What to do about (Cyber)Mobbing?

Systemic Intervention and Prevention in Schools

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Improving Internet Safety through Media Literacy

N.B.:
In the interest of legibility, on pages where gender-specific designations
occur, masculine and feminine forms are used interchangeably, each
implying also the other.

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Preface

Mobbing is an extreme form of aggressive behavior. Aggression, in itself, is not reproachable. It occurs often in the course of human interaction when fundamental needs are violated. If, however, a sincere exchange about it can be undertaken, then aggression can be transformed into a constructive impetus. In the case of mobbing, this is exactly what does not happen; instead, individuals are systematically excluded, denigrated, and dismantled. Mobbing harbors an enormous potential for damage. Its effects on the victims demonstrate this: they are affected by similar neurological processes to those observed in persons who have had to fear for their lives.

The expansion of everyday communication into the digital realm has greatly exacerbated the negative impact of mobbing. Perpetrators can – at any moment, anonymously, and with very little effort – address a huge 'audience'. The victims have practically no means to parry such attacks. In this way, extensive realms of interaction without effective behavioral checks can arise. At the same time, studies have shown that mobbing among children and adolescents most frequently occurs in the school context, or at least begins there: in a real, factual situation. This situation has by nature a coercive aspect – inasmuch as schoolmates do not choose, of their own volition, to be grouped together. It is therefore all the more important that heightened attention be addressed to group interaction and, with it, to the schools' mandate for social education.

In a class where there is good guidance, mobbing occurs less frequently. But what exactly is good guidance? And what does this imply for educators?

The key to being a successful educator – and to providing good guidance for a class – lies in achieving the balance between empathy and direction that is at the core of the pedagogical relationship. To form this relationship and be able to provide leadership to their students, teachers need to be in close touch with the everyday world of children and adolescents. They must be skilled in verbal interaction and knowledgeable on such topics as attachment, motivation, and empathy; their educational approach has to acknowledge conflict as a valuable opportunity for development and social learning.

And teachers need an established in-house structure for conflict management that guarantees clarity and authoritative reliability as well as professional handling of incidents involving mobbing or other conflicts.

Most supportive conceptions, manuals, and programs that address mobbing are limited to prevention issues – whereas adequate intervention methods are few and hard to find. As a result, in acute cases either methods are applied that have been developed for preventive work (and fall short here) or, for lack of interventional options, little or nothing is undertaken.

This handbook presents, along with fundamentals on the topic of mobbing, a number of different possibilities for intervention measures. In addition, it provides insight into the highly differentiated approach of Systemic Conflict Management. This makes it a most significant source of counsel on an urgently pressing issue!

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*Lob der Schule, Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2007.
Seven Perspectives for Students, Teachers, and Parents*

All the work materials and forms mentioned in the chapters are available for downloading at

ⓘ **www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing**

ⓘ **www.konflikt-kultur.de/cyber-mobbing**

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O Introduction

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Introduction

Introduction

Alongside the accustomed analog reality, our world has acquired in recent years another – digital – reality. A major part of the communication among children and adolescents takes place in that sphere, so that conflicts are also no longer limited to actual (analog) encounters, but rather are increasingly carried out in the digital realm. This facilitates mobbing and at the same time greatly enhances its potential to do damage. Research studies have shown that, in every school classroom, there are one or two pupils suffering continually from attacks by their schoolmates. For those affected, the burden is enormous: their learning curve plummets; they fantasize about being violently attacked; they are isolated, depressive, and suicidal; they develop psychosomatic symptoms.

In classrooms where (cyber)mobbing is underway, discrimination is a given, and democratic tenets are undermined daily. Often, the strongest just have their say. Consequently, educational content relating to topics such as diversity, tolerance, or empathy will tend to fall flat in these classes. Our handbook is intended as a contribution to making democracy and the rule of law palpable in such classrooms, enabling children and adolescents to protect themselves effectively and to develop a pro-social attitude. This publication combines violence prevention and mobbing intervention with media education. Typically, educators in the areas of violence prevention/intervention and those working in media education are in separate fields. But, in fact, mobbing and cyber-mobbing are two sides of the same coin. Breaking them down requires expert knowledge from both the fields of violence prevention and media education. This is why klicksafe and the multi-level program Conflict CULTURE have thrown in their lot together, learned from one another, and developed something new.

1.1 The Content of this Handbook

■ **Here in Chapter 1,** we define several fundamental concepts and in doing so also indicate the approach the handbook authors will be taking.

■ **Chapter 2** clarifies conceptual issues and background knowledge about mobbing, cyber-mobbing and (cyber)mobbing. In particular, it discusses the dynamic of mobbing and the specifics of mobbing by digital means.

■ **In Chapter 3,** four actual cases of (cyber)mobbing are described. The discussion illustrates in brief the approach suggested by SCM (Systemic Conflict Management).

■ **Chapter 4** presents two methods of intervention: the scientifically evaluated and confirmed method of Systemic Mobbing Intervention (SMI) and another method supported by numerous practical applications, Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI).

■ **Chapter 5** describes Systemic Conflict Management (SCM) as an element of school development, with its aims, measures, and sub-processes. It tells you how to determine the seriousness of an individual case and how choose and implement the interventions suited to it. The intervention methods described in Chapter 4 are again taken up. At the end of the chapter, you are given a short set of directions to be applied in an acute situation.

■ **Chapter 6** addresses a fifth case of (cyber)mobbing ("The Case of Nele"). It describes in detail the events of the case and the process of dealing with them through Systemic Conflict Management. Particularly for readers who are under time pressure, it is recommended to read this case study first, before giving closer attention to the foundations of SCM in Chapter 5: the complete case study in Chapter 6 provides a good impression of how SCM can function well in practice, while Chapter 5 informs more theoretically about the conceptual background it rests upon.

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■ **In Chapter 7,** the overall pedagogical context is discussed. No amount of specific knowledge about dealing with (cyber)mobbing can belie the fact that an intervention will only have sustained effects if it is pedagogically sound. The foundations: courage to lead, tactful authority and orientation to needs, clear orientation towards norms and values, promotion of personal competencies – in particular, the capacity for self-regulation, the integration of methods into a culture of motivation and interaction, and the promotion of emotional empathy and compassion. This long list sounds like a tall order, but chapter 7 brings it to life.

■ **Chapter 8** presents in detail eleven examples of practical projects that were created for prevention work on the topic of cybermobbing in classroom or other groups. These projects can be implemented without extensive preparation. Teachers, headmasters, school social workers, school psychologists, prevention experts, multipliers, and continuing education faculty involved with schools, youth support agencies, or police will find advice on methods and didactics, along with background information for their preventive work.

At the end of each chapter there is a reference list detailing the sources used and suggestions for further reading. Forms for preparing and documenting recurring situations can be developed, and some are available in German versions at ⓦ www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing and ⓦ www.konflikt-kultur.de/cyber-mobbing.

Although (cyber)mobbing is a systemic problem, intervention undertaken in schools has previously been restricted to individual students or small groups. With Systemic Mobbing Intervention (SMI) and Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI), two methods of intervention are now available that can be applied in an entire class at school. This has great advantages, since it involves all the members of a school class who all receive the same information first-hand, all feel personally affected in the same way, and all can make pledges for the future. Every student can see and hear how justifications for (cyber)mobbing are refuted by the person conducting the intervention, how willingness to help comes into play and reparation is made for

wrongs done in the past. Together, all these factors increase the effectivity and sustainability of the mutual effort. Both of the intervention methods are embedded in a social training program lasting several school days and oriented towards prevention – usually as a facet of the school's social curriculum or, in the case of a comprehensive Systemic Conflict Management, as an element of sustainable school development (see Chapters 4, 5, and 6).

Intervention in cases of (cyber)mobbing is demanding. It calls for ongoing training, practice, reflection, and supervision. Our goal is to support school administrators, teachers, school social workers and school psychologists in developing their conceptions for (cyber)mobbing intervention by providing them with concepts, visions, and practical methods. Currently, continuing education programs are underway in various German states – Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, Saxonia, Schleswig-Holstein, and particularly Baden-Württemberg. In most cases, the in-state agencies for the protection of minors manage the arrangements. In Baden-Württemberg, several hundred specialized counselors have already completed a qualification, most of them school social workers, teachers, or school psychologists. In addition, there is a state-wide network maintained there by Konflikt-KULTUR to offer training events and crisis intervention on location.

1.2 Systemic and Systematic – The Approach Taken in this Handbook

In this handbook, you will frequently encounter the concepts *systemic* and *system*. In the professional world, each of these terms can take on various meanings. So what exactly is meant when, in the following, we speak of a system? And what do we mean by systemic?

Our definitions relate to the structural theory of systems (cybernetics), but have, above all, a practical cast: they are intended to support educationally meaningful action (see Chapters 5 and 7) in the context of conflicts at schools.

In our view, a system in the school context exhibits the following distinct characteristics:

- a specific set of tasks and a specific significance
- its own behavioral patterns and rules, an informal framework of values and norms, and a viable culture
- a formal framework of values and norms that is pre-defined
- distinct levels (hierarchies) with their own formal and informal structures for decision-making.

These attributes distinguish one system from other (sub)systems and allow for delineation: "we" as opposed to "others", or "inside" vs. "outside".

A school is not a closed system, but rather an area in which various subsystems meet, develop synergies, and – sometimes temporarily – form additional subsystems (see Chapters 5 and 6).

In the overall area of a school, we can identify the following subsystems, among others:

- teachers and administrators/headmasters
- school social workers (youth support agencies) and school psychologists, if available
- those legally responsible for children's upbringing – parents/legal guardians, teachers and headmasters
- classes, consisting of students and homeroom teachers
- peer groups, consisting of students from one or more classes
- property custodians and school secretaries

Individuals can also be regarded as subsystems – e.g., in the interaction between two conflicting parties. Thinking and acting systemically implies comprehending the architecture of a conflict process in its entirety, understanding and influencing its dynamic and structure in an individual, interpersonal and social context (see also Chapter 2.1.2).

In cases of (cyber)mobbing, there is always a group dynamic process involved that can only be understood from this systemic perspective, addressing more than simply the relationship between perpetrators and victims.

(Cyber)mobbing is a complex process of conflict, and many agents – individuals as well as social systems – contribute towards generating and maintaining it. Therefore, a systemic intervention can only lead to a sustainable solution if it takes communicative structures, the web of relationships, and the shared value system into account.

Consequently, the primary goal of intervention at its outset is not to identify the perpetrator and confront him or her with their actions, but rather

- to de-escalate the conflict process
- to re-activate the formal, pro-social framework of norms and values in the hearts and minds of the students (more on these concepts below)
- to disrupt the dominant (former) order in the class or peer group, and
- to implement new, democratic structures by, e.g., building up a peer-related helper system as a pre-requisite for sustainability.

In concrete terms, this means promoting compassion and pro-social behavior, while putting an end to the mobbing. And it means developing – with long-term commitment on the part of the responsible teacher, the class itself, and individual students chosen by the class as helpers – a sustainable democratic living community with a pro-social climate.

1.3 Key Concepts

Before you start reading this handbook, we would like to clarify the meaning of a few key concepts. The definitions will also provide a first impression of our approach to the overall topic.

Mobbing/Cybermobbing/(Cyber)Mobbing

We generally use the term *(cyber)mobbing* in this handbook, rather than *mobbing*. In doing so we wish to point out that, in most cases today, mobbing not only occurs through direct personal contact in the classroom, the schoolyard, on the way to school, or on a sports field: parallel to that, it takes place on the internet, on social media, and via smartphone.

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Mobbing without the prefix "cyber" hardly exists any more, and *cybermobbing* makes mobbing even more effective and more disastrous for the victims. When both come together – analog and digital mobbing – we speak of (cyber)mobbing. The odd spelling may irritate linguistic purists. All the better. (Cyber)mobbing should give everyone pause, particularly those involved in education, it should make them take a closer look and think about a fitting response. We only use the term *cybermobbing* when explicitly describing the digital sphere. And, similarly, we use the term *analog mobbing* only when explicitly discussing mobbing that involves no digital support.

Bully/Bullying
What English-speaking people usually designate as *bullying* is called *Mobbing* in German. However, the bully, the perpetrator or aggressor, evokes the image of an isolated, individual figure. We chose to retain the term *mobbing,* as used in German, since it is more suggestive of the shared context in which the aggression occurs.

Cyber Attacks and (Cyber)Mobbing
A *cyber attack* is a single (or repeated) act of aggression against another person using digital means. Often, *(cyber)mobbing* begins with such an attack. If the relevant group does not respond to the cyber-attack (or perhaps even condemns it), then it can be considered a failed attempt at (cyber)mobbing (see Chapter 2.2). However, if the group responds in kind to the cyber attack, it can develop into (cyber)mobbing. In contrast to a cyber attack, (cyber)mobbing is always systemic and lasting over a period of time.

"Victim" and "Perpetrator"
While composing these texts, we initially set the term *victim* – and also *perpetrator* – in quotation marks. We wished to indicate that, in the strict sense, calling a person a perpetrator means that he has committed a criminal offense. With (cyber)mobbing, the latter is not always the case. The term perpetrator is also quite stigmatizing and applies to the whole person, not just his behavior – and this distinction is important to us.

In an educational context, it therefore would be better to use the term sparingly, and instead to refer to the *person responsible* for the deed or to the *offender* when speaking to children and adolescents. These aspects may be more evident when using the word "perpetrator" only in quotation marks.

It's similar with the term victim. This concept is now commonly used by children and adolescents as an invective, and it's also stigmatizing. In working with children and adolescents, it is better to operate with paraphrases such as the *person harmed* or *the one who took the hit*.

Nevertheless, we decided to retain both of the terms and, in the interest of better readability, to leave away the quotation marks. But you can add them in mind, if you like. (And in places where masculine forms are used in the following, we always mean that independent of gender.)

Pro-social Behavior
By pro-social behavior, we mean personal behavior that satisfies one's own basic physical, emotional and social needs while respecting those of others to the *same* degree. The opposite of that would be dis-social or anti-social behavior deliberately aimed at damaging, suppressing, exploiting, humiliating, or denigrating other persons bodily, emotionally, or socially.

Democracy Education
Pro-social behavior and pro-social competencies are, in our view, essential goals in any kind of prevention or intervention efforts within the educational context of schools. The aims of education as set down in German state constitutions, school laws, and curricula also refer to this ("education in the spirit of humaneness" for "social interaction", "brotherhood", "love of one's neighbor", "mindfulness", "tolerance" and towards "democracy and freedom"). Ultimately, pro-social behavior is aligned with universal civil rights, human rights, and children's rights.

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It may sound absurd, but even (cyber)mobbing has a positive side: intervention in cases of (cyber)mobbing is a good learning opportunity for pro-social behavior and implementing democracy as a form of living! The attention level in the group is at its maximum, and cognitive and emotional learning processes are coupled in an optimal fashion. The intervention helps students to grasp the distinction between a democratically informed social living context and a communal living system based on the mastery of a few members who humiliate or exclude others.

Framework of Values and Norms
The foundation of co-existence in a democratic life style, society, and form of government is a consensus on a shared set of values and norms that are oriented towards human dignity. The *formal* framework in the broadest sense is stated by the constitution, which guarantees mental and physical integrity, the right to own property, freedom of expression, the right to equal treatment and protection from discrimination. Other elements of the formal framework include the UN Convention on Children's Rights and the penal code (in Germany, the StGB) and laws such as those protecting copyrights (KunstUrhG). In the school context, the educational legislation of the individual states applies, as well as the school statues and house rules of the particular school.

Needless to say, all of these formal rules also provide the framework for activities on the internet and on mobile devices – although this may not be immediately clear to many students. In these digital spaces, just as in social groups such as school classes, sports clubs, or circles of friends, often an informal set of values and norms arises and partially displaces the formal framework.

It's up to you!
This handbook may initially seem very extensive and complex to you. But it addresses a complex topic which calls for adequate approaches and methods towards protecting children and promoting their development. We would like to encourage you to absorb and take inspiration from this handbook. Perhaps you will develop an inclination to apply the methods described or some elements of Systemic Conflict Management in your school.

Every path begins with a first step. And you have just taken it by beginning this handbook. A wise old saying says: if you want to change the world, start with yourself. If you would like to create better conditions for combatting (cyber)mobbing effectively, judging by our experience the way to begin is to make sure there are persons on location who are specifically trained, who recognize a "no go" when they see it, and who know how to proceed professionally.

Qualification of staff is the first step towards altering the whole constellation. The counseling competence of these persons will be sought after and is indispensable. Before long, the idea of systematizing procedures will be voiced. At this point, you will already be in the middle of a process of school development. Further steps (see Chapter 5.3, Introducing SCM to a school) can then be undertaken.

We invite you to continue browsing: use the handbook as a treasure trove and source of ideas. The path emerges as you move forward. Today, you are beginning to address the topic of (cyber)mobbing intensively, and you as an individual person are already making a big difference.

We wish everyone a productive reading experience.

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From Mobbing to (Cyber)Mobbing

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From Mobbing to (Cyber)Mobbing

2. From Mobbing to (Cyber)Mobbing

Children and adolescents are capable of constructive as well as destructive behavior, just as adults are. When acts of violence occur and individuals suffer harm, teachers and school administrators are obliged to take action. (Cyber)mobbing is one of the phenomena that call for a response from the school community. The issue is not *whether* to respond, but rather *how* and *when*.

But first, it is imperative that teachers, school social workers, and school psychologists agree on definitions, so that misunderstandings can be avoided and a basis for teamwork established. In this chapter, among other things we will define what is meant by a conflict; how mobbing, cybermobbing, and cyber attacks differ from one another; and the dynamics that drive the group phenomenon of (cyber)mobbing.

Why does (cyber)mobbing occur most often in schools?

Mobbing arises most easily in social systems determined by necessity, from which individuals cannot simply extract themselves – situations dictated by such things as the requirement to attend school. Therefore, this handbook concentrates on the system typical to schools. However, many observations can also be related to other contexts, such as (partially residential) youth shelters. The texts may give rise to the impression that (cyber)mobbing occurs exclusively among students. However, teachers are sometimes also involved, often as victims.

2.1 Definition of Terms

2.1.1 Areas of Conflict in Schools

Strictly speaking, school conflict is not a *singular* phenomenon. Conflicts in schools are very frequent, everyday occurrences, and they differ from one another in many ways. A correct diagnosis greatly facilitates the handling of school conflicts (see Chapter 5.4.2). The following is an attempt to differentiate the areas, levels, dynamics, and subconflicts that play a role in school conflicts.

Conflicts in working together as opposed to conflicts in living together

At the outset, it is essential to distinguish two major areas of conflict occurring in the school context (see Figure 1, p. 18).

Firstly, there are the conflicts that come up while participating in classroom instruction. We call them *conflicts in working together*. These are particular conflicts that result when work assignments or other directions given by teachers are ignored – when homework isn't completed, students come late to class or disturb lessons. There are symmetrical conflicts among persons on the same level and asymmetrical conflicts with persons on a higher or lower hierarchical level. Conflicts in working together are by their nature asymmetrical, since they occur between teachers and students.

Demeaning or insulting teachers does not, however, fall into this area, nor do attacks on dignity and social status among the students. Such conflicts, which arise from or have an effect on *living together* at school, form the second category. These are conflicts resulting from the interaction between individuals or between an individual and the school as an institution. It is unimportant in this context whether a person happens to be a teacher or a student; what is essential is the person's fundamental status as a human being. Usually, such conflicts are triggered by violations of basic human needs or when property is damaged.

Most conflicts in the area of living together don't command the attention of the school community; many of them are settled by the persons involved, with more or less outside support. Many such conflicts proceed chronically or under the surface without ever escalating. The spectrum extends from ill will to jostling and fighting, which is important for personal development, all the way to serious conflicts in the course of which criminal acts can be committed and emotional and physical harm can be done – as is the case with (cyber)mobbing. However, it is apparent that the border between different forms of conflict

cannot always be drawn clearly, even within a particular peer group. Ultimately, the distinction between a joke, a difference of opinion, a fight, and mobbing can only be clarified through social exchange, and this lack of clarity can in turn generate further conflicts.

2.1.2 The Conflict Process, its Dynamic, Levels, and Subconflicts

In the conflict area of living together in a school community, there is seldom a case of an isolated conflict existing all on its own. If, for example, student A denounces student B in a chat and the teachers hears about it, often the behavior perceived as an individual conflict between A and B may in fact be the tip of an iceberg (whose main mass lies invisible beneath the surface). At schools, frequently a conflict is only perceived as such when one person behaves offensively towards another and the other person responds in kind. Before this conflict-laden behavior was to be

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Areas of Conflict in Schools

Working together

- disrupting lessons by commenting out loud
- distracting a student at the same desk
- refusing to work in a group
- tardiness
- cutting class
- ignoring teachers' instructions
- not having work materials at hand
- not doing homework
- dissatisfaction with the style of instruction
- dissatisfaction with grades

Living together

- violation of psycho-social needs for recognition/acknowledgement or acceptance, through:
  - slander
  - calumny
  - insult
  - exclusion
- assault/physical harm
- removal of or damage done to personal property/vandalism

Conflicts in **working** together, as well as conflicts in **living** together, originate in the experience of individual persons.
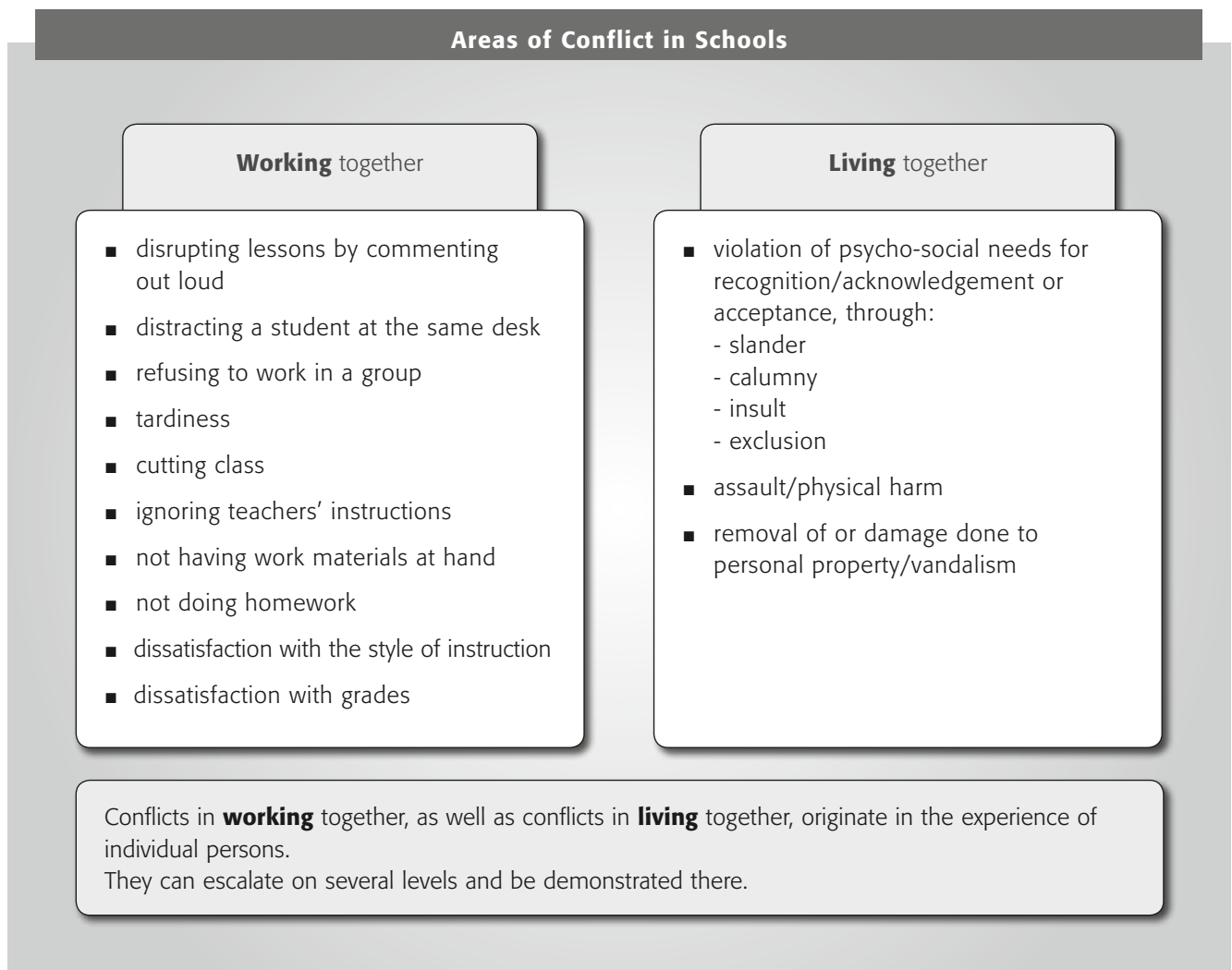They can escalate on several levels and be demonstrated there.

Fig. 1: Conflict areas in the school context.

observed, however, there was already an inner conflict – not easily perceived from without – for at least one of the persons now interacting. It is the result of an inner conflict between the person's experience of what is and what should be. The inter-action between the conflict parties is consequently an attempt to do away with this inner conflict. Seen in this perspective, it is realistic to assume that a perceived individual conflict between A and B is only the visible tip of an iceberg and part of a larger whole. As we proceed, we will refer to this larger entity as a conflict system or as a conflict process. Under that surface and initially not visible, there may be other weighty matters coming to bear on several levels, and we will refer to these as subconflicts of the conflict system.

To work out a conflict in a manner that is educationally significant, it is recommended that one think and act systemically. Practically speaking, that implies pursuing the following lines of questioning:

1. Which persons are interacting on the stage (or visible surface) of the conflict process?
2. What inner conflicts are driving them?
3. How are these intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts mirrored in the surrounding social systems (peer group, school class, school and family system)?
4. And vice versa: How do these social systems affect the individual and his/her interactions?

With our systemic approach, the assumption is that a conflict process in a school is a many-leveled field of tension, in which parts affect the whole and the whole affects the parts. Every conflict process has its own characteristic architecture and its own dynamic (see Chapter 2.2). Thinking and acting systemically calls for a close examination of the structure and dynamic of the conflict process on all its levels, with attention to reciprocal influences – of individual, interpersonal, and social contexts.

Continuing the analogy to the architecture of a building, we postulate that a conflict process – depending on its dynamic – can demonstrate itself on as many as *five levels.* The levels described here as 1 and 2 form the micro-level of the individual conflict system.

1. Intrapersonal Level (the system of the individual)

On the *intrapersonal level,* the conflict process is reflected inwardly when one person experiences, in relation to another person, an inner conflict – or a feeling of discomfort – in the form of

- cognitive dissonance
- unpleasant bodily sensations
- negative emotions.

The person feels physically or emotionally uncomfort-able, and may even feel pain. He or she feels slighted, impaired, irritated or even anxious. People describe this as a feeling of (great) dissatisfaction. Taken literally, this suggests that they have lost their inner peace, their inner sense of balance. What they are experiencing as what IS (in the here and now) does not correspond to some aspect of their inner self, and another aspect of the self is wishing for something else that SHOULD be (in the future). We designate this as an inner conflict.

We speak of traumatization in cases where the individual system of a person is so greatly overtaxed that, after a disturbing event, it cannot re-balance itself and regain control.

Inner conflicts are often triggered when a person's current interaction with others frustrates some basic emotional need, such as the need for security, recognition, self-efficacy, or attachment (see Chapter 7.1.1). Sometimes, the causes for internal and external conflicts lie in biographical, neuro-biological or genetic factors (e.g., in cases of highly impulsive behavior) and are deeply anchored in the individual's personality (as in the case of autism).

Since the individual experience of the conflict parties is an important part of the conflict process, high priority should be given to this level in any analysis. N.B.: Playful jostling between children or adolescents either does not involve an inner conflict, or this conflict is taken in stride. Such struggles are a part of the positioning and tussling that are necessary for psychological development and usually do not lead to an escalation on the second level, the interpersonal level.

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2. Interpersonal Level
(System of I-to-You Interaction)

A conflict process expresses itself on the *interpersonal level* when one person is dissatisfied with another person, this other person perceives the dissatisfaction, and the two interact over it. The interaction can be violent or it can be respectful, aiming at a mutually agreeable, peaceful solution. In most cases, an interpersonal conflict process is not openly communicated. It may be stewing inside, but isn't enacted. In this case, we call it a covert interpersonal conflict. If the dissatisfaction is not perceived by the other conflict party, then there is no interpersonal subconflict on this level. Nevertheless, this situation is considered to be a conflict process.

The other levels described (3 to 5) in the following are the meso-levels of the social system. What we mean by that was discussed in Chapter 1.1 (What do we mean by a system?) and is also treated in Chapter 5.4.4 (The element of levels of action).

3. Peer Level or Classmate Level
(System of the peer group and school class)

From the intrapersonal or interpersonal level, a conflict process can escalate to the level of the social system in the peer group or the school class (bottom-up). This dynamic develops particularly when one conflict party wants to draw a peer or class system into the conflict. It often begins with a cyber attack. The digital options presented by social media simplify this enormously (see Chapter 2.1.4 to 2.1.6). A reverse dynamic is also possible (top-down), with the conflict process set into motion in the social media frequented by the peer group or classmates. This is always the case with (cyber)mobbing. The distinguishing characteristic is then the conflict between the informal norms and values of the peer group or classmates ('putting someone down is OK!') and the formal, legally defined framework of values and norms for the school system (see Chapter 2.1.3). The examination and evaluation of these bottom-up and top-down dynamics is extremely important for planning how to proceed towards resolution.

4. Institutional Level (School System)

A conflict process can escalate to the institutional level of the school system if:

- individuals seriously or repeatedly violate the legal framework of values and norms
- this behavior has an influence on life at the school – which is usually the case with (cyber)mobbing
- the school is obliged to react to the offensive behavior and finds it indicated to take educative or punitive measures (not always the case)
- the police are notified within the context of criminal prosecution (not always the case)

It is a core pedagogical task of every school to enable young people to perceive conflicts in their environment and to overcome them non-violently. State constitutions and school laws also state this aim. Teachers and headmasters represent the school system. They should take an active role and use the conflict process toward an educational aim – to strengthen the pro-social competence of the students and promote democratically functioning community life. This is a part of the school's mandate for democracy education.

Another responsibility of the school system is to protect the students from harm, to identify endangerments and to counteract them. Article 1 of the (German) constitution states: "Human dignity is inviolable. To respect and protect it is the obligation of all governmental power." In cases of (cyber)mobbing, the victims' dignity is trampled upon. Therefore, in accord with current legal precedents, the school system in which it occurs is legally obliged to react on the institutional level. Subject to their duty to protect and shelter students, teachers cannot remain bystanders when their students' basic human rights are being violated. However, the extent to which a school system or its representatives actually intervene on the institutional level and carry out the institutional subconflict is largely determined by two factors:

1. What is the informal position of this particular school system concerning violence in all forms (guiding policy?)
2. What resources does it have available in terms of time and specific competence?

5. **Level of the Educational Partners**
(Style of Upbringing)

Finally, it can occur that a conflict process is also reflected on the level of the family system, and that cooperation between parents and teachers or headmasters is gravely disturbed as a result. This is often the case when violence is accepted or justified within the family, or perhaps even practiced.

In families and schools there is a generation boundary. Those responsible for educating the young in both systems (parents, teachers, headmasters) ideally form a mutual system of education for school children. They are legally required to inform one another about essential developments and to confer on them. This is the explicit duty of the school system.

When a conflict process escalates to the level of the style of upbringing, it becomes particularly difficult to reach a pedagogical conflict resolution. This is the case when:

- the framework or values and norms is unclear
- the parents advocate a different set of norms and values than the teachers or headmasters, and/or
- the parents feel overlooked, overruled, or disadvantaged by the measures taken toward conflict resolution at the school.

If, from the outset, too little attention is paid to cultivating a cooperative relationship, there can be a rapid escalation that will effectively block any reasonable pedagogical attempts at regulation on the intrapersonal or interpersonal levels. Every conflict system is a constellation of forces or tensions. It can be broken down into subsystems (levels, relation-ships, individuals). Although it may – depending on the case – be a very specific constellation, it always displays the same patterns.

The upshot is that educators in schools need to consider carefully: the levels on which the conflict process is articulated (for professional discussion on this, see Chapter 5.4.2); in what manner the subconflicts are expressed; and what type of dynamic might lead to a further escalation of events. Only after analyzing the escalation potential of the subconflicts is it possible to set out a goal-oriented timeline for further action (see Chapter 5.5 The Element of Phases of Activity).

Especially with (cyber)mobbing, the situation of a victim can deteriorate dramatically if the visible one-on-one conflict is addressed prematurely, or if the dynamic of the conflict process (bottom-up versus top-down) is initially misjudged.

According to the teacher-training standards of the Conference of the Ministers of Education (representing the German federal states and coordinating their educational policies nation-wide), teachers are expected to develop their ability to handle conflicts. A conflict can certainly have positive effects and be regarded as a learning situation for democracy education. Seeing it exclusively as a burden would be too one-sided. Conflicts enlighten interaction, repeatedly put values and norms of existing systems to the test, and serve as a driving force towards development – for better or for worse.

2

Matrix: Conflict levels with their corresponding systems and methods for approaching them

Conflict level	System	Methods of approach in the school context
1. intrapersonal level	individual system of subjective thinking, feeling, physical sensation, and free will (system of the individual person)	counseling, coaching, supervised attendance at school
2. interpersonal level	system of the conflict parties involved (system of the conflict parties and those observing them)	three-way conversation, mediation, reparation for damage done
3. peer/classmate level	system of the peer group or classroom unit with its informally practiced set of values and norms	social training, Systemic Brief Intervention or Mobbing Intervention, establishment of a peer support system, work with personal contracts or pledges to cease and desist, follow-up rituals
4. institutional level	system of the institution (school), particularly the formal and informal norms and values it cultivates – represented by the regulators	contracts renouncing the use of force; retribution through compensation for past deeds, community service assignments, educative or punitive measures
5. overall realm of upbringing	system of shared educational partnership (family system vs. school system)	participatory talks, agreements negotiated personally between parents/guardians and teachers/headmasters

Fig. 2: Levels of conflict, systems, and methods of approach

2.1.3 The Framework of Values and Norms

**The formal societal framework of
values and norms**

Students and teachers in Germany are obliged to
conform to a given set of norms and values. These
include the personality rights and civil rights granted
by the federal constitution, human rights and
children's rights, the constitutions and school laws
of the individual states, and the statutes and house
rules of the school itself. Although it may not be
immediately clear to everyone: of course there are
also binding formal norms for activities on the
internet and particularly in social networks, including
the penal code (in Germany, StGB) and copyright
law (KunstUrhG). In addition, school and house rules
often stipulate how smartphones may be used.

However, adolescents are often lax when it comes
to transferring the formal framework of values into
their own (particularly their digital) everyday lives.
Such concepts as cybergrooming, cyberstalking,
happy slapping, shitstorm, or sexting delineate the
phenomena that result. What is more, in open
societies with their wide range of value judgments,
it is necessary to clarify certain issues again and
again: what kind of behavior violates a norm, or does
not; what constitutes an insult as opposed to a free
expression of someone's opinion. Children and
adolescents therefore need, just as adults do, the
ability to assert themselves non-violently in order to
protect themselves against emotional and physical
attacks and also to protect their property. Training
guidelines on "non-violent self-assertion" are
available in most languages online, in German on
the websites of klicksafe and Konflikt-KULTUR.

**The informal Framework of Values and Norms
within Social Group**

Almost invariably, there are differences between formal
and informal sets of values and norms (see Figure 3).
An adolescent who behaves violently is not always
aware of the extent to which his behavior runs
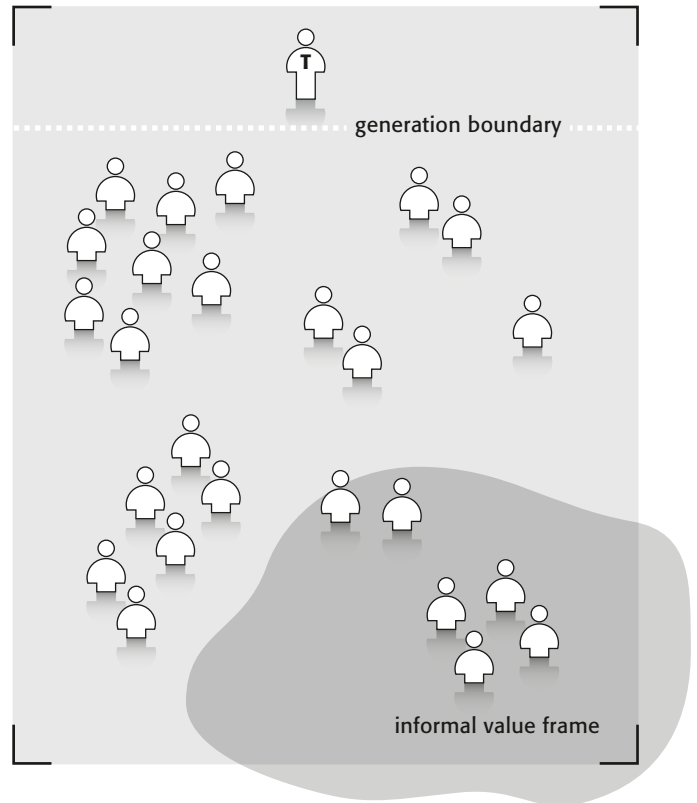
*Fig. 3: Starting point (= group members, T = teacher).
In every school class there is a formal framework of values
and norm. Individual students demonstrate dissocial
behavior.*

counter to the accepted framework of values and
norms. It would be most likely that he realize it due
to the reaction of adults. But in the digital realm
there are not many adults around. Social controls are
weak. This is one of the reasons why (cyber)mobbing
among adolescents is often noticed quite late by
adults. Adolescents take advantage of the options the
digital realm offers to fulfill their developmentally
essential need for autonomy and differentiation from
the world of adults. They make their own rules. In the
case of (cyber)mobbing, the informal framework of
values and norms differs greatly from formal standards.
A subculture is cultivated that is often misanthropic.
Pro-social skills are blocked off and become stunted.

....

2.1.4 "Analog" Mobbing

To be able to respond professionally to the phenomenon of (cyber)mobbing in schools or youth centers, it helps to be familiar with mobbing research and its definition of mobbing. Studies on "analog" (or traditional) mobbing date back primarily to the work of the Swedish-Norwegian psychologist Dan Olweus, who began systemically addressing the topic of force and mobbing in the early 1970s. Olweus defines mobbing this way: "A student is exposed to force or is mobbed when he or she is repeatedly, over a period of time, exposed to negative behavior of one or more other students. In most cases, there is an imbalance of power between the offenders and the victims." (cf. Olweus 1993). The approaches of Stephenson and Smith expand Olweus' definition to include the form of the social interaction (cf. Stephenson/Smith 1989). They distinguish two types of mobbing: direct and indirect. Direct mobbing may be verbal (the victim is spoken to abusively or insulted) or physical (the victim is hit, kicked, or otherwise maltreated). With indirect (relational) mobbing, rumors are spread about the victim, or he/she is deliberately excluded from a group.

The authors of this handbook define mobbing as follows:

> ▷ *Mobbing* is repeated and systematic demeaning of other persons, which serves to fulfill needs of the person initiating it – particularly needs for power and status –, which evokes a positive response within the group, which cannot be brought to an end by the victim alone, and which alters the value framework of the group.

In other words (and with a bit more differentiation): mobbing at schools is a complex and hostile process of conflict that is reflected on several levels. It involves repeated and deliberate actions within groups (e.g., in a school class) intended to damage other persons emotionally or socially in their immediate social environment including the group, used as a means of satisfying unfulfilled needs of one's own (such as needs for power, recognition, or diversion) and thus stabilizing one's own personality. An important factor is the imbalance of power. The offender, striving for dominance, aims at improving his/her own social clout by reducing the social status of the person attacked. This can only be considered successful when and if the social group participates actively and the group's informal framework of values and norms takes increasing precedence over the formal framework. Then, the damaging, dominating persons are in a sufficient position of power, so that the victims find themselves in a helpless position, unable to put an end to the damaging attacks on their own and thus not able to free themselves from this inferior position.

Mobbing occurs through words and gestures, physical attacks, theft or damage of property, and through psycho-social manipulation (relational force exercised by lying, spreading rumors, delegating tasks to helpers, misinforming educators, etc.). Expressed in another way: it can consist of attacks on the body, the property, or the psyche. Mobbing is not some kind of playful jostling or pretended argument, not a difference of opinion, not any kind of horsing around, but rather a deliberate injury.

The sum of individual attacks adds up to the phenomenon of mobbing. An individual attack generally can't be identified as mobbing, or may not even be mobbing; it usually does not involve any illegal action and therefore is not associated with a criminal offense. In most cases, the perpetrator seeks out a victim who cannot defend himself/herself adequately against the attacks, or only with the greatest difficulty.

Some publications on the topic make a distinction between mobbing and conflicts. But the imbalance of power between offenders and victims being as severe as is in mobbing, the present authors refuse to designate it as a conflict. That would be to downplay its gravity. Since we view mobbing as a complex process of conflict expressing itself on several levels and difficult to grasp, we find it meaningful to treat mobbing as a sum of conflicts.

The American media scholar and social researcher danah boyd points out (boyd 2014, p. 128 ff.) that networked technologies complicate the task of understand the mobbing phenomenon, since many people assume that cybermobbing is something new. She also makes it clear that adults use the word mobbing (or bullying) as a generic term for any form of aggressive behavior. The distinction between mobbing and drama (the latter term is used by young people for any kind of conflict) is imprecise, and hateful or cruel acts implemented by technical means are usually closely interwoven with conflicts at school.

danah boyd established in her interviews with adolescents that, although mobbing and drama occur in their language, in practice their interaction reflects a different picture. This has to do with differences in behavior and the perceptions of that behavior: here, tensions become visible that are central to the problem – namely, how adolescents and adults perceive and experience conflicts. "At the same time, it's essential that concerned outsiders do not take what they see on social media and make assessments without trying to understand the context." (boyd 2014, p. 133ff).

2.1.5 From Cybermobbing to (Cyber)Mobbing

Due to the increasing use of mobile devices, with annually rising numbers also among younger users, the digital world is gradually converging with the analog world. The JIM Study 2018 (longitudinal research on media use among young people in Germany) observed the following preferences in its survey of 12-to-19-year-olds:
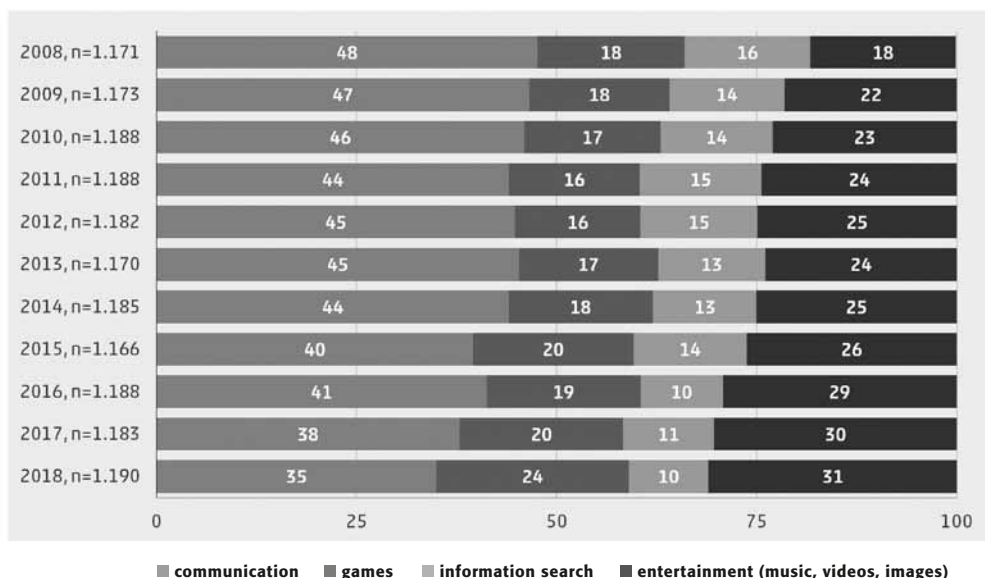
Fig. 4: Distribution of content in internet use among German adolescents in the years 2008 through 2018, in percent.
(source JIM Study 2018)
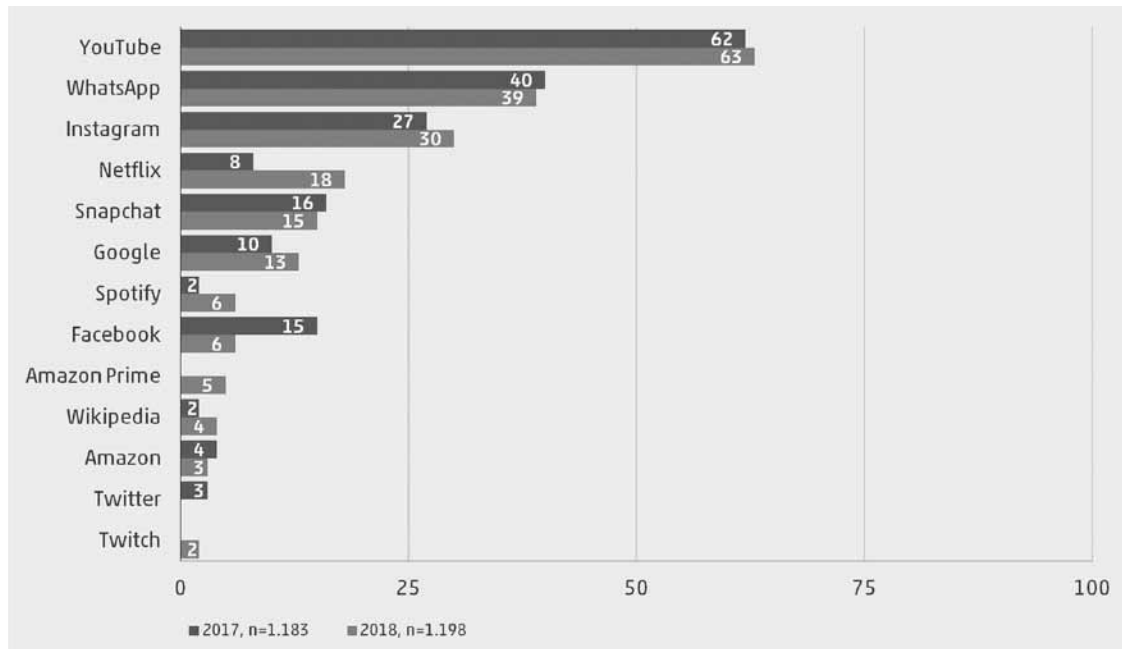
*Fig. 5: The most popular internet portals in 2017 and 2018 among adolescents in Germany.
(source: JIM Study 2018)*

Young people mostly make use of digital resources to communicate with one another. When they are affected by mobbing, it can be assumed that this is proceeding in both the analog world ("analog" mobbing) and the digital sphere (cybermobbing), since the analog and digital worlds of children and adolescents overlap seamlessly and therefore need to be regarded as a unit. Physical mobbing corresponds to the digitally delivered threat of physical violence, verbal mobbing corresponds to insults and harassment, and relational mobbing corresponds to exclusion from a group, e.g. a chat (cf. Stod/Wegmann/Brand 2015).

Although it is theoretically possible to draw a line between mobbing and cybermobbing, it doesn't usually make sense in practice. Mobbing via digital means has an enormously increased, hostile, and damaging potential, and it therefore must be given particularly careful attention.

As explained earlier, in Chapter 1, in the following we use almost exclusively the term (cyber)mobbing, since mobbing without any involvement of digital means practically doesn't occur any more, and we define it as follows:

> (▷) **(Cyber)mobbing is mobbing** in the course of which attacks take place in the digital and analog spheres.

Even though digital and analog attacks generally occur in parallel to one another, for purposes of analysis it is essential to be familiar with the definition of cybermobbing and in particular with its specific characteristics as detailed in Chapter 2.3.5.

2

The Extent of (Cyber)Mobbing

Many research studies call attention to the fact that instances of (cyber)mobbing increase during the transition to secondary schools and are most common among teenagers aged 13 through 15 – which indicates that (cyber)mobbing is less common earlier, among children, and later, among young adults. It has not been clearly established whether boys or girls are more prone to engage in (cyber)mobbing. Taking the outcomes of various studies into account, it is possible to make a tentative estimate of the number of persons already victimized by (cyber)mobbing. International studies assume a wide range with a victim rate between 10% and 40% (cf. Stod/Wegmann/ Brand 2015) – whereby the estimates depend on the issues and methods the studies are based on. The frequency of (cyber)mobbing cases is highest during puberty, after which it gradually decreases. Therefore, appropriate prevention measures should already be implemented in the third or fourth grade, or even earlier. Particular attention should be paid to developments at the outset of the school year, when new groups are forming.

2.1.6 Cyber Attacks

A cyber attack (in this context) is an incursion undertaken by using digital means. If a cyber attack is ignored (or even condemned) by the group, then it can be regarded as an attempt at (cyber)mobbing that failed its testing stage (see also Chapter 2.2.3). If, on the other hand, a cyber attack is reinforced by the group, then it becomes a case of (cyber)mobbing.

What exactly is the difference between a cyber attack and (cyber)mobbing? A cyber attack is an isolated event, a single attack launched by one person using a smartphone or e-mail against another person. There may be a group drawn in, or the attack may take place exclusively between the offender and the person targeted. Even a series of several cyber attacks may not yet amount to (cyber)mobbing. Only when a

group has been addressed and has also signaled its readiness to join in the attack does it become a case of (cyber)mobbing.

To clarify this, a comparison:
a) A sends B an insulting e-mail ▶ cyber attack
b) A sends B an insulting e-mail with copies to the entire class mailing list ▶ cyber attack
c) A sends B an insulting e-mail with copies to the entire class mailing list.
   B then receives similar insulting mails from 10 members of the class ▶ (cyber)mobbing or (cyber)mobbing in the testing stage.

2.2 The Dynamic of (Cyber)Mobbing

Anyone who wishes to understand (cyber)mobbing has to look beyond the relationship between offenders and victims. (Cyber)mobbing is a complex, systemic conflict process within school classes and other groups, but with many other parties contributing to bring it into existence and maintain it (cf. Korn 2006, Schäfer 2007, Schäfer / Korn 2007).

2.2.1 Who becomes an Offender?

All human beings share – in widely varying degrees and forms – the need for recognition, status, and power. This is a legitimate need, the decisive factor being the strategy applied to fulfill it. Personal effort is one possible way to achieve this, another possible way is by humiliating others.

Children and adolescents who have a particularly strong need for recognition often discover early in life that they can satisfy this need by exercising force, humiliating others and deliberately victimizing them by manipulating the rest of a group. Often enough, parents play a role here that should not be underestimated – by promoting an exaggerated need for recognition in their children as a way of satisfying the parents' own need to dominate and command a high social status.

For a long time, it was believed that mobbing offenders were lacking in self-estimation. In fact, usually quite the opposite is the case. Someone who, over a period of months, builds up a system that ultimately almost all the classmates participate in, needs to have a particular set of skills. "These offenders have a distinct social intelligence. Social intelligence, in this context, is regarded as a *neutral* ability that can be associated both with mobbing offenders and with dissocial behavior. A socially intelligent person exhibits social skills in order to achieve personal aims by employing aggressive or non-aggressive behavioral tactics" (Scheithauer et al. 2007, p. 144).

It follows from this that, toward preventing or terminating (cyber)mobbing, a sole emphasis on cognitive skills may be counterproductive, e.g. in relation to understanding the perspective of another person: this might "under certain circumstances [lead] to a more ingenious deployment of socially manipulative behavior in the social environment, meaning that the intervention itself will perhaps not produce a de-escalation of the problem, but rather its exacerbation in the form of increased occurrences of bullying" (ibid., p. 149).

In the literature on (cyber)mobbing, several types of offenders are differentiated. They have been labeled with bizarre names, such as "avenging angel" or "nasty girl" (cf. Aftab 2012). These rather stereotyped designations point towards various motivations among the offenders – revenge, prestige, power, or fun. An intervention is more likely to be successful if it refrains from such stereotyping, instead distinguishing clearly between the person and his/her behavior, taking the needs of the offender into account while consistently refusing to accept their behavior (see Chapter 4).

Often there is such a strong focus on the offender that one could go so far as to call it a 'trance' with all the negative effects that implies. Investigating or searching for offenders, or rather offender profiles, in advance of or during an intervention can endanger its success by directing attention too soon away from the systemic dynamic and towards the issue of who is individually responsible. But mobbing can only be understood and resolved when approached as a group-dynamic phenomenon.

2.2.2 Who becomes a Victim?

A potential offender makes use of little everyday tests (like an insulting remark, or an unflattering photo on a chat) and observes similar interchanges among the classmates to find out who the most suitable victim might be. Three factors are of special significance here:

- hooks

- ineffective self-defense

- imbalance of power/lack of support

Hooks
Hooks are personal attributes to which mobbing can be "attached" in the sense of "hung onto". All kinds of attributes and forms of behavior can be used as hooks: ethnic background, family income, skin or hair color, attentiveness in class, grades, athletic ability, preferences in music, clothing, stuttering, dialect – to name only a few. The decisive issue is not the actual significance of an attribute, but rather the response evoked, for example reinforcement or laughter from the classmates. This means that:

- anyone can become a victim, since everyone has attributes that distinguish him or her from others

- hooks have to be addressed explicitly during an intervention, otherwise their destructive use will continue off the record.

2

Ineffective Self-Defense

Some victims don't defend themselves at all. Others simply "grin and bear it". Most victims don't defend themselves sufficiently, or their defense does them more harm than good.

Mobbing is especially difficult to resolve when the victim or his/her parents themselves behave aggressively or violently and demonstrate a lack of self-control. The classmates perceive this behavior as unsuitable and use "they flipped out!" as a justification for badgering the victim: "It's Jonathan's own fault, he flips out every day." Needless to say, the classmates know where his sensitive spots are and what "buttons" they need to push. When Jonathan goes over the top again, they skillfully call adults' attention to it: "See, he's batty. There he goes again."

There are other children who bear all the attacks silently for a long time and then suddenly break into tears. These victims show their vulnerability in an unprotected environment, and this frequently has negative consequences. At the same time, they usually receive attention from adults – a bit of that scarce human good that everyone wants more of. The rest of the class reacts with rejection and envy, they think it's unfair and again use that as justification for further attacks. Often, students who cry are accused of deliberately using their tears to gain an advantage.

Some victims don't come to class or come in late in order to avoid being attacked. Educators who go along with this and refrain from the usual sanctions often provoke a counterreaction from the classmates, who accuse the victims of being lazy and the adults of being unfair.

The most ineffective form of self-defense is tattling, that is, saying negative things about someone behind his or her back. This is why it is absolutely essential that children and adolescents understand and internalize the distinction between 'tattling' and 'getting help'. In an acute situation, 'getting help' is the next step following an unsuccessful attempt at self-defense. Also, 'getting help' can be announced. Students who tattle and teachers who don't respond properly to tattling both foster mobbing – that it can occur at all and that it can be continued.

Children who are emotionally instable or socially insecure/anxious lack, from the outset, the personal skills needed to defend themselves. They need strong persons at their side to protect them, which again points toward the necessity of working in this direction during an intervention (see Chapter 4).

Imbalance of Power/Lack of Support

Potential mobbing victims have little or no support, but they are not always classical outsiders or loners. Often they have one or two friends in the class, but this does not suffice in the face of the overwhelming power of the offenders and their assistants. The decisive factor is the imbalance of power between offenders and victims.

▷ *In summary, we can say:*
Ultimatelly, anyone can become a victim. The most likely candidate is someone who presents obvious hooks to dock into, who has the least effective self-defense and little or no support.

2.2.3 The Testing Stage

The testing stage serves toward figuring out who is most "suitable" to be humiliated. For selecting a mobbing victim, in some cases one single interlude lasting only a few minutes can be conclusive enough – say, an exchange in the locker room of the school gym. But the entire testing stage, as experience has shown, generally lasts several weeks: until the imbalance of power is well established and the informal, dissocial value framework of the school class expands and takes hold.

(Cyber)mobbing can actually be triggered by one individual act – be it deliberate or not. If, for example, digital content falls into the "wrong hands", it can be distributed at lightning speed with no means of holding it back. In this respect, the assisting fellow offenders play an essential role. When content is re-posted, there may no longer be just one offender responsible. The effective power of the group is immense in such cases and can even lead to a situation in which a criminal act cannot be traced back to any one person. In the event of a cyber attack copied to various addresses via a mailing list or posted on a social network, this can always be considered a case of (cyber)mobbing in the testing stage.

It does in fact happen that mobbing processes never advance beyond the testing stage, that they 'get stuck', so to speak. This happens particularly in school classes or communities where

■ the victim can defend himself/herself effectively,

■ there are sufficient protective, pro-social energies at play, and

■ the homeroom or leading teacher cultivates good contact to the children/adolescents and deftly fulfills the responsibility of leading. (cf. Grüner / Hilt / Tilp 2015)
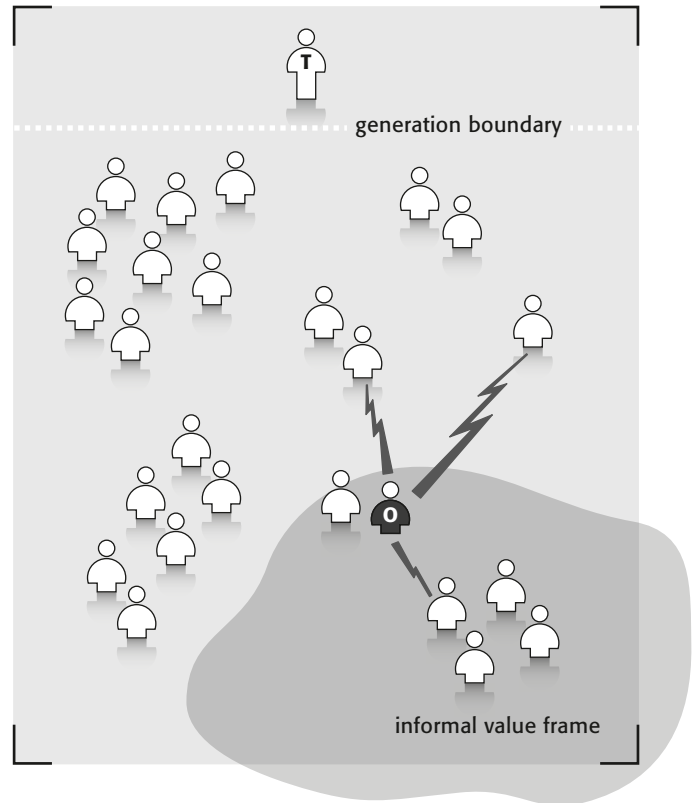
Fig. 6: Testing stage (⚭ = group members, O = offender, T = teacher). A student with a heightened need for recognition is investigating which classmate might be suited for humiliation and denigration.

2.2.4 The Consolidation Stage

Differentiating the Roles

Figure 7 shows the development after the testing stage if adequate efforts are not undertaken to work with the group. The distinctive characteristic of the consolidation stage is the differentiation of roles. The persons positioned near the offender are the so-called assistants. These are students who act in the interest of the offender, although they may have been attacked by him themselves during the testing stage and therefore still have a bone to pick with him. This paradox has to do with the advantages of the assistant role and the basic need for security, belonging, power, fun, and recognition.

Anyone who contributes to victimizing another person reduces the danger of becoming a victim himself. Belonging to a strong group gives an individual a sense of community and of his own power. And someone who enjoys being in a group that goes after someone else is well suited for the role as assistant.
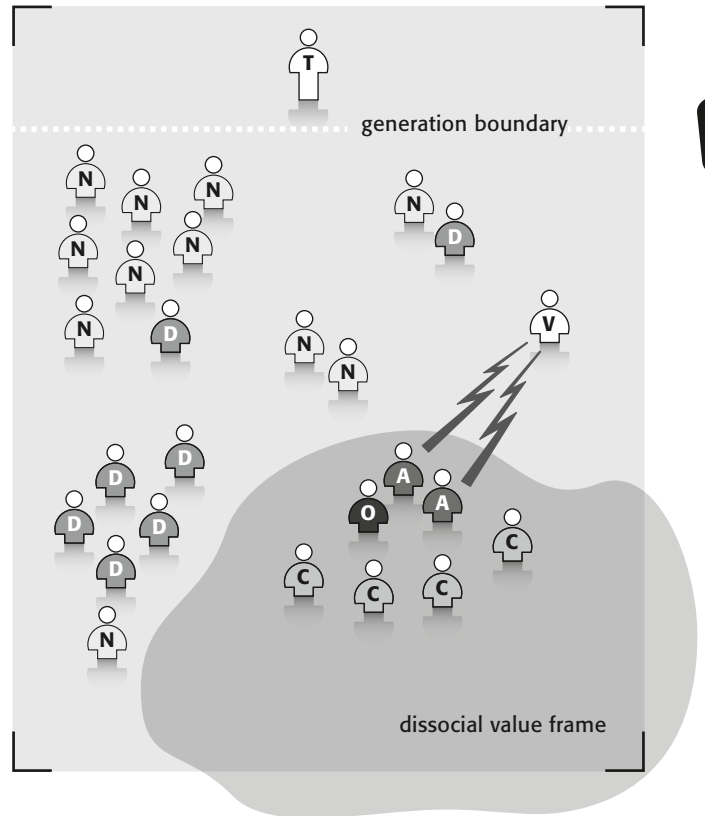
Fig. 7: Consolidation stage (⚇ *= group members, O = offender, V = victim, A = assistants, C = claqueurs, D = (potential) defenders, N = non-participants). A mobbing group has formed, with differentiated roles. The victim is repeatedly and systematically attacked, and cannot escape the situation (context of obligatory attendance at school).*

In addition, there are the *claqueurs,* also called *amplifiers*, who are grouped around the offender and his assistants. They do not participate actively in the mobbing, instead forming an interested audience, for example by laughing. This in turn reinforces the activities of the offender and the assistants.

The *defenders* or *potential defenders* feel committed to the formal framework of values and are uncomfortable with mobbing. Although they do not participate actively in it, they may have a guilty conscience. They have compassion with the victim. Some of them help the victim directly or indirectly, others do not – although they potentially could.

The last group consists of the *non-participants* or the *bystanders.* Usually, they find mobbing unpleasant and would prefer to avoid the situation completely – which is not possible due to the requirement that they attend school. They also feel committed to the formal framework of values, but they seek refuge in the illusion that what's happening is none of their business. If, for example, the mobbing is directed only at the girls in the class, then the boys say that they have nothing to do with the girls (and vice versa).

These roles are not absolutely fixed. During the stage of consolidation, it can always happen that roles are switched, for example because friendships are formed or fall apart, or because classmates have pangs of conscience. From this, we draw a key insight for the intervention: *Mobbing is a dynamic process of conflict and, as such, is fundamentally open to modification.*

Another characteristic of the consolidation stage is the increasingly dissocial behavior of the group members. Approval for a dissocial, informal set of values and norms is on the rise. More and more, the social group follows 'its own rules'. Examples of this would be a lack of freedom to express one's opinion or, figuratively speaking, 'a wall of silence'. Any attempt to recruit outside help is considered taboo and is punished by the dominating offenders. A 'state within a state' begins to emerge. The offenders work consistently toward expanding the reach of their power.

Mobbing is a group phenomenon in which, alongside offenders and victims, all the members of a group participate – in the following roles:

A *Assistants* support the offender.

C *Claqueurs* form an interested audience but do not participate in the mobbing.

D *Defenders* or *potential defenders* feel committed to the formal framework of values. Some of them help the victim, others do not.

N *Non-participants* or *bystanders* would prefer to avoid the situation entirely and seek refuge in the idea that it's none of their business.

What keeps potential defenders from acting?
There are many reasons why some persons do not do anything to improve the situation, although they would be able to. Many potential defenders are afraid of becoming victims themselves. Or they don't know exactly what they could do. Since there is often no adult support, they don't trust themselves to be of any help. Getting outside help would be vilified as tattling, and being considered a tattler is the last thing any student would want.

It is noteworthy that, during the consolidation stage, the group of (potential) defenders is generally larger than the group of offenders, assistants, and claqueurs. The group of defenders and bystanders is, however, neither aware of its power, nor is it organized. The group surrounding the offender, on the other hand, has an identity: "We are the ones who attack."

With regard to prevention and intervention, it is therefore the task of adults to organize the defense against mobbing.

One potent protective factor is a respectful culture of teamwork and communicative exchange, for example in a class council that is oriented toward democracy education and is well led. If the school class as a group gets together regularly in some formal framework of this type and cultivates an egalitarian atmosphere with a respectful, free exchange of opinions, and where needs can be articulated and considered – that is, if a culture of dialog based on respect has been developed –, then mobbing attempts can be discussed and solidarity with the victim can be shown. (On the subject of classroom councils, continuing education is offered in Germany, e.g. by Konflikt-KULTUR.) When (cyber)mobbing is occurring on the internet, often (potential) defenders see hardly any options for supporting the victim. They're afraid of 'doing the wrong thing'. Critical comments that they might post on the internet in response to mobbing actions, for example, would be documented on the net indefinitely and would increase the probability that they themselves might become the victim of an attack.

In this stage, the influence teachers can have on the framework of values and norms and on the behavior of students is steadily reduced. The generation boundary takes on the form of a wall of silence. There are individual cases in which adults assume the role of an assistant or a claqueur and in doing so actually reinforce the mobbing, for instance by embarrassing a students in front of others, or by grinning at a "joking" remark thrown in by an offender.
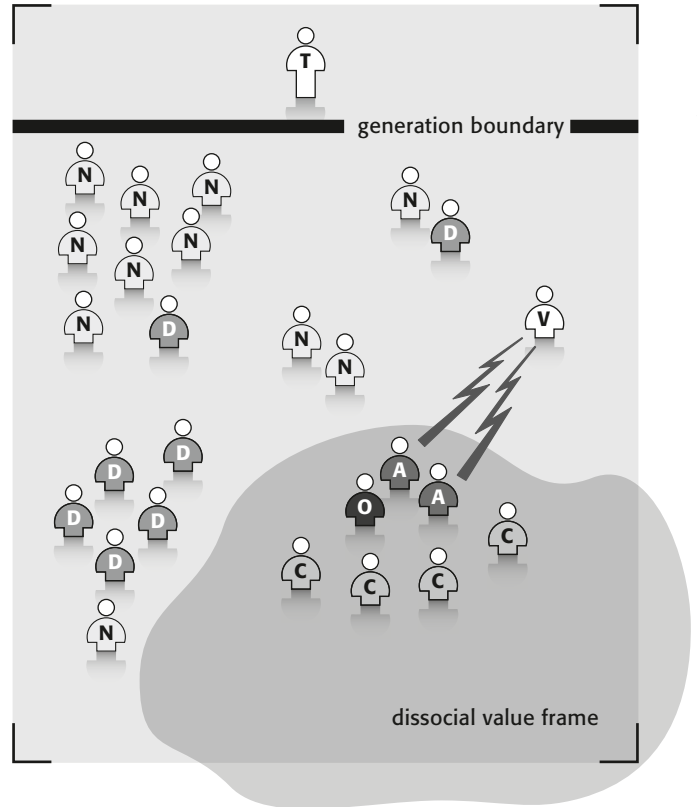
Fig. 8: The generation boundary as a wall of silence. Between students and teacher there is a 'wall of silence'; the teacher's ability to influence the values, norms, and behavior of the students is steadily weakened.

Why do Victims Suffer in Silence?

During the consolidation stage, the victim already suffers greatly. Often, symptoms such as abdominal pain or the inability to sleep well set in. Nonetheless, most mobbing victims don't tell anyone what is happening to them. Some reasons for this are:

- The victim is very much afraid that any interference by adults will just make everything worse. Unfortunately, this fear is justified – inasmuch as the application of unsuitable intervention methods will in fact exacerbate the mobbing (see also Chapter 4.5).

- The victim has already made an attempt at confiding in an adult and been put off with unhelpful comments, such as: "You just have to stick up for yourself", "Things will settle down again", or "It must be partly your own fault."

- The victim wishes to spare his/her parents the suffering he/she is enduring and thus protect them. Besides, the student knows how little influence parents can actually exert and also has an inkling of the additional damage that can result from their interference.

- The victim fears that the parents will be reproachful, as in: "Why didn't you tell me about it. Don't you trust me?"

- The victim doesn't want to tattle.

- The offenders have threatened more attacks if the victim informs any adults.

- The victim feels guilty and reproaches himself/herself, asking: "What's wrong with me, why does all this happen to me?"

- The victim is overwhelmed by shame because of his/her otherness and increasingly identifies with the denigrations dealt out by the offenders.

Specific reasons in cases of cybermobbing:

- The victim feels guilty, for example because of having recorded/sent out videos that are now being circulated.

- The victim resigns, feeling helpless over against the internet: "Once something is posted, you can never get it deleted."

- A report submitted to the web provider produces no effect, or the response comes much too late.

2.2.5 The Manifestation Stage

Whereas, up to now, there have been varying opinions within the group/school class, now in the manifestation stage the group more or less unanimously agrees on the exclusion of the victim. Except for one or two non-participants, all the classmates are now active as offenders, assistants, or claqueurs. Should some classmates initially have had a guilty conscience, they now consider their actions to be morally justified. With few exceptions, no one has any more pangs of conscience. "The longer the harassment lasts, the greater the number of classmates who think the offender's actions toward the victim are justified" (Huber 2011, p. 5).

From the students' point of view, the formal framework of values and norms – and with it, the victim's basic human rights – no longer need be observed. Now, the group's dissocial, informal framework of values and norms applies. The victim is caught, with no possibility to escape, in the social realm of a subculture determined by its own set of misanthropic values and norms. A 'state within a state' has been erected. The torment, harassment, degradation, and humiliation of the victim are now informally legitimated and considered to conform to the 'raison d'état'.

There is a wall of silence between the school class
and the representatives of the formally applicable
framework of values and norms established by the
democratic state. The right to free expression, the
right to free development of the individual, the right
to inclusion and participation – out the window with
them all!

The drama building up during the stages of consolida-
tion and manifestation is one of the most oppressive
aspects that distinguish mobbing from other conflicts.
"For the victim, it becomes increasingly difficult to
break out of this role. His unpopularity and isolation
continue to grow. While the offender expands his
radius of action, the victim has less and less headroom.
The victim himself can do almost nothing to change
the situation, and instead is dependent on support
from others. Unfortunately, as the manifestation of the
victim role advances, intervention becomes more
and more difficult" (Huber 2011, p. 5).

To the classmates, it feels as if the class had a right
to harass the victim and force him/her out of the
class, as if everyone were allowed to participate, as if
it were the only correct thing to do, as if they even
deserved to be praised for it. Often, in this stage the
group plays the 'epidemic game', acting as though
the person being mobbed had some threatening,
contagious disease. Contact with this person would be
'fatal'. The sick person has to be 'isolated'. He has
to be gotten rid of. The student being mobbed is 'free
game', everything is his fault as the scapegoat, and
he can be 'burned at the stake'.
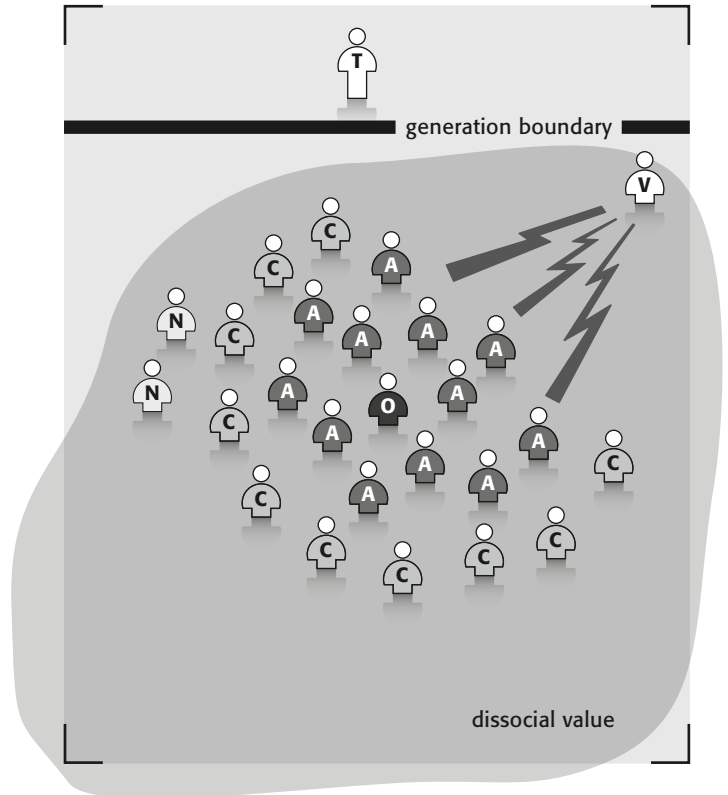
Fig. 9: The manifestation stage:
The dissocial, informal framework of values and norms
dominates the students' behavior. From their point of
view, their behavior is legitimate. There is now a "state
within a state", and the helpless victim is at its mercy.

Should you at this point, as a well-meaning teacher, enter the class with the aim of intervening, the probability is high that the class will be entirely unwilling to speak with you. "I don't know", "no idea what's going on!", or gestures of repudiation are typical reactions of students trying to signalize that they don't want any interference. Any member of the group who makes an attempt at dialog will later be punished.

In the event that the class group is willing to engage, the students will be patient at the outset, but soon will be informing you in an irritated and aggressive tone that your understanding of the whole matter is entirely wrong. And should you go on refusing to concede that it's all the victim's fault, you yourself will become the enemy.

Victims' reactions in this stage tend to differ. While girls often direct their suffering and aggression inwards (implosion), boys' revenge fantasies may threaten to explode. Frequent results are a drop in school achievement, psychosomatic illnesses, self-damaging behavior, or suicidal thoughts – extending all the way to suicide or extreme fantasies of violence and revenge. If one asks the victims who are affected, these dramatic aspects may easily be glossed over, with responses no more emphatic than "they should just stop it."

More often than one might expect, the school class manages to convince the teacher that its dissocial behavior is legitimate. A visible sign of this would be the educator picking up on the justification strategy of the class, inwardly and outwardly, saying something like, "She has no sense of humor at all, and sometimes young people just play a little bit rough with one another" (Grüner/Hilt 2011, p. 96).

The chances for successful intervention at this point are very slim. As an emergency measure, and to avoid imminent danger, there is often no alternative to taking the victim out of the class – which can have catastrophic consequences both for the victim and for the class/group.
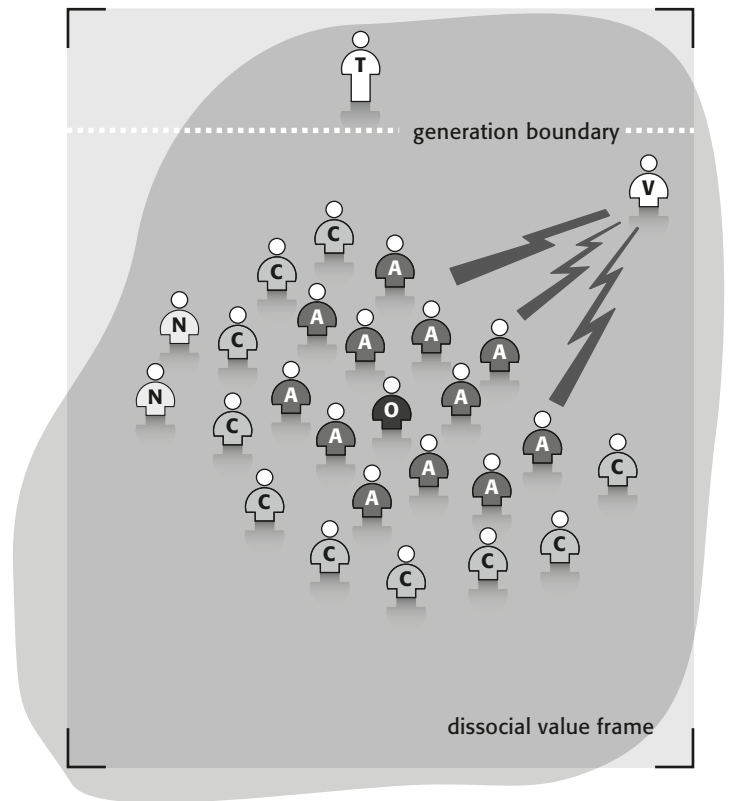
Fig. 10: The teacher is involved in the dissocial framework of values and norms.
It is not uncommon that the school class manages to convince the teacher that its dissocial behavior is legitimate (justification strategy).

The Dynamic of Removing the Victim

Taking the victim out the class or group does not necessarily put an end to the mobbing – neither for the class, nor for the victim. If the problem is not addressed, often the following happens:

With his or her self-confidence and trust in others severely damaged, the victim starts off on what is purportedly a new beginning – in a group that is completely unfamiliar and that in itself has an established structure. Despite efforts of the new peer group to take up contact, many victims display strongly protective behavior, are extremely reticent and therefore seem strange to the others. This 'odd' behavior can easily become the hook for another round of mobbing. It can become a vicious circle, or a self-fulfilling prophecy: "I protect myself, so that I don't present an easy target"; "He seems kind of strange [or arrogant], let's put him to the test." Often enough, former victims also behave very aggressively in their new environment in an attempt to avoid becoming a victim again.

Transferring a new school as means of solving the problem thus presents considerable risks and quite often can lead to a new instance of mobbing: "Such behavior indicates, on the one hand, that the school is unable to guarantee the physical and emotional safety of its students. On the other hand, the child who is already feeling shaken is confronted in the new class with what is probably the most difficult task of student life: integrating into an existing classroom community where relationships are already closely woven" (Schäfer / Herpell 2010, p. 202).

If it is to be foreseen that mobbing cannot be brought to an end under the circumstances in a given school class, then transferring to a new school should not be ruled out – in the interest of protecting the victim. Anyway, it is not uncommon that the victim and parents act preemptively, taking the decision out of the educators' hands. To improve the likelihood that such an emergency measure will succeed, the victim requires the active support of responsible persons who facilitate integration into the new environment.

When a mobbing victim is taken out of the class, the group is reinforced in its behavior. At the same time, individual students may still have an unfulfilled need for prestige, status, and power. If they are not shown a way to satisfy this need without using force, they will hardly be willing to revise their previous strategy. For this reason, a new cycle of testing, consolidation, and manifestation is likely to set in. It is apparent that, just like the victim, the school class is also in acute need of active support. This encompasses, among other things, a re-activation of the formal framework of values and norms, the development of a democratic team culture and communication, and all the means through which educational influence can be brought to bear, as described in Chapter 7.

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2.3 How the Internet Alters Mobbing

The internet in combination with social media and mobile devices has radically changed communication among individuals. This 'sea change' accommodates in a unique way adolescents' need to communicate and be able to maintain constant contact with friends, but also their need for self-portrayal and recognition.

It is unsurprising that, among teenagers, exchange with others via messenger or in online communities is statistically the top priority of their communicative activity on the net (see Figure 11). However, this new culture of communication and constant availability thanks to mobile technology also creates new options for doing harm to others.
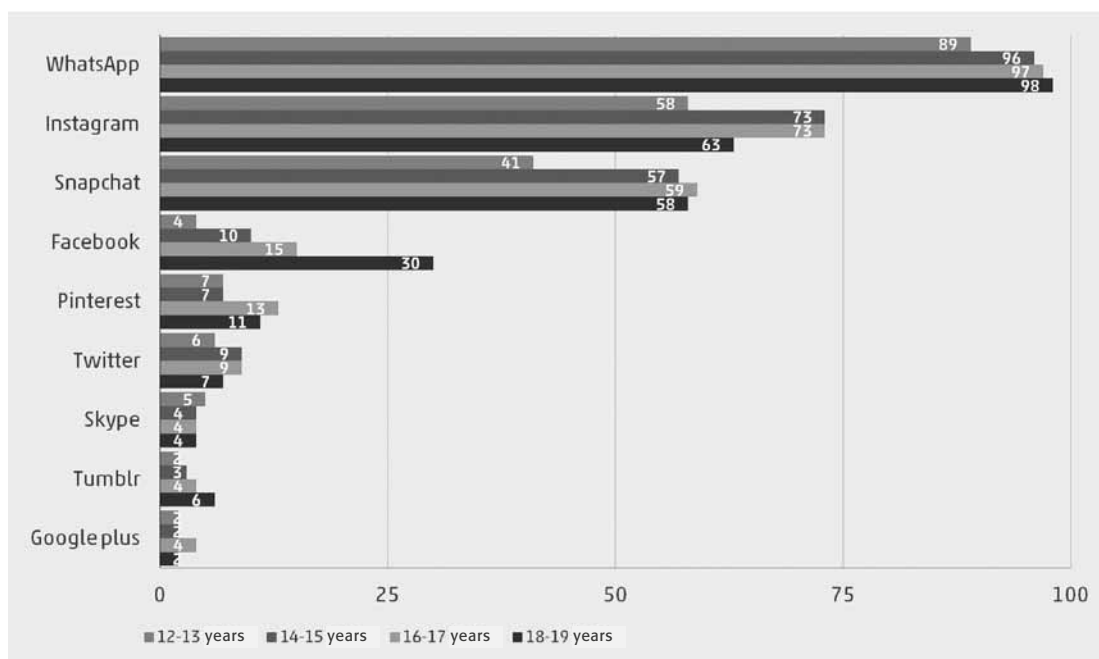
Fig. 11: Activities on the internet relating predominantly to communication, for the age group 12 to 19 years in Germany: messenger services have a strong lead ahead of other digital communication modes. (source: JIM Study 2018)

2.3.1 The Significance of Digital Self-Portrayal

An important facet of development during adolescence consists in developing one's own identity, testing it, and strengthening it. The conception of developmental tasks and identity development in adolescents was defined by, among others, R. J. Havighurst und Erik H. Erikson (cf. Grob/Jaschinski 2003). It sees identity as based, above all, on self-perception and on external assessment. Feedback from age peers and other members of the social group thus bears great meaning for adolescents. Social networks play a special role in this "identity work"; in particular, the options for self-portrayal are highly significant, along with group feedback to it. Social networks offer many modes for feedback, recognition, and self-orientation. Among them are:

- recognition through 'likes' and comments

- remarks about a person's appearance

- information about status/standing in the group

- relationships with friends

- gender roles and sexual orientation

- personal interests and abilities

- hobbies and recreational activities

- ideals, role models, goals

Self-portrayal guided by personal questionnaires is still familiar to some of us from the albums of primary school days ('favorite color, favorite food', etc.). These types of questions about a person, his or her interests and attitudes now crop up again in social networks. Users of social networks invest considerable effort in creating a perfect virtual portrayal of their own person. With an individual profile, photo, posts, and more, users launch a quest for the recognition of friends, acquaintances, and strangers. Feedback comes in the form of comments, likes, or friending requests.

The increasing speed of digital communication often lures adolescents in search of recognition into posting information, images, or video without thinking first. Social networks and many of the social media applications subsist on this: the fact that users share a great deal of material, possibly too much material, with one other. But not every bit of information, every photo or video is suited to be presented to the online world or to vague acquaintances.

Particularly during puberty, it is of interest to teenagers to test whether they can make a splash in their peer group or with a potential love interest. Moreover, daily they see prominent figures doing just this – using the net to promote their image and to advertise. Since VIPs serve as role models for adolescents, it's hardly surprising that they imitate their idols when it comes to self-portrayal.

Feedback from others in response to posted photos and videos or other content is, however, not always positive. Images and posts can evoke all kinds of undesirable reactions from the community. Demeaning comments get sent off spontaneously, without any reflection, and can be disseminated at lightning speed among a vast and incalculable number of recipients.

All these forms of self-staging can also provide a target for (cyber)mobbing. Largess and lack of caution in handling personal data – one's own or others' – is exactly what offenders are on the outlook for, as they present easy picking and a breeding ground for vilification, threats, or harassment. Content can be copied, altered, re-posted, and made available to a huge audience within seconds. In the real world, a victim can be bullied through physical or verbal attacks, but on the internet the possibilities are much more extensive. And there are few inhibitions. Attacks remain omnipresent. There is no protected space for unwinding or regeneration. With this situation, a core developmental task of young people's lives has become even riskier.

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When boundaries are overstepped on the internet, teachers, educators, and parents usually don't hear about it, or not until it's too late. There are two important reasons for this. Firstly, adults usually don't frequent the same virtual spaces as adolescents do. And secondly, young people who are affected don't regard adults as confidents who have access to effective means of support or defense.

2.3.2 The Significance of Privacy for Adolescents

Although everyone is aware that one needs to be cautious about divulging personal information on the net, there remains a problem called the privacy paradox. This is a phenomenon that not only affects children and adolescents, but also many adults in like measure. The privacy paradox describes the contradiction that, while users think protecting their private sphere is important in general, they do not apply this insight to their own actions.

In her study on the life of adolescents in social networks, the media scholar and social researcher danah boyd addressed young people's conception of the private sphere and was able to provide valuable outcomes for (media) educational work with this group (cf. Boyd 2014). She asserts that adolescents are indeed interested in protecting their own privacy; however, their understanding and experience of the private sphere tends to differ from that of adults. When adolescents seek privacy, boyd reports, they think of it in relation to persons who have power over them, such as parents and teachers. Young people want to participate in public life and, above all, they want to act without supervision, moving outside of the

sphere of influence of their parents. To achieve this, they develop sophisticated strategies for controlling contexts and for self-portrayal that can be interpreted correctly by their target audience. In addition, they have to build strategies for coming to terms with constant supervision by the surrounding adults and learn to deal with invisible listeners and observers and with colliding contexts. The aspect of invisible users is particularly difficult for adolescents to grasp, since they often can't imagine who – outside of their immediate surroundings – could be interested in their internet activities. Seen from the adolescent point of view, their own networks are not public, quite the contrary: they are private, since (as teenagers assume) only the peer group is tuned in.

What is more, young people often struggle on social networks to deal with societal norms, due to the fact that in social media, diverse societal contexts often converge. Adolescents expect that their families and friends will understand and respect these varying contexts, and will recognize it when a message is not intended for them. When moving in a social situation characterized by familiarity or intimacy, most people initially rule out the possibility that their conversations are or could become public. But due to the fact that the internet is universally accessible and difficult to regulate, social norms are only effective to a certain extent. In a world determined by media, assumptions and norms relating to the visibility and distribution of messages need to be questioned, because many popular social networks are specifically designed to induce users to disseminate their messages and comments widely. If values and norms are to be effectively applied in dealing with digital media, "new" conventions will have to be agreed upon by users.

2.3.3 Where Mobbing Occurs on the Net

Even though the great majority of users cultivates responsible handling of devices and services, these can nonetheless be misused for (cyber)mobbing. The following overview pinpoints risks that can be associated with the use of new media and online services.

device/service	possible misuse / forms of mobbing
smartphones/ mobiles	■ Using mobile phones or smartphones, anonymous calls can be placed repeatedly, for one thing, and for another, they can be used to send nasty or humiliating messages, threats, intimidations, or insults. ■ In addition, they make it possible to produce photos or video that are humiliating, then send them to others or publish them on the internet.
instant messenger/ messaging apps (WhatsApp, Threema, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.)	■ With instant-messaging applications on the smartphone or PC, nasty or embarrassing text messages, photos, or videos can be sent out. They can go viral and rapidly reach a large audience. ■ The person who is affected can be blocked or excluded from groups, and thus isolated. ■ When an account is hacked, it can be misused to post malicious or embarrassing messages to the contact list in the name of the hacking victim, in order to discredit that person.
smartphones and apps – specifics relating to mobile applications	■ Deleting content that was sent through an app is almost impossible, since the content is no longer only located on the device that sent it or on the provider's server, but rather on all the devices that were contacted. ■ Many apps do not offer a function (such as a 'report' button) for registering mobbing attacks. ■ It is hardly possible to initiate legal proceedings because the providers are often located outside of Europe. ■ The group function on many apps greatly increases the range, meaning that problematic content can be distributed to a wide audience very quickly. Moreover, the person affected can be excluded from the group and, as a result, not realize that they are being harassed. ■ Some apps give the impression that posted photos and videos can only be viewed for a certain period of time, that they have an expiration date. This is misleading because images can usually be restored, and in addition, it can have the effect that problematic content is even more deliberately re-posted or forwarded.
chatrooms/ forums/blogs	■ In chatrooms, nasty or unpleasant messages can be sent anonymously. ■ Through the use of groups, particular individuals can be deliberately ignored or excluded. ■ Sometimes, friendships are offered as a means of gaining access to personal information. This can ultimately lead to coercion or libel.

social networks	■ Mobbing attacks on social networks often take the form of disparaging photos or videos that are published, or nasty comments posted under pictures. ■ When an account gets hacked, it can be used to send nasty messages to the contact list as a way of discrediting the account's owner. ■ If a mobber has access to an account, he can change it to the disadvantage of the account's owner (for example, by deleting or adding information). ■ Offenders can create fake profiles and pretend to be a certain person, either to harass that person or to impersonate him/her while harassing someone else; or they can form hate groups directed toward another person. ■ Sometimes, in order to gain access to personal information, people will establish a friendship under false premises or will pretend to be interested in beginning a relationship. This can ultimately lead to coercion or libel.
e-mail	■ In addition to nasty or threatening messages, e-mail also enables the distribution of problematic photos and videos, as well as computer viruses. ■ When an e-mail account is hacked, it can be used to send unpleasant messages to the contact list in the name of the account's owner, to forward personal e-mails and in doing so discredit the hacking victim, or simply to delete private e-mails.
video portals (YouTube, Vimeo, MyVideo, etc.)	■ On video portals, clips can be published that are shameful, humiliating, or embarrassing to a person (e.g. 'happy-slapping' videos showing how a victim is being humiliated or beaten by others). ■ It also happens that private videos (often with erotic content) are posted online after a relationship has ended as a way of shaming the ex-partner in public. ■ Such videos, once posted, are often 'liked', snidely commented on, and further circulated on the net. ■ When an e-mail account is hacked, it can be used to upload videos in the name of the account's owner in order to discredit him or her.
gaming sites, virtual world (e.g. World of Warcraft, GTA)	■ In the gaming realm, mobbing occurs, for example, when advanced players seek out inexperienced players and repeated kill their avatar, so that the victim no longer has access to the game. ■ A gamer can exclude individual players from group activities and events. ■ When an account is hacked, it can be misused to send malicious messages to the community in the name of the victim, in order to discredit him. If a mobber has access to an account, he can also manipulate it or make moves in the game to the disadvantage of the account's owner (for example, with money or goods accumulated during play).
webcams	■ Via webcam, unsuitable or private content can be recorded and posted. ■ Young people can be persuaded or forced to perform unsuitable acts that are then recorded and posted. ■ Private recordings also are uploaded when a relationship has ended and one person wants to shame the ex-partner publicly.

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2.3.4 Forms of Mobbing on the Net

Here are various types of damage done in the context of cybermobbing (based on Willard 2007):

- accusations, spreading rumors: deliberate defamation of another person by posting or sending out rumors/lies aimed at destroying relationships or ruining the person's reputation

- exclusion, expulsion: deliberately blocking persons from participating in a group, such as a chat, a community, or an online game

- insults, invectives: sending malicious or nasty messages, posting injurious comments and taunts

- harassment, badgering: repeatedly sending out or posting malicious, cruel, or insulting messages, pin board entries, photos, or videos

- assuming a false identity: pretending to be another person and doing things online that will bring him/her into difficulty (e.g. by using the password directly from the person's Facebook profile)

- shaming: making private habits and intimate details public against the will or without the knowledge of the person affected (e.g. via text, video, or photos – say, taken in the locker room)

- violation of trust: eliciting intimate details, secrets, or embarrassing images from someone in order to distribute them or to coerce the person

- threats: directly or indirectly menacing a person with actual force affecting them bodily, emotionally, or in their (social) relationships

2.3.5 Specific Characteristics of Cybermobbing

Cybermobbing takes place on the internet (e.g. via e-mail, on social networks, or through portals handling videos) and on smartphones (e.g. via instant-messaging apps such as WhatsApp). Cybermobbing is a type of mobbing that – as opposed to "analog" mobbing – exhibits the following characteristics:

Loss of Private, Protected Spaces
Cybermobbing is not over at the end of the school day, but rather continues around the clock, independent of location and extending into a victim's private refuges. Since cyber offenders can work the internet at any time of the day or night, their victims are also harassed during their time at home. Even in their own four walls, they have no respite from attacks and no opportunity to recover from them. Simply extracting themselves from social networks is hardly an option, since this would be tantamount to the loss of all essential social contacts in the digital realm. Therefore, advising victims to stay off the internet for some time can mean an additional burden for them.

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Loss of Control over Data on the Net

Digital content gets disseminated very rapidly and can be shared unlimitedly on social media. As soon as messages, images, and videos are online, it is hardly possible to control their distribution. Quickly and easily, they can be copied from one portal to another. This makes the extent and the scope of cybermobbing much greater than that of analog mobbing. Moreover, long-forgotten content can re-surface and cause difficulties for a victim in the aftermath of a mobbing attack. There is a much wider audience than in analog mobbing, which makes it extremely burdensome for those affected. This is particularly true of photos and videos, since the mobbing victim can be recognized in them for a long time – a circumstance that can complicate a 'fresh start' after transferring to a new school and lead to a continuation of mobbing.

The Vast, Unknown Audience

Content not only circulates very quickly, it can also become accessible to an incalculably large number of persons. The fact that posted vilifications can also be read by strangers, who then have a negative image of the victim, presents an additional burden. It is not uncommon that people who don't even know the victim take part in the harassment. The audience is generally much larger than in cases of analog mobbing.

Anonymity of the Offenders

Often, the offender conceals his own identity, for example by using nicknames, so that the victim doesn't know exactly who is behind the attacks. It could even be that this gives the offender a feeling of – false – security and an endurance that draws things out. Especially in cases of cybermobbing among children and adolescents, offenders and victims usually know one another from their "real" personal environment, either from school, the neighborhood, the village, or the ethnic community. For this reason, the victims almost always have a suspicion about who could be attacking them.

Lacking Perception of the Damage Done to the Victim

The direct reaction of the victim to a damaging statement or a disrespectful photo is normally not visible to the cybermobbing offender. Essential elements of communication are lacking, such as facial expressions and gestures that provide feedback to a partner in personal communication. Therefore, the offender is often not aware of the impact of his actions. Under these circumstances, no compassion or impulse toward ceasing the attacks can take hold. Neither can the victim, without direct contact, grasp the motivation for the attacks – making them all the more difficult to bear.

2.4 Legal Fundamentals

Mobbing is not always associated with actions that are obvious violations of law; intelligent offenders, in particular, avoid getting into areas regulated by the penal code. However, mobbing always is based on the violation of human rights, civil rights, and children's rights. Therefore, intervention in cases of mobbing primarily addresses the violation of established values. However, whenever criminal acts are involved, these must be prosecuted or sanctioned in addition to the educative intervention. Only in the rarest cases is it sensible to limit the response to penal prosecution, without any educative or systemic intervention.

In Germany, there is no specific "Mobbing Law" or "(Cyber)Mobbing Law", but it is possible to prosecute individual offenses covered by the penal code and other laws. (Cyber)mobbing proceedings often elaborate various elements of an offense, such as insult, libel, blackmail/coercion or the distribution of photos and videos without consent, which in combination have far-reaching penal consequences. The following overview summarizes the criminal acts that can be associated with (cyber)mobbing under German law.

Demeaning Statements on the Internet:

- **Insult** (§ 185 Penal Code)
  Whoever degrades, demeans, or through other statements or actions damages the honor of another person or humiliates that person, is liable to prosecution.

- **Slander and calumny**
  (§§ 186 & 187 Penal Code)
  Whoever (e.g., in forums, social networks, or blogs) voices statements or insults that serve to damage another person's reputation or disseminates untruths about that person or is liable to prosecution.

- **Coercion** (§ 240 Penal Code)
  Whoever uses force or threat of serious damage to induce another person to fulfill his will by performing, enduring, or omitting an act, is liable to prosecution.

- **Threatening** (§ 241 Penal Code)
  Whoever threatens another person with a felony against him or a person close to him is liable to prosecution.

- **Blackmail** (§ 253 S Penal Code)
  Whoever uses force or threat of serious harm to a person or his property in order to attain benefit for himself or a third person is liable to prosecution.

- **Stalking** (§ 238 Penal Code)
  The concept of 'stalking' means 'to sneak up' on someone, to insist on seeking his proximity against that person's will, using communication media to establish contact or in other ways to infringe on the person's life style. Whoever terrorizes another person in this manner is liable to prosecution.

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**Dissemination of Photos, Videos, or
Audio Recordings Containing Comprising Content:**

■ **Control over one's own image**
(§§ 22 & 23 Artistic Copyright Act)
Photos and videos may only be distributed and
published if the person portrayed has granted
consent. Every person has the fundamental right to
determine whether and in which context portrayals
of him/her are made public. Violations of this right
can be penalized under §33 Artistic Copyright Act.

*N.B. § 23 Artistic Copyright Act stipulates,
however, that consent is not required when "the
persons shown are incidental to the depiction
of a landscape or other location", when prominent
persons are displayed, or in "pictures of gatherings,
public processions, and similar activities such
as public events in which the persons depicted
have taken part", e.g. a school festival.
Prosecution under this law is only possible where
none of these exceptions applies.*

■ **Violation of the integrity of the spoken word**
(§ 201 Penal Code)
Whoever makes, without consent, an audio recording
of the spoken words of another (e.g. of a
statement intended for a particular, limited group
of persons – like a school class) is liable to
prosecution. This violation is particularly grave when
the recording is made available to third parties,
or is published. Even the posting of such recorded
speech in online chats (not accessible to the
general public) can be subject to prosecution.

*N.B. Particularly strict rules apply to telephone
conversations (§ 88-89 and §148 Telecommuni-
cation Law). It is forbidden to record the spoken
word off the telephone without the previous
explicit consent of the person speaking, and
broadcasting or otherwise disseminating such
statements is considered a grave offense.
Even when a person has left a message on an
answering machine, this does not imply his or
her consent to any further transmission – meaning
that it must not be re-recorded, posted, or in
any way made available to anyone other than
the person to whom that (spoken) message
was originally directed.*

■ **Violation of the intimate sphere by taking
photographs** (§ 201a Penal Code)
Whoever secretly creates photos or films of another
person in their living quarters or another space
especially protected from view (e.g. a shower, a
toilet, or a locker room) is liable to prosecution.
The offense is more serious when such images are
transmitted or made available to others.

*N.B. In this context of visual images, a classroom
is not a protected space, but a locker room or a
toilet would be one.*

■ **Violation of the integrity of the written
word / Data espionage**
(§§ 202 & 202a Penal Code)
Although § 202 forbids opening or reading sealed
letters and documents intended for another person;
this does not apply to reading e-mails, meaning
that online communication is exempt from this
restriction.

In this context, however, § 202a on "Data Espionage"
can be called upon – provided that the data
were, in advance, "especially protected against
unauthorized access". This implies that persons are
liable to prosecution who, without authorization,
read encrypted e-mails or unlawfully gain possession
of the log-in password of another person.

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■ **Circulation of pornography**
(§ 184 Penal Code)
Whoever makes pornographic written materials
available to a person under 18 years of age,
by offering, showing, or supplying it, or by present-
ing it at a place accessible or visible to them, is
liable to prosecution.

■ **Circulation of child pornography**
(§ 184b Penal Code)
Whoever stores, acquires, or disseminates photos
or video clips of persons under 14 years of age,
in which their genitals are suggestively presented or
sexual acts are depicted, is liable to prosecution.
This crime is, in Germany, a so-called "Offizialdelikt",
meaning that when police receive notice of it,
they are required to take up an investigation and
prosecution – whether or not the person
depicted in the photo or video clip submits a
complaint of their own.

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Four (Cyber)Mobbing Case Stories

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Four (Cyber)Mobbing Case Stories

3. Four (Cyber)Mobbing Case Stories

Now that Chapter 2 has clarified definitions and discussed the course of events in (cyber)mobbing in terms of social psychology, the following four actual cases will demonstrate (cyber)mobbing situations as they occur daily in schools. They were all addressed with the methods of Systemic Conflict Management and were all de-fused, using the means explained in Chapters 4 and 5. All four cases are described briefly and clearly so that they can serve as an introduction to the two theoretical chapters that will follow.

A fifth true case ("Nele – A Case Study") will then be presented in Chapter 6. The case itself and the approach taken to it through Systemic Conflict Management are depicted in great detail. It is recommended that readers familiarize themselves thoroughly with the fundamentals of SCM (Chapter 5) and with its methods (Chapter 4), so that they can return to Nele's case repeatedly with newly acquired practical tools. At the end of this chapter (section 3.5) you will find an overview of the five cases listing their similarities and differences.

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3.1 The (Cyber)Mobbing Case of "Mika"

Mika wants to see Sebastian's brain splatter

Mika is in the sixth grade at a middle school. He enjoys a dominant position in the class and high prestige among the boys as well as the girls – a sort of class 'boss'. Using a photo of his classmate Sebastian (one of the typical, normal boys in the class) Mika has constructed a photo collage. He has copied Sebastian's portrait off Instagram and mounted a heap of excrement on the head. Underneath, he has written "ha, ha, ha – I'm laughing myself sick!", then posted the photo in the class chat on WhatsApp. On the same evening, he also posted an audio message saying, "Basti you are such a miserable spastic! I'm warning you. I really, really hate your guts. If you say one more time that I am mobbing you, I'm gonna take your head and bash it against a radiator so hard that your brain splatters and the classroom is covered in your blood!" Several classmates give the photo and the audio clip a 'like' or post a comment with "ha, ha, ha" and a smiley laughing itself to tears. The next day, Sebastian doesn't want to go to school, and he shows his mother the photo and the audio message. His mother realizes how frightened he is and allows him to stay home from school. In the afternoon, she calls the homeroom teacher. The teacher, Ms. Bogen, then confers with the school social worker (in his role as conflict mediator and manager) and the headmaster. This team decides on a strategy for action and plans how to proceed. Although the team does not yet have all the details on what has transpired, it assumes that this is a threatening situation which calls for immediate intervention. Under no circumstances should the incident be made light of (as in "Pull yourself together, it's not the end of the world") – which, unfortunately, can happen all too easily.

Intervention Addressing the Threat

In a first step, it is examined whether the threat is substantial. Ms. Bogen asks the mother to document the chat as a means of proof. Then the headmaster, together with the school social worker, asks Mika about what happened. They want to find out what the relationship between Mika and Sebastian is like (interpersonally) and whether Mika is feeling some severe inner grievance (intrapersonally) that could give rise to a murder threat. According to Mika, his relationship with Sebastian is perfectly OK. The headmaster responds to this denial strategy by showing Mika the proof. "It wasn't meant that way", says Mika in an attempt to trivialize what he did. The headmaster and school social worker ask him if he is willing to refrain completely from any use of force. He agrees and this is formalized in a written deposition renouncing the use of force. The school social worker begins documenting the case.

The headmaster now informs Sebastian's mother and offers a school escort to her son. Sebastian accepts the suggestion – meaning, for example, that the next day he spends his recess time in a protected area of the school building. The following day, he realizes that he is no longer acutely threatened by Mika and resumes the usual pattern of his school day. Now, Mika is told that he must spend all his recess time during the next two weeks in the protected zone.

Regulating the Conflict

The team consisting of headmaster, homeroom teacher Ms. Bogen, and school social worker now analyze the conflict in detail. On what level should the conflict process be addressed? In this case, the conflict levels are: intrapersonal – inner grievances of the offender and the victim; interpersonal – between the conflicting parties; institutional – between the school and the offender, since he has committed a prosecutable offense and disturbed the school community; systemic – since members of the class participated actively; and on the level of the partners responsible for education and up-bringing – in particular, the parents.

The team decides to approach the process primarily on the systemic and interpersonal levels. Within the class group, a Systemic Brief Intervention SBI is conducted (see Chapter 4.4). On the interpersonal level, an exchange between the conflicting parties is arranged (see chart *Support on the interpersonal level*). In the presence of a mediator – in this case, the school social worker who is trained in this field – Mika declares that he did not really mean it seriously, that he is sorry, and that he will not do it again: essentially, he repeats what he said in the deposition renouncing the use of force. Sebastian accepts Mika's apology.

In his audio message, Mika had threatened his classmate with murder or at least aggravated assault. It has to be made clear to Mika, that this is a serious violation of norms. The headmaster offers him the option of making reparation to the school community to "set right" this norm violation through responsible behavior on his own part. On the one hand, he is to do twelve hours of voluntary work for the school custodian. On the other, he is to present to his class a written and oral apology for having committed an offense and, in doing so, endangered the social cohesion of the class. (Should Mika decide against these measures, the headmaster will suspend him from school for one week.) All of the measures are discussed with the parents, both Mika's and Sebastian's.

Follow-up

After about a week, it is ascertained in the course of a talk held by the school social worker with Mika and Sebastian that in recent days there have, in fact, not been any altercations between the two. After another week or two, the students who had been chosen during the SBI as human rights observers are asked how the class group has been conducting itself with regard to such conflicts. As far as anyone knows, all the members of the class have abided by the voluntary declaration of commitment they had made. There have been no further cyber attacks – this included the class chat.

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3.2 The (Cyber)Mobbing Case of "Mr. Beutelsbacher"

Mr. Beutelsbacher is exposed to ridicule via a fake account

Mr. Beutelsbacher has been a chemistry teacher at an academic high school for the last 30 years. In his field, he is unsurpassable, but his style of instruction is not exactly modern. He has increasing difficulty in asserting himself during lessons, particularly in the more lively class groups.

David, Luca, and John are in a seventh grade class where Mr. Beutelsbacher teaches chemistry. They like to fool around during class, and their grades show it. One rainy Sunday afternoon, they get together at Luca's house and watch videos they made secretly during chemistry class. They also show them to Luca's mother, trying to prove to her that, with such instruction, no one could possibly get good chemistry grades. She is indignant about Mr. Beutelsbacher – no wonder her son is getting such bad marks! She considers making a complaint to the school in the near future. That puts Luca and his friends in a good mood. They spontaneously decide to do Mr. Beutelsbacher a "favor" by creating a fake Facebook account for him. Onto it, they upload one of their videos.

In the next few days, several classmates discover the Facebook account and tell the others about it. Everybody has a good laugh. A couple of students are skeptical that Mr. Beutelsbacher could have created this account. Various parents also take note of the Facebook page and inform the teacher. Mr. Beutelsbacher is appalled. He feels that he is being exposed to ridicule and his honor is slighted. He demands that the headmaster levy severe consequences. The headmaster suggests addressing the conflict process by means of Systemic Conflict Intervention. First, what exactly happened will be clarified, and right away on the next afternoon there will be a case conference among colleagues to discuss further steps.

The school social worker is experienced at diagnosing conflicts. He explains to the team consisting of the headmaster, the homeroom teacher, and Mr. Beutelsbacher (see also Chapter 5.4.3) that recording the video and publishing it was a violation of the privacy of the spoken word (§ 201 German Penal Code) and of universal personal rights. These were not simply copyright violations. Moreover, creating the fake Facebook account was slanderous and also violated personality rights. The social cohesion of the school and the class group have been grievously disturbed.

In addressing the conflict process, the team distinguishes two areas of conflict: a) the conflict area of living together (the video recording, fake account, and publication) and b) the conflict area of working together (the old-fashioned style of teaching) – see also Chapter 2.1.1. Each of these conflict areas is to be addressed separately. Mr. Beutelsbacher is still hesitant: on the one hand, he would like to say "forget it, no hard feelings!", but on the other, he would like to see the boys punished. He is concerned that, in either case, he has been damaged by the incident. The outcome of the team consultation convinces him in the end, and he agrees to proceed together as planned.

The conflict event itself is quickly clarified – how it happened. As a conflict in the area of living together, the team assesses the students' action as (cyber)mobbing in the testing stage. The team presumes that there could be quite a few classmates who sympathize with the behavior of David, Luca, and John. This assessment implies that intervening quickly and systemically in the class group would be well-advised. In a first step, Mr. Beutelsbacher will submit an urgent request to Facebook that the account be terminated immediately. Also, addressing the institutional conflict will in this case not – as is otherwise usual – begin with an exchange between the school administration and the group of boys. Nor will the interpersonal conflict (between the three boys and Mr. Beutelsbacher) be taken up immediately. Instead, the team will first address the systemic conflict between the formal framework of values and norms applying to the school (penal code, school and house statutes) and the informal value framework within the

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class which is very apparently in contradiction to the formal framework, and the team will do this on the systemic level by working with the entire class. The task is now to activate, among the classmates, feelings of concern and compassion for Mr. Beutelsbacher, and to motivate them to respect the formal framework of values and norms. As soon as that has been achieved, the institutional conflict will be taken up between the school administration and the group of boys, with their parents participating. In another step, the interpersonal conflict between Mr. Beutelsbacher and the three boys will then be addressed. Were the institutional conflict treated first, there would be the risk that the offenders could morph into "martyrs" and their classmates into "victims" of Mr. Beutelsbacher's supposedly unsatisfactory teaching. That might indeed damage Mr. Beutelsbacher even more, and many members of the class might just end up thinking that the boys' behavior was courageous and it was a shame that they got caught.

At the request of the headmaster and in the presence of the homeroom teacher, the school social worker now conducts an SBI (Systemic Brief Intervention, Chapter 4.4). Its aim is to have the class distance itself from the behavior or the three boys and disavow such behavior for the future – no matter whom it might be directed toward. The class group needs to be won over to respecting the formal value framework, making it their own, and confirming that by writing individual declarations of their commitment to maintain it (see Chapter 4.4).

With this foundation set out, the headmaster and homeroom teacher can approach the institutional conflict more successfully, with the systemic level factored in. The school social worker moderates a session in which the homeroom teacher gives the students a "chance to be honest" and asks who among them has ever done anything similar (without singling out the group of boys). The three students then admit what they did. The headmaster and the homeroom teacher take advantage of the opportunity to praise them for being honest and offer them help in making reparation. If the students now agree to offer restitution for the deed and the damage done, the

headmaster tells them, then he will refrain from other punitive measures (such as suspension). Reparation toward the school community would involve voluntary work at the school and a letter of apology read to the class (as in case 1); loss adjustment for the personal damage done would take the form of a personal meeting with Mr. Beutelsbacher, mediated by the school social worker.

Needless to say, the parents are also informed. At first, they argue that the "bad teaching" of Mr. Beutelsbacher was the catalyst: anyone would understand why the kids put up resistance, and the Facebook account was just a boyish prank. The headmaster elucidates for the parents the distinction between conflicts in the area of living together and those in the area of working together. He explains that the two conflict areas are being treated and regulated separately. On issues of living together, the educational approaches will be discussed collaboratively with the parents and then decided upon in mutual agreement. The parents respond with relief and are satisfied to see that the school is giving attention and priority to the personality development of their children.

The conflict area of working together is being approached by implementing structured rounds of feedback. The dissatisfied students will provide their feedback to Mr. Beutelsbacher in a standardized form managed by the school social worker. The chemistry teacher, in turn, will articulate for the students his wishes regarding their behavior in class. The headmaster suggests that he himself also be involved in this exchange of feedback. Mr. Beutelsbacher agrees. The parents also agree to proceeding as suggested.

After a few weeks, it can be observed that in Mr. Beutelsbacher's lessons, things are more relaxed. The joking around has quieted down, and Mr. Beutelsbacher's "old-fashioned" teaching style is being accepted more readily by the students. Regulating the conflict in the area of living together has also facilitated the de-escalation of conflicts in working together.

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3.3 The (Cyber)Mobbing Case of "Sabahat"

Sabahat gets into a panic

Sabahat is 16 years old, has Turkish roots, and attends the ninth grade at a vocational school. She likes to dress well; looking attractive means a lot to her. And the boys think she is classy. However, her "style" often leads to strain with her traditionally oriented Muslim family.

Among the other girls her age at the school, it is in vogue to take daring photos of themselves in erotic poses wearing only lingerie – that is, not entirely nude. Their faces are cleverly concealed from the camera. Sabahat also took such pictures and uploaded them onto her Instagram account, which she manages under a nickname that nobody knows. Without revealing her identity, she invited three of the boys from her school to express their opinion of the photos on Tellonym (see *Explanatory Note*).

Mohammat, a fourth boy who also comes from a Turkish family, mentions the pictures to her the next day at school. Does she need the kick of posting pictures like that? he barks at her, and asks her, outraged, why she would do something like that. Sabahat suspects that the photos are circulating and panics over the idea that her family might see them. She turns to the school social worker, Ms. Ahrendt. "How did Mohammat get to see those pictures? How does he know that it's me? Is he going to show them to my older brother?"

After Sabahat has told her what has happened, Ms. Ahrendt promises to handle the matter with discretion (which is her legal obligation in accord with § 203 German Penal Code). In this first consultation, she asks Sabahat about her own needs. "I don't want my parents to see the pictures, not under any circumstances. And not my older brother either. That would be terrible!" The school social worker offers to coach the girl. The aim is to stabilize Sabahat; instead of panicking she can, with this support, recover her capability to act. Ms. Ahrendt

advises the girl to delete the Instagram account right away. Then she should speak individually with each of the three boys to make certain that they delete the pictures on their smartphones immediately and not forward them to anyone. Ms. Ahrendt offers to be present as a mediator for these conversations. But Sabahat herself has to do the talking.

The talks with the three boys to whom Sabahat had sent the Tellonym link take place on that same day. One of them admits that he had made a screenshot of the pictures and shown it to Mohammat, mentioning that he thought it might be Sabahat. Sabahat appeals to the compassion of the boys and asks them not to talk about the pictures any more. "Do you know what my brother would do to me if he thought that was me in the pictures?" She leaves the question unanswered. Sabahat demands of each boy that he show her his photo folder on the mobile. The boy who had made the screenshot deletes the images as she watches; the other two hadn't made screenshots.

At this point, Ms. Ahrendt makes an entry into the conservation. She wants the boys, too, to be strengthened in their pro-social competence by having resolved this conflict. She makes it clear that, should the boys assert publicly that these were pictures of Sabahat, they would be damaging Sabahat, and it could be interpreted as slander or libel – prosecutable offenses. The school social worker also points it out to the boy who had made the screenshot that, legally speaking, he was not allowed to take possession of the pictures, let alone show them to someone else. Technically, Sabahat could even bring charges against him.

The next conversation to take place will be between Sabahat and Mohammat. The girl is to make it clear to Mohammat what her brother would surely do to her if he learned about the pictures. The aim is to induce a change of perspective and to awaken his compassion (on compassion and the prospect of sanctions, see Chapter 7.2.7). Also, Sabahat should threaten to bring libel charges against him.

The conversation takes place, again with the school social worker present as a mediator. Sabahat conducts the conversation with admirable self-confidence. She actually achieves the desired change of perspective in Mohammat and evokes his compassion. In this encounter, she does not reveal that she is in fact the person in the pictures, instead using the subjunctive ("what if my brother believed that it had been me in the pictures?"). Mohammat finally promises that he won't "tip off" the brother about his suspicion.

The school social worker makes note of the outcomes of all four conversations, always in the presence of the boy. Each of them signs a personal declaration of commitment, which further emphasizes the binding effect of the agreements reached. In addition, Ms. Ahrendt arranges a second set of talks between the individual boys and Sabahat two weeks later, in order to check on their compliance to the agreements.

In a final consultation, Ms. Ahrendt requests that Sabahat inform her immediately if the family somehow hears about the pictures – since an acute crisis might then arise (for example, the danger of an act of violence on the part of the family). In such a situation, Ms. Ahrendt would have to shift the focus of her efforts from conflict support to the field of child protection (see also Positioning in Systemic Conflict Management, Chapter 5.5.1).

Explanatory Note:

Tellonym is a platform on the web. It is designed for posting statements people wouldn't make face-to-face. The service presents itself as a platform for people who want to know what others really think of them – and is often used by adolescents for negative or insulting remarks. A person creating a Tellonym account is given an individual link that can be sent to acquaintances. Anyone who has this link can send anonymous messages to the account, even without registering.

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3.4 The (Cyber)Mobbing Case of "Ahmet"

The anti-Ahmet group

Leon is in the fifth grade at middle school. He is very popular in his class and has a solid social status. His classmate Uwe has invited him to a chat group that Uwe started up together with Lars and Andreas. Leon grasps immediately that the chat group has a right-wing slant: the group symbol is a swastika. They call themselves "AAG – Anti-Ahmet Group" and are out to get Ahmet, who is a classmate of Leon's with Turkish roots.

Leon doesn't approve of the group. Three days before summer vacation starts, he talks to his mother about it. He tells her that, in the group, there is a lot of talk about Hitler and the Wehrmacht (armed forces of the Third Reich). Besides, they're badmouthing Ahmet all the time: he stinks like Turkey, he can't even speak German properly, and his parents only put him into the world to collect German family benefits. Leon also relates that he saw Uwe and Lars giving one another the Nazi salute during recess. Leon's mother is shocked. She reinforces her son in his feeling that something is wrong here, and asks him to inform his teacher, Ms. Winkler, so that she can do something about it.

Leon feels a bit queasy. On the one hand, he doesn't want to tattle on his classmates, but on the other hand he thinks it's lousy that Ahmet should be the target of racist rantings. He wants to make sure that no other classmates get into this chat. So he takes heart and shows Ms. Winkler the chat.

Ms. Winkler gets very upset while reading the chat. She has long suspected that Uwe and Lars have a right-wing mind cast. Both of them bring up xenophobic and racist talking points during lessons, and they often dress in 'military' look. She cannot quite wrap her head around the fact that such young pupils can already spout extremist slogans and be so biased. She also has another suspicion: at the last parents' evening, Uwe's father had given her the impression that he could be a right-wing conservative or even extremist.

Personally, Ms. Winkler's spontaneous reaction might be an official complaint to the police, but as a teacher she knows that a productive educational response to this will depend on careful consideration and a thorough assessment of the situation. First, she wants to consult with the headmaster and the school social worker. She asks Leon to go with her to see the social worker, that very same day.

Mr. Heiber, the school social worker, impresses Leon as friendly. He listens calmly to what Leon says and then remarks that he could help the class to avoiding drifting off into right-wing radicalism. But he would need help from Leon and the whole class; and, by the way, Leon's name wouldn't have to be mentioned. One thing he would definitely need is the back record of the chat. He also wants to find out who already knows about this chat group. Maybe the other classmates and Ahmet haven't even heard of the AAG yet.

Leon is all for it. Mr. Heiber loads the chat from Leon's smartphone onto his own PC and starts checking out the content. But before the others go, he doesn't forget to ask the homeroom teacher to call Leon's mother, tell her how things have proceeded, and ask her for her ideas on mutual steps to be taken. It's important in such a situation, he says, that no one act all on his own.

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The chat is very revealing. Alongside unlawful content (such as swastikas) there are war-glorifying YouTube links that relate to the Wehrmacht and the SS. Also, scenes from video games come up, taken from an online game about an SS tank division. One image shows Europe after the German attack on the Soviet Union, with a comment from Uwe that says, "very successful". Lars writes in the chat that he has a "dago problem and no gas". He asks what he should do, and Andreas answers, "get a knife and stab!", while Uwe seconds with "Stab in the neck and yank around until it breaks!" An animated clip shows a Black African, and the members of the group comment on it with disgusted facial expressions and "bah".

For the next morning, Mr. Heiber invites the homeroom teacher Ms. Winkler and the headmaster to the planned case consultation. It is the second-to-last day of school before the summer. Mr. Heiber explains that his first analysis has uncovered an alarming degree of hostility and hate. Since it was not yet known to what extent this hate has been directed toward Ahmet in everyday contact, Mr. Heiber had called Ahmet at home the previous afternoon and cautiously inquired whether Ahmet had heard that he was being ostracized in a chat group, and how things were generally going in the class group. In fact, Ahmet hat heard that there was a chat called Anti-Ahmet-Group. He suspected that Uwe and Lars were behind it because they kept calling him dago, but they didn't mean it seriously. He didn't think that was great, but he also didn't believe that it was really malicious. In the class group he was doing fine, he had friends and felt pretty good.

School social worker Heiber evaluates these statements as reassuring, for a start; at the moment Ahmet does not seem to be in duress. Nonetheless, the risk of escalation has to be considered carefully.

Up to now, the potential for violence on the part of Uwe, Lars, and Andreas cannot be reliably estimated. How seriously should these fantasies of violence be taken ("yank it around til the neck breaks")? There are also other unanswered questions: Were other classmates besides Leon invited to the chat? What does the rest of the class know about it? What is the overall attitude in the class toward right-wing radicalism, racism, and xenophobia? What do the parents of Uwe, Lars, and Andreas know? It will hardly be possible to answer all these questions before vacation starts. But as much as possible has to be clarified, and above all, the parents of all the conflict participants shouldn't be in the dark when they start their vacation.

School social worker, homeroom teacher, and headmaster agree on the following procedure:

1. In the context of a threat intervention, tomorrow (the last school day before summer break!) confrontative interviews (see Chapter 5.4.2) will be conducted with Uwe, Lars, and Andreas in order to begin assessing how severe their grievances are on the intrapersonal level.

2. Already today, this evening, the parents of the three students will be informed by the headmaster that their sons have been posting illegal content on the chat and demeaning a classmate. The headmaster would like to persuade the parents to collaborate with the school in bringing the conflict to a satisfactory closure and seeing that restitution is made. Before the summer holidays begin, the school will demand that the three boys make a commitment to refrain from the use of force and will suggest ways in which they can make reparation. The parents will be asked to see to it that the AAG is deleted and terminated. This is meant to ensure that no further criminal offenses will be committed by the students during vacation. Should the parents be uncooperative, the headmaster will begin with regulatory measures and possibly make an official complaint to the police. School social worker Heiber will ask Ahmet to participate in efforts at damage adjustment when school is back in session, even though Ahmet is not yet feeling very much damage at the moment.

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3. That Leon was invited to join the chat group is regarded as an attempt by its members to gradually establish a mobbing system in the class. Fortunately, Leon adheres to pro-social norms and values, and did not allow himself to be taken in. Instead, he demonstrated civil courage. Ms. Winkler thinks that Uwe, Lars, and Andreas are not the ones setting the tone for the atmosphere in class; nonetheless, it has to be prevented that right-wing opinions, racism, and xenophobia get a foothold in the class or are given any recognition. School social worker Heiber offers to conduct a two-day social training as soon as school is back in session, as a way of fortifying the framework of values and norms. The social training could also provide more diagnostic input on the group dynamics within the class and help to prevent mobbing. The headmaster and Ms. Winkler gladly accept this offer, and a date is set for the training.

The parents of Uwe, Lars, and Andreas respond coopera-tively. They agree with the headmaster that their sons' behavior was not correct. On the last day of school and in the presence of his parents, each of the three students pledges to make restitution and accept support from the school social worker in doing so. The AAG chat group is terminated.

Three weeks into the new school year, the school social worker holds the two-day social training. It emerges that the homeroom teacher was right: the class has not yet been influenced by racist, xeno-phobic thinking, no mobbing is in course. During the training, the three offenders make use of the opportunity to be honest and admit to the class what they had done.

The class is shocked to hear about the chat group. Many students show compassion. It is easy, then, to field the idea of signing individual declarations of commitment to human rights, relating them to the conflict events at hand. Every student signs his or her own "contract with oneself", pledging to respect the human rights and personality rights of every member of the class, and to be courageous in speak-ing out against racist statements, xenophobia, and hate speech. Spontaneously, during the social training, Andreas and Lars apologize to Ahmet.

Uwe, Lars and Andreas, together with their parents, had agreed before the summer break to make restitution for the deed and the damage done. In the course of the social training, they boys receive help in developing a declaration to cease and desist, in which they pledge to refrain from racist and xenophobic acts in the future.

The day after the social training, the headmaster visits the class. He says he is proud of the group and their personal declarations of commitment. If the class succeeds in consistently observing human rights until the end of the school year, he will nominate the group for a prize the school can award against racism and for tolerant co-existence.

During the social training, Uwe's body language suggests a posture of resistance. He has a hard time bringing himself to sign the "contract with oneself". As a justification, he says he doesn't want make a promise he is not entirely sure he can keep. It is thus unsurprising that in Uwe's case, the efforts at repara-tion for the deed are unsuccessful. He doesn't come regularly to the preparatory meetings or, after the training, to the voluntary work assignments. (The headmaster later decides to suspend him from school for one week. An additional outcome of Uwe's behavior is that, among the classmates, he is now isolated.)

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The class group now chooses human rights observers (HROs). The students follow their intuition and elect Leon with the highest number of votes. Ahmet is also elected. The task of the HROs during the next half year will be to monitor adherence to the "contracts with oneself". Mr. Heiber will coach the HROs, three girls and three boys who are excused from class once a week to confer with him.

Mr. Heiber arranges with the homeroom teacher that he will visit the class once every three or four weeks for a 90-minute session re-iterating some of the elements of the social training. This is intended to reinforce the work on democracy education begun during the two-day training.

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3.5 Overview of the (Cyber)Mobbing Case Examples with their Similarities and Differences

In working to overcome cyber attacks and (cyber)mobbing, no one case is quite like another. If the efforts to deal with them are systematic, based on careful diagnosis, and conducted in the sense of Systemic Conflict Management (see Chapter 5), considerable differences will emerge concerning the approach to be taken, the conflict levels, and the methods. The following chart gives an overview of the five actual cases presented in this handbook.

case name	conflict event(s)	conflict parties	conflict levels (Chapters 2.1.2 and 5.4.4)
case 1: Mika (Chapter 3)	brutal threat via chat that receives 'likes' from some members of the class	"boss of the class" and the class group ↕ one member of the class	■ intrapersonal ■ interpersonal ■ institutional ■ systemic ■ educational partnership
case 2: Herr Beutelsbacher (Chapter 3)	video recording of the teacher during class, upload of the video creation of a fake Facebook account	three students ↕ teacher	■ interpersonal ■ institutional ■ systemic ■ educational partnership
case 3: Sabahat (Chapter 3)	sexting risk that Muslim family will hear about erotic photos of daughter	girl of Turkish origin ↕ boy of Turkish origin	■ intrapersonal ■ interpersonal
case 4: Ahmet (Chapter 3)	chat indicating radicalization and displaying right-wing extremist, racist, and xenophobic content	three students and claqueurs from their class ↕ boy of Turkish origin and one supporter from the class	■ intrapersonal ■ interpersonal ■ institutional ■ systemic ■ educational partnership
case 5: Nele (Chapter 6)	sexting publication of nude photos of former girlfriend that were circulated widely throughout the entire school	girl ↕ boy	■ intrapersonal ■ interpersonal ■ institutional ■ systemic ■ educational partnership

timeline for intervention (Chapter 5.5)	methods applied (Chapter 5.4.4)
Threatening situation! Begin by intervening in the threat, since there may be acute danger	■ for diagnosis: interview with person seeking conflict support, confrontative interview with offender due to threatening situation ■ agreement on a commitment to refrain from use of force ■ school escort ■ Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI) ■ three-way talks ■ adjustment for deed and damage done ■ cooperative participatory talks ■ follow-up rituals (coaching of HROs, chance for offender)
No acute endangerment. First, systemic intervention on the class level, then treatment of the case on the institutional level, in the educational partnership, and on the intrapersonal level	■ for diagnosis: interview with person seeking conflict support, confrontative interview with person suspected of offending ■ Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI) ■ adjustment for deed and damage done ■ cooperative participatory talks ■ follow-up rituals (coaching of HROs, chance for offender)
No acute endangerment. No conflict on systemic and institutional levels or in the educational partnership. Particular responsibility to observe discretion. First intrapersonal, then interpersonal work on the case	■ counseling and coaching ■ three-way talks
Threatening situation! First, intervene in threat, then address case on institutional level, in educational partnership, finally in class group and on interpersonal level	■ for diagnosis: interview with person seeking support, confrontative interview due to threatening situation ■ declaration of commitment to refrain from use of force ■ cooperative participatory talks ■ two-day social training with follow-up ■ adjustment for deed and damage done
Endangerment, therefore crisis intervention, since victim is badly damaged	■ for diagnosis: interview with a traumatized person seeking conflict support confrontative interviews with suspected offender and with observers ■ Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI) ■ adjustment for deed and damage done ■ cooperative participatory talks ■ educative and regulatory measures, follow-up rituals (coaching of HROs, chance for offender)

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○ **Intervention Methods**

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Intervention Methods

4. Intervention Methods

Anyone who sets out to come to terms with cyber attacks or full-scale (cyber)mobbing will naturally want to know, before beginning, which method is most likely to work. For years, the authors of this handbook have successfully applied the intervention instruments *Systemic Mobbing Intervention (SMI)* und *Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI)*. Cyber attacks and (cyber)mobbing generally present, at the outset, a complex and confusing constellation. The choice of method – SMI or SBI – depends on the nature of the problem.

Before the intervention instruments Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI and Systemic Brief Intervention SKI are explained in detail, two other approaches will be presented briefly. Both offer procedural methods with which a case of mobbing can be handled: the No Blame Approach, which also takes recourse to systemic insights, and the Farsta method, by way of contrast.

In order to be able to apply intervention methods successfully, practitioners require thorough training that is available through continuing education. Successful mobbing intervention depends not only on the correct implementation of procedures, but also and essentially on the posture and presence of the person conducting the intervention – aspects which are systematically rehearsed in training (see also Chapter 7.1). Both the No Blame Approach and the Farsta method were originally developed to deal with analog mobbing.

The No Blame Approach

The No Blame Approach was developed in 1990 by Maines and Robinson in England and tested by Szaday in Switzerland (Schubart 2010, p. 153). It is a solution-oriented conception derived from Systemic Short Therapy as described by de Shazer. Here, mobbing is regarded from a systemic point of view. The inter-connections determining a case of mobbing are seen as circular, meaning for example that the behavior of each individual student in a class results from the interaction of all the participants in that system/class (Blum / Beck 2010, p. 60). The orientation toward solution in this approach implies foregoing any detailed search for the causes and events of mobbing, and also avoiding such things as assignment of guilt or punitive measures. The perspective taken toward the problem focuses exclusively on overcoming the situation (Blum / Beck, in: Huber 2011, p. 19); the only things sought after are solutions. On the one hand, this saves those affected from having to reveal, in detail, the events that embarrassed them. On the other hand, those enacting the mobbing are relieved of any pressure to rectify their actions, and this gives them more leeway to contribute to solving the problem (Blum / Beck 2010, p. 65). Part of the basic stance in this approach is a positive image of human beings that assumes people are humanely and ethically motivated and that they act morally when given the opportunity to do so. Furthermore, this approach has faith in the willingness and ability of children and adolescents to take on responsibility and, as experts for the their own school class, find suitable paths towards solving the problem (ibid., p. 64).

The No Blame Approach was evaluated, and the study's authors reported that the method led to significant improvements (Blum / Beck, in: Huber 2011, p. 20 f).

The Farsta Method

The Farsta method is a confrontative approach to mobbing intervention, for acute cases of mobbing. It was developed by Karl Ljungström (Hoechner / Mahler- Kraus, in: Huber 2011, p. 50). At its center is the confrontation of the mobbing offenders with their actions (Schubart 2010, p. 154; Huber 2011, p. 49f.). The confrontation takes place in a meeting with a special work group, the "anti-mobbing group" consisting of two to five teachers and/or school social workers. The members of this group have to be persons trained in conversational techniques, since the talks with the offenders "make high demands on the communicative competence of the work group" (Schubart 2010, p. 154 f.).

There is hardly any data available on the effectivity of the Farsta method (Schubart 2010, p. 155). Hoechner and Mahler-Kraus, who have practiced it extensively for many years, consider it effective and its impact long-lasting (Hoechner / Mahler-Kraus, in: Huber 2011, p. 52).

4.1 The Foundation: Evoking Compassion

Effective methods release positive feelings in the educators who apply them. It is deeply satisfying when one is able to produce the desired results elegantly, thanks to having the proper tools. But tools and methods are not everything. They only become truly effective when backed by a certain posture – which is discussed at length in Chapter 7.

In addition to maintaining a clear-cut, consistent posture, it is also essential to have the goal of one's professional activity in mind at all times. Both of the methods that will now be presented aim at promoting compassion and thereby fostering an intrinsic motivation in children and adolescents to behave pro-socially and to help others.

But cognitive empathy – that is, merely understanding what another person is feeling – is not sufficient to generate such motivation. Children and adolescents who readily take recourse to the use of force are not lacking in cognitive empathy. They rather understand very well what others are feeling. What they are lacking, however, is emotional empathy and the compassion that it generates. This is why it is important to foster their emotional or affective response to the inner experience of their counterpart, their sympathy with and compassion for the other.

The methods of Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI and Systemic Breif Intervention SBI consist essentially in a careful confrontation with the consequences of one's actions, coupled with techniques for adopting the perspective of the other and for undercutting justification strategies. A core aspect of the work consists in "jarring" the participants: only if children and adolescents are shaken or shocked about the consequences of dissocial behavior can emotional empathy advance and develop into compassion.

The methods described in the following – even when applied without other accompanying measures – are of themselves already part of Systemic Conflict Management. How they relate to the other elements of Systemic Conflict Management will then be discussed in the ensuing Chapter 5.

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4.2 An Overview: Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI and Systemic Brief Intervention SBI as realized by Konflikt-KULTUR

Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI
(cf. Grüner / Hilt 2011)

■ is the most effective instrument for dealing with (cyber)mobbing;

■ is (nearly always) integrated into social training;

■ requires a mandate conferred by the victim and his or her parents, as well as the consent of the school headmaster and the homeroom teacher;

■ integrates, as a systemic method, the entire class group into the process; and

■ produces sustained effects through social training.

The social training into which SMI is usually integrated extends over approximately two full morning sessions. If for particular reasons the SMI is conducted without social training, it will require about three or four class hours.

Although Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI is the method of choice in cases of (cyber)mobbing, unfortunately it cannot always be applied. The following circumstances would speak against it:

■ The endangerment or risk of escalation is so great that an immediate reaction is necessary.

■ The victim is emotionally instable.

■ The victim or his/her parents do not confer a mandate for an SMI.

■ Since protection for the victim cannot be guaranteed, he or she must remain anonymous.

■ There are extreme feelings of shame (as in cases of sexting) on the part of the victim.

If Systemic Mobbing Intervention is not feasible for any of the above reasons, *Systemic Brief Intervention* can be implemented instead. Its earmarks are:

■ It is applied in cases where it is necessary to intervene immediately (high risk of escalation, or significant endangerment).

■ It is not only suitable for dealing with (cyber)mobbing, but also with other conflict events that can trigger crises, such as cyber attacks.

■ It can be realized without the consent of the victim and his/her parents, although it does have to be expressly requested by the homeroom teacher and the headmaster.

■ It can be conducted without naming the victim(s).

■ Like SMI, it involves the entire class group.

The process of Systemic Brief Intervention SBI can be carried out in two class hours.

In the great majority of cases, mobbing occurs simultaneously in analog and digital form – which is why this handbook generally refers to (cyber)mobbing, meaning both (see also Chapter 1.3 and 2). Drawing an artificial distinction between the two phenomena would contradict the everyday reality of children's and adolescents' lives. SMI as a method takes this reality into account, since it addresses both analog and digital mobbing.

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Excursus: Social Training

The aim in conducting social training is to establish, together with a school class, a peaceful and respectful manner of living together and working together (that is oriented toward the formal value framework of human rights, civil rights, and children's rights). The training lasts 10 to 12 hours and takes place on 2 or 3 days. It serves to strengthen personal compentencies (the courage of one's convictions, self-control, respect, etc.) and communicative skills (giving feedback, expressing wishes, negotiating behavioral issues, etc.).
All the students who belong to the class or group participate in the training. In an atmosphere of increasing openness and trust, the participants voice what "doesn't suit" them in their own group. They agree on a few rules, in effect the basic tenets of universal human rights.

The social training can (or better: should) be conducted even when no acute conflict situation is at hand. When disturbances and conflicts do occur, they offer the facilitator welcome "material" for social training specifically aimed at the acute issues. A prerequisite is the cultivation of a well-structured and secure space in which those affected can come forward. There are no pre-formulated materials, such as handouts. The situational work with whatever the children and adolescents contribute demands great skill on the part of the facilitator, as well as concern and earnestness of the part of all participants.

Should it emerge in the course of social training that (cyber) mobbing is in fact underway in the group, then this is the right time to conduct Systemic Mobbing Intervention. The basis for it is given by the re-activated framework of values, the earnestness of the group, and the lucidity of the facilitator.

The intervention methods SMI and SBI concentrate on the *behavior* involved in harassment, not on the offender as a *person* or on identifying guilty parties – which greatly improves the level of acceptance among participants. Specific agreements are negotiated that are then, over a longer period of time, subject to discussion and peer supervision, and in this way contribute to sustained success.

If an SMI is embedded in social training (Grüner / Hilt / Tilp 2015, p. 83 ff.), children and adolescents profit over and above the intervention itself by learning basic skills for their social dealings with one another.
They learn:

- to be honest;

- to express their own opinion (courage of their convictions) and to respect the opinions of others;

- to grasp the basic civil rights and human rights and to defend themselves without using force;

- to recognize and constructively criticize dissocial behavior on the part of classmates or group members and to acknowledge pro-social behavior;

- to overcome problematic behavioral patterns with the help of the class or group in small, realistic steps that can be observed (and deemed successful).

These abilities form the foundation for implementing Systemic Mobbing Intervention and simplify the process.

Systemic Brief Intervention SBI can only draw on some of these skills. For this reason, Systemic Mobbing Intervention that is embedded in social training is likely to have greater and more long-lasting effects. Whenever the indication allows for it (see above), SMI would therefore be preferable to SBI.

Who are the Participants?

In the context of SMI and SBI, insights gleaned from international research on bullying are incorporated. That implies, in particular, that all the students in a class are party to the intervention – along with the responsible teachers and the school administration, in their respective roles. (Cyber)mobbing must always be approached as a group-dynamic problem that not only affects offenders and victims, but rather all the members of a group, that is, in this case the school class. "Effective prevention and intervention strategies must therefore be applied on the class level and must encompass the entire group" (Scheithauer / Hayer / Bull 2007, p. 148).

Every Case is Different

Before the intervention begins, a careful analysis of the conflict is undertaken. It is essential that the potential for endangerment be quickly and correctly estimated, and that the persons bearing educational responsibility in the case form a team and plan how they will proceed. This is described in detail in Chapter 5.4.

Every case is different. To accommodate this fact, on the one hand both types of intervention are clearly structured and divided into seven individual steps, while on the other hand the process can be individualized significantly to adjust to the needs and demands of the participants and the dynamics in the group. The structure can be varied by changing the order in which steps are taken, or by omitting individual steps.

Imbedding, Transparency, and Sustainability

Each member of the team assumes responsibility in accord with his or her professional educational role and in keeping with legal mandates.

The intervention method that is chosen is explained fully to the victim and his/her parents. In advance of an SMI, the consent (the mandate) of the victim and parents is obtained. Before a two-day social training takes place, the parents of all the students are informed about its aims. The homeroom teacher is present for all of the work steps undertaken with the class group by the person conducting the intervention. Involving the homeroom teacher and the headmaster is a way of ensuring sustainability, even when the facilitator of the invention (a colleague or a school social worker) has withdrawn from the process after several weeks of follow-up.

Implementation by Professionals

It is imperative that an SMI be conducted by a trained professional. Certified continuing education programs for teachers and school social workers are offered across Germany by Konflikt-KULTUR.

The homeroom teacher is especially suitable for conducting an intervention due to his or her role as a constant guide with an established educational relationship to the class – provided that the teacher is explicitly qualified for interventions. Teacher trainees who are already qualified can also lead an intervention. In this case, the homeroom teacher is present as an observer and does not undertake active steps during the intervention.

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4.3 Systemic Mobbing Intervention

Dividing the process into seven steps allows for systematic procedure and helps to avoid
overlooking important actions.

The 7 Steps in Systemic Mobbing Intervention

Step 1 (preparation)	**Identify the mobbing victim and motivate him or her to participate in the intervention** The inclusion of the victim during SMI is sensible, but not absolutely imperative.	**Aim:** The Intervention is carefully prepared, and the victim has granted consent.
Step 2	**Act(s) of violence (against the mobbing victim) are brought to light** The names of the offenders are not mentioned when students describe acts of force that have taken place, and there are no accusations of individual guilt, since everyone is collectively responsible. The person conducting the intervention demonstrates concern and thus fosters the students' willingness to change the situation (emotional contagion).	**Aim:** The act(s) of violence are now apparent to the whole group, and this gives rise to concern and shock over the extent and cruelty of the deeds, generating readiness to alter behavior.
Step 3	**Confrontation, through reversal of perspective, with the consequences of violent acts**	**Aim**: intrinsically motivated inhibition of force due to emotional empathy and compassion
Step 4 (if necessary)	**Addressing the hooks used to legitimate aggressive acts; breaking down justifications** Behavioral patterns of the victim are addressed that have triggered feelings of anger, fear, or rejection in the group on a daily basis.	**Aim:** sources of anger are reduced, i.e., behavioral adjustments on the part of the victim (self-regulation) lead to reduced availability of hooks and in this way undercut the supposed legimation for acts of force. Attributes (hooks) that cannot be changed, such as clinical conditions, are understood and tolerated by the rest of the class.
Step 5	**Further acts of force (violations of human rights) are declared taboo and it is made clear that any future offenses will be followed by sanctions**	**Aim:** Articulating the threat of sanctions in order to reach those students who are only willing to adjust their behavior if explicit controls are in place (not on the basis of an instrinsic motivation)
Step 6	**Establish a peer-related helper system**	**Aim:** Mobbing can only establish itself when the victim has insufficient or ineffective defense, and too little or no support. The helper system serves to overcome these circumstances.
Step 7 (follow-up)	**Observation of adherence to human rights commitment**	**Aim:** Sustainability. Reduce the likelihood of attacks recurring by demonstrating presence (pedagogical counsel, observation, controls); exert a norm-reinforcing effect on the class and encourage behavioral modification of offenders by seeing to it that restitution is made. Due to the danger of relapses in systemic conflicts, this task extends over a period of at least six months.

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Step 1 (Preparation): Identify mobbing victim(s), motivate them to participate in intervention

The focus here is on the mobbing victims that can be found in almost every school class: students who have been suffering under the analog and digital attacks of their classmates for week and months, or even years. The focus is not on acute crisis events that are sometimes associated with spectacular cyber attacks: these should rather be addressed with the help of an SBI.

Often, mobbing victims are not clearly identified as such. (Cyber)mobbing usually occurs over a longer period of time in covert spaces not openly visible to adults, and teachers are not made aware of it. The victims are ashamed to speak openly, and bystanders refrain from getting involved. Potential defenders don't want to tattle, are afraid of being mobbed themselves, or fear that unqualified reactions on the part of adults could simply make things worse. In brief: seen from the outside, there are few indicators of what is occurring and who the victim(s) could be.

Seeking out the victims therefore has to be an active process involving everyone in the class – even when the identity of at least one victim already is (or seems to be) clear. The mutual process of bringing things to light has the advantage of shared responsibility among the class: no one person can be blamed for exposing the situation.

Although there are many methods used to identify victims, ultimately the following questions need to be answered: who in the class is most frequently teased, demeaned, harassed, badgered …? Who has to put up with the most? Who is most often the target of aggression? (see Chapter 5.4.2).

As a means of protecting possible victims, this survey is usually completed in writing, without any one else seeing it. To ease the hesitation of the class in addressing the topic, it helps to mention that this behavior occurs in practically every school class and the aim of asking about it is to relieve the problem, not to blame or punish possible offenders.

Motivating mobbing victims and their parents to participate in an intervention

The process of uncovering and the ensuing offer to conduct an intervention can be received quite differently by those affected. While some are happy and relieved that someone is concerned about their worries, others may be anxious because they don't know how things will develop. Some may even be un-impressed because they don't expect much good to be done by adults. For the parents of the victims, it is similar. The task is now to gain consent to an intervention from the victims and also their parents, and to motivate them to participate (see Chapter 5.5.1, Clarifying the Mandate). As necessary and emancipating as an intervention may be, it can also be associated with a burden on the victim. Sometimes the responsible parties at school (homeroom teacher and headmaster) or the parents hesitate for this reason. The solution to this problem lies, on one hand, in the appropriate personal qualification of the facilitator for the inter-vention, and on the other in transparency: sufficient information for the the victim and parents in advance of a clear decision on their part to proceed.

Comprehensive information for the victim and his or her parents is based on the following insights:

- Now that the adults also know about the (cyber)mobbing in progress, it would be irresponsible not to act – since the class might otherwise come to the conclusion that all the harassment isn't that bad, or that it is permissible. In other words: what will the class be thinking if we do not intervene now?
- Fear is normal, and a part of life. But if one never faces up to it, it never stops. The only way to overcome it is to say: I'll do it anyway!
- Active participation of the victim is not necessary, or only to a small extent. Most of the work is done will the class. If the victim does not want to say anything, he or she can participate passively. An intervention is also possible without the victim being present.
- The victim has to be able to grasp the significance of step 2 (bringing the acts of force into the open). Everyone in the class has to understand how bad it is to be harassed continually; their eyes need to be opened so that they will refrain from such harassment in the future.
- The purpose is not to identify guilty parties or to punish them (see also Chapter 4.5).

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The person who will be conducting the intervention obtains the mandate from the victim and his/her parents and from the homeroom teacher. The latter is important as the constant guide of the class, the only person who is always engaged with the students, who can ultimately insist on changes in behavior and successfully accompany the follow-up process.

In a few cases there are parents or victims who agree to an SMI, but do not wish to participate actively. Should the victim and parents decide against taking part in the SMI – despite the mechanisms in place to prepare and protect the victim –, it is nonetheless possible to conduct the SMI. The class/group is to learn about the suffering of the victim, but the victim does not necessarily have to be present. However, the victim then does not experience the compassion, concern, and sympathy of the classmates.

Step 2: Bringing acts of violence to light
Since (cyber)mobbing is a systemic problem of the entire class – everyone shares responsibility and should contribute to the solution –, it is made clear to the students at the outset that there will be no search for offenders or guilty parties, and that no one will be punished. This promise (of freedom from punishment) creates the basis for successful intervention – namely, freedom from fear. We want to solve the problem and, to do that, we need the help of everyone in the class.

In this step, the students are asked to name the ways that they themselves have made used of force. The list below (Figure 12) demonstrates how open a class can be during this exercise. This list is the outcome of a ten-minute collecting session of all the attacks the victim was exposed to daily; this is not an extreme case, but rather typical for such a list.

In compiling this list, it is insufficient to just make a summarial note, such as "insults". Every single invective should be articulated in full and written out on a flip chart. In this way, the very mass that accumulates can move or shock the classmates – which is just the point. The students see with their own eyes how extensive and how cruel their abuse has been. This should cause them concern and increase their willingsness to modify their behavior. At its core, this procedure aims at enkindling the form of instrinsic motivation that is described as compassion (see Chapter 7.2.7).

The individual listings are assigned to the three categories of emotional violence, physical violence, and damage to property, and are designated as violations of human rights. In this way, the students begin to perceive a value framework that they can use for orientation. In other words: we pull the distorted value frame of the class back into shape, expose as illegitimate the informal set of values the class has set up, and work toward establishing in the classroom the basic principles of civic order.

not allowed to take part, bad-mouthing, embarrassing photos on the class chat, shut out of class chat, fake account, insulted him by saying: "mongo", "bigfoot", "golum", "elephant", "mammoth", "fat sack", "walrus", "fat kid", "fishhead", "oversized baby", "fatty", "giant", "big daddy", "hey, he's rolling over this way", "fat ass", "wanker", "XXL asshole", "tramp", "gay kid", "girly", "fat pudge", "son of a whore", "sumo wrestler", "fuck …"

hit, kicked, pushed, slapped, pulled away his chair, punched, "plague", jumped at him, body checks,

took away his stuff (pencil case, jacket), broke his stuff (cup), made him share his candy,

Fig. 12: Example of explicit listings of violent acts, compiled by a school class.

This work of uncovering violent acts by naming each instance explicitly does not require naming the offenders. Concentrating on the behavior is enough.

Due to the clear distinction between the person and the behavior, it is also possible for offenders to take an active part here, which caters to their need for prestige. Sometimes, the names of the offenders are known in advance – perhaps because teachers have reported on unsuccessful attempts at intervening. It is astounding to see how confidently offenders participate in compiling this list of violent acts. The offenders, too, are caught in the system of (cyber)mobbing and are not necessarily content with their role, which may simply serve to protect them from becoming victims. If they have the opportunity to gain acknowledgement in some other, acceptable way, they will usually take advantage of it – particularly if they are younger students.

The victim doesn't need to say anything in the context of the intervention, and should in fact say as little as possible. It would be a major mistake in this phase of work to let the victim say more than a few words. For the moment, we will mention only the most important reasons for this aspect of protecting the victim:

- The classmates may feel betrayed by statements the victim makes, and react negatively to them.

- The victim may lose his or her composure and corroborate the image of being a "crybaby", or react strangely and thereby reinforce the hooks already being used by his classmates.

- The victim doesn't want to be perceived as a "sissy" and tends to play things down ("It has gotten a bit better").

In the course of our experience with and ongoing development of SMI, these arguments have emerged as increasingly significant, so that we have begun giving the victim the opportunity to speak – if at all – only at the very end of this phase. By then, the classmates have done the heavy work, so to speak, reporting in detail on what has occurred. The victim can restrict himself to confiming what the classmates have said, which at that moment is a positive contribution. Victims who start to cry in this situation

make the class feel more concerned and more prone to develop compassion. One student who had been mobbed said, for example, "I knew that I had to take a lot, but I didn't realize it was so much."

It happens frequently in this phase that students try to sabotage the process of uncovering previous deeds, since they feel under pressure to rectify themselves in the face of their own violent acts. In this phase, they bring up the 'hooks' that serve as a justification for the (cyber)mobbing going on in the class (see also Chapter 2.2.2). At such a moment, it is essential to continue with compiling the list of cruel acts. At the same time, however, it would be a mistake to brusquely interrupt this mention of hooks because doing so could evoke more resistance and interfere with the overall process of resolution. Therefore, the facilitator accepts the remark without commenting on it. Instead, it is made note of as an agenda point for later on in the SMI. Managing this kind of touch-and-go situation can call for a great deal of skill.

Once all the statements of the students have been collected, the facilitator brings this phase of the SMI to a close by expressing his or her own concern. He calls to mind the immeasureable suffering of the victim (not estimable for the classmates, either, up to now), confronts the class with the extent and cruelty of their actions, and does not conceal his own great dismay and concern over it. The aim is to accompany the students beyond their shock over their own behavior to a point where they being to identify with the reaction of the facilitator, realizing that with their actions they have violated both the victim and universally acknowledged human rights.

For the victim, this phase is difficult to bear due to the fact that everything "comes to light", but it is also an important step toward healing: the victim is no longer alone with all these events. His suffering is being witnessed and acknowledged as real. Sensing the concern of others permits the victim, as well, to acknowledge how badly he has suffered. And it does him good to feel the compassion of the facilitator and potential defenders. The pain had to be hidden for such a long time. Now it is being given a chance to surface and granted recognition.

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Step 3: Confrontation with the consequences of violent acts, through reversal of perspective

In this phase, the object is to promote and deepen the emotional empathy that has already been triggered. The students are asked to focus on the inner experience and suffering of the victim, and thus develop a sense of the consequences their behavior has had. They should feel the effects of their dissocial behavior so strongly that they not only grasp them on a cognitive level, but rather are truly moved, startled, concerned, shocked, and shaken – which makes them feel deep dismay and become pensive. Only in this way can they advance from emotional empathy to compassion (see also Chapter 7.2.7).

Two universally effective techniques can be employed to induce this change of perspective:

- The class is asked to imagine the inner experience of the victim: "How do you think XY feels, having to take this all the time? What could he/she be thinking or feeling (while trying to get to sleep, the next morning, on the way to school, in school, on the way home)?"

- The class is asked to relate comparable experiences of their own: "Who among you has ever experienced a similar situation where other people were badgering you or getting at you all the time, teasing and taunting or harassing you? What was the worst thing for you? How did you feel then?"

In addition to the aspect of reversing perspectives, the answers to this second group of questions also enable the expression of solidarity, coming as they do from classmates who enjoy more recognition than the mobbing victim but still admit that they have also at some point been cast in a similarly debased, marginal, inferior, or helpless role. This parallel is reinforced by the facilitator who listens attentively with respect and understanding, asks about one detail or another, and finally sums up, "Yes, that's about how XY must be feeling in this class."

In this third phase, every class reacts differently. Sometime you could hear a pin drop and you could practically grasp the dismay that's in the air with your bare hands. Sometimes almost all the students have a story to relate, and other times only two of them will be able to admit ever having had such a negative experience. Sometimes there is hardly any reaction to the first set of questions, but on the second set the stories just keep pouring out. In one secondary school, a boy who was a mobbing victim started to cry quietly ar this point. One after another, three other boys related stories of their suffering, and in the end all four were crying. The class was deeply shaken. The facilitator supported the boys by praising their courage and openness, and by saying that crying was a normal reaction: "Every one of you has cried sometime. You boys have the courage to show us how you really feel, and that shows how much trust you have in your classmates."

In attempting to support a reversal of perspective, there is one line of questioning frequently used that can produce very unfavorable outcomes. The actual question is introduced by a sentence such as, "Imagine that this happened to you" or "What if someone picked on you like that …", followed by the question itself "How would you feel? What would you think (feel, say) if someone …?" Overt or latent resistance is often the response. Here are the essential arguments against such attempts at reversal of perspective:

- The focus of such questions is not the victim, but rather the aggressor. He therefore concentrates on himself (and not on the victim). This makes it easier to pass up the offer of taking on the other person's perspective.

- Questions formulated in this way tend to be understood as reproaches, attacks, accusations, or demands for a concession, and so they provoke counterreactions such as: "It wouldn't make any difference to me" (trivialization) or "Things like that don't happen to me!" (denial) or "No idea!" (refusal).

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Step 4: Addressing the hooks used to legitimate aggressive acts (if necessary) and breaking down justifications

If behavioral hooks (such as stuttering or losing one's temper) play a significant role in the class, these are often mentioned earlier on, in step 2. Now is the suitable time to take them up during SMI. If the class has not yet mentioned any behavioral hooks, the facilitator now has the task of consciously searching them out, so that they can also be brought out into the open and will not continue working under the surface.

In order to protect the victim and ensure that only those hooks are discussed that have resonated with the class and therefore serve to maintain the mobbing process, the facilitator installs a three-fold filter before inviting the students to contribute statements. He/she says: "There are some kinds of behavior I find so bad that I even have difficulty respecting that person's human rights, because it gets me so upset that I can hardly control myself. If XY [the mobbing victim] is behaving in some such way, then you can talk about it now. But three conditions must be fulfilled before you so: firstly, this behavior has to be something that upset you to the point where you almost lost control; secondly, it has to be something that happens practically every day; and thirdly, you have to be sure that not only you experience it that way, but all or almost all of your classmates as well. If these three conditions are fulfilled, you will now have a chance to speak about it."

Our experience is that, in about half of the classes, one or more students will say something. They describe behavioral habits of the victim that cause strong feelings of anger, anxiety, or disgust in the group on a daily basis.

In working through these complaints, the idea is to dry up the source of the anger or disgust, so that the hook loses its significance. Without much detail, here in brief: the facilitator performs the task of categorizing the statements of the class members. If they bring up personal attributes, such as hair color, skin color, overweight, thick glasses, or reticence (clinically relevant matters such as stuttering will be discussed later), then it's very simple. Discrimination 'hooked' (hung) onto such attributes is easily identified as a violation of human rights. Moreover, these are not behavioral habits, which is what originally (and exclusively) was asked for. Now, it is possible to convey the insight to the students that every person has some attributes that distinguish him from others and that can be used against him. "Basically, no one is normal!" was the succinct conclusion drawn by one seventh-grader.

If the hook is a behavioral habit of the victim that can be influenced – such as frequent, violent outbursts of temper – then the task is to work on modifying that behavior. Violence or behavior that damages the community cannot be tolerated on the part of the victim, either. At the same time, it has to be considered whether and how the classmates' actions affect these outbursts. In mobbing cases, the victims' 'red buttons' are often pushed by the others as way of provoking a violent reaction that everyone can then laugh about.

Sometimes when students are irritated by behavior that itself is a reaction to their mobbing, e.g. dropping back from the group, breaking off contact, isolating oneself, or being mistrustful, it helps to ask question such as: "What could bring someone to do that? Do you have an idea where that behavior might come from? What to you think that XY is trying to achieve by that?" Essentially, this serves to improve the tolerance of the class, due to a better understanding of the behavior.

4

In some particular cases, working on the hooks has to be postponed. When the behavioral trait results from a clinical condition (stuttering, lisping, a tic, selective mutism, Asperger, ADHD, etc.), part of the solution can also lie in raising the tolerance threshold of the group by making the behavior comprehensible. If diagnostic clarification by a doctor is necessary, it will presuppose the participation and consent of the victim's parents. Therefore, in advance, the homeroom teacher must first speak to the parents and also individually with the affected student. On occasion, the participation of other agencies is indicated – school social work, youth agency, family counseling, or child psychiatry. If all this is successfully completed and there is no deterrent to speaking openly about the outcome, then the class-mates can digest this new information along the lines of, "Oh, now I get it, he doesn't do that on purpose!" This brings everyone much closer to solving the mobbing problem.

Dealing with justification strategies

When the facilitator starts asking about behavioral hooks, he has to be prepared and agile enough to field the trivializations, accusations, and justifications of violence that may follow. For, despite the fact that SMI promises freedom from punishment (see step 2), it does occasionally happen that some students try to rectify their actions toward the mobbing victim and, at the same time, put the blame on the victim.

Why do they do this? Persons who make use of force have learned to block off their empathy. With the help of blockade or neutralization techniques, they protect themselves from their own guilty conscience and talk their way out of any responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Based on experience, we bake these attempts at justification down to five typcial strategies:

- **trivialization or denial**
  "We were just having fun!" – "It wasn't intentional!" – "We didn't do anything!" – "Somebody else sent me the photo!"

- **reversal of guilt**
  "He started it!" – "He's asking for it!" – "She's just a slut if she takes that kind of pictures of herself!"

- **loss of control**
  "We can't help it!" – "That's just the way we are!" – "When she says that, I just lose it!"

- **legitimation of force**
  "That's normal, that's what everybody does!" – "He's got it coming to him!" – "He needs it!" – "That's the way we do things here!" – "My father says I shouldn't take that sitting down!"

- **posturing as a victim**
  "You're always after us!" – "It's always our fault!" – "Are we on your bad-boy list, or what?"

In order to protect the victim, these attempts at justification have to be rebutted. It is not the victim who is responsible for the mobbing, but rather the class. This must never be watered down during the intervention, it has to be perfectly clear at all times. Each of the five justification strategies has its own peculiar logic. For those seeking to reverse the guilt: "It's not our fault, it's the victim's. And that's why we shouldn't be punished, he should." To each of the justification strategies there is a fitting response. For reversal of guilt, it would be shifting the focus from reproaching the victim to examining the experience and behavior of the offenders. It is the offender who interprets the victim's behavior: is it a provocation, an attempt at making contact, or a cry for help? And the offender himself is responsible for this interpretation and for his reaction to it. It follows that the facilitator's response to the 'reversal of gulit' tactic would be: "Yes, you feel provoked by XY's behavior. In what other way could you take it?" or "OK, his behavior gets on your nerves. What could you do the next time you feel provoked by it, instead of reacting violently?"

In most Systemic Mobbing Interventions SMI, steps 2 and 3 lead to a good deal of compassion. Thanks to the exemption from punishment, the offenders and their assistants feel secure enough to refrain from attempts at justification. If the latter do come up, the facilitator has be well-enough trained to have fitting responses to all five of the standard rectifications right at hand, without hesitation.

Working on these hooks can be painstaking and tedious. However, it is indispensable for any sustained resolution of mobbing. If the class group is not supplied with answers to its troubles and ends up still sitting on its 'anger triggers', then there will always be food for social unrest and more mobbing. If no one stands up to the challenge of addressing the group's anger and instead simply 'helps' the victim, the anger will only grow. Due to this injustice, the danger of renewed attacks on the part of the class will increase. More and more classmates will participate, and as a result of this unprofessional handling, the class will slip further and further into the manifestation phase.

Step 5: Further acts of force (violations of human rights) are declared taboo and it is made clear that future offenses will be sanctioned

Mobbing is violence in one of its most massive forms, and it is clear that it should never happen again in the class. The entire class is responsible for this violence, meaning that – after the intervention – each individual student will have to face consequences if he or she again uses force against the mobbing victim. Up to this point, the intervention has been focused on motivating as many classmates as possible to compassion and behavioral modification. It is necessary to now threaten with consequences, since it can easily happen that some students are not willing to show compassion or to change their behavior, or are not capable of sustaining such feelings or alterations in their behavior over a significant period of time. Since there is a risk of relapse and continued threat to the basic human rights of physical and emotional integrity, we work at this point with the concept of forbearance. Either the

homeroom teacher bearing responsibility for the class makes a statement to cease and desist, or the teacher calls on each student to sign a personal commitment to refrain from further violent acts. This can be done by prefacing the list of violent acts that has been compiled on the flip chart with the declaration, "I respect human rights. That means that I will refrain from …"

Step 6: Establish a helper system

As explained in Chapter 2.2, mobbing can only occur when the victim can't or can not effectively defend himself, and too little or no support is provided by others. A helper system can compensate these deficits so that these prerequisites for mobbing are no longer given. To work well, the helper system has to be attuned to the needs of the individual case, suitably arranged, and sufficiently strong.

We distinguish here between human rights observers on one hand and buddies (advocates) on the other. The classmates chose five or six boys and girls from their midst as human rights observers (comparable to electing class speakers). Their number ensures that the observers will be 'everywhere'. They receive the recognition and trust of the homeroom teacher and the headmaster.

Supported by this democratic legitimation, they have the task of being on the outlook for human rights violations within the class and, should they take place, reporting back to the homeroom teacher on what was done and by what means – but not by whom. This is not about tattling, but rather about informing the homeroom teacher of human rights violations. The teacher can then, in the context of the intervention work described in this chapter, learn who the offenders were and offer them the chance to make restitution in the form of reparation for the deed and the damage. This process is usually conducted by the homeroom teacher or the school social worker. The girls and boys who have been designated as human rights observers are given an introduction to their role by the homeroom teacher or the school social worker, and they receive ongoing support at regular meetings.

4

Buddies, on the other hand, are direct supporters of the victim. They come into play if the homeroom teacher judges that the victim – despite the successful intervention – will be in need of personal support in touchy everyday situations because he or she will not quickly enough be able to develop the personal prerequisites for successful and nonviolent defense. By accepting this support, however, the victim surrenders part of his or her own independence – and that should only be done if it is unavoidable. A buddy can serve as a go-between if the victim is threatened with violence or the victim himself is on the verge of an outburst. To fulfill their task, buddies need to be accepted by the victim and to have a good standing in the class.

Step 7 (Follow-up): Observation of adherence to human rights commitment

The goal of the follow-up is sustainability. Mobbing is an extremely intractable problem. It not only satisfies the needs of the offender, the assistants and claqueurs, it also can become, the longer it lasts, a behavorial pattern of the entire class that they tend to fall back into again and again. Human rights oberservers and buddies, along with a tenacious homeroom teacher, work against that. The teacher attends to cultivating close contact with the human rights observers, including a ritualized review of the declaration of commitment. The time-consuming and intensive contacts with the human rights observers can also be taken on at the outset – at least for a limited time – by school social workers. At first, at least two contacts per week to the human rights observers and/or buddies should take place, later on these can be gradually reduced. Relapses occur often: the decisive issue is the pedagogical response to them. Whenever a relapse comes up, that is, when a new instance of mobbing is observed, the frequency of contacts to the human rights observers needs to be stepped up again. Only after at least a half year 'with no symptoms' is it advisable to discontinue the regular review of the declaration to desist. If this is discontinued sooner, the risk of relapse rises.

Helping and regulating roles are coordinated

Working as a team is essential for successful follow-up, as is the clear distinction between helping roles and regulating roles (see Chapter 5.4.3). When declarations to desist are not adhered to, there have to be consequences. If the offending students are unwilling or reluctant to accept support toward altering their behavior, their dissocial attitude should be sanctioned. This task can only be performed by those with regulative roles in the school system: the homeroom teacher or the headmaster.

Nourishment to help growth – Strengthening pro-social communication

In addition to systematic checks on compliance, positive encounters with the students are essential: weekly or bi-weekly sessions to train pro-social skills. These sessions can be supported with methods from adventure and experiential education or from resiliency work. The primary aim is to consolidate pro-social behavior – once mobbing has been stopped and declared taboo – by cultivating good relationships between the homeroom teacher and the students, as well as among the students, and to celebrate this interaction with one another (think: Mexican wave).

Strengthening pro-social abilities is an effective way to prevent relapses. One suitable tool, a concept used in social learning, is the class council for democracy education. Here, students experience what it means that every person has equal value and each has "one vote in parliament". Every individual can voice his or her opinion politely and respectfully, no matter whether others agree with it or not. Decisions are arrived at democratically. The teacher is one member of the community among many. Students and teachers learn to apply pro-social communicative skills: to express wishes, zu make demands, and to give feedback. A feedback culture oriented to nonviolent communication (in the sense coined by Marshall B. Rosenberg) grows and develops.

Monitoring and trust belong together

All in all, the task is: to minimize the likelihood of renewed attacks through presence (escort, observation, review); to reinforce norms in the group and bring about changes in the offenders' behavior through reparations and sanctions; and all the while to tap into the effective energies of interaction, recognition, and training. This sounds like a big order – and it does, indeed, require a lot of time. But it is also a very satisfying type of work. John Hattie, author of the meta-study "Visible Learning", designates as essential prerequistes for successful learning (cf. Hattie 2011): the relationship between teacher and student and the personality of the teacher. In this context, both can prove and improve themselves.

Scholarly evaluation

During the academic year 2014/2015, the module "Social Training and Systemic Mobbing Intervention" from the Multi-Level Program Konflikt-KULTUR was evaluated in a longitudinal study undertaken at the University of Münster in Westphalen. The control-group design with three data collection rounds at different points in time encompassed 20 groups pursuing training and 10 control groups without training sessions. Among other things, the self-assessment of the students and the external assessment by teachers on issues of aggression and victimization were analyzed.

In the course of evaluation, signiicant changes became evident, with moderate to strong positive effects noticeable after each training round. While the enaction of aggression and victimization was reduced in the classes with training, it increased in the control group. That is to say, the students felt more secure after training, and their fear of being victimized was assessed by the teachers as considerably reduced. In the classes with training, the number of victims and offenders dropped significantly from one data collection point to the next, while the number of non-participants grew (cf. Linßer 2019).

Conditions for Success

The following pre-conditions will contribute to the success of a Systemic Mobbing Intervention:

- *Previous participation of at least two professional educators working at the same school/agency in a continuing education measure (ideally, one educator per 100 students)*

- *Work time allowance (without other commitments) averaging at least one hour per week and educator*

- *Information event (lecture or teacher-training day) for teachers and education professionals on the dynamic involved in the emergence of mobbing, as well as the pitfalls and conditions for success in intervention*

- *Regularly (annually) held parents' evening with a talk on "Social Training and Systemic Mobbing Prevention"*

- *Resolution passed by the school conference and teachers' conference on the implementation of social training and Systemic Mobbing Intervention*

- *Integration of social training and Systemic Mobbing Intervention into the social curriculum of the school*

- *Intervision or supervision for the education professionals at the school*

- *Integration of the topic into an existing steering group, resp., establishment of such a group under the direction of the headmaster (partici-pants: headmaster, teacher, where available school social worker or school psychologist, teacher-counselor, prevention specialist)*

- *Embedment of the method in an ongoing process of Systemic Conflict Management (see also Chapter 5)*

4.4 Systemic Brief Intervention

Systemic Brief Intervention SBI is a derivative form of Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI. It incorporates methods originating in sociodrama and hypnotherapy as described by Erickson (see References attached to this chapter). Systemic Brief Intervention SBI is distinguished from SMI in particular by the following characteristics:

- The victim is not identified.

- The hooks and justifications for attacks are not addressed, in order to sidestep the resistance this can evoke in a class group.

- The occasion for an SBI need not be (cyber)mobbing, it can also be a response to other conflicts, such as cyber attacks or sexual harassment.

Other distinctions between Systemic Brief Intervention SBI and Systemic Mobbing Intervention SMI are discussed in Chapter 4.2.

SBI is always applied in cases where the pedagogical plan for action makes it imperative to address a conflict quickly in order to exert a de-escalating influence on hostilities or violent acts that might otherwise spiral out of control. But whenever the conflict events permit, social training with an SMI should be the preferred method!

An SBI lasts up to 90 minutes (two school periods); the duration depends largely on the discipline habits of the class. Its primary aims are to re-invigorate the formal framework of values and norms, to establish social controls, and to set up a peer-related helper system.

SBI Step 1: Preparation
First, the facilitator prepares the victim for the brief intervention by explaining the method. Then, together with the homeroom teacher, three case examples are developed, which in the following will be called "stories" and which will later be presented to the students. Two of these stories serve to create a context for the event that occurred, and the third story addresses the actual event.

The first two stories approach the acute conflict situation indirectly, as a way of sensitizing the students. The third refers to the actual case at hand, but is sufficiently distanced in its details (dissociated) that no direct connection can be drawn to the persons actually involved. Nonetheless, the victim's consent to this case construction is necessary, since many students will recognize the constellation anyway.

▷ *Goals:*

- *Preparing the affected student for the SBI*

- *Preparing a script fot the SBI*

- *Organizing materials (signs, yellow cards)*

SBI Step 2: Clarification of roles and tasks
Work with the class begins with a friendly greeting.

"Hello everybody! No tests to take today? Did you see the game yesterday? Who was rooting for which team? …"

Next, the playing rules for the work to be done together are laid down (comparable to the social training described above). Signs with the words "earnestness", "respect", and "self-control" are posted on the board. No circle of chairs is formed: the class remains sitting as usual during lessons.

"Believe me, I like to party and have fun. But today, I've come to your class with a topic that makes me feel very sad and concerned. I have something serious to say and I'm going to need you to take it seriously, to be respectful, and to keep control of yourselves. I would like you to show me that you are already somewhat grown-up. Please raise your hand if you can promise to do that. If anyone doesn't act respectfully enough, I'm going to let them know by flashing a yellow card – because that a foul in my eyes!"

Now, signs are posted that say "no names!" and "behavior".

> *"I'm not here today to make accusations or blame anybody. I am a school social worker (school psychologist…) and my job is to help people straighten things out. I was asked by your homeroom teacher (headmaster) to talk with you about how one can behave in difficult situations so that everyone is OK and everyone can feel at ease. My concern is not about individual persons, it's about behavior. So please don't name any names. I won't ask you for names, either. I would like to help, and I'm asking you to assist me."*

As an alternative, a teacher from the same school who happens to be conducting the SBI could start off differently:

> *"Today, I'm not standing here in my role as a teacher who has to correct people or criticize them. Instead, I want to help you. I want to talk with you about how one can behave in difficult situations so that everyone is OK and everyone can feel at ease.*
>
> *My concern is not about individual persons, but about behavior. So please don't name any names. I won't ask you for names, either. I would like to help, and I'm asking you to assist me."*

▷ *Goals:*

- *Establish contact with the class*
- *Agree on playing rules for working together*
- *Clarify roles and tasks:*
  The facilitator is offering help.
- *Commitment (students agree to cooperate)*

SBI Step 3: Telling the stories

At this point, the approach to the conflict event begins with the first two stories. The aim is to evoke concern and compassion and to motivate the students to shift their perspective. It soon becomes apparent how capable the class is of earnestness, self-control, and compassion.

The facilitator approaches the stories like an actor would, taking the stage and symbolically involving students in the plot so that they are integrated into the "social drama".

> *"I would like to tell you three stories. One is about a girl who, like me, weighs a bit too much. Somehow, it got started: somebody insulted her on the class chat by calling her 'fatty', and somebody else had the idea that only girls who weren't overweight should be allowed on the chat. Lots of people thought that was funny, but it made the girl feel very sad … [pause]. Have any of you ever seen that happen, that somebody gets insulted on the chat? … [hands go up] … OK, that's quite a few. What do you think, who was having fun, and who felt hurt? …*
>
> *Here's the second story: A boy who was a little shy and also had slight speech defect …"*

[Somebody grins and, with no further ado, gets to see the yellow card.]

Interruption: the story continues only after confronting this violation of rules. Disturbances and rule-breaking have to be taken up right away and used to induce the students to shift their perspective.
> *"What do you think – how would the boy feel if he heard you laughing now?"*

Wait until a pro-social student says something.

> *"Yeah, right … he would feel very hurt, not just because of his speech defect, I mean, it was really, really bad for him! His suffering deserves respect! He really got taken for a ride. Other boys from his school had set up a fake account, pretending to be a girl, and gotten him to do sexy things in front of webcam … One day when he got to school, one of the other boys said, 'Today, you're going to see your dick on the internet, and the girls will be crazy about you!' In his distress, he turned to the teacher.*

....

The boy felt destroyed, he just wanted to disappear into thin air. He said if that happens he won't ever leave the house again. It would be better if he didn't even exist!"

The story has to be told with weighty pauses, so that its effect on the class can be observed in their non-verbal communication. Afterwards, the method of "circular questioning" can be used: all the questions relate to the past, and they're all in the subjunctive (what if, what could …):

"What do you think, what consequences would that have had for the boy? What would have happened to him? What would he have needed? Yeah, that's it. He needed the other people's compassion. How could they have helped him?"

Post the "compassion" sign.

If the students don't take up these questions, but instead make other comments about the story, it's important to intervene ("Please stick to the question I asked. What happened to him?").

"The teacher was able to help the boy. The video never surfaced, and the other boys apologized when they realized how awful the situation was for him. That was a close call!"

Only if the class demonstates a good measure of earnestness, concern, and empathy – i.e. the willingness to continue following the facilitator through the intervention – can one now proceed to step 4. Otherwise, step 4 is omitted, and the group proceeds directly to step 5 (agreement on rules, personal declaration of self-restraint).

Goals:

■ *Bring the conflict event out into the open*

■ *Evoke concern*

■ *Stir up compasssion*

■ *Test the capacity of the class for earnestness, self-restraint, and empathy*

SBI Step 4: Tell about the mobbing case and call for compassion

Now the actual situation is described – in anonymized form, of course. Again, this serves to evoke the students' concern and to motivate them to see the event from the perspective of the victim. Because the consequences of the deeds are spelled out, compassion is raised and violence is regarded as taboo. The third story relates to the conflict at hand, which was the reason for conducting the SBI:

"My third story is about a girl who fell deeply in love with a boy from her school. This was a real big thing. She trusted him completely… Because he asked her to, as a sign of her love, she sent him nude photos of herself… Then their relationship took a bad turn, and the girl brought it to an end. That hurt the boy very badly. He was very angry, but hadn't yet lost all hope. He threatened to circulate the nude photos at school, thinking that this would get her to come back to him. But she wrote back that she wouldn't do that. She wrote that it was forbidden to post photos like that, and she warned him. But he couldn't control himself and did it anyway. For the girl, it was a catastrophe! She didn't want to go to school anymore. She was ashamed. The worst part was that if a classmate even just looked at her or smiled, she thought they could be making fun of her. Her life seemed dark and desolate. She never would have expected the boy she had once loved so much to do anything like that.

What do you think the girl was feeling like? What consequences did all this have for her?"

At this point, the facilitator must strictly avoid asking certain types of questions that could either: block the participation of the class, in some way expose anyone or assign blame, be answered simply with yes or no, trigger justification strategies, or contain indirect reproaches. Examples of no-go questions would be: "Who knows anything about what happened?", "Why do you think the boy did that?", "Whose fault was it?", "Did the girl do the right thing?"

Examples of more productive questions: "What would be important to do now, so that things don't get worse?", "How could everyone contribute to that?", "What should definitely not happen again?"

Good contributions to the discussion should be acknowledged and reinforced immediately:

> "Yes, exactly, I see it that way, too … that would have helped … the photos shouldn't be forwarded again … something like this should never happen again … somebody has to sound the alarm …"

If there are objections made and students try to make a direct connection to the actual events that took place, their perception of things has to be acknowledged – but without naming names.

> "Yes, I understand what you mean. This story could have something to do with what is going on in the class right now. But you all know: I'm here to talk about behavior, not about individual persons."

▷ *Aims:*

- *evoke concern*
- *stir up compassion*
- *spell our consequences*
- *call for compassion*
- *declare violence to be taboo*

SBI Step 5: Negotiate agreements

On the basis of the resilient personal abilities called for in step 4 (earnestness/self-restraint/respect/compassion), the facilitator and the class together set out a "contract with oneself" (a declaration of commitment) naming the forms of behavior that should no longer occur.

> "What should not be allowed to happen in this class any more? I'm writing down what you say …"

The forms of behavior are written on the board or the flip chart. The text says:

> ***Contract with myself toward respecting human rights in Class 7b.***
>
> *I pledge that in the future …*
>
> ***1.** I will not re-send and will immediately delete any hurtful texts, photos, or video that are sent to me.*
>
> ***2.** I will respond to the person who sent them, making clear that I do not want to be sent any such texts, photos, or videos again, and that I object to his or her behavior.*
>
> ***3.** I will inform the human rights observers or the teachers about any incident of this kind. I know that this would not be tattling, but rather providing support.*
>
> *I am aware that breaking this contract with myself can have serious consequences for me.*

The students are asked to come forward individually and sign the declaration.

> "Who among you is now willing to come forward and sign the contract?"

In the next class session, the headmaster/homeroom teacher expresses recognition for the students' having reached and signed this agreement, reminding them that their contract is to be taken seriously and the school will not tolerate violations of it.

4

The declaration of commitment that has been signed in front of the whole class is now photographed. A sign with the word "courage" is posted.

> *"Now I'm really curious. I want to see who among you has the courage and the strength to stand up in the future and see to it that the agreement is adhered to – so that everyone in the class can feel at ease and everyone is OK. Whoever does that will get a note of praise in his or her school report, your teacher told me. Any hands raised? … Quite a few, I'm glad to see."*

At this point, the homeroom teacher can make suggestions (see exercise in Chapter 8, Project 10).

> *"Right now, the task of the human rights observers is to support the class in complying with the declaration. If any violation of it takes place, the human rights observers have to report on it without naming names. You all know that this is about behavior."*

▷ *Goals:*

- *Declare that violence is taboo*
- *Set down a declaration of commitment*
- *Implement a system of social peer supervision and support*

SBI Step 6: Closing survey (optional)
In order to estimate the chances of success, the value framework of the class can now be asked about in a (protected) written survey. With a guided questionnaire, tendencies in the class toward pro-social or dissocial behavior can be detected. Usually, it also emerges whether there are also other students who have been victimized. This survey can be very valuable toward understanding the overall situation.

The students respond in writing (under conditions similar to those of a classroom test) to questions on the situation in the class and on the acute conflict event(s). The following text is presented on a flipchart:

> *"Write your name, the date, and your class at the top. Please answer my questions openly and honestly. Respect the privacy of your neighbors and let them find their own answers by themselves without any disturbance. Every person has the right to their own opinion – whether it suits the others, or not! Please remember that I'm not interested in names of classmates.*

Question Nr. 1: What do you think of it when classmates are insulted on WhatsApp?

Question Nr. 2: What do you think of it when photos are posted on WhatsApp against a person's will?

Question Nr. 3: What things like that have happened in this class?

Question Nr. 4: Are you afraid that you could be dissed on WhatsApp someday?

Question Nr. 5: Do you think that the declaration of commitment will result in fewer things like this happening, or maybe no more at all?

Question Nr. 6: Would it be tattling or helping if the human rights observers sound an alarm?

Question Nr. 7: What is your opinion on setting up binding rules for the class chat?

Question Nr. 8: This is the only question where you're allowed to name someone's name: Right now, in the class, who is taking the most hits / getting dissed the most?"

....

The survey outcomes are discussed in the team consisting of homeroom teacher, headmaster, and school social worker or school psychologist. They are not made available to the class.

▷ *Goals:*

- *Input on current framework of values and norms in the class*

- *Estimation of chances for success in implementing a system of social peer supervision and support*

- *Finding out how many students have pro-social or dissocial tendencies*

SBI Step 7: Follow-up
The results and experiences of the SBI are assessed by the team, with the homeroom teacher and the headmaster. Based on the these outcomes, ongoing social measures are planned for the class, e.g. writing letters with wishes or praise, a two-day social training, or an adventure education project. A date is set for a review of the declarations of commitment.

▷ *Goal:*

- *Drawing conclusions/consequences from the SBI process and the protected survey*

4.5 Pitfalls

The treatment of (cyber)mobbing usually involves a great deal of effort. However, many of the persons bearing responsibility at schools are already pressed for time. Lack of time and lack of knowledge lead in many cases to a situation in which insufficient attention is addressed to dealing with (cyber)mobbing. Instead people respond spontaneously, perhaps also intuitively. With the best of intentions, educators transpose methods suited for resolving individual conflicts over into the (cyber)mobbing case. In doing so, they encounter pitfalls from which they themselves and the persons affected cannot easily escape – and which, in the worst case, can lead to an escalation of violence. The following list points toward essential mistakes that are often made inadvertently:

Pitfall 1: Just conducting individual talks with the victim will not end the mobbing
Of course it is important to have an initial conversation with the victim. At the same time, it's clear that mobbing is a systemic phenomenon that can only be resolved in the systemic context, i.e. by involving all the participants For lack of suitable professional tools, adults often restrict their efforts to individual talks with the victim. These conversations are made note of by the classmates, however, and they react with irritation because they feel disadvantaged. Attention is hard to get in schools – why should the victim get more than anyone else? What is more, the classmates feel betrayed and unsure of themselves. They don't know what's going on behind their backs. What did the victim say, how did he get the teacher/social worker to take his side? The result can be that students who formerly weren't participants also turn against the victim and reinforce the mobbing.

An individual talk certainly needs to take place, but it does not alter the fact that the victim hasn't got a chance against the overweening force of the offenders. Victims need support from their classmates, meaning that other measures also are necessary. Individual counseling in itself cannot end mobbing.

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Pitfall 2: Intervention by the parents can make things worse

The parents of a victim see clearly how their child is suffering, and they suffer too. Perhaps they also feel guilty because they haven't been able to protect their child adequately up to now. Usually, they want put an end to their own inactivity and help their child, so they press the child to name names and, in their desperation, take up direct contact with the offenders and their parents – hoping to terminate the mobbing.

How cool and calm, how constructive can a telephone conversation possibly be under such circumstances? What affect does this first contact have on the course of events? Generally, it leads to further escalation for one of the following reasons. Either the offenders' parents try to protect their children and end up reinforcing the offenders' position, or they threaten to punish their children, with the effect that the offenders relay this pressure onto the victim – they want to get revenge for having been betrayed. At worst, the mobbing escalates from the student level to the parent level, with the offenders' parents recruiting allies among the other classmates' parents and attacking the victim's parents – a dynamic to be observed at parents' evenings planned to discuss the problem.

If, on the other hand, the parents have the impression that the professional educators at the school are doing a good job and giving their child competent support, they can remain more or less relaxed. Parents can restrict themselves to doing what they can to contribute to a solution: giving the child all the love they have and encouraging the child to pursue positive experiences in other groups.

Pitfall 3: Promptly threatening to punish offenders

Mobbing is not an individual offense, but rather the result of a group process. Simply punishing an individual will therefore bear no fruit. The assistants and claqueurs – and also the uninterested and the inactive – also are responsible for it. Should they be punished for refusing to help? Or should everyone be punished?

Threatening punishment and assigning guilt actually hinder the resolution of mobbing cases and promote solidarity with the offenders. Such actions drive the harassment underground, lead to covert attacks, and undermine the transparency that is necessary to come to a solution. To end mobbing, you need to bring it out into the open, into the civic sphere, and you need compassion. But how can any compassion with the victim be shown if the offenders are trying to avoid punishment by trumpeting rectifications and self-serving attempts to justify their own behavior? They will present themselves as the ones who are suffering and claim that they are being treated unfairly: "We were just making a joke!", "He was the one who provoked us!", "He gets on everybody's nerves!" The threat of punishment and the assignment of guilt put the offenders at the center of attention, allowing them to slip into the role of victim. In addition, their repeated attempts at justification make it impossible for them and the other classmates to feel empathy with the actual victim. Accusations directed toward the offenders may actually have the effect that the class steps up its mobbing activities.

Before the offenders are confronted, the class needs to have it brought to mind that human rights are the basis of civil society, and that they are violated by mobbing. Mobbing is violence against the soul, the body, and a person's property. Another prerequisite is the development of empathy as the fundamental ability to sense the suffering of the victim, and as the intrinsic motivation to help the victim. The likelihood of this is greatly reduced if an educator's first reaction has been to threaten punishment and assign guilt. With that, pressure is built up under which the offender and the class will be able to continuing refusing to empathize, and which undercuts the integration of the offender and the class into the process of resolution.

Needless to say, guilt and punishment certainly are important in mobbing cases. But they need to be addressed at the right point in time – which the next pitfall is intended to illustrate.

Pitfall 4: Lack of supervision after the intervention
After a mobbing intervention, there is a high risk of relapse, particularly if the mobbing has been in progress for a longer time. Mobbing activities tend to establish a status as a stabilizing factor in a system, and now, this prop has been removed. Former offenders can no longer satisfy their needs for power, recognition, amusement, etc. in the customary way. This is why consistent monitoring is necessary for at least six months. One aspect of this is the threat of punishment, as formulated in the context of Systemic Mobbing Intervention (see Section 4.3 of this chapter, Step 5).

Pitfall 5: Ascribing guilt to victims can be taken as a legitimation of violence
Sometimes victims behave strangely. Their behavior is not readily understood, even irritating adults, and giving rise to comments such as "He shouldn't be surprised that he gets treated this way sometimes," "He seems to be enjoying the role of victim," or "It's his own fault if …". Some classmates interpret these more or less subtle statements made by adults as a free pass for harassment. But there is no strange behavior, no tic, no selfie, no body scent, no outburst of rage and nothing else that can legitimate systematic harassment and violence. At the most, it can indicate that a behavioral contract should be negotiated, for instance in the case of temper outbursts.

Pitfall 6: Urging the victim to defend himself
Naturally, it is the task and usually also the impulse of every person to defend himself – thus also against harassment. In the case of systematic harassment, as in mobbing, the victim is by definition the weaker party. The offenders will emphasize this and will not allow their power to be taken away. Calling on the victim to defend himself only escalates the use of force.

Pitfall 7: Expecting the class to solve the problem
The students cannot cope with this alone. This would also risk cementing or escalating the conflict.

Pitfall 8: "Discussing" the problem with the class
(Cyber)mobbing has its own specific dynamic (see chapter 2.2). If an intervention is to counteract this dynamic constructively, the procedure must be highly structured. Simply discussing things without a conceptual basis will make everything worse. It will create a stage on which the offenders can rectify themselves and develop their profile.

Pitfall 9: Information briefings with a cognitive emphasis
Intervention measures are long-term efforts, they relate to the entire class or group and encompass effective behavioral regulation. Emotional aspects of interaction are taken into account, so that compassion can be developed, and helpers from the peer group are provided for the victim in the ensuing period. Reducing all this to informative briefings will not turn the trick.

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Systemic Conflict Management

Systemic Conflict Management

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5. Systemic Conflict Management

When (cyber)mobbing occurs at school or reaches into the realm of school life, schools clearly have to react. They have a legal mandate that obliges them to. School administrators, teachers, and education professionals bear responsibility for addressing every case of (cyber)mobbing, together with the victim and his legal guardians, as well as the offender. The question is not *whether* to respond, but *how* to respond. Also not open to discussion is the issue of whether conflict management should be undertaken. Again, the question is only *what kind* – with what quality criteria, principles of action, and degree of transparency.

Spontaneous conflict management improvised in an acute situation can be a success, but it can also cause considerable 'collateral damage' and great suffering. It is hard to find well- structured, institutionally anchored arrangements with goal-oriented, systematic interactive work done by trained educational teams. In teacher training, this is hardly even mentioned (cf. Wedemann 2014; Scheithauer et al. 2007).

The concept of "conflict management" contains the word "management"; it derives from the Latin "manum agere" and literally means "to lead by the hand". Exactly that: conflict parties, the persons surrounding them in their school classes, and all those involved in educating them at school and in the family need to be taken by the hand and escorted by qualified professionals. Often, the response to a tense situation has to be rapid and goal-oriented, and there is no time for extensive discussion. Still, decisions should not simply be arrived at intuitively. On the basis of Systemic Conflict Management (SCM), it is possible to cultivate an approach that is pedagogically enlightened, well-reflected, sustainable, and oriented to societal principles of law and justice.

Although most of the texts in this handbook relate to (cyber)mobbing among school students, there are various ways in which educators and parents can also be targeted. Practitioners and professional organizations, such as the German teachers' union GEW (Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft), report that teachers are relatively often the victims of mobbing. In a GEW study from the year 2007, eight percent of teachers reported having been the target of mobbing activities. Since then, the number is likely to have risen. The estimated number of unreported cases is high, because many teachers hesitate to reveal their difficulties (see GEW study on cybermobbing, 2007). The authors of this handbook consider it important to call attention to this situation, although the focus here is on (cyber)mobbing phenomena among school students. The procedures and methods for dealing with (cyber)mobbing that are described in this chapter can be just as effectively applied when a teacher outs himself as a victim and requests help. In Chapter 3 (section on "The Case of Mr. Beutelsbacher"), a situation is depicted in which a teacher became a victim of (cyber)mobbing. We therefore refer deliberately to conflict participants, conflicting parties or persons, rather than merely students. The only variants not included in this systematic treatment of SCM would be conflicts among teachers or between teachers and school administrators.

Principles of Action in Systemic Conflict Management

1 Every treatment and regulation of a conflict is oriented toward adherence to human rights, civil rights, and children's rights.

2 Each of the conflicting parties has the right to be heard.

3 No conflicting party can be forced to incriminate himself.

4 Accusations may only be brought against a conflict participant if the facts and circumstances are proven or backed by plausible witness statements. Otherwise, the person must be given the benefit of the doubt.

5 A restriction of the rights of a member of the school community can only be levied by the teachers, the headmaster, or in an emergency by the police. Such a restriction must be founded on the principles of law and order.

6 No person active in addressing the conflict can claim any right to personal, individual violence. Everyone is exhorted to communicate non-violently.

7 In addressing the conflict, any and all forms of violence are countermanded. The responsible parties are confronted with their own harmful behavior. This applies particularly in cases where criminal acts have been committed that violate human rights, civil rights, or children's rights or that discriminate against persons due to their family or ethnic origin, their appearance, skin color, gender, or level of achievement in school, or when hate speech is directed against such persons.

8 Any use of force that is rectified as self-defense or defense of a third person must nonetheless remain within the bounds set by constitutional standards.

9 Protection and support for persons who have been damaged are given priority.

10 The fundamental principle is observed of separating the person and his/her behavior, respecting the dignity of the person while at the same time systematically eschewing the use of force. The person is not the focus of examination in solving any given conflict, but rather the damaging behavior. The dignity of every person is respected.

11 Following the tenet that helping is more important than punishment, the school community approaches the persons who have made offense, offering options for support and reconciliation that are oriented toward the basic principle of inclusion. These offers take precedence over negative educative or regulatory measures tending towards exclusion. This presupposes, however, that no endangerment of others occurs, and that the offenders are willing to accept support toward modifying their behavior. Conflict regulation should aim at promoting pro-social personality development.

12 The treatment of serious conflicts is undertaken – wherever feasible – by a team, with its members striving for the greatest possible clarity concerning their own social roles. Decisions on disciplinary measures are made only by the persons legally responsible for them.

13 All conflicting parties participate in the planning and realization of the conflict regulation, and the process is kept transparent for all those involved.

14 Teachers, students, and parents as well as external cooperation partners (such as school social workers or school psychologists) are involved in the development of procedural standards, cooperative structures, guidelines, and formative principles as a means of school development.

15 In conflict regulation, data protection regulations are observed.

Systemic Conflict Management (SCM)

The three subprocesses of Systemic Conflict Management (SCM)

Structural management
Four levels of implementation for structures (Chapter 5.3.1)

1. interpersonal
2. class group
3. individual school
4. school district/region

Personnel management
Qualification measures and Formation of Teams (Chapter 5.3.2)

Defining social roles, professional requirements, work commissions, reporting duties

Process management
Setting out and defining procedures (Chapter 5.3.3) – five basic modules and five elements within the module on strategy for action – to be subsumed into the discussion of Phases of Action (Chapter 5.5)

The five modules of operative process management in SCM (Chapter 5.4)

The Element 'Phases of Action' provides a fundamental structure for the process

Module: Principles of Action (Chapter 5.4.1)

Separation of person and behavior, condemnation of violence, priority of protecting victims, helping is more important than punishment, the right to be heard, the benefit of the doubt, observing data protection standards, maintaining transparency for and participation of all those affected, teamwork (excerpt)

Module: Diagnosis (Chapter 5.4.2)

Areas of conflict (Chapter 2.1.1)	conflicts in living together and working together
Levels of conflict (Chapters 2.1.2 and 5.4.2)	intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, systemic and cooperative levels
Characteristics of conflict (Chapter 5.4.2)	hostility, lacking potential for nonviolent resolution, damage to persons, violation of values and norms, complexity, and responsibility
Scale of conflict (Chapter 5.4.2)	(A) atmospheric disturbance, (B) tousling and roughing around, (C) relatively serious conflict, (D) serious conflict, (E) threat or crisis

Module: Teamwork (Chapter 5.4.3)

Social roles (Chapter 5.4.3)	roles within the conflict treatment team: headmaster, homeroom teacher, conflict manager, conflict helper, assistant conflict helper, prevention expert (e.g. media educator)

Module: Strategy for Action (Chapter 5.4.4)

Element: modes of action (Chapter 5.4.4)	Self-regulation, regulation on request, compulsory regulation, threat intervention, and crisis intervention
Element: types of action (Chapter 5.4.4)	Support, interference, and package deal (if – then)
Element: levels of action (Chapter 5.4.4)	Intrapersonal, interpersonal, peer or class group, family and school, communal or regional level
Element: methods of action (Chapter 5.4.4)	Methods for pedagogical interference and for support (e.g. Systemic Mobbing Intervention, Brief Intervention / restitution for deeds and damage done)
Element: phases of action (Chapter 5.5)	1. First response and positioning, 2. Threat or crisis intervention, 3. Conflict regulation, and 4. Follow-up

Module: Documentation and Reporting Duties (Chapter 5.4.5)

Requirements for documentation and reciprocal information following established standards and based on forms to be completed

5.1 Characteristics of SCM

Systemic Conflict Management (SCM) has the following fundamental characteristics:

■ **Systematic procedure**
   Systematic procedure, here in the context of handling conflicts, is thought through in advance, making it well structured, well prepared, and transparent for all its participants from the outset. It adheres to procedural standards, principles for action, and quality criteria – suited to the situation of the individual school – that are negotiated by students, parents, and the faculty. The methods described in Chapter 4, SMI and SBI, along with restitution for deed and damage as described below, are regarded as core methods for the practical work of conflict treatment.

■ **Systemic approach**
   The systemic approach to the process of dealing with conflict does not simply focus on the persons directly involved in the individual incident, but rather factors in the social environment where it occurs – including the persons interacting in the subsystems school, family, and peer group – and in doing so takes into account that there are reciprocal influences between the individual and his surroundings.

■ **Prevention by fostering development**
   Conflict, threat, and crisis are not simply regarded as unpleasant burdens, but rather as pedagogical challenges, as opportunities and learning situations – for the (delinquent) student and his victim as well as for those doing educational work in the school and for their cooperation partners in youth agencies, school counseling, and the police.

■ **Personnel and organizational development complement individual case treatment**
   The operative process of managing a conflict case (process management) profits from complementary longer-term efforts – such as personnel and organizational development work in the school itself and among cooperation partners in local youth agencies, school psychology services, and at the police – aimed at creating sustainable structures (structural management) and professional competence among staff (personnel management) on the level of the class, the school, and the town or neighborhood. Ideally, such structures are anchored in policies of school development and communal education planning, so that concrete cases can be addressed quickly and with long-term success.

SCM thus defines itself as a systematic approach to structural, personnel, and process management anchored in a particular school or class and oriented toward standards of quality and guidelines for action.

■ **Teaching democracy by way of experience**
   SCM fosters the development and personality formation of young people by initiating and reinforcing pro-social behavior and transporting fundamental democratic values. It fulfills all the prerequisites for professional handling of conflicts.

5.2 Advantages of SCM

Introducing Systemic Conflict Management (SCM) at a school has considerable advantages for the students, parents, teachers, administrators, the external support persons in youth agencies and psychological services. Here, we will list eight of the advantages:

■ **Confidence in procedures**
   The knowledge that a school is applying a tested strategy and has a clear assignment of roles and professional capacities saves time and worry.

■ **Democracy education in a learning situation**
   Conflicts typical in cases of (cyber)mobbing are very unfortunate circumstances that need to be overcome as quickly as possible. They can, however, also be regarded as opportunities for learning pro-social skills.

■ **Goal-oriented and flexible procedure**
   Often, the borderline between degress of conflict escalation can be be blurred. SCM offers a diagnostic roster for estimating the gravity of a conflict, as well as procedural steps that build upon one another and can be adjusted to the individual case in a flexible manner.

■ **Preventing the escalation of violence**
There are instances where the primary interest is not to solve a conflict as quickly as possible, but rather to recognize a conflict-in-the-making and intervene early to de-escalate it and forestall the conflict through constructive efforts that have sustained effect. SCM thus reduces the undesirable 'cost' of hostilities and of escalating conflicts for the students, their families, and the school.

■ **Participation**
Procedures and methods are defined in advance. For students, parents, and teachers, this makes the process more transparent and enables their democratic participation, while fostering trust and also – through educational partnership and teamwork – relieves the burdens on homeroom teachers and headmasters.

■ **Enhancing the educational profile**
SCM bridges gaps pertaining to fairness, cooperation, and competence that the traditional school system often encounters in dealing with conflicts. SCM helps to broaden the understanding of prevention work so that it is no longer simply seen as a task for socially committed teachers, but defined as a holistic effort encompassing all facets of the mandate for guidance and education borne collectively by the school. SCM compensates structural deficits and heightens the educational profile of a school or an individual class.

■ **Conserving resoures through synergy**
SCM promotes cooperation with external support systems on an equal footing, for instance with youth support agencies, particularly school social work, school psychology services, and the police. Interfaces for this are established, roles are clarified, cooperation is intensified, and synergetic effects result.

■ **Protection from burnout**
SCM helps protect educators against overload on the job and reassures them that they are doing all that is possible and necessary to fulfill their social and professional responsibilities. SCM fosters teamwork and sharing of responsibility.

5.3 Subprocesses in SCM

SCM is not a method, it is a program. It serves several major aims: planned, systematic handling of conflicts and professionalization of individuals dealing with the process, as well as organizational and personnel development at schools and in youth support agencies, with their subsystems. A subsystem at a school could be an individual class – SCM would then be implemented by the homeroom teacher, as a facet of classroom management. A subsystem of a youth support agency could be their school social work services, using SCM to shape the cooperative relationship in the field of conflict support. Where SCM is applied to an entire school, it can contribute to enhancing the overall educational profile of the school.

In addition, SCM can even serve as a communal or regional program for the social sphere by fostering networking activities among all those working in the field violence prevention and crime prevention (schools, school social workers and psychologists, police) – through intensified cooperation that is very effective and makes optimal use of resources.

Depending on the circumstances in a school and the environment where its students live, SCM takes the existing conditions (difficulties, potentials, resources) as a starting point, with five maxims in mind:

■ Development emerges from the recognition of what exists.

■ The doors to change are opened from within.

■ Work done in organizations and their subsystems is done by people. Any changes have to be accepted and supported by these people.

■ Development within organizations requires both bottom-up processes (good practice) and top-down processes (good leadership).

■ Development calls for good will in the form of public recognition, a healthy way of dealing with mistakes, and availability of personnel, spatial, and financial resources.

In practice, this implies that when (cyber)mobbing phenomena appear in a class, a committed homeroom teacher and a developmentally oriented headmaster will come forward with programmatic suggestions on how such conflicts are to be addressed in the future, and will involve school administrators, faculty, parents, and student representatives in the planning. On the level of city or community administration, the responsible officials confer with regional school authorities, the communal youth authorities, psychological counseling services, a (public) youth support agency, and the police to formulate a tailor-made suggestion on how serious conflicts can be approached and mutual cooperation initiated.

Introducing SCM into a school
It takes some time to anchor SCM securely in the educational profile of a school; haste will not help. It is better to proceed in small steps and, if possible, phase by phase:

Step 1 – Introduction on the interpersonal level
Individual teachers, school social workers or psychologists acquire competence in SCM. They qualify themselves to apply the conflict diagnosis roster and are better able to assess conflicts and then advise students, parents, teachers or school administrators in difficult situations. The clarity and professionality of their recommendations will speak for itself, so that SCM receives recognition at the school.

Step 2 – Introduction on the class level
SCM is then applied on the level of individual classes or parallel classes. One or more homeroom teachers agree to approach future conflicts using SCM. Small teams are formed and reach agreement on strategies for action. When an individual case comes up, the team asks the headmaster for re-confirmation of approval, then seeks support from external sources (school social work or psychological services). SCM will establish itself readily as an effective approach, and the first projects will appear as 'beacons' to the rest of the school.

Step 3 – Introduction on the school community level
Faculty, school administration, and parents perceive SCM as a meaningful and necessary tool for educational work. They want more. A steering group is formed to plan the binding structures being introduced throughout the school. The formal decision-making bodies of the school pass a resolution to establish the structures in the school's program. Supporters are recruited within the local community. Available resources are consolidated, and new ones created. The school instates SCM as an integral part of its everyday functioning, and in doing so raises its own profile. Promotion of development, prevention of violence, and democracy education now become characteristic for the school in the perception of the public, serving as a model for others.

Step 4 – Introduction in neighboring schools
Various schools in a city or region affiliate with one another. Resources are consolidated. Youth support agencies, school psychological services, and police support the schools in their structural development work and operative process of dealing with severe conflicts. In the context of communal planning for education and youth support measures, SCM is treated as a standard part of social education, schooling, and prevention. The city or region serves as a beacon for others.

In the following, we present the three subprocesses of SCM with their aims, measures, and tasks.

5.3.1 Creating Structures (Structural Management)

This subprocess serves to create the structures necessary for conflict resolution. Structural management (like personnel management) needs to be pursed in advance, independent of acute demand, that is, long before an individual case makes it indispensable. Previous preparation of operative process management provides, in cases of (cyber)mobbing, the foundation for decisions on a strategy for action that is tailored to the individual case.

In structural management, colleagues, administrators, and external partners, with input from student and parent representatives, determine procedural standards, handling methods, personnel and time resources for conflict resolution in an organigram and a portfolio of procedures and methods. During the follow-up after a conflict intervention, the stated goals are compared with the actual outcomes. Where indicated, consequences are drawn for future processes, and adjustments made.

This is an essential aspect of structural management. Procedures and methods have to be adjusted to suit the circumstances in a particular class or school.

Aim: to create functional structures on the level of individual classes, parallel classes in one form, in the individual school and/or community/district

Task: planning, description, and adoption of binding agreements on cooperation, procedures, and ethical-pedagogical principles for the process of conflict resolution

Measures:
- analysis of the current status of existing structures
- formulation of procedural standards to be entered into the portfolio of procedures
- determination of standardized methods to be placed in the portfolio of methods
- description of time and personnel resources to be invested
- where applicable, negotiation of standards for cooperation with external partners in school social work, school psychological services, counseling centers, and police
- participation of faculty members, parents, students, and external partners in processes of school development
- transparent information policy for all participants
- evaluation of outcomes and adjustment of procedural standards and methods
- adjustment of principles for action, process descriptions and methods, undertaken at meetings of the steering group
- preparation of an organization plan with an organigram

5.3.2 Qualifying Personnel (Personnel Management)

Personnel management is both a preparatory task and an operative one. This subprocess aims at professionalizing the work of those responsible for addressing conflicts, and the formation of teams. Social roles within the team are defined, and professional requirements,

tasks, and reporting duties are spelled out. The persons actively dealing with conflicts need particular poise and advanced methodical skills. They have to achieve and maintain this qualification by participating in relevant continuing education programs and through professional supervision.

On the basis of such personnel development measures, a school (or a community with several schools) will be able to organize teams to work together. SCM calls for two types of teams:

- The **SCM steering team** works on an ongoing basis for as long as the SCM program is in place. On the meta-level, it steers and evaluates the process of structural and personnel management.
- The **SCM case management team** is an operative unit working for a limited period of time on an individual conflict case, and can be temporarily expanded to include conflict support assistants and external professional colleagues.

Aim: formation of a functioning steering team and a case management team

Task: recruitment, planned qualification measures, and professionalization of the team members

Measures:
- analysis of the current status among personnel
- conferences held to foster participation of faculty members and external support systems
- designation of social roles, individual tasks within the team, and documentation and reporting duties
- negotiations initiated toward establishing cooperation with external partners
- formal agreements on cooperation, with special attention given to data protection
- promotion of transparency and acceptance thanks to frequent oral and written information relating to feedback and work outcomes
- organization of continuing education measures
- evaluation of process documentation to assess the need for further development of professional competence among the active persons.

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5.3.3 Defining Procedures for Individual Cases (Process Management)

By process management, we mean direct conflict management in an individual case. When structural and personnel development measures have been successfully carried out (see above), they form a solid foundation for process management, since procedures, principles of action, and quality standards have already been agreed upon and the participants are qualified to assume their roles and tasks.

Aim: Resolution of a particular conflict and promotion of personality formation among the conflict parties

Task: Addressing and working through the conflict (in accord with the procedures set out in structural management)

Measures:

■ case-related definition of mandate and positioning of the participating professionals in dialogue with other supporting figures (see Chapter 5.5.1)

■ appointment of an operative SCM case-working team, a conflict manager, conflict helpers and their assistants (see Chapter 5.4.3) by the headmaster or at his/her request, followed by positioning of the team in accord with their individual roles and tasks

■ clarification of the conflict events, systematic analysis of the conflict, development of a suitable strategy for action, planning for regulation of the conflict with the participation of the conflict parties and (where indicated) with their parents, selection of appropriate methods allowing for action on the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels as well as with the school class(es) involved (extensive description of these measures follows in Chapter 5.4)

■ Coordination and monitoring of the measures, documentation of the process, written and verbal information to those participating as stipulated in the established roster for documentation and reporting duties

5.4 Building Blocks of SCM

Working to resolve serious conflicts escalating on various levels, while striving for high educational aims, is not a walk in the park. It is associated with emotional and social risks, both for those directly involved and for those who intervene. Intervention in cases of (cyber) mobbing can be compared with mountain hiking, where bad weather conditions can reduce visibility. So it's hardly surprising that mountain climbers' rules can easily be applied to addressing (cyber)mobbing

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10 Mountain climbers' rules *(also applying to SCM)*

1. *Do your preparation thoroughly. Adjust the equipment to the challenge (in the preparatory phase: implement structures). Inquire about the weather and the local conditions (diagnostics).*

2. *Don't start off on your own (team principle).*

3. *Choose a route that is suited to your degree of expertise (professional competence).*

4. *Avoid overexertion and involve the whole group, taking everyone's capacity for pace and endurance into account (participation of conflict parties).*

5. *Leave a message about what path you've taken (transparency).*

6. *Turn back if you stop making progress (priority is protection of victims and your own safety).*

7. *Get help when you're in trouble (network).*

8. *Play close attention to correct technique (method skills) for climbing, securing, and navigating (diagnostic skills) and keep yourself in good shape (continuing education and evaluation).*

9. *The more difficult the terrain, the more important it is to have persons with special skills (advanced training) running the team (headmaster and homeroom teacher, conflict manager and helpers) and contributing their experience (continuity and consistency of actions).*

10. *Allow these principles to guide you (ethical tenets and guidelines).*

Modelled after the Mountainclimbing Rules of the German Alpine Association.

conflicts, and the SCM described here has taken inspiration from them.

SCM focuses on secure footing for action and on ensuring that neither the conflict parties nor the professionals involved will be endangered by the intervention and, figuratively speaking, stumble into a rock slide. SCM stands for mindfulness and awareness in working through conflicts, so as to avoid collateral damage.

Planfully resolving a conflict in SCM encompasses five *building blocks* that interlock with one another (see below) and proceeds through four *phases of action* (see Chapter 5.5).

The five building blocks are:

1. Principles of action
The principles of action form the legal and ethical foundation for all actions taken.

2. Diagnostics
Conflict diagnosis is the basis for assessing the conflict events and the resulting plan for action, upon which the strategy for action is built. Diagnosis is a cross-sectional task that applies to the entire on-going process of conflict resolution.

3. Teamwork
Working in a team is mandatory in severe cases of (cyber)mobbing. The wide range of tasks and roles simply cannot be mastered by one individual person.

4. Strategy for action
The strategy for action is determined by the mode of procedure, the level, the direction, and the method of conflict resolution.

5. Documentation and reporting duties
Documentation and reporting need, like diagnostics, to be cultivated continuously during the process of addressing a conflict – as proof of the legality and conformity of procedure, and as a means of providing all persons active in the team with current information.

Building Blocks of Systemic Conflict Management in the Partial Process of Operative Process Management
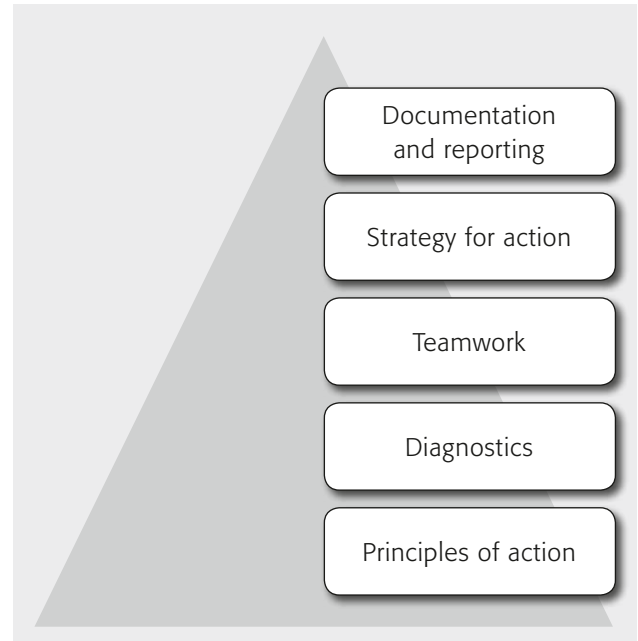
5.4.1 Building Block 'Principles of Action'

Human Rights
We can't undertake measures against (cyber)mobbing without simultaneously advocating respect for human rights: "Human dignity is inalienable." But experience shows that fundamental human rights are often violated, for example in school classes where (cyber)mobbing is underway, and that this often occurs in plain view of the classmates, parents, and teachers.

As human beings we are not immune to developing negative feelings toward students who behave aggressively or violently. Such feelings can range from antipathy to overt aggression. Therefore it happens that in pedagogical approaches to heated conflicts likely to escalate, there can be mention of forcing students to admit their mistakes and to apologize immediately, or letting them know "who has the say". If things get to this point, then it is time to pause and reflect on the situation. At such an impasse, children and adolescents are particularly dependent on reasonable adults who have themselves well under control.

Violence evokes violence as a response. If we are not careful enough about our own behavior, this true saying will take shape in reality. It can happen too easily that we expect others to observe fundamental human rights while disregarding them ourselves.

For this reason, those active in addressing a conflict should join in developing pedagogical principles oriented towards an anti-authoritarian style of education and adherence to fundamental human rights. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi: "There is no path to peace, for peace is the path."

These principles should be set out in writing. They form the basis for a mutual approach towards the pedagogical interaction that will ensue while addressing the conflict. Their significance should be emphasized by requesting that each member of the team sign a personal declaration of adherence to them (on pedagogical posture, see Chapter 7).

Data Protection
An important fundamental right that we all have is the right to determine how our personal information is treated. This basic right is often violated in cases of (cyber)mobbing – and again in the course of addressing the conflicts. Students should never be sounded out, and one should never force them to incriminate themselves. When "gathering information" from students, one must conform to (data protection) rules: the intent of an interview has to be clear to the student from the outset, and the student's permission is required before any information can be passed on to others (with exceptions made only in extreme cases). Children have fundamental rights, like everyone else! It has to be ensured that children, as their age and maturity permit, comprehend the purpose and intent of an interview or of relaying data to others. If this is doubtful or if the events have a certain magnitude, teachers should inform the children's parents. Particular attention should be paid to this aspect with elementary school pupils or children up to the age of 13.

For school social workers, school psychologists, and teacher-counselors, the rules on sharing social data differ (at least in Germany). Trust and confidentiality are the foundations of their work. They are "bearers of secrets" and as such are subject to § 203 Sect. 1 Nr. 2 and Nr. 5 StGB (Penal Code), which call for strict confidentiality.

Similar restrictions apply to teachers (at least those who are tenured public servants) according to § 203 Sect. 2 Nr. 1 StGB, since they are public officials. However, transmitting information to others is forbidden only when it is unauthorized. In cases where there is reason to assume that a child may be endangered or that a felony has been committed, school social workers, school psychologists, and counselors may, or rather must, reveal the information they have.

By contrast, the rights and duties of teachers differ fundamentally when it comes to revealing information. Generally, teachers are expected to handle confidential information about their students with reticence. However, whenever events occur that could be detrimental to the normal course of school life or could impinge on the rights of individual persons, the teachers have to inform the school administration and the parents, even if the affected students have not given their permission. The legal framework in such cases is the educational partnership between parents and the school as defined in School Law.

In practice, this implies that a teacher is allowed and required to inform other persons even about relatively minor incidents soon after they come to his or her attention – as opposed to the greater confidentiality granted to school social workers, school psychologists, and counselors.

It is therefore important that members of a conflict intervention team be trained on their legal duties and their social roles in the context of data protection. This is consolidated when they sign a written declaration on data protection.

Team Principle
The fundamental tenet that severe conflicts should be approached wherever possible by a team does not only derive from the insight that individuals can be professionally or personally overtaxed. It also protects those involved from complacency, unfair behavior, arbitrariness, lack of principle, and a high rate of error. The prerequisite is, however, that the team members acknowledge and respect the responsibility and tasks of their team colleagues and that they cultivate a feedback culture allowing for critical questions. In SCM, the task of maintaining this culture is considered an aspect of personnel management.

5.4.2 Building Block: Diagnostics

In this section on 'diagnostics' we present a standard procedure used in SCM.

Goals

■ Shed light on the conflict events – clarify the matter at hand – secure proof

■ Arrive at a reliable assessment of the conflict events

■ Prepare a sustainable regulation on all the levels of conflict

■ Safeguard an intervention that is in process

Guiding Questions

■ Which of the conflict participants are on 'center stage', which persons are background actors?

■ Who observed or witnessed the conflict events?

■ Is the report of the person seeking help corroborated by observers or by indisputable evidence (e.g. chat exchange)? Does the experience as reported emerge as an actual occurrence with verifiable facts?

■ Which persons and whose property have been or are being damaged?

■ What values and norms were violated in the course of the conflict events?

■ What degree of severity and complexity does the conflict reveal on its various levels?

■ How are the conflict events reflected on the different levels of interaction (the intrapersonal, interpersonal, class and peer systemic, institutional, and the educational partnership – see also Chapter 2.1.2)

■ How great is the danger of further, or even violent, escalation? To what extent are the conflict participants lacking in empathy, self-control, and readiness to accept non-violent solutions?

■ Does the responsibility for escalation of the conflict rest on one party, or on more than one?

Description of Procedure

Conflict analysis provides orientation to the team during all phases of treatment and needs to be updated continuously. In this procedure, the conflict helpers and their assistants (see Chapter 5.4.3) play an essential role. Their task is to clarify the conflict events by conducting standardized interviews with the conflicting parties (see working materials, below).

The clarification of events is considered complete when…

■ the reports given by conflicting parties match up and there is no doubt about their veracity, or

■ persons who observed the conflict can describe it with high credibility, or

■ the events can be re-traced univocally through media sources, such as chat exchanges, voice mail, images, or videos.

The quality of these interviews and their documentation is very important for a circumspect and sound resolution of the conflict. The persons conducting them have to be well-trained and practiced; in SCM, this responsibility lies with the personnel management (see Chapter 5.3.2).

Doubts may arise, for example if one conflict party is putting pressure on or manipulating the other, or if the damaged party due to anxiety and social insecurity is unable to remember and describe the events fully. This can occur easily in mobbing processes that have been in course for some time. Empathetic support given by helpers can reduce such insecurity and often contributes to more clarity.

Frequently, reports on what has happened and been experienced differ significantly. It could be that one party portrays the events in such a one-sided manner that it is impossible to assess the conflict reliably. Furthermore, it can remain unclear for a long time to what degree the conflict has encompassed more and more individuals, beginning to have effects on the class and peer-group level. Particularly when (cyber)mobbing is in the stage of consolidation or manifestation, the generation barrier presents a veritable 'wall of silence', so that great effort has to be

invested in clarification. But this is worth the effort, since only proof of the events and their consequences can undermine denials and allow for pedagogical action to be initiated.

The ways in which conflict events begin, develop over time, and come to an end can differ enormously. This also applies to the severity and complexity of conflict events and to the hostilitiy manifested through them – ranging from minor disagreements among peers all the way to violently escalating struggles spilling over onto the level of the educational partnership between school and parents, or upending the framework of norms and values for an entire class system. Minor disturbances or jostling among peers do not call for conflict management.

But cases of severe, risk-laden conflict processes definitely do. The challenge is to distinguish the one from the other. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that any conflict can escalate at any time. In complex cases, it is essential to 'take the pulse' constantly and to keep an eye on all the levels of conflict events. Sometimes, indications of a severe mobbing incident emerge from a report on a conflict that was initially assessed as "superficial". Only by means of persistent probing is the dramatic extent of events brought to light. This makes it all the more important that we be attentive, perceive any and all signs of conflict, and do not settle on an assessment made too early and too casually.

Therefore, it is necessary to analyze conflicts closely, to document the results whenever a certain severity is given, and to report to the team and especially to those who decide on procedure. In the analysis, the characteristics of the conflict events are assessed. On this basis, the events are categorized on a conflict scale and the levels on which the conflict is being carried out are designated.

Materials that can be Prepared and Re-used

- Guidelines for conducting a discreet survey

- Form and guidelines for conducting and documenting an interview with a person seeking help

- Form and guidelines for conducting and documenting an interview with an accused person

- Form and guidelines for conducting and documenting an interview with a conflict observer

- Form for realizing and documenting a conflict analysis

Frequent Mistakes and Risks

- Not all the conflict parties are asked about the events.

- Observers of the conflict are overlooked.

- The quality of the interviews is insufficient. The conflict participants are not fully listed; some characteristics or levels of the conflict are not brought up in the interview. Factual matters (e.g. observable behavior) are not distinguished from experiential aspects (thinking, feeling, wishes), which need to be asked about separately.

- Conflict parties are compelled to participate in interviews.

- Those conducting the interviews evaluate the interviewees, judge them morally and (more or less subtly) reproach them, instead of maintaining neutrality.

- In a confrontative interview, an accusation is disclosed by a conflict helper instead of the conflict regulator or the other conflict party.

- The interviewer does not request permission to share the data gathered in the interview.

- Interviews are not or not sufficiently documented.

Excursus: Characteristics of a Conflict Event

Conflict characteristic	Definition
Hostility	Intent to do harm ("I'm going to get him!")
Insufficient potential for non-violent solutions	Lack of willingness or deficits in personal capabilities (self-control, compassion, respect) and communicative skills (negotiating wishes and demands) to solve a conflict non-violently
Damage to persons or property	Degree of bodily or psycho-social damage done to individuals/communities, or damage to their property
Violation of values and norms	Severity of an offense against the school and house rules, class agreements, penal code or basic human and children's rights
Complexity	Extent of participation, number of persons or conflict levels involved
Responsibility	Measure of responsibility for the escalation of the conflict

Hostility

Hostility is defined here as an indicator of damage potential for the other conflict party (win-win, win-lose, lose-lose) on the cognitive, motivational, and behavioral planes.

Insufficient potential for non-violent solutions

Here we mean the ability of conflict parties to maintain self-control, eschew violence, and take recourse to non-violent options for dealing with an internal or external grievance.

Damage to persons or property

This encompasses any emotional, physical, social, or material consequences of the conflict. Assessing the damage – apart from material damage – is highly subjective and has to be respected as such.

Violation of values and norms

Damage done to a person can result from an accident caused by gross negligence, without any specific violation of values and norms. By contrast, a violation of values and norms is defined as offense against fundamental human rights or children's rights, against legal norms (such as the penal code, copyright law, etc.) or the school ordinance or house rules of the school. The more severe the legal penalty for norm-violating behavior in a conflict, the more difficult it is to assess the violation of values and norms. For diagnostic purposes and in developing the strategy for action based on a diagnosis, it is of great significance to distinguish between criminal offenses liable to public prosecution and criminal offenses prosecuted only upon application by the victim. The former are more or less severe felonies that are punishable by prison sentences or fines. However, these legal distinctions are complicated. It happens often in the course of (cyber)mobbing conflicts that an image of a person is published without permission. Technically, this is a moderately severe offense that can be punished by a fine or up to one year in prison. But prosecution is only initiated when requested by the victim. Should, however, the images contain porno-graphic material showing children or adolescents, then any police officer is compelled to initiate proceedings as soon as this comes to his attention in his official function. Likewise in cases where a crime against a person is being threatened (threat of homicide, for example): the police are required to investigate without delay upon learning of it. For those involved in SCM and analyzing conflicts, it is important to have a network of partners whose professional skill enables them to provide reliable legal counsel.

Complexity

The higher the number of persons caught up in the conflict events, the more different levels and subsystems will be affected within the family, school, and community: the greater the complexity of the conflict events. With (cyber)mobbing, a high degree of complexity can always be assumed. The complexity of a conflict is also increased when parents, teachers and administrators have differing opinions, or when the cooperation between school and parents doesn't function well because parents question or undermine the educational mandate of the school. Along with those directly affected, the families are then also a factor in regulating the conflict. Their participation is necessary in order to avoid the arisal of a new conflict and/or a situation in which they themselves, intending to support their children, become actively involved in the conflict events (on the role of parents in (cyber)mobbing processes, see also Chapters 2.1 and 5.4.4, on the element: level of action).

Responsibility

Who takes the step up to the next higher level of violent action? Practically speaking: who initiates the escalation that brings the conflict to the attention of the entire school class? Who is the first to take physical action? Is this person responsible or are there several persons who share the responsibility? The measure of responsibility determines the mode and measure of restitution to be made.

The characteristics of a conflict in process are assessed in terms of their severity or their extent, with A (= minor extent) to E (=maximal extent) – in analogy to the conflict scale to be discussed in the following section.

Relating to the characteristic 'hostility', for example, scale A would signify that a person has no negative feelings and still feels well-disposed towards the other person despite the conflict. Hostility rated as scale E, on the other hand, would indicate that the person harbors strong feelings of hate towards the other and wishes to destroy him or her psycho-socially, even at the expense of serious self-damage.

Determining the Scale of the Conflict

Deriving from Friedrich Glasl's conception of the "degrees of escalation in a conflict" (cf. Glasl 2004; Glasl 2007), we have developed the following scale to describe conflict intensities.

Just as in the assessment of conflict charasteristics, we differentiate here in categories from A to E. Not every conflict necessarily begins at A and proceeds to E, but it can happen. Simultaneously, the estimation as a win-win, win-lose, or lose-lose situation indicates

the developmental trend in a conflict process and makes the dynamics of escalation easier to comprehend. In the last of these situations, lose-lose, one person wishes to damage the other "even if I suffer losses myself". In the same way that a medical diagnosis forms the basis for descisions on treatment, determining the scale of a conflict suggests guidelines for addressing the conflict in the form of strategies for action (see Chapter 5.4.4).

Scale of Escalation for Conflict Processes in the Context of a School or a Youth Agency
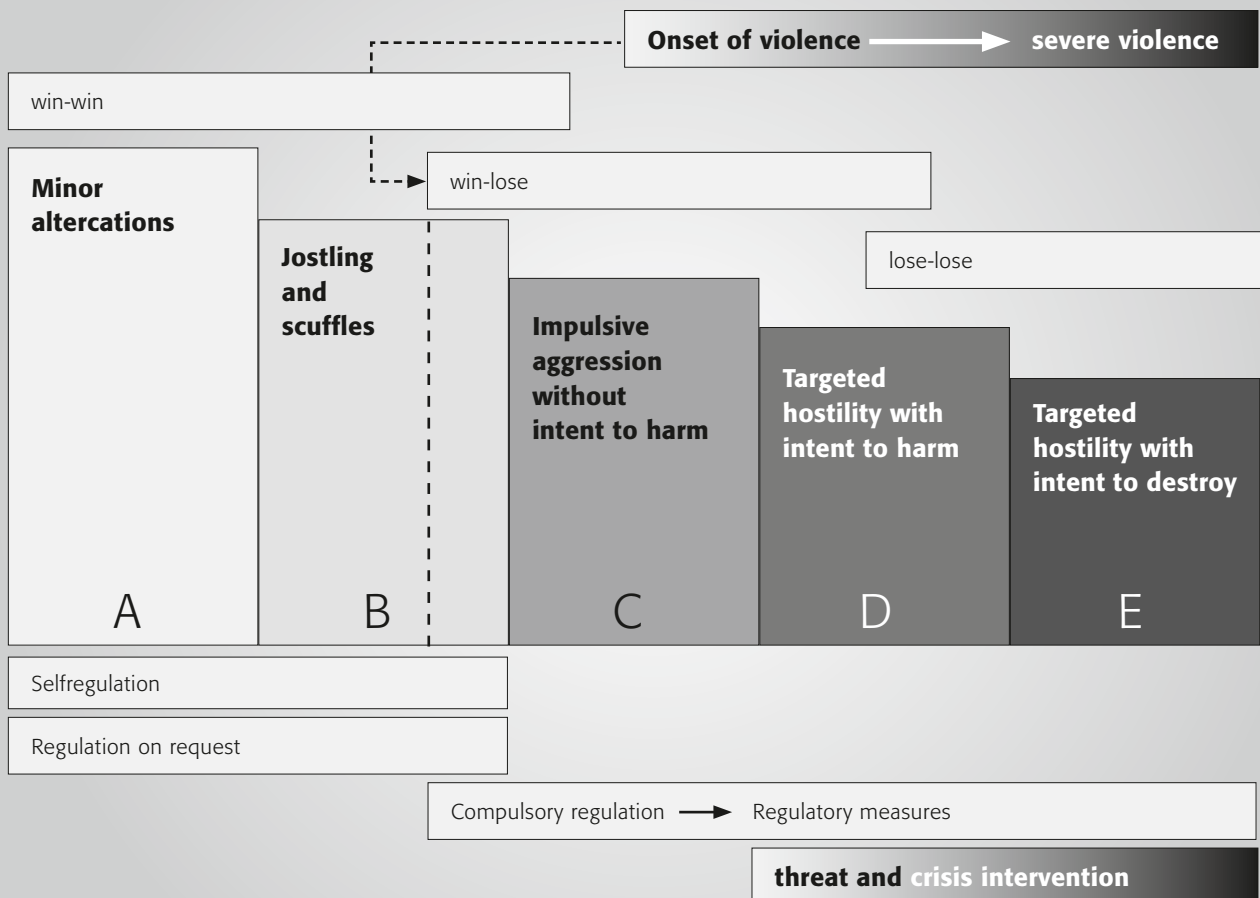
Onset of violence ⟶ **severe violence**

win-win

win-lose

lose-lose

A	B	C	D	E
Minor altercations	**Jostling and scuffles**	**Impulsive aggression without intent to harm**	**Targeted hostility with intent to harm**	**Targeted hostility with intent to destroy**

Selfregulation

Regulation on request

Compulsory regulation ⟶ Regulatory measures

threat and crisis intervention

5.4.3 Building Block: Teamwork

Never walk alone!

One individual person cannot manage to perform all the pedagogical tasks that are necessary towards conflict resolution. Regulatory action, pedagogical measures or sanctions, interviews, conflict support, coaching and counseling, systemic mobbing intervention, follow-up: one person alone would simply be overtaxed, both in terms of time resources and due to the restrictions on his or her role/function as headperson, teacher, school social worker, or school psychologist. Generally, working as a team is required, and in severe cases it is absolutely mandatory. However, the necessary professional skill doesn't just descend from heaven, it has to be acquired.

Form a Team in Advance

Teams that are well-attuned work together more easily. If an operative SCM team is already up and running, then it won't need to be formed amidst the confusion in an acute situation of threat or endangerment. Of course, one person can perform more than one function. But a switch from one role to another should always be communicated carefully.

New Roles in the System

Various persons in differing social roles take part in conflict events. It is important to distinguish between these roles. In a school class or peer group there will be the roles of: offenders, victims, assistants, claquers, defenders, and non-participants (see also Chapter 2.2). In the school context there are also the roles of regulators and parents. When addressing conflicts with Systemic Conflict Management, two new roles come into play on the professional side: the conflict helper and the conflict manager. All interactions among the participants are then chaired by the *conflict manager* or conflict helper. They take on challenging tasks and should therefore be specifically qualified for it through continuing education. The conflict manager prepares team meetings and decisions, formulates the conflict diagnosis, makes recommendations on assessing the conflict, suggests a strategy for action, advises school administrators and homeroom teachers, evaluates the procedure to provide feedback whenever agreements and standards are not adhered to, and is responsible for documentation. The *conflict helper* conducts interviews with those seeking help or confrontative interviews with those accused, and also leads social training sessions and Systemic Mobbing or Brief Interventions. He or she counsels and coaches victims and students responsible for offenses along with their parents, conducts three-way talks, arranges reparation and loss adjustment, and supports the homeroom teacher during follow-up. On the level of the class or peer group – if necessary – two new roles may also be introduced: the buddy and the human rights observer. The buddy, as a support person for the victim, can intervene directly in conflict events, while the human rights observer can only take note of violations of values and norms and then report on them – without naming names – to the conflict helper or the homeroom teacher (see Chapter 5.5.4).

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Building up an External Network

When building your network, don't restrict it to persons working inside of your own school system. Seek contact with external persons who can play a part within the realm of school, such as school social workers, school psychologists, parents, or volunteers. In addition, gather information about the offerings of nearby counseling centers or media education agencies. Once you are well informed and have established such contacts, the basic structures are set up for an emergency, in which case you can then concentrate on the tasks at hand rather than having to catch up on research.

Get in touch with the local police and ask about options for cooperation and about the rules that would apply to it. Police officers are familiar with the penal code. They can advise you in assessing behavior that violates norms. You should, however, keep in mind that when certain offenses come to their attention, police officers are required to initiate proceedings.

Collect information about the availability of counseling services and therapeutic offerings. (Cyber)mobbing can cause traumatization. Sometimes, victims need professional help quickly. What options are there? Do they have long waiting lists? Are individual consultations possible? etc.

Implementation of a Steering Group

For better quality of procedure and the satisfaction of all those actively involved, it is highly recommended to develop and secure structures within the school, with the help of a SCM steering group, through ongoing school development measures in the areas of structural management and personnel management (which are both partial processes in SCM). This steering group is responsible for setting up an SCM team in advance and, before any incident has occurred, addressing together with the team members the tasks, roles, and skills that will be in demand in the event.

5

Excursus: The Realm of School vs. the School System

Before working systemically within a school, it's necessary to clarify its affiliation with a system. Different systems distinguish themselves from one another predominantly through the definition of their mandates, rules, and decision-making structures.

Teachers and headmaster belong to the *school system*. The headmaster is authorized to issue directives to the teachers. Both make decisions on educative or regulatory measures and have an individual, legally defined mandate that obliges them to act.

By contrast, the position of school social workers is quite different. They are a part of the *youth support system*. Its core mandate is assistance for minors and, in certain contexts, the protection of children. Among the fundamental principles of school social work are: voluntary recourse to it, confidentiality, its participatory precept, and the goal of working towards inclusion. School psychology is guided by comparable principles and it refrains, in similar fashion, from dictating educative measures or otherwise pursuing pedagogical aims in the narrow sense. Neither school social work nor school psychology is bound by directives of the school administration.

When these separate systems work together closely and systematically, an overriding field of action is created. In the broadest sense, this can be regarded as a newly consolidated system for conflict resolution – *Systemic Conflict Management*.

School social work and school psychology do their best work when the school is open to them and allows their activity within the *school realm*. In this way, a *subsystem* within the school realm is formed that is both a part of the school system and of the youth support system. Again, it applies that the subsystem needs to have its own rules, standards, and decision-making structures. In discussing teamwork here, we are referring to such a subsystem within the school realm. Needless to say, such structures don't create themselves. Seeing to their development is one of the tasks of structure and personnel management.

Important: In a team, *roles* need to be clarified and be taken on by competent persons – *independent of the original profession* of the person filling a given role. Apart from the homeroom teacher and headmaster (regulators), none of the other team roles are restricted to members of any particular profession and they all can be assigned, for example, to teachers, school social workers, or school psychologists.

The following chart gives an overview of the social roles to be filled during a conflict within the school realm.

Role Distribution in Systemic Conflict Management

	Role	Task(s)
Regulators	Decision maker of the first order *School headmaste*	responsible for orderly process of school activities, regulates conflicts, decides on the convocation and composition of the SCM team and serves as its chairperson, hears the conflicting parties (parents, victims, students responsible for offenses, and their families), levies educative measures or sanctions formally treated as administrative acts, provides counsel for victims, offenders and their families in the role of a regulator
	Decision maker of the second order *Homeroom teacher*	responsible for classroom management, informs parents about all relevant developments relating to them, decides on educative measures that are not formal administrative acts, offers options for interaction, provides counsel for victims, students responsible for offenses, and their families in the role of a regulator
Helpers	Conflict manager *Professional who is trained in Systemic Conflict Management*	prepares team meetings and decisions, formulates the conflict diagnosis, makes recommendations on assessing the conflict, suggests a strategy for action, advises school administrators and homeroom teachers, evaluates the procedure to provide feedback whenever agreements and standards are not adhered to, and is responsible for documentation
	Conflict helper(s) *Professionals qualified in social training and mobbing intervention, or mediation and reparation*	conducts interviews with those seeking help or confrontative interviews with those accused, leads social training sessions and Systemic Mobbing or Brief Interventions, advises on cultivation of values in the class, counsels and coaches victims and students responsible for offenses along with their parents, conducts three-way talks, arranges reparation and loss adjustment – where indicated, to take place in front of the whole class
	Consultant and trainer *Professionals in the field of prevention (e.g. media education)*	advises the team and its associates on professional issues, for example on media education or technical aspects of media
	Conflict support assistants *recruited among parents, teachers, community volunteers, or from external agencies*	conduct interviews with the conflict parties or with others who observed the conflict, assist the conflict helpers

Apart from the roles of the headmaster and homeroom teacher (regulators), **none** of the other roles are restricted to members of any particular profession and they all can be assigned, for example, to teachers, school social workers (youth support system), or school psychologists

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Tasks for External Support Systems

	Institution/Agency	Task(s)
Government institutions	Police	work both in enforcement and prevention, have expert knowledge of penal law – particularly in dealing with offenders who are minors; are obliged to prosecute in certain cases, should only be informed in instances of severe offenses (where prosecution is obligatory) or when pedagogical measures are not possible or not sufficient, or when protection for victims cannot otherwise be ensured and it is imperative that the conflict be clarified but this can only be achieved through police investigation
	School psychology services	advise and support schools, students, parents, and teachers – also in crisis situations or severe instances involving violence, are obliged to confidentiality under penal code (StGB) § 203
Local youth support agencies	Youth authorities	are drawn in when a case of child endangerment occurs, when parents can not or will not provide protection, or when a child can not safely or does not wanto to remain in the family; personnel at the youth authorities are obliged to confidentiality under penal code (StGB) § 203
	School social work	advise and support schools, students, parents, and teachers in crisis situations, coach victims and offenders, conduct Systemic Mobbing and Brief Interventions, serve as mediators, negotiate reparation and restitution, contribute to classroom management or other school programs; obliged to confidentiality under penal code (StGB) § 203
	Counseling services	Contribute to the stabilizing, intensive psycho-social care of children and adolescents who have been confronted with such events as severe cases of (cyber)mobbing; counselors are obliged to confidentiality under penal code (StGB) § 203
Associates (examples)	klicksafe	EU initiative with headquarters at the Central Authority for Media and Communication Rhineland-Palatinate (LMK), provides comprehensive media education materials and support
	Konflikt-KULTUR	Programs for prevention and continuing education, multi-level program, trains professionals in Systemic Conflict Management, mobbing intervention, mediation and negotiating reparation, provides trainers for socialtraining and Systemic Mobbing Intervention, serves as consultant on school devetopment
Health services	Out-patient and in-patient psychiatric/psychothera-peutic services for children and adolescents	treat children and adolescents who are traumatized and emotionally ill; obliged to confidentiality under penal code (StGB) § 203

external professional sources

5.4.4 Strategy for Action

Dealing with conflicts in schools is, unfortunately, too often reduced to the mere issue of methods. The understandable assumption behind this is that competence in methods is something like a Swiss pocket knife – that can rise to almost any challenge. Our experience of the problematic circumstances surrounding (cyber)mobbing or other forms of violent behavior in schools indicates that this approach falls short.

One particularly fashionable method these days is mediation, involving no regulatory measures or pedagogical effort, and instead delegating the conflict resolution to the students. In many school cultures, handling of conflicts is effectively reduced to dispute settlement and negotiation among peers. As helpful and sensible as this can be in certain conflicts, in others it may be entirely misplaced and only exacerbate matters. The assumption that a majority of severe conflicts in schools can be treated by mediative methods alone is contradicted by our experience.

Focussing on method also harbors another risk. As Paul Watzlawick put it, "If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." This saying can help us to avoid applying a method we have acquired simply because it is socially acceptable and we we know how to use it.

We need to widen the perspective and think systemically. In terms of conflict resolution, what does it mean to think and act systemically? It means acknowledging the conflict events in their dynamic on various levels and in different subsystems that reciprocally influence one another, and on this basis developing a strategy that will have effect on all the levels of conflict (see also Chapter 2.1.2) and on the relevant subsystems and their participants. This strategy encompasses educative intervention and definition of limits along with constructive interference involving a wide range of methods to take both circumstances (school structures) and behavior into account; it perceives the involved individuals in their social environment as well as that environment itself, places equal value on both, and also regards those intervening as a significant factor in this environment.

In the following sections we would like to suggest how you can arrive at a strategy for action that is systemic, effective, and sustainable, and we will present the elements that should compose such a strategy.

Overview
A strategy for action emerges, in any and all circumstances, from an ongoing analysis of the conflict on its various levels. Should new developments or insights come up in the course of conflict events, this may well affect the assessment of the conflict and therefore call for adjustment of the strategy. Conflict analysis and strategy for action are inseparably and dynamically linked to one another.

We will describe the strategy for action as consisting of five elements, whereby the element "Phases of Action" is of such great significance for an understanding of SCM that we will treat it separately in Chapter 5.5.

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Five Elements of a Strategy for Action

Mode of action developed on the basis of the "Five key questions in planning a strategy for action"	Self-regulation	Conflict scale A–B
	Regulation on request	Conflict scale B
	Compulsory regulation	Conflict scale C–D
	Threat intervention	Conflict scale E
	Crisis intervention	Conflict scale E

Direction of action	Support	Upon request, the conflict parties, their classmates and (if indicated) families are given support toward a satisfactory resolution of the conflict through coaching, mediation, reparation and loss adjustment, Systemic Mobbing or Brief Intervention, and other methods
	Regulatory measure	School headmaster and homeroom teacher interfere by introducing educative or regulatory measures to de-escalate the conflict, such as pledges to refrain from the use of violence, temporary suspension from classes, ban on mobile phones
	Package deal	Support and regulatory measures are coupled, for example: if reparation is agreed upon (support) and restitution is made, a certain measure will not be taken (suspension from class)

Level of action (the conflict level on which action is necessary)	Intrapersonal	Individual support, coaching to stabilize the conflict participants
	Interpersonal	Mediation, reparation to settle the conflict peacefully
	In the system: peer group, school class	Interventions to restore or stabilize a democratic framework of values and norms in peer groups, class or school communities; motivation of parents' representatives to engage in cooperative action with the homeroom teacher
	In the system: family	Motivation of families to engage in the educational partnership with the school, taking the respective family dynamic into account
	Institutional	Pedagogically oriented regulatory measures or sanctions, restitution to restore harmony to the school or the class

Phases of action	Phase I First response and positioning
	Phase II Threat or crisis intervention
	Phase III Conflict regulation
	Phase IV Follow-up and final resolution

Methods of action	- Methods for pedagogical intervention steps, such as monitoring during school attendance, pledges to refrain from the use of violence, ban on mobile phone use, individual talks to spell out norms and risks
	- Methods of conflict support, such as mediation, reparation and loss adjustment, volunteer work for the school community, Systemic Mobbing Intervention or Systemic Brief Intervention (see Chapter 4)

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The Element: Mode of Action

The mode of action in addressing a conflict is a core factor in the strategy for action. Clarifying the mode of action is the first step in addressing a conflict.

A teacher might conclude in a particular situation that the students will be able to resolve the conflict on their own, and therefore decide on the mode of *self-regulation*. Or the teacher might be of the opinion that he or she needs to interfere in the conflict, whether the conflict parties want that or not: therefore, the mode will be *compulsory regulation*. In the case of a threat or crisis situation, the school has no choice. Due to the legal responsibilities that apply, the decision must be made for the mode of *threat or crisis intervention*.

In addressing a conflict, a mode of action appropriate to the conflict events is chosen. From this decision on the mode, further steps including the direction of action and the methods applied will proceed. The conflict parties should participate in this decision on the mode of action. Their participation, however, does not automatically imply that decisions on all issues rest upon them.

Whether those who are educationally responsible should interfere at all, or whether they are in fact obliged to regulate the conflict, how and when they should do so: these issues can be approached using the "guiding questions" explained below.

Five Modes of a Strategy for Action

Modi	Definition	Conflict scale
Self-regulation	The regulation of the conflict is left to the conflict parties themselves.	A–B
Regulation on request	Because at least one of the conflict parties has requested support, the educator who is responsible takes action to help one or both of the parties solve the conflict non-violently.	B
Compulsory regulation	The teacher or headmaster interferes in their official capacity as a regulator, because a norm relevant to the school has been violated.	C–D
Threat intervention	The teacher or headmaster intervenes as a regulator in order to clarify or de-fuse a threat and to de-escalate the conflict.	E
Crisis intervention	An adult or the homeroom teacher or headmaster intervenes directly and immediately because an emergency is in the offing or is occurring, in order to provide emergency aid, secure the situation, and de-escalate the conflict quickly. After this incident, the conflict is addressed in a process of compulsory regulation.	E

Five Guiding Questions for Determining a Mode of Action

Question 1
Is it imperative to address the conflict immediately, since there is danger of serious physical harm being done?

→ **Yes** → **Crisis intervention**

If only immediate intervention can avert the danger, then action must be taken. Furthermore, the headmaster and, if indicated, the parents need to be informed right away. In a crisis intervention, the headmaster is in charge. He or she convenes a crisis team.

No ↓

Question 2
Does the conflict threaten to escalate in a hostile manner and develop into a dangerous situation/crisis?

→ **Yes** → **Threat intervention**

The threat that has been described and is subjectively experienced has to be examined: is it in fact substantial? The aim is de-escalation to stabilize the conflict events. In a threatening situation, one does not begin by offering support.

No ↓

Question 3
Has there been a relevant violation of values and norms that calls for a pedagogical response?

→ **Yes** → **Compulsory regulation**

The compulsory regulation calls for sanctioning or support. The two can be coupled in a 'package deal'.

No ↓

Question 4
Does the student wish for help in resolving the conflict?

→ **Yes** → **Regulation on request**

One or both of the conflict parties receive support towards overcoming the conflict – through coaching, three-way conversation, mediation, or restitution. The 'who, what, when, and how' is always discussed outside of class, never during.

No ↓

Question 5
Do you wish to leave the regulation of the conflict to the parties involved?

→ **Yes** → **Self-regulation**

One or both of the conflict parties can resolve the conflict and get along with the outcome

No ↓

Clarification of mandate

Ask the students for permission to be involved (feedback, counseling, coaching, mediation).

The Element: Direction of Action

The direction of the action is an essential aspect of a strategy for action. Fundamentally, two directions present themselves as options for the regulation of a conflict: on the one hand, *pedagogical interference* involving a number of educative measures, and on the other, *social education support* for one or both of the conflict parties. There is actually a third option, as well, where a regulatory measure and support are coupled in a *package deal*. This direction of action is suggested in some school laws, but unfortunately is largely unknown in practice.

Pedagogical Interference

Due to a violation of norms and values, the regulator – i.e. the responsible educator (teacher, homeroom teacher, or headmaster) – reacts by introducing educative measures or sanctions to fulfill the educational mandate while protecting students and teachers. In the context of Systemic Conflict Management we refer to educative measures or sanctions as interference, since they can be undertaken even without permission from the student or his parents. The aim is to protect the framework of values and norms in the school community from eroding, to minimize risks, to exercise the mandate for education, and in particular to promote pro-social personality formation in the students. We deliberately refer to these actions of teachers and headmasters as pedagogical interference, to emphasize the constructive intent and positive stimulus (as opposed to other forms of interference experienced as a disturbance or as static).

When norms are disrespected, a conflict arises between one or more of the conflict parties and the homeroom teacher or headmaster as representatives of the school. We call this an *institutionally induced conflict* (see Chapter 2.1.2 for discussion of the institutional conflict level). Every form of educative interference requires a legal foundation, must be enacted by a school staff member, and has to allow for parental participation. (Participation in this context is not tantamount to decision.) School social workers or school psychologists are not permitted to interfere in this way – with the exception of situations in which they observe an emergency, are obliged to help, and no teacher or headmaster is present.

Regarding pedagogical interference in a conflict, there are two types of interference to be taken into regard. State school laws distinguish between "pedagogical educative measures and means" and "regulatory measures and formal sanctions". The latter are administrative acts which generally constrict personality rights of a student – even two hours of additional class (detention) would fulfill this criterion. By contrast, measures of pedagogical interference are not administrative acts and need not conform to formal procedural rules. Naturally, they must not violate fundamental rights of the students, for example by humiliating or emotionally damaging them. A pedagogical interference measure might be, for example, a reprimand during a one-on-one talk, or some additional homework. Pedagogical interference through such measures and means, wherever sufficient and effective, should always take precedence over sanctions.

The functions of pedagogical interference:

- Pedagogical interference measures are aimed at restoring harmony in the classroom or school community and at promoting the personality formation of the student. Positively speaking, their goal is enabling all the individuals at a school to live and work together harmoniously. The measures should allow children and adolescents to develop their personality freely and assist them in exercising their right to an education.

- Such measures protect members of the community from violations of their rights, particularly fundamental human rights and children's rights, while they are living and working together at school.

- Theses measures have an overall preventive effect. All members of the school community are made aware that violations of values and norms have consequences. A norm is only respected within a community if violations against it can be sanctioned and the measures have an emotional impact.

- The measures provide orientation for children and adolescents and make it easier for them to adapt to societal culture (fulfilling the school's mandate to promote social skills and enculturation).

This is a juncture at which misunderdandings frequently can arise because victims and their parents assume it is the duty of the school to investigate and punish a student offense. But punishment is not the school's job; that is reserved to the judicial system, to the authority of the state. It goes without saying that criminal acts committed at school by students cannot be quietly tolerated. When legal norms are violated – for example, stipulations of the penal code or copyright law, which are often offended in cases of (cyber)mobbing – teachers and administrators should respond with pedagogical efforts, so that students can learn from their mistakes. Punishment and retaliation are not suitable measures for interference in conflicts. Therefore, within the framework of SCM itself, there is no emphasis on investigation or witness statements; where indicated, these are tasks for the police. In SCM, interviews are conducted, students are confronted with accusations and are held responsible. The emphasis is on listening, participation, and documentation.

Pedagogical Support
Promoting pro-social personality formation and with it, personal and communicative skills, is far more successful when based on support and aid than on sanctions. Anyone who relies on keeping the students functioning – in the hope that fear of sanctions will move them to adhere to norms – is clinging to an approach that has been dismantled thoroughly by criminality research. Support and help for the conflict parties, offender as well as victim, have greater educational significance than sanctions. Conflict support enables the parties to arrive at a non-violent conflict resolution or at least to live with a conflict that will not escalate dynamically into violence. Conflict support has a number of diverse tasks to fulfill. A differentiated discussion of the available methods is to be found later in this chapter.

On the intrapersonal level, support helps
- victims to deal better with psycho-social stress factors, and thus prevent traumatization,
- offenders to become aware of their own neediness and of the consequences of their deeds,

and on the interpersonal level, support helps the conflict parties
- to define their own position in the conflict process,
- to develop non-violent defense strategies to parry attacks and to apply these strategies confidently (victims),
- to communicate non-violently in the conflict process and to articulate their own needs calmly (offenders),
- to make reparation for injustice done and damage caused, and to end the conflict on a conciliatory note – at the end of the restitution process, there is then personal recognition for the offender rather than stigmatization as an "evil person".

On various levels, support helps
- families in dealing with the stigma of 'victim' or 'offender' in such a way that the conflict dynamic can be de-escalated,
- school classes and peer groups in taking stock of their own interactive culture and, if necessary, re-activating pro-social values,
- schools to enhance their pedagogical profile and instate conflict support methods as a prominent feature of their educational and school culture, inwardly and outwardly,
- homeroom teachers and headmasters to perceive conflict support methods as an opportunity for cooperation with external support systems, and in this way to tap new resources that reinforce the educational efforts of the school,
- to give school social workers and school psychologists a structural opening for work with and access to their clientele.

Pedagogical Package Deal
Interference and support join together in the 'package deal' (junctim). Systems of regulation and support form a healthy synthesis. This means that the regulator makes a conciliatory offer to the conflict party, something like: "I want to see you come into your own, so I'm giving you a chance. If you make reparation, then you won't be sanctioned!" If a student is willing to accept conflict support and "get things back in order", then the community – represented by the homeroom teacher or headmaster – can make a suggestion of this kind.

The offender is being given a chance for support, shown a way out of blame or guilt and towards responsibility – away from justifications for the past and towards a stabile resolution for the future. To take this step, most school students need professional support from qualified conflict helpers (trained in mediation, negotiating reparation and loss adjustment). The motivation to accept the package deal is clearly reinforced by the immediate recognition it grants – discontinuation of sanctions and acknowledgement by the institution. Students who choose this option for reparation or loss adjustment usually learn something new from it and often make a step toward maturity. A school that offers the option of a package deal also enhances its pedagogical 'tool case' considerably. The principle "support is better than punishment" humanizes the school while protecting it from any naïve assumption that enlightened thinking, help and understanding could prevent violence.

In recent years, educative support efforts and regulatory sanctions have somehow parted ways in the traditional school system, and have no longer been closely related to one another. This is a loss for both types of action.

It wasn't until a few years ago that the option for making reparation was anchored in the school law of some of Germany's federal states. And in practice, there is still a long way to go.

The Element: Level of Action
By 'level of action' we mean, in the following, the conflict level on which an active response is necessary. Determining the level(s) to be addressed is one of the tasks of conflict analysis (see Chapter 5.4.2). Deciding when to become active on what level is an essential that should not be neglected. Effective measures toward conflict resolution build on a multi-leveled approach. Although this approach is gradually becoming more common, it still occurs frequently that the methods applied during practical treatment of the conflict are limited to the interpersonal level 2 – that is, to the communication and interactive behavior of the conflict parties. However, in the long run this will not lead to sustainability, and it also neglects the aspects of victim protection and work with offenders on the intrapersonal level 1.

Levels of Action in Systemic Conflict Management
SCM is a multi-leveled program and encompasses the subprocesses structural, personnel, and process management (see Chapter 5.3). While process management treats the conflict events on the micro and meso levels, structural and personnel management also take the macro level into account. All three levels influence one another reciprocally.

micro level	1	**Level of intrapersonal thinking, feelings, and wishes of the conflict parties**
	2	**Level of interpersonal interaction between the conflict parties**
meso level	3	**Level of the peer group and school class systems** (homeroom teacher, group dynamic, informal framework of values and norms)
	4	**Level of the school as an institution** (headmaster, structures, school and house rules, guiding policy, vital framework of values and norms, pedagogical profile, social curriculum, cooperation schemes, contracts)
	5	**Level of cooperation between the school and parents as educational partners** (informal framework of values and norms in the family and school systems, cultural background, religious affiliation, social and economic situation, family and school dynamic)
macro level	6	**Level of surrounding conditions in the civil community** Youth support planning, communal education planning
	7	**Level of legal statutes** Civil rights, penal code, school law, law on assistance for minors, UN Children's Rights Convention, Federal Child Protection Law

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When assuming a systemic perspective on (cyber)-mobbing, one cannot stop at the students but must rather go on to take the other participants into account – these are the teachers, headmasters (level 4) and the parents with whom they interact (level 5). They all have an effect on the dynamic of mobbing – sometimes as victims, sometimes as passive witnesses, sometimes even contributing to the cause.

Teachers who maintain an authoritarian style of education, based on the principle of personal subjugation, can serve as a (negative) model for students who then, becoming offenders, establishing authoritarian structures within the class. Teachers who cultivate a permissive style may, on the other hand, offer less orientation than necessary – which offenders can take advantage of when implementing a dissocial framework of values and norms. The best prophylaxis proceeds from a teaching style that is authoritative but at the same time provides the students with orientation and appreciation (see Chapter 7).

Students active in mobbing are not necessary the ones who cause disturbances in class or criticize teachers. They can also be students with good grades who participate during lessons and behave submissively towards teachers.

There are other cases, however, as depicted in Chapter 3, where teachers can be threatened by mobbing attacks. Earlier, in chapter 2, we described the typical dynamic of mobbing, in which the offenders gain increasing sway and, with it, can also influence teachers. As their power increases, they feel confident enough to act more openly, even during class. This presents a danger for teachers in more than one respect. If a teacher contradicts these students, he or she may encounter massive resistance. But if the teacher does not react, he or she may gradually surrender the role of leadership in the class.

In constellations such as these, there is a risk that the teachers may develop a 'blind spot' and no longer take note of the dissocial behavior of certain students.

Although parents rarely appear in the everyday workings of school life, in the background they can strongly reinforce (cyber)mobbing, or even initiate it. This tends to come into play when the parents themselves, in their own personal interactions, are living by a dissocial set of values and norms and therefore give a bad example for their children, perhaps even encouraging their young to exclude and disparage others. Occasionally there are parents who enjoy watching their children use mobbing methods to attain higher social status in their school class and make good connections. If such parents succeed in taking the lead at a parents' meeting with their opinions, then the chances for intervening constructively deteriorate rapidly. In such cases, the offenders feel protected by their parents. The system of mobbing events is then mirrored on the level of cooperation between parents and the school.

On the first, intrapersonal level, one works with an individual person who needs support in dealing with him/herself. Close psycho-social attention can have positive effects in various areas – psychosomatic disorders, behavioral problems such as avoidance of school, short attention span, or lack of self-control. Interpersonal work on the second level focuses on the interaction of the conflict parties. The systemic work addresses the third, fourth, and fifth levels, aiming at adjustments of the conditions in the family, class, or school system, and the interaction among these systems.

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The Element: Methods of Action

The choice of methods is sometimes made too hastily, with the unfortunate result that they are not carefully enough coordinated with other elements of the strategy for action. In the following sections we explain how you can select, from a portfolio of methods, one that is tailor-fit to a particular conflict. Related pedagogical-psychological background can be found in Chapter 7. And two of the most effective methods for addressing (cyber)mobbing are presented in detail in Chapter 4.

Methods of Pedagogical Interference

Methods of pedagogical interference are anchored in educational law as regulatory measures and sanctions. They are tools for affecting the course of a conflict through educative influence on the conflict parties (see, e.g., GEW yearbook 2015). For your school's portfolio of methods, we recommend the following educative and supportive measures that have stood us in good stead over the years.

Interference by Means of Educative Measures

Educative measure	Description
One-on-one talk covering norms and risks (NaR talk)	The NaR talk does not address past events, but rather future behavior. Imparting norms is its essential significance. The addressee is informed about the potential risks and ramifications of his or her actions for himself and others.
Supervision during school breaks and recess	A student is not allowed to interact with schoolmates during breaks. He or she is personally supervised at these times.
Supervised attendance during school hours	A student is accompanied by a monitor during school hours, before and after lessons. He or she is not allowed to interact with schoolmates at these times.
Pledge to refrain form the use of violence	A pledge to refrain from the use of violence is a special form of a declaration to desist. A violation of norms that has taken place is discussed thoroughly with the student, in the presence of his or her parents. Building upon this, the aim is to negotiate with the offender to set out a personal declaration to refrain from violent behavior in the future. The student's resolve to adhere to values and norms from this point on is cross-examined, and the parents are motivated to participate actively in an educational partnership. With his or her signature, the student demonstates his willingness to refrain from the use of violence and to accept help in his efforts towards that goal. The regulators are the official contract partners of this written declaration to desist, but it can be prepared together with the student by a school social worker, who also chairs the ensuing meeting with the homeroom teacher and headmaster.
Composition of a personal statement	Some people would call this a "punitive assignment". But the student is not requested to copy by rote any school statues or other existing rules, but rather asked to compose a personal statement about his or her own behavior.

Interference by Means of Formal Sanctions

Formal sanction	Description
One or two hours of detention	The student is given one or two hours of additional instruction with the requirement that he or she compose a personal statement.
Four hours of detention	The student receives four hours of additional instruction with the requirement that he or she compose a personal statement. He or she is presented with instruction materials and questions on the issue of violent behavior.
Threat of suspension from lessons	The student is warned that he may be temporarily suspended from (not allowed to attend) classes.
Suspension from lessons (where indicated, with supervision)	The student is barred from attending classes. The suspension may last one only day, or several weeks. Wherever possible, the student should be supervised during the period of suspension (e.g., through a youth support measure or a by school social worker).
Threat of expulsion from school	The student is threatened with being expelled from school.
Expulsion from school	The student is expelled from school.
Ban on entering the school	The (former) student is barred from the school campus (where necessary, this may extend to the parents). This is an administrative act that can only be executed by a headmaster due to the house authority vested in him/her.

Methods of Pedagogical Support

Applying the methods of conflict support make it easier for the involved parties to come to a non-violent resolution of the conflict or to be able to live with the conflict without having it spiral into an escalation of violence and retaliation. The available support methods come to bear on several levels, have reciprocal effects on one another, and differ in their goals.

Support on the Intrapersonal Level

Method	Description
Counseling/coaching	Victims or offenders together with their parents or guardians receive support, in an ongoing series of consultations, towards coming to terms with psycho-social strain or towards achieving certain goals, such as learning to defend oneself non-violently, preparing for a formal meeting with the homeroom teacher and headmaster, signing a declaration to refrain from the use of violence, and adhering to such a pledge. In cases associated with mild or moderate psycho-social strain, support can be provided within the school framework by specifically qualified school social workers or school psychologists. If more severe psycho-social strain or traumatization that could lead to illness are suspected, then the affected student should be referred to external support systems (counseling services, child psychiatry or psychotherapeutic professionals).

Support on the Interpersonal Level

Method	Description
Interviews	There are different types of interviews. We distinguish between interviews with a person seeking support, interviews with students accused of an offense, and interviews with observers. All three serve the purposes of first response, clarification of conflict events, analysis of a conflict, and confrontation with an accusation. Here, it is particularly productive if interviewers can comprehend the intrapersonal tensions and suggestions for resolution made by the persons involved.
Three-way talks	In a three-way talk, the conflict parties have the opportunity to express themselves freely – in a protected situation, to articulate a wish, voice a demand, or raise an accusation. The talk is not, by definition, directly aimed at reaching a resolution. It is supported by a school mediator, and the way is the goal. A three-way talk can be initiated by a teacher or the headmaster with the aim of reaching a better understanding of the conflict events as mirrored on the intra- and interpersonal levels.
School mediation	School mediation is a form of arbitration suited for de-fusing conflicts that have hardened into a chronic condition. The method is oriented towards resolution. The conflict parties are supported by a qualified school mediator following professional standards. School mediation is more extensive than a three-way talk, usually requiring several preparatory meetings and more than one mediation session. On occasion, parents need to be involved or at least informed. This aspect can also be managed via video conference.
Supervised breaks	This form of support is provided either for students who seek protection from further attack, or is mandated for certain students to prevent damage being done to others during school breaks (see above section on pedagogical interference). Sometimes, the student affected will be monitored by a person from the support system, for example, a school social worker in his or her office. If a student objects to being supervised, then one of the regulators (teacher, headmaster) has to take on the task as a formal act, since all the methods of conflict support are based on the principle of voluntary participation.
Supervised attendance during school hours	The student in question is under constant supervision (by a teacher or school social worker) during classes as well as breaks.

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Method	Description
Supervised suspension	The student is barred from attending class and instead remanded to a supplementary form of supervision (e.g. a youth support program or a school social worker). An information sheet for parents can be prepared in advance for use in this situation.
Support from buddies	If, in the course of a mobbing intervention, a student is not yet able to defend him/herself against an offender (through non-violent self-assertion), he or she can accept the support of buddies. These are classmates who actively protect the student from transgressions by others. Their assumption of this supportive role can be handled openly or discreetly. If this is done discreetly, the classmates and potentially also the victim are not aware of the protective function. If it is done openly, the victim's agreement to it serves to justify it towards the rest of the class and also as a motivation for the classmates to support the protective role of the buddies. Appointing buddies is undertaken as a way of compensating a disadvantage, with techniques to be discussed with the students serving as buddies (e.g. non-violent, supportive rather than defensive/aggressive). Support from a counselor can also be arranged for buddies.
Loss adjustment	Loss adjustment can be a part of a restitution agreement. It helps to reconcile the conflict on the interpersonal level. It is negotiated by a school mediator (conflict helper/trained in mediation and restitution) according to set standards. The school mediator helps the conflict parties to decide on a suitable form of loss adjustment for personal damage done. Realizing a loss adjustment requires voluntary participation of the conflict parties.
Reparation	Making reparation can also be part of a restitution agreement. While loss adjustment is intended to rectify matters between individual persons, reparation pertains to the pedagogical response and to resolving the institutionally founded conflict between a person and the school. Reparation is a way of making recompense to the school community and its representatives for an offensive action (a criminal offense, a violation of fundamental human rights). Often, homeroom teacher and headmaster will call for the offender to perform some kind of "community service" at the school. But making reparation is voluntary, and coercion would be out of place here. In many cases, reparation is made in front of the class. Therefore, it is not considered a means of pedagogical interference.

Support through Systemic Intervention

Method	Description
Systemic Mobbing Intervention (SMI) see Chapter 4.3	In an SMI, the violent acts – or more precisely, frequent and systematic chicanery directed against a person – are exposed together with the class. During this work with the class, in general the victim is present. SMI focuses on the behavior involved in harassment and victimization, not on the offender as a person. In seven steps, the group works towards a change of perspective, development of compassion, invalidation of behavioral 'hooks' – often used as stereotypes to justify (cyber)mobbing – and towards formulating a pledge to desist and activating a system of helpers (buddies/human rights observers). Usually, SMI is imbedded in a two-day social training event. This increases its effectiveness.
Systemic Brief Intervention (SBI) See Chapter 4.4	SBI, like SMI, relies on triggering concern and compassion. But the path to them is a different one. Neither victim nor offender is openly identified. Instead, the group works with stories and metaphors. The aim of the intervention, as with SMI, is to de-escalate the systemic part of the conflict, to reactivate a pro-social framework of norms and values, to have all the classmates develop a personal pledge, and to implement a support system.
Circumspect monitoring of the declaration to desist or voluntary personal pledge, conducted regularly by human rights observers	During the follow-up phase, in particular after an SMI or SBI, sustainability needs to be ensured: therefore, the class elects several students charged with observing the group's adherence to fundamental human rights and children's rights. In declarations to desist, called for by the homeroom teacher or headmaster, students spell out that they will refrain from illegal, norm-violating, and damaging acts towards other students in the future. To guarantee effectiveness, compliance with these declarations and voluntary pledges made by the students is checked upon at regular intervals. In a voluntary pledge (contract with oneself) students state their resolve to respect human rights, for example in the class chat, without discussing past behavior or reproaching individual classmates.

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A prerequisite for applying these methods is being specifically qualified to do so. Without training, supervision, and standards upheld, conflict situations can be worsened, escalate out of control, and endanger persons who have sought help. The interactive culture of a school class can be damaged, not to mention the professional status of the responsible teacher, school social worker or school psychologist.

5.4.5 Building Block: Documentation and Reporting

When it comes to documentation, meticulousness pays off, since it fulfills important functions:

■ Documentation serves to support memory. Especially if several conflicts have to be addressed at the same time, if many individuals are involved in a conflict and/or the events are convoluted, solid documentation will make it easier to compare differing perspectives or secure evidence.

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- In crises or cases of child endangerment, documentation is legally obliged (cf. § 8a Book Eight, Social Lawbook [SGB VIII]).

- Teachers are accountable to parents and headmasters. Documentation therefore serves toward their security and the protection of their professional status.

- A detailed documentation of all steps that have been taken enables one to reflect on one's own actions.

To optimize the documentation and reduce the work load, it is recommended to use standardized forms in a digital format. Suitable software is available at low cost in common office packages. Reporting duties – that is, who needs to report about what to whom, and when – should be definitively decided upon and stated clearly by the personnel management.

5.5 The Element: Phases of Action

Mountain climbing is undertaken in 'legs' – separate stretches of a route, which are clearly marked. Addressing a conflict is similar. It proceeds through typical phases in a set order. The more clearly the phases of action and turning points are defined, the more transparent the "route" for teachers, students and parents, victims and offenders.

The preparatory phase of conflict resolution (*Phase 0*) is, strictly speaking, not a phase in the conflict itself. It should take place in advance of any specific conflict treatment (see Chapters 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 on structures and management).

The *first phase* consists of three separate steps. The first is to grasp the situation and provide emotional and physical support on the intrapersonal level to the person who is seeking help. In the second step, the situation is assessed and the mandate is clarified. In the third step, the professional who has been approached positions him/herself towards the conflict parties on the interpersonal level and decides for or against forming a team to address the situation.

The *second phase* is that of threat or crisis intervention. This is always undertaken in a team. The aim is, on the one hand, to secure the situation and protect the conflict parties from (further) emotional, physical, material, and social damage, and on the other hand to work towards de-escalating the conflict events. It is also possible that initial regulatory measures or sanctions will be enacted.

The *third phase* begins with the clarification of any remaining uncertainties about what has occurred. In a second step, after it has been established who is responsible for damage done to persons or for a violation of values, norms, and rules, the conflict parties are confronted with the outcome. In the third and major step of this phase, the decisions and agreements that have been arrived at are implemented.

Phases of Action in Addressing a Conflict

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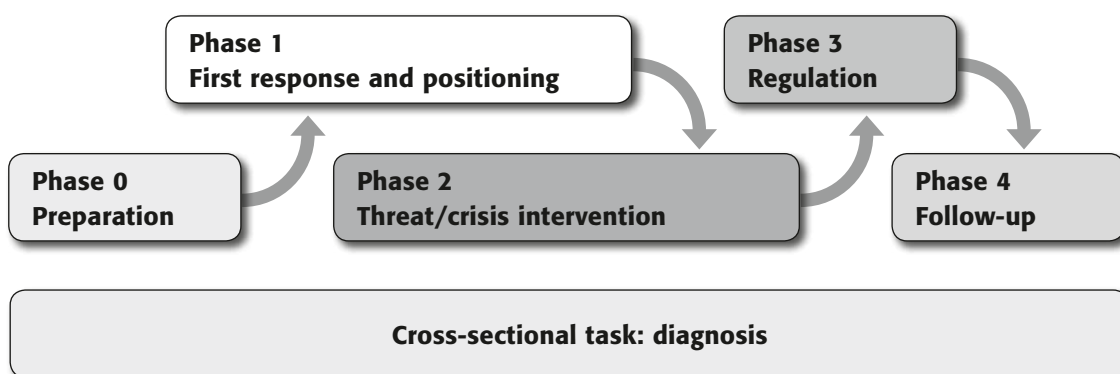
Phase four is devoted to follow-up. Its significance should not be underestimated. Ultimately, this is the phase that will determine sustainability. Conflict diagnosis is not an isolated phase, but rather, like documentation, a cross-sectional activity to be pursued in all phases. The following chart provides an overview of the phases and their tasks:

Phases of Action and their Tasks

Phase 0 Preparation	Phase 1 First response Positioning	Phase 2 Threat or crisis intervention	Phase 3 Regulation of the conflict	Phase 4 Follow-up
Cross-sectional activities of conflict diagnosis and documentation Ongoing assessment on all conflict levels to estimate hostility, danger of escalation, individuals involved, groups (systems and subsystems), and the readiness to accept non-violent problem-solving strategies and support; perception of any substantial indications for child endangerment, both for the victim and the offender; documentation and reporting in according with defined standards				
Tasks				
Creation of structures	First response, clarification of mandate, positioning	Securing the situation & de-escalating the danger	Planning & realization of conflict regulation	Monitoring and stabilizing processes
Reach decision to initiate program on the class or school level Determine scale of involvement Qualify professional personnel Agree on principles, standards for procedure and methods Assign resources Form network with external support systems Inform and engage students, parents, and teachers	Provide psycho-social first aid Comprehend what has occurred and how it was subjectively experienced Formulate first assessment, categorize the conflict on the scale of A–E Clarify the mandate given by the person seeking help Estimate the possibility of child endangerment Decide on positioning in the field of individual support, conflict support or child protection Determine which conflict levels will be addressed in what order Agree on composition of team and assignment of roles, define requirements for documentation, reporting, and pariticpation	Consider indications of potential threat and assess their severity Implement measures to protect victim and offfender Lay out crisis intervention plan with direction and levels of actions, educative measures and support, and the methods to be applied Decide on whether to involve an external support system	With the conflict parties and, if indicated, their guardians, develop a suggestion for regulating the conflict in an educative process and ending it on a conciliatory note Work through the conflict together with the victim, offender, and school class in a pedagogical frame, applying suitable methods such as coaching, mediation, loss adjustment and reparation, Systemic Mobbing Intervention of Systemic Brief Intervention	Stabilize the process of conflict regulation on a long-term basis Monitor the adherence of students to their personal declarations to desist and to their personal pledges Acknowledge pro-social developments in the group Confront dissocial impulses that crop up Complete the process and document outcomes

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5.5.1 Phase I – First Response and Positioning

At the outset, the first step is to provide physical and emotional care for the person seeking help. The situation is laid out for the first time, and the subjective experience of it is also asked about, since this will contribute to an understanding of the needs and inner tensions of the persons involved. The documentation of a severe conflict (scale D and E) begins here and extends throughout the process until its resolution.

In a second step, the aim is to shed light on what exactly has happened, to assess the situation, and to clarify the mandate, which follows from the facts and discussion during the initial meeting.

The first priority is assessing risks and the degree of endangerment. From here on, there will be a continuous, systematic analysis of the conflict events, throughout all phases of action.

The professional who conducted the initial meeting now has to formulate precisely what he or she is commissioned to do, i.e. the mandate, and in a third step, to position him/herself toward the conflict parties. In this step, the professional person decides, in an exchange with the person seeking help, what the area of work will be: will this remain an individual counseling situation, or will the constellation be conflict support – involving other persons as well? Or, for reasons of child protection, is it indicated to plan an intervention and form a team?

Positioning within the Field of Work
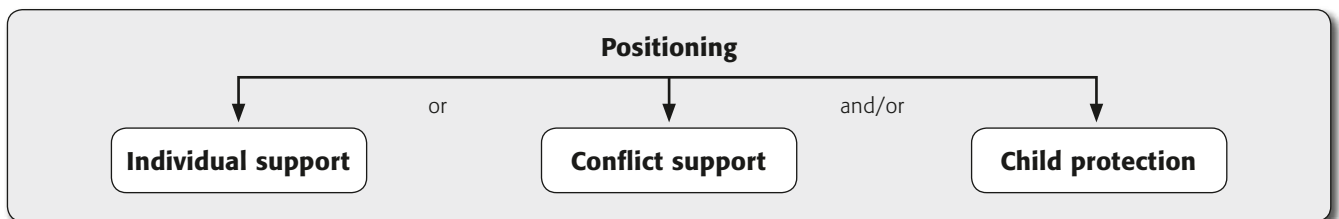
In the area of conflict support, addressing a severe conflict will call for the assignment of roles and tasks to various persons; in the area of child protection, depending on the individual case, a team may be formed with the same set of persons. From the first assessment and positioning follows the mode of action for further treatment of the conflict on its various levels (see Chapter 5.4.4); this is discussed and decided upon by the team.

1 **First Step: First Response Goals/Tasks**
■ provide physical and psycho-social care to the person seeking help
■ understand what has occurred and how it is being experienced intrapersonally and interpersonally
■ assume a position in the work area of individual support, conflict support, or child protection
■ document what has been reported

Guiding Questions
■ Which persons have participated in the conflict, in what roles, and who has observed it?
■ Which person seeking help describes what type of behavior from what perspective (perception of events, e.g., through hearing or seeing), and how have they experienced it (interpretation based on thoughts, bodily sensations, feelings, needs)?
■ What does the person seeking help want and need? What psycho-social needs are apparent or can be assumed? What needs have been damaged? Which of these have priority and should be attended to immediately?
■ What inner tensions become apparent through all this?
■ What solutions does the person seeking help see towards relieving the tension? Which does he or she prefer? How great are the person's deficits with regard to non-violent paths to solution?

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- Which persons are perceived by the one seeking help in what roles? Observer, damager, offender, assistants?
- In your estimation, how great is the share of the person seeking help in creating the conflict, how great is the share of the others?
- In what the person seeking help has experienced and describes, are there substantial indications of child endangerment? Am I, as a professional, mandated by law to initiate a child protection intervention?
- Is it allowed, possible, advisable, or obligatory to inform the headmaster and the parents?

Description of Procedure

■ First contact
The first person who learns about the conflict is already partly positioned by this knowledge. It predefines his or her social role, the task of first response and of clarifying the mandate. This person bears great responsibility in cases of severe, violently escalating conflicts. Aside from the formal duties, he or she has to decide whether to take on the mandate, implicitly or explicitly – to provide support beyond this first response and whether to pledge confidentiality – or to transfer the matter to a third person who could be called in. The first responder decides whether to refer the case to someone else or to begin working quickly towards the next phase. He or she also decides on what information from the initial contact will be passed on to whom, and it what form – anonymized or revealing personal identities.

An agreement to work together with the person seeking help presupposes that person's trust and is often reached implicitly. The great significance of appropriate pedagogical action in this phase is often underestimated in everyday school life. Even at this early point in time, the path to potential success of Systemic Conflict Management is being laid out.

■ First response to the person seeking help
Before an extensive conversation can take place with the person seeking help, their physical and psycho-social needs have to be attended to in a first step.

If the student is bodily injured, of course the first priority is medical attention. But one must also pay attention to the psycho-social condition of the student: if he or she is very nervous, angry, sad, etc., the first thing is to calm him or her down. You can use relaxation techniques for this or simply give the student some time. Often it suffices to just be there for support.

■ Grasp the events and the subjective experience
The next task is comprehending as fully as possible the situation depicted by the person seeking help, so that in the ensuing second step the situation can be assessed. Not only the events that have occurred need to be understood, but also the interpersonal events – the interaction between the persons involved – and the intrapersonal aspect of the conflict – the subjective inner experience of a person. This personal experience includes thoughts, feelings, and wishes.

■ Documentation
The situation as described by the person seeking help is documented in writing "live" – in the first person, that is, from the perspective of the person seeking help, and in their presence. In this report, all the relevant persons should be named and distinguished according to the social roles they assume in the conflict (victims, offenders, assistants, observers). In addition, any behavior that has violated values and norms or caused damage to persons should be described in such a way that others can reconstruct it.

■ Securing proof and leads
Discuss the measures to be taken immediately with the student. If proof of (cyber)mobbing attacks or violations of values and norms is available – for example in chat exchanges or internet forums – it should be secured immediately, with screenshots or by other means.

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Sources of Error and Risks

- student may refuse to accept support
- student does not explain why he/she seeks help
- first responder is lacking in required skills
- too little attention paid to uncovering the events that have unfolded (hearing, seeing, smelling) and to separating them from the subjective experience (thoughts, bodily sensations, feelings, needs)
- failure to explore the events taking place in the cyber realm
- lack of engagement on the issue of child protection
- insufficient professional distance: close identification with the experience of the victim, positioning as rescuer or judge
- (moral) admonition of the the victim
- lacking or inexact documentation of what was reported

2 Second Step: Initial Assessment

Goals/Tasks

- Initial assessment and categorization of the conflict

Guiding Questions

- Is there a threat or endangerment that calls for immediate action?
- What characteristics are to be perceived in the conflict with regard to hostility, lack of potential for non-violent resolution, violations of norms and values, damage to persons or property, and complexity?
- Who is responsible for escalation of the conflict?
- Is there an obligation to regulate the conflict, or is the decision to do so dependent on pedagogical deliberations (the personal judgment) of the professional who was first approached?

Description of Procedure

- **Initial assessment of the situation**
  This second step of the first phase consists in assessing the situation for the first time, which will have far-reaching effects for handling it. Make use of the diagram "Five Guiding Questions" on page 116. It helps in recognizing whether the case involves endangerment – in which case you are obliged to intervene immediately – or the situation is low-key enough that you need not become involved. Naturally, no five questions can serve as a

substitute for your gut feeling. Sometimes it's best to trust your native instinct and let it show you the way. However, often the situation is so entangled that it becomes difficult to keep essentials in focus and arrive at an initial assessment. Keep in mind that, at this point, you needn't produce a final analysis of the conflict: the task is now to distinguish severe conflicts or even emergencies from less serious altercations.

- **Categorization of the conflict events**
  After initial assessment, the conflict needs to be categorized in terms of scale. For basic analysis of the conflict events, you can refer to the diagnostic diagram in Chapter 5.4.2 for support in judging how far the conflict has escalated, on what levels it has taken hold, and what options for action are available to you.

- **Categorization when cyber attacks may be in course**
  Whenever there are indications that cyber attacks may be taking place, the conflict level 3 – the school class or peer group and its framework of values as an active factor and autonomous social entity – should be taken into the equation. In this case, you should plan to later conduct a discreet systemic survey of the group to establish whether a mobbing dynamic or mobbing phase has taken hold, and if so, who the protagonists are. The conflict parties are then further differentiated as assistants and claquers on the side of the offenders, and defenders and bystanders on the side of the victimized (see Chapter 2).

Work Materials

- Application of the "Five Guiding Questions for Determining a Mode of Action" (see Chapter 5.4.4)

Sources of Error and Risks

- incorrect assessment of a threatening situation, either due to trivialization or dramatization
- failure of first assessment to take the environment of the person seeking help into account, e.g. the peer group, the classmates, or the family with their respective dynamic
- lack of diagnostic skill

3 Third Step: Positioning

Goals/Tasks

- decision on positioning in the area of work and on the mode of action
- decision on whether to inform the parents and/or the headmaster, against the will of the student if necessary
- decision on whether to form a team to address the conflict
- work division (agreement on roles) within the team
- determining which conflict levels will be addressed in what order, agreement on a first strategy for action
- ensuring transparency for the person seeking help and, where appropriate, their teachers or guardians

Guiding Questions

- In what area of work does the professional situate the process and position him/herself in order to provide adequate support: confidential individual counseling? conflict support? (formal) child protection?
- Is it necessary to form a team?
- If so, which professionally competent persons should assume which social roles and be active on which conflict levels?
- Who may, should, or must be informed and be a participant in the process?

Description of Procedure

- **Positioning in the area of work**
  Proceeding from the description of events and how they were experienced on the personal plane, the professional involved in the first encounter has assessed the situation in the second step. Now, in the third step, positioning has to follow. In cases where there is no substantial indication of child endangerment and the profession of the first responder obliges him or her to strict confidentiality (school psychologist, teacher-counselor, or social worker), then the professional can clarify together with the person seeking help whether the latter would prefer individual support or conflict support involving other persons. In the other cases, the ensuing work should be situated in the field of child protection, which can be supplemented by conflict support. Individual support, conflict support, or child protection? This positioning lays out the basis

for the strategy for action, in particular the mode of action, matters of data protection, and the participation of third parties (documentation and reporting).

- **Data protections and confidentiality**
  In the case of individual support, no data can be shared without a legal imperative – such as substantial indication of child endangerment – or explicit permission, if the supporting professional is by legal definition a bearer of secrets (in the German penal code, § 203 sect. 1 nr. 2 and nr. 5 StGB, this includes the school social worker, school psychologist, and teacher-counselsor). If the person seeking help insists on confidentiality, then it is not possible to provide conflict support, since this would involve informing others. If the first responders is a teacher and the person seeking help a student, then the first responder has to consider whether the educational relevance of the matter suggests or imperatively calls for informing the headmaster and possibly the parents of the student. If child endangerment can be assumed, the professional acting as first responder is required by (federal child protection) law to intervene, whether the person seeking help agrees to it or not. The issue is then not whether to take action, but rather how. The first responder – even if professionally bound to confidentiality – has to decide on whether to inform the parents or the teachers of a student who has sought help, and is advised to do so in cases assessed as dangerous.

- **Informing the parents**
  Informing the parents of an endangered student, whether on the side of victims or offenders, can be legally indicated, absolutely necessary, and very helpful. However, informing parents can potentially also increase the endangerment of a young person. This therefore has to be carefully considered in the context of protecting the victim and also overall child protection.

Should there be any indication of familial violence in the home environment of a student, or if religious, ethnic, or cultural factors suggest that informing the parents would exacerbate the student's situation, it would be unwise to pass the information on immediately. First, the safety of the situation has to be guaranteed.

If necessary, this can be achieved with the help of external partners from the network that has previously been established, e.g., the police or youth authorities.

- **Transparency for the person seeking help**
  Every step that is taken should be lucent for the person seeking help. He or she needs to be informed about and to understand who is being involved, what is being undertaken, and why. One should never act against the will of the person affected, except in cases where this is indicated for legal reasons. But even then, you should speak openly with the student about your decision. You can attempt to persuade him/her, but should never ignore the student's needs. Otherwise, any and every method you apply may lose its effectiveness and ultimately endanger you or the person seeking help.

- **Defining roles and tasks within the team**
  Positioning oneself in a process of conflict resolution means assuming a social role that is pre-defined or agreed upon within a team, and implies shaping one's interaction and actions in accord with this role. The overview given in Chapter 5.4.3 can be of help for positioning. It lists the various positions, roles, and their associated tasks. Naturally, it is possible for one person to take on more than one position with its tasks. With the assignment of functions in the team, the prerequisites are given for developing a differentiated and appropriate strategy for action.

Work Materials
- Guiding questions for determining a mode of action (see Chapter 5.4.4)
- Tasks within a team (see Chapter 5.4.3)
- Overview "Ten Basics for Emergencies" (see Chapter 5.6)
- Overview of "Pitfalls" in cases of (cyber)mobbing (see Chapter 4.5)
- Overview of methods for addressing conflicts (see Chapter 5.4.4)

Sources of Error and Risks
- lack of circumspection in clarifying the mandate and the area of work in which support will be situated
- acting without a formal legal mandate or a mandate from the person seeking help
- role confusion concerning one's formal role in the school realm, or lack of discipline in adhering to a role
- legally impermissible or premature sharing of data
- legally impermissible or delayed sharing of data
- individual actions without recourse to a team or a case consultant
- lack of professional compentence

5.5.2 Phase II – Threat or Crisis Intervention

If there are substantial indications of endangerment or even an emergency, the conflict is addressed during this second phase in the area of child protection, as a supplement to ongoing conflict support in the mode of a threat or crisis intervention. The two areas of work often overlap in many respects. If there are no such indications of endangerment, for conflicts of the scale C–E compulsory regulation is further pursued as the mode of action in the area of conflict support. Every intervention is carefully planned. The overriding aim is to secure the situation and protect the conflict parties from any (further) emotional, physical, material, or social damage. De-escalating the conflict is meant to enable level-headed, non-violent, and pedagogically productive regulation of the conflict. At this point, it may also be fitting to interfere in the conflict by enacting initial educative measures or sanctions.

Goals/Tasks
- clarifying the type of intervention and the accompanying methods
- setting out a crisis intervention plan
- conducting confrontative interviews
- securing and monitoring the situation
- intervention
- realization of measures to protect victims

Guiding Questions

- What constitutes the threat? Do threatening statements made during the conflict have any actual substance? How great is the inner tension of the person who is threatening and the person threatened? Is the person voicing the threat able to back off?
- What constitutes the endangerment that calls for immediate action?
- On the basis of the initial assessment, which persons should be subjected to an accusation? Who will confront them with it – the homeroom teacher, headmaster, the other conflict party, or even the police? In what setting should this take place?
- How can the dangerous situation be alleviated quickly?
- Which families, school classes, peer groups and individuals need to be addressed and won over for agreements to stabilize the situation?
- How can effective and sustainable protection for the victim(s) be established?

Description of Procedure

- **Formation of a crisis intervention team**
  Together with the responsible persons (homeroom teacher and headmaster, possibly also parents or professional colleagues), discuss the form of intervention that you find appropriate. Is it a case calling for threat intervention or even crisis interventions? Clarify who will be responsible for individual tasks, and in what social role, in order to secure the situation quickly. In an intervention, the persons involved should be those who can act quickly and effectively to guarantee safety.

- **Development of a crisis intervention plan**
  Set up a timeline and inform all the persons who need to know about the intervention and those who will be participating in it.

- **Tasks of the headmaster**
  Particularly in the context of a threat or crisis intervention, the school administration has special functions to fulfill. By way of office, the headmaster is the chairperson of the intervention team. His or her demeanor has to signalize that a serious violation of values and norms has occurred that is not acceptable at the school. The conflict team requires the full support of the headmaster in order to act effectively.

- **Conducting confrontative interviews**
  The phase of threat or crisis intervention usually begins with the accusation being presented to the student who is suspected of violent behavior.

  The disclosure of the accusation in a case of crisis, but also in other cases, is fundamentally the task of the homeroom teacher or the headmaster. This should never be undertaken by a conflict helper. In conflicts that are not crisis-laden or not likely to escalate into ongoing hostilities, it is also possible that the damaged party voice the accusation within the framework of a mediated three-way talk.

  Working with the students responsible for misbehavior is of major significance, since they can contribute a great deal to de-escalating the situation, restoring stability, and achieving sustainability, provided they are moved to pro-social acts.

  The word "confrontative" shouldn't be misunderstood here. The idea is not to hurl accusations at anyone, to scold them or shout at them. Quite the contrary. In a respectful encounter and a secure environment, the student needs to be given an opportunity to weigh the allegation, perhaps reflect on internal or external tensions that may have a bearing on it, and begin seeking (new) ways to come to peaceful terms with him/herself and the environment.

- **Justification strategies**
  Reproaches and accusation are highly unpleasant for just about everyone. To neutralize them, people react with justifications – which are important as a means of protecting oneself from an acute overload. Rectifying one's actions soothes inner conflicts and renders superfluous any insight into emotional, social, or material responsibility for one's deeds. However, as helpful as justifications may be towards regulating one's own self-esteem: they can severely hinder the personality development of another person. If the justification strategies of an offender resonate in the social environment and the offender receives positive feedback for his/her behavior, it is impossible to come to any pedagogically constructive resolution. Dealing with justification strategies is one of the core competencies in method required for persons working in conflict regulation processes at a school (see also Chapter 4.3).

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■ **Securing and monitoring the situation**

After the confrontation with the conflict event, it is very important to secure the situation and monitor it. One possibility is to protect the endangering or endangered students by restricting their mobility or their free ability to act. In many states, it is allowed to temporarily store a student's mobile phone at the headmaster's office as long as the student is on the school campus. To be on the safe side, before taking this measure you would best check its legal status in your region. Other options are monitoring the student during school hours or temporary suspension from classes, also coupled with monitoring. If a cooperative partnership with the parents is possible, measures applied at home (monitored/restricted internet access) can help to de-escalate the situation.

To protect the victim, it is of the greatest importance that any distribution or dissemination of questionable content via internet be stopped immediately. Therefore, you should contact the relevant networks or online services as soon as possible. It usually takes some time to block an account or delete content. But you should nonetheless make the attempt.

If these tasks cannot be covered by school resources alone, external services should be called upon – these could be police, youth authorities, or special counseling and emergency services. To avoid collateral damage, it is important to consider possible side effects before involving the police. This should not be done on short notice, without careful consideration. Informing the police is only required in cases where an emergency is in the offing or has already occurred, that is, when there is acute danger of a person doing harm to him/herself or others, and protection can only be ensured by police action.

Intervention

At the center of every threat or crisis intervention lies the protection of the victim. The aim is always to improve significantly the situation of the person affected. Two measures that can provide rapid relief are: social training that integrates Systemic Mobbing Intervention, or Systemic Brief Intervention (see Chapter 4). The aim of intervention is to de-escalate the (systemic) conflict and reduce it in scale (to C or D), to minimize the threat potential, to establish effective protection for the victim(s), and to re-activate the framework of values and norms (fundamental human rights) in the group.

Work Materials

■ Social training with Systemic Mobbing Intervention (see Chapter 4)

Sources of Error and Risks

■ violation of data protection rules due to impermissible sharing of data
■ lack of a respectful approach in dealing with students responsible for misbehavior
■ identification with the victim, which frequently leads to neglect of democratic principles
■ neglect of protection for the victim
■ overlooking individuals or groups relevant to the conflict
■ justification strategies of the student offenders resonate with classmates and are not confronted and exposed
■ inconsequential measures in response to threats of students responsible for misbehavior, or their parents
■ fear of loss of reputation and popularity
■ exclusion of option of informing police
■ overlooking indication of child endangerment

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Threat Intervention as Opposed to Crisis Intervention

Our understanding of threat or crisis intervention in the context of severe conflicts such as (cyber)mobbing:

1. Threat Intervention

Threat intervention is initiated when persons or groups are exposed to an intense physical, emotional, social, or material threat of harm, or when they subjectively feel that they are. This would be the case, for example, if one student threatened another in a chat, saying "You'll be dead tomorrow!" or "I'm gonna get you! I'll send your pussy pics to the whole school!" The purpose of threat intervention is to assess the content of a threat and with that also estimate the danger that it might actually be carried out, and to either successfully negotiate with the person issuing the threat a non-violent means of relieving the tension through conflict regulation, or – should that fail – to take other measures towards ensuring safety.

2. Crisis Intervention

Crisis intervention is taken up in the face of the hostile escalation of a conflict arising from damage that is imminent or has already been done and that leads to a loss of control and psycho-social overtaxation for a person, a group, or a community. The purpose of the intervention is to restore control over the situation, both in terms of how it is experienced subjectively and in terms of the objective progression of events. It is essential to intervene in the conflict and de-escalate it before it has reached a point of no return, beyond which any further escalation would cause lasting, severe damage to persons or groups.

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5.5.3 Phase III – Conflict Regulation

The third phase again consists of several steps. In the first of them, any questions remaining open about the previous course of conflict events are clarified. Diagnostic insights gleaned during the intervention are integrated into the ongoing assessment of conflict events. The aim is, after de-escalation on the intra-personal and interpersonal levels has been achieved, to continue working toward resolution of the conflict. This requires determining who, in what role, will take action on the various conflict levels, and in what order those levels will be addressed.

This presupposes sorting out, in the next step, how the peer, class, or family system 'ticks' on its respective level, so that priorities can be set concerning the levels of action to be addressed. If it is established that (cyber)mobbing in the consolidating stage is underway,

then work on conflict level 3 (see Chapter 2.1.2) with the school class or peer group should begin promptly.

A further aim is to clarify who is responsible for damage done to persons and for the violation of values and norms, and to confront the conflict parties with this outcome. Among all those involved (person, class, family, school) a dialogue is conducted on the following questions: with what responsibilities (victim, offender, assistant) and what direction of action (support and/or punishment), on what levels, with what methods and in what time frame will the conflict be addressed?

The decisions and agreements emerging from this exchange are implemented in the last step of this phase. The realization is coordinated and supervised by the conflict manager within the framework of a defined structure for conflict management.

❶ First Step: Planning

Goals/Tasks

- Determine which of the conflict levels will be addressed, and in what order. If indicated, the class or peer group (level 3) will have to be the first level of action, before work can continue on the interpersonal level 2.
- Entry into negotiations with the conflict parties, possibly together with their guardians, to plan the regulation of the conflict; the headmaster or homeroom teacher holds informal meetings with them (if no formal sanctions are envisioned) or conducts a hearing (if administrative measures are planned)
- Development, with the conflict parties and possibly also their guardians, of a proposal for regulation that can be agreed upon by all and that employs a pedagogical approach to reach an amicable/conciliatory end to the conflict.

Guiding Questions

- At what point in the process can this ongoing planning dock in?
  What has already been addressed in previous phases, what remains to de done?
- Which levels of conflict need to be taken into account, in what order, and how will they be related to one another?
- Which methods will help to achieve the goals of conflict regulation on the various levels?
- In what manner will the conflict parties and the others surrounding them (parents, teachers, school classes or peer groups) be involved?
  Is it imperative to conduct a formal hearing in the context of an administrative act?

Description of Procedure

Further steps in the planning of conflict regulation emerge from the specific tasks at hand. You have come to a point that allows you to develop a plan together with the conflict parties, with their parents participating in severe cases (level 5). Planning conflict regulation presupposes that the scale of the the conflict has been de-escalated to at least scale D through threat or crisis intervention. If this is not yet the case, then a crisis intervention plan is what is needed.

Planning the regulation is undertaken on the basis of thorough inquiry into and diagnosis of the conflict events. A proposal is prepared by the team and then discussed with the conflict parties and their parents. Not all aspects of a conflict regulation have to be negotiated and mutually agreed upon. If the plan foresees any restriction of the student's personality rights – for example, suspension from class or detention after school – then the participation of the conflict parties and their parents must take place in a framework of formal hearings, since in such cases the legally stipulated formalities of an administrative act must be strictly upheld.

If values and norms have been violated, then Systemic Conflict Management not only addresses the student who was damaged and the student who was responsible, but also the environment at school, in the family, and in peer groups. They all require support in overcoming the conflict. At the same time, a stimulus is given for personality and group development. The three addressees to be given predecence when selecting working methods are:
- the class (possibly the school as a whole)
- the offender(s)
- the the victim

Work Materials
- catalog of methods (see Chapter 5.4.4)

Sources of Error and Risks
- Failure to make connection with the outcomes of previous phases of action, poor timing
- neglect of the team principle
- insufficient information, transparency, and participation for the conflict parties, their guardians, and the social groups in the environment of the conflict
- too little responsibility vested in the conflict parties and their guardians with regard to decision on support and 'package deal'
- failure to comply with legal stipulations when enacting sanctions that require an administrative act
- violation of data protection rules
- insufficient professional skill in planning a strategy for action

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2 **Second Step: Implementation**

Goals / Tasks
- Addressing the conflict in a way that enables school attendance in the future for both parties on a basis of cooperation, conciliation, and non-violence
- regulation on levels 3 and 5 (school class, family, etc.)
- development of declarations to desist (level 4) and personal lpledges (level 3)
- pedagogical processing of the conflict together with the offender in the form of reparation (level 4) and loss adjustment (level 2)

Guiding Questions
- How can effective and sustainable protection of victims be achieved?
- How can the victim and the school regain control over the situation?
- How can the systems and subsystems involved (class and peer groups) be relieved of tensions and prophylactically re-oriented to values and norms?
- How can student offenders and their parents be motivated to agree to a mutual regulation of the conflict?
- How can you induce the offending student to accept support? How can his/her willingness be stimulated to make restitution for the deed and the damage and to regard this as a starting point for altering his/her own behavior?
- What internal and external networks need to be / can be activated for support?

Description of Procedure

Conflict regulation is, to a considerable extent, educational work that has to be administered, organized, and moderated. It is strenuous, and it requires good planning and professional discipline, perseverance, mutual recognition and respect.

Offenders often achieve short-term success by using violence and then rectifying it. Moving these students towards pro-social behavorial modification involves working with denials, avoidance, and justification strategies. Personal attacks on educators, disparagement and defamation, come into play fairly frequently. Victims and offenders are faced with the challenge of responding in a manner that is not entirely determined by their emotions, i.e. overcoming reactions that are

deeply rooted in human nature: struggle, retaliation, withdrawal, escape/flight towards the inside (suppression) or the outside (denial).

On all sides of the conflict – among offenders, victims, and in the environment – it is necessary to awaken readiness to work through the conflict events by applying the fundamental pro-social values of our democracy. This presupposes that the community has access to distinct value standards and feels allegiance to them. To reach this point, it is possible to work with the entire class group (level 3) through Systemic Mobbing Intervention or Systemic Brief Intervention. Zero tolerance for violence! Everyone has to be motivated to take advantage of the non-violent means made available by the school; this will only be successful if pro-social behavior is systematically anchored and promoted in the school community culture.

Educative Process of Working through the Conflict with the Offender

Addressing intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict with pedagogical intent can be undertaken in the form of reparation and loss adjustment. This presupposes that the offender is willing to take responsibility for his/her behavior and its consequences and makes an earnest and binding decision for restitution.

In the framework of reparation and loss adjustment, the student describes in detail his/her own damaging behavior and its ramifications with respect to
– the perspective person who was damaged (emotions, needs),
– the personal rights of his/her classmates and their families,
– the values of the class and school communities, and
– penal law (where applicable).

If this is successful, the student makes an offer towards reparation and loss adjustment. He/she promises to refrain from such damaging behavior in the future, and makes a sincere apology to the victim, personally and potentially also in writing. He/she also apologizes to the homeroom teacher and the headmaster. In addition, he/she can also promise to make restitution. If reparation and loss adjustment are fully realized, the student has adhered to the agreements made and fulfilled his/her promises.

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Sources of Error and Risks

- willingness of conflict parties and their parents to accept support has not been sufficiently secured
- lack of reliability and endurance on the part of responsible educators in implementing the pedagogical process
- insufficient professional skill in realizing reparation and loss adjustment, social training, mobbing intervention and Systemic Brief Intervention, as well as in monitoring adherence to declarations to desist and personal pledges

5.5.4 Phase IV – Follow-up

The fourth and last phase pertains to follow-up. Although this comprises the final phase of action, its significance should not be underestimated. Particularly in cases of (cyber)mobbing, the quality of follow-up work determines the sustainability of the resolution!

Goals/Tasks

- Further cultivation of processes already in course
- monitoring of adherence to human rights and to the declarations to desist and personal pledges that were made in writing
- acknowledgement of positive behavior and behavioral changes for the better
- ending the conflict through educative work with the victim, offender, and school class
- reflection on the overall process with regard to protection for the victim and behavioral changes in the student responsible for the offense

Guiding Questions

- Was the conflict management successful?
- Are human rights now being adhered to?
- How can positive developments be secured on a sustainable basis?
- What forms of acknowledgement have the most positive effect on students and their families?
- At what point in time can the conflict be brought to an end, and using which methods?

Description of Procedure

The purpose of follow-up is to secure sustainability and to bring the conflict to a conciliatory ending. This phase is often neglected or overlooked. But follow-up is the decisive factor for the sustainability of the entire intervention. If essential steps in follow-up are not attended to, all the effort invested in the context of conflict management may have been in vain.

Regularly Monitoring Declarations and Pledges

If declarations to desist have been set out and personal pledges developed, adherence to them has to be monitored on a regular basis. Without monitoring, they lose their effectiveness and there is a risk that matters may return to the former status quo.

Processes that Continue over Time

In social training, Systemic Mobbing Intervention and Brief Intervention, cognitive content is conveyed and methods are established in the form of rituals that are then repeated, reflected on, and monitored. Keeping these processes up and running, and accompanying them, is the job of participating professionals (conflict manager) and/or the homeroom teacher. The main responsibility for this lies with the homeroom teacher. It is advisable to keep follow-up issues on the agenda for quite some time – in some cases, even for a whole year. The following issues and customs should be brought up and re-iterated again and again at intervals.

Methods, Rituals, and Processes in Follow-up

Acknowledgement of pro-social behavior / pro-social behavioral improvement	Acknowledging pro-social behavior or behavioral improvement is the most important pedagogical activity during follow-up. Students notice quickly whether the recognition they received in the week following the intervention was just a means of praising their initial progress and then returning to the status quo, or on the contrary, pro-social behavior such as compassion and civil courage will be made note of and promoted in the future.
Re-iteration of human rights	What fundamental rights do human beings have? What is their significance? How well are they adhered to in the class?
Characteristics of a good class collective	Repetition of content developed together about the attributes of a well-functioning class collective, reflection on having developed them successfully together
Monitoring declarations to desist and personal pledges	Checking on how well promises have been kept
Report by human rights observers	Human rights observers report to the conflict manager on the progress of their work and on potential violations of fundamental human rights or children's rights; possibly also repetition of elections for human rights observers
Report by buddies	Buddies report to the conflict manager or homeroom teacher on the progress of their work and on measures that may be necessary to protect the victim
Letters containing wishes and praise	Students give individual feedback to classmates in a respectful and mindful way: to whom would I like to express a wish? Who do I think deserves praise for his/her behavior? Accepting letters containing wishes, praise, or other feedback is always voluntary.
Open ranking session	Students give one other feedback in a respectful and mindful way concerning their practical commitment to fundamental human rights and children's rights. The homeroom teachers can also give feedback and accept it as well. Participation in the open ranking session is voluntary.
Rituals	Ongoing cultivation of rituals that provide security and orientation (e.g. greetings, farewells, positive feedback)

Settlement of Conflict Events

A conflict does not have to be 'solved' in order to be brought to an end. Often it is not possible to achieve more than a regulation of the conflict that prevents violent escalation and enables ongoing interaction in the group. Even if maximal goals such as friendship or a good class collective cannot be achieved, a conflict process can be considered resolved when both of the conflict parties manage to maintain their school attendance over a longer period of time without hostilities, making at least a minimal form of cooperation attainable. Ultimately, the regulators are the ones who must determine whether a conflict can be regarded as finally settled.

Reflection

Reflection on the process of conflict management is very essential for future work.
The following areas should be evaluated and reflected on by the professionals involved:

Aspekts of Reflection

Level	Aspects	Lines of questioning
Conflict regulation on the side of the victim	■ protection of victim(s) ■ sustainability of the resolution ■ separation of person/behavior	*What went well?* *What aims / milestones were achieved? Which ones weren't?*
Conflict regulation on the side of the offender	■ confrontation ■ separation of person/behavior ■ support or sanctions	*Were the principles of action adhered to? If not, what got in the the way?*
Conflict regulation on the class/peer-group level	■ framework of norms and values ■ adherence to declaration to desist and personal pledge ■ role played by human rights observers	*Did we proceed systematically, step by step, and conform to the structured phases of conflict treatment?* *Were the modes of action chosen well?*
Conflict regulation on the level of the educational partnership	■ Conflict regulation with parents – information shared with parents' representatives or with all parents	*Which methods proved suitable in practice? Is our methodological competence sufficient for cases yet to come?*
Conflict regulation on the level of the school community	■ cooperation with headmaster ■ cooperation with homeroom teacher	*What should have been better?* *What should not have happened?*
Cooperation within the SCM team	■ division of tasks ■ reliability ■ professional posture ■ feedback culture / handling mistakes ■ cooperation with external partners	*What can I/we improve the next time around?* *Do we need more training or developmental consulting?* *Which outcomes should we discuss in the faculty meeting, the school bodies, with internal and external partners?*
Self-management	■ professional posture ■ delimitation ■ self-efficacy ■ resources	*What should be made public?*
Operative process management	■ principles of action ■ phases of action ■ methodology ■ documentation	

When reflecting on a work process with a school class, the diagnostic instruments described in Chapter 5.4.2 can be used. Viewing the documentation that has been produced in the course of addressing the conflict provides a suitable foundation for analysis.

Integration of Experience into Conflict Management

After evaluating and reflecting on the insights gained through experience, these points need to be integrated into ongoing conflict management. It is recommended to undertake this in the context of a steering group meeting at which the individual phases of action are discussed and new insights are incorporated into the existing management scheme.

Sources of Error and Risks
- neglecting this phase of action
- insufficient presence and monitoring
- lack of recognition for pro-social behavior
- insufficient counseling of human rights observers and buddies
- no reflection on the conflict management process
- lack of reliability and endurance on the part of educators in fulfilling follow-up tasks

5.6 Ten Basics for Emergencies

Many schools are not yet applying Systemic Conflict Management. We therefore provide, in the following, ten points that can be of use in an emergency.

When a case of (cyber)mobbing occurs, it is essential to act immediately in order to put an end to the suffering of its addressee and to prevent lasting damage to the person's emotional health. What you should certainly *not* do in such an acute case is discussed in Chapter 4.5 ("Pitfalls"). The following emergency steps indicate what you can do if you are the first person bearing educational responsibility who learns about the problem. Due to legal regulations, in individual cases there may be major differences in the steps you can undertake, depending on whether you are a schoolteacher or a school social worker / school psychologist / teacher-counsellor (see Basics Nr. 3 and 8).

1. Offer the student who is affected a trustful relationship and a safe environment

Ask about what has happened and how the victim experienced it. Confirm to the student that it was a very good idea to come to you and get help. Let the student know that you are concerned and want to support him/her.

2. Consider whether anyone is in danger of being hurt or hurting themselves

Don't hesitate to ask about thoughts or actions that could be damaging to others or self-damaging. In doing so, you are protecting the mental and physical health of this student and others. If the student who was victimized is informing you directly, you can ensure – at least for the moment – that he or she will not endanger themself with any kind of rash action. Should there be indications that self-damage or damage by or to others might occur, consider together with the affected person how the grave state of affairs can be alleviated and the dangerous situation can be de-escalated, and which persons could be called in to help. In this case, have a careful look at the advice given in Basics Nr. 4 and 6 – 10.

3. Clarify with the victim what your mandate is and explain what you are legally allowed or required to do

Ask the person what their wishes are in this situation. Explain the options that you have for accommodating these needs. Be cautious about proposing solutions of your own. Make it clear that you will not take any steps without informing her/him or, if indicated, asking for her/his permission (see Basic Nr. 8). Usually, (cyber)-mobbing can't be stopped without informing and involving other teachers, the headmaster, and school-mates. In this case, ask for permission to contact other persons about it so that de-fusing the conflict will be effective. Some arguments in favor of such contacts:

- There has to be an unmistakable signal sent out: "(Cyber)mobbing will not be tolerated here, and we are doing something about it!"

- Teachers can only deal effectively with cyber attacks if they are informed about the case.

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- Only systemic intervention can stop the spread of digital material. Such intervention can't be undertaken without informing other teachers and the principal, or in some cases even the police.

If you can exclude the possibility of an emergency situation or child endangerment and you are a school social worker, school psychologist, school counsellor or youth counsellor, you are obliged to observe strict confidentiality (according to German law, § 203 Penal Code). In most cases, it is not allowed that you pass on any information without the consent of the victim, or also the offender! This has the advantage that you can concentrate fully on forming a trustful relationship within the framework of individual counseling. The disadvantage is that your access to support in the form of conflict resolution is restricted. Any release from confidentiality should be given expressly by the student, at least orally, and documented in writing. A release always applies only to the person(s) named in it and is thus non-transferable.

Note well: The confidentiality rule on this sweeping scale does not apply to you if you are a teacher or another type of monitor. Here, you are obliged to act in most cases by informing the headmaster and the parents. This does not preclude individual counseling or conflict resolution, providing that you have permission to pursue them.

4. Involve other students as peer counselors

If you are told about the problem by other students or by adults, ask them to encourage the victim to get competent help. Request that these persons get back to you with information on whether their efforts have been successful. Should you yourself come in question as a professionally qualified helper, you can ask a third party to facilitate the victim's contact to you.

5. Get in touch with a victim who is refusing to accept help

If the victimized person refuses to get in touch or to accept help, you should take up direct contact in order to assess their frame of mind. You are actually obliged to do this if there are indications that the person might be endangered by himself or others.

6. Encourage the victim to put up a fight

Reinforce the victim's resolve to defend herself/himself against (cyber)mobbing using nonviolent means. Appeal to the person's self-respect. Possible talking points:

- Mobbing damages people – sometimes even much later in life. It can't be tolerated and has to be put to an end, as quickly as possible.
- It may be that other students are also being targeted. They will be encouraged to step forward and report on it if a climate of resistance against (cyber)mobbing is cultivated at the school.
- It can get worse if you don't do anything about it.

Offer coaching. This should be the first and most important step. Back up the victim and escort her/him through thick and thin. If you succeed in building a trustful relationship, it is much more likely that the victim will decide to become active. One prerequisite for this is transparency at every step. If the affected person has difficulty in deciding to act, take that seriously! Together, explore the factors that could be holding the person back.

7. Document what has occurred

Have the events explained to you for as long as necessary until you've understood them fully. Remember that what you are hearing is a subjective account – things may sound different when described by others. But under all circumstances: take the account seriously. Make a detailed documentation of what has occurred and how it was experienced. The more information you get down at the outset, the better. Should there later be an intervention by a qualified specialist, you will have done decisive groundwork that benefits the overall outcome.

8. Consider whether you need to inform parents, other teachers, or the headmaster

Some conflicting parties – victims as well as offenders – don't want parents, other teachers, or the principal to be informed. It is important to understand that wish, but not always to agree with it. You are required (at least by German law) to comply with this request if these two conditions apply, otherwise you would commit an offense by complying with the victim's wish:

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a) if you are a school social worker, a school psychologist, a school counsellor (§ 203 StGB) or a youth counsellor,

b) if no substantial indications of child endangerment (§ 8a SGB VIII) are known to you.

Also, is it essential that in your estimation, the child (e.g. of primary school age) is mature enough and in an emotional and mental condition enabling him/her to understand and take responsibility for his/her own decision against informing parents or the school principal.

Consult experts on this issue by presenting the case in anonymized form.

However, if there are substantial indications of child endangerment, you are also permitted to speak to teachers, other parents or caregivers in order to estimate the endangerment more correctly. In such a case, it is wise to discuss this in advance with the victim so that you can act consensually. Whether the victim agrees to it or not, you should first inform the legal guardians of the victim, as you are required by law to do so. The younger the victim, the more emphasis is placed on this duty to inform the parents/guardians. Exceptions are allowed only in cases where the information would lead to further endangerment. This could be the case if you have reliable indications of violent behavior on the part of the parents, for example if the student might be exposed to beating, kidnapping, or even forced marriage. Depending on the age of the student, in such a case you should inform youth authorities or the police. Again, the fundamental principle applies here: wherever possible, act with the consent of the student and not without his or her knowledge.

Should you be unsure or in doubt, e.g. when it comes to estimating the degree of endangerment, you can take recourse to a qualified adviser (in German law "sufficiently experienced professional") with an anonymized version of the case. Contact to such a person versed in the protection of minors can be established through the youth authorities or other youth welfare organisations.

In the event of an acute emergency, for example someone threatening to kill a (cyber)mobbing victim during school time or a victim threatening to commit suicide, it is always imperative to first inform and call in those who can resolve the emergency quickly – even if the threatened person does not consent. At school, this is usually the headmaster, who in turn can call in the police.

The situation is different if you are a teacher or other educational staff member, since you then have the responsibility – regardless of whether there are substantial indications of endangerment – to inform the parents or the school principal whenever normal lessons are impeded or essential concerns for the education and care of the child are affected, for example when crimes or punishable offences against school rules have occurred or need to be prevented in the school. Here again, there is the caveat about not informing parents if that might lead to an endangerment of the student. In such a case, ensuring the safety of the student has the highest priority and might even speak for temporary placement of the student in the custody of youth authorities.

9. **Consider whether you should inform the police or advise others to do so!**
Registering a complaint with the police should generally be undertaken by the victim or the parents. Doing so is indicated if and when

- the conflict events cannot be de-escalated using educational means and the police can have a de-escalating effect,
- an emergency situation has arisen which can only be remedied by police action,
- the perpetrators have been identified, are committing offences, and only police measures can prevent them from harming the victim,
- the offenders can only be identified using police techniques,
- mediation has failed and internal (school) educative and regulatory measures have proven ineffective,
- offenders are not part of the school community and cannot be influenced by educational efforts.

If *none* of the reasons given above apply, it may be advisable to refrain from informing the police. Arguments against informing the police can include:

- After an official complaint, ramifications for the offender and other involved parties can take a long time to have any effect, because the time span between making notice and an indictment or conviction can be very long.
- An official complaint can lead to further escalation.
- In (cyber)mobbing, there are deeds done that are not punishable by law.
- Viable proof is not available or insufficient.
- Police action would block off pedagogical efforts to work the matter through constructively.
- Police measures would not put an end to the (cyber)mobbing, since it is probable that other persons would continue pursuing actions that are, strictly speaking, within the legal realm.
- Police presence would result in the victim being ostracized by the community.
- Since the police are obliged to investigate this particular type of criminal offense, the victim and her/his family might have little or no control over the conflict resolution.
- A pedagogical approach to dealing with the matter could be pushed aside heedlessly while legal aspects take the fore and lawyers determine the further course of events.

All of these aspects can have the effect of worsening the victim's situation after an official complaint, marginalizing educational considerations and the protection of the victim, and blocking timely corrective work with the offender. Take into consideration that, in many cases, the police are required to investigate and prosecute. Initially, police measures may relieve the pressure on educators, but in the long run can produce incalculable 'collateral damage'.

10. Build a network of competent persons inside and outside your school!

Never walk alone! Whenever possible, work in a team – even where a final decision may rest on you. See to it that all the roles in the team are in good hands (see Chapter 5.4.3). Bring in essential decision-makers, experienced professionals, and persons significant to the victim. Members of the team must have access to the personal information surrounding the case. You should always, if possible, elicit consent for that in advance.

Police can potentially be of aid in consulting roles. However, you need to be careful when describing the hard facts of a case to them, as they may be legally required to take up proceedings. Portray the case to the police in an anonymized, hypothetical version, using the subjunctive mode. Get information about external sources of support. Are there counseling centers in your area? What conceptions do they apply in their work? Take full measure of the fact that options for effectively putting an end to (cyber)mobbing are significantly expanded when you have outside help.

Establish contact with such a center and ask about the possibility of scheduling counseling or an intervention, and also about costs that would be incurred and potential sources of funding.

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Nele – A Case Study

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Nele – A Case Study

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6. Nele – A Case Study

The following case is true-to-life, it actually occurred. Some details and personal characteristics have been altered – but the social roles and the sequence of events correspond fully to the conflict as it unfolded in reality.

This case of sexting (communication on sexual themes via mobile messaging, in particular involving photos or video) demonstrates that educators in schools and youth agencies are not helpless when faced with instances of (cyber)mobbing. Not only prevention is possible: intervention is, too, and it should not simply be left to the police. This case also shows how well interdisciplinary cooperation can work and how schools can tap into the expert knowledge of social educators and school psychologists. And finally, the case study illustrates the functioning of systemic conflict management (undertaken from a systemic perspective and with a systematic, planned procedure in a team), creating a school configuration that can lead to educational effects of measurable quality.

6.1 The Starting Point

One Tuesday, after morning recess, in the counseling room of an academic high school in northern Germany: Her head lowered, 13-year-old Nele is staring at her smartphone, her friend Jessica is next to her and Theresa Obermüller is sitting across from them. She is a school social worker and it's her job to provide psycho-social 'first aid' in cases of conflict and to advise the school decision-makers. As Nele starts to tell her story, Obermüller realizes quickly that the girl has become the victim of a serious and extremely hostile (cyber)mobbing attack. The counselor senses that the girl is going to need a lot of support in the coming days.

The story Nele tells is a teenage classic. Nele had fallen in love for the first time and had made, for her boyfriend Steve, a video in which she was shown nude. "The love I felt for him was like nothing I had ever known" says Nele, her eyes shining. When Steve had asked her for a video like that, she had in fact felt a bit queasy. She knew – from an information day at school where a

policeman said so – that one might perhaps take intimate photos for oneself, but should never send them to anyone via chat. Well, those were rules made by adults, she adds, as if making an excuse for something stupid. She didn't send the video to Steve right away – but he put her under pressure. "Prove that you love me!", it said in the chat, which Nele shows to the other two in the counseling room at their request. She felt blind trust towards Steve, who was two years older than she. Four months later, the relationship had broken up, and Steve threatened to pass around the video in a chat room – which Nele obviously did not want. He wrote, "I swear I'll send the video to everybody. I'm gonna finish you off. The whole school is going to see what a bitch you are!"

That Tuesday morning, Nele goes on, she learned that Steve's words hadn't been a hollow threat. The day before, a number of students from various forms had already seen the video on their mobiles, as Jessica found out. Nele had noticed that people were leering at her and exchanging whispers – something was off key. But that Steve would go that far: she just couldn't imagine that. "The video went around the school like lightning, and who knows where else it will end up!" She says she feels absolutely helpless and at people's mercy. She is scared that someone could use the video to go after her and maybe even blackmail her later on. "Now I'll never get an apprenticeship! The policeman said that the personnel bosses google you!" When Theresa Obermüller asks her what she wishes for right now, Nele doesn't need to stop and think: "not to come to school tomorrow!" She says she can't bear the whispering and gawking. But she doesn't want Steve to be punished and "thrown out of school" – in this statement the memory of her affection for him is still echoed.

Theresa Obermüller presents her with a different idea: "Nele, suppose you could regain control of the situation. What if the video disappears from your school because everybody decides that its's despicable to have that on one's mobile or to re-send it? What if your schoolmates, teachers, and the principal show you their compassion and want to help make sure people respect you? What if your reputation didn't suffer? If Steve admitted

149

what he did, regretted it, and made up for it?" Nele starts listening hard. She hadn't thought of anything like that – since she'd always heard that once something was on the internet, there was nothing you could do about it. Besides, how would she ever be able to persuade her classmates to do that? She wouldn't even be able to speak openly about it with them. And Steve? "We'll talk to him", says Theresa Obermüller. "But I need your permission for that, and it would be best to have your parents' permission, too!" (see Chapter 5.5.1 on first response and positioning).

6.2 Background at the School

With regard to school development, this case has a back story that is essential to the success of the intervention that took place.

Theresa Obermüller is employed as a school social worker by an independent organization, her job is financed by three sources: this organization, the Social Ministry of the state, and the community (town). This is not to be taken for granted, since towns and independent organizations are not required to do this. But this town wanted to support its school with more than just a building and equipment to go in it. They wanted to make a contribution to quality education and good upbringing. One of Obermüller's specializations in her professional work is conflict management. In an average school year, she handles about 70 serious cases of conflict in several different schools.

At the school where Nele's case comes up, there has been a steering group for five years now – initiated by the principal, Mr. Schuster (see box). Thanks to this group, systemic conflict management has been firmly established as part of the school's culture; the procedural standards developed here have systematized pedagogical efforts and provided them with a reliable framework. After initial resistance, today the parents, students, teachers, Theresa Obermüller herself, and the principal are glad that these structures have been developed.

STEERING GROUP

Members:
– School principal Mr. Schuster
– School social worker Theresa Obermüller
– School counselor
– Teacher commissioned with prevention issues

Tasks:
– Implementation, ongoing development, and evaluation of systemic conflict management at the school
– Reporting to school bodies/committees and drafting proposals for decisions on issues relevant to the pedagogical profile of the school

Roster:
One meeting per quarter, lasting about 2,5 hours

As a result, this school is well set up to deal with (cyber)-mobbing. Theresa Obermüller may not have much power to make *decisions* – these are up to the principal. Nonetheless, she pays a key role by serving as a *conflict manager* in individual cases. In this role, and specifically for each individual case, she forms a team (called an SCM team, see Chapter 5.4.3), coordinates the process of conflict resolution, counsels the responsible parties, and conducts the intervention. She has achieved the high-level professional competence required for this demanding work through continuing education. In this context, a person's initial professional qualification as an educator is not as significant as the special skills acquired in advanced training, and the person's having sufficient resources of work time to apply them beneficially.

6.3 First Response, Positioning, and Data Protection

The first adult to hear about Nele's problem was the 'link' teacher (a teacher chosen at German schools who can be approached by any student). Nele's friend Jessica spoke to her after having seen the video with her friend in the nude. The link teacher listened carefully and empathetically. The student's extreme distress could be sensed immediately. But the link teacher also realized right away that this problem situation was over her head. As the "person of first contact" she now had to decide how Nele could be helped. Being a link teacher, she is glad to serve as a first contact, but not to take responsibility for further support. She therefore – with Nele's permission – accompanies Nele to see Theresa Obermüller and informs the principal. The link teacher, as the first educationally responsible person drawn into the conflict, takes a clear position on her own role: first link – yes, conflict treatment – no.

Theresa Obermüller would now like, together with Nele, to find out more about what has occurred. Sympathetically and respectfully, she places questions to Nele, who settles in to the relaxed atmosphere and is able to report more and more clearly. Obermüller tries to find out whether Steve has committed punishable offenses, and if so, how serious they were. Items of evidence – particularly videos, photos, and chat exchanges – need to be ascertained and documented, since they will prevent the offending student from denying or trivializing the matter, or trying to reverse the burden of guilt. "Nele, now everything has to be put on the table. I believe you, but I also need proof. Did you save the chat exchanges with Steve? I need to see the video and should also save it, otherwise I can't do the right things for you!" Quite some time back, the media appointee of the school had seen to it that Obermüller had the technical means to save quickly any material proof that was on the internet or on mobile phones. This way, she can view it in detail after an interview. To avoid committing an offense herself, she saves the potentially incriminating material only on DVD, not on the PC itself, and later hands the DVD over to the principal, to be stored in the school safe as ascertained evidence. If it couldn't be proven that Steve elicited a pornographic video from Nele and took possession of it, then he would not be an offender by constitutional standards – and would not need to take responsibility for it.

Nele is agonized, full of self-reproach. "It's my own fault if I behave like a bitch! How could anybody be that stupid!" At this point in the interview, Theresa Obermüller concentrates increasingly, together with Nele, on probing the girl's inner process; feelings and needs are now in the focus of attention. "Nele, how serious is the situation for you? So bad that you don't want to come to school anymore? Or so bad that you don't want to be anywhere anymore?" No, answers the student, she hasn't thought about doing harm to herself. Obermüller registers that there is no indication of acute danger, no threat to the girl's life. But the idea of refusing to go to school keeps circling around in Nele's head. The stares and whispers behind her back are unbearable, she wishes she could just beam herself away! Nele bursts into tears. Only Jessica is loyal to her. And from Jessica she learned what others were saying about her, "that I'm a slut and got what I had coming!" Theresa Obermüller asks whether everyone reacted that way. Jessica says no, some people were quite taken aback and pensive. But a few were maliciously sharing the video.

She doesn't know, says Nele, downtrodden, whether she will ever be able to trust a boyfriend again. "Nele, I hope that someday you will meet a person you can give your love to and still take good care of yourself, without his feeling slighted. Trust has to grow, and it always has a limit," answers the social worker. "I think, OK, what you did was pretty lightheaded, but there is nothing reproachable about making videos or nude photos of yourself. You have the right to do that and you were expressing your love. Steve did something wrong, not you!" One year later, Nele will get back to Theresa Obermüller to say that this 'first aid' provided by the social worker and the link teacher was tremendously important to her.

It would make Obermüller's work much easier, she explains, if Nele consents to her taking active steps in the case. Nele agrees to that and in doing so gives Obermüller a formal commission. Now they have to determine what kind of commission it should be: individual support or conflict support? First, Obermüller asks Nele whether she may inform Nele's parents; Nele gives her consent. If Nele also permits that data be given to the principal and the SCM team, Theresa Obermüller could accompany her within the framework called "conflict support". However, if Nele and/or her parents opt for full discretion, the commission would simply be "individual support".

Under German penal law (§ 203 StGB), Theresa Obermüller as a "bearer of secrets" must observe strict confidentiality. Without consent, she cannot even take up contact with others involved in the conflict. Nele gives her permission to make the data available – and Obermüller can now approach the case as one of "conflict support".

There is one exception to the school social worker's confidentiality obligation. Even if Nele had not given her consent, in one particular case Theresa Obermüller would have been required to take steps. This would be her duty according to German social law (§ 8a SGB VIII): where there are serious indications of child endangerment, it would generally be imperative that she urge the legal guardians – here, the parents – to initiate remedial action.

Before bringing the consultation to an end, Obermüller must also judge whether Nele could be additionally endangered if her parents are informed. Theresa Obermüller knows from experience that parents are sometimes unable to cope and can react with force. Nele says it will be unpleasant and taxing for all three, but that she trusts her parents and that they will remain approachable for her.

Obermüller has being noting down Nele's report in the first person; now she uses a standardized form to take down additional data (Form for Conducting and Documenting an Interview with a Person Seeking Help). Nele receives a copy of these minutes for her parents. Theresa Obermüller lets Nele know that the principal or the homeroom teacher will be getting in touch with the parents, probably that same evening. Before then, Nele should find an opportunity to get her parents ready for that. As a precaution, Theresa Obermüller tells the student that she can get back in touch with school social work immediately should there be any unforeseeable escalation at home (see Chapter 5.5.1).

6.4 Team Formation, Conflict Diagnosis, and Plan for Action

The initial steps are completed: 'first aid', clarification of the mandate, and definition of Obermüller's position within the work field of conflict support. After a short conversation with the school principal, Theresa Obermüller sets up a first meeting of the SCM team for the next morning before school. With this step the case treatment which has, up to now, taken place on the intrapersonal level, is expanded to include treatment on the institutional level of the school. Because the social worker continues to assume that the student may be in danger, it is justified to call a meeting on such short notice. Theresa Obermüller will be coordinating the SCM team as the conflict manager. She has previously been given (blanket) permission to do so by the principal and the teachers' conference. The other members of the SCM team are (in this case) the two homeroom teachers and the school principal (see also chart on role distribution in Chapter 5.4.3).

Wednesday 7:30 A.M. – Before school has even started, the SCM team meets for its first case consultation among colleagues. Obermüller gives the team members the support application and the minutes she prepared during the interview with Nele. Documentation and written reports form the foundation for successful conflict resolution. The first task of the team is now to come to an initial assessment and to clarify role assignments within the SCM team.

Theresa Obermüller projects onto a wall screen the completed Form for Implementing and Documenting a Conflict Analysis, and she summarizes what has happened: "According to the information we have at this point, based on statements made by the 13-year-old student Nele and her friend Jessica, as well as chat exchanges and a video that have been ascertained, the student Steve from the 9th form circulated, at 11:30 P.M. on Sunday – deliberately, to take revenge and against Nele's express wishes – a video of his former girlfriend Nele in which she is shown in the nude. Nele had terminated the relationship several weeks earlier. In a viewing of the video, it emerged that circulating it is very probably a punishable offense under the penal code (§ 184b StGB), since the video contains child pornographic material.

....

There were numerous other students involved who became accomplices by requesting the video, taking possession of it, and re-sending it. It is not yet known how widely the video has in fact been distributed."

In brief, Obermüller categorizes the conflict on the basis of its characteristics: "The conflict occurring is to be considered as stage E and is very complex. That means that the potential for escalation and endangerment is very great for all involved; the psycho-social damage already done to those involved is, in part, extremely severe; in the course of the conflict process, criminal offenses have been committed; and the conflict events are highly complex! They are occurring on all levels: intra- and interpersonal, institutional, systemic and probably also on the level of parental cooperation." The assessment of a conflict is always undertaken on a scale set up by the Steering Group. It categorizes the gravity of conflict situations on a scale from A to E (the highest, see diagram in Chapter 5.4.2).

In Obermüller's estimation, there is a threat of serious detriment to Nele's social status and to her emotional and physical well-being. She reports that Nele is on the verge of refusing to attend school. Fortunately, she is not expressing any suicidal thoughts right now and says she has no tendency towards them. Steve's attack, Obermüller explains, began on the interpersonal level and then escalated systemically. It could potentially lead to a significant disturbance of the peaceful community and work climate at the school. How widely the video has circulated on the internet is not yet clear; up to now, it is known to have been sent to various groups on WhatsApp. Mr. Schuster, the principal, adds that he had a long talk with Nele's mother the previous evening. She impressed him as being cooperative and rational. At that point, Nele's father did not yet know what had happened because he didn't get home from work until very late in the evening.

In the SCM team, questions come up: What is Steve's response to the accusation? With teenagers, you can't completely exclude the possibility that someone else with a mobile could have posted the video. And: how is child pornography defined in legal terms? On this second issue, Theresa Obermüller has done her homework. She spoke to the youth officer in the police department, using "What if….?" mode as one would for a fictitious case. Nele is 13 years old. That is very significant. Nele's video shows her genitals, which was no accident, but rather undertaken with sexual intent – meaning that it fulfils the legal criteria for child pornographic material, even if Nele looks like she's 16. When such videos (or photos) are produced, acquired, or circulated by other persons, it is a felony according to § 184b StGB. According to the penal code, this is a criminal offense and the police are required to investigate as soon as it comes to their attention – regardless of whether Nele and her parents want them to. If, on the other hand, the video (or comparable photo material) were not pornographic, then circulating it against Nele's wishes would not be quite as grave an offense in terms of the penal code, and it would only be prosecuted on demand. Here, however, "With very high probability, a crime according to the penal code (§ 184b StGB) is to be assumed." That Theresa Obermüller has this reliable assessment – made by her cooperation partner in the police department – so promptly at hand is an outcome of networking efforts she has pursued over many years.

In planning how to proceed, the SCM team follows systematically an action strategy that they have previously set out together (see Chapter 5.4.4). First, the mode of action needs to be determined – the team has to decide how to treat the conflict: by self-regulation, regulation on demand, obligatory regulation, threat intervention, or crisis intervention (see overview Five Elements of a Strategy for Action in Chapter 5.4.4). The following questions help in deciding:

1. Does the conflict have to be treated immediately in order to prevent acute, severe damage to anyone's emotional or physical well-being?
2. Would the conflict threaten to escalate and produce a situation of acute endangerment if there were no intervention?
3. Has there been a serious transgression against values and norms that calls for a pedagogical regulatory measure levied by the school?
4. Does the student who has been targeted wish for help with the conflict?
5. Does the homeroom teacher or the principal want to leave the conflict resolution up to the students (or the parents)?

In this case, the group quickly reaches unanimous agreement: questions 1 through 4 clearly 'yes' and question 5 'no'. With that, the mode of action for the ongoing procedure is set: the school has to conduct a crisis intervention.

Every member of the SCM team now takes up a position in accord with his/her expertise and options for decision-making and action: as an advisor, conflict helper, conflict manager, or regulator. Treatment of conflicts that are serious or can escalate into a crisis should always be undertaken by a team.

Conflict treatment by a team ensures

- high quality of the treatment, particularly with regard to maximum protection of victims,
- a high educational standard in overcoming the crisis,
- the division of the time/work burden among several persons, which conserves resources,
- responsibility borne by several persons,
- critical reflection on and correction of planned actions, based on feedback from team members.

The following persons and roles should be involved in an SCM or crisis intervention team:

The SCM Team	
The core team is built around four roles. Although they could be performed by two persons, this should remain an exception due to the work load, but also in terms of defining oneself in the role. Therefore, the SCM team should be formed by at least four persons.	
Role	**Task**
School principal (regulator, first order) (obligatory)	Directs the team; confronts student(s) with accusation; decides on strategy for action, particularly on interventions, pedagogical or regulatory measures; directs intervention in cases of threat or crisis; takes responsibility for all actions in the school; involves the conflicting parties
Homeroom teacher(s) (regulator, second order) (obligatory)	Directs the class; confronts student(s) with accusations; decides on pedagogical measures; also takes responsibility for the legality and commensurability of actions taken in classes; involves the conflicting parties
Conflict manager (role can be played by homeroom teacher or school social worker)	Conducts a conflict diagnosis; makes recommendations towards assessing the conflict process; advises the decision-makers in their planning and decision on strategies for action (mode, direction, level, data sharing); coordinates and supervises the process of crisis intervention, conflict resolution, and follow-up; reports to the regulators; involves the conflicting parties
Conflict helper (teachers or external consultants)	Conducts negotiations on reparation, three-way talks with victim and offender, mediation with others involved, coaching of human-rights observers; supports the monitoring of voluntary self-commitments or declarations to cease and desist
Expanded team	
Social education professionals	Conduct social training sessions, systemic mobbing intervention or brief intervention; these should be certified professionals who have pursued advanced training
Media education specialists (optional)	Provide advice on media education issues and technical-organizational aspects in cases of endangerment through the use of media
Coaches (optional)	Accompany and support victim and offender in serious conflict situations in order to avoid violent escalation or traumatization; these should be professionals who have pursued advanced training (school psychologists, school social workers, crisis intervention specialists, school counselors)
Support team (participates only partially in the collegial case consultations of those listed above)	
Conflict support assistants (teachers, external consultants or parents who have specific training)	Conduct exploratory interviews with involved students and teachers

6.5 The Crisis Intervention

Due to the decision to conduct an intervention, in this case the SCM automatically becomes a crisis intervention team. Now they spell out the goals of the crisis intervention: the primary aim is to achieve, in short time, de-escalation on the interpersonal and systemic level (see Chapter 2.1.2). That means:

■ supporting Nele in re-gaining her stability and refraining from acts that could be self-damaging or damaging to Steve,

■ obliging Steve and accomplices to refrain from any further cyber-attacking,

■ re-gaining control of the situation, above all over possession and circulation of the video, and thus preventing further criminal offenses,

■ strengthening the pro-social value system among the classmates of Steve and Nele, and raising concern and compassion for the victim,

■ and confronting the rationalization strategies that Steve has been propagating ("I didn't do anything wrong, Nele is a bitch and it's all her own fault!").

But first, several questions still need to be answered:

■ How did the video get onto the net?

■ How widely has it been circulated, and in what media forums?

■ Who requested to receive a copy?

■ Who forwarded/shared it?

■ Who has it in his/her possession?

■ Who has really committed a serious violation of values and norms, and may therefore be suspected of continuing to do so?

During the following school hours the conflict assistants (see Chapters 5.4.3 and 6.4), directed by Obermüller, conduct interviews with those students (and also teachers) who are involved in the conflict in the broadest sense (or who are witnesses to it). The outcome of the 30 interviews is already available the next day:

■ At the school, approximately 70 students had viewed Nele's nude video up to that point.

■ About 30 students had saved the video, which they received via chat, and stored it on their mobile phones.

■ Several students were very eager to get a copy and sent out requests for it.

■ Only a few students deleted the video, finding it offensive.

■ During school breaks, groups had formed in the hallways with people smirking and laughing. Only a few students were concerned and pensive.

■ With the exception of Jessica, not one of these 70 students got in contact with an adult about the matter – despite the fact that the disastrous results of sexting had been discussed at a prevention workshop only six months earlier.

■ Justifications had produced their intended effect on many students: compassion for Nele was uncommon. Even when questioned explicitly about Steve's behavior, hardly anyone found it morally reprehensible – there were practically no critical statements.

■ The focus of indignation was on Nele's behavior.

Theresa Obermüller had been expecting that Nele would not be treated with much compassion. The value system of many children and adolescents is not oriented, of its own accord, towards respect and human rights. On the contrary, commercial TV formats based on shaming people mercilessly ("Germany's Next Superstar") present a blueprint for cynicism. Malicious jokes about someone else's suffering are a lot more popular than compassion and moral courage.

Now that Theresa Obermüller has been able to glean a reliable impression of the conflict's status, based on the interviews, she can now arrange to talk to Steve. An essential principle of the school's SCM is that every person must have an opportunity to be heard. But Theresa Obermüller won't contact Steve directly. Her confrontative interview with Steve will be preceded by a conversation between Steve and the homeroom teacher or the principal. The binding tenet is: the accusation is always voiced initially by the responsible teacher or the principal (or the victim). Only the heads of the form and the school are legally commissioned to address educational issues of this gravity and have the right to

confront a student with an accusation. Therefore the principal, Mr. Schuster, conducts this first regulatory talk with Steve, who roundly rejects any blame for the cyber attack. He denies that he was the first to re-send the video. He claims that he received it from other students and then shared it. And besides, he asserts, Nele herself had already posted the video on Facebook. Mr. Schuster asks Steve to enlist help from Ms. Obermüller and get his version of the story down on paper. This way, everyone will understand him better. Steve agrees to do that, and Mr. Schuster accompanies him to Theresa Obermüller's office.

Tasks of the Regulators and Conflict Helpers

In the terms of Systemic Conflict Management, the school principal and the homeroom teacher are regulators. While teachers bear "the direct responsibility for the education and instruction of the students", the principal as head of the school has the "overall responsibility", must see to it "that legal and administrative regulations and school ordinances are observed", and must "take the necessary measures in individual cases" (quoted from the School Law of Lower Saxony).

It is the task of regulators to conduct a hearing with the student and, where appropriate, his/her parents relating to the student's behavior that is assumed to be damaging (towards persons) or that violates values and norms.
This hearing includes the disclosure of an accusation. It confronts the accused student with having violated values and norms. With this confrontation, the institutional conflict between the regulators as representatives of the school community and a student suspected of damaging or injurious behavior has begun.

Conflict helpers may be school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, or other professionals. It is not their job to confront the accused with a violation of values and norms, but rather, once the accusation has been articulated, to help him/her come to terms with it and present his/her perspective on the events (the experience and the acts that took place).

Where no significant violation of values and norms has occurred, only a disagreement, bad feelings or harm due to carelessness, the affected student should be the one to voice the reproach. This can be done in the presence of a conflict helper who, however, should never be the person articulating the accusation. The conflict helper's role consists in offering the opportunity for talks to mediate and resolve conflicts, and in moderating such talks if indicated.

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Theresa Obermüller greets Steve in a friendly and respectful manner. She will help him, she says, to express his view of the events, his experience, and his needs. "Steve, I would like to motivate you to be open and honest. If it came out later on that you didn't tell the truth, the situation might get unpleasant for you. I don't think that Mr. Schuster or your homeroom teacher would exactly be forgiving."

She confronts Steve with the facts and the subjective experience of those involved, and she is eager to see how he responds. After all, based on the interview reports and the chat exchanges that have been ascertained, he is highly suspect. Perhaps he can contribute new information that would be important in regulating the conflict? Theresa Obermüller's task right now is to understand him – his thoughts, his feelings and motives. In this consultation, she will establish whether Steve can accept the accusations and is willing to take responsibility for the effects of his own behavior.

Unfortunately, Steve does not react as Theresa Obermüller had hoped he would. There is a lot at stake for Steve. If he can manage to deny responsibility for the purported violation of values and norms and for the emotional harm done to Nele (as well as the violation of her personality rights), then he's off the hook. And in fact, Steve does grab for the same justifications that he has been trumpeting to his classmates. The strategies range from denial ("She sent out the video herself, even posted it on Facebook") through attempted reversal of the burden of guilt ("That slut, she shouldn't be surprised") to legalizing what he did ("That's not forbidden"). It's clear to Theresa Obermüller that there are plausible explanations for these justification strategies. That makes it possible for her to avoid condemning Steve morally. She holds to the basic tenet of separating the person and the behavior, and remains friendly and open towards Steve.

Steve's reaction does, however, reinforce Theresa Obermüller in her resolve to begin an intervention on the systemic level in both classes as soon as possible. And another matter seems to demand immediate attention, as well: Many of the classmates have already profited from possessing and sharing the video, motivated by things like sensationalism, wanting recognition from peers, or schadenfreude (gloating over another's misfortune) coupled with the feeling of being worth more than the victim, or glee over being on the safe side.

For a systemic brief intervention (SBI), formally speaking Obermüller needs a commission from the homeroom teachers and the principal. She would actually prefer having a decision made by the all-class conference as a basis for action, but there is no time for that now. The following points are of importance:

- For the intervention to succeed, one of the essential requisites is that of evoking compassion. There are two factors potentially working against that: firstly, the relatively low social status of the victim, even before the attack; and secondly, the possibility of socially incompetent behavior as a reaction to the attack, e.g. in the form of retaliation. On the first point, not much can be done in short order. Nele is not the class darling, but she's also not marginalized.

- Nele and her parents need further support without delay – coaching that is tailored to the situation. Her homeroom teacher says that Nele is a smart girl with good self-regulation.

- Another condition for success is that the behavior of Steve and his accomplices be ostracized by the homeroom teacher and the principal, plainly and clearly. Nele needs advocates. She is the one who was damaged – there can't be any doubt about that.

6

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The very same day, Mr. Schuster talks to Nele and her parents, in the presence of the homeroom teacher and Theresa Obermüller. Nele and her parents pledge to reveal any and all information relating to the conflict and to inform the school immediately should any further attacks occur. They give the school permission to exchange case data within the SCM team. Mr. Schuster makes it clear to Nele and her parents how important it now is that neither Nele nor any of her friends try to 'strike back' aggressively. That would seriously endanger the outcome of the intervention. Nele and her parents promise that they won't make any moves on their own and will refrain from any use of force or escalatory acts. The parents report that, as Mr. Schuster had requested, they have temporarily taken away Nele's mobile phone – among other reasons, to protect her from any further attack. Mr. Schuster, for his part, promises to keep Nele and her parents well informed about how things progress. He reminds the parents that they can turn to him or the conflict manager Ms. Obermüller at any time. Theresa Obermüller offers Nele highly-frequent counseling and coaching sessions; Mr. Schuster urges Nele to take advantage of that and never miss a session. The professional approach of the SCM team impresses Nele and her parents – they have trust in the team.

The next morning – it's Friday – the SCM meets for its second collegial case consultation. Theresa Obermüller reports that the circumstances have been clarified, unequivocally: stowed in the school safe is a DVD with the ascertained video and the chat exchange between Nele and Steve. These suffice to prove that Steve – contrary to what he claims – posted the video against Nele's will, purposely and deliberately, in order to "finish her off": it is indisputable that Steve bears the responsibility for escalating the conflict.

Theresa Obermüller addresses a concern that relates to the conflict process on the systemic level of the school classes and peer groups. From her point of view, dissocial attitudes and behavior have come to the fore in both classes. Justification strategies have been taken up by classmates. Due to the attack, Nele has been maneuvered into an inferior position.
In many of the interviews, she was condemned – and Steve's behavior wasn't. The responsibility for the

offense is being reversed. There is a danger that Nele will be marginalized even more. She is now in dire need of advocates, and both classes are in need of pro-social orientation.

Theresa Obermüller suggests that a systemic brief intervention (SBI) be carried out in both classes, and very soon. The SCM team agrees. The principal commissions Tom Griener with conducting the intervention. He is a teacher who is also a certified specialist for social training and systemic mobbing intervention, and has engaged in both for many years. Together with the homeroom teachers, he plans for the intervention to take place on the next school day.

Parallel to the SBI, the SCM team also develops a plan for other actions. The most important steps are summarized in a 10-point crisis plan:

1. Individual support for Nele through highly-frequent coaching on the intrapersonal level (one-on-one)

2. Highly-frequent information and counseling for Nele's parents and – if they wish – also for Steve's parents to avoid a blockade in the form of a secondary conflict on the level of cooperation among the educational partners.

3. A hearing with Steve and his parents suggesting a "package deal" for his participation
Since Nele says she can imagine continuing to attend the same school that Steve does, the SCM team recommends that the principal suggest a "package deal" to Steve (on the direction of action, see Chapter 5.4.4). The offer would involve *deed adjustment* to "heal" the institutional conflict between Steve and the school community, as well as *loss adjustment* or reparation to ease the interpersonal conflict between Steve and Nele. The "deed" aspect usually includes doing a certain amount of unpaid work for the school community and apologizing, in front of the class, to the principal and the homeroom teacher. In this particular case, Steve would also be expected, very soon, to revisit the chatrooms, disclosing his misbehavior, expressing his regret (and thus restoring Nele's "honor") and requesting that the chat members immediately delete the video he has circulated.

Deed and loss adjustment are, at Steve's school, pedagogical methods that are applied according to established procedural standards and are usually implemented by the school social work office in the framework of conflict support. If he wants to profit from this offer, by a given date Steve has to submit a formal application to that office for conflict support. His taking this opportunity would be the starting point for consensual resolution. Other sanctions could be avoided or reduced. One such conceivable sanction might be suspending him from class for a limited time.

4. Restriction of mobile phone use during school hours

It will be suggested to Steve's parents that, for a period of four weeks, he will not be allowed to carry a mobile phone during school hours. When entering the school building, he must hand in his smartphone to the secretary's office and may not pick it up until his school day has ended. Should Steve be willing to observe this measure voluntarily, that will be acknowledged as a sign of willingness to make reparation.

5. Deposition renouncing the use of force

A renunciation of (the use of) force is a particular type of declaration to cease and desist, which is formulated in the presence of the parents and signed by the student. In it, the student pledges to refrain from any further use of force.

In this case, the deposition includes the pledge to delete the video, never re-send it again, and refrain – also, expressly, in chatrooms – from commenting on the conflict, apart from posting a negotiated statement (see above under point 3). In addition, the renunciation of force comprises refraining from mental or physical coercion or harassment and from any violation of property rights (pertaining to photo/video material). In the event of any violation of this deposition, the school administration will impose sanctions: an official complaint to the police and Steve's expulsion from the school. During the meeting in which the deposition is composed, an assessment will be undertaken of the willingness of the student offender and his family environment to conform to legitimate values and norms in the future. Point 4 (restriction of smartphone

use) can be included in the deposition as a voluntary effort on the part of Steve.

6. Offer of support through highly-frequent coaching for Steve

Under the condition that Steve is willing to work towards improving his behavior and resolving the conflict amenably (as stated in Point 3), he will be offered support towards fulfilling his deposition in the form of highly-frequent coaching.

7. Monitoring during school hours

For a period of four weeks, Steve will not be allowed to move freely about the school without a monitor. During this time, options for his mobility and communication at school will be restricted for him and his accomplices. His presence on or in the school properties will only be allowed if he is monitored by a teacher or other educator who is present.

8. Implementation of systemic brief intervention (SBI) in Steve's and Nele's classes

In the course of systemic brief intervention, in both of the (entire) classes, the students are expected to develop their compassion for persons in a situation similar to Nele's and to compose a voluntary declaration of commitment towards that goal (see Chapter 4.4, Step 5). Human rights observers shall be chosen in each class, and the distinction between tattling and eliciting help will be clearly drawn.

9. Talks with class members emphasizing norms and risks

Shortly after the mobbing intervention, the principal and homeroom teachers will conduct talks with students who were involved, in order to elucidate norms and risks and to re-emphasize that the possession and circulation of unauthorized images and videos constitute a criminal offense, violating the value system of the school community and, in the future, will result either in educational and regulatory measures or in notification of the police. The principal and homeroom teachers can refer in this context to the declarations of commitment that were composed and confirmed on a voluntary basis during the SBI.

6

What to do about (Cyber)Mobbing?

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1   Introduction
2   From Mobbing to (Cyber)Mobbing
3   Four (Cyber)Mobbing Case Stories
4   Intervention Methods

5   Systemic Conflict Management
6   Nele – A Case Study
7   Pedagogical Conduct
8   Projects in Practice

10. Announcement of a social award – Monitoring the declarations of commitment

Once the SBI has been successfully completed, monitoring will occur on a regular basis in both classes to ensure compliance with the declaration of commitment (see Chapter 5.5.4 on follow-up). If the class members succeed in observing their self-made rules on decency, they will receive a social award. The human rights observers will receive recognition in their school report ('Student N.N. contributed very significantly to the development of social awareness and norms within the class').

The minutes of this meeting are – as always – taken down by Theresa Obermüller in her role as conflict manager and distributed to the members of the SCM team.

The implementation of the 10-point crisis plan gets off to a good start. Nele and her parents accept the offer of counseling and coaching. Nele is able to refrain entirely from retaliation or returning insults. Her parents act prudently; they set aside their idea of confronting Steve personally and having a talk with his parents. They are not planning to notify the police. The homeroom teacher and the principal were able to convey how damaging a further escalation of the conflict would be for Nele at this time. At bottom, Theresa Obermüller herself would not have been disinclined to recommend an official complaint. There had been several instances in the past where the involvement of the police and the district attorney added gravity to the process. However, the SCM team estimated that notifying the police would have made it much easier for Steve to present himself as the victim and to reverse the burden of guilt. The chance of forming an alliance with Steve's parents and the classmates would have been reduced. Still, the possibility is not excluded that the police may later be involved if pedagogical measures do not produce the desired effect.

The principal invites Steve and his parents to a formal hearing (see Point 3), giving them an opportunity to comment on the events and the principal an occasion to take stock of Steve's willingness to de-escalate and make reparation, while trying to enlist the parents as partners for educational measures. The conversation begins as Mr. Schuster and Theresa Obermüller had expected it would. Steve tries to deny it all, to trivialize

it, to put the other side to blame. His parents adopt his position. They endorse it. They say they trust their son and cannot imagine that he would do something like that. When someone makes videos like Nele did, that tells you a lot. They voice doubts about Nele's moral integrity. Besides, other students had also re-sent the video: why should their son be the one to be punished? The tide doesn't turn until Theresa Obermüller describes in detail the events as they unfolded and reveals the content of the chat exchange between Nele and Steve. Now the parents are unsettled. Steve breaks down. In tears, he admits that he had posted the video "to get back" at Nele. He hated her after she broke up with him. The conversation takes a turn. Steve indicates that he is willing to make reparation.

The principal has the best intentions. He wants Steve to learn something from this conflict. He gives Steve his first chance for reparation: If, by Tuesday evening, Steve publishes a chatroom post in which he sincerely regrets his actions and requests that the video be deleted by all recipients, Mr. Schuster as principal will recognize that Steve is prepared to make a step in the right direction. Towards the end of the conversation, he gives the student another deadline: Steve has until Tuesday to submit his application for conflict support to Theresa Obermüller.

The Systemic Brief Intervention

On the next day of school, Monday, Tom Griener comes into play with the systemic brief intervention SBI. Theresa Obermüller is involved as co-trainer. Tom Griener is like a boulder in the bedrock of this school; he is a member of the steering group, and many years earlier he had pursued continuing education to acquire the advanced skills such work demands. On such occasions as this, Mr. Schuster excuses him from regular lessons – he considers himself lucky to have such capable people among his teachers.

The "scripts" for the intervention (see Chapter 4.4) have been set out together with the two homeroom teachers. For their orientation, Griener goes through the plan step by step. In advance of an SBI, Theresa Obermüller is always a bit tense. She never knows exactly what values and norms she is going to encounter in a school class. On the basis of the interviews, she

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reckons with considerable erosion of values in these classes. She and Griener take into account that the SBI may fail. That tends to occur in classes where pro-social values have been trodden upon over a long period of time, and where pro-socially inclined students and parents are few and far between or have withdrawn out of anxiety. Nonetheless, even if the SBI fails, it remains valuable as a diagnostic tool. The SCM team can orient its ongoing strategy to the outcome. But Theresa Obermüller is optimistic that the classes will, collectively, develop their compassion. If things go well, at the end there will be voluntary declaration of commitment signed by everyone.

The SBI is successful in both classes: both prepare declarations to respect human rights ("I hereby pledge that in the future I will not re-send and will immediately delete any damaging images, texts, or videos that I receive"). Since she didn't have to play any exposed role in the SBI, Nele was present the whole time. Afterwards, she seemed visibly relieved. A few students who did not want to sign were not pressured to do so. They hadn't done anything wrong, they argued. It was not possible to convey to them that the intervention was not about the past, but rather about future behavior.

Theresa Obermüller asks Tom Griener to put together a formalized report on the SBIs. With their completion and the declarations of commitment, a milestone is set for the overall intervention. That is the basis for Point 9 of the 10-point plan: talks with class members to elucidate norms and risks. They take place on the same day – directly after the SBI – and are conducted exclusively by the "regulators" (the principal and home-room teachers). In this case, Mr. Schuster conducts them in both classes. Addressing the students, he calls attention to the legal norms and school rules that apply and emphasizes the risks students would be taking if they violate these norms in the future. And he makes it clear that he considers the appointment of human rights observers an important step. That is not an easy job, he explains, and taking it on indicates a person's great capacity for compassion and their impressive moral courage. Theresa Obermüller is watching the students' response. The principal's talk hits the mark. The students appear concerned, aware of the seriousness of the situation. Theresa Obermüller is

convinced: the use of force – in the form of cyber attacks or otherwise – has just become a lot more unlikely in these classes!

The next day, Theresa Obermüller picks up the human rights observers for a first briefing and coaching session, for which they are excused from class. In the school community, sessions such as this are regarded as part of the educational work and can therefore be held during class hours. The human rights observers have the task of reporting, without naming names, any violation of human rights – in this case, as pledged in the declaration of commitment. Obermüller discusses at length how the monitoring of a voluntary declaration works. The observers need protection, good orientation, and frequent recognition. "You have to be aware that in this function, sooner or later someone is going to give you a hard time!" It's no accident that the word "courage" is contained in the expression "moral courage". Obermüller assures them she will provide support whenever they need it.

A discreet survey in both classes is conducted to see whether the SBI is bearing fruit. The results show that a large number of students are in favor of refraining from damaging behavior in chatrooms. The majority says that force is taboo. A smaller number, those who had previously set the tone, still trivializes it, reverses the burden of guilt, and clings to justification strategies. The pro-social value system of the classes has been strengthened, but is not yet firm. Rules for the class chat are rejected. That is nothing new to the SCM team, it is a typical reaction of many classes in that age group: their need for autonomy and their corresponding resistance against interference from adults is great.

Conflict Support for the Offender
On Tuesday morning, Steve appears in Theresa Obermüller's office. Since the hearing on Friday, he has had time to think about whether he will submit an application to the social worker for conflict support – and finally has brought himself to take this step. Steve opens the conversation as was to be expected: Mr. Schuster had told him he was supposed to go and see her. Theresa Obermüller replies, "Steve, you're telling me what Mr. Schuster wants. I would like to hear from you what it is that you want. Maybe you're just

doing Mr. Schuster the favor? Or do you yourself want to accomplish something?" A bit annoyed, Steve says he has to put in 20 hours of work for the janitor as a punishment, and he has to apologize. The school made that decision, and otherwise they're going to throw him out. Theresa Obermüller sets that straight: he must have misunderstood something. The school can't demand voluntary work or an apology. Only he himself, and in accord with his parents, can make a decision to do those things. If he really wants it, then the teacher responsible for mediation and reparation at the school will give him support. (This could also be done by the school social worker. But it is advisable to have various competent partners for different tasks at the school. Differentiating in this manner helps to avoid work overload and role confusion.)

Theresa Obermüller senses how annoyed but also torn Steve is inwardly. "You're annoyed? I can help you to get things back in order – but only if you want that!" She offers to support him in finding his own way. Steve takes her up on that. Then Obermüller sets up two chairs in front of him and asks him to think about which one stands for the side of him that is annoyed, feels treated unfairly, and wants to refuse the deal on reparation and reconciliation – and then she asks him to sit on that chair (on work with chairs, cf. Hartmann-Kottek 2008, p 206 f.). It's easy for Steve to take up this position. A lot of resentment and injured pride comes to the fore – for Theresa Obermüller, an unmistakable sign of needs that have been neglected. He can't forgive Nele for having left him. She had just zapped him off with a message on the chat. "She was already keen on somebody else! She said the reason was that my clothes were shitty and I was not cool and got on her nerves all the time!" Theresa Obermüller mirrors him on the experiential level, saying "I can imagine that really hurt, being rejected like that." Bull's eye! Steve falls sad.

Now she asks him to sit on the other chair. "Steve, that could be the side of you that thinks it's done something wrong. The side that wants to get things back into order. So I'm asking this side: Do you think that you did something wrong?" Resentfully, Steve gets right to

the point. Yes, he did something wrong, he knows that now. He shouldn't have posted the video. That was going too far. And he hadn't known that it was so strictly forbidden. "Okay. So what does this side of you say about Nele? Do you think you did something wrong to her, too?" A hard nut to crack! "Not really! She earned it that I hurt her just as bad!" – "Whoops, you just slipped back over onto the other chair, he's already had his say. Try again to see it from this chair! Start talking about the effects this had for Nele!"

This is the entry into assuming another perspective and workings towards empathy and compassion. Theresa Obermüller presumes that Steve has a long way to go. Maybe he will at least be able to take the next step towards cognitive assumption of a different perspective. The school specialist for mediation and reparation would be able to continuing working on that with him.

Obermüller pulls out the application form for conflict support. "So, Steve, now decide: accept help – yes or no? Now you have the opportunity to give one side of you the right of way. I think that the right decision would be to accept help. It would show that you're strong enough to face the music for what you've done. Don't forget that Mr. Schuster wants to give you a chance if you post an apology on the class chat today! Without that, it'll be the end of the road. This is your ticket to patching things up." She gives him an hour's time to come to a decision.

Steve returns to Theresa Obermüller's office right after the next lesson and fills out the application for conflict support with her. He formulates his apology for the class chat, including a short description of the consequences of his offense. Theresa Obermüller fetches Steve's smartphone from the secretary's office. He prepares the text and discusses it with Theresa Obermüller. Then he posts it on the chat. With that, the path towards ongoing conflict resolution is opened. Theresa Obermüller is glad that Steve seems to be getting on the move, too. But things are yet to take a different turn.

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On Thursday, the SCM team holds a short meeting to assess the situation. All agree: the crisis intervention seems complete. Due to it, the crisis has de-escalated from stage E to D (see diagram in Chapter 5.4.2). Hostility and malice have, in the main, given yield to concern, compassion, and fear of prosecution. According to a criminological study, 70% of children and adolescents adjust their behavior with regard to norms and rules when threatened with prosecution (cf. Pogarsky 2002). For the time being, the heat is off.

6.6 Regulating the Conflict

Theresa Obermüller regularly asks Nele, the homeroom teachers, and the human rights observers about the current status of things. She concludes that for the time being, the de-escalation of the conflict is ensured: there seems to no longer be a high degree of self-endangerment or endangerment of others. The human rights observers have the impression that all the classmates have deleted the video, not re-sent it, and not received any new videos. Still, the conflict is not yet definitively regulated.

This is a moment at which Theresa Obermüller, in her role as conflict manager, is irreplaceable – it can happen all too quickly that people start congratulating themselves in the assumption that the goals of the intervention have been attained. The 10-point program for crisis intervention has been implemented in many of its parts – but not in all of them. There remains the educational heart of the matter: work with Nele as the person who was targeted. She needs support in overcoming the injury and learning the right lessons from it.

On the offending side, Steve requires support, during the course of reparation, in working through what he did and maturing personally in the process. And finally, in both classes the development of pro-social competence has to be promoted through ongoing efforts.

The homeroom teachers are monitoring whether the declarations of commitment are actually being complied to – and in fact, no violations have come

to their attention. Nele seems more relaxed. She has the feeling that she has regained some control – but she still feels unsure of herself. She is worried that the video may have been circulated among students of other schools and may suddenly pop up again on the net – a fear that is hardly unfounded. Nele takes advantage of the coaching she was offered. She doesn't want "buddies" who go to bat for her. Her friend Jessica suffices as a back-up among her peers. The topic of refusing to go to school is off the table. Classmates don't mention the video to her. She doesn't really want to consent to victim-offender mediation with Steve. She doesn't want to be around him anymore. Due to the monitoring requirement that was imposed on him, at the moment Steve cannot move around the school freely – so there is no danger that she will run into him during a break. This relieves the pressure on her.

And then: on Thursday, Steve does not come to school. His parents write him in sick. A week later, they give notice that he is leaving the school. He is transferring to another school, they say, to make a new start. The educational partnership with Steve's parents ends here. The next day, the SCM team discusses the new situation. Cancelling the 'package deal' would normally result in a notification of the police about the offense. It would also be possible to expel Steve from the school 'after the fact'. The other option is to refrain from these measures in the hope that Steve will effectively withdraw from the conflict. Then again, he might find another victim at his new school – no one really knows whether he has now learned better. Theresa Obermüller recommends that protection of the victim be given the highest priority and that the school refrain from a post-facto expulsion and an official complaint to the police, under the conditions that Nele and her parents agree and Steve does not initiate any more attacks. Steve's homeroom teacher regrets the student's withdrawal: "He could have learned a lot for the future from this conflict." The specialist for mediation and reparation adds, "Making retribution for the deed in front of his class and the reconciliation that would have followed could have worked wonders!" In lack of an educational partnership with the parents, however, formative influence at this level cannot be exerted.

The principal decides to involve Nele and her parents, as well as Steve and his parents, in the decision. He gets in touch with Steve's parents. They are of the opinion that Steve has already made his contribution to settling the matter. "He apologized on the chat. That's enough." The parents don't want him to work on regulating the conflict and making reparation. They request that Mr. Schuster let him go his way without burdening the new start at the other school with a post-facto expulsion from the old school. Mr. Schuster is not very satisfied with this. After conferring with Nele and her parents, he decides to refrain from further measures. That provides the best foundation for sustained protection of Nele and for control over the situation. Nele's parents want to "calm things down" now, so that Nele can think about schoolwork again – right now, she's way behind on that. Nele herself feels no urge to retaliate. She is glad that the climate in her class and her circle of friends has returned to normal.

In a final team consultation, Theresa Obermüller concludes that the conflict regulation is now completed – and the team working on the case can be scaled down in size. Now, the follow-up phase begins.

6.7 Follow-up and the End of the Conflict

It would be naïve to assume that two days of social training or even a systemic brief intervention could alter the informal value system and the dissocial tendencies that have been established in a school class over the years. Alterations in behavior can be accomplished over a period of time through emotional concern, insight, good relational work, and also the threat of sanctions – but one has to keep at it.

One of the central tasks during the follow-up now consists in monitoring the observance of the agreements that were made. The students need the supportive presence of adults if they are to adjust their behavior in the long term in accord with a re-activated framework of pro-social values and norms. The outcome of the

systemic brief intervention serves for Theresa Obermüller as a basis for the follow-up phase. She will support the homeroom teachers in their next steps. On her agenda are:

- orientation talks with the human rights observers, then further meetings with them – on a daily basis during the first week,

- periodic monitoring of the declarations of commitment during the coming school weeks, at least twice a week,

- composition of a renunciation of force together with one student and her parents, since she has declared her intention to continue re-sending the video if she gets a copy of it,

- invitation from the prevention team to the police to return to the school for another information event on the legal situation and the consequences of offenses against the penal code,

- across-the-board measure: acknowledge the students' effort! at least once a week!
  Don't forget to announce the social award, and remember the acknowledgment for the human rights observers in their school reports.

- Attempt to reach agreement with the classes on rules of conduct in social networks.

Unfortunately, when it appears that a conflict is over, motivation often slacks off. So too in Nele's case. After the first monitoring rounds provide grounds for optimism, both homeroom teachers want to get back to the normal agenda as quickly as possible. One of the classes is behind in math, the other is busy with a vocational preparation project. That means that time for social education work is scarce, as Theresa Obermüller also knows. Therefore, she is not really disappointed when the teachers come out with a more or less definitive statement against further monitoring of the declarations and against continuing the human rights observers' work. The social worker would have liked to see things progress otherwise, but she respects the decision of the homeroom teachers.

She has two more tasks to complete. Firstly, she produces a final report on the events and on the outcome of the systemic brief intervention, distributing it to the entire team. In it, she also mentions the deficits during follow-up, since they present a risk for the sustainability of the learning process. Secondly, she keeps in close touch with Nele.

Half a year later, Nele and Theresa Obermüller are holding their last session. Nele's mother is also there. During these months, no further cases of (cyber)-mobbing have come up in the classes. That is a success! Obermüller is eager to hear how Nele and her parents have experienced the work that was done. "When I think back…" Nele's mother sets in, "that was a shock! As a mother I want to protect my daughter from that type of thing and I had to see: I couldn't do it!" Theresa Obermüller knows that in cases of such serious violations of values and norms, feelings of guilt and failure are always involved – for the victim, the offender, and within their school and family environments. The question of who is at fault is a burden for everyone, causing stress and overload.

Nele says that during the first few days she had had great difficulty going to school. The first steps into the building were like "horror". She was glad to be able to take up the offer of coaching by the school social worker. It helped her a lot that the school had assured her its support and had looked after her. "Mr. Schuster, my homeroom teacher and you, you were so optimistic and you bolstered my courage. I remember that you told me, 'We'll master this together! We want you to go through this conflict together with us. That will make you even stronger!'"

Her mother adds, "It was really important for my daughter that she had people at school who took her part and spoke out about who was the offender and who was the victim!" She remembers well the first thing that the principal said to her: "Anyone who behaves like that at my school and damages other people so badly is going to take the responsibility. We don't tolerate that kind of behavior here!" For the principal,

protecting the victim was the highest priority. He could have reacted with hesitation or reproaches, says Nele's mother. She is thankful to him to this day for his resolute stance. Theresa Obermüller documents the conversation and prepares an evaluation of today's feedback for the next meeting of the steering group. This conflict case can now be considered closed.

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Pedagogical Conduct

7

Pedagogical Conduct

7.1 Posture as the Basis of Pedagogy

7.2 Pedagogical Propositions

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7. Pedagogical Conduct

Up to now, we have discussed specific methods of dealing with (cyber)mobbing. But children's and adolescents' response to method is actually secondary. Their primary response is to the person offering the methods.

For any method to even have a chance of producing sustainable effect, there are certain inner attitudes required on the part of educators. In the following, we will discuss the posture that is necessary if your influence on children and adolescents is to strengthen their resilience and promote their development, and what overall pedagogical propositions you can offer adolescents so that they develop pro-socially, refrain from violent behavior, and can rise to the (media) challenges of life.

7.1 Posture as the Foundation of One's Actions

Whether we succeed in having a positive influence on the pro-social development of children and adolescents depends decisively on our own demeanor. Our posture determines our actions and the outcomes of our actions.

7.1.1 Orientation to Needs

Every behavioral act, including those of children and adolescents, serves to fulfill basic needs (cf. Grüner 2010a). Among these "most essential target values of emotional activity" (Grawe 2000, p. 383) are the needs for:

- **security** (existential safety, orientation, trust, justice, fairness, values, norms, rules)

- **interaction** (attachment, closeness, belonging, companionship, togetherness, help, support, solidarity)

- **control** (freedom, power, self-efficacy, autonomy, participation, influence, codetermination)

- **stimulation** (play, fun, learning, action, entertainment, enjoyment, vitality, pleasure, joy, avoidance of fear and pain)

- **recognition** (respect, appreciation, success, esteem, a high standing)

Just as every fingerprint is unique, nature and nurture produce a unique manifestation of these basic needs in every individual person. At the same time, the diversity of these needs inevitably leads to intraindividual conflicts (within a person) and inter-individualconflicts (between persons). Anyone working with children and adolescents should not only reflect on his/her own set of needs and their interplay with the needs of an interaction partner, but rather should empathetically sense the individual needs of the adolescents, suggest pro-social paths to fulfilling these needs, and address the children's conflicting needs. Whether the issue is mobbing, media consumption, drugs, violence or extremism, is beside the point.

> ▷ **The aim is** to enable children and adolescents to fulfill their basic needs in a pro-social manner, and to understand and come to terms with conflicts that arise.

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To satisfy these basic needs, adolescents spend time in places (including media locations) that adults have no access to and therefore no way of influencing the young people's behavior there. In these control-free areas, the temptation is great for young people to fulfill their needs in ways that are not necessarily pro-social:

Security: the one who is the aggressor cannot be the victim, and therefore feels secure.

Interaction: bullies make friends with one another and form a tight clique.

Control: violence is associated with the experience of self-efficacy. Perpetrators of violence exert power over others and influence the course of social events.

Stimulation: violence is enjoyable, "bad" is good and is also extremely stimulating due to raised adrenalin and (in dangerous situations) endorphin levels.

Recognition: aggressors are often considered "cool" and are admired by the peer group, and they feel respected. Violence is often associated with a sense of achievement and enhanced self-esteem.

If they are to resist these temptations, children and adolescents have to be mentally strong and robust, to be resilient. We can all contribute to this by ensuring that basic needs are satisfied appropriately, for we are the most effective environmental protection known to resilience research (Wustmann 2004).

7.1.2 The Courage to Lead

We often dwell on questions such as: Is it even permissible for us to exert influence on children? And if so, how strongly? Should we, as adults, tell children what they are allowed to do and what they are not? Can we adults take the lead? Doesn't that make us callous and authoritarian? Are love and guidance even compatible with one another?
We often hear people say, "I know I should be more consistent, but I just can't bring myself to be more strict." In other words, "People are afraid of bearing authority because they don't want to be authoritarian" (Jesper Juul).

Some reasons for this fear may be:

- **Fear of abusing authority**
  "The abuse of authority and forced obedience in Germany's past apparently still affects pedagogical thinking and schoolteaching to this day" (Reichenbach 2010, 2011). A person in a leading role bears a great deal of responsibility. To do justice to it, leadership has to be oriented to ethical guidelines and to be accompanied by willingness for constant reflection on itself and others.

- **Fear of losing children's affection**
  Another aspect is the fear of losing children's affection and having them turn away. We don't want to be the "bad guys".

- **Fear of being overchallanged**
  Saying no, standing one's ground, and carrying out conflicts with children is strenuous. Being tolerant and permissive, allowing children to get away with things, is less complicated, easier, and demands less effort.

■ Fear of jeopardizing one's good relationship to the children

A clear, consistent, and occasionally strict stance may not suit our own image of ourselves as being endearing, nice, and understanding. Consistence and recognition can, however, go hand in hand, if the distinction is made between a person and his or her behavior. We can critize behavior – even do so emphatically –, but not the person as a whole ("You get on my nerves! You're impossible!") or their inner experience or thoughts ("What a stupid idea!"), their feelings ("That's nothing to get mad about!"), or their needs ("Who could possibly think that's fun!"). In addition, carrying on and scolding (in the sense of unreflected "letting off steam"), making reproaches, and demanding insight and reasonableness ("And? Now do you see why …?") are signs of lack of self-esteem on the part of the adult. Conversely, recognition must not be misconstrued as an excuse to avoid voicing criticism. We can demonstrate understanding for the inner life of children – for their thoughts, feelings, and needs – without condoning dissocial behavior. Understanding the reasons for a person's behavior is not tantamount to excusing it.

▷ *In short: we need not decide between loving concern and decisive leadership. The secret of good up-bringing and pedagogy is to do both, for "The core of pedagogical interaction is a well-adjusted balance between compassionate understanding and guidance" (Bauer 2010).*

7.1.3 Composure

A short thinking experiment: You are very interested in the social development of a certain teenager. Let's call him Max. You want him to stop harassing other people on a daily basis, insulting them, and helping himself to their belongings. You are conducting a project on preventing violence and have an overall commitment to it beyond the project itself. Nevertheless, Max's behavior does not change. How do you feel now? Disappointed, slighted, angry, frustrated, helpless, unsettled? You have self-doubts setting in, and feel that you have failed? These are unbearable feelings. So you try harder and step up your commit-ment. Still no change in Max's behavior. Now you notice that you're thinking about Max while you're at home. You can't get him out of your head, just can't find the 'off' switch. A new emotion comes into play: fear. Fear of renewed disappointment. You try even harder – and a vicious circle starts up. You are getting into a gratification crisis, i.e. your efforts are not rewarded. You begin to get irritable and thin-skinned. More and more often, you lose patience or simply withdraw. It's not much further to a burnout. For in reality, in the course of a long professional life you have encountered any number of Maxes whose behavior you wished to influence and who have disappointed your expectations. In all these cases, you are allowing your own happiness, satisfaction, self-esteem, and success to depend on other individuals.

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What does this attitude mean for Max? Now, he is no longer allowed to be a child/adolescent. Now, you need him. Now, he is supposed to satisfy your needs for attention, influence, confirmation, success, and recognition. Now, you are dependent on him, and not vice versa, as would correspond to a healthy generational border and a composed bearing on your part. Now, your happiness depends on his behavior. He senses the power he has over you. From his perspective, that makes you small, weak, and susceptible to manipulation. Now, he can take the lead and play the role of the tyrant (cf. Winterhoff 2009). At the same time, he is angry about it and behaves even more aggressively than he did before. Which leads us back to the above-mentioned vicious circle. The situation is aggravated by the fact that Max now feels he is under pressure. To make you happy, he has to change his behavior. Maybe he would even have liked to do so, but now his response becomes one of defiance.

How can such vicious circles be avoided? You can only maintain your inner independence (sovereign composure) if your own happiness, satisfaction, and self-esteem do not depend on altering other persons' behavior, but rather on your professionality and on changes in your own behavior. Your happiness is not tangent on whether children and adolescents behave pro-socially. You ask yourself what you have done right, and what aspects of your attitude and behavior you could improve. Instead of exerting pressure, you make proposals and offer young people new options.

Avoiding perfectionism is an element of this inner composure. You are proud when you succeed in identifying a mistake of your own and can gradually manage to refrain from repeating it. Mistakes are a source of motivation to work on one's own behavior – patiently, one step at a time.

You no longer identify with others, but rather maintain a professional stance, and you own your inner independence. What signs are there of this inner independence? Composure, for example, is demonstrated when you no longer scold people. Since you don't take dissocial behavior personally, you don't feel slighted by it and have no need to "let off steam". Since you are not placing blame with others, you refrain from reproaches, accusations, and complaints. You don't rely on children's confirmation of you and therefore needn't exhort them to demonstrate insight and be reasonable.

This inner composure does not set in overnight. Sovereign demeanor is a life-long learning process that only succeeds when accompanied by continual reflection on oneself and others. Working on oneself also implies refraining from self-excuses. Examples would be: "That's the way I am"; "I'm just the impulsive type, temperamentful and chaotic"; "That's too much work"; "They know what I mean"; "I don't want to lose my spontaneity"; "Hey, I'm not a robot"; "But I have to be authentic." Every new stance and every new form of behavior feels strange and inauthentic at first, requiring time to become a part of the self.

To maintain one's own sovereign composure and inner independence, it also helps to regard aggressive and respectless behavior of children and adolescents from a different perspective. *Breaking rules and being disrespectful are often interactive proposals serving as tests.* To check out your composure, your frustration tolerance, and your self-control, Max provokes you and tries to get you flustered. To test your steadfastness, he tries to get you off balance. To test your self-assurance, he tries to make you feel insecure. To test your leadership and assertiveness, he tries playing the boss. To find out whether dissocial behavior will get him your attention, he tries to stand out with aggressive behavior.

To find out whether he can rely on you or rather has to fear rejection, withdrawal of appreciation, violence or abuse of power (being denigrated, humiliated, ridiculed, scolded, shouted at, threatened, subjected to force, silenced, etc.), he tries to get you into a position of helplessness, powerlessness, and weakness. To find out whether you will insist on adherence to rules, he breaks the rules. If you pass all the tests, Max will form an attachment, will seek out your company and listen to what you say, meaning that – slowly but surely – he will adopt values and norms from you. If you don't pass the tests, that's no big problem. Max will continue making interactive proposals to test you, since he is also quite interested in your development.

One's own posture forms the foundation of preventive action and intervention. Children and adolescents sense whether or not you have the courage to lead, whether you identify with them, project your own expectations, hopes, and longings onto them and misuse them as substitute partners; and they respond accordingly.

Based on the developmentally relevant posture that has been discussed above, the question arises: What can we offer children and adolescents to promote the development of pro-social behavior?

7.2 Pedagogical Propositions

7.2.1 Explanations

If we expect children and adolescents to do something or not to do it, we have to explain the reasons. To explain does not mean to negotiate, and the young people need not agree with the explanation and adopt its rationale for themselves. By sharing practical life experience, we are making them an offer to understand something better and grasp it as a meaningful part of a whole.

When conveying values in the framework of violence prevention and therefore also in the context of (cyber)mobbing, the essential core is the first article of the constitution as the minimal standard on which our liberal, democratic social order in the sense of a strident and well-protected democratic system is based. Citizenship education does not only consist in offering liberties and the right to codetermination, but also in the demand that duties be fulfilled – to observe human rights, civil rights, and to respect human dignity (cf. Schmidt 2011; Marks 2010). The most important fundamental rights – in the context of social learning – are the right to emotional and physical Integrity, the right to property, and the right of free expression. Exclusion, slander, ridicule, injurious comments, insults, physical blows, and property damage are serious violations of law that must not be trivialized on the pretext that "they're only children."

Advantage: *To explain something, no specific knowledge of methods is required.*

Disadvantage: *Only in the most unusual cases does an explanation trigger such a strong and emotionally gripping 'aha' effect that it results in an intrinsically motivated change of behavior, i.e. not based on pedagogical actions undertaken by adults. Most kids will simply shelve an explanation under "what adults carry on about", letting it in one ear and out the other.*

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7.2.2 Conveying and Reinforcing Skills

In order to cultivate pro-social behavior, children and adolescents require skills and personal competence. Among the abilities that grant them the competence to act are non-violent self-assertion and communicative skills, such as

■ the ability to express their inner experience,

■ the ability to voice criticism in the form of a wish,

■ how to criticize behavior rather than a person and his/her inner experience,

■ how to describe behavioral acts precisely rather than using standard expressions such as "he gets on my nerves" or "he annoys me",

■ how to relate things from an experiential perspective, e.g. "When you make that face, I feel provoked" rather than "You are provoking me,"

■ and – particularly important – the ability to praise, confirm, and acknowledge others for their behavior.

But adolescents also need to practice their personal skills, for example to develop courage and civil commitment, which involves learning to overcome their own fears and to take a stand and express their opinions in a community situation or in the public sphere. This applies as well to personal attributes, such as honesty, sincerity, reliability, and readiness to act.

Of particular significance is the development and reinforcement of the personal skill of *self-control* (self-determination, self-regulation, self-direction, self-care, mindfulness, control of impulses, self-restraint). This is the basis and prerequisite for all other skills and is therefore a core competency. It encompasses, among other things, the ability to accept delayed gratification, to tolerate frustration, and to relinquish some ideas or wishes. Some people may associate self-control with commands like "stand up straight!" But the core issue is, on the contrary, that children learn not to react immediately and automatically, instead developing an "inner observer" that allows for mindfulness and concentration. Training such competencies with young people also counteracts the effects of the advertising industry that tempts us to believe we can have anything and everything right away, and if we can't afford it, we can get it on credit.

Scientific studies – beginning with Walter Mischel's "marshmallow test" – have provided impressive proof that children who have a greater degree of self-control are more successful in school, can concentrate better, display more extensive social skills, and can handle stress more effectively than age peers who have less self-control. Later in life, they are healthier and more successful in their professional lives and their relationships. Self-control is an essential factor in resilience (Wustmann 2004) and has much greater influence than the intelligence quotient on academic success (cf. Bauer 2015; Duckworth 2011; Ernst 2010; Mischel et al. 1989; Mischel 2014; Moffitt 2011; Spitzer 2011). Malte Friese and Claude Messner from the Institute for Psychology at the University of Basel describe this as follows: "Simply stated, intelligence gives an indication of a person's potential, while self-control allows for an assessment of how well a person uses that potential to achieve success" (quoted in Jacobs 2013).

Fun and diversion are good and important things, to be counted among the basic needs of human beings. When the issue is learning self-control, however, it is permissible to frustrate children on occasion, taking them to their limits and expecting them to deal with it – rather than expecting ourselves to change the tack every ten minutes. To avoid underchallenging or overchallenging children, training in self-control has to be oriented to their level of achievement – 'picking them up' where they are, not where we would like them to be. Their developmental age is decisive, not their biological age.

Training has to be planned in such a way that children experience success. This strengthens their expectation of self-efficacy and their self-esteem. Looking forward to future successes promotes their willingness to make an effort and motivates them to goal-oriented changes in behavior. Training is most effective when it is ritualized and the desired behavior thus becomes habitual.

▷ *Advantage: Training and rituals facilitate and promote pro-social behavior by establishing and reinforcing neuronal networks (automatic responses and habits).*

Disadvantages: To apply what has been learned, children and adolescents have to apply it in practice. They need to be willing to adjust their own behavior. This readiness is not always given.
Another disadvantage: To maintain the positive effects of training, constant practice and repetition are necessary.

7.2.3 Providing Attention and Recognition

Receiving attention and recognition are among the most important fundamental human needs (cf. Grawe 2000; Grüner 2010). We can promote children's readiness to develop pro-social behavior and motivate them to change their habits by offering to fulfill these needs. The goal is to establish a reliable – that is, predictable – culture of acknowledgement that provides motivation for pro-social behavior by activating the brain's reward system: its anticipation of the pleasure of receiving attention and recognition. This includes the anticipation of reliable and ongoing feedback as a response to positive changes in behavior. Dopamin being produced and circulated through the brain promotes motivation, concentration, and willingsness to achieve. It focuses a person's brain, wakes him up, and makes him feel euphoric (in anticipation). Some forms of attention and recognition are: handshakes, approval, applause, oral or written praise (referring to the behavior, not to the person), symbolic means of acknowledgement (smileys, etc.), waivers on homework, special activities, privileges, prizes, certificates, additional entries in school reports, etc. When the anticipated recognition is experienced, the brains's reward system is active and produces opioids that induce relaxed and happy feelings. Anticipation of more such feelings again activates the system of expectation, which in turn produces dopamine and leads to renewed willingness to achieve. A more thorough description of recognition culture and its neurobiological foundations can be found in Bauer 2008 und Grüner / Hilt / Tilp 2015a.

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Because we ourselves were often shortchanged when we were younger, even today still don't receive enough recognition, and because it is hard to bear that some adolescents cannot be intrinsically motiviated: we often have hurdles to overcome on the path to a professional culture of recognition: "What I'm asking of the children is just normal, it can be taken for granted, I just expect it"; "Silence is praise enough"; "Life is not a bowl of cherries"; "Everyone has to do his duty"; "I don't get any praise either, just for doing my job"; "I didn't get anything handed to me in life, either"; "Then they'll only do it to get a reward – that destroys intrinsic motivation"; "You shouldn't spoil children"; "I haven't got any time for that". When inner resistance along these lines rears its head, praise is likely to be mingled with irritation and morph into scolding: "Nice to see that you're finally doing what I've been telling you all along!" If you as an educator do not take the time to provide positive reinforcement by granting attention and recognition to children and adolescents, then they have no other choice but to attract attention to themselves by behaving badly and eliciting negative feedback. This brings us to the

Attention and Recognition Traps:

- A discontinuation of dissocial behavior is not an occasion for praise ("If you stop doing … , then later you'll be allowed to … !"), because a reward would merely motivate adolescents to more of the same dissocial behavior.

- Dissocial behavior must not be allowed to pay off. Let's go back to the example of Max. What does Max need to do in order to quickly reap attention and esteem from as many people as possible? He has to create a disturbance. Then he will get attention. Someone will take heed of him, and he will feel important. For him, it's a simple equation, and it works: the more often everyone pays attention to him, the higher his status in the peer group will rise. The more disrespectful he manages to be, the more he'll be admired by the clique. For this reason, we work with the concept of the 'time out' – just like referees in all the team sports in the world that strive for fairness.

Children's whose behavior is dissocial briefly lose their right to participate actively in whatever is going on. The opposite reaction – directing one's immediate attention to those who are behaving dissocially – would be counterproductive: it would enhance their status among some of the others, while those children who behave pro-socially would receive no attention at all during the whole episode. No one who behaves dissocially should be rewarded with extra attention.

An example from everyday school life: after a break, two children come back into the classroom in an upset and each of them claims that the other one insulted him. If you turn your attention to them right away, it will have several disadvantages:

- You are breaching the fundamental tenet, "do not work while emotions are at high pitch". When adrenalin is flowing, the body is set for fight or flight, and the brain does not work properly. The conflict therefore threatens to escalate.

- The students who want to get on with learning are annoyed because the lesson is interrupted and they aren't given any attention or regard. During the incident, they are simply ignored.

- The students who don't want to learn are glad that the lesson is interrupted and now know what they need to do in the future to enjoy some attention and a break from lessons.

- You yourself are in a stress situation because you want to get on with the lesson, and this increases the probability that you will react in an unprofessional manner.

- If you take the two children aside and talk to them now, you will be granting them your presence, time, and attention, while giving them a negative response. In doing so, you are rewarding them for their aggressive behavior and motivating them to behave aggressively in the future as well.

- If you ask the two children why they did this or what they were thinking, they may experience it as an offensive, reproachful, or even as being blamed. At the same time, this is an invitation for them attempt to justify themselves or make excuses ("It wasn't on purpose"; "I was just making a joke"; "He was asking for it"; "The others do the same thing"; "Why always me?").

- If you then lose your patience and scold them, this in turn brings several disadvantages:

  - By losing your self-control and demonstrating a low level of frustration tolerance, you damage your own image as a role model.

  - You misuse the two children as a sounding board for your own annoyance.

  - You lose your inner equilibrium and your composure. With that, you demonstrate weakness and give the children power over you.

  - By losing your temper, you grant them an intense kind of closeness to you in the form of even more negative attention.

In such a case, it is to the advantage of all the participants if you give each of the two children a place and enough time (out) to calm down – together with the promise to make a note of what's bothering them and the suggestion to clarify it later. This could also be an offer to work through the conflict in the class council or a mediation session.

> **Advantage**: *Anticipation of approval and recognition is a strong source of motivation. It can make children eager to behave pro-socially because they look forward to the attention and recognition they will receive.*
>
> **Disadvantage:** *Anticipation of attention and recognition is an extrinsic source of motivation. If the behavioral reward disappears, i.e. if pro-social behavior is no longer reliably rewarded by attention and recognition, then the motivation to behave pro-socially loses its momentum.*

7.2.4 Making Interactive Proposals

If children and adolescents encounter adults who satisfy their basic needs for security, attention, self-efficacy, stimulation, and recognition, then they are less susceptible to satisfying these needs through dissocial behavior: instead, they feel attached to these adults and they emulate them.

Experiencing adults who take the lead, who expect something of children and adolescents and trust them to manage it, who show concern about their worries, troubles, and conflicts, and make feasible suggestions towards pro-social development: all this encourages kids and teens to form attachments to such adults and to internalize their values, norms, and rules.

Children and adolescents who experience adults as having self-control, giving an example of non-violent behavior and credibility, will orient themselves towards these adults and will behave in an exemplary way themselves.

Offering interactive relationships to children and adolescents raises their levels of the attachment hormone oxytocin (cf. Bauer 2008). This 'feel good' hormone allows them to build trust, and it inhibits aggressivity.

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At the same time, the preventive effect of positive attachments is limited by everyday life: relationships that promote attachment require investing time, which is not always sufficiently in large groups or when the adult role is passed on to a new colleague. Pro-social behavior based on affection for an adult is also extrinsically motivated. If the attachment person disappears, so does the protective effect. This makes building new attachments more difficult for children and adolescents with attachment disorders, who demonstrate either ambivalent behavior, oscillating between exaggerated closeness and aggressive rejection, or avoidant behavior that feigns attachment and in fact coldly ignores any interactive effort on the part of the interested adult. In cases where adolescents find themselves caught in a conflict of loyalties – because they feel affection for their peers, parents, or educators, but these persons live by differing rules, values, and norms, or cultivate differing styles of upbringing – they are faced with a dilemma and forced to make a decision. Frequently, the loyalty to the family and the peer group is stronger than the attachment to the professional person.

▷ *Advantage: A secure attachment to adults who cultivate an authoritative style in upbringing is, in terms of environment, the strongest protective factor known to resilience research.*

Obstacles: Large groups, frequent shifts from one caregiver to another, attachment disorders, and loyalty conflicts make it more difficult to build secure attachments.

7.2.5 Working with Retrospective Sanctions

This section addresses retrospective sanctions that are enacted because dissocial behavior has taken place. In Chapter 7.2.7, we will discuss prospective sanctions that motivate persons to help others and not harm them in the future.

Violence and other forms of dissocial behavior must never be ignored. To protect the community, it is imperative that violations of the rights and values of others within a social community be sanctioned and that restitution be made to restore balance. What effect do retrospective sanctions have? In answering this question, the outcomes of research on sanctions provide important insights (cf. Backmann 2003; Kury / Scherr 2013; Lamnek 2007; Wetz 1998). *The greatest and most important effect of a retrospective sanction is that it elucidates norms for the rest of the community.* Violence is very seductive and contagious, as it provides many advantages to the aggressor. Violence can be used to satisfy the most essential basic needs (cf. Grawe 2000; Grüner 2010):

- justice and security: With violence, one can take revenge for slights and violence one has experienced (victim-offender reversal). At the same time, one crosses over onto the 'safe' side – for an offender cannot be a victim.

- belonging and attention: A person who applies force is regarded as "cool", and adults direct their attention to the aggressor.

- self-efficacy and control: Violent acts are associated with feelings of influence and power.

- stimulation: Violence is "phat" and feels like fun. It releases an intense feeling of vitality and is experienced as a 'kick'.

- desire for esteem and status: With violence, one can procure 'respect'. Violence is associated with feelings of greatness, strength, and enhanced status. One can make a name for oneself, be admired, and reap esteem. Violence also serves as a protection against one's own feelings of inferiority or shame (cf. Marks 2010).

Or to express it in the words of two students (Glattacker / Engel / Grüner / Hilt / Käppler 2002, p. 208):

> *"Students are violent because it makes them feel stronger. Maybe they get beaten and abused at home. In their hearts, they hate everybody, and over against their parents they feel small, and they don't want to feel small, so they feel strong when they have the feeling that they are threatening and oppressing others."*

> *"If you want to be cool in the clique, you have to have beaten somebody up."*

If dissocial behavior is sanctioned, those who adhere to norms and values experience that as justice being done. Everyone can see that norm-violating behavior doesn't pay off and that those who gained an advantage from it have to pay the price. This motivates the others to continue conforming to norms. If there are no sanctions enacted, the others feel "taken for a ride"; they are frustrated, angry, and they wonder whether they as well might prefer to profit from the advantages of dissocial behavior.

A retrospective sanction can also lead to changes in the aggressor's behavior. But for that to succeed, eight prerequistes must be fulfilled:

- The reaction must be prompt to violations of boundaries, values, or rules that are clearly proven or were observed by an educationally responsible adult. Otherwise, the response to the behavior will no longer be associated with to the behavior itself, and 'memory gaps' may lead to a situation in which the response is considered unjust.

- There has to be a reaction to any and every violation of boundaries, values, or rules.

  ◆ If irregular exceptions are made, children and adolescents will be motivated to violate rules as a way of finding out how often exceptions will be made.

- While the reaction to behavior one has witnessed personally (calling it out, making a note) has to follow immediately, any sanction going beyond an immediate 'time out' should be announced at a later time ("Sleep on it first"). This allows for emotions to cool down, helps avoid over-hasty, unprofessional moves, and gives both sides time for reflection. In (cyber)mobbing constellations, sanctions should only be enacted after successful work on the informal framework of values and norms. In such cases, this step has high priority and must be initiated quickly (see also Chapter 4).

- A sanction has greater effect if announced by a person with whom the offender has a good relationship. Since this person is important to the student, the sanction also has more significance.

- A sanction has to relate to the way the student's needs are structured, or in other words, it has to hurt. It needs to weigh heavier than the many advantages of violent behavior (see above). Therefore, a simply apology does not fulfill this criterion.

- When sanctions are enacted, it is to important to stand your ground. Giving in and ignoring the consequences – out of fear of losing students' affection, out of compassion, or due to feeling guilty oneself – makes you appear weak and manipulable from the students' point of view. When a sanction is completed, or later, gestures of reconciliation can be made to set a positive mode of interaction (a spiral of reciprocal giving) in motion. The gesture could be: helping to put the last of the chairs up on the desks, giving a student first preference to respond to a question during class, or offering a one-on-one talk.

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■ Any sanction has to be associated with responsibily. No one likes to feel guilty. No one likes to bear the responsibility for dissocial behavior, since that would imply accepting the sanction and the call for making restitution. Therefore, the aggressor blames the adult for the sanction: "Just because of him/her, now I have to …".

If you let the blame rest on yourself, that has two disadvantages. Firstly, the aggressor will feel innocent and present him/herself as a victim ("Why always me. It's just because they're after me …"). His behavior becomes even more dissocial than it was before, because he is enraged over being, from his point of view, "persecuted".

Secondly, if you always let the blame fall back on yourself, you will feel guiltier with each sanction you enact. This latent guilt weakens you and makes you manipulable. Maybe you will turn a blind eye to one incident or another, be more understanding than is appropriate, or allow an offender to get off with a display of insight and an apology. For this reason, we always couple sanctions with the question, "How could you have prevented … from happening?", or "How could you prevent … from happening in the future?" With that, we return the burden of blame, which was being unloaded upon us, back to the student and make it unmistakeably clear who is responsible for the sanction.

Before someone – after a time out – is again allowed to participate actively in the community, we ask, "Are you ready to behave respectfully now?" In this way, we emphasize that a lack of respect was the reason for the sanction and that the student bears the responsibility for it.

■ A sanction has to involve the community, firstly because the norm-confirming effect would otherwise fall short, and secondly because "…every act of violence, even if committed secretly, is a public issue, since it disregards the foundations of communal life together. The response to such incidents is insufficient if it omits the public dimension. In our opinion, every attempt to minimize or deny the significance of violent incidents for the community constitutes a renewed violation of the common good. Anyone who simply deals with a violent child behind closed doors is disregarding the community's right to visible protective measures and also the child's right to restore order in his disturbed relationship to the community" (Omer / von Schlippe 2010, p. 252).

A sanction is ultimately an offer that we make. Our satisfaction with it does not depend on the more or less successful behavioral adjustment of the aggressor, but rather on the professionality of our own actions. We therefore ask ourselves how many of the criteria listed above we have been able to fulfill, and what we can do better the next time. Otherwise, we can again stumble into the burn-out trap (see segment above on composure).

In the context of mobbing intervention as described in Chapter 4, we do not take recourse to retrospective sanctions – for the following reason: mobbing is a systemic problem, meaning that the entire group (rather than certain individuals) bears responsibility for it and has to be involved in resolving it. After mobbing intervention has taken place, retrospective sanctions can be enacted if individual students again violate human rights.

▷ *Advantage: Retrospective sanctions are indispensable because, over and above their effect of reinforcing norms, they have a primary preventive influence on the community.*

Disadvantage: Since it is seldom the case that all the conditions necessary for behavioral adjustment are fulfilled, a retrospective sanction rarely leads to a correction of the offfender's behavior. And even if it does, the behavioral change is not intrinsically motivated, but rather only extrinsically – based on fear of further sanctions and usually maintained only as long as the student feels closely observed and is convinced that further misbehavior will again be sanctioned.

All in all, it would be better if we needed to enact as few sanctions as possible. How is it possible to prevent the violations of rules, values, and norms that make retrospective sanctions necessary?

7.2.6 Demonstrating Presence

What does a person normally do before breaking a rule? He or she looks around to see if anyone is watching, checks whether his behavior will be observed and monitored. The more certain he is that his actions will be noticed, the more likely he is to refrain from going on with them. When we're driving, if we know where the radar trap is, we're going to slow down there – at least enough to avoid losing our driver's license, because that's a sanction that really hurts. Children and adolescents don't behave any better than adults do. They act exactly the same way: this means that we can prevent violations of values, norms, and rules by demonstrating presence. The more convinced a child is that his rule violation will be noticed and sanctioned, the less likely the violation is to occur.

▷ *Advantage: The frequency of sanctions can be significantly reduced through increased presence of adults.*

Obstacle: We can't demonstrate the necessary presence everywhere and all the time. On mobile phones, along the way to school or a youth center, in some areas of the campus, hallways, rest rooms, showers, and locker rooms, we normally have no control; children and adolescents tend to take full advantage of that.

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7.2.7 Promoting Compassion with Prospective Sanctions

All the offerings proposed up to this point have the disadvantage that the pro-social behavior they wish to induce is not intrinsically motivated. It relies instead on external influence – including that of adults. At the same time, the vanishingly small number of children who can be moved by good explanations towards intrinsically motivated social behavior is negligible.

With prospective sanctions, we make young people an offer towards behavioral change that, by contrast to the behavioral adjustment described in the previous section (through retrospective sanctions), is intrinsically motivated and is sustainable. The retrospective sanction remains necessary, as a response to violation of rights or rules, and the prospective sanction is also necessary to prevent future violations. A prospective sanction promotes compassion – the intrinsic motivation to behave pro-socially and help others – and essentially consists of a carefully conducted confrontation with the consequences of behavior, coupled with the application of techniques for reversal of perspective and dissolution of justification strategies. In addition to these techniques being integrated into normal everyday pedagogy and education, they are also an important element in specific methods such as social training (cf. Grüner / Hilt / Tilp 2015a), mediation (cf. Grüner 2015, Grüner / Hilt / Tilp 2015b), reparation (cf. Grüner 2008) and mobbing intervention (see Chapter 4 and Grüner / Hilt 2011).

At the age of three to five years, children develop the ability to put themself in another person's position and reflect on the thoughts, feelings, needs, and intentions of the other. They develop hypotheses about the inner experience of other persons. This inner assumption of perspective is therefore called "Theory of Mind" or ToM (cf. Bischof 1999, Bischof-Köhler 2011, Förstl 2012). External assumption of perspective, by comparison, is already possible in the first year of life, and is designated as 'model learning', by imitation or observation.

ToM enables children not only to reflect on others, but also on themselves. With the help of ToM, children can develop a stable image of self and project it into the future. They develop a permanent gender identity. ToM also enables foresight in thinking and acting, facilitating delayed gratification of needs, tolerance for frustration, and self-regulation (see also Chapter 7.2.2). The capacity for ToM can be utilized both pro-socially and dissocially. Without it, betrayal, deception, lying, slander, pretense, spreading rumors, and acting anonymously are not thinkable – and neither is (cyber)mobbing.

ToM is not to be confused with empathy. Empathy is a multidimensional construct. Simply understanding what another person is experiencing – cognitive empathy – corresponds to a partial area of ToM. The emotional reaction to the inner experience of another – inward sharing of, relating to, and sympathizing with another's feelings – also results from the ability to adopt another's perspective, but affective or emotional empathy extends beyond ToM itself.

The distinction between cognitive and emotional empathy is of decisive significance not only towards prevention in general, but also specifically in the context of mobbing prevention and intervention. If cognitive empathy is trained exclusively, i.e. if the emphasis in merely on comprehension of what another is experiencing, this enables students who are willing to use violence to be even more effective in 'casing' their victims and harassing them. In other words, restricting oneself to "exclusive promotion of cognitive skills (e.g. adoption of perspective) can under certain circumstances lead to clever application of socially manipulative behavior in the group environment, meaning that the intervention itself does not relieve the problem but rather, on the contrary, results in an increase in instances of bullying" (Scheithauer, Hayer / Bull 2007, p. 149).

Mobbing is referred to in english-speaking areas as bullying. Children and adolescents who are prepared to use force are not lacking in cognitive empathy. They rather understand very well what others experience inwardly. What they lack is emotionaly empathy and the compassion that emerges from it, for "Offenders who have learned to use aggressive means to attain a position of social power and to maintain it have a good antenna for vulnerability and socially weak positions" (Schäfer / Korn 2004, pp. 20).

Prevention projects that emphasize training in cognitive empathy enable students to harass their victims even more effectively.

Emotional empathy is, however, not to be confused with emotional contagion. Emotional contagion is an inherited instinct that can be explained by the workings of mirror neurons (cf. Bauer 2006, Rizzolatti/ Sinigaglia 2008). It is an automatic process of affective resonance through which we identify with a counterpart and adopt his feelings, making them our own, whereas the ability to adopt another's perspective, developed between the ages of one and three years, allows us to simultaneously perceive our own feelings and someone else's, to reflect on them and distance ourself from them.

Emotional contagion has two negative side effects. Firstly, persons working in helping professions are endangered by burnout if they allow themselves, in an unreflected process, to be caught up in the feelings of another, identifying and suffering with that person. Secondly, we may also assume a defensive attitude in order to avoid emotional contagion. Sometimes, another person's suffering comes home to us in such an unpleasant way that we react with antipathy or we hesitate to establish a relationship with the child or adolescent and work towards attachment. In children and adolescents who behave violently, resistance against emotional contagion can trigger extremely aggressive reactions. Since one is striving to avoid emotional involvement and therefore puts up defenses (defense against shame), the young person feels provoked and gets completely unhinged. This can be likened to hitting someone who is already down.

Nevertheless, it remains true that emotional contagion is a prerequisite for emotional empathy, which in turn is a prerequisite for compassion. Emotional empathy becomes compassion when it gives rise to the wish, the readiness, and the motivation to behave caringly towards another – i.e. not to harm them, but to help them. *Compassion is not an emotion, but rather an intrinsic motivation to behave pro-socially and help others* (cf. Singer / Bolz 2013).

If we succeed in pointing out to children and adolescents the consequences of their dissocial behavior so clearly, tangibly, and palpably that they not only grasp them cognitively, but are also emotionally moved and feel shocked, concerned, shaken, and upset, so that they feel deep remorse and become reflective, then emotional empathy can develop into compassion. The consequences of the behavior have to get 'under their skin' and not simply be grasped on a cognitive level.

'Shaking up' young persons in a perceptive and appreciative way is an important element in effective and sustainable pedagogy. Children and adolescents need adults who offer them ongoing training in compassion. They need adults who have the courage and the professional knowledge of methods required to help them take stock of the consequences of their actions, who make proposals on adopting other perspectives, and who break down their justification strategies.

It is essential for educators to reach a thorough comprehension of these interrelated connections, particularly because the core task of 'shaking up' a person's presuppositions (see Chapter 4) must never take the form of embarrassment, shaming, or oppressive pedagogy. But without any 'shaking up', efforts at prevention and mobbing intervention often remain a 'flash in the pan' and produce no sustainable effect.

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The more often we induce children and adolescents to take stock of the consequences of their behavior, the more considerate their behavior will become. The more often they have to answer questions about the consequences of their actions for others, the more responsibly they will act. The more often they reflect, before taking action, on the effect it could have upon others, the more circumspect they will become.

If we hesitate to spell out the consequences of their dissocial behavior to children and adolescents, we are impeding their pro-social development. It is also a way of trivializing and belittling them. If we protect children and adolescents from being shaken up when necessary, we are denying them the possibility to develop the strongest, intrinsically compelling factor that inhibits the use of violence – namely, compassion.

In addition to confrontation with the conseqences of action, there are other techniques that can be applied to promote emotional empathy, e.g. asking young people what they assume the consequences might be, or having them describe situations, feelings, and needs that they have experienced and that can be translated to the person who is damaged – this can involve role play and role reversal. Detailed description of these techniques can be found in Grüner / Hilt / Tilp 2015a, Grüner 2015, Grüner/Hilt / Tilp 2015b, Grüner 2008 and in the third phase of Systemic Mobbing Intervention (see Chapter 4 and Grüner / Hilt 2011).

The question, "How would you feel if someone … ?", is counterproductive in working towards emotional empathy for the following reasons:

■ Those asked this question will concentrate on their own experience instead of the experience of the other person.

■ Unless they have already experienced the exact same situation once before, which is unlikely, they can honestly reply with "No idea!" and successfully parry your question.

■ They can give answers such as, "That wouldn't bother me!" or "I'm not that oversensitive!" – portraying the victim as a sissy.

■ They can come back with "No one would dare do that to me!" – assuming a position of strength and humiliating the person who was targeted.

■ They may feel attacked and accused, and respond with justifications: "It wasn't on purpose"; "I was just making a joke"; "He was asking for it"; "The others do the same thing"; "Why always me?"

■ They take your question as a demand that they demonstrate insight and then try to second-guess you by imagining what you might like to hear or what is supposed to be a socially acceptable answer – but with no inner resonance (the insight trap).

Behavioral change will only result from a confrontation with the consequences of one's actions if the confrontation triggers emotional concern and upheaval. But no one enjoys feeling the pain he or she has inflicted upon someone else. To protect themself from feeling shaken-up or concerned, and to deflect the need for compassion with the other, individuals condone their own behavior and block off any compassion that might arise by making self-serving excuses and attempts at mollification. That is to say, they rectify their behavior: "It was all in fun"; "It wasn't intentional"; "That's no big thing"; "It's his fault, he started it"; "I got mad, that's all"; "My hand just slipped"; "I can't help it, I have ADHS"; "Everyone else does it, too"; "That's normal for us"; "I was just making sure I get respect"; "Why always me?" *Justifications make it impossible to develop compassion.*

Such justification strategies, refusals of empathy, and blockage of compassion can only be dissipated through repeated intervention with questions/ statements such as: "What consequences did the joke have for … ?"; "What were the unintentional consequences of your behavior?"; "Your feeling provoked does not give you the right to use force"; "You lost your self-control, and what were the consequences?"; "It may be normal for you, but not for us."

Here, we respect human rights. Anyone who does harm to another has to make restitution"*;* "The issue is not that someone has something against you, or whether we like you or not. The only issue is the consequences of your actions." A detailed discussion of this is given in Grüner 2008.

Since the question "Why did you do that?" or "What were you thinking?" can be taken as an attack, a reproach, an assignment of guilt, or a demand for submissive insight, and can also serve as an invitation to make justifications that then have to be taken apart, it is better to refrain from the question "why".

Asking why will only evoke justifications. In everyday classroom situations, a student's answer to the question, "Why did you disturb the lesson?" is highly likely to be one or more of the following attempts at

rectification: "No idea"*;* "I didn't do anything"*;* "He started it"*;* "I just asked him a question"*;* "I just wanted to give him the eraser"*;* "He provoked me"*;* "Everybody else disturbs the class as well"*;* "I was bored." It would be a very rare exception for a student to admit that the behavior (like any form of behavior) was aimed at fulfilling a basic need (see Chapter 7.1.1) by saying something like: "I wanted you to give me more attention"*;* "I wanted to feel important, influential, and significant"*;* "I want the others to think I'm cool, I want to gain higher status"*;* "I think it's funny when you go off like a rocket. I wanted to get you up and going"*;* "I didn't feel like working. I caused a disturbance so that you would have to interrupt your teaching and this tiring lesson would be cancelled." Either the student is not conscious of these deeper reasons, or he/she cannot articulate them.
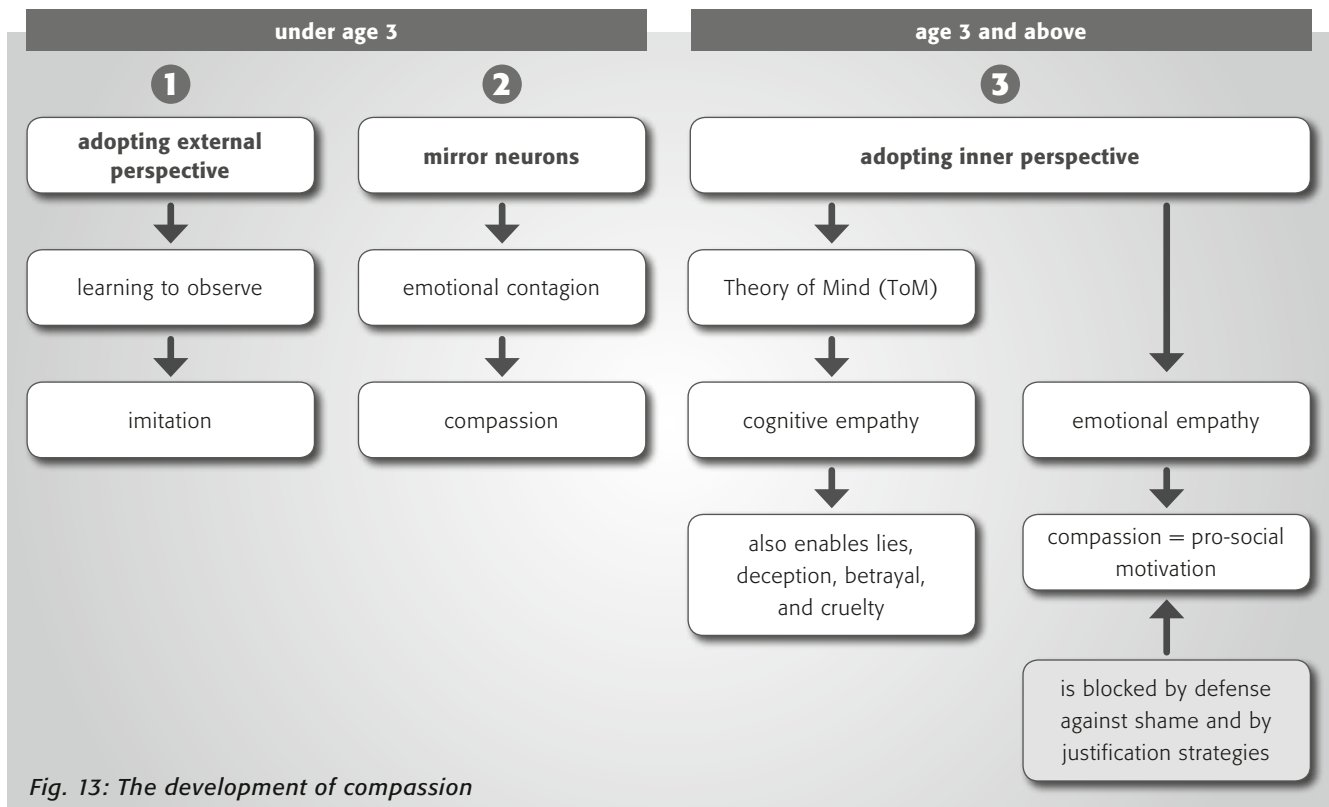
Fig. 13: The development of compassion

Retrospective and prospective sanctions are not mutually exclusive. They complement one another. After being confronted with the consequences of an offense (prospectively – so that no further harm will be done), the person responsible has to make restitution for it (retrospectively – because harm has been done).

The most important means of promoting compassion is a careful confrontation with the consequences of an action, accompanied by techniques for adopting the perspective of another person and for dismantling justification strategies.

Advantage: Compassion, as an intrinsic motivation for pro-social behavior and helping others, exerts the strongest effect towards inhibiting violence and therefore preventing it.

Obstacles: Permissive styles of upbringing and pedagogy, which are very widespread, impede the development of compassion due to the fact that they withhold from children and adolescents the essential experience of feeling 'shaken up'. What is more, young persons' inner defenses against feeling shame and their strategies for justification may already be so entrenched that being 'shaken up' in a pedagogical context may not suffice to enable them to develop compassion.

7.2.8 Making Suitable Structures and Resources Available

For children and adolescents, pro-social personality formation is only possible in an environment that provides suitable structures and available resources in terms of time, space, and personnel.

Prevention is successful when all the parties involved regard it as a collective effort. Its effect will only be sustainable if a mutual posture among the educators sets the tone for everyday pedagogical activity, and if pro-social skills are not only conveyed in the context of explicit prevention projects, but also practiced in everyday learning encounters. *Prevention is an organizational task that depends on team development.*

Effective and sustainable prevention requires professional conflict management and an array of instruments applicable on various levels that build upon, supplement, and complement one another (see Chapter 5). Having each of the involved professionals attend a continuing education event of their choice and then 'follow the recipe they have learned' will not turn the trick. Qualification measures need to be coordinated, decided upon and attended by teams who can then assume complementary, coordinated roles. *Prevention should be a multi-leveled program embedded in a corresponding structure of conflict management* (team development is also discussed in detail in Chapter 5.4.3).

The quality and sustainability of prevention depends not only on the quality of the training and certifications achieved by the participating educators, but also on their readiness to engage in ongoing quality management through video supervision and evaluation. This calls for openness, mutual trust, and reciprocal acknowledgement – which in turn are facets of the team development that is indispensable.

Advantage: Appropriate structures and resources facilitate professional pedagogical work.

Obstacles: If individual colleagues insist on their "pedagogical autonomy", only feeling obliged to fulfill their educational mandate by conveying academic content, and if educational styles and goals vary greatly among faculty members, it will be difficult to create viable structures.

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Projects in Practice

8

What to do about (Cyber)Mobbing?   Konflikt-KULTUR   klicksafe.de

Overview of the Projects

Recommendations on Method and Didactics
– Overview of the Projects

Project	Title	Skills trained	Time in 45-min classes	Methods	Materials	Internet/PC access
1	**Mobbing Situations – Situation that Hurt**	The students recognize and analyze mobbing situations. They become sensitized to the topic of mobbing.	2	silent impulse, videos, guiding questions	videos (1–5 provided, or others you choose), handouts with guiding questions	yes (or download videos onto school server)
2	**The Roles in (Cyber)Mobbing**	Students reflect on roles and dynamic in (cyber)mobbing	1	'lightning round', role description	TV clip *Let's fight it together* or another short video	yes (for video)
3	**Exclusion, Insults, Threats – How Cybermobbing does its Damage**	Using examples from social media, students learn to identify and distinguish the various ways that harm is done through cybermobbing.	1	Overhead puzzle to help categorize, screenshot gallery to form judgements	scissors, copy of puzzle "Forms of Cybermobbing" on overhead foil, overhead projector/ whiteboard, print-outs of screenshots for gallery	no (yes if showing video *Fix You* or *Benjamin Fokken*)
4	**Consequences – What do the Victims Experience?**	On the basis of a fictitious case study, the students reflect on the potential consequences of (cyber)mobbing for the victims.	1	'lightning round', mind map, paper mail	case study	yes (for video and home assignment)
5	**Justice and Law** (for students 14 and older)	The students learn about the legal concepts relevant to (cyber)mobbing and apply them to typical cases.	2	partner-interviews, case analysis	case studies, work sheet for investigating cases, solutions, beamer	no
6	**Living Together on the Basis of Human Rights**	The students learn about human rights and the UN declaration with its 30 articles, and they practice putting feelings into words and judging situations.	3	offline posting (if that option is chosen), case analysis	cards for keywords, marker pens, post-its, work sheets	yes (for video and teaser)

Project	Title	Skills trained	Time in 45-min classes	Methods	Materials	Internet/PC access
7	**Delete – Block – Report: Stop (Cyber)Mobbing!**	The students learn about options for reporting, blocking, and deleting on social networks, and about how to use these options.	2	work at a series of stations	cyber-mobbing first-aid app, cards for the stations with assignments, posters with solutions	yes ▶ computer room (and students' phones: ▶ obtain clearance for use during class)
8	**Digital Self-Assertion and Civil Courage on the Net**	The students can apply techniques of non-violent self-assertion on the net, just as anywhere else, and can show the courage of their conviction.	2	transfer of techniques offline > online, case examples	scissors	no
9	**Avoiding Harm in Class Chats**	The students can reconsider their own behavior, e.g. on WhatsApp, negotiate and discuss rules in a democratic fashion, and work through conflicts.	4	circle of chairs, group discussion	flipchart, slips of paper, writing pad, pen/pencil, work sheet, examples of flipchart sheets	no
10	**Human Rights Observers – Rules for Living Together**	The students learn how to monitor rights violations in the class by appointing human rights observers.	2	circle of chairs, group discussion	slips of paper, writing pad, pen/pencil for voting	no
11	**Coping Strategies**	Using a fictitious case as a starting point, the students devise potential ways out of a (cyber)mobbing situation.	1	case study, scale for evaluation	work sheet	no

At ⊚ www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing and ⊚ www.konflikt-kultur.de/cyber-mobbing
there are additional materials and project suggestions to be found
(in German, but also some in English and other languages).

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 1: Mobbing Situations – Situations that Hurt

skills	**The students recognize and analyze mobbing situations. They become sensitized to the topic of mobbing.**
time in 45-min classes	2
methods	silent impulse, videos, guiding questions
materials	videos (1–5 that are provided, or others you choose), handouts with guiding questions
internet/PC access	yes (or download videos onto school server); length of the provided videos: 1. *Dare to tell* 01:26, 2. *You can help* 01:35, 3. *Remembrances* 01:33, 4. *Malicious pleasure* 01:24, 5. *Alone* 01:01; 5 PCs/Tablets should be available

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	Silent impulse: write "Mobbing is …" at the center of the board. The sentence shouldn't be completed until the end of the lesson. First, the students work on videos that treat mobbing situations from various perspectives. Watching the videos, the students can reflect on the topic of mobbing. It is recommended to view the videos thoroughly yourself, in advance, and to download them onto the school server for exchange, so that the students have ready access. Videos: ⓘ **www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing** (*source: part of a mobbing prevention campaign in Finland, produced by the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and Folkhälsan*), ⓘ **www.mll.fi/peersupport**
Development	Assign the individual videos to smaller groups of students for viewing and give them the corresponding handouts with guiding questions. These questions challenge the students to consider how they might react in a similar situation.
	Alternative: If time is too short to work through all the videos in groups, then it would also suffice to show the videos to the entire class and then discuss the questions provided in the handout.
Reinforcement	In a presentation session, have the students show the video they worked with and talk about their response. When all the groups have finished, the class can complete the statement on the board, "Mobbing is …". Possible fill-ins: *spreading rumors and lies behind someone's back; referring to someone with nasty expressions or nicknames; making fun of someone; disparaging glances and gestures; imitating someone; calling them stupid; not letting them say anything; excluding them from the class community; taking away, hiding, or damaging their school things or clothing; making unfounded accusations; blackmail; touching them physically against their will; sexual harassment; shoving; bumping; hitting* (*source: www.saferinternet.at/*)
	Additional assignment/homework The characteristics of cybermobbing – mobbing through digital media – can be laid out, for example in a mindmap.
	Some characteristics of cybermobbing **24/7:** invades a person's private life around the clock, in some cases 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. **Audience and distribution:** The audience is inestimably large; content disseminates quickly and is often visibile for a long time. **Anonymity:** Offenders can act anonymously. **No f2f contact:** Noone perceives directly how the victim is affected, since there is no face-to-face (f2f) contact. (*source: www.klicksafe.de/themen/kommunizieren/cyber-mobbing/cyber-mobbing-was-ist-das*)

Guiding Questions on the Videos (1)

Video 1: Dare to tell

Situation in the classroom:
- What is going on in the classroom?
- What is going on among the three girls?
- Are the girls (or were they) friends?
- If the two girls were friends of the one being mobbed, why aren't they any longer?
- How can the girl respond right there in the classroom?
- Does the teacher notice that someone in the class is being mobbed?
- Do the other students know that it is happening?
- If the other students do know about it, what could they do?
- What is probably going to happen next in the classroom?
- Could the same thing happen at our school?

Situation in the living room:
- How does the mother react in the video?
- Is her daughter being mobbed? Or is she mobbing someone else?
- What response would you expect from your parents in this situation?
- Why is that young people often don't tell their parents that they are being mobbed

▷ *Tip: Early intervention often prevents mobbing from breaking out!*
Studies indicate that students hope an adult will notice what is going on and will intervene.
What do you think about that?
At what point should teachers intervene?

Guiding Questions on the Videos (2)

Video 2: You can help

Situation in the school hallway:
- What happens in the hallway?
- Which roles do you recognize in the video?
- Who is the offender? What about the helpers?
- What is the role of the boy and girl who observe the situation from a bit further away?
- How do they feel?
- What could they do?
- What stops them from intervening?
- Can they inform an adult about the incident What stops them from doing so?
- What might the boy who is being mobbed have done before this happened?

▷ *Tip: Mobbing is often a group phenomenon; there are usually a number of persons involved. In your work group, look at the various roles in the situation and discuss mobbing as a process occurring in a group*

Situation in front of the door:
- The boy in the video seeks help from the school social worker. When mobbing takes place, who can you turn to at our school?
- When should one tell an adult about it?
- How do you wish that adults would react?
- How does the boy feel in the hallway? How does he feel at the office door?
- Could this happen at our school?

Situation in the store:
- How does the boy feel when he goes into the store?
- What can you do when you don't feel good, and how can you deal with this feeling?
- How can you show solidarity with the mobbing victim?
- How can you show the offender that it's wrong to mob someone?
- How could the situation proceed from here?

Guiding Questions on the Videos (3/4)

Video 3: Remembrances

- What happens in the video?
- How does the man feel after he receives the invitation to the class reunion?
- Has the man spoken to anyone about the mobbing experience he had as a boy?
- How is he doing now?
- The man decides not to go the reunion.
  What might happen if he did go after all?
- If he doesn't go the the reunion, how might his former classmates feel when they see that he isn't there?
- What memories does the man have of his school days?
- What things are important so that a person can enjoy his time at school?
- Remember how important it is that no one is excluded. Could this be a real situation?

Video 4: Malicious pleasure

- What happens in the video?
- Is it allowed to film other people?
- What could Tina do when she notices that she is being filmed?
- How could the teacher react?
- How could the other students react?
- Why do the girls want to post the video online, and for whom?
- What could one of the girls do when she notices that it's not a good idea to upload the video?
- Have you ever encountered cybermobbing?
- What makes it different from other forms of mobbing at school?
- Are cybermobbing offenders the same persons who mob others at school?
- Are these girls breaking the law?
- Is it possible to delete the video?
- Could this be a real-life situation?

Guiding Questions on the Videos (5)

Video 5: Alone

- What is going on in the video?
- How does the boy feel, sitting all by himself?
- Is there anything he could do?
- What does the other boy notice?
- Are there students at our school who sit alone
  In the hallways or the cafeteria?
- How could you approach them and start a
  Conversation; what could you talk about?
- Would you be afraid to start a conversation with a
  student you don't know who is alone?
- How can one start up new friendships?
- What steps can be taken during lessons and breaks
  so that no students feel lonely?
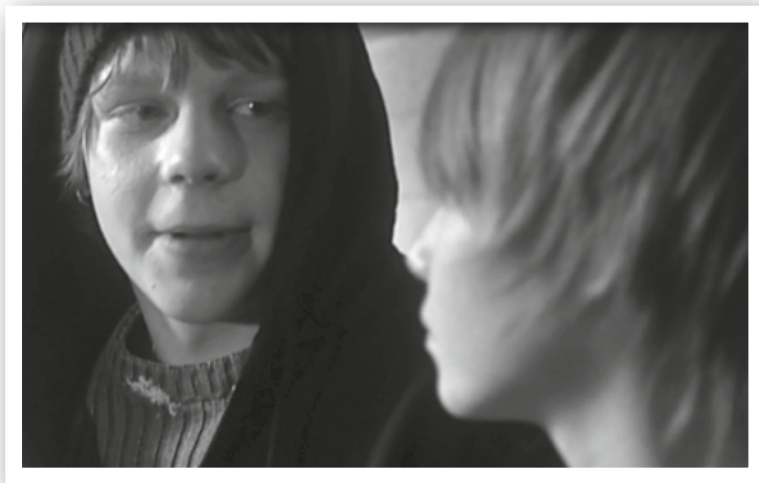
*Source: Stills from the videos 1–5 produced and published by the
Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and Folkhälsan, Finland:
www.folkhalsan.fi, www.mll.fi/peersupport*

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 2: The Roles in (Cyber)Mobbing

skills	**Students reflect on roles and dynamic in (cyber)mobbing.**
time in 45-min classes	1
methods	'lightning round', role description
materials	TV clip *Let's fight it together* or another short video
internet/PC access	yes (for short video)

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	Show the class the short video *Let's fight it together* – or another clip that illustrates the roles in (cyber)mobbing – either using a beamer or having the students watch the film on a PC or on their own equipment. The clip *Let's fight it together* can be found at www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing. Spontaneous impressions can be voiced in a 'lightning round' directly after viewing.
Development	The roles assumed and the dynamic of (cyber)mobbing can be examined more closely using the chart in the following work sheet.

Tip: In the system of mobbing, where the victim is pushed out of the value framework of the class collective, there are many indidivuals who participate.

⚲ = group members

⚲ = offenders

⚲ = victim

⚲ = assistants

⚲ = claqueurs

⚲ = (potential) defenders

⚲ = non-participants

With older students, it's worth discussing this illustration from Chapter 2.2.4. The students can draw a similar image indicating the roles of all the participants.
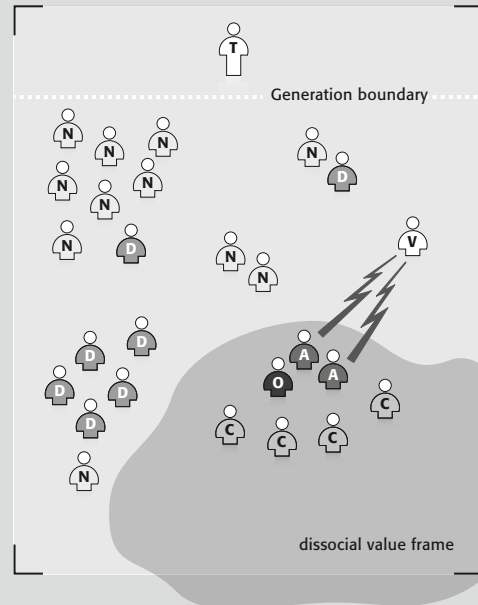
Reinforcement	In discussing the outcomes, make sure to ask the individual students how they would have reacted if in the position of the person(s) they have been describing.

Tip: In the klicksafe publication "Click E for Ethics", the second module is entitled "Harmful online behaviour". You can download an English, Polish, or German version from the page https://www.klicksafe.de/themen/medienethik/verletzendes-online-verhalten/ This brochure approaches human rights issues and (cyber)mobbing from an ethical point of view. It also contains suggestions on how you can respond when you are affected or when you see that someone else is being targeted.

The Roles in (Cyber)Mobbing

Work Assignments:

1. In the film, a variety of individual persons come into play. Your task now is to understand these characters and their roles. Fill out the following chart:

persons	victim	offender(s)	assistants + claqueurs (French for audience animators)	non-participants	parents	teacher
how? (does this person act)						
why? (possible reasons for their behavior)						
and what about us? (how we would have behaved)						

2. First think about this question on your own, then discuss it with the person next to you: How would you have behaved in the position of the persons in the film?

3. Agree with you discussion partner on a possible course of action in the situation, and write that down in the chart ("and what about us?"). With the rest of the class, talk about your chart entries.

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 3:

Exclusion, Insults, Threats – How Cybermobbing Does its Damage

skills	**Using examples from social media, students learn to identify and distinguish the various ways that harm is done through cybermobbing.**
time in 45-min classes	1
methods	overhead puzzle to help categorize, screenshot gallery to form judgements
materials	scissors, copy of puzzle "Forms of Cybermobbing" can be transferred to overhead foil and cut up, overhead projector/whiteboard, print-outs of screenshots for gallery
internet/PC access	no (yes if showing video after the exercise)

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	*What kinds of injuries are inflicted through cybermobbing?* Lay the puzzle pieces (cut-up foil copy of chart on the next page) onto an overhead projector. Have students volunteer to try to match up the *TYPES* of injury with the correct *DESCRIPTIONS* and explain them in their own words. In this way, the students learn to recognize various forms of cybermobbing (source: Nancy E. Willard, Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats, 2007).
Development	Gallery: While walking around and looking at print-outs from various popular services, such as WhatsApp or Snapchat, students speak to the group about their judgements on the harm being done: what kind of injury – from exclusion to threat – is involved? To prepare this, you can display the screenshot examples from WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and PlayStation Network (PSN) around the classroom walls. And for reference, leave the puzzle pieces visible on the overhead or beamer.
Reinforcement	Suggestions on categories for the examples provided: WhatsApp = insult, exclusion; Facebook = spreading rumors, insult; Snapchat = publishing private material, fraud, harassment; YouTube = insult, slander; PSN = exclusion, insult, threat Points for discussion: *What form of injury would be the worst for you yourself? Tell us why.* *How do think the victims in these examples must feel?* *What kind of thoughts are they probably having?* *Think about whether you have ever been in that kind of a situation.* At the end of the lesson, you can show the Australian music video *Fix You* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EA5C-1N_r1w provided by the Anti-Bullying Learning and Teaching Resource (ALTER) of the Catholic Education Office in Wollongong, New South Wales. Additional assignment/homework: **From Arguing to Cybermobbing – Conflicts Seen from a Teenage Perspektive** From a young person's point of view, not every action that adults would classify as cybermobbing is necessarily cybermobbing. Teenagers make distinctions between *arguing for fun – differences of opinion – fighting – mobbing.* Write these concepts on the board. For each type of conflict, the students have the assignment of finding an example. Discuss with the students the differences between these conflicts (rising levels of escalation). Point out to them that when a conflict escalates or mobbing occurs, it's extremely important to seek help.

Exclusion, Insults, Threats – How Cybermobbing Does its Damage

Handout/puzzle pieces on "Exclusion, Insults, Threats – How Cybermobbing Does its Damage"
(derived from Willard 2007)

Type of damage	Description
spreading rumors	slander by way of posting or mailing rumors/lies with the result that friendships are destroyed or a person's reputation is ruined
exclusion	deliberate isolation of certain persons, e.g. by excluding them from a chat group, a community, or an online game
insult	sending cruel or nasty messages, posting hurtful comments and taunts
harassment	repeatedly sending cruel, nasty, insulting messages, postings on bulletin boards, photos or videos
assuming a false identity	making believe you are someone else and doing things online, in the name of that person, that are going to cause him or her trouble (e.g. by stealing the person's password or taking advantage when they haven't logged out)
publication of private material	distributing information about private habits or intimate secrets, against the will or without the knowledge of the person affected (e.g. via text, video or photo – such as pictures taken in the locker room)
fraud	eliciting intimate details, secrets, or embarrassing pictures from someone, and then circulating them
threat	directly or indirectly announcing to do physical or emotional damage to someone, instigating others to acts of violence

WhatsApp

●●●●○ congstar 3G   11:54   ⏰ 58 % ▭

‹ Chats (1) **Geh sterben Fotze!!!**

erstellt

🔒 Nachrichten, die Sie an diese Gruppe senden, sind jetzt mit Ende-zu-Ende-Verschlüsselung geschützt. Für mehr Infos tippen.

Du brauchst dich nicht zu wundern das die Leute dich moben, so häslich wie du bist du fotze. Wie du dich anziehst, voll wie so ne scheiß Nutte und trotzdem will dich dich keiner ficken. Du wirst immer nur ein Opfer bleiben. Also tu uns allen einen Gefallen und nimm dir nen Strick   11:51 ✓✓

Go die cunt!!!

Dont be surprised that people mob you, ugly like you are. The way you look, just like a shitty slut and still nobody wants to fuck you you. You will never be anything but a victim. So do us all a favor and go hang yourself.

Source: fictitious example WhatsApp message, klicksafe

Facebook

Sluts

too warm for those leggings today 😊

how bad off must you be to take people down like that its siiick 😕

don't talk shit and go castrate your boyfriend if hes even a man to begin with.

Yeaah what do you get out of shaming people lol

he looks more like a whore anyway

maybe he is boss but the guys said just do it for fun

Ha ha watching all of you de-stroy one another

Schlampen
Diese Seite gefällt mir · 6. Juli

Heute mal zu warm für die leggings 😊

Gefällt mir · Kommentieren · Teilen

205 Personen gefällt das.

Vorherige Kommentare anzeigen   6 von 55

wie arm muss man sein leute so kras runterzumachen das ist kraaaaaank 😕
13. Juli um 12:48 · Gefällt mir · 2

labber keine scheiße und geh deinen Freund kastrieren wenn er überhaupt ein Mann ist.
17. Juli um 13:03 via Handy · Gefällt mir · 1

Yaaa was bringt es euch leute zu blamieren lol
17. Juli um 19:43 via Handy · Gefällt mir · 1

sieht doch eh aus wie eine Kahba
28. Juli um 21:07 · Gefällt mir · 1

er is vielleicht babo aber jabo hat gesagt machs just for fun
31. Juli um 17:33 · Gefällt mir

Haha wie sich hier alle gegen seitig zerstören
7. August um 19:13 via Handy · Gefällt mir · 1

Schreibe einen Kommentar …

Personen, die du vielleicht kennst   Alle anzeigen

Source: https://de-de.facebook.com/ (retrieved Sept. 24, 2014)

Snapchat

HEUTE

Wieso hat die alte eigentlich mit dir schlus gemacht?

ICH

Ka einfach so weil sie ne schlampe ist...

Sende einen Chat
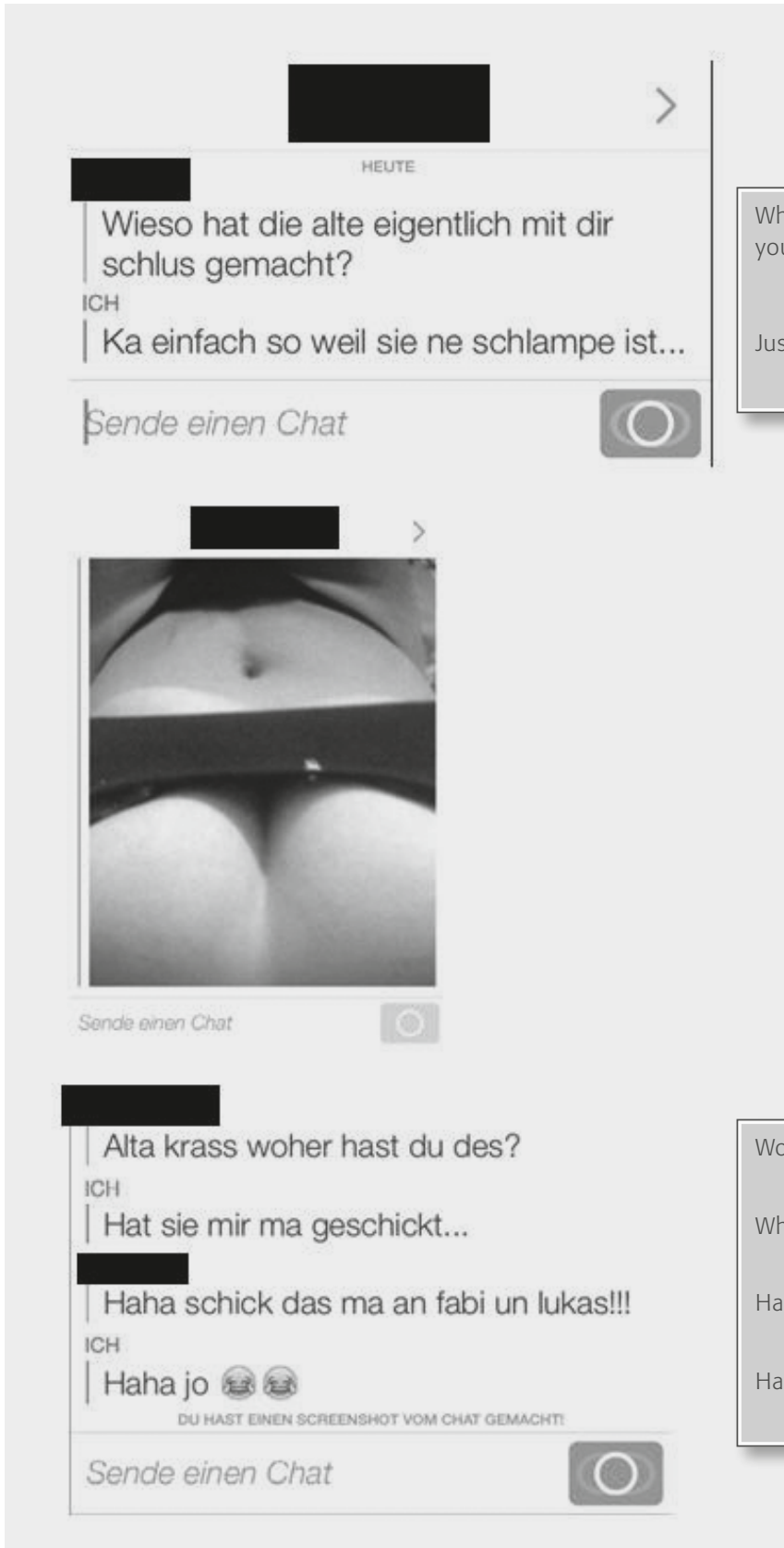
Why did the hag break up with you, anyway?

Just because shes a slut…

Alta krass woher hast du des?

ICH

Hat sie mir ma geschickt...

Haha schick das ma an fabi un lukas!!!

ICH

Haha jo 😂😂

DU HAST EINEN SCREENSHOT VOM CHAT GEMACHT!

Sende einen Chat

Wow where dya get that?

While ago she sent it to me…

Ha ha pass that on to Fabi n Lukas

Ha ha yeah 😂😂

Source: fictitious example of Snapchat, klicksafe
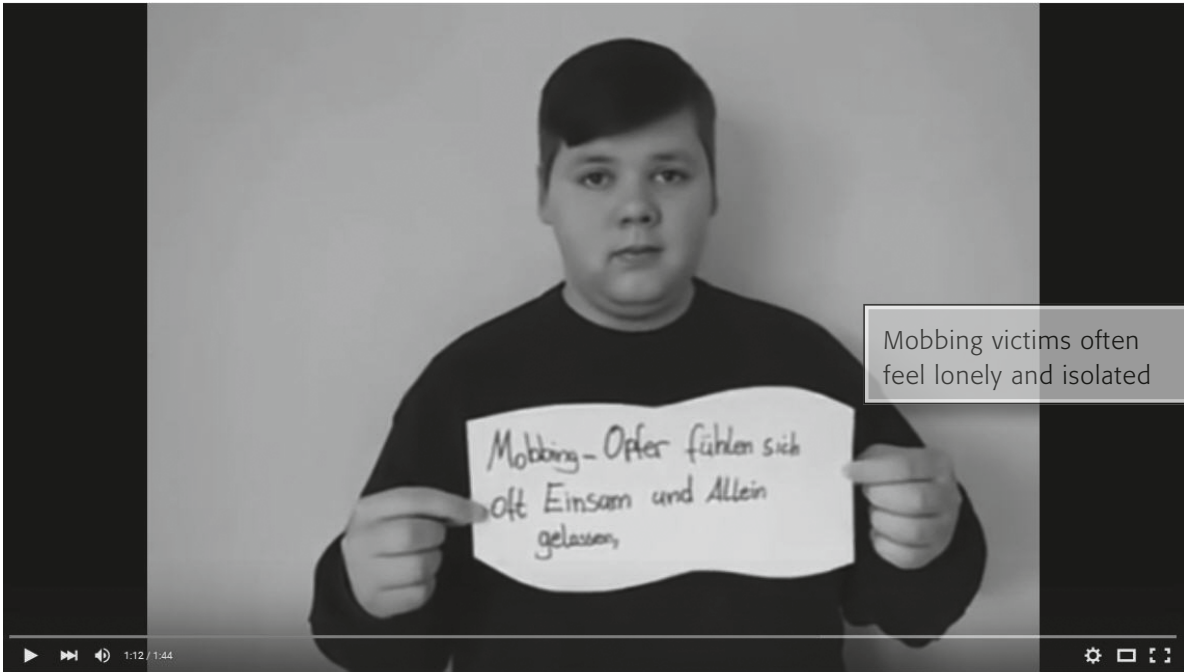
YouTube

Benjamin Drews Anti Mobbing Video

Abonnieren 57

3.051

Hinzufügen   Teilen   ••• Mehr   125   6

> Mobbing victims often feel lonely and isolated

Veröffentlicht am 25.02.2015

Kategorie   Menschen & Blogs
Lizenz   Standard-YouTube-Lizenz

ALLE KOMMENTARE (14)

Kommentar hinzufügen

Top-Kommentare ▾

2 Wochen
Amanda Todd style. Willst du ein bisschen Bleichmittel zu deinem Bi
Antworten · 1

Alle 4 Antworten anzeigen ⌄

1 Woche
Ist doch so. Amanda Todd Style. Der Fettsack hat es verdient gemobbt zu werden.
Antworten ·

> Amanda Todd style. Want some bleach to go with your BigMac, Fatty?
>
> U got it. Amanda Todd style. That fatbag deserves to be mobbed.

Playstation Network (PSN)

```
••○○○ o2-de 🤍        19:21        100 %▬▬

<                  ████████ ist offline          •••

                        18. Okt.

        ████████ hat eine Gruppe erstellt.
        ████████ hat ██████ hinzugefügt.
                                    Vor 4 Minuten

        ██████████

        Du verfluchter kleiner pisser.
        Scheiß cheater. Niemand! kann
        durch  Wände schießen und
        einfach weg sein. Ich werde dich
        kleines Arschloch bei Sony
        melden und dafür sorgen das du
        dich dein ganzes Leben nie
        wieder bei psn anmelden kannst!
        Ich verfluche dich du blöder assi
                                    Vor 4 Minuten

    📎   ☺   Nachricht eingeben        Senden
```

You damn little pisser. Shitty cheater. Nobody! can shoot thru walls and just vanish. I will report you little asshole to Sony and make sure you cant get back onto psn for the rest of your life! A curse on you, you stupid outcast!

Source: fictitious example of PSN Messenger, klicksafe

Playstation Network (PSN)
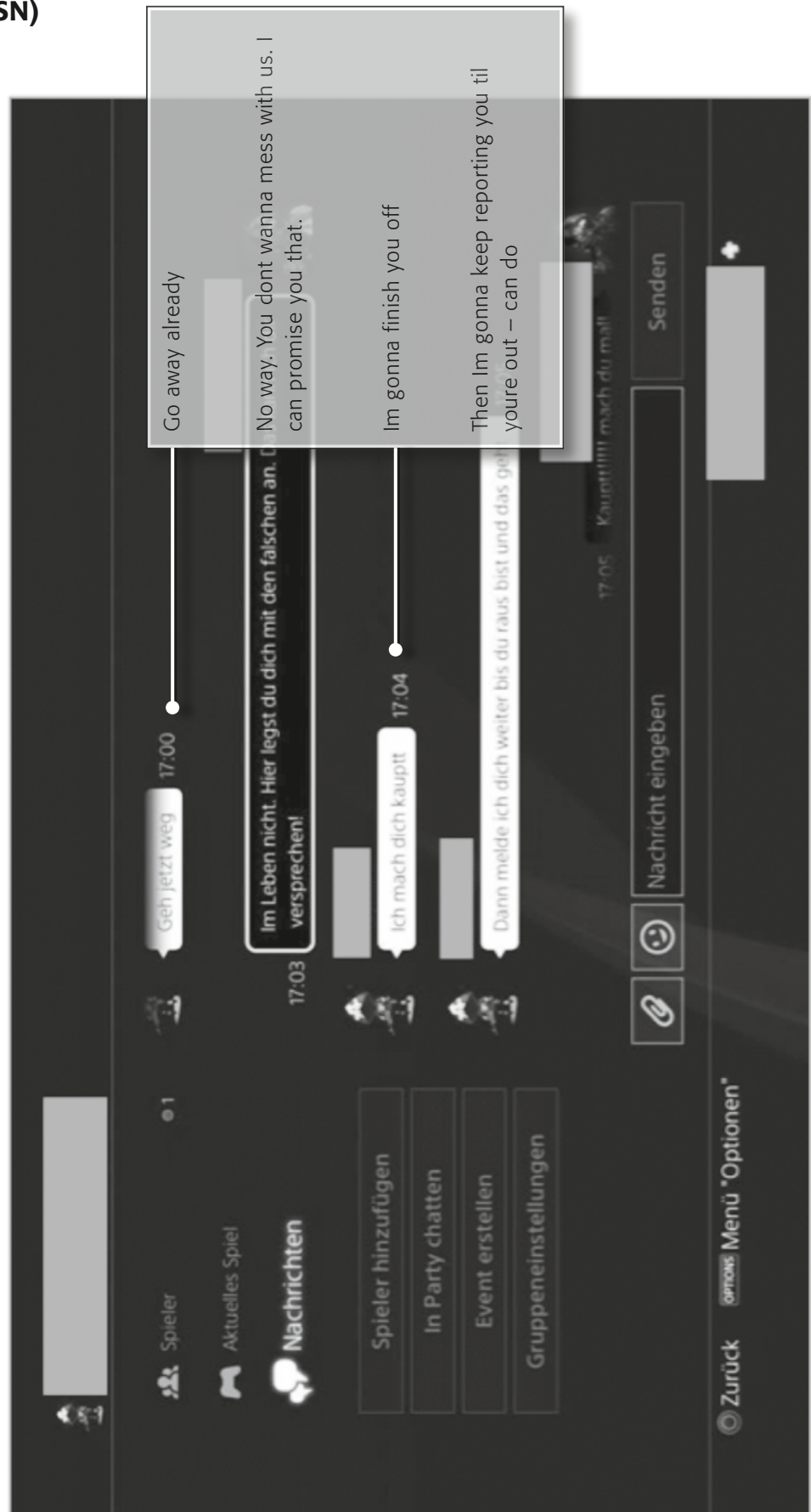
Source: fictitious example of PSN Messenger, klicksafe

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 4: Consequences – What do the Victims Experience?

skills	**On the basis of a fictitious case study, the students reflect on the potential consequences of (cyber)mobbing for the victims.**
time in 45-min classes	1
methods	'lightning round', mind map, paper e-mail
materials	case study
internet/PC access	yes (for video and home assignment)

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	Show the video *Create No Hate* by the teenager Luke Culhane, which gives a vivid impression of how damaging (cyber)mobbing is. Emotional blows are illustrated metaphorically through bodily injuries. ⊚ **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MV5v0m6pEMs** or at ⊚ **www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing** (with German subtitles)
Development	With the support of a fictitious – but realisitic – case study, the students can learn about and be sensitized to the serious physical, emotional, and social consequences that mobbing can have for those affected. Hand out the work sheet to the students and have them read, silently, the text on "Lilli15". After they have read about Lilli and another girl, Samantha, ask the students to develop and discuss a mind map on the long-term effects of (cyber)mobbing. The potential consequences may include psychosomatic illnesses, depression, thoughts of suicide or revenge. Then have each of them write down a short message (as if answering an e-mail, but on paper) with suggestions on what could be done first to support the victims.
Reinforcement	Several of these 'paper e-mails' can be read aloud and discussed.

▷ **Tip:** There is a worksheet called "Coping Strategies" at the very end of this chapter (Project 11) that encourages students to think about strategies for responding to (cyber)mobbing incidents.

⊕ **Additional assignment/homework:**
In most countries, there's a website young people can visit to get help. ⊚ **www.juuuport.de** is one in Germany providing peer-to-peer support; comprehensive services are also linked through the portal ⊚ **https://jugend.support/**.
Your task: surf out the go-to addresses in your country that offer help in overcoming mobbing. There are also telephone hotlines offering assistance. Get details on one of them and put together a smallk poster for your classmates about the services. Sometimes there are teenagers responding on the other end – with counselors who train them and back them up. (see example on page after next)

Work Sheet for Project 4: Consequences – What do the Victims Experience?

What you might find in an internet forum – posted by Lilli15:

Hello, for starters!
I'm not sure whether what I'm writing really belongs here, but I am completely wiped out, so I'm giving it a try. It all began about a year ago, all of a sudden these strange WhatsApp messages and e-mails started coming in, really rotten stuff. "You stupid cow", they said, or "Watch out, we're gonna get you." At first I didn't care, but after a while it did get on my nerves. Couple of weeks later, a girl in my class said I mustn't be right in the head to be writing things like that in internet forums, and I didn't know what she was talking about. Then she showed it to me: some idiots had posted gross stuff under my name – first they had me praising Hitler, then hating all the teachers, sleeping with all the boys who got in touch, and plenty more … of course, all this together with my name, address, and telephone number. On Tellonym there was a fake profile under my name. I was almost too scared to go to school, and I had a stomach ache all the time. After a while my parents brought up the topic of my bad moods and my problems, and we wrote to all the providers that they should delete this junk. But it kept coming up somewhere else. Then I was in really bad shape, couldn't sleep at night, shivering all the time and breaking into tears at the drop of a hat. Hardly anybody at school wanted anything to do with me.

For about two months now, there have been pictures circulating around school on WhatsApp that are supposedly nude shots of me. The whole school has seen them, and wherever I go, I hear people whispering "porn queen" behind my back. But I am absolutely sure that there are no nude photos of me, at least I was never aware of being photographed – in the nude, I mean.
I am so embarrassed, I mean, mortified – although I'm sure that these cannot possibly be pictures of me. After all, there's software for faking things like that. But as soon as I get to school, the whispering starts up. It's come to the point that I hide in the toilet during recess – that is, if I even go to school in the first place, I have these whammo panic attacks in the morning. What I would like to do is just leave everything behind, I've even thought of going all the way.
Why do these fools do things like this? I don't even know who's behind it all – although I do have an inkling. My parents sent me to a psychologist, and now I'm taking medication to cope with the anxiety. She advised them to transfer me to a different school, but hey: just run away? On the other hand, it can't go on like this. I feel so miserable. Need I mention that my grades have gone down the drain? All I want is to be left alone!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The suffering of victims lasts for a long time, as a student named Samantha related in a TV feature:

It is not over yet. "It keeps happening that I have panic attacks and feel like the ground is being pulled out from under my feet," Samantha relates. For a year now, her psychotherapist Gisela Geist has been helping her to work through this experience and overcome being so deeply traumatized. These talks are what help her most to regain her sense of self. "I wasn't worth anything any more, and the first thing I had to learn was to like myself again. Only if you love yourself can you love anyone else again," was her way of putting it.

Source: Film report "Target of Ridicule" on German TV (ZDF) show "37 Grad",
broadcast June 12, 2007

Assignments:

1. Read the texts quietly.

2. What consequences can mobbing have for the victims? Think about the fact that it can not only affect a person's health, but also their emotions and social interaction. First write down your own keywords, then arrange them into a mind map together with your classmates (refer to the examples).

3. What tips would you offer to Lilli15? Write her an e-mail (on paper) with some friendly advice. In the group, read some of these messages aloud and talk about them!

Dear Lilli 15,

Additional assignment / homework
Homework's done! My poster

social media stress?
cybermobbing?
sexting gone haywire?

been hacked?

hooked on an online game?

private pics posted?

we're the juuuport scouts, teenage volunteers, here to help!

experts train us to give good advice

• anonymous and free of charge
• use our form to send your question
• we send you a code
• you log-in and read our answer

technical and legal know-how
tips on where to get more help

can take us 24 hours to reply – so many teens on the line!

visit us at www.juuuport.de/

(!) JUUUPORT

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 5: Justice and Law (for students 14 and older)

skills	**The students learn about the legal concepts relevant to (cyber)mobbing and apply them to typical cases.**
time in 45-min classes	2
methods	partner interview, case analysis
materials	case examples, work sheet for investigation cases, solutions, beamer
internet/PC access	no

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point

Ask your students: *What do you think – is there a law in our country against (cyber)mobbing?* The students will probably not be sure. The legal situation is different in every country. We will use the example of German law to show that even where (cyber)mobbing is not specifically mentioned in the penal code, there are quite a few criminal offenses for which (cyber)mobbers can be prosecuted. You will need to compare the codes and terminology with those in your country, but to begin thinking about how civil and personality rights are protected, let's dive in and take a good look at this particular legal framework. Hand out the work sheet with the penal codes (3 pages).

The Austria penal code now includes a law (§107c) forbidding "continued harassment by means of telecommunication or a computer system". Information (in German) is available at
  https://www.saferinternet.at/faq/was-sagt-das-gesetz-zu-cyber-mobbing/

Development

First, the students read the legal texts quietly. You may further simplify the language, since some concepts are unaccustomed. At this first reading, clarify terms if necessary and begin writing key words such as "stalking" on the board, with their explanation. By conducting partner interviews, the students reiterate and confirm what they have read.
The students form 6 work groups. Distribute the 6 case examples to them, along with the 'investigative' work sheet. Working together, the students form a judgement on their particular case, relating the events to the legal concepts they have been introduced to. (You can also give the same case to two groups or only address selected cases.)

You may want to write the number of laws applying to each case on the board. That motivates the students to examine the cases very closely, e.g. Lisa: 6, Tim: 3 …

Reinforcement

Evaluation and discussion of the cases on the basis of the work sheets and the solutions (which can be projected via beamer). Have the students read each case example aloud for all to hear.

The following Project 6, "Living Together on the Basis of Human Rights" will expand the legal insight of the students into the realm of universally acknowledged human rights.

Additional assignment/homework:
The students can draft a law against (cyber)mobbing in their own words.
Alternative: Discuss whether your country should have a law like the one in Austria.

Copyright violations and non-adherence to user agreements of online services
In some of the case examples, copyright and intellectual property rights are also violated, for example when a photo is publicly re-posted without the permission of its rightholder, the photographer. Legally, this is a separate issue unrelated to the personality rights of the person shown in the photo. Yet another issue would be whether – in cases of insult, defamation, or publication of pictures without permission – there is a violation of the user agreement applying to the host service where the mobbing is taking place.

Justice and Law (1/2)

The internet not a legal vacuum, and (cyber)mobbing can be prosecuted as a criminal offense! Like many other countries, Germany has no specific law that forbids (cyber)mobbing. However, the German penal code – abbreviated StGB – contains a number of laws that apply to it. And your country certainly has similar laws. Let's find out how these systems work.

Assignments:

1. To begin, read the legal texts quietly on your own. Then go over them again by conducting `partner interviews´ with the person sitting next to you.

2. In the case examples of (cyber)mobbing from around the world, what violations of the penal code can you identify? Investigate together with your work group, using the work sheet that lists criminal offenses.

The method: 'partner interviews'
Two persons, partner A and partner B. Each of them reads the legal texts carefully. Then, partner A summarizes the most important points, and partner B repeats them, starting by saying, "Did I get you right? You're explaining that …"
Then the partners switch roles and the second interview begins – but watch out and listen carefully! Each partner is allowed to smuggle in two mistakes that the other person has to find!

Additional assignment/homework
In your opinion and your own words, what could or should a law against (cyber)mobbing say? Try to formulate a text that takes the specific characteristics of (cyber)mobbing into account.

§

My law against (cyber)mobbing

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

Demeaning Statements on the Internet:

Insult
(§ 185 Penal Code)
Whoever degrades, demeans, or through other statements or actions damages the honor of another person or humiliates that person, is liable to prosecution.

Slander and calumny
(§§ 186 & 187 Penal Code)
Whoever (e.g., in forums, social networks, or blogs) voices statements or insults that serve to damage another person's reputation or disseminates untruths about that person or is liable to prosecution.

Coercion
(§ 240 Penal Codev)
Whoever uses force or threat of serious damage to induce another person to fulfill his will by performing, enduring, or omitting an act, is liable to prosecution.

Blackmail
(§ 253 Penal Code)
Whoever uses force or threat of serious harm to a person or his property in order to attain benefit for himself or a third person is liable to prosecution.

Stalking
(§ 238 Penal Code)
The concept of 'stalking' means 'to sneak up' on someone, to insist on seeking his proximity against that person's will, using communication media to establish contact or in other ways to infringe on the person's life style. Whoever terrorizes another person in this manner is liable to prosecution.

▷ You can find the complete text of your country's laws on the internet. Once you are on the legal pages, you can search with keywords, such as: 'privacy, personality rights, integrity, discretion, permission, honor' or 'harassment, defamation, libel, recording, violation, detrimental, eavesdropping'.

Dissemination of Photos, Videos, or Audio Recordings Containing Comprising Content:

Control over one's own image
(§§ 22 & 23 Artistic Copyright Act)

Photos and videos may only be distributed and published if the person portrayed has granted consent. Every person has the fundamental right to determine whether and in which context portrayals of him/her are made public. Violations of this right can be penalized under §33 Artistic Copyright Act.

> (!) § 23 Artistic Copyright Act stipulates, however, that consent is not required when "the persons shown are incidental to the depiction of a landscape or other location", when prominent persons are displayed, or in "pictures of gatherings, public processions, and similar activities such as public events in which the persons depicted have taken part", e.g. a school festival. Prosecution under this law is only possible where none of these exceptions applies.

Violation of the integrity of the spoken word
(§ 201 Penal Code)

Whoever makes, without consent, an audio recording of the spoken words of another (e.g. of a statement intended for a particular, limited group of persons – like a school class) is liable to prosecution. This violation is particularly grave when the recording is made available to third parties, or is published. Even the posting of such recorded speech in online chats (not accessible to the general public) can be subject to prosecution.

Violation of the intimate sphere by taking
photographs (§ 201a Penal Code)

Whoever secretly creates photos or films of another person in their living quarters or another space especially protected from view (e.g. a shower, a toilet, or a locker room) is liable to prosecution. The offense is more serious when such images are transmitted or made available to others. Whoever creates without permission or transmits images depicting another person as helpless, and in doing so violates the intimate privacy of that person, is also liable to prosecution.

> (!) In this context of visual images, a classroom would not be considered a protected space, but a locker room or toilet would be.

Violation of the integrity of the
written word / Data espionage
(§§ 202 & 202a Penal Code)

Although § 202 forbids opening or reading sealed letters and documents intended for another person; this does not apply to reading e-mails, meaning that online communication is exempt from this restriction. In this context, however, § 202a on "Data Espionage" can be called upon – provided that the data were, in advance, "especially protected against unauthorized access". This implies that persons are liable to prosecution who, without authorization, read encrypted e-mails or unlawfully gain possession of the log-in password of another person.

Circulation of child pornography
(§ 184b Penal Code)

Whoever stores, acquires, or disseminates photos or video clips of persons less than 14 years of age, in which their genitals are suggestively presented or sexual acts are depicted, is liable to prosecution. This crime is, in Germany, a so-called "Offizialdelikt", meaning that when police receive notice of it, they are required to take up an investigation – whether or not the person depicted in the photo or video clip submits a complaint of their own.

Circulation of juvenile pornography
(§ 184c Penal Code)

Whoever possesses, acquires, or transmits photos or video clips of persons between the age of 14 and 18, in which their genitals are suggestively presented or sexual acts are depicted, is liable to prosecution.

Failure to provide assistance
(§ 323c Penal Code)

Whoever fails to provide assistance during accidents or in a dangerous situation or emergency, although it is necessary and can be expected under the circumstances, and particularly if he/she would not be significantly endangered or forced to neglect other major responsibilities, is liable to prosecution.

Case Examples (2/2)

The Case of Lisa

Lisa is 12 years old, and she often chats with a stranger on the internet. After some time, he asks her to send him, on Snapchat, a sexy photo of her naked chest. Once she has sent him the picture, he circulates it on the net without asking her. He then demands more nude pictures and threatens that if she doesn't send them, he'll send the first picture to her schoolmates – for he now knows where she goes to school, since she has revealed on the chat, along with other very personal things. Lisa doesn't send him any more pictures, with the result that the first photo is soon circulating at her school. Her schoolmates tease her about it. Lisa doesn't feel at ease at her school any more, and she actually moves to another city with her family. But at her new school, the photo makes the rounds again, this time it's even in a Facebook profile under her name. The mobbing attacks get worse. Lisa is not only insulted by her schoolmates, but also beaten by them, with someone filming it all.

The Case of Tim

Tim has always been someone who has few friends, and he often feels left out. In primary school he is already teased a lot, but he doesn't tell anyone about it. Starting university, he's still usually alone and at 20, he doesn't have a girlfriend. So a girl from his town starts to hassle him, and before long he is being insulted and mobbed on the internet. The anonymous attackers are calling him "loser" and "homo". They also claim that he strikes up conversations with young boys at the playground and tries to get them to go with him. In front of his house, a group of worried townspeople holds a demonstration about pedophiles and threatens with brute violence to run him out of town.

The Case of Aila

Aila is 13 years old and in love with a boy she met on Facebook. "Jonas" had contacted her there; they have a lot in common and talk about all kinds of things. Aila also tells her mother about her internet friendship. Her mother makes sure that Jonas is not sending indecent messages or asking Aila for intimate photos. After a while, though, Jonas becomes dismissive and starts to reproach and insult Aila. He accuses her of not being nice enough to her friends and says she's deceitful. Insulting comments also come in from other Facebook users, probably instigated by Jonas, calling her a "slut" and badmouthing her profile photo. Aila is very disappointed and hurt. Some time later, it emerges that another girl, a former friend of Aila's, had goaded Jonas to behave that way by telling him that Aila was saying nasty things about him to their other friends.

The Case of Karim

Karim is a student who shares a dormitory room with another guy. One evening, Karim is alone in the room with his boyfriend. Karim has no idea that his roommate is secretly filming everything that happens, using the webcam and a hidden microphone on his computer. The video showing Karim and his friend kissing gets posted on the internet by the roommate, along with cruel comments like "queer pig" and "cock-sucker". On Twitter, the roommate announces that he's going to film and upload the next rendezvous as well.

The Case of Laura

Laura is 15 years old, and an acquaintance sends her a video in which he is masturbating. She doesn't know him personally, only on the net. He asks Laura to send him a video, too, and promises not to forward it to anyone. Laura makes a video of herself masturbating and sends it to him on WhatsApp. Within two weeks, the video has spread around her school. Her schoolmates are dissing her, bumping into her, taking her picture without permission, and they open a WhatsApp group where they badmouth her ("Laura sleeps with all the boys", "the class mattress"). Laura tells her mother about it, and the topic is now brought up at school. Laura receives messages from other people she doesn't know, demanding that she show more videos and pictures of herself, otherwise they'll post the masturbation video on YouTube. Laura feels really pressured and, on Skype, shows one of the boys her breasts. He also circulates the video. He says he'll send it to her parents if she doesn't give him 100 Euros. When the case is made public at school again, Laura's mother puts a ban on her using the computer or smartphone for some time. In addition, she gets a new mobile number and transfers to a different class at school.

The Case of Josefine

Josefine came out a year ago and is now trying to find a girlfriend via Tinder. There, she "matches" with Melanie. Melanie tells her that she recently came out, too, and that she often feels misunderstood. Josefine soon trusts Melanie enough to flirt with her and reveal a few intimate secrets on their Tinder chat. A few days later, Josefine discovers screenshots of the Tinder chat on Facebook. Now, the whole school knows about her coming-out, and many classmates start calling her "bull dyke". It later emerges that a classmate had spied on her and stolen her password during a class break while she was logging in. As he explained it himself, it was his revenge on Josefine because she didn't want to go out with him.

Work Sheet for Investigating the Cases:

Possible criminal offenses in (cyber)mobbing		Does this law apply? Check the box!	How was the law broken? Reasons to prosecute …
Criminal offense	**Relevant law (Germany)**		
Insult	§ 185 penal code		
Slander Calumny	§ 186 penal code § 187 penal code		
Coercion	§ 240 penal code		
Blackmail	§ 253 penal code		
Stalking	§ 238 penal code		
Control over one's own image	§ 22 artistic copyright law		
Violation of the integrity of the spoken word	§ 201 penal code		
Violation of the intimate sphere by taking photographs	§§ 201a penal code		
Violation of the integrity of the written word / Data espionage	§ 202 & 202a penal code		
Circulation of juvenile pornography	§ 184c penal code		
Circulation of child pornography	§ 184b penal code		
Failure to provide assistance	§ 323c penal code		

Solutions

The Case of Lisa	
Law that was broken	**How it was broken**
Insult (§ 185 penal code)	mobbing attacks of the students
Coercion (§ 240 penal code)	using the threat of circulating the photo at school as a means to get more nude photos
Control over one's own image (§ 22 Art.Copyright)	picture distributed without Laura's permission
Failure to provide assistance (§ 323c penal code)	failure of students to intervene in the beating (others filmed the incident – meaning they were present and could have provided help)
Circulation of child pornography (§ 184b penal code)	dissemination of the nude photo on the internet (the photo is categorized as child pornography)
Violation of the intimate sphere by taking photographs (§ 201a penal code)	beating scene is filmed (Lisa's helplessness was put on exhibit)

The Case of Tim	
Law that was broken	**How it was broken**
Insult (§ 185 penal code)	name-calling ("loser" and "homo")
Slander and calumny §§ 186 & 187 penal code)	rumors are spread about Tim and young boys
Coercion (§ 240 penal code)	"worried" townspeople want to force Tim to leave town, threatening him with violence

The Case of Aila	
Law that was broken	**How it was broken**
Insult (§ 185 penal code)	calling her a "slut" on Facebook
Slander and calumny (§§ 186 & 187 penal code)	calling her a "slut" on Facebook

The Case of Josefine	
Law that was broken	**How it was broken**
Insult (§ 185 penal code)	calling her "bull dyke"
Data espionage (§ 202a penal code)	hacking Josefine's account and publishing the chat without her permission

Solutions

The Case of Karim	
Law that was broken	**How it was broken**
Insult (§ 185 penal code)	insulting comments posted under the video on Facebook: "queer pig" and "cock-sucker"
Slander and calumny (§§ 186 & 187 penal code)	insulting comments posted under the video on Facebook: "queer pig" and "cock-sucker"
Control over one's own image (§ 22 Artistic Copyright)	the video of Karim and his friend is video-recorded and circulated without their permission
Violation of the integrity of the spoken word (§ 201 penal code)	Karim is recorded, without his permission, while flirting with his boyfriend. The encounter was illegally recorded and circulated.
Violation of the intimate sphere by taking photographs (§ 201a penal code)	Karim's room is considered a particularly intimate place, where no video or audio recordings can be made and distributed without his explicit permission.

The Case of Laura	
Law that was broken	**How it was broken**
Insult (§ 185 penal code)	the WhatsApp group, in which cruel things were written about Laura; calling her "the class mattress"
Coercion (§ 240 penal code)	anonymous persons demand that she show "even more", otherwise they will circulate the masturbation video
Slander and calumny (§§ 186 & 187 penal code)	the WhatsApp group, in which cruel things were written about Laura; rumor that she sleeps with all the boys in the class
Blackmail (§ 253 penal code)	threat that the video will be sent to her parents if Laura does pay
Control over one's own image (§ 22 Art.Copyright)	circulating the video without Laura's permission
Violation of the intimate sphere by taking photographs (§ 201a penal code)	posting the video filmed in Laura's private space
Circulation of juvenile pornography (§ 184b penal code)	distribution of the masturbation video at school (the video is considered juvenile pornography)

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 6: Living Together on the Basis of Human Rights

skills	The students learn about human rights and the UN declaration with its 30 articles, and they practice putting feelings into words and judging situations.
time in 45-min classes	3
methods	offline posting (if that option is chosen), case analysis
materials	cards for keywords, marker pens, post-its, work sheets
internet/PC access	yes (for video and teaser)

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	Show the video *Kids read mean tweets* (background information is given in attachment at end of this unit). ⊕ **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JIucvK_Z8g** Discuss what is shown in the film. Possible questions would be: ■ *What did you observe?*　■ *What are the students reading aloud?* ■ *What is the issue here?*　■ *Which of the tweets did you find particularly nasty, and why?* **Alternative requiring no internet access: "offline posting""** Distribute post-its to the students, who are sitting in a circle. Each student writes something positive or appreciative about the person sitting to their right and 'posts' it on the person (in analogy to posting it online). All the comments are read aloud. Questions that can be asked in the ensuing discussion: *How do you think ..nn… felt while his/her post-it was being read to the group? What made you feel really good? Who felt the same way? What do the others think?* If the class is not practiced at answering such questions, you should begin by placing the first question to students whom you consider socially competent and most able to express themselves. Some school classes don't get any further than just saying "OK" or "cool". Use the opportunity to have the class think about what makes people feel good: community, friendship, recognition, success, fun, and so on.
Development	Offline and online, a great number of human rights violations occurs every day. Together with the students, collect their impressions of situations they have experienced online or offline, in which they have observed violations taking place (if they are not able to give examples, you can use those give in Project 5). Make note of the situations by writing keywords on cards and posting them up on the board for all to see. Every time a situation is described, ask the class: What do you think, how might the person affected have felt? Write the feeling that students express onto cards, as well, and post them on the board where the situation has been set up. The aim is to make it clear that human beings are sensitive to being hurt – on the net and in real life. Every person forms an opinion of their own about what might be hurtful to others and how serious the damage might be. This judgement is something each person has to make on their own; it can't be dictated by anyone else. Together with the students, develop the topic of human rights. You can do this by presenting the following questions: ■ *What are human rights?* ■ *Where have they been formulated in declarations and laws?* ■ *Which is the first and most important among the fundamental principles of human rights?* Show the students the websit ⊕ **http://www.recht-auf-menschenrecht.de/** and watch the opening teaser together. It is in German, but it will nonetheless be obvious that well-known personalities (actors, musicians, soccer players, etc.) are stepping up and calling attention to fundamental rights. The voice-over tells about the individual rights – to dignity, respect, and education, for example. Using the situations that the group has made note of and the feelings associated with them, the students should now try to locate the relevant articles in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (or, if you have prepared the Bill of Rights from your own country, the corresponding articles there). *Which articles are being violated in these situations?* Write that on cards and post them on the board, as shown on the next page.

219

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Plan for the Sequence

Development

sad

not liked
by anyone

ugly

**girl sends
selfie** → **boy replies:
"You're so
ugly"**

hurt

Article 3:
the right to life,
right to live in freedom
and safety

not worth
much

angry

---

sad

rejected

angry

unfairly
treated

**Karim
kissing
best
friend** → **insults:
"faggot",
"swine"**

aggressive

Article 5:
no degrading treatment

Article 2:
don't discriminate

Article 12:
right to privacy
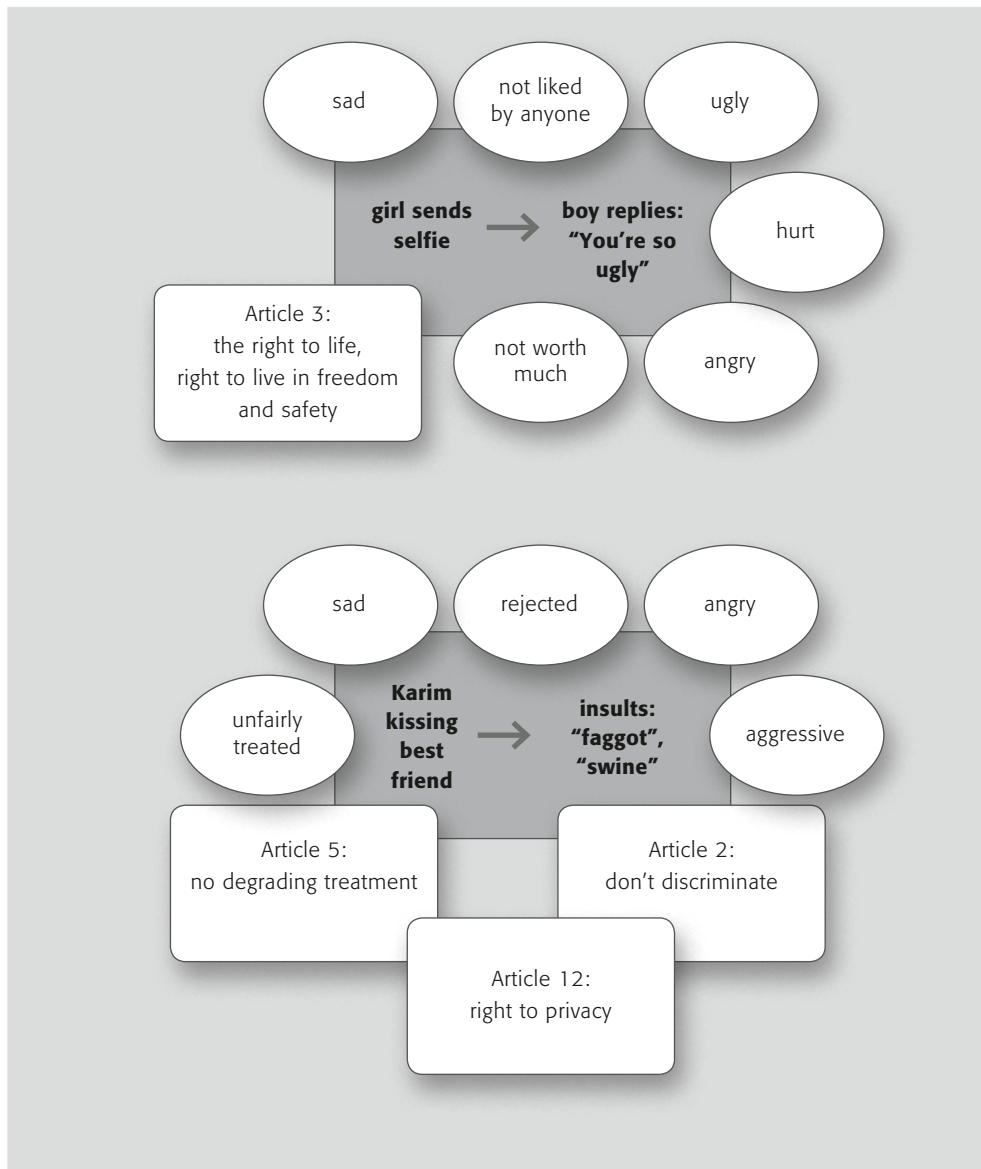
Reinforcement

Have the students fill out the work sheet "Human Rights Violations".

Additional assignment/homework:
Discuss with the class (or assign an essay on) the significance of freedom of speech in relation to the possibility of hurting or doing damage to another person. Where do the limits of free speech lie, where does the violation of another person's rights begin? The topic can also be treated in the context of current political debate.

Creative assignment:
On the website ⊚ **http://www.recht-auf-menschenrecht.de/** described above, popular personalities appear in a video teaser (German) to support human rights.
They each make a cardboard poster with an article they find important, and flash it for the camera – all in black-and-white. With your students, create a class photo or collage along the same lines.

Handout for Project 6: Fundamental Human Rights

United Nations - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
in a simplified version for young people.

◉ https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/
  universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-1-15.html

◉ https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/
  universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-16-30.html

If availalbe, the Bill of Rights of your own country can be used instead.

The Thirty Articles of the Declaration

1. We Are All Born Free & Equal.
We are all born free. We all have our own thoughts and ideas. We should all be treated in the same way.

2. Don't Discriminate.
These rights belong to everybody, whatever our differences.

3. The Right to Life.
We all have the right to life, and to live in freedom and safety.

4. No Slavery.
Nobody has any right to make us a slave. We cannot make anyone our slave.

5. No Torture.
Nobody has any right to hurt us or to torture us.

6. You Have Rights No Matter Where You Go.
I am a person just like you!

7. We're All Equal Before the Law.
The law is the same for everyone. It must treat us all fairly.

8. Your Human Rights Are Protected by Law.
We can all ask for the law to help us when we are not treated fairly.

9. No Unfair Detainment.
Nobody has the right to put us in prison without good reason and keep us there, or to send us away from our country.

10. The Right to Trial.
If we are put on trial this should be in public. The people who try us should not let anyone tell them what to do.

11. We're Always Innocent Till Proven Guilty.
Nobody should be blamed for doing something until it is proven. When people say we did a bad thing we have the right to show it is not true.

12. The Right to Privacy.
Nobody should try to harm our good name. Nobody has the right to come into our home, open our letters, or bother us or our family without a good reason.

13. Freedom to Move.
We all have the right to go where we want in our own country and to travel as we wish.

14. The Right to Seek a Safe Place to Live.
If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we all have the right to run away to another country to be safe.

15. Right to a Nationality.
We all have the right to belong to a country.

16. Marriage and Family.
Every grown-up has the right to marry and have a family if they want to. Men and women have the same rights when they are married, and when they are separated.

17. The Right to Your Own Things.
Everyone has the right to own things or share them. Nobody should take our things from us without a good reason.

18. Freedom of Thought.
We all have the right to believe in what we want to believe, to have a religion, or to change it if we want.

19. Freedom of Expression.
We all have the right to make up our own minds, to think what we like, to say what we think, and to share our ideas with other people.

20. The Right to Public Assembly.
We all have the right to meet our friends and to work together in peace to defend our rights. Nobody can make us join a group if we don't want to.

21. The Right to Democracy.
We all have the right to take part in the government of our country. Every grown-up should be allowed to choose their own leaders.

22. Social Security.
We all have the right to affordable housing, medicine, education, and childcare, enough money to live on and medical help if we are ill or old.

23. Workers' Rights.
Every grown-up has the right to do a job, to a fair wage for their work, and to join a trade union.

24. The Right to Play.
We all have the right to rest from work and to relax.

25. Food and Shelter for All.
We all have the right to a good life. Mothers and children, people who are old, unemployed or disabled, and all people have the right to be cared for.

26. The Right to Education.
Education is a right. Primary school should be free. We should learn about the United Nations and how to get on with others. Our parents can choose what we learn.

27. Copyright.
Copyright is a special law that protects one's own artistic creations and writings; others cannot make copies without permission. We all have the right to our own way of life and to enjoy the good things that art, science and learning bring.

28. A Fair and Free World.
There must be proper order so we can all enjoy rights and freedoms in our own country and all over the world.

29. Responsibility.
We have a duty to other people, and we should protect their rights and freedoms.

30. No One Can Take Away Your Human Rights.

Source: This simplified version of the 30 Articles of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** has been created especially for young people and published by the non-profit organization Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI).
⊚ https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/
This organization also offers videos and other interesting material on the topic of human rights, including a free online course about the 30 Articles.

▷ The preamble and full text of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** can be found and downloaded at
⊚ http://www.un.org/en/
universal-declaration-human-rights/

Every country has incorporated these fundamental principles into its own constitution in some way, usually at the very beginning of the document in a **Bill of Rights.** It provides the basis for other laws of the country, such as penal codes.

Human Rights Violations

Assignment:

1. In the chart, make notes on the all the situations, feelings and relevant human rights principles that you have been discussing together.

situation	feelings	human rights

About the Video Suggested as a Starting Point

Background information on the video *Kids read mean tweets*

Jimmy Kimmel, the presenter of a late-night TV show in the USA, started a kind of trend. On camera, he had prominent guests reading aloud some of the insults sent to them via Twitter. Usually, the guests make a joke of it and the audience laughs, but almost everyone seems to notice at some point that this is not truly funny.

The initiative "Canadian Safe School Network" then built up a campaign against cyberbullying and produced a video. In it, teenagers read cruel tweets that were posted. At first, one can hear an audience applauding and howling in the background, but that dies down after a few minutes – so that the insulting words and the body language of the young people really begin to hit home. The video ends with the statement, "Cyberbullying is no joke."

◉ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JIucvK_Z8g

Similar videos have been posted since then by others, including a group of teenage students who are building the website bullying.org.
Their video *Teens read mean tweets* can be found at

◉ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkKEYsizz6Y

Description of Project 7: Delete – Block – Report: Stop (Cyber)Mobbing!

skills	The students learn about options for reporting, blocking, and deleting on social networks, and about how to use these options.
time in 45-min classes	2
methods	work at a series of stations
materials	cybermobbing first-aid app, cards for the stations with assignments, posters with solutions
internet/PC access	Yes ▷ computer room (and students' phones ▷ obtain clearance for use during class)

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	Ask the class: *Have any of you ever reported, blocked, or deleted anyone/anything on a social network? What is your experience with this? Did it help to solve a problem? Do you know how to do it on all the platforms that you use?*
Development	Rotating through a series of stations, the students learn how to handle problems on various platforms with the help of technical options for reporting, blocking, and deleting. You can either set up all the stations, or only those relevant for the class (having asked in advance which services they use most). Set up the stations by printing out the work sheets and the posters with solutions, and make sure that each station has the proper equipment and access to the corresponding platform. The required set-up for the stations Facebook, e-Mail, YouTube, and Twitch (live-streaming video portal) would be a PC or a tablet. For the other stations – Snapchat, Handy, WhatsApp, and Instagram – the students' smartphones will suffice. The posters with solutions can also be distributed as handouts. Students change stations every ten minutes. Posters (in English versions) can be downloaded at: ⊚ **www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing** ▷ **Tip:** At the site Social Media Guides ⊚ **https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/ social-media-guides** you can find out more about the safety features available on popular social networks.
Reinforcement	To assess and review the tour of work stations, ask: *Which station helped you the most? What can you do if you find a reporting option on a platform?* (e.g. write to the person responsible for the protection of minors on the portal – their contact address should be in the site notice). At the end of the lesson, you can present the klicksafe cybermobbing first-aid app, which is available in English. ⊚ **www.klicksafe.de/service/aktuelles/klicksafe-apps**. **Cybermobbing first-aid app** The klicksafe (Youth Panel), made up of students ages 12 through 16, has developed a first-aid app to help combat (cyber)mobbing. They even wrote the code themselves. The app is available in English. It also contains tutorial material on making a screenshot and using it to report insults and other violations occurring on online platforms. **Homework:** The students practice making screenshots on the smartphone, tablet, and PC, using the tutorial contained in the app.

Handout for Work Stations

Station Facebook

Assignment:
In a social network such as Facebook, it can happen that someone insults you or posts pictures of you that you want to have deleted.

*On Facebook, how can you report a **photo/video,** a **message**, a **user**, or a **post on a pinboard?** Find out!*

Station YouTube

Assignment:
YouTube offers the option of entering comments below a video.
They are not always very nice.

*On YouTube, how can you report **hateful comments** or entire **videos** and **channels?** Is it possible to block another user? Find out!*

Station E-Mail

Assignment:
Sometimes insulting messages also come in via e-mail.

*How can you ensure that, in the future, undesired e-mails land in the **spam file** and not in your in-box? Find out!*

Station WhatsApp

Assignment:
It sometimes happens that one gets insulted or harassed on WhatsApp. No one has to put up with that.

*On WhatsApp, how do you go about **reporting** or **blocking** another **user?** Are there differences between Android, Apple, or Windows devices? Find out!*

Station Snapchat

Assignment:
On Snapchat, you can upload your own Snapchat story, but you can also exchange private snaps with other users.

⁇ *But how can you **block** a **user** if you have received a snap with inappropriate or insulting content? Find out!*

Station Twitch

Assignment:
The streaming platform Twitch offers the option, in a live chat, of commenting on videos and livestreams coming in off computers and game consoles ('Let's Play' or LP). However, especially on LP there are any number of viewers that attack those playing because of their supposedly inferior skills (so-called 'flamers').

⁇ *On Twitch, how can you **report** and **block** these **users?** Find out!*

Station smartphone

Assignment:
It's not just the internet: you can also be harassed over the phone or via texting.

⁇ *How can you **block callers** or maybe even get your phone number **changed** or **deactivated?** Find out!*

Station Instagram

Assignment:
On Instagram, you can share and comment on photos and videos.

⁇ *How can you report **undesirable photos** or **videos** directly to Instagram? How can you **block** or **report** a **user** on Instagram? Find out!*

An Example of a Poster with Solutions

"Solution" posters (in English) for other platforms are available for download at ⊚ www.klicksafe.de/cyber-mobbing

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 8: Digital Self-Assertion and Civil Courage on the Net

skills	The students can apply techniques of non-violent self-assertion on the net, just as anywhere else, and can show the courage of their conviction.
time in 45-min classes	2
methods	transfer of techniques offline > online, case examples
materials	scissors
internet/PC access	no

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	In social networks such as WhatsApp, one can get into painful situations where self-assurance is important. *What kind of situations could those be?* Together with your students, gather some impressions of such situations. *Has anyone among you experienced this type of situation? What does it feel like to be the person affected? Has anyone among you been witness to this type of situation, without being the target of it? What feelings can one experience as a bystander, or as the person who is targeted?*
Development	Individually, the students go through the first assignment on the work sheet. The goal is to apply techniques for self-assertion, translating them into actions one can take on the internet. At the outset, explain the concepts "de-escalation" and "confrontation".

> ▷ **Tip:** It is recommended, in advance of this project, to do an exercise or unit on non-violent self-assertion. Material in most languages in available on the internet.

Potential solutions for the first assignment are given here. They should be discussed with the whole class. Blocking a person on the internet can be interpreted in more than one way: it could be confrontational, or also de-escalating.

self-assertion offline	self-assertion online
de-escalation – walk away, evade it – ignore it – "let off!" – "please …" – speak off to the side, don't turn towards the person	– close the service – leave the platform/app – ignore it – block the person
confrontation – posture (upright) – glance (serious) – voice (firm) – "quit it!", "that's enough!", "stop it!"	– don't be insulting – "Please stop doing this, writing these things here, that's going too far." – "Stop it!" – block the person – take up direct contact: "it hurts me that …"
getting help – if possible, say what you're going to do – "If you don't stop right away, I'm going to the teacher / … going to get help."	– "If you don't stop, I'm going to turn to someone / … get help." – report the person / turn to the admin – take advantage of support options online (helplines, counseling, peer scouts) – seek help from friends, family, teachers

For the second assignment, divide the students into small groups and give each group one or more of the 14 case examples provided. The students should read the case described and discuss options for self-assertion on the basis of the charts they have developed.

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Reinforcement

When the small groups have completed the work sheet, they present their case to the class first, then the solutions they are suggesting. As an example, the case of "Stefan":

> Stefan is invited by a classmate to be in an "anti-Michael group". In the group, everyone disses Michael, and they share photos and videos that make Michael look like a fool.

A possible short presentation on this case could sound like this:
"Our example is about Stefan, who gets invited into an "anti-Michael" group. In the group, everyone disses Michael, and they share photos and videos that make Michael look like a fool. We would suggest that Stefan either take steps to de-escalate – by leaving the group and therefore being able to ignore it. That doesn't help Michael, but at least it means Stefan is not a participant. Of course it would be better if Stefan could confront the members of the group by telling them that what they are doing is not OK and that it violates fundamental human rights. He could appeal to the others to delete the group. If there is content that is threatening to Michael, Stefan should seek help from an adult right away to prevent something even worse from happening."

For reflection at the end of the lesson, these questions can serve as a guide:
– *What path of action to you think is particularly good, and why?*
– *What path of action would you consider ineffective, and why?*

Template for Cut-outs: Examples of Digitally Overstepped Boundaries

Susanne takes a selfie and posts it as her new profile pic on Facebook. Two minutes later Jan, a boy from her class, writes underneath it, "You are so ugly."	In the class group on WhatsApp, Daniel relates that he has been to an amusement park with his family over the weekend. Florian then writes, "Nobody wants to hear about that", and Ines confirms Florian's comment with a 'thumbs-up' emoji 👍 .
Somebody secretly takes pictures of Jakob in the locker room of the gym. A boy in his class sends a picture to several other classmates via WhatsApp.	Just by accident, Marie notices that on her school's guest book, there are entries made under her real name. One of them says, "I'm the biggest slut in the school."
Over the weekend, Anna went to a party, had too much to drink, and was badmouthing one of the teachers. Franziska secretly recorded the conversation on her smartphone and now posts in on the class chat.	In a Facebook group, Leon reads several entries about Kerim, whose parents come from Turkey. They include expressions like "garlic dago", "mu-slime" or "mohamedan".
Janina and Olli have been dating for two years. Olli asks Janina to send him a nude photo, as proof of her trust in him. After she does so, the relationship breaks up and Olli re-sends the photo to his friends.	In the class group on WhatsApp, Simon asks what homework the class has. No one answers.
Stefan is invited by a classmate to be in an "anti-Michael group". In the group, everyone disses Michael, and they share photos and videos that make Michael look like a fool.	In a forum, Anke has been following a discussion about unemployed people. Some of the forum members make derogatory comments, insult the unemployed, and spread untrue statements.
Through the class group on WhatsApp, Malina receives a video of a fat lady, who is naked, falling into the mud. Most of the classmates think the video is funny and share it with other friends.	Someone sent Henry a video showing a boy who is masturbating.
For two weeks now, Irene has been getting text messages sent from an unknown phone number. In the messages there are insults such as "fucking mistake" and "slut".	Johannes uploads a picture of his little brother onto Facebook with the comment, "best brother in the world". Shortly, he sees that others have added comments like "gay", "sexy", and "another one of those meatfaces".

Work Sheet – Self-Assertion

Perhaps you may someday be in a situation where you need to defend yourself – on the street, in the school courtyard, or on the internet. If that should happen, you'll be well prepared. How to assert yourself well – even in the digital realm – you can find out here.

Assignments:

1. Read through the tips on how to defend oneself – for example if someone gives you a hard time on the street. Then translate that know-how into a digital situation: analogously, how could you defend yourself on the internet? Write down your ideas in the column "self-assertion online".

self-assertion offline	self-assertion online
de-escalation – walk away, evade it – ignore it – "let off!" – "please …" – speak off to the side, don't turn towards the person	
confrontation – posture (upright) – glance (serious) – voice (firm) – "quit it!", "that's enough!", "stop it!"	
getting help – if possible, say what you're going to do – "If you don't stop right away, I'm going to the teacher / … going to get help."	

2. In your small work group, think about options for self-assertion in the case example(s) you have been given, and present them to the class.

Our solution:

....

....

....

....

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 9: Avoiding Harm in Class Chats

skills	**The students can re-consider their own behavior, e.g. on WhatsApp, negotiate and discuss rules in a democratic fashion, and work through conflicts.**
time in 45-min classes	4
methods	circle of chairs, group discussion
materials	flipchart, slips of paper/writing pad, pen/pencil, worksheet, template for flipchart sheets
internet/PC access	no

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point

Where does the community life of the class take place? With the class, count up all the locations that potentially have an influence on the class community. These could be: *the classroom, the school courtyard, the locker rooms, the way home, the country hostel on the school trip, etc., WhatsApp* and other digital spaces.
Explain that what happens in the class group on WhatsApp definitely has a direct effect on everyone in the class and how they are feeling. Therefore, what goes on there is not just a private matter, but rather something that the school and the students' parents also share responsibility for.
The following seating arrangement will help your students to work without disturbances during the first step of this project: form a circle of chairs in which every second chair is turn outwards and moved out into an outside circle, so that the students are essentially sitting back to back.
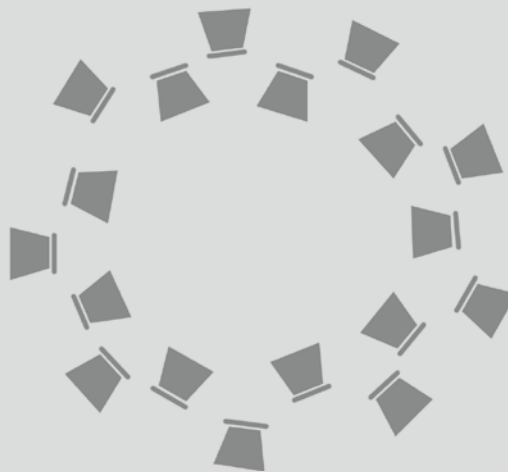
Development

Each of the students writes down on a piece of paper what bothers him or her about the classmates' behavior on WhatsApp – what gets on his/her nerves, what is annoying. This is not about writing down names: instead the topic is ways of behaving. The more precise the description, the clearer it will be exactly what type of behavior or statement is experienced as disturbing. Each student should work alone, with no talking during the exercise.
If, after some time, the students say they need support, you can relate that students in other classes have made note of things like:
- *too many messages every day*
- *voice messages that are unnecessarily long*
- *messages in the middle of the night*
- *having to share homework just because you've done it*
- *two people calling all the shots for the whole group*
- *anti-groups*
- *…*

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

....

Reinforcement

When that is completed, restore the circle of chairs to its normal shape and collect all of the papers. Begin reading the notes aloud and writing the items onto three large flipchart sheets, gradually working through all of them. Mentally sort the items according to these three aspects:

On the first sheet, write all the forms of behavior that are clearly associated with danger. Among these would be: material (videos, pictures, texts) with juvenile pornographic content, attempts made by strangers to get in touch, etc.

On the second sheet, write all the aspects relating to violations of human rights, that is, involving emotional or physical harm, or damage to property. This would include, for example: excluding members of the group, insults, threats, secretly taking photos of others and posting them in der group, etc.

On the third sheet, write all the aspects of behavior that can be negotiated and regulated by the class itself. Here, it might say: to many messages, unnecessary messages, messages all night long, copying homework, chain letters, and so on.

If a complaint is repeated, add a mark to the existing entry. Not until all the items have been made note of and the students have seen them all, do you actually add in at the top the titles of the categories: Dangers, Human Rights Violations, and Class Topics. Examples of such flipchart sheets are attached at the end of this project description.

Discussing dangers
Make it clear that the students are exposed to certain dangers when using WhatsApp. Using the chart, discuss with the students the points they have brought up and possible options for action towards protection again them.

Example:

danger	option for action
material with content damaging to minors	• do not re-send • discuss with homeroom teacher/parents • assess content (together with adults) • report content to police (e.g., in cases involving child pornography or propaganda) • delete content
strangers trying to make contact	• do not reply • block phone number
chain letters	• what is a chain letter? • check credibility of chain letters, for example through an internet search to establish its origin and verity • do not re-send • if unsure of yourself, speak to parents/friends/advisors
phony profile photos	• do not use phony photos yourself • what to do if you get a warning letter? • knowledge on copyright and personality rights

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Reinforcement

Discussing human rights violations

Now proceed to the topic of human rights violations. Again, group the offenses into three mental categories that do not yet have titles or a theme immediately apparent to the class:

1. harm done to the mind / heart / feelings
2. physical harm (not much space required, since only indirect bodily damage is done via digital media and this is usually not mentioned by students)
3. damage to property

Together with the students, formulate the titles of these three categories. Then take up the topic of "human rights", perhaps beginning with the questions, "What is the most important law in the country?" and "What does the first and most important article of law say?" Make it clear to the students that the law applies to everyone living in the country. And it also applies to behavior on the internet and over smartphone.

By taking reference to the corresponding paragraphs of the penal code, you can emphasize how serious the violations are. In every country, the penal code spells out the boundaries between acceptable behavior and criminal acts that violate the fundamental rights of others.

Point out to your students that the list they have produced is a clear indication that human rights violations are actually taking place within the class. At the same time, school is a place to learn. Therefore, the students are given the opportunity to change their behavior. When violations do occur, it is important that they be addressed – by the students themselves, ideally. Then goals can be formulated (practical, realistic agreements) and reparation can be called for. In this context, a distinction the students should be urged to grasp is that between seeking help and tattling (see handbook Chapter 4.4). It is essential that they understand the difference between tattling and seeking help: only then will they be able to turn to an adult when troubles come up.

Example:

Human right	violation	(German) penal code StGB
mind/heart/ feelings	• insult • spreading rumors • threats • blackmail • …	§ 185 StGB § 186 & 187 StGB § 241 StGB § 253 StGB
body	Physical injuries can be inflicted indirectly. If someone is repeatedly targeted by (cyber)mobbing, this can indirectly lead to bodily harm: • stomach pain • headaches • …	
property	• Someone photographs me without permission. • Someone re-sends my photos. • Someone takes video footage. • Someone re-sends the videos. • possession/circulation of child or juvenile pornography • audio or video recording during class (e.g. of the teacher) • …	• control over one's own image § 22 artistic copyright law • distribution, acquisition or possession of child and juvenile pornography § 184b & 184c StGB • violation of the intimate sphere by taking photographs § 201a StGB • violation of the integrity of the spoken word § 201 StGB

235

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Reinforcement

Discussing rules for the class chat

Finally, you look at the third flipchart sheet together. This is about rules, and with your supervision, the students can discuss and negotiate them fairly independently. You can encourage the process of reflection by inquiring about individual points or having the students explain them. Provide time for exchanges.

Example:

content	key questions	rule
too many unnecessary messages	• What do you mean by 'unnecessary'? • What topics are for the whole class? • How many messages is 'too many'? • What kind of messages are most frequent? (greetings, irrelevant conversations, etc.)	I only write messages whose content is relevant for the whole class.
messages at night	• When is it nighttime? • What consequences could sending messages during the night have? • What consequences could it have to leave the smartphone on the night table overnight (without turning on the mute)? (waking up, significance of sleep, radiation from smartphones)	I only send messages to the class group between 7 A.M. and 7 P.M.
two admins have their say about everything	• What does it indicate if there are members of the class who can determine over others? • What is the advantage? What is the disadvantage? • If only two persons from the class were responsible for the chat, what abilities would they need to have?	All the students in the class have admin rights in the group. All of them are entitled to be in the group. OR: There are two (democratically elected) admins who bear responsibility for the group.

The students form groups of 4 or 5 persons. Assign each group one of the themes listed in the last poster, 'rules for the class chat', and give them the work sheet "Group Assignment about WhatsApp". Each group discusses and completes the work sheet, and then presents to the whole class the rule it has created. The class compares the rule with the criteria listed in the work sheet and modifies the rule if necessary. Then the class votes on whether to adopt the rule. An ordinary majority is sufficient (more yesses than nos.)

The students may want to know whether there will be consequences if rules are not observed. This impulse may be understandable, but students often tend to levy rather harsh sanctions. You should therefore take care to see that the consequences are appropriate (something like – performing a task for the class), that they serve to support the sense community and are not tantamount to "exclusion from the group".

Homework:
The completed set of rules can be transferred to a large poster by several of the students, and then signed by everyone.

Avoiding Doing Harm in Class Chats – Group Assignment about WhatsApp

Group (names): ....

Assignment:

1. Create a binding rule on the issue of: ....

Details:
....
....
....
....
....
....
....

Our rule reads:
....
....
....
....

▷ *Tip: The rule should fulfill these criteria:*
Effective behavioral rules
– call for behavior that is clearly defined and verifiable,
– contain the word "I",
– are brief, to the point, and binding,
– are unemotional and down-to-earth,
– are in positive wording whenever possible.

Example of Flipchart Sheets Listing Violations/Annoyances

Dangers

– disgusting videos
– embarrassing pictures
– anonymous messages
– chain letters

Human rights violations

Emotional harm:

exclusion from the group
slander/badmouthing III *
spreading rumors I
threats and blackmail
"victim" IIII I
"loser"
"handicapped"
"asshole"

Physical harm:

stomach ache, headache

Violence against property:

taking pictures of others II
secretly filming videos
audio recordings of teachers IIII III

* Every time this keyword is
mentioned by another student,
another mark is added, in
order to indicate its frequency.

Class topics

– too many messages IIII IIII III

– a lot of unnecessary messages

– messages all through the night III

– nobody answers my questions

– passing homework around

– voice messages longer
  than 20 seconds IIII

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 10:
Human Rights Observers – Rules for Living Together

skills	**The students learn how to monitor rights violations in the class by appointing human rights observers.**
time in 45-min classes	2
methods	circle of chairs, group discussion
materials	slips of paper, writing pad, pen/pencil for voting
internet/PC access	no

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point

You have the option of electing **human rights observers** in the class (see handbook Chapters 4.4 and 5.5.4). The class as a community gives them the mandate to pay close attention to whether any human rights violations take place in the group and, should they occur, to report on them (without naming names) in regularly held talks with the homeroom teacher or a designated school social worker. (The tasks are described in detail in handbook Chapter 4.4.) The students who are elected should be well-informed on issues of human rights (see Project 6), and rules on what is considered 'no go' should be agreed upon by the whole class (see previous Project 9).

The role of the human rights oberservers:
- They are well-informed about human rights.
- They pay careful attention to events in the class.
- They document human rights violations, if any occur.
- They report to the class council on violations they have observed.
  (**Important:** Their job is not to name names!)
- In serious cases they are witness to, they intervene immediately or get help.

Development

The students should consider what abilities and personal characteristics the human rights observers need to have (see work sheet). Several students can then read their outcomes aloud.

Election of the human rights observers
Distribute slips of paper to the students.

Each student may now nominate 4 classmates (2 girls, 2 boys) who they think would be able to handle the office of human rights observer successfully. The names are then written on the board. Ask the students who are nominated whether they can envision accepting the mandate. Voting then proceeds by ballot, with each student making his or her choices privately. Every student has one vote for a girl and one for a boy. The three boys and three girls with the most votes are elected.

The homeroom teacher counts out the votes discreetly, not openly, then announces the names of those elected. The teacher congratulates them and sets up a schedule for the orientation and feedback sessions to be held on a regular basis.

After a number of weeks, new elections can for human rights observers can be held.

Human Rights Observers

Role description:

1. What tasks are entrusted to the human rights observers?

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

....

2. What character attributes should the human rights observers have?
   Mark all the characteristics that seem important to you.
   Then choose the five that are most important in your eyes, and
   write them down here:

   • ....

   • ....

   • ....

   • ....

   • ....

Work Sheet for Project 10: Character Attributes

adventuresome	callous	snobbish	derisive
mindful	affected	aggressive	active
silly	adaptable	fear-inspiring	decent
authentic	inspirational	resilient	motherly
modest	protective	concerned	know-it-all
aware	conformist	chaotic	solid character
clever	cool	courageous	defensive
democratic	disinterested	dictatorial	diplomatic
discreet	direct	self-disciplined	thin-skinned
honest	genuine	jealous	selfish
emotional	empathetic	committed	serious
industrious	peaceful	happy	fearless
sensitive	craving recognition	relaxed	congenial
conscientious	dependent on harmony	hectic	condescending
good sense of humor	idealistic	interested	intelligent
calculating	companionable	collegial	communicative
competent	shying away from conflict	vigorous	creative
able to take criticism	moody	lively	nice
focused on solutions	funny	despotic	humane
compassionate	brave	natural	neutral
superficial	objective	forward	perfectionist
finicky	provocative	punctual	radical
opinionated	articulate	respectful	inconsiderate
matter-of-fact	hasty	shy	tactless
team-oriented	loyal	personable	unblinking
impartial	trustworthy	appreciative	reliable

Recommendations on Method and Didactics

Description of Project 11: Coping Strategies
(Excerpt from the German online project 'Ways Out of Cybermobbing')

skills	**Using a fictitious case as a starting point, the students devise potential ways out of a (cyber)mobbing situation.**
time in 45-min classes	1
methods	case study, scale for evaluation
materials	-
internet/PC access	no

Plan for the Sequence

Starting point	*What strategies or measures to end mobbing are the students familiar with?* Read them the case example of Paul, which is also at the top of the work sheet (next page). The example is deliberately constructed so vaguely as to leave room for students' hypotheses about what factors or actions might have led to the end of the mobbing.
Development	The students work individually and quietly on the first assignment in the work sheet. When, in the second step, they read their ideas to the class, a picture emerges of the strategies they already have at hand to deal with mobbing. Some of their wishes and needs in cases of mobbing can also be inferred. Document the strategies they suggest – such as, support for the victim from peers/parents/school, transfer of the victim to another school, punishment of the offender, three-way talk with offender and victim followed by reparation, etc. – on the board, for example in a mind map.
	Tip: To organize the concepts, you might use categories such as *human/technical/self-help/ other support.*
	The students estimate on the scale (in step 3) which of the proposed strategies would be most important or meaningful for them. This can lead to an interesting discussion in the class.
Reinforcement	Point out that mobbing often arises in situations where a victim doesn't have sufficient defenses of his or her own (through gestures, facial expressions, or verbal responses) or when there is little or no support from others. Mobbing in the stage of consolidation or manifestation can be counteracted quite effectively through the intervention of trained professionals. But it is also possible to provide the wrong kind of support (see handbook Chapter 4.5).

▷ **TIP: statements against mobbing.**
One digital method of fighting back against mobbing is the video statement, which most students are familiar with. In Project 3, we mentioned an example from Australia (Fix You). But one can work more simply, as Benjamin Fokken demonstrated with his statement (reminiscent of Amanda Todd's style), which triggered an internet hype in 2015. It's in German, and black-and-white, but gets the message across impressively: together, we can do something about this. And it's not just about the author, but rather all kinds of people mobbed merely for being themselves.
Video: ⊕ **https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=jBSIVmNBYyA** *(retrieved March 14, 2019)*
Perhaps your students have ideas for their own statement against (cyber)mobbing?

Work Sheet – Coping Strategies

> *Paul* is now in the ninth grade. When he was in seventh grade, he had the problem that schoolmates were spreading rumors about him on the internet, and posting really mean pictures. Since he's been in the ninth grade, the cybermobbing has stopped.

Tasks:

1. What do you think happened?
   Describe what might have brought the cybermobbing to an end.

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

2. Read your ideas aloud to the rest of the class. In a mind map on the board,
   structure your ideas about what it could have been that made the mobbing stop.

3. What would help you most if you were in a similar situation? List the most helpful thing first,
   at the top of the ladder.
   Talk about it with the person sitting next to you and, later, explain your opinion to the whole class.

> ▷ *Tip: Don't swallow it, re-post it!*
> *One student took a screenshot of insults sent to him and re-posted that on his own profile. Would you do the same thing? Discuss it with your class.*

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Konflikt-KULTUR
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Konflikt-KULTUR has been in existence since 1997 and is a comprehensive program for prevention and continuing education, based on academic research and evaluation.

As a multi-level program, it pursues outreach to individual children and adolescents, as well as their groups and school classes, and the overriding institutional instances of schools and youth agencies. On the practical level, its work is implemented in all types of schools, from elementary through vocational, and in youth support agencies. Its aim is the development of sustainable conflict-management methods within these schools and organizations or institutions. Continuing education offerings and consulting arrangements provide ongoing support for teachers, social workers, and psychologists in anchoring these methods in the everyday processes and structures of their workplaces and establishing them as an integral element of the pedagogical profile.

Contact and further information:

www.konflikt-kultur.de
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PRÄVENTION UND REHABILITATION
IN DER ERZDIÖZESE FREIBURG E. V.

The **AGJ Professional Association** is a subsidiary of Caritas (Catholic Charities) addressing the issues associated with addiction, homelessness, and unemployment, as well as active protection for children and adolescents.

About 500 staff members in the diocese of Freiburg are active in a network of resident or day-time institutions and agencies devoted to prevention, intervention, treatment, promotion of employment, and job training. One of the AGJ programs has been, since 1997, **Konflikt-KULTUR**, whose 10 staff members and 19 free-lancers conduct as many as 600 events per year – speeches, professional workshops, educational days, training courses, consulting, and sustainable development in schools and organizations. This includes an average of 80 interventions per year in the area of mobbing and cybermobbing.

Contact and further information:

www.agj-freiburg.de/kinder-jugendschutz/konflikt-kultur

German agencies and initiatives:

Good advice and prompt support for young users experiencing stress and uncomfortable situations online
www.jugend.support

Telephone hotline for children and adolescents
www.nummergegenkummer.de

The self-defense platform run by teens for teens
www.juuuport.de

Advisory platform of the Federal Conference on Parental Counseling
www.bke-beratung.de

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Rhineland-Palatinate (LMK) – www.lmk-online.de

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Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia (LFM-NRW)
www.medienanstalt-nrw.de

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