Schools and college campuses—where young people spend part or all of their day—are often assumed to be relatively safe places. Yet children age 12 to 18 still experience and witness acts of violence in their schools, negatively affecting their physical and emotional well-being as well as their learning. Crimes committed on campuses include physical and sexual abuse, bullying, and property crimes. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and also students of color, can be the target of harassment, but may hesitate to report incidents to school officials. On their campuses, students can experience violent crimes—by both known and unknown offenders—such as forcible rape,1 aggravated assault, and robberies.2 Stalking is also a widespread but underreported crime on campuses, and national studies suggest that there are higher rates of stalking victimization among college-age women than among the general population.3 The statistics represented in this document are drawn from several sources including FBI data, national crime trends data, information from the United States Department of Education research, and campus-specific data collected and reported as a result of the Clery Act.4

Data from the FBI showed:

- In 2011, 89,160 crimes were reported to college and university campus police. Of these reported crimes, 97 percent were property crimes, and 3 percent were violent crimes.5
- Of the violent crimes reported on college and university campuses in 2011, 51 percent were aggravated assaults, 28 percent were robberies, 21 percent were forcible rapes, and 0.3 percent were murder or non-negligent manslaughter.6

Clery Act reporting from 2011 showed:

- Of aggravated assaults reported, 60 percent occurred on campus and 40 percent occurred off campus.9
- Of murders reported, 20 occurred on campus and 16 occurred off campus.10
- Of the sex offenses reported, 88 percent occurred on campus and 12 percent occurred off campus.9
- Of the robberies reported, 39 percent were on campus, and 61 percent were off campus. Of the burglaries, 95 percent were on campus and 5 percent occurred off campus. Of motor vehicle thefts, 57 percent occurred on campus, while 43 percent were off campus.12

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3 The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act requires campuses to keep records and disclose all incidents of campus crime to the federal government. The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA) was signed into law on March 7, 2013, and amended parts of the Clery Act to require colleges and universities to compile statistics for additional crimes including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.


5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.


9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.
School and Campus Crime

According to a national study on the historical trends of school violence between 1909 and 2008:

- Suspects targeted one or more specifically named individuals in 73 percent of targeted violence incidents on college and university campuses.\(^{13}\)
- A majority of incidents of targeted violence occurred on campus (79 percent), while approximately one-fifth were off campus. When the incidents occurred inside a campus-owned or -operated building, more than one-half took place in dorm rooms or apartments, offices, or instructional areas (such as classrooms, lecture halls, or laboratories); approximately 27 percent took place on campus grounds or parking lots.\(^{15}\)
- There were 272 targeted violence incidents on campuses between 1909 and 2008. Suspects caused 281 deaths and injured 247 individuals. Of the deaths, at least 190 were students, and at least 72 were employees. Of the injured, at least 144 were students, and at least 35 were employees.\(^{16}\)

Bullying, harassment, and physical and sexual abuse are all real problems in schools across the United States. Several national surveys and research studies have revealed the following data about these crimes:

- In one 2011 survey, 30 percent of respondents had missed at least one day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.\(^{17}\)
- In the 2010 to 2011 school year, 74 percent of all public schools recorded one or more serious violent crimes such as rape, sexual battery other than rape, robbery with or without a weapon, threat of physical attack with a weapon, or fight or physical attack with a weapon. Only 40 percent of all public schools reported any of these incidents to the police.\(^{18}\)
- During the 2010 to 2011 school year, 91 percent of both middle and high schools reported violent incidents at school compared to 64 percent of elementary (primary) schools.\(^{19}\)
- In 2011, students age 12 to 18 were victims of 89,000 non-fatally serious violent crimes at school, which was a 66 percent decrease from the number of serious violent crimes in 2001 and an 83.3 percent decrease for the peak in 1993.\(^{20}\)

**Note:** Due to methodological changes in the 2008 survey, those estimates are not comparable with subsequent or prior years.

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\(^{13}\) Targeted violence includes incidents in which the suspect targeted a specific institution of higher education student, employee, or facility/event. In the present study, incident was included if it matched the victim's profile, but the incident was not a random attack. Furthermore, the incident was included if it matched the victim's profile, but the incident was not a random attack.

\(^{14}\) Ibid.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 12, 14.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 11, 17.


\(^{19}\) Ibid., 29.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., calculated from data in table 2.1.
In 2011, 33 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 reported they had been in a physical fight anywhere at least one time during the previous 12 months compared to 42 percent in 1993, and 12 percent said they had been in a fight on school property during the previous 12 months compared to 16 percent in 1993.\(^{21}\)

In 2011, 17 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 had carried a weapon in the previous 30 days. In the same year, about 5 percent of students had carried a gun.\(^{22}\)

For school-age youth (5 to 18) in the 2010 to 2011 school year, there were 11 homicides at school.\(^{23}\)

In 2011, seven percent of students in grades 9 through 12 reported having been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.\(^{24}\)

In 2011, 26 percent of students in grades 9 through 12—including 29 percent of males and 22 percent of females—reported that drugs had been made available to them on school property during the previous 12 months.\(^{25}\)

In 2011, 36 percent of students who reported bullying problems at school indicated that they occurred at least once or twice a month.\(^{26}\)

In 2011, 18 percent of students age 12 to 18 reported that gangs were present at their schools.\(^{27}\)

In 2011, 28 percent of students age 12 to 18 reported being bullied at school during the school year.\(^{28}\)

In a 2011 study that included youth in grades 6 through 12, 64 percent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) respondents said they felt unsafe in school because of their sexual orientation, and 44 percent felt unsafe because of their gender expression.\(^{29}\)

In 2011, 82 percent of LGBT youth respondents had been verbally harassed at school because of their sexual orientation, 45 percent had been physically harassed (e.g., pushed or shoved), and 22 percent had been physically assaulted because of their sexual orientation.\(^{30}\)

Of LGBT students who had been harassed or assaulted at school, 60 percent did not report the incident to school officials, most commonly because they doubted anything would be done or believed the situation could become worse if reported.\(^{31}\)