REVISTA INVECOM
ISSN en línea: 2739-0063

Effectiveness of programs to prevent school violence among children

Efectividad de los programas de prevención de violencia escolar infantil

Received: 09/02/2026 - **Accepted:** 15/04/2026

Jemmy Carolina Cano Acosta
https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2233-7361
jcanoac79@ucvvirtual.edu.pe
Universidad César Vallejo – Guayaquil, Ecuador

Abstract

Violence is a problematic reality that affects all levels of society, including schools, causing social, emotional, and psychological harm from early childhood onward. This has led to the creation of prevention programs in classrooms. However, it is difficult to verify the effectiveness of these programs due to a lack of evidence, as they lack quantifiable data and do not use validated instruments. The objective of this research was to identify and analyze the scientific evidence regarding the effectiveness of prevention programs (PPs) implemented in schools to reduce or prevent violent behavior among children, based on studies published between 2015 and 2025. The study began with a systematic review that identified 21 articles covering 22 programs using the PRISMA 2020 protocol; a quantitative and technology watch approach was applied, and the Rayyan tool was also used. The data revealed a greater use of quasi-experimental designs employing pre- and post-intervention measures, as well as standardized and validated questionnaires, including the European Bullying Intervention Project Questionnaire (EBIPQ) and surveys derived from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study. This approach enabled the measurement of behavioral, emotional, and attitudinal changes in students under 15 years of age. The study also identified programs that employed descriptive analysis, multivariate models, multiple regression, and qualitative approaches. It is worth noting the limited information available on educational programs for children under five years of age. These findings highlight the need to strengthen context-specific educational programs, with an emphasis on early childhood and the educational realities of Latin America.

Keywords: School violence, intervention programs, technology monitoring.

Resumen

La violencia es una realidad problemática que afecta en todo nivel, incluyendo a las escuelas, provocando afectación en el ámbito social, emocional y psicológico desde la primera infancia, lo que ha promovido la creación de programas para la prevención desde las aulas de clase. Sin embargo, resulta difícil comprobar la efectividad de los mismos por la falta de evidencia, ya que no poseen datos cuantificables y no emplean instrumentos validados. El objetivo de esta investigación fue identificar y analizar la evidencia científica sobre la efectividad de programas preventivos (PP) implementados en escuelas para reducir o prevenir conductas violentas entre niños, a partir de investigaciones publicadas entre 2015 y 2025. Se inició con la revisión sistemática que permitió seleccionar 21 artículos con 22 programas mediante el protocolo PRISMA 2020, se aplicó un enfoque cuantitativo y de vigilancia tecnológica, también se usó la herramienta Rayyan. Se obtuvo datos que muestran un mayor uso de diseños cuasi-experimentales que aplican el pre y post-intervención, así como uso de cuestionarios estandarizados y validados, entre ellos el European Bullying Intervention Project Questionnaire (EBIPQ) y encuestas derivadas del estudio Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC), es así como lograron medir cambios conductuales, emocionales y actitudinales en estudiantes menores de 15 años. También se encontraron programas que aplicaron el análisis descriptivo, modelos multivariados o de regresión múltiple y enfoques cualitativos. Algo que cabe destacar es la limitada información sobre PP aplicados en niños menores de cinco años. Estos resultados señalan la necesidad de fortalecer PP contextualizados, con énfasis en la infancia temprana y en realidades educativas latinoamericanas.

Palabras clave: Violencia escolar, programas de intervención, vigilancia tecnológica.

CC BY

Introduction

A growing body of recent research has framed school violence around the institutional shortcomings that compound the problem, alongside the family and social factors that sustain it over time (Hurtado & Domínguez, 2024; González Bellido, 2021; Ramos Corpas, 2007; Trucco & Inostroza, 2017; Estévez, 2006). Preventing school violence connects directly to the Sustainable Development Goals, since safe, inclusive, discrimination-free learning environments advance both SDG 4 and SDG 16. Introducing prevention programs (PPs) early in a child's schooling supports emotional wellbeing, mutual respect, and healthy coexistence, reinforcing the school's role as a protective space (ONU, 2019).

International research and organizations describe school violence as the use of physical force or power, whether actual or threatened, producing psychological, social, and physical consequences that hinder healthy development (Unesco, 2024; WHO, 2023; Unicef, 2023; Briones, 2020; Hamodi & Jiménez, 2018; Díaz-Aguado et al., 2013; Garaigordobil, 2011).

This problem affects populations worldwide and continues to grow, with children showing disruptive behavior and becoming involved in physical confrontations both inside and outside school, at estimated rates of between 42% and 50% (WHO, 2023; Bedoya et al., 2020; Infocop, 2020; Unesco, 2019).

Emotional education is a key tool for preventing violent behavior and building a positive school climate. Programs introduced at early stages help children understand and regulate their emotions, which in turn shapes behavior and is associated with lower levels of violence (OCDE, 2015; Bisquerra, 2009; Guerra & Williams, 2006).

This is precisely why a systematic review of programs that build emotional education into prevention efforts from the earliest years is needed: early intervention curbs disruptive behavior and strengthens social-emotional skills, while support from peers, family, and teachers functions as a protective factor (Domitrovich et al., 2017; Due et al., 2009; Guerra & Williams, 2006).

In Latin America, and in Ecuador in particular, structured and standardized PPs remain scarce. Models that promote coexistence and social-emotional skills do exist, backed by public policy, but they have not undergone systematic experimental evaluation (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2023). The Comprehensive Care Model of the DECE (Student Counseling Departments) is a flexible preventive policy adapted to each school's circumstances, which limits the extent to which its impact can be measured through empirical evidence (MINEDUC, 2023).

These gaps underscore the relevance of examining the effectiveness of school violence prevention programs between 2015 and 2025, which prompted the following questions, formulated under the PICo framework: Is there evidence that prevention programs are effective in curbing violence from an early age? What characterizes the prevention programs aimed at children?

Which Latin American countries have implemented PPs against school violence? What evidence exists regarding their effectiveness? What techniques and instruments have been used? And what is their scientific productivity, impact, and growth? This systematic review approaches school violence from a scientific standpoint, examining early interventions in light of up-to-date evidence and identifying effective strategies to guide future research and public policy within the Ecuadorian context. It promotes skills such as emotional management, safe environments, wellbeing, and inclusion, contributing to peaceful coexistence and to a lasting reduction in violence.

To guide the study, the following objectives were established: to identify the outcomes of PPs implemented between 2010 and 2025 through a systematic review, to determine their characteristics, to gather information on the Latin American countries involved, to analyze the evidence of their effectiveness, to describe the techniques and instruments used, and to determine the scientific productivity, impact, and growth of these programs.

In developing this article, technology-watch and performance-analysis strategies were applied, examining publication volume, temporal distribution, methodological approaches, and reported outcomes, so as to provide a structured overview of the state of research without losing sight of qualitative interpretation (Donthu et al., 2021).

Methodology

This study follows a quantitative approach grounded in the positivist paradigm. It was carried out according to the PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews, which impose a rigorous structure on the process and thereby strengthen the clarity and reliability of the results obtained (Page et al., 2021). Academic sources were consulted through Scopus, SciELO, Dialnet, ProQuest, Science Direct, Redalyc, and ResearchGate, covering research published between 2010 and 2025.

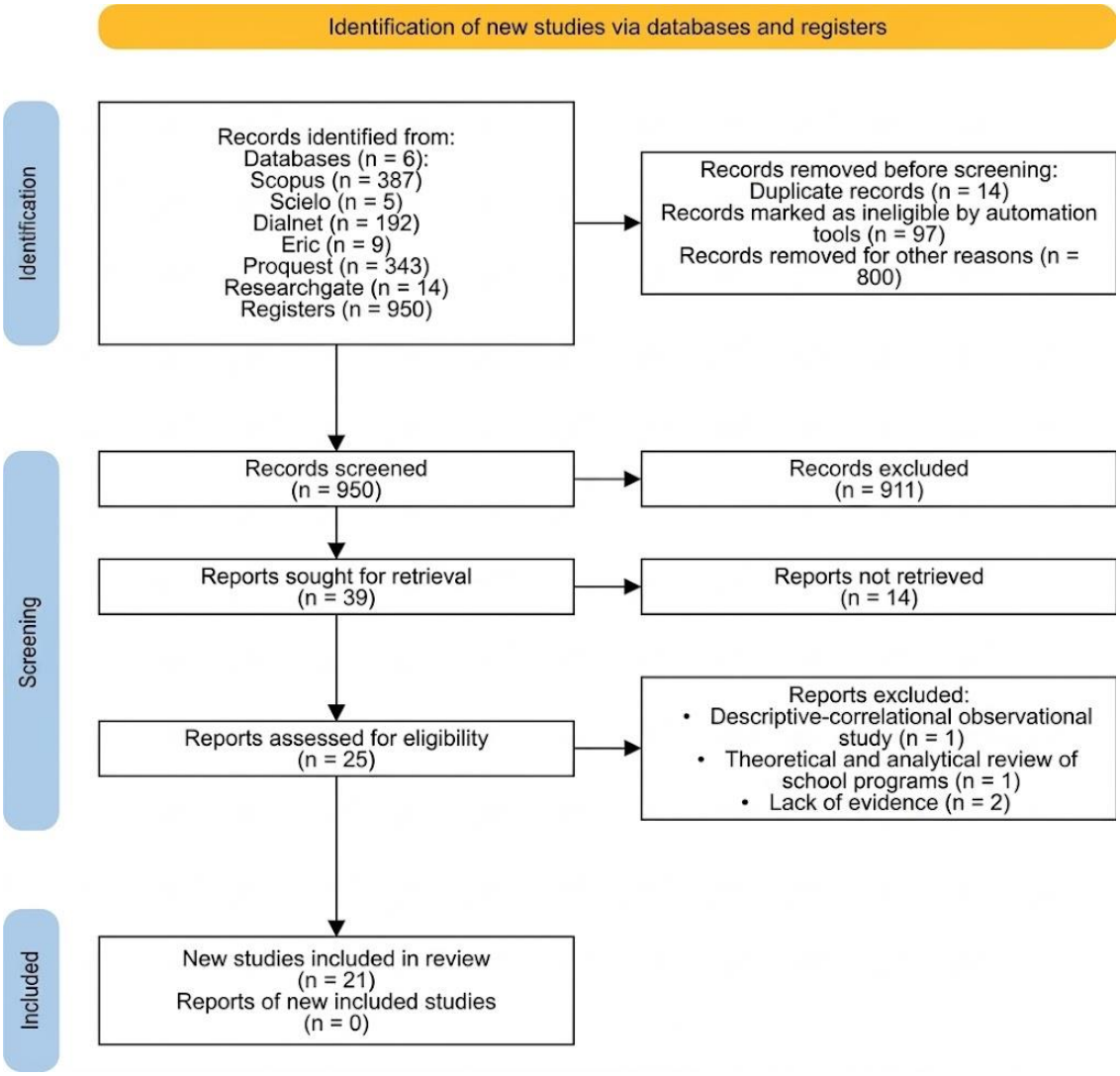
The search relied on key terms such as school violence, bullying, prevention, intervention, program, children, early childhood, and primary education, along with their Spanish equivalents, combined through the Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT, quotation marks for exact phrases, and parentheses to structure the search strings used across the specialized databases.

The initial search yielded 950 publications. After screening titles and excluding studies unrelated to the school-age population, the topic of violence, or the required research design, 150 studies remained. Using the Rayyan (2023) tool for systematic reviews, which streamlines screening by title and objective, this pool was narrowed down to 53.

Abstracts were then reviewed in Rayyan against the following inclusion criteria: a school-age student population; interventions aimed at preventing or reducing violence within educational settings; and measurable quantitative outcomes (e.g., reduced aggression or improved social-emotional functioning). Exclusion criteria ruled out studies conducted outside school settings, studies without reported outcomes, and family-, community-, or clinic-based or incomplete programs.

This left 50 documents; a detailed full-text reading of these led to the final selection of 21 articles covering 22 programs that met the study's objectives.

Figure 1
Diagram of selected publications



Source: Flow diagram produced with the PRISMA 2020 tool, available at (Haddaway et al., 2022). https://estech.shinyapps.io/prisma_flowdiagram/

Results and discussion

In response to the first specific objective, to identify the outcomes of PPs against school violence implemented between 2010 and 2025, the following results were obtained.

Table 1
Reported outcomes of prevention programs against school violence

Program short title	Author(s)/year and country	Program type	Main results
School Violence Prevention (PVE)	Silva Mendes (2011) Portugal	Psychoeducational	Reduced aggressive behavior and improved coexistence
School Violence Prevention Strategies (EPVE)	Varela Torres (2011) Chile	Educational–coexistence	Fewer episodes of peer violence
School Violence Preventive Intervention (IPVE)	Baixauli Gallego (2015) Spain	Psychoeducational	Positive shift in attitudes toward conflict
Psychoeducational Intervention in Primary School (IPSP)	Carrasco, Alarcón, and Trianes (2015) Spain	Social-emotional	Improved classroom climate and reduced physical aggression
Program to Reduce School Bullying (PDAE)	Mendoza González and Pedroza Cabrera (2015) Mexico	Comprehensive	Significant reduction in bullying and disruptive behavior
Olweus Program (OBPP)	Beltrán Villamizar and Herrera Díaz (2016) Colombia	Comprehensive anti-bullying	Sustained reduction in school bullying
Seville Anti-School-Violence Project (SAVE)		Comprehensive	Reduced bullying and improved school climate
Preventive Art-Therapy Interventions (IAP)	Fernández de Juan (2017) Mexico	Art-therapy-based	Positive qualitative changes in behavior and emotions
Resilience Against Bullying (RCB)	Mazadiego Infante, Huerta Cortés, and Pérez Torres (2017) Mexico	Social-emotional	Reduced mistreatment and increased resilience
Social Support and School Violence (ASVE)	Šmigelskas et al. (2018) European countries	Correlational–preventive	Social support acts as a protective factor

Self-Control and Violence in Sport (AVD)	Smith Palacio et al. (2020) Spain	Theoretical–educational	Self-control proposed as a preventive strategy
School and Peacebuilding (ECP)	Duarte and Mendoza (2021) Mexico	Educational–civic	The school is key to preventing violence
Peer Tutoring Program (TEI)	González Bellido (2021) Spain	Comprehensive social-emotional	Significant reductions in bullying and improved wellbeing
Roundies Program (SEL)	Moazami-Goodarzi and Zarra-Nezhad (2021) Finland	Social-emotional	Increased prosocial behavior and fewer difficulties
Facilitators and Barriers (KIVA)	Herkama et al. (2022) Finland	Qualitative–implementation	Identification of facilitators and barriers
Anti-Bullying Pocket Program (PBAA)	Pérez, Córdoba, Ortega, and Benítez (2023) Spain	Brief psychoeducational	Reduced victimization; limited effects on climate
Play-Based Preventive Training (FLP)	Sanguino-Gómez, Gualdrón-Porra, and Rodríguez-Quiñonez (2023) Colombia	Community–educational	Strengthened preventive skills
KiVa Effects and Costs (ECKV)	Bowes et al. (2024) United Kingdom	Comprehensive anti-bullying	Significant reduction and cost-effectiveness
Child-Friendly, Anti-Bullying School (EAAB)	Mariyati et al. (2024) Indonesia	Educational–environmental	Qualitative reduction in bullying
Be-Prox Program (PBPX)	Kvestad et al. (2024) Norway	Social-emotional	Reduced bullying and improved school climate
Preventive Educommunication (EDCP)	Behar Leiser et al. (2024) Colombia	Community–participatory	Distancing from violent behavior
Visual Arts and Prevention (ASP)	Mendoza-Huachani, W.A. and Turpo-Gebera, O. (2025) Peru	Educational–artistic	Greater awareness of and reflection on violence

The review (see Table 1) shows that several studies agree school-based interventions significantly reduce forms of violence such as bullying, verbal, physical, and psychological aggression, cyberbullying, and aggressive behavior toward peers or teachers, while also improving social-emotional and relational variables such as prosocial behavior, emotional self-regulation, self-esteem, empathy, cooperation, a positive classroom climate, and peaceful conflict resolution. Even so, the findings are mixed: experienced or observed violence and overall school climate

do not always shift, which points to variable effectiveness. Factors such as family and school support, administrative leadership, teacher training, and program integration shape these outcomes, with comprehensive, long-term interventions proving the most effective.

With respect to the second objective, to determine the characteristics of prevention programs against school violence, the details obtained are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Characteristics of prevention programs against violence

Short title	Duration	Main components	Theoretical approach	Participants
PVE	18 weeks	Training in communication, empathy, and conflict resolution	Psychoeducational and social skills	N = 307 students, 9–13 years
EPVE	10 weeks	Coexistence norms and school mediation	Ecological theory of coexistence	N = 120 students, 12–15 years
IPVE	One school year	Modification of attitudes and aggressive behavior	Cognitive–behavioral	1st year of compulsory secondary education (ESO), 12–14 years
IPSP	October to May (7–8 months)	Improved classroom climate and group cohesion	Social-emotional approach	N = 78 students, 7–10 years (M = 8.62)
PDAE	One school year	Multilevel intervention against school bullying	Comprehensive prevention model	Primary-level students, teachers, and school staff
OBPP	8 months	Clear rules, supervision, and institutional support	Ecological theory of bullying	Primary and secondary students, teachers, administrators, families (as support)
SAVE	One year	Institutional prevention of school bullying	Community psychosocial approach	Primary and secondary students, teachers, administrators, families (as support)
IAP	9 sessions, once a week	Emotional expression through art	Expressive–emotional approach	Children, 7–14 years

RCB	4 weeks (progressive duration)	Strengthening resilience and self-esteem	Positive psychology	24 children, 8–10 years, 4th grade of primary school
ASVE	Single-application instrument study	Peer support networks	Social support theory	Students from school institutions
AVD	10 weeks	Emotional regulation in sports settings	Self-control theory	N = 204 students, 11–13 years
ECP	Ongoing	Building citizenship and a culture of peace	Values education	Administrators, teachers, students, and families
TEI	Annual	Peer tutoring and mutual support	Cooperative and social-emotional learning	± 4,000 students in primary, secondary, early-childhood, and special education
SEL	± 8 months	Development of social-emotional competencies	SEL model	Approximately 70 teachers and ± 700 children, 3–6 years
KIVA	Ongoing	Fidelity, sustainability, and school organization	Implementation theory	Principals, teachers, KiVa coordinators, ± 200 schools
PBAA	One academic year	Awareness-raising and early prevention	Targeted psychoeducational	179 students in 5th grade of primary education
FLP	September 2021 – May 2022	Play and preventive recreational activities	Experiential learning	211 students from 2nd to 7th grade, families, teachers, and administrators
ECKV	One academic year	Systematic institutional intervention	Ecological theory of bullying	3,214 students, 7–11 years
EAAB	One-off intervention / August 23, 2024	Improving the school environment	Environmental–educational approach	± 60 early-childhood pupils; teachers and university team

EBPX	One school year	Prosocial behavior and emotional regulation	Social-emotional learning	Between 9 and 14 years
EDCP	Intervention carried out in phases	Communication and active participation	Communicative–participatory approach	23 students, between 14 and 17 years
ASP	± 8 sessions	Visual arts as an awareness-raising strategy against school bullying	Humanistic approach	30 students, between 13 and 15 years

Analysis of these prevention programs points to a trend toward comprehensive, extended interventions, particularly at the primary and secondary levels. Duration ranges from 10 weeks to a full school year or even longitudinal designs, all aimed at producing lasting changes in behavior and school coexistence.

Their key components emphasize social and social-emotional skills such as assertive communication, empathy, peaceful conflict resolution, and emotional self-regulation, complemented by psychoeducational activities addressing norms, reflection, and aggression prevention. The predominant theoretical frameworks are cognitive-behavioral, social-emotional, ecological, and comprehensive in nature, approaching violence as a multidimensional phenomenon that spans individual to contextual factors.

Finally, these programs target school-age students, with sample sizes ranging from small groups to several hundred participants. A number of designs incorporate experimental and control groups, lending them greater methodological rigor. Overall, the results point to a shared emphasis on strengthening social-emotional competencies and improving school coexistence.

Regarding the third specific objective, to gather information on the Latin American countries that have benefited from the implementation of school violence prevention programs, eight programs benefiting Latin American countries were identified.

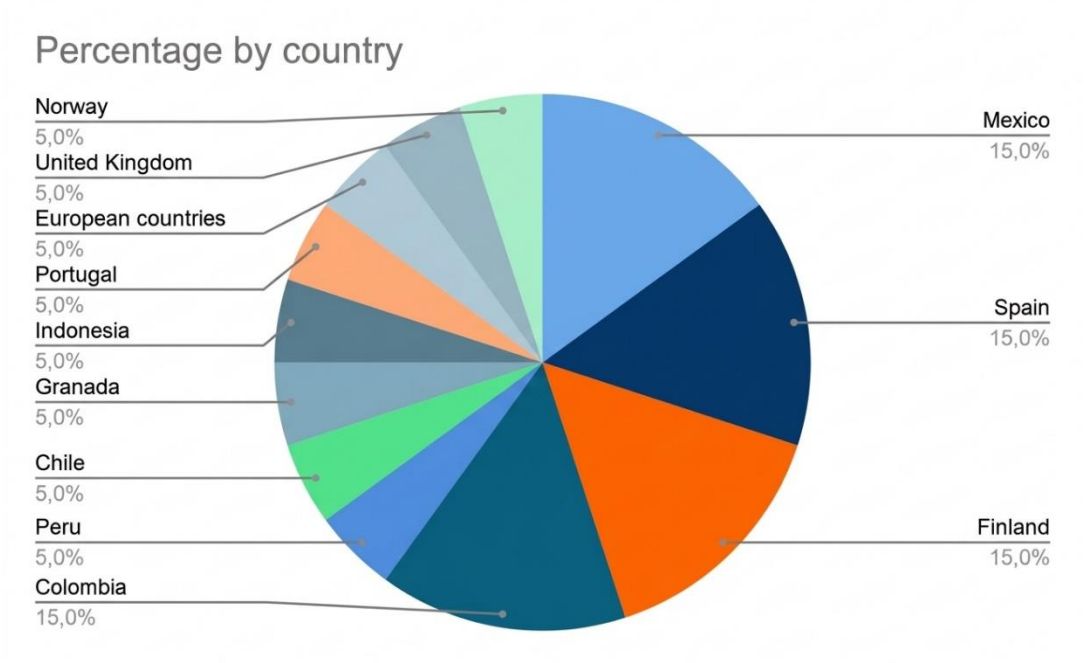
Mexico and Colombia account for the highest share of these programs. Other Latin American countries were also identified, but it was not possible to obtain valid scientific information on their implementation or outcomes, partly owing to access limitations; the corresponding data are presented in Table 3:

Table 3
Geographic distribution of the included studies

Country	Number of studies	Publication period	Type of school context	Predominant educational level
Spain	3	2020/2021/2023	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / primary and secondary
Finland	3	2021/2022/2024	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / primary and secondary

Colombia	3	2016/2023/2024	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / primary and secondary
Mexico	3	2017 (2)/2021	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / primary
Peru	1	2025	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / secondary
Chile	1	2011	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / secondary
Grenada	1	2015	Public and charter schools	Basic / secondary
Indonesia	1	2024	TK Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal III Kindergarten	Early childhood / preschool (PAUD – TK)
Portugal	1	2011	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / primary
European countries	1	2018	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / middle school
United Kingdom	1	2023	Basic/public educational institutions	Basic / primary and secondary
Norway	1	2024	Basic/public educational institutions	

Figure 2
Percentages of Latin American countries benefiting from violence prevention programs



To address the fourth specific objective, to analyze the evidence on the effectiveness of these prevention programs, the data reported in the selected articles were examined in detail, focusing on factors that allow their effectiveness to be assessed objectively in terms of scope, follow-up, and level of evidence:

Table 4
Effectiveness of prevention programs against violence

Short title	Study design	Control group	Reported results
PVE	Quasi-experimental action research	No control group (NCG)	Positive effects on classroom social climate and sociometric variables
EPVE	Quasi-experimental, pretest–posttest	Has a control group (SCG)	Social support reduces violent behavior; family support is the most significant factor
IPVE	Quasi-experimental pretest–intervention–posttest	NCG	Successful experiences in prevention and education with young people
IPSP	Quasi-experimental, pretest–posttest, with control and experimental groups	SGC	Significant reduction in bullying and disruptive behavior, especially antisocial behavior
PDAE	Quasi-experimental, with experimental and comparison groups, using pretest and posttest measures	NGC	Development of an educational booklet; reduced myths and stigma; strengthened support networks

OBPP	Quasi-experimental, with pretest and posttest measures and between-group comparison (intervention vs. comparison)	NGC	Improved climate; fewer bullying reports
SAVE	Quasi-experimental, with pretest and posttest measures and between-group comparison	NGC	Reduced mistreatment; improved interpersonal relationships
IAP	Quasi-experimental, with pretest and posttest measures and between-group comparison (intervention vs. comparison)	Intervention projects and case study: NGC	Visible improvement in sociability and reduced school violence
RCB	Uncontrolled quasi-experimental	NGC	Reduced school violence; increased prosocial behavior, empathy, and improved school climate
ASVE	Non-experimental – correlational	NGC	Reduced victimization (OR = 0.87); increased empathy; fewer problems with peers
AVD	Quasi-experimental	SGC	Improved communication and relational skills; reduced aggression
ECP	Multiple case study	NGC	Significant reduction in school violence and aggression toward teachers and staff
TEI	Quasi-experimental	SGC	Low to moderate
SEL	Quasi-experimental	SGC	Significant decline in victim and aggressor roles
KIVA	Longitudinal implementation study	NGC	Greater awareness of abuse and neglect, higher willingness to seek help, and improved school culture
PBAA	Longitudinal quasi-experimental, pretest–posttest, no control group	NGC	Increased awareness of bullying, reduced violence, and a more appealing school environment
FLP	Participatory Action Research (PAR); descriptive-interpretive study	SGC	15% experience bullying; boys bully and witness it more often, girls are victimized more; team sports reduce bullying
ECKV	Multicenter cluster randomized controlled trial (cluster RCT)	SGC (usual education)	Positive effects on classroom social climate and sociometric variables

CC BY

EAAB	Pre-experimental, without standardized measurement	NGC	Social support reduces violent behavior; family support is the most significant factor
EBPX	Quasi-experimental, longitudinal evaluation	SGC (schools without Be-Prox implementation)	Significant improvements; fewer cases; better school environment
EDCP	Quasi-experimental; Participatory Action Research (PAR) method	NGC	New outlook on life
ASP	Pre-experimental, single-group pretest–posttest	NGC	High level of awareness; improved self-knowledge

Analysis of the empirical evidence collected shows that these programs generally report positive results in improving school coexistence and reducing violent behavior within the educational setting. Most rely on quasi-experimental designs with pretest–posttest schemes.

With respect to methodological design, the use of control groups varies considerably across studies. Some incorporate a direct comparison group, while others forgo this approach in favor of within-group comparisons. Despite this variation, the reported findings converge in pointing to favorable effects from program implementation.

The reported results show significant improvements in classroom social climate, along with reductions in school bullying and aggressive behavior. Social support and positive interpersonal relationships stand out as key factors in reducing school violence.

The evidence reviewed suggests that prevention programs are effective in addressing school violence, particularly when grounded in structured, ongoing interventions.

To address the fifth specific objective, to describe the techniques and instruments used in prevention programs to evaluate their impact and effectiveness, the data provided by the selected articles were reviewed, yielding the following instruments:

Table 5
Evaluation techniques and instruments used

Short title	Instrument type	Reported validity
PVE	Questionnaire (Q) developed by the authors	Cronbach’s alpha = 0.8136 (pretest)
EPVE	Standardized school-violence scales; Likert-type Q	Cronbach’s alpha between 0.78 and 0.86
IPVE	Likert-type Q	Implicit face and content validity

	Ad hoc–designed instrument; classroom behavior observation by teachers and tutor	
IPSP	School Social Climate Q (CUVECO); “class list” sociometric technique	Cronbach’s alpha: .77, .72, and .85 (victimization), .74; KMO = .89 and .88; test–retest = .61 and .63; high test–retest reliability
PDAE	Behavior log; school reports	Does not explicitly report validity/reliability studies
OBPP	Olweus Q; Cronbach’s alpha > 0.80	Cronbach’s alpha > 0.80
SAVE	Program-specific Q	No cutoff point or validation data provided
IAP	Observation	Does not report psychometric validity or reliability
RCB	Q on peer intimidation and mistreatment; Children’s Self-Esteem Test; Resilience Inventory	(Cronbach’s alpha): bullying/mistreatment: 0.722, self-esteem: 0.715, resilience: 0.812
ACV	Social support Q; bullying/school fights	The article does not explicitly report technical validity/reliability data
AVD	CACIA Q; standardized child self-control Q	Reliability (Cronbach’s α): personal feedback (.79), procedural self-control (.76), reward delay (.71), criterion self-control (.50), and sincerity (.63)
ECP	Semi-structured interviews	Qualitative validity: credibility, triangulation of sources and techniques,

	Participant observation; document analysis; accounts and narratives from school actors	theoretical saturation, and internal coherence of the analysis
TEI	TEI Q (internal evaluation); coexistence records and disciplinary reports; student-perception measures	Evidence of external validity; reliability supported by a large sample size and comparison with a control group
SEL	Teacher-report Q; children's social-emotional skills scales; classroom observation records	Validated instruments; theoretical–methodological coherence; reliability: acceptable alpha coefficients reported
KIVA	Q for teachers and administrators; semi-structured interviews; program administrative records; institutional follow-up reports	High ecological validity; triangulation of sources and methods; coherence between quantitative and qualitative data; reliability: KiVa's own instruments
PBAA	European Bullying Intervention Project Questionnaire (EBIPQ); assesses students' subjective perception of school climate	Victimization: pretest α = .80, posttest α = .79; aggression: pretest α = .61, posttest α = .80
FLP	Focus groups; structured and semi-structured interviews; participant and in-situ observation; self-assessment forms; socio-family studies	Qualitative validity: triangulation of sources, pilot testing of instruments, comparison with the scientific literature, and information saturation
ECKV	Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (OBVQ); student self-report	Widely validated instruments internationally

	Measurement of victimization and perpetration; Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)	Reliability: acceptable alpha coefficients
EAAB	Direct and participant observation; participation and behavior logs; qualitative evaluation by the intervention team; practical evidence (materials produced, activities)	Ecological and contextual validity; coherence with objectives; reliability: results based on observation and professional judgment
EBPX	Self-report bullying Q; Norwegian adaptations of standardized instruments; measurement of victimization and bullying	Construct validity supported by prior instruments; coherence among objectives, variables, and measurement; reliability with acceptable coefficients
EDCP	Participant observation; field diaries; reflective workshops; production of communicative content	Ecological and contextual validity; theoretical–methodological coherence; implicit qualitative triangulation; reliability
ASP	Q based on a previously validated instrument (CUVE3)	Internal validity; pretest (diagnosis), intervention (art), posttest (evaluation); confidence level: 95%; margin of error: 5%

Note: Questionnaires (Q) predominate among the instruments used to evaluate school violence prevention programs, measuring school violence, social climate, interpersonal relationships, and educational coexistence.

Some rely on standardized scales for violent behavior and school climate, which lends methodological rigor, reliability, and comparability of results. Others use instruments developed specifically for the program and population in question, though without formal reports of validity or reliability, which weakens their overall robustness.

The prevailing methodology favors quasi-experimental designs with pre- and post-intervention assessments, using standardized or ad hoc questionnaires to measure behavioral, attitudinal, and emotional change objectively and ethically in child populations.

With respect to the sixth specific objective, to determine the scientific productivity, impact, and growth of school-based prevention programs aimed at children, operational efficiency was measured through the number of children participating, the rate of complete implementation, and the reported reduction in recorded incidents of violence, in addition to quantifying the number of programs and their scalability.

Table 6
Integrative synthesis: productivity, impact, and growth

Dimension	Indicator analyzed	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Result
Scientific productivity	Studies published between 2015–2025	16	69.60%	Growth in scientific output
	Studies published between 2010–2014	7	30.40%	Preventive research was still in its early stages during this initial period
	Studies conducted in Europe	11	47.80%	Europe accounts for nearly half of the scientific output
	Studies conducted in Latin America	9	39.10%	Latin America shows growing, context-sensitive productivity
	Other contexts (multinational/other)	3	13.10%	Limited presence of international comparative studies
Impact of programmes	Programmes with significant reductions in violence/bullying	15	65.20%	Reports of direct positive impacts
	Programmes yielding socio-emotional and school-climate improvements	18	78.30%	Impact extends beyond violent behaviour
	Programmes with mixed or partial results	6	26.10%	Effects depend on duration, design, and implementation fidelity
	Programmes with no conclusive evidence of impact	2	8.70%	Minority of studies reporting limited or descriptive results
Growth of the preventive approach	Comprehensive or socio-emotional programmes	14	60.90%	A holistic preventive approach is becoming consolidated
	Targeted programmes (one-off or brief intervention)	9	39.10%	Interventions of limited scope still persist

	Programmes involving the entire educational community	13	56.50%	A transition towards institutional models is evident
	Programmes addressing sustainability/implementation	8	34.80%	An emerging theme in recent studies
Methodological design	Quantitative studies (experimental/quasi-experimental)	13	56.50%	Predominance of efficacy evaluation
	Qualitative or mixed-methods studies	7	30.40%	A relevant contribution to contextual understanding
	Systematic reviews or theoretical studies	3	13.10%	They contribute to consolidating the field
Overall synthesis	Programmes with moderate-to-high positive evidence	17	73.90%	School-based violence prevention proves effective when sustained and comprehensive

Analysis of the 22 studies included reveals a steady, progressive body of scientific output on peer-violence prevention programs between 2010 and 2025. Most publications cluster from the second half of the 2010s onward, in parallel with growing institutional recognition of school violence as a public health and educational problem requiring evidence-based prevention strategies.

Geographically, this output is concentrated in Europe and Latin America, drawing on research from Spain, Finland, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, and Peru. Robust methodological designs, such as randomized controlled trials, predominate in the European context, whereas Latin American production leans toward psychoeducational, community-based, and qualitative work oriented toward contextual understanding (Behar Leiser et al., 2024).

Methodologically, this body of work spans quasi-experimental quantitative studies, qualitative research, systematic reviews, and theoretical-reflective papers. Such diversity reflects a growing field seeking both to measure effectiveness and to understand the processes involved in preventing school violence. The evidence indicates that most programs achieve positive effects, reducing bullying, victimization, and peer aggression while improving school climate and emotional wellbeing, particularly under comprehensive, social-emotional approaches. Programs such as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and KiVa significantly reduce bullying when implemented with fidelity and institutional support (Olweus, 2013; Humphrey et al., 2021), while the TEI Program (Peer Tutoring) lowers school violence and improves social integration, self-esteem, and school climate (Ferrer-Cascales et al., 2019).

These contributions broaden our understanding of program impact beyond behavioral measurement alone and point to an increasingly preventive outlook. The most recent programs adopt an ecological, comprehensive view that takes into account students, teachers, families, and school organization as a whole. They also incorporate strategies such as peer tutoring, social-emotional learning, educommunication, the arts, and sport. This growth has been accompanied by greater attention to sustainability, with factors such as administrative leadership, teacher training, and curricular integration standing out (Ahtola et al., 2013; Humphrey et al., 2021).

The data show that early intervention, participatory methodologies, and the involvement of teachers, families, and communities all increase program effectiveness, reinforcing the need to place emotional and social education at the core of prevention efforts, as detailed in Table 4.

Conclusions

Synthesizing the evidence reviewed makes it possible not only to describe current trends in school violence prevention but also to interrogate the assumptions that have guided the design and implementation of these programs. Broadly speaking, the studies reviewed converge on the finding that effectiveness hinges on how systematic these programs are, how sustained they remain over time, and how well the various actors within the educational community work together. Scientific output clearly grew between 2015 and 2025, intensifying over the past five years; however, this growth has occurred unevenly, revealing disparities across the Latin American context and raising questions about the applicability of PPs designed for different sociocultural settings (Smith et al., 2019).

past five years; however, this growth has occurred unevenly, revealing disparities across the Latin American context and raising questions about the applicability of PPs designed for different sociocultural settings (Smith et al., 2019).

The target population is likewise skewed toward early adolescence and middle childhood, while early childhood remains largely overlooked, despite evidence that the foundations of social-emotional competencies, which later act as protective factors against disruptive behavior, are laid down during these earliest stages (Durlak et al., 2011). Quasi-experimental designs with pre- and post-intervention measurements predominate, allowing researchers to assess feasibility in real-world settings, albeit with limitations in internal validity and causal inference; this methodological base has been strengthened through controlled trials and longitudinal studies, as in the case of KiVa, which identified key mediating variables such as teacher training, implementation fidelity, and institutional commitment (Gaffney et al., 2019).

Consistent reductions in bullying, victimization, and aggression are evident, alongside improvements in school climate and interpersonal relationships; the programs with the greatest impact are those built on an ecological or systemic approach, one that reshapes social norms and cultural practices rather than targeting individual behavior alone (Gaffney et al., 2019).

In Latin America, the literature stresses the need to incorporate cultural and community dimensions to ensure relevance and effectiveness, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals' vision of inclusive education and peaceful societies, achieved through social-emotional competencies fostered in structured settings (Durlak et al., 2011; Domitrovich et al., 2017; Barrios & Contreras, 2019). The analysis reveals a rise in universal social-emotional approaches, with teachers and families playing a central role, yet inconsistencies persist in the duration and magnitude of effects, standardized instruments remain scarce, and self-report measures with inherent biases continue to predominate; in short, the evidence supports these programs, but progress is urgently needed on equity, methodological rigor, and contextual adaptation to inform data-driven policy.

References

Ahtola, A., Haataja, A., Kärnä, A., Poskiparta, E., Salmivalli, C., & Holopainen, L. (2013). Implementation of anti-bullying lessons in primary classrooms: How important is head teacher support? Educational Psychology, 33(3), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2012.745458

Baixauli Gallego, E. (2015). Prevenció de la violència a l'escola: Una propuesta de intervenció. Anuari de Psicologia, 16(2), 33–51. https://doi.org/10.7203/anuari.psicologia.16.2.33

Barrios, L., & Contreras, A. (2019). Primera infancia y prevención de la violencia: Una mirada desde la psicología del desarrollo. Revista Infancia y Sociedad, 21(2), 45–60. https://doi.org/10.22370/ris.2019.21.2.1613

Behar Leiser, O., Jordán Tróchez, M., Castillo Muñoz, J., & Ardila Behar, C. (2024). Educomunicación para la prevención de la delincuencia y la violencia escolar en adolescentes. Revista Criminalidad, 66(2), 125–135. https://doi.org/10.47741/17943108.609

Beltrán Villamizar, Y. I., & Herrera Díaz, L. J. (2016). Análisis comparativo del programa de prevención del hostigamiento escolar Olweus y del proyecto Sevilla anti-violencia escolar. Revista de Pedagogía, 37(101), 13–40.

Bombi, A. S., Cannoni, E., Gallì, F., & Norcia, A. D. (2020). Children's pictorial representation of their interactions with teachers. Psicología Educativa, 27(1), 13–20. https://doi.org/10.5093/psed2020a14

Bowes, L., Babu, M., Badger, J. R., Broome, M. R., Cannings-John, R., Clarkson, S., Hutchings, J., & Stand Together Team. (2024). Effects and costs of an anti-bullying programme (KiVa) in UK primary schools: A multicentre cluster randomised controlled trial. Psychological Medicine, 54(15), 4362–4373. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291724002666

Briones, L. (2020). *Causas, efectos y prevención del bullying escolar en niños y adolescentes.* Editorial Académica Española.

Carrasco, C., Alarcón, R., & Trianes, M. V. (2015). Eficacia de una intervención psicoeducativa basada en clima social, violencia percibida y sociometría en alumnado de educación primaria. Revista de Psicodidáctica, 20(2), 247–262. https://doi.org/10.1387/RevPsicodidact.13206

Cerezo, F., & Méndez, I. (2018). Preschool aggression: Epidemiology, prevention and intervention. Psychology, Society & Education, 10(2), 155–163. https://doi.org/10.25115/psye.v10i2.2189

Cook, T. D., Campbell, D. T., & Shadish, W. (2010). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference.* Houghton Mifflin.
Domitrovich, C. E., Durlak, J. A., Staley, K. C., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Social-emotional competence: An essential factor for promoting positive adjustment and reducing risk in school children. Child Development, 88(2), 408–416. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12739
Donthu, N., Kumar, S., Mukherjee, D., Pandey, N., & Lim, W. M. (2021). How to conduct a bibliometric analysis: An overview and guidelines. Journal of Business Research, 133, 285–296. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.04.070
Duarte, J., & Mendoza, A. (2021). Las escuelas como espacios para la construcción de la paz y la convivencia. Revista Innova Educación, 3(1), 94–119. https://doi.org/10.35622/j.rie.2021.01.005
Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis. Child Development, 82(1), 405–432. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x
Estévez, E. (2006). *Violencia, victimización y rechazo en la escuela.* Editorial Síntesis.
Fernández de Juan, T. (2017). El arte que cura: Aplicación de técnicas frente a la violencia. Arteterapia, 12, 95–107. https://doi.org/10.5209/ARTE.57564
Ferrer-Cascales, R., Albaladejo-Blázquez, N., Sánchez-SanSegundo, M., Portilla-Tamarit, I., & Lordan, O. (2019). Effectiveness of the TEI program for bullying and cyberbullying reduction and school climate improvement. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 16(4), 580. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16040580
Gaffney, H., Ttofi, M. M., & Farrington, D. P. (2019). Evaluating the effectiveness of school-bullying prevention programs. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 45, 111–133. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2018.07.001
Garaigordobil, M. (2011). Psicopatologías relacionadas con la violencia escolar. Papeles del Psicólogo, 32(1), 27–35.
González Bellido, A. (2021). Programa TEI: El alumno como protagonista de la prevención de la violencia y el acoso escolar. INFAD Revista de Psicología, 2(2), 47–58.
Heckman, J. J. (2006). Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children. Science, 312(5782), 1900–1902. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1128898
Herkama, S., Kontio, M., Sainio, M., Turunen, T., Poskiparta, E., & Salmivalli, C. (2022). Facilitators and barriers to sustainability of an anti-bullying program. Prevention Science, 23(6), 954–968. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-022-01368-2
Humphrey, N., Lendrum, A., & Wigelsworth, M. (2021). Making the case for universal school-based mental health interventions. Educational Psychology Review, 33, 1049–1075. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09563-2
Jiménez-Barbero, J. A., Ruiz-Hernández, J. A., Llor-Zaragoza, L., Pérez-García, M., & Llor-Esteban, B. (2016). Effectiveness of anti-bullying school programs: A meta-analysis. Children and Youth Services Review, 61, 165–175. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.12.015
Kvestad, I., Adolfsen, F., Ángeles, R. C., Brandseth, O. L., Breivik, K., Evertsen, J. G., Foer, I. K., Haaland, M., Homola, B. M., Hoseth, G. E., Jonsson, J., Kjerstad, E., Kyrrestad, H., Martinussen, M., Moberg, A., Moberg, K., Skogstrand, A., Solberg, L. R., & Aasheim, M. (2024). Effectiveness of a bullying intervention (Be-Prox) in early childhood education settings. JMIR Research Protocols, 13, e60626. https://doi.org/10.2196/60626
Mariyati, L. I., Nisaa'ul Ulaa, A. H., Hapsari, A. P., & Ismail, R. N. (2025). Realizing a child friendly school through anti-bullying and environmentally friendly strategies at TK Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal III Candi [Mewujudkan sekolah ramah anak melalui strategi anti-bullying dan ramah lingkungan di TK Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal III Candi]. Indonesian Journal of Cultural and Child Development (IJCCD), 16(1), 1–03. http://journal.umsida.ac.id/index.php/ijccd
Mazadiego, T., Huerta, C., & Pérez, E. (2017). Intimidación y maltrato en una muestra de niños. Voces de la Educación, 2(2), 102–111.
Mendoza-Huachani, W. A., & Turpo-Gebera, O. (2025). Artes plásticas para la sensibilización y prevención de la violencia escolar: Un estudio de caso en Arequipa (Perú) [Plastic arts for awareness and prevention of school violence: A case study in Arequipa (Peru)]. European Public & Social Innovation Review, 10, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.31637/epsir-2025-1911
Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador. (2023). *Modelo de atención integral de los Departamentos de Consejería Estudiantil (DECE)*. https://educacion.gob.ec

Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador. (2023). *Normativa para la convivencia armónica y cultura de paz.* https://educacion.gob.ec

Moazami-Goodarzi, A., Zarra-Nezhad, M., Hytti, M., Heiskanen, N., & Sajaniemi, N. (2021). Training early childhood teachers to support children's social and emotional learning: A preliminary evaluation of the Roundies program. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18(20), 10679. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182010679

Olweus, D. (2013). School bullying: Development and some important challenges. Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, 9, 751–780. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-050212-185516

Ortega-Ruiz, R., Del Rey, R., & Casas, J. A. (2016). Assessing bullying and cyberbullying: Spanish validation of EBIP-Q and ECIP-Q. Psicothema, 28(1), 71–79. https://doi.org/10.7334/psicothema2015.71

Pérez-Daza, M. A., Córdoba-Alcaide, F., Ortega-Ruiz, R., & Benítez-Sillero, J. (2023). Programa de bolsillo anti-acoso escolar: Diseño desde un equipo de orientación educativa. Revista Española de Orientación y Psicopedagogía, 34(2), 149–167. https://doi.org/10.5944/reop.vol.34.num.2.2023.38071

Sanguino-Gómez, A. M., Gualdrón-Porra, T., & Rodríguez-Quiñonez, D. A. (2023). Formación lúdica-pedagógica en el desarrollo integral de habilidades sociales para prevenir la violencia sexual de niños, niñas y adolescentes, San Andrés-Santander. Revista Criterios, 30(2), 12–27. https://doi.org/10.31948/rev.criterios/30.2-art1

Šmigelskas, K., Vaičiūnas, T., Lukoševičiūtė, J., Malinowska-Cieślik, M., Melkumova, M., Movsesyan, E., & Zaborskis, A. (2018). Sufficient social support as a possible preventive factor against fighting bullying in school children. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 15(5), 870. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15050870

Smith, J. D., et al. (2019). Implementation science in education. Educational Researcher, 48(9), 585–595.

UNESCO. (2024). Entornos de aprendizaje seguros. https://www.unesco.org

World Health Organization. (2020). Preventing violence in schools: A practical guide. https://www.who.int