Bullying more common in middle schools than many recognize

By Craig Chamberlain

Forget the classic image of the lone schoolyard bully, says UI professor Dorothy Espelage. It seems most kids do at least a little bullying of their peers, if the results from a survey at a large Midwestern middle school are any indication.

The survey showed 80 percent of 558 students in the sample, drawn from a student body of 1,361, had engaged in bullying behaviors during the previous 30 days. “[T]he findings indicated that the bullying behaviors measured (that is, teasing, name-calling, threatening and social ridiculing of peers) were common, with most students reporting some involvement in bullying others,” according to an article on the survey being published next month in the Journal of Early Adolescence.

In contrast to most previous research on the topic, Espelage and her research colleagues – Kris Bosworth, a professor at the University of Arizona, and Thomas Simon, a scientist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – looked at bullying as a continuum of behaviors, rather than singling out kids as bullies, non-bullies or victims. Instead, the researchers asked students if they had engaged in certain behaviors over the past month, without telling them they had engaged in bullying.

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Although the highest percentage of students who said they engaged in bullying behavior reported low to moderate levels of that behavior, the results supported the researchers’ perspective that adolescents don’t fall into categories of either bullies or non-bullies.

In fact, in interview-based research conducted at three other Midwestern middle schools, Espelage noted, “what’s interesting is that kids who bully a lot say they’ve been victimized too.” And recent studies by others have found nearly 80 to 90 percent of adolescents report some form of victimization from a bully at school, she said.

Rather than just dealing with a few problem kids, or obvious physical aggression, Espelage said, “the research in general would support the idea that in order to impact bullying, you have to impact the school climate.” But school personnel don’t see most of the bullying, since it happens out of their sight, said Espelage, a professor of educational psychology. In all four schools studied, the staff seriously under-estimated the problem, based on what students told researchers.

Teachers and parents might also fail to recognize and address the problem because they see a certain degree of bullying, and learning how to deal with it, as just part of growing up, she said.

Espelage will present a paper on her research at the American Psychological Association annual convention Aug. 23-24 in Boston. Additional research will be published early next year. The survey research was supported through an agreement between Indiana University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The interview research was supported by the UI Campus Research Board.

Eating proper foods at right time after exercise can speed recovery

By Jim Barlow

Athletes have been advised for years that carbohydrates and amino acids can enhance their performance. Now, it appears that timing of the right food – in addition to fluid replacement – may be crucial to post-exercise recovery.

Based on a series of experiments using rats, UI scientists say swifter recovery occurs when foods containing leucine, a branch-chain amino acid, are eaten immediately after intensive workouts. Leucine is found in protein products such as meats and dairy products, as well as in protein bars and some sports drinks. The use of a pure amino-acid supplement is not recommended, because optimum dosages are not known.

“Leucine appears to have a specific, and apparently unique, impact on skeletal muscle,” said Donald K. Layman, professor of nutrition. “It stimulates muscle protein synthesis, provides fuel for the muscle and helps to maintain blood glucose. What really surprised us was that its activity is not seen when leucine or protein is consumed before or during exercise. Instead it has a dramatic impact on protein synthesis during the recovery period after exercise.”

In the tests, rats were divided into five groups based on sedentary or exercised activity levels and combinations of food (leucine or carbohydrates or both). Researchers then studied muscle recovery after some rats ran on a treadmill. The exercised rats fed leucine and carbohydrates (a sugar and water combination) immediately after running showed quicker recovery of muscle protein synthesis.

The findings by Layman and graduate students Josh Anthony and Tracy Gaantisch appeared in the June issue of the Journal of Nutrition. The National Institutes of Health funded the research.

“It appears that leucine stimulates a signaling pathway somewhat like the hormone insulin,” Layman said. “It has been debated whether the action of leucine was simply confused with the action of insulin. Our research shows that there is a unique role of leucine, and that it runs almost parallel to insulin. It appears that leucine stimulates the first step in protein synthesis.”
Trustees discuss funding needs for large capital projects

By Craig Chamberlain

The UI has a dilemma as it looks at its large capital needs for the next fiscal year (2000-2001). At least four or three projects could be classified as No. 1 priorities. So the university is looking at different ways to fund those needs, and different ways to package and present them to the state, according to administrators who spoke to the UI Board of Trustees on July 8 in Urbana.

The meeting followed a daylong board retreat that took place at the UI’s Allerton Conference Center, located 5 miles southwest of Monticello.

Among the top priorities listed by administrators were better funding of repair and renovation to academic buildings; a central chiller facility on the Urbana campus; biotechnology facilities on both the Chicago and Urbana campuses; a new building for the National Center for Supercomputer Applications (NCSA), six new buildings on various Urbana campuses; and making progress on recently approved plans for the South Farms renovation.

“We’re thinking about an amalgamation that could be in the neighborhood of $200 million,” said Craig Bazzani, vice president for business and finance.

Bazzani, in presenting the various priorities, said the administration was seeking feedback from the board on the direction the administration was headed. He noted that several of those No. 1 priorities—biotechnology and NCSA, in particular—went beyond the university’s traditional missions of teaching, research and public service, even though they had obvious benefits for those missions.

They were, he said, a “new fourth leg on the stool that we’re calling economic development.”

As such, Bazzani and President Jim Stukel talked about the possibility of presenting some of the UI’s needs separate from the traditional route through the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). The UI needs to communicate, Stukel said, that its mission is distinct, in certain respects, from that of all other institutions of higher education in the state.

Trustees seemed generally supportive of the administration’s thinking, and several offered suggestions on ways to make the university’s case to the state. Much of the discussion was dominated, however, by questions from trustee Gerald Shea, who asked why the university or the UI Foundation couldn’t generate funds on its own to support these priorities, rather than just going to the state.

One particular concern of his was NCSA.

“This is one of those things we can’t afford not to do,” he said.

In answering Shea’s questions, Bazzani and Chancellor Michael Aiken noted that the university already was straining to meet its other obligations, and in fact had had to make cuts in faculty numbers during lean years earlier in the decade. In addition to its primary missions, Bazzani said, “it’s hard for us to also do economic development for the state... it ought to be the state’s responsibility.”

Bazzani also noted that more than 99 percent of the money raised by the UI Foundation is not in funding the specific needs for which it was donated.

Aiken also noted that the new building for NCSA, estimated to cost more than $60 million, was part of a package being considered by potential developers of a new research park to be located east of the Beckman Institute. The campus was preparing to go the route of either public or private funding, or a mix of the two, within the next five months, he said.

Among other items approved by the board:

• A contract extension, to June 2004, for Urbana women’s head basketball coach Theresa Grentz. The item also included an initial 4 percent salary increase, with additional increases to be considered after annual performance reviews, along with an increase in compensation for radio and television services, and a tax-deferred annuity.

• The go-ahead on actions leading to the issuance of approximately $11.295 million in revenue bonds to fund projects needed under the UI’s Auxiliary Facilities System. The largest share of the funds, $9.751 million, will go toward projects at UI, among which are construction of some student apartments and an expanded retail space ($60 million); remodeling of campus unions ($14 million); renovation of exist- ing south campus buildings ($7 million); and repairs and renovations of several parking structures ($6.75 million).

• A report on the Medical Center on interim basis.

Lawrence A. Bergman, professor of astronomical and astrophysical engineering, will receive the American Society of Civil Engineers’ 1999 Norman Medal for the camp’s “Structural Concepts Past, Present, Future,” which appeared in the Journal of Engineering Mechanics in September 1997. Bergman also will receive this year’s best technical paper award at the society’s annual convention in Charlotte, N.C., in October.

William E. Berry, research professor of telecommunications and journalism, received a Fulbright Scholar award that will allow him to pursue teaching and research in the Dominican Republic during the next academic year.

John D. Buckmaster, professor of aeronautics and astronautical and engineering and of computational science and engineering, was elected into the Institute of Physics as a Fellow and Chartered Physicist in recognition of his status in the physics community and his contributions to the institute as a member of an editorial board. The IOP is an international learned society and professional body for the advancement and dissemination of physics, pure and applied, and promotion of physics education.

Two of the most prestigious academic honors that an Illinois high-school senior can receive have been awarded to a student at the University Laboratory High School.

Huibin A. “Amy” Chew has been named a 1999 Presidential Scholar and a member of the 14th annual Chicago Tribune Illinois High School All-State Academic Team. Chew was one of two students in Illinois selected as a Presidential Scholar and was among only 10 students chosen for the Tribune’s All-State Academic Team. She was the only student to receive both honors. Chew will attend Harvard in the fall.

Yung Mu “Steve” Kang, professor of head and the department of electrical and computer engineering, has been selected as a winner of the 1998 Semiconductor Research Corporation Technical Excellence Award for his consistent contributions in the area of “Modeling, Simulation and Design Guidelines for VLSI Reliability.”

He received the award June 30 at the 1999 SRC International Directors’ Retreat Dinner in Vancouver. Kang also has been elected secretary-treasurer for the National Electronic Engineering Department Heads Association for the 1999-2000 term. This election will result in his serving as president-elect in 2000-2001 and as president in 2001-2002.

Michael Plewa, professor of genetics in the departments of crop sciences and of microbiology, won the Campus Honors Program’s third annual Broadrick-Allen Award for Excellence in Teaching. He was nominated by both CHP pre-med juniors and he mentors. In nominating Plewa, the students praised his “scientific brilliance” and the way he “transfers his passion for science from the laboratory to the classroom.”

Richard Powers, professor of English and the UI’s first holder of a Swannlund Chair, has won the James Fenimore Cooper Award from the Society of American Historians for “Gain,” his latest novel. The prize of $2,500 was awarded for the best work of historical fiction written between 1997-1998. The awards banquet was held May 11 in New York City. Richard Powers is the author of five other highly acclaimed works.

Cathy Rix, staff secretary in the Office of Associate Vice President for Acade- mic Affairs, was named the seventh Of- fice Professional of the Year by the Secre- tariat. Rix was nominated by her supervi- sors, who cited her exceptional organiza- tional, managerial and interpersonal skills. Rix was honored at the April 21 meeting of (See achievements, page 4)
Agricultural Engineering. Assistant professor. PhD in agricultural, food or biological engineering or other area of specialization; relevant experience required; emphasis in dairy, food or plant. Excellent oral and written communications skills. Research, teaching and service experience. Additional information available. Available immediately. Contact Richard D. Buehler, 333-7920.


Business. Management Information Systems. Assistant professor or associate professor, 12-month, nine-month or one-year appointment in a necessity. Teaching experience, PhD. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact David Philipp, 244-5055.

Chemistry. Assistant professor, one-year term, renewable to a second term with evidence of excellence. Teaching experience, PhD. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. Assistant professor. PhD in chemical; or biochemical engineering; or a closely related field; or equivalent experience, preferred. Teaching and research experience. Strong preference for exposure to biological chemistry. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.

Civil and Environmental Engineering. Assistant professor. PhD in civil or environmental engineering; or related field. Research and teaching experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.


Dentistry. Assistant professor, term (one year or to be renewed for two years, renewable for third year). Dental school, preferably in periodontics. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.


Freezing. Assistant professor. PhD in food science or closely related area. Teaching and research experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.

Health Administration. Assistant professor. PhD in health administration or related field. Research and teaching experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.


Library. Assistant professor. PhD in library and information science or closely related area. Teaching and research experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.


Microbiology. Assistant professor. PhD in microbiology; or equivalent specialization. Research and teaching experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.


Psychology. Faculty positions. Academic professionals. Several positions available. Additional information available at the Office for Academic Professionals, 333-2252. Closing date: Sept. 15.

Veterinary Medicine. Assistant professor. PhD in veterinary medicine; or equivalent specialization. Research and teaching experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.

Veterinary Nursing. Assistant professor. PhD in veterinary nursing; or equivalent specialization. Research and teaching experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.

Veterinary Sciences. Assistant professor. PhD in veterinary sciences; or equivalent specialization. Research and teaching experience. Salary: $42,000 minimum. Available: Aug. 20. Contact Richard O. Buckius, 244-3267.


The play is directed by Parkland College Theater artistic director Randi Jennifer Collins Hard.

4 Wednesday
Guest Artist Recital. Scott Roeder, tuba. 7 p.m. Music Building auditorium.

17 Saturday
Children’s Book Reading. “Brennstein Bears.” 10:30 a.m. Authors corner, second floor, Illini Union Bookstore. Children of all ages are welcome. For more information, call 333-2050. Illini Union Bookstore.

Note: The play "The Odd Couple" will be performed through July 30 in the Studio Theater at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. While this comedy has inspired both a film and a TV series, Summerfest brings it to audiences in its hilarious original form. As the story goes, the meticulous, rather uptight Felix Unger (Ashley Green, left), who has just separated from his wife moves in with newly divorced Oscar Madison (Jake Schneider), a messy sportswriter. Betsy Capes (left) and Stacy Freeman play love interests Gwendolyn and Cecily Pigeon.

Calendar of Events

19 Monday

15 Thursday
"The Foreigner." Peter Reynolds, director. 8 p.m. Studio Theater. Krannert Center. This comedy, in which a man tells other guests at a fishing lodge that his shy friend, Charlie, is from another country and speaks no English, so that friend won’t have to talk. Admission charge.

16 Friday
"Smoke and Mirrors," Sara Lampert Hoover, director. 8 p.m. Studio Theater. Krannert Center. This mystery/comedy takes place on an isolated island where power-hungry producer/mystery/comedy takes place. Hansel and Gretel. 7 p.m. Studio Theater, Krannert Center. Admission charge.

15 Thursday
Master of Music Choral Recital. Diana Nordlund, conductor. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Smith Hall.

22 Thursday
"An Evening of Song." J. Mark Baker, baritone, and Eric Dalheim, piano. 8 p.m. Recital Hall, Smith Hall. Works of Beethoven, Jean-Baptiste Faust, Roger Quilter, Samuel Barber and other composers.

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"Smoke and Mirrors," Sara Lampert Hoover, director. 7 p.m. Studio Theater, Krannert Center. Admission charge.

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