



Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2003

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U.S. Department of Education
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NCES 2004-004

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Office of Justice Programs
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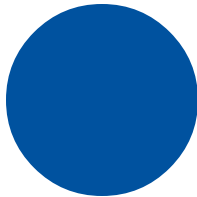
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FOREWORD

The *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* provides the most recent national indicators on school crime and safety. These indicators demonstrate that sizable improvements have occurred in the safety of students: between 1992 and 2001, the violent crime victimization rate at school declined from 48 violent victimizations per 1,000 students in 1992 to 28 such victimizations in 2001. Even so, violence, theft, bullying, drugs, and firearms are still prevalent: students ages 12–18 were victims of about 764,000 violent crimes and 1.2 million crimes of theft at school in 2001.

Accurate information about the nature, extent, and scope of the problem being addressed is essential in developing effective programs and policies. The information in this report is intended to serve as a foundation for policymakers and practitioners so that they can develop effective programs and policies to prevent violence and crime in schools and cope with it when it occurs.

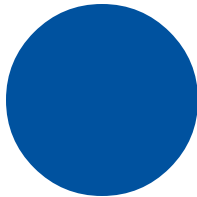
This is the sixth edition of *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*, a joint publication of the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Education Statistics. This report provides detailed statistical information to inform the nation on the current status of crime in schools. The 2003 edition of *Indicators* includes the most recent available data, including 2001 data and newly released data from the 2000 School Survey on Crime and Safety, a survey of our nation's public schools.

The data in this report were compiled from a number of statistical data sources supported by the federal government. Such sources include results from a study of violent deaths in schools, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the National Crime Victimization Survey and School Crime Supplement to the survey, sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Education Statistics, respectively; the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and the Schools and Staffing Survey, sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics.

The entire report is available on the Internet. The Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Center for Education Statistics continue to work toward providing more timely and complete data on the issues of school-related violence and safety.

Val Plisko
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National Center for Education Statistics

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For youth to fulfill their potential in school, schools should be safe and secure places for all students, teachers, and staff members. Without a safe learning environment, teachers may have difficulty teaching and students may have difficulty learning. Gauging the safety of the school environment, however, may be difficult given the large amount of attention devoted to isolated incidents of extreme school violence nationwide.

Ensuring safer schools requires establishing good indicators of the current state of school crime and safety across the nation and periodically monitoring and updating these indicators. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* is designed to provide an annual snapshot of specific crime and safety indicators, covering topics such as victimization, fights, bullying, disorder, teacher injury, weapons, student perceptions of school safety, and others. In addition to covering a wide range of topics, the indicators are based on information drawn from surveys of students, teachers, and principals, and data collections by federal agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Students ages 12–18 were victims of about 2 million nonfatal crimes of violence or theft at school in 2001, with the majority (62 percent) of all victimizations at school being thefts. However, this report is not only concerned with the safety of students in schools. Where comparable data are available for crimes that occur outside of school grounds, these data are offered as a point of comparison. In fact, as the data in this report show, a larger number of serious violent victimizations (that is, rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault) take place away from school than at school.¹

Data on homicides and suicides at school show there were 32 school-associated violent deaths in the United States between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2000, including 24 homicides, 16 of which involved school-aged children. In each school year from 1992 to 2000, youth ages 5–19 were at least 70 times more likely to be murdered away from school than at school.

Trends in school crime over time are also of interest to researchers, educators, and families. Data show that the percentage of students being victimized at school has declined over recent years. Between 1995 and 2001, the percentage of students who reported being victims of crime at school decreased from 10 percent to 6 percent. This included a decrease in theft (from 7 percent to 4 percent) and a decrease in violent victimization (from 3 percent to 2 percent) over the same time period.

¹These data are not adjusted by the number of hours that students spend on school property and the number of hours they spend elsewhere.

For some other types of crime at school, the frequency of these behaviors has shown no detectable pattern of increase or decrease over time. These include the percentage of suicides of school-age youth between 1992 and 1999, the percentage of students being threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property between 1993 and 2001, and the percentage of teachers being physically attacked by a student between 1993–94 and 1999–2000. Hate-related graffiti between 1999 and 2001, and measures of marijuana use, alcohol use, and drug distribution at school between 1993 and 2001 have also shown no detectable pattern of change over their respective survey periods.

The prevalence of one problem behavior at school has increased. In 2001, 8 percent of students reported that they had been bullied at school in the last 6 months, up from 5 percent in 1999.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

This report, the sixth in a series of annual reports on school crime and safety from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), presents the latest available data on school crime and student safety. The report repeats some indicators from the 2002 report and also provides updated data on nonfatal student victimization; nonfatal victimization of teachers; principal reports of select crimes; and principal reports of disciplinary problems and actions at school. This year's report also includes data from last year's *Indicators* on fatal student victimization and students' reports of being threatened or injured with a weapon, being in fights, being bullied, avoiding places, being called hate-related words, and seeing hate-related graffiti. Data are also included on students' perceptions of personal safety, gangs, carrying weapons at school, using alcohol and marijuana, and drug availability on school property.

The report is organized as a series of indicators, with each indicator presenting data on a different aspect of school crime and safety. It starts with a description of the most serious violence. There are five sections to the report: Violent Deaths at School; Nonfatal Student Victimization—Student Reports; Violence and Crime at School—Public School Reports; Nonfatal Teacher Victimization at School—Teacher Reports; and School Environment. Each section contains a set of indicators that, taken together, describe a distinct aspect of school crime and safety.

Rather than relying on data from a large omnibus survey of school crime and safety, this report uses a variety of independent data sources from federal departments and agencies, including the BJS, NCES, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Each data source has an independent sample design, data collection method, and questionnaire design. By combining multiple and independent sources of data, this report aims to present a more complete portrait of school crime and safety than would be possible using any single source of information.

However, because the report relies on so many data sets, the age groups, time periods, and types of respondents analyzed can vary from indicator to indicator. Readers should keep these variations in mind when they compare data from different indicators. Readers should also note that trends in the data are discussed when possible. Where trends are not discussed, either the data are not available in earlier surveys or survey question wording changed from year to year, eliminating the ability to discuss any trend. Furthermore, while every effort has been made to keep key definitions consistent across indicators, readers should always use caution in making comparisons between results from different data sets for several reasons: the data sets may contain definitional differences, such as those used for specific crimes and crimes that occur “at school,” and respondent differences, such as examining students who report a victimization (at the individual level) and a school reporting one or more victimizations school wide. Appendix A of this report contains descriptions of all the data sets used in this report.

KEY FINDINGS

All the comparisons described in this report are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The following section presents the key findings of the report:

Violent Deaths at School

From July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000, 32 school-associated violent deaths occurred in the United States (*Indicator 1*). Twenty-four of these violent deaths were homicides and 8 were suicides. Sixteen of the 24 school-associated homicides involved school-aged children. These 16 homicides are relatively few (1 percent of all homicides of youth) when comparing them with a total of 2,124 children ages 5–19 who were victims of homicide in the United States over the same period. Six of the 8 school-associated suicides from July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000 involved school-aged children. Away from school, there were a total of 1,922 suicides of children ages 5–19 during the 2000 calendar year.

Nonfatal Student Victimization—Student Reports

Students ages 12–18 were more likely to be victims of nonfatal serious violent crime—including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault—when they were away from school than at school (*Indicator 2*). In 2001, students in this age range were victims of about 290,000 serious violent crimes away from school, compared with about 161,000 at school.

- Between 1992 and 2001, the violent crime victimization rates (that is, serious violent crime plus simple assault) for students ages 12–18 both at school and away from school decreased from 48 violent crimes per 1,000 students in 1992 to 28 violent crimes per 1,000 students in 2001 (*Indicator 2*). While this trend indicates an overall decline during this time frame, no difference was detected between 2000 and 2001 in the number of violent victimizations.

- In 2001, younger students (ages 12–14) were more likely to be victimized at school than older students (ages 15–18); however, away from school, older students were more likely to be victimized than their younger counterparts (*Indicator 2*).
- The percentages of students in grades 9–12 who have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property² have shown no measurable differences in recent years (*Indicator 4*). In 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, and 2001, between 7 and 9 percent of students reported being threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property in the preceding 12 months.
- The percentage of students who reported being in a fight anywhere declined between 1993 and 2001, from 42 percent to 33 percent (*Indicator 5*). Similarly, the percentage of students who reported fighting on school property also declined over this period, from 16 percent to 13 percent.
- In 2001, 8 percent of 12- through 18-year-old students reported being bullied at school in the last 6 months, up from 5 percent in 1999 (*Indicator 6*).
- Both males and females were more likely to report being bullied in 2001 than in 1999 (*Indicator 6*). In 2001, males were more likely than females to report being bullied (9 and 7 percent, respectively); however, in 1999, no such difference could be detected (5 percent each).

Violence and Crime at School—Public School Reports

In 1999–2000, 20 percent of all public schools experienced one or more serious violent crimes such as rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. Seventy-one percent of schools reported at least one violent incident. Forty-six percent of public schools reported property crimes, or thefts (*Indicator 7*). This report also provides the number of disciplinary actions taken by school principals for reasons not related to academics. About 54 percent of public schools reported taking a serious disciplinary action in the 1999–2000 school year. Of those disciplinary actions, 83 percent were suspensions lasting 5 days or more, 11 percent were removals with no services (i.e., expulsions), and 7 percent were transfers to specialized schools (*Indicator 8*).

- Secondary schools were more likely than other schools to experience a violent incident during the 1999–2000 school year (92 vs. 61–87 percent for elementary, middle, and combined schools). Likewise, larger schools were more likely to experience a violent incident than smaller schools. About 89 percent of schools with 1,000 or more students experienced a violent incident, compared with 61 percent of schools with less than 300 students (*Indicator 7*).

²Definitions for “on school property” and “at school” may differ. See appendix B for specific definitions.

- Two percent of public schools took a serious disciplinary action for the use of a firearm or explosive device, and 4 percent did so for the possession of such a device (*Indicator 8*).

Nonfatal Teacher Victimization at School—Teacher Reports

Over the 5-year period from 1997 through 2001, teachers were victims of approximately 1.3 million nonfatal crimes at school, including 817,000 thefts and 473,000 violent crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault) (*Indicator 9*).

- From 1997 through 2001, senior high school and middle/junior high school teachers were more likely to be victims of violent crimes (most of which were simple assaults) than elementary school teachers (*Indicator 9*).
- Teachers were differentially victimized by violent crimes at school according to where they taught (*Indicator 9*). From 1997 through 2001, urban teachers were more likely to be victims of violent crimes than suburban and rural teachers.
- In the 1999–2000 school year, 9 percent of all elementary and secondary school teachers were threatened with injury by a student, and 4 percent were physically attacked by a student (*Indicator 10*). This represented about 305,000 teachers who were victims of threats of injury by students that year and 135,000 teachers who were victims of attacks by students.

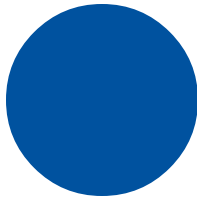
School Environment

Between 1995 and 1999, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who felt unsafe while they were at school or on the way to and from school decreased (*Indicator 12*). However, between 1999 and 2001, no change was found in the percentage of students who felt unsafe. In both 1999 and 2001, students were more likely to be afraid of being attacked when they were at school than away from school.

- Between 1993 and 2001, the percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property within the previous 30 days declined from 12 percent to 6 percent (*Indicator 11*).
- Between 1999 and 2001, no differences were detected in the percentage of students ages 12–18 who avoided one or more places at school (about 5 percent in each year) (*Indicator 13*). These estimates represented a decrease from 1995, when 9 percent of students avoided places at school.
- In 2001, 12 percent of students ages 12–18 reported that someone at school had used hate-related words against them (*Indicator 14*). That is, in the previous 6 months, someone at school had called them a derogatory word related to race,

religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. During the same period, about 36 percent of students saw hate-related graffiti at school.

- In 2001, 20 percent of students reported that street gangs were present at their schools (*Indicator 15*). Students in urban schools were more likely to report the presence of street gangs at their schools (29 percent) than were suburban and rural students (18 and 13 percent, respectively).
- In 1999–2000, public school principals were asked to report how often certain disciplinary problems occurred at their schools. Twenty-nine percent of public schools reported that student bullying occurred on a daily or weekly basis and 19 percent reported student acts of disrespect for teachers occurred at the same frequency (*Indicator 16*). Additionally, 13 percent reported student verbal abuse of teachers and 3 percent reported occurrences of student racial tensions and widespread disorder in the classrooms with the same frequency.
- Between 1993 and 2001, no consistent patterns of increase or decrease were found in the percentage of students who had consumed alcohol, both anywhere and on school property (*Indicator 17*). In 2001, 5 percent of students in grades 9–12 had at least one drink of alcohol on school property in the 30 days prior to the survey. Forty-seven percent of students had at least one drink anywhere during the same period.
- Between 1993 and 2001, no consistent patterns of increase or decrease were found in the percentage of students who had used marijuana—both anywhere and on school property (*Indicator 18*). In 2001, 24 percent of students reported using marijuana anywhere during the previous 30 days, and 5 percent reported using marijuana on school property.
- In 2001, 29 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported that someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property in the 12 months prior to the survey (*Indicator 19*).



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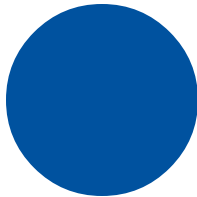
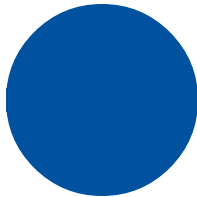


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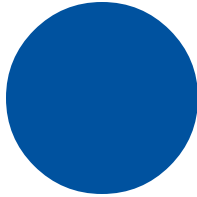
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**VIOLENT DEATHS AT
SCHOOL**

VIOLENT DEATHS AT SCHOOL AND AWAY FROM SCHOOL

In each school year from July 1, 1992 to June 30, 2000, youth ages 5–19 were at least 70 times more likely to be murdered away from school than at school.

Violent deaths in schools are tragic events that affect not only the individuals and families directly involved, but also everyone in the schools and communities where they occur. In the 2001–02 school year, 17 school-aged youth were victims of a school-associated violent death. In this indicator, a school-associated violent death is a homicide, suicide, legal intervention (involving a law enforcement officer), or unintentional firearm-related death in which the fatal injury occurred on the campus of a functioning elementary or secondary school in the United States. Deaths that occurred while the victim was on the way to or from regular sessions at school, or while the victim was attending or traveling to or from an official school-sponsored event, were also considered a school-associated violent death. Victims of school-associated violent deaths include students, staff members, and other nonstudents. Data were drawn from a number of data sets to enable comparisons of homicides and suicides at school and away from school. Data for school-associated violent deaths during the 1999–2000 through 2000–01 school years are preliminary.

In the most recent school year for which data from all sources are available, from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000, there were 32 school-associated violent deaths (table 1.1). Of these violent deaths, 24 were homicides and 8 were suicides. Sixteen of the homicides and 6 of the suicides were of school-aged youth (ages 5–19) at school (figure 1.1 and table 1.1). Combined, this translates into less than 1 homicide or suicide of a school-aged youth at school per million students enrolled during the 1999–2000 school year.¹ Away from school, during roughly the same time period, there were 2,124 homicides and 1,922 suicides of youth ages 5–19.

From July 1, 1992 to June 30, 2000, 390 school-associated violent deaths occurred on campuses of U.S. elementary or secondary schools. Of these violent deaths, 234 were homicides and 43 were suicides of school-aged youth (ages 5–19). Away from school during roughly the same period,² 24,406 children ages 5–19 were victims of homicide and 16,735 children committed suicide. In each school year, youth were at least 70 times more likely to be murdered away from school than at school.

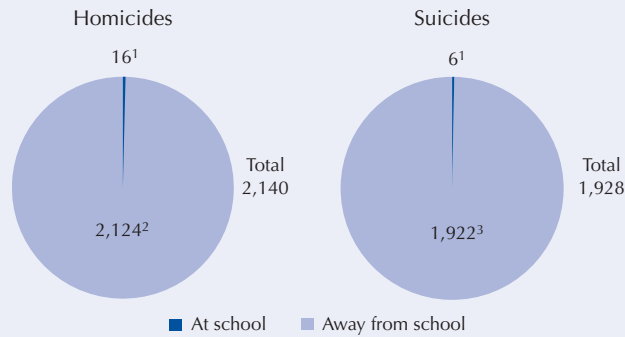
Between July 1, 1992 and June 30, 1998, no consistent pattern of increase or decrease was observed in the number of homicides or suicides of school-aged youth at school (figure 1.2 and table 1.1). During this period, between 28 and 34 homicides and between 1 and 7 suicides of school-aged youth occurred at school in each year. However, from July 1, 1998 to June 30, 2002, there has been a decline in the number of homicides at school, from 33 homicides of youth at school during the 1998–99 school year, to 14 during the 2001–2002 school year.

This indicator has been updated to include the most recent data available.

¹The total number of students in grades K–12 enrolled during the Fall of the 1999 school year was 52,020,000 (U.S. Department of Education 2003).

²The estimates include homicides of youth ages 5–19 occurring from July 1, 1992 to June 30, 2000 and suicides of youth ages 5–19 occurring from 1993 to 2000 calendar years.

Figure 1.1. Number of homicides and suicides of youth ages 5–19 at school and away from school: 1999–2000



¹Youth ages 5–19 from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000. Data are preliminary and subject to change.

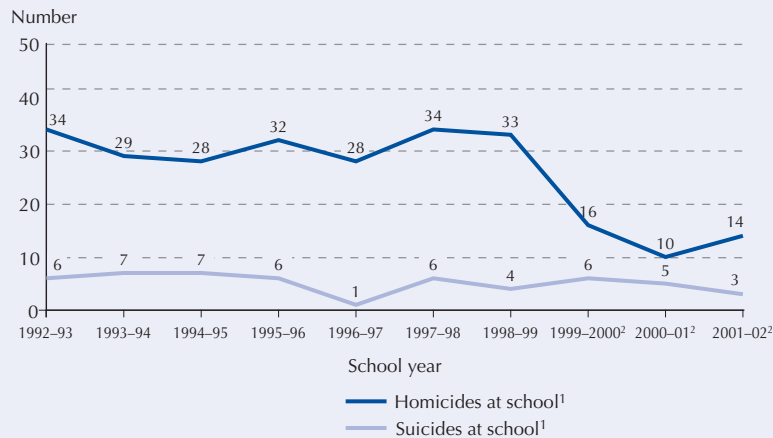
²Youth ages 5–19 from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

³Youth ages 5–19 in the 2000 calendar year.

NOTE: “At school” includes on school property, on the way to or from school, and while attending or traveling to or from a school-sponsored event.

SOURCE: Data on homicides and suicides of youth ages 5–19 at school and total school-associated violent deaths from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1992–2002 School-Associated Violent Deaths Surveillance System, previously unpublished tabulation (August 2003); data on suicides of youth ages 5–19 from the CDC, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS™) (2003), retrieved August 2003 from <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/>; and data on homicides of youth ages 5–19 away from school for the 1992–93 through 2000–01 school year from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, preliminary data (October 2003).

Figure 1.2. Number of homicides and suicides of youth ages 5–19 at school: 1992–2002



¹Homicides and suicides of youth ages 5–19 at school from July 1, 1992 to June 30, 2002.

²Data are preliminary and subject to change.

NOTE: “At school” includes on school property, on the way to or from school, and while attending or traveling to or from a school-sponsored event.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1992–2002 School-Associated Violent Deaths Surveillance System, previously unpublished tabulation (August 2003).



**NONFATAL STUDENT
VICTIMIZATION—
STUDENT REPORTS**

VICTIMIZATION AT SCHOOL AND AWAY FROM SCHOOL

Between 1992 and 2001, the victimization rate for students ages 12–18 generally declined for thefts, violent crimes, and serious violent crimes at school and away from school.

Theft and violence at school and while going to and from school can lead to a disruptive and threatening environment, physical injury, and emotional stress and can be an obstacle to student achievement (Elliott, Hamburg, and Williams 1998). Data from the National Crime Victimization Survey show that students ages 12–18 were victims of about 2 million nonfatal crimes (theft plus violent crime) while they were at school and about 1.7 million crimes while they were away from school in 2001 (tables 2.1 and 2.3).³ These figures represent victimization rates of 73 crimes per 1,000 students at school, and 61 crimes per 1,000 students away from school (figure 2.1 and tables 2.2 and 2.4).

Students ages 12–18 were more likely to be victims of theft at school than away from school between 1992 and 2001, in all but 2 years (1997 and 2000) (tables 2.1 and 2.3). In 2001, about 1.2 million thefts occurred at school, and about 913,000 occurred away from school. In 2001, students ages 12–18 were victims of about 764,000 violent crimes at school (rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault), including 161,000 serious violent crimes (rape, sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault). Away from school, students were victims of about 758,000 violent crimes, including 290,000 serious violent crimes. Although during most of the period between 1992 and 2001, the victimization rates for violent crime and serious violent crime were lower at school than away from school, no difference could be detected in the violent victimization rate for students at school and away from school in 2001.

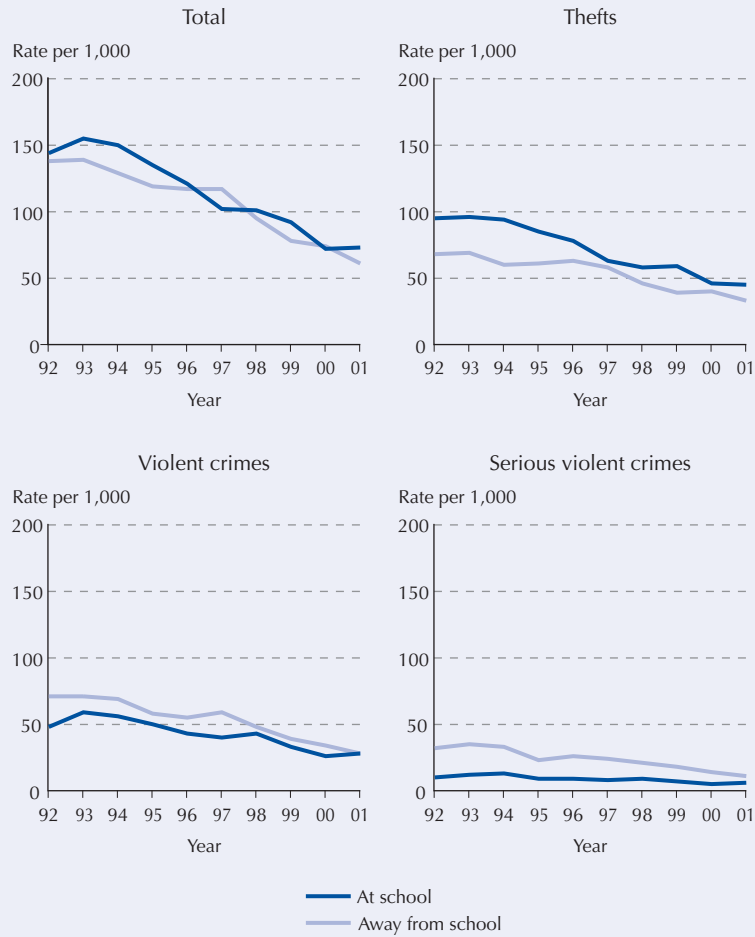
The victimization rate for students ages 12–18 generally declined for thefts, violent crimes, and serious violent crimes at school and away from school between 1992 and 2001 (figure 2.1 and tables 2.2 and 2.4). Specifically, the violent victimization rate generally declined between 1992 and 2001 from 48 to 28 crimes per 1,000 students at school and from 71 to 28 crimes per 1,000 students away from school. While this trend indicates an overall decline during this time frame, no difference was detected between 2000 and 2001 in the number of violent victimizations.

In 2001, the rate of serious violent crime away from school was higher for urban students than for both suburban and rural students (figures 2.2 and 2.3, and tables 2.2 and 2.4). However, no differences were detected in the likelihood of theft, violent victimization, and serious violent victimization at school between students living in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Younger students (ages 12–14) were more likely than older students (ages 15–18) to be victims of crime at school while older students were more likely than younger students to be victimized away from school. No differences could be detected in the rate of theft, violent victimization, and serious violent victimization between males and females both at school and away from school.

This indicator has been updated to include 2001 data.

³“Students” refers to persons 12–18 years of age who reported being in any elementary or secondary grade at the time of the survey. An uncertain percentage of these persons may not have attended school during the survey reference period. These data do not take into account the number of hours that students spend at school and the number of hours they spend away from school.

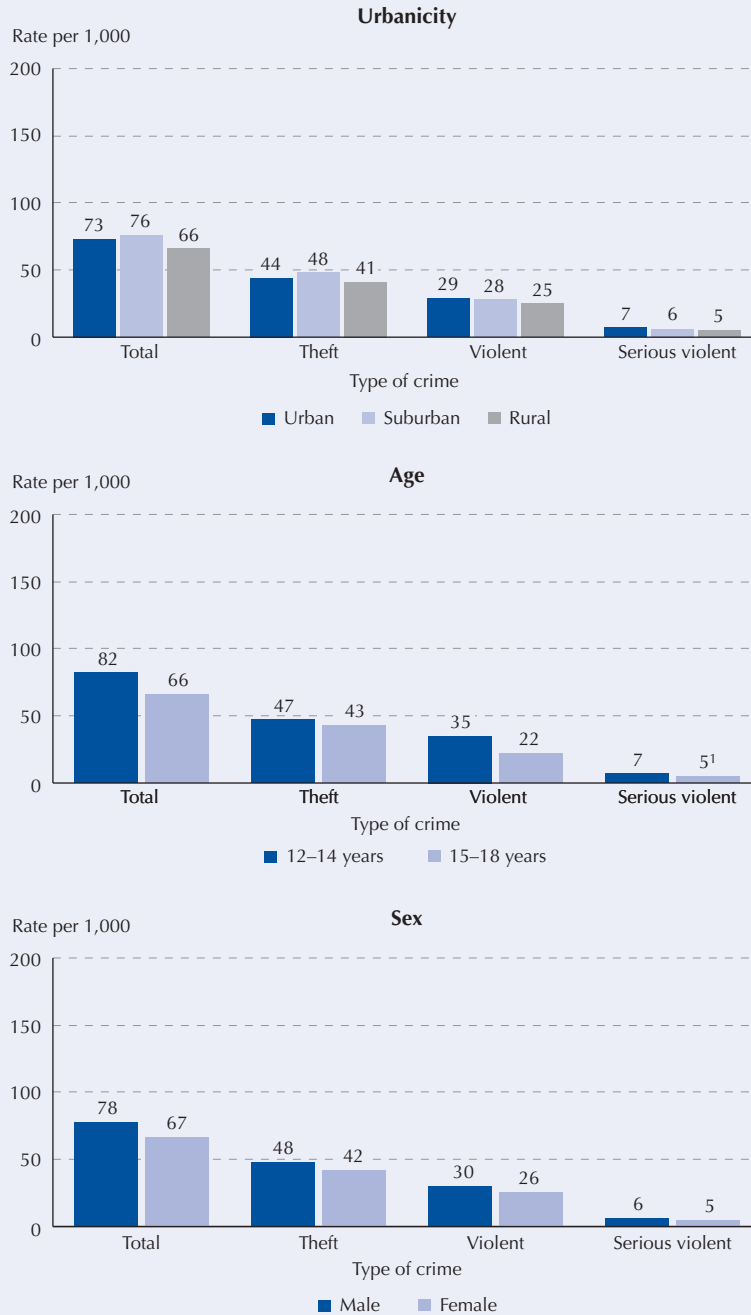
Figure 2.1. Rate of nonfatal crimes against students ages 12–18 per 1,000 students, by type of crime and location: 1992–2001



NOTE: Serious violent crimes include rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. Violent crimes include serious violent crimes and simple assault. Total crimes include violent crimes and theft. "At school" includes inside the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 1992–2001.

Figure 2.2. Rate of nonfatal crimes against students ages 12–18 occurring at school or going to or from school per 1,000 students, by type of crime and selected student characteristics: 2001

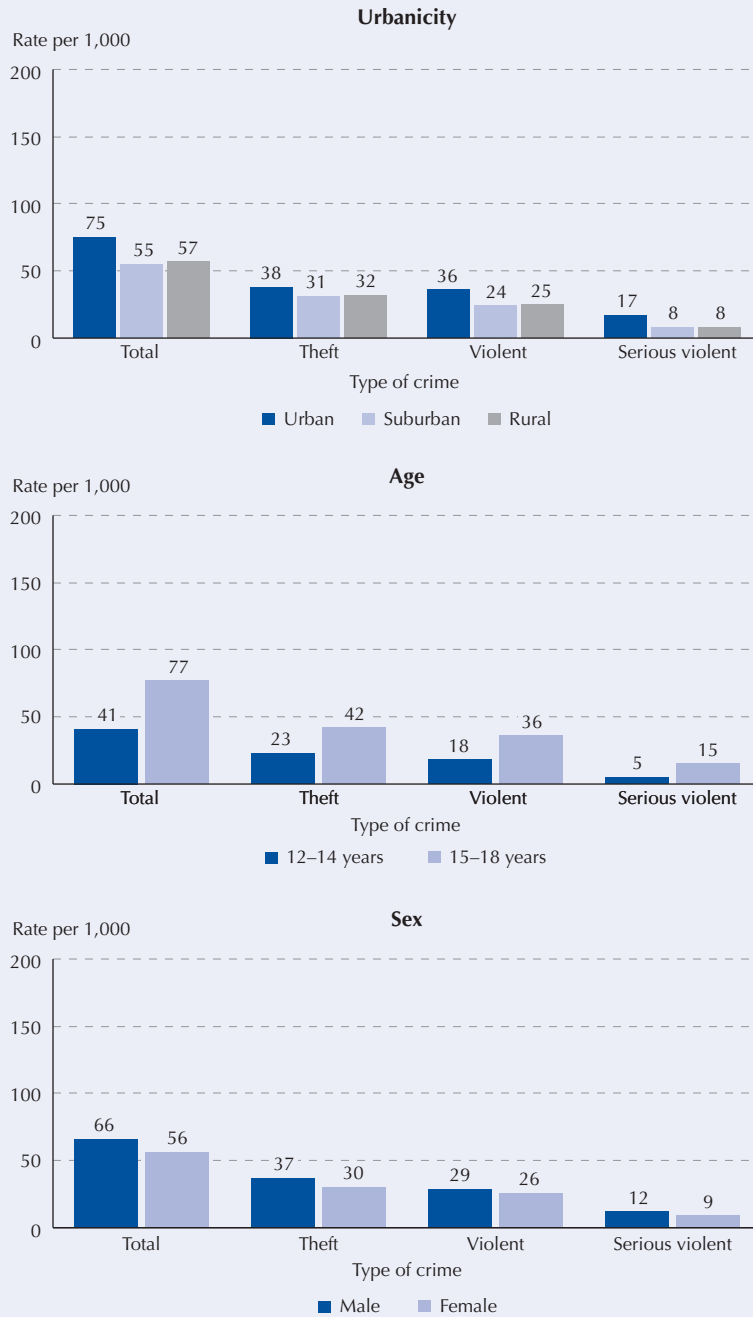


¹Estimate based on fewer than 10 cases.

NOTE: Serious violent crimes include rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. Violent crimes include serious violent crimes and simple assault. Total crimes include violent crimes and theft. "At school" includes inside the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 2001.

Figure 2.3. Rate of nonfatal crimes against students ages 12–18 occurring away from school per 1,000 students, by type of crime and selected student characteristics: 2001



NOTE: Serious violent crimes include rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. Violent crimes include serious violent crimes and simple assault. Total crimes include violent crimes and theft. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 2001.

Indicator
3

VICTIMIZATION OF STUDENTS AT SCHOOL

In recent years, as student grade level increased from 6th to 12th, reports of victimization generally decreased.

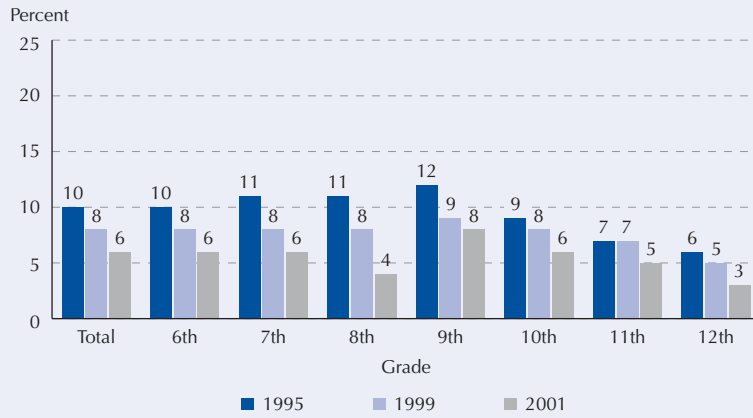
The most frequently occurring type of nonfatal crime in the United States is theft, though violent crime continues to be of importance in examining school safety (U.S. Department of Justice 2000). Data from the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey show a decrease in the percentage of students affected by most types of victimization in recent years. For example, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being victims of nonfatal crimes at school during the previous 6 months was lower in 2001 than in 1999 and 1995 (6 percent vs. 8 and 10 percent, respectively) (table 3.1). Student reports of theft at school decreased from 7 percent in 1995 to 4 percent in 2001. In addition, student reports of violence at school decreased from 1995 to 1999 but were not measurably different between 1999 and 2001 (3 percent in 1995 and 2 percent in both 1999 and 2001).

In 2001, male students were more likely than female students to report any criminal victimization (6 vs. 5 percent). Among 6th–12th-grade students, as student grade level increased, reports of victimization generally decreased in all survey years (figure 3.1 and table 3.1). Nonetheless, for students in each grade level, the percentage who reported being victims of nonfatal crimes declined between 1995 and 2001. During this period, reports of victimization dropped from 10 percent to 6 percent for 6th-graders and from 6 percent to 3 percent for 12th-graders.

Nonfatal victimization rates varied according to school sector. In each survey year, public school students were more likely to report having been victims of violent crime than their private school counterparts. Public school students were also more likely than private school students to report being victims of theft in 1995 and 2001.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 3.1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported nonfatal criminal victimization at school during the previous 6 months, by grade level: 1995, 1999, and 2001



NOTE: This figure presents the prevalence of total victimization, which is a combination of violent victimization and theft. "At school" includes in the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school. (See appendix A for more information.)

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1995, 1999, and 2001.

Indicator
4

THREATS AND INJURIES WITH WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property has fluctuated in recent years without a clear trend.

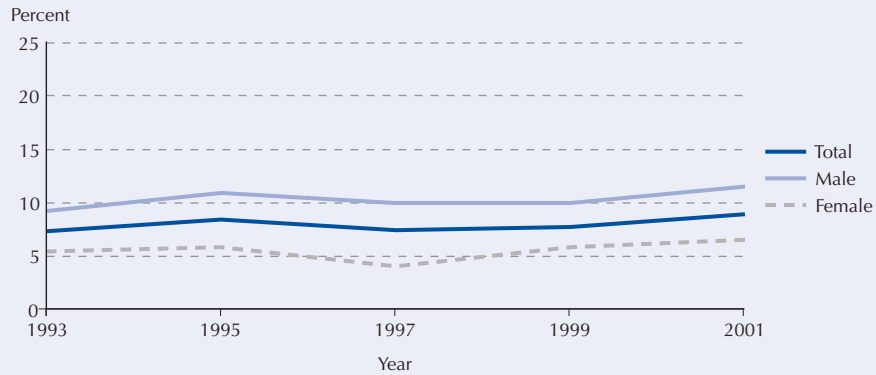
Every year, some students are threatened or injured with a weapon while they are on school property. The percentage of students victimized in this way provides an important measure of how safe our schools are and how this changes over time. In the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students in grades 9–12 were asked whether they had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the 12 months preceding the survey. Results show that the percentage of students who were threatened or injured in this way has fluctuated in recent years without a clear trend. In all survey years from 1993 to 2001, between 7 percent and 9 percent of students reported being threatened or injured with a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club, on school property (table 4.1).

The likelihood of being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property varied by student characteristics. In each survey year, males were more likely than females to report being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (figure 4.1 and table 4.1). For example, in 2001, 12 percent of male students reported being threatened or injured in the past year, compared with 7 percent of female students. Among 9th–12th-grade students, those in lower grades were more likely to be threatened or injured with a weapon on school property than were those in higher grades in all survey years (figure 4.2 and table 4.1). In 2001, 13 percent of 9th-graders reported that they were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property, compared with 9 percent of 10th-graders, 7 percent of 11th-graders, and 5 percent of 12th-graders.

Finally, students' likelihood of being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property was examined by race/ethnicity. In 2001, Pacific Islander students were more likely than Black, Hispanic, or White students to report being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property. While there appear to be large differences in other racial/ethnic groups, some of these estimates are associated with large standard errors and should be interpreted with caution.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

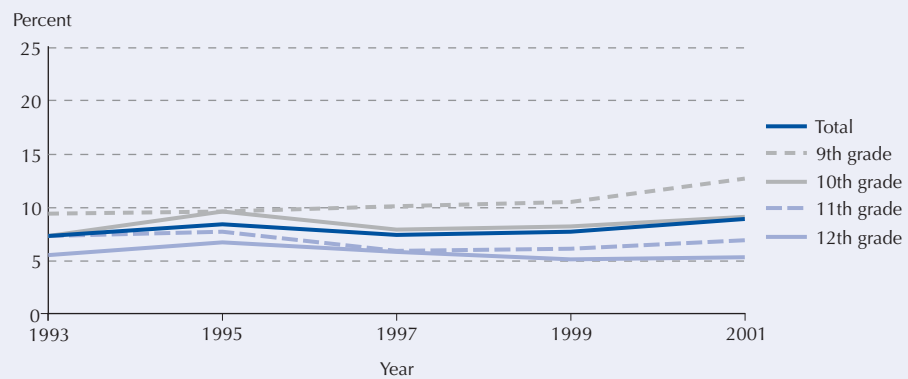
Figure 4.1. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the previous 12 months, by sex: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Figure 4.2. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the previous 12 months, by grade: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Indicator
5

PHYSICAL FIGHTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

In recent years, the percentage of 9th–12th-grade students who reported being in a physical fight on school property has declined—from 16 percent in 1993 to 13 percent in 2001.

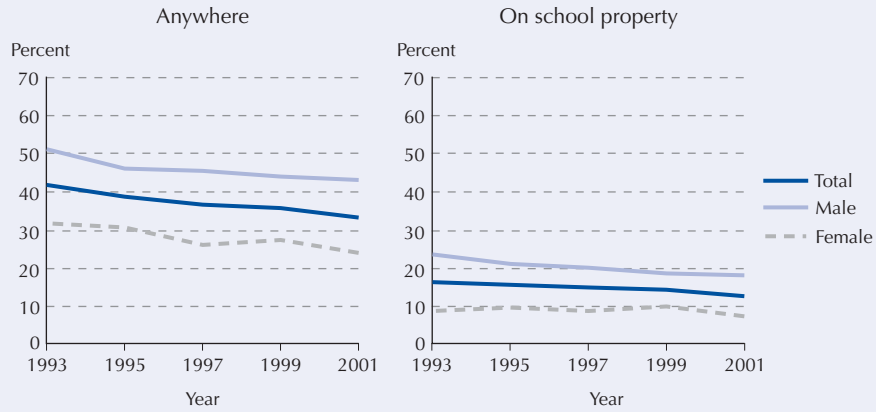
Schools at which there are numerous physical fights may not be able to maintain a focused learning environment for students. Further, students who are involved in fights on school property may have difficulty succeeding in their studies (Hamburg 1998). In the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students in grades 9–12 were asked about their general involvement in physical fights during the preceding 12 months (referred to as “anywhere” in this analysis) and their involvement in physical fights on school property. The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported being in a fight anywhere declined from 1993 to 2001—from 42 percent in 1993 to 33 percent in 2001 (table 5.1). Similarly, the percentages of students who reported fighting on school property in these years also declined, from 16 percent in 1993 to 13 percent in 2001.

In all survey years, males were more likely than females to have been in a fight anywhere and on school property (figure 5.1 and table 5.1). In 2001, 43 percent of males said they had been in a fight anywhere, and 18 percent said they had been in a fight on school property. In that same year, 24 percent of females reported they had been in a fight anywhere, and 7 percent said they had been in a fight on school property. When looking at different grade levels, students in lower grades reported being in fights more frequently than students in higher grades both anywhere and on school property in all survey years (figure 5.2 and table 5.1). For example, in 2001, 17 percent of 9th-graders reported being in a fight on school property, while 8 percent of 12th-graders reported the same.

In 2001, the percentages of students engaging in fights anywhere varied according to students’ race/ethnicity. Specifically, Asian students were less likely than Black, White, and Hispanic students to report being in a fight anywhere (22 percent vs. 32–37 percent for Black, White, and Hispanic students). However, a similar pattern could not be detected in the percentages of students who reported being in a fight at school. While there appear to be large differences in other racial/ethnic groups, these estimates are associated with large standard errors and should be interpreted with caution.

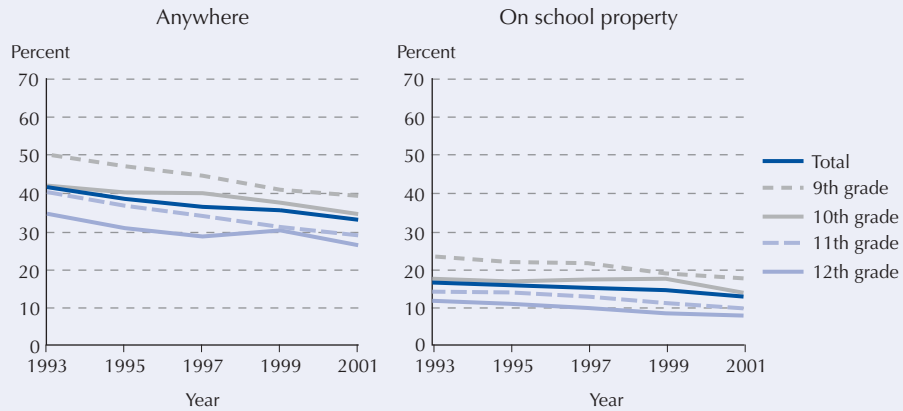
This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 5.1. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported having been in a physical fight during the previous 12 months, by sex: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire; rather, students are simply asked how many times in the last 12 months they had been in a physical fight.
 SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Figure 5.2. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported having been in a physical fight during the previous 12 months, by grade: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire; rather, students are simply asked how many times in the last 12 months they had been in a physical fight.
 SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

BULLYING AT SCHOOL

The percentage of students who reported that they had been bullied at school increased from 5 percent in 1999 to 8 percent in 2001.

Bullying can contribute to an environment of fear and intimidation in schools (Arnette and Walsleben 1998; Ericson 2001). In the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, students ages 12–18 were asked if they had been bullied (for example, picked on or made to do things they did not want to do) at school. In 2001, 8 percent of students reported that they had been bullied at school in the last 6 months, up from 5 percent in 1999 (table 6.1).

In 2001, males were more likely than females to be bullied (9 vs. 7 percent); however, no differences could be detected according to students' sex in 1999 (about 5 percent each) (figure 6.1 and table 6.1). The percentage of students who reported that they had been bullied increased between 1999 and 2001 for all racial/ethnic groups except Blacks. About 6 percent of Black students in both years reported they had been bullied. During this period, the percentage of students who had been bullied increased from 5 to 9 percent for White students, and from 4 to 8 percent for Hispanic students. In 2001, one difference could be detected among racial/ethnic groups in the percentage of students who reported being bullied: White students were more likely than Black students to report being bullied (9 vs. 6 percent).

In 1999 and 2001, grade level was inversely related to students' likelihood of being bullied: as grade level increased, students' likelihood of being bullied decreased (figure 6.2 and table 6.1). For example, in 2001, 14 percent of 6th-graders, 9 percent of 9th-graders, and 2 percent of 12th-graders reported that they had been bullied at school.

In 1999, public school students were more likely to report being bullied than private school students (5 vs. 3 percent); however, no differences were detected between public and private school students' reports of being bullied in 2001.

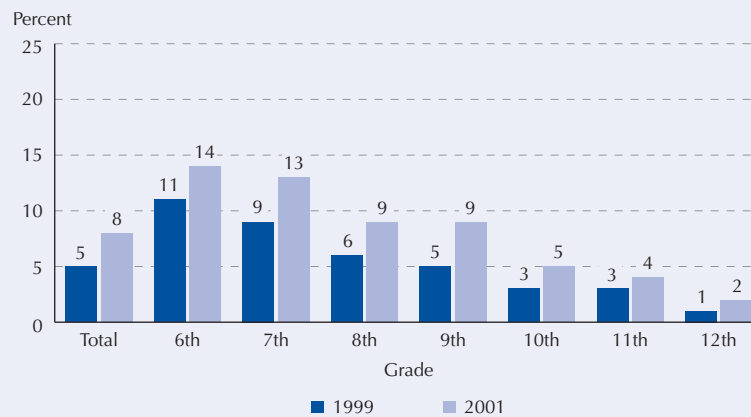
This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 6.1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being bullied at school during the previous 6 months, by sex: 1999 and 2001



NOTE: In the 1999 survey, “at school” was defined as in the school building, on the school grounds, or on a school bus. In the 2001 survey, “at school” was defined as in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999 and 2001.

Figure 6.2. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being bullied at school during the previous 6 months, by grade: 1999 and 2001



NOTE: In the 1999 survey, “at school” was defined as in the school building, on the school grounds, or on a school bus. In the 2001 survey, “at school” was defined as in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999 and 2001.



**VIOLENCE AND
CRIME AT SCHOOL
—PUBLIC SCHOOL
REPORTS**

Indicator
7

VIOLENT AND OTHER INCIDENTS AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THOSE REPORTED TO THE POLICE

Seventy-one percent of public schools experienced one or more violent incidents, while 36 percent reported one or more such incidents to the police.

This indicator provides the percentage of schools that experienced one or more crimes and the total number of crimes reported by schools. In the School Survey on Crime and Safety, principals of public schools were asked to provide the number of violent incidents, serious violent incidents, thefts, and other incidents that occurred at their school, as well as the number of incidents that were reported to the police. Violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with or without a weapon, threat of physical attack with or without a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon.

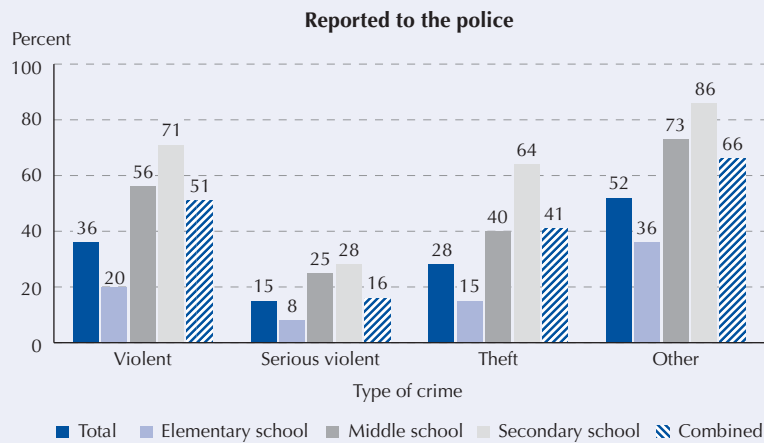
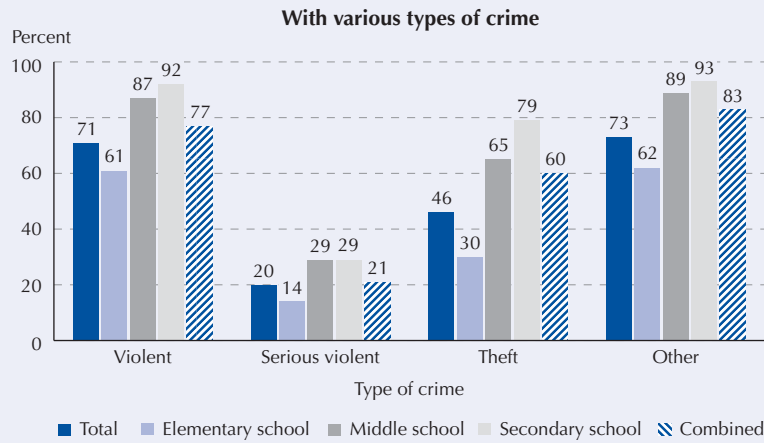
In 1999–2000, an estimated 1.5 million violent incidents occurred in public elementary and secondary schools (table 7.1). Seventy-one percent of public schools experienced one or more violent incidents and 36 percent of schools reported one or more such incidents to the police (tables 7.1 and 7.2). Twenty percent of schools experienced one or more serious violent incidents (which are a subset of violent incidents and include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with a weapon, threat of physical attack with a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon) and 46 percent of public schools experienced one or more thefts. These translate into an estimated 61,000 serious violent incidents and 218,000 thefts at public schools in 1999–2000. When looking at reports to police, 15 percent of public schools reported one or more serious violent incidents to the police and 28 percent reported one or more thefts to the police.

The prevalence of violent incidents and those reported to the police varied by the school level and size of the school (figures 7.1 and 7.2 and tables 7.1 and 7.2). Schools with students in higher grades were more likely to experience a violent incident than those with students in lower grades. Specifically, secondary schools were more likely to have a violent incident than elementary, middle, or combined schools (92 percent vs. 61–87 percent for the other school levels). A similar pattern was observed for those incidents that were reported to the authorities: 71 percent of secondary schools reported a violent incident, compared with 20 percent of elementary schools, 56 percent of middle schools, and 51 percent of combined schools. Likewise, larger schools were more likely to have a violent incident and report one or more violent incidents to the police than smaller schools. About 89 percent of schools with 1,000 students or more had a violent incident, compared with 61 percent of schools with less than 300 students.

This is a new indicator.

When examining violent incidents by the location of public schools, city schools were more likely than urban fringe schools to experience or report to the police at least one violent incident during the 1999–2000 school year (figure 7.3 and tables 7.1 and 7.2). Seventy-seven percent of urban schools had one or more violent incidents and 44 percent reported one or more incidents to the police, compared with 67 and 35 percent, respectively, of urban fringe schools. Rural schools were the least likely to report one or more violent incidents to the police (28 percent vs. 35–44 percent for public schools in urban fringe and city areas).

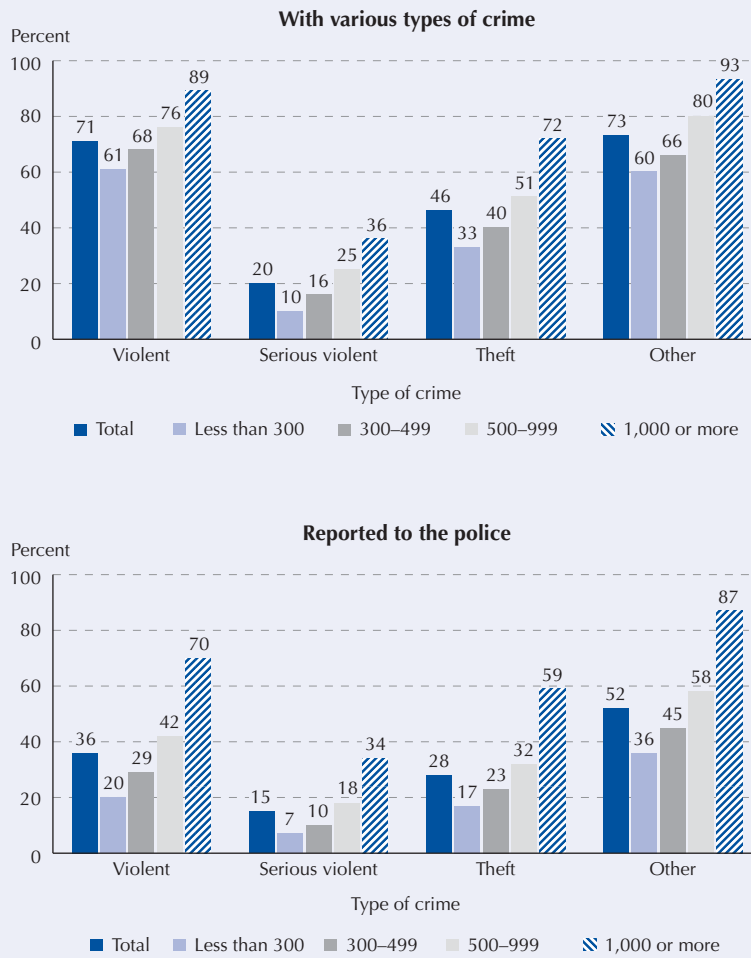
Figure 7.1. Percentage of public schools with various types of crime and percentage of public schools that reported various types of crime to the police, by school level: 1999–2000



NOTE: Violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with or without a weapon, threat of physical attack with or without a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon. Serious violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with a weapon, threat of physical attack with a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon. Other incidents include possession of a firearm or explosive device, possession of a knife or sharp object, distribution of illegal drugs, possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, sexual harassment, or vandalism. Principals were asked to report crimes that took place in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses during normal school hours and at school-sponsored events or activities.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 1999–2000.

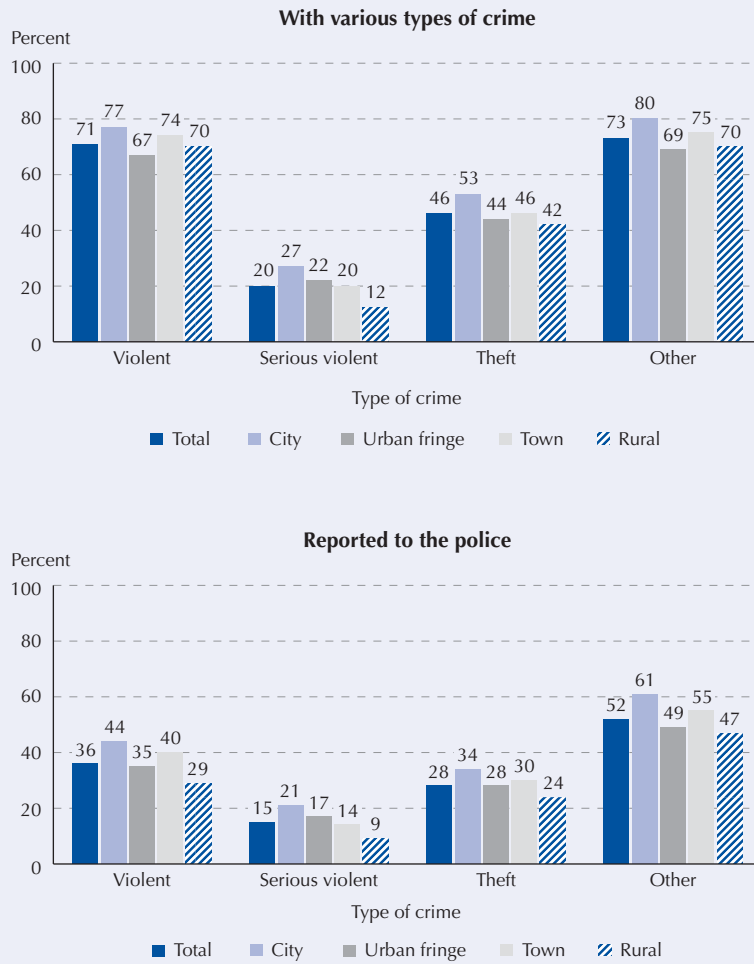
Figure 7.2. Percentage of public schools with various types of crime and percentage of public schools that reported various types of crime to the police, by enrollment: 1999–2000



NOTE: Violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with or without a weapon, threat of physical attack with or without a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon. Serious violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with a weapon, threat of physical attack with a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon. Other incidents include possession of a firearm or explosive device, possession of a knife or sharp object, distribution of illegal drugs, possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, sexual harassment, or vandalism. Principals were asked to report crimes that took place in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses during normal school hours and at school-sponsored events or activities.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 1999–2000.

Figure 7.3. Percentage of public schools with various types of crime and percentage of public schools that reported various types of crime to the police, by urbanicity: 1999–2000



NOTE: Violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with or without a weapon, threat of physical attack with or without a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon. Serious violent incidents include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with a weapon, threat of physical attack with a weapon, and robbery with or without a weapon. Other incidents include possession of a firearm or explosive device, possession of a knife or sharp object, distribution of illegal drugs, possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, sexual harassment, or vandalism. Principals were asked to report crimes that took place in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses during normal school hours and at school-sponsored events or activities.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 1999–2000.

SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS TAKEN BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

About 54 percent of public schools took a serious disciplinary action in the 1999–2000 school year. Of those disciplinary actions, 83 percent were suspensions lasting 5 days or more, 11 percent were removals with no services (i.e., expulsions), and 7 percent were transfers to specialized schools.

The extent to which schools remove students from regular instruction as a result of crime and violence has important consequences for student instruction. In the School Survey on Crime and Safety, public school principals were asked to report the number of disciplinary actions taken during the 1999–2000 school year for specific offenses that were not academic infractions.

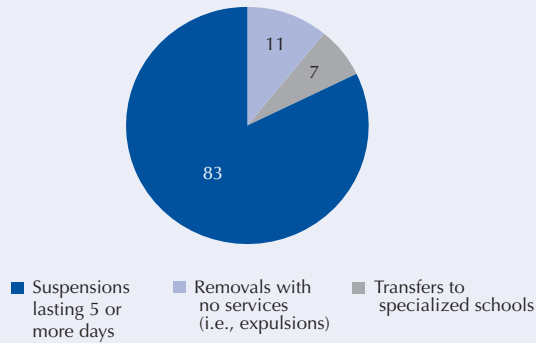
About 54 percent of public schools took at least one serious disciplinary action, including suspensions lasting 5 days or more, removals with no services (i.e., expulsions), and transfers to specialized schools, for any of the offenses that occurred in the 1999–2000 school year (table 8.1). Altogether, about 1,163,000 actions were taken. Of those serious disciplinary actions, 83 percent were suspensions for 5 days or more, 11 percent were removals with no services, and 7 percent were transfers to specialized schools (figure 8.1 and table 8.1).

Two percent of all public schools took one or more serious disciplinary actions in response to the use of a firearm or explosive device, and 4 percent did so for the possession of such a device (figure 8.2 and table 8.1). Use of weapons other than firearms resulted in at least one serious disciplinary action in 5 percent of schools, while possession of weapons other than firearms led to a serious disciplinary action in 19 percent of schools.

Ten percent of all public schools took one or more serious disciplinary actions for the distribution of illegal drugs, and 20 percent for the possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol. In 1999–2000, public schools took serious disciplinary actions for offenses such as fights (35 percent), threats (22 percent), insubordination (18 percent), and other non-academic infractions (14 percent).

This is a new indicator.

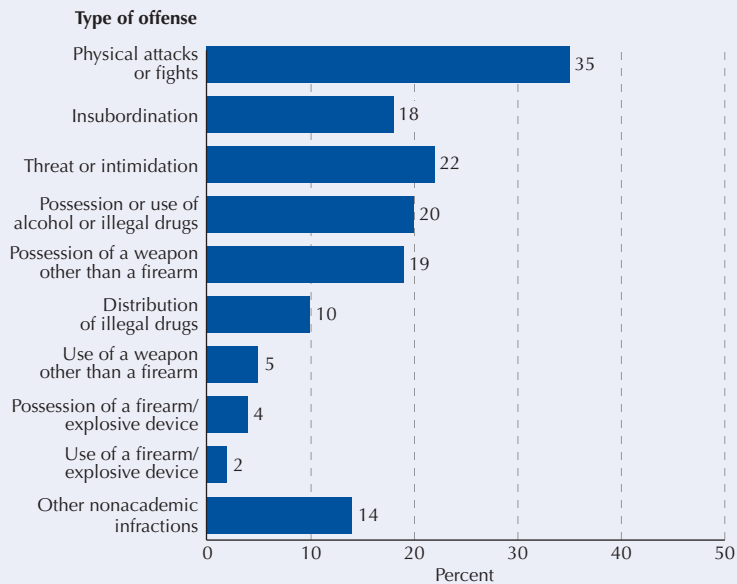
Figure 8.1. Percentage distribution of serious disciplinary actions taken by public schools according to type of action: 1999–2000



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 1999–2000.

Figure 8.2. Percentage of public schools that took a serious disciplinary action for selected offenses, by type of offense: 1999–2000



NOTE: Serious disciplinary action includes suspensions lasting 5 days or more, removals with no services (i.e., expulsions), and transfers to specialized schools.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 1999–2000.



**NONFATAL
TEACHER
VICTIMIZATION
AT SCHOOL
—TEACHER
REPORTS**

NONFATAL TEACHER VICTIMIZATION AT SCHOOL

From 1997 to 2001, teachers were the victims of approximately 1.3 million nonfatal crimes at school, including 817,000 thefts and 473,000 violent crimes.

Students are not the only victims of crime at school. Teachers are also targets of violence and theft in schools. In addition to the personal toll that violence may take on teachers, those who worry about their safety may have difficulty teaching and may leave the profession altogether (Elliott, Hamburg, and Williams 1998). Information on the number of crimes against teachers at school can help show the extent of the problem. Estimates of teacher victimization are drawn from the National Crime Victimization Survey, which obtains information about the occupation of survey respondents. These events are not limited to offenses committed by students; offenses committed by others against teachers at school are also included.

Over the 5-year period from 1997 to 2001, teachers were the victims of approximately 1.3 million nonfatal crimes at school, including 817,000 thefts and 473,000 violent crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault) (table 9.1). Among the violent crimes against teachers during this 5-year period, there were about 48,000 serious violent crimes (accounting for 10 percent of the violent crimes), including rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. On average, these figures translate into a rate of 21 violent crimes per 1,000 teachers, and 2 serious violent crimes per 1,000 teachers annually.⁴

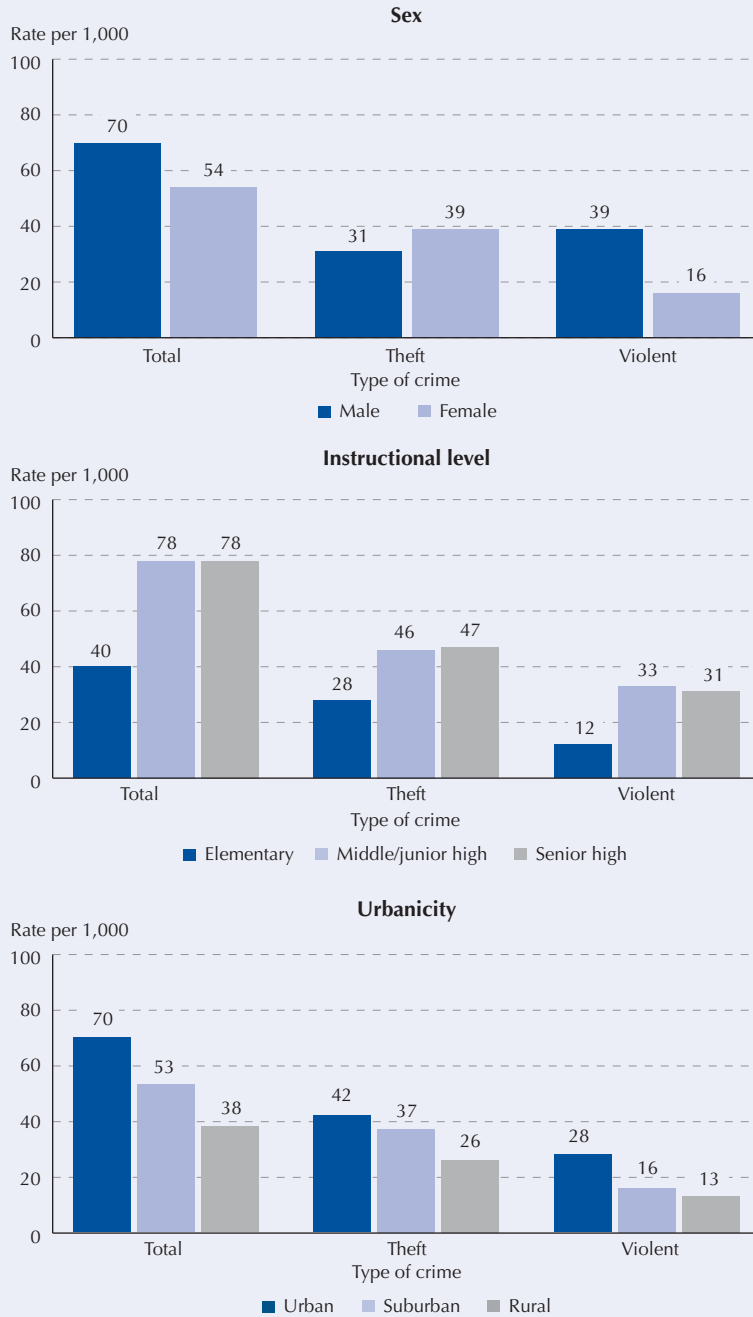
During the 5-year period, the annual rate of violent victimization for teachers varied according to their sex and their instructional level (figure 9.1 and table 9.1). Over the 5-year period from 1997 to 2001, male teachers were more likely than female teachers to be victims of violent crimes (39 vs. 16 crimes per 1,000 teachers). Also, senior high school and middle/junior high school teachers were more likely than elementary school teachers to be victims of violent crimes (31 and 33 vs. 12 violent crimes per 1,000 teachers, respectively).

Teachers in urban areas were more vulnerable to violent crime victimization at school than others. For example, annually over the 5-year period, urban teachers were more likely than rural and suburban teachers to be victims of violent crimes (28 vs. 13 and 16 crimes, respectively, per 1,000 teachers). Teachers in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to experience theft at school (42 and 26 crimes per 1,000 teachers, respectively).

This indicator has been updated to include 2001 data.

⁴The average annual rate is the sum of all teacher victimizations across the 5 years divided by the sum of all teachers over those years, multiplied by 1,000.

Figure 9.1. Average annual rate of nonfatal crimes against teachers at school per 1,000 teachers, by type of crime and selected teacher and school characteristics: 1997–2001



NOTE: Violent crimes include rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Total crimes include violent crimes and theft. "At school" includes inside the school building, on school property, at the work site, or while working. For thefts, "while working" was not considered, since thefts of teachers' property kept at school can occur when teachers are not present. The data were aggregated from 1997–2001 due to the small number of teachers in each year's sample. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 1997–2001.

Indicator
10

TEACHERS THREATENED WITH INJURY OR ATTACKED BY STUDENTS

Teachers in central city schools were more likely than their peers in urban fringe or rural schools to be threatened with injury or physically attacked.

Some of the offenses against teachers are committed by students. Data on the extent to which students make threats or physically attack elementary and secondary teachers can provide a snapshot of this problem. In the Schools and Staffing Survey, teachers were asked whether they had been threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student in the previous 12 months. The survey results indicate that a smaller percentage of elementary and secondary school teachers were threatened with injury by a student at their school in the 1999–2000 school year than in the 1993–94 school year (9 vs. 12 percent) (table 10.1). No difference was detected in the percentage of teachers physically attacked by a student in the 1999–2000 school year compared to the 1993–94 school year (4 percent) (table 10.2).

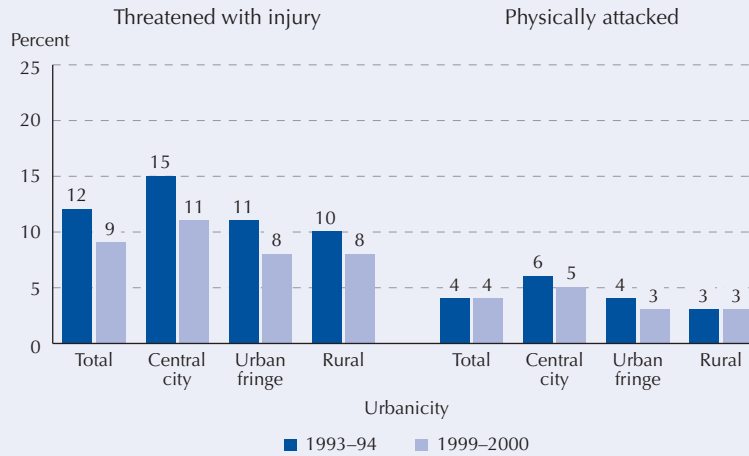
In 1999–2000, few differences could be detected in the likelihood of teachers being victimized by students according to teachers' race/ethnicity (tables 10.1 and 10.2). One such difference was that Black teachers were more likely to be threatened than White teachers in 1999–2000 (12 vs. 9 percent).

In both survey years, teachers in central city schools were more likely to be threatened with injury or physically attacked than teachers in urban fringe or rural schools (figure 10.1 and tables 10.1 and 10.2). For example, in 1999–2000, 11 percent of teachers in central city schools had been threatened with injury by students, compared with 8 percent each in urban fringe and rural schools. Five percent of teachers in central city schools had been attacked by students, while 3 percent each of teachers in urban fringe and rural schools had experienced such attacks.

In 1999–2000, teachers' reports of being victimized or attacked by a student varied according to the level and sector of their school. Secondary school teachers were more likely than elementary school teachers to have been threatened with injury by a student (10 vs. 8 percent); however, secondary school teachers were less likely to have been physically attacked (2 vs. 6 percent). Public school teachers were more likely than private school teachers to be victimized by students in school (figure 10.2 and tables 10.1 and 10.2): 10 percent of public school teachers had been threatened with injury, compared with 4 percent of private school teachers. Likewise, 4 percent of public school teachers and 2 percent of private school teachers had been physically attacked by students. Among teachers in central city schools, those at public schools were four times more likely to be targets of threats of injury than their colleagues in private schools (14 vs. 3 percent) and about three times more likely to be targets of attacks (6 vs. 2 percent).

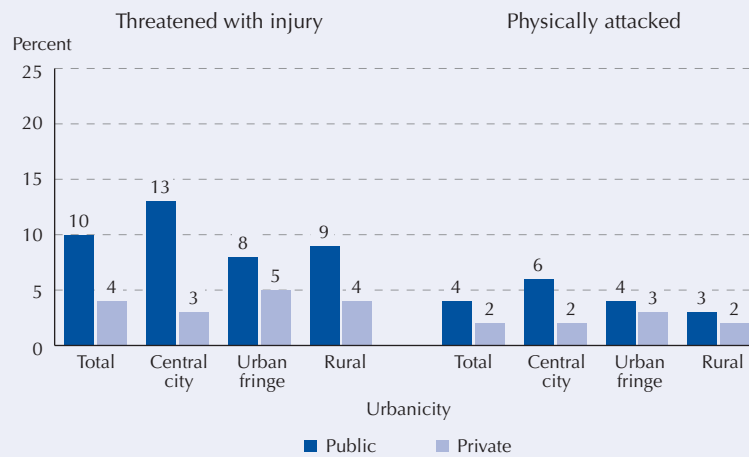
This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 10.1. Percentage of public and private school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or that they were physically attacked by a student from school during the previous 12 months, by urbanicity: 1993–94 and 1999–2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public, Private, and Charter Teacher and School Surveys,” 1993–94 and 1999–2000.

Figure 10.2. Percentage of public and private school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or that they were physically attacked by a student from school during the previous 12 months, by urbanicity and school sector: 1999–2000



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public, Private, and Charter Teacher and School Surveys,” 1993–94 and 1999–2000.



**SCHOOL
ENVIRONMENT**

STUDENTS CARRYING WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Between 1993 and 2001, the percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon anywhere and at school declined.

The presence of weapons at school can create an intimidating and threatening atmosphere, making teaching and learning difficult (Ingersoll and LeBoeuf 1997). The percentage of students who report that they carry a gun or other weapon on school property is an indicator of the breadth of the problem of weapons at school. In the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students were asked if they had carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club in the past 30 days (referred to as “anywhere” in this analysis) or carried one of these weapons onto school property in the past 30 days. In 2001, 17 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported they had carried a weapon anywhere, and about 6 percent reported they had carried a weapon on school property (table 11.1).

Between 1993 and 2001, the percentage of students who reported carrying a weapon anywhere generally declined from 22 to 17 percent. Similarly, the percentage of students who carried a weapon at school also declined during this period—from 12 to 6 percent.

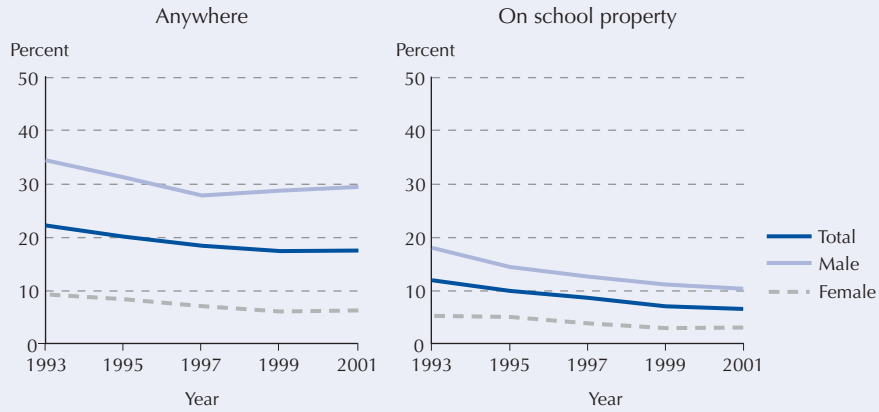
When looking at the types of students who carried weapons to school, the survey results show that in all years, males were at least two times more likely than females to carry a weapon—both anywhere and on school property (figure 11.1 and table 11.1). For example, in 2001, 10 percent of males carried a weapon on school property, compared with 3 percent of females.

For most survey years, the likelihood of students reporting that they carried a weapon anywhere was inversely related to their grade level: students in lower grades were more likely to report that they did so than their peers in higher grades in all survey years except in 1999, at which time no such relationship was found (figure 11.2 and table 11.1). However, no consistent pattern could be detected by grade level for students who reported carrying a weapon at school in almost all of the survey years.

In 2001, there were some differences in the percentages of students carrying weapons anywhere and on school property according to students’ race/ethnicity. Although there appear to be large differences in the prevalence of carrying weapons among students of various racial/ethnic groups, some of these estimates are associated with large standard errors and should be interpreted with caution.

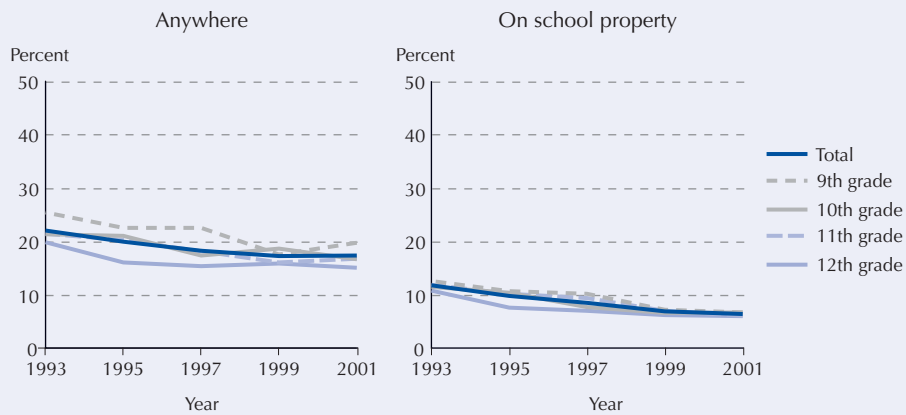
This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 11.1. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon at least 1 day during the previous 30 days, by sex: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire. Rather, students are simply asked during the past 30 days, on how many days they carried a weapon. SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Figure 11.2. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon at least 1 day during the previous 30 days, by grade: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire. Rather, students are simply asked during the past 30 days, on how many days they carried a weapon. SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Indicator
12

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL SAFETY AT SCHOOL OR ON THE WAY TO AND FROM SCHOOL AND AWAY FROM SCHOOL

In both 1999 and 2001, students were more likely to be afraid of being attacked at school or on the way to and from school than away from school.

School violence can make students fearful and affect their readiness and ability to learn. Concerns about vulnerability to attacks also have a detrimental effect on the school environment (Elliott, Hamburg, and Williams 1998). In the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, students ages 12–18 were asked how often they were afraid of attack⁵ “at school or on the way to and from school” and “away from school” during the previous 6 months. Between 1999 and 2001, there was no change detected in the percentage of students who felt unsafe at school or on the way to and from school (table 12.1). However, between 1995 and 1999, there was a decrease in the percentage of students who felt unsafe. In 2001, 6 percent of students ages 12–18 reported that they sometimes or most of the time were fearful about their safety at school compared with 12 percent in 1995. Away from school in 2001, 5 percent of students feared being attacked.

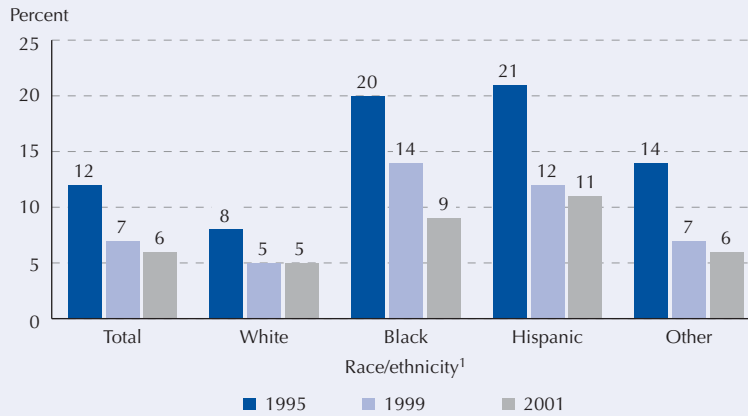
In both 1999 and 2001, Black and Hispanic students were more likely than White students to fear for their safety at school or on the way to and from school and away from school (figures 12.1 and 12.2 and table 12.1). In all survey years, students in lower grades were generally more likely than students in higher grades to fear such attacks at school or on the way to and from school. For example, in 2001, 11 percent of 6th-graders, 6 percent of 9th-graders, and 3 percent of 12th-graders feared for their safety at school or on the way to and from school.

The location of the school was also related to the extent to which students feared attack: students in urban schools were more likely than students in suburban and rural schools to fear being attacked at school or on the way to and from school in all three survey years. In the most recent survey year, 10 percent of students in urban schools feared being attacked at school, compared with 5 percent of their counterparts in suburban and 6 percent in rural schools.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

⁵In 1995 and 1999, students reported fear of “attack or harm” at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months. In 2001, students reported fear of “attack or threat of attack” at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months. Includes students who reported that they sometimes or most of the time feared being victimized in this way.

Figure 12.1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being afraid at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months, by race/ethnicity: 1995, 1999, and 2001

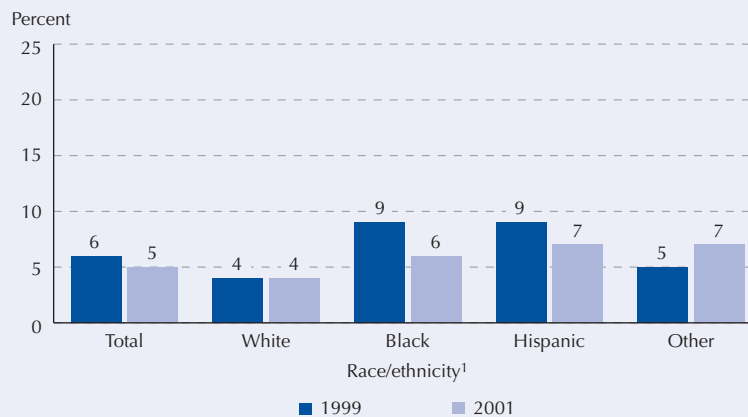


¹Other includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians (including Alaska Natives). Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified.

NOTE: In 1995 and 1999, students reported fear of “attack or harm” at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months. In 2001, students reported fear of “attack or threat of attack” at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months. Includes students who reported that they sometimes or most of the time feared being victimized in this way.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1995, 1999, and 2001.

Figure 12.2. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being afraid away from school during the previous 6 months, by race/ethnicity: 1999 and 2001



¹Other includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians (including Alaska Natives). Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified.

NOTE: In 1999, students reported fear of “attack or harm” at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months. In 2001, students reported fear of “attack or threat of attack” at school or on the way to and from school during the previous 6 months. Includes students who reported that they sometimes or most of the time feared being victimized in this way. Fear of attack away from school was not collected in 1995.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999 and 2001.

Indicator
13

STUDENTS' REPORTS OF AVOIDING PLACES IN SCHOOL

In 2001, 6th-grade students and urban students were more likely to avoid places in school than 12th-grade students and students from suburban and rural areas, respectively.

School crime may lead students to perceive specific areas at school as unsafe. In trying to ensure their own safety, they begin to avoid these areas (Ingersoll and LeBoeuf 1997). Changes in the percentage of students avoiding certain areas in school may be a good barometer of how safe schools are, at least in the minds of those who attend them. In the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, students ages 12–18 were asked whether they had avoided certain places in school—such as the entrance, any hallways or stairs, parts of the cafeteria, restrooms, and other places inside the school building—during the previous 6 months. This indicator provides estimates of those students who responded that they avoided at least one of these places.

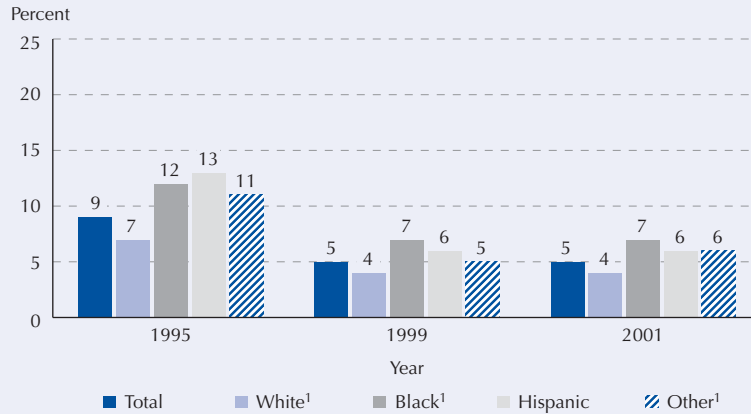
No difference could be detected in the percentage of students who avoided one or more places in school between 1999 and 2001 (5 percent in both years) (table 13.1). Between 1995 and 1999, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who avoided one or more places in school decreased from 9 to 5 percent.

In all survey years, both Black and Hispanic students were more likely than White students to report avoiding specific places in school (figure 13.1 and table 13.1). In 2001, for example, 4 percent of White students reported avoiding certain areas, compared with 7 percent of Black students and 6 percent of Hispanic students.

In the most recent survey year, students' avoidance of certain places in school differed according to their grade level and the location of their school. Grade level was inversely associated with the likelihood of avoiding places at school. In 2001, 7 percent of 6th-graders and 3 percent of 12th-graders avoided certain areas in school. In the same year, students in urban areas were the most likely to avoid specific places in school (figure 13.2 and table 13.1): 6 percent of urban students reported that they had done so, compared with 4 percent each of suburban and rural students.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 13.1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that they avoided one or more places in school during the previous 6 months, by race/ethnicity: 1995, 1999, and 2001

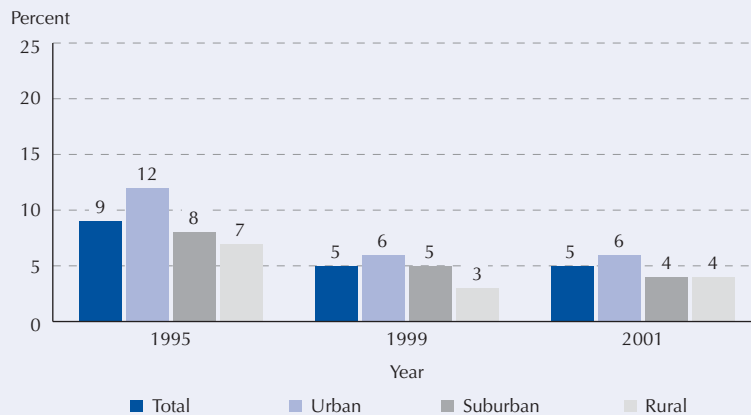


¹Other includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians (including Alaska Natives). Race categories exclude Hispanic origin.

NOTE: Places include the entrance, any hallways or stairs, parts of the cafeteria, restrooms, and other places inside the school building. See appendix A for details on changes to the questionnaire among survey years.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1995, 1999, and 2001.

Figure 13.2. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that they avoided one or more places in school during the previous 6 months, by urbanicity: 1995, 1999, and 2001



NOTE: Places include the entrance, any hallways or stairs, parts of the cafeteria, restrooms, and other places inside the school building. See appendix A for details on changes to the questionnaire among survey years.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1995, 1999, and 2001.

Indicator
14

STUDENTS' REPORTS OF BEING CALLED HATE-RELATED WORDS AND SEEING HATE-RELATED GRAFFITI

In 2001, 12 percent of students ages 12–18 reported that someone at school had used hate-related words against them, and more than one-third of students (36 percent) saw hate-related graffiti at school.

A student's exposure to hate-related words or symbols at school may increase that student's feeling of vulnerability. Discriminatory behavior in schools can create a hostile environment that is not conducive to learning (McLaughlin and Brilliant 1997). In the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, students ages 12–18 were asked if someone at school called them a derogatory word having to do with race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexual orientation during the previous 6 months. In the 2001 administration of the survey, they were then asked to specify the characteristic to which the hate-related word was directed. In 2001, 12 percent of students ages 12–18 reported that someone at school had used hate-related words against them (figure 14.1 and table 14.1). Four percent of respondents reported that the hate-related words concerned their race, about 3 percent each reported that the hate-related words concerned their ethnicity or gender, and between 1 and 2 percent each reported that the words were related to their religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

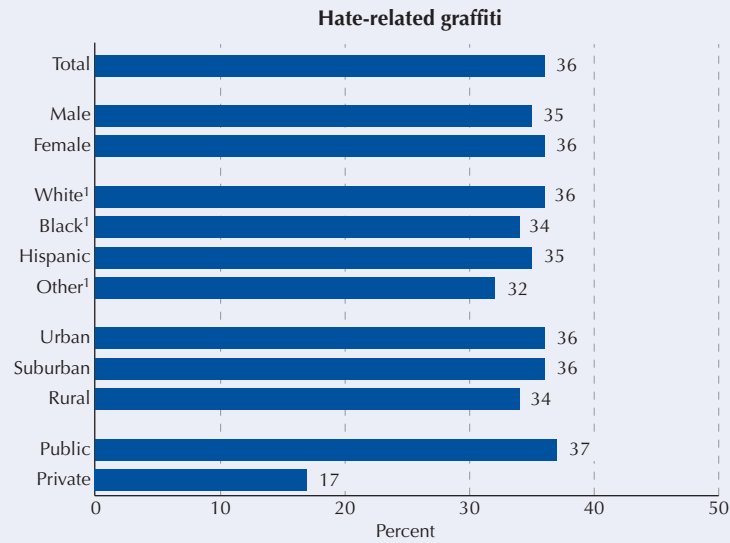
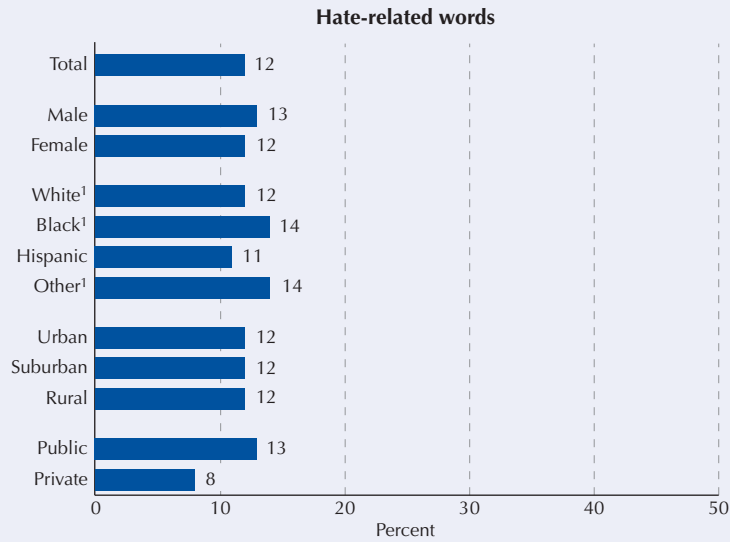
Students were also asked if they had seen hate-related graffiti at their school—that is, hate-related words or symbols written in classrooms, bathrooms, hallways, or on the outside of the school building. In both 1999 and 2001, more than one-third (36 percent) of students saw hate-related graffiti at school (table 14.2).

In 2001, there were differences across sex and race/ethnicity in students' experience being called specific types of hate-related words (tables 14.1 and 14.2). For example, females were more likely to report gender-related hate words than males (4 percent of females vs. 1 percent of males). Whites were less likely to report race-related hate words than students of other race/ethnicities (3 percent of Whites compared to 8 percent of Blacks, 5 percent of Hispanics, and 10 percent of students of other races).

Students in public schools were more likely than students in private schools to report being called hate-related words or seeing hate-related graffiti in 2001. Specifically, public school students were more likely to report exposure to hate words related to their race, ethnicity, or disability.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 14.1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being targets of hate-related words or who saw hate-related graffiti at school during the previous 6 months, by student and school characteristics: 2001



¹Other includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians (including Alaska Natives). Race categories exclude Hispanic origin.

NOTE: "At school" means in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2001.

Indicator
15

STUDENTS' REPORTS OF GANGS AT SCHOOL

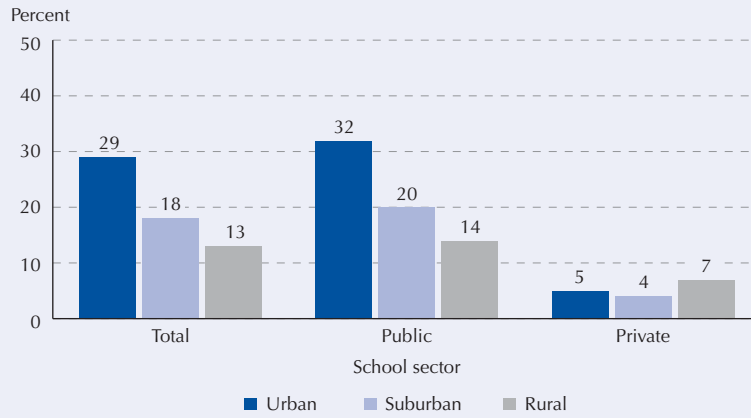
In 2001, students ages 12–18 in urban schools were the most likely to report the presence of street gangs at their school, followed by suburban students and rural students.

Street gangs are organized groups that are often involved in drugs, weapons trafficking, and violence. The presence of street gangs in school can be very disruptive to the school environment because they may not only create fear among students but also increase the level of violence in school (Laub and Lauritsen 1998). In the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, students ages 12–18 were asked if street gangs are present in their schools. In 2001, 20 percent of students reported that there were gangs at their schools (table 15.1). Students in urban schools were the most likely to report the presence of street gangs at their school (29 percent), followed by suburban students and rural students, who were the least likely to do so (18 and 13 percent, respectively).

Hispanic and Black students were more likely than White students to report the existence of street gangs in their schools in 2001 (32 and 29 percent, respectively, vs. 16 percent). This pattern also held among students in urban schools and suburban schools. Students in public schools were more likely to report the presence of street gangs than students in private schools (figure 15.1 and table 15.1). In 2001, 22 percent of students in public schools reported that there were street gangs in their schools, compared with 5 percent in private schools.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

Figure 15.1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that street gangs were present at school during the previous 6 months, by urbanicity and school sector: 2001



NOTE: "At school" means in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2001.

Indicator
16

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS REPORTED BY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In 1999–2000, more than one-quarter (29 percent) of public schools reported daily or weekly student bullying.

Discipline problems in a school may contribute to an overall environment in which violence and crime may occur. In the School Survey on Crime and Safety, school principals were asked how often certain disciplinary problems occur. Behaviors discussed in this indicator include racial tensions, bullying, student verbal abuse of teachers, widespread classroom disorder, and student acts of disrespect for teachers that happened daily or once a week. If gang or cult activities happened at all in the school, they were included as problematic.

In 1999–2000, more than one-quarter (29 percent) of public schools reported daily or weekly student bullying (table 16.1). Among the other discipline problems reported, 19 percent of public schools reported student acts of disrespect for teachers, 13 percent reported student verbal abuse of teachers, and 3 percent reported student racial tensions and widespread disorder in classrooms. Furthermore, 19 percent of public schools reported undesirable gang activities and 7 percent of schools reported undesirable cult or extremist activities occurred at some point in time during the 1999–2000 school year.

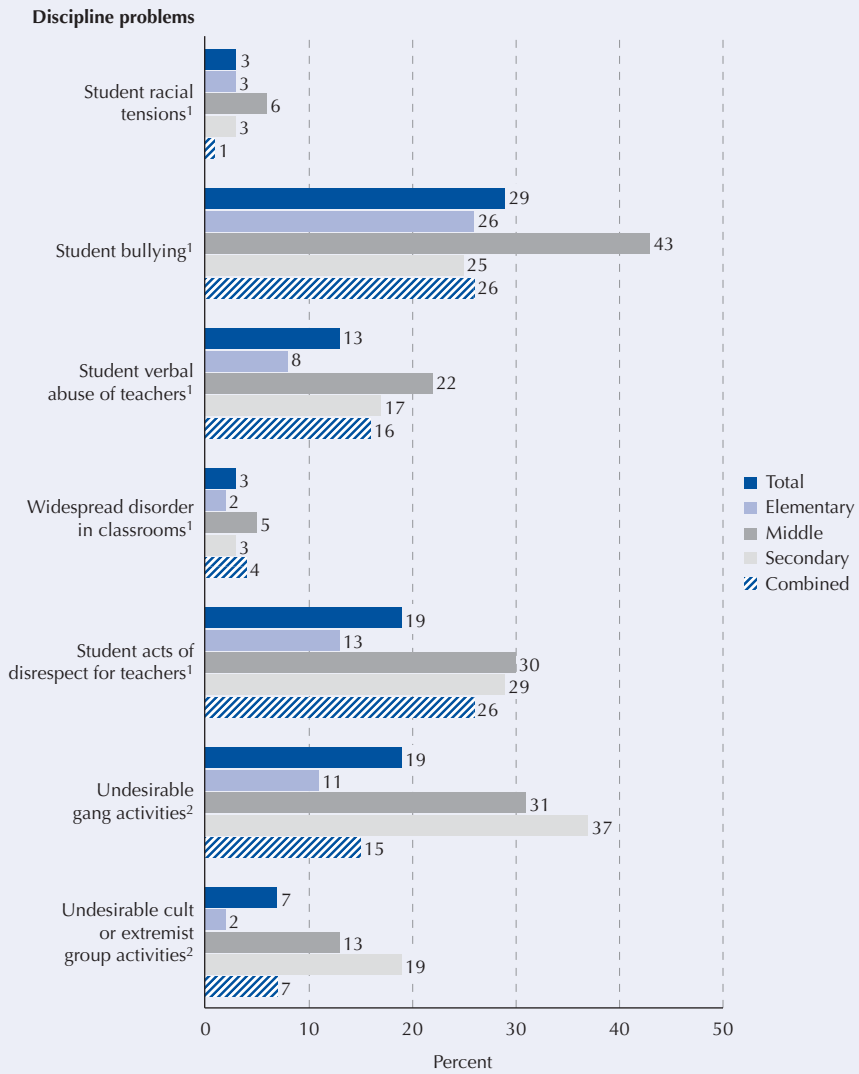
Discipline problems reported by public schools varied by school characteristics. For example, middle schools were more likely than elementary and secondary schools to report racial tensions, bullying, verbal abuse of teachers, and widespread disorder in classrooms (figure 16.1 and table 16.1). Middle schools were more likely than elementary schools, but less likely than high schools to report gang or extremist cult activity.

The prevalence of discipline problems was positively related to school size. As school enrollment increased, so did the likelihood of schools reporting each discipline problem at their school except widespread disorder in the classroom—which was reported by relatively few principals (less than 5 percent at all enrollment levels). Twenty-six percent of principals at schools with 1,000 or more students reported student verbal abuse of teachers, compared to 14 percent of schools with 500–999 students, 10 percent of schools with 300–499 students, and 7 percent of schools with less than 300 students.

Schools that had one or more violent incidents occur at their school were more likely to report each of the disciplinary problems discussed above, than those schools with no violent incidents. For example, 34 percent of schools with one or more violent incidents reported that bullying happened at least once a week, compared with 17 percent of schools with no violent incidents.

This is a new indicator.

Figure 16.1. Percentage of public schools that reported selected discipline problems, by school level: 1999–2000



¹Includes schools that reported the activity happens either once a week or daily.

²Includes schools that reported the activity has happened at all at their school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 1999–2000.

STUDENTS' USE OF ALCOHOL

In 2001, 47 percent of students in grades 9–12 had at least one drink of alcohol anywhere in the 30 days before being surveyed and 5 percent had at least one drink on school property.

The consumption of alcohol by students on school property, a crime in itself, may lead to other crimes and misbehavior on the part of students. It may also lead to a school environment that is harmful to students, teachers, and staff (Fagan and Wilkinson 1998). In the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students in grades 9–12 were asked whether they had consumed alcohol at all in the past 30 days (referred to as “anywhere” in this analysis) and if they had consumed alcohol on school property. In 2001, 47 percent of students had consumed at least one drink of alcohol anywhere in the 30 days before being surveyed, and a smaller percentage (5 percent) had consumed at least one drink on school property (table 17.1). When examining students’ reports of drinking between 1993 and 2001, no consistent patterns of increase or decrease were found in the percentage of students who had consumed alcohol, both anywhere and on school property.

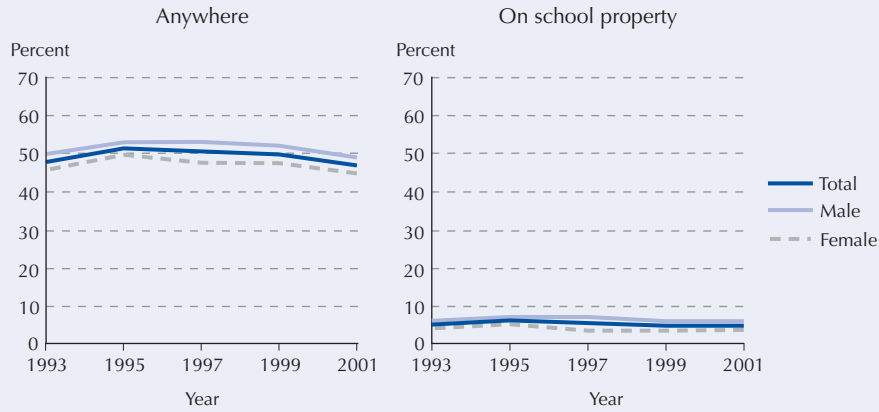
In every survey year except 1995, males were more likely than females to have used alcohol anywhere (figure 17.1 and table 17.1). Furthermore, in every survey year, males were more likely than females to use alcohol on school property. For example, in 2001, 6 percent of males had reported using alcohol on school property, compared with 4 percent of females.

Grade level was positively associated with the likelihood that students reported drinking alcohol anywhere in every survey year: students in higher grades were more likely to report drinking alcohol anywhere than students in lower grades (figure 17.2 and table 17.1). However, no such relationship was found across grade levels for students’ reports of drinking alcohol on school property.

In 2001, Asian and Black students were less likely to use alcohol anywhere than American Indian, Pacific Islander, White, and Hispanic students. Roughly one-third of Asian (28 percent) and Black (33 percent) students reported using alcohol anywhere, compared with about one-half (between 45 and 52 percent) of students in other racial/ethnic groups. While there also appear to be differences by race/ethnicity in students’ use of alcohol on school property, few differences could be detected due to large standard errors associated with these estimates.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

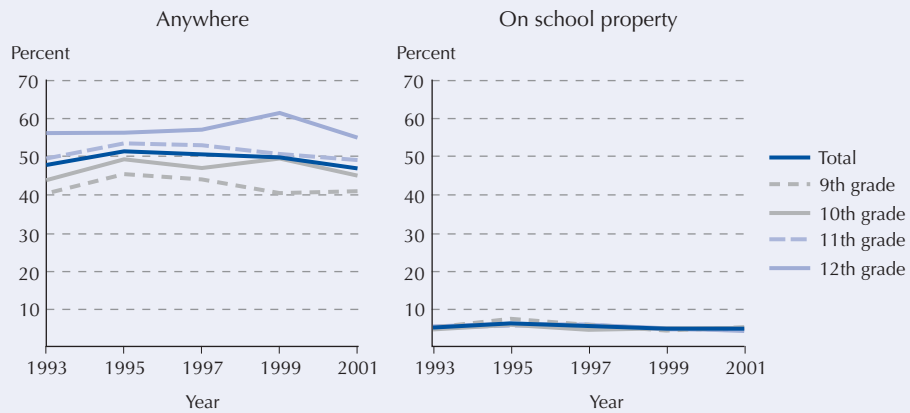
Figure 17.1. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported using alcohol during the previous 30 days, by sex: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire. Rather, students are simply asked during the past 30 days, on how many days did they have at least one drink of alcohol.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Figure 17.2. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported using alcohol during the previous 30 days, by grade: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire. Rather, students are simply asked during the past 30 days, on how many days did they have at least one drink of alcohol.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

STUDENTS' USE OF MARIJUANA

In 2001, 24 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported using marijuana anywhere during the last 30 days and 5 percent of students reported using marijuana on school property.

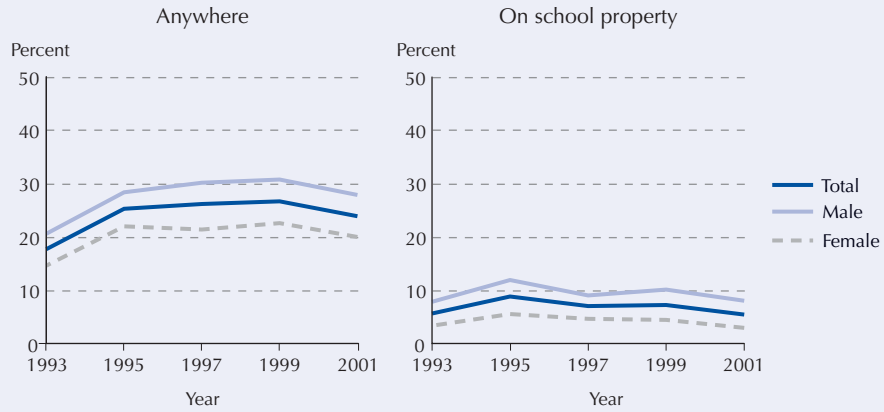
The use of drugs, such as marijuana, at school may lead to a school environment that is harmful to students, teachers, and school administrators. In the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students in grades 9–12 were asked whether they had used marijuana at all in the past 30 days (referred to as “anywhere” in this analysis) and whether they had used marijuana on school property. In 2001, about one-quarter (24 percent) of students in grades 9–12 reported using marijuana anywhere during the last 30 days, whereas 5 percent of students reported using marijuana on school property (table 18.1). Overall, no consistent patterns of increase or decrease were found in the percentage of students who had used marijuana between 1993 and 2001, both anywhere and on school property.

Both students’ sex and grade level were associated with students’ use of marijuana at school. Males were more likely than females to have used marijuana in every survey year, both anywhere and on school property (figure 18.1 and table 18.1). For example, in 2001, 8 percent of males and 3 percent of females reported using marijuana on school property. In that same year, students in lower grades were less likely than students in higher grades to report using marijuana anywhere (figure 18.2 and table 18.1). However, no corresponding difference could be detected in students’ use of marijuana on school property according to grade in school—between 5 and 6 percent of students in grades 9–12 reported such use.

In 2001, Asian students were less likely than students of all other race/ethnicities to report using marijuana anywhere. However, few differences could be found among these groups for students’ marijuana use at school. One such difference was that American Indian/Alaska Native students were more likely than students of all other race/ethnicities to report marijuana use at school in 2001. However, there was no difference detected in American Indian/Alaska Native students’ use of marijuana at school between 1999 and 2001. While students from various racial/ethnic groups appear to differ in their use of marijuana, these estimates are associated with large standard errors and should be interpreted with caution.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

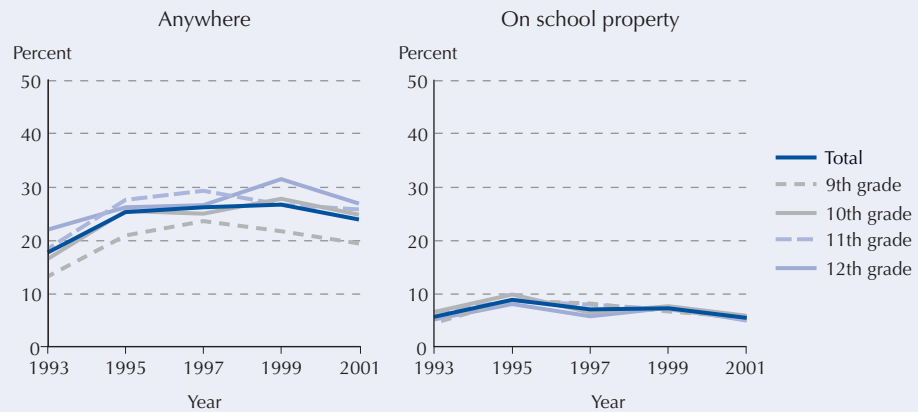
Figure 18.1. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported using marijuana during the previous 30 days, by sex: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire. Rather, students are simply asked how many times during the past 30 days they used marijuana.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Figure 18.2. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported using marijuana during the previous 30 days, by grade: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBS questionnaire. Rather, students are simply asked how many times during the past 30 days they used marijuana.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Indicator
19

STUDENTS' REPORTS OF DRUG AVAILABILITY ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

In 2001, 29 percent of all students in grades 9–12 reported that someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property in the 12 months before the survey.

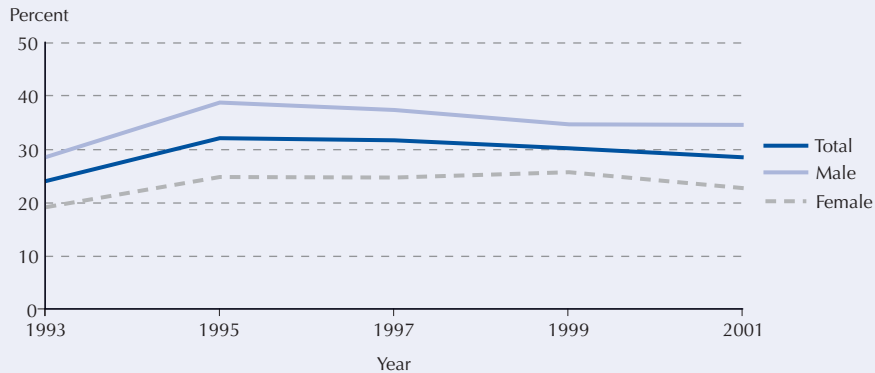
The availability of drugs on school property has a disruptive and corrupting influence on the school environment (Nolin et al. 1997). In the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, students in grades 9–12 were asked whether someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property in the 12 months before the survey. In 2001, 29 percent of all students in grades 9–12 reported that drugs were made available to them on school property (table 19.1). No consistent patterns of increase or decrease were found in the percentage of students who had reported that drugs were made available to them from 1993 to 2001, with between 24 and 32 percent of students reporting that this occurred in each survey year.

Males were more likely than females to report that drugs were offered, sold, or given to them on school property in each survey year (figure 19.1 and table 19.1). For example, in 2001, 35 percent of males reported the availability of drugs, while 23 percent of females did so.

In 1999 and 2001, students' racial/ethnic backgrounds were examined in relation to whether they reported having illegal drugs offered, sold, or given to them on school property (figure 19.2 and table 19.1). In 2001, Black and Asian students were less likely than Hispanic, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders and students of multiple race/ethnicities to report that drugs were made available to them. While there appear to be other differences among students in various racial/ethnic groups, these estimates are associated with large standard errors and should be interpreted with caution.

This indicator repeats information from the 2002 Indicators of School Crime and Safety report.

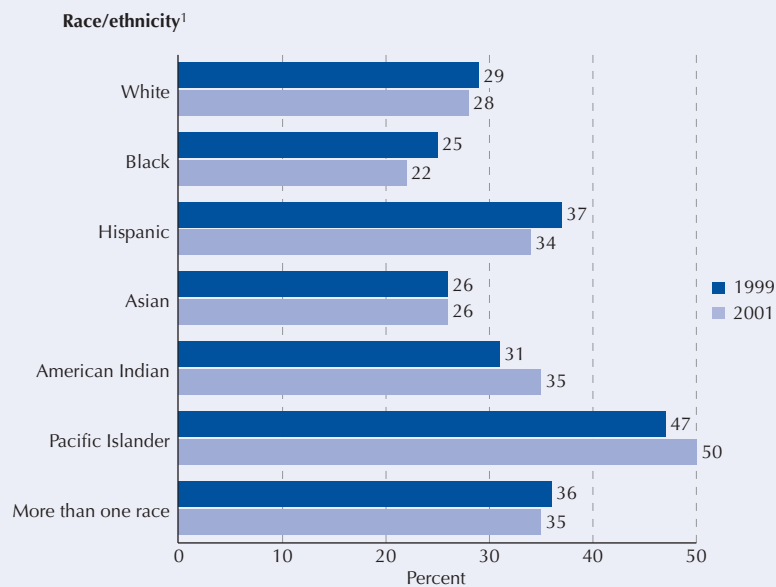
Figure 19.1. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported drugs were made available to them on school property during the previous 12 months, by sex: Selected years 1993–2001



NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), selected years 1993–2001.

Figure 19.2. Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported drugs were made available to them on school property during the previous 12 months, by race/ethnicity: 1999 and 2001



¹American Indian includes Alaska Native, Black includes African American, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified.

NOTE: “On school property” was not defined for survey respondents.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), “Youth Risk Behavior Survey” (YRBS), 1999 and 2001.

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