortable	9%	1%
Sharing private information about someone, or sharing secrets they told, online	8%	1%
Screenshotting and reposting a message someone wrote, without their permission, on social media	7%	5%
Flaming		
Making negative comments about someone's appearance on social media	11%	2%
Denigration		
Posting hurtful or mean jokes, rumors, or gossip targeting someone, specifically online	11%	2%

Data in the study reveal certain important contradictions.

On one hand, the vast majority of young men revealed that they had seen bullying in their online lives as well as "away from the keyboard." On the other hand, comparatively fewer men in the sample said that they had used any bullying behaviors, online or offline, recently or early in their lives. So, what's the explanation? Is it that a very small proportion of men undertake the vast majority of cyberbullying behavior? Or, are young men hesitant to reveal the true scope of their own bullying behaviors, even in an anonymous online survey? The answer, almost certainly, is some combination of the two. Future studies into cyberbullying will need to continue to innovate in terms of data collection methodologies to encourage accurate reporting of bullying behaviors by young men and individuals of all gender identities.

4.2.2. Witnessing and Intervening

Even though young men were not very likely to report doing it themselves, the young men's responses demonstrate that cyberbullying is occurring all around them.

Significant proportions of respondents reported witnessing cyberbullying behaviors targeting someone else's appearance, sexual orientation, hobbies or interests, or race or ethnicity. As Table 11 demonstrates, witnessing cyberbullying due to appearance was particularly common; 62 percent reported having witnessed someone post negative comments and 51 percent reported having seen someone post a photo or video to make fun of someone based on their appearance. Among respondents, 57 percent said they had witnessed negative posts about someone's sexual orientation.

	Witnessed		Intervened	
	1-2 times	More than 2 times	1-2 times	More than 2 times
Because of appearance				
Sending negative direct online messages or posting comments that criticize or tease someone	21%	41%	24%	14%
Posting a photo or video online to make fun of someone	19%	32%	17%	9%
Because of sexual orientation				
Sending negative direct online messages or posting negative comments about someone	17%	40%	19%	19%
Posting a photo or video online to make fun of someone	29%	16%	14%	14%
Because of hobbies/interests				
Sending negative direct online messages or posting comments that criticize or tease someone	22%	33%	21%	13%
Posting a photo or video online to make fun of someone	17%	26%	15%	9%
Because of race/ethnicity				
Sending negative direct online messages or posting negative comments about someone	19%	37%	19%	18%
Posting a photo or video online to make fun of someone	16%	29%	15%	14%

Many young men said that they intervene to stop these online behaviors when they see them, though there is room for encouraging greater bystander intervention.

As presented in Table 11, between one-quarter and one-half of men reported intervening to stop forms of cyberbullying related to appearance, sexual orientation, hobbies or interests, or race or ethnicity. While patterns were similar for all four of these categories, study participants were most likely to report having intervened to stop bullying related to sexual orientation and appearance.

4.2.3. Differences Among Groups

Patterns of intervening to stop cyberbullying seem to have more connections with demographic factors, compared to patterns of use, experiencing, or witnessing cyberbullying.

Statistical calculations demonstrate which groups are more or less likely to report using, experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop cyberbullying. Table 12 summarizes these results.

TABLE 12. **DIFFERENCES BY GROUP: CYBERBULLYING**

	Experiencing	Using	Witnessing	Intervened
Age				
18-20	0.50	0.12	0.79	0.44
21-22	0.49	0.12	0.80	0.42
23-24	0.60	0.14	0.91	0.54
Working status				
Not working	0.64	0.11	*0.94**	*0.63**
University student	0.41	*0.11**	*0.73**	*0.34**
Working part time	0.52	*0.15**	0.82	*0.48**
Working full time	0.59	0.13	*0.89**	*0.51**
Relationship status				
Single	0.47	0.12	0.81	*0.42**
In a relationship or married	0.58	0.13	0.86	*0.51**

Table 12 presents the average scores of respondents experiencing, using, witnessing, and intervening to stop cyberbullying, by age group, working status, and relationship status, using a zero-to-two scale as described in section 6.2. The table marks statistically significant relationships with an asterisk and bold, italic text.

The important differences among groups include:

- **For <u>experiencing</u> cyberbullying:** The data showed that participants' age, working status, and relationship status were not associated with differences in experiencing cyberbullying.

- **For <u>using</u> cyberbullying:** The likelihood of using cyberbullying was lower for university students than for participants working part time. Participants' age and relationship status were not related to differences in using cyberbullying.

- **For <u>witnessing</u> cyberbullying:** Being a university student was less likely to result in being a witness, compared to young men who were not working, working part time, or working full time. Age and relationship status were not associated with being a witness.

- **For <u>intervening</u> to stop cyberbullying:** University students were also less likely to report intervening in cyberbullying situations than young men who were not working, working part time, or working full time. Also, single men were less likely to intervene in cyberbullying situations than those who were in a relationship or married. Age was not associated with intervening.

4.3 DRIVERS AND ASSOCIATIONS

This chapter analyzes whether any of the patterns of bullying behaviors presented thus far in the report show any meaningful links with three hypothesized drivers of bullying – gender attitudes, empathy levels, and bullying-supportive attitudes.[1] Detailed definitions of the measures used in this section are presented in section 6.1.

4.3.1. Gender Attitudes (Man Box)

Many young men hold restrictive ideas about how to "be a real man," and these ideas show strong links to bullying behaviors.

A 2017 study by Promundo-US and Axe, the predecessor to this study, demonstrated that many men in the US, UK, and Mexico can be said to be "in the Man Box" – that is, they have internalized messages and beliefs communicated by parents, families, the media, peers, and other members of society that place pressure on men to be "self-sufficient, to act tough, to be physically attractive, to stick to rigid gender roles, to be heterosexual, to have sexual prowess, and to use aggression to resolve conflicts" (Heilman, Barker, & Harrison, 2017). This study applied the same Man Box measures and found that many men in the study agreed with statements reflecting stereotypical notions of masculinity.

TABLE 13. **FREQUENCY OF RESPONDENTS' AGREEMENT WITH SELECTED STATEMENTS FROM THE MAN BOX SCALE**

Statement	% of men who agreed or strongly agreed
In my opinion, guys should act strong even if they feel scared or nervous inside.	35%
In my opinion, it is very hard for a man to be successful if he doesn't look good.	30%
In my opinion, women don't go for guys who fuss too much about their clothes, hair, and skin.	24%
In my opinion, if a guy has a girlfriend or wife, he deserves to know where she is all the time.	18%
In my opinion, men should really be the ones to bring money home to provide for their families, not women.	17%

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1   The survey also included a measure on social desirability, which allowed the analysis to account for variations in the responses due to people's desire to respond in a way they thought would be "politically correct." The results also control for demographic variables of age, location, income, and education, which are shown in the literature to be associated with bullying behaviors. Accounting for these variables provides the most accurate estimates possible.

After accounting for variations due to age, relationship status, and working status, this study found that being in the Man Box is associated with a lower likelihood of experiencing general bullying but a greater likelihood of using both general bullying and cyberbullying. Moreover, those men who are in the Man Box are less likely to intervene to stop both general bullying and cyberbullying situations.

In other words, men who believe that "being a man" should imply self-reliance, aggressiveness, toughness, and other restrictive characteristics are more likely to be bullies.

Table 14 demonstrates the statistically significant links between Man Box scale scores and bullying experiences. The Man Box is a violent place, with higher rates of using both general bullying and cyberbullying and lower rates of intervening to stop all forms of bullying. These findings validate research showing that stereotypically masculine traits and worldviews are related more strongly with bullying perpetration, proneness to aggression, and overall experiences of anger and hostility (Navarro, Larrañaga, & Yubero, 2012). Likewise, considerable research has demonstrated that individuals who violate gender stereotypes face backlash that manifests as bullying (Berger & Rodkin, 2009; Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Rudman, 2010; Poteat, Kimmel, & Wilchins, 2010). Thus, it is not surprising that men who are in the Man Box also reported experiencing less general bullying.

TABLE 14. **MEAN SCORES FOR MEN INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE MAN BOX**

	Outside the Man Box	Inside the Man Box
General bullying		
Experiencing	*0.83**	*0.76**
Using	*0.26**	*0.37**
Witnessing	1.16	1.10
Intervening	*0.80**	*0.71**
Cyberbullying		
Experiencing	0.55	0.50
Using	*0.11**	*0.15**
Witnessing	0.86	0.79
Intervening	*0.52**	*0.39**

Table 14 presents young men's bullying scores (on a zero-to-two scale, with a higher number reflecting a higher lifetime rate of this form of bullying) according to whether they are inside or outside the Man Box. The table marks statistically significant relationships with an asterisk and bold, italic text. A detailed explanation the measures used in this table are presented in sections 6.1 and 6.2.

4.3.2. Empathy Levels

The survey found that as their empathy increases, so do men's attempts to stop bullying when they see it.

Young men in the study showed broad – though not universal – empathetic traits. Table 15 shows that one in five young men agreed with the statement, "I find it annoying when people cry in public," reflecting low levels of empathy in at least this proportion of respondents. However, 86 percent of respondents agreed with one or more of the four positively framed statements.

TABLE 15. **FREQUENCY OF AGREEMENT WITH EMPATHY-RELATED STATEMENTS AMONG YOUNG MEN IN THE SAMPLE**

	% of men who agreed or strongly agreed
Negative, less empathetic statements	
Complaining about getting picked on is a weak thing to do.	12%
I find it annoying when people cry in public.	20%
Positive, more empathetic statements	
I don't like it when I see someone else getting picked on.	93%
I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset.	86%
I like it when someone sticks up for someone who is picked on unfairly.	94%
I feel good when I help someone or when I do something nice for someone.	95%

Deeper statistical analysis reveals that even if overall empathy rates are relatively high, having higher levels of empathy is significantly linked with a higher likelihood of intervening to stop bullying.

When the six empathy items were combined to form a scale score and then tested in relation to bullying behaviors, a strong link emerged between empathy and intervention for both general bullying and cyberbullying. This association supports the existing literature showing that bystander intervention and empathy are positively and linearly related (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012). The study found that age and education also play a role in how empathy and bystander intervention relate to each other. This was particularly the case for older men in the study, as 23- and 24-year-olds with greater levels of empathy were particularly likely to intervene. A similar trend was noticeable with education level. Those men with any post-secondary education and higher empathy scores were more likely to intervene as bystanders.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

In addition to testing relationships between empathy and bullying behavior, the study explored a small range of bystander intervention intentions among young men. Responses were as follows:

How would you react if you saw someone being picked on because of how they look or how they act?	Percent of respondents "likely" or "very likely" to respond this way
I would insist that the person picking on someone "cut it out."	84%
I would comfort the victim of the action.	86%
I would not do anything because then I would be picked on by others.	89%
I would tell the victim to ignore the perpetrator.	74%

As results elsewhere in the study suggest, young men's ideas and intentions are sometimes at odds with one another. Many report that they would *not* do anything for fear of retaliation, and simultaneously say that they would intervene in many positive ways. This contradiction and uncertainty present an opportunity for greater coaching, encouragement, and social norms shifts around safe bystander intervention approaches and options.

4.3.3. Bullying-Supportive Attitudes

Young men in the study generally did not look favorably on bullying, but those who did tended to follow up their attitudes with harmful actions.

Leaving aside gender norms and empathy: Does it matter what young men think about bullying? Does someone who looks more favorably on bullying in the abstract follow up those attitudes with harmful actions? According to study results, yes. As shown in Table 16, 4 to 17 percent of young men in the sample agreed with attitude statements justifying or supporting bullying. The most commonly supported idea was that "showing your dominance is the only way to get ahead in this world," with 17 percent of young men agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. For cyberbullying, 10 percent of men agreed or strongly agreed that "social media sites are no fun without posts that tease or embarrass people" and that "if you get a lot of likes, it doesn't matter if some people maybe think that your post is rude." Even if rates of agreement were somewhat low, the real-world consequences are clear. Attitudes in support of general bullying (the first five items in Table 16) were linked at statistically significant levels with ever using *all* forms of bullying – online and offline. Likewise, attitudes in support of cyberbullying (the last four items in Table 16) were linked at statistically significant levels with ever using bullying behaviors, including both general bullying and cyberbullying. Simultaneously, attitudes in support of cyberbullying were also significantly associated with a decreased likelihood of intervening to stop cyberbullying.

"PICKING ON OTHERS IS FUN"

The study demonstrated clearly that attitudes justifying bullying – for instance, believing that "picking on others is fun" or that "people who look weird or look different are asking to be teased" – were statistically linked with being a bully.

TABLE 16. FREQUENCY OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ON BULLYING-SUPPORTIVE ATTITUDES AMONG YOUNG MEN IN THE SAMPLE

	% of men who agreed or strongly agreed
General bullying	
In any relationship, one person is more superior than the other person.	13%
Picking on others is fun, it shouldn't be taken so seriously.	10%
Showing your dominance is the only way to get ahead in this world.	17%
People often insult or tease someone when they are pushed to do it by others.	7%
People who look weird or look different are asking to be teased.	4%
Cyberbullying	
Social media sites are no fun without posts that tease or embarrass people.	10%
If someone makes a lot of posts about their LGBT* lifestyle, then of course people should criticize them.	6%
If you get a lot of likes, it doesn't matter if some people maybe think your post is rude.	10%
What is said online doesn't cause that much damage since it is not "real" life.	5%

* Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender

4.4 CONSEQUENCES

This chapter discusses whether any of the patterns of bullying behaviors presented earlier in the report show any meaningful links with three hypothesized consequences of bullying: self-esteem, well-being, and depressive tendencies.[2] The tables in this section present an overview of the relationships observed between bullying experiences and the various outcomes. Detailed definitions of the measures used in this section are presented in section 6.3.

TABLE 17. CONSEQUENCES OF GENERAL BULLYING ON OUTCOMES AMONG RESPONDENTS

Consequences of general bullying	Experiencing	Using	Witnessing	Intervening
Self-esteem				
Life satisfaction	√ (-)	X	X	√ (+)
Desire to change appearance	√ (-)	√ (-)	X	X
Well-being	√ (-)	√ (-)	X	X
Depressive tendencies	√ (+)	√ (+)	√ (+)	√ (+)

TABLE 18. CONSEQUENCES OF CYBERBULLYING ON OUTCOMES AMONG RESPONDENTS

Consequences of cyberbullying	Experiencing	Using	Witnessing	Intervening
Self-esteem				
Life satisfaction	√ (-)	X	X	X
Desire to change appearance	√ (+)	X	√ (+)	√ (+)
Desire to be more confident in real life	√ (+)	X	√ (+)	√ (+)
Well-being	√ (-)	X	√ (-)	√ (-)
Depressive tendencies	√ (+)	X	√ (+)	√ (+)

Note: √(-) indicates a significant negative relationship, √(+) indicates a significant positive relationship, and X indicates a non-significant relationship.

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2   The survey also included a measure on social desirability, which allowed the analysis to account for variations in the responses due to people's desire to respond in a way they thought would be "politically correct." The results also control for demographic variables of age, location, income, and education, which are shown in the literature to be associated with bullying behaviors. Accounting for these variables provides the most accurate estimates possible.

4.4.1. Self-Esteem

Various bullying behaviors show links with self-esteem, with many experiences causing young men to wish to change their appearance or to be more confident overall.

Young men's self-esteem is relatively high but demonstrates strong links with their experiences of bullying. Table 19 shows that, in general, young men rated themselves highly in terms of how much they feel they can be themselves in their day-to-day lives, and they were relatively less likely to report a desire to change their appearance to avoid criticism or to be more confident in real life.

TABLE 19. **AVERAGE SCORES OF THE SAMPLE RELATED TO SELF-ESTEEM**	
	Average score of the sample (1-5 scale, 1 = "almost never" and 5 = "all the time")
Self-esteem	
Life satisfaction: How much do you feel that you can really be yourself in your day-to-day life?	3.68
Desire to change appearance: How often do you think about changing your appearance to avoid criticism?	1.40
Confidence: How often do you wish you were as confident in real life as you are online?	1.55

The only category linked with an *increase* in men's self-reported life satisfaction was intervening to stop general bullying. Experiencing both general bullying and cyberbullying was linked with a *decrease* in life satisfaction. Figure 4 charts these linear relationships, as represented by the linear coefficients that result from regression analyses. Reading the figure from left to right, as one's frequency of experiencing bullying increases (on the mean/composite scale for all general bullying items), one's life satisfaction score falls in a significant linear relationship. Reading the figure the same way, it is also clear that as one's frequency of intervening to stop general bullying increases, one's life satisfaction steadily rises in a linear relationship.

Increasing life satisfaction

Intervening

Experiencing

Increasing frequency of bullying experiences
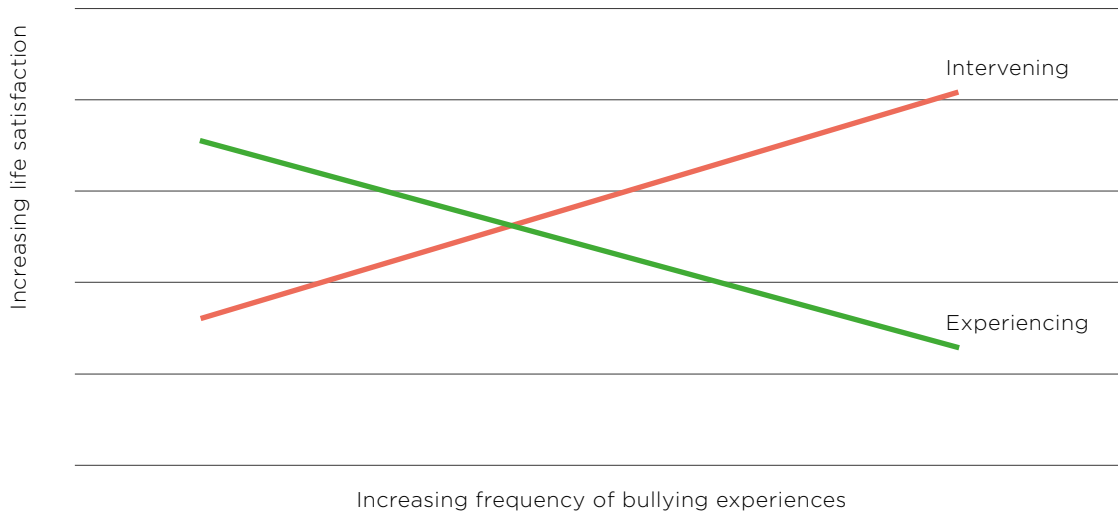
The desire to change one's appearance and to be more confident in real life showed multiple strong links to cyberbullying behaviors.

As shown previously, both of these consequences were statistically associated with experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop cyberbullying behavior. Seemingly, as young men encounter more and more cyberbullying incidents – whether as their direct target, as a witness, or as someone trying to step in and help – the more likely they are to doubt their appearance and confidence. These links are compelling, warranting additional research to tease out these dynamics.

4.4.2. Depressive Tendencies

All four manifestations of general bullying and three of the four manifestations of cyberbullying show strong associations with young men's depressive tendencies: the more bullying they encounter or use, the greater these tendencies become.

All four general bullying experiences were related to depressive tendencies. Figure 5 shows the relationship between all forms of general bullying (experiencing, using, witnessing, and intervening) and depressive tendencies. While additional amounts of experiencing, witnessing, and intervening were all associated with a higher score on the depressive symptomatology scale, this same link for those who report *using* general bullying was much stronger and more significant.

Whatever momentary gain in power or status bullies may receive, this finding demonstrates that they also carry a long-term toll in terms of depressive tendencies. The fact that this relationship does not persist for using cyberbullying may suggest a different immediacy and emotional impact of bullying in offline public spaces, as compared to the relative distance and sometimes anonymity online; this distinction warrants further research.

FIGURE 5. **ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN BULLYING EXPERIENCES AND DEPRESSIVE TENDENCIES**

Increasing depressive tendencies

Increasing frequency of bullying experiences

— Experiencing   — Using   — Witnessing   — Intervening
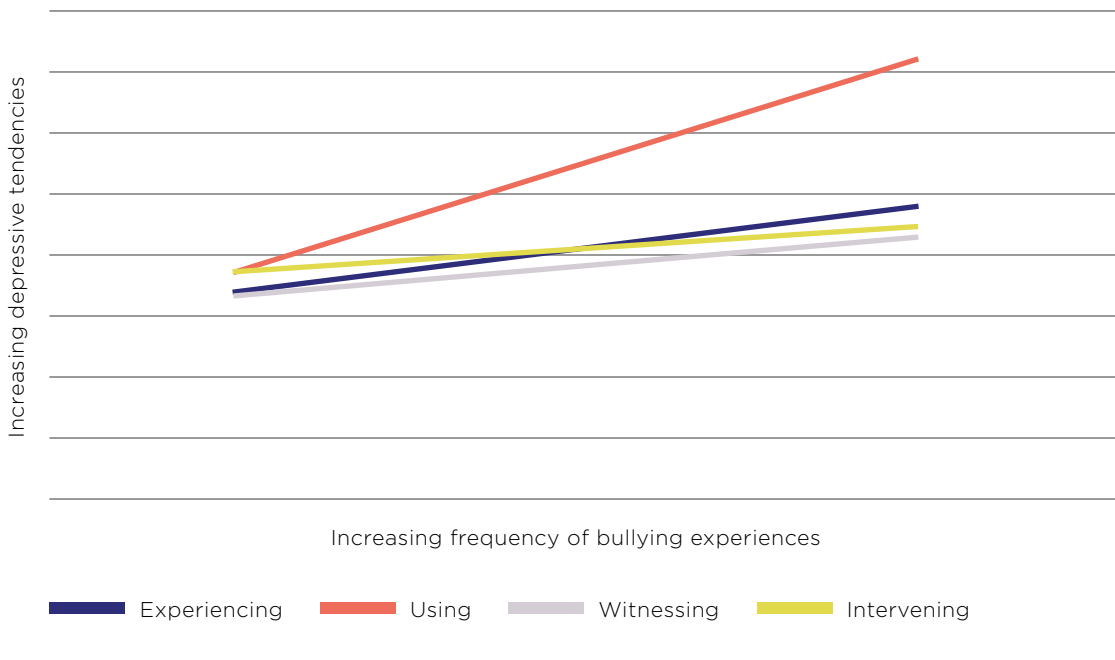
4.4.3. Overall Well-Being

In the broadest terms, being around bullies – or being one – is bad for one's health.

In the majority of domains, as young men's interactions with bullying increased, their well-being scores decreased at statistically significant levels. For general bullying, this relationship held true for experiencing and using bullying; for cyberbullying, this relationship held true for experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop bullying. Deeper analysis of this and other links appears in the box "Online Versus Offline: Which Is the More Dangerous Terrain?"

ONLINE VERSUS OFFLINE: WHICH IS THE MORE DANGEROUS TERRAIN?

Of all the relationships studied, the scope and strength of the negative consequences of experiencing cyberbullying stand out. Experiencing cyberbullying is linked with decreased life satisfaction, increased desire to change one's appearance, increased desire to be more confident in real life, increased depressive tendencies, and decreased overall well-being. Figure 6 visualizes these linear relationships. Scanning the figure from left to right, it becomes evident that an increased frequency of experiencing cyberbullying has clear linear relationships with all of the negative consequences explored in the study.

FIGURE 6. **ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN CYBERBULLYING EXPERIENCES AND ALL OUTCOMES IN THE STUDY**

Increasing levels of study outcomes

Increasing frequency of cyberbulling experiences

Desire to be as confident in real life as online

Desire to change appearance

Life satisfaction

Poor overall well-being

Depressive tendencies
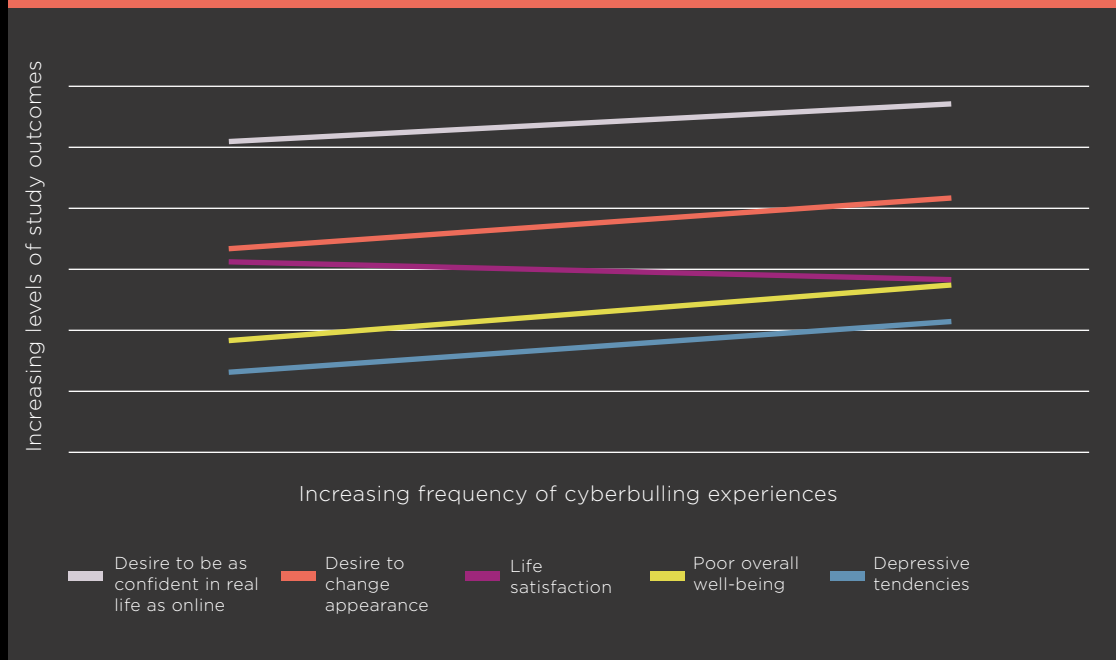
At the same time, the study also demonstrates clearly that the "offline world" is not free of these same risks. A comparative analysis of the strength of relationships between bullying experiences and negative consequences shows that for certain outcomes, general bullying is more detrimental, while for other outcomes, cyberbullying is more detrimental.

TABLE 20. OUTCOMES OF EXPERIENCING BULLYING BASED ON STANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS

	General bullying	Cyberbullying
Self-esteem		
Life satisfaction	-0.53	*-0.11**
Desire to change appearance	*0.17**	*0.15**
Desire to be more confident in real life	*0.12**	*0.18**
Overall well-being	*0.18**	*0.15**
Depressive tendencies	*0.07**	0.03

At a minimum, the study demonstrates that the harmful consequences of being targeted by bullying behaviors are broad, are multifaceted, and resonate online as well as offline.

As presented in Table 20, the study used standardized coefficients to assess the relative impact of experiencing general bullying and cyberbullying. The numbers presented in Table 20 do not reflect respondents' answers on the bullying scale. Rather, they are the coefficients of linear regression analyses between the variables in question. Coefficients in bold, italic text with an asterisk represent statistically significant relationships. These data demonstrate that the effect of general bullying is slightly stronger than cyberbullying for the desire to change one's appearance, overall well-being, and depressive tendencies. On the other hand, cyberbullying shows stronger links for decreased life satisfaction and a stronger desire to be more confident in real life. These tests related only to experiencing bullying.

This study helps fill a gap in research on the health consequences of bullying, particularly the under-researched area of cyberbullying. Overall, the study found that being a victim of cyberbullying is highly detrimental to one's health.

Evidence for this conclusion is otherwise rare in the literature (Heirman & Walrave, 2008), although some studies point to negative psychological effects – such as anxiety, loneliness, depression, frustration, and anger – of being victimized by cyberbullying or online harassment (Beran & Li, 2007; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006). This study builds on other evidence showing that bullying across all contexts results in poor mental health, an inability to perform work, and poor quality of relationships with peers or colleagues, among other harmful consequences (Gini & Pozzoli, 2006; Munroe, n.d.; Samnani & Singh, 2012; Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Demonstrating health effects for merely witnessing bullying is also a useful addition to a growing field; some evidence has shown, for instance, that those who work alongside aggressive employees tend to exhibit aggressive tendencies as well (Samnani & Singh, 2012). Likewise, echoing some of this report's findings, Polanin, Espelage, and Pigott (2012) found in their meta-analysis that bystanders demonstrate greater interpersonal problems than those who use violence.

5 Conclusion

Bullying is a predominant feature of young men's online and offline lives.

This report has explored young men's patterns of bullying both online and offline, demonstrated the power of certain drivers of this bullying (such as gender attitudes, empathy, and bullying-supportive attitudes), and explored several prevalent health-related consequences. The picture that emerges can be grim, as significant proportions of respondents reported using, experiencing, and witnessing many forms of bullying: direct physical and verbal actions, actions to hurt someone's reputation or relationships, and actions to harass and intimidate in online spaces. The findings also demonstrate that making fun of someone because of their race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation was frequent. At the same time, however, many young men shared that they had intervened to stop bullying when they saw it, with nearly three-fourths of participants reporting that they had stepped in on behalf of someone who was insulted because of the way they look or dress. Even as proximity to bullying was nearly universal among respondents, one can rightly draw hope from young men's willingness to intervene, their high reported rates of empathy, and the statistical linkages that emerged between these two factors.

Just as strongly as young men's restrictive ideas about masculinity prompt them to bully others, their empathetic traits and beliefs prompt them to stop bullying when they see it.

Many young men in the study held restrictive ideas about how to "be a real man," and these ideas were strongly linked to their bullying behaviors. After accounting for variations due to age, relationship status, and working status, the study found that more restrictive gender attitudes were associated with a greater likelihood of using both general bullying and cyberbullying. Moreover, the men who demonstrated the most restrictive attitudes were less likely to intervene to stop both general bullying and cyberbullying when they saw it happening. In other words, men who believe that "being a man" should imply self-reliance, aggressiveness, toughness, and other restrictive characteristics are more likely to be bullies.

Conversely, the report also demonstrates that as young men's empathy increases, so do their attempts to stop bullying when they see it. Young men in the study

showed broad – though not universal – empathetic traits. Deeper statistical analysis reveals that even if overall empathy rates are relatively high, having a higher level of empathy is linked significantly with a higher likelihood of intervening to stop bullying. Furthermore, when asked specific questions related to justifying bullying behavior, young men in the study generally did not look favorably on bullying. Those who did were also more likely to report using bullying.

Why does this matter? Bullying is not just fun and games; various bullying experiences showed strong and important links with negative health and well-being outcomes.

Many experiences of bullying cause young men to wish to change their appearance or to wish to be more confident in real life. The only experience in this study linked with an increase in men's self-reported life satisfaction was intervening to stop an incident of general bullying. Experiencing both general bullying and cyberbullying were linked with a decrease in life satisfaction. Experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop cyberbullying were all linked with an increased likelihood of wanting to change one's appearance or be more confident.

Additionally, nearly all manifestations of bullying show strong associations with young men's depressive tendencies; the more bullying they encounter or use, the greater these tendencies become. All four general bullying experiences were related to depressive tendencies, as were three of four cyberbullying experiences. In the broadest terms, being around bullies – or being one – is bad for one's health. Men's overall well-being scores also changed in relation to their bullying experiences.

The scope of young men's bullying calls for intervention, and increased attention to gender attitudes and empathy is a promising starting point.

These findings continue to build the evidence base on the widespread scope and negative consequences of bullying for young men. They also shed new light on the drivers and consequences of these behaviors and therefore the policy and programming avenues that may mitigate further harm. For instance, the findings demonstrate that witnessing bullying in one's social or online life is associated with negative health outcomes, in some cases of equal or greater magnitude to those experienced by victims. This finding calls for increased, multi-component bullying prevention campaigns and policies with a broader focus on the harmful environment created for everyone when bullying behaviors are prevalent. Beyond this recommendation, results urge future programmers and policymakers to explore new research and solutions addressing the gamut of bullying experiences and also to devote particular attention to transforming young men's harmful gender norms and amplifying their empathetic traits and abilities. Bullying dynamics are multifaceted and enormously harmful; as such, any prevention and response mechanisms need to be equally nuanced and multifaceted. The struggle to end the harms of bullying is undeniably difficult, but this gender-transformative approach calls on everyone to play a role.

6 Appendix: Study Measures

This appendix presents the specific questionnaire items, measures, and analytical approaches used for the main topics included in the report. Following the order of the conceptual model presented in section 3.2, the section starts with measures of drivers and associations, then presents the bullying measures, and then addresses the measures of consequences.

6.1 DRIVERS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Gender Attitudes (Man Box)

The study's investigation of young men's gender attitudes focuses on the harmful masculine norms captured in the Man Box scale (first explored in the aforementioned 2017 study by Promundo-US and Axe). This scale includes 16 messages organized into seven thematic pillars. All of these messages reflect what respondents may think a "real man" should believe and/or how a "real man" should behave. In selecting these messages, the authors drew on decades of social science research on masculine norms in the countries of study and around the world – primarily on the global applications of the widely used Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) scale created by Promundo and the Population Council (Pulerwitz & Barker, 2008).

Respondents chose whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each item, and a mean/composite score was derived from all 16 responses. For ease of analysis and presentation, the study coded all men with mean/composite Man Box scores below the country average as "in the Man Box" (meaning those men with *less* equitable views about masculinity) and those with scores at or above the country average as "outside the Man Box" (meaning those men with *more* equitable views about masculinity).

TABLE 21. **THE MAN BOX IN SEVEN PILLARS**

Pillar 1: Self-Sufficiency

A man who talks a lot about his worries, fears, and problems shouldn't really get respect.

Men should figure out their personal problems on their own without asking others for help.

Pillar 2: Acting Tough

A guy who doesn't fight back when others push him around is weak.

Guys should act strong even if they feel scared or nervous inside.

Pillar 3: Physical Attractiveness

It is very hard for a man to be successful if he doesn't look good.

Women don't go for guys who fuss too much about their clothes, hair, and skin.

A guy who spends a lot of time on his looks isn't very manly.

Pillar 4: Rigid Masculine Gender Roles

It is not good for a boy to be taught how to cook, sew, clean the house, and take care of younger children.

A husband shouldn't have to do household chores.

Men should really be the ones to bring money home to provide for their families, not women.

Pillar 5: Homophobia

A gay guy is not a "real man."

Pillar 6: Hypersexuality

A real man should have as many sexual partners as he can.

A real man would never say no to sex.

Pillar 7: Aggression and Control

Men should use violence to get respect if necessary.

A man should always have the final say about decisions in his relationship or marriage.

If a guy has a girlfriend or wife, he deserves to know where she is all the time.

Empathy

This survey included six statements to assess young men's empathy levels. Two items were presented in more negative terms, for which agreement indicated a less empathetic worldview. Four items were presented in more positive terms, for which agreement indicated a more empathetic worldview.

TABLE 22. **EMPATHY STATEMENTS IN THE SURVEY**

Negative, less empathetic statements
Complaining about getting picked on is a weak thing to do.
I find it annoying when people cry in public.
Positive, more empathetic statements
I don't like it when I see someone else getting picked on.
I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset.
I like it when someone sticks up for someone who is picked on unfairly.
I feel good when I help someone or when I do something nice for someone.

The answer categories were the same as for the Man Box items (strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree). For tests of association, these responses were also coded into a mean/composite score, with a higher score indicating greater empathy and a lower score indicating less empathy.

Bullying-Supportive Attitudes

The survey also included five items to measure bullying-supportive attitudes related to situations of general bullying and four items related to cyberbullying situations (shown in Table 23). Answer categories and scale construction followed the methodology for the Man Box and empathy scores, although scales using the five items on general bullying-supportive attitudes and the four items on cyberbullying-supportive attitudes were constructed separately.

TABLE 23. BULLYING-SUPPORTIVE ATTITUDE STATEMENTS IN THE SURVEY

General bullying

In any relationship, one person is more superior than the other person.

Picking on others is fun, it shouldn't be taken so seriously.

Showing your dominance is the only way to get ahead in this world.

People often insult or tease someone when they are pushed to do it by others.

People who look weird or look different are asking to be teased.

Cyberbullying

Social media sites are no fun without posts that tease or embarrass people.

If someone makes a lot of posts about their LGBT[*] lifestyle, then of course people should criticize them.

If you get a lot of likes, it doesn't matter if some people maybe think your post is rude.

What is said online doesn't cause that much damage since it is not "real" life.

* Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender

6.2 BULLYING

Direct and Indirect General Bullying

The "Definitions of Bullying" box on page 17 provides the definitions of bullying and the relevant survey items used in the study. As that box clarifies, this report explores *direct* and *indirect* forms of bullying in young men's offline lives under the heading "general bullying." For each form of bullying and for each way of experiencing that act – using, directly experiencing, witnessing, and intervening to stop – the survey provided respondents three options: this never happened, this happened one or two times, or this happened more than two times.

In many places in the report, bullying behaviors are combined into a composite/ mean score under the headings "experienced," "used," "witnessed," and "intervened." To calculate these scores, the three answer options were preserved. Each answer of "this never happened" received zero points; "this happened one or two times" received one point; and "this happened more than two times" received two points. Therefore, a higher score on any of these composite/mean scores indicates a greater reported rate of the particular bullying experience.

Whenever a respondent reported that a certain experience had happened at least once, the survey presented a follow-up question to ascertain whether this experience had taken place within the previous month. These questions were in a simple "yes/no" format and are presented only as basic frequencies in this report rather than in a scale format. In later sections of the report, the "direct" and "indirect" categories are combined under the unified heading of "general bullying."

Cyberbullying

This study measured cyberbullying through two different frameworks. To measure using and experiencing cyberbullying, participants were asked about six specific actions under the categories of masquerading, outing and trickery, flaming, and denigration (as presented in the box "Definitions of Bullying" on page 17). For witnessing and intervening to stop cyberbullying, due to certain cyberbullying acts being private and thus invisible to others and closed to outside intervention, the study focuses on the perceived *reasons* for a more limited range of cyberbullying acts. Participants shared their experiences with two specific forms of cyberbullying, listed below; both questions were asked four times each – once for appearance, once for sexual orientation, once for hobbies or interests, and once for race or ethnicity.

- Sending negative direct online messages or posting comments that criticize or tease someone because of _____.

- Posting a photo or video online to make fun of someone because of _____.

The calculation of composite/mean scale scores for cyberbullying was the same as for general bullying, with scores ranging from zero to two. Likewise, whenever a respondent reported that a certain experience had happened at least once, the survey asked whether this experience had taken place within the previous month using a "yes/no" format.

6.3 CONSEQUENCES

Self-Esteem

Under the broad heading of "self-esteem," the survey included three items measuring different domains:

- *Life satisfaction:* How much do you feel that you can really be yourself in your day-to-day life?

- *Changing one's appearance*: How often do you think about changing your appearance to avoid criticism?

- *Confidence*: How often do you wish you were as confident in real life as you are online?

Respondents were asked to select responses on a scale of one to five, with one meaning "almost never" and five meaning "all the time." The report's presentation of these findings uses this one-to-five scale, without any additional coding or changes.

Depressive Tendencies

To measure respondents' depressive tendencies, the survey presented four items. For each item, respondents were asked, "Over the past two weeks, how often have you been bothered by or experienced any of the following problems?" Items included:

- Little interest or pleasure in doing things

- Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless

- Having thoughts of suicide

- Feeling nervous, anxious, or panicked

Respondents selected from four answer options: "not at all," "some days," "more than half of the days," and "nearly every day." Each answer was given an integer score from zero to three – "not at all" received zero points, "some days" one point, "more than half of the days" two points, and "nearly every day" three points. Depressive tendencies scores are presented on this zero-to-three scale throughout the report.

Overall Well-Being

To measure respondents' general well-being, the survey presented a reduced number of items from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule. For each item, respondents were asked, "In the past few weeks, how often have you had any of these feelings or medical complaints?" Items included:

- Feeling run down and out of sorts

- Feeling perfectly well and in good health

- Getting edgy and bad-tempered

- Felt constantly under strain

- Felt on the whole you were doing things well

- Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities

- Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person

- Felt lonely and without anyone to talk to

Respondents selected from four answer options: "not at all," "not more than usual," "rather more than usual," and "much more than usual." Each answer was given an integer score from zero to three, for which zero reflected the lowest state of well-being ("not at all" for positive items, "much more than usual" for negative items) and three reflected the highest state of well-being ("much more than usual" for positive items, "not at all" for negative items). Overall well-being scores are presented on this zero-to-three scale throughout the report.

Additional note: The survey also included a measure on **social desirability**, which allowed the analysis to account for variations in the responses due to people's desire to respond in a way they thought would be "politically correct." All tests of association presented in the report also control for demographic variables of age, location, income, and education, which are shown in the literature to be associated with bullying behaviors. Accounting for these variables provides the most accurate estimates possible.

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