

the condition of education 2008



INDICATOR 28

School Violence and Safety

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2008*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2008*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008031>) or contact ED PUBS at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

Suggested Citation:

Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Provasnik, S., Kena, G., Dinkes, R., KewalRamani, A., and Kemp, J. (2008). *The Condition of Education 2008* (NCES 2008-031). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.

School Characteristics and Climate

School Violence and Safety

During the 2005–06 school year, 17 percent of public schools experienced at least one serious violent incident at school.

In the School Survey on Crime and Safety, public school principals were asked to provide the number of violent incidents,¹ thefts of items valued at \$10 or greater,² and other incidents³ that occurred at their school, as well as the number of these incidents reported to the police. During the 2005–06 school year, 86 percent of public schools indicated that one or more incidents had taken place at school (see supplemental table 28-1). During the same year, 61 percent of schools reported at least one incident to the police.

In the 2005–06 school year, 78 percent of public schools experienced one or more violent incidents, 17 percent experienced one or more serious violent incidents, 46 percent experienced one or more thefts, and 68 percent experienced one or more of other types of incidents. Thirty-eight percent of public schools reported at least one violent incident to the police, 13 percent reported at least one serious violent incident to the police, 28 percent

reported at least one theft to the police, and 51 percent reported at least one of the other specified incidents to the police.

The percentage of schools experiencing at least one violent incident was lower in 2005–06 than in 2003–04 (78 vs. 81 percent), but the percentage of schools experiencing violent incidents was lowest in 1999–2000 (71 percent). While the percentage of schools reporting at least one violent incident to the police was not measurably different in 2005–06 than in 1999–2000 (38 vs. 36 percent), a larger percentage of schools reported at least one violent incident to the police in 2003–04 (44 percent) than in 1999–2000 or 2005–06.

The prevalence of violent incidents at public schools varied by school level. A smaller percentage of primary schools (67 percent) than middle schools (94 percent) or high schools (95 percent) experienced a violent incident in 2005–06 (see supplemental table 28-2).

¹ Violent incidents include serious violent incidents (rape or attempted 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), physical attack or fight without a weapon, and threat of physical attack without a weapon.

² Theft/larceny (taking things worth over \$10 without personal confrontation) was defined for respondents as “the unlawful taking of another person’s property without personal confrontation, threat, violence, or bodily harm. Included are pocket picking, stealing a purse or backpack (if left unattended or no force was used to take it from owner), theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle or of motor vehicle parts or accessories, theft of bicycles, theft from vending machines, and all other types of thefts.”

³ Other incidents include possession of a firearm or explosive device, possession of a knife or sharp object, distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol, and vandalism.

NOTE: “At school” was defined for respondents to include activities that happen in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that hold school-sponsored events or activities. Respondents were instructed to respond only for those times that were during normal school hours or when school activities or events were in session. Reported crimes are computed by dividing the number of public schools that reported crimes to the police by all public schools, including those that did not report experiencing crime. For more information, please see supplemental note 3.

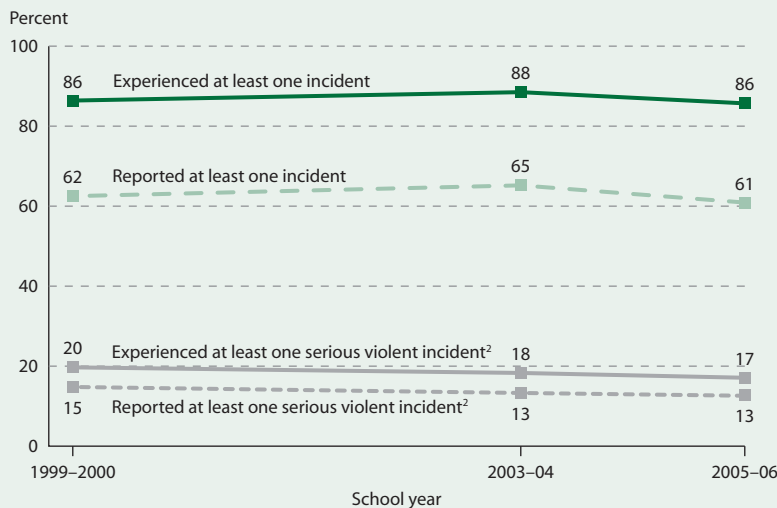
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1999–2000, 2003–04, and 2005–06 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2000, 2004, and 2006.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 1, 3
Supplemental Tables 28-1,
28-2



NCES 2007-361

SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND SAFETY: Percentage of public schools experiencing at least one incident and reporting at least one incident that occurred at school to the police, by selected incidents: School years 1999–2000, 2003–04, and 2005–06



School Violence and Safety

Table 28-1. Percentage of public schools experiencing at least one incident and reporting at least one incident that occurred at school to the police, by type of incident: School years 1999–2000, 2003–04, and 2005–06

| Type of incident | Experienced various types of incidents | | | Reported to police | | |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1999–2000 | 2003–04 | 2005–06 | 1999–2000 | 2003–04 | 2005–06 |
| Total | 86.4 | 88.5 | 85.7 | 62.5 | 65.2 | 60.9 |
| Violent incidents | 71.4 | 81.4 | 77.7 | 36.0 | 43.6 | 37.7 |
| Physical attack or fight without a weapon | 63.7 | 76.7 | 74.3 | 25.8 | 35.6 | 29.2 |
| Threat of physical attack without a weapon | 52.2 | 53.0 | 52.2 | 18.9 | 21.0 | 19.7 |
| Serious violent incidents | 19.7 | 18.3 | 17.1 | 14.8 | 13.3 | 12.6 |
| Rape or attempted rape | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.3 |
| Sexual battery other than rape | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Physical attack or fight with a weapon | 5.2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 3.9 | 2.8 | 2.2 |
| Threat of physical attack with a weapon | 11.1 | 8.6 | 8.8 | 8.5 | 6.0 | 5.9 |
| Robbery with a weapon | 0.5! | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.3! | 0.6 | 0.4 |
| Robbery without a weapon | 5.3 | 6.3 | 6.4 | 3.4 | 4.2 | 4.9 |
| Theft/larceny ¹ | 45.6 | 46.0 | 46.0 | 28.5 | 30.5 | 27.9 |
| Other incidents | 72.7 | 64.0 | 68.2 | 52.0 | 50.0 | 50.6 |
| Possession of a firearm/explosive device | 5.5 | 6.1 | 7.2 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 5.5 |
| Possession of a knife or sharp object ² | 42.6 | 15.9 | 42.8 | 23.0 | 12.1 | 25.0 |
| Distribution of illegal drugs | 12.3 | 12.9 | — | 11.4 | 12.4 | — |
| Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs | 26.6 | 29.3 | — | 22.2 | 26.0 | — |
| Distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs | — | — | 25.9 | — | — | 22.8 |
| Distribution, possession, or use of alcohol | — | — | 16.2 | — | — | 11.6 |
| Student sexual harassment of other students | 36.3 | — | — | 14.7 | — | — |
| Vandalism | 51.4 | 51.4 | 50.5 | 32.7 | 34.3 | 31.9 |

— Not available.

! Interpret data with caution (estimates are unstable).

¹ Theft/larceny (taking things worth over \$10 without personal confrontation) was defined for respondents as “the unlawful taking of another person’s property without personal confrontation, threat, violence, or bodily harm. Included are pocket picking, stealing a purse or backpack (if left unattended or no force was used to take it from owner), theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle or of motor vehicle parts or accessories, theft of bicycles, theft from vending machines, and all other types of thefts.”

² The questionnaire wording for possession of a knife or sharp object differed among survey administrations. In 1999–2000 and 2005–06, the question asked about possession of a knife or sharp object. In 2003–04, the question was changed to refer to possession of a knife or sharp object with intent to harm.

NOTE: “At school” was defined for respondents to include activities that happen in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that hold school-sponsored events or activities. Respondents were instructed to respond only for those times that were during normal school hours or when school activities or events were in session. Reported crimes are computed by dividing the number of public schools that reported crimes to the police by all public schools, including those that did not report experiencing crime. For more information, please see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1999–2000, 2003–04, and 2005–06 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2000, 2004, and 2006.

School Violence and Safety

Table 28-2. Percentage of public schools experiencing at least one incident and reporting at least one incident that occurred at school to the police, by type of incident and selected school characteristics: School year 2005–06

| School characteristic | Violent incidents ¹ | | Serious violent incidents ² | | Theft ³ | | Other ⁴ | |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------|--|-------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | Experienced | Reported | Experienced | Reported | Experienced | Reported | Experienced | Reported |
| Total | 77.7 | 37.7 | 17.1 | 12.6 | 46.0 | 27.9 | 68.2 | 50.6 |
| School level ⁵ | | | | | | | | |
| Primary | 67.3 | 18.7 | 11.0 | 6.2 | 27.8 | 12.5 | 54.8 | 34.1 |
| Middle | 94.4 | 63.1 | 25.2 | 19.7 | 68.7 | 43.3 | 87.8 | 72.6 |
| High school | 95.2 | 77.3 | 31.8 | 29.5 | 85.6 | 67.6 | 93.6 | 86.9 |
| Combined | 83.5 | 46.2 | 17.4 | 13.2 | 54.9 | 33.9 | 75.0 | 55.3 |
| Enrollment size | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 300 | 63.7 | 26.6 | 11.4 | 8.4 | 29.6 | 14.1 | 53.2 | 36.4 |
| 300–499 | 77.3 | 24.8 | 11.7 | 6.1 | 37.2 | 18.5 | 63.4 | 39.6 |
| 500–999 | 82.1 | 43.1 | 19.2 | 14.1 | 52.1 | 32.1 | 74.2 | 57.2 |
| 1,000 or more | 96.5 | 78.4 | 37.2 | 34.1 | 85.8 | 69.4 | 95.1 | 89.7 |
| Locale ⁶ | | | | | | | | |
| City | 82.5 | 39.9 | 23.2 | 17.4 | 47.2 | 30.3 | 73.1 | 54.6 |
| Suburban | 78.2 | 35.3 | 15.4 | 11.5 | 47.0 | 29.7 | 71.0 | 52.5 |
| Town | 81.7 | 41.8 | 16.6 | 12.1 | 51.0 | 32.3 | 70.1 | 56.4 |
| Rural | 71.9 | 35.9 | 14.4 | 10.0 | 42.1 | 22.1 | 61.5 | 44.1 |
| Percent minority enrollment ⁷ | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 percent | 71.6 | 32.8 | 13.1 | 7.3 | 42.8 | 21.9 | 62.4 | 41.4 |
| 5 to 20 percent | 73.5 | 34.7 | 15.7 | 11.5 | 43.4 | 26.8 | 63.4 | 45.2 |
| 20 to 50 percent | 79.7 | 39.3 | 16.6 | 12.1 | 47.9 | 30.0 | 71.5 | 52.0 |
| 50 percent or more | 82.9 | 42.7 | 21.6 | 17.4 | 48.4 | 30.9 | 71.9 | 59.0 |
| Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch | | | | | | | | |
| 0–20 percent | 68.0 | 30.8 | 12.5 | 9.4 | 45.9 | 28.5 | 61.7 | 44.0 |
| 21–50 percent | 79.7 | 40.0 | 19.2 | 13.0 | 52.5 | 31.6 | 72.3 | 50.8 |
| More than 50 percent | 81.4 | 39.5 | 18.0 | 14.0 | 41.0 | 24.7 | 68.5 | 54.0 |

¹Violent incidents include serious violent incidents (rape or attempted 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), physical attack or fight without a weapon, and threat of physical attack without a weapon.

²Serious violent incidents include rape or attempted 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.

³Theft/larceny (taking things worth over \$10 without personal confrontation) was defined for respondents as “the unlawful taking of another person’s property without personal confrontation, threat, violence, or bodily harm. Included are pocket picking, stealing a purse or backpack (if left unattended or no force was used to take it from owner), theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle or of motor vehicle parts or accessories, theft of bicycles, theft from vending machines, and all other types of thefts.”

⁴Other incidents include possession of a firearm or explosive device, possession of a knife or sharp object, distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs or alcohol, and vandalism.

⁵Primary schools are defined as schools in which the lowest grade is not higher than grade 3 and the highest grade is not higher than grade 8. Middle schools are defined as schools in which the lowest grade is not lower than grade 4 and the highest grade is not higher than grade 9. High schools are defined as schools in which the lowest grade is not lower than grade 9. Combined schools include all other combinations of grades, including K–12 schools.

⁶Estimates are based on the 2006 urban-centric locale codes and may differ from previously published figures. Excludes 52 schools without information on locale. See *supplemental note 1* for more information.

⁷These estimates exclude data from the 73 schools that did not report estimates of student race/ethnicity.

NOTE: “At school” was defined for respondents to include activities that happen in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that hold school-sponsored events or activities. Respondents were instructed to respond only for those times that were during normal school hours or when school activities or events were in session. Reported crimes are computed by dividing the number of public schools that reported crimes to the police by all public schools, including those that did not report experiencing crime. For more information, please see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2005–06 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2006.

School Violence and Safety

Table S28-1. Standard errors for the percentage of public schools experiencing at least one incident and reporting at least one incident that occurred at school to the police, by type of incident: School years 1999–2000, 2003–04, and 2005–06

| Type of incident | Experienced various types of incidents | | | Reported to police | | |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1999–2000 | 2003–04 | 2005–06 | 1999–2000 | 2003–04 | 2005–06 |
| Total | 1.23 | 0.85 | 1.07 | 1.37 | 1.35 | 1.15 |
| Violent incidents | 1.37 | 1.05 | 1.11 | 1.26 | 1.15 | 1.09 |
| Physical attack or fight without a weapon | 1.52 | 1.21 | 1.20 | 0.91 | 0.98 | 1.00 |
| Threat of physical attack without a weapon | 1.47 | 1.34 | 1.27 | 0.94 | 0.82 | 0.69 |
| Serious violent incidents | 0.98 | 0.99 | 0.91 | 0.82 | 0.88 | 0.70 |
| Rape or attempted rape | 0.10 | 0.17 | 0.07 | 0.10 | 0.17 | 0.07 |
| Sexual battery other than rape | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.24 | 0.34 | 0.28 | 0.26 |
| Physical attack or fight with a weapon | 0.60 | 0.46 | 0.38 | 0.50 | 0.38 | 0.27 |
| Threat of physical attack with a weapon | 0.70 | 0.71 | 0.66 | 0.59 | 0.55 | 0.49 |
| Robbery with a weapon | 0.15 | 0.15 | 0.12 | 0.09 | 0.15 | 0.12 |
| Robbery without a weapon | 0.56 | 0.60 | 0.59 | 0.41 | 0.51 | 0.48 |
| Theft/larceny | 1.37 | 1.29 | 1.07 | 1.04 | 1.17 | 0.97 |
| Other incidents | 1.30 | 1.27 | 1.07 | 1.14 | 1.18 | 1.00 |
| Possession of a firearm/explosive device | 0.44 | 0.49 | 0.60 | 0.41 | 0.44 | 0.51 |
| Possession of a knife or sharp object | 1.28 | 0.85 | 1.23 | 0.84 | 0.70 | 1.00 |
| Distribution of illegal drugs | 0.50 | 0.55 | † | 0.48 | 0.57 | † |
| Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs | 0.72 | 0.87 | † | 0.67 | 0.76 | † |
| Distribution, possession, or use of illegal drugs | † | † | 0.68 | † | † | 0.62 |
| Distribution, possession, or use of alcohol | † | † | 0.68 | † | † | 0.61 |
| Student sexual harassment of other students | 1.26 | † | † | 0.78 | † | † |
| Vandalism | 1.61 | 1.17 | 1.17 | 1.10 | 1.06 | 1.02 |

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1999–2000, 2003–04, and 2005–06 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2000, 2004, and 2006.

School Violence and Safety

Table S28-2. Standard errors for the percentage of public schools experiencing at least one incident and reporting at least one incident that occurred at school to the police, by type of incident and selected school characteristics: School year 2005–06

| School characteristic | Violent incidents | | Serious violent incidents | | Theft | | Other | |
|--|-------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Experienced | Reported | Experienced | Reported | Experienced | Reported | Experienced | Reported |
| Total | 1.11 | 1.09 | 0.91 | 0.70 | 1.07 | 0.97 | 1.07 | 1.00 |
| School level | | | | | | | | |
| Primary | 1.75 | 1.26 | 1.22 | 0.86 | 1.55 | 1.16 | 1.67 | 1.44 |
| Middle | 0.85 | 1.72 | 1.59 | 1.39 | 1.48 | 1.57 | 0.94 | 1.08 |
| High school | 0.92 | 1.68 | 1.77 | 1.70 | 1.32 | 1.94 | 1.08 | 1.52 |
| Combined | 3.64 | 4.98 | 4.04 | 3.09 | 5.47 | 4.94 | 4.52 | 4.75 |
| Enrollment size | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 300 | 3.29 | 2.60 | 1.63 | 1.46 | 2.52 | 1.76 | 3.02 | 2.66 |
| 300–499 | 2.08 | 2.03 | 1.38 | 0.85 | 1.91 | 1.59 | 2.47 | 2.41 |
| 500–999 | 1.38 | 1.77 | 1.41 | 1.26 | 1.83 | 1.69 | 2.07 | 1.92 |
| 1,000 or more | 1.03 | 1.63 | 1.82 | 1.84 | 1.64 | 1.94 | 1.15 | 1.48 |
| Locale | | | | | | | | |
| City | 1.90 | 1.88 | 2.12 | 1.38 | 2.16 | 2.05 | 2.57 | 2.73 |
| Suburban | 1.87 | 1.91 | 1.20 | 1.03 | 2.11 | 1.65 | 1.69 | 1.80 |
| Town | 2.85 | 2.82 | 2.10 | 1.58 | 2.70 | 2.19 | 3.21 | 2.84 |
| Rural | 2.58 | 2.20 | 1.42 | 1.17 | 2.36 | 1.54 | 2.82 | 2.32 |
| Percent minority enrollment | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 percent | 3.33 | 2.73 | 1.68 | 1.12 | 3.53 | 2.07 | 3.66 | 3.38 |
| 5 to 20 percent | 2.62 | 2.61 | 1.52 | 1.29 | 2.06 | 1.98 | 2.18 | 2.28 |
| 20 to 50 percent | 2.07 | 2.67 | 2.10 | 1.39 | 2.43 | 2.20 | 2.55 | 2.86 |
| 50 percent or more | 1.90 | 2.05 | 1.89 | 1.55 | 2.28 | 1.86 | 2.24 | 2.08 |
| Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch | | | | | | | | |
| 0–20 percent | 2.53 | 1.71 | 1.21 | 1.10 | 1.94 | 1.81 | 2.87 | 2.31 |
| 21–50 percent | 2.16 | 1.87 | 1.67 | 1.37 | 1.95 | 1.80 | 1.88 | 2.22 |
| More than 50 percent | 1.66 | 1.54 | 1.31 | 1.17 | 1.68 | 1.48 | 1.67 | 1.64 |

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2005–06 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2006.