

School Breakfast Clubs: Does Attendance Impact Upon Children's Peer Relationships?

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What is a Breakfast Club?



- Safe place to go before the start of the school day
- Opportunity to meet with friends and staff
- Nutritious breakfast
- Activities to take part in

(Defeyter, Graham, Walton and Apicella, 2010)

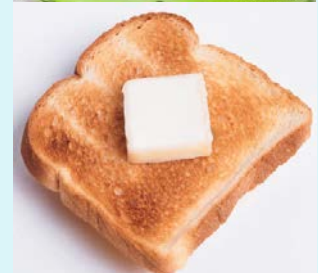
Benefits of Breakfast Club

School breakfast participation has been linked to improvements in:

- Classroom behaviour (Bro et al, 1994)
- Maths grades (Murphy et al, 1998)
- School attendance (Simeon, 1998)

Benefits associated with school breakfast participation have been attributed mainly to the breakfast meal.

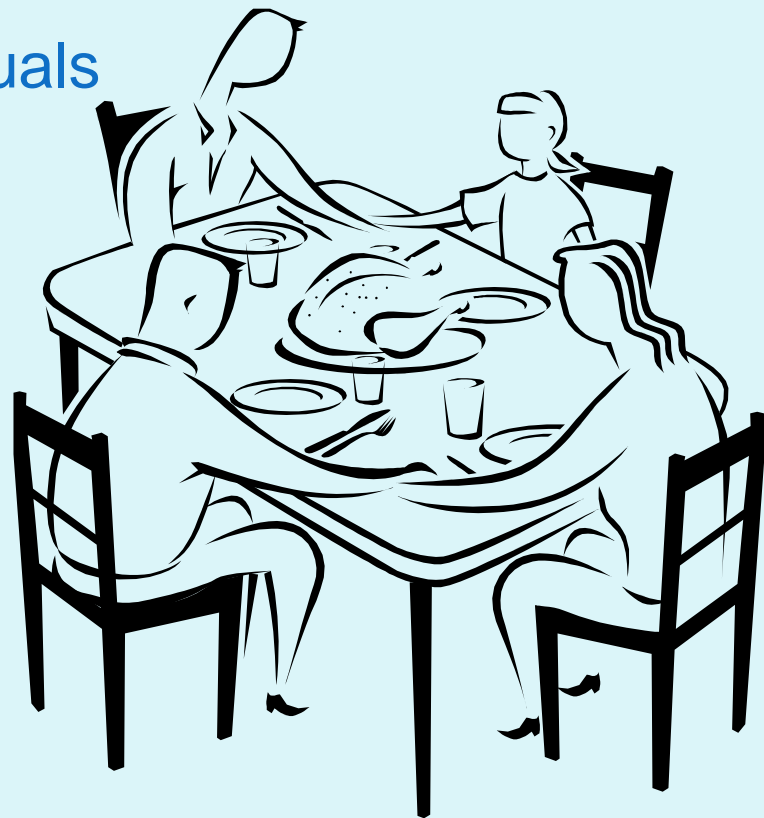
Potential impact of the social environment has received little attention



The Breakfast Club Environment

Group Mealtimes

- Build a sense of community and belonging (Fulkerson et al, 2006)
- Facilitate interaction between individuals (Cason, 2006)
- Opportunity to teach social skills (Eisenberg et al, 2004)



More Than Just a Meal?

Out of School Activities

- Positive peer interaction
(Bartko & Eccles, 2003)
- Development of friendship
(Bartko & Eccles, 2003)
- Protection from victimisation
(Hodges et al, 1999)



Aim of Present Study

To investigate whether breakfast club attendance facilitates children's peer relationships in school.

- Friendship quality
- Peer victimisation



Participants

8 primary schools
n = 268
163 females 105 males
Mean age = 8.4 years
Age range = 6.3 years – 10.11 years

Breakfast Club

n = 94

59 females
35 males

Mean age = 8.24
years

After School Club

n = 86

47 females
39 males

Mean age = 8.75
years

Control

n = 88

57 females
31 males

Mean age = 8.24
years

Friendship Qualities Scale

(Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin, 1994)

- + Companionship – free time spent together
- + Help – mutual help, assistance and protection
- + Security – reliance and conflict resolution
- + Closeness – emotional bond between friends
- Conflict – fights, arguments and disagreements



False	Partly False	Don't Know	Partly True	True
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Multidimensional Peer Victimisation Scale

(Mynard and Joseph, 2000)

- Physical victimisation – punching and kicking
- Verbal victimisation – name calling
- Social manipulation – turning friends against each other
- Attacks of physical property – damage or theft of possessions

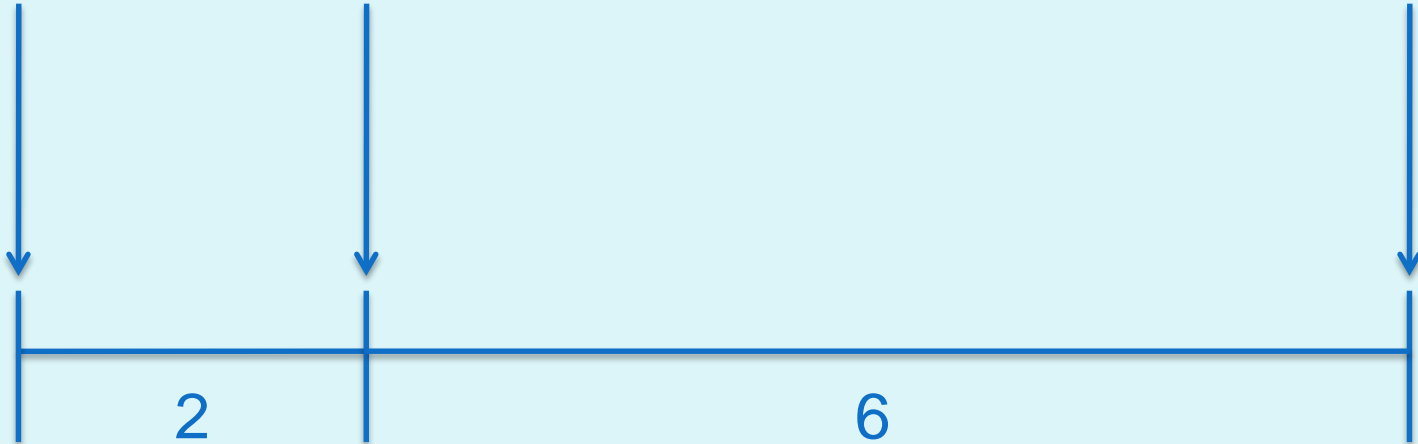


Procedure

Breakfast
clubs
started

Time 1

Time 2



2
months

6
months

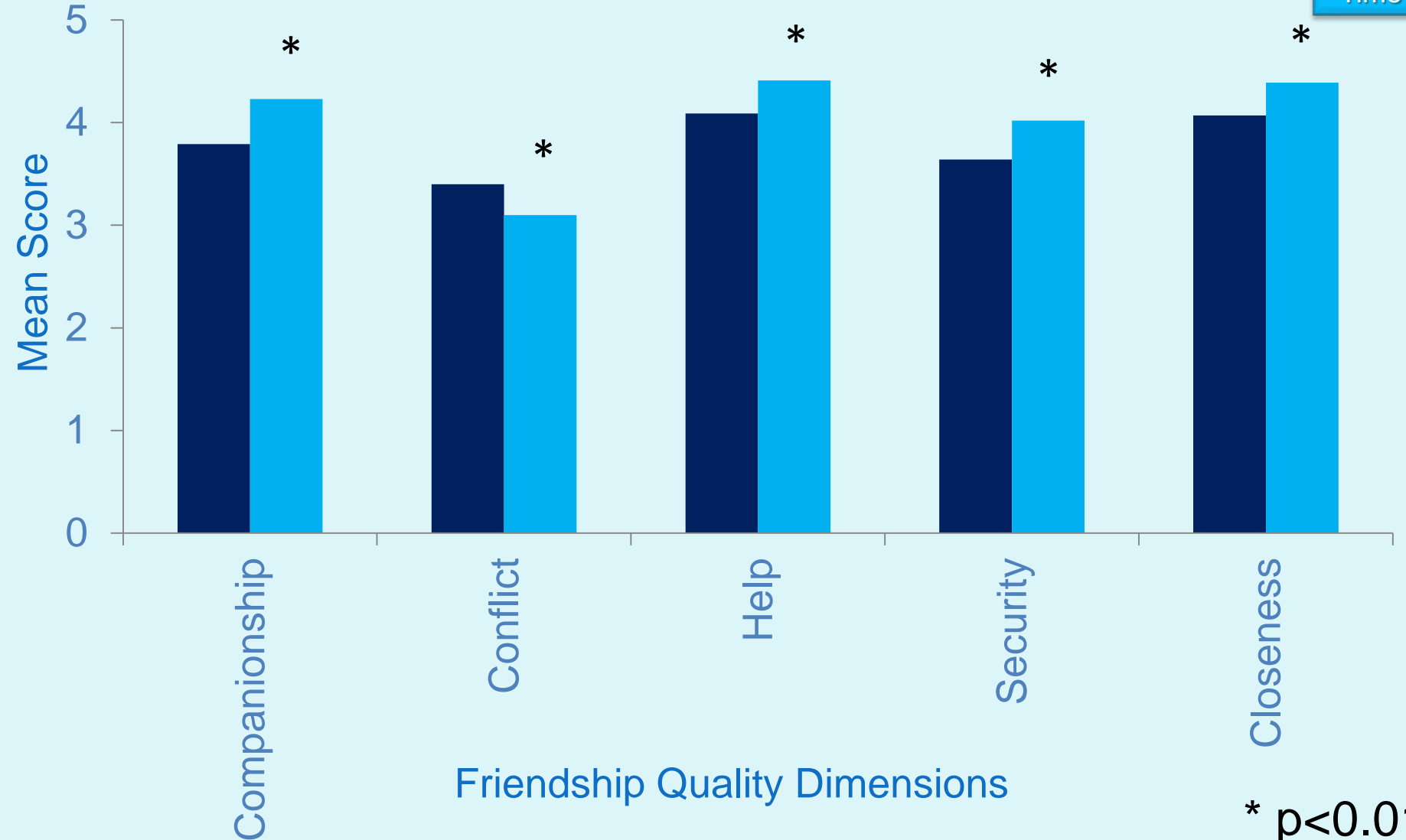
Friendship Qualities
Scale
&
Peer Victimisation
Scale

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Results: Friendship Qualities Scale Breakfast Club

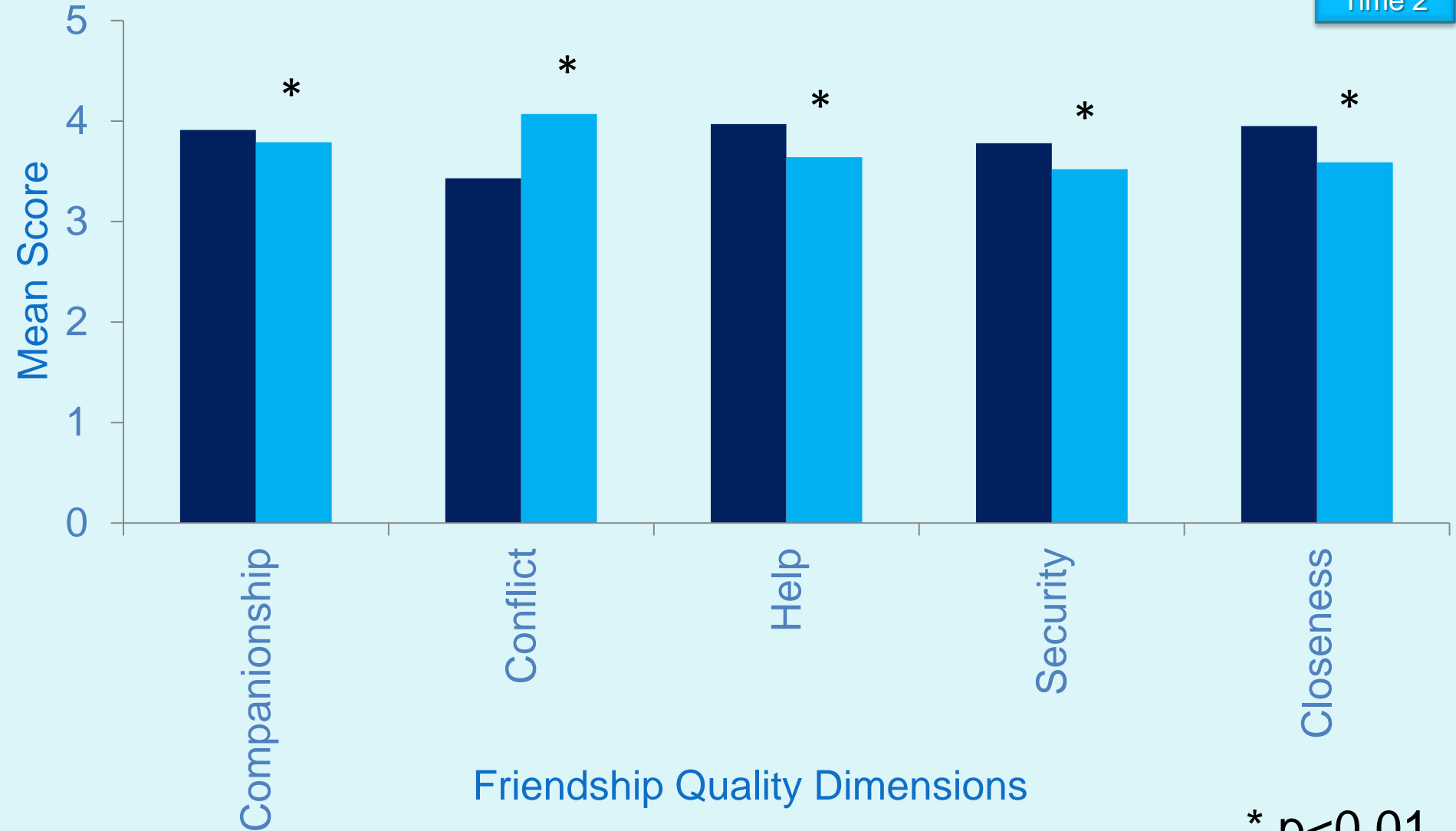
Time 1

Time 2



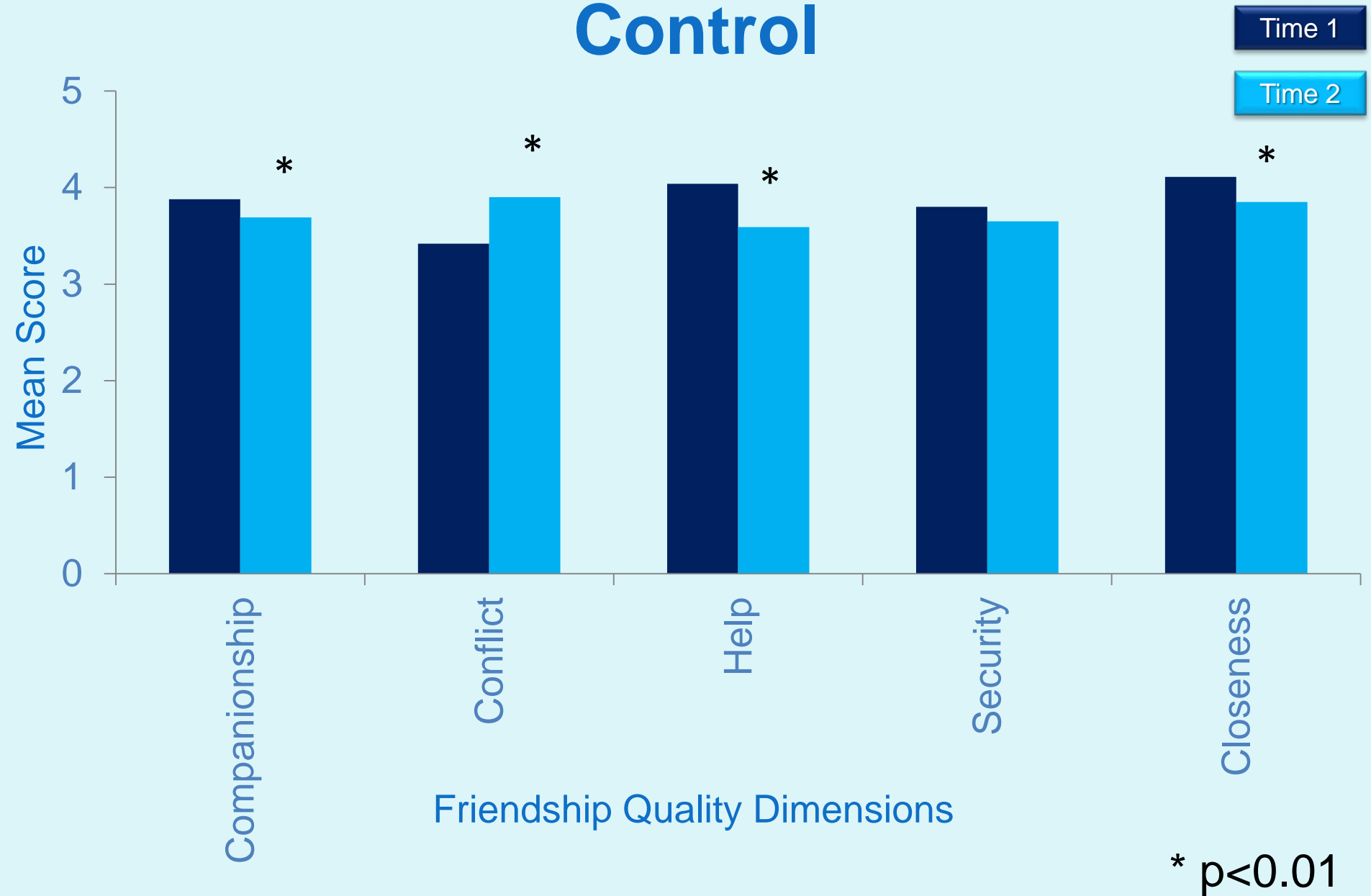
Results: Friendship Qualities Scale After School Club

Time 1
Time 2



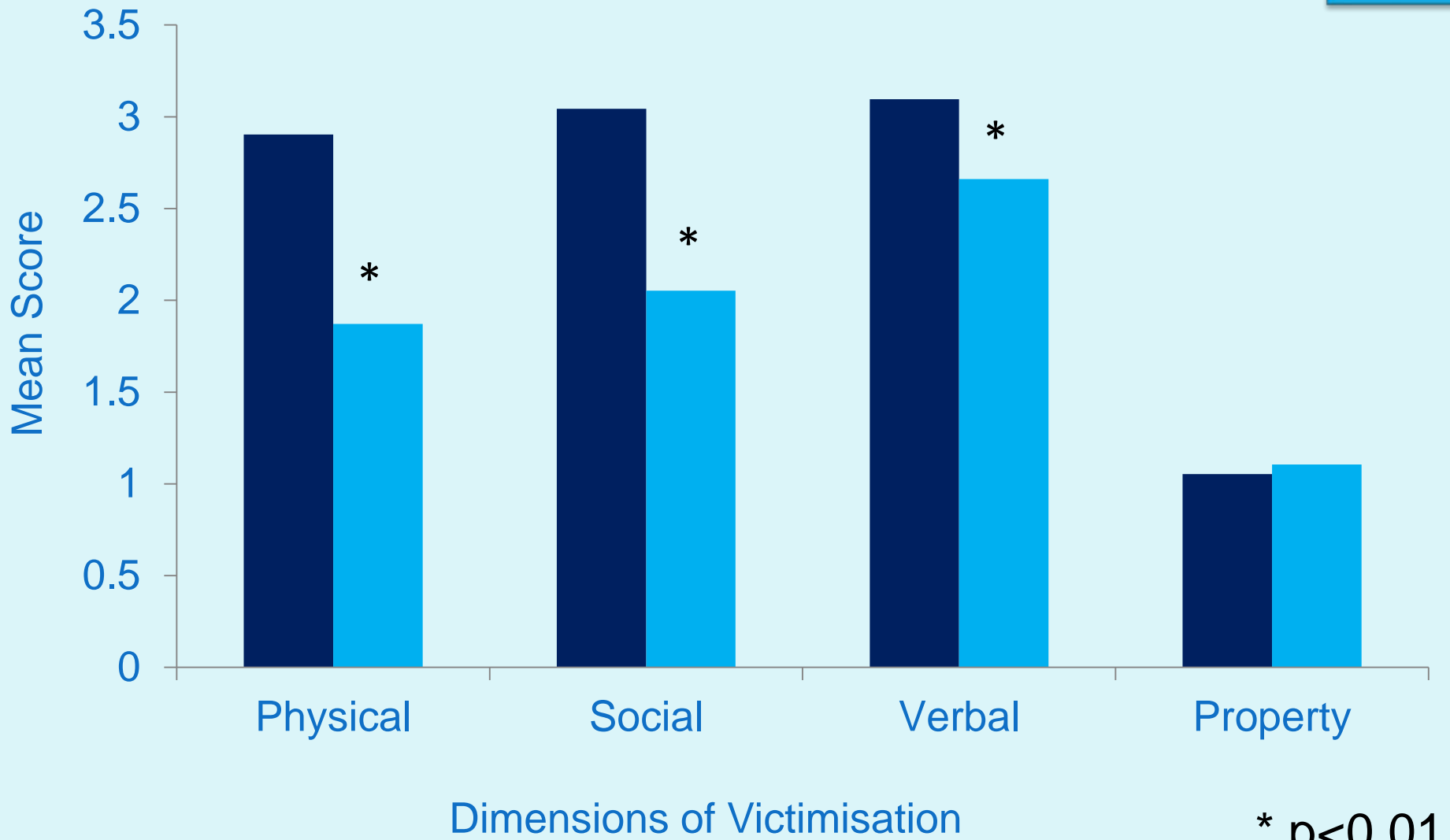
* p<0.01

Results: Friendship Qualities Scale Control



Results: Peer Victimisation Scale Breakfast Club

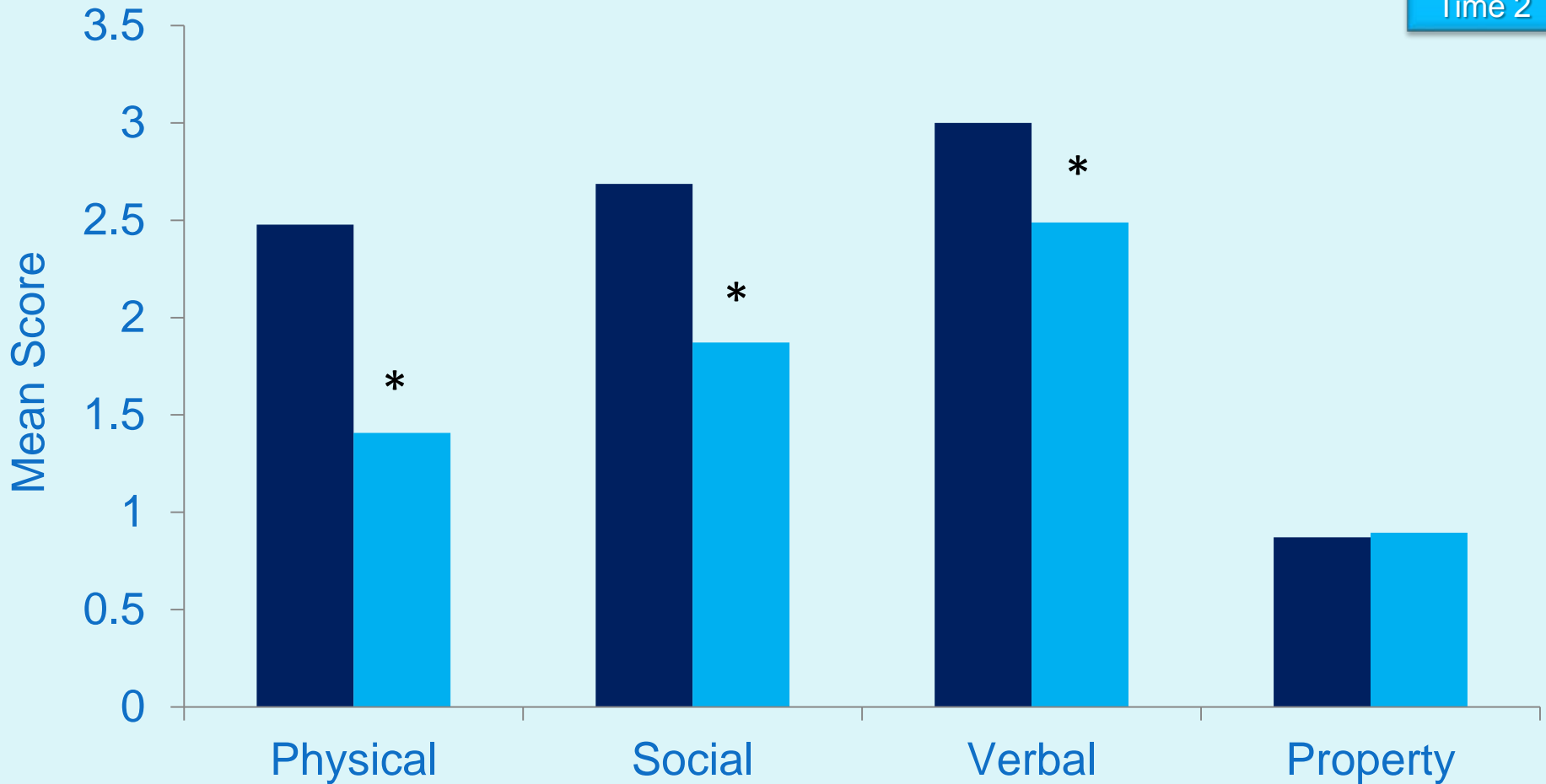
Time 1
Time 2



* p<0.01

Results: Peer Victimisation Scale After School Club

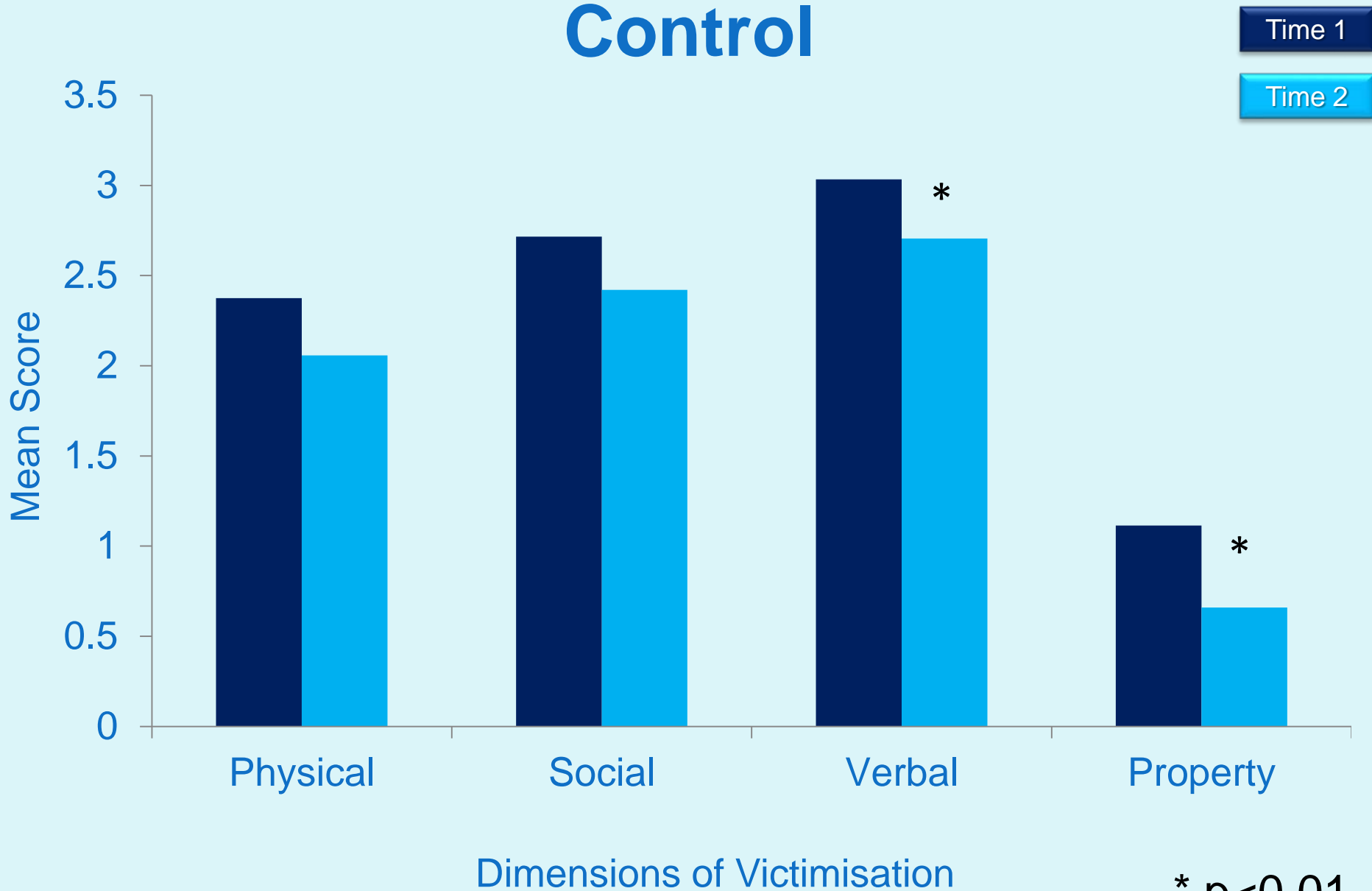
Time 1
Time 2



Dimensions of Victimisation

* p<0.01

Results: Peer Victimisation Scale Control



* p<0.01

Discussion

- No significant differences between groups at time 1
 - Findings cannot be ascribed to inherent differences between groups at time 1

- Breakfast club attendance did appear to facilitate children's relationships with their peers in school
 - Small group meal might be the driving force

Discussion

○ Out of school club attendance led to a reduction in victimisation across time

- Out of school clubs might provide a protective peer group



