

# Linking Bullying to Teen Dating Violence, Sexual Harassment, & Sexual Violence

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This research was supported by the University of Illinois Research Board.



BULLY





# University of Illinois Anti-Bullying Program

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- Indiana University Teen Conflict Survey (Bosworth, Espelage, & Simon, 1999; Espelage et al., 2000, 2001)
- University of Illinois Bullying Research Program
  - INTERVIEW STUDY (Espelage & Asidao, 2001)
  - EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE STUDY (Espelage, 1998)
  - SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS STUDY (Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003; Espelage, Mebane, & Green, in press)
  - SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DATING VIOLENCE, & BULLYING STUDIES (Holt & Espelage, 2003; Holt & Espelage, in press; Espelage & Holt, in press)
  - ATTRIBUTION, COPING STYLES, & BULLYING (Kingsbury & Espelage, in press)
  - THEORY OF MIND, EMPATHY, & BULLYING (Espelage et al., 2004; Oprea & Espelage, under review; Mayberry & Espelage, under review)
  - HOMOPHOBIA, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, & BULLYING (Poteat & Espelage, in press; Espelage et al., 2005)
- Wisconsin Climate Surveys
  - Student & Teacher Climate Surveys (Espelage, Koenig, & Kelly, 2001)

# Session Objectives

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- To present prevalence rates of bullying, sexual harassment, homophobia, dating violence, and sexual violence.
- To present definitions of these constructs.
- To evaluate studies on etiology of bullying.
- To evaluate models on etiology of sexual violence.
- To discuss areas of clinical intervention.
- To explore areas of further research/clinical work.



# Bullying in American Schools

A Social-Ecological Perspective  
on Prevention and Intervention



**Edited by**

**Dorothy L. Espelage & Susan M. Swearer, 2004**

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates <http://www.erlbaum.com> OR [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

# Defining Bullying

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- **“A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students” (Olweus, 2001)**
- **Definition highlights the aggressive component of bullying, associated power imbalance, and repetitive nature**

# Bullying Prevalence

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- **Nearly 30% of American students are involved in bullying** (Nansel et al., 2001)
- **Among these 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders:**
  - 13% had bullied others
  - 11% had been bullied
  - 6% had both bullied others and been bullied (bully-victims)

# Dept. of Health & Human Services National Bullying Prevention Campaign

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- Multi-year public awareness and prevention campaign
- Title: "Take a stand. Lend a hand. Stop bullying now."
- Congressionally funded through the CDC's National Youth Media Campaign
  - "IF we are to have a positive impact on the future health and safety of the American populations, we must change the behaviors of our children and young adults by reaching them with important health messages"

(House Approp. Comm, 2001)

<http://www.bullyingresources.org/>

# Definition from the National Bullying Prevention Campaign

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Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose and the person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over.

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading bad rumors about people
- Keeping certain people out of a "group"
- Teasing people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to "gang up" on others

# Sexual Violence

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- *Sexual violence* is defined as “nonconsensual completed or attempted contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus involving penetration, however slight; nonconsensual contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus; nonconsensual penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person by a hand, finger, or other object; nonconsensual intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks; or nonconsensual non-contact acts of a sexual nature such as voyeurism and verbal or behavioral sexual harassment.”
- CDC (2005)
- Includes sexual harassment & homophobia

# Bullying & Sexual Aggression

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- School as a Social Context
  - A primary place in which bullying, sexual harassment, & homophobia co-occur among students
  - LGBT Victimization<sup>2</sup>
    - 91% report hearing homophobic content
    - Name-calling, assault, and teasing (82%, 60%, 58% respectively)

1. Boulton & Smith, 1994; Eslea & Rees, 2000; Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992; Nansel et al., 2001

2. Koskiw, 2004; Rivers, 2001

# Sexual Harassment

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- 80% of students experience some form of sexual harassment during their school lives; 60% experience it occasionally; 27% experience it often
- Girls are more frequent targets
- African-American youth appear to be at high risk for victimization
- Correlates include depression, anxiety, difficulty concentrating in school, and diminished feelings of school safety.

\*From American Association of University Women Surveys (1993, 2001) & Holt (2002)

# Examples?

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Verbal

Physical

Written

Gestures

# Dating Violence

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- **Rates range from 10-55%** (Roscoe & Callahan, 1985; O'Keefe, 1998)
- **Conflicting information about dating violence rates by sex and race** (Malik, Sorenson, & Aneshensel, 1997; Roscoe & Callahan, 1985)
- **Correlates include anger, sadness, diminished self-esteem, anxiety, and depression** (Carlson, 1987; Holt, 2002)

# Dating Violence

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- Physical, verbal, and relational forms of aggression used in dating relationships to control partner
- 55% of high school students who have dated have incurred abuse from a dating partner (O'Keefe, 1998)
- Experiencing dating violence can produce outcomes including feelings of anger and sadness (Carlson, 1987), post-traumatic stress and anxiety (Harned, 2001)
- Recent research (Pellegrini, 2002) have found that bullies during middle school are more likely to be sexually harassing and violent in dating relationships in the high school.

# Homophobia

(Poteat & Espelage; in press)

**Bullying and homophobia are strongly interrelated for males and females**

**Homophobic content directed across perceived sexual orientations but more toward those perceived as gay/lesbian**

# Poteat & Espelage (in press)

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- Homophobic content and empathy
  - Similar to past findings for attitudinal homophobia and empathy<sup>1</sup>
- Homophobic content and school belonging
  - Similar to past findings for LGBT students and isolation, stigmatization<sup>2</sup>
- Homophobic content and anxiety/depression
  - Negative consequences to “harmless” banter?

1. Johnson, Brems, & Alford-Keating (1997)

2. Uribe & Harbeck (1991)

# Integrating Bullying & Sexual Aggression

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- Common Themes<sup>1</sup>
  - Masculine/feminine ideology
  - Enforcing gender role norms
  - Breeding ground for negative attitudes toward women
- Overlapping correlates

1. Epstein, 2001; Fineran, 2002; Mandel & Shakeshaft, 2000

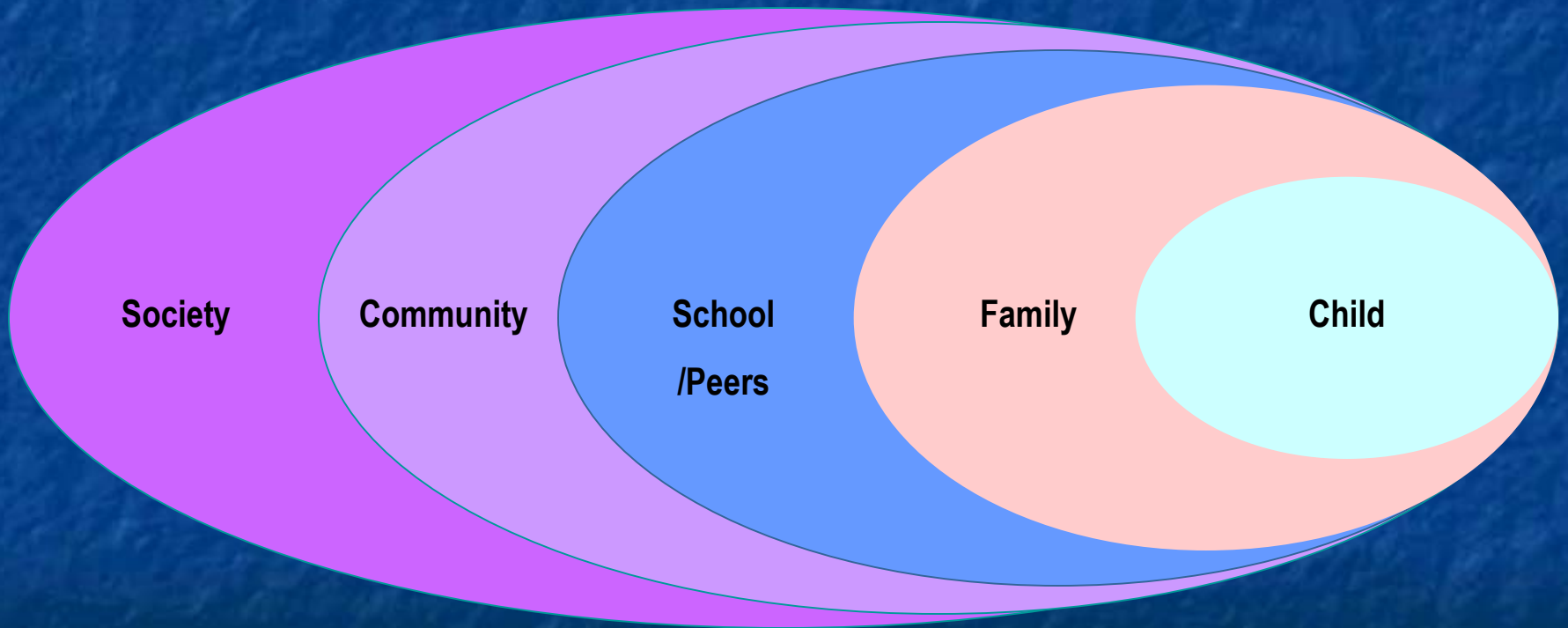
2. Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003; Plummer, 2001

# Overlapping Correlates

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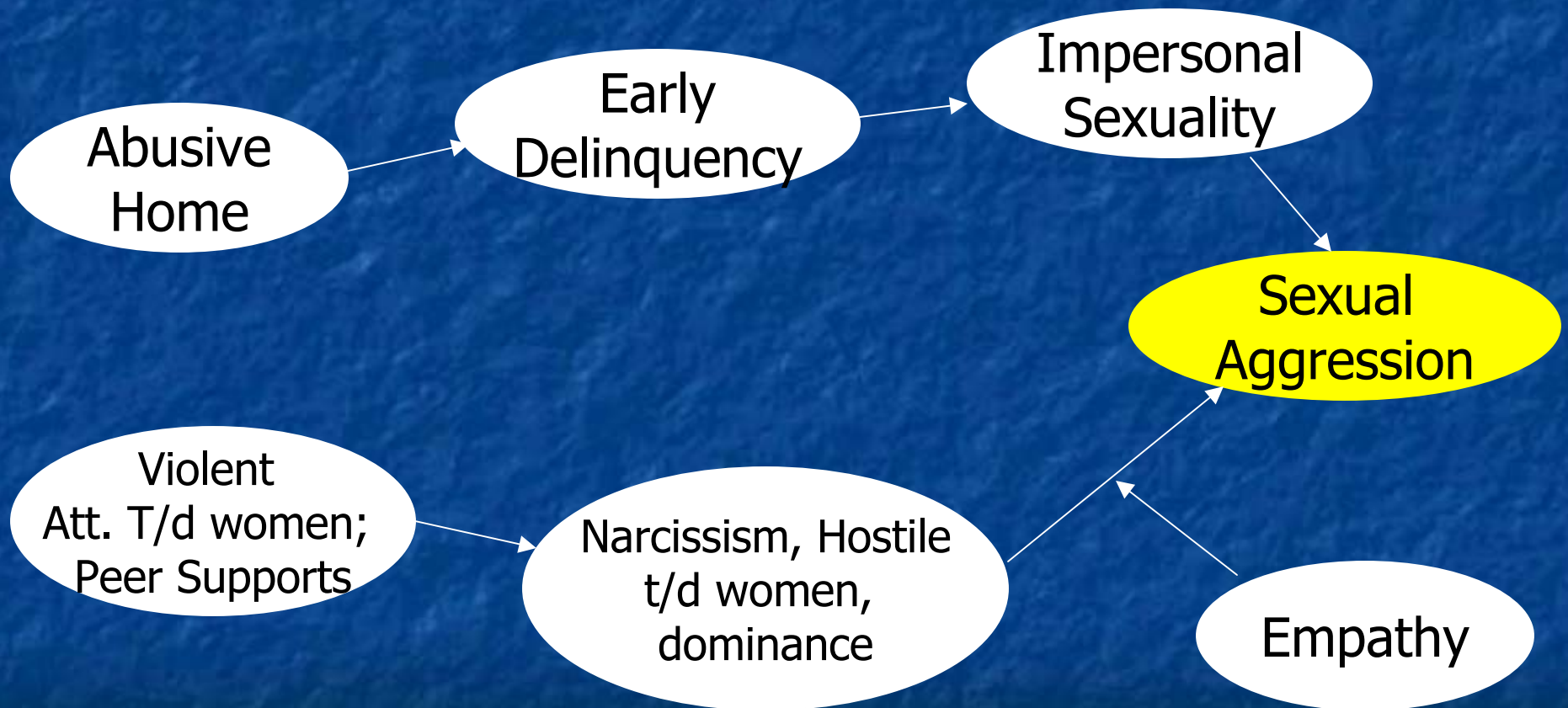
- Positive Attitudes t/d Violence
- Anger Management Issues
- Negative Home Life
- Need for dominance in relationships
- Peer Support
- Narcissistic Personality
- Heightened Social Skills
- Low Empathy

# Social-Ecological Perspective of Child Development



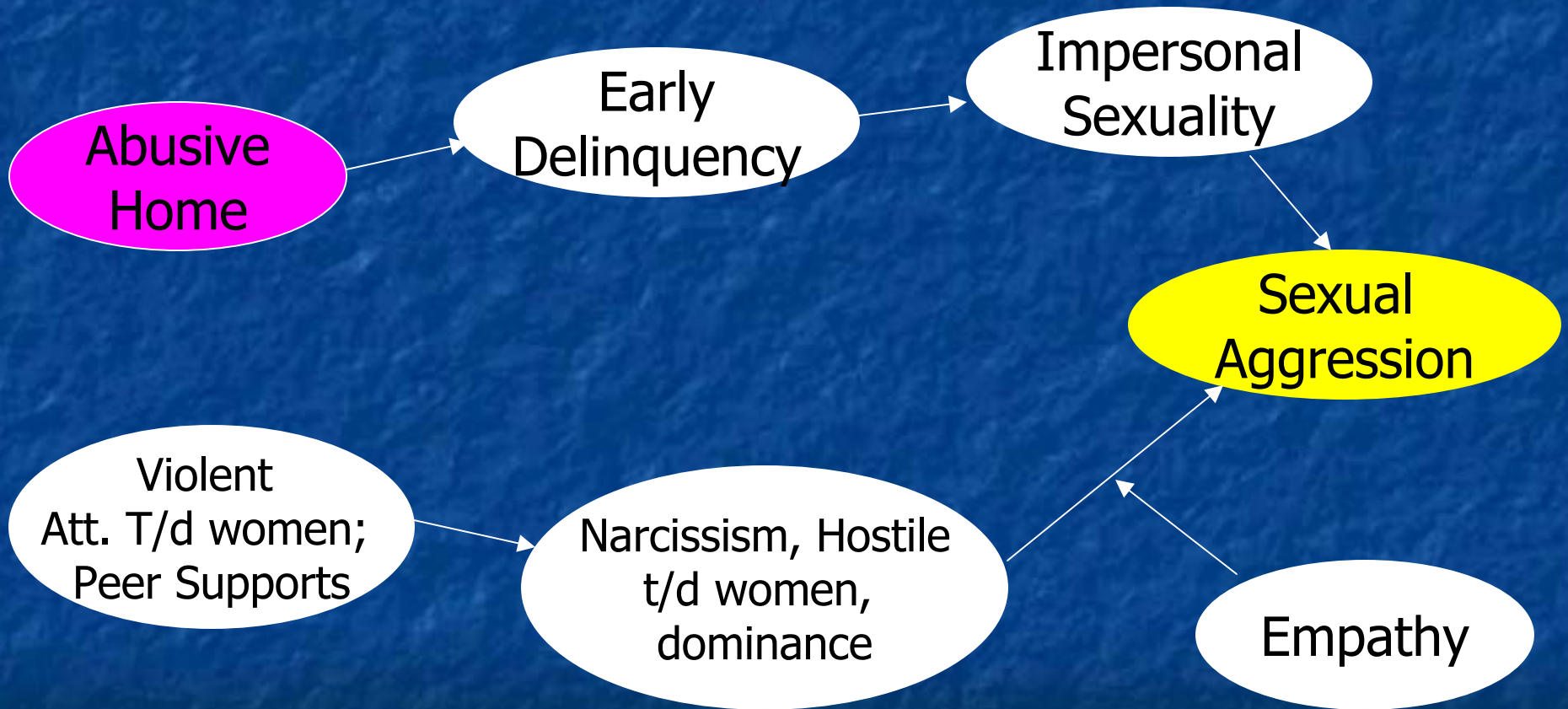
(Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Swearer & Doll, 2001; Swearer & Espelage, 2004)

# Malamuth Confluence Model (Sexual Violence Prep.)



(Malamuth et al., 1991, 1995)

# Malamuth Confluence Model (Sexual Violence Perp.)



(Malamuth et al., 1991, 1995)

# Family/School Risk Factors

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## ■ FAMILY

- Lack of supervision
- Lack of attachment
- Negative relationships
- Lack of discipline/  
consequences
- Support for violence
- Modeling of violence

## ■ SCHOOL

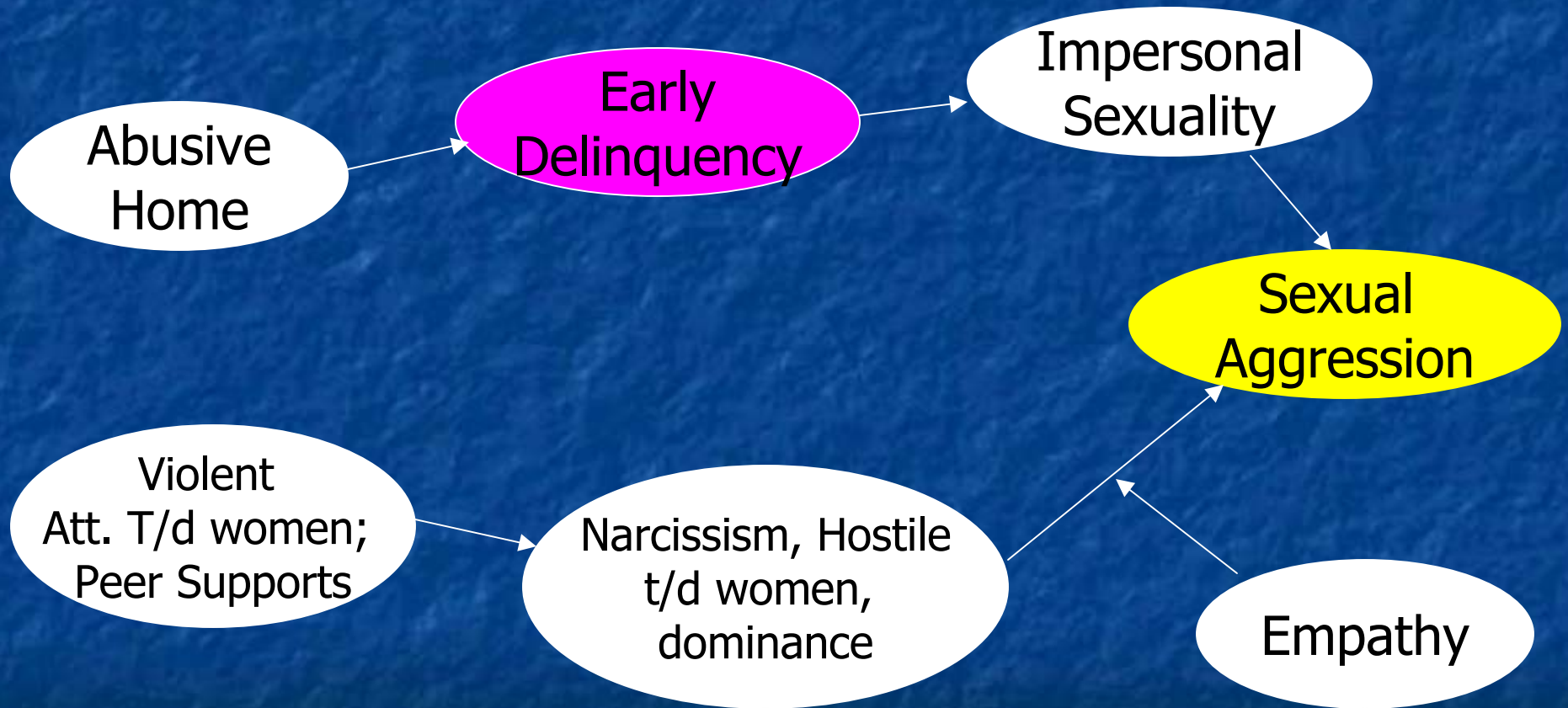
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of attachment
- Negative relationships
- Lack of discipline/  
consequences
- Support for violence
- Lack of alternatives to  
violence

# Relation Between Bullying & Other Victimization Forms

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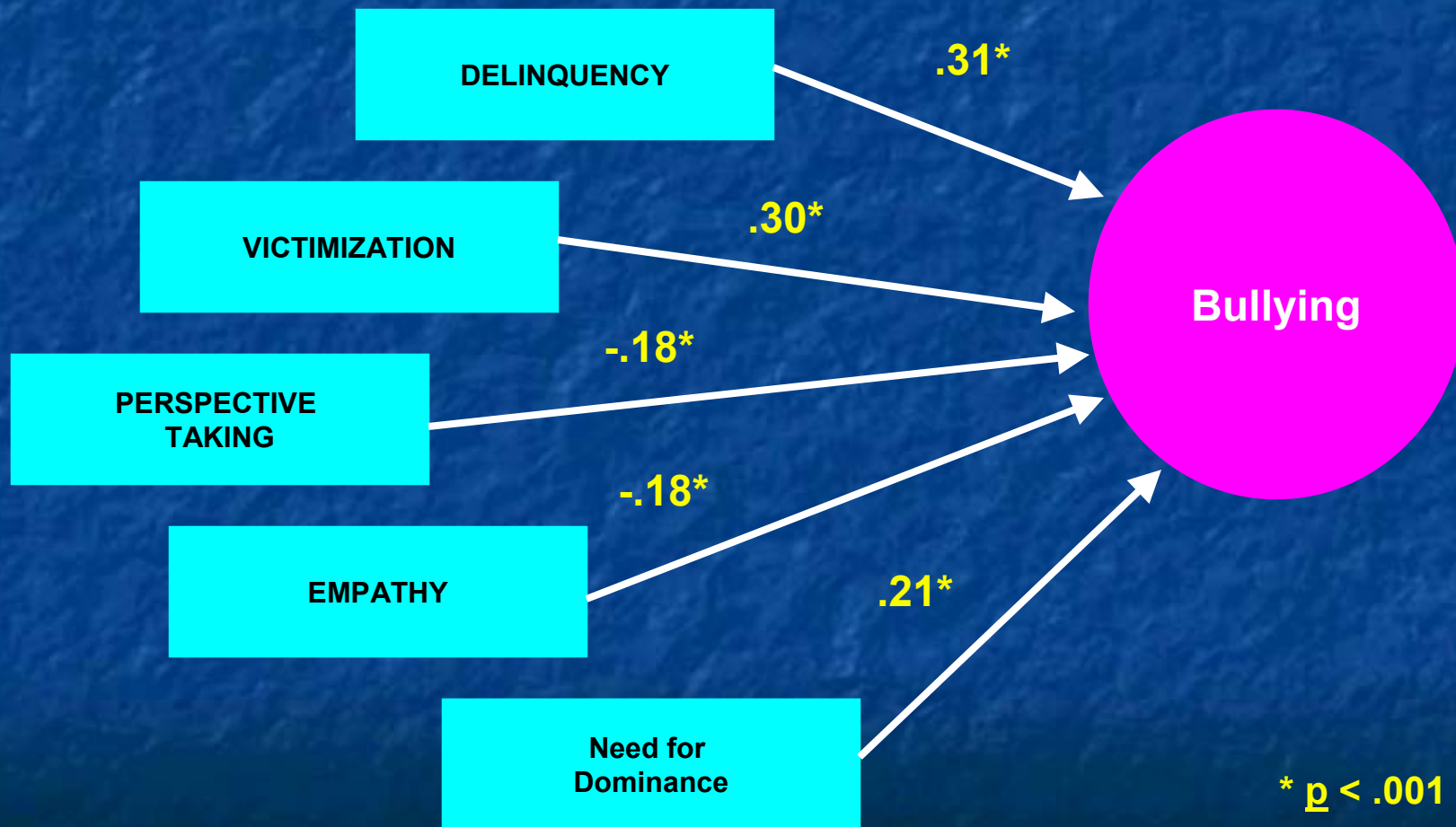
- **Child maltreatment has been associated with difficulties in peer relations** (Jacobsen & Straker, 1992; Shields & Cicchetti, 2001)
- **Exposure to domestic violence has been linked to bullying perpetration** (Baldry, 2003)
- **In a national longitudinal sample of 2-17 year olds, peer & sibling victimization were related to subsequent victimization in other domains (e.g., conventional crime, physical assault, maltreatment)** (Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2005)

# Malamuth Confluence Model (Sexual Violence Perp.)



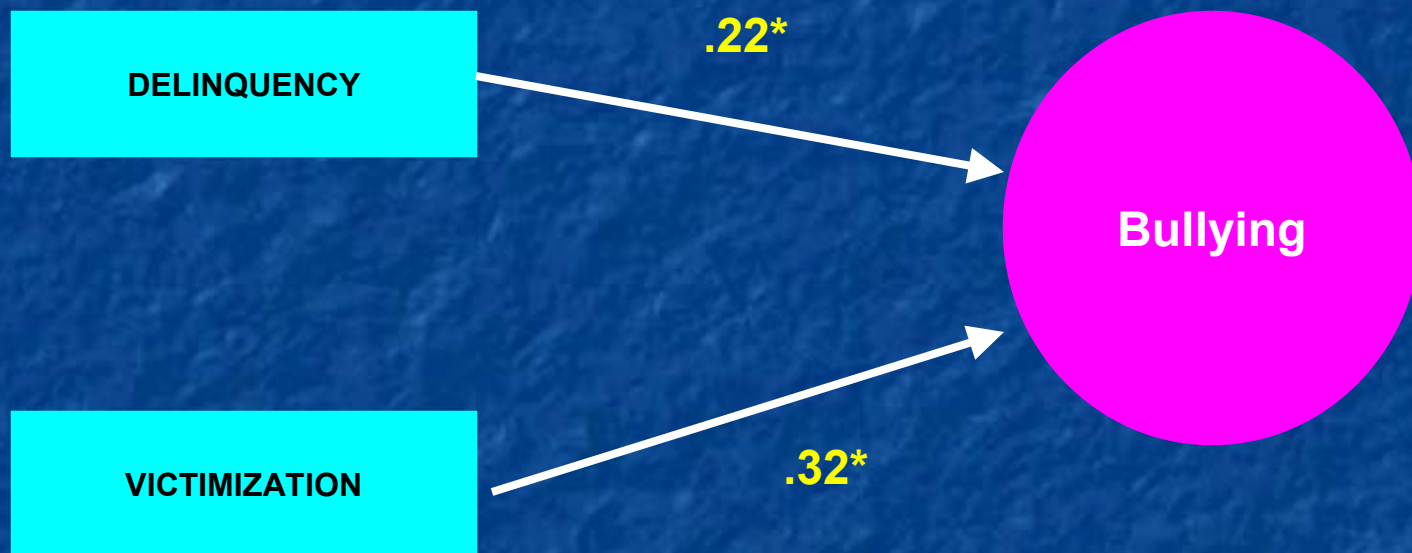
(Malamuth et al., 1991, 1995)

# What are predictors of bullying? (BOYS)



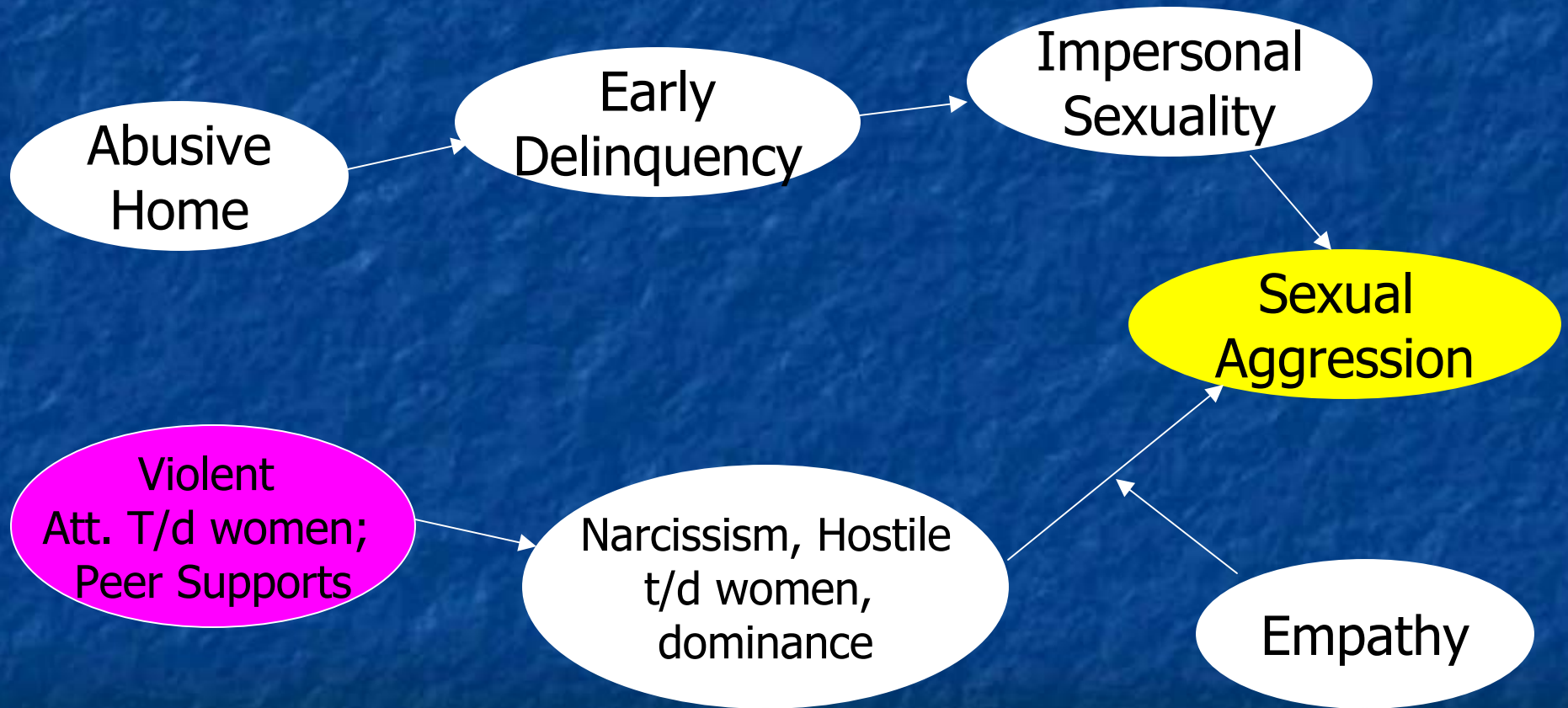
# What are predictors of bullying? (GIRLS)

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\*  $p < .001$

# Malamuth Confluence Model (Sexual Violence Perp.)



(Malamuth et al., 1991, 1995)

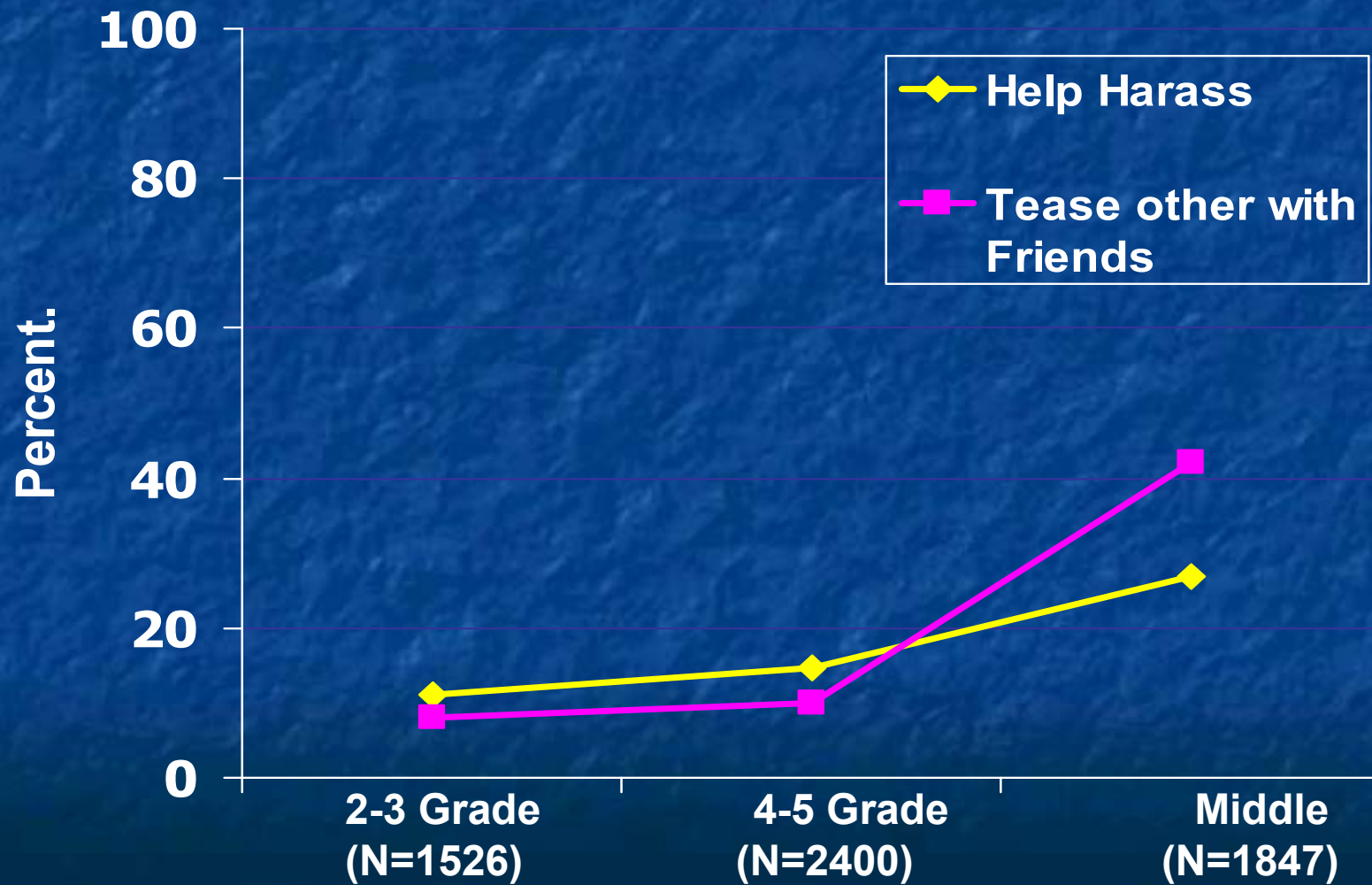
# Why do students bully others? – More Kids' Voices

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“They can be a part of a group and they do it so the group will respect them more. People just want to be cool and fit in.”

(Espelage & Asidao, 2001)

# Developmental Perspective



# Homophily

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- Within-group similarity
- Peer Groups emerge based on similarities (sex, race, & behavioral dimensions)
- Process of Homophily:
  - *Selective Association versus Reciprocal Socialization*
  - Need longitudinal data to disentangle selection from influence

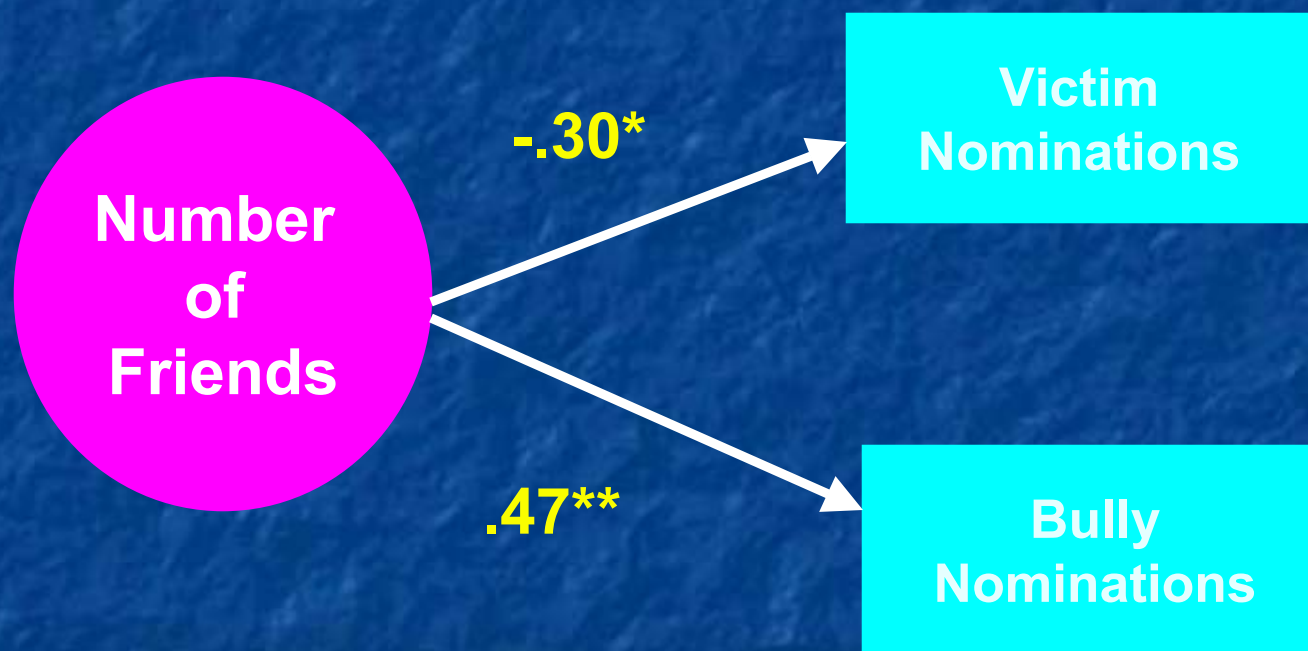
# Homophily Across Aggression Subtypes

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- Espelage, Holt, & Henkel (2003):
  - Homophily extends to low level aggression; High peer group bullying/fighting was associated with more bullying/fighting over a year period (after controlling for baseline).
  - Peer-level bullying was more predictive than peer-level fighting. Other variables explain physical aggression.
  - Grade was not significant after peer-level variables were considered.

# Buys you popularity-- Espelage & Holt (2001)

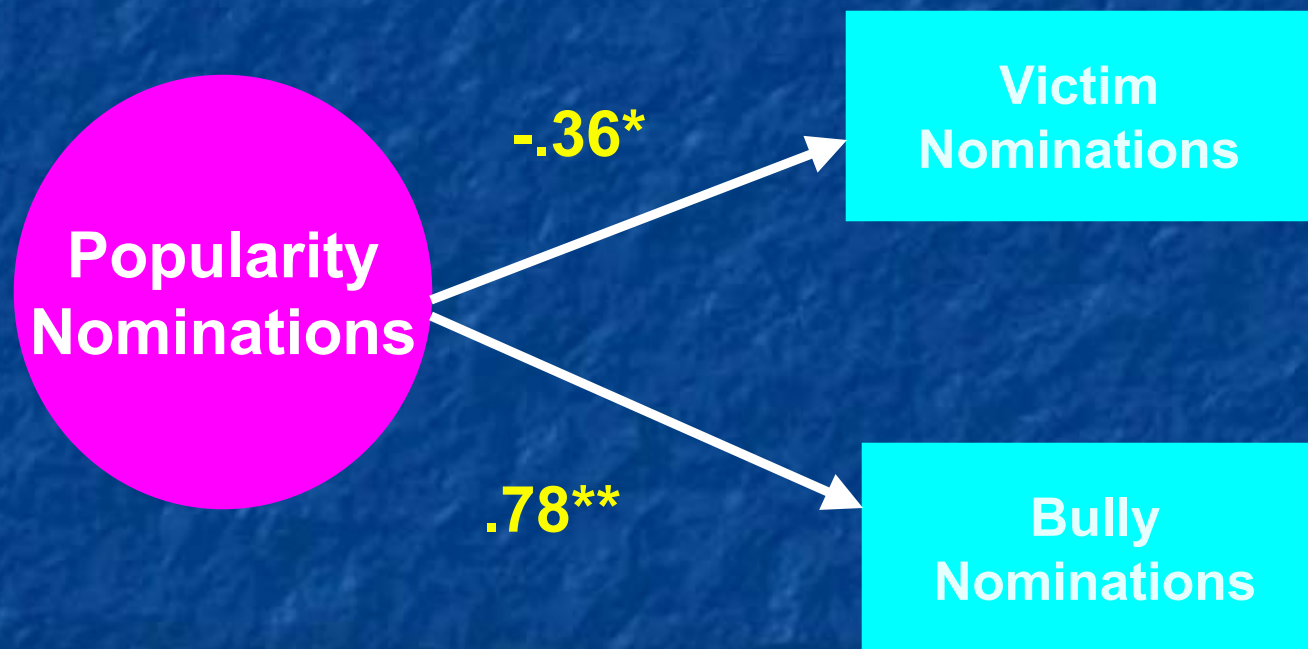
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\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .001$

# Espelage & Mebane (2003)

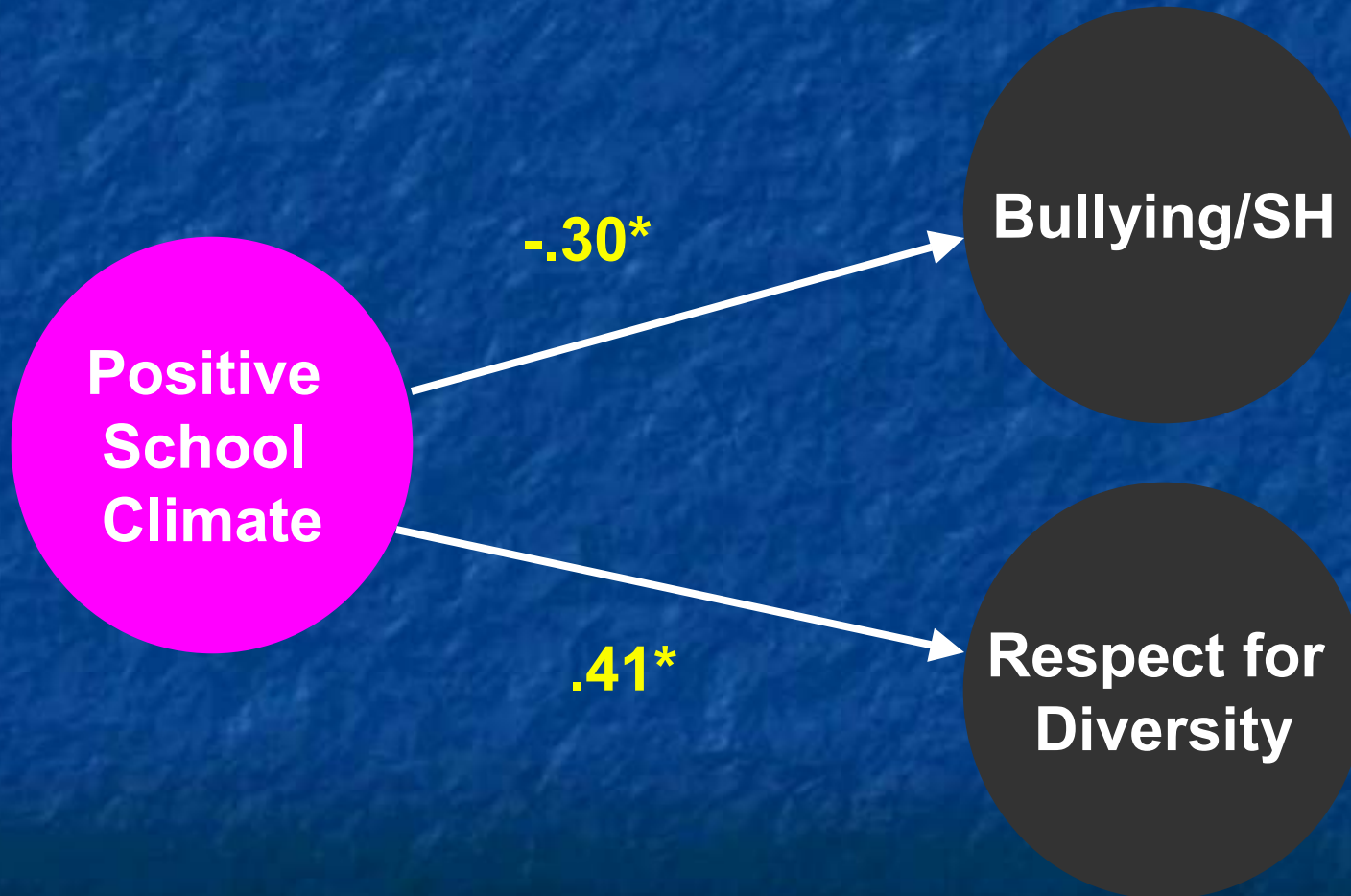
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\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .001$

# Middle School Climate ( $N = 6,344$ )

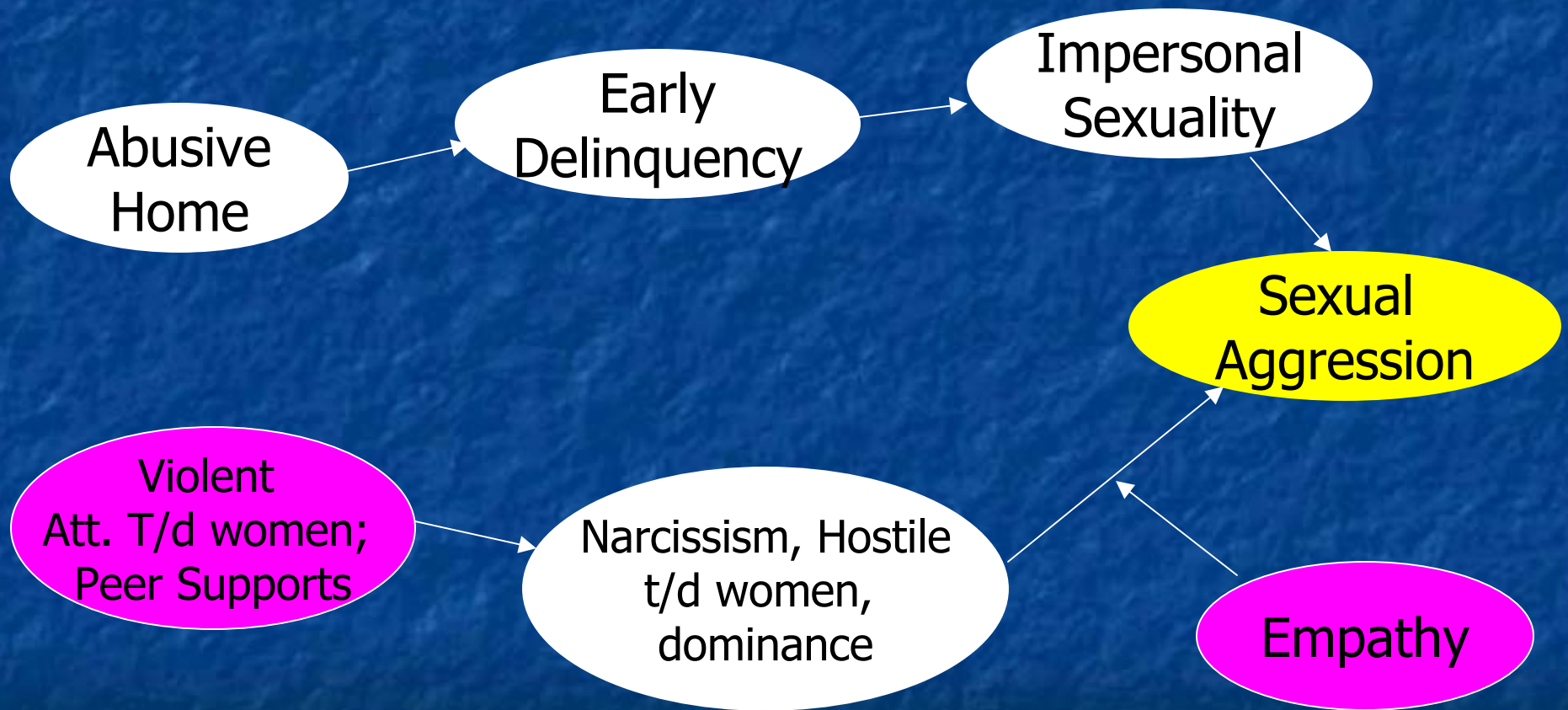
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$*p < .001$

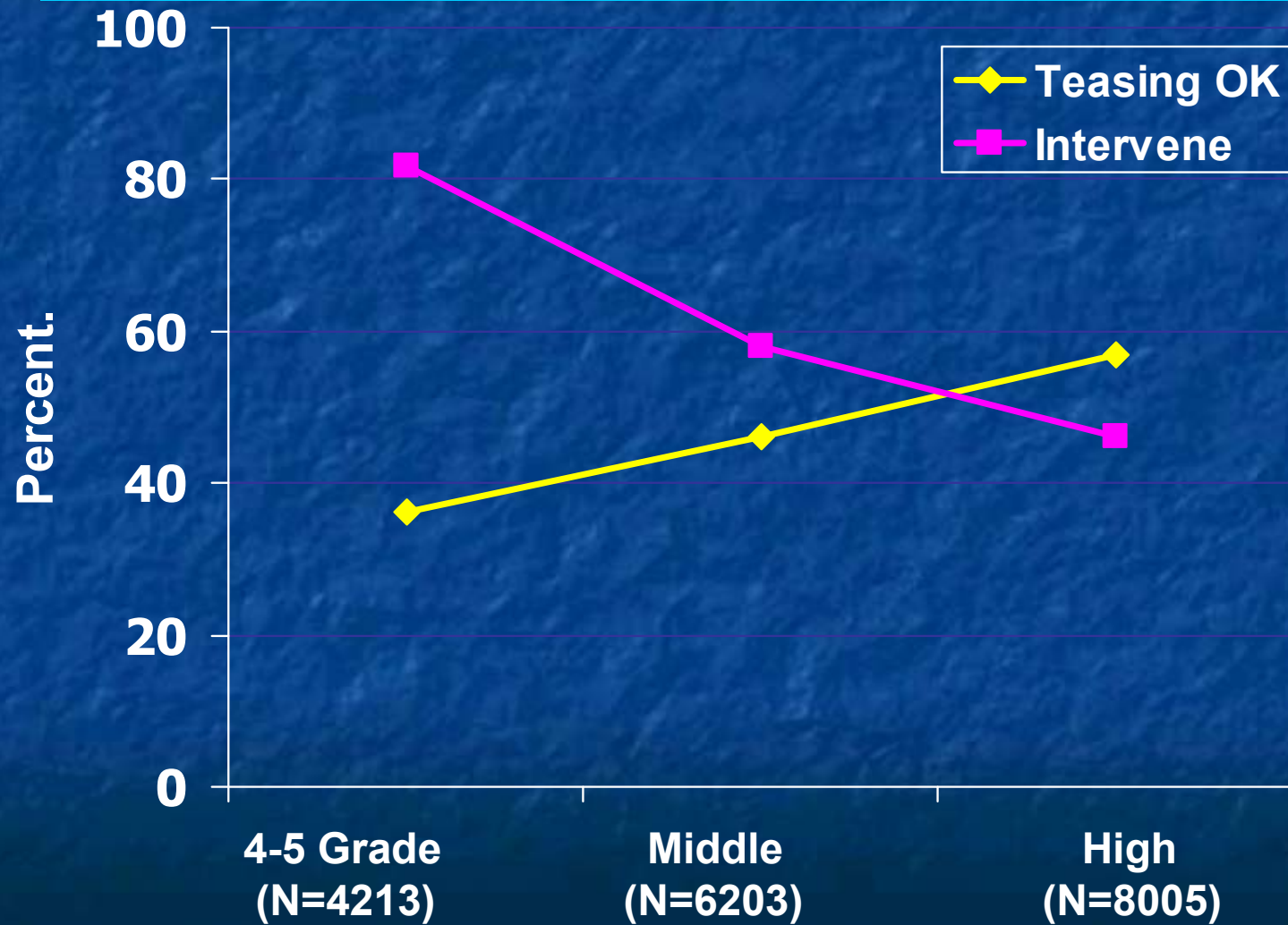
Holt & Keyes, in press

# Malamuth Confluence Model (Sexual Violence Prep.)

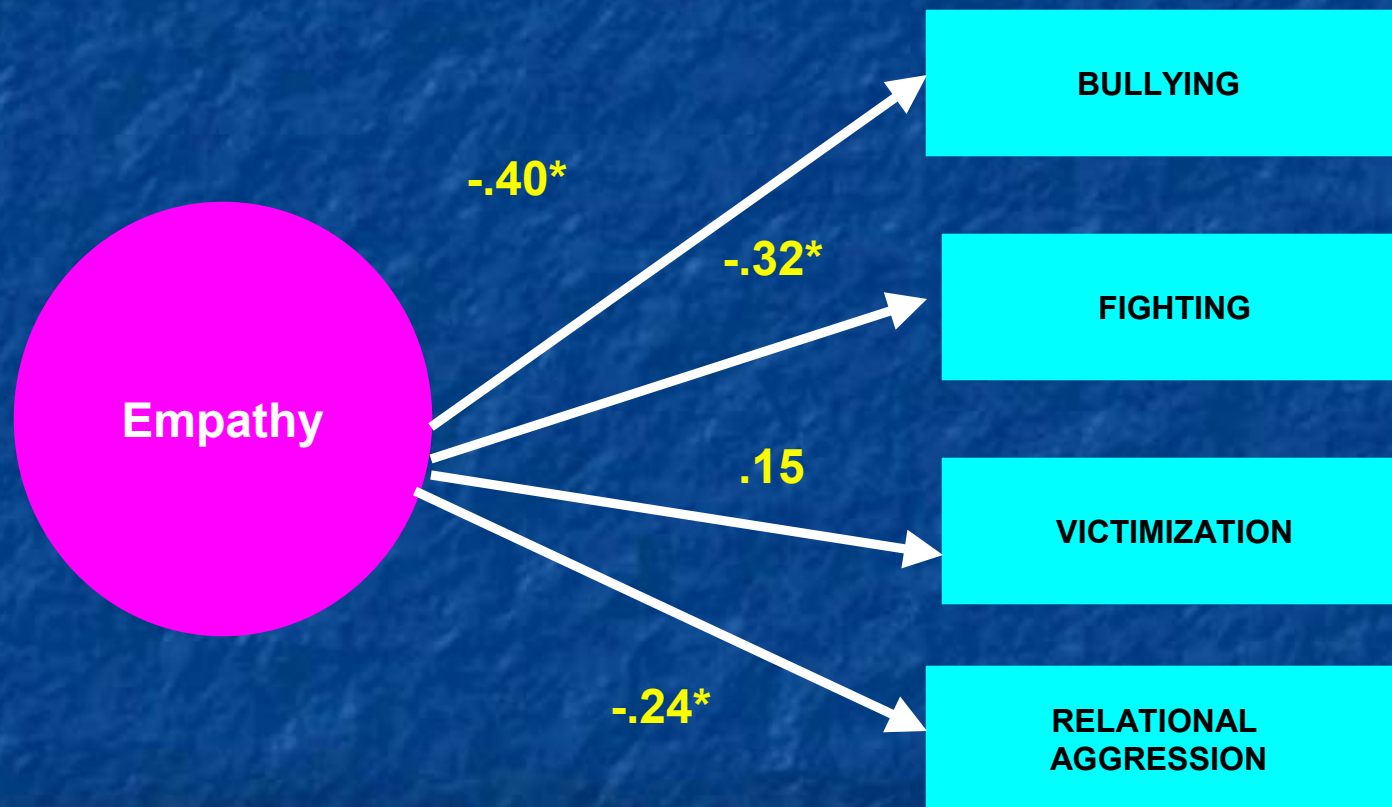


(Malamuth et al., 1991, 1995)

# Developmental Perspective

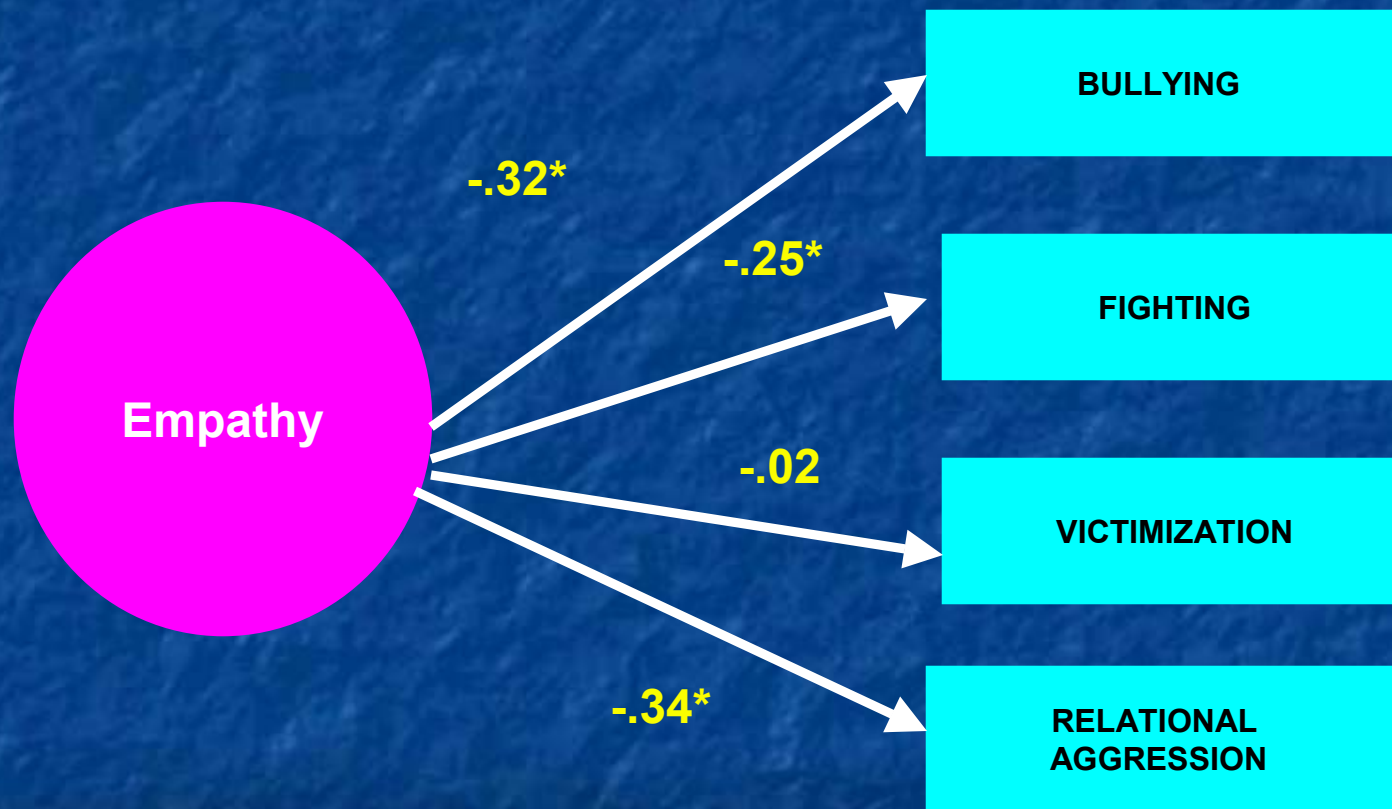


# Bullying and Empathy (boys)



\*  $p < .001$

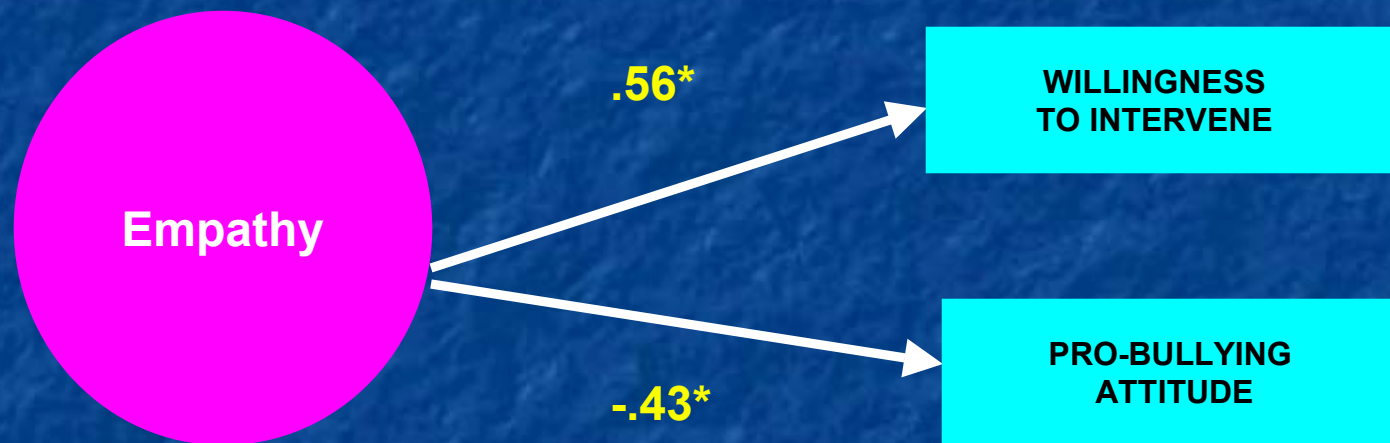
# Bullying and Empathy (girls)



\*  $p < .001$

# Empathy & Willingness to Intervene (boys)

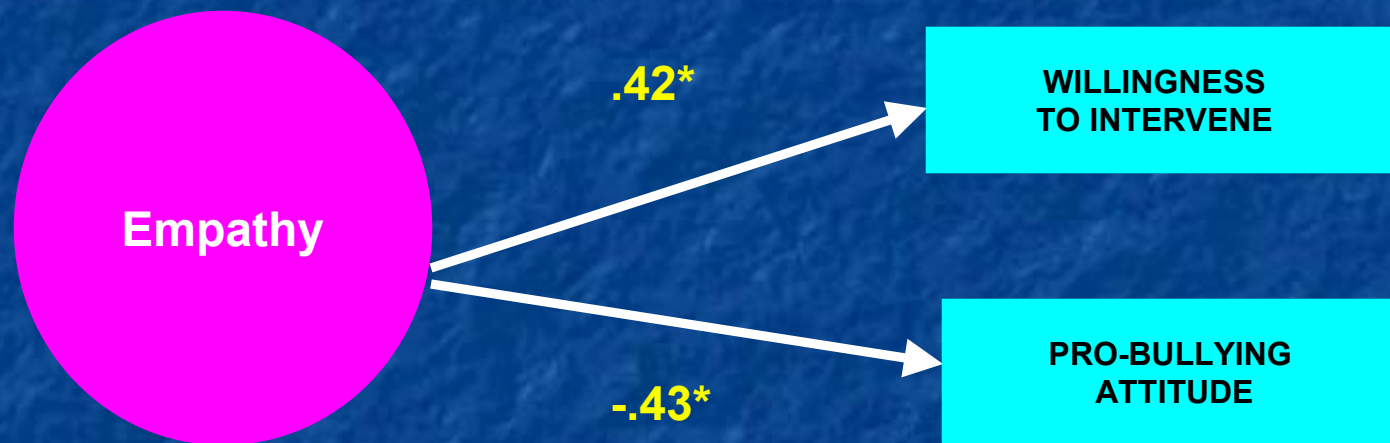
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\*  $p < .001$

# Empathy & Willingness to Intervene (girls)

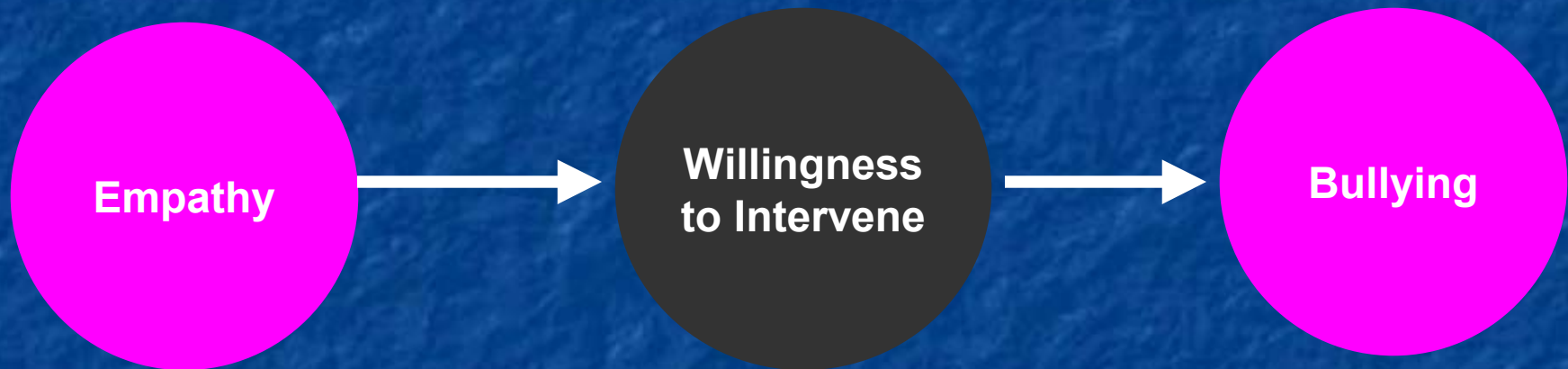
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\*  $p < .001$

# Willingness to Intervene as a Mediator

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# SH Discussion Points? (Nan Stein's Flirting or Hurting)

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- How do you think SH can interfere with student's ability to get an education?
- How will student who is doing the SH know that it is hurtful?
- When might it be unsafe for targets of SH to share with person hurting them?
- When is SH a crime?
- What about adult to student SH?
- Girl to Girl?; Boy to Boy?

# Discussion Points?

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- In your opinion, what is the main difference between sexual harassment and flirting?
- Is it possible that someone can start off flirting with someone and then somehow it turns into sexual harassment?
- Without using names, what kinds of sexual harassment have you seen or experienced?
- If there were any people around when the incident occurred, what did they do? How did it make you feel?
- How do you see people at this school respond to rumors?
- What do people at this school usually do when they see someone being harassed? Adults? Other students? How do you think they should respond?
- What do you think is needed in order to stop sexual harassment on this campus?

# What do you know about sexual harassment?

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## TRUE OR FALSE?

- If a girl wears tight jeans or a short skirt, she is asking to be sexually harassed.
- Boys don't usually get sexually harassed.
- Spreading rumors around school can be a form of sexual harassment.
- Calling someone "gay" or "queer" is a form of sexual harassment.
- You can go to jail for sexually harassing someone.
- Sexual harassment isn't a problem at this school.
- If you see someone you don't know very well being sexually harassed, you should mind your own business.

# What do you know about sexual harassment?

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## TRUE OR FALSE?

- If a girl wears tight jeans or a short skirt, she is asking to be sexually harassed. (FALSE)
- Boys don't usually get sexually harassed. (FALSE)
- Spreading rumors around school can be a form of sexual harassment. (TRUE)
- Calling someone "gay" or "queer" is a form of sexual harassment. (TRUE)
- You can go to jail for sexually harassing someone. (TRUE)
- Sexual harassment isn't a problem at this school. (FALSE)
- If you see someone you don't know very well being sexually harassed, you should mind your own business. (FALSE)

# Why does SH happen?

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- The way people act at school seems to encourage it and make it seem normal.
- Lack of clear communication. Why do you think some girls do not clearly communicate their lack of agreement with behaviors?
- Adult attitudes
- Lack of follow through if you report it.
- No consequences to the person who is doing the harassing behaviors.
- Targets don't always report it

# Consequences of Sexual Harassment

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- Loredó and colleagues (1995) found that female high school students rated scenarios depicting sexual harassment as more severe than their male peers
- Girls were three times as likely as boys to report feeling very upset following a sexual harassment episode (33% vs. 11%) (AAUW, 2001)
- Whereas 35% of Caucasian boys felt embarrassed after being sexually harassed, only 14% of African-American boys endorsed embarrassment (AAUW, 2001)
- Similarly, 57% of Caucasian girls revealed feeling embarrassed compared to 31% of African-American girls (AAUW, 2001)

# What to tell students?

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- Let the harasser know that you don't like the behavior or comments.
- It's very important to never blame yourself.
- Keep a written record of the incidents Tell someone and keep telling until something is done to stop it.
- If you do not like the way that this problem is handled, you can go to the Title IX Coordinator for your school district and if you are still not satisfied, you can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.
- When you see sexual harassment happening to other people, speak up, get an adult to intervene, report the incident and never stay silent or participate in the harassment.
- If you need someone to talk to, go to your counselor, a trusted adult.

# Examples?

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- Sexual comments, jokes, gestures, or looks
- Showed, gave, or left you sexual pictures, photos, notes etc.
- Wrote sexual messages about you on bathroom walls etc.
- Spread sexual rumors about you
- Said you were gay or lesbian
- Spied on you as you dressed or showered at school
- Flashed or mooned you
- Touched, grabbed, or pinched you in a sexual way
- Intentionally brushed up against you in a sexual way
- Pulled at clothing/Pulled off or down your clothing
- Blocked your way or cornered you in a sexual way
- Forced you to kiss him/her
- Forced you to do something sexual other than kissing

# Dating Violence

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- Physical, verbal, and relational forms of aggression used in dating relationships to control partner
- 55% of high school students who have dated have incurred abuse from a dating partner (O'Keefe, 1998)
- Experiencing dating violence can produce outcomes including feelings of anger and sadness (Carlson, 1987), post-traumatic stress and anxiety (Harned, 2001)
- Recent research (Pellegrini, 2002) have found that bullies during middle school are more likely to be sexually harassing and violent in dating relationships in the high school.

# Abuse?

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- What are some forms of abuse?
- What is abuse when it comes to physical touch?
- What is abuse when it comes to sex?
- How can someone abuse you without touching you?
- What could someone do or say that would make you feel bad about yourself?
- Does anyone have anything else to add to this list?

# Respect?

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- What is respect?
- How do you like to be treated by other people?
- Think about someone who respects you, how does this person show it?
- How do you like someone to talk to you?
- What do you consider respectful when it comes to physical touch?
- How do you like someone to act if they disagree with you?
- What is respectful when it comes to sex?
- Does anyone have anything else they would like to add to this list?

# Warning Signs

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- jealousy and possessiveness
- blames you when they mistreat you
- giving orders
- making all decisions
- history of bad relationships
- scary
- threatens you
- believes that men should be in control
- pressures you for sex
- serious too fast
- friends or family are worried about you
- abuses drugs or alcohol and expects you to
- is violent, loses temper

# What do we tell students?

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- Listen to them without judgment, believe them, never condone the abuse and tell them that it is not their fault and that they don't deserve it.
- Show concern for their safety. It's important to know that it can be dangerous for the person when they break up or try to get out. So it's important to help them build support, tell supportive adults (school counselor, parent, teacher) and find ways to stay safe.
- Let them make their own decisions about getting help and/or remaining in the relationship and keep supporting them no matter what they choose.
- Go with them for help.
- Notify someone if your friend is in danger. Talk to a school administrator, a parent or call 911.

# What about homophobia?

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- Implications for Research and Practice
  - Research: Concurrent examination of bullying and homophobia, multiple schools, racially diverse samples, different age groups
  - Practice: Consistent intervention by teachers and administrators, school policies and intervention programs to address homophobia

# Implications for Interventions

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- Need to put “gender” back into the discussion
- Need to examine how schools promote gender-based aggression & negative attitudes t/d girls
- Need to develop prevention and intervention programs that consider peer influence –
- Consider how peer influence can be used to foster more prosocial behaviors
- Teachers need to re-evaluate their perceptions
- Parents need to recognize that their children might be playing a role in these behaviors

# Suggestions for School-Wide Intervention

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- Conduct a school-wide assessment of bullying, sexual harassment, dv, and homophobia.
- Counseling services should address internalizing problems (depression and anxiety) particularly during transition years.
- Interventions should confront and modify supportive attitudes toward violence, bullying, gender-based harassment.

# Suggestions for School-Wide Intervention

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- Increase monitoring of “hot spots” (i.e., hallways, classrooms)
- Include the area around schools and include parents in monitoring efforts.
- Interventions should be developmentally based and should address changes throughout the middle school years.
- Where is the discourse of gender?

# Suggestions for Classroom Intervention

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- Support teacher responses to bullying and sexual harassment.
- Create an open-door policy for all students.
- Monitor hallways outside the classroom.
- Monitor student behavior in the classroom.
- Be aware of seating arrangements and student involvement.

# Conclusions

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- Students experience high rates of bullying, sexual harassment, and dating violence.
- Gender plays a big role, as well as ethnicity.
- Serious psychological consequences result for some students.
- These behaviors are maintained by students, teachers, and administrators.