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Frenemy
The Friend Who Bullies

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to look into the slang term frenemy, what it meant for adolescent girls and their friendships. Therefore, this research had three key objectives. The first objective was to define the word frenemy and to determine how young women recognise one. The second objective was to find out what types of bullying young women have experienced from frenemies and what impact that had on them. The last objective was to find out how the young women responded to the bullying and what things supported or undermined attempts to deal with the frenemy. Seven individual interviews were held with young women who had had a frenemy. The results gave an insight into the complex nature of what and who a frenemy can be. This study has shown that any friend can become a frenemy and use indirectly aggressive behaviours to bully. As female adolescents have highly intimate friendships, frenemies can be particularly effective in causing pain when they were once a 'best friend'. When a target seeks help, she is most likely to go to other friends first or seek advice but not intervention from parents. The attitudes of school personnel towards indirect aggression among girls have resulted in failed attempts to stop the bullying.

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Chapter One: Introduction

My Story

Frenemies, for me, are those friends you love to hate, the ones who you never truly trust and the ones who tend to be the bully of the group.

My first frenemy was a girl called Caroline¹. She was my best friends' other best friend. Maggie was caught in the middle between us. At the time, we had a wider friend group as well. That was how I found out Caroline was making up lies about me and telling Maggie I had said horrible things about her. Maggie has always seen the best in people so had given me the benefit of the doubt. This caused the rift between Caroline and me to worsen. I remember coming to school after a long weekend to find Caroline had given Maggie a 'best friends' forever necklace. This did not bother me until I noticed Maggie was no longer wearing the friendship bracelet I had made for her. Maggie said that it had been broken when she and Caroline had been playing.

I knew that Caroline had broken it and after that, I noticed Maggie was spending more time with her than me. It hurt because I thought that Maggie no longer wanted to be friends. Another member in the group, Chloe, started spending more time with me and we got along well. Without intending to, I had made Maggie jealous and she started hanging around with Chloe and me. She was not always nice to Chloe and talked badly about her behind her back. This however made Caroline angry with me. Caroline's birthday party was the next weekend and she invited everyone except for me. She even had rung me pretending to ask why I had not come.

Luckily, for me, Maggie and the others felt that Caroline had been mean by not inviting me. Maggie stayed friends with Caroline but the others did not. This gave me a group of friends that I remain friends with now. Caroline moved away a few months after her birthday so Maggie re-joined our group.

¹ All names have been changed.

Another frenemy I had was a member of my larger friendship circle when I was in Year 11. There were around 13 of us girls who hung out together. Victoria and I never really got along from the moment our two friend groups had joined to become one big group. Victoria was always friendly towards everyone in the group except me. I found her very snobbish and standoffish. After trying to get to know her, I found out that she had been bitching about me. Her mistake was bitching to girls who had been my friends since primary school, so they told me what was going on.

The rumours started not long after. Apparently, I was trying to break up my good friend's relationship with her boyfriend. This caused trouble within the group as some did not know me well enough yet to know it was a lie. The girl in question laughed it off because she had known me for years and knew it was not true. Victoria continued to stir this conflict on. She told the few who did not believe me that I had been bitching about them.

I had had enough of her lies and confronted her in front of the whole group. I knew I had friends who would back me up. By confronting her, it made people realise, I was telling the truth but it also meant Victoria was caught out. To get back at me she hung out with another group for a while and continued to spread rumours about me. This continued until we left high school.

I was a frenemy at one stage too. Looking back my behaviour was wrong and hurtful. The girl I targeted had once been a close friend until she betrayed my trust. To this day, I do not know if that was intentional or accidental. I thought she had done it on purpose so wanted to get back at her. Her name was Addison. We had been friends for a few years before our friendship ended. I spread stories about her and told people the things she had said about them to me. When we used to talk about others, it was not malicious and at the time, we had no reason to think either of us would tell anyone. I used this information against her and it resulted in her losing a few friends.

Frenemies are part of everyday lives, for not only girls but also women. Being older now, I still have people in my life that I would class as frenemies. Some of my friends from high school turned into frenemies over the years. However, I think the experiences from high school have made me able to

recognise these toxic 'friends' and distance myself from them. I know that now I will be polite and courteous to them, as they remain friends with friends of mine. Nevertheless, I know I do not have to be friends with them and can leave them out of my life.

Frenemies became my research topic because I was interested in defining this slang term used to describe these toxic friends. Once you have a definition, how do you spot a frenemy? I was lucky that my other friends told me what was going on, so how do others identify their frenemies. While discussing this topic with my supervisor it was clear, that I was interested in six key questions.

Key Questions:

1. What is a frenemy?
2. How do you spot a frenemy?
3. What kind of bullying do friends experience from their frenemy?
4. What is the impact of such bullying?
5. How do young women respond to bullying from their frenemy?
6. What things support or undermine attempts to deal effectively with a frenemy?

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Frenemy

Definition: A friend who is an enemy = frenemy (Urban Dictionary, 2007). This common definition is too simple when talking with girls who have been bullied by their frenemy. At the time, many of the girls did not recognise a friend was bullying them.

Frenemy is a slang term that has recently been added to the dictionary. The Oxford dictionary defines a frenemy as “a person with whom one is friendly despite a fundamental dislike or rivalry” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2010). Slang terminology defines a frenemy as “someone who is both friend and enemy, a relationship that is both mutually beneficial or dependent while being competitive, fraught with risk and mistrust” (Urban Dictionary, 2007).

Different Types of Frenemies

While researching this topic and interviewing participants it became apparent that one definition of frenemy is not sufficient. There have been attempts to define different types that fall under the broad ‘friends who are enemies’ definition such as the Competitive Frenemy, the Gossip/Stirrer, the Drama Queen, the Know it All and the Criticizer. These definitions come from teen magazines as there is not currently academic sources in this area.

The Competitive Frenemy is the girl who has to compete against her target all the time (Labrador, 2010; Moon, 2012; StyleCaster, 2010; Weir, 2011), whether it be who got the highest score on the maths test or which boy asked who out first. If her target mentions a new crush, she instantly has to tell everyone about her new man. This friend does not congratulate her target’s accomplishments or positive news (StyleCaster, 2010, Review of Florence Isaacs Toxic Friends/True Friends). This girl has to win.

The Gossip/Stirrer frenemy starts and spreads the rumours. She is the go-to person for all the latest scoop on who is dating who, what happened at that party, and she is “constantly breaking your confidentiality” (StyleCaster, 2010) by spreading her targets secrets. She also will be nice to her targets face but not

behind her back (Weir, 2011). This girl can dish it out but when the tables are turned can't take it (Labrador, 2010).

The Drama Queen is not a nasty frenemy but very tiring. She wears her target out with her exaggerated stories and lies. Whenever something slightly bad happens to her, the world is ending. The over exaggeration extends to every part of her life, for example, if she is grounded she will say she is going to be disowned. This frenemy takes up a lot of time because she has to be the centre of attention (Labrador, 2010) and the target may find that their "friendship has unintentionally turned into a never-ending therapy session" (StyleCaster, 2010). Also the target needs to forget about talking about their life: this girl will never pause "to ask you what's going on in your life" (Weir, 2011). For this girl it is all about herself.

The Know it All is a frenemy who has to be right and sometimes her target will find themselves unsure whether they actually like her or not. She is the girl that will always point out when her target is wrong and will find pleasure in doing so (Labrador, 2010). She has an opinion on everything and knows more about the subject than her target does. If her target corrects her when she is wrong, she will cover up her mistake by saying she was thinking about something else (Urban Dictionary, 2003). This girl has to be right regardless of whom she steps on to prove it.

The Criticiser is one of the 'bitchiest' girls her target will know. From the way she wears her hair to the way she dresses, this girl criticises everything (StyleCaster, 2010; Weir, 2011). She has the 'just joking' comments down to a fine art. This girl has her targets guard up from the minute she spots her until she is out of sight. "This type of friendship will eventually becoming draining" (StyleCaster, 2010). Other friends notice that she will target her but no one else. This makes it harder for the target as they will find her 'just joking' comments to be funny. On top of that instead of encouraging her target she "is more likely to discourage" them (Weir, 2011). This girl goes out of her way to criticise her target and means what she says.

While these different types have been identified by some, I believe they are limited definitions, as they do not help to identify which friend may become a

frenemy or at what point the behaviour crosses the line to bullying. They do not mention that these frenemies or toxic friends are being bullies. While these definitions have the potential to help, I believe they need to be more in depth to prevent girls from staying friends with a potential frenemy because their behaviour does not fit the current definitions provided. The types of behaviour described are not associated with bullying by girls, therefore may not be seen as bullying behaviour, especially not from friends. Next adolescent girls' friendships are discussed.

Friendship

Friendship is defined as a “voluntary relationship between people that lasts a long time and those involved are concerned about each other. It develops from shared interests and experiences and is mutually gratifying” (Psychology Dictionary, 2013). There is a unique culture within female adolescent friendships that allows their friendships to be portrayed as close, intimate and as a protective factor from victimization (Besag, 2006; Frith, 2004; Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1999; Mishna, Wiener, & Pepler, 2008; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011). As well as being portrayed as “unstable, fractious and volatile” (Besag, 2006, p. 536), with hierarchical cliques, and power struggles (Besag, 2006; Frith, 2004; Henrich, Kuperminc, Sack, Blatt, & Leadbeater, 2000; Wilkinson, 2008).

Female friendships are described as being communal with high intimacy, high disclosure and high in social conversation (Hall, 2011; McAdams, Healy, & Krause, 1984; Rose, 2007; Underwood, 2007). Girls are encouraged from a young age to ‘be nice’ to others and not to show outward aggression against each other including competitiveness (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992; Crothers, Field, & Kolbert, 2005; Felmlee, Sweet, & Sinclair, 2012; Hibbard & Buhrmester, 2010; Rose, 2007; Singleton & Vacca, 2007). Overt competitiveness has been linked to poor quality friendships among females as it clashes with the dictum of being ‘nice’ and can lead to social alienation for the competitive girl (Hibbard & Buhrmester, 2010; Singleton & Vacca, 2007). Females can see “competition as undermining the emotional support that friendship requires” (Singleton & Vacca, 2007, p. 618). Therefore, overt competitiveness is often discouraged among girls as well.

During adolescence, girls increasingly spend more time with friends and develop close attachments with best friends (De Goede, Branje, & Meeus, 2009). It is common for girls to have a best friend within a larger friendship group or clique. A friendship with a best friend is seen as mutual, voluntary and equal in power with the rewards being closeness, intimacy, and emotional support (De Goede et al., 2009; Wilkinson, 2008). While conflict is seen as unavoidable, when resolved can lead to the friendship being more stable and fulfilling (Mishna et al., 2008). When a conflict is not resolved, this can lead to feelings of betrayal, self-doubt, and fear (Owens, Shute, & Slee, 2000b) because they both know personal information about each other (Storch & Masia-Warner, 2004). Friendship breakups, therefore, are intensely emotional for girls (Hall, 2011; Underwood, 2007).

Friendship is seen as a protective factor against bullying and victimization by some researchers (Kendrick, Jutengren, & Stattin, 2012; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011). These studies did not consider the possibility that friends can be bullied or victimized by their friends. By limiting who can become bullies, they have excluded victims who are targeted by friends. There is also a lack of recognition that friendships can and do have power imbalances. As friendships are mainly seen as equal in power, the researchers are again limiting and excluding experiences of girls who are targeted by friends.

Popularity and status also play a major role in some female adolescent friendships. Several researchers believe girls will choose popularity over friendship as there is a growing importance placed on popularity during adolescence (Currie, Kelly, & Pomerantz, 2007; Henrich et al., 2000; Owens et al., 2000b; Willer & Cupach, 2008). Being part of the 'right' group does not mean girls choose popularity over friends but may choose to turn against a friend to stay popular (Eder, 1985; McAdams et al., 1984; Owens, Shute, & Slee, 2000a; Owens et al., 2000b; Owens, Shute, & Slee, 2000c; Shute, Owens, & Slee, 2002). The social status of being popular is seen as a positive thing by some girls to prevent them from becoming social outcasts. The desire to be included in the popular groups is linked to social activities outside of school. To be invited to the right parties and social gatherings is seen as important to some adolescent girls (Currie et al., 2007; Eder, 1985; Owens et al., 2000a; Willer & Cupach, 2008). However,

many of the studies that discussed popularity and status did not look into why some girls chose to be 'loners' or 'unpopular'. There seems to be a gap in the literature available regarding adolescent girls' friendships as to why some girls do not seek popularity.

The desire to belong to a group has been linked by some researchers to evolution psychology (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Felmlee et al., 2012; Hall, 2011). The theory is that as women are the child bearers, they seek social groups that can defend and protect any offspring as fleeing may not be an option. Therefore, they cannot use overt aggression because they need to ensure they remain a member of the social group (Hall, 2011; Lange, 2010). This may be another explanation as to why some girls seek out and stay in large friendship groups. Next, an overview of bullying and the types of aggression used most often by girls are discussed.

Bullying

Bullying has been discussed widely with the focus on bullies, victims and bystanders. The definition of bullying varies slightly but overall there seems to be "at least three defining characteristics of bullying that seem to be universally accepted: a) intent to harm, (b) repetition over time, and (c) power differential" (Salmivalli, Peets, & Hodges, 2010, p. 510). The difference in the power imbalance between a victim and bully is important because many use this imbalance to distinguish between bullying and "other acts of violence or aggression" (Aalsma & Brown, 2008).

With the above definition of bullying, many have not considered the impact friendship bullying can have. As the victim and perpetrator are friends, when the victim seeks help many adults will assume it is just 'girls being girls'. Wei and Jonson-Reid (2011, p. 253), found "a significant proportion (25 to 30%) of bullying events occurs in the context of perceived friendship". The perceptions of friendship were not unidirectional. That is, not only did the victim classify the bully as a friend: sometimes the bully also classified the victim as a friend. Such research has shown that not all friendships offer protection and support because some friends are indirectly aggressive and abusive (Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011).

The most troublesome finding from a study by Mishna et al. (2008) is that some of the children were positive that their friends did not bully them but went on to mention situations where a friend had bullied them. This seems more problematic for girls because “girls are aggressive towards each other but usually in more indirect or covert ways which are motivated by their relational goals concerned with the making and breaking of friendships” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 86).

Indirect Aggression

A number of studies, across different countries and cultures, have shown that female adolescents use indirectly aggressive behaviours against their friends and outsiders (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Björkqvist et al., 1992; James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b, 2000c). These behaviours can be name calling, talking just loud enough for the victim to hear what is being said about them, note writing, the evils or daggers and many more (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Björkqvist et al., 1992; Owens et al., 2000b). The evils or daggers are looks that can be “intended to intimidate or demonstrate dislike” (Shute et al., 2002, p. 360). This type of behaviour has been termed indirect aggression which is used in a manner to hide the aggressive intent (James & Owens, 2005).

Research by Björkqvist and associates found that girls scored higher on items related to indirect aggression and withdrawal behaviours than direct or physical aggression (1992). The behaviours under indirect aggression were “gossiping, suggesting shunning of the other, spreading vicious rumours as revenge, breaking contact with the person in question, and becoming friend [*sic*] with someone else as revenge” (Björkqvist et al., 1992, p. 125). Withdrawal behaviours included “sulking, withdrawing from the situation, and pretending not to know the person” (Björkqvist et al., 1992, p. 125).

Indirect aggression is a commonly used term when discussing girls bullying. “The emphasis is not on the form the aggression takes, but on the intention to harm a relationship or group membership” (Archer & Coyne, 2005, p. 217). A key feature is how the aggressor or perpetrator attempts to remain in the background, hidden from suspicion, disapproval and retaliation (Coyne, Archer, & Eslea, 2006). As the majority of bullying tactics used by girls are subtle, they

tend to go unnoticed by outsiders. By using indirect aggressive tactics, the main perpetrator may appear innocent by getting others in her friend group to use overt bullying behaviours (Shute et al., 2002). This behaviour by the perpetrator is covert in nature and “a low-cost way of harming others” (Björkqvist, 1994 as cited in Archer & Coyne, 2005, p. 212) which allows a perpetrator to inflict pain on their target without anyone knowing the intention was to harm or hurt the target (Björkqvist et al., 1992). However, indirect behaviours such as spreading rumours, exclusion or threatening to withdraw friendship are seen as aggressive behaviours because they are seen as hurtful when used against girls (Owens et al., 2000c).

Girls are taught over time not to be directly aggressive or use physical aggression because adults discourage this type of behaviour. Therefore, girls use indirect forms of aggression which can be hidden from adults (Owens et al., 2000a). As this type of aggression relies on the importance of friendship and social status (Archer & Coyne, 2005), it has been found, in a study by Björkqvist and associates, that indirectly aggressive girls were more likely to have high social status within the group and were less lonely when compared to girls who were not indirectly aggressive (Björkqvist et al., 2001 as cited in Archer & Coyne, 2005, p. 224). This relates to another finding that the higher a girl’s rank within the group, the more likely she will not be bullied (James & Owens, 2005).

Some researchers use the term indirect victimization which described behaviour such as “talking occurred in secret, behind girls’ backs or things were purposefully said just loud enough for by-standing girls, who may have even included the girl it was about, to hear”(James & Owens, 2005, p. 77). Others use the term Relational aggression, which will be discussed next (Coyne et al., 2006; Currie et al., 2007; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004).

Relational Aggression

The term relational aggression is commonly used in research discussing aggressive behaviours of girls. Its defining characteristics are very similar to indirect aggression: in fact, many authors seem to use the terms interchangeably (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Coyne et al., 2006; Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007). Relational aggression is “frequently defined as the intent to harm another through

the exploitation of a relationship” (Remillard & Lamb, 2005, p. 221). This is mainly through manipulation of relationships or damaging relationships of the targets (Kahn, Jones, & Wieland, 2012).

The behaviours used to define relational aggression “include sarcastic verbal comments, speaking to another in a cold or hostile tone of voice, ignoring, staring, gossiping, spreading rumors [*sic*], ‘mean’ facial expressions, and exclusion, all acts aimed to damage the target’s social status or self-esteem” (Remillard & Lamb, 2005, p. 221). The key difference between indirect and relational aggression is a sub category called direct relational aggression.

Direct relational aggression differs from relational aggression because it is used in dyads or couples (Archer & Coyne, 2005, p. 220). It includes behaviours such as sulking, threatening to end the relationship, and other behaviours used to control the others actions (Archer & Coyne, 2005, p. 220). Statements such as ‘you’re not my friend unless you do this’ are used in overt ways to manipulate the other member in the dyad relationship (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Björkqvist et al., 1992).

Social Aggression

This type of aggression has the widest definition and includes nonverbal social aggression. “Social aggression often is used to describe nonconfrontational [*sic*] forms of aggression” (Blake, Kim, & Lease, 2011, p. 294). Blake et al., used the term social aggression to describe all “aggressive behaviors [*sic*] that are intended to cause psychological harm through the manipulation of victim’s interpersonal relationships and social status because it is the only term that encompasses both verbal and nonverbal forms of social exclusion and manipulation” (Blake et al., 2011, p. 294).

Another definition of social aggression is behaviour that is “directed toward damaging another’s self-esteem, social status, or both, and may take such direct forms as verbal rejection, negative facial expressions or body movements, or more indirect forms such as slanderous rumors [*sic*] or social exclusion” (Galen & Underwood, 1997, p. 589, as cited in Coyne et al., 2006, p. 295).

Nonverbal social aggression “may take many forms but is commonly displayed through disdainful facial expressions, hostile eye gazes, eye rolling, turning one’s back on the victim during conversation or social interactions, and flicking one’s hair in the victim’s face to communicate dislike” (Blake et al., 2011, p. 295). This behaviour enables the aggressor to hide their intention to cause harm (Blake et al., 2011). Eye rolling and facial expressions are hard to interpret and “teachers have difficulty detecting the intention” (Blake et al., 2011, p. 296). However, the target will interpret this behaviour as aggressive and may understand the meaning behind eye rolling or facial expressions. They can also be used “to convey messages of general dislike, to let girls know they had done something wrong or as cues to ignore unwanted or disliked girls” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 78). Girls are able to notice subtle cues that are easily missed by outsiders because “females tend to be more skilled both in expression and decoding of nonverbal communication” (Durkin, 1995 as cited in Shute et al., 2002, p. 356).

Sarcasm is also listed as a nonverbal tactic. The tone of voice used is showing as dislike while the words said may appear nice. Girls can use sarcasm to put down their target, whether it is a comment such as ‘*I love that skirt on you*’ or ‘oh my god that is *super* funny’. Their target knows that the girl in fact does not like the skirt and what she said is definitely not funny. This highlights the fact that “nonverbal behaviour can also serve the function of supporting or replacing verbal communication” (Shute et al., 2002, p. 368). The next section will discuss girls and bullying, the indirect behaviours girls use to bully their friends and the impact those behaviours have on the targets.

Girls and Bullying

Research shows that girls are more likely to use covert, indirect/relational methods of bullying rather than overt, physical methods (Björkqvist et al., 1992; Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencourt, & Lemme, 2006; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b; Shute et al., 2002). The behaviours that girls use to bully friends may not be seen as bullying by the victim or the bully (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). Gossip and exclusion are two key tactics used against friends, which are not associated with bullying by girls.

Girls can be particularly cunning when using indirect aggression against friends. For example, gossip. Gossip is a part of daily life at high school, however, the intent behind the gossip can easily be hidden and appear innocent. “Gossip is only a form of aggression if the perpetrator knows that the victim’s feelings would be hurt if they heard about what was said” (Coyne et al., 2006, p. 305). Thus, Coyne et al. (2006) coined the term malicious gossip which “can therefore be defined as another person saying something mean about someone else behind his or her back” (p. 305). This is still slightly problematic, as the target of such gossip would need to know, firstly, who started the gossip and secondly, were they out to hurt them or merely passing on what they were told.

Another behaviour that girls have been known to use is exclusion. This behaviour is on “a continuum of exclusionary behaviours, ranging from ignoring someone for a limited time, to excluding her from a particular group of girls and, at its most extreme, ostracising her from the entire peer group” (Shute et al., 2002, p. 362). This can range from being subtle in the form of a girl whispering to only two others and leaving the third out, to being overt in the form of making a whole year group dislike and ignore a girl (James & Owens, 2005; Shute et al., 2002). Girls can also manipulate the target to think she is making her own choice to leave, when in fact the friendship group had decided they no longer wanted her to hang out with them. “They would make things so uncomfortable for the unwanted girls that those girls would leave as though it were a free choice” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 79).

When a target is being bullied by a friend, others in the friendship group will join in and support the leader because they do not want to become the next target, so they will either participate or deliberately avoid the situation (James & Owens, 2005). This is a protection mechanism for others in the group and is sometimes referred to as scapegoating (Owens et al., 2000a; Salmivalli et al., 2010). By letting one member be the target of indirectly aggressive attacks, this can reassure other members they are not being targeted.

A group member’s status also has implications on whether or not they step up to stop the bullying. “Status within a group determined one’s power to intervene in a bullying situation” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 80). Therefore, a girl

who has low status within the group is more likely to join in the bullying, so as to secure her place in the group. This may also raise her status within the group. Others will just stay quiet and not intervene and some girls are also more likely to abandon a friend in order to stay in the popular group (Owens et al., 2000a). When discussing the ‘popular’ girl in the class, one study found many girls thought it best to be friends with the ‘popular’ girl rather than her enemy to avoid being targeted by her (Besag, 2006).

Jealousy can be a cause of bullying between girls (James & Owens, 2005). In dyad relationships, jealousy can start because of an outsider trying to befriend one girl (Besag, 2006). This dyad can be part of a wider group of friends but they are each other’s best friends. Friendship ‘poaching’ is a term used to describe how girls feel when their best friend is being taken away from them (Owens et al., 2000a).

Boys are a major source of jealousy and conflict between girls (Besag, 2006; James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a). There are some unwritten rules within girls’ friendship groups such as you do not date your friends’ ex-boyfriend without her permission or in some cases not at all. If your friend has a crush on a particular person, you do not flirt or talk to him unless it is about her. When two girls in the same group do like the same boy, it can be a source of conflict (Besag, 2006).

When a victim seeks help from a parent or teacher, many girls believe they have the right to retaliate against the ‘dobber’ (Owens et al., 2000a). This form of victim blaming is sometimes taken on by the teachers themselves (Owens et al., 2000c) which will be discussed under Impacts of Adults Reactions and Advice.

Impact of friendship bullying

“Girls value social relationships more than boys do, and are thus more hurt when these relationships are harmed or put into jeopardy” (Coyne et al., 2006, p. 304). Girls also have closer interpersonal relationships which means that when a friendship ends they both know personal information about each other that can be used against them (Storch & Masia-Warner, 2004). When friends use indirect/relational aggression against friends the targets are more likely to

“experience elevated levels of social anxiety and loneliness” (Storch & Masia-Warner, 2004, p. 358). Friendships have also been found to be correlated to girls’ self-esteem levels. That is, when friendships are going well, girls’ self-esteem will be high, but if the friendship is falling apart their self-esteem declines (Thomas & Daubman, 2001). Girls report higher stress levels in their close relationships and have worries about loyalty and rejection, however, while the friendship remains strong, girls are more likely to have higher self-esteem and lower stress levels (Thomas & Daubman, 2001).

Research shows that friendships can be a protective factor against bullying (Kendrick et al., 2012; Thomas & Daubman, 2001). However, there does not seem to be much research showing what happens when a friend bullies a friend. The research shows that friends can have positive effects on the amount of depression and suicidal ideation victims feel after being bullied systematically (Kendrick et al., 2012; Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2008; Thomas & Daubman, 2001). A desire to escape from the bullying lead some girls to the “consideration of suicide”(Owens et al., 2000c, p. 368). This consideration was so extreme in nature that even teachers “spoke of girls who believed that this was the only option left to alleviate them of the pain they suffered at the hands of their peers” (Owens et al., 2000c, p. 368).

Klomek et al. (2008) found that girls have a higher association with serious suicidal ideation, depression and suicide attempts when they have been victims of frequent bullying, including lies or rumours being spread about them, the subject of sexual jokes, teased about looks or how they speak and victims of physical violence. Another key finding in their research is that “females who were victimized in five or six ways were approximately 33 times more likely to be depressed, 27 times more likely to have experienced suicidal ideation, and 19 times more likely to attempt suicide” (Klomek et al., 2008, p. 173).

The pain that girls feel because of bullying includes “embarrassment, anger, worry, fear, humiliation, loneliness, self-consciousness, betrayal and sadness” (Owens et al., 2000c, p. 367). The pain from the “loss of trust and intimacy in their friendships” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 81) has different effects on different individuals. One of the most common reactions is confusion. Many

girls start to believe there is something wrong with them and that is why they are being targeted (James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000c). They often do not know why they became the target (James & Owens, 2005). Girls tend to engage in wishful thinking, self-blame, tension reduction or keep to themselves when they feel hurt by indirectly aggressive tactics (Remillard & Lamb, 2005). The next common reaction is denial.

Girls are often in denial at first over the hurt and pain caused by bullying (Owens et al., 2000c). They try to cover up these feelings as to prove a point to those who excluded them. Some go and make a new group of friends. This is not always just a simple case of meeting a new group: “status is one feature of this – a hierarchy of groups exists and girls want to belong to not just any group, to the right group ... and may suffer abuse in the group rather than leave it” (Shute et al., 2002, p. 368). This is not always the case though as other girls will avoid the situation, use wishful thinking or seek social support from other friends (Remillard & Lamb, 2005).

The girls may seek out a member of the group to talk to alone, to find out what is going on. Some of the others in the group may feel bad for the victim but will not speak against the bully in fear that they will become the next target (James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a; Shute et al., 2002). This means the isolated girl needs to figure out whom she can go to for help.

When girls find themselves victims of bullying or excluded by their friends, they often weigh up the benefits and risks of who to turn to for help (Danby, Butler, & Emmison, 2011). Talking to a teacher is often suggested as the best way to end bullying (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b; Shute et al., 2002), but “talking to the teacher may not always be a useful strategy for young people dealing with being bullied as they may not be believed and reprisals from others may happen” (Danby et al., 2011, p. 336). Therefore, the targets of indirect aggression weigh up the desire to end the bullying with the desire to mend the relationship without getting their friend in trouble (Danby et al., 2011).

Hunter, Boyle, and Warden (2004) studied help seeking in victims of bullying and found that victims who had told someone thought it had been the

best strategy to stop the bullying. The people who victims told were most likely to be friends first, followed by family or the combination of both. Girls are more likely to tell someone, as Hunter et al. (2004, p. 384) found 86% of girls who had been victimised had told someone. The interesting finding was that many girls told someone about the bullying to make themselves feel better rather than to stop the bullying. However, “no one who felt that telling was best for making them feel better had told only a teacher, or just a friend and a teacher” (Hunter et al., 2004, p. 386).

Impact of Adults Reactions and Advice

Teachers

Teachers are normally the adults who witness or hear about bullying first and are one of the first to respond. This does put particular responsibility on the first teacher, because if they are too soft on the bully, the victim may believe that no one can help them, or if they try to resolve it between the two, there is the possibility of making the situation worse for the victim. Many girls in a research study said “teacher intervention was seen as highly undesirable and usually unhelpful” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 82). When girls go to teachers for help to stop the bullying, the attitude of the teacher towards different types of bullying will affect their response.

Studies have shown that teachers’ attitudes and beliefs have an effect on their response to bullying situations (Ellis & Shute, 2007; Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007; Kahn et al., 2012). Jacobsen and Bauman (2007) looked into teachers’ and counsellors’ views on three types of bullying, in which “teachers viewed relational bullying to be less serious than physical or verbal bullying and were less likely to intervene in relational bullying incidents” (Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007, p. 2). This finding is concerning as girls are more likely to be targets of relational aggression and could explain why girls often feel teacher intervention is unhelpful.

Another study had similar findings, Kahn et al. (2012) found “teachers are more likely to respond to overt aggression” (p. 785) rather than relational aggression. They also found that only 28% of their participant teachers “correctly

stated there is a power imbalance between the bully and victim, and only 6% accurately believed that bullying was a repetitive behavior [*sic*]” (Kahn et al., 2012, p. 784).

Ellis and Shute (2007) found teacher’s gender also contributed to the way teachers would respond to bullying and how serious the teachers thought the incident was. Male teachers were less likely to intervene in a mildly serious situation, such as dirty looks and name calling (Ellis & Shute, 2007). These incidents were labelled social bullying and the research found “relatively high numbers of teachers believe it best to let students sort it out for themselves, see it as too minor to bother with and are more influenced by whether they have time to deal with it” (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 660). Male teachers are less likely to intervene in social bullying as they do not understand the serious impact of this behaviour on victims, whereas female teachers may understand more because it is “more typically female behaviour” (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 661).

With regard to indirect or relational aggression, it was found that teachers “were less likely to be involved in interventions” (Kahn et al., 2012, p. 785) than when direct aggression was used, paid less attention to relational aggression than direct aggression, and left “the resolution up to the children” (Kahn et al., 2012, p. 785). In another study, researchers found when discussing indirect aggression “several of the teachers did agree that the victims bought the aggression on themselves” (Owens et al., 2000c, p. 372). This attitude towards victims is problematic and another reason why girls are less likely to seek teacher help.

The amount of harm caused by indirect/relational bullying was not included in teacher’s perceptions of bullying (Ellis & Shute, 2007; Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007; Kahn et al., 2012). “Considering that perceptions of seriousness predicted teacher involvement in bullying incidents, the potentially serious effects on victims of such subtle behaviours, as ‘dirty looks’ needs to be conveyed to teachers” (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 660). Teachers are not the only school personal students go to when being bullied; counsellors play an important role in helping the victims.

Counsellors

Many school counsellors will deal with bullying at some stage during their career. Therefore, the way counsellors respond to bullies and victims will have an impact on the outcome for those students. A study looked into the attitudes of counsellors and found many treated “physical and verbal bullying as more serious than relational bullying, had more empathy for victims of physical and verbal bullying than for victims of relational bullying, and were more likely to intervene in verbal bullying than in relational bullying” (Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007, p. 5).

The lack of school counsellor’s awareness surrounding the evidence that relational bullying is damaging to those who are targeted is a matter for concern (Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007). Most counsellors should be trained to recognise when a student is being targeted and victimised. If the counsellors believe that relational bullying is not a significant form of bullying, then it is no wonder, students are not seeking help from them. Counsellors also “may minimize relational bullying and assume that teasing and excluding are part of normal childhood development” (Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007, p. 6).

Jacobsen and Bauman (2007) found that “school counselors [sic] with bullying training perceived relational bullying to be more serious than did school counselors [sic] without” (p. 6). Training programmes that teach counsellors and teachers about all forms of bullying including relational aggression will benefit any schools anti-bullying policies (Naylor et al., 2006). Teachers and counsellors will be able to help victims of relational bullying more if they know about the serious impacts this type of behaviour can have.

When counsellors do not realise that there can be serious damaging effects for girls who are targeted by friends with indirect aggression there is the potential for them to make the situation even worse. Using mediation in bullying situations is considered not acceptable as the power imbalance between the bully and victim is not removed, and can result in the bullying becoming intensified (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). However, if counsellors do not view indirect/relational aggression as bullying, and use mediations in situations they believe are just girls’ quarrels, they are potentially making the target’s situation worse.

To conclude, girls are more likely to use indirectly aggressive behaviours against each other, including friends, rather than physical or overt forms of aggression. The behaviours are not often recognised as bullying by girls because they can be a part of daily life, for example gossip. Adolescent girls' friendships are highly important to them as they begin to spend more time with friends. The friendships are often close and intimate but can be unstable and volatile. Bullying within friendships is not yet recognised as widespread or problematic by teachers or school counsellors. Their attitudes towards indirect/relational bullying are troubling, as they do not rate it as seriously as they should. This results in ineffective interventions, which puts off girls seeking help. Therefore, I am interested in finding how this relates to girls who have a frenemy.

Chapter Three: Method

Aim

My overall aim for this research is to investigate frenemies. The first specific objective is to define the word frenemy, and how does a young women recognise a frenemy. The second objective is to find out what types of bullying friends have experienced from frenemies and what impact that had on them. The last objective is to find out how the friends responded to the bullying and what things supported or undermined attempts to deal with the frenemy.

For this research, I chose a qualitative approach to get in-depth data. I wanted to get personal experiences from young women about the bullying they experienced from a friend turned frenemy. Focus groups were initially going to be the data collection method. However, this was changed to semi-structured individual interviews due to lack of participant interest. The change from focus groups to interviews elicited more interest in participating.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval was granted from the University of Waikato, School of Psychology. The main concern around participant safety was that this research had the possibility of discussing sensitive issues surrounding bullying and what impacts it had on each participant. For this reason, each participant was told about the University's counselling service and follow up contact was made to ensure no harm was caused by the interview. Before the interviews, the participants were reminded that they did not have to answer any questions or discuss anything they did not wish too.

Informed consent from participants required that an information sheet (see appendix B) clearly outlining my research goals and their rights as participants was available to them. Due to recruitment being through participants emailing me, the information sheet was emailed along with a consent form (see appendix C). They were asked to read it over, email any questions they may have, and then to sign a consent form before coming for an interview. Before the interviews began, verbal consent was sought to record the interview.

The limits to confidentiality were explained to participants before the interview began. This issue arose due to the course credit that first year psychology students could receive. A form with their name and signature had to be filled out and given to the course convenor. This meant the convenor knew which first year students had participated. Otherwise, all identifying information from the interviews was changed and pseudonyms were used.

Recruitment

Participants were recruited through posters that were displayed on graduate notice boards in the School of Psychology (see appendix A). An online poster was also made available to psychology first year students through the PSYC102 class Moodle page. Tutors from PSYC102 also discussed my research at the beginning of one tutorial to help increase awareness and participation.

Recruitment criteria stated on the poster were for any young women between the ages of 17-22 who had been bullied by a friend, or had witnessed a friend being bullied by another friend. A 1% course credit was given to eligible first year psychology students for participating in this research as the School of Psychology allows.

Participants

The participants of this research emailed me after seeing the recruitment poster and were sent an information sheet and consent form. I had seven young women email to show an interest in participating and after reading the information sheet, wanted to participate in the research. All seven participants were first year female psychology students from the University of Waikato.

Interviews

The interviews were scheduled to be an hour long at the most. This was decided so students would be able to come before, after, or in between lectures or tutorials. Due to my travel distance, all interview times were arranged via email and I booked a library study room or a Psychology room for the time agreed. In addition, participants were asked to email the night before if they needed to change the time or location of the interviews.

The interviews were semi-structured with 15 set questions (see appendix D). Using a semi-structured outline, allowed participants to introduce ideas I may not have considered. I began the interviews with a quick discussion about their rights as a participant and asked if they had any questions about the research. I collected their consent forms and double checked they were comfortable and consented with the interview being recorded.

At this point, it was explained that the recording would be transcribed and emailed to them for approval. The participants had one week to read over their transcripts and were reminded they could remove, change or add information into the transcript. Each participant was also asked whether direct quotes could be used from their transcripts and were told that all identifying information would be changed. This allowed the participants to ensure there was no misunderstanding and gave them control over their information.

Analysis

After participants sent approved transcripts back, each transcript was read over to find themes relating to the six key questions for this research. The transcripts were first used to write up the participants stories about their experiences with frenemies. These stories are an important guide for how each participant would interpret the interview questions. With this in mind, I began to pull out information relating to the six key questions. Once this was done, I went through the transcripts multiple times to see what other themes had arisen that were not expected.

Chapter Four: Girls' Stories

This section will begin with the stories of my participants (note: all names have been changed). I believe it is important for the reader to understand how these friendships changed and why it is not a simple matter of just ending the relationship. Every frenemy acts differently and uses different tactics. These stories show how complicated these relationships can be and how difficult it is for some young women to end what they may still see as a friendship.

Ruby

Ruby's story started in intermediate when her two best friends physically beat her up. They would also make little digs towards her about different things to make her feel bad about herself. Ruby said that they would be rude, diss her and instead of supporting her, made snide comments instead.

At high school, the snide comments and dissing continued, but by this stage, Ruby considered these two girls as only acquaintances within their wider friendship group. She continued to hang out with the group because it was the 'easier' option rather than going off to make new friends when there was a chance that the bullying would continue with a new group. With help from her parents, she knew that her friends should not treat her the way they did so she distanced herself from being close friends with the group.

When asked why she did not end the friendship with her frenemies she said, *"Because, like, they were fun to hang out with at times when they weren't being bitches"*. They were also classed as the cool or popular group at school and it was the two 'popular' girls who were the bullies. Because of that status, no one stepped in whenever one of the frenemies was bullying Ruby.

Outside of school, Ruby had a different group of friends who treated her as friends should. Her mother was always there to support her and gave her advice about how to deal with her frenemies. Ruby said her mother *"made me realise that what my friends think is not what everyone else thinks of me or how I think of myself"*. Ruby also learnt that after she left school she was quite comfortable being independent and did not need someone with her all the time compared to some of her other friends.

She no longer has contact with anyone from that friendship group. Ruby is now more hesitant to trust people straight away but when someone has earned her trust, she trusts them.

Charlotte

Charlotte's frenemy is close to home. Her frenemy, Amanda, is her boyfriend Adam's sister. The girls started out as best friends in intermediate. However, when they started high school, the friendship changed. The relationship went further downhill when Charlotte and Adam started dating towards the end of high school.

The trouble started when Charlotte found out through friends that Amanda was trying to turn friends against her. Amanda was bitching and gossiping about Charlotte. Another tactic Amanda used was spreading 'rumours' about Charlotte; however, they were not actually rumours. Their mutual friends had assumed Amanda had made the stories up when she was in fact using information Charlotte had told her about her family.

Amanda was jealous of Charlotte's natural talent at sports and her boyfriends. Amanda would make it look like Charlotte was gloating and had a big ego about her sporting abilities and her boyfriend at the time. Amanda was competing against Charlotte in different areas. She would start rumours and bitching about Charlotte if she lost. With boys, Amanda would only start to show an interest in them if it was known that Charlotte liked them or was dating them. Amanda was constantly trying to steal boyfriends of Charlotte and she did not approve when Adam started dating Charlotte.

Charlotte said that she continued to be friends with Amanda because she thought she could help Amanda get over what was wrong or be there for her when she was ready to talk and sort things out. She went to a counsellor and talked to her parents about the bullying. Charlotte also found going to the gym to get rid of stress helpful. Her mum's advice was to stick with it and be there for Amanda and she "*might come around*".

Charlotte found that Amanda was also interfering with her relationship with Adam and their parents. Amanda was telling their parents lies about

Charlotte, which tainted their relationship with her. Adam and Charlotte do not speak with Amanda now unless they need to as Amanda also treats him badly.

Sophie

Sophie had a hard time at high school with her frenemy and her personal battle with anorexia. Paige had been one of Sophie's best friends up until she was hospitalised. From what Sophie remembers, Paige began bullying her when she started back at school after being hospitalised to be tube fed because of her anorexia. Paige would say comments just loud enough for Sophie to hear, comments such as "*Oh my god she's so fat*", "*Can't believe she's having to be re-fed she's so fat*". Sophie does not know why Paige turned against her and commented that these types of digs are horrible enough without battling with anorexia.

Sophie said she put up with the bullying for a while, and then she decided to go to the school counsellor. This was a big mistake, as the counsellor did not handle the situation at all well. Sophie said the counsellor left her in the room with Paige and some of Paige's closest friends. This resulted in the bullying getting worse and ended other friendships Sophie had with some of the other girls. By putting Sophie in this situation, Sophie believed that no one could help her or change the situation. She never went back to the counsellor and did not tell teachers or parents what was going on. With hindsight, she knows that had the counsellor handled the situation better she would have continued to ask for help.

After the counselling session went so badly, Sophie tried to avoid Paige as much as possible. She was able to float around different groups but did not make any close friends again but was happy with having acquaintances. Paige, however, was still trying to make life hell for Sophie. When they found themselves together, for whatever reason, Paige would continue to make comments about Sophie's weight and started attacking her family's appearance. Paige tried to get others to turn against Sophie and due to Paige's popularity many peers followed her lead.

Sophie was still battling against anorexia when she faced another horrific event. She was 15 when she was raped. Paige used this to further target and bully

Sophie to make her life, as Sophie said, “*A living hell*”. Paige was one of the ringleaders who spread rumours saying that Sophie “*Was lying about it*”, “*She made it up, it never happened*” or “*It was consensual but Sophie wants attention so is lying*”. There were many rumours and lies spread by Paige, which resulted in Sophie being bullied and talked about by most of the school. Sophie relapsed with her anorexia so left school a year early.

Sophie is now healthy and no longer anorexic. She has an extremely positive outlook on life and wants to work in a profession where she can help young people. She has no contact with any of the girls who were frenemies.

Anna

Anna was not sure at first whether she had been bullied by any of her friends because she values the relationship too much. She said

They are kind of a support system for me so whenever they have said something that probably other people would think is bullying, like something just really rude, I haven't taken it as that or I haven't let it get to me because I would rather have the friend.

After we started the interview, she realised that she did have a best friend, Ashley, who turned into a frenemy whom she is not friends with anymore. Anna's friendship with Ashley had many difficulties over a three to four year period until Anna had enough. Ashley would break her trust by gossiping and spreading Anna's secrets and personal troubles. Because of this, Anna was hesitant to trust Ashley. Things deteriorated between them because Ashley had a bad habit of lying to Anna as well.

Many of the lies conflicted with previous lies she had told. Anna said the most telling lie was about how Ashley's father was either rich or bankrupt. Next a new house was being built so they were selling their current house or the house was being renovated, neither of which ever happened.

The final straw for their friendship was over a boy. Anna liked Tristan and asked Ashley for advice. Ashley helped Anna but when Anna and Tristan starting talking and hanging out Ashley started to pursue him. Anna explained that a

mutual friend of the girls, Rachel, had previously dated Tristan and did not mind Anna liking him. Rachel went overseas, Anna was out of town and Ashley invited Tristan to a party and had sex with him. She then lied to both Anna and Rachel about what happened, yet bragged to other friends. Anna and Rachel found out and both have since distanced themselves from Ashley as she continued to lie to them.

Lila

Lila's story starts back in Year 7 when she started at a private Christian school. She became friends with a group of girls quickly but soon noticed they would make little digs towards her about being Maori. They would make fun of her for bringing left overs for lunch and say things like 'Oh you Maori'. This type of behaviour from her friends was a regular occurrence until Year 9.

Lila's best friend, Courtney, was having a birthday party and invited the whole group except for Lila. The night of the party Lila received a text message from Courtney asking if she was a lesbian. Lila was already feeling hurt because her best friend had excluded her and then to receive a nasty text from Courtney made Lila go to her parents. Lila's mother was the one who took charge of the situation and rung Courtney's parents to inform them of the unacceptable behaviour. Lila's mother was also a teacher at her school so the principal and dean were informed.

The school organised a group mediation between Lila and the nine girls at the party. Lila felt extremely uncomfortable and outnumbered. She described the meeting as "*nine versus one*". Lila also stated that when she is nervous or uncomfortable she tends to laugh so during the meeting she laughed at inappropriate times. During the meeting, she said all the girls who had been at the party started making excuses for their behaviour. The common excuse used was that they themselves were having a hard time at home so took it out on her. Many of the girls "*Put on the water works to get out of trouble*". Lila's mother was allowed at the meeting and said to the girls, "*I'm very disappointed in what you said and I won't be expecting any more behaviour of that kind towards my daughter*".

After the meeting, Lila decided to distance herself from the group because she thought their apologies were just an act for the teachers. She made another group of friends but classed them more as acquaintances. After being hurt and humiliated by Courtney she made the choice not to get close to people unless they had a positive influence in her life. She now has a tightknit group of friends and is engaged to be married.

Kayla

Kayla had a big group of friends at high school but one friend caused trouble. Tracey's reputation within the group and the school was 'you only told her things if you wanted the whole school to know'. This caused friction within the group, especially when Tracey started making up rumours about Kayla.

Friends told Kayla that Tracey had been making up rumours and was bitching about her to the group. She also noticed that Tracey would bitch about the others when they were not around. When the whole group was together, Kayla observed that Tracey would try to exclude her from the conversation or would try to separate the group by only talking to two or three people.

Kayla and some other members of the friendship group started to distance themselves from Tracey. For example when Kayla had a class with Tracey she no longer sat with her. This continued until Tracey realised that her behaviour towards the friend group was not tolerated. Kayla says, "*It's easier to be polite and civil than to try to cut Tracey out because other members of the group are still friends with her*". Being from a smaller town where people grew up together, Kayla realised that if she were to cut Tracey out then it would affect her more than Tracey. She said that now whenever they run into each other back home they will talk but Kayla does not regard her as a friend anymore.

Emma

Emma has had two frenemies. The first was a frenemy at school who suddenly excluded her from the friend group. The second was a best friend who turned into a frenemy.

Emma's first frenemy was Jana. After a week off school, Emma came back to find that Jana and the group would not talk to her. They excluded her by not sitting with her or even associating with her. Emma does not know why they stopped talking to her but went and hung out with another group of friends. Emma was lucky that she had another group to turn to in this situation.

When Emma talked about her second frenemy, she seemed torn between whether this girl Jackie was actually a friend or whether she was frenemy. Emma said her and Jackie grew up together since kindergarten. Emma wants to keep this friendship because "*We used to be inseparable so it doesn't sound right not to be best friends anymore*". She also describes Jackie as "*a total bitch*" who uses people to get her way. Emma said that they are not as close as they were because they went to different intermediates and high schools.

Jackie likes to spread rumours about other friends and is continually bitching about their mutual friends. Emma finds it hard when other friends question why she puts up with Jackie's 'bitchiness' and spoilt behaviour. Now many of those friends do not associate with Jackie.

Emma said Jackie's worst behaviour towards her was over a boy. Emma had a crush on James and started talking to him and texting him. After a few weeks, they were dating. This was when Jackie's behaviour changed towards both of them. Jackie accused Emma of stealing James from her and said that Emma knew she liked him so was a bitch for going out with him. Emma said that before she started texting him, Jackie had shown no interest in him and said there was no way she would ever like him and Emma had bad taste. Jackie continued causing problems between Emma and James until Emma confronted her and said that she would not choose between James and her.

Emma still believes that Jackie will change her behaviour and remains 'best friends' with her.

Chapter Five: Findings

Key Question 1: What is a frenemy?

The common definition of a frenemy is a friend who is an enemy (Urban Dictionary, 2007). Every young woman will have a different story and a slightly different definition of a frenemy. Frenemies can take many different forms and act in many different ways. This makes it hard to make a single definition but from the participant interviews, it became clear that many of the frenemies seemed to turn against the friend without warning. The sudden change means the girl who is targeted may not think or believe the frenemy is responsible for the bitching, gossip, or rumours. The participants talked about being bitched about behind their backs and behaviours that were direct but masked to hide the bullying intent.

Ruby's frenemies, who once were her two best friends, turned on her and physically beat her up, then continued to make snide comments and would say mean things then say 'just kidding' in a sarcastic tone. Ruby said a frenemy was

Someone who you always hang out with who you think you're close with but then they sort of turn their back on you, like without you really doing anything or they always give you snappy comments over nothing really.

Charlotte's frenemy used private information about her and her family to spread rumours that were aimed to 'sabotage' Charlotte socially. The frenemy tried to turn other friends against her and bitched about her to mutual friends. Her frenemy had been one of her best friends. Charlotte felt that she had been stabbed in the back because the information that was gained through friendship had been used against her. Charlotte believed a frenemy

Is someone that is like your friend but not your friend, like they get close to you but aren't really genuine and stab you in the back and stuff like that. Or they're out to sabotage you.

Sophie's definition describes her frenemy who randomly turned against her and who treated her horribly. In front of teaching staff, however, her frenemy treated her as a friend. Outside the classroom, she spread rumours about Sophie and used Sophie's anorexia as a weapon against her. Sophie said

A frenemy is someone who was a friend and for some unknown reasons becomes an enemy or has an intense hatred for you but in public situations will still describe themselves as friends but in private not.

Anna had a best friend who turned into a frenemy. Anna found out that her frenemy was being two faced and was lying to her. This frenemy also seemed, to Anna, to use her friendship when she needed a friend and would discard Anna when it suited her. Anna thinks

A frenemy is some one that will be a friend to your face, like they will be genuinely kind and stuff like that. But then they'll turn around and be . . . two faced". "I also think of a frenemy as someone who will be your friend . . . for the purpose of having a friend until something they don't like comes up and then they'll turn on you.

Lila's frenemy was her best friend until she stabbed Lila in the back. Lila decided that she would not put up with friends who talked behind her back with the intention of hurting her so she ended the friendship. Lila defines a frenemy as

Somebody who acts like your friend but who stabs you in the back and talks about you and doesn't really like you but still is your friend.

Kayla found out about her frenemy from mutual friends. Her frenemy was bitching about and backstabbing her to others in an attempt to turn some of them against Kayla. Kayla's definition is

A frenemy to me is someone who is your friend that pretty much backstabs you or talks about you behind your back.

Emma did not realise or believe that her friend had turned into a frenemy even though her frenemy's behaviour was hurtful and caused friction between them. She puts up with the behaviour and still classes her frenemy as her best friend. Emma did notice another friend being targeted by a frenemy and recognised the bullying behaviour. Emma classed a frenemy as

Someone that pretends to be your friend but actually they don't like you at all so they want to try to know everything about you and then use it against you like to blackmail you or something. So they're your friends but not really.

These participant definitions give an insight into how these young women try to distinguish friend and frenemy. Overall, from slang definitions and my participants' definitions, I believe a frenemy is a friend who has turned against you and starts being nasty by bitching and spreading rumours behind your back or will be openly hostile to your face. Frenemies can use subtle forms of criticism to belittle their target and make them feel bad about themselves. Some frenemies will try to turn mutual friends against their target and will try to exclude them from the friendship group. A frenemy can range from being someone who was/is a best friend to the new girl in the group. Anybody from within the friendship circle can turn into a frenemy.

Discussion

While researching frenemies, I came across definitions for different types of frenemies (discussed in the literature review). These definitions came from online teen magazines, which can be helpful for teenage girls who suspect something in their friendship has changed. However, I found that while these definitions can help with some frenemies they do not cover all frenemies. By having limited types and definitions of frenemies, currently available in teen magazines, the consequence could result in adolescent girls being unable to identify bullying behaviour from a frenemy when it does not fall within the currently defined types. In addition, there was also lack of recognition about how close and intimate female friendships are, especially among adolescents.

In this study, three characteristic patterns emerged that were not covered by any of the teen magazine definitions. The first pattern was best friends turning into frenemies; the second was the abrupt change from friend to frenemy and the third was the popularity of the frenemy.

Six out of the seven participants had best friends turn into frenemies. While some of these best friends showed similar characteristics from the Competitive frenemy definition, none of the definitions highlighted the fact that any friend including best friends could become a frenemy. They also ignored the high intimacy levels within best friendships and the amount of knowledge shared to each other, which would be private. This knowledge, which is gained during a friendship, can then be used by a frenemy to hurt their target. Charlotte's frenemy

Amanda, for example, began to spread Charlotte's personal secrets and started rumours about her. They had been best friends until Amanda turned on Charlotte and showed characteristics from the Competitive frenemy definition (Labrador, 2010; Moon, 2012; StyleCaster, 2010; Weir, 2011). Amanda would always seem to be competing with Charlotte. When Charlotte started dating a new boyfriend, Amanda would have to get a new boyfriend or would try to steal Charlotte's off her. Amanda would get annoyed if Charlotte got into a better netball or sports team.

When a best friend turns into a frenemy "the disappointment of losing a friend is exacerbated by the closeness of the bonds girls frequently build up in their personal relationships" (Besag, 2006, p. 536). One study found that the previous best friend is the instigator behind attacks on the target (Besag, 2006). This fits with a study by Owens et al. (2000b) who found that friends are willing to turn against each other so long as they are not the target. As a best friend knows personal information and is trusted by the target, the implication is that they are less likely to be suspected as a frenemy. This can have repercussions that influence the amount of pain the target feels on discovering they are a frenemy, what behaviours they are willing to put up with while trying to fix the friendship, in what ways the target is likely to seek help, and the advice given by adults. In this study, Anna put up with many bullying behaviours from her best friend turned frenemy. Anna did not want to believe her best friend was capable of spreading her secrets and bitching about her. She tried to repair their friendship and ignored advice to end the friendship.

Four participants had friends suddenly turn on them without warning. This sudden change from friend to frenemy is not covered in any of the magazine definitions (as discussed in the literature review). This pattern was found in other studies on indirect aggression when exclusion was used (James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000b; Shute et al., 2002). In this study, I found that the sudden change happened after the target had been absent for a period from school. In my participants' experience, such frenemies are hostile, nasty and verbally abusive. However, in front of teachers and parents, the frenemy will continue to act like a friend. This type of two-faced behaviour makes it hard for the target to approach adults because there is a risk adults will make the situation worse (Owens et al.,

2000b; Shute et al., 2002). There is also the risk of retaliation if the situation is not handled well as Sophie experienced.

Another trend in the participants' frenemies was that the group leader or 'popular' girl was the frenemy (for a discussion on popularity see Currie et al. (2007). The status held by the frenemy meant other members of the group joined in the bullying behaviour and did not stick up for the target (Besag, 2006; James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b, 2000c; Shute et al., 2002). While there is not a set definition that discusses the role the popular girl, in the definitions I found, this type of frenemy has similar characteristics to the Criticiser (StyleCaster, 2010; Weir, 2011). The frenemies of Ruby, Sophie and Lila and one of Emma's frenemies were the 'popular' ringleaders in the bullying experienced by these participants. Due to the high social status of the frenemy, some group members would join in, some would ignore it but no one would try to stop it (Blake et al., 2011; Owens et al., 2000b; Salmivalli et al., 2010). This is further looked at under how young women respond to bullying.

From the participant interviews and available resources about frenemies, I believe there cannot be set types of frenemies. When girls learn about friendship through their own experiences and from what parents/teachers/counsellors teach as acceptable behaviour in friendship, there is a need for a guide so girls know when a friendship has crossed the line into frenemy territory (Weir, 2011). For example, if a friend is just in a bad mood one day, she may criticise an item of clothing or insult you but if this is a one off type of behaviour, and she has apologised for it, she would not be a frenemy. However, if this behaviour happened once or twice a week, this friend is most likely a frenemy.

I believe it is about teaching young girls what is healthy in a friendship. "Good friends are honest, trustworthy, and respectful" (Weir, 2011, p. 19). While gossiping and bitching is a common occurrence, girls need to be aware of the harm they may be causing by further spreading the information. What information would they want being spread about them, would they be hurt by comments they are making, and does the friendship not mean anything anymore? Therefore, while the magazine definitions are a starting point for young women to start questioning whether their friend is a frenemy, they need to know that it is not a set

definition. However, knowing what a ‘frenemy’ is does not mean everyone will be able to identify when a friend has turned into a frenemy. Which leads to the next key question how does one spot a frenemy?

Key Question 2: How does one spot a frenemy?

In this study, there were some obvious frenemies while others were ambiguous. There was an impression that either frenemies were caught out by mutual friends who told the target, or the frenemy chose to be openly hostile to their target. As a result, none of the participants could give a guaranteed way to spot a frenemy; I do not believe there is one. As one participant, Emma, had two different frenemies, there were four obvious frenemies and four ambiguous frenemies.

The obvious frenemies were open in their dislike of the target and did not attempt to hide their behaviour from their target. In most cases, these frenemies turned suddenly on their target. They used exclusion as the initial tactic and then used other indirect behaviours such as bitching and gossiping. Ruby had two frenemies who were obvious but did not exclude her from the group. Sophie, Lila and Emma were all excluded by their frenemies. Below is an account of their experience.

Ruby’s two best friends suddenly turned on her and physically bet her up in a fight at intermediate. Afterwards they patched up their friendship and remained in the same friendship group at high school. While she stayed in that friendship circle, Ruby noticed their behaviour towards her changed. They would bitch about her and use ‘just kidding’ comments to put her down. Ruby said to identify a frenemy

You can tell by their catty behaviour, like especially with girls. You usually know if they are making up rumours about someone, or if they were really good friends with someone one day and then fully avoiding them the next.

Sophie’s frenemy excluded her from their friendship circle and was directly hostile to her face when she returned to school after being hospitalised for her eating disorder. For an unknown reason, her once best friend had turned

against her, spread rumours and verbally abused her on a daily basis. Sophie's eating disorder was used to bully and ridicule her. She said

I would not know how to spot one [a frenemy], they are kind of very coy or my frenemy was. They would be all polite in front of teachers and everyone and then as soon as they would turn their backs it would be 'blah blah blah'.

Lila's best friend became her frenemy when she held a sleepover party where everyone was invited except Lila. On the night of the party, Lila received a hurtful text message from her frenemy. Lila went to her mother about the text and her mother told her friends did not treat each other that way. After this incident, Lila realised that her frenemy had also made slight digs towards her ethnicity (Maori) during their friendship. Lila said she would identify a frenemy by listening to friends

Maybe they said oh so n so said this about you. That is when I would probably get suspicious. Or if I can feel that they aren't genuine in the things that they say.

Emma's first frenemy excluded her from the friendship group after she had been away from school for a week. Until the exclusion, Emma had no reason to doubt their friendship. This incident made Emma recognise the bullying behaviour her frenemy used against other friends, so she chose to make new friends. To spot a frenemy Emma said

When little bits of information that you told them start leaking out and then you work out, narrow it down to who it is.

The ambiguous frenemies used bitching, gossiping and rumours as their main tactics against their targets. Charlotte, Kayla, Anna and Emma all had an ambiguous frenemy. Below is how each one found out about their ambiguous frenemy.

Charlotte found out through mutual friends that her frenemy was bitching about her and spreading rumours. After being told, Charlotte then began to notice her frenemy's destructive behaviour towards their friendship. The information used against Charlotte, through rumours, made it clear the rumours were being

started by her frenemy, as no one else knew about her family problems. Charlotte said you could spot a frenemy

By their face, like, if you're talking to them and they're not even on the same level as you or not listening to you, like looking away or something, I found that a big thing. Like you're trying to talk to them about your feelings and stuff and they just don't even, it looks like it has gone straight through them. And sometimes they use that against you, like they pick out all your weaknesses.

Kayla also heard through friends about her frenemy. She was bitching about Kayla behind her back and her friends thought she should know. After being told this, Kayla, also noticed during group conversations her frenemy would try to exclude her. Kayla thinks she would spot a frenemy by their behaviour, she said

I think if a frenemy came to me and started talking to me about one of my other friends; I would assume that they are talking about everyone behind their back. So that's how I would target/notice someone.

Anna had some friends warn her that a friend was gossiping about her and spreading her secrets. She ignored their warnings but soon began to notice other behaviours from her frenemy that were hurtful towards her. She labels herself as a people pleaser but believes that

I genuinely spot my frenemies by umm most of my close friends are people who are always there for me and they would never turn around and say anything bad behind my back. If I have ever caught that, I have just walked away straight away. One friend she was supposed to be my best friend and was being really nice helping me out with this guy. Then she turned around and started texting him . . . so you were willing to push me out of it, just to get what you wanted.

Emma's ambiguous frenemy has been her 'best friend' since kindergarten. Other friends had pointed out her 'best friends' bullying behaviour which Emma ignored at first. Emma describes her 'best friend' as a "total bitch" and was able to identify that her behaviour is bullying but she cannot conceive "not being best friends".

When a frenemy is obvious, they make their dislike known to the target. By using exclusion to remove them from the friendship circle, they can then be openly hostile and abusive to the target without fear of retaliation. Ambiguous frenemies are often identified by mutual friends who tell the target what is going on behind their back. When bitching and gossiping behind their target's back the frenemy may not realise others disagree with their behaviour.

Discussion

A frenemy is hard to spot when she does not want to be found out. When a frenemy is using sly tactics such as gossip, the target will often not know who is spreading the information because the frenemy can easily shift the blame onto somebody else. This relates to research showing that when girls do bully they prefer to be in the background (Björkqvist et al., 1992; Coyne et al., 2006; Owens et al., 2000a).

While being in the background maybe true for some, other frenemies have high social status and can be very open with their bullying. When the frenemy has high status within the group, she can be openly hostile, when she chooses to be, as others may join in or ignore the behaviour to avoid becoming the target (James & Owens, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a; Salmivalli et al., 2010). In this study, Ruby's two frenemies were the 'popular' girls in the group so nobody stepped in to help Ruby. Ruby stayed in that group of friends because they were the 'cool' group. She enjoyed the status of the group, so was willing to endure the snarky comments.

Sophie's frenemy was also the 'popular' girl in the group so had no fear of retaliation. She was openly hostile, aggressive and callous towards Sophie. However, she would change her attitude around teachers and parents. The sudden change in attitude towards Sophie was surprising and she does not know why her friend turned on her so quickly. Her frenemy used her popularity to turn other friends against Sophie until she was completely excluded from that friendship group.

Several of the participants found out about their frenemy because mutual friends told them about the bitching and gossiping. While these friends may not

have stopped the bullying, by communicating with the target they showed that they valued the friendship. The quality of friendship has been shown to act as a protective factor against bullying (Kendrick et al., 2012).

Spotting a frenemy also requires targets to be able to recognise certain indirect behaviours as bullying. Raskauskas and Stoltz (2004) found, in their pilot study, girls were confused about what they classed as bullying. They found 82.2% of the girls who participated did not consider social exclusion to be bullying. Girls do not expect to be bullied by their friends (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). “If victims do not identify relational aggression as bullying, they will not be able to defend themselves from the recurring behavior [sic]” (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004, p. 211). This is discussed further under key question 3.

The lack of knowledge about indirect aggression combined with the indirect behaviours can make frenemies very hard to identify. Some participants made excuses for their frenemies behaviour at the beginning until other friends told them about the bitching and backstabbing. When frenemies use ‘just kidding’ comments they try to inflict pain but “makes it seem as though there has been no intention to hurt at all” (Björkqvist et al., 1992, p. 118). This makes it hard for outsiders to intervene.

Outsiders Point of View

The complex nature of girls’ friendships can make it hard to distinguish who is the frenemy. To be able to judge who is a target of relational aggression, knowledge about the history of the friendship is needed (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Parents, teachers, counsellors and other bystanders can easily be deceived as to the intention and identity of the frenemy. With the pressure to be seen as the ‘nice girl’ by authority figures in their lives, using indirect aggression against targets can mask the bullying behaviour (Blake et al., 2011; Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007; Owens et al., 2000b).

The popularity of a frenemy can make it hard for outsiders to realise what is going on within the friend group. One study called the power the ‘popular’ frenemy has “social authority” (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995, p. 720). Another study called it “social dominance” (Blake et al., 2011, p. 298). This authority and

dominance gives this frenemy the social control and influence of who is in and who is out without the risk of being challenged, by either peers or adults (Blake et al., 2011; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). The use of nonverbal social aggression (disdainful facial expressions, hostile eye gazes etc.) also makes it harder for outsiders to know what is going on as they do not know the meaning behind the behaviour (Blake et al., 2011). Frenemies use this type of behaviour because they know teachers, parents and other adults are less likely to identify or intervene because it is not necessarily associated with bullying.

When a best friend turns into a frenemy, it can be hard for outsiders to identify the frenemy and intervene. Girls are more likely to be bullied by a friend who they once trusted rather than by a stranger (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). The delay in recognising the difference between a quarrel and bullying between best 'friends' can lead outsiders to give very different advice and take different action (Besag, 2006; Owens et al., 2000b; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). This is a tricky area as it is normal to have quarrels with friends, but as an outsider, judging whether there is a power difference between friends is not easy. As some girls will not recognise the behaviour as bullying, they will remain 'friends' with a frenemy outsiders may need to intervene. Helping girls to understand what behaviours are bullying will help them recognise a potential frenemy. The different bullying types used by a frenemy are looked at next.

Key Question 3: What kind of bullying do friends experience from their frenemy?

For this question, knowing what the participants classed as bullying behaviour helped to establish what behaviours they would identify as bullying from their frenemies. They use the term 'mental' bullying, which from their descriptions includes tactics such as social exclusion (out-casting, ignoring, shutting them out), bitching, gossiping and rumours. Their definitions of bullying will be given followed by what they experienced from their frenemies.

I sort of want to say that bullying is only the physical part because I think, with mentally bullying, like being picked on and stuff, just avoid them. It's easier to get away from than actual physical bullying. (Ruby)

Ruby had one physical bullying incident followed by years of ‘mental’ bullying. She chose to put up with it, as it was easier to stay with that friendship group than making new friends. Her frenemies continued to make snide comments that were aimed at putting her down. They would also say ‘just kidding’ after the comments to hide the intent of hurting her. When Ruby would say they were being hurtful, her frenemies could pass it off as a joke. However, their sarcastic tone proved to Ruby that the intent was to hurt her. They would be overly nice and patronising at the same time.

Something that would hurt someone or damage someone's self-esteem or them physically like that would be bullying to me. Anything that would be hurting someone else.
(Charlotte)

Charlotte's frenemy, used information gained during their friendship about Charlotte and her family, against her. Her frenemy would spread the private information around and would mock Charlotte about her family issues. If her frenemy knew that Charlotte had a crush or was dating a particular boy, her frenemy would diss and mock her about him; however, her frenemy would then start to “*chase after him*”. There were many rumours started about Charlotte by her frenemy who would bitch about her behind her back. Things escalated when Charlotte and her frenemy's brother started dating. Her frenemy started telling lies about Charlotte to her parents, even going as far as to say Charlotte was pregnant when she was not. This caused friction between the family and Charlotte. For another participant, Sophie, she believes bullying is

Any situation that degrades or inhibits someone and makes them feel less human.

Sophie suffered extreme verbal bullying at the hands of her frenemy. Sophie's frenemy began taunting and bullying her when she returned to school after being hospitalised for anorexia. Her frenemy used Sophie's eating disorder to taunt and bully her, with comments such as “*Can't believe you're being re-fed you're so fat*”. Her frenemy also would make attacks against Sophie's family. As well as the verbal attacks, her frenemy made sure Sophie was excluded from the friendship group. The others in the friendship group soon all began to bitch and

criticise Sophie when they were near her. They would speak loud enough for her to hear but would make sure that no teacher could hear.

Bullying can be anything. Because we have social networking now it can be anything from being horrible on a picture on Facebook to text bullying. (Anna)

Anna chose to ignore her best friend turned frenemy's behaviour for many years until the trust was broken. Anna could not trust her frenemy anymore because she would spread her secrets, gossip and bitch about her to others. Anna realised her friend was a frenemy when she tried to steal her boyfriend.

Everything that's not nice like texting maybe. It such a sinful act, like they can do it so conniving. Its anything really that is not particularly nice. So more verbal and anything texting side of bullying. (Lila)

Lila had one bullying incident that made her realise her best friend was a frenemy. Her frenemy invited the whole friendship group except Lila to a birthday sleepover. During the sleepover, Lila received texts from the girls asking if she was a lesbian and other hurtful things. Lila also mentioned that while she was a part of that friendship group they would make digs at her about being Maori. She noticed, as she put it, "segregation" within the group.

You know there's always that physical, mental so anything that makes the other person uncomfortable or cause frenemies obviously don't go around punching their friends in the face. It's not physical bullying its more putting someone out, out-casting them and ignoring them. (Kayla)

Kayla's frenemy bitched about her and tried to exclude her from the group or at the least would exclude her from conversations. Kayla was not the only friend that was targeted by this frenemy. This meant Kayla, at times, witnessed the frenemy bitching and gossiping about other friends.

Most of the things I think about is physical bullying, so punching and kicking and that, but then in the back of my mind I think about mental bullying. Like always shutting them out like not including them like always being picked last for sports sort of thing. (Emma)

Emma had two frenemies, the first, suddenly turned on her and excluded her from the friendship group. After the exclusion, some rumours were spread about her. Her second frenemy is a girl who she has been best friends with from a young age. During their friendship, her frenemy has dissed her, bitched and gossiped about her behind her back, and has tried to guilt trip her over boys.

Discussion

The bullying experienced by the participants from their friends who turned into frenemies was mostly indirect. For some the bullying was over a long period until the friendship ended, while for the others the bullying happened in an overt incident. Some of the young women who participated in this research did not realise at first that their friend had begun to bully them and had turned into a frenemy. I believe it is hard to distinguish when a friend is a frenemy because of the type of bullying that frenemies use against their friends. Many of the bullying tactics are not overt in nature so are hard to spot. They are also tactics that teenage girls may not associate as bullying such as gossiping (Coyne et al., 2006; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). In addition, the high disclosure and intimacy in a female adolescent friendship can result in frenemies using indirectly aggressive behaviours against their targets. As the frenemy will know private and sensitive information about their target, indirect tactics will be the most effective to cause pain and hurt to their target.

Types of Bullying

The types of bullying experienced by participants' in this study were bitching, gossiping and exclusion. These indirect aggressive behaviours are common forms of bullying and other forms include talking just loud enough for the target to hear and disdainful facial expressions. By using indirect methods, the frenemy can conceal their intention from others (Besag, 2006; Björkqvist et al., 1992; Owens et al., 2000a; Shute et al., 2002). For example, the participants in this study do not know why their friend turned into a frenemy. Even though they found out through other friends about the bitching and gossiping, they can only guess at the intention behind their frenemy's behaviour.

By using indirect aggressive behaviours against friends, the frenemy can begin the bullying without the target knowing. Bitching behind the target's back can start quite easily. Using a comment such as 'what's her problem, she's being such a bitch lately' can test which friends would join in or stick up for the target. In my own experience as a frenemy, getting other friends to join in the bitching can act as a protective barrier because those friends will not want to be caught out in their own bitching. This is not always true, however, because there are some friends who join in, and then to protect themselves, will go and tell the target what everyone else said.

The participants did not explicitly mention nonverbal social aggression behaviours such as eye rolling, hostile eye gazes, abruptly turning away from the target (Blake et al., 2011). These behaviours have been found to coincide with exclusion, as when a group decides to exclude someone they will turn away from them, and use hostile gazes to portray the target is unwanted (Blake et al., 2011; James & Owens, 2005; Shute et al., 2002). These behaviours however, are not always seen as bullying behaviours by girls, which could explain why in this study there was little mention of them occurring.

There was only one incident of physical bullying in this study. Ruby had two best friends beat her up. Even though most of the literature says girls are more indirectly aggressive and are encouraged not to be physically aggressive (Björkqvist et al., 1992; Owens et al., 2000a). The absence of more physical bullying, was slightly surprising, as there has been a number of news articles about girls physical aggression in New Zealand being on the rise (Binning, 2011; E2NZ.org, 2011; Tapaleao & Collins, 2012). However, this does not give an overall definitive view on girls' physical aggression.

The lack of cyber bullying in this study intrigued me. Some participants had experiences that were not relevant to this study as the bullying was not from friends. As there have been many news stories about the rise in cyber bullying, I was expecting to find that frenemies also use technology to bully their targets (Bailey, 2013; Collins, 2013; Shanks, 2013). One participant, Lila, did receive a text message from her frenemy but it happened on one occasion only. I believe the size of this research is why there were not more cases of technology being used to

bully the targets. I believe this area needs more research done with a focus on friends using technology to bully friends.

When is it Bullying?

The behaviours used by frenemies are not all seen as bullying by frenemies and targets (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004). Gossip is a normal part of high school life for girls but can also be used to bully someone. Coyne et al. (2006) use the term ‘malicious gossip’ to highlight the intention behind the gossip. When someone is deliberately saying things to hurt their target, which would be malicious gossip, compared to someone passing along a piece of information without the intention to hurt the person, which would just be gossip. When a frenemy uses gossip intentionally to hurt their target, it is bullying (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Coyne et al., 2006). However, identifying the intention behind the gossip can be hard to do. Therefore, the perceived intention of the gossip by the target must also be taken into account. A friend may pass along a piece of gossip without intending to hurt anyone; the person whom the gossip is about may believe that friend is trying to hurt them. Anna, for example, believes her frenemy used gossip to hurt her by spreading rumours.

Exclusion is another tactic used by frenemies. Again, there is a fine line between whether the exclusion is bullying or not. As friendships are a matter of choice (Owens et al., 2000a), deciding when exclusion is bullying or just the natural end of a friendship is difficult. The intention behind the exclusion is unlikely to be known by the target (Owens et al., 2000a; Shute et al., 2002). The type of exclusion will often be the deciding factor as to whether or not a friend has become a frenemy. Kayla’s frenemy tried and failed to exclude her from conversations. Kayla does not know the reason why her frenemy did not want her in those conversations. The frequency of this type of behaviour towards Kayla made the attempted exclusion bullying behaviour. However, for Sophie, her exclusion was at the extreme end of a continuum of exclusionary behaviours (Shute et al., 2002). She was ostracised from the friend group after the mediation failed. This paired with the verbal abuse made her exclusion bullying. Friends experience different types of bullying behaviour from their frenemies. The impact this type of bullying has had on the participants is discussed next.

Key Question 4: What is the impact of such bullying?

I think being bullied and having that is something that no matter the amount of help you get, it's something that you still never get over. It's kind of like if someone puts a nail into a piece of wood, you can pull the nail out but it has a scar, the hole's still there. (Charlotte)

For each participant the bullying has had different impacts. The initial impact on the target was confusion. The confusion lead participants to seek out social support from other friends. Longer-term impacts were anxiety, lack of self-esteem, the ability to trust others and lack of interest in socialising. The positive impact the participants spoke of was now being able to recognise personalities they believe would become frenemies.

Charlotte had a trusted best friend turn on her, while she wanted to work things out, her frenemy spread personal information about her around the school. The confusion over why her friend had turned against her and the anxiety about what her frenemy would do next has had lasting effects on Charlotte. When her anxiety levels are high, it affects her ability to be around crowds. To this day, she still struggles with anxiety and sometimes avoids going to lectures at University. Her self-esteem was also affected by the betrayal of her best friend. She now doubts her ability to choose friends and is cautious and hesitant when making new acquaintances.

Charlotte uses her experience to guide her but remains cautious and hesitant. Ruby does not see her hesitancy to trust newcomers and potential friends as a negative impact, resulting from the bullying by her frenemies. While Ruby will trust people once they have proved to be trustworthy she believes that the bullying

Has made me stronger because I'm more independent, like I don't have to rely on other people... I'm sort of more sceptical of people but once I know they are reliable I do.

However, Ruby also admits that she does not want to make new friends and most of her friends are now male as girls are too “*bitchy*”. She says that while it sounds a bit antisocial, she finds it is easier. For other participants’ the negative impact is more noticeable to themselves. Sophie had tried to resolve the problem

with her frenemy by going to the school counsellor. She was confused about her frenemy's change in behaviour towards her but the mediation did not work.

Sophie said the impact from the bullying by her frenemy completely

Destroyed it [their friendship] and most of my friendships. I did not really have a friend after that. I do not really get close to people anymore. Although I float around groups quite okay I find being able to associate with people ok but I do not really go out anymore.

Some participants have used the negative experience of their frenemies to guide them with new friendships. By doing this they have also turned their experience into a positive way of understanding different personalities. For Charlotte, even though the bullying has had lasting effects, she says

It has kind of made me more compassionate and more understanding of other people's feelings. I want to go into social work so I can help people like that, because you can't stop it but you could at least make people stronger for it because it really sucks when you don't know anything about it and then you have to pretty much struggle on your own.

Lila has similarly used her experience to guide her, having had her best friend and friendship group turn on her, she says

I think it has definitely impacted me in, like the friendships I make now. I'm so picky about who I hang out with... I've said to myself... If they are not nice to be around, if they are not going to uplift me, then I'm not going to hang around them.

Kayla used her experience, with her frenemy being a member of her friendship group as a learning opportunity, she said

If I did not know her beforehand, I would not know what a frenemy was. So it has made me more wiser on different personalities and things but because I can spot people I don't want to be friends with I trust the friends I do have.

Charlotte and Sophie were able to recognise the effect the bullying has had on them while Ruby seems to underestimate the effect. I believe the full impact

the bullying has had may not be evident now. As there has not been a long period between the bullying and this study, other impacts may arise at a later stage.

Discussion

When friendships suddenly change, the initial impact is often confusion and denial (Owens et al., 2000c). Denial works in two ways when friendship bullying happens. The first is denial that it is actually bullying. The second is denial over the hurt and pain caused by the bullying (Owens et al., 2000c). The target does not often know why the bullying started and is hurt by the “loss of trust and intimacy in their friendships” (James & Owens, 2005, p. 81). Also when a close friendship ends, both parties know personal information about each other, which can be used against them (Storch & Masia-Warner, 2004).

When discussing the impact the bullying had on the participants, many focused on the long-term impact, not the initial impact of the bullying. Most of the participants spoke about how they have used their experience to guide them in future friendships. This was the main positive effect participants mentioned. However, Charlotte spoke about the effect on her self-esteem and levels of social anxiety.

Charlotte’s experience relates to findings from Storch and Masia-Warner (2004) who found targets of friends indirect aggression are likely to have elevated levels of social anxiety. Thomas and Daubman (2001) found girls’ friendships were correlated to their self-esteem levels. When friendships start to deteriorate, their self-esteem also starts to deteriorate, but when friendships are strong, they are likely to have higher self-esteem.

When a best friend turns into a frenemy, the target is often in denial that their friend has begun to bully them. In this study, two participants did not want to admit, at the time, their best friend was bullying them. One of those still denies her ‘best friend’ bullies her, purely because she wants to keep the friendship. They have been ‘best friends’ since kindergarten and she does not want to end the friendship because of the length of time, rather than the friendship itself as she calls her ‘best friend’ a “*total bitch*”. This scenario is linked to literature showing that girls are often confused and have mixed feelings towards the friendship when

they are targets of indirect aggression (Mishna et al., 2008; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011). This is also linked to literature showing that some adolescents will stay in friendships with aggressive peers to protect themselves from victimization by others (Mishna et al., 2008).

Other participants recognised the behaviour as bullying but wanted to fix their friendship rather than end the relationship. As conflict in friendships is inevitable, their first reaction was to work out the conflict without endangering the relationship (Mishna et al., 2008; Remillard & Lamb, 2005). This meant, for my participants, that they did not seek help from a teacher, as there was a high risk that would end the friendship (Mishna et al., 2008). However, maintaining the friendship may not always result in a positive outcome. The consequence of this is that girls are choosing to preserve a friendship, “even at the cost of self-esteem and self-respect” (Remillard & Lamb, 2005, p. 227).

A long-term impact for two participants is their hesitancy to make new friends. Ruby reported that she avoided making new friends after being bullied by her frenemies. While still at school, she found it easier to stay ‘friends’ with her frenemies than making new friends. Sophie also said she finds it hard to make new friends and she does not like to socialise much anymore. This finding is similar to one study which linked avoidance of general and new social situations, to the effects of relational victimization (Storch & Masia-Warner, 2004). For these two participants, I believe there is a fear of being rejected, which also influences their decision not to seek new friends (Mishna et al., 2008; Storch & Masia-Warner, 2004; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011).

The desire to be socially accepted in adolescence can influence how targets let their frenemies bullying outwardly affect them. Many of the participants did not want their frenemy to see just how hurt they were over the bullying. This in turn influenced how they sought help to deal with their frenemy.

Key Question 5: How do young women respond to bullying from their frenemy?

When the participants realised their friend had turned into a frenemy and was bullying them they responded in different ways with some talking with other friends, some tolerating it, others were in denial, and most sought advice.

Talked to Friends

Charlotte, Anna and Kayla all turned to friends for support and advice when they discovered their friend had turned into frenemy. By talking with friends, it gave the young women a sounding board to try to understand the change in the friendship. Charlotte had two friend groups, so was able to go to the group her frenemy was not a part of to discuss her frenemy's behaviour. Charlotte found it useful talking with her friends because they could give her insight about why her friend had turned on her. Anna found comfort in talking with mutual friends because she found she was not the only person who was affected by her frenemy. Kayla and her friends discovered her frenemy was bitching about most of the friend group behind their backs. By talking with her friends, they were all able to support each other and put a stop to the frenemies bullying behaviour. For these three participants through talking about their frenemy with trusted friends, they were able to brainstorm different ideas as to why their friend had turned into a frenemy and what they could do to repair the friendship.

Sought Advice from Adults

Ruby, Charlotte and Lila sought advice from their mothers. Unsure of what to do about their frenemies the young women followed their mother's advice. For Ruby, she stuck with her frenemies to try to sort things out. Ruby said she just had to remember that what you think of yourself matters more than what anyone else thinks. Charlotte's mother originally wanted to go sort it out with the frenemies family but Charlotte was against this idea. Her mother told her to hang in there and be there to support her frenemy because she "*might come around*".

Lila went to her mother as well but because her mother was a teacher at her school, she set up a mediation between Lila, her frenemy and mutual friends involved. She also told Lila that friends should be a positive influence in her life.

Charlotte and Sophie went to counsellors about their frenemies. For Charlotte, she chose a counsellor outside the school system; she believes that it helped her to understand she was not to blame for her frenemies behaviour. The counselling sessions gave her time to discuss how much stress the bullying was putting on her.

Sophie's experience put her off seeking any more help from adults. Her school counsellor set up a mediation between her, her frenemy, and friends of her frenemy. The counsellor left Sophie alone in the room with her frenemy and frenemies' friends who all ganged up on her. This resulted in the bullying becoming intensified. Sophie had tried to sort things out but after the mediation failed, she put up with the behaviour and avoided her frenemy whenever possible.

Tolerance

Ruby chose to tolerate and ignore the bullying from her frenemies. The status of the friendship group outweighed the desire for the bullying to stop. Ruby had her two best friends turn into frenemies, as they were also the two popular girls of the group, she put up with the bullying. She also said she stayed in that friendship group because it was easier than going to make new friends. Ruby would also do the same thing back to her frenemies. For example, if they were making snarky comments to her she would make snarky comments back.

For two participants, Anna and Emma, tolerance and denial that was given to friends who were bullying them came from the need to have friends. Anna chose, at first to deny and ignore, and then began to tolerate the behaviours that others would see as bullying. She describes her 'best friend' as having "*No moral compass on the fact that if I told her something that that was between us*". The trust between them dwindled as her frenemy continued to spread her secrets and gossip about her. This behaviour was not new for her frenemy but Anna had ignored it many times before because as she said "*I wasn't in a great place and I was looking for all the friends I could get*". At the time, Anna continued to give her frenemy second chances until their final year of high school. Anna said

Throughout the year there had been heaps of little other bits and pieces where she had broken my trust. Then the final thing was the boy. I really liked him and she knew it

and I was making an effort to talk to him and then she started texting him and then she didn't even like him. She just didn't like that fact that I liked him.

After the trouble over the boy, her frenemy moved away. This gave Anna the space and time she needed to realise she did not want or need her frenemy in her life. She said

Once she moved I pretty much cut the lines. I was like ok this is a new starting point and I don't really want you in my life. And I found it better because there was less drama.

Emma's best friend since kindergarten in her words is "a total bitch". Her frenemy is manipulative and tries to guilt trip her over boys. However, Emma continues to make excuses for her frenemy's behaviour and is very tolerant towards her. She uses her frenemy's up bringing to justify the 'spoilt' behaviour her frenemy shows. Emma continues to call her frenemy her best friend.

Discussion

The three main responses identified in this study were talking to friends, seeking advice from adults and tolerating the bullying. Research has shown girls are likely to use two main coping strategies, which are either emotion-focused or problem-focused (Remillard & Lamb, 2005). Emotion-focused strategies include "avoidance, ignoring, withdrawing, and expressing oneself negatively" (Remillard & Lamb, 2005, p. 223). Problem-focused strategies "which are characterized by outside support, both social and instrumental, and organizing plans of action" (Williams & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 2000 as cited in Remillard & Lamb, 2005, p. 223). With these two types of coping strategies, it is clear in this study, participants used problem-focused strategies first and then emotion-focused strategies if the first failed. Sophie, for example, first responded by seeking outside support from the school counsellor, after the mediation failed she withdrew and avoided the situation.

When the frenemy was a best friend and the target sought help, the advice given by adults was aimed to preserve the friendship (Besag, 2006; Mishna et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2000b; Remillard & Lamb, 2005). Studies have shown that

girls are encouraged to persevere with friendships even when indirect aggression is present (Besag, 2006; Crothers et al., 2005; Remillard & Lamb, 2005).

Girls who are bullied are most likely to talk to friends first before seeking help from adults (Hunter et al., 2004). Friends are a social support network for girls and many will tell friends about bullying to make themselves feel better (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Danby et al., 2011; Hunter et al., 2004). However, when a friend is doing the bullying, girls must decide which friends can be trusted. When two friends are fighting, it is typical for mutual friends to take sides. Therefore, when targets are deciding which friends to confide in they need to weigh up which friends can be trusted.

However, talking to friends can backfire on targets, as these targets are essentially talking behind their frenemy's back; does that make them a frenemy as well? Kayla said, "If someone pisses me off, I want to talk to someone about it and that's normally to one of my friends who knows them and will kind of get it". This is where I believe the intention behind the behaviour is relevant. Kayla for example, just wants to vent and let off steam. She does not want to hurt or exclude the girl. The downside is girls must make sure what they are saying in their vent is not shared around. In my own experience, I found that some friends would become "stirrers" in these situations. A stirrer is "a person who tries to make situations in which people disagree even worse" (Urban Dictionary, 2010). In frenemy situations, this girl goes back and forth between the two saying what the other has said but will also add in things that are not true to make the conflict worse instead of better. A stirrer will likely side with whoever she believes to have more social power in the situation, most likely the frenemy.

Talking to friends can have positive impacts as well. For Anna, talking with others gave her reassurance that she was not alone in being targeted. She found out that her frenemy was also gossiping and breaking confidences with other friends. Kayla had a similar outcome with her friends and as a group; they made it clear that the frenemy's behaviour was not going to be tolerated. This resulted in the frenemy changing her behaviour. In one study, researchers found "40% of the girls remained friends and became even closer friends with the aggressor of the incident they described" (Remillard & Lamb, 2005, p. 226) in

indirectly aggressive situations. However, when the target seeks help from an adult, normally a teacher, that lowers the chance of an amicable result (Besag, 2006; Hunter et al., 2004; James & Owens, 2005; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Owens et al., 2000c; Remillard & Lamb, 2005).

Some of the participants in this study went to their mothers for advice. The choice to talk to an adult about what is going on is often weighed up against the risk involved. One risk in telling an adult about being bullied by a friend is that one will not be believed (Danby et al., 2011; James & Owens, 2005; Mishna et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2000b). As some adults do not understand how hurtful indirect aggression can be, they can dismiss incidents as girls being girls (Danby et al., 2011). When the frenemy is a best friend, many adults may just assume that the two girls are having a tiff and will sort it out themselves (Shute et al., 2002). Therefore, many targets have to decide whether the possible repercussions of talking to adult outweigh the possible advantages.

For the participants who sought help from their mothers, two were given advice but asked their parents not to intervene as they had mixed feelings about whether their mother would help or make things worse. This finding is similar to girls' attitudes towards parent and teacher intervention in James and Owens (2005) research. In this study, Lila, went to her mother, who was a teacher at her school, when her best friend turned into a frenemy. Her mother intervened by setting up a mediation at school with the frenemy and other girls involved. This was not good for Lila, as her frenemy retaliated by making the bullying worse. This retaliation is what many targets fear when going to adults for help (Danby et al., 2011; James & Owens, 2005; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Shute et al., 2002).

Help seeking can have both positive and negative effects but for Sophie it resulted in her frenemy retaliating and intensifying the bullying. Sophie did not seek help from teachers or the school counsellor again for two reasons. The first was because she had already tried to get help, which made things worse, she thought no one could or would help. The second was her frenemy was fairly popular and was always nice in front of authority figures. Therefore, Sophie put up with the bullying, tried to avoid her frenemy where possible, and hoped over time the bullying would stop.

The influence of popularity and group status on the targets' response to bullying has been found in many studies (Currie et al., 2007; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b, 2000c; Willer & Cupach, 2008). The importance for girls to be in the 'right' group and feel socially accepted can often outweigh the desire for the bullying to stop. Group status was one reason Ruby chose to tolerate the bullying from her frenemies. Ruby was willing to endure bullying behaviours from her two frenemies so long as she was a part of the cool group. Within the group itself, Ruby's frenemies were the 'popular' girls, which meant while some of the group may not have liked them much, because of their social power, no one would challenge them. This has been found in other studies as well (Currie et al., 2007; Henrich et al., 2000; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b, 2000c; Willer & Cupach, 2008).

The popularity of a frenemy can also influence whom targets will go to for help. In this study, Charlotte, Kayla, Emma and Anna chose to go to a friend first rather than an adult because adult intervention is often unhelpful and can result in retaliation. The influence a popular frenemy can have on a target's social standing is another reason some targets will not seek help from teachers. Many popular girls will be skilled in using indirect aggression to keep others in their social place to maintain their own social dominance (Currie et al., 2007; Willer & Cupach, 2008). Therefore, many popular girls will know when to play nice in front of authority figures. By having a nice girl persona, teachers and adults may be hesitant to believe the bullying accusations by targets (Currie et al., 2007; Owens et al., 2000b).

Denial of the bullying behaviour and the need for friends were the reasons for two participants to continue their 'friendships' with their frenemies. Anna labelled herself as a people pleaser who wanted friends for support, as home life was unstable. Emma denied that she had been bullied by a friend, but then went on to discuss many situations that were bullying and came to that realisation during her interview. She labelled her best friend as a frenemy and a "*total bitch*" yet stayed friends with her because they had been friends since kindergarten. As I chose to end my friendship with my frenemy, the desire for Anna and Emma to remain 'friends' with their frenemies puzzled me.

This started to raise questions about why some people end the relationship and why some people hang on to it. Are there certain types of people who are more likely to have long-term frenemies? Anna, for example, mentioned problems with home life and that she was in a ‘bad place’. Therefore, she wanted all the friends she could get for support. While this study is too small to make definite conclusions, I would speculate that having an unstable home life would make some girls rely on support from friends, even if they are frenemies, and will continue the relationship as long as the emotional support they get outweighs the negative impact.

A study by Weir (2011, p. 19) found “people who don’t feel good about themselves are more likely to tolerate toxic friends because they’re afraid of not having any friends at all”. While this may be true for some girls, Weir did not consider the social dominance and power a popular frenemy may hold. I do not think tolerating a toxic friend or frenemy is necessarily because the girls feel bad about themselves; rather they know how the social order works and do not want to lose status.

The participants responded in a variety of ways with some seeking advice from friends, others went to counsellors and parents. Others put up with their frenemies either by choice or because they felt nothing could be done. Two participants also used tolerance of frenemies behaviours as a way to hold on to friendships for the sake of having friends. Therefore, what things support or undermine attempts to deal effectively with a frenemy?

Key Question 6: What things support or undermine attempts to deal effectively with a frenemy?

For this question, effectively, means the bullying behaviour stops. Therefore, things that helped to stop the bullying behaviour will be seen as supportive avenues that the participants used. While any that hindered or encouraged the participants to persevere with the ‘friendship’ will be seen as undermining attempts to end the bullying. Some avenues were supportive for some participants but failed for others. Counselling was one such avenue.

Counsellors

Seeking help from counsellors had mixed results for participants. Charlotte had a positive experience with a counsellor outside of the school system. She did not go to the school counsellor because she wanted someone who was completely separate from the situation. The counselling helped her understand that her frenemy's behaviour was not her fault.

Sophie and Lila had unsuccessful experiences with school counsellors. Sophie's experience with her school counsellor had the opposite effect of what Sophie wanted. Instead of helping the situation, the counsellor made things worse for her. They had a group mediation in which the counsellor left Sophie in the room with her frenemy and frenemy's supporters. They ganged up on Sophie and this resulted in more bullying and ended friendships she had with some of the other girls.

Lila's mediation experience was better than Sophie's but Lila also felt her frenemy and supporters ganged up on her. Lila's mediation happened due to her mother's involvement, as her mother was a teacher at the school. Lila believes that the girls also put on the waterworks to get out of trouble. After making excuses about their home life, they used that as justification for their behaviour. Lila made the decision after the mediation to distance herself from those 'friends' and began to hang out with another group of friends.

Teachers

Emma was the only participant who went to a teacher for help. Most of the participants thought going to a teacher would make things worse. In Emma's situation, she went to a teacher who she trusted. The teacher promised to "*keep an eye on things*" but her frenemy did not say anything in front of the teacher so they could not do anything. Therefore, she felt it was a waste of her time trying to seek help about her frenemy at school.

Ruby, Charlotte, Sophie, and Kayla thought there was no point in going to a teacher because either they would not be able to do anything about their situations or the teacher would make their situations worse.

Parents

Advice from mothers was sought from Ruby, Charlotte and Lila. The most effective advice was from Lila's mother because she encouraged Lila to make new friends that treated her as friends should. Lila received an apology through the mediation but felt it was insincere so followed her mother's advice and made new friends.

Ruby's mother supported her through the bullying from her frenemies but the advice was to stick with the friendship and try work things out. Ruby felt that this was the easiest option compared to making new friends, so continued to be 'friends' with her frenemies. The group's status at the school also made Ruby want to stay in the group. They were classed as one of the cool groups and Ruby enjoyed that attention.

Charlotte's mother gave her mixed advice. At the beginning, her mother wanted to go and sort it out with the frenemy's family. This idea did not appeal to Charlotte, as she did not want her frenemy to get in trouble. The next advice from her mother was 'just be there for her and she might come around'. This advice, in Charlotte's situation, made her believe that she could help fix the problems her frenemy had and try to end the friendship on good terms.

Personal Disposition

Two participants in this study have held onto toxic friends who even they call frenemies. Therefore, their own personalities have enabled their frenemies to continue bullying and using them. Advice given to them to end the friendship was ignored at the time and both defended their frenemies. Anna and Emma both alluded to wanting friends because home life was unsteady at the time. They used their friends for support so were willing to ignore bullying behaviours in order to keep their friend.

Anna labelled herself as a people pleaser who would rather keep friendships so she has friends to turn to when she needs support. She put up with a lot of bullying behaviour from her best friend turned frenemy. When others tried to encourage her to either end the friendship or confront her frenemy about the bullying, Anna chose to ignore the advice and would stick up for her frenemy. She

said, *“I was looking for all the friends I could get”*. Anna is no longer friends with her frenemy but said it was because her frenemy moved away.

Emma has made excuses for her one of her frenemies behaviour for many years. They became best friends at a young age so Emma seems reluctant to end the friendship *“because we have always been best friends...it doesn’t sound right not to be best friends anymore”*. Friends cannot understand why Emma wants to hold on to this friendship, when even she describes her frenemy/best friend as a *“total bitch”*.

Other Friendships

When Charlotte, Sophie, Lila, Kayla and Emma’s frenemies started to bully them they had other friend groups to turn to for support. Mutual friends, of both the target and frenemy, were how Charlotte, Lila and Kayla originally found out their friend had turned into a frenemy. Friends had come to them about their frenemies bitching about them and spreading rumours.

However not all mutual friends stop the bullying from happening. They even may join in so they themselves will not become the target. This happened in Ruby’s friendship circle. The status of her two frenemies, as the leaders of the group, stopped anyone from speaking out against them or their behaviour. Ruby would stand up for others in the group if they were being picked on but no one would stand up for her. She believes part of the reason was because the others did not want to have the frenemies turn on them.

Distance

For all participants, having distance from their frenemies was a helpful way to stop the bullying. Sophie, Lila and Kayla chose to distance themselves from their frenemies to get away from and stop the bullying. This had different outcomes for the three. It gave Sophie a much-deserved break from her frenemy’s taunting and gave her time to make new friends. Lila was able to distance herself from her frenemy by choosing to hang out with the sub-group that occasionally hung out with the main group. Kayla’s frenemy was in some of the same classes with her so she decided not to sit with her anymore. The small change of not

sitting with her frenemy anymore, Kayla thinks, made her frenemy realise her behaviour was not going to be tolerated.

For other participants the distance put in between them and their frenemies was not something they could control. Ruby left school to start Polytechnic training, Anna's frenemy moved to another city, and Emma's family moved away. For Ruby, starting Polytechnic was a new beginning and this caused a rupture in communication between her and her frenemies. When Anna's frenemy moved away she was questioning their friendship and with the lack of contact from her frenemy, Anna decided their friendship was over. Though Emma's family moved away from her frenemy, Emma still labels her as her 'best friend'. Emma does admit her 'best friend' is a frenemy but due to the distance between them, she chooses to remember only the good things about her frenemy.

Charlotte is in a tough position with her frenemy (being her boyfriend's sister). Though Charlotte avoids her where possible, she does not want to be the reason her boyfriend does not see his family. Due to her frenemy trying to cause conflict in their relationship, her boyfriend has started to limit the amount of time he spends with his sister.

Discussion

Each of these strategies, when used with the goal of ending the bullying behaviour, can be successful. However, they can also hinder that goal when advice from others goes against stopping the bullying. This shows a need for education around frenemies and bullying. Teachers, school counsellors and parents far too often dismiss indirect/relational aggression between friends as 'girls being girls' instead of recognising bullying behaviour. For my participants, going to counsellors and teachers had mixed results. The initial help seeking to stop the bullying failed. Counsellors and teachers attitudes towards friendship bullying need to change and they need to acknowledge that it happens.

For the participants who went to counsellors and teachers the overall trend was the failure to stop the bullying. Charlotte found her out of school counsellor helpful but it did not help to stop the bullying, it helped her understand the bullying was not her fault. School counsellors who used mediation for frenemy

conflicts were unsuccessful. Sophie and Lila both had mediations held at school between them, their frenemy and frenemies' supporters. This has left an impression that nothing can be done about the bullying and that no one actually cares about the girl targeted. One study gave advice on how to handle indirect/relational aggressive situations, the authors said

Be careful to avoid attempts to mediate bullying situations. Conflict resolution strategies should not be employed in cases of bullying because forcing the victims to confront the bullies may exacerbate the problem. The imbalance in power may cause victims to feel further victimized or lead to self-blame when traditional mediation procedures are used (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2004, p. 214).

The counsellor's lack of knowledge about the social power differences between these 'friends' has resulted in poor outcomes for the targets. Sophie had the worst result with the counsellor leaving the room and not mediating the session. Sophie was left alone with her frenemy and frenemy's supporters, which resulted in the intensification of the bullying and ended friendships with other mutual friends. Her frenemy used this mediation session as an excuse to retaliate against Sophie for seeking help. Some studies have found when targets do seek help, many frenemies believe they have the right to retaliate against the target for "dobbing" them in (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Mishna et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2000a; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011).

Lila's mediation was handled better but she felt the frenemy and supporters only said what the teachers wanted to hear to get out of trouble. The apology she received was insincere and she believed this showed her frenemy's true colours so took her mother's advice and made new friends.

Teachers who were asked for help could not do anything as the frenemy used indirect aggression. This meant the teacher never saw the behaviour or did not identify the behaviour as bullying. When exclusion is used as a bullying strategy some teachers do not see it as bullying but that the target was just "hurt because of the loss of the friendship" (Mishna et al., 2008, p. 558). Many teachers

do not believe that social exclusion is a serious problem or bullying (Naylor et al., 2006).

The attitudes of counsellors' and teachers' towards indirect/relational aggression and the effect have been studied numerous times (Jacobsen & Bauman, 2007; James & Owens, 2005; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Naylor et al., 2006; Owens et al., 2000a, 2000b, 2000c; Shute et al., 2002). Students do not want to go to school staff because of the often-ineffective outcomes. The above experiences of Sophie and Lila with mediation are a good example since the outcome made things worse. Neither girl sought more help. With school staff minimising the potential seriousness of indirect aggression as 'girls being girls' they are limiting the amount of supportive avenues girls can access to end bullying within a friendship.

The advice given from parents differed depending on whom the frenemy was and the type of bullying used. When the frenemy was a best friend, the advice tended to be to resolve the issue and maintain the friendship. This can be problematic if the target wants the bullying to stop. Parents may not understand the full impact of the bullying because they do not see what is going on and they have to rely on their daughter to tell them. When the participants sought advice from their parents none wanted the parents to intervene, they just wanted advice on how to deal with the situation themselves. Lila's mother (who was a teacher) intervened by setting up a mediation which Lila did not find helpful. However, the advice her mother gave her, about how friends should treat each other and only to have positive people in her life, Lila found very helpful.

Parents are often in a hard position in these situations because, as in this study, the majority of bullying happens during school hours and on school grounds. The chances of parents hearing about the gossiping and bitching are slim unless their daughter tells them. In this study, only three participants sought their mother's help. The other four relied on friends for support and advice.

Many adolescent girls start to rely on friends for support more than family as they are seeking to become more independent (Mishna et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2000c). In this study, five participants found out about their frenemy from mutual friends who in turn supported them through the bullying. Many studies

have found friendships to be a protective factor against bullying but these studies treated friendships as a separate group from bullies (Archer & Coyne, 2005; Besag, 2006; Björkqvist et al., 1992; Coyne et al., 2006; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Currie et al., 2007; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Kendrick et al., 2012; Mishna et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2000b; Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011). Therefore, they have not considered the possibility that friends can bully, targets may consider the bully a friend or the bully may see the target as a friend. Some studies have begun to look into friendship bullying and found many targets and bullies find the friendship reciprocal (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Mishna et al., 2008; Owens et al., 2000b).

Not all friendships are supportive. This is particularly so when the frenemy is the popular girl in the group. In this study, Ruby and Sophie had friends turn on them so they would remain in the cool group. The status of their frenemies had meant others in the group were either afraid to stand up against the frenemy or afraid they would become the next targets. This trend of choosing the popular side has been found in other studies in which friends may side with the bully for self-protection (Salmivalli et al., 2010). This can mean for adolescent girls, friendships are unstable and some friends will follow whoever has higher social influence instead of who may be the better friend.

How participants dealt with their frenemy was influenced by their personalities. Their home life was also a contributing factor. Two participants held onto their frenemy because they did not want to see the behaviour as bullying. Due to an unstable home life, they wanted all the friends they could get, even if those friends were bullying them.

Anna comes across as someone who forgives easily and will give many second chances before she ends the relationship. While she did not go into details about her home life, she did say she needed friends because home was not so great at the time. It took Anna a few years before she ended her friendship with her frenemy and that was because her frenemy moved to another city. Emma comes across as very reluctant to end her friendship with her frenemy. She calls her 'best friend' a frenemy and a "*total bitch*" but still looks for the best in her. There was also a sense of needing the friendship. Emma remains in contact with her frenemy even though her family moved away.

Studies that have looked at victims of bullying found targets are usually unpopular, often lack social skills, and tend to be insecure, anxious, and withdrawn. They are more submissive than their non-bullied peers (Besag, 2006; Coyne et al., 2006; Crothers et al., 2005; Danby et al., 2011; James & Owens, 2005; Mishna & Alaggia, 2005). This study did not seek to look into whom and why someone becomes a target, but I believe there is a link between different personality types and how they will handle a frenemy situation.

Putting distance between the target and frenemy helped most of the participants whether the choice was theirs or not. For some participants putting a small distance between them and their frenemy at school helped. For other participants, having moved or having their frenemy move away from the area, helped end the relationship and bullying. For the most part putting distance between the two was a positive as it stopped the bullying for most. However, I would be cautious to say it would work for everyone. For one participant, Charlotte, her frenemy is her boyfriend's sister. While Charlotte stays away when possible, it is a very complicated situation, as she does not want to be the reason there is a rift between brother and sister.

While the frenemy and target are still at school, distance is not very practicable. When they have classes together, the target is very limited as to whether they can put some distance between them and their frenemy. In addition, as mentioned earlier, teachers' lack of knowledge surrounding indirect aggression, means seeking teacher help may risk retaliation from the frenemy. Outside of school, the target can put space between them to a certain extent. In this study, cyber bullying was not very prevalent but I believe that with the growing use of social media, frenemies will soon target them anywhere at any time through cyber bullying.

Other findings

Being a Frenemy

One theme I thought I would find is that most girls have been a frenemy at some point. This interested me because at which point do you go from friend to

frenemy with your own behaviour. When I asked if my participants had ever been a frenemy to someone I found it interesting that some at first said no but then described a situation in which they had been, while others were open and said yes. For those who admitted being a frenemy I was curious to see where their boundaries were for what they would do to their target.

Charlotte admitted that she had targeted one girl and only did things to her that she (the target) had done to Charlotte. She said she knew that her behaviour was wrong and tried to make sure no one found out what she was doing. When people did find out, she stopped and tried to cover up her behaviour. Charlotte did not want her friend's opinions about her to change, so she used gossip and rumours to tarnish her target's reputation.

Charlotte's story about being a frenemy had a similar theme with others stories. Anna and Emma both targeted someone to get back at them using the same tactics that had been used against them. Retaliation was used as a justification for becoming frenemies. The behaviours described to me by Charlotte, Anna and Emma did not seem to me to be overly aggressive towards their target and all stopped when other friends started to find out about their bad behaviour.

Kayla was not sure whether she had been a frenemy because while her frenemy was targeting her, she talked to other friends, about what was going on so was essentially bitching behind her frenemies back. This situation is common, but does raise questions about the intentions behind the behaviour. Kayla went to talk/bitch about her frenemy to other friends because the situation was annoying and she did not know why her frenemy was targeting her. So does that make her a frenemy? Kayla was not out to intentionally hurt her frenemy but was trying to figure out the situation with other friends.

From my own experience, the intent behind the behaviour is important. When I was a frenemy, I wanted to get back at one girl for making up a rumour about me. I used my knowledge from our friendship to hurt her by telling our mutual friends her issues. I intentionally and knowingly told people selected information that she would not want certain people to know. She may have

bitched about someone, so I told them what she had said, or if she had a crush on a boy I would tell him.

Discussion

Four participants had been a frenemy as well as the victim of one. This raised some interesting areas that are important as to why a friend becomes a frenemy. The intention behind their behaviour gave an insight to how some frenemies may think. How the target views the intention is important as well. If they do not want to see the behaviour as intentionally aimed to hurt them, then they are likely to make excuses for their frenemy. Jealousy was alluded to as a reason behind some of the participant's frenemies. Another key theme was retaliation. Charlotte, Anna, and Emma have all been a frenemy at some point. All three used retaliation as a justification for their behaviour as they "*only did what she had done to me*".

Intention

The intention behind the behaviour is important because a friend may hurt you without intending to while a frenemy's intent would be to hurt you. This is a hard thing to work out. Many targets do not know the intent behind their frenemies behaviour. In some of my participants' experiences with their frenemies, the intent behind the behaviour was hidden so well that they did not realise their frenemy was out to hurt them until other friends told them. I found it interesting when going through literature surrounding bullying that there was not more on why the bully chose intentionally to hurt someone. As a frenemy, this is the key purpose, to hurt, whether it is to hurt their reputation, social status, relationship or their feelings. For this reason, I believe there is a need for more research into frenemies and their targets.

On the other side, how the target views the intention behind behaviour may be more important in the identification of bullying (Wei & Jonson-Reid, 2011). This is relevant because friends normally do not try to inflict pain on each other. Therefore, there is a balance within each friendship as to where certain comments and behaviour go from friendly criticism and joking to bullying. For participants in this study, each one had different tolerance levels, which were

guided by who the frenemy was. For example, Anna put up with a lot of bullying behaviour from her frenemy because she had been her best friend.

Jealousy

Jealousy was thought to be the reason behind the bullying for Charlotte, Lila, and Anna. Charlotte believed that because she was more socially accepted and had more boyfriends than her frenemy, this was what caused the bullying to start. Lila thought because she was a part of a Maori support group with some ‘hot guys’ her frenemy became jealous over the friendships she made within that group. Jealousy over boys was highlighted as a reason for indirect aggression in Owens et al. (2000a) research. Participants, in this study, had frenemies try to steal their boyfriends and would guilt trip them over boys they liked. A guilt trip is when “someone tries to make you feel guilty for thinking/feeling/doing things a certain way” (Urban Dictionary, 2004). Anna was guilt tripped because her frenemy decided that she liked the same boy Anna did, said she had liked him first so Anna should not like him.

Retaliation

There are two sides with retaliation. In the first, targets retaliate and turn into frenemies themselves. In the second, frenemies retaliate against “dobbers” (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005; Owens et al., 2000a). Dobbers are targets who ‘tell on’ their frenemies. Four participants in this study used retaliation as justification for their behaviour. After being targeted by their own frenemy, they became a frenemy back. This back and forth behaviour would not fall under many traditional definitions of bullying (Aalsma & Brown, 2008; Björkqvist et al., 1992; Owens et al., 2000b; Salmivalli et al., 2010). The power imbalance is often used to differentiate between bullying and other types of aggression. Consequently, the assumption that friends have equal power means two friends, turned frenemies to each other, would be seen as aggression, not bullying. The use of retaliation as justification for their behaviour is a concern, as it is a form of victim blaming (Owens et al., 2000a).

Victim blaming is also used when targets ‘tell on’ their frenemies. The result is the frenemy believes they have the right to get back at the target for

getting them in trouble (Owens et al., 2000a). Comments such as ‘she asked for it’ and ‘she had it coming’ when discussing the intensification of bullying towards a target, who went to a teacher, show attitudes of victim blaming (Owens et al., 2000a). The risk of retaliation from frenemies is enough to put off targets from seeking help (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005). For those that do seek help, if the intervention is not successful, the bullying is very likely to get worse. Sophie’s experience is a clear example of how help seeking gone wrong can make life for the target a “*living hell*”.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

With this study, I wanted to explore what the term frenemy meant for adolescent girls and their friendships. Therefore, the first objective was to define the word frenemy and then how would one spot a frenemy. The second objective was to find out what types of bullying friends experienced from frenemies and what impact the bullying had on them. The last objective was to find out how the friends responded to the bullying and what things supported or undermined attempts to deal with the frenemy.

Much of the information currently available about frenemies is in teen magazines. This study used a qualitative approach by interviewing seven young women about their experiences with their frenemies. This enabled me to get an understanding of their lived experiences. While I have had frenemies of my own, I used my experiences to relate to the young women. This allowed an open discussion of the participants' different experiences.

One key finding in this study was the trend for best friends to turn into frenemies. The repercussions of a best friend turning into a frenemy had effects on the way participants sought help, the advice given to participants, the amount of pain felt, and the attempts to stop the bullying. The participants sought help from other friends when a best friend turned into a frenemy. By talking with friends, the chances of an amicable outcome with the frenemy are considerably higher, compared to when an adults help is sought. Also during adolescence, young women are trying to become more independent and want to try to solve problems by themselves first. However, not all participants sought help. For some they did not recognise the behaviour as bullying because it was their 'best friend' and they did not expect to be bullied by a friend. For others, they chose to 'put up with' or tolerate the bullying behaviour because they wanted to keep the friendship.

The advice given by parents when the frenemy had been a best friend was predominately to continue the friendship. For some participants the advice resulted in more bullying because they were trying to 'be there' for their frenemy. In these situations, parents can only give advice based on what their daughter tells them is going on. Therefore, parents face the difficult task of trying to figure out what is the best advice.

The emotional pain felt by girls when a best friend turns against them is quite significant. As adolescents tend to have highly intimate friendships where they disclose personal secrets and information relating to home life, the sense of betrayal and hurt is keenly felt. When the frenemy uses that information to spread gossip and make up rumours, the target often can't deny what is being said and is hurt that their 'best friend' would break their trust.

Attempts to stop the bullying by a best friend turned frenemy were hindered because it was a 'best friend'. The targets took longer to seek help, even from other friends, sought advice but not interventions from parents, and were willing to endure and tolerate the behaviour. This in turn leads into the finding about the type of behaviour used. Would the targets have tolerated the behaviour for so long if they had recognised their frenemies behaviour as bullying?

Indirect aggression has been found, across countries and cultures, to be the main form of aggression used by females. In this study, the main bullying behaviours used by frenemies against their former friends were indirectly aggressive behaviours. Gossip, bitching, rumours and exclusion were all used as bullying tactics by frenemies. These behaviours are not always associated to bullying by girls, as they are a part of everyday high school life. The intention behind these types of behaviours, which is normally not known by the target, can change them into a bullying tactic. Gossip can be used to bully when the intention is to knowingly use information to cause the target harm, either emotionally or socially. Indirect aggression has been found to be used to damage or manipulate social relationships and social status among female adolescents. As social relationships are important to adolescent females, indirect aggression is an effective way to hurt them.

Another key finding that stood out to me was how help seeking failed for those participants who sought help from school personnel. Studies done in Australia by Owens et al. (2000b) found female adolescents would not go to teaching staff as they were often unhelpful and made the situation worse. I found the same in this study as most participants said they would not bother going to a teacher as they would make the situation worse or would not be able to stop the bullying. School counsellors, in this study, failed to help targets and made the

bullying situation worse. Mediations were used in situations where there was a power imbalance between the frenemy and target. The counsellors also allowed the frenemies to have support people attend the mediation, which resulted in the targets being outnumbered. One counsellor in this situation left the target alone in the room with the frenemy and supporters. They ‘ganged up’ against the target and the bullying intensified as the supporters joined in after the failed mediation. This situation highlights why many female adolescents do not seek help from school personnel. Their attitudes towards indirect aggression between girls as being normal conflicts with many bullying policies saying students should tell an adult when being bullied. Teachers and counsellors should be knowledgeable about all forms of bullying, including being bullied by a former friend turned frenemy.

Overall, this study has shown that a friend can become a frenemy and use indirectly aggressive behaviours to bully. Behaviours such as bitching, gossiping, rumours and exclusion are used to damage their targets social reputation or other friendships. As female adolescents have highly intimate friendships, frenemies can be particularly effective in causing pain when they were once a best friend. When a target seeks help, they are most likely to go to other friends first or seek advice but not intervention from parents. School personnel attitudes towards indirect aggression among girls have resulted in failed attempts to stop the bullying.

Limitations

A limitation was the lack of New Zealand specific research on female adolescent friendships. There was also a lack of information regarding the prevalence of bullying within friendships.

Research on Maori or Pacific Island friendship patterns could not be found. As this study was small, I could not make any conclusions based on cultural identity. While there was information regarding indirect aggression across other countries and cultures, there was no relevant New Zealand based research.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study has begun to look into frenemies but has raised questions along the way. Two participants mentioned an unstable home life as a reason to maintain a relationship with their frenemies. I believe research looking into potential factors that may make a girl more susceptible to having a long-term frenemy would be beneficial.

Another potential area to research is female adolescent personality types and the influence on how they react and cope with a frenemy. I would be interested to see whether stronger personality types are more likely to end the friendship sooner than other personality types.

With the rise of cyber bullying, I believe there is a need to look into whether frenemies use technology to bully their friends. As some social media sites allow for anonymous postings, this could be used by frenemies or by targets to get back at the frenemy.

Another research area looking into different environmental factors would add more knowledge to this topic. As New Zealand has a variety of cultures, it would be interesting to see whether adolescent girls across all cultures experience frenemies.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Poster

Do You Have A Frenemy?

- Are you a female psychology student? (Age 17-22)
- Do/did you have friends who don't treat you right?
- Been bullied by friends?
- Want some course credit? (PSYC102 only)

Please help me out with my research!

I will be holding one on one interviews. These will be held from now **14th August till the end of August**. Please email me if you are interested or have any questions!!

Frenemies

The aim of this research is to investigate frenemies. Frenemies is a term used by female teens, which is not easily defined. Therefore, the first aim is to define the word frenemy and how to recognise a frenemy. The second aim is to find out what types of bullying friends have experienced from frenemies and what impact that had on them. Lastly, to find out how the friends coped/responded to the bullying and what things supported or undermined attempts to deal with the frenemy.

*If you are interested in more information or interested in participating,
please email me: sjb82@students.waikato.ac.nz*

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Frenemies Information Sheet

What is the research about?

This research is looking into bullying that happens between ‘friends’. I use the term frenemies to describe the friend that does the bullying. I am interested in finding out what types of bullying happens.

Who is the researcher?

My name is Shannon Beard and I am a post-graduate student from the School of Psychology. This research is for my Master of Applied Psychology Thesis and may be used for an academic journal article. This research is being supervised by Neville Robertson and Cate Curtis. If you have any queries you can contact us using the details at the bottom of this information sheet.

Who can participate?

For this research any psychology female student aged 17-22, who either has a frenemy who bullied you or witnessed a frenemy bullying another friend. First year psychology students can apply for course credit for participating.

What will I be asked to do?

I would like to interview you one on one. The interview is expected to be about an hour long. These will take place in a library study room, which I will book.

What will be discussed in the interview?

I am interested in finding out more about bullying that happens between female friends. I have six key questions, which are:

1. What is a frenemy?
2. How do you spot a frenemy?
3. What kind of bullying do friends experience from frenemies?
4. What is the impact of such bullying?
5. How do young women respond to bullying from their frenemies?
6. What things support or undermine attempts to deal effectively with frenemies?

What will happen with my information?

The interview will be audio taped and I may write notes. Only my two supervisors and I will have access to the recording and notes.

Will other people know who I am?

The interview will be between you and me so only my supervisors and I will know. You will not be identified in the write up or in my thesis.

What are my rights and what can I expect from the researcher?

You can:

- Ask any questions you may have at any point.
- Decline to answer any specific questions.
- Withdraw from the research at any point during the interview by leaving or up to one week after the interview.
- Ask to see a summary of the research.
- Contact my supervisors or myself if you have any questions or concerns.
- Contact the ethics convenor if you have any concerns.

What do I need to do now?

If you would like to participate in this research please contact me via my email listed below.

Contact details

Researcher: Shannon Beard, email: sjb82@students.waikato.ac.nz

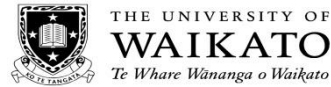
Supervisor: Neville Robertson, email: scorpio@waikato.ac.nz

Supervisor: Cate Curtis, email: ccurtis@waikato.ac.nz

Ethics Convenor: Nicola Starkey, email: nstarkey@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent Form



PARTICIPANT'S COPY

Research Project: Frenemies

Name of Researcher: Shannon Beard

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): Neville Robertson

I have received an information sheet about this research project or the researcher has explained the study to me including possible limits to my privacy. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee (Dr Nicola Starkey, phone: 838 4466 ext.6472, e-mail nstarkey@waikato.ac.nz)

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Consent Form



RESEARCHER'S COPY

Research Project: Frenemies

Name of Researcher: Shannon Beard

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): Neville Robertson

I have received an information sheet about this research project or the researcher has explained the study to me including possible limits to my privacy. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____
Date: _____

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Interview Questions:

1. How do you define a Frenemy?
2. How do you spot a frenemy?
3. What do you consider bullying? Such as name-calling, gossiping, excluding, cyber, and physical violence?
4. Have you been bullied by a friend?
5. What kind of bullying have you experienced from a frenemy?
6. What types of bullying have you seen frenemies do to other friends?
7. Have you ever been a frenemy?
8. What did you do about your frenemy?
9. How did the bullying impact you or your friendship?
10. What things helped deal with your frenemy?
11. What stopped you from ending the friendship with your frenemy?
12. Did other friends stop the bullying?
13. What support system did you have to deal with the bullying?
14. Who gave you advice, and what advice?
15. Did you go to any school staff?