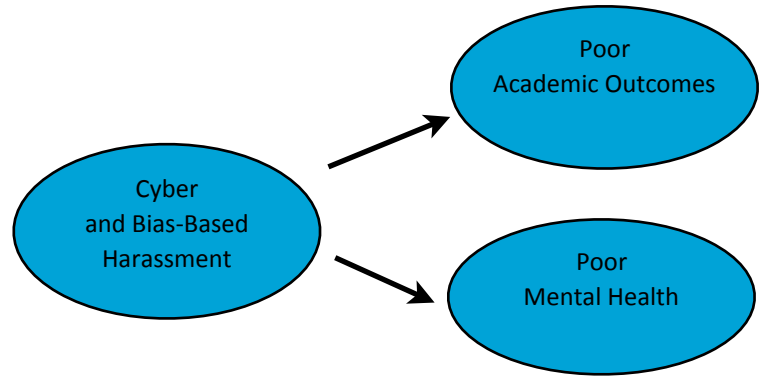


# Cyber and Bias-Based Harassment News Brief:

## ACADEMIC AND MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

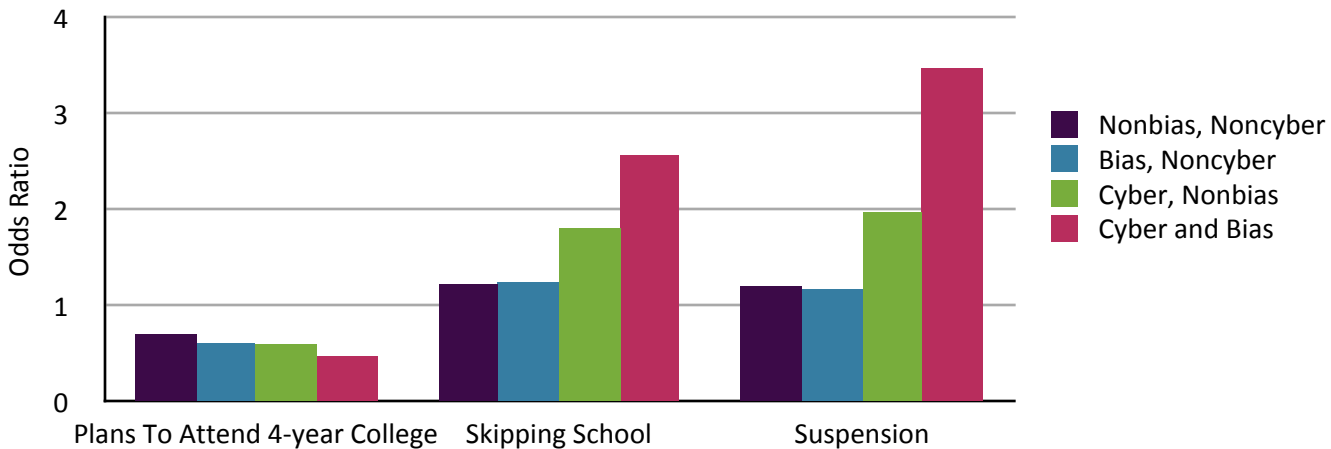
Harassment is correlated with negative academic and mental health outcomes. Cyber harassment (internet and text) and bias-based (targeted based on ethnicity, race, or sexual orientation) are both associated with adverse academic and mental health outcomes.



### FINDING 1: ACADEMIC CONSEQUENCES OF HARASSMENT VARY BY TYPE OF HARASSMENT EXPERIENCED

Victims of both cyber and bias-based harassment were least likely to have plans to attend a 4-year college and most likely to skip school and be suspended. There were similar trends for students who experienced cyber, non-bias harassment compared to those who reported bias, non-cyber harassment.

**Odds Ratio of Academic Consequences By Type of Harassment**



### Recommendations

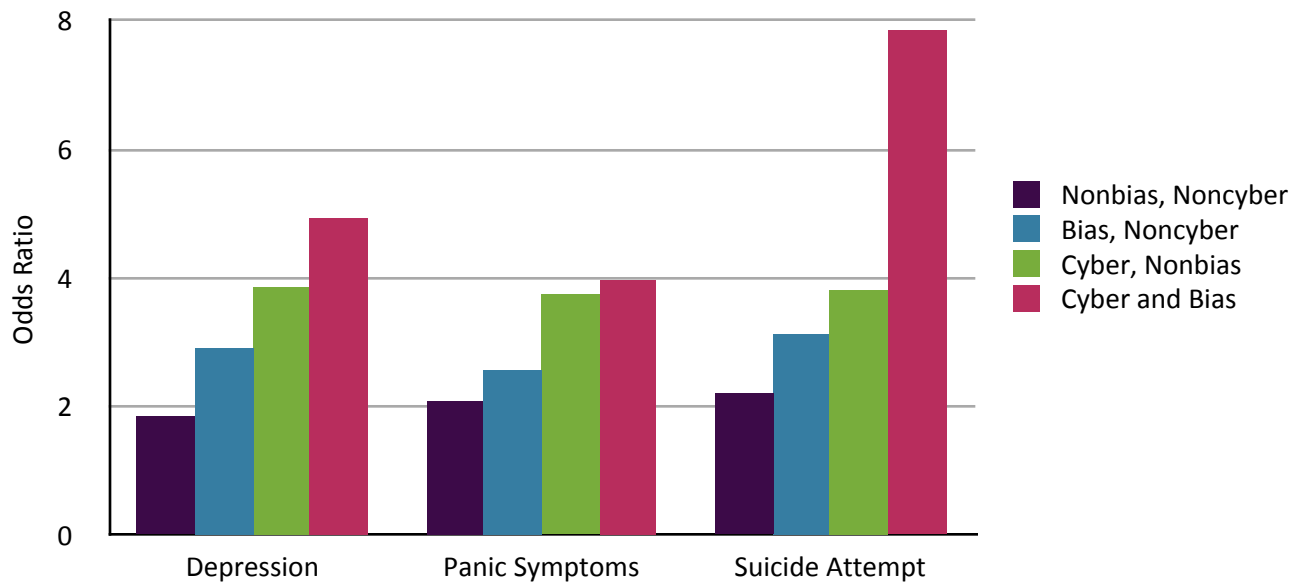
- Workshops for teachers and parents on bullying prevention and intervention
- Annual school-parent meetings on harassment to raise awareness of and to collectively address bullying

The data came from the 2009 Dane County Youth Assessment, a population-based survey of middle and high school students in Wisconsin. 17,366 students participated; 94.6% identified as heterosexual and 5.4% identified as LGBTQ. With regards to race/ethnicity, 74% identified as White and 26% as racial/ethnic minorities. There was an equal split between boys and girls.

**FINDING 2: VARIABILITY IN MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES IS BASED ON HARASSMENT TYPE**

Students who experienced cyber and biased-based bullying had greater odds of experiencing poorer mental health. When compared to a non-harassed group, those who experience cyber and bias-based bullying are: 4 times more likely to experience panic symptoms, nearly 5 times more likely to experience depression, and nearly 8 times more likely to attempt suicide.

**Odds Ratio of Mental Health Outcomes By Type of Harassment**



**Recommendations**

- 🕒 Assess for victimization as a cause of students’ mental health concerns
- 🕒 Integrate curriculum that promotes healthy friendships, communication, and respect
- 🕒 Educate students on web safety and how to report cyber bullying to parents and teachers
- 🕒 Share resources on cyber bullying with students (e.g., MTV’s *A Thin Line* campaign: <http://www.athinline.org/pages/street-team>)