

 **NCES**  
National Center for  
Education Statistics

# Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2005

**BJS**  
Bureau of  
Justice Statistics



**U.S. Department of Education**  
Institute of Education Sciences  
NCES 2005-002

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Office of Justice Programs  
NCJ 205290



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November 2004

**Suggested Citation**

DeVoe, J.F., Peter, K., Kaufman, P., Miller, A., Noonan, M., Snyder, T.D., and Baum, K. (2004). Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2004 (NCES 2005-002/NCJ 205290). U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

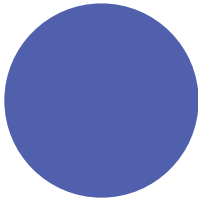
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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, classroom disorder, teacher injury, weapons, and student perceptions of school safety. In addition to covering a wide range of topics, the indicators are based on information drawn from a wide range of sources, including surveys of students, teachers, and principals, and data collections by federal departments and agencies such as the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the report are presented below.

### ***Violent Deaths at School***

From July 1, 1999, through June 30, 2000, there were 32 school-associated violent deaths 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 a relatively small percentage (1 percent) of the total of 2,124 children ages 5–19 who were victims of homicide 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***

The victimization rate for students ages 12–18 generally declined both at school and away from school between 1992 and 2002; this was true for the total crime rate as well as for thefts, serious violent crimes (including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault), and violent crimes (that is, serious violent crime plus simple assault) (Indicator 2). While this overall trend indicates a decline during this time frame, no difference was detected between 2001 and 2002 in the total crime rate, the rate of theft, or the rate of violent victimization either at or away from school.

- In 2002, students ages 12–18 were more likely to be victims of nonfatal serious violent crime away from school than at school ( Indicator 2).<sup>1</sup> Students in this age range were victims of about 309,000 serious violent crimes away from school, compared with about 88,000 at school.
- In 2002, 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 victims away from school ( Indicator 2).
- In 2003, 5 percent of students ages 12–18 reported being victims of nonfatal crimes, 4 percent reported being victims of theft, and 1 percent reported being victims of violent incidents ( Indicator 3).
- The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property fluctuated between 1993 and 2003, but without a clear trend ( Indicator 4). In all survey years from 1993 to 2003, 7–9 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.
- Between 1993 and 2003, the percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported being in a fight anywhere declined from 42 percent to 33 percent ( Indicator 5). Similarly, the percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported fighting on school property declined over this period, from 16 percent to 13 percent.
- In 2003, 7 percent of students ages 12–18 reported that they had been bullied at school. The percentage of students in this age range who had been bullied increased from 5 percent in 1999 to 8 percent in 2001, but no differences were detected between 2001 and 2003 ( Indicator 6).
- In 2003, public school students were more likely than private school students to report being bullied (7 vs. 5 percent) ( Indicator 6). In the same year, rural students were more likely than their urban and suburban counterparts to report being bullied (10 percent of rural students vs. 7 percent each of urban and suburban students).

***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 public schools reported violent incidents and 46 percent reported 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

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

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) ( Indicator 7).
- 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 a firearm or explosive device ( Indicator 8).

### ***Nonfatal Teacher Victimization at School—Teacher Reports***

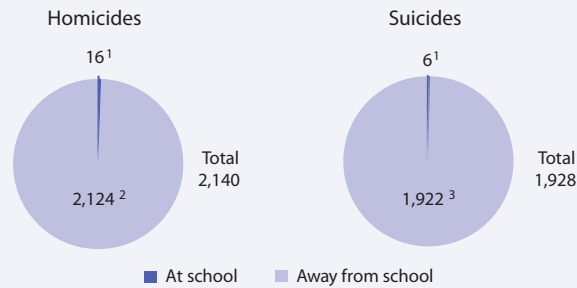
Annually, over the 5-year period from 1998 to 2002, teachers were the victims of approximately 234,000 total nonfatal crimes at school, including 144,000 thefts and 90,000 violent crimes (rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault) (Indicator 9).

- Over the 5-year period from 1998 to 2002, senior high school and middle/junior high school teachers were more likely than elementary school teachers to be victims of violent crimes (most of which were simple assaults) (30 and 26 crimes, respectively, vs. 12 crimes per 1,000 teachers) ( Indicator 9).
- Teachers were differentially victimized by violent crimes at school according to where they taught ( Indicator 9). Over the 5-year period from 1998 to 2002, urban teachers were more likely than rural and suburban teachers to be victims of violent crimes.
- 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).

### ***School Environment***

The percentage of students who reported being afraid of being attacked at school or on the way to and from school decreased from 12 percent in 1995 to 6 percent in 2001. No difference was detected between the most recent survey years, 2001 and 2003, in the percentage of students who feared such an attack (Indicator 12). In 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; however, in 2003, no difference was detected in the percentage of students who reported fear of an attack at school and those fearing an attack away from school.

**Figure 1.1. Number of homicides and suicides of youth ages 5–19, by location: 1999–2000**



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

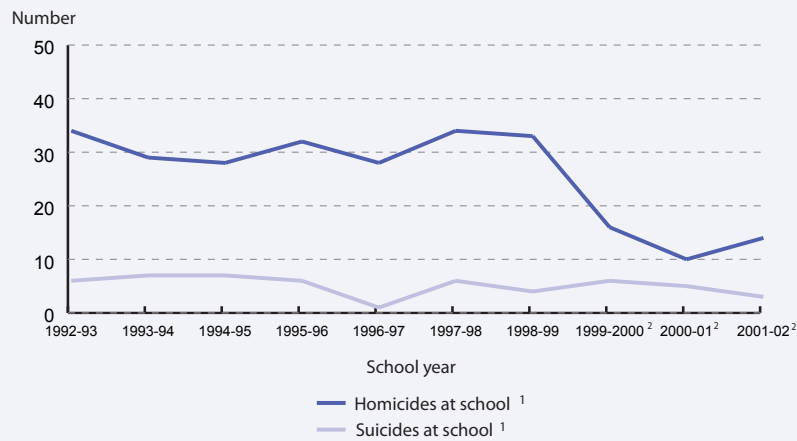
<sup>2</sup>Youth ages 5–19 from July 1, 1999, to June 30, 2000.

<sup>3</sup>Youth 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 are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1992–2002 School-Associated Violent Deaths Surveillance Study, previously unpublished tabulation (August 2003); data on suicides of youth ages 5–19 are 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 are 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**



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

<sup>2</sup>Data 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 Study, previously unpublished tabulation (August 2003).

**Table 2.1.—Number of nonfatal crimes against students ages 12–18 at school, by type of crime and selected student characteristics: 1992–2002**

Student characteristic	1992			1993			1994					
	Total	Theft	Violent	Serious violent <sup>1</sup>	Total	Theft	Violent	Serious violent <sup>1</sup>	Total	Theft	Violent	Serious violent <sup>1</sup>
Total	3,409,200	2,260,500	1,148,600	245,400	3,795,200	2,357,000	1,438,200	306,700	3,795,500	2,371,500	1,424,000	322,400
Sex												
Male	2,058,400	1,278,000	780,400	183,200	2,168,000	1,275,100	892,900	180,200	2,109,600	1,265,600	844,000	200,600
Female	1,350,700	982,500	368,200	62,200	1,627,200	1,081,900	545,300	126,500	1,685,800	1,105,800	580,000	121,700
Age												
12–14	1,858,900	1,134,200	724,700	172,000	2,123,200	1,241,100	882,100	182,400	2,140,000	1,246,500	893,400	201,800
15–18	1,550,300	1,126,400	423,900	73,300	1,672,100	1,115,900	556,100	124,300	1,655,500	1,124,900	530,600	120,600
Race/ethnicity <sup>2</sup>												
White	2,526,700	1,694,300	832,400	148,000	2,832,800	1,775,700	1,057,100	188,400	2,670,800	1,726,600	944,300	179,700
Black	443,300	262,300	181,000	71,500	507,800	300,600	207,200	88,100	552,800	320,100	232,700	60,000
Hispanic	299,200	191,300	107,900	25,900	335,500	193,800	141,600	25,100	431,700	234,000	197,700	70,200
Other	111,600	95,300	16,300	#	90,700	64,200	26,500	5,100	105,600	68,300	37,200	12,500
Urbanicity												
Urban	883,000	572,300	310,700	95,600	967,200	557,100	410,200	100,700	978,200	534,800	443,400	140,300
Suburban	1,809,200	1,226,700	582,500	115,000	2,023,000	1,319,500	703,500	135,300	2,036,300	1,293,400	742,900	153,600
Rural	717,000	461,500	255,500	34,700	804,900	480,500	324,500	70,700	780,900	543,300	237,700	28,500
Household income												
Less than \$7,500	249,300	132,800	116,400	27,400	253,600	105,900	147,700	27,900	185,000	90,600	94,400	40,400
\$7,500–14,999	335,800	196,700	139,200	38,300	340,100	205,000	135,100	36,400	322,100	202,300	119,800	15,900
\$15,000–24,999	415,200	199,700	215,600	53,100	489,000	266,500	222,500	36,000	494,900	312,400	182,500	44,100
\$25,000–34,999	489,800	334,700	155,100	16,900	684,300	471,100	213,200	36,600	572,200	313,500	258,700	55,100
\$35,000–49,999	765,000	564,000	201,000	38,600	670,900	418,500	252,400	58,200	741,500	473,500	268,000	50,500
\$50,000–74,999	511,100	406,500	104,600	12,000	639,300	430,800	208,500	43,200	668,000	421,300	246,700	53,300
\$75,000 or more	382,300	252,000	130,300	31,000	406,700	300,700	106,000	19,700	438,900	314,500	124,400	19,800