*Supporting Every Student Learning Series*

CONVERSATION GUIDE

# The Effects of Bullying on Children

**Part 2. Heterogeneity in Mental Health Outcomes**

(*with Dr. Tracy Vaillancourt, University of Ottawa*)

*Some children and youth seem to be adversely affected by bullying while others seem to cope better.*

# Key understandings

* How individuals cope with bullying is affected (or moderated) by:
  + Context
    - For example, youth from positive home environments fare better when bullied than youth from less positive home environments.
    - When a single student in a classroom is the only one experiencing bullying behaviour, the negative impact on mental health will be greater for that student than if a number of students are experiencing bullying behavior.
  + Personal characteristics
    - For example, gender can be a factor. Research show that internalizing problems persisted even after the bullying had stopped for girls, but not for boys.
  + Biological characteristics
    - For example, neuroscience is beginning to help us understand how an individual’s genetic makeup may affect his or her response to stress, including their response to bullying behaviour.

# Question for reflection and discussion

* Why is it important to understand why bullying affects individual children differently?
* How did these key understandings change your thinking about bullying behaviour? How might this impact your practice?

# For more information

* Visit Bullying Prevention at <https://education.alberta.ca/bullying-prevention/what-is-bullying/>