BULLYING AMONG CHILDREN

National Sociological Study

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INTRODUCTION

For more than 15 years, Save the Children was systematically concerned with the phenomenon of child violence, playing a fundamental role in the civil society in developing policies that regulate any form of violence against children, in all life contexts.

The national studies carried out by Save the Children in the last decade, on adult violent behaviours against children, irrespective of their nature, have shown concerning levels of violence use in the adult-child relationship, in all contexts: home, school, protection institutions, in the community.

An impressive number of specialized studies have repeatedly shown the different negative consequences of child violence on the development of their personality. Each dimension of the psychological development is impacted by it: the emotional one, emphasizing the risk that the most frequent emotions felt in the interpersonal relations are fear, anger, frustration, resentment, guilt or shame; the social one, bringing in the relationships with other people behaviours of aggressiveness, rejection or isolation; the behavioural one, turning, for many children, the violent behaviour into the most common strategy used to solve problems; the cognitive one, diminishing the resources children have for the learning process.

In a society where, at the end of 2013, 63% of the children said that they are beaten at home by their parents, and 87% of the students confessed that they have been verbally abused by their teachers, at least once, it is no surprise that the level of violence that children show in their relationships with their colleagues/friends, seems to have increased significantly; moreover, the nuances of the violent behaviours where children are involved as victims, bullies and witnesses, are more diverse, often degenerating into what the specialized literature names “bullying”, respectively, an intentional aggressive behaviour, meant to cause pain, which involves a power imbalance and strength between the aggressor and victim, and which manifests repeatedly and regularly (Limber, 2002; Olweus, 1993a; Nansel et al., 2001).

Different from other forms of aggression/violence against children, bullying is an umbrella concept that covers diverse and constant behaviours, hidden from adults, which continue in the absence of specific intervention measures. This is an extremely important aspect, that Save the Children wants to outline, when, very often, the behaviours associated to bullying are interpreted by many adults, parents and teachers, as normal adjustment strategies that children naturally use and which do not require the intervention of adults. In reality, bullying behaviours represent one of the most powerful risk factors for the health and protection of children, which through its specific features (power imbalance, regularity, the intention to cause physical and/or emotional discomfort), becomes impossible to manage by children alone. The
complexity of this phenomenon requires the attention and joint action of all the adults in the life contexts of children (parents, teachers, auxiliary staff, community members), especially that bullying doesn’t take place in plain sight, but in spaces where traditionally adults are not very present (restrooms, school yard, the road from home to schoole and viceversa, hidden corners near the school etc.).

Another aspect that Save the Children warns about is that, in a bullying situation all children are victims - the one that suffers the direct consequences of the bullying; and also the author of the violent behaviour, that he has learnt for sure by being the victim in a different life context; and the one that is a helpless witness and learns that the school or the neighbourhood are battle fields where only the strong survive.

This investigation actions becomes even more important, as, by showing us the size and the characteristic of the bullying phenomenon in the Romanian education, it gives us access to the most important data in order to develop strategies and intervention and prevention programmes, which allow, once more, the protection of children against any form of violence and guarantee safety in schools and within the community for our children.

Gabriela Alexandrescu

CEO, Save the Children
THE GOALS OF THE RESEARCH

This research started from the need for qualitative and quantitative information about the bullying phenomenon, for a better understanding of the motivations that lead to such behaviours and the dimensions of this phenomenon in the social context in Romania.

Thus, the main goals of this research were:

- To describe the way in which children perceive bullying, their attitudes and behaviours, in different social contexts (school, friends, the online environment etc.);
- To measure the incidence of the bullying case at school level, at the level of the group of friends and in the online environment;
- To measure the incidence of the various types of behaviours associated to bullying, like exclusion from the group, humiliation, destroying somebodies goods, physical violence;
- To determine the social profile of the actors involved in such behaviours.
METHODOLOGY

In line with the proposed objectives, a double research approach was chosen for this study:

- **the qualitative approach** that followed mainly to outline children’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviours with regards to bullying, to identify the main stakeholders involved, the social contexts where this takes place and the solutions to limit it;

- **the quantitative approach**, which implied the measuring of the opinions of children and parents about the social phenomenon studied.

Qualitative Research:

The research method that was used was the **Focus Group**, a method that allows investigating in detail the subjects’ perceptions and attitudes. *The Focus Group, as a qualitative research technique, can be described as a mediated discussion, focused on a clear topic, involving between 6 and 12 people, taking into account the homogeneity of the opinions, the participants’ age structure, the social and demographic characteristics or social status etc. The participants are selected based on a recruitment questionnaire that ensures the homogeneity of the group of dialogue and which filters, at the same time, the participants based on the desired social and demographic characteristics.*

**The target group** of the qualitative research was represented by children, grouped by the education cycle, as follows:

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The qualitative research included children from the following counties / cities: *Bucharest, Brasov, Dolj, Iasi, Maramures, Suceava and Timis,*

Quantitative research amongst parents and children in order to estimate the incidence of bullying:

The research method used, for both target groups (parents and children) was the investigation based on questionnaire, as follows:

1. **The investigation involving the parents** had as target group the households (families) with at least one child between 10 and 18 years of age in their care.

   **The cohort** selected was stratified, probabilistic, tristadial and had as stratification criteria the development regions (North - East, South - East, South, South - West, West, North - West, Centre, Bucharest - Ilfov), the residential area (urban - rural) and the size of the settlements (urban big, urban medium, urban small, rural big and rural small).

   **The cohort of parents included** 1,262 people and they were selected by the probabilistic selection of settlements (124 settlements) and of people (probabilistic selection, birthdate method).

   The cohort is representative at national level, for the population of the target group, with an error margin of +/- 2.5% at a level of trust of 95%. The cohort was validated based on the data of the National Institute of Statistics.

   The interviews were carried out at the residence of the subjects, in May - July 2015.

2. **The investigation** amongst children had the same regional distribution as the one for parents, and it included 1,120 people.

   **The cohort** used is representative for the school population (from middle school and high-school students under 18 years old), with an error margin of +/- 3%, and a trust level of 95%.

   The data was collected by questionnaires filled in by the subjects, and the selection of schools, classes and students was done randomly.
The data collection in the field took place between September and November 2015.

Research tools (the questionnaire for parents, the one for children and the interview guide) are available in the annex. The research tools followed these dimensions:

The interview guide: the way children relate to bullying, defining the associated behaviours and the main forms of bullying, the typical bullying situations etc.

The questionnaire for parents: the family structure, living conditions, family material and financial status, the existence / absence of family conflicts and their type, the behaviour of the parents towards children (care, supervision, child punishment behaviours), ways to related to bullying (the perceived and known dimension of behaviours ) etc.

The questionnaire for children: socio-demographic data of children and parents, family structure and living conditions, the perception of the child related to the family material status, child abuse and neglect, ways to relate to bullying, the measurement of the incident of bullying behaviours, the ways in which these occur etc.

The analysis of the qualitative data was made using the content analysis method.

The quantitative data was analysed by using the procedures specific to descriptive or inferential statistics.
CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

The conceptual clarifications are necessary to the sociological investigation assumed by this research for two reasons. On one hand, there is a need to define the concept of “bullying” and of its main indicators in order to draft a methodology that reflects most accurately this phenomenon; on the other hand, they are necessary in order to draft the bullying prevention and protection recommendations.

The common understanding of the meaning of the terms used in this field is essential for a fluent and intelligible communication between the professionals who work directly with the child, in various fields of activity, and/or those who do not work directly with the child (mass-media representatives, community leaders etc.) but who, due to the nature of their activity, impact the child’s life.

In general, bullying is characterized as an intentional aggressive behaviour that (a) is meant to cause discomfort or pain, (b) involves a power and strength imbalance between the bully and the victim, and (c) is manifested repeatedly and regularly (Limber, 2002; Olweus, 1993a; Nansel et al., 2001);

As a form of hurting peers, differs from other forms of aggression / violence amongst children (e.g., conflict between peers) (Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003; Olweus, 1993a, 2001; Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999; Pellegrini, 2002).

Bullying behaviours have an increased stability in time, and are most often hidden from adults and continue in the absence of specific intervention measures. Unlike aggressive behaviours, which spontaneously occur between children, as a result of experiencing intense emotions (e.g., anger, frustration, fear etc.) and disappear as soon as the intensity of the emotions diminishes, bullying behaviours do not disappear on their own. Bullying is a relational problem that always requires a solution that implies changes at the level of the relationships between children and in the group dynamics. In order to eliminate the bullying behaviours, a direct intervention in the context where they occur is required, most often the context being the school environment.
For a correct understanding of the bullying phenomenon, it is very important, however, to differentiate between the behaviours subsumed to this phenomenon in relation to:

- isolated episodes of social exclusion;
- isolated episodes of ironic behaviour;
- isolated episodes of aggression and / or intimidation;
- conflict/ fights between children, characterized by reciprocity in terms of intention;

Even though all the above-mentioned behaviours generate stress, discomfort and discomfort in the relational dynamics of children, they are not bullying behaviours, as long as they are not on purpose and repeated.

Bullying has several dimensions:

- physical bullying; it includes but is not limited to repeated behaviours like: hitting, tripping, shoving, slapping, destroying / taking by force personal goods;
- verbal bullying; it includes but is not limited to repeated behaviours like: nicknaming, insults, teasing, humiliation, intimidation, sending message with homophobic or racist content;
- social bullying, often hidden, hard to identify / to recognize, achieved with the purpose of destroying the social reputation of a child and to publicly humiliate him/her; it includes but is not limited to repeated behaviours like: lying and/or spreading rumours, pranks with the purpose of humiliating the other person / creating embarrassing situations, encouraging social exclusion / isolation, gossip;
- cyberbullying, hidden or obvious; it refers to any bullying behaviour mediated by technology, identified in the social media environment, websites, messaging etc.; it includes, but is not limited to repeated behaviours like: mails, posts, messages, images, films with abusive / offending / insulting content; the intentional exclusion of a child from the online environment; hacking passwords of personal accounts (e-mail, FB etc.)

International studies have indicated that bullying involves a great number of children and young people from all socio-economical environments, from the racial groups
that were studied, and is present in areas with different population density (urban, suburban and rural areas) (Nansel et al., 2001);

Studies have also shown a high correlation between bullying behaviours and a negative psycho-social functioning in children, characterized by: low self-esteem (Hodges & Perry, 1996; Olweus, 1993a; Rigby & Slee, 1993); a high level of depression (Craig, 1998; Hodges & Perry, 1996; Olweus, 1993a; Salmon 2000; Slee, 1995); anxiety (Craig, 1998; Hodges & Perry, 1996; Olweus, 1993a; Rigby & Slee, 1993); feelings of loneliness (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996; Nansel et al., 2001); suicidal thoughts (Rigby, 1996); and a low school attendance rate (Rigby, 1996);

Children and young people with disabilities, mental disorders, the overweight, coming from minority ethnic groups or with sexual roles and behaviours other than the majority ones (homosexuality, transexuality), or that are perceived as being different, present a high risk of being aggressed by their peers (Dawkins, 1996; Hershberger & D’Augelli, 1995; Hunter, 1990; Nabuzka & Smith, 1993; Pilkington & D’Augelli, 1995; Rigby, 2002; Yude, Goodman, & McConachie, 1998; Whitney, Smith, & Thompson, 1994).

It is more likely for the teenagers and children that generate bullying behaviours to have beliefs that support violence, stronger than those of their peers (Bosworth, Espelage, & Simon, 1999;) and they are more likely to influence, in time, their peers to get involved in bullying others (Espelage et al., 2003).

Studies suggest that bullying doesn’t have just one cause. The factors related to the person, family, peers, school and community are those that can rather lead to the risk of a child or teenager bullying his/her peers. (Limber, 2000; Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999).

Studies show that bullying behaviours are linked to other problematic behaviours, including vandalism (Solberg & Olweus, 2003), beating (Nansel et al., 2001; Nansel, Overpeck, Haynie, Ruan, & Scheidt, 2003), alcohol consumption (Nansel et al., 2001), smoking (Nansel et al., 2001), low school attendance (Byrne, 1994), school abandonment (Byrne, 1994) and other antisocial behaviours (Solberg & Olweus, 2003);

Recently, intervention programmes, educational curricula and bullying prevention
strategies for schools have been developed at international level (e.g., Beane, 1999; Committee for Children, 2001; Froschl, Spring, & Mullin-Rindler, 1998; Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, & Short-Camilli, 1994; Newman, Horne, & Bartalumucci, 2000; Olweus, 1993a; Stein & Sjostrom 1996). The existing studies show that bullying in schools can be significantly reduced through complex programmes in the schools that are meant to change behavioural norms (Olweus, 1993a; Olweus, 1993b; Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999; Whitney, Rivers, Smith, & Sharp, 1994);

The figures available at national level led to considering bullying and parental education as fundamental risk factors for the mental health of children and teenagers and for the optimum development of their academic learning potential and social functioning. Given the dimension and the severity of its consequences on the children’s health, bullying is tackled in many European countries as a public health issue.

The international studies have shown that 15% - 25% of the students are bullied in school; 15% - 20% of the students report frequently bullying others (Nansel et al., 2001; Melton et al., 1998; Geffner, Loring, &Young, 2001). During a year, almost 25% of the students in each class reported having been bullied or harassed on the school ground, because of their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or disability (Austin, Huh-Kim, Skage, & Furlong, 2002). More than 70% of the students between 8 and 11 years old declared that they are teased and harassed in their school ( Kaiser Family Foundation and Nickelodeon , 2001). 40% of the bullied students in the first four grades and 60% of the students in the 5th to 8th grade report that teachers intervene during the bullying “sometimes” or “almost never“ (Olweus, 1993; Charach, Pepler, & Ziegler, 1995).

What is worrying is that 25% of the teachers do not think there is something wrong with harassment, teasing or humiliating behaviours amongst students, so they intervene in just 4% of the bullying cases (Cohn & Canter, 2003). More than 60% of the students often say that adult intervention is rare and useless, and are afraid that by telling adults they will be harassed in the future, too (Cohn & Canter, 2003).
Main Conclusion of the Focus Groups

The qualitative research was meant mainly to outline the main patterns of the way children relate to bullying, the way in which they define the behaviours associated to this phenomenon, the solutions to limit bullying and to identify the players involved in bullying, as well as in its prevention. In order to reveal more easily the main conclusions of the qualitative research, we decided that these should follow the structure of the focus group guide.

How do you feel at school? What do you like? Is there anything you don’t like?

This question received a wide range of answers; children’s feelings in school vary from positive (“good”, “I like it at school, especially because I spend time with my friends”, “some teachers are cool”) to negative (“it’s boring”, “I don’t like it, we have bad teachers”). In terms of things children do not like, the most frequent answers were: school hours are too long and homework takes too much time (which reduces children’s time for leisure activities), the fact that school was left behind in terms of modern technologies, there is too much theory, without practice, students have no real power on selecting the optional subjects, or some teachers are not qualified enough. It was noticed that children tend to analyse school based on the way in which the school supports them with their development and their future.

Is there bullying in your school?

First of all, it has to be mentioned that there is no Romanian word to translate bullying (words like “humiliation”, “harassment” are used sometimes, but these cannot reflect
the entire meaning of the phenomenon). Plus, there is a low awareness level of this issue, even amongst the professionals in the field of social protection or education.

**Children's awareness of bullying**

It is important to understand what children know about this issue. We have tested the awareness level (with questions like: “Have you heard the word "bullying"? Where have you heard it? What do you think it means?”), and assisted awareness (the children were presented with a scenario, and, with their help, the implications of the scenario were explored).

Just a part of the children said that they have heard before the word "bullying" and the contexts were: a short clip is running on a music channel or on a cartoon channel (it is a famous Romanian singer, who was described briefly, with little information, but with the clear message that bullying is wrong) and in school. It has to be emphasized that those who said that they heard it in school, declared that they didn't hear the word from their teacher or from the school counsellor, but during the English classes. Even in their case, the understanding of the concept was very limited - “in Romanian it could be translated as harassment”, “it refers to a child that beats others”. However, most children stated that they have not heard the word "bullying" and cannot say what it refers to.

When children were helped in identifying this behaviour, the predominant opinion was that this was a common behaviour and that they are familiar with it. This was described as being very frequent in schools and also common in places they often go to. All the children said that the described behaviour exists in their school.

With help, children were able to identify various forms of bullying. The focus groups were the first opportunity for children to explore a very frequent type of violence, seen by them almost daily, and to understand the complexity of bullying. This clearly shows that there is an acute lack of intervention in schools and the prevention measures are almost invisible / inexistent.

**What do you think happens with children who are bullied?**
Asked about the impact of bullying on victims, children seemed aware of the consequences: it diminishes the feelings of self-appreciation, it isolates the person, could lead to depression and suicide, even.

Children say that any person that is different from others may become a bullying target, like: the ones who look different (physical appearance was underlined as one of the most common reasons for bullying), behave different than the majority (like the child who is very shy, who has better school results or has a handicap or with special educational needs), are new-comers, come from an disadvantaged economic background (including the case when they come from the rural areas or from the Republic of Moldova), are Roma etc.

“Any detail, no matter how small, may turn into a reason to bully" (girl, 15 years)

A teenager who is often treated rudely in his group of friends said that he accepts the behaviour because otherwise he wouldn’t have any friends.

Remark: in a focus group with children between 11 and 12 years old, from a prestigious school, we noticed a very high level of intolerance towards children that could disturb the class (when a particular case of a child with special educational needs was brought into discussion, some of the interviewed children said that “fortunately" he was transferred to a different class) and that came together with a bullying behaviour (bullying seemed to be a tool to reject certain classmates). In this group, we noticed that some of the children wanted to impress with their background and their level of education. The same children tended to intimidate the others in the focus group and discussed about the victims of bullying as being children that are guilty for what is happening to them. They underlined that bullies could fear a sanction from the school, but they are more afraid of the way in which their parents would react to such sanctions. It must be said that this focus group had distinct dynamics and was very different from the others.

“Yes, when they cannot integrate in this class, they could be transferred!”
"We have two girls in our class, they are very shy, we tried to involve them, we tried to get closer to them, but they are not interested. They don’t want to be with us.”

“His parents are to blame for this situation. They are the ones that refused to take him to a special school. He was the one that disturbed the class."

According to children, the ones who physically bully another child want to impress others, in order to show "how cool they are" and sometimes even succeed (other children are afraid of them, they are well-known), and sometimes for not receiving the desired attention. Some children associated physical aggression with the “survival of the fittest” that, thus, makes the bully stronger.

Children have underlined that, sometimes the same person who is a bully in a group may easily be the victim in another group. A 11 year old child said:

"I pick on Cristian and Dan every time I see them, but if I see Denis and Radu, I try to make myself disappear as fast as possible".

The role dynamics (victim or aggressor) is more prominent in the case of younger children (they can easily find themselves in the role of victim or bullies, depending on the circumstances). In the case of teenagers, the roles tend to be more stable and the dynamics is less prominent.

**How do bullying witnesses feel? What can they do?**

According to the opinions expressed in the focus groups, the most frequent reaction of bullying witnessing children is not to intervene, but to look. Aggression is treated as a show that "sometimes can be fun".

When others intervene, they rarely do so in order to support the victim (and in this case, children said that they are friends of the victim, in general), and most of the time they support the bully.

The participants to the focus groups have given the following explanation for this
behaviour: children that witness want to "stay out of trouble" (they do not want to be harassed), they do not ask for the help of an adult in order not to be considered weak or just because they feel they have more power in case they support the bully. Harassment is more frequent in older children and the most common behaviour, if somebody started the bullying, is that the others will join in order to ridicule the victim.

Can we learn something from bullying? What?

When we asked about violence in general, children tended to speak about physical violence, perceived as being softer than the other forms. On the other hand, when they were supported in exploring the bullying behaviour, their opinion was slightly different: they said that all forms of aggression are severe, but humiliation is one of the worst:

“Physical wounds heal, but words leave deep traces, even as the years go by”

(boy, 15 years)

The Internet was described as being an environment for bullying behaviours that favours the bully.

An interesting finding came from one of the teenager focus groups and was that bullying is more frequent when children are faced with new social situations (like the first year of high school, or when a new student is transferred in their class etc.). In other words, children entering a new group are exposed to an additional vulnerability.

Some of the children have considered that there are cases when bullying is treated in a discriminatory way: the bullying coming from children with good educational results is sometimes less visible for adults and is sanctioned in a gentler way, while children with poorer educational results are “bad from the start” (“it’s not fair to handle the same situation differently” (boy, 16 years).

What should be done to reduce this phenomenon?
Younger children tend to consider more important school sanctions like a lower grade for behaviour in school, suspension or transfer to another class (in the same school or to a different school). They thought that these sanctions have to be applied to bullying. Older students tend to believe that such sanctions cannot solve much and they seemed rather pessimistic in terms of reducing bullying.

None of the children who participated to the focus groups knew that there is a commission that fights violence in their school (according to the law, each school must has a commission like this, which should monitor and fight violence in the educational unit; the commission is formed by several teachers and the school counsellor).

Can you think of an example of bullying when such measures were taken and they worked?

The opinion of the interviewed children was that there are few cases when bullying can be stopped, and their experience was that no measure was successful in the long run. There were situations when bullying was stopped or was no longer so frequent, but only for a limited period of time (the measures were: parents came to school to solve the problem, teachers intervened, the bully was labelled because of his/her behaviour or was sanctioned in school). Thus, children's answers indicate that anti-bullying measures are related to isolated events, like a case of physical violence or a case of severe humiliation.

In general, adults are described by children as tolerant towards the psychological and emotional forms of bullying. The classic intervention in bullying usually comes very late, then when the conflict escalates and physical violence already took place. (This is a paradox: while children declared that humiliation is one of the worst forms of violence, they have the trend look for and receive help mainly when the violence is physical).

In some cases, even physical violence is overlooked or ignored: children said that there are teachers who do not want to get involved ("the unwritten rule is that, as long
as the fight takes place outside the school, it’s OK, they told us to keep the fight outside the school”).

From the children’s answers, we understand that schools do not have a common approach when it comes to violence (not just bullying) and that some teachers are more involved in stopping the violent behaviour, while others remain passive (“what matters is if the teacher cares”). Some children mentioned that there are cases when some teachers encourage bullying or the bully (constantly humiliating certain children).

The interventions focus on the aggressor and the victim, considering the reaction of the audience less important.

When asked about the intervention of the school counsellors, most children declared that either they don’t know what to do professionally or that the intervention occurs only in case teachers refer the problem children to them.

In terms of the interventions of the parents, the interviewed children tended not to comment a lot or give many examples. Briefly, they believe that the impact of the parent’s intervention may vary: there are parents that worsen the relationship between children (for example, then when parents come to school to “defend” their child asking for explanations or “disciplining” the other child) but there are also parents who contribute to reducing violence.
FAMILY SITUATION, RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE FAMILY AND OPINIONS ON CHILD EDUCATION

Even if this research has as main objective the description of bullying, in our research actions we decided to include a set of items regarding family situation (household type, its size, covering the consumption needs etc.), the quality of the family environment, opinions on child education, parenting practices. The reason for this is linked to the need to analyse such behaviours / their causes, in relation to as many factors as possible that contribute / affect children’s direction in life / socialization.

The collected data is succinctly presented below, where it was possible, with references to other similar researches carried out by Save the Children, and the chapter dedicated to bullying will analyse this data in relation to a set of behaviours assimilated to this phenomenon.

Family situation - Children’s opinions

By analysing the household structure, for the cohort of children, we see that the average number of children per family is 1.68, similar to the one per population\(^1\), the modal value is\(^2\) 1, just like the median value\(^3\). The minimum number of children per household, in the case of the studied population, is 1, and the maximum number is 9.

In terms of percentages, 50% of the households in this cohort have a child in their care, 38.9% two children, 7.1% three children and 4% more than four children.

The average age of the children who filled in the questionnaires is 14.3 years old, the modal value is 12 years and the median value 14. In terms of their education level, 47.2% are between the 5th and the 8th grade, and 52.8% are attending high school.

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1 in the case of families with children in care  
2 the modal value is the value with an occurrence maximum frequency. In this case, most households in the cohort have 1 child.  
3 the median value of a set of measured values is the value in the middle, then when values are arranged by size
Most children who filled in the questionnaires, say that they live with both parents (72.7%). As for the other respondents, the data can be synthesized as follows:

- 11% are in the care of a single parent, as a result of divorce / separation (8.6% are in the care of the mother, and 2.4% are in the care of the father);
- 5.4% live with the mother, the father working abroad, 2.8% live with somebody else (grandparents, relatives, other adults), both parents working abroad, and 2.5% live with the father, the mother working abroad;
- 2.4% are in the care of a single parent, the other one being dead;
- 3.2% say they live with somebody else (relatives or not) for various reasons.

In this case, we should underline the size of the migration abroad, which affects approximately 11% of the households with children between 10 and 18, in almost 8% of the cases one parent working abroad and in approximately 3% of the cases both parents working abroad. Obviously (this is not the case of this cohort), households with children under 10 years of age and those without children are not included in these figures.

Most children (85%) consider that the financial situation of the household / family they come from is similar to that of their friends / colleagues. Following the evolution in
time of this indicator, we notice that this data is similar to the data from the studies carried out by Save the Children⁴.

From the perspective of the analysed socio-demographic variables, male respondents stated, to a statistically significant higher extent, that the financial situation of the family is better than the one of the majority of the people their age, $\chi^2(2) = 11.34$, $p < .05$.

**Family Situation - Parents' Opinions**

The average size of a household, for the cohort of parents is of 3.92 people (the modal value is 3 and the median value is 4). As for the number of children per household, the average value is 1.57 (the modal and median value being 1). The net average income per household is 2,222 lei, 25% of the households having a total income below 1,200 lei, 50% under 2,000 lei and 75% under 3,000 lei.

In terms of percentages, 80% of the households in the cohort are made of maximum four people, and 20% of five or more.

Most respondents, 86%, when referring to the marital status say that they are married, and 2% are cohabitating. In approximately 11% of the entire cohort (family with children at a school age, under 18) we talk about single parent families.

Approximately a quarter of the parents say that the current living standard is higher than last year's, 53% say it is similar, and 21% say it is lower.

From the perspective of the consumption needs, 5.6% of the respondents said that the current income is enough to purchase the necessities, without restrictions, 35% may buy various goods, but with restrictions, and 18.2% that they can ensure their daily living, but cannot buy other goods. At the same time, almost 27% of the respondents say that the income is enough just for the basic necessities, and 13% that they don't have enough even for this.

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⁴ CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, National Sociological Study, Bucharest, 2013
In terms of the household size, we see that there are significantly more households with 5 or more members that say they cannot provide for the basic necessities ($\chi^2(5) = 38.91, p < .01$).
The data is similar in the case of monoparental families, these having statistically significantly more difficulties in providing the basic necessities ($\chi^2(5) = 37.44, p < .01$).

25% of the parents say that often they cannot buy the necessary goods for their children, and other 30% say they cannot purchase (with the same frequency) other things (toys, books). At the same time, 50% of the respondents say they cannot provide the necessary goods for their children, but with a lower frequency, rarely and very rarely, respectively.

Analysing the data from the perspective of the household size, we see that big families, made of five members or more are more often in the position of not being able to buy the necessary goods for their children ($\chi^2(5) = 25.88, p < .01$), and in the position of not being able to purchase other things for their children, like toys and books ($\chi^2(5) = 28.59, p < .01$).

The situation repeats in the case of monoparental families, the number of those that cannot buy the basic necessities for their children being statistically significantly higher, ($\chi^2(5) = 40.62, p < .01$) just like those that cannot buy other categories of goods ($\chi^2(5) = 23.78, p < .01$).
Moreover, 46% of the respondents say that it happened for them not to be able to buy basic food products (bread, sugar, oil), 15% saying that this happens often or very often.

In this case too, the most affected are big households ($\chi^2(5) = 48.84, p < .01$), those that have more than four children ($\chi^2(5) = 78.29, p < .01$) and monoparental families ($\chi^2(5) = 20.06, p < .01$).

The differences underlined above remain if we analyse the data from the residential point of view, people in the rural areas saying that it happens more often, compared to the ones in the urban areas, for them not to be able to provide the necessities for their children ($\chi^2(5) = 14.19, p < .05$) or not to be able to buy basic food products ($\chi^2(5) = 34.02, p < .01$).

**Family Environment**
87% of the parents say that it happened to them to argue with the wife/husband, most of them saying that this happens rarely or very rarely (62%). Out of these 87%, 16% admit that there were cases when they argued in front of the children.

The percentages are similar to those from other studies carried out by Save the Children, like in the case of „CHILD NEGLECT AND ABUSE, National Sociologic Studies, 2013“, 83% of the parents said that they argue with their partner, 14% saying that they do this in front of the children.

Children's Relationship with Their Parents

Most children (91.8%) said that they have a good or very good relationship with their parents.

From the perspective of the demographic variables analysed, we notice there are no statistically significant differences starting from the background, gender or ethnicity of the children who answered the questionnaires. In other words, the children in the rural areas describe their relationship with their parents similarly to those in the urban areas, the girls similar to the boys etc.

If in the cases described at the paragraph above, the answer are similar starting from the background, gender or ethnicity, when analysing the data starting with the children’s age, education in particular, we see that middle school students describe
this relationship as being very good to a greater extent than the high school ones ($\chi^2(4) = 48.79, p < .01$).

When it comes to various activities and ways to spend time with the family, most children say that the mother is the one who listens to them when they have a problem and helps them with the homework (if there is somebody who helps them with the homework).
It's worth to note that almost 58% of the students said that nobody helps them with their homework, the percentage being of 72% for high school students and 43% for middle school children. The difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2(5) = 121.10, p < .01$).

![Bar chart](chart.png)

As asked how supervised by their family they feel, 65.5% of the student said that „family always knows what I am doing”, while 26% said that they are sometimes left unsupervised, and 5.5% are often in this situation.

In terms of the gender of the respondents, the number of the girls who said they are supervised by the family is statistically significantly higher than that of boys ($\chi^2(3) = 38.36, p < .01$). Also, there are more high school students than middle school ones who said that family „often leaves me unsupervised” or that „nobody ever asks what I am doing” ($\chi^2(3) = 20.40, p < .01$).

**General Opinions on the Education of Children**

Most parents tend to show a moderate agreement towards the statement „if a parent loves his/her child, he/she must fulfil all the child's wishes”, most respondent
selecting the mid value of the scale (the modal value is 5), and the median value of the entire cohort is 5.94.

The situation is similar for the statement “if a parent wants to discipline the child, he/she must punish the child every time the child makes a mistake”, most subjects choosing 5, the average being lower by one point than in the previous case, respectively 4.85.

In terms of percentages, 74% of the parents selected a number between 5 and 10, for the first statement (“if a parent loves his/her child, he/she must fulfil all the child’s wishes”) and 57% for the second one.

Analysing the data from the perspective of the socio-demographic variables (gender, income, residence, household size) we see there are no statistically significant differences for a level of trust of 95%.

Referring to the sanctioning of children’s improper behaviours, 62% of the parents agree with cancelling certain privileges as punishment, and 58% of the parents said that the child has the bear the natural consequences of her/his deed, and 51% said that the solution is not to support certain activities that the child prefers. Also,
approximately one of five parents think that, for the improper behaviours of children, any sanction is useful, no matter how harsh, as the important thing is not to repeat the mistake.

A more detailed analysis shows us that there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the opinions on the sanctioning of improper behaviours from the perspective of the respondents’ gender; in other words, both men and women have a similar opinion. The situation is similar if we compare the data to the household size, the opinions on sanctioning improper behaviours being similar in the case of the respondents who come from larger households (more than five people), and in the case of families with fewer members.

However, for the statement „any sanction, the harsher the better, the important thing is not to repeat the mistake” we see that the data defers depending on the income, namely people with income lower than 1000 lei agree to a significantly higher extent than those with higher income ($\chi^2(6) = 23.88, p < .01$).

Also, in the case of the residential environment, even if in terms of agreeing or disagreeing with the types of sanctions that can be applied to children there are no statistically significant differences, we see that people in the rural areas are significantly more inclined ($p < .01$) towards the answer „I don’t know/ No answer”.

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**In opinia dumneavoastră, ce sancțiuni trebuie aplicate copiilor pentru comportamente neadecvate?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Da</th>
<th>Nu</th>
<th>Nu știu/ Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orică sancțiune, cu cât mai aspră, cu atât mai bine, important este să nu mai repede greșeala.</td>
<td>19,8%</td>
<td>75,7%</td>
<td>4,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O sancțiune pe care nu au mai aplicat-o și care să îl surprindă pe copil prin noutatea ei.</td>
<td>19,8%</td>
<td>74,1%</td>
<td>6,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să suporte consecvențele ce decurg natural din fapta sa.</td>
<td>58,1%</td>
<td>37,1%</td>
<td>4,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să i se retragă sprijinul pentru anumite activități pe care le preferă.</td>
<td>51,4%</td>
<td>44,8%</td>
<td>3,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să i se anuleze anumite privilegiuri de care se bucură.</td>
<td>62,3%</td>
<td>34,8%</td>
<td>2,8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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$\chi^2(6) = 23.88, p < .01$.
Children's Opinions

Most children said that they are happy at school (73% of the answers, the sum of the first and second choice). However, if for the first choice, most children have a positive feeling towards the time spent at school, for the second choice we have answers like: indifferent (25%), nervous (19%), shy (11%) tensed (11%), insecure (10%) or worried (6%).

![Graph showing children's feelings at school](image)

Most children said they spend their time (or play) outside the class with several classmates (90% of those who answered the questionnaires), 7% said that they do this with only one classmate, and 3% said they spend their time alone.

In terms of this last item analysed, we see that there is a significantly greater number of girls who spend time / play with only one classmate ($\chi^2(2) = 8.85, p < .05$).
Referring to the educational results from the previous year, 74% of the children said that these were good or very good, 23% said they were average and 3% said they were poor or very poor.

In terms of the socio-demographic variables, we see that the number girls who say they have good results is significantly higher ($\chi^2(4) = 38.91, p < .01$), just like in the
case of middle school students compared to high school students ($\chi^2(4) = 36.03, p < .01$) and like the students in the urban areas, compared to the ones in the rural areas ($\chi^2(4) = 18.62, p < .01$).

From the entire cohort, 42% of the children said that there are cases when they skip school without a good reason, 56% of them saying that they do this once a month or more rarely, 21% twice or three times a month, and 22% at least once a week.

A more detailed analysis shows that the percentage of boys who said that they skip school is significantly higher than the girls’ ($\chi^2(2) = 11.03, p < .01$), just like in the case of high school students, compared to middle school students ($\chi^2(2) = 80.32, p < .01$). Also, the frequency with which they say they skip school for an unjustified reason is higher for boys and for high school students.

Most children, over 95%, said that their parents come to the parents’ meetings and are interested to find out about grades (approximately ¾ said they do this very often). Children say that their parents talk to the teachers/ form teacher, but in this case most of them said this happens ‘sometimes’. Also, most respondents said that their parents check to see if they were at school.

Starting from the gender of the respondents, we see that girls say their parents are more often interested in their grades than in the case of boys ($\chi^2(2) = 24.29, p < .01$). In terms of the other means used by parents to keep in touch with the school, we see no significant differences for gender; in other words the opinions expressed by children are similar for this variable.
Another variable that shows statistically significant differences is the education cycle attended by children. Thus, those attending middle school say, to a greater extent than those in high school, that their parents come more often to parents’ meetings, that they are interested in their grades, that they stay in touch with the form master / teachers or that their parents check to see if they were at school (p < .01).

Parents’ Opinions

According to the opinions of most parents, their child / children go to school regularly (98% of the respondents).

Only 2% of the parents said that their child regularly skips school. Their percentage is too small to present a statistical analysis of the reasons for which the child doesn’t go to school; however we can mention the main categories of answers, without an hierarchy. Thus, we see cases when the child has to work to earn money, or must take care of the younger siblings or help with the household chores, often gets sick and doesn’t want to go to school.

Referring to children’s educational results, almost 90% of the parents said that these were good or very good, 8% said they were average and 2% said they were poor or very poor.
A more detailed analysis shows that parents in the urban areas tend to consider the results of the children as very good, while most of those in the rural areas said these are good ($\chi^2(5) = 11.06, p < .05$). The same thing applied to the respondents coming from households with less than 5 people ($\chi^2(5) = 14.17, p < .01$) and those with a high income ($\chi^2(15) = 67.87, p < .01$).

Talking about how often they go to school to find out about their child’s situation, 38% of the parents said that they do this once a month, and other 37% said they only go to meetings. At the same time, 9% of the respondents said that they go to school to find out about their children only if they are called.
We see that, in terms of gender, women have a closer connection to school, compared to men ($\chi^2(8) = 25.98$, $p < .01$). Also, in the last year, the respondents in the rural areas said they went significantly more often to school to find out about the situation of their children only when they were called ($\chi^2(8) = 27.49$, $p < .01$), the same thing being valid for those with big households, with more than five members ($\chi^2(8) = 23.03$, $p < .01$).
THE GROUP OF FRIENDS

Most children (81%) said that they have many friends, and that these friends have the same age or are also of different ages. Just 3% of those who said they have friends, said that these are adults and under 1% said they do not have friends outside the family.

In terms of gender, we see that there is a significantly higher number of girls who said they have few friends ($\chi^2(2) = 16.30, p < .01$). Also, the number of children in the rural areas who said they have many friends is significantly higher ($\chi^2(2) = 14.18, p < .01$), just like in the case of middle school students ($\chi^2(2) = 63.59, p < .01$).

Irrespective of their statement that they have many or few friends, approximately 70% of the children said that their parents know all or most of their friends. We should underline that there is a greater number of girls who said that their friends are known by their parents ($\chi^2(4) = 20.53, p < .01$), just like in the case of middle school students ($\chi^2(4) = 84.47, p < .01$).

In terms of the parents' opinion about their group of friends, most children (80% of the entire cohort) said that their parents like their friends a lot or very much.
In terms of gender, we see that there is a significantly higher number of boys who said their parents do not approve of their friends ($\chi^2(4) = 27.63, p < .01$). As expected, the situation is similar for high school students, as a lower number of high school students said that their parents approve of their group of friends ($\chi^2(4) = 19.98, p < .01$).
Most children, 78% of them, said that their family never stopped them from being friends with somebody. Out of the 22% saying the contrary, most of them said that the reason for which their parents forbid them to be friends with somebody was because such friends are considered to be a bad influence.
ABUSE AND CHILD PUNISHMENT BEHAVIOURS

Talking about different forms of family abuse, emotional or physical, it must be said that this study doesn’t want to show the incidence, but to underline if certain types of abuse having children as victims are associated to different measured bullying behaviours5.

Also, we must keep in mind that we are referring to abusive behaviours perceived by the respondents as being more frequent, abuses that took place in the last year.

Thus, 21% of the children said that they often had their ear pulled or they were slapped by their parents or caregivers in the last year, and 5% said they got hit with various objects. At the same time, 7% said they were humiliated in front of other adults or children and 9% said they were cursed or harsh words were used.

![Image]

In terms of the answers given by parents, we notice that approximately 18% said that, in the last ear, they often pulled the ears of or slapped the child when the child did something bad, and 6% said they hit the child with an object (belt, stick) in a similar

5 The detailed anaysis of the association between family abuse and bullying is provided in the next chapter
situation. For this last item (severe physical abuse), we see that approximately 10% of the parents prefer not to answer, thus existing the possibility that the percentage of those that actually do this (hit the child using various objects) is significantly higher.

When we refer to the statistic data available\(^6\), we see that the percentage of parents who said they often slap the child or pull his/her ears is identical to that of the parents who said they agree with a beating when the child does something bad (the study about the incidence of abuse and neglect carried out by Save the Children in 2013).

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\(^6\) CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, National Sociological Study, Bucharest, 2013
THE QUANTITATIVE DIMENSION OF BULLYING

The Notoriety of the Term

Asked if they heard about the term „bullying”, 48% of the children said yes, while 52% said they have never heard it / do not know it. Of those who said that they have heard about it, 35% said they have seen it, they saw it on the internet, 30% on TV, 24% from the English class, and 13% from the form teacher's class.

Talking about what they understand by bullying, most of those who have heard about it, said that it is a form of aggression, physical or verbal (25%), of insult or humiliation (14%) or of harassment (13%).

In terms of the gender of the respondents, we see that 51% of the girls said that they heard about bullying, compared to 44% of the boys. The difference is statistically significant, (\(\chi^2(1) = 4.98, p < .05\)).

The term is better known in the urban areas, 51% of the children who lives in cities or municipalities said they have heard about „bullying”, compared to 43% of the rural respondents. Also, the difference is statistically significant, (\(\chi^2(1) = 5.30, p < .05\)).
The notoriety of the term is higher amongst high school students (57%) compared to the middle school ones (37%) ($\chi^2(1) = 39.53, p < .01$).

**Bullying amongst Children**

Bullying behaviours were measured starting from three dimensions, respectively the author of the action (bully), the target of the action (bullied) and the witness, and actions associated to bullying were measured for each of these dimensions, like: group exclusion or the threat of group exclusion, the threat of physical violence, humiliation, goods destruction, physical violence.

To simplify the subsequent data analysis, the answers were recoded, in terms of the presence or absence of an action or behaviour. Thus, the answers „very often/often”, „not often, nor rarely”, „very rarely/rarely” were interpreted as bullying behaviours, but „never” as the lack of such acts. The differential analysis of the data follows this approach, for all three dimensions mentioned above: bully, bullied and witness.

The statistic data was analysed based on the socio-demographic (gender, ethnicity, residential area, age, education cycle), as well as based on other types of statistic data previously described in this research (family situation, family climate, the relationship between the child and the family, school results and group of friends).

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7 See Table 1
Bullying behaviours where the child is the initiator of the action (bully)

Table 1 The percentage of the total number of children who said that they were the authors of the action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comportamente pe care tu le ai față de alți copii</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată / Nu știu/Nu răspun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Să spui altor copiii să nu se joace cu un anumit copil.</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>5,4%</td>
<td>16,6%</td>
<td>68,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să interzici unui alt copil să participe la activitățile grupului din care faceți parte.</td>
<td>3,9%</td>
<td>3,2%</td>
<td>15,7%</td>
<td>74,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să ameninți că dai afară din grup un alt copil dacă nu face ce îi ceri.</td>
<td>3,1%</td>
<td>3,4%</td>
<td>11,3%</td>
<td>78,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să ameninți că lovești sau bați un alt copil.</td>
<td>3,6%</td>
<td>2,6%</td>
<td>15,9%</td>
<td>74,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să umilești / să faci de rușine un alt copil.</td>
<td>2,8%</td>
<td>2,6%</td>
<td>13,3%</td>
<td>78,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să râspândești zvonuri cu privire la alți copii.</td>
<td>2,0%</td>
<td>3,3%</td>
<td>19,2%</td>
<td>72,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să distrugi lucrurile unui alt copil dacă te-au supărat pe el.</td>
<td>1,6%</td>
<td>1,7%</td>
<td>9,4%</td>
<td>84,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să împingi sau să îmbrâncești alți copii.</td>
<td>2,9%</td>
<td>3,5%</td>
<td>19,0%</td>
<td>72,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să rânești ușor alți copii prin comportamente fizice (să lovești ușor, să ciupești, să mușți etc.).</td>
<td>4,7%</td>
<td>4,8%</td>
<td>20,4%</td>
<td>67,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să bați alți copii.</td>
<td>2,3%</td>
<td>2,1%</td>
<td>11,2%</td>
<td>81,1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behaviours that envisage the exclusion of a child from group:

In terms of the exclusion of a child from a group, we see that between 18% and 28% of the respondents said that they started such action, its frequency being described in Table 1.

Analysing the data from the perspective of the gender, environment and education cycle attended by the respondents, for the above-mentioned behaviours, we can observe that:

- “Telling other children not to play with a certain child.”
  - it is more likely for boys to do this, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 26.61$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .16$, $p < .01$;
o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data related to the environment of origin, both children from the rural and urban areas saying that they do this to a similar extent;
o there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said this, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 12.07$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .10$, $p < .01$.

“Forbidding another child to participate to the activities of your group.”

o it is more likely for boys to stop another child from taking part to group activities, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 34.47$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .18$, $p < .01$;
o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data related to the environment of origin, both children from the rural and urban areas saying that they do this to a similar extent;
o there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have excluded another child from the group, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 6.27$, $p < .05$, $\Phi = .08$, $p < .05$.

“Threatening to kick out of the group another child if he/she doesn’t do what you ask him/her.”

o it is more likely for boys to threaten another child with group exclusion, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 30.49$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .17$, $p < .01$;
o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data related to the environment of origin, both children from the rural and urban areas saying that they do this to a similar extent;
o there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have threatened to exclude another child from the group, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 16.51$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .13$, $p < .01$. 
Considering the financial situation of the family of origin, it is more likely for the respondents who come from families “richer than those of most children” to ask for the group exclusion of a child. $\chi^2(2) = 10.23, p < .01$.

Another dimension where we notice statistically significant differences in terms of the group exclusion behaviours, is the relationship that parents have with the school; thus, children with parents who never come to the parents’ meetings said, to a greater extent, that they have asked for another child to be excluded from the group of peers, $\chi^2(2) = 14.73, p < .01$.

Also, slight physical child abuse, in the family of origin (ear pulling or slapping) is significantly associated to bullying behaviours. Thus, children who said they were slapped or had their ears pulled by their parents said, to a greater extent, that:

- they have told other children not to play with a certain child, $\chi^2(1) = 27.28, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01$;
- they have stopped another child from taking part to their group activities, $\chi^2(1) = 21.10, p < .01, \Phi = .14, p < .01$;
- they have threatened to exclude from the group another child, if that child doesn’t do what they ask, $\chi^2(1) = 28.50, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01$;

Also, sever physical child abuse, in the family of origin (hitting with objects), increases the chances for such abused children to become bullies in bullying behaviours. In other words, children who said that they had been hit with objects said, to a greater extent, that they asked other children to exclude somebody from the group ($\chi^2(1) = 22.48, p < .01, \Phi = .15, p < .01$), that they have excluded themselves another child from a group ($\chi^2(1) = 8.29, p < .01, \Phi = .9, p < .01$), or they threatened another child with exclusion ($\chi^2(1) = 4.71, p < .05, \Phi = .07, p < .05$).

Behaviours That Envisage the Threat of Physical Violence or Humiliation
At cohort level, 22% of the children said that it happened to them to hit another child, 19% said that they humiliated somebody and 25% that they had spread rumours about another child. The data on the frequency of these actions is available in Table 1.

Analysing the data in terms of **gender, environment and education cycle** attended by the respondents, for the behaviours that target humiliation and physical violence threat, we observe that:

“**Threatening to hit or beat another child.**”
- it is more likely for boys to threaten to beat another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, \( \chi^2(1) = 45.27, p < .01, \Phi = .21, p < .01; \)
- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have threatened to hit or beat up another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, \( \chi^2(1) = 28.23, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01. \)

“**Humiliating / shaming another child.**”
- it is more likely for boys to say that they have humiliated or shamed another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, \( \chi^2(1) = 19.53, p < .01, \Phi = .14, p < .01; \)
- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have humiliated or shamed another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, \( \chi^2(1) = 31.16, p < .01, \Phi = .17, p < .01. \)

“**Spreading rumours about other children.**”
- it is more likely for boys to say that they have spread rumours about another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant
and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 10.14$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .10$, $p < .01$;

- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the education cycle;

The data analysis in terms of different types of family abuse the child can suffer, as victim, underlines the association between those abuses and the role of bully that a child can have in a bullying behaviour.

Thus, children who said that, in the last year, they had been ridiculed by their parents in front of other children, also said, to a greater extent, that they also humiliated other children $\chi^2(1) = 43.73$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .20$, $p < .01$, or threatened another child, $\chi^2(1) = 41.71$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .19$, $p < .01$.

Children who said that, in the last year, they had been the victim of a slight family abuse, also said, to a significantly greater extent, that they also humiliated another child $\chi^2(1) = 18.06$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .13$, $p < .01$ or threatened to beat up another child, $\chi^2(1) = 27.10$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .16$, $p < .01$. The differences are similar also for severe physical abuse, thus, the child who is a victim of this type of family abuse is more likely to threaten another child $\chi^2(1) = 28.16$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .16$, $p < .01$ or to humiliate him/her, $\chi^2(1) = 22.74$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .15$, $p < .01$.

**Behaviours That Involve Physical Violence or Destruction of Goods**

13% of the children who took part in the study said that they had destroyed the goods of another child, after they got upset with that child, 16% said they beat up another child and 30% said that they slightly hit a classmate or another person of similar age. The frequency of such behaviours is presented in Table 1.

Analysing the data in terms of gender, environment and education cycle attended by the respondents, for the behaviours that involve physical violence, we observe that:
“Destroying the favourite belongings of another child if you got upset with him/her.”

- it is more likely for boys to say that they have destroyed the things of another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 16.27$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .12$, $p < .01$;
- we see no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data in terms of the area of origin; in other words it is just as likely for a child in the urban area and one in the rural area to destroy somebody else’s things;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have destroyed the things belonging to another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 18.87$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .10$, $p < .01$.

“Pushing or shoving other children.”

- it is more likely for boys to say that they have shoved another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 60.15$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .24$, $p < .01$;
- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have shoved or pushed another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 8.58$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .09$, $p < .01$.

“Slightly hurting other children with physical behaviours (slightly hitting, pinching, biting etc.).”

- it is more likely for boys to say that they have slightly hurt another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 8.50$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .09$, $p < .01$;
- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
o there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have slightly hurt another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 24.54$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .15$, $p < .01$.

“Beating up other children.”

o it is more likely for boys to say that they have beaten up another child, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 62.35$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .24$, $p < .01$;

o there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;

o there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have beaten up another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 7.76$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .09$, $p < .01$.

In conclusion, we can say that the male respondents said, to a greater extent, that they are bullies in all the measured bullying behaviours, just like high school students.
Just like bullying that involves group exclusion or humiliation, we see the association of the behaviours that involve repeated physical violence amongst children to child abuse in families. Thus, a child that had his/her ears pulled or was slapped by his/her parents is more likely to slightly hurt other children $\chi^2(1) = 34.73, p < .01$, $\Phi = .18$, $p < .01$ or beat them up, $\chi^2(1) = 27.11, p < .01$, $\Phi = .16$, $p < .01$.

The differences remain the same also when it comes to severe abuse in families (hitting with different objects or a belt), as children who were victims of such
behaviours said, to a significantly greater extent, that they had beaten up another child, $\chi^2(1) = 31.05$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .17$, $p < .01$.

Thus, we notice the association between the different forms of physical or emotional abuse that children say they suffer in their families and the role of bully in the case of bullying behaviours, which can occur in a group of peers, either if we talk about the environment in school, outside the school or online.
Bullying behaviours where the child is the victim

Table 2 The percentage of the total number of children who said that they were the victims of the action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Câte de des ți se întâmplă următoarele situaţii...?</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată</th>
<th>Nu ştiu/Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Să ceră un copil altui copil să nu să joace / vorbească cu tine.</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să îţi interzică un alt copil să participe la activităţile unui grup.</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se te ameninţe alt copil că te dă afară din grup.</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să te ameninţe alt copil că te loveşte sau te bate.</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să te umilească sau să te facă de ruşine un alt copil.</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să răspândească zvonuri despre tine un alt copil.</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să îţi distrugă lucrurile un alt copil.</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să te împingă sau să te îmbrâncească un alt copil.</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să te rânească uşor un alt copil (să te lovească uşor, să te ciupească, să te muşte etc.)</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să te bată un alt copil.</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behaviours that envisage group exclusion:

In terms of group exclusion, 23% of the children said that there were cases when they had been threatened with group exclusion, 31% said that they had been excluded and 39% that another child asked somebody not to talk or play with those who took part in the research. At a first glance, we see that the percentages are higher when the child said he/she was the victim of this type of bullying, compared to when the child said he/she was the bully. The differences are between 5% and 11%, depending on the dimension measured.

Analysing the data in terms of gender, environment and education cycle attended by the respondents, for the behaviours where children said that they have been victims of bullying, we observe that:

“A child asking another child not to play with / talk to you.”
o it is more likely for boys to say that they have been the victims of such behaviour, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 7.53, p < .01, \Phi = .09, p < .01$;

o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data related to the environment of origin, both children from the rural and urban areas saying, to a similar extent, that somebody asked another child not to speak to them;

o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend; in other words they said that they have been the victim of such behaviours, to a similar extent, irrespective if they are high school or middle school students.

“Another child forbidding you to take part in the activities of a group.”

o it is more likely for boys to say that they have been the victim of such behaviour, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 7.41, p < .01, \Phi = .09, p < .01$;

o there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;

o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend.

“Being threatened by another child to be kicked out of the group.”

o it is more likely for boys to say that they have been the victim of such behaviour, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 18.49, p < .01, \Phi = .13, p < .01$;

o there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;

o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend.
Considering the financial situation of the family of origin, it is more likely for the respondents who said that they come from families "poorer than those of most children" to say that they have been excluded from the group by another child, $\chi^2(2) = 11.27, p < .01$.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the role of a family abuse victim, either we talk about emotional or physical abuse, is associated to the one of aggressor in the case of bullying behaviours amongst children.

When we analyse the profile of the bullying victims, we see a set of statistically significant differences related to the chances a child has to be the victim of repeated peer harassment, starting from various forms of abuse suffered in the family of origin. Thus, we talk about a double relation, both of perpetuating abusive behaviours, as well as "getting used" to the role of victim.

Thus, children who said that often had their ears pulled or were slightly hit by their parents, said, to a significantly greater extent, that they were excluded from the group by another child $\chi^2(1) = 16.68, p < .01, \Phi = .12, p < .01$. The above-mentioned differences remain the same also when it comes to severe abuse in families, $\chi^2(1) = 27.90, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01$.

**Behaviours That Envisage the Threat of Physical Violence or Humiliation**

29% of the children who filled in the questionnaires said that other children had threatened to hit them or beat them up, 24% said they had been humiliated and ridiculed in the group of peers and 37% said that rumours about them had been spread.

Analysing the data in terms of **gender, environment and education cycle** attended by the respondents, we outline that:

- "Being threatened by another child to be hit or beaten."
  - it is more likely for boys to say that they have been in a situation where they were threatened to be beaten by another child, the difference in
terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, \( \chi^2(1) = 61.67, p < .01, \Phi = .24, p < .01; \)
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
- there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend.

“Being humiliated or ridiculed by another child.”

- it is more likely for boys to say that they have been in a situation where they were humiliated, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, \( \chi^2(1) = 14.74, p < .01, \Phi = .12, p < .01; \)
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have been humiliated or ridiculed by another child, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, \( \chi^2(1) = 9.78, p < .01, \Phi = .10, p < .01. \)

“Another child spreading rumours about you.”

- there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender;
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said that rumours have been spread about them, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, \( \chi^2(1) = 27.50, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01. \)

Just like in the case of behaviours envisaging the exclusion or isolation of a child, the significant differences, based on the previous role of victim of physical or mental abuse in families, can be found also in the harassment that implies peer humiliation:

children who said that they have been ridiculed in front of other children or adults by their parents, said, to a significantly greater extent, that they were
humiliated by another child in a typical bullying situation $\chi^2(1) = 37.30, p < .01, \Phi = .19, p < .01$.

there is a significantly higher percentage of children who said that they had been victims of humiliation in the group of peers $\chi^2(1) = 35.74, p < .01, \Phi = .18, p < .01$ (the situation is similar also in the case of more severe forms of family abuse).

Behaviours That Involve Physical Violence or Destruction of Goods

32% of the children said that they had been pushed or shoved by other children, 39% said that they had been slightly hurt and 16% that they had been beaten. In terms of gender, environment and education cycle, we see that:

“Another child destroying your things.”
- it is more likely for boys to say that they have been in a situation where their things were destroyed, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 7.75, p < .01, \Phi = .09, p < .01$;
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
- there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said their goods have been destroyed by other children, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 11.00, p < .01, \Phi = .10, p < .01$.

“Being pushed or shoved by another child.”
- it is more likely for boys to say that they have been pushed or shoved by other children, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 39.40, p < .01, \Phi = .19, p < .01$;
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
o there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend.

**“Being slightly hurt by another child (slightly hit, pinched, bitten etc.)”**

- it is more likely for boys to say that they have been slightly hurt by other children, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 6.40, p < .05, \Phi = .08, p < .05$;
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
- there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend;

**“Being beaten up by another child.”**

- it is more likely for boys to say that they have been slightly hurt by other children, the difference in terms of gender is statistically significant and the intensity of the association is low, $\chi^2(1) = 49.87, p < .01, \Phi = .22, p < .01$;
- there are no statistically significant differences based on the area of origin;
- there are no statistically significant differences when we analyse the data based on the education cycle that children attend;

Similar to the relationship between the role of victim of bullying behaviours, which involve isolation and humiliation, and the one of victim of various forms of family abuse, we see the same association when it comes to repeated harassment amongst children that involves physical violence:

- children who said that they often had their ears pulled or had been slapped by their parents said, to a significantly greater extent, that they had been shoved by other children, $\chi^2(1) = 25.03, p < .01, \Phi = .15, p < .01$, that they had been slightly hurt in their group of peers $\chi^2(1) = 23.68, p < .01, \Phi = .15, p < .01$, or they had been beaten up by other children $\chi^2(1) = 13.33, p < .01, \Phi = .11, p < .01$.
- children who said that they had been often hit with various objects by their parents said, to a significantly greater extent, that they had been shoved by
other children, $\chi^2(1) = 31.74, p < .01, \Phi = .17, p < .01$, that they had been slightly hurt in their group of peers $\chi^2(1) = 35.15, p < .01, \Phi = .18, p < .01$, or they had been beaten up by other children $\chi^2(1) = 12.62, p < .01, \Phi = .11, p < .01$.

In conclusion, we can say that the male respondents said, to a significantly greater extent, that they are victims in most of the measured bullying behaviours. When referring to the role of bully, if we see the same differences for the high school students, in the case of the role of victim the there are fewer associations, these being characteristic especially to bullying that involves humiliation.
Also, we notice an important association between the different forms of physical or emotional abuse that children say they suffer in their families and the role of bully in the case of bullying behaviours, which can occur in a group of peers. Thus, we can underline a double relation, both of perpetuating abusive behaviours, as well as „getting used” to the role of victim.
Bullying Behaviours Where the Child Is the Witness

The bullying behaviours witnessed by children were measured starting from the most visible actions in the group of peers, describing thus situations that can be easily noticed in a typical social interaction. Obviously, children declare that they have been more often in the position of witness, than in that of the bully or victim, but this dimension is very useful to define the size of the phenomenon in the groups of peers, taking into account all the environments where these can happen. A detailed analysis based on the environment where these behaviours take place, is presented in the next chapter.

Thus, 84% of the children, who filled in the questionnaires, said that they witnessed a situation where a child threatens another one, 80% witnessed a situation where a child is humiliated by another child, 78% slight aggression (slight pushing or hitting) and 69% a fight between two children. The frequency of such behaviours is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 The percentage of the total number of children who said that they were the witnesses of the action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cât de des ți se întâmplă următoarele situații...? Comportamente la care ai fost martor / ai văzut doi copii făcând acest lucru</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată</th>
<th>Nu știu/Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut cum un copil amenință un alt copil.</td>
<td>38,0%</td>
<td>19,3%</td>
<td>27,3%</td>
<td>13,8%</td>
<td>1,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut cum un copil umilește sau face de rușine un alt copil.</td>
<td>30,7%</td>
<td>18,6%</td>
<td>30,4%</td>
<td>18,9%</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai auzit că un copil răspândește zvonuri cu privire la alt copil.</td>
<td>36,1%</td>
<td>15,8%</td>
<td>27,3%</td>
<td>18,2%</td>
<td>2,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut cum un copil distrugă lucrurile unui alt copil.</td>
<td>21,5%</td>
<td>14,6%</td>
<td>31,5%</td>
<td>30,1%</td>
<td>2,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut cum un copil îmbrâncă un alt copil.</td>
<td>28,6%</td>
<td>17,4%</td>
<td>32,2%</td>
<td>20,0%</td>
<td>1,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut cum un copil lovește ușor un alt copil.</td>
<td>29,0%</td>
<td>18,5%</td>
<td>30,1%</td>
<td>20,2%</td>
<td>2,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut cum un copil bate un alt copil.</td>
<td>23,8%</td>
<td>14,2%</td>
<td>30,7%</td>
<td>28,2%</td>
<td>3,0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behaviours That Envisage the Threat of Physical Violence or Humiliation

“*You saw a child threatening another child.*”
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender; in other words, the situation was noticed to the same extent by male and female respondents;

there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin, the percentage of children in the urban areas who saw a child threatening another child is similar to that of the children in the rural areas;

there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they had seen a child threatening another child, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, \( \chi^2(1) = 57.50, p < .01, \Phi = .23, p < .01. \)

"You saw a child humiliating or ridiculing another child."

there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender;

there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;

there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they had seen a child humiliating or ridiculing another child, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being medium, \( \chi^2(1) = 89.06, p < .01, \Phi = .30, p < .01. \)

"You heard a child spreading rumours about another child."

there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender;

there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;

there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they had seen a child spreading rumours about another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being medium, \( \chi^2(1) = 90.31, p < .01, \Phi = .30, p < .01. \)

Behaviours That Involve Physical Violence or Destruction of Goods

"You saw a child destroying the things belonging to another child."
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender;
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have seen a child destroying the goods belonging to another child, compared to the middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 83.63$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .28$, $p < .01$.

"You saw a child shoving another child."
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender;
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have seen a child shoving another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 73.35$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .26$, $p < .01$.

"You saw a child slightly hitting another child."
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of gender;
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they had seen a child spreading rumours about another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 72.48$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .26$, $p < .01$.

"You saw a child beating another child."
there is a statistically significantly higher number of boys who said they have seen a child beating up another child, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 12.69$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .11$, $p < .01$.
there are no statistically significant differences in terms of the area of origin;
there is a significantly higher number of high school students who said they have seen a child beating up another child, compared to middle school students, the intensity of the association being low, $\chi^2(1) = 78.29$, $p < .01$, $\Phi = .27$, $p < .01$. 
When it comes to the role of witness in various behaviours associated to bullying, we see that the differences in terms of the analysed socio-demographic variables have more nuances:

- for gender, we see a higher chance for the boys to be witnesses just when it is harassment which involves severe physical violence, which shows a certain type of interaction between peers that it is more likely to include boys;
- for education, we see that the number of high school students who said they were witnesses to humiliation or physical aggression between peers, is higher. These situations are more likely to occur more frequently in high school, than in middle school.
Also, we see important differences between the percentages of those who said they were bullies, victims or witnesses in a bullying behaviour. Beyond the fact that it is normal for those who have been bullies or victims to be in much smaller numbers, the witness dimension can provide an overview of the phenomenon.

Thus, the different bullying situations tested, from forms of emotional abuse (threat, humiliation) to physical abuse (both slight and severe aggression) have values between 67% and 85% for the role of witness, irrespective of the environment these take place (school, group of friends, online environment).
The detailed analysis of the environment of the bullying behaviours and of the way children react to them, and of the role, is available in the next chapter.

The Description of a Typical Bullying Situation

The analysis of the environments where bullying behaviours take place started from a typical situation:

“John and George are about the same age. George has the habit of laughing at John, for various reasons, like for the fact that he doesn’t play football well, that he is a nerd, that he doesn’t skip classes with the other kids and so on. Sometimes he is the only one laughing, other times his classmates or friends join him. Sometimes, George softly pushes or hits John. (The role of George and John can be played by two girls or a boy and a girl)”

Children were asked if they have ever been faced with this situation, if they took part in it as bullies or victims and how did they react.

In terms of the environment, the analysis took into account three dimensions: the educational environment (depending on the proximity and nature of the relations between children), the group of friends and the online environment.
In the educational environment, 73% of the children say they have seen a bullying situation amongst peers in the school they attend and 58% in their class. The frequency of such behaviours is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4 The environment where bullying behaviours take place**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ionuț și George sunt cam de aceeași vârstă. George obișnuiește să râdă des de Ionuț, găsind diferite motive, cum ar fi că nu e bun la fotbal, că e tocilor, că nu chiulește cu ceilalți și tot așa. Uneori râde doar el, altele împreună cu alți colegi sau prieteni. Se întâmplă uneori ca George să-l împingă sau să-l lovească pe Ionuț. (În locul lui George și Ionuț se pot afla și două fete, sau o fată și un băiat)</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată</th>
<th>Nu ştiu/Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut întâmplându-se în școala ta asemenea lucruri?</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut întâmplându-se în clasa ta asemenea lucruri?</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut întâmplându-se în grupul tău de prieteni asemenea lucruri?</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai văzut întâmplându-se pe rețelele de socializare asemenea lucruri?</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next environment in terms of bullying frequency is the online one (69% of the respondents) and the environment with the rarest bullying behaviours is the group of friends (46%). We need to underline that the frequency of the harassment behaviours amongst children is higher than in the online environment, followed the school children attend.
When we analyse the data in terms of the respondents’ gender, we see that:

- there are statistically significant differences if we compare the educational environment and the online one, this meaning that both boys and girls notice, to the same extent, bullying behaviours;
- boys said they have seen bullying behaviours, to a significantly higher extent, in the group of friends, $\chi^2(1) = 17.60, p < .01, \Phi = .13, p < .01$.

We also see that the number of respondents in the urban areas said that they witnessed repeated harassment behaviours in the social media, is higher than the number of those in the rural areas, $\chi^2(1) = 24.78, p < .01, \Phi = .15, p < .01$.

The fact that this type of harassment seems to be more present in high schools, as we mentioned in the previous chapter, is supported by the answers given by high
school students for this item (describing a typical bullying situation). Thus, high school students are more likely to declare that they have seen a similar situation, both at school level \( \chi^2(1) = 43.50, p < .01, \Phi = .20, p < .01 \), as well as in their class \( \chi^2(1) = 27.48, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01 \). We see the same differences when it comes to the group of friends \( \chi^2(1) = 41.78, p < .01, \Phi = .20, p < .01 \) or social networks \( \chi^2(1) = 102.24, p < .01, \Phi = .31, p < .01 \).

At cohort level, 29% of the children said they were victims of a situation similar to the one described above. The data is similar to the data obtained by testing various behaviours 8 associated to bullying, where we see that, taking into account all dimensions, from group exclusion to humiliation and physical violence, an average of 29% of the children said they have been the victim of a kind of harassment.

At the same time, 21% of the children said they have repeatedly aggressed or harassed another child (similarly, 21% is the average representing those who said they had one of the behaviours associated to bullying presented in the previous chapter).

Table 5. A Typical Bullying Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ionuț și George sunt cam de aceeași vârstă. George obișnuieste să râdă des de Ionuț, găsind diferite motive, cum ar fi că nu e bun la fotbal, că e tocilar, că nu chiește cu ceiață și tot așa. Uneori râde doar el, alteori împreună cu alții colegi sau prieteni. Se întâmplă uneori ca George să-l împingă sau să-l lovească pe Ionuț. (În locul lui George și Ionuț se pot afla și două fete, sau o fătă și un băiat)</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată / Nu știu/Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Te-ai aflat și tu în locul lui Ionuț? (VICTIMA)</td>
<td>5,0%</td>
<td>4,9%</td>
<td>18,8%</td>
<td>68,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai făcut și tu ce a făcut George? (AGRESOR)</td>
<td>3,1%</td>
<td>3,2%</td>
<td>14,3%</td>
<td>75,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L-ai luat apărarea copilului care s-a aflat în poziția lui Ionuț?</td>
<td>57,8%</td>
<td>17,1%</td>
<td>11,2%</td>
<td>6,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L-ai încurajaț pe cel care s-a comportat ca George</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>3,4%</td>
<td>11,1%</td>
<td>74,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nu ai intervenit</td>
<td>18,3%</td>
<td>11,8%</td>
<td>30,0%</td>
<td>31,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai vorbit cu un adult</td>
<td>32,1%</td>
<td>14,5%</td>
<td>21,9%</td>
<td>23,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai cerut altor copii să intervină</td>
<td>23,0%</td>
<td>14,0%</td>
<td>21,6%</td>
<td>32,4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the way in which a child who witnesses peer bullying says he/she behaves towards the actors involved, most respondents (86%) said they defended the bullied

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8 Their analysis is available in the previous chapter.
child, while 7% said they encouraged the bully. However, 60% of the children say that there are cases when they preferred to stay aside.

Starting from the gender of the respondents, we see that boys are more likely to find themselves in the role of bully, \( \chi^2(1) = 51.23, p < .01, \Phi = .22, p < .01 \), as well as in the role of victim \( \chi^2(1) = 25.85, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01 \).

However, even though in terms of gender there is no difference between those who said they defended the victim, we see that, when we look at those who encouraged the bully, they are mostly boys \( \chi^2(1) = 24.19, p < .01, \Phi = .16, p < .01 \). In other words, even though it is just as likely for a boy or a girl to intervene in defending the victim, boys are more likely to be the ones encouraging the bully.

Talking about the education cycle the respondents attend, we see that middle school students are more likely to be harassment victims, \( \chi^2(1) = 10.08, p < .01, \Phi = .10, p < .01 \), high school students declaring, to a greater extent, that they have been bullies \( \chi^2(1) = 13.12, p < .01, \Phi = .12, p < .01 \). Putting aside the desire to please socially behind the answers, based on the children’s age, we can talk about a trend of separation between the generations, there where possible, of the roles of victim and bully.

Also, high school students said, to a significantly greater extent, that they have encouraged the bully \( \chi^2(1) = 9.08, p < .01, \Phi = .10, p < .01 \) or preferred not to intervene \( \chi^2(1) = 9.03, p < .01, \Phi = .10, p < .01 \).
Analysing the data in terms of the children’s area of residence, we see that students in the urban areas said, to a greater extent, that they part in a situation as the above-mentioned one\(^9\), but the differences are not statistically significant, except for the respondents who said “they didn’t intervene” ($\chi^2(1) = 9.28, p < .01$).

\[\text{Parents’ Opinions on Bullying}\]

9 typical bullying situation, Table 5
Parents’ opinions on bullying behaviours, in which children can be involved, were measured based on two dimensions: as the author of the action (their child is the bully) and as its victim (the child is the victim of bullying). For each dimension, various actions associated to bullying were measured, like: group exclusion or the threat with group exclusion, the threat with physical violence, humiliation, destruction of goods, physical violence.

At a first level, the dimensions described above were measured based on a hypothetical situation, thus, parents were asked if their child could have or could be faced with such behaviours, following that, at a second level, to measure the specific situations where children were victims or bullies, in the last year (obviously the data reflects, in both cases, the cases known by parents).

To simplify the subsequent data analysis, the answers were recoded, in terms of the presence or absence of an action or behaviour. Thus, the answers „very often/ often”, „not often, nor rarely”, „very rarely/ rarely” were interpreted as bullying behaviours, and „never” as the lack of such acts. The inferential analysis of the data follows this approach, for the two dimensions mentioned above: bully and victim.

11 See Table 7
Behaviours the child could have as a bully

When referring to the situations when the child could be the bully in a bullying behaviour, approximately 40% of the parents say that it is possible, when he/she is upset, for the child to ask for the exclusion of another child from the group or to keep another child far away from the playground or from the place where the group meets. Also, 16%-25% of the respondents think that it is possible for their son/daughter to physically bully another child, and 16% said the child could beat up other colleagues, and 25% said that their child could shove or push other children.

Table 6. Behaviours the child could have as a bully

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copilul dvs. AR PUTEA AVEA față de alți copii de vârste apropiate următoarele comportamente?</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată</th>
<th>Nu știu/Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Să spună altora să nu se joace sau să nu fie prieteni cu un anumit coleg.</td>
<td>8,8%</td>
<td>14,5%</td>
<td>18,3%</td>
<td>53,5%</td>
<td>4,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Când este supărat pe un coleg, să îl ţină departe de locul de joacă/de întâlnire al grupului.</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>11,5%</td>
<td>23,5%</td>
<td>54,4%</td>
<td>4,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să amenințe că dă afară din grup un copil dacă acestea nu face ceva ce copilul își dorește.</td>
<td>2,7%</td>
<td>8,6%</td>
<td>16,8%</td>
<td>66,8%</td>
<td>5,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să amenințe că îi lovește sau bate pe colegi.</td>
<td>2,8%</td>
<td>7,4%</td>
<td>13,3%</td>
<td>72,1%</td>
<td>4,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să umilească alții colegi.</td>
<td>1,1%</td>
<td>6,3%</td>
<td>13,9%</td>
<td>74,0%</td>
<td>4,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să răspândească zvonuri și minciuni cu privire la alți copii.</td>
<td>1,5%</td>
<td>5,1%</td>
<td>14,2%</td>
<td>74,9%</td>
<td>4,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să distrugă lucrurile altor colegi când se supără.</td>
<td>1,1%</td>
<td>5,6%</td>
<td>11,6%</td>
<td>77,5%</td>
<td>4,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să împingă sau să îmbrâncească alți colegi.</td>
<td>2,3%</td>
<td>7,8%</td>
<td>14,8%</td>
<td>70,5%</td>
<td>4,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să rănească ușor alți colegi prin comportamente fizice (să lovească ușor, să ciupească, să muște etc.).</td>
<td>1,8%</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>12,3%</td>
<td>75,6%</td>
<td>4,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să bată alți colegi.</td>
<td>1,2%</td>
<td>4,4%</td>
<td>10,7%</td>
<td>79,6%</td>
<td>4,2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we talk about the fact that parents think that, in a bullying situation, their child could be the bully, we see that the difference in terms of the area of origin of the respondent is maintained, the parents in the rural areas declaring, to a significantly greater extent, that their child might beat up other children ($\chi^2(1) = 8.33, p < .01$).

When we analyse the data starting from the parental practices of the respondents, we see that parents who said that they had beaten or humiliated/ridiculed the child, think, at a significantly greater extent, that the child can humiliate or bully another child.
In other words, it is more likely that:

- parents who say they ridiculed the child to consider that their child might: humiliate other children ($\chi^2(1) = 56.46$, $p < .01$), push or shove other children ($\chi^2(1) = 44.86$, $p < .01$), slightly hurt other colleagues ($\chi^2(1) = 69.72$, $p < .01$) or beat up other children ($\chi^2(1) = 57.76$, $p < .01$);

- parents who say they pulled the ears or slapped their child, to think that their child might: humiliate other children ($\chi^2(1) = 18.32$, $p < .01$), push or shove other children ($\chi^2(1) = 25.49$, $p < .01$), slightly hurt other children ($\chi^2(1) = 20.87$, $p < .01$) or beat up other children ($\chi^2(1) = 13.08$, $p < .01$);

- parents who said they have hit their child with an object, like a belt or a stick, to think that their child might: humiliate other children ($\chi^2(1) = 10.63$, $p < .01$), push or shove other children ($\chi^2(1) = 22.76$, $p < .01$), slightly hurt other colleagues ($\chi^2(1) = 19.86$, $p < .01$) or beat up other children ($\chi^2(1) = 22.50$, $p < .01$).
Behaviours the child could have as a victim

In terms of the situations when their child could be the victim, most parents (53%) said that it may happen that their child gets pushed or shoved by his classmates, and (46%) think their child could be slightly hurt. Approximately 20% of the respondents say that the child might get beaten up by his/her colleagues.

Table 8. Behaviours the child could have as a victim

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comportamente cu care copilul dumneavoastră S-AR PUTEA întâlni din partea altor copii de vârste apropiate</th>
<th>Foarte Des / Des</th>
<th>Nici des nici rar</th>
<th>Foarte Rar / Rar</th>
<th>Niciodată</th>
<th>Nu ştiu/Nu răspund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copilul dvs. să fie împins sau îmbrâncit de către colegi.</td>
<td>10,9%</td>
<td>16,3%</td>
<td>26,2%</td>
<td>43,8%</td>
<td>2,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copilul dvs. să fie lovit ușor / ciupit de colegi.</td>
<td>8,0%</td>
<td>14,1%</td>
<td>23,8%</td>
<td>50,6%</td>
<td>3,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copilul dvs. să fie bătut de colegi.</td>
<td>2,2%</td>
<td>4,8%</td>
<td>12,8%</td>
<td>64,2%</td>
<td>16,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Să fie răspândite zvonuri şi minciuni cu privire la copilul dvs.</td>
<td>3,3%</td>
<td>9,4%</td>
<td>19,3%</td>
<td>63,6%</td>
<td>4,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copilul dvs. să fie umilit de către colegi.</td>
<td>3,5%</td>
<td>6,4%</td>
<td>16,5%</td>
<td>68,7%</td>
<td>4,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copilul dvs. să primească porecle în clăsă.</td>
<td>5,3%</td>
<td>11,0%</td>
<td>18,2%</td>
<td>59,6%</td>
<td>5,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copilul dvs. să fie ignorat de partenerii de joacă/grupul de colegi când ei sunt supăraţi pe el/ea.</td>
<td>4,1%</td>
<td>8,3%</td>
<td>19,4%</td>
<td>62,5%</td>
<td>5,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copilului dvs. să i se spună adesea ”nu eşti prietenul meu / amicul meu” dacă nu face ce i se cere.</td>
<td>3,8%</td>
<td>6,6%</td>
<td>18,8%</td>
<td>65,3%</td>
<td>5,6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When analysing the data in terms of the socio-demographic variables, we see that parents who live in the rural areas said, to a significantly greater extent, compared to the ones in the urban area, that their child might get beaten up by his/her colleagues ($\chi^2(1) = 14.21, p < .01$).

When we compare with the parental practices of the respondents, we see that we can talk about an association between the role of victim in family abuse and in bullying.
Thus, parents who said that they had beaten or humiliated/ridiculed the child, think, to a significantly greater extent, that the child can be humiliated or bullied by another child.

In other words, it is more likely that:

- parents who said they ridiculed the child to think that the child might: be humiliated by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 52.65, p < .01$), be pushed or shoved by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 19.90, p < .01$), be slightly hurt by other classmates ($\chi^2(1) = 29.38, p < .01$) or get beaten up by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 49.98, p < .01$);
- parents who said that they used ear pulling or slapping to think that the child might: be humiliated by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 15.46, p < .01$), be shoved or pushed by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 8.90, p < .01$), be slightly hurt by other classmates ($\chi^2(1) = 18.57, p < .01$) or might get beaten up by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 5.05, p < .05$);
- parents who said they have hit the child with an object, to think that the child might: be humiliated by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 20.80, p < .01$), be pushed or shoved by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 9.23, p < .01$), be slightly hurt by other classmates ($\chi^2(1) = 13.03, p < .01$) or get beaten up by other children ($\chi^2(1) = 17.27, p < .01$);

In conclusion, we see that we can talk about a double relation between the role of victim in family abuse and the role of bully or possible victim in bullying. Even if the
tested situation is a hypothetical one, and not a real one, it underlines a certain tolerance of the parents who said that they have humiliated or hit the child, towards bullying-related behaviours.

**Particular Cases When Children Were Victims or Bullies**

Out of the entire cohort, approximately 17% of the parent said they know their child was slightly shoved or pushed in the last year, and 13% know that the child got hit. Under 5% of the parents said that the child was the victim of a serious form of violence or humiliation. A much lower percentage of the respondents said that their child was the bully.

Comparing the answers given by parents to those given by children, we see significant differences related to the incidence of bullying. For example, 19% of the children said that they have humiliated another child, 30% said that they slightly hit a classmate or another person of similar age, and 16% said they have beaten up another child. On the other hand, 24% of the children said that they have been ridiculed in their group of peers, 32% said they have been pushed or shoved by other children, 39% said that they have been slightly hurt and 16% said that they have been beaten up.
Such differences can be explained both by the fact that some people may answer as they think it is expected of them, but especially by the fact that parents are not aware of these situations, when their children are victims or bullies.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Main Conclusion of the Research

The Characteristics of Bullying from the Children’s Perspective

The Notoriety of the Concept

! Only 13% of the children have heard about bullying in an educational context, the class of the form teacher, respectively. TV and Internet are still the main sources of information for this phenomenon.

The term "bullying" is known by approximately 48% of the children. Out of those who said that they have heard about this concept, 35% said they have found information on the Internet, 30% found out from TV sources, 24% from the English class (information just about the meaning of the word, not about the phenomenon as such), and 13% from the form teacher's class. Most of the children who are familiar with the term, perceive bullying as a form of physical or verbal aggression, a form of mockery or humiliation.

Out of the total number of girls, 51% said that they have heard about bullying, 7% more than the number of boys. Also, we see that the notoriety of the term is higher in the urban environment and also when it comes to high school students.

The Incidence of various actions associated to bullying, starting from the role of author of an action (bully), target of the action (victim) and the witness
Exclusion from the group

- 2 of 10 children exclude colleagues from the group of peers.
- 3 of 10 children ask another peer not to play with a certain person.
- 23% of children are threatened with exclusion from the group.
- 31% of children are excluded from the group.
- 39% of children state that another child has asked someone not to play or talk to them.

Exclusion from the group, as a form of bullying, depending on the measured action, reaches values between 18% and 28%, in case the child responding to the questionnaire states that he/she him/herself has done this to another child. Thus, approximately 2 out of 10 children said that they had excluded someone from the group of peers, and almost 3 of 10 children had asked another child not to play with somebody.

In case children state that they had been the victims of bullying, the ratio of those saying that they had been excluded from the peer group is much higher. Thus, 23% of children mentioned that it had happened that they had been threatened with exclusion from the group, 31% that they had been excluded and 39% that another child had asked somebody not to play with or talk to them.

Threatening with physical violence and/or humiliation

- 19% of the children state that they have repeatedly humiliated another child at school.
- 22% of the children state that they had threatened another child that they would hit them.
- 29% of the children have been threatened with hitting or beating up.
- 24% of the children have been humiliated or put to shame in their peer group.
- Rumours have been spread about 37% of the children.
84% of the children state that they have witnessed situations when a child threatened another one.

80% of the children state that they have witnessed a situation when a child was humiliated by another child.

Threatening with physical violence and/or humiliation, as specific forms of bullying, are between 19% (children stating that they have humiliated someone) and 22% (children stating that it has happened that they threatened another child with hitting, repeatedly), if we talk about along the dimension of bully or author of the action.

Studying the data from the perspective of those stating that they had been victims of bullying, we notice that 29% of the children responding to the questionnaire stated that other children happened to threaten them with hitting or beating, 24% had been humiliated or put to shame in the peer group, and 37% said that rumours had been spread about them.

Compared to the situation when children state that they had been victims or bullies, we notice that the percentage of those mentioning that they had witnessed of actions associated with bullying is much higher. Thus, 84% of the children responding to the questionnaire state that they have witnessed situations when a child threatened another one, and 80% a situation when a child was humiliated by another child.

Physical violence and/or destruction of goods

13% of the children stated that there were cases when they destroyed the things of another child.

16% of the children stated that they have repeatedly beaten another child, and 30% of the children say that they have slightly hit, repeatedly, a schoolmate.

32% of the children say that they have been pushed or shoved repeatedly by other children.

39% of the children say that they have been slightly hurt and 16% that they have been beaten repeatedly at school.
In the peer group 78% of the children state that they have witnessed slight, but repeated aggression (shoving or slightly hitting); 69% of the children state that they have witnessed a fight between two children.

In the school environment 73% of the children state that they have witnessed bullying.

Specific situations of bullying:

58% of the children state that they have witnessed a situation of bullying in their class.
69% of the children state that they have witnessed a situation of bullying in the online environment.
46% of the children state that they have witnessed a situation of bullying in the group of peers.

Analysing the data along the dimension of bully in the bullying type behaviour, we notice that 13% of the children participating in the study stated that there were cases when they destroyed the things of another child, 16% that they have beaten another child, and 30% that they have slightly, but repeatedly hit a schoolmate or another person of similar age.

Talking of the victims of the phenomenon, 32% of the children say that they have been pushed or shoved by other children, 39% that they have been injured slightly, and 16% that they have been beaten.

In the peer group 78% state that they have witnessed slight aggression (shoving or slight hitting) and 69% have witnessed a fight between two children.

In the school environment 73% of the children say that they have come across instances of bullying among peers in the school they attend, and 58% in case of their class. The next environment from the perspective of the frequency of bullying is the online (69% of the respondent), and the environment in which children say such behaviour occurs most rarely is their group of friends (46%).
The socio-demographic profile of the victim, of the bully and of the witness.

Analysing the relationship between the gender, study cycle, residential area of the respondents and their status of bully or victim, we can conclude:

- **The male respondents state to a significantly higher extent that they are both bullies and victims, in all measured bullying behaviours, regardless of whether we are talking about excluding another child from the group, about behaviour that involves threatening with physical violence and humiliation or actions involving physical violence.**

- **The situation is similar in case of high school students, but in their case the specific situations of bullying in which they state that they are the bullies are higher in number as compared to those, when they say they are the victim.** Thus, in case of this category, in terms of the status of victim, especially the bullying behaviour involving humiliation is typical.

- **In most situations associated to bullying, starting from the role of bully or victim, no significant differences are noticed from the viewpoint of the residential environment of the respondents.** In other words, the odds to encounter bullying behaviour are similar, regardless of whether we talk about rural or urban environment.

In case the status of witness of different bullying behaviours, the differences from the viewpoint of the studied socio-demographic variables are more nuanced:

- **in terms of the gender, we notice a higher chance that boys are the witnesses only in case of harassment involving serious physical violence, fact revealing a certain type of interaction between peers, in which the boys are more likely to take part.**

- **in case of the type of type of education attended, we notice that high school students state in a significantly higher measure that they have witnessed actions involving humiliation or physical aggression between peers.** It is possible that these situations occur more frequently in high school, as compared to middle school.

- **there are no statistically significant differences starting from the residential environment;**
The qualitative research revealed the following characteristics of the phenomenon of bullying at school:

1. The high level of children’s awareness regarding the impact of bullying on the victims: reduces the feelings of personal value, isolates the child, and might lead to depression and even suicide.

2. Any child that is different from the others, might become the target of bullying, mainly those that: look different (looks has been pointed put as one of the most common reasons for bullying), behave differently than the majority (the very shy child, the one that learns better, has a disability or special educational needs), the newcomers in the group, come from a less favourable socio-economic environment (including the case when these come from the rural area or from the Republic of Moldova), are Roma, etc.

3. The reasons underlying the bullying behaviour vary from the need to impress the people around, up to the “survival of the fittest”;

4. It was easy to identify the double standing of some of the children - bully in one context, victim in another one. The dynamics of the roles (victim or bully) is more prominent in case of younger children (they can easily be in the role of victim or bully, depending on the circumstances). In case of teenagers, the roles tend to become more stable and the dynamics is less prominent.

5. The most frequent reaction of children, witnesses to bullying, is not to intervene, but to forget. Aggression is treated as a show that ‘can sometimes even be fun’. When they intervene, the children support mainly the bully.

6. Bullying is most frequent when the children have to deal with new social situations (such as first year of high school, when a new student is transferred to their class, etc.). Children’s entering a new group brings about additional vulnerability.

7. There are situations when bullying is treated in a discriminatory manner: bullying originating from children with good results at school is sometimes less visible for grownups or is punished less severely, while children with poor results are ‘bad from the start’.
Punishments within the school system (giving a lower grade for conduct, suspension or transfer to another class within the same school or to another school) are considered by middle school students’ effective measures for reducing bullying behaviour, while teenagers are more pessimistic regarding in terms of reducing the phenomenon.

None of the children that participated in the group interviews knew of the existence of a commission at their school for fighting violence. Anti-bullying measures are related to singular events, such as a case of repeated extreme physical violence or an action of severe humiliation.

Grownups are generally described by children as being tolerant with the psychological and emotional forms of bullying. The classical intervention in bullying usually comes very late, when the conflict escalades and physical violence has occurred.

Schools do not have a common approach in cases of bullying; some teachers are more involved in stopping violent behaviour, while others remain passive (“what matters is whether the teacher cares”). Some children mentioned that there are cases when some teachers encourage bullying or the bullies (constantly humiliating certain children). Interventions focus on the bully and on the victim, granting less importance to the reaction of the group of witnesses.

Regarding the intervention of school counsellors, most children declared that they either don’t know what to do professionally, or that the intervention occurs only in case the teachers send problem children to the counsellor’s office.

Regarding the interventions originating at the parents, the impact of their intervention may vary: there are parents that aggravate the relationship between the children (for example, when parents come to school to ‘protect’ their son/daughter, requesting explanations or ‘disciplining’ the child their son/daughter is in conflict with), but also other parents, that contribute to reducing violence.

Parental Practices and the Bullying Phenomenon
Abuse in family involves both perpetuating abusive behaviour, and the ‘habit’ of being a victim.

Studying the relationship between parental practices/various forms of abuse in the family of origin, we notice that:

Mild\textsuperscript{12} or serious\textsuperscript{13} physical abuse of children is significantly associated in the family of origin with bullying behaviour. In this case, we can talk about a twofold association of abuse in the family, both with the status of bully, and with that of the victim. In other words, abuse in the family involves both perpetuation of abusive behaviour, and the ‘being used to’ being the victim:

\begin{itemize}
  \item children stating that they have been slapped or ear-pulled by their parents say in a significantly higher extent that they have excluded from the group, humiliated or physically aggressed another child;
  \item at the same time, we notice a significant increase of the situations when a child is the victim of repeated harassment among peers (exclusion from the group, humiliation or physical violence), if he/she is the victim of a form of abuse in the family of origin.
\end{itemize}

Characteristics of the bullying phenomenon from the viewpoint of the parents

\begin{itemize}
  \item 40\% of the parents say that it is possible that their child might request the exclusion of another child from the group, or to keep another child away from the playground or the meeting place of the group.
  \item Up to 25\% of the parents deem that it is possible that their son/daughter would physically assault another child.
  \item 53\% of the parents state that it is possible that their child would be pushed or shoved by their mates.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{12} ear-pulling or slapped lightly
\textsuperscript{13} beating with various objects
66% of the parents state that it is possible that their child would be hit lightly or beaten up by their mates.

Speaking of the situations in which their child might be the bully in a bullying behaviour, approximately 40% of the parents say it is possible that when upset, their child would request the exclusion of another child from the group, or keep another child away from the playground or the meeting place of the group. Similarly, 16 - 25% of the respondents consider it is possible that their son/daughter would physically assault another child, 16% stating that their child might beat up other schoolmates, and 25% that the child could push or shove other children.

Regarding the situations when their child might be the victim, most parents (53%) state it is possible that their child is pushed or shoved by their mates, and 46% consider that the child might be hit lightly. Approximately 20% of the respondents say it is possible that their child would be beaten up by their mates.

Analysing the data starting from the parental practices of the respondents, we notice that the parents stating that they have beaten or humiliated/put their child to shame, consider at a significantly higher extent that the latter may humiliate or assault another child, as well as that he/she could be the victim or harassment between peers.

In conclusion, we notice that we can talk about a twofold relationship between the status of victim of abuse in the family, and that of potential bully or victim in situations of bullying. Even if the tested situation is a hypothetical and not real one, it emphasizes a certain tolerance of bullying behaviour of the parents stating that they have humiliated or hit their child.
RECOMMENDATIONS

At central/national level:

1. Including into all national strategy documents on regulating children’s well-being, the aspects regarding prevention and intervention in situations of bullying (Ministry of Education, Research and Youth Strategy on Reducing the Phenomenon of Violence in Pre-University Education Units, National Strategy on the Mental Health of the Child and the Teenager, National Strategy on Child Protection), depending on the objectives and specific implications of each of these strategies on the well-being and quality of life.

2. Increasing awareness of the population regarding the negative consequences bullying behaviour has on the psycho-social development of the child, regardless of said child’s position in relation to the studied phenomenon (victim, bully, witness), through campaigns of public interest, carried out with the support and involvement of the central institutions.

3. Developing educational materials meant directly for parents, as well as for professionals in the fields of education, healthcare and social protection, that interact with children, meant to increase the level of grownups’ knowledge regarding identification, recognizing and intervention methods and techniques in situations when children generate/are victims/witnesses of bullying behaviour.

4. Developing and piloting programs for building social and emotional skills, available in kindergartens, schools, high schools, and adapted to the different stages of life of the children (pre-school, school, teenage years), as a fundamental prevention mechanism of bullying behaviour among children.

5. Capitalizing on best practices developed by NGOs and other institutions in designing services meant for children involved in situations of bullying.

6. Integrating the multidisciplinary perspective - education, healthcare, child protection - into drafting prevention/intervention programmes in cases when bullying behaviour occurs.
7. Encouraging lifelong education programmes for teaching staff and school counsellors, in order for the early recognition and proper management of cases of bullying in educational context.

8. Encouraging school counsellors to gain mental health screening and intervention competences in case of the children involved in situations of bullying, regardless of the latters’ status (victim, bully).

9. Encouraging lifelong education programmes for the teaching staff in order to gain minimal knowledge regarding methods and techniques of positive education and behaviour management in the classroom.

10. Developing communication networks and work methodologies among professionals in the field of education - healthcare - child protection.

11. Developing specific programmes meant for at risk children from the viewpoint of occurrence of bullying behaviour, and children, victims of abuse and violence in the family and at school.

At each school:

1. Including in the school rules the fundamental aspects for the identification, recognition and early intervention in cases where bullying behaviour is signalled and publicly displaying such rules;

2. Increasing awareness regarding the risks of bullying for the protection and health of the children, amongst all the stakeholders involved in education: teachers, admin staff, parents, students;

3. Drafting clear procedures for the right management of the situations of bullying;

4. Development and implementation of activities, with assigned resource staff, in less supervised areas within the school, other areas than the classroom (e.g., restrooms, playgrounds, school yard, hallways with corners, etc.), known as being of high risk for the occurrence of bullying behaviour;

5. Involving the students in drafting strategies and solutions for eliminating bullying behaviour, in compliance with the specific, local needs of each school;
Given the high correlation between the (physical and/or emotional) abuse of the child in the family and the latter’s involvement in bullying as victim and/or bully, the following are recommended:

1. Opening parent education centres and support services for the child and the family in each county in the country;
2. Developing parent education competences of the professionals that interact with parents in an educational context and not only (e.g. teachers, kindergarten teachers, paediatricians, MDs, psychologists, social workers, etc.);
3. Funding services and programmes meant for parents, in order to increase their accessibility amongst the population;
4. Implementing at national level public awareness raising campaigns regarding the negative consequences abuse generates on the development of the child, consequences that include the high risk of an abused child to become an bully/victim in a situation of bullying;

It is also recommended that all the initiatives focussed on the child be built in compliance with the following principles:

1. Observing the best interest of the child in all the actions and decisions that regard them;
2. Avoiding and fighting interventions that re-victimize the child;
3. Participation of the child, the teacher and of the parent, or, on a case by case basis, of the caregiver in the process of solving the situation of bullying;
4. Multidisciplinary teamwork, in inter-institutional network, and in partnership with the family;
5. Ensuring unitary and specialized intervention for the victim and/or bully child, in educational and healthcare contexts;
6. Ensuring and facilitating access to support and specialized services to all the children in situation of bullying (victims, bullies, witnesses);
7. Ensuring stability and continuity in caring, raising and education of the child;
8. Observing privacy and the rules of professional ethics, without prejudice to the activity of signalling situations of violence or bringing evidence to the cases.
Children’s Questionnaire

Hello! We kindly ask you to fill in this questionnaire in order for us to find out what children think about some behaviours in school or in the group of friends, to make the Save the Children Programmes more efficient. The answers that we will get will not be communicated to anybody as such (the information is confidential). Please do not write down your name on this questionnaire.

**Family Profile**

Q1. How many children (under 18) are there in your family (including you)? ______

Q2. What is the situation of your family:
   1. I live with both parents
   2. I live with my mother, my father works abroad
   3. I live with my mother, my parents are separated
   4. I live with my mother, my father is dead
   5. I live with my father, my mother works abroad
   6. I live with my father, my parents are separated
   7. I live with my father, my mother is dead
   8. I live with somebody else (grandparents, relatives, other adults), both my parents are working abroad
   98. different situation; which? ________________________________

Q3. Father’s age__________

Q4. Father’s occupation:
   1. Farmer
   2. Worker
   3. Foreman, Technician
   4. Clerk
   5. Sales person
   6. Manager, owner
   7. Engineer, professor, economist, architect
   8. Other profession; what?
   9. Unemployed, no job
   10. Retired

Q5. Last school the father graduated:
   1. No school
   2. Elementary school (1-4 grades)
   3. Middle school (7-8 grades)
   4. Vocational school
   5. High school
   6. Post-High school education
   7. College, University

Q6. Mother’s age__________

Q7. Mother’s occupation:
   1. Farmer
   2. Worker
   3. Foreman, Technician
   4. Clerk
   5. Sales person
   6. Manager, owner
   7. Engineer, professor, economist, architect
   8. Other profession; what?
   9. Unemployed, no job
   10. Retired

Q8. Last school the mother graduated:
   1. No school
   2. Elementary school (1-4 grades)
   3. Middle school (7-8 grades)
   4. Vocational school
   5. High school
   6. Post-High school education
   7. College, University

Q9. If you had to compare the financial situation of your family to that of some of your friends or colleagues, you think your family is...
   1. richer than the one of most of the people your age
   2. similar to those of your age
   3. poorer than the one of most of the people your age
### Parenting Practices / Family Relations

**Q10. In general, what is your relationship with your parents (or your caregivers)?**

1. Very good  
2. Good enough  
3. Nor good, nor bad  
4. Bad  
5. Very bad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Siblings</th>
<th>Grandparents</th>
<th>Somebody else</th>
<th>Nobody</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q11. Who helps you with your homework?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12. Who do you spend you spare time with (playing, taking walks, movies, shows etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13. How comforts you when you are in distress</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14. Who listens to you and helps you when you have a problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15. Who do you feel you are closer to?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q16. How supervised do you feel in your family?**

1. My family knows what I am doing all the time  
2. Sometimes, my family leaves me unsupervised  
3. Often, my family leaves me unsupervised  
4. Nobody ever asks what I am doing

**How do your parents keep in touch with the school? How often...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q17. Do they check to see if you are skipping classes?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18. Do they talk to the form teacher / teachers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19. Are they interested in your grades?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20. Do they come to the meetings with the parents?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q21. In the last year, did your parents or caregivers frequently do the following things...?**

**TICK ON EACH ROW THE ANSWER THAT CORRESPONDS TO YOUR SITUATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. They used threats to make you listen to them</td>
<td>□₁₁</td>
<td>□₂₉</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. They cursed you or used harsh words</td>
<td>□₁₁</td>
<td>□₂₉</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. They isolated you after you had made a mistake (e.g., they locked you in a different room)</td>
<td>□₁₁</td>
<td>□₂₉</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. They shamed you in front of other children/adults</td>
<td>□₁₁</td>
<td>□₂₉</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. They pulled your ear or slapped you when you did something that upset them</td>
<td>□₁₁</td>
<td>□₂₉</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. They hit you with an object (belt, stick) when you did something that upset them</td>
<td>□₁₁</td>
<td>□₂₉</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**School environment**

**Q22. How do you usually feel at school?** (circle maximum two answers that best fit your situation)
1. Scared  
2. Joyful  
3. Worried  
4. Insecure  
5. Tensed  
6. Sad  
7. Nervous  
8. Indifferent  
9. Shy

**Q23. When you are in school who do you usually play with or spend your breaks with?**
1. With several classmates  
2. With just one classmate  
3. With nobody, I sit by myself

**Q24. How were your education results in the previous school year?**
1. Very good  
2. Good  
3. Not good, nor bad  
4. Bad  
5. Very bad

**Q25. Do you often skip school without a good reason?**
1. Yes  
2. No  
3. No answer

**Q25.1. If yes, how often do you skip school without a good reason?**
1. Daily  
2. Twice or three times a week  
3. Once a week  
4. Twice or three times per month  
5. Less than once per month

**Q25.2. If yes, what is the reason for you unjustifiably skipping school most often?**
............................................................................................................

**Q26. Do they scold you?**
1. Often  
2. Sometimes  
3. Never

**Q27. Do they insult you?**
1. Often  
2. Sometimes  
3. Never

**Q28. Do they hit you?**
1. Often  
2. Sometimes  
3. Never

**Group of Friends**

**Q29. How many friends do you have?**
1. Many  
2. Few  
3. None

**Q30. Who are your friends, in general?**
1. Children of the same age  
2. Children of a different age  
3. It doesn't matter  
4. Adults  
5. No friends outside my family

**Q31. Has your family ever stopped you from being friends with somebody?**
1. Yes  
2. No

**Q31.1. If yes, why?**
............................................................................................................

**Q32. To what extent, your parents (caregivers) know your friends?**
1. They know all of them  
2. They know most of them  
3. They know some of them  
4. They don't know most of them  
5. They don't know any friend of mine

**Q33. To what extent, your parents (caregivers) like or approve of your friends?**
1. Very much  
2. A lot  
3. Little  
4. Very little/At all  
5. My parents do not know my friends
Behaviours and relationships amongst children

Q34. How often do the following situations happen to you...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviours you have towards other children</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Not often, nor rarely</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know/No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Helping your classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Helping your friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Being nice to your classmate, telling them nice things or doing nice things for them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Being nice to your friends, telling them nice things or doing nice things for them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Telling other children not to play with a certain child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Forbidding another child to participate to the activities of your group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Threatening to kick out of the group another child if he/she doesn’t do what you ask him/her.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Threatening to hit or beat another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Humiliating / shaming another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Spreading rumours about other children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Destroying the favourite belongings of another child if you got upset with him/her.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Pushing or shoving other children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Softly hurting other children with physical behaviours (softly hitting, pinching, biting etc.).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Beating other children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviours that other children have towards you</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Not often, nor rarely</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know/No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Being helped by a classmate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Being helped by a friend.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Your classmates being kind to you, telling you nice things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Your friends being kind to you, telling you nice things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. A child asking another child not to play with / talk to you.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Another child forbidding you to take part in the activities of a group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Being threatened by another child to be kicked out of the group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Being threatened by another child to be hit or beaten.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Being humiliated or shamed by another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Another child spreading rumours about you.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Another child destroying your things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Being pushed or shoved by another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Being softly hurt by another child (softly hit, pinched, bitten etc.).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Being beaten by another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Behaviours you have witnessed / you saw two children doing this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>behaviours</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Not often, nor rarely</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know/No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29. You saw how a child helps / is kind to another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. You saw a child threatening another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. You saw a child humiliating or shaming another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. You heard a child spreading rumours about another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. You saw a child destroying the things belonging to another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. You saw a child shoving another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. You saw a child softly hitting another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. You saw a child beating another child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please read the following situation and then answer a few questions:

John and George are about the same age. George has the habit of laughing at John, for various reasons, like for the fact that he doesn't play football well, that he is a nerd, that he doesn't skip classes with the other kids and so on. Sometimes he is the only one laughing, other times his classmates or friends join him. Sometimes, George softly pushes or hits John. (The role of George and John can be played by two girls or a boy and a girl)

Q35. Please tell us if you have seen such situations (like the one above)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>situations</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Not often, nor rarely</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know/No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You saw such things happening in your school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. You saw such things happening in your class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. You saw such things happening in your group of friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. You saw this on the social media (Facebook, Ask.fm...)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. You have been in the shoes of John</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You have done what George did</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q36: If you happened to see such things (like in the situation above), please tell us your reaction?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>reactions</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Not often, nor rarely</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know/No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. I defended the child who was in John's shoes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. You encouraged the one who acted like George</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. You didn't do anything (you witnessed without getting involved)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I talked to an adult</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I asked other children to intervene</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q37: If such things happen in your school, who does something/intervenes in general? (you can circle several answers)

1. The Form Master
2. The Head Master
3. The teacher on call
4. Other teachers
5. The school counsellor / psychologist
Bullying

Q38: Have you heard the word "bullying" before?
1. Yes 2. No

Q38.1: If yes, where have you heard it?
1. The class of the form master 2. English class 3. Other classes (which?) ....
4. From parents 5. From other adults (who?) ......... 6. From friends 7. On TV
11. From somewhere else (where?) ........

Q38.1: Please tell us, in a few lines, what you think „bullying“ is:

........................................................................................................................................

........................................................................................................................................

........................................................................................................................................

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

In conclusion, please tell us:

D1. Your age (after your last birthday)? _____

D2. Gender: 1. boy 2. girl

2. Hungarian 4. German

D4. What grade are you in? _______

D5. City __________ D6. County ____________

If you want to add something, please do it below:
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Thank you!
Questionnaire for parents

Hello, my name is ……………… and I work for AB Research Grup. At the moment, at the request of Save the Children, AB Research Grup is carrying out a national research to estimate the incidence of violence and bullying in schools. Please grant us 10 minutes to answer to a few questions. Your answers are confidential, the data being exclusively statistically processed.

Family Profile

Q1. How is your standard of living compared to last year?
1. much better  2. better  3. not good, or bad  4. worse  5. much worse  9. No answer/Don’t know

Q2. How do you consider the current income of your family to be related to your needs?
1. Enough just for the basic necessities  2. Enough also to purchase other goods, but with restrictions
3. Not enough for the basic necessities  4. Enough for the daily living but it doesn’t allow me to buy other goods
5. Enough to buy all that is necessary, without restrictions
9. No answer/ Don’t know

Q3. How would you describe your current professional situation? (tick only one answer)
1. Unemployed for less than 12 months  2. Unemployed for more than 12 months
4. Retired (all categories)  5. Housewife/Homemaker
6. Working in agriculture  7. Employed by the State
8. Employed by a private employer  9. Entrepreneur/ Owner
10. Different situation. Which?…………

Q4. For each of the following questions that we ask you, please tell us what suits best your family situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often ...?</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>No answer/ Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. you had no money for the daily shopping/expenses?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. you had to postpone the payment of the house expenditures or other taxes?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. you are not able to buy your children the necessary goods?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. you are not able to buy other things (toys, books etc.) that they want or that you want to give them?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. you borrowed money in order to get by for a while?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. you don’t have enough money to buy basic food (bread, sugar, oil, fruits etc.)?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Family

F1. How many people live in your household? (the respondent included) ………………………………………
F2. How many underage children do you have? ……………………………………………
F3. From them, how many live with you? ……………………………………………………………

F4. If you have children who do not live with you, where do they live? (several answers are possible)
1. With the other parent  4. At an orphanage/shelter  7. They ran away from home
2. With their grandparents  5. They were adopted  8. Don’t know
3. With other relatives  6. They are in foster homes  9. N/A, I don’t have other children

F5. How often do you fight with your husband/wife?
9. N/A, I am single
F6. Usually, when you fight with your wife/husband, do you do it in front of the children?
1. Yes 2. No 9. NC

Parenting Practices / Family Relations

O1. If a parent loves his/her child, he/she must fulfil all the child's wishes.
Totally against Totally for
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

O2. If a parent wants to discipline his/her child, he/she must punish the child every time the child makes a mistake.
Totally against Totally for
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

O3. In your opinion, what sanctions can be applied to children for improper behaviours?:
TICK ALL THE ANSWERS THAT YOU AGREE WITH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Any sanction, the harsher, the better; the important thing is for the child not to repeat the mistake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A sanction that has never been used by adults and that will totally surprise the child with its novelty.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To bear the consequences naturally resulting from his/her deed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To lose support for certain activities that the child likes, hobbies,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To suspend certain privileges that the child enjoys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4. Does/do the child/children at a school age attend school regularly?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Some do, some don’t (has several children) 9. N/A (no children in school)

Q5. If NOT, why?
1. the child stays at home to help with the chores
2. the child works to earn money for the family
3. the child must take care of the younger brothers
4. when the child doesn’t do his/her homework
5. when we consider that the child is too tired
6. school no longer provides a future
7. he/she doesn’t want to go to school
8. other reasons (which?)
9. No answer

Q6. During the last school year (2014 - 2015), how many times have you been to school to get information about your child/children?
1. once a month 2. once a quarter 3. once every six months
4. only when I am called 5. only for the meetings 6. never
9. NC (no children in school)

Q7. How do you think your child’s school results are?
9. NC (No children in school)

Q8. Who are, in general, your children’s friends?
1. children of the same age 2. children of different ages 3. it doesn’t matter 4. adult
5. No friends outside the family

Q9. To what extent do you approve of your child’s friends?
1. Very much 2. A lot 3. Little 4. Very little/At all

Q10. In the last year, did you (or your spouse/partner) often do the following?
TICK ON EACH ROW THE ANSWER THAT CORRESPONDS TO YOUR SITUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Used threats to convince your child to listen to you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Addressed harsh words to the child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cursed the child (used an indecent language)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Isolated the child after a mistake the child did (like locking him in another room)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ridiculed the child in front of other children/adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Pulled his/her ear or slapped the child when the child did something bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hit the child with an object (belt, stick) when the child did something bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behaviours and relationships amongst children

B1. Now please tell us to what extent to you agree with the following behaviours that - COULD OCCUR amongst children. WARNING FOR THE OPERATOR, emphasize for the respondent that this is a hypothetical situation, and not about what the child does or not or how the child is treated by others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The behaviours that your child MIGHT manifest towards other children of close age</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>So, so</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>At all</th>
<th>NO ANSWER/ DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To offer himself/herself to help other classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To be kind with the classmates, to say or do nice things for classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To tell others no to play or not to be friends with a certain classmate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. When he/she is upset with a classmate, to keep that classmate far from the playground where the group plays or meets.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To threaten to kick out of the group a child, if the child doesn’t do what your child wants.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To threaten to beat or hit the classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To humiliate other classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To spread rumours and lies about other children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. To destroy the things of the classmates when your child is upset.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To push or shove other classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. To softly hurt other classmates through physical behaviours (softly hit, pinch, bite etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. To beat other classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The behaviours that your child MIGHT be faced with, manifested by other children of similar age</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>So, so</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>At all</th>
<th>NO ANSWER/ DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. To be cheered up by his/her classmates when your child is sad.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. To be shoved or pushed by classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. To be softly hit, pushed or pinched by classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. To be beaten by his/her colleagues.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. The spreading of rumours and lies about your child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. To be humiliated by classmates.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. To be nicknamed in class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. To be ignored by his/her playmates/group of classmates when they are upset with your child.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
21. To be often told “you are not my friends/my buddy” if your child doesn’t do what she/he is asked to.

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B2. As far as you know, in the last year, did your child do to another child any of the things described in the list above?**
If yes, what?.....................................................(Operator, write down the corresponding codes)

**B3. As far as you know, in the last year, did another child do to your child any of the things described in the list above?**
If yes, what?.....................................................(Operator, write down the corresponding codes)

**B4. As far as you know, in the last year, did your child witness any of the things described in the list above?**
If yes, what?.....................................................(Operator, write down the corresponding codes)

### SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- **D1. Age:** ......
- **D2. Gender:**
  1. Male
  2. Female
- **D3. Last school finished:**
  1. no education
  2. elementary school
  3. middle school (8 grades)
  4. vocational school (10 grades)
  5. high school (12 grades)
  6. post-high school education
  7. college
  8. university
  9. postgraduate education
  What?.........
- **D4. Marital status**
  1. married
  2. not married
  3. free union
  4. divorced
  5. widow/er
- **D5. Last month, the total amount of money earned by all the members of the household was of __________ RON** (write down 0, if there is no income)

- **A. Your surname and first name:**___________________
- **B. Phone no. __________
- **C. Address________________________________
  City/Village ______________________
  County ________________
  Operator ______________
  Interview date___________
Focus Group Guide

The introduction of the facilitator, discussion rules (it is a free discussion, not a test of your knowledge, there are no wrong answers, the answers are anonymous, we take turns to speak, we respect each other etc.), the reason for being here (we want to find out what children / parents / teachers think about some behaviours in school or in the group of friends, in order to make the Save the Children Programmes more efficient) and the need to record the discussion.

1. Let's go around the table and introduce ourselves.
   - Name and age.
   - What are the first words that come to your mind when you hear:
     - Bullying
     - Violence in school

2. The relationship with the school.

   How would you characterize, in few words, your relationship with your classmates? What about with the other children in your school? What do you like or you don't like about this relationship?

   What do you like most about your class? And the least?

   How would you characterize, in few words, your relationship with your teachers?

3. Case study

   Let's imagine the following situation. John and George are classmates. George has the habit of making fun of John, for various reasons, like the fact that he doesn't play football well, that he is a nerd, that he doesn't skip classes with the other kids and so on. Sometimes he is the only one laughing, other times his classmates or friends join him.

   How do you find this? Give more details.

   But what is he is mocking John together with other classmates? Namely, what if the ridicule him in class, amongst friends?

   What if they hit him, joking, just to make fun of him?

4. Bullying

   Have you heard the word “bullying” before? What do you think it means? What are the behaviours that could be considered like this? Where do they manifest? Can we create together a definition for bullying?

   Warning for the facilitator, you go once around the table, you explain what bullying is, if they don't come up with an acceptable definition.
Have you experienced until now a situation like the one above (Bullying)? If yes, what was the context (school, group of friends, internet)?

What do you think happens with children who are the target of such behaviours? From your experience, how do this children react? How do you think they feel?
Let's discuss also about the bullies? What do they feel and what makes them act this way?
What about the children who witness such behaviours? What do they feel? How do they act?
How do they feel?
How severe do you find these behaviours? Are some forms more severe than others? When can we look the other way and when we cannot?

Some behaviours like the ones mentioned above (bullying) may be disturbing for some children. Should somebody do something to fight them? If yes, who? What could they do?

What do you think parents can do in order to fight bullying? (facilitator, discussion about teachers, school counsellors, students)

**Final comments**
Do you want to add something to what was said until now? Is there something I forgot to ask you?
SELECTIVE REFERENCES

Child Abuse and Neglect, Save the Children, Bucharest, 2013

Agabrian Mircea, Analiza de conținut, Editura Polirom, Bucharest, 2006;


Krueger Richard A., Mary Anne Casey, The Focus Group Method. A practical guide for applied research, Editura Polirom, 2005

Vlasceanu Lazar, Metodologia cercetării sociologice, Editura Economica, Bucharest, 2000;