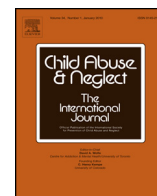




Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Child Abuse & Neglect



Sibling and peer victimization in childhood and adolescence[☆]

Corinna Jenkins Tucker^{a,*}, David Finkelhor^b, Heather Turner^b,
Anne M. Shattuck^b

^a Department of Family Studies, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824, USA

^b Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 11 February 2014

Received in revised form 1 May 2014

Accepted 8 May 2014

Available online xxx

Keywords:

Adolescents

Aggression

Children

Siblings

Victimization

ABSTRACT

This study examined how victimizations by either a sibling or peer are linked to each other and to mental health in childhood and adolescence. The data were from the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence which includes a sample of children aged 3–9 ($N = 1,536$) and adolescents aged 10–17 ($N = 1,523$) gathered through telephone interviews. An adult caregiver (usually a parent) provided the information for children while self-reports were employed for adolescents. Fifteen percent of each age group reported victimization by both a sibling and peer. Victimization by a sibling alone was more common in childhood than adolescence. Victimization by a sibling was predictive of peer victimization. Children and adolescents victimized by both a sibling and peer reported the greatest mental distress. This work establishes that for some children and adolescents, victimization at the hands of other juveniles happens both at home and school. Programs should consider the role of siblings and target parents and siblings to encourage the development and maintenance of constructive sibling interactions.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

Sibling and peer relationships figure prominently in children's and adolescents' daily experiences as important contexts of individual development. A significant body of research has documented the extent of peer victimization and its potential effects on mental health for children and adolescents. Though less likely to be recognized as harmful (Caspi, 2012), recent work also has documented the frequency and possible implications of sibling aggression for children's and adolescents' mental health (Tucker, Finkelhor, Turner, & Shattuck, 2013). Although sibling and peer victimization generally have been studied separately, children's and adolescents' experiences in these relationships do not occur in isolation from one another (Kramer & Kowal, 2005). To achieve a greater understanding of children's and adolescents' victimization experiences, examination of victimization within the context of both sibling and peer relationships is needed. Taken together, there may be patterns of victimization across these two relationships that have important connections to mental health. The current research builds on the limited research (Wolke & Skew, 2012) that has explored the overlap between adolescents' experiences of sibling

[☆] For the purposes of compliance with section 507 of Public Law 104–208 (Stevens Amendment), readers are advised that 100% of the funds for this program are derived from federal sources (this project was supported by grant 2006-JW-BX-0003 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice) to the second and third author. The total amount of federal funding involved is \$2,709,912. Support was also provided by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention through an interagency agreement with the Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the US Department of Justice or the CDC.

* Corresponding author.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2014.05.007>

0145-2134/© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Please cite this article in press as: Tucker, C. J., et al. Sibling and peer victimization in childhood and adolescence. *Child Abuse & Neglect* (2014), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2014.05.007>

and peer victimization with convenience samples (e.g., Bowers, Smith, & Binney, 1994; Duncan, 1999; Wolke & Samara, 2004). We employ a large nationally-representative sample to describe patterns of victimization across sibling and peer relationships in two age groups: childhood and adolescence. Relationships with siblings and peers are important contexts for development during these two periods and interactions with peers increase and assume greater significance as children age. We also investigate the links between patterns of sibling and peer victimization and mental health in childhood and adolescence.

Relationship experiences with siblings and peers are integrated within children's and adolescents' lives creating important connections between these two developmentally significant relationships. Theoretical and empirical work suggests, however, that there may be congruity and incongruity in experiences across these two relationships. Both attachment (Bowlby, 1973; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1988) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1973) predict congruity across these two relationships. A central tenet of attachment theory is that individuals develop internal working models of relationships based on their relationship with a central early attachment figure (usually a parent). This model then influences expectations and experiences individuals have with others. As such, children's and adolescents' relationships with siblings and peers are consistent with their internal working model and each other. From a social learning perspective, individuals learn ways of interacting with family members, in this case siblings, and these behaviors then are generalized to experiences with peers. Taken together, this theoretical work suggests that whether children and adolescents are victimized at home or not, they are likely to have a similar experience with peers. Some empirical work supports such a proposition. Wolke & Samara's (2004) work with Israeli adolescents showed that eight percent were victimized at home and at school. Duncan (1999) reported that of the 25% of American adolescents bullied at school, the majority also were victimized by a sibling at home. Though not focused on victimization, a small number of studies show that aggressive and conflictive behavior between siblings is associated with such behavior in peer relationships (e.g., Ensor, Jacobs, & Hughes, 2010; Patterson, 1986; Stormshak, Bellanti, & Bierman, 1996) and demonstrate some congruence across negative sibling and peer relationship experiences.

Empirical work also has shown that there is not a simple carry-over of experiences between sibling and peer relationships (Bowers et al., 1994; Duncan, 1999). Such incongruity could be reflective of that fact that individuals are not able to choose their siblings but may choose or be assigned to contexts with peers who have different characteristics and family experiences than their own and their siblings (Wolke & Samara, 2004). Evidence of variability in the connections between sibling and peer relationships suggests that there are multiple and unique patterns of association between these two relationships that are likely to reveal important group differences in mental health. Traditional approaches of studying relationships in isolation obscure and limit a fuller understanding of individuals' experiences. In the current study, we employ a more holistic approach to individuals' victimization experiences by employing a person-centered approach (Magnusson, 2003). A person-centered approach identifies groups of individuals who share similarities based on relations among specific variables (Magnusson, 2003). By grouping together individuals' victimization experiences, variability in patterns of victimization across sibling and peer relationships in childhood and adolescence is highlighted. There are four possible patterns of association between sibling and peer victimization: victimization in neither relationship, victimization in both relationships, victimization in sibling relationships only or victimization in peer relationships only. We expect that the prevalence of these patterns will differ between childhood and adolescence.

Most of the research on sibling victimization has focused on young children while the greatest proportion of work on peer victimization has included school-aged children (Perry, Hodges, & Egan, 2001). In the current study, we examine the patterns of sibling and peer victimization in two age groups expecting that the distribution of victimization across the four possibilities will likely reflect the differential importance of and involvement with siblings and peers in childhood and adolescence. With increasing age, children and adolescents spend more time with outside of the family and have greater interaction with peers. Reflecting this developmental trend, work has shown that sibling victimization peaks in childhood (Tucker, Finkelhor, Shattuck, & Turner, 2013) whereas peer victimization may increase with age and peak in adolescence (Finkelhor, Turner, & Ormrod, 2006; Turner, Finkelhor, Hamby, Shattuck, & Ormrod, 2011). However, despite decreased involvement as compared to childhood, siblings remain important figures in many adolescents' lives (McHale, Updegraff, & Whiteman, 2012) and a significant number of adolescents are victimized by their siblings (Tucker, Finkelhor, Shattuck, et al., 2013).

During childhood and adolescence, interactions with siblings and peers are a prominent part of individuals' experiences and likely make experiences in both relationships salient for mental health. Work on sibling and peer victimization has consistently shown that such experiences are linked to lower mental health (e.g., Boivin, Hymel, & Hodges, 2001; Finkelhor et al., 2006; Tucker, Finkelhor, Turner, et al., 2013). Studies that have examined sibling and peer bullying simultaneously have tended to focus on *perpetration*. These studies have shown that individuals who bully in both relationships have the lowest mental health compared to those who did not bully at all or who bullied in only one relationship context (Duncan, 1999; Wolke & Skew, 2012). No study has assessed the mental health of sibling and peer *victims* simultaneously, but in the current study, we expect that those children and adolescents who are victimized by their peers and siblings would report the lowest mental health of the four groups. We also hypothesize that victimization by either a sibling or peer would be associated with lower mental health than those children and adolescents who do not experience it in either relationship. However, the nature of the link between being victimized by a sibling versus a peer may change across these two age periods as the relative importance of these two relationships changes.

In summary, employing a person-centered approach (Magnusson, 2003), we describe the frequency of four possible patterns of sibling and peer victimization in childhood and adolescence using a nationally representative sample. We expect

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10310758>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10310758>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)