Introducing
Bullying has recently become an ever growing form of victimization in the UK. In 2011–12 there were 2,410 reported cases of cyberbullying (“Cyberbullying on the rise – ChildLine”) By 2013 this number had almost doubled to 4,507 cases. Students who were bullied in both cyberspace and school experienced difficulties such as low marks, poor concentrations, and absenteeism (Beren & Li, 2007). The purpose of the current study was to investigate the factors that could influence an individual’s willingness to intervene, so that future interventions can be created to prevent bullying and promote pro-social behaviour. Several circumstances were considered in the exploration of when a witness/bystander might intervene in a bullying incident: the group size (Latane & Darley, 1970), the setting (cyber vs. traditional bullying settings), and the gender of the bullying victim. In addition, several personality traits were also considered, including appraisal of emotions in others and altruism.

Method
Participants & procedure
A sample of 82 individuals participated via an opportunity sample, including 22 males and 56 females (2 missing cases). The average age was 24. The only exclusion criteria of the current study were that participants had to be over the age of 18. All participants were recruited using an online survey.

Measures
All participants were presented with different scenarios to assess and asked to report how likely they would intervene (see scenario overview on Table 1).

Victim
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offline (Traditional Bullying)</th>
<th>Online (Cyber bullying)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small grp</td>
<td>Large grp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 1</td>
<td>Scen. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male 2</td>
<td>Scen. 2</td>
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In addition, we asked about participants’ awareness of press cases of bullying. To assess personality, we used two scales. First, the 10 items from Rushton’s (1982) altruism scale. An example item is: “I have donated goods or clothes to a charity” with a response range of 1 “never” to 5 “very often” (α=.70; SD=96). Second, appraisals of others was assessed using 7 items from the emotional intelligence subscale (Schutte et al., 1998). An example item is: “I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them” with a response range of 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree” (α=.70; M=3.57; SD=.74), Finally, participants are also requested to tell us what resources and contacts they would ask for help. We also asked what help methods the participants were most likely to use themselves if bullied. The study concluded with a few questions about past bullying experiences and demographics.

Results
Previous experience with bullying & social network use
Almost half (n=38) of all participants had previous experiences with bullying. 95.1% (n=77) used social network sites daily. The Internet was used more often for: social networking (30%), studying (22%), shopping (18%), banking (11%), work-related activities (8%), gaming (5%) and other activities (6%).

Intervention likelihood by gender
Group differences were examined using analysis of variance. Female participants were more likely to intervene when witnessing cyberbullying than the male participants. No other significant differences emerged. The present findings (Table 2) suggest gender differences which are specific to context (cyberbullying).

5 Top recommendations for a bullying awareness campaign:
- Encourage pro-social behaviour
- Give options / ability to report instantly
- Encouraging reporting to trusted others
- Provide online platform for information seeking
- Telephone chat line – app that gives you information and number

Conclusions
In conclusion, the current research has clearly found that there are context specific variables (online vs offline) gender differences and personality traits such as altruism that can affect a bystander’s willingness to intervene in bullying situations. Knowing about these gender differences can therefore be helpful in the development of interventions aimed at reducing cyberbullying by motivating more witnesses to intervene. Those who witness bullying situations still need to be encouraged to behave in ways that are pro social regardless of the context of the situations or their own personality traits.

References

Investigating Cyber and Traditional Bullying: Implications for Future Interventions
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