

# THE NATURE AND PREVALENCE OF BULLYING AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS IN CROATIAN CARE INSTITUTIONS: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN'S HOMES AND CORRECTIONAL HOMES

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## SUMMARY

*No research to date has established reliable estimates of bullying behaviour in Croatian care institutions. Drawing upon conceptual and methodological conclusions from the prison-based research in the UK, the present study aimed to explore the nature and extent of indirect and direct bullying in a national sample of boys and girls from Croatian residential care facilities. The study also aimed to assess whether there were gender differences in the frequency and types of bullying as well as whether bullying was more prevalent and serious in Correctional Homes as opposed to in Children's Homes. The sample consisted of 601 young people aged 11 – 21 from 22 residential institutions in Croatia. Data was collected using an anonymous self-reported questionnaire. Residents were classified as bullies or victims if they reported at least one behaviour indicative of bullying others or being bullied two or three times a month or more often. With this definition, approximately three quarters of residents in both Children's Homes and Correctional Homes were involved in bullying either as victims (66.8% and 56.3% respectively) or as bullies (45.9% and 50.2% respectively). Indirect victimisation was more prevalent in Children's Homes. In both samples, girls were significantly more likely than boys to be involved in indirect bullying either as victims or as perpetrators. In Correctional Homes, boys were significantly more likely than girls to bully directly. Although descriptive in nature, this study is the first to offer a comprehensive insight into bullying behaviour in Croatian residential care. As such, it should serve as a basis for future research.*

**Keywords:** *bullying, victims, Children's Homes, Correctional Homes, gender differences*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the UK there have recently been attempts to move research on bullying beyond school settings. The interest in exploring bullying in prisons first emerged in the early 1990s, when Beck (1992, 1993, 1994, 1995) and McGurk & McDougall (1991) published the results of their research on bullying in young offenders' institutions, and it has been rapidly evolving ever since (for details see Blaauw, 2005; Brookes & Pratt, 2006; Connell & Farrington, 1996, 1997; Dyson, 2005; Ireland & Archer, 1996; Ireland, 1998; Ireland, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d; Ireland 2002; Ireland & Ireland 2003; Ireland 2005a; Power, Dyson, & Wozniak, 1997; Smith,

Pendleton, & Mitchell, 2005; Spain, 2005). Most recently, research has also moved on to addressing bullying which occurs in secure hospitals (Ireland & Snowden, 2003; Ireland, 2004; Ireland 2005b; Ireland & Bescoby, 2005). The research on bullying in residential care institutions is, however, still limited in scope. Except for one qualitative study undertaken in 2002 (Cawson et al., 2002; Barter et al. 2004), the results of which cannot be generalised, no previous research has focused solely on the issue of peer violence in residential placements.

Residential living of any kind means that the whole personality of a young person is involved in a more or less inescapable social system (Elliot &

Thompson, 1991). When it comes to bullying, such a system renders victims captive and increases their exposure to the aggressor (Baker, Cunningham, & Male, 2002) making it unlikely that bullying in those settings could be easily compared with or studied like bullying among school children. Therefore, this paper mainly builds upon what prison-based research suggests is the most appropriate approach to defining and measuring bullying in closed social environments.

Early prison-based research relied on school-based definitions of bullying (Beck, 1992; Connell & Farrington, 1996, 1997) which specify physical or verbal 'negative actions' that *persist over time*, include *an imbalance of power* (Olweus, 1993) and *the intention* to cause harm or distress to the victim (Smith & Thompson, 1991). Today it is argued that, in prison settings, a broader definition of bullying is needed (Ireland & Ireland, 2003; Ireland, 2002, 2005a). As Ireland argues, the first limitation of the school-based definition centres on the fact that, in prisons, fear of future victimisation might be more important in determining bullying than actual repetition of 'negative actions'. Secondly, the imbalance of power might not be important in cases of more sophisticated forms of bullying amongst prisoners such as 'baroning', in which goods are given to the prisoner by another person who later demands a high repayment<sup>1</sup>. Since the victim enters this relationship voluntarily, the relationship is not initially based on the imbalance of power (Ireland, 2002). Thirdly, not all bullying in prisons is necessarily intentional. For instance, the intent in a prison environment might not be to cause harm but simply to obtain status in a peer group or to obtain material goods. Finally, early school-based definitions tended to neglect more subtle forms of indirect aggression such as non-verbal harassment (e.g. staring at someone in a threatening way) and indirect harassment (e.g. attacks on personal belongings) (Ireland & Archer, 1996; Ireland & Ireland, 2003; Ireland, 2005a).

The methods employed to measure bullying in prisons have also evolved<sup>2</sup>. Early studies used self-completion questionnaires that provided a definition of bullying and used the term bullying throughout

the questionnaire (Ireland, 2002). Such an approach underestimates the prevalence of bullying for at least three reasons. First, the term bullying is a stigmatising one that has negative connotations for both perpetrators and victims (Ireland, 2002). As such, it can encourage dishonest answers because participants might feel pressured to provide socially desirable responses (Theriot et al., 2005). Second, participants may have different interpretations of the term (Connell & Farrington, 1996). For instance, they may not perceive their behaviour as bullying and therefore not report it when asked directly using the term (Ireland, 2002). Third, there is evidence that victimisation has to be severe and frequent before participants identify it as bullying (Connell & Farrington, 1996; Theriot et al., 2005).

That using the term bullying throughout the questionnaire might be especially problematic in non-English speaking countries was confirmed by a pilot study conducted by Sekol (2007) in one Correctional Home in Croatia. The author applied a questionnaire that included both general questions about bullying which included the term bullying (e.g. 'have you ever been bullied here') and questions indicative of bullying (e.g. 'have you been gossiped about'). A definition of bullying was provided at the beginning of the questionnaire and verbally explained to participants. The definition notwithstanding, results showed that five out of seven residents, who said that they had never been bullied when asked directly, could be classified as victims of bullying once behaviours indicative of bullying were considered. The author concluded that, probably because of the lack of appropriate translation of the term, the term bullying should be avoided when studying bullying in Croatia<sup>3</sup>.

While in the UK the interest in and the methodology for studying bullying in closed environments is evolving, in Croatia bullying is still considered to be a phenomenon that occurs only in schools. Despite alarming incidents in two Correctional Homes in 2003 and 2004, and despite the fact that the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child reported that, of 30 European and Central Asian countries in the period between 2002 and 2005, Croatia had the highest incidence of violence in care institutions (Cantwell, 2005), little was done to deal with the problem. To the authors' knowledge, apart from one study based on the Olweus questionnaire conducted in two Children's Homes by Jaman in 2008 (cited in Ajduković, Rajhvajn

<sup>1</sup> 'Baroning' is an exploitative relationship that is known as 'kamatarenje' among young people in Croatian Care institutions.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed discussion about different methods employed to measure bullying stretches beyond the scope of this paper. However, there is a general agreement that self-report measures provide the best method of measuring bullying (Connell and Farrington, 1997; Ireland, 2005a). The main advantage of self-report is that it can measure less visible forms of indirect bullying, which official records often do not include (Ireland, 2005a), and about which other informants (i.e. staff) often do not have enough information (Farrington, 1993; Rosen, 1985; Tattum, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> In Croatia, the term 'bullying' is translated as 'peer violence' which clearly connotes physical aggression.

Bulat, & Sladović Franz, 2008), no other research has focused exclusively on bullying among young people in Croatian care facilities<sup>4</sup>.

This paper aims to address the lack of research into the bullying that occurs in Croatian residential care by exploring the nature and extent of bullying behaviour using a self-report measure. The paper further aims to assess whether bullying is more prevalent and serious in institutions that accommodate young people with behavioural problems than in institutions that formally only accommodate young people without explicit behavioural problems. Another aim of this paper is to assess whether there are gender differences in the frequency and types of bullying with a special emphasis on possible gender differences in indirect as opposed to direct bullying in both types of facilities. Finally, by following current trends in prison-based research in the UK and applying a questionnaire which does not include a definition of bullying but leaves a decision about the definition to the researcher (Ireland, 1999b), the paper also aims to assess whether residential care research can benefit from the prison-based methodology.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Sample

The complete populations of young people aged 11-21 from all Croatian care institutions were selected in choosing the sample. Excluding a juvenile prison, there are 26 residential care facilities that accommodate the adolescent population in Croatia. Apart from two Children's Homes, the directors of which could not be reached, all the remaining 24 facilities were asked to participate in the study. Twenty-two of these agreed, ensuring an institutional response rate of 91.7%. Of 22 facilities included in the sample, 10 were Children's Homes, 7 were Community Residential Homes, 3 were State Residential Homes and 2 were Correctional Institutions<sup>5</sup>.

A total of 643 residents in the target age range from the above-listed 22 institutions were asked to take part in the study. Thirty-two of these declined. A further 10 either provided incomplete questionnaires or answered questions randomly. Thus, the final sample comprised 601 residents which ensured a residents' response rate of 94.4%. The sample was

further split into a sub-sample of residents from Children's Homes (N=292) and a sub-sample of residents from all other Homes included in the study. For ease of interpretation the latter sub-sample will be referred to as to the sample of residents from 'Correctional Homes' (N=309). The data collection took part in February, March and April 2008. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics. Differences between Children's Homes and Correctional Homes were assessed through Chi-square tests.

Of 292 residents from Children's Homes, 153 (52.4%) were male and 139 (47.6%) were female. They were on average 15.4 years old and had spent on average 43.0 months in their current Home. The majority (70.5%) of residents from Children's Homes were referred to care because of family problems and for the majority (80.8%) this was their first placement. In Correctional Homes, of 309 residents, 251 (81.2%) were male and 58 (18.8%) were female. Their average age was 16.3 years and they had spent on average 14.3 months in their current institution. The majority of residents (88.7%) from Correctional Homes were institutionalised because of problematic behaviour which in 43.4% of cases included a criminal offence. Finally, of all residents from Correctional Homes, 36.0% had been institutionalised before this placement.

### 2.2 An Anonymous Self-reported Bullying Questionnaire

An anonymous self-reported bullying questionnaire was created for the purpose of this research. The questionnaire incorporated a modified and extended version of an interview schedule constructed by Connell and Farrington (1996)<sup>6</sup>. Following current methodological trends in studying bullying among prisoners (Ireland, 1999a, 1999b, 2005a, 2005b, 2006), Archer, Ireland and Power (2007) as well as the results of the pilot studies conducted by Sekol (2007), the final version of the questionnaire included only behaviours indicative of being a victim of bullying or being a bully. A definition of bullying, which was an integral part of the original interview schedule, was omitted from the questionnaire and the term

4 This study, conducted for the requirements of the M.Phil. thesis in Social Work, has not been published and was unavailable to the authors.

5 While acknowledging that these might not be the most appropriate translations, Croatian care facilities were, for the purposes of this paper, translated as follows: Children's Home = Dječji dom; Community Residential Home = Dom za odgoj djece i mladeži; State Residential Home = Odgojni dom; Correctional Institution = Odgojni zavod.

6 The authors are grateful to Dr. Jane L. Ireland for supplying them with full schedules of different versions of her Direct and Indirect Prisoner behaviour Checklist (DIPC (©Ireland 1998); DIPC-R (©Ireland 2002); and DIPC-SCALED (©Ireland, 2005)) which is the most widely used instrument indicative of bullying in prison-based research in the UK. Unfortunately, because of the very young age of some residents included in this study and the concentration/literacy problems of most of them, the DIPC seemed too lengthy for the target population of this study and was therefore not used.

'bullying' was not used throughout it.

Additional behaviours indicative of bullying, which arose from a review of prison-based research (Brookes, 1993; Home Office Prison Service, 1993; Ireland, 1999a, 2002, 2005a, Ireland & Ireland, 2003; McGurk & McDougall, 1991) as well as from the focus groups conducted in the piloting stage of this study, were added to the questionnaire. These included behaviours such as 'being forced to do chores for others', 'baroning', 'bicycle' and the like<sup>7</sup>. The questionnaire addressed both direct and indirect forms of bullying. Direct forms included verbal, 'intimidating', physical and sexual bullying. Indirect forms, defined as harm delivered without face-to-face confrontation between aggressors and victims (Björkvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992; Garandau & Cillessen; 2006; Lagerspetz & Björkvist, 1994; Richardson & Green, 2006), included behaviours such as social exclusion, gossiping, attacks on or the theft of personal belongings.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part collected sociodemographic data about participants. The second part included 25 items indicative of being a victim of bullying and additional questions about times and places of bullying, the number of perpetrators, staff awareness of the problem and so on. The third part included 22 variables indicative of being a bully and questions about residents' attitudes towards bullying. Likert-type responses were offered for each item indicative of bullying. Since the definition of bullying specifies repeated acts, the response option 'it happens two or three times a month' (or more often) was used as a cut off point for deciding whether a resident was a victim and/or a perpetrator of bullying. Examples of items included and response options are provided in the appendix.

Cognitive interviews conducted in the piloting stage demonstrated that the measurement and construct validity of the questionnaire were good. As shown in Table I, the questionnaire also proved to be internally consistent for both samples. The stability of the questionnaire was confirmed by the results of test-retest analyses which were conducted on a sample of 12 residents from one Community Residential Home. The test-retest showed that over all 25 victimisation items only 11.8% of all initial admissions turned into denials in the second appli-

cation, and over all 22 bullying items, only 7.7% of all initial admissions turned into denials.

**Table 1.** Cronbach alphas for the two samples

Cronbach alpha	Children's Homes	Correctional Homes
Overall victimisation scale	0.88	0.90
Indirect victimisation subscale	0.76	0.83
Direct victimisation subscale	0.85	0.86
Overall bullying scale	0.89	0.88
Indirect bullying subscale	0.70	0.60
Direct bullying subscale	0.86	0.86

### 2.3. Procedure

The questionnaires were completed in groups of three residents who were seated in a common room or a classroom of each facility, facing away from one another. Occasionally, residents filled in the questionnaire in bigger groups, but they were always carefully separated so that they could not see each other's answers. The anonymity of the questionnaire was stressed. The researcher verbally explained how to fill in the questionnaire and was present during the completion of questionnaires. In cases where residents had literacy difficulties or a learning disability, questionnaires were completed in individual sessions with the researcher. To assure confidentiality, unmarked envelopes were provided with each questionnaire and residents were asked to place the questionnaire into the envelope, seal it, and place the envelope in a large bag/box.

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1. General Estimates of Bullying Behaviour

Recall that, according to prison-based research, the fear of future victimisation could be more important for defining bullying than the repetition of 'negative actions' and that therefore single incidents of aggression could be considered bullying (Ireland, 2002). However, because fear is a subjective emotional state, this study could not overcome difficulties connected with how to measure it. Hence, this study included the element of repetition into the definition and applied the definition of bullying according to which residents could be classified as bullies or victims only if they were involved in at least one behaviour indicative of victimisation or bullying *two or three times a month* or more often. The imbalance of power and the intent to cause harm were excluded from the definition.

With this definition, as Table 2 demonstrates, the majority of residents in both Children's Homes

<sup>7</sup> A 'bicycle' is an item that arose from the focus group conducted in the piloting stage of this study. It refers to placing a piece of paper between toes of the victims, who are asleep, and setting it on fire. To defend themselves, victims start moving their legs as if they are cycling. This type of bullying was also found by McGurk & McDougall (1991) in young offenders' institutions in the UK.

**Table 2.** *Prevalence of Bullying and Victimization*

		Percentage of residents (%)					Two or three times a month or more often	Frequent (once a week or more often)
		Never	Once or twice	Two or three times a month	Once a week	Several times a week		
Victim?	Children's Homes							
	Entire Sample* (N= 292)	7.9	25.3	20.5	10.3	36.0	66.8	46.2
	Females (N = 139)	1.4	24.5	19.4	8.6	46.0	74.0	54.7
	Males (N = 153)	13.7	26.1	21.6	11.8	26.8	60.2	38.6
	Correctional Homes							
	Entire Sample* (N = 309)	13.6	30.1	16.5	7.4	32.4	56.3	39.8
	Males (N = 251)	15.5	30.3	16.3	7.2	30.7	54.2	38.1
Bully?	Children's Homes							
	Entire Sample* (N= 292)	19.2	34.9	19.2	8.6	18.2	46.0	26.8
	Females (N= 139)	13.7	35.3	17.3	11.5	22.3	51.1	33.8
	Males (N= 153)	24.2	34.6	20.9	5.9	14.4	41.2	20.3
	Correctional Homes							
	Entire Sample* (N = 309)	22.7	27.2	17.8	7.4	24.9	50.1	32.3
	Males (N=251)	23.9	25.9	15.9	6.0	28.3	50.2	29.0

\* Results in this row refer to both genders combined together

and Correctional Homes were involved in bullying either as victims (66.8% and 56.3% respectively) or bullies (45.9% and 50.2% respectively)<sup>8</sup>. The majority of all self-reported victims in both samples (70.0%) reported being victims of frequent bullying (occurring once a week or more often), while 58.0% of all bullies from Children's Homes and 64.5% of all bullies from Correctional Homes reported bullying others frequently. In both samples, girls reported more victimisation than boys did. In Correctional Homes, equal percentages of boys and girls reported bullying others, while in Children's Homes more girls than boys reported bullying others.

Table 3 compares the prevalence of bullying and victimisation in two types of Homes as well as gender differences in each sample<sup>9</sup>. Contrary to expectations, residents from Children's Homes were only slightly and non-significantly less likely than residents from Correctional Homes to bully others. However, significantly more residents from Children's Homes than from Correctional Homes

reported being victims of bullying. This is partly because of the fact that girls, who admitted more victimisation than boys in both samples, were underrepresented in the sample of residents from Correctional Homes.

Gender differences in the prevalence of bullying reveal that in Children's Homes, significantly more girls than boys reported both victimisation (74.1% vs. 60.1%) and frequent victimisation (54.7% vs. 38.6%). Furthermore, in Children's Homes, more girls (51.1%) than boys (41.2%) also reported being a bully but that difference was not quite significant. However, when bullying others, girls from Children's Homes were significantly more likely than their male peers to bully others frequently. In Correctional Homes, more girls (65.5%) than boys (54.2%) reported being a victim of bullying, but unlike in Children's Homes that difference was not significant. Girls from Correctional Homes (48.3%) were also more likely than boys from Correctional Homes (37.8%) to be victims of frequent bullying but this difference was not significant either. Interestingly, in Correctional Homes, the same fraction of boys (50.2%) and girls (50.0%) reported bullying others frequently.

<sup>8</sup> The percentages of bullies and victims in Table II do not add up to 100 because the majority of those who reported victimisation in both samples also reported bullying and vice versa. Most of the residents (38.7% in Children's Homes and 33.7% in Correctional Homes) could, therefore, be classified as belonging to a bully/victim group the discussion of which stretches beyond the scope of this paper.

<sup>9</sup> Odds ratios in this table, as well as in tables that follow, were calculated so that their value is larger than 1. A direction of the differences between the two groups compared should be considered when interpreting the odds ratios that are not reported in the text.

**Table 3.** Differences in the Prevalence of Bullying and Victimization by Gender and Facilities

	Victim (%)	Frequent Victim (%)	Bully (%)	Frequent Bully (%)	Not involved (%)
Children's Homes (N= 292)	66.8	46.2	45.9	26.7	26.0
Correctional Homes (N= 309)	56.3	39.8	50.2	32.4	27.2
OR	1.8**	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.1
Children's Homes					
Female (N= 139)	74.1	54.7	51.1	33.8	18.0
Male (N = 153)	60.1	38.6	41.2	20.3	33.3
OR	1.9*	1.9**	1.5	2.0**	2.2**
Correctional Homes					
Female (N = 58)	65.5	48.3	50.0	24.1	24.1
Male (N = 251)	54.2	37.8	50.2	34.3	27.9
OR	1.6	1.5	1.0	1.6	1.2

Notes: \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; OR = Odds Ratio

### 3.2. Frequency of Different Types of Victimization

#### a) Indirect Victimization

Of all the items indicative of being bullied, the items defined as *'indirect victimisation'* were the most prevalent in Children's Homes and only slightly less prevalent than their *'direct bullying'* counterparts in Correctional Homes. More precisely, 57.2% of all residents from Children Homes and 42.7% of all residents from Correctional Homes reported at least one item indicative of being bullied indirectly. Sixty-six percent of all indirect victims in Children's Homes and 62.1% of all indirect victims in Correctional Homes were the victims of frequent indirect bullying. Of all the items indicative of being bullied indirectly, so-called *'classic indirect victimisation'* was the most frequently reported in both samples (reported by 55.1% of residents in Children's Homes and by 40.1% of residents in Correctional Homes)<sup>10</sup>. In both types of facilities, *'being gossiped about'* was the most frequently reported form of *'classic indirect victimisation'* and was followed in prevalence by *'having had rumours spread about'*. *'Having had other residents turned against me'* and *'having been deliberately ignored'* were the least often reported items of *'classic indirect victimisation'* in both samples. Finally, in both Children's Homes (17.8%) and Correctional Homes (13.3%) *'attacks on personal belongings'* either through theft or deliberate destruction of personal belongings were reported less frequently than the items that constituted *'classic'* forms of indirect victimisation.

Significantly more residents from Children's

Homes (57.2%) than residents from Correctional Homes (42.7%) reported being bullied indirectly. Similarly, significantly more residents from Children's Homes (37.7%) than from Correctional Homes (26.5%) reported being victims of frequent indirect bullying. Apart from residents from Children's Homes being significantly more likely than residents from Correctional Homes to be victims of gossiping, and to have had rumours spread about them, no significant differences were found in the likelihood of certain types of indirect bullying occurring in Children's Homes as opposed to in Correctional Homes.

Table 4 shows gender differences in indirect victimisation in two types of facilities. As can be seen from the table, in both Children's Homes and Correctional Homes girls were significantly more likely than boys to report being bullied indirectly as well as to report frequent indirect bullying. All significant gender differences in both types of Homes were found only for items that constituted *'classic indirect victimisation'*. In Children's Homes, girls were significantly more likely than boys to report all of the *'classic indirect victimisation'* items. In Correctional Homes, the situation was the same except for the fact that the difference for the social exclusion was not significant. The two items categorised as *'attacks on personal belongings'* were reported by slightly more girls than boys in both types of Homes, but neither of those differences were significant.

Finally, it is important to note that all significant gender differences found in the two types of facilities were stronger in Children's Homes than in Correctional Homes. For instance, even though in both types of facilities the odds ratios for *'being gossiped about'* and *'having had other residents turned*

<sup>10</sup> For details on how the indirect and direct items were classified and what items constituted each subcategory of direct and indirect victimisation see tables 4 and 5.

**Table 4.** Gender Differences in Indirect Victimization

	Children's Homes (%)			Correctional Homes (%)		
	Female (N = 139)	Male (N = 153)	OR	Female (N = 58)	Male (N = 251)	OR
Overall indirect	66.9	48.4	2.2**	62.1	38.2	2.6**
Overall frequent indirect	47.5	28.8	2.2**	44.8	22.3	2.8***
<b>Total Classic Indirect</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>45.8</b>	<b>2.2**</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>2.5**</b>
Gossiped about?	62.6	34.0	3.3***	46.6	25.5	2.5**
Rumours spread about?	46.0	26.1	2.4***	39.7	22.3	2.3*
Had someone turned against me?	28.1	11.8	3.0***	32.8	15.5	2.6*
Deliberately ignored?	23.0	10.5	2.5**	17.2	11.2	1.7
<b>Attack on personal belongings</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Being robbed?	13.7	9.8	1.5	12.1	8.8	1.4
Belongings destroyed?	14.4	8.5	1.8	10.3	7.2	1.5

Notes: \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; OR = Odds Ratio

against' were greater than 2.0, which indicated very strong differences between girls and boys on those particular items, in Children's Homes the odds ratios for those two items were 3.3 and 3 respectively (for details, see Table 4).

### b) Direct Victimization

Slightly more direct victimisation was reported in Children's Homes (47.3%) than in Correctional Homes (44.7%), but this difference was not significant. Of all residents who reported direct victimisation, more than half reported frequent direct victimisation in both samples. Slightly more residents from Children's Homes (29.8%) than residents from Correctional Homes (28.8%) reported frequent direct victimisation, but this difference was not significant either.

Reported by 33.6% of residents in Children's Homes, and by 30.1% of residents in Correctional Homes, *verbal harassment* was the most prevalent form of direct victimisation in both samples. In Children's Homes, the item 'making fun of my physical appearance' was the most frequently reported item of direct victimisation, while in Correctional Homes the most frequently reported item of verbal harassment was 'being called names because of nationality, religion or the county of origin'. The second most prevalent item of verbal victimisation in Children's Homes was 'making fun of something else', while the second most prevalent item in Correctional Homes was 'making fun of my physical appearance'. The least often reported item of verbal harassment in Correctional Homes was 'making fun of my family', while the least often reported item of verbal harassment in Children's Homes was 'making fun of my nationality, religion

or county of origin'. On the whole, more residents from Children's Homes than from Correctional Homes reported each of the verbal victimisation items but this difference was significant only for the item 'making fun of my physical appearance' (17.8% vs.11.7%; OR = 1.6;  $p < 0.05$ ).

In both samples, verbal victimisation was followed in prevalence by *coercive victimisation* which was reported by 22.3% of residents from Children's Homes and by 19.1% of residents from Correctional Homes<sup>11</sup>. Of all the items of coercive victimisation, 'being forced to lie for others' was the most prevalent, while 'being forced to do the chores for others' was the second most prevalent item in both types of facilities. In both samples, borrowing something and then being asked to pay back with a high interest rate was the least frequently reported item of coercive victimisation. Again, although more residents from Children's Homes than from Correctional Homes reported each of the items of coercive victimisation, none of those differences was significant.

In both Children's Homes and Correctional Homes, coercive victimisation was followed in prevalence by *physical victimisation* which was reported by 20.2% and 17.5% of residents respectively. Across the physical victimisation subcategories, 'being punched, pushed or hit' was the most frequently reported item and was, in both samples, followed in prevalence with 'being beaten up'. The least frequently reported items of physical victimisation were being a victim of a 'bicycle', and 'blan-

<sup>11</sup> The term 'coercive' was adopted from prison-based research which defines coercive aggression as an act in which "...an individual is made to engage in or encourages others to engage in, specific tasks" (Ireland, 2005: 6)

**Table 5.** Gender Differences in Direct Victimization

	Children's Homes (%)			Correctional Homes (%)		
	Female (N=139)	Male (N=153)	OR	Female (N = 58)	Male (N= 251)	OR
Overall direct victimisation	49.6	45.1	1.2	46.6	44.2	1.1
Overall frequent direct victimisation	32.4	27.5	1.3	25.9	29.5	1.2
<b>Total Verbal</b>	33.8	33.3	1.0	27.6	30.7	1.2
Physical Appearance?	21.6	14.4	1.6	13.8	11.2	1.3
Something else?	12.2	13.7	1.4	8.6	10.0	1.2
Nationality?	7.9	8.3	1.6	8.6	13.5	1.6
Wrong rules about facility?	10.1	11.1	1.1	6.9	11.6	1.8
Family?	12.2	7.2	1.8	8.6	6.4	1.4
<b>Total Coercive</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>1.9*</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>2.6**</b>
Forced to lie for others'?	21.6	9.8	2.5**	29.3	9.6	4.0***
Forced to do the chores for others ?	10.1	7.2	1.4	6.9	7.6	1.1
Borrowed and asked to pay back with a high interest rate?	5.8	3.9	1.5	1.7	3.6	2.1 <sup>A</sup>
<b>Total Physical</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>3.4*</b>
Punched, pushed, hit?	15.1	16.3	1.1	5.2	16.7	3.7*
Beaten up?	6.5	5.9	1.1	0.0	7.6	4.8 <sup>A</sup>
Slid out of the bed?	4.3	3.9	1.1	1.7	3.2	1.9 <sup>B</sup>
Paper lit between toes?	2.2	1.3	1.6 <sup>B</sup>	0.0	2.0	1.2 <sup>B</sup>
Covered with a blanket and hit?	1.4	1.3	1.1 <sup>B</sup>	0.0	2.2	1.2 <sup>B</sup>
<b>Total Intimidating</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Stared at in a threatening way?	15.1	9.2	1.7	8.6	13.9	1.7
Threatened, pressured, intimidated?	7.9	3.9	2.1	5.2	8.0	1.6 <sup>A</sup>
Shouted at while asleep?	5.0	5.2	1.0	5.2	4.4	1.2 <sup>B</sup>
<b>Total Sexual</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>
Sexually touched?	3.6	3.3	1.1 <sup>B</sup>	3.4	2.0	1.7 <sup>A</sup>
Forced to sexually touch someone?	0.7	2.0	2.7 <sup>B</sup>	0.0	2.4	1.4 <sup>B</sup>
Sexual Intercourse?	0.7	0.3	2.2 <sup>B</sup>	0.0	0.4	1.1 <sup>B</sup>

Notes: \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; F = female; M = male; OR = Odds Ratio; <sup>A</sup> = 1 cell had an expected count less than 5; <sup>B</sup> = 2 cells had an expected count less than 5; in cases where no residents reported a certain item, 1 was inputted to calculate the odds ratio

ketting'<sup>12</sup>. Again, more residents from Children's Homes than from Correctional Homes reported each of the physical victimisation items but none of those differences was significant.

Of all items of the *intimidation* category, which was reported by 16.4% of residents from Children's Homes and by 16.5% of residents from Correctional Homes, 'being stared at in a threatening way' was the most prevalent, while 'being shouted at while asleep' was the least prevalent item of intimidation in both samples. Residents from Children's Homes were as likely to report all intimidation items as residents from Correctional Homes were. Finally, *sex-*

*ual victimisation* was the least frequently reported of all victimisation items in both samples. Slightly more residents from Children's Homes (3.8%) than from Correctional Homes (3.6%) reported sexual victimisation but that difference was not significant. Worryingly, however, residents from Children's Homes (1.0%) were more likely than residents of Correctional Homes (0.3%) to be forced to have sexual intercourse with other residents which was indicated by an odds ratio of 3.2.

Table 5 shows gender differences in the prevalence of direct victimisation in the two types of Homes<sup>13</sup>. As can be seen from the Table, boys and

<sup>12</sup> 'Blanketing' is the term that residents use to describe a type of bullying in which (usually a group of) bullies cover the victim, who is asleep, with a blanket and then hit the victim either with or without heavy objects.

<sup>13</sup> Note that, because of small numbers of residents who reported certain items, the expected cell counts for those items were very low. This notwithstanding, the odds ratios still meaningfully indicate how strong gender differences were.



girls were equally likely to report being victims of total direct victimisation in both samples. Only a few significant gender differences were found for specific categories of direct victimisation. The only significant difference found in Children's Homes referred to girls being significantly more likely than boys to be victims of coercive victimisation. This was because girls from Children's Homes were significantly more likely than their male counterparts to be forced to lie for others and, although not significantly so, more likely to be forced to do chores for others and to return borrowed goods with a high interest rate.

In Correctional Homes, two direct victimisation categories were significantly different for boys and girls. The first difference, as in Children's Homes, referred to the fact that girls from Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than their male counterparts to report being victims of coercive victimisation. Here, such a gender difference on overall coercive victimisation arose only from the fact that girls were significantly more likely than boys to be forced to lie for others, as the other two items of coercive victimisation were reported by slightly more boys than girls. The second significant difference in direct victimisation in Correctional Homes referred to boys being more likely than girls to report being victims of physical victimisation. This difference arose from the fact that, apart from being non-significantly more likely to report all physical victimisation items, boys were also significantly more likely than girls to report being punched, pushed or hit and considerably more likely than girls to have been beaten up. The latter difference was not significant only because no girls in Correctional Homes reported being beaten up. However, an odds ratio of 4.8 indicated a very strong gender difference for this item.

### 3.3. Frequency of Different Types of Bullying

#### a) Indirect Bullying

In Children's Homes, of all the items indicative of bullying others, bullying others indirectly was the most prevalent. In Correctional Homes, however, only slightly more direct than indirect bullying was reported. In terms of indirect bullying, 36.3% of residents from Children's Homes and 29.8% of residents from Correctional Homes reported bullying others indirectly. Of all residents who reported bullying others indirectly, 52.6% of residents from Children's Homes and 52.2% of residents from Correctional Homes reported bullying

others frequently. Reported by 36.0% of residents from Children's Homes and by 28.5% of residents from Correctional Homes, the '*classic indirect victimisation*' subcategory of indirect bullying was more frequently reported than the '*attacks on personal belongings*' subcategory which was reported by only 2.1% and 4.9% of residents respectively<sup>14</sup>. In both samples, gossiping about others was the most common, while turning other residents against the victim was the least reported item of 'classic' indirect bullying. Socially excluding victims and spreading rumours about them took second and third place respectively in the prevalence of all 'classic' bullying items in both samples.

More residents from Children's Homes than from Correctional Homes reported both total indirect and total frequent indirect bullying, but these differences were not significant and were most likely caused by the fact that girls were underrepresented in the sample of residents from Correctional Homes. Apart from residents from Children's Homes being significantly more likely than residents from Correctional Homes to gossip about others (28.1% vs. 17.8%; OR = 1.8;  $p < 0.01$ ), no significant differences were found in the likelihood of certain types of indirect bullying occurring in Children's Homes as opposed to in Correctional Homes.

Table 6 shows gender differences in indirect bullying for the two types of facilities. As can be seen from the table, girls were significantly more likely than boys to report bullying others indirectly in both samples. Girls from both samples were also more likely than boys to report each of the 'classic indirect bullying' items. However, of all 'classic indirect bullying' items, only gossiping about others was reported by significantly more girls than boys. No other gender differences reached the level of statistical significance. In both samples, more boys than girls reported stealing from others with boys from Correctional Homes being considerably more likely than girls from Correctional Homes to do this kind of bullying<sup>15</sup>.

#### b) Direct Bullying

Slightly more direct bullying was reported in

<sup>14</sup> In an attempt to keep the questionnaire at reasonable length, three items that were included in the victimisation part of the questionnaire, but were reported by very little residents in the pilot study, were excluded from the bullying part of the questionnaire. These items were 'destroying or damaging someone's personal belongings', 'lying about the rules of the facility' and 'staring at someone in a threatening way'.

<sup>15</sup> Gender differences on the item 'stealing from others' probably did not reach statistical significance just because of the small numbers of residents who reported those items in both samples. For details, see Table 6

**Table 6.** Gender Differences in Indirect Bullying

	Children's Homes (%)			Correctional Homes (%)		
	Female (N=139)	Male (N=153)	OR	Female (N=58)	Male (N=251)	OR
Overall indirect	44.6	28.8	2.0**	44.8	26.3	2.2**
Overall frequent indirect	25.9	13.1	2.3**	22.4	13.9	1.7
Total Classic Indirect	44.6	28.1	2.1**	44.8	24.7	2.5**
Gossiping about?	38.8	18.3	2.8***	31	14.7	2.6**
Deliberately ignoring someone?	13.7	13.1	1.0	8.6	8.8	1.0
Spreading rumours?	8.6	8.5	1.0	10.3	6.8	1.5 <sup>B</sup>
Turned others against someone?	7.9	7.8	1.0	8.6	6.4	1.4
Attack on personal belongings	1.4	2.6	1.8 <sup>A</sup>	1.7	5.6	3.4 <sup>B</sup>
Stealing from others?	1.4	2.6	1.8 <sup>A</sup>	1.7	5.6	3.4 <sup>B</sup>

Notes: \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; F = female; M = male; OR = Odds Ratio; <sup>A</sup> = 1 cell had an expected count less than 5; <sup>B</sup> = 2 cells had an expected count less than 5

Correctional Homes (50.2%) than in Children's Homes (45.9%) but that difference was not significant. More than 50.0% of all direct bullies in both samples reported bullying others frequently. Reported by 22.6% of residents, *verbal bullying* was the most frequent category of direct bullying in Children's Homes, and followed by *physical bullying* which was reported by 16.6% of residents. In Correctional Homes, however, slightly more residents reported physical (26.9%) than verbal (26.5%) bullying. Interestingly, such a trend held only for girls. In both types of Homes, *coercive bullying* took the third and *intimidation* took the fourth place in the prevalence of direct bullying categories. Sexual bullying was the least often reported direct bullying category in both samples<sup>16</sup>.

Unlike self-reported direct victimisation, more residents from Correctional Homes than residents from Children's Homes reported all five main direct bullying categories. While for overall verbal, overall coercive and overall sexual bullying those differences were not significant, residents from Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes to admit bullying others by means of physical aggression (26.9% vs. 16.6%; OR = 1.8;  $p < 0.01$ ) as well as by means of intimidation (14.2% vs. 8.6%; OR = 1.7;  $p < 0.05$ ). More precisely, residents from Correctional Homes were more likely to report each of the items that were measuring physical bullying, and significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes to report punching, pushing or hitting others (20.4% vs. 13.7%; OR = 1.6;  $p < 0.05$ ), beating other residents up (11.3% vs. 4.5%; OR = 2.7;  $p < 0.01$ ), and 'blanketing' others

(6.8% vs. 2.7%; OR = 2.6;  $p < 0.5$ ). Residents from Correctional Homes were more likely than residents from Children's Homes to report both items of 'intimidating' bullying and consequently, significantly more likely to report overall 'intimidation' (14.2% vs. 8.6%; OR = 1.7,  $p < 0.05$ ).

It is, however, important to note that, after splitting the samples by gender, most significant differences between the two types of facilities in physical and 'intimidating' bullying were largely created by differences between boys from the two samples (for details, see below). Finally, even though there were no significant differences in the likelihood of residents from the two samples reporting overall verbal and overall coercive bullying, residents from Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes to report bullying others on a national basis (16.2% vs. 10.3%; OR= 1.7;  $p < 0.01$ ), as well as to charge victims for the goods they borrowed them (6.1% vs. 2.1%; OR= 3.1;  $p < 0.05$ ). Again, once the sample was split by gender, these differences held only for boys.

Table 7 shows gender differences in direct bullying in two types of Homes. As can be seen from the table, in Children's Homes, more girls than boys reported overall direct bullying but this difference was not significant. Apart from girls from Children's Homes being considerably more likely than boys to threaten, pressure or intimidate others, no other significant gender differences were found for any of the direct bullying categories in Children's Homes.

In Correctional Homes, on the other hand, significantly more boys than girls admitted overall direct bullying. Significantly more boys than girls also reported total verbal, total physical, and total

<sup>16</sup> Unlike direct victimisation, because of space limitations, the prevalence of each type of direct bullying individually will not be explained in detail.

**Table 7.** Gender Differences in Direct Bullying

	Children's Homes (%)			Correctional Homes (%)		
	Females (N = 139)	Males (N = 153)	OR	Females (N= 58)	Males (N= 251)	OR
Overall direct bullying	37.7	31.4	1.3	26.9	44.6	2.3*
Overall frequent direct bullying	22.5	16.3	1.5	6.9	30.4	5.9***
<b>Total Verbal</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>7.67</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>3.1**</b>
Physical appearance?	12.2	12.4	1.0	3.4	17.1	5.8*
Something else?	10.8	12.4	1.2	6.9	14.7	2.3***
Nationality?	10.1	10.5	1.0	5.2	18.7	4.2*
Family?	5.0	4.6	1.1	0.0	6.4	4.0* <sup>B</sup>
<b>Total Coercive</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Forced someone to lie for you?	10.1	6.5	1.6	6.9	8.0	1.2
Forced someone to do your chores?	6.5	5.9	1.6	6.9	9.2	1.4
Double bubble?	2.2	2.0	1.0 <sup>B</sup>	0.0	7.6	4.7* <sup>B</sup>
<b>Total Physical</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>2.6</b>
Punching, pushing, hitting?	14.4	13.1	1.1	12.1	22.3	2.1***
Beating up?	2.4	2.1	1.0	0.0	13.9	9.4**
Sliding out of the bed?	4.3	3.3	1.2	1.7	5.2	3.1 <sup>B</sup>
'Bicycle'?	2.9	0.7	4.5 <sup>A</sup>	1.7	2.8	1.6 <sup>B</sup>
'Blanketing'?	3.6	2.0	1.3 <sup>B</sup>	1.7	8.0	5.0 <sup>B</sup>
<b>Total Intimidating</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>3.6*</b>
Threatening, pressuring, intimidating?	8.6	3.3	2.8*	3.4	11.6	3.6 †
Shouting at someone while asleep?	4.3	5.2	1.2	3.4	7.2	2.2 <sup>B</sup>
<b>Overall Sexual</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.6<sup>B</sup></b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Sexually touching someone?	2.2	1.3	1.2 <sup>A</sup>	0.0	1.2	1.4 <sup>A</sup>
Forcing someone to sexually touch you?	1.4	1.3	1.0 <sup>A</sup>	0.0	2.0	1.2 <sup>A</sup>
Sexual Intercourse?	2.2	0.7	3.4 <sup>A</sup>	0.0	1.6	1.1 <sup>A</sup>

Notes: † =  $p < .10$ ; \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; OR = Odds Ratio; <sup>A</sup> = 1 cell had an expected count less than 5; <sup>B</sup> = 2 cells had an expected count less than 5; in cases where no residents reported certain item, 1 was inputted to calculate the odds ratio

'intimidating' bullying. As for verbal bullying, boys were significantly more likely than girls to report all the items included in this subcategory. For instance, odds ratios larger than 4.0 indicate that boys were much more likely than girls to make fun of someone's physical appearance, to make fun of someone's nationality and to make fun of someone's family. In Correctional Homes, boys were also, although not statistically so for all items, more likely to admit committing all of the items measuring 'physical' and 'intimidating' bullying (for details on odds ratios and significance levels for each item see Table 7).

### 3.4. When and Where Does Bullying Occur?

Although 39.0% of residents in Children's Homes and 29.3% of residents in Correctional Homes indicated that bullying occurs anytime during the day, most residents in both types of facilities clearly specified particular times for bullying. As can be seen from Table 8, most residents in both

samples indicated that bullying occurs during the night hours, either between dinner and sleeping time or during the night when residents should be sleeping<sup>17</sup>. In line with this, bedrooms were the most frequently reported locations of bullying in both samples. All other most frequently reported locations of bullying, such as living rooms, yards and corridors, referred to rather public places within facilities. Other locations of greater privacy and lower supervision such as toilets and showers were reported as very rare bullying locations.

It is important to note that residents from Correctional Homes (70.7%) were significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes (61.0%) to be explicit about times of bullying in their facility and not to state that bullying can occur anytime during day. Similarly, residents from Correctional Homes (11.4%) were significantly

<sup>17</sup> Due to space limitations and for ease of interpretation, locations of bullying that were reported extremely rarely (normally by only 1 resident) were omitted from the table.

**Table 8.** *Times and Places of Bullying*

When?	Children's Homes (%) (N = 292)	Correctional Homes (%) (N=309 )	Where?	Children's Homes (%) (N = 292)	Correctional Homes (%) (N = 309)
There is no rule: anytime	39.0	29.3	Bedroom	36.8	36.2
During the night	18.8	26.4	Living Room	19.0	15.9
Between dinner and sleeping time	16.4	12.1	Yard	14.8	15.5
Between lunch and dinner time	14.7	18	Corridor	10.6	8.1
Between breakfast and lunch time	4.5	7.2	In all places equally often	2.1	4.2
In the morning before breakfast	6.2	4.2	Recreation	0.3	4.2
Any time between dinner and breakfast	0.0	1.0	Showers	0.3	3.6
Any time between lunch and bed time	0.0	1.0	Toilets	1.7	2.3
Any time between lunch and breakfast	0.0	0.3	Dining Hall	0.0	1.9
I'm not a grasser – i don't know	0.0	0.3	Outside the Home	0.3	1.6
During lunch	0.0	0.3	Reported only 1 location	6.2	11.4

more likely than residents from Children's Homes (6.2%) to be specific about places of bullying in their facility and report only one unique bullying location (e.g. a smoking area, an outside area behind the canteen building, and the area in a demote part of the yard around sitting benches)<sup>18</sup>.

### 3.5. Number and Gender of Bullies

As can be seen from Table 9, over 40.0% of victims in both samples were bullied by a group of residents. Furthermore, most residents in both samples reported being bullied by residents of the same gender. The same-gender bullying was especially the case for Correctional Homes where only 4.6% of victims reported being bullied by both boys and girls. Residents from Children's Homes (29.2%) were, however, about 6 times more likely than residents from Correctional Homes (4.6%) to report being bullied by residents of both genders. For instance, 19.6% of all male victims and 37.9% of all female victims in Children's Homes were bullied by both boys and girls. In Correctional Homes, this was the case for only 1.5% of all male victims and for 15.8% of all female victims.

### 3.6. Residents' Attitudes about Bullying and their Willingness to Report Victimisation

Only slightly under half of residents in Correctional Homes (48.2%) and 40.1% of resi-

dents in Children's Homes thought that staff almost never or only sometimes knew about bullying in their facility. This difference was significant which implied that residents from Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes to think that staff do not know about bullying (OR = 1.4;  $p < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, about half of all victims in both samples stated that they did not report their victimisation to staff. Probably because in many cases staff were unaware of bullying, rather than unwilling to stop it, over a quarter of residents from both samples believed that staff only sometimes or never try to put a stop to bullying in their facility. Moreover, about half of the residents in both samples believed that other residents only sometimes or never try to put a stop to bullying.

Particularly worrying is the fact that 57.9% of residents in Correctional Homes and 50.0% of residents in Children's Homes believed that bullying was just part of the way things work in residential care with residents from Correctional Homes being significantly more likely to express such a belief (OR = 1.4;  $p < 0.05$ ). Equally worrying is the fact that 56.8% of residents in Correctional Homes and 43.2% of residents in Children's Homes believed that victims often or always deserve to be bullied with residents from Correctional Homes being again significantly more likely to believe so (OR = 1.5;  $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 10 shows gender differences in residents' attitudes about bullying. As can be seen from the table, in Children's Homes, girls were significantly more likely than boys to believe that bullying is just part of the way things work in care institutions and that staff only sometimes or never know about bul-

<sup>18</sup> While the smoking area was reported in three different Correctional Homes, only residents from Correctional Institution 2 mentioned the area behind the canteen and around benches as bullying locations. Although those specific locations were reported by such small numbers of residents in each facility that they were not worth including in Table 7, in preventative terms, the fact that residents could be very specific about locations of bullying points out to the importance of mapping 'hot spots' for bullying in each facility individually.

**Table 9.** Number and Gender of Bullies (according to victims)

	By 1 Resident (%)	By Girls (%)	By Boys (%)	By Boys & Girls Equally (%)
Children's Homes (N=292)	57.4	27.7	43.1	29.2
Correctional Homes (N=309)	54.3	23.7	71.7	4.6
OR	1.1	1.2	3.3***	8.5***
Children's Homes				
Male (N=153)	55.4	12	68.5	19.6
Female (N=139)	59.2	41.7	20.4	37.9
OR	1.2	3.3***	8.5***	2.5***
Correctional Homes				
Male (N=251)	50.4	13.3	85.2	1.5 <sup>a</sup>
Female (N=58)	68.4	60.5	23.7	15.8
OR	2.1	10.0***	18.5***	8.6***

<sup>a</sup> 1 cell had an expected count less than 5

**Table 10.** Gender Differences in Attitudes about Bullying

	Children's Homes (%)			Correctional Homes (%)		
	Female (N=139)	Male (N=153)	OR	Female (N=58)	Male (N=251)	OR
I didn't report I was bullied <sup>a</sup>	47.6	51.1	1.5	36.8	59.3	2.5*
Staff sometimes/never know about bullying	45.3	35.3	1.5†	58.6	45.8	1.7†
Staff sometimes/never try to stop bullying	31.7	32.0	1.0	44.8	29.1	2.0*
Residents sometimes/never try to stop bullying	45.3	56.9	1.6*	63.8	50.2	1.4†
Bullying is part of the way things work in care	56.1	44.4	1.6*	56.9	58.2	1.4
Victims often/always deserve to be bullied	38.8	50.3	1.6*	32.8	61.0	3.2***
I don't do anything to help victims	15.8	23.5	1.6†	19.0	48.2	4.0***

Notes: † =  $p < .10$ ; \* =  $p < .05$ ; \*\* =  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* =  $p < .001$ ; OR = Odds Ratio; <sup>a</sup> = 1 cell had an expected count less than 5; <sup>a</sup> = includes only those residents who were classified as victims

lying in their facility. Boys in Children's Homes, on the other hand, were significantly more likely than girls to believe that other residents only sometimes or never try to stop bullying and that victims often or always deserve to be bullied. Boys were also significantly more likely than girls not to try to help victims when they see them being bullied.

In Correctional Homes, girls were significantly more likely than boys to believe that staff and residents almost never or only sometimes try to stop bullying as well as that staff only sometimes or never know about bullying in their facility. As in Children's Homes (with the exception that these differences were highly significant in Correctional Homes), boys in Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than their female counterparts to believe that victims deserve to be bullied and to not do anything when they see someone being bullied.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

This paper demonstrated that bullying behaviour in Croatian residential care facilities is a prevalent

phenomenon. About three quarters of residents in both samples were involved in bullying either as victims or bullies. These are more disturbing estimates of bullying than those found in male young offenders' institutions in Canada and in the UK (for details see Connell, 1997; Ireland & Monaghan, 2006). In both Children's Homes and Correctional Homes, residents were more willing to report their own victimisation than their bullying of others. This is inconsistent with previous prison-based research which demonstrates that juvenile and young offenders are more willing to report bullying than victimisation (Connell, 1997; Ireland, 1999a; Ireland & Monaghan, 2006). Connell and Farrington (1997) suggested that, in the prison setting, the bullies might be enthusiastic about admitting their bullying, because bullying behaviour in prisons could be a source of status. The results of this study suggest that such an assumption might hold only for the sample of residents from Correctional Homes for two reasons.

First, in Correctional Homes the difference

between the number of self-reported victims and self-reported bullies was rather small. This suggests that, unlike in Children's Homes, admitting bullying in Correctional Homes might not have represented a problem for residents. Second, significantly more residents from Children's Homes than from Correctional Homes admitted victimisation. This might mean that a negative residential peer culture might be stronger in Correctional Homes which might have made residents from those facilities reluctant to admit their victimisation either because they feared peer reprisals in the case their identity was revealed, or because admitting victimisation in Correctional Homes might indeed be interpreted as a sign of weakness. Both assumptions require further, preferably qualitative investigation as well as validity checks. However, girls in both samples were more likely than boys to report victimisation. The greater victimisation found in Children's Homes was, therefore, at least partly caused by small numbers of girls in the sample of residents from Correctional Homes. It is also possible that bullies from Children's Homes had more power than bullies from Correctional Homes, which allowed them to bully more residents.

In Children's Homes, both indirect victimisation and indirect bullying were more prevalent than their direct counterparts, while in Correctional Homes indirect victimisation was approximately as prevalent as its direct counterpart. This is consistent with previous research among adult and young offenders as well as among adult residents of a high secure hospital (Ireland, 1999a, 2001, 2005b) and emphasizes the importance of focusing research attention on indirect forms of bullying. Relying on the effect/danger or cost/benefit theory of aggression proposed by Björkvist (1994), prison-based research (Ireland, 1999a, 2002, Ireland & Bescoby, 2005) has suggested that indirect bullying is more prevalent in secure settings because its subtle nature ensures that it remains difficult to detect by staff. The results of this study suggest that a similar argument can be completely applied to Croatian Children's Homes and partly, in terms of victimisation, to Croatian Correctional Homes. In Correctional Homes, direct bullying (but not direct victimisation) was much more prevalent than its indirect counterpart. This might be in favour of the above-mentioned assumption according to which, in Correctional Homes, being a bully might represent a symbol of strength and power, making bullies in Correctional Homes more eager than bullies in Children's Homes to report very overt types of direct bullying. However,

since the differences in direct bullying between the two samples were largely caused by the boys, it is possible that the above assumption might hold for boys but not for girls from Correctional Homes.

Residents from Children's Homes were slightly more likely than residents from Correctional Homes to be classified as direct victims and indirect bullies, significantly more likely to be classified as indirect victims and only slightly less likely to be classified as direct bullies. This demonstrates that, at least in terms of the prevalence of bullying and victimisation, the situation in Children's Homes was not any less serious than the situation in Correctional Homes. In terms of types of victimisation and bullying, residents from Children's Homes were significantly more likely to report certain indirect victimisation items such as being gossiped about, having rumours spread about and having other residents turned against them. Residents from Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes to report certain bullying items such as stealing from others, physically hurting and intimidating others. Apart from these differences, that could partly be explained by different proportions of boys and girls in the two samples, no other major differences in types of bullying between the two types of facilities were found.

In both samples, more girls than boys were involved in bullying either as victims or as perpetrators which questions the traditional belief that boys tend to be more involved in bullying (Olweus, 1978). In line with previous research about gender differences in aggression in general (Björkvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Green, Richardson & Lago 1996; Lagerspetz & Björkvist, 1994; Walker, Richardson, & Green, 2000) as well as about gender differences in both school (Ahmad & Smith, 1994; Rigby & Slee, 1991) and prison bullying in particular (Ireland & Archer, 1996) girls from both Children's Homes and Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than boys to be involved in indirect bullying either as victims or bullies.

In Children's Homes, more girls than boys reported being both direct and indirect victims and direct and indirect bullies, suggesting that assumptions about females being less likely to get into direct conflicts than males (Björkvist, 1994) did not hold for the sample of residents from Children's Homes. Given the fact that, in Children's Homes, girls were as likely as boys to be involved in direct bullying, girls' preference for indirect bullying is highly unlikely to be, as Björkvist (1994) suggested,

a result of girls being physically weaker than boys and therefore having to develop other means than physical ones for obtaining their goals. It is more likely that girls simply possessed more of the verbal and social skills that are required to make more sophisticated, indirect strategies possible (Björkqvist, 1994; Garandea & Cillessen, 2006) and to use those strategies along with direct ones.

Even though girls from Correctional Homes also used direct strategies to bully others, their male counterparts were significantly more likely to use direct means of aggression. This is at odds with the fact that girls from Correctional Homes were, although not significantly so, more likely than boys to be victims of direct bullying, especially taking into account the fact that, in Correctional Homes, most girls reported being bullied only by girls. It might, therefore, be the case that in Correctional Homes, female bullies either underreported their direct bullying activities, or that, compared to Children's Homes, a smaller fraction of female direct bullies in Correctional Homes managed to bully more girls.

Most residents in both samples stated that bullying usually occurs in bedrooms during the night. Catalano et al. (2005) suggest that an increase in antisocial and/or bullying opportunities is a result of *decreased supervision*, a *large aggregation of adolescents* at one place, and *low perceived costs* of bullying behaviour connected with the low possibility of being detected. Due to extremely poor staff: children ratios during the night, all three assumptions made by Catalano et al. are easily met in Croatian care institutions. An important step in preventing a lot of bullying in Croatian care would, therefore, require better supervision of residents during the night. Apart from bullying occurring during the night, in bedrooms, a lot of bullying in both types of facilities was happening in public communal areas such as living rooms, yards and corridors. This is rather surprising and might mean either that staff do not supervise those areas appropriately or that a lot of bullying is happening despite staff being present in bullying locations. Residents from Correctional Homes were significantly more likely than residents from Children's Homes to be more certain where and when bullying occurs, which might mean that bullying in Correctional Homes follows more predictable patterns of occurrence.

Just a little under half of the victims in both samples were bullied by a group of their fellow residents. This might mean that a large proportion of victims are, for some reason, especially unpopular among

their peers. Aggression researchers point to more damaging psychological consequences on a victim when the victim is targeted by a number of peers instead of just one (Garandea & Cillessen, 2006). It has been demonstrated that victimised middle school students often feel responsible for their victimisation (Graham & Juvonen, 1998). Such self-blaming tendencies are expected to be intensified when victims are repetitively harassed by a group of their peers. While being disliked by one person may make victims assume that one particular person might, perhaps because of some external reason, not like them, being openly disliked by a group makes it easier for victims to believe that there is something intrinsically wrong with them and that they indeed deserve to be victimised. In cases where victims blame themselves, they are unlikely to report their victimisation to adults or to retaliate against aggressors (Garandea & Cillessen, 2006).

Same-gender bullying was the most prevalent kind in both types of facilities. Correctional Homes were, however, much more likely to have gender-exclusive bullies. Although gender-exclusive bullying in Correctional Homes is most likely the result of small numbers of girls in Correctional Homes, it might also mean that gender relations are more fluid in Children's than in Correctional Homes. In terms of the likelihood of being bullied by residents of the opposite gender, in both samples, girls were in a less desirable position than boys, as they were significantly more likely to be bullied by boys as often as by girls.

In both samples, residents had rather pessimistic and negative attitudes towards bullying in their facilities. Just under half of residents in both samples believed that staff only sometimes or never knew about bullying, that bullying was just part of the way things work in residential care, and that victims deserved to be bullied. More than a quarter of residents in both types of facilities believed staff only sometimes or never try to stop bullying. About half of all victims in both samples stated that they did not report their victimisation to staff. A poor relationship with staff and a strong anti-grassing culture could be, therefore, distinctive and important features of all Croatian care facilities. The fact that such a negative residential peer culture might be stronger in Correctional Homes than in Children's Homes was supported by residents from Correctional Homes being significantly more likely to have negative attitudes on most of the variables measuring attitudes about bullying in their facility than residents of Correctional Homes.

Although only descriptive in nature, the present study is the first to offer a valuable insight into bullying behaviour that occurs among boys and girls within Croatian residential care institutions. It demonstrated that, in Croatian care, bullying is a prevalent phenomenon, which takes various forms and which is worth further investigation. By establishing that bullying in Children's Homes was as prevalent, and in most cases as serious, as in Correctional Homes, this study has also pointed to the possibility of bullying being predominantly determined by a residential peer subculture and other institutional variables, rather than by the psychological profile of the young people referred to the two types of facilities. However, more quantitative research focusing on both intrinsic characteristics of bullies and victims and institutional variables is required. Building on prison-based research in the UK, this paper also highlighted the importance of addressing indirect types of bullying as well as of focusing research attention on both genders. Finally, by applying a questionnaire which did not use the term bullying, this study has managed to overcome difficulties connected with the translation of the term as well as to demonstrate that residential care research could largely benefit from the methodological and conceptual considerations that have proven to be useful in prison-based research in the UK.

To develop evidence-based anti-bullying strategies, future research should try to establish to what degree bullying in care can be predicted by personal characteristics of residents, to what degree by institutional variables and, most importantly, to what degree by an interaction between the two. Qualitative research should also be encouraged to try to establish whether the concept of a 'residential peer culture' exists in Croatian care institutions, and if it does, what shapes such a culture and how it might contribute to bullying.

#### **Acknowledgements**

The authors are grateful to all the young people who took part in the study, and the staff who provided assistance. Special thanks go to the Children's Home 'Izvor' in Selce, Community Residential Homes Split and Karlovac, the State Residential Home Mali Lošinj, Correctional Institutions Požega and Turopolje as well as to Dr. Antonija Žižak for providing accommodation and transportation during data collection. Many thanks also go to Mr.sc. Jasminka Dević for allowing access to the Community Residential Home Osijek on number of occasions making thus pilot studies and reliability checks possible.



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## APPENDIX

Examples of questions presented in the anonymous bullying questionnaire applied in this study

Category	Questions about being bullied	Questions about bullying others
'Classic' indirect	Does it happen that other resident(s) do not really want to hang around with you and you end up being alone?	Does it happen that you gossip about other resident(s)?
'Attacks on belongings' indirect	Does it happen that other resident(s) deliberately destroy your personal belongings?	Does it happen that you steal from other resident(s)?
Direct verbal	Does it happen that other resident(s) call you names/make fun of you because of your physical appearance?	Does it happen that you call other resident(s) names about their nationality/region they come from?
Direct coercive	Does it happen that other resident(s) force you to their chores?	Does it happen that you force someone to lie for you?
Direct intimidating	Does it happen that other resident(s) stare at you in a threatening way?	Does it happen that you start shouting at someone while they are asleep in order to scare him or her?
Direct physical	Does it happen that other resident(s) punch, push or hit you?	Does it happen that you beat other residents up?
Direct sexual	Does it happen that other residents touch you in a sexual way despite your will?	Does it happen that you force someone to have a sexual intercourse with you?

Note: The same response options were offered below each question. The response options were as follows: a) No, it never happens ; b) It has only happened once or twice since I came here; c) Yes, it happens about two or three times a month; d) Yes, it happens once a week; e) Yes, it happens several times a week

# PRIRODA I OPSEG VRŠNJAČKOG NASILJA MEĐU MLADIĆIMA I DJEVOJKAMA U HRVATSKOM DOMSKOM SMJEŠTAJU: DESKRIPTIVNA ANALIZA DJEČJIH I ODGOJNIH DOMOVA

## SAŽETAK

Utemeljeno na konceptijskim i empirijskim spoznajama istraživanja vršnjačkog nasilja ili bullying-a među zatvorenicima u Ujedinjenom Kraljevstvu, cilj ovog rada je utvrđivanje prirode i učestalosti posrednog i neposrednog vršnjačkog nasilja među institucionaliziranim mladima na području Republike Hrvatske. U istraživanju, koje je prvo ovakvog tipa u nas, sudjelovala je 601 mlada osoba od 11 do 21 godine iz dječjih i odgojnih domova. Podaci su prikupljeni metodom samoprocjene, a u primijenjenom upitniku, zlostavljač ili žrtva definirani su prijavom barem jednog ponašanja koje upućuje na zlostavljanje drugih ili na vlastitu viktimizaciju, s učestalošću takvog ponašanja od 2 do 3 puta mjesečno ili češće. Rezultati su pokazali da je otprilike tri četvrtine ispitanika iz oba tipa domova bilo uključeno u bullying, bilo kao žrtva ili kao zlostavljač. Indirektna viktimizacija intenzivnija je u dječjim domovima. U oba tipa domova, značajno više djevojaka nego mladića bilo je uključeno (bilo kao žrtva ili kao zlostavljač) u indirektnan bullying. U domovima koji zbrinjavaju mlade s poremećajima u ponašanju, značajno više mladića nego djevojaka koristilo se direktnim oblicima bullying-a prilikom viktimiziranja drugih. Iako deskriptivno, ovo je prvo istraživanje koje nudi opsežan uvid u bullying među institucionaliziranom mladeži u Republici Hrvatskoj.

**Ključne riječi:** bullying, žrtve, dječji domovi, odgojni domovi, spolne razlike