Empowering At-Risk Adolescents: Understanding Bullying Dynamics Through Rap Music

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NNLM

## TRIP: teen rap intervention program

Presentation Overview

- *Overview of Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU – I)*

- *Bullying Rates in the US and Georgia Schools*

- *Effects of bullying on adolescents*

- *Adolescents and substance use*

- *Preventive factors for bullying*

- *Teen Rap Intervention Program overview*

- *Rap as a musical therapy*

- *Evaluating TRIP*

- *Conclusion*

A Brief Overview of NPU I

- *NPU I resides in Fulton County, Atlanta, GA.*

- *NPU I is a neighborhood planning unit resting in the Southwest quadrant of Atlanta.*

- *It has a population of 21,310 residents. 92.2% are black, 5.2% are Hispanic, and 1% are white*

- *Median household income: $39,597*

- *NPU I has:*

- *<u>Two high schools</u> , Therrell High School and Benjamin E. Mays High School*

- *<u>Two middle schools</u>, Atlanta SMART Academy and Jean Childs Young Middle School*
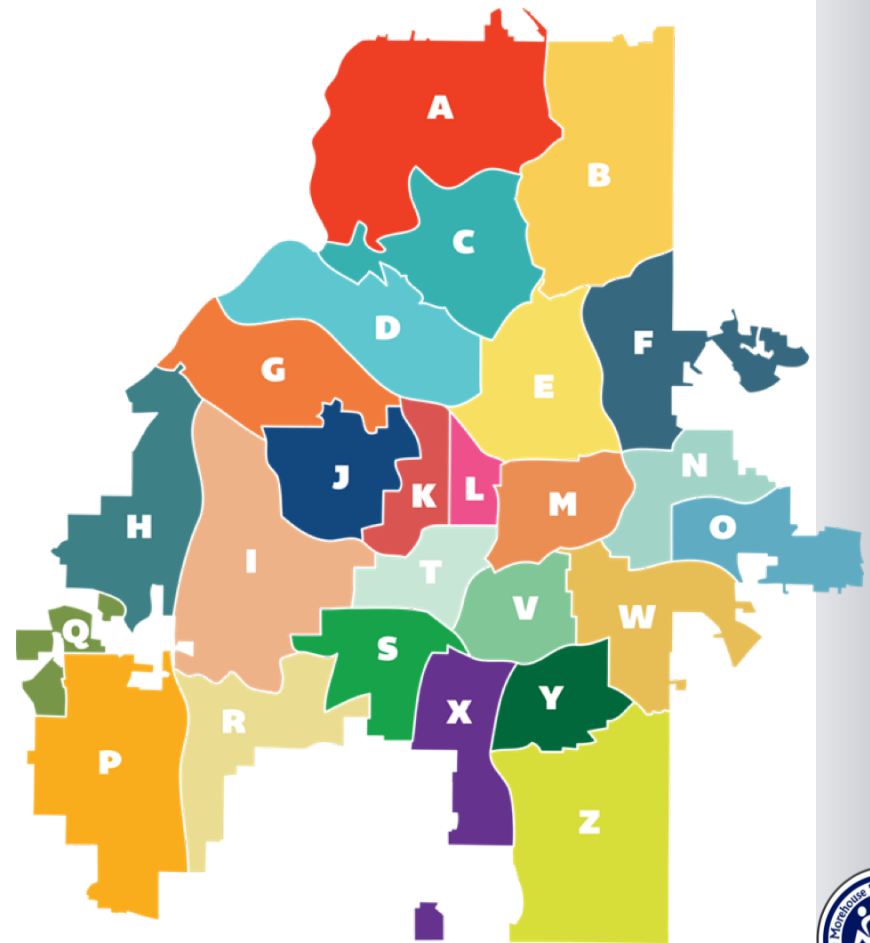
Description of the Distribution

- **30% of US students report being involved in bullying situations in roles as bullies, victims, or bully-victims (bullies who are bullied)**

- **15% of adolescents in Georgia schools (4,459 students) reported being bullied by someone else**

- **15.8% adolescents at schools in NPU I area report being bullied by someone else within the last 30 days – (GSHS, 2022)**

Georgia Student Health Survey - Middle and High School 2022
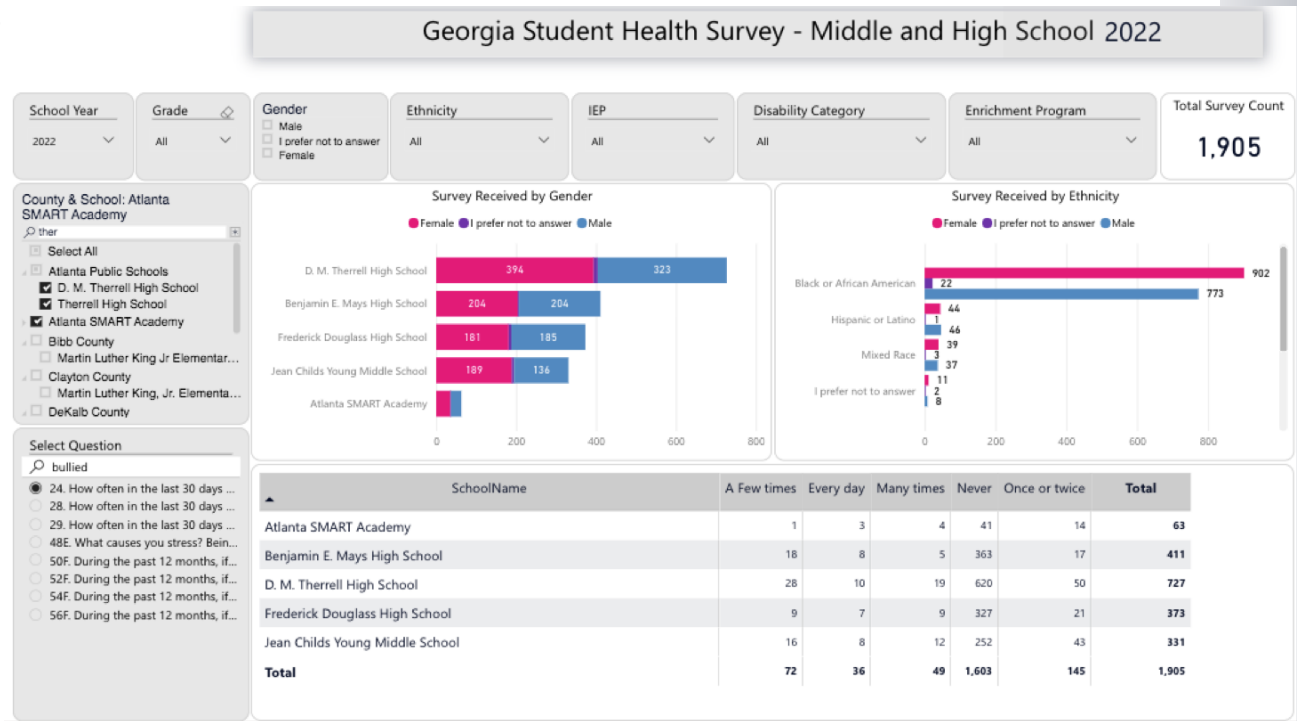
Description of the Determinants

Bully perpetrators…

- Have a high-risk for depression, anxiety, psychological distress, psychosomatic symptoms, and suicidal behaviors – (Silva et al., 2019)

- Are more likely to experience low economic status, conflictual family dynamics, and child maltreatment; maladaptive coping mechanisms

- Are likely to use illicit substances, commit criminal activity, and other deviant behaviors. (Sharp et al., 2019)

Description of the Determinants

- In the United States, reportedly One in every four or five adolescents has a mental health disorder: 31% of that population suffers from anxiety disorder, 14.3% from mood disorders, and 14.3% from substance abuse disorder (Merikangas et al., 2010)

- Bully Perpetration is negatively associated with a student's level of self regulation – or self control. (Hong Chui et al. 2012)

- Emotional Self-Regulation: refers to the understanding, acceptance, and modulation of emotional responses, is a process that children and adolescents carry out in order to adapt to their psychosocial environment.

- Self-regulation helps students orient themselves toward the achievement of their evolutionary goals and favors their mental health (Van Lissa et al., 2019).

Prevention & Control Mechanisms

- School-based anti-bulling programs are effective in reducing both bully perpetration and bully victimization.

- Reduce bully perpetration by 19-20%, and victimization by 15-16% (Gaffney, et al., 2021)

- Rap and singing interventions are useful for self-regulation, development of coping strategies, and behavioral changes for adolescents. (Uhlig et al, 2018)

TRIP:

teen rap intervention program

Program Components

- **Song Communication Groups -** Discussion of common song lyrics as its purpose relates to common situations and scenarios of bullying and hate

(Kanye West – Can't Tell Me Nothing) – Trusting yourself
(Snoop Dogg, Nate Dogg – Lay Low) – Hate and conflict
(Jay-Z – Some People Hate) - Jealousy

- **Creative Activities** – Lyric writing, group song performance – themes of anti-bullying

- **Role modeling**: visits from rappers who can share personal stories and experiences

- **Freestyles** to foster group cohesion and strengthening of rap skill

- **Album and Music Video Creation** with end of semester showcase for students and parents

Rap music as a teaching tool

- Rap as a music genre is listened to and made in virtually every country in the world. It is the most popular music genre among listeners aged 12-35 (Susic, 2022).

- Lupe Fiasco: Rap music contains "micro decisions" which may consist of stretching or extending specific vowels in words to achieve or regulate certain tones, moods, or temporalities.
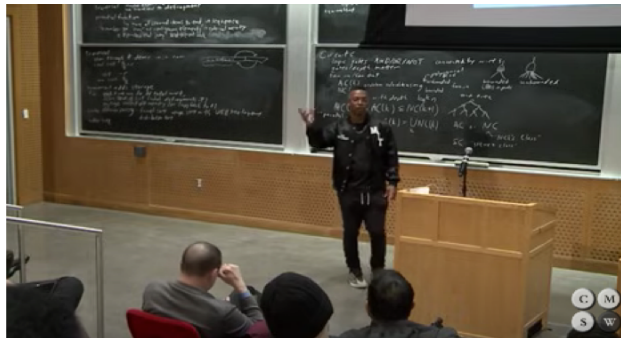
Lupe Fiasco:

• Relationships

• Associations

• Parallels

• Surprises

• Surprise: "surprising information has been shown to impact what we remember and to facilitate transfer of learning strategies; inducing an uncertain mood like surprise has been found to lead to more systematic processing which might aid in learning…" (Tiedens & Linton, 2001)

- **Case-Control study:**
- **RapSingMT & Netherlands 8th graders**

- Experimental group showed a **<u>decline</u>** on <u>SDQ T</u> (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) and <u>DERS</u> (Difficulties and Emotion Regulation Scale) problem scores, while the control group problem scores showed a **<u>significant increase</u>** in reports of aggressive behaviors.

- Uhlig et al. found that the students' self-esteem was enhanced by being able to accept both positive and negative lyrics, which in turn **<u>trained problem-solving skills</u>** and modulated **<u>or reduced destructive feelings</u>** (Uhlig et al, 2018).

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Teachers): SDQ T
"I get angry often and lose my temper"
"I think before I do things"
> Not true; somewhat true; certainly true

Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale: DERS
"I am attentive to my feelings"
"When I am upset, it takes me a long time to feel better"
> Almost never; Sometimes; Most the time; Almost always

PRECEDE

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1 <u>Social Assessment</u> – Quality of Life of NPU I Schools. Prevalence of bullying behaviors including bully perpetration, victimization, and a mixture of the two amongst **African American students** – the largest population affected.

2 <u>Epidemiological Assessment</u>—School-wide data collection of types of bully perpetration present, including physical, verbal, cyber-bullying. Clarifying limited evidence of perpetration data. Assessing the physical and psychological consequences of bullying. - Subjectively defined problems and priorities of individuals (low school achievement, aggressive behaviors, low self-esteem, low values of social conduct) – **SDQ for students, teachers, and parents**

3 <u>Behavioral & Environmental</u> – impulse control difficulties, lack of emotional awareness, lack of emotional clarity, non-acceptance of emotional responses, limited access to emotion regulation strategies perceived as effective – **DERS for students**

4 <u>Administrative & Policy Assessment and Intervention</u> Alignment – Ensuring that **bully prevention is integrated into the curriculum** and policies are consistent with best practices in bullying prevention - identifying policy gaps.

5 <u>Implementation</u> - Implementing potential prevention strategies **– TRIP:** <u>Music therapy and rap music intervention</u> to promote group cohesion and cooperation, as well as increase emotion regulation in adolescents, all in effort to discourage bullying behavior.

PROCEED

PROCEED
6 Process Evaluation – Ensures the intervention was delivered as planned. Examines barriers and limitations to implementation. Did weekly lyric writing and performances promote group cohesion and cooperation? Is timing, location, and program content effective in achieving bully prevention goals? From start (administration of SDQ and DERS surveys) throughout program duration: Closing and Follow-Up Surveys. **Assessing the process.**
7 Impact Evaluation – To **determine whether changes in the targeted behaviors** took place (reduced levels of aggression, impulsive behavior, and low self-esteem). Should be evaluated at the duration of program the program's end.
8 Outcome Evaluation – Assessing the outcomes TRIP is intended to address. Assessed after the first participant has cooperated in the intervention. Comparing student participants in the intervention program with non-participating students. Also assessing if there are positive changes in student's beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors amongst their peers that last after program duration. – **Revisiting bully NPU I perpetration data.**

RE-AIM

RE-AIM

Reach – Intended use and benefit is for bully perpetrators and victims in NPU I middle schools and high schools. Observation and interviews to understand reasons for not participating.
- 5 -15 participants

Effectiveness – Decrease in problem scores on SDQ and DERS and improvement of school environment. Evaluating negative outcomes like continuing of bullying behaviors and experiences.

Adoption – Implemented at 1 school/after-school program to begin. Consists of 2-3 Intervention agents per program site. Evaluating appropriateness for staff selection and adoption for future locations.

Implementation – 2-3 Days/Wk. Will be adapted to accommodate participant interests for best use and effectiveness. Equipment costs and compensation for intervention agent time.

Maintenance – Operational during summer and semester months, each duration in 12-week increments. Sustainability of results shown through follow-up SDQ and DERS surveys 6-months after duration of participation. Evaluated for routine organization practice.

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QUESTIONS?