

# ***Prevention Works***

Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.  
Virginia Youth Violence Project  
Curry School of Education  
University of Virginia

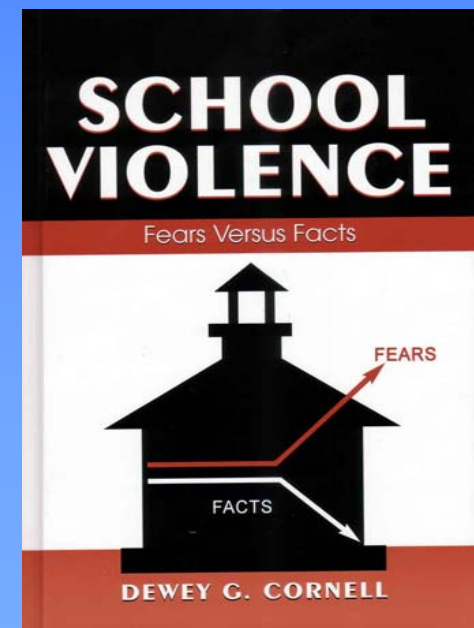
Website: [youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu](http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu)





**Dewey G. Cornell, Ph. D., is a forensic clinical psychologist and Professor of Education in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Dr. Cornell is Director of the UVA Youth Violence Project and a faculty associate of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy.**

**Dr. Cornell has studied youth violence for over 20 years and has assisted numerous schools in the development of violence prevention programs. He has authored more than 100 publications in psychology and education, including two recent books: *Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence* and *School Violence: Fears versus Facts*.**



# **Youth Promise Act**

**HR 3846**

**Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring,  
Intervention, Support, and Education**

**Endorsed by the American Psychological  
Association, American Bar Association, Child Welfare  
League, NAACP, National PTA, and many others**

**This presentation does not represent the official position of the  
University of Virginia.**

# Main Points

- 1. There is no epidemic.**
- 2. Beware of simple solutions.**
- 3. Prevention works.**

This presentation does not represent the official position of the University of Virginia.

# Main Points

- 1. There is no epidemic of youth violence.**

# Don't be misled by false trends

**abc NEWS**  
GOOD MORNING AMERICA

ABC News Home > Good Morning America

## Why the Spike in School Shootings?

Across the Country, a Disturbing New Trend of Adults Killing Children in Schools



There have been more than two dozen school shootings in the U.S. since the start of the school year. (ABC News)

**By PIERRE THOMAS**

**abc NEWS**

**Oct. 3, 2006** — Since the beginning of the school year, there have been 25 shootings at or near schools nationwide.


Seven of the shootings — three in the last week alone — have been fatal.

**THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR** csmonitor.com

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**USA**  
from the October 04, 2006 edition



**NEAR LANCASTER:** Amish men watch as members of the media gather to be led to the Nickel Mines Amish School in Nickel Mines, Pa., where a gunman opened fire on girls Monday. (ANDY NELSON - STAFF)

## A PATTERN IN RURAL SCHOOL SHOOTINGS: GIRLS AS TARGETS

Monday's deadly shooting in Nickel Mines, Pa., was the fourth such incident in five weeks.

By Gail Russell Chaddock and Mark Clayton | Staff writers of *The Christian Science Monitor*

**NICKEL MINES, PA., AND BOSTON** — The scene Monday at the buff-colored, one-room schoolhouse in the gentle heart of Amish country was wrenching, but also distressingly familiar.

One of four fatal school shootings to beset rural America in just over a month, the rampage that killed five young girls raises anew a host of old concerns — about campus security in countryside settings, access to guns by unstable individuals, and “copycat” violence advanced by media attention.

# Don't be misled by false trends

## Fourth School Shooting of the Week

There is no known motive for the Northern Illinois University shooting.

Posted: Friday, February 15, 2008 at 8:53 a.m.

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NIU Deadly Rampage - 4th School Shooting in 1 Week



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[http://www.wfvl.com/news/news\\_story.aspx?id=96255](http://www.wfvl.com/news/news_story.aspx?id=96255)



### Current News

## Northern Illinois Shooting Fourth At A School Within One Week

by Associated Press  
Feb 15, 2008, 22:35

# How many shootings occur in the United States?

- 80+ people are killed *every day* by firearms in the United states
- 30,000 deaths per year
- 68,000 injuries per year

Source: National Vital Statistics Reports, 54 (10), 2006

Deaths include suicides, homicides, and accidental deaths

abc NEWS  
GOOD MORNING AMERICA

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abc NEWS



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**Oct. 3, 2006** — Since the beginning of the school year, there have been 25 shootings at or near schools nationwide.

Seven of those shootings — three in the last week alone — have been fatal.



# Don't be misled by false trends

With 80+ people killed *every day*, it is possible to find numerous pseudo-trends.

**abc NEWS**  
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## Why the Spike in School Shootings?

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## Fourth School Shooting of the Week

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Posted: Friday, February 15, 2008 at 8:53 a.m.

DEKALB, ILL. (AP) — The Fourth School Shooting This Week Claims the Lives of Six Students. Is Albany State University and Albany Technical College Prepared for a Similar Tragedy? Find Out Tonight on FOX 31 News at 6:30 and 10:00.

The gunman who killed six people in a Northern Illinois University lecture hall before committing suicide was identified Friday as 27-year-old former student Steven Kazmierczak, according to Florida authorities and a university official familiar with the investigation.



[http://www.wfxl.com/news/news\\_story.aspx?id=96255](http://www.wfxl.com/news/news_story.aspx?id=96255)

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USA

From the October 14, 2006 edition



**NEAR LANCASTER** — A group of people gathered to see the bodies of three young girls in a rural Pennsylvania schoolhouse.

## A PATTERN IN RURAL SCHOOL SHOOTINGS: GIRLS AS TARGETS

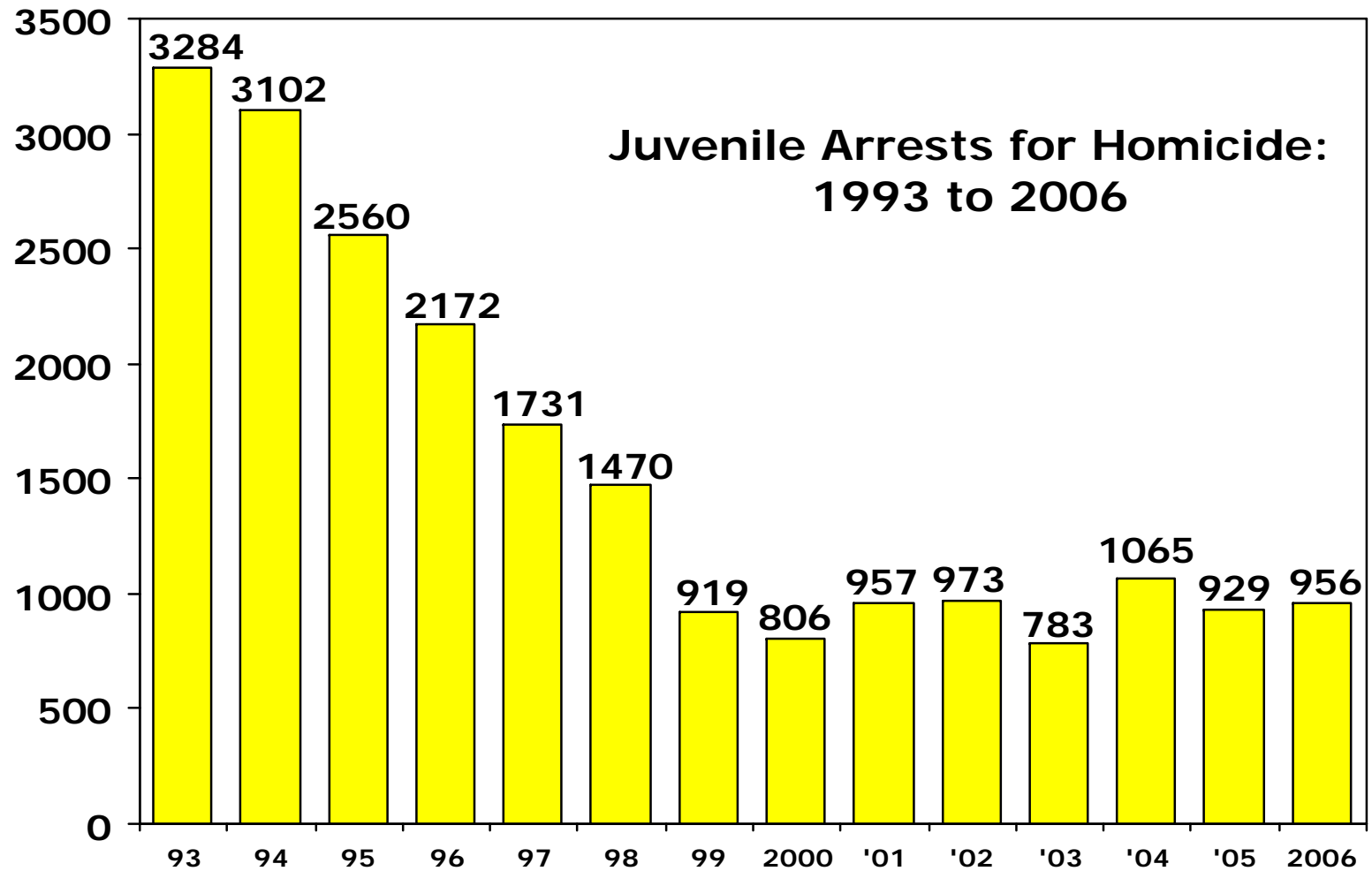
Monday's deadly shooting in Nickel Mines, Pa., was the fourth such incident in five weeks.

By Gail Russell Chadwick and Mark Clayton | Staff writers of The Christian Science Monitor

**NICKEL MINES, PA., AND BOSTON** — The scene Monday at the half-colored, one-room schoolhouse in the gentle heart of Amish country was wrenching, but also disarmingly familiar.

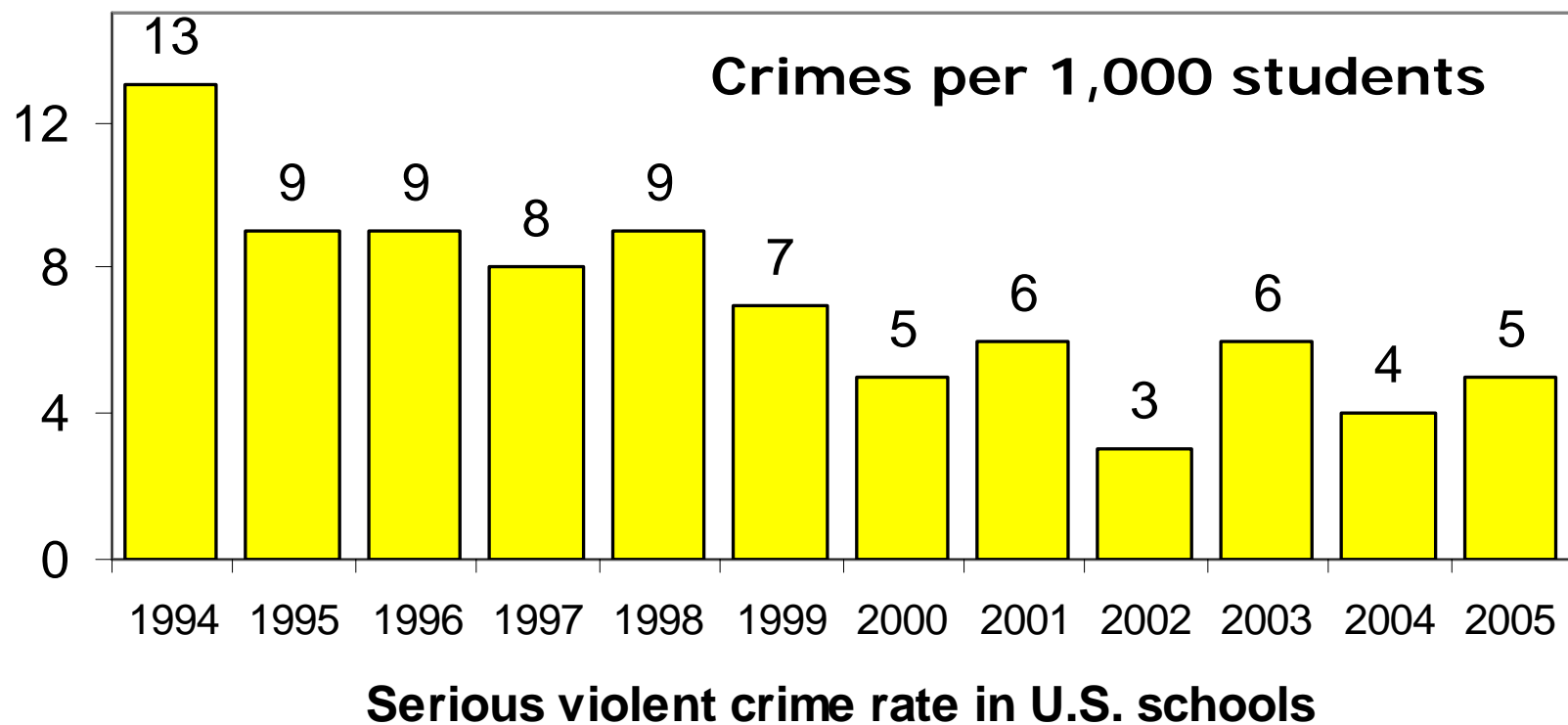
One of four fatal school shootings to blast rural America in just over a month, the rampage that killed five young girls leaves anew a host of old concerns — about campus security in countryside settings, access to guns by unstable individuals, and "typical" violence advanced by media attention.

# Juvenile violence is not increasing



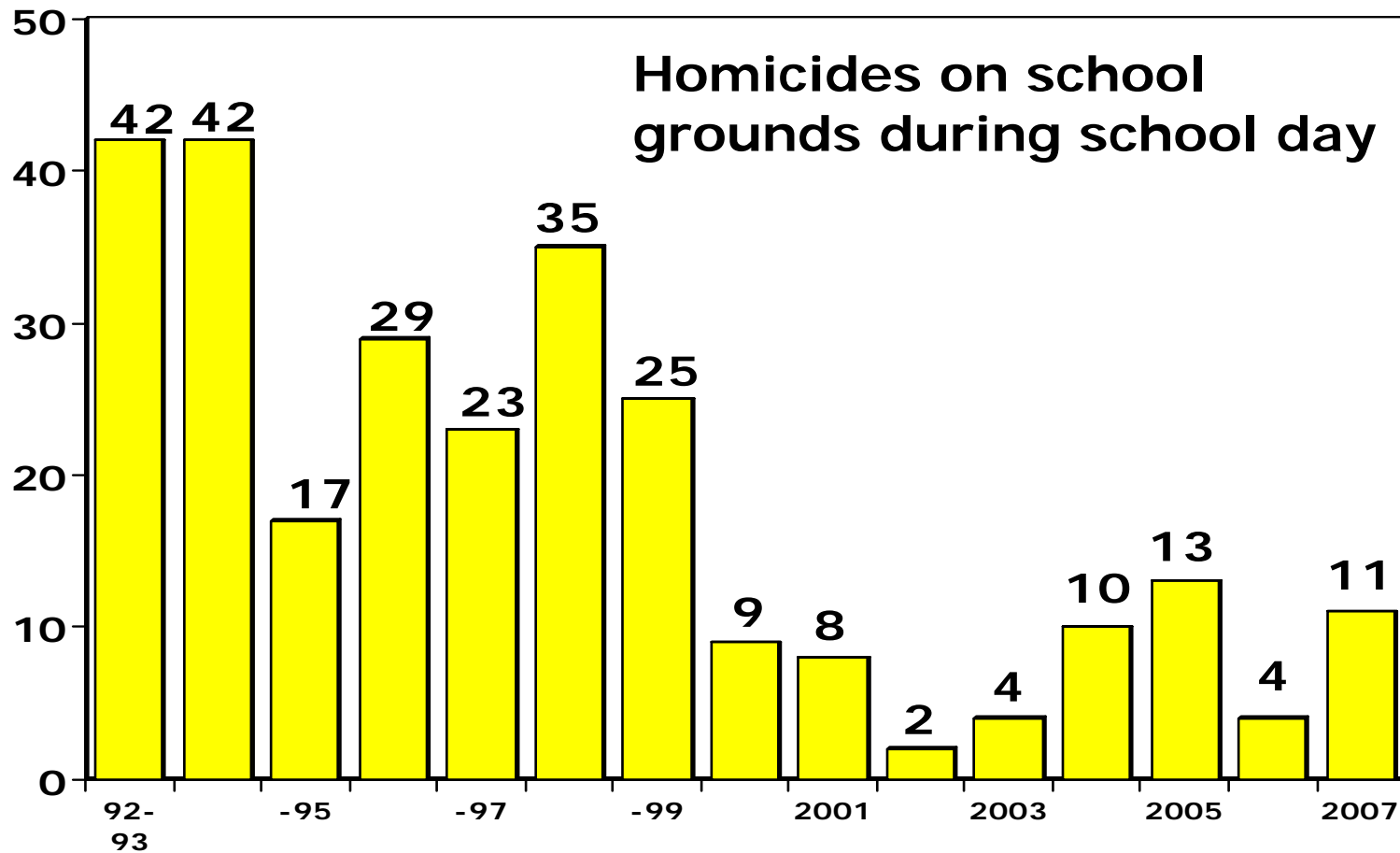
FBI Uniform Crime Reports

# School violence is not increasing.



*Indicators of school crime and safety: 2007*

# School homicides are not increasing.



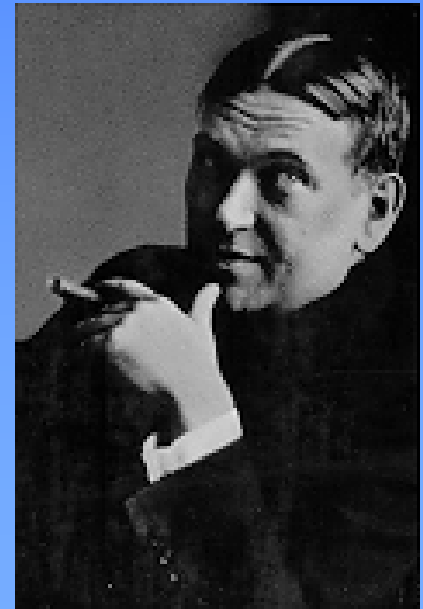
Selected cases from records of the National School Safety Center.

**We have been making good progress in reducing youth violence, and we can do more, but let's not get derailed by high profile cases.**

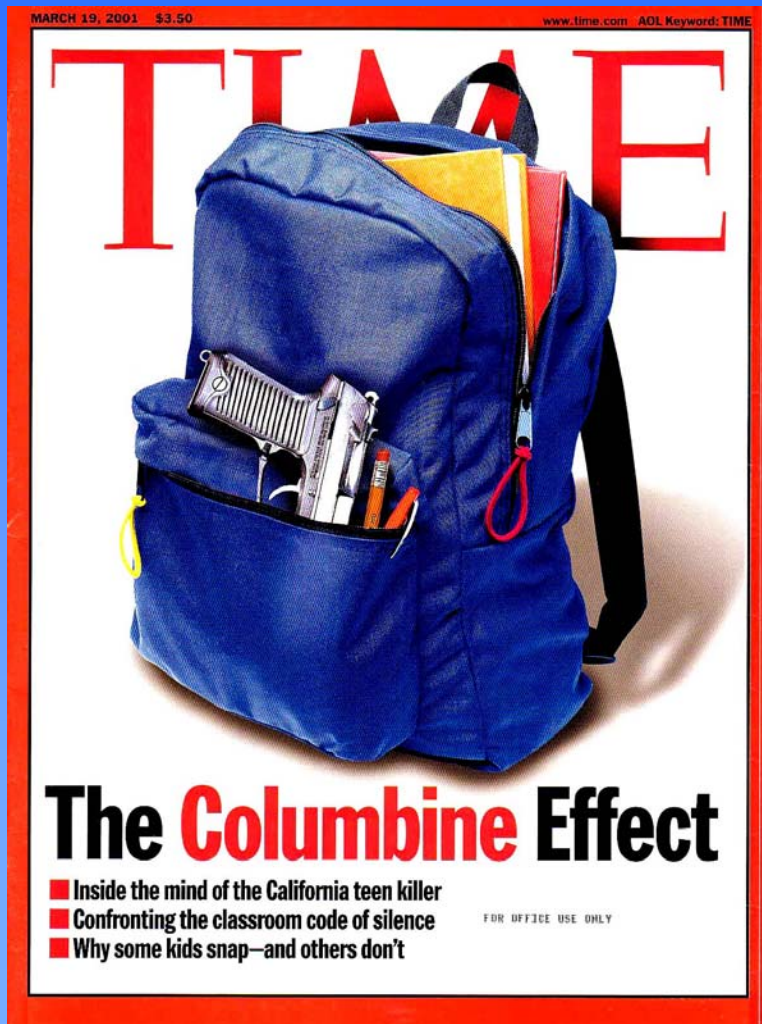
# Main Points

**2. Beware of simple solutions.**

For every problem there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong. H.L. Mencken



# The *Expansion* of Zero Tolerance



## From No Guns to

- No Toy Guns
- No Nail clippers
- No Plastic utensils
- No Finger-pointing
- No Jokes
- No Drawings
- No Rubber band shooting

*No Accidental violations*



# 5-Year-Old Handcuffed by Florida Police

*Girl Was Misbehaving*



April 14, 2005; NBC10 News

# Annual Expulsions from U.S. Schools

Approximately 97,000 expulsions

- 80% involve alternative educational services
- 20% no educational services

Source: Estimates obtained from National Center for Education Statistics,  
<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d03/tables/xls/tab147.xls>

[http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/table\\_18\\_1.asp?referrer=report](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/table_18_1.asp?referrer=report)

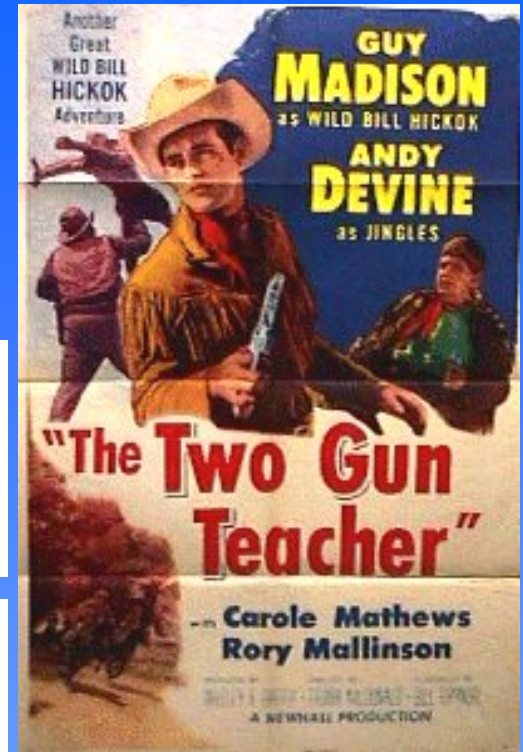
# Calls to Arm Teachers

**Michigan** Rep. David Agema introduced HB 5162 to permit teachers to carry concealed firearms at school. UPI Sept 10, 2007. <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2007-2008/billintroduced/House/htm/2007-HIB-5162.htm>

**Missouri** Governor Matt Blunt said because of the recent spate of school violence it would be worth considering proposals from lawmakers to allow teachers to carry firearms in schools. "It's an interesting idea worth discussing." Associated Press, Oct 22, 2006.

**Nevada** Sen Bob Beers announced he is preparing a bill to permit teachers to carry a gun while teaching. Las Vegas Review Journal, Dec 14, 2006.

**Wisconsin** Legislator Frank Lasee stated: "Israel and Thailand have well-trained teachers carrying weapons and keeping their children safe from harm. It can work in Wisconsin." USA Today Oct 5, 2006



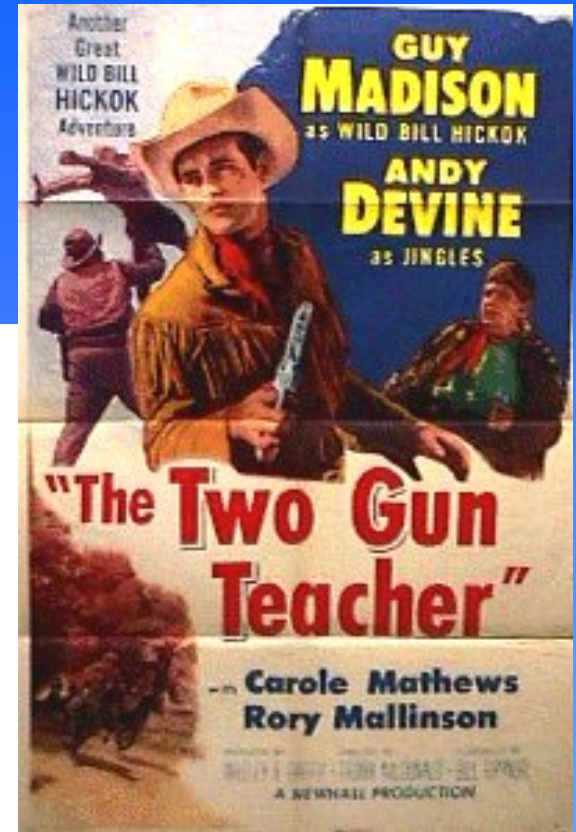
# Cost of Arming Teachers

**3.6 Million teachers**

**X**

**\$664 Smith & Wesson Model 10**

**\$2.4 Billion**



Sources: National Center for Education Statistics,  
<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d06/>  
Smith & Wesson <http://www.smith-wesson.com/>

# Bullet-Proof Backpacks



Two entrepreneurs are selling bullet-proof backpacks for \$175.

Boston Herald, Aug 9, 2007.

<http://shop.mjsafetyolutions.com/main.sc>



# Cost of Bullet-Proof Backpacks

**55 Million students**

**X**

**\$175 Bullet-Proof Backpack**

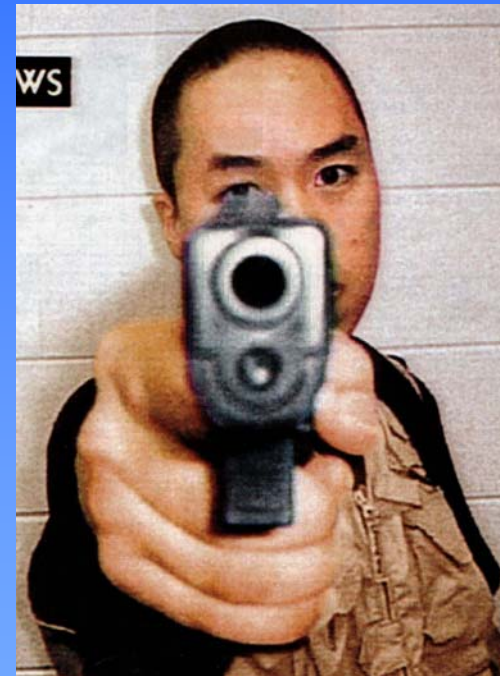
**\$9.6 Billion**



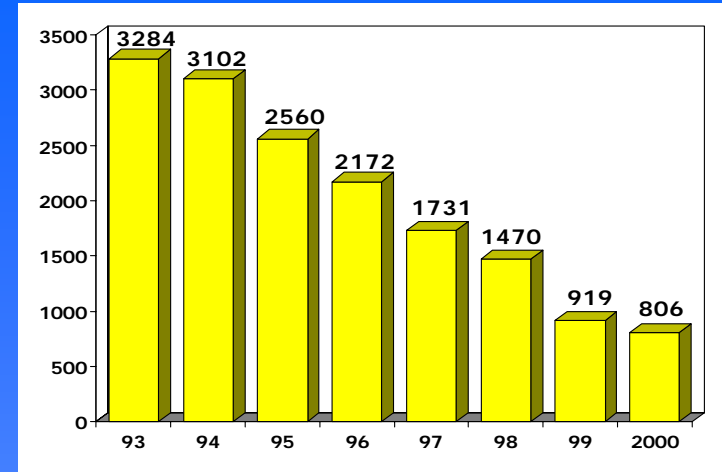
Source for enrollment: National Center for Education Statistics,  
[http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d06/tables/dt06\\_001.asp?referrer=report](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d06/tables/dt06_001.asp?referrer=report)

# Fear-based Reactions to Shootings

*Prevention cannot  
wait until the  
gunman is at the  
door.*



# Why the decline in juvenile violence?



- Community-oriented policing
- Employment opportunities
- Prevention programs
  - School-based
  - After-school
  - In-home treatment
  - Residential



# Main Points

**3. Prevention works!**

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## School-Based Interventions for Aggressive and Disruptive Behavior Update of a Meta-Analysis

Sandra Jo Wilson, PhD, Mark W. Lipsey, PhD

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**Background:** Research about the effectiveness of school-based psychosocial prevention programs for reducing aggressive and disruptive behavior was synthesized using meta-analysis. This work updated previous work by the authors and further investigated which program and student characteristics were associated with the most positive outcomes.

**Methods:** Two hundred forty-nine experimental and quasi-experimental studies of school-based programs with outcomes representing aggressive and/or disruptive behavior were obtained. Effect sizes and study characteristics were coded from these studies and analyzed.

**Results:** Positive overall intervention effects were found on aggressive and disruptive behavior and other relevant outcomes. The most common and most effective approaches were universal programs and targeted programs for selected/indicated children. The mean effect sizes for these types of programs represent a decrease in aggressive/disruptive behavior that is likely to be of practical significance to schools. Multicomponent comprehensive programs did not show significant effects and those for special schools or classrooms were marginal. Different treatment modalities (e.g., behavioral, cognitive, social skills) produced largely similar effects. Effects were larger for better-implemented programs and those involving students at higher risk for aggressive behavior.

**Conclusions:** Schools seeking prevention programs may choose from a range of effective programs with some confidence that whatever they pick will be effective. Without the researcher involvement that characterizes the great majority of programs in this meta-analysis, schools might be well-advised to give priority to those that will be easiest to implement well in their settings.  
(Am J Prev Med 2007;33(2S):S130–S143) © 2007 American Journal of Preventive Medicine

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- 249 controlled studies of school-based programs
- Behavioral, cognitive, and social skills programs reduced student aggression.

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- Staff must be adequately trained to implement programs correctly.
- Many programs are ineffective because they are not properly implemented

# Numerous Effective Programs

- Anger management
- Bullying prevention
- Conflict resolution
- Family therapy
- Parenting skills
- Problem-solving
- Social competence
- Substance abuse resistance
- Etc.



American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2007

## Effects on Violence of Laws and Policies Facilitating the Transfer of Juveniles from the Juvenile Justice System to the Adult Justice System

### A Systematic Review

Angela McGowan, JD, MPH, Robert Hahn, PhD, MPH, Akiva Liberman, PhD, Alex Crosby, MD, MPH, Mindy Fullilove, MD, Robert Johnson, MD, Eve Moscicki, ScD, MPH, LeShawndra Price, PhD, Susan Snyder, PhD, Farris Tuma, ScD, Jessica Lowy, MPH, Peter Briss, MD, MPH, Stella Cory, MD, MPH, Glenda Stone, PhD, Task Force on Community Preventive Services

**Abstract:** The independent, nonfederal Task Force on Community Preventive Services (Task Force), which directs development of the *Guide to Community Preventive Services (Community Guide)*, has conducted a systematic review of published scientific evidence concerning the effectiveness of laws and policies that facilitate the transfer of juveniles to the adult criminal justice system, on either preventing or reducing violence (1) among those youth who experience the adult criminal system or (2) in the juvenile population as a whole.

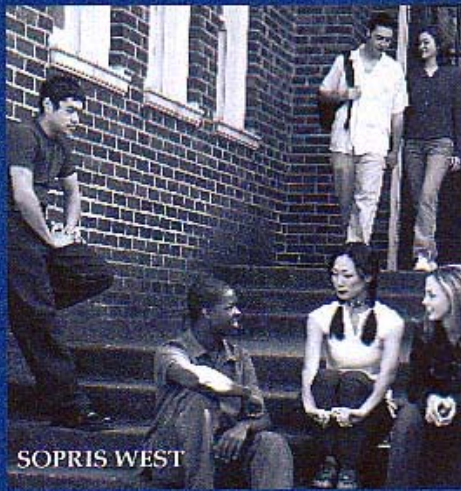
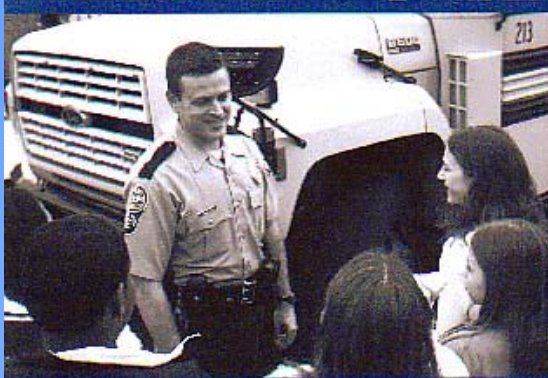
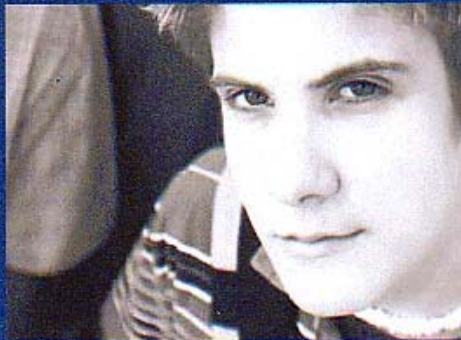
This review focuses on interpersonal violence. Violence may lead to the juvenile's initial arrest and entry into the justice system and, for those who are arrested, may be committed subsequent to exiting the justice system. Here transfer is defined as the placement of juveniles aged less than 18 years under the jurisdiction of the adult criminal justice system, rather than the juvenile justice system, following arrest. Using the methods developed by the *Community Guide* to conduct a systematic review of literature and provide recommendations to public health decision makers, the review team found that transferring juveniles to the adult justice system generally increases, rather than decreases, rates of violence among transferred youth. Evidence was insufficient for the Task Force on Community Preventive Services to determine the effect of such laws and policies in reducing violent behavior in the overall juvenile population. Overall, the Task Force recommends against laws or policies facilitating the transfer of juveniles from the juvenile to the adult judicial system for the purpose of reducing violence.

(Am J Prev Med 2007;32(4S):S7-S28) © 2007 American Journal of Preventive Medicine

“...transferring juveniles to the adult justice system generally increases, rather than decreases, rates of violence among transferred youth.”

DEWEY CORNELL & PETER SHERAS

# GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO STUDENT THREATS OF VIOLENCE

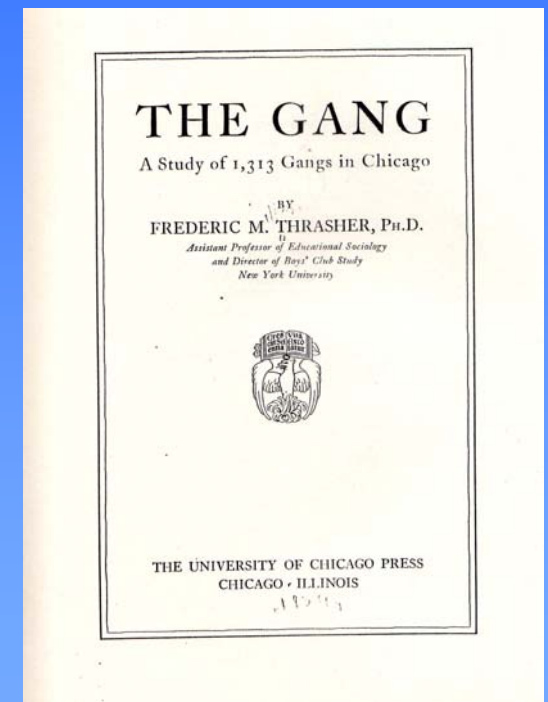


- Legally defensible procedures for responding to student threats
- Step-by-step guidelines and decision-tree
- Research-based and field-tested
- Covers K-12, regular and special education

Available from  
**sopriswest.com**

# 1,300 Gangs in Chicago!

**Reported by  
Frederic Thrasher in  
*The Gang*, 1927.**



# 1,300 Gangs in Chicago!

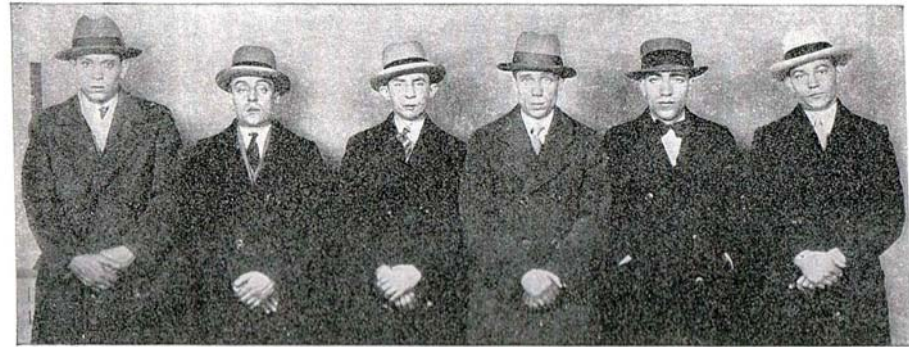


*P. M. C. A. Photo*

THE REESE STREET GANG

This gang, composed mostly of Italian boys from twelve to sixteen years of age, was alleged to have engaged in predatory activities. It was taken into the Boys' Department of the Young Men's Christian Association Junior Club. In the beginning it was a nuisance in the "Y," breaking up games and shooting craps. The group games and showed poor sportsmanship. The group has shown great improvement, however, under athletic leaders. (See pp. 514-17.)

From Thrasher's  
*The Gang, 1927*



*P. & A. Photo*

A CRIMINAL GANG

This is a portion of the "Candy Kid" Whittemore gang, which operated on an interstate basis. This group has been held responsible for many murders and for robberies involving more than \$1,000,000. Its leader, Richard Reese Whittemore (fifth man from the left), was hanged August 13, 1926, for the murder of a prison guard. Gangs of this type are at work in most large American cities. (See chap. xx.)



# Most Common Ethnic Gangs in Chicago, 1927

- Polish
- Italian
- Irish

## CHAPTER XII

### RACE AND NATIONALITY IN THE GANG

The gang in Chicago is largely, though not entirely, a phenomenon of the immigrant community of the poorer type.<sup>1</sup> Of the 880 gangs for which data have been secured

TABLE III

RACES AND NATIONALITIES OF GANGS IN CHICAGO

Race or Nationality	Number of Gangs	Percentage of Total Gangs
Mixed nationalities . . . . .	351	39.89
Polish . . . . .	148	16.82
Italian . . . . .	99	11.25
Irish . . . . .	75	8.52
Negro . . . . .	63	7.16
American—white . . . . .	45	5.11
Mixed negro-white . . . . .	25	2.84
Jewish . . . . .	20	2.27
Slavic . . . . .	16	1.82
Bohemian . . . . .	12	1.36
German . . . . .	8	.91
Swedish . . . . .	7	.79
Lithuanian . . . . .	6	.69
Miscellaneous . . . . .	5	.57
Total . . . . .	880	100

From Thrasher's  
*The Gang, 1927*

# **Risk Factors for Gang Development**

- **Poverty and unemployment**
- **Dysfunctional families**
- **Social alienation/discrimination**
- **Frustration, anger, and a desperate desire for respect**

# **Risk Factors for Gang Development**

- Poverty and unemployment**
- Dysfunctional families**
- Social alienation/discrimination**
- Frustration, anger, and a desperate desire for respect**

**When these issues were addressed, the gang problem was resolved.**



## Virginia Youth Violence Project

Effective methods for youth violence prevention and school safety

Curry School of Education  
University of Virginia

Acknowledgements  
Bibliography  
Conference Presentations  
Clinical Psychology  
Training  
Links  
Research Publications  
Staff Information  
Training Available



WWW Youth Violence Site  
Google Search

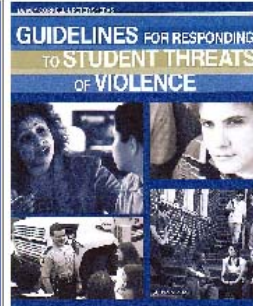
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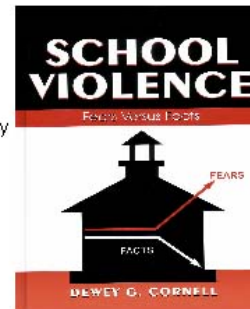
Telephone: 434-924-8929  
Fax: 434-924-1433

Email: youthvio@virginia.edu  
This email address is an image rather than a link, in order to avoid spam.



\*\*\*\*\*  
Now available: our *Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence*. This research-based manual explains how school teams can evaluate and resolve potentially dangerous situations in schools. In most cases, student incidents can be resolved without resorting to long-term suspension. [More information.](#)  
\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*  
How safe are our schools? What caused so many youth to go on rampage shootings at their schools? Does television violence really make children more aggressive? What kinds of school policies would make our schools safer? The answers to these questions can be found in [School Violence: Facts Versus Fears.](#)  
\*\*\*\*\*



How dangerous are our schools? News coverage of school shootings inflamed public fears, but there is solid evidence that youth violence inside and outside of schools has declined substantially since 1994. [More.](#)

### Violence in Schools

National statistics  
Virginia statistics  
School shootings decline  
School violence myths  
NPR interview on fear of school violence  
PBS NewsHour interview on school shootings  
CourtTVNews on schools under fire  
School crisis response  
Do we need zero tolerance?  
The school survey hoax

### Threat Assessment

Training available  
What is student threat assessment?  
Study shows threat assessment works  
Our threat assessment manual  
Sample threats  
Special education and threats  
Evaluations of our training

### Prevention

Prevention works!  
Parent advice  
Talking to children about terrorism  
Parent statistics  
Virginia Needs Assessment  
Reduce the risk of gun violence  
Suicide Prevention Project

### Bullying

What is bullying?  
Middle school bullying  
Book on bullying  
Bullying links  
Virginia Bullying Legislation

### Juvenile Violence

Juvenile homicide  
Psychopathy and violence  
Juvenile psychopathy research  
Multicultural Issues