

# School Crime and Victimization

The National Center for Education Statistics reported that in 2000, students between the ages of 12 and 18 were victims of about 1.9 million crimes of violence or theft while at school. Included in this figure are 128,000 serious violent crimes i.e., rape, sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault. Despite these overwhelming figures, there has been a 46 percent decrease in violent crime victimization rates at school between 1992 and 2000. (Bureau of Justice Statistics. November 2002. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2002*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.)

In 1999, thirty-three students between the ages of 12 and 18 were murdered while they were attending school. (Ibid.)

Between 1996 and 2000, teachers were victims of 1,603,000 non-fatal crimes, which include 1,004,000 thefts and 599,000 violent crimes such as rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. (Ibid.)

In 2001, 8 percent of the students reported that they had been bullied while at school, up from 5 percent in 1999. (Ibid.)

Between 7 and 9 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 reported being intimidated by or injured with weapons such as guns, knives, or clubs while attending school during 2001. (Ibid.)

Of students surveyed in grades 9 through 12 in 2001, 17 percent reported carrying weapons, such as a gun, knife or club anywhere within the previous 30 days, and 6 percent reported they carried the weapon at school. (Ibid.)

Students in the lower grades are more likely to avoid areas at school for fear of attack. Seven percent of 6th graders reported that they feared certain areas, while 3 percent of the 12th graders avoided certain areas. (Ibid.)

Students are more likely to be afraid of attack going to and from school than they are away from the school. In 2001, 6 percent feared attack traveling back and forth to school while 5 percent feared attack away from the school. (Ibid.)

An average of 20 percent of students reported that street gangs were present at their schools in 2001. In urban schools, 29 percent reported a gang presence; in suburban schools, 18 percent reported a gang presence; and in rural schools, 13 percent reported a gang presence. (Ibid.)

Violent deaths associated with school attendance represent less than one percent of all homicides and suicides that occur among adolescents. More than 50 percent of deaths associated with school attendance take place during transition periods—at the beginning of the day, at lunchtime, or at the end of the day. (Anderson, et. al. 2001. "School Associated Violent Deaths in the United States, 1994-1999." *JAMA* 2001; 286:2695-2702.)

Of the 3,371 students expelled for bringing firearms to school during the 1998-1999 year, 55 percent attended a high school, 33 percent attended a junior high school, and 10 percent attended an elementary school. Sixty-two percent of the expulsions involved a handgun; 7 percent involved rifles or shotguns; and 31 percent involved other firearms, including bombs, grenades, starter pistols, and rockets. (Gray, K. and Sinclair, B. October 2000. *Report of State Implementation of the Gun-Free Schools Act, 1998-1999*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.)