Keynote Speaker

Using Research to Inform Bystander Intervention Approaches to Prevent School-based Bullying

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Bio:
Dorothy L. Espelage, Ph.D., is a Professor of Child Development in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She is an University Scholar and has fellow status in Division 17 (Counseling Psychology) of the American Psychological Association. She earned her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Indiana University in 1997. She has conducted research on bullying, homophobic teasing, sexual harassment, and dating violence for the last 18 years. As a result, she presents regularly at regional, national, and international conferences and is author on over 90 professional publications. She is co-editor of four published books including “Bullying in North American Schools: A Social-Ecological Perspective on Prevention and Intervention” and “International Handbook of Bullying” published by Routledge. She is Associate Editor of the Journal of Counseling Psychology. She has presented thousands of workshops and in-service training seminars for teachers, administrators, counselors, and social workers across the U.S. Her research focuses on translating empirical findings into prevention and intervention programming. She is currently funded by the CDC for a randomized clinical trial of a bullying prevention program in 36 middle schools. She authored a 2011 White House Brief on bullying among LGBTQ youth and attended the White House Conference in 2011. She is also funded by National Science Foundation to develop better methods to assess bullying among adolescents and CDC and NIJ are funding a longitudinal study of predictors of bullying and dating violence among adolescents. Dr. Espelage has appeared on many television news and talk shows, including The Today Show; CNN; CBS Evening News; The Oprah Winfrey Show, Anderson, Anderson 360 and has been quoted in the national print press, including Time Magazine, USA Today, People, Boston Globe, and the Wall Street Journal. Her dedicated team of undergraduate and graduate students are committed to the dissemination of the research through various mechanisms (www.espelageagainstbully.com).

Abstract:
Increasingly school-based bully prevention efforts focus on encouraging and training bystanders to intervene to support a victim of bullying. However, much of this work has not considered the evolving research on the topic of bystander intervention or what predicts a bystander’s willingness to intervene. Professor Dorothy Espelage will review findings from studies conducted in Italy, Finland, Australia, and the US on characteristics of students who intervene to help victims and what drives their decisions. In addition, results of a recent meta-analysis that examined the efficacy of bystander intervention studies will be discussed (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012). Findings will be linked to practical implications for bully prevention efforts.