

Unintentional Injury and Violence-Related Behaviors

and Academic Achievement

What is the relationship between unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors and academic achievement?

Data presented below, from the 2003 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), show a negative association between unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors and academic achievement after controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade level. This means that students with higher grades are less likely to engage in unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors than their classmates with lower grades, and students who do not engage in unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors receive higher grades than their classmates who do engage in unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors. These associations do not prove causation. Further research is needed to determine whether low grades lead to behaviors related to unintentional injury and violence, behaviors related to unintentional injury and violence lead to low grades, or some other factors lead to both of these problems.

Students with higher grades are significantly less likely to have engaged in behaviors such as:

- **Rarely or never wore a seatbelt** (When riding in a car driven by someone else).
- **Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol** (In a car or other vehicle one or more times during the 30 days before the survey).
- **Carried a weapon** (For example, a gun, knife, or club on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey).
- **In a physical fight** (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey).
- **Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school** (On at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey).
- **Attempted suicide** (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey).

Percentage of U.S. high school students receiving mostly A's, B's, C's, or D/F's who engaged in unintentional injury or violence-related behaviors, by type of grades earned – National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2003.

Unintentional Injury and Violence-Related Behaviors	Percentage of U.S. high school students who received mostly			
	A's	B's	C's	D/F's
Unintentional Injury-Related Behaviors				
Rarely or never wore a seatbelt (When riding in a car driven by someone else) ¹	11	14	24	40
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol (In a car or other vehicle one or more times during the 30 days before the survey) ¹	22	29	37	43
Drove when drinking alcohol (In a car or other vehicle one or more times during the 30 days before the survey) ¹	9	10	15	24
Violence-Related Behaviors				
Carried a weapon (For example, a gun, knife, or club on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey) ¹	11	14	22	35
In a physical fight (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey) ¹	20	30	43	57
Injured in a physical fight (Injuries had to be treated by a doctor or nurse one or more times during the 12 months before the survey) ¹	2	3	6	9
Hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend (During the 12 months before the survey) ¹	6	8	11	14
Ever physically forced to have sexual intercourse (When they did not want to) ²	6	8	11	16
Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey) ¹	5	8	12	21
In a physical fight on school property (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey) ¹	7	10	17	30
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school (On at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey) ¹	3	5	7	11
Had property stolen or deliberately damaged on school property (For example, a car, clothing, or books 1 or more times during the 12 months before the survey) ²	27	28	32	39
Felt sad or hopeless (Almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities during the 12 months before the survey) ¹	21	27	33	47
Seriously considered attempting suicide (During the 12 months before the survey) ¹	12	16	20	30
Made a suicide plan (During the 12 months before the survey) ²	13	16	18	28
Attempted suicide (One or more times during the 12 months before the survey) ¹	4	7	12	19
Suicide attempt resulted in an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse (During the 12 months before the survey) ²	1	2	4	8

¹p<.0001 based on logistic regression analysis controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade level.

²p<.001 based on logistic regression analysis controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade level.

Figure 1. Percentage of U.S. high school students receiving mostly A's, B's, C's, or D/F's who rarely or never wore a seatbelt, rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol, and drove when drinking alcohol—Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2003.

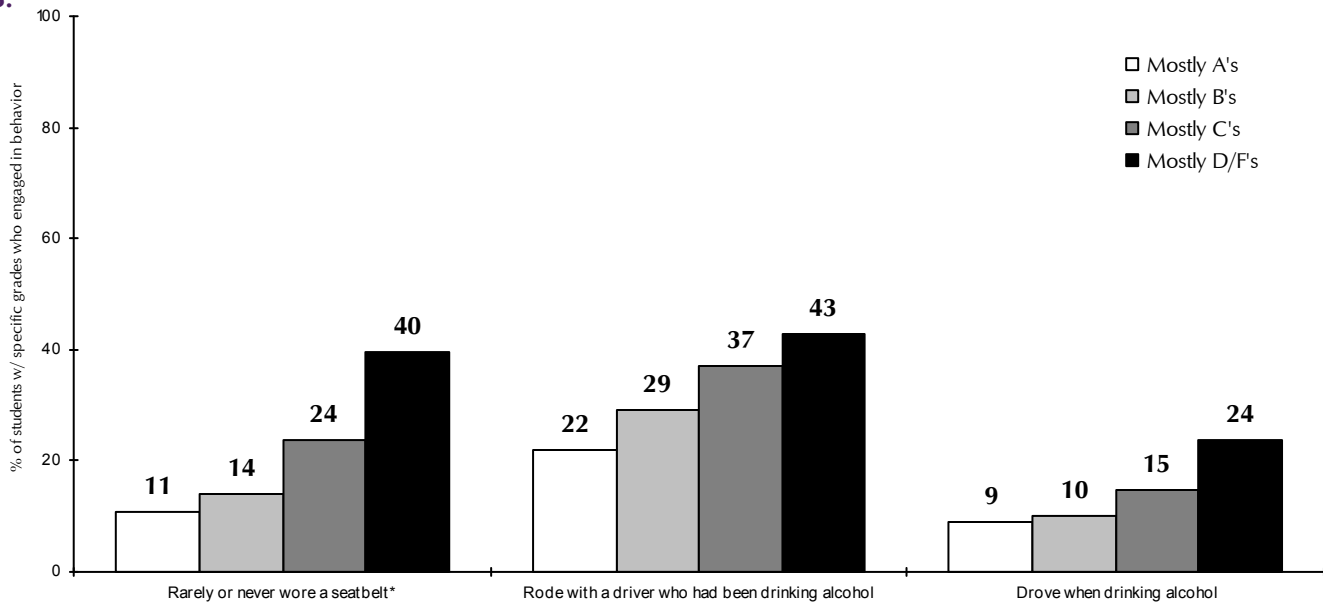
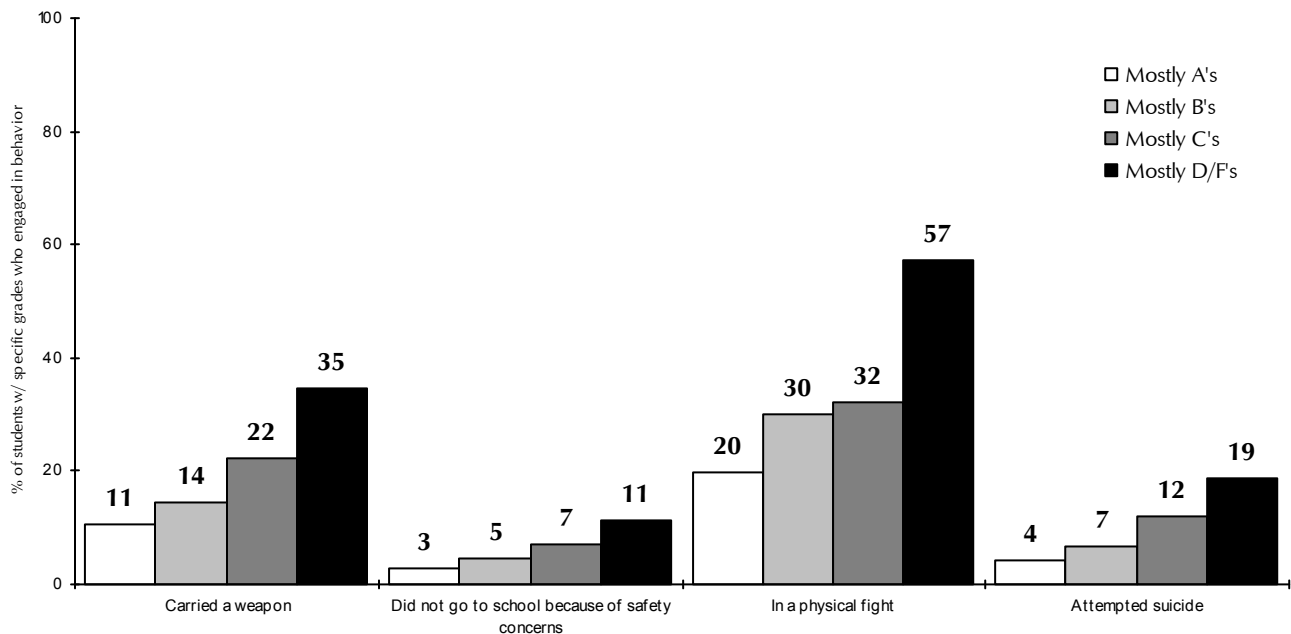


Figure 2. Percentage of U.S. high school students receiving mostly A's, B's, C's, or D/F's who carried a weapon, did not go to school because of safety concerns, were in a physical fight, and attempted suicide—Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2003.



*This means that 11% of students with mostly A's rarely or never wore a seatbelt and 40% of students with mostly D's or F's rarely or never wore a seatbelt.

The national YRBS monitors priority health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. It is conducted every two years during the spring and provides data representative of 9th through 12th grade students in public and private schools throughout the United States. In 2003, students completing the YRBS were asked, "During the past 12 months, how would you describe your grades in school?" and given 7 response options (Mostly A's, Mostly B's, Mostly C's, Mostly D's, Mostly F's, None of these grades, Not sure). In 2003, 27% of students received mostly A's, 38% received mostly B's, 23% received mostly C's, 6% received mostly D's or F's, and 5% reported receiving none of these grades or not sure.

For more information visit http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health_and_academics/ or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).



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