4. Parental intrusive-demandingness and responsiveness as moderators of the course of peer victimization in four- to five-year-old children

Mariëlle Bonnet, Frits A. Goossens, and Carlo Schuengel

Manuscript submitted for publication
Abstract

This study examined the linkages between two dimensions of parenting style, controlling parenting in the form of intrusive-demandingness and autonomy support in the form of responsiveness, and trajectories of peer victimization in young children. Seventy children (4- and 5-year-olds) identified as victims of peer aggression in the Fall semester and one of their parents were recruited from 46 classrooms in 18 schools in the Netherlands. All children were followed-up twice during one school year in order to determine for whom victimization was stable. Observation sessions were organized in the form of children’s parties, in which a series of four structured tasks were presented to each parent-child dyad and videotaped for coding intrusive-demandingness and responsiveness. Findings revealed that preschool children victimized at the beginning of the school year were more likely to be non-victimized at the end if their parent showed more responsiveness. Intrusive-demanding parenting was not associated with continued victimization. These findings underscore the importance of parenting as a potential source of resilience against victimization at school.
Introduction

Victimization in young children (4-5 years) is generally defined as a form of peer abuse in which a child is frequently the recipient of aggressive acts (Hanish, Ryan, Martin, & Fabes, 2005; Ladd & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 1998; Monks, Smith, & Swettenham, 2003). Starting at an early age, victimization becomes increasingly stable over time (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996a, 1996b). The consequences of chronic peer victimization are serious and include loneliness, anxiety, low self-esteem and depression as well as school avoidance (e.g., Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996b; Olweus, 1991). Evidence is emerging that specific parental features and behaviors are among the factors associated with peer victimization. Parenting styles and behaviors may foster child behavior patterns (e.g., reactive aggression, submissive behavior) that elicit victimization by peers (Barker et al., 2008; Ladd & Kochenderfer Ladd, 1998). On the other hand, parenting may also contribute to the ability to solve social problems and rid oneself of the status of victim. For the youngest group of preschool children, such successful or unsuccessful attempts to resolve social problems may further shape their self-confidence as well as their social competence. It is therefore important to investigate the association between parenting and the course of victimization among young children at the start of their school careers.

Prior research on the link between peer victimization and parenting behavior has in general focused on dimensions such as controlling parenting (e.g., intrusiveness, demandingness) and responsiveness (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009; Ladd & Kochenderfer Ladd, 1998; Ladd & Pettit, 2002). Controlling parenting not only incorporates the high demands parents want their children to meet, but also attempts to solve their children’s problems. Controlling parents act from a parental perspective rather than from their children’s perspective. In contrast, responsiveness involves actions of parents that foster development of autonomy by being attuned, supportive and taking their children’s perspective (Bornstein & Bornstein, 2007; Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009).

Schwarz, Dodge, Pettit, and Bates (1997) examined prospectively the relation between early family experiences and victimization experiences of aggressive boys in middle childhood. They found that harsh parenting at age 5 was linked with peer victimization 4 to 5 years later. This is consistent with the findings of Barker et al. (2008) who, also prospectively, demonstrated that high levels of harsh, reactive parenting at age 17 months predicted high/chronic peer victimization trajectories in first grade. In contrast, maternal responsiveness was positively associated with social adaptation at school. Kochenderfer and Ladd (1998) investigated features of parenting behavior in relation to vulnerability to peer victimization in kindergarten. Results showed that high levels of intrusive-demandingness and low levels of responsiveness were associated with peer victimization at the start of kindergarten for both boys and girls. High levels of intense closeness within
A parent-child relationship appeared also to be predictive of peer victimization, but only for boys.

These prior studies have demonstrated that specific dimensions of parenting are predictive of later peer victimization. However, it is yet unclear to what extent these parenting dimensions predict the course of peer victimization. In other words, parenting qualities are likely to make some children more vulnerable to peer victimization. Now the question is whether these qualities, the level of parental responsiveness or intrusion in children’s autonomy, also determine which children become stable victims. From a social learning perspective, positive effects may be expected from a parenting style high in responsiveness and low in intrusive-demanding control. High levels of responsiveness support children’s emerging autonomy, which may foster children’s opportunities to develop social competencies and problem solving skills (Ladd & Kochenderfer Ladd, 1998). Research has shown that children with responsive parents tend to be more socially competent in preschool, more confident, more capable of reciprocity, and more flexible problem solvers in case of conflicts with peers (Sroufe, 1983; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986). Children in the youngest group of elementary school, however, are still at the early stage of developing autonomy and may therefore not able to solve the problem of victimization all by themselves. Their initial responses may even inadvertently increase the chance of further victimization. Children may therefore benefit from having a responsive parent.

A more negative effect may be expected from a parenting style high in intrusive-demanding control and low in responsiveness. A controlling parenting style has been found to limit children’s opportunities to develop social competencies, develop a sense of self-esteem, make decisions for themselves and cope adequately with stress (Barber, & Harmon, 2002; Grusec & Davidov, 2007). In case of peer victimization, these children may mainly rely on conflict-avoidant strategies and may be less capable of making their needs known to their parents. Based on these considerations, we expect higher levels of intrusive-demanding control to be associated with an increase or continuation of victimization.

The aim of this study is to extend previous research on the role of parenting style with respect to peer victimization. We examined the linkages between two dimensions of parenting style, controlling parenting in the form of intrusive-demandingness and autonomy support in the form of responsiveness, and the stability of peer victimization in young children (4-5 years) during one school year. Higher levels of responsiveness were expected to be related to lower levels of victimization during one academic year. Furthermore, higher levels of intrusive-ness-demandingness were expected to be related to continuation of victimization during one academic year.

Specific dimensions of parenting style have mostly been studied by using parent-reports, especially when children are young. In a preschool setting, Sessa, Avenevoli,
Steinberg and Morris (2001) examined the correspondence between parent, child and observer reports regarding parental behavior. Results revealed that mothers’ self reported parental behavior showed significantly less correspondence with observer or child report than between child and observer reports of parental behavior. Informant biases associated with being the subject of observation (i.e. mothers) versus being an observer of another person’s behavior (i.e. child and observer) seemed to be a plausible explanation for this finding. We decided to measure parenting style by way of observation.

In sum, the present study was designed to relate two dimensions of parenting style (i.e., intrusive-demanding parenting and responsiveness) to the course of peer victimization in young children (4-5 years). Children identified as victims of peer aggression in the fall semester were followed up twice during the rest of the school year to determine for whom victimization was stable.

**Method**

**Participants**

The sample included 70 victimized children (17 girls, 53 boys; mean age = 5.02 years, SD=.61 at the start of the school year) and one of their parents (54 mothers, 16 fathers). Most children (87.1%) were from two-parent families. Forty-four percent of the parents had college or university degrees. The educational level of the parents in this sample was somewhat higher than the educational level of the general population (32%) according to data of the National Bureau of Statistics. The families were recruited from 46 classes from 18 elementary schools in the Netherlands. Dutch children begin elementary school at age 4. In all schools classrooms were composed of almost equal numbers of first- and second graders. As a result, the classes were heterogeneous with respect to age.

The sample of victimized children was selected on the basis of a two-step screening procedure. In the first step, forty-nine elementary schools in the provinces of Flevoland and North Holland were requested to participate by way of a letter. These provinces are situated in the central part of the Netherlands and contain both urban and rural areas. Twenty-three schools (47%) consented to participate. No significant differences were found when comparing the participating and non-participating schools on school identity (i.e., religious or non-religious affiliation), school size, school climate (i.e., social climate and anti-bullying policy) and SES of the neighborhood.

After permission was obtained from the school councils to conduct the study, parents of all children in the first and second grade were informed about the project and asked whether they objected to the teacher providing anonymous information to the researchers on victimization of the children in their classroom. We used a passive consent procedure, as we could not directly approach the parents. Schools are obliged to protect
the privacy of pupils and parents. About 8% of the parents objected. Teachers were asked not to include these children in their reports.

The teachers completed a questionnaire on exposure to victimization for each participating child \((n=2,003)\) in late October, mostly within one week. Because of the anonymous procedure, each questionnaire was given a unique code by the researchers corresponding to a school, class and child. The teacher linked each child to a unique code and kept a list of names and corresponding codes.

In the second step of the two-way screening procedure, we identified within each individual school class the children who scored above a cut-off point. That cut-off point for victimization scores had been determined in a pilot study that we had conducted beforehand among 197 elementary school children (age 4-7) (see below for a description of this pilot study). The unique codes of these 295 children were given to the teachers and they were asked to inform the parents of these children about the project, by way of an information folder. In this folder the purpose and design of the study and required efforts of children and parents were described. Victimization status was not revealed. Each information folder included a consent form and stamped envelope which parents could return to the researcher if they were interested in participation. By sending this form to the researchers parents revealed their name, address and phone number. All parents who returned this form were phoned by the researcher in order to provide answers to their questions and acquire active consent. The consent rate was 25% \((n=73)\). It was not possible to compare consenting and non-consenting parents, because of the anonymous character of the screening procedure. Three parents were not able to participate in the assessment of parenting style due to illness. The study and selection procedure were approved by the Faculty’s Review Board.

**Measures**

*Peer victimization.* Teachers completed a 16-item measure of children’s peer victimization. This measure consisted of the three physical and two relational peer victimization items developed by Crick, Casas, and Ku (1999). Eleven additional items were included, assessing verbal, object related (i.e., damaging property), and indirect relational (i.e., rumor spreading) victimization, in order to sample the various forms of victimization. Victimization items were taken from Ladd and Profilet’s (1996) Perception of Peer Support Scale – a self-report measure-, and from peer report cartoons developed by Monks, Smith and Swettenham (2003). All these measures have in common that they were developed for the age range we were interested in. Items were answered using a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (never true), 2 (rarely), 3 (regularly) to 4 (often/very often). The dimensionality of the 16-item measure was analyzed using maximum likelihood factor analyses. The results pointed to one interpretable underlying factor (see Bonnet,
Goossens, Willemen, & Schuengel, 2009). Victimization scores were therefore computed by taking the summed score of the 16 items for each child. Reliability was high (Coefficient alpha .87, .90, and .92 at T1, T2 and T3 respectively; item-total correlations > .44).

A pilot study was conducted in order to test the teacher report measure and to determine a cut-off point for peer victimization. The pilot sample included 197 elementary school children (115 girls, 82 boys), between 4 and 7 years of age ($M$=6.15 years, $SD$=13.9 months). The children were recruited from 8 classes from 2 elementary schools in the Netherlands. Parents were informed about the study by way of a letter and given the opportunity to have their child excluded from the questionnaire to be filled out by the teacher. Less than 10% of the parents used this opportunity.

We compared the teacher report measure with a peer-report measure (five cartoons developed by Monks, Smith and Swettenham, 2003), a self-report measure (victimization items of the Perception of Peer Support Scale by Ladd and Proffilt, 1996), and a parent report measure (the same 16-item teacher report measure of children’s peer victimization). Peer reports, self reports and teacher reports were correlated. Raw correlations ranged from .20 (teachers and peers) through .26 (teacher and self reports) to .28 (peer and self reports). After partialling out age and gender teacher reports were significantly predicted by both peer and self reports ($R^2$=.16; self reports were more strongly associated). Peer reports were significantly predicted by both self and teacher reports ($R^2$=.15; self reports were more strongly associated). Self reports were significantly predicted by peer and teacher reports ($R^2$=.18; teacher reports were more strongly associated). These results were similar to those of Crick, Casas, and Mosher (1997) who considered teachers reliable informants on the social behavior of young children. When comparing teacher and parent reports of victimization, statistically significant but moderate correlations were found ($r$=.27). Moreover, parents and teachers agreed strongly on who were the victims. On the basis of these results we decided to use the teacher measure, as this would be the most practical in terms of investment of time.

In order to determine a cut-off point for victimization a latent construct of victimization based on multiple informants was created. We standardized the scores of the peer and self reports and created a summed score. This summed score was used as ‘golden standard’ to determine a cut-off point for teacher rated victimization by conducting a ROC-analyse. The optimum cut-off point found was $z$=.74.

**Parenting style.** As part of an observation procedure designed as a children’s party, a series of four structured tasks were presented to allow the observation of parenting style. For each party, six children and one of their parents were invited. All four tasks were designed to create the opportunity of observing controlling parenting (i.e., intrusiveness and demandingness) and autonomy support (responsiveness). The duration of each task was 7 minutes and all tasks were videotaped. The tasks included the following: (1) children
had to make a puzzle they could not perform on their own and help from their parents was needed; (2) children had to paint a plaster figure any way they liked, with or without help from their parent; (3) parent and child could pick a book to read together; (4) a table version soccer game in which the ball was moved by blowing through a straw: parent and child were asked to determine the rules together and play the game.

Every 7 minutes all parent-child dyads were asked to rotate from one task to the following one. As a small reward, the children received a card to paste a sticker onto after completion of each task. The party was designed in such a way that the interaction tasks were performed near the end, following data collection for another part of the study. In this way parents and children would get the opportunity to feel comfortable with the situation and act more naturally.

We used a coding system developed by Ladd and Kochenderfer-Ladd (1998) to score intrusiveness and demandingness (controlling parenting). Intrusiveness was defined as the degree to which parents interfere with their child’s activities and dominate the interaction. Demandingness referred to the parents’ expectations for their children, and the high standard by which they judged their child’s performance. Autonomy support was measured by parents’ responsiveness (including both contingency and quality of the responses). Responsiveness referred to the degree to which parents are consistent, attuned and supportive to their child’s initiatives, questions and comments.

Two coders rated the four tasks on scales for each dimension ranging from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Ratings were averaged over the four tasks and across the two coders to create a single score for each dimension for each parent. Thus, we reduced 32 scores to just four. Practice tapes from the pilot of the children’s party were used to train the coders to an 80% or higher level of agreement with the first author on the four dimensions before coding the data for this sample. Coders worked independently, and reliability was continuously monitored throughout the rating period. Disagreements were resolved by discussion. Reliability was calculated for each dimension by using the average Intra-Class Correlations (ICC). Interrater reliabilities for the total sample were: .83 for intrusiveness, .79 for demandingness, .85 for responsiveness contingency, and .75 for responsiveness quality. Following Ladd and Kochenderfer-Ladd (1998), the averaged ratings on intrusiveness and demandingness were combined into one measure for intrusive demanding parenting style by summing the averaged scores of the two dimensions. The two dimensions were highly correlated ($r=.59, p<.001$). The scores of the two components of responsiveness (i.e., contingency and quality) were also averaged to create one measure for parental responsiveness for the same reason ($r=.75, p<.001$).
**Design and Procedure**

Each child was evaluated three times on exposure to victimization over the course of one school year. The first assessment (T1) was the screening procedure in late October. Following T1, teachers were asked to fill out the teacher report again during the winter semester (T2) and the spring semester (T3) in order to determine the stability of victimization. All teachers received a reward of €10 ($7.5) for their participation.

During the winter semester (T2) the children and one of their parents visited a children’s party conducted in a laboratory situation (6 parent-child dyads per session). The duration of each party was 2.5 hours and was videotaped by nine cameras. As part of the children’s party, the four structured tasks took place to allow the observation of parenting style.

**Data analyses**

Multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the hypothesized relations between the course of peer victimization (i.e., T1-T3) and parenting style. Due to technical problems (no sound recorded) during the observation of parenting style, missing data were present in 9 cases. Conducting the MCAR test revealed that the missings were not selective ($p>.05$). In order to maintain sufficient statistical power missing data were imputed using the Expected Maximization (ME) method.

**Results**

**Preliminary analyses**

The mean intrusive-demandingness score was 5.31 ($SD=1.00$), and the mean responsiveness score was 4.24 ($SD=.45$). The means of peer victimization scores at T1, T2 and T3 were respectively 26.13 ($SD=6.18$; range 17-44), 25.01 ($SD=6.05$; range 16-40) and 23.83 ($SD=6.05$; range 16-36).

Pearson correlations were computed between all variables. There was no effect of gender of the child on any of the dependent or independent variables ($p>.05$). As shown in Table 1, intrusive-demandingness was negatively related to responsiveness and to the age of the child. Responsiveness was negatively related to victimization at T3, indicating that a higher level of responsiveness was associated with a lower level of peer victimization at the end of the school year. Measurements of peer victimization during the school year were moderately to strongly related.
Table 1. Bivariate Correlations among Parenting Style and Peer Victimization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.</th>
<th>6.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Intrusive-demandingness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Responsiveness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Peer victimization T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.42***</td>
<td>.46***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Peer victimization T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Peer victimization T3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05  **p<.01  ***p<.001 (2-tailed)

Predicting the course of peer victimization

Multiple regression analyses were used to examine the association between the two measures of parenting behavior and change in peer victimization. To control for earlier peer victimization at Time 1, we included that variable in the first step. In this way, effects of the following predictors represented effects on change in peer victimization over time. The measures of intrusive-demandingness and responsiveness were entered simultaneously in the second step.

As shown in Table 2, responsiveness was significantly related to the course of peer victimization. Higher levels of responsiveness were associated with decreases of victimization at T3. Intrusive-demandingness was not significantly related to the course of peer victimization. Responsiveness accounted for a significant proportion of change in peer victimization, $R^2$ change=.08, $F(2,66)=3.66, p<.05$.

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analyses for the Effect of Parenting Behavior on the Course of Peer Victimization (T1-T3, N=70)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Victimization T1</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.46**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Victimization T1</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.48**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusive-Demandingness</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>-3.16</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $R^2$=.21 for Step 1; $\Delta R^2=.08$ for Step 2 ($p<.05$).

*p<.05  **p<.01

Separate regression analyses with the measures of parenting style as predictors of the course of peer victimization for the first (starting at T1 and ending at T2) and second semester (starting at T2 and ending at T3) of the school year yielded no significant associations ($R^2$ change=.03, $F(2,66)=1.22, p>.05$ and $R^2$ change=.05, $F(2,66)=1.90, p>.05$ respectively).
Discussion

This study examined the association between two dimensions of parenting style, controlling parenting (i.e., intrusive-demandingness) and autonomy support (i.e., responsiveness) and the course of peer victimization in young children (4-5 years). Victimization followed a more benign course for children whose parents were observed to show a responsive parenting style. No evidence was found that intrusive demanding parenting increases the likelihood that children continue to be victims.

As expected, parental responsiveness is not only an important positive factor in relation to the onset of peer victimization (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1998) but also in relation to the course of victimization. Responsive parents are highly attuned and supportive to their children. Responsive parenting therefore also appears to be important for children subjected to victimization, even if the parent is unaware of what these children are going through. This may be explained by more effective coping by children, at least as long as they remain motivated to solve the problems by themselves. It seems likely that when problems are too big for them to solve, these children will rely on their parents for help.

Another explanation of the positive effect of responsiveness might be that children might have internalized positive interpersonal skills shown by responsive parents. As a result, they may more often be able to solve the problems with their peers, or approach the teacher (Thompson, 2006). Similar to responsive and supportive parent-child relationships, positive interpersonal relationships with teachers may also promote personal growth and adaptive social development of children (Pianta, Hamre, & Stuhlman, 2003). Compared to older children, teachers are often an important source of support for young children, especially in situations they cannot handle on their own (Reid, Landesman, Treder, & Jaccard, 1989). Future research is necessary to tease out the extent to which the supportiveness of the teacher-child relationship in case of victimization is influenced by children’s internalized experiences with parents or by the teacher behavior towards the child.

Regarding controlling parenting style, no support was found for our hypothesis that higher levels of intrusive-demandingness would increase children’s risk of being victimized. This is somewhat surprising and not in line with the previous study by Ladd and Kochenderfer-Ladd (1998) that examined this issue. They found that children whose parents showed higher levels of intrusive-demandingness reported higher levels of victimization at the beginning of kindergarten. It therefore seems that intrusive-demandingness may be predictive of the onset of victimization but not of persistence or desistence of victimization problems during the school year. This study and the Ladd and Kochenderfer-Ladd study also differ from each other. We used a teacher measure for victimization and they used a self-report measure.
Another possible explanation for the lack of effect of intrusive-demandingness may be that children who are 4 or 5 years of age are still at the early stage of developing autonomy. Therefore, controlling behavior of parents should possibly be seen as more normative behavior which should decrease more when children become older and develop more social competences. Siegal and Cowen (1984) found that young children experience strong parental intervention and direction as less threatening for their autonomy and as more appropriate than do older children. Consistent with this interpretation was the negative correlation we found between age of the child and intrusive-demanding behaviour of the parent. Future studies are needed to investigate age trends in the impact of controlling parenting on the course of peer victimization.

Limitations and future research directions
Our study involved largely white middle class European parents and children. It was therefore not possible to test whether the associations found hold across ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic groups (Bornstein & Bornstein, 2007). Although our comparison of informants (self, peer, teacher, and parent) showed that teacher ratings were most reliable in this age group (cf. also Smith, 2004), there may be forms of victimization that go relatively unnoticed by teachers. Future research should expand on the present findings by using a multi-method and multi-informant approach to overcome this caveat (Ladd & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2002).

Another limitation concerns the issue of gender differences. Gender and parenting styles were not significantly related and therefore we did not further explore the issue of gender differences. This finding is in line with the study of Ladd and Kochenderfer Ladd (1998) who also did not find evidence for gender differences in responsiveness and intrusiveness at this age. They argued that at early stages of social development, the effects of parental responsiveness and intrusiveness may be less sex-differentiated than in middle childhood. Future studies may consider addressing this issue.

A final limitation concerns the issue of differences between maternal and paternal parenting style. In our sample we observed only the parenting style of one parent of each child. The parents were mostly, but not exclusively mothers (77%). Because of the small number of fathers involved we did not examine differences between mothers and fathers. However, mothers and fathers may have different roles and different effects on the socialization of children (Ladd & Pettit, 2002). Future research should expand on the present findings by examining the combined effect of both maternal and paternal parenting style on the course of peer victimization.

Practical implications
During the first years of their life, young children are facing different developmental tasks such as developing social competencies and problem-solving skills which may influence
their life course. In the same period, developing an appropriate parenting style is a challenging task for parents. It is important for them to find a proper balance between responsiveness and control, also depending on the child’s needs, to ensure the best possible outcome for their children (Bornstein & Bornstein, 2007).

In case of victimization, children appeared to have less of a chance to escape a situation of victimization when they had less responsive parents than when they had more responsive parents. These findings add to the reasons for informing and educating parents so they continue to be an important support for the resilience of their children as they are transitioning towards formal schooling. The importance of regular communication with and involvement of parents in reducing victimization problems was stressed by the meta-analytic study of Ttofi and Farrington (2010). They found that parent training and meetings as part of an anti-bullying program were significantly related to a decrease in victimization. Furthermore, our findings do not support concerns that parents may actually make the situation of young victimized children worse by becoming overly involved, although controlling parenting should not be promoted in most situations. Finally, this study also stresses the importance of alertness for schools serving children from high-risk families. These children are not only at risk of becoming victimized, they will also have a hard time overcoming these experiences if teachers or parents do not step in to support the child.
References


