

Parental forgiveness cuts bullying conduct

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Australian researchers say they've determined parental forgiveness and reconciliation can lessen the recurrence of bullying among adolescents.

The scientists at Australian National University surveyed nearly 2,000 Bengali youths and found parental forgiveness and reconciliation promote adaptive shame management and reduces bullying behaviors.

The study says punitive measures, such as suspension and expulsion, may reinforce bullying tendencies by excluding the child from social support networks, thereby triggering inappropriate modes of shame management.

The researchers say school bullies should be held accountable for their actions, but such children need to be re-integrated into social groups where they feel loved by their significant others.

The research by Eliza Ahmed and Valerie Braithwaite, both fellows in the university's Research School of Social Sciences, appears in the *Journal of Social Issues*

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