ABSTRACT
In this Chapter, we provide a comprehensive presentation of what is known about bullying in schools. We begin with highlighting the epidemiology and nature of bullying, and we proceed with the research findings of hypothesised antecedents and consequences of bullying. Then, we present the anti-bullying intervention programmes, along with a commentary of their effectiveness, and our recommendations for further preventative measures. Throughout the Chapter, we adopt a critical stance towards the international and South African bullying literature, pointing out strengths and deficits of the theories, research methods, and practical applications employed. We concur that investigators must carefully synthesise existing theoretical and empirical information and use it as a basis for developing anti-bullying programmes. To be efficacious, preventative efforts need to be theory-driven, data-driven, and subjected to rigorous evaluation.

Keywords: bullying at schools, risk-factors, prevention strategies

INTRODUCTION
Bullying is a noxious intentional action aimed at causing physical and/or psychological harm to one or more students, who are weaker and find it difficult to defend themselves (Olweus, 1993; Rigby, 1996; Smith & Sharp, 1994). In this Chapter, we present:

a. What is known about the nature of bullying.
b. The roles adopted in bullying relationships.
c. The behavioural correlates of bullying, as well as factors that sustain it.
d. The anti-bullying programmes that appear in the international published literature.
e. Core intervention recommendations, based on the international and South African research outputs.

OVERVIEW OF BULLYING
Bullying is seen as a subset of aggressive behaviour (Olweus, 1999), that is expressed in an open, direct way (e.g., physically hitting, kicking, punching someone; verbally threatening, insulting, teasing, taking belongings), and/or in a relational, indirect way (e.g., spreading rumours, gossiping, excluding and isolating someone from a group). More recently, the Internet has provided an arena for additional types of bullying (cyber-bullying), including behaviours such as name-calling using MSN (Microsoft’s messaging service, which provides text messaging and voice calling), sending threatening emails and viruses, hacking and posting one’s picture or video on the Internet without permission (Dehue, Bolman & Völlink, 2008). Although researchers have not reached consensus as to how bullying is best conceptualised (Griffin & Gross, 2004), most agree that bullying encompasses personality elements, group dynamics, repetition, intentionality, and power imbalances amongst those involved (Greene, 2000; Olweus, 1994). Studies have revealed bullying in schools as a common, worldwide, phenomenon:
in high-income countries, prevalence rates are reported between 5% and 35% (Chesson, 1999) and between 9% to 54% (Nansel, Craig, Overpeck, Saluja & Ruan, 2004). In South Africa, bullying has been reported to be as high as 61% in a sample of high-school students in Tshwane (Neser, Ovens, van der Merwe, Morodi & Ladikos, 2003), 52% in Grade 8 students of Cape Town (Townsend, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2008), 41% in a national sample of high school students (Reddy et al., 2003), 36.3% in Grade 8 and 11 students in Durban (Liang, Flisher & Lombard, 2007), 24.3% in Grade 9 students in Port Elizabeth (Fisher et al., 2006), 16.49% in rural high school students in the Eastern Cape (Mlisa, Ward, Flisher & Lombard, 2008), and 11.8% in rural high schools in Mpumalanga (Taiwo & Goldstein, 2006).

With the exception of cyber-bullying, all other types of bullying occur in groups, wherein participants mainly take on the roles of bully, victim, bully-victim (i.e., students who are both bullies and victims). Moreover, a peer group is usually present during bullying, members of which may be neutral (bystanders), assist the bully or make fun of the victim (reinforcers), or aid/console the victim (defenders). Studies have shown that, even when students believe that bullying is wrong, they still tend to encourage the bully, instead of helping the victim (Salmivalli, 1999; Sutton, Smith & Swettenham, 1999). In addition to the peer group, Olweus (1991; 1993) documented that teachers are often present during bullying; teachers can be either unaware of bullying taking place, or may choose not to intervene. Children can interpret adult non-intervention as approval, which may sustain and reinforce bullying, as well as non-disclosure of the act (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008). Although data are inconclusive, studies assessing gender effects reveal that boys are more likely to be classified as bullies (Veenstra et al., 2007), as well as bully-victims (Olweus, 1993; Liang et al., 2007). On the whole, sex effects are not reported for victimisation (Espelage, Mebane & Adams, 2004; Hanish & Guerra, 2004; Pellegrini, Bartini & Brooks, 1999; Schwartz, 2000), although some reports assume girls to be more frequent victims and perpetrators of indirect bullying (Olweus, 1993). Pellegrini and Long (2002) found bullying as more often directed to children of the same sex, than toward children of the opposite sex. With regard to age, bullying gradually declines as children grow older (Fisher, Mathews, Mukoma & Lombard, 2006; Olweus, 1993; Smith, Madsen & Moody, 1999), and some authors suggested that a certain amount of bullying may be a developmental phenomenon that peaks at early adolescence (Fisher et al., 2006), and during the transition from primary to secondary school (Pellegrini & Long, 2002; Smith et al., 1999).

Correlates of bullying
In this section, we deal with the psycho-social and contextual factors that have been found to contribute to the onset of bullying, as well as with hypothesised effects of having experienced bullying, as a victim or bully. Findings drawn from bullying research need to be interpreted with caution, as the research designs used in this domain (i.e., case studies, cross-sectional surveys, retrospective and longitudinal surveys) are fraught with several limitations. Specifically, the correlational nature of these designs and their reliance on self-reports, must be taken into consideration. Biases involved in self-reports, such as self-presentation (i.e., presenting oneself in a more ‘socially favourable’ light than actually is), and memory problems, are well documented and might result in over- or under-reporting a behaviour (Allport, 1942; Mayer, McCormick & Strong, 1995; Rigby, 2003). Longitudinal designs are assumed to offer the most valid findings, as data are gathered at more than one point in time. For example, data can be collected before and after participants have experienced bullying, and health changes occurring after the bullying can be more confidently attributed to the effects of exposure to bullying, than is the
case with cross-sectional designs. However, one cannot be certain that such results are caused by bullying. Methods of data collection typically include self-reports (e.g., data obtained from students using questionnaires and interviews), peer nominations (e.g., the students say who are the bullies and the victims), teacher reports (teachers’ estimation of extent of bullying and the students involved), and direct observation (researchers themselves observe bullying in the context it unfolds, or via the use of recording devices). Methodological limitations notwithstanding, the available body of research allows a presentation of ‘typical’ behavioural profiles of those involved in bullying.

The behaviour of the bully

Bullying is often attributed to personality and family characteristics (Olweus, 1993). Specifically, it is argued that bullies possess a hot-tempered, impulsive and domineering temperament (Bernstein & Watson, 1997), reinforced by growing up in a family that tolerates aggression and the use of power-assertive discipline, such as corporal punishment (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Olweus, 1980). The parents of bullies are reported to be cold and indifferent; inconsistent in their demonstration of affection; and unable to set clear boundaries (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1993). A common misconception, backed by early research (e.g., Roland, 1993), describes bullies as having a low level of intellectual functioning, and lacking effective social skills. Furthermore, bullies are reported to be unable to process social information accurately (Randall, 1997) or understand others’ feelings, thoughts and perspective (Hazler, 1996). In this view, bullies resort to violence as their only means to reach their goals, as their repertoire of responses is limited by their intellectual and social impairments. However, more recent studies (e.g., Sutton, Smith & Swettenham, 1999) rejected this view of bullies, pointing to the fact that the social context and skills of bullying depend on the ability to understand and manipulate the minds of others, i.e., possessing a superior theory of mind. Theory of mind (Premack & Woodruf, 1978) refers to the ability to explain and predict others’ desires and behaviour, based on own mental states — theory of mind is accomplished at childhood, from the age of six and develops onwards (Wellman, 1990). Bullies seem to be able not only to spot which of their peers are suitable candidates for victimisation, but also to succeed in gaining support from their social environment. For example, bullies are adept in predicting those who will join in the bullying, and in coming up with appropriate justifications for the bullying. These cognitive mechanisms may be more obvious in indirect methods of bullying, such as social exclusion or isolation and gossiping, all of which require the ability to manipulate a developed social infrastructure (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz & Kaukiainen, 1992). In a similar vein, earlier descriptions of bullies, as experiencing low levels of self-worth and self-esteem (Besag, 1989), are contradicted by studies showing bullies’ scores on self-esteem scales as generally comparable to their peers (Carney & Merrell, 2001) and even slightly higher (Rigby & Slee, 1993). Such data prompted a number of investigators to shift their view of bullying as based on social deficiency, towards bullying based on social reward. Hawley (1999; 2003), Olweus (1993) and Veenstra et al. (2007) argued that one main motivation behind bullying, is to obtain higher status, prestige and power within a peer group. Since striving for status is considered a ubiquitous human goal (Lindenberg, 2001), it would be reasonable to assume that the bully is guided by a desire to establish high status within his or her group. In terms of the means of obtaining status, it has been documented that the bully derives satisfaction from inflicting injury on others (Olweus, 1995), understands the emotions involved in victimisation, but does not share them (Happé & Frith, 1996) and regards domination as more rewarding than being seen as socially competent (Arsenio & Lemerise, 2001).
Although people perceive the negative effects of bullying more in terms of victimisation, perpetration is also linked with compromising outcomes. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, studies have shown that those identified as bullies at school, are more likely to be convicted for a crime by early adulthood (Brewster & Railsback, 2001; Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1997). Bully status has also been consistently associated with depression, suicide, conduct disorder and psychosomatic complaints (Carney, 2000; Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpelä, Rantanen, & Rimpelä, 2000; Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld & Gould, 2007), risk-taking behaviours, such as substance use (Liang et al., 2007), and poor academic achievement (Townsend et al., 2008).

The behaviour of the victim
Victim status is also attributed to personality and family characteristics. Olweus (1993, 1995, 1997) describes typical victims, also known as passive victims, as anxious, overly sensitive, submissive, cautious, insecure, quiet, low in self-esteem and as having only a few friends. Some victims may come from over-protective or enmeshed families, wherein independence and self-assertion is not emphasised (Smith & Myron-Wilson, 1998). Another type of victim is the provocative or bully-victim. Bully-victims, encountered less often than passive victims, are both victims and perpetrators of bullying. The basis of acquiring the bully-victim role may be a lack of social skills and an inferior theory of mind. Studies (e.g., Carney & Merrell, 2001; Greene, 2000) have shown that bully-victims often violate social norms by interfering in conversations, being impatient, finding it hard to wait for their turn, and engaging in behaviours typical of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Thus, bully-victims tend to cause irritation around them, and, in a way, elicit all sorts of negative responses, including bullying, from their peers. Studies consistently suggest that, compared with victims and bullies, bully-victims are the most vulnerable for depression (Seals & Young, 2003), anxiety-related disorders (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000), conduct disorders (Junoven, Graham & Schuster, 2003), poor self-esteem, high neuroticism, poor problem-solving ability (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005), truancy and academic difficulties (Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003), substance use (Forero, McLellan, Rissel & Bauman, 1999) and suicidal tendencies (Klomek et al., 2007). Recent South African studies found that bully-victims from schools of Cape Town and Durban, demonstrated comparable aggressive, antisocial, and risk-taking behaviours to bullies and comparable suicidal tendencies and tobacco use to victims (Liang et al., 2007). Also, female bully-victims (but not male bully-victims) from Cape Town schools were more likely to drop out (Townsend et al., 2008). The social or contextual factors that sustain perpetration (premium on power, status, dominance; peer-group encouragement; lack of teacher interference), combined with the victim’s characteristics (shy demeanour, sensitivity, lack of friends or support group) help explain why the victim finds it hard to object to, and end, the abuse. In an environment where aggressive behaviours are accepted, admired even, victims are likely to ‘internalise’ bullying, that is, assuming bullying is a normal behaviour, triggered by their own characteristics (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008). Moreover, it has been documented that even when victims initially react to being bullied, as provocative victims would do, this fails to stop the bully, and may even heighten the level of aggression (Camodeca, Goossens, Terwogt & Schuengel, 2002).

Bullying as bias: A social-cognitive process
Published studies on bullying place a premium on the individual (i.e., personality characteristics, developmental factors, internal motivations, family background), whilst addressing, albeit less so, the peer group context in which bullying unfolds, and even less so the social-cognitive processes at work. However, bullying includes all the characteristics of...
social inter-group bias, whereby, one group of people – the in-group – systematically and consistently perceive themselves more favourably than another group, the out-group (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002). Bias encompasses negative behaviours (discrimination), cognitions (stereotypes), attitudes (prejudice), and is unfair, because it is not based on objective evidence of the situation (Fiske, 1998; Wilder & Simon, 2001). In psychology, ever since individualistic explanations of bias were abandoned (i.e., the authoritarian personality: Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson & Sanford, 1950) inter-group bias and conflict have been traditionally explained through the Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and its more recent version, Social Identity Developmental Theory (SIDT) (Nesdale, 1999). SIT and SIDT postulate that children and adults engage in peer groups and friendships due to social identity and self-esteem concerns; being a member of a group is paramount in forming one’s sense of identity and self-worth. Under optimal conditions, establishing and securing social identity requires some amount of in-group favouritism, in relation to the out-group, but not out-group disparagement (Brewer, 1999). Bullying, however, and peer group conflict, occur when in-group children think that their status might be enhanced by out-group derogation, or, is somehow threatened by the out-group (Nesdale & Scarlett, 2004). Gini (2006), in an experimental study, applied the SIT/SIDT to assess bullying perceptions in preadolescent students, and demonstrated participants’ consistent preference for their own group (in-group) and derogation of the out-group. Relevant to this, authors have put forth the argument that lack of adequate contact, in terms of quantity and quality, between in- and out-group members will lead to bias and conflict (the contact hypothesis) (Allport, 1954; Brewer & Gaertner, 2001; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Hewstone 1996; Pettigrew, 1998). Understandably, the SIT and contact hypothesis could describe and explain an amount of bullying based on racial or ethnic differences, which is clearly relevant to South Africa. Although not restricted to bullying, South African studies have assessed the effect of inter-racial contact in schools. Holtman, Louw, Tredoux and Carney (2005) found that inter-racial contact between learners was a strong predictor of positive inter-group attitudes and behaviours, even when the strength of the group identity was accounted for. Moholola and Finchilescu (2006) found that black students’ attitudes were significantly more positive towards that of white students in a multiracial school, as compared with those attending an exclusively white school.

Although not conforming to a specific theoretical model, a number of international studies associated victimisation with ethnicity, revealing ethnic minority students as more likely to become victims of bullying, but not perpetrators (Maharaj, Tie & Ryba, 2000; Wolke, Woods, Stanford & Schulz, 2001). Studies assessing the role of ethnicity in perpetration are scarce and have yielded conflicting results (Nguy & Hunt, 2004).

ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAMMES

Given that bullying is essentially a group process, occurring amongst and being influenced by peers2 (Sutton et al., 1999; Veenstra et al., 2007), and that most bullying takes place in schools (Olweus, 1993), the majority of anti-bullying programmes are school-based. In addition, intervening at schools is relatively cost-efficient, as schools have the necessary facilities, as well as the human resources required for programme implementation. A study of international reviews of anti-bullying school-based interventions (e.g., Crothers & Kolbert, 2008; Rigby, 2004; Smith & Ananiadou, 2003; Smith, Schneider, Smith & Ananiadou, 2004; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007) revealed five types of interventions: curriculum, multi-disciplinary or “whole-school”, social skills training, mentoring, and social worker support.

2 Deviating from the group element of bullying and making it thus difficult to tackle, cyber-bullying is a predominately private, individualistic and anonymous activity; still cyber-bullying has been correlated with traditional bullying (Dehue et al., 2008).
Curriculum (classroom) interventions include anti-bullying lectures, presentations, discussions, written curriculum and videotapes. Curricula attempt to prevent or reduce bullying in the classroom by improving student attitudes, changing group norms, teaching adaptive social skills and increasing self-efficacy. Vreeman and Carroll (2007) conducted the first systematic review of school-based anti-bullying interventions. In this review, interventions had to be experimental, with control and intervention groups, as well as a follow-up evaluation with measured results. Twenty-six studies worldwide met the inclusion criteria; all of the studies applied the intervention to primary schools, whilst six of them also intervened in secondary schools. Results of classroom interventions were far from promising. Of the 10 curriculum interventions, six failed to significantly reduce bullying. Of the four that managed to reduce bullying, three also showed an increase in bullying and victimisation in certain populations. For example, Baldry and Farrington (2004) found a decrease in self-reported victimisation in older students (aged 14-16), but an increase in self-reported victimisation in younger students, whilst, overall, there was no statistically-significant difference in bullying or victimisation. In Teglasi and Rothman (2001), teachers reported reduced bullying for non-aggressive students, but increased bullying for students previously identified as aggressive, whilst student self-reports revealed no statistically significant intervention effects. Vreeman and Carroll (2007) found no overall statistically-significant reductions in direct bullying or victimisation measures in the curriculum interventions.

Whole-school interventions include a combination of methods involving the school at all levels, such as enforcing anti-bullying rules and specific sanctions for those breaking the rules, teacher training, classroom curricula, conflict resolution techniques, counselling, as well as providing educational material. Whole-school interventions are inspired by, and follow in the steps of, the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme (Olweus, 1994), which was a highly successful anti-bullying intervention, implemented in Bergen, Norway. Compared with curriculum interventions, whole-school approaches have been more effective in reducing bullying (Vreeman & Carroll, 2007), but, by and large, evaluations have yielded mixed results. To elaborate, the dramatic success of the Olweus Programme has not been replicated outside of Norway (Smith et al., 2004) and in some cases its implementation has provided no decrease in bullying (e.g., Melton et al., 1998), or resulted in an increase in bullying and victimisation (e.g., Roland, 1993). Roland replicated the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme in Rogaland, Norway, and found increased self-reported victimisation and social exclusion for boys, and increased self-reported bullying and victimisation for girls. Pepler, Craig, Ziegeler and Charach (1994) applied an intervention modelled after Olweus’, in Toronto, Canada, and found no statistically-significant changes in the proportion of children who had been bullied more than once or twice during school term, but a small reduction (about 5%) of bullying in children who had been bullied at least once in the previous week. At the same time, Pepler et al. (1994) found an increase in the proportion of students who reported bullying others more than once or twice a week, and during the last five days over 18 months. Similar ‘paradoxical’ results were found by Hanewinkel and Knaack (1997), who applied an intervention closely modelled after Olweus’, in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany.

In addition to the systematic review of Vreeman and Carroll (2007), we located a synthesis of the evaluation research of 24 whole-school interventions (Smith et al., 2004), in primary and secondary schools worldwide. Both Vreeman and Carroll (2007) and Smith et al. (2004) agree that, although the whole-school interventions fare much better than the curriculum ones, the majority of interventions yielded outcomes with no statistical significance on
measures of self-reported bullying and victimisation. Only a few programmes proved to be effective in reducing bullying and victimisation (i.e., Alsaker & Valkanover, 2001; Menesini, Codecasa, Benelli & Cowie, 2003; Metzler, Biglan, Rusby & Sprague, 2001; Olweus, 1993; Rahey & Craig, 2002; Twemlow et al., 2001).

Social skills training anti-bullying interventions include group activities, such as learning how to be effective speakers and listeners, building friendships, enhancing self-knowledge and empathy, resolving conflict without resorting to aggression, and improving social norms and attitudes. Vreeman and Carroll (2007) managed to locate four social skills training interventions, meeting their review criteria. Of these interventions, only the one carried out by De Rosier (2004) demonstrated statistically-significant reductions in self-reported bullying and victimisation.

A study by Bagley and Pritchard (1998) that assessed the effects of increasing the numbers of social workers in schools in the United Kingdom, found a significant decrease in self-reported bullying in primary schools, but an increase of bullying in secondary schools.

King, Vidourek, Davis and McClellan (2002) implemented and evaluated a primary school peer-mentoring programme for at-risk fourth graders. The programme emphasised relationship building, self-esteem enhancement, goal setting, and academic assistance. Data revealed that mentored students were less likely to report being involved in bullying, as compared with their non-mentored counterparts. Also, mentored students showed improved self-esteem levels, as well as improved connections to school, peers and family.

A literature search revealed only one South African, anti-bullying intervention (Meyer & Lesch, 2000), implemented at three schools, and targeting boys only. This intervention applied a social or behavioural skills modification programme, which, based on peer and self-reports, did not decrease bullying in any statistically-significant way. The authors put forth issues related to the conceptualisation of bullying behaviour, the effects of the socio-economic environment, and time-focused approach of the project, as factors impeding the programme’s success.

To conclude, anti-bullying programmes have yielded inconsistent, even paradoxical outcomes in terms of reducing bullying and victimisation. Some interventions have decreased bullying, others have had no effect, and some have increased bullying. Additionally, substantial inconsistencies are evidenced as a function of age: younger children seem to benefit less from curriculum and whole-school interventions, whereas older children benefit less from social-skills interventions. Although we have painted a somewhat bleak picture of the preventative efforts thus far, we do not suggest that they be abandoned altogether. Some of the interventions presented in this Chapter may have failed to reduce bullying, but they still improved other areas of functioning, such as group problem-solving (Elliot & Faupel, 1997), awareness of bullying and school rules (Alsaker & Valkanover, 2001; Mitchell, Palmer, Booth & Powell-Davies, 2000), academic achievement scores (Twemlow et al., 2001), social skills (De Rosier, 2004), and general well-being (King et al., 2002). However, if the existing anti-bullying interventions wish to continue to be labelled as such, they need to undergo (re)evaluation and be modified accordingly.

Comments on intervention
As revealed above, interventions have had only limited success in reducing bullying and victimisation (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003; Smith et al., 2004; Sutton et al., 1999; Rigby, 2002; Vreeman & Carroll, 2002).
2007). In light of the findings from programme evaluations, only cautious recommendations can be made that anti-bullying interventions be continued in their current forms. Therefore, a commentary of possible reasons of the failure of some anti-bullying programmes is well warranted.

Most whole-school interventions have been modelled on the hugely successful Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme (also known as the Bergen Programme). There are several differences, however, between the Bergen Programme and the others. Firstly, the Bergen Programme was successful in Norwegian schools, which operates on very high quality standards (e.g., they have small, fully-equipped classes, highly-educated teachers, and function in a tradition that welcome the intervention of the government in social welfare issues). Moreover, the Bergen programme was implemented at a time when bullying was escalating in Norway, and a number of suicides linked to bullying and victimisation were reported (Smith et al., 2004). Parents, students, teachers and health officials were very motivated to make the programme work. Thus, the educational and historical context surrounding Olweus’ intervention was optimal, potentially ensuring its success. Years later, Roland’s (1989) replication of the Bergen Programme in another Norwegian city (Rogaland) was unsuccessful, and this may be linked to a changed historical setting. Implementation issues have also been presented as factors contributing to the failure of some whole-school interventions (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). The possibility exists that Olweus created a unique intervention that, if altered, may not be effective. Subsequent interventions have substantially modified the original Bergen Programme, for the purpose of cultural relevance, possibly at the expense of intervention fidelity (Dane & Schneider, 1998). Additionally, the Olweus’ intervention does not come with a detailed manual, rendering it more difficult to replicate. Another factor that may underscore the observed paradoxical results is increased sensitisation following anti-bullying programmes. After an intervention, students are aware of what bullying entails and may report it more, rather than experience it more; similarly, decreases in victimisation may be too subtle to be measured. Age-related paradoxes in bullying interventions (i.e., younger students benefited more from social skills programmes, whereas older students benefited more from whole-school and curriculum), might suggest the need for age-specific interventions. This is consistent with findings viewing bullying as a developmental phenomenon, peaking at early adolescence (Flisher et al., 2006), and during the transition from primary to secondary school (Pellegrini & Long, 2002).

Implementation issues notwithstanding, we argue that theoretical and epistemological issues underscore the problems surrounding anti-bullying interventions. As already put forth, the aetiology of bullying has mostly been provided in terms of individual psychological factors, emphasising maladaptive personality traits and parenting practices. Personality and developmental theoretical perspectives have guided the development of, virtually, all interventions, thus targeting specific individuals and changing individual bullying behaviours and attitudes. Although there is no doubt that personality or family characteristics impact bullying, aiming to address or modify such factors in schools, may be futile, because once established, personality traits are notoriously resistant to change (Eysenck, 1983; Rigby, 2004) and nothing can be done about parenting. Moreover, doubts have been cast (e.g., Sutton et al., 1999) over the widespread assumption of bullies being deficient in intellectual, emotional and social skills, such as theory of mind, self-esteem, assessing group dynamics, etc. Consequently, interventions that emphasise the building of intellectual skills and understanding others, may, in fact, be to the advantage of the
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bully (Sutton et al., 1999). Thus, a main reason for the limited success of anti-bullying interventions, in general, may be the person-centred approach of changing the ‘individual’. Despite the use of person-centred strategies, the whole-school approach has fared better than the rest, probably because it also aims to modify the entire school environment and philosophy. In addition to individual characteristics, whole-school interventions view bullying as influenced by external factors, such as group interaction. This is why we are surprised to see that a whole body of social psychological research, which traditionally investigates inter-group conflict, has been downplayed. To elaborate, studies applying the SIT (e.g., Turner & Reynolds, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the contact hypothesis model (Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000) to inter-group processes have provided valuable data regarding the factors that give birth and sustain group bias and conflict. A mass of research findings (e.g., Brewer & Gaertner, 2001; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Hewstone, 1996; Pettigrew 1998) suggests that a reduction of inter-group bias and conflict can be accomplished through increasing of the quantity and quality of inter-group contact. The moderating mechanism underlying intergroup contact, is known as “categorisation”. Categorisation (Pettigrew, 1998) is a fundamental cognitive process, whereby people organise their social world on the basis of categorical distinctions, transforming continuous variables into discrete ones. Categorisation minimises perceived differences within categories and maximises differences across categories. Because people are always members of some social categories and not others, categorisation includes implicit in-group versus out-group (we versus they) distinctions. We will now briefly outline how eliminating, or modifying, categorisation can improve inter-group relationships; for a review, however, see Hewstone, Rubin and Willis (2002). Bias can be reduced or removed by a de-categorisation process, which is moving former in-group members, once individuated, towards out-group members, thus removing in-group favouritism as the source of bias (Brewer, 1999). An example of this would be reducing bias through fostering out-group friendships, as demonstrated by Pettigrew (1997) and Phinney, Ferguson and Tate (1997). Bias can be further reduced by improving attitudes towards former out-group members, owing to their re-categorisation from out-, to in-group. As a result, intergroup relations are likely to improve by self-disclosing interactions with former out-group members, which results in more differentiated impressions of them (Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson & Howard, 1997; Gaertner & Dovidio 2000). Some out-groups, however, tend to have very strong identities (e.g., ethnic minorities) that they wish to keep distinct, and may therefore resist assimilation to a super-ordinate out-group; assimilation, in this case, is perceived as a threat to lose what makes the group special (Van Oudenhoven, Groenewoud & Hewstone, 1996). Another categorisation strategy, therefore, consists of maintaining group boundaries and distinct roles, whilst cooperating (Dovidio, Gaertner & Validzic, 1998); in this case, more favourable attitudes are established when contact occurs with a typical out-group member and/or references to nationality or culture are frequent during contact (Brown, Maras, Masser, Vivian & Hewstone, 2001; Brown, Vivian & Hewstone, 1999). A final categorisation strategy aims to foster a dual group identity (Horney & Hogg, 2000) to groups who share a super-ordinate category, as is usually the case. For example, Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Bachman and Anastasio (1994) found less bias in a multi-ethnic high school when students were trained to perceive themselves in terms of different ethnic sub-groups, but still “all playing for the same team” (i.e., the school), and when students identified themselves at both subgroup (i.e. ethnic group) and at super-ordinate (i.e., Americans) level.

Whilst no anti-bullying interventions that we know of have used social-psychological data, such as
the above, we believe that including some type of categorisation strategies could prove beneficial. In the following Box we summarise elements of successful anti-bullying strategies, based on the data presented in this Chapter.

**Anti-bullying strategies need to:**

- Have a sound theoretical basis.
- Acknowledge the complexity of aetiological factors by addressing psychological, contextual, and socio-cognitive processes.
- Modify group processes; not the individual.
- Carefully foster cooperative activities between bullies and victims, reducing, thus, biases and enhancing familiarity/friendship.
- Come with a manual.
- Clearly describe the nature of bullying to the whole school population, with the expectation of non-perpetration.
- Include a sanctions element only if sanctions are consistently and reliably applied.
- Be evaluated for effectiveness and flexible to necessary adaptations.

**South African policies addressing bullying**

Although a South African national policy specific to school bullying (or school violence) does not exist, there are some policies related to youth well-being, in general, wherein violence reduction can be an indirect outcome (Department of Health, 2001). For example, the Child Care Act includes a reporting system requiring any type of child abuse to be reported to the police and, or, child welfare officials (Human Rights Watch, 2001). The South African Schools Act of 1996 demands that students found guilty of serious misconduct be suspended or expelled from the school. Additionally, the Department of Education revised the curriculum in 2006, by introducing new content and teaching methods that aim, amongst other things, to improve student-student and student-teacher interaction (Department of Education, 2007). The National Programme of Action for Children is responsible for integrating all policies by all governmental departments and non-government group organisations (NGOs).

**Key messages**

- Bullying consists of repetitive, direct and indirect, acts of aggression: hitting, kicking, biting, scratching, name-calling, gossiping, ignoring, shunning, threatening.
- Bullying stems from a combination of psychological, social and cognitive factors.
- Bullying is a worldwide phenomenon, with reported prevalence rates ranging from 5% to 61%.
- Anybody can potentially be a bully or a victim, regardless of culture and socio-economic standing.
- Interventions are mostly successful when they involve the whole school and promote goal-oriented cooperative activities.

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