

Liability

School Crimes and Safety - 2014

Report Number: [LB-10-66](#)

Release Date: [August 6, 2015](#)

Section Title: [General Information](#)

Abstract

School violence not only has a direct impact on students, but also on educators, parents, and the entire community. This report analyzes the most recent data available on school crime and student safety. The latest in a series of annual publications produced jointly by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Education Statistics, the report details victimization, teacher injury, bullying and cyber-bullying, school conditions, fights, weapons, availability and student use of drugs and alcohol, student perceptions of personal safety at school, and criminal incidents at post-secondary institutions. The information was drawn from a variety of federal data sources, including national surveys of students, teachers, principals, colleges, and universities. The most recent data collection for each indicator varied by survey, from 2009 to 2013.

Introduction

School violence not only has a direct impact on students, but also on educators, parents, and the entire community. This report analyzes the most recent data available on school crime and student safety. The latest in a series of annual publications produced jointly by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the report details victimization, teacher injury, bullying and cyber-bullying, school conditions, fights, weapons, availability and student use of drugs and alcohol, student perceptions of personal safety at school, and criminal incidents at post-secondary institutions. The information was drawn from a variety of federal data sources, including national surveys of students, teachers, principals, colleges, and universities.

This edition of the report contains data for sixteen indicators: violent deaths at school and away from school, incidence of victimization at school and away from school, prevalence of victimization at school, threats and injuries with weapons on school property, students' reports of gangs at school, students' reports of illegal drug availability on school property, students' reports of being called hate-related words and seeing hate-related graffiti, bullying at school and cyber-bullying anywhere, physical fights on school property and anywhere, students carrying weapons on school property and anywhere and students' access to firearms, students' use of alcohol on school property and anywhere, students' use of marijuana on school property and anywhere, students' perceptions of personal safety at school and away from school, students' reports of avoiding school activities or classes or specific places in school, students' reports of safety and security measures observed at school, and criminal incidents at post-secondary institutions. In addition, this report introduces a new indicator on hate crime incidents at post-secondary institutions.

This report provides the executive summary for *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2014*.

Key Findings

Preliminary data show that there were 45 school-associated violent deaths from July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012. In 2013, among students ages 12–18, there were about 1,420,900 nonfatal victimizations at school, which included 454,900 theft victimizations and 966,000 violent victimizations (simple assault and serious violent victimizations). Out of 791 total hate crimes reported on college campuses in 2012, the most

School Crimes and Safety - 2014

common type of hate crime reported by institutions was destruction, damage, and vandalism (412 incidents), followed by intimidation (261 incidents), simple assault (79 incidents), aggravated assault (14 incidents), larceny (11 incidents), robbery (5 incidents), burglary (5 incidents), and forcible sex offenses (4 incidents).

Violent Deaths

Of the 45 student, staff, and non-student school-associated violent deaths occurring between July 1, 2011, and June 30, 2012, there were 26 homicides, 14 suicides, and 5 legal intervention deaths. Of these 45 deaths, there were 15 homicides, 5 suicides, and 0 legal intervention deaths of school-age youth (ages 5–18) at school. During the 2011–12 school year, 15 of the 1,199 homicides among school-age youth ages 5–18 occurred at school. During the 2011 calendar year, 5 of the 1,568 suicides of school-age youth ages 5–18 occurred at school.

Nonfatal Student and Teacher Victimization

In 2013, among students ages 12–18, there were about 1,420,900 nonfatal victimizations at school, which included 454,900 theft victimizations and 966,000 violent victimizations (simple assault and serious violent victimizations).

In 2013, students ages 12–18 experienced higher rates of nonfatal victimizations at school than away from school. That year, they experienced 55 victimizations per 1,000 students at school and 30 per 1,000 students away from school.

In 2013, the rate of violent victimization at school (37 per 1,000 students) was greater than the rate of violent victimization away from school (15 per 1,000 students). This difference was driven primarily by higher rates of simple assault at school (33 per 1,000 students) than away from school that year (9 per 1,000).

Between 1992 and 2013, the total victimization rates for students ages 12–18 generally declined both at and away from school. Between 1995 and 2013, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being victimized at school during the previous 6 months decreased overall (from 10 to 3 percent), as did the percentages of students who reported theft (from 7 to 2 percent), violent victimization (from 3 to 1 percent), and serious violent victimization (from 1 percent to less than one-half of 1 percent). About 7 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported being threatened or injured with a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club on school property in 2013. The percentage of students who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property has decreased over the last decade, from 9 percent in 2003 to 7 percent in 2013.

In each survey year from 1993 to 2013, a higher percentage of males than of females in grades 9–12 reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property. In 2013, approximately 8 percent of males and 6 percent of females reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property. The percentage of males who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property was lower in 2013 than in 2011 (8 vs. 10 percent); however, the percentages for females were not measurably different between these two years.

Teacher Victimization

Ten percent of elementary teachers and 9 percent of secondary teachers reported being threatened by a student from their school in 2011–12. The percentage of elementary teachers who reported being physically attacked by a student was higher than the percentage of secondary teachers (8 vs. 3 percent). During the 2011–12 school year, a higher percentage of public than private school teachers reported being threatened with injury (10 vs. 3 percent) or being physically attacked (6 vs. 3 percent) by a student from their school.

School Crimes and Safety - 2014

School Environment

During the 2009–10 school year, 85 percent of public schools recorded that one or more crime incidents had taken place at school, amounting to an estimated 1.9 million crimes. This translates to a rate of 40 crimes per 1,000 public school students enrolled in 2009–10. During the same year, 60 percent of public schools reported a crime incident that occurred at school to the police, amounting to 689,000 crimes—or 15 crimes per 1,000 public school students enrolled. In 2009–10, about 74 percent of public schools recorded one or more violent incidents of crime, 16 percent recorded one or more serious violent incidents, 44 percent recorded one or more thefts, and 68 percent recorded one or more other incidents. Forty percent of public schools reported at least one violent incident to police, 10 percent reported at least one serious violent incident to police, 25 percent reported at least one theft to police, and 46 percent reported one or more other incidents to police.

During the 2009–10 school year, 23 percent of public schools reported that bullying occurred among students on a daily or weekly basis, and 3 percent reported widespread disorder in classrooms on a daily or weekly basis. The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported that illegal drugs were made available to them on school property increased from 1993 to 1995 (from 24 to 32 percent), but then decreased to 22 percent in 2013. The percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that gangs were present at their school decreased from 18 percent in 2011 to 12 percent in 2013. A higher percentage of students from urban areas (18 percent) reported a gang presence than students from suburban (11 percent) and rural areas (7 percent) in 2013.

The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported that illegal drugs were made available to them on school property increased from 1993 to 1995 (from 24 to 32 percent), but then decreased to 22 percent in 2013. The percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being the target of hate-related words decreased from 12 percent in 2001 (the first year of data collection for this item) to 7 percent in 2013. The percentage of students who reported being the target of hate-related words in 2013 was lower than the percentage in 2011 (9 percent). The percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported seeing hate-related graffiti at school decreased from 36 percent in 1999 (the first year of data collection for this item) to 25 percent in 2013. The percentage of students who reported seeing hate-related graffiti in 2013 was lower than the percentage in 2011 (28 percent).

In 2013, about 22 percent of students, ages 12–18 reported being bullied at school during the school year. Higher percentages of females than of males reported that they were made fun of, called names, or insulted (15 vs. 13 percent); were the subject of rumors (17 vs. 10 percent); and were excluded from activities on purpose (5 vs. 4 percent). In contrast, a higher percentage of males (7 percent) than of females (5 percent) reported being pushed, shoved, tripped, or spit on. In 2013, about 33 percent of students who reported being bullied at school indicated that they were bullied at least once or twice a month during the school year, and about 27 percent of students who reported being cyber-bullied anywhere indicated that they were cyber-bullied at least once or twice a month. A higher percentage of students reported notifying an adult after being bullied at school than after being cyber-bullied anywhere (39 vs. 23 percent). The percentage of students who reported being bullied was lower in 2013 (22 percent) than in every prior survey year (28 percent each in 2005, 2009, and 2011 and 32 percent in 2007). The same pattern was observed across many of the student and school characteristics examined.

Fights, Weapons, and Illegal Substances

In 2013, about 25 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported that they had been in a physical fight anywhere during the previous 12 months, and 8 percent reported that they had been in a physical fight on school property during this time period. The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported being in a physical fight anywhere decreased between 1993 and 2013 (from 42 to 25 percent), and the percentage of students in these grades who reported being in a physical fight on school property also decreased during this period from 16 to 8 percent.

School Crimes and Safety - 2014

The percentage of students who reported carrying a weapon on school property in the previous 30 days declined from 12 percent in 1993 to 5 percent in 2013. The percentage of students carrying weapons anywhere was lower in 2013 (18 percent) than in 1993 (22 percent). In 2013, a higher percentage of White students (21 percent) than of Hispanic students (16 percent), Pacific Islander and Black students (13 percent each), and Asian students (9 percent) reported carrying a weapon anywhere in the previous 30 days. Also, a higher percentage of White students (6 percent) than of Black students (4 percent) reported carrying a weapon on school property during the previous 30 days. The percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that they had access to a loaded gun without adult permission, either at school or away from school, during the current school year decreased from 7 percent in 2007 to 4 percent in 2013.

Between 1993 and 2013, the percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported having at least one drink of alcohol during the previous 30 days decreased from 48 to 35 percent. In 2013, some 23 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported using marijuana at least one time in the previous 30 days, which was a higher percentage than that reported in 1993 (18 percent) but not measurably different from that reported in 2011. In every survey year between 1993 and 2011, higher percentages of male students than of female students reported using marijuana at least one time in the previous 30 days; in 2013; however, there was no measurable difference in the percentages reported by male and female students (25 and 22 percent, respectively).

Fear and Avoidance

The percentage of students who reported being afraid of attack or harm at school or on the way to and from school decreased from 12 percent in 1995 to 3 percent in 2013, and the percentage of students who reported being afraid of attack or harm away from school decreased from 6 percent in 1999 to 3 percent in 2013.

A higher percentage of Hispanic students (5 percent) than of White students (3 percent) reported avoiding one or more places in school in 2013. In addition, a higher percentage of public school students (4 percent) than of private school students (1 percent) reported avoiding one or more places in school.

Discipline, Safety, and Security Measures

During the 2009–10 school years, 39 percent of public schools (about 32,300 schools) took at least one serious disciplinary action against a student for specific offenses. Of the 433,800 serious disciplinary actions taken during the 2009–10 school year, 74 percent were suspensions for 5 days or more, 20 percent were transfers to specialized schools, and 6 percent were removals with no services for the remainder of the school year.

During the 2009–10 school years, 43 percent of public schools reported the presence of one or more security staff at their school at least once a week during the school year. Twenty-nine percent of schools reported having at least one full-time employed security staff member who was present at least once a week, and 14 percent of schools reported having only part-time staff. Twenty-eight percent of all schools reported the presence of security staff routinely carrying a firearm at school.

In 2013, nearly all students ages 12–18 reported that they observed the use of at least one of the selected security measures at their schools. Most students ages 12–18 reported that their schools had a written code of student conduct and a requirement that visitors sign in (96 percent each). Approximately 90 percent of students reported the presence of school staff other than security guards or assigned police officers or other adults supervising the hallway, 77 percent reported the presence of one or more security cameras to monitor the school, and 76 percent reported locked entrance or exit doors during the day. Eleven percent of students reported the use of metal detectors at their schools, representing the least observed of the selected safety and security measures.

School Crimes and Safety - 2014

Postsecondary Campus Safety and Security

In 2012, there were 29,500 criminal incidents at public and private two-year and four-year post-secondary institutions that were reported to police and security agencies, representing a 4-percent decrease from 2011 (30,700). There was also a decrease in the number of on-campus crimes per 10,000 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students, from 20.0 in 2011 to 19.4 in 2012.

The number of disciplinary referrals for drug law violations reported by public and private two-year and four-year post-secondary institutions increased from 20.5 per 10,000 students in 2001 to 35.6 per 10,000 students in 2012. Also, the number of referrals for liquor law violations per 10,000 students was higher in 2012 (127.4) than in 2001 (111.3). In contrast, the number of referrals per 10,000 students for illegal weapons possession was lower in 2012 (0.9) than in 2001 (1.1). The number of arrests for weapons possession reported by public and private two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions was 4 percent lower in 2012 than in 2001 (1,000 vs. 1,100). Arrests for drug law violations increased by 76 percent during this period, reaching 20,800, and arrests for liquor law violations rose by 8 percent, reaching 29,500.

Out of the 791 total hate crimes reported on college campuses in 2012, the most common type of hate crime reported by institutions was destruction, damage, and vandalism (412 incidents), followed by intimidation (261 incidents), simple assault (79 incidents), aggravated assault (14 incidents), larceny (11 incidents), robbery (5 incidents), burglary (5 incidents), and forcible sex offenses (4 incidents).

Race-related hate crimes accounted for 46 percent of reported vandalisms classified as hate crimes, 45 percent of reported intimidations, and 44 percent of reported simple assaults in 2012. Additionally, one-quarter of vandalism and intimidation hate crimes and 28 percent of simple assaults were classified with sexual orientation as the motivating bias.

Summary

The information presented in this report is intended to serve as a reference for policymakers and practitioners so that they can develop effective programs and policies aimed at violence and school crime prevention. Schools should be safe havens for teaching and learning, free of crime and violence. Any instance of crime or violence at school not only affects the individuals involved, but also may disrupt the educational process and affect bystanders, the school itself, and the surrounding community. Updates are published annually. The Indicators of School Crime and Safety Series is available at <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbse&sid=8>.

For parents, school staff, and policymakers to effectively address school crime, they need an accurate understanding of the extent, nature, and context of the problem. However, it is difficult to gauge the scope of crime and violence in schools given the large amount of attention devoted to isolated incidents of extreme school violence. Measuring progress toward safer schools requires establishing good indicators of the current state of school crime and safety across the nation and regularly updating and monitoring these indicators; this is the aim of *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2014*.

References

1. Engineering and Safety Service. *COPS Podcast Series Addressing School Safety, Emergency Preparedness, Police in Schools, and Mental Illness Available*. NR-2013-02-08. Jersey City, NJ: ISO, 2013.
2. ---. *School Violence Prevention*. CP-93-65. Jersey City, NJ: ISO, 2013.
3. ---. *School Violence Prevention Resources and Training Programs*. CP-98-31. Jersey City, NJ: ISO, 2013.

School Crimes and Safety - 2014

4. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2014*. Washington, DC: BJS, 2015. <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/iscs14.pdf>.

COPYRIGHT ©2015, ISO Services, Inc.

The information contained in this publication was obtained from sources believed to be reliable. ISO Services, Inc., its companies and employees make no guarantee of results and assume no liability in connection with either the information herein contained or the safety suggestions herein made. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that every acceptable safety procedure is contained herein or that abnormal or unusual circumstances may not warrant or require further or additional procedure.