

# Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2023

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# Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2023

July 2024

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# Foreword

*Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2023* provides the most recent national indicators on school crime and safety. The information presented in this report serves as a reference for policymakers and practitioners so that they can develop effective programs and policies aimed at violence and school crime prevention. Accurate information about the nature, extent, and scope of the problem being addressed is essential for developing effective programs and policies.

This is the 26th edition of *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*, a joint effort of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This report provides summary statistics to inform the nation about current aspects of crime and safety in schools.

*Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety* includes the most recent available data at the time of its development, compiled from a number of statistical data sources supported by the federal government. Such sources include results from the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) School-Associated Violent Death Module, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the National Vital Statistics System, sponsored by CDC; the Studies of Active Shooter Incidents, sponsored by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the National Crime Victimization Survey and School Crime Supplement to that survey, sponsored by BJS and NCES, respectively; the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, sponsored by CDC; the School Survey on Crime and Safety, *EDFacts*, and the National Teacher and Principal Survey, all sponsored by NCES; and the Campus Safety and Security Survey, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. Some of these data are collected annually, while others are collected less frequently.

This report is available as a PDF file at <https://nces.ed.gov> or <https://bjs.ojp.gov>. BJS and NCES continue to work together in order to provide timely and complete data on the issues of school-related violence and safety.

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# Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Foreword .....	iii
Acknowledgments .....	iv
List of Figures .....	vi
Introduction .....	1
Highlights .....	2
Elementary and Secondary Student and Teacher Victimization .....	4
Violent Deaths and Active Shooter Incidents .....	4
Nonfatal Criminal Victimization Experienced by Students .....	6
Student Reports of Bullying Victimization .....	7
Teacher Victimization .....	10
School Environment .....	12
Gangs and Hate-Related Speech .....	12
Student Fear and Avoidance .....	14
Teachers' Reports of Student Behavior and Rule Enforcement .....	15
Fights and Weapons .....	16
Student Involvement in Physical Fights .....	16
Students Carrying Weapons and Threats and Injuries With Weapons .....	17
Safety, Security, and Mental Health Practices .....	19
Safety Measures and Crisis Planning .....	19
Security Staff and Officers Carrying Firearms .....	21
Mental Health Services and Support .....	21
Postsecondary Campus Safety and Security .....	24
Active Shooter Incidents .....	24
Criminal Incidents .....	25
Hate Crime Incidents .....	26

# List of Figures

	<i>Page</i>
1. Number of casualties in active shooter incidents at elementary and secondary schools: 2000 through 2022 . . .	5
2. Rate of nonfatal victimization against students ages 12-18 per 1,000 students, by location: Selected years, 2012 through 2022 . . . . .	6
3. Percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied during school, by selected student and school characteristics: School year 2021-22 . . . . .	8
4. Among students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied during school, percentage who reported being bullied online or by text, by selected student and school characteristics: School year 2021-22 . . . . .	9
5. Percentage of public school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student from their school during the previous 12 months, by instructional level: School year 2020-21 . . . . .	11
6. Percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported a gang presence, being called hate-related words, and seeing hate-related graffiti at school: Selected school years, 2010-11 through 2021-22 . . . . .	13
7. Percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported being afraid of attack or harm, and percentage who reported avoiding school activities or classes because of fear of attack or harm: School year 2021-22 . . . . .	14
8. Percentage of public school teachers who agreed that student misbehavior and student tardiness and class cutting interfered with their teaching and percentage who agreed that other teachers and the principal enforced school rules: School years 2011-12 and 2020-21 . . . . .	15
9. Percentage of students in grades 9-12 who reported having been in a physical fight at least one time on school property during the previous 12 months, by selected student characteristics: 2021 . . . . .	17
10. Percentage of students in grades 9-12 who reported carrying a weapon at least 1 day on school property during the previous 30 days, and percentage who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property at least one time during the previous 12 months: 2011, 2019, and 2021 . . . . .	18
11. Percentage of public schools with a written plan for procedures to be performed in selected scenarios: School year 2021-22 . . . . .	20
12. Percentage of public schools providing diagnostic mental health assessments and treatment to students, by selected school characteristics: School year 2021-22 . . . . .	22
13. Number of casualties in active shooter incidents at postsecondary institutions: 2000 through 2022 . . . . .	24
14. Number of on-campus crimes reported per 10,000 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by selected type of crime: 2011 through 2021 . . . . .	25
15. Number of on-campus hate crimes at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by category of bias motivating the crime and selected types of crime: 2021 . . . . .	27

# Introduction

It is important to establish reliable indicators of the current state of school crime and safety across the nation—and to regularly update and monitor these indicators as new data become available. These indicators can help inform policymakers and practitioners of the nature, extent, and scope of the problem being addressed as they develop programs aimed at violence and school crime prevention. This is the purpose of Indicators of School Crime and Safety, a joint effort by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The full contents of the Indicators of School Crime and Safety can be accessed [online](#) as part of the [Condition of Education](#) Indicator System or by downloading PDFs for the individual indicators.

The *Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety 2023* compiles key findings from the Indicator System. This summary report provides an overview of information available on various topics, as well as direct links to the online versions of the indicators discussed. This year's report also includes selected content from the *Digest of Education Statistics*. The report is organized into five sections: elementary and secondary student and teacher victimization; school environment; fights and weapons; safety, security, and mental health practices; and postsecondary campus safety and security. Each section begins with a set of key findings. Because individual indicators provide only partial measures of the overall condition of school crime and safety in the United States, the summary format of this report—particularly the key findings sections—serve as important syntheses of the information provided in the Indicator System and the *Digest of Education Statistics*.

In this report, where available, data on victimization that occurred away from school are offered as a point of comparison for data on victimization that occurred at school. Indicators of crime and safety are compared across different population subgroups and over time. All data reflect the most current data available at the time the report was produced. Across indicators, the year of the most recent data collection varies by survey, generally ranging from 2020 through 2022. In 2020 and 2021, in particular, schools across the country suspended or modified in-person classes to mitigate the risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Students might have spent less time at school than in previous years due to these modified procedures. Thus, readers are encouraged to interpret data since 2020 in the context of these pandemic-related modifications.

Data in the indicators were obtained from many different surveys and compilations of administrative records and describe various people and entities throughout the education system, including students and teachers, elementary and secondary schools, state education agencies, and colleges and universities. Readers should be cautious when comparing data from different sources. Differences across these sources in aspects such as data collection procedures and timing, the phrasing of questions used to collect information from respondents, and interviewer training can affect the comparability of results across data sources. The accuracy of any statistic is determined by the joint effects of sampling and nonsampling errors. Sampling error affects estimates based on a sample of a population, and as a result the estimates may differ from those that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same survey instruments, instructions, and procedures. All data collections (whether a sample or complete census) are also subject to nonsampling error, including potential errors in design, reporting, and processing as well as error due to nonresponse. To the extent possible, these nonsampling errors are kept to a minimum by methods built into the study design, data collection procedures, and data processing. In general, however, the effects of nonsampling error are more difficult to gauge than are those produced by sampling variability.

Data throughout this report represent the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Findings described with comparative language (e.g., higher, lower, increase, and decrease) are statistically significant at the .05 level. Additional information about methodology and the datasets analyzed in this report may be found online in the [Reader's Guide](#) and [Guide to Sources](#).

# Highlights

In recent years, reported incidents related to several crime and safety issues have become less prevalent at elementary and secondary schools when compared with about a decade earlier. Specifically, incidents of nonfatal student and teacher victimization, reports of student bullying, and reports of some unfavorable conditions at school have become less prevalent:<sup>1</sup>

- At school, the nonfatal criminal victimization rate (including theft and violent victimization) for students ages 12-18 decreased between 2012 and 2022 (from 52 to 22 victimizations per 1,000 students).
- The percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied<sup>2</sup> during school<sup>3</sup> was lower in 2021-22 than in 2010-11 (19 vs. 28 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- Lower percentages of public school teachers in 2020-21 than in 2011-12 reported being threatened with injury by a student from their school (6 vs. 10 percent) or being physically attacked by a student from their school (4 vs. 6 percent).<sup>5</sup>
- Lower percentages of students ages 12-18 in 2021-22 than in 2010-11 reported the following unfavorable conditions at their school: gang presence (6 vs. 18 percent), being called hate-related words (7 vs. 9 percent), or seeing hate-related graffiti (23 vs. 28 percent).
- The percentage of students in grades 9-12 who reported having been in a physical fight on school property in the previous 12 months was lower in 2021 than in 2011 (6 vs. 12 percent).

In the most recent data on weapons and firearms, a lower percentage of students reported carrying a weapon (such as a gun, knife, or club) on school property, while public schools reported higher incident rates of firearm possessions, compared with the early 2010s:

- The percentage of students in grades 9-12 who reported carrying a weapon on school property at least 1 day during the previous 30 days decreased from 5 percent in 2011 to 3 percent in 2021.<sup>6</sup>
- During the 2021-22 school year, 5,000 public school students from kindergarten to 12th grade were reported to have possessed firearms at schools in the United States. This translates to an overall rate of 10 firearm possessions per 100,000 students, which was higher than in any other school year over the previous decade (ranging from 2 to 7 possessions per 100,000 students).

The percentage of public schools that reported having sworn law enforcement officers who routinely carried a firearm was lower in 2021-22 than in 2019-20 (45 vs. 51 percent).

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<sup>1</sup> In 2020 and 2021, in particular, schools across the country suspended or modified in-person classes to mitigate the risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Students may have spent less time at school and had less in-person interaction with their teachers and other students than in previous years due to these modified procedures. Readers are encouraged to interpret data since 2020 in the context of these pandemic-related modifications.

<sup>2</sup> In 2018-19 and earlier years, students were identified as having been bullied if they reported that another student had made fun of them, called them names, or insulted them; spread rumors about them; threatened them with harm; tried to make them do something they did not want to do; excluded them from activities on purpose; destroyed their property on purpose; or pushed, shoved, tripped, or spit on them. In 2021-22, the definition of being bullied was expanded to include having private information, photos, or videos shared on purpose in a harmful way. In the total for students bullied during school, students who reported more than one type of bullying were counted only once.

<sup>3</sup> In 2018-19 and earlier years, students were asked to report their experiences “at school,” which included in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school. In 2021-22, students were asked about things that happen “during school,” which included in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, going to and from school, and using the phone, internet, or social media.

<sup>4</sup> Due to changes in the 2022 School Crime Supplement (SCS) survey (i.e., changes outlined in the preceding footnotes), caution should be used when comparing 2021-22 estimates with those from earlier years.

<sup>5</sup> Teachers who taught only prekindergarten students are excluded. Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools.

<sup>6</sup> The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is conducted biennially, typically during the spring (January-June) of odd-numbered years. However, the 2021 national YRBS administration was postponed until fall (September-December) 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic and the shift to virtual and hybrid school instructional models and ongoing school closures during spring 2021. For more details, see [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/su/su7201a1.htm?s\\_cid=su7201a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/su/su7201a1.htm?s_cid=su7201a1_w).

Active shooter incidents<sup>7</sup> represent a subset of the possible gun violence incidents that occur at school. From 2000 through 2022, at elementary and secondary schools, there were a total of 50 active shooter incidents, with the annual number ranging from 0 to 6 incidents. In 2022, there were 4 active shooter incidents documented at elementary and secondary schools. These resulted in 52 casualties,<sup>8</sup> which was the second highest number in any year since 2000, following 2018 (81 casualties).

Lower percentages of public schools in 2021-22 than in 2019-20 provided mental health services to students, including

- diagnostic services (49 vs. 55 percent); and
- treatment services (38 vs. 42 percent).

However, 90 percent of public schools reported providing increased social and emotional supports for students in 2021-22, and 78 percent reported doing so for staff.

At the postsecondary level, crimes were generally less prevalent in 2021 than a decade earlier:<sup>9</sup>

- The overall rate of crimes reported on campuses of postsecondary institutions per 10,000 full-time equivalent students enrolled was 16 percent lower in 2021 (16.9) than in 2011 (20.0) but showed no consistent trend for this period.
- The number of reported on-campus hate crimes was 12 percent lower in 2021 (667 incidents) than in 2011 (761 incidents). In 2021, race, sexual orientation, and religion were the three most commonly reported categories of bias motivating these hate crimes, accounting for 81 percent of all reported hate crimes.

Despite the lower overall rate of crime in 2021 than in 2011 at the postsecondary level, the rate of forcible sex offenses increased between 2011 and 2021 (from 2.2 to 7.5 per 10,000 students).<sup>10</sup> Forcible sex offenses accounted for 44 percent of all criminal incidents reported on campus in 2021.

From 2000 through 2022, a total of 18 active shooter incidents were documented at postsecondary institutions, with the annual number ranging from 0 to 2. These incidents resulted in 157 casualties (75 killed and 82 wounded). There were no active shooter incidents documented at postsecondary institutions in 2022.

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<sup>7</sup> An active shooter incident is an incident in which “one or more individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area.” Because the situation is active, law enforcement and citizens involved in the incident have the potential to affect the outcome.

<sup>8</sup> Casualties include both the number killed and the number wounded. Number of casualties excludes active shooters and may include casualties that occurred as part of the same incident but at different locations.

<sup>9</sup> Data are for degree-granting institutions, which are institutions that grant associate’s or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Duplicate reporting of a small number of incidents may occur among institutions sharing all or part of a building, institutions in close proximity to each other that rely on the same crime statistics from local law enforcement agencies, or institutions operating more than one campus in close proximity to each other.

<sup>10</sup> Reporting guidelines for forcible sex offenses changed in 2014. In years prior to 2014, schools reported a total number of forcible sex offenses, with no breakouts for specific types of offenses. Beginning in 2014, schools were asked to report the numbers of two different types of forcible sex offenses: rape and fondling. These two types were added together to calculate the total number of reported forcible sex offenses.

# Elementary and Secondary Student and Teacher Victimization

***From 2000 through 2022, there were a total of 50 active shooter incidents at elementary and secondary schools, with the number ranging from 0 to 6 per year during this period. In 2022, there were 4 active shooter incidents documented at elementary and secondary schools. These resulted in 52 casualties, which was the second highest number in any year since 2000, following 2018 (81 casualties).***

***In recent years, nonfatal student and teacher victimization was generally less prevalent than about a decade ago.***

- *At school, the nonfatal criminal victimization rate for students ages 12–18 decreased between 2012 and 2022 (from 52 to 22 victimizations per 1,000 students).*
- *The percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being bullied during school was lower in 2021–22 than in 2010–11 (19 vs. 28 percent).*
- *Lower percentages of public school teachers in 2020–21 than in 2011–12 reported being threatened with injury by a student from their school (6 vs. 10 percent) or being physically attacked by a student from their school (4 vs. 6 percent).*

## ***Violent Deaths and Active Shooter Incidents<sup>11</sup>***

The most recent data on school-associated violent deaths from the School-Associated Violent Death Surveillance System (SAVD-SS) and the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) School-Associated Violent Death Module cover the period from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, which includes the first full school year of the coronavirus pandemic, when many students were learning remotely.<sup>12</sup> During this period, a total of 41 school-associated violent deaths<sup>13</sup> were documented in the United States. Of these 41 deaths, 11 homicides and 6 suicides<sup>14</sup> involved school-age youth (ages 5–18). Considering all persons, the 41 deaths included 20 homicides, 17 suicides, 3 legal intervention deaths, and 1 undetermined violent death.<sup>15,16</sup> Between 1992–93 (when data collection began) and 2020–21, the number of school-associated violent deaths of all persons ranged from 25 (in 2019–20) to 63 (in 2006–07). The total number of homicides in 2020–21 (20) was the lowest of any year since data collection began. However, the number of suicides (17) in 2020–21 was higher than all other years except 2013–14 (20) and 2014–15 (17).

<sup>11</sup> While most of this report focuses on trends over roughly the last decade, this section includes all available data from the beginning of each data collection in order to present a more complete picture of these tragic and relatively rare events.

<sup>12</sup> For data on mode of instruction in spring of the 2020–21 school year, especially full-time, in-person public school enrollment, see <https://ies.ed.gov/schoolsurvey/mss-report/>.

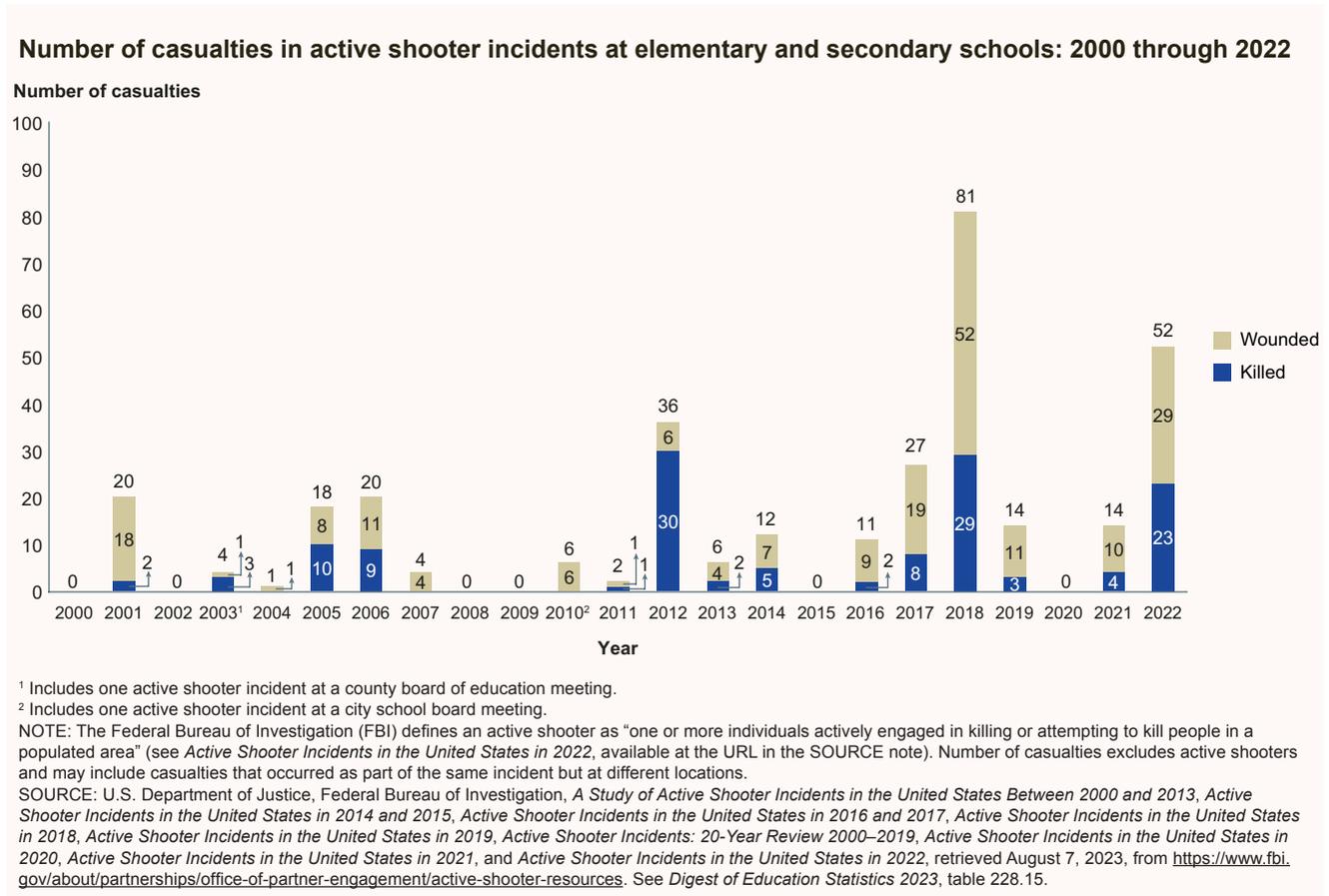
<sup>13</sup> The SAVD-SS defines a school-associated violent death as a homicide, suicide, or legal intervention death (i.e., involving a law enforcement officer), in which the fatal injury occurred on the campus of a functioning elementary or secondary school in the United States. School-associated violent deaths also include those that were documented to have occurred while the victim was on the way to or from regular sessions at school or while the victim was attending or traveling to or from an official school-sponsored event. School-associated violent deaths include not only students and staff members but also others at school, such as students' parents and community members.

<sup>14</sup> Data are subject to change until law enforcement reports have been obtained and interviews with school and law enforcement officials have been completed. The details learned during the interviews can occasionally change the classification of a case.

<sup>15</sup> In the SAVD-SS, a legal intervention death is defined as a death caused by a law enforcement agent in the course of arresting or attempting to arrest a lawbreaker, suppressing a disturbance, maintaining order, or engaging in another legal action.

<sup>16</sup> "Undetermined violent death" refers to those for which the manner was undetermined; that is, the information pointing to one manner of death was no more compelling than the information pointing to one or more other competing manners of death when all available information was considered.

FIGURE 1.



Active shooter incidents represent a subset of the possible gun violence or serious violent incidents that occur at schools. Data on active shooter incidents are available from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the most recent data are for 2022. The FBI defines an active shooter incident as an incident in which “one or more individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area.” Because the situation is active, law enforcement and citizens involved in the incident have the potential to affect the outcome. From 2000 through 2022, at elementary and secondary schools, there were

- a total of 50 active shooter incidents;
- 0 to 6 active shooter incidents per year;
- a total of 328 casualties (131 killed and 197 wounded) in active shooter incidents;<sup>17</sup> and
- 0 to 81 casualties per year from active shooter incidents (figure 1).

In 2022, there were 4 active shooter incidents documented at elementary and secondary schools. These resulted in 52 casualties, which was the second highest number in any year since 2000, following 2018 (81 casualties). From 2000 through 2022, about half of all casualties during active shooter incidents in elementary and secondary schools have occurred since the beginning of 2018 (161 casualties, or 49 percent), though there was no measurable upward or downward trend in the number of incidents over this period.

From 2000 through 2022, there were 51 active shooters responsible for the 50 incidents at elementary and secondary schools. Of the 51 active shooters,

- 49 were male and 2 were female; and
- 35 were 12 to 18 years old, 7 were 19 to 24 years old, and 9 were 25 years old and above. (*Violent Deaths at School and Away From School, and Active Shooter Incidents*)

<sup>17</sup> Number of casualties excludes active shooters and may include casualties that occurred as part of the same incident but at different locations.

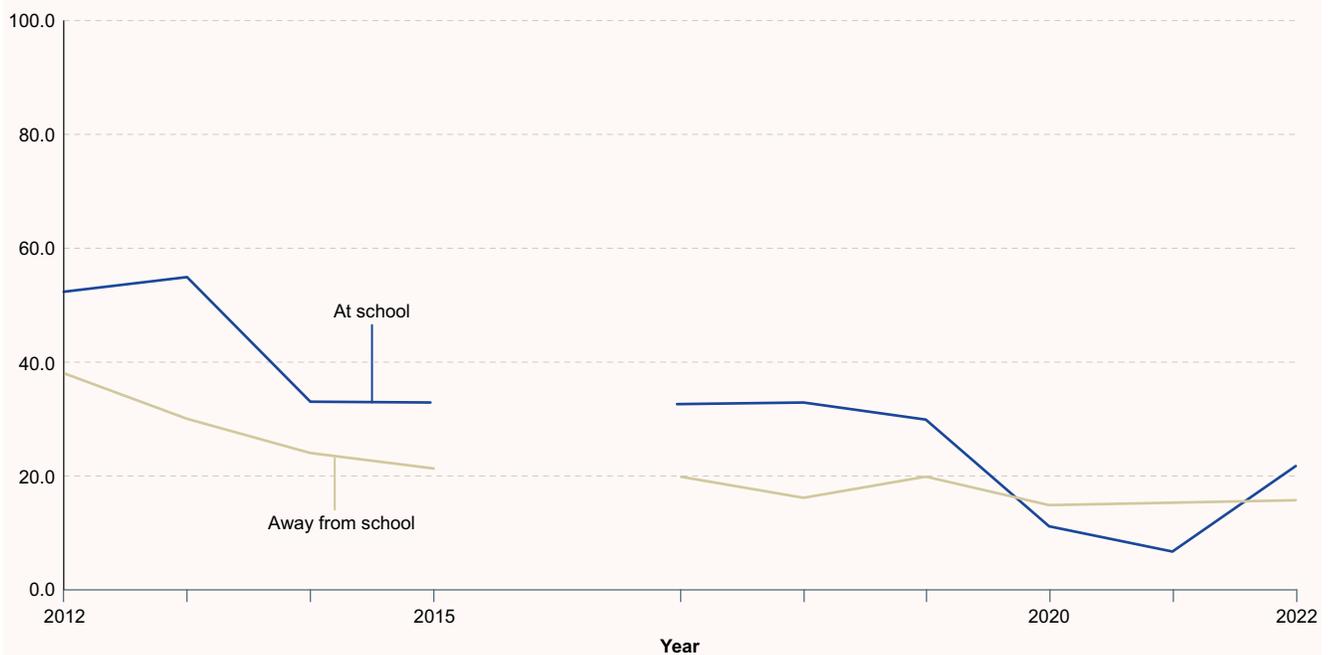
## Nonfatal Criminal Victimization Experienced by Students

Data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) provide insights on nonfatal criminal victimization experienced by students ages 12-18, according to students' own reports.<sup>18</sup> Nonfatal criminal victimization includes theft<sup>19</sup> and violent victimization, the latter of which includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. In 2022, students ages 12-18 experienced 568,100 victimizations at school<sup>20</sup> and 412,600 victimizations not in connection with school ("away from school"). This translates to a rate of 22 victimizations per 1,000 students at school<sup>21</sup> and a rate of 16 victimizations per 1,000 students away from school (figure 2).

**FIGURE 2.**

### Rate of nonfatal victimization against students ages 12–18 per 1,000 students, by location: Selected years, 2012 through 2022

Rate per 1,000 students



NOTE: Due to the methodology used to create the 2016 revised National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data, victimization estimates among students ages 12–18 in 2016 are not comparable to estimates for other years. Nonfatal victimization includes theft, rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. "At school" includes in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to or from school. The NCVS data in this report are reported in accordance with Bureau of Justice Statistics statistical standards. The population size for students ages 12–18 was 26,128,300 in 2022. In 2020, 2021, and 2022, schools across the country suspended or modified in-person classes to mitigate the risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Students may have spent less time at school than in previous years due to these modified procedures. Estimates may vary from previously published reports. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 2012 through 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 228.20.

<sup>18</sup> "Students" refers to those ages 12-18 whose educational attainment did not exceed grade 12 at the time of the survey. An uncertain percentage of these persons may not have attended school during the survey reference period. These data do not take into account the number of hours that students spend at school or away from school.

<sup>19</sup> "Theft" includes attempted and completed purse-snatching, completed pickpocketing, and all attempted and completed thefts, with the exception of motor vehicle thefts. Theft does not include robbery, which involves the threat or use of force and is classified as a violent crime.

<sup>20</sup> "At school" is defined to include in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school.

<sup>21</sup> Data on the *percentage of students* ages 12-18 who reported being victimized at school during the previous 6 months are available from the School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the NCVS. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, [table 228.30](#) for SCS data over time and by selected student and school characteristics.

For students ages 12-18, the total victimization rate decreased between 2012 and 2022, both at school and away from school.<sup>22,23</sup> At school, the total victimization rate decreased from 52 to 22 victimizations per 1,000 students. Away from school, the total victimization rate decreased from 38 to 16 victimizations per 1,000 students.

At school between 2012 and 2022,

- the theft victimization rate decreased from 24 to 6 victimizations per 1,000 students;
- the violent victimization rate decreased from 29 to 16 victimizations per 1,000 students; and
- the violent victimization rate excluding simple assault did not change significantly (3 victimizations per 1,000 students in 2022).

Similar patterns over time were observed for these various types of victimization away from school.

In 2022, the total victimization rate—either at school or away from school—generally did not differ significantly by student race/ethnicity<sup>24</sup> or by urbanicity (urban, suburban, rural). (*Incidence of Nonfatal Victimization at School and Away From School*)

### **Student Reports of Bullying Victimization**

Another type of student victimization that is important to understand is bullying. Previous research has found that students who are bullied are more likely to experience depression and anxiety, have more health complaints, and skip or drop out of school.<sup>25,26</sup> The involvement of young bullying victims in suicides and school shootings has also heightened concerns regarding the public health implications of bullying.<sup>26</sup>

According to data from the School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the NCVS, in school year 2021-22, about 19 percent of students ages 12-18<sup>27</sup> reported being bullied<sup>28</sup> during school.<sup>29</sup> This was lower than the percentage who reported being bullied in 2018-19 or 2010-11 (22 and 28 percent, respectively), although there was no consistent trend throughout the period.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Due to the methodology used to create the 2016 revised NCVS data, victimization estimates among students ages 12-18 in 2016 are not comparable to estimates for other years and are thus excluded from the analyses.

<sup>23</sup> In 2020, 2021, and 2022, schools across the country suspended or modified in-person classes to mitigate the risks associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Students may have spent less time at school than in previous years due to these modified procedures. Readers are encouraged to interpret data since 2020 in the context of these pandemic-related modifications.

<sup>24</sup> Data for all students who were of a race/ethnicity other than Black, Hispanic, or White were combined for reporting and analyses. These students included those who were American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races.

<sup>25</sup> Swearer, S.M., and Hymel, S. (2015). Understanding the Psychology of Bullying: Moving Toward a Social-Ecological Diathesis-Stress Model. *American Psychologist*, 70(4): 344.

<sup>26</sup> Hornor, G. (2018). Bullying: What the PNP Needs to Know. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 32(4): 399-408.

<sup>27</sup> Includes only students who reported being enrolled in grades 6 through 12. Excludes students who received any homeschooling education during the school year. In 2021-22, also excludes students who only attended virtual public or private schools.

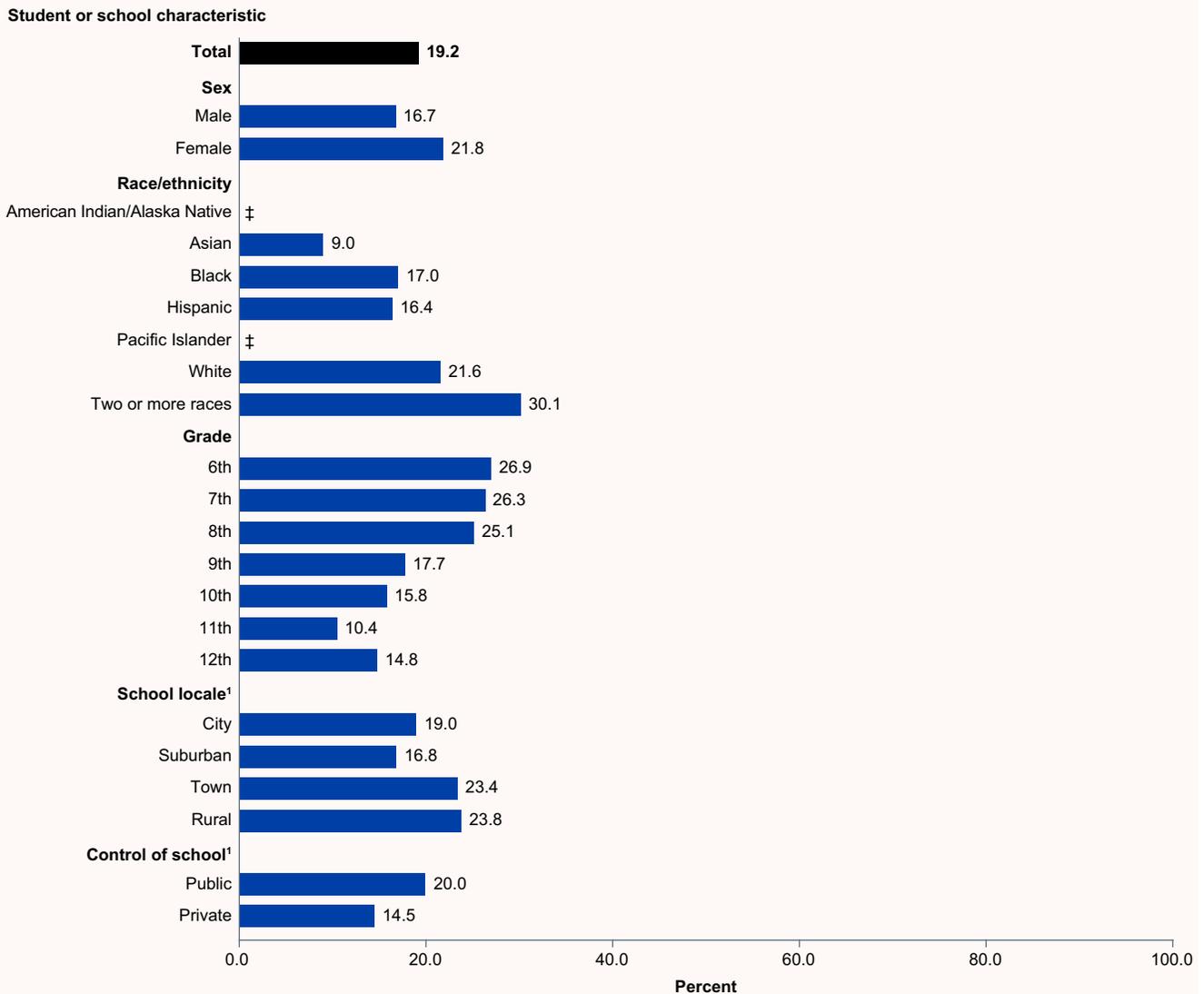
<sup>28</sup> In 2018-19 and earlier years, students were identified as having been bullied if they reported that another student had made fun of them, called them names, or insulted them; spread rumors about them; threatened them with harm; tried to make them do something they did not want to do; excluded them from activities on purpose; destroyed their property on purpose; or pushed, shoved, tripped, or spit on them. In 2021-22, the definition of being bullied was expanded to include having private information, photos, or videos shared on purpose in a harmful way. In the total for students bullied during school, students who reported more than one type of bullying were counted only once.

<sup>29</sup> In 2018-19 and earlier years, students were asked to report their experiences “at school,” which included in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school. In 2021-22, students were asked about things that happen “during school,” which included in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, going to and from school, and using the phone, internet, or social media.

<sup>30</sup> Due to changes in the 2022 SCS survey (i.e., changes outlined in the preceding footnotes), caution should be used when comparing 2021-22 estimates with those from earlier years.

**FIGURE 3.**

**Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being bullied during school, by selected student and school characteristics: School year 2021–22**



‡ Reporting standards not met. Either there are too few cases for a reliable estimate or the coefficient of variation (CV) is 50 percent or greater.  
<sup>1</sup> Excludes students with missing information about the school characteristic. In 2021–22, about 9 percent of sampled students were missing school locale data, and 8 percent were missing control of school data.  
 NOTE: Excludes students who received any homeschooling education during the school year as well as students who only attended virtual public or private schools. Students were asked about things that happen “during school,” which included in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, going to and from school, and using the phone, internet, or social media. “Bullied” included students who reported being made fun of, called names, or insulted; being the subject of rumors; being threatened with harm; being made to do things they did not want to do; being excluded from activities on purpose; having their property destroyed on purpose; being pushed, shoved, tripped, or spit on; and having private information, photos, or videos shared on purpose in a harmful way. Students who reported more than one type of bullying were counted only once. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 230.40.

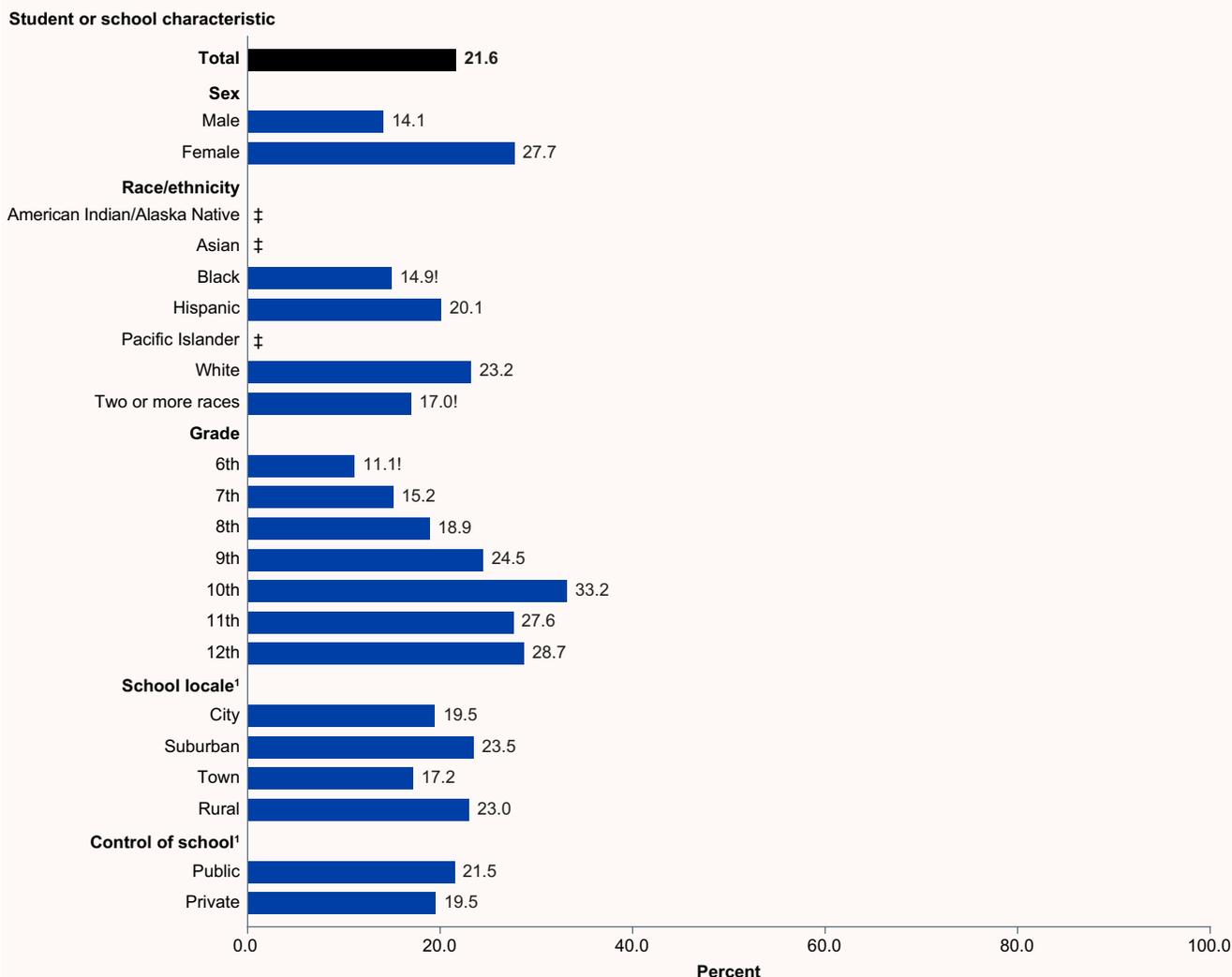
Students' reports of being bullied varied based on student and school characteristics<sup>31</sup> in 2021-22 (figure 3).

Specifically, the percentage of students who reported being bullied during school was

- higher for female students than for male students (22 vs. 17 percent);
- higher for students of Two or more races (30 percent) and White students (22 percent) than for Black students (17 percent) and Hispanic students (16 percent), which were all higher than the percentage for Asian students (9 percent);<sup>32</sup>
- higher for 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-graders (27, 26, and 25 percent, respectively) than for 9th-, 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-graders (18, 16, 10, and 15 percent, respectively);
- higher for students enrolled in schools in rural areas (24 percent) than for students enrolled in schools in cities (19 percent) and suburban areas (17 percent);
- higher for students enrolled in schools in towns (23 percent) than for students enrolled in schools in suburban areas; and
- higher for public school students than for private school students (20 vs. 15 percent).

**FIGURE 4.**

**Among students ages 12–18 who reported being bullied during school, percentage who reported being bullied online or by text, by selected student and school characteristics: School year 2021–22**



See next page for notes and sources.

<sup>31</sup> Analyses by school locale and control of school exclude students with missing information about the school characteristic. In 2021-22, about 9 percent of sampled students were missing school locale data, and 8 percent were missing data on school control.

<sup>32</sup> In 2021-22, data for American Indian/Alaska Native and Pacific Islander students did not meet reporting standards.

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.

‡ Reporting standards not met. Either there are too few cases for a reliable estimate or the coefficient of variation (CV) is 50 percent or greater.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes students with missing information about the school characteristic. In 2021–22, among sampled students who reported being bullied during school, 7 percent each were missing school locale and control of school data.

NOTE: Excludes students who received any homeschooling education during the school year as well as students who only attended virtual public or private schools.

"During school" included in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, going to and from school, and using the phone, internet, or social media. Excludes students who indicated that they were bullied but did not answer the question about where the bullying occurred. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 230.50.

In 2021-22, of the students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied during school, 22 percent reported being bullied online or by text (figure 4). This was lower than the percentage who reported being bullied inside the classroom (39 percent) or in the hallway or stairwell (37 percent). In 2021-22, among students who reported being bullied, the percentage who were bullied online or by text was

- higher for female students than for male students (28 vs. 14 percent);
- higher for 9th-, 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-graders (24, 33, 28, and 29 percent, respectively) than for 6th-graders (11 percent); and
- higher for 10th- and 12th-graders than for 7th-graders (15 percent). (*Student Bullying*)

### Teacher Victimization

In addition to students, teachers are also subject to intimidation and violence, and students from their schools sometimes commit these offenses. According to data on public school teachers<sup>33</sup> from the 2020-21 National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), threats of injury were more commonly reported than actual physical attacks. Additionally, both types of teacher victimization were less prevalent in 2020-21<sup>34</sup> than in 2011-12:

- The percentage of public school teachers who reported being threatened with injury by a student from their school was 6 percent in 2020-21, compared with 10 percent in 2011-12.
- The percentage who reported being physically attacked by a student from their school was 4 percent in 2020-21, compared with 6 percent in 2011-12.<sup>35</sup>

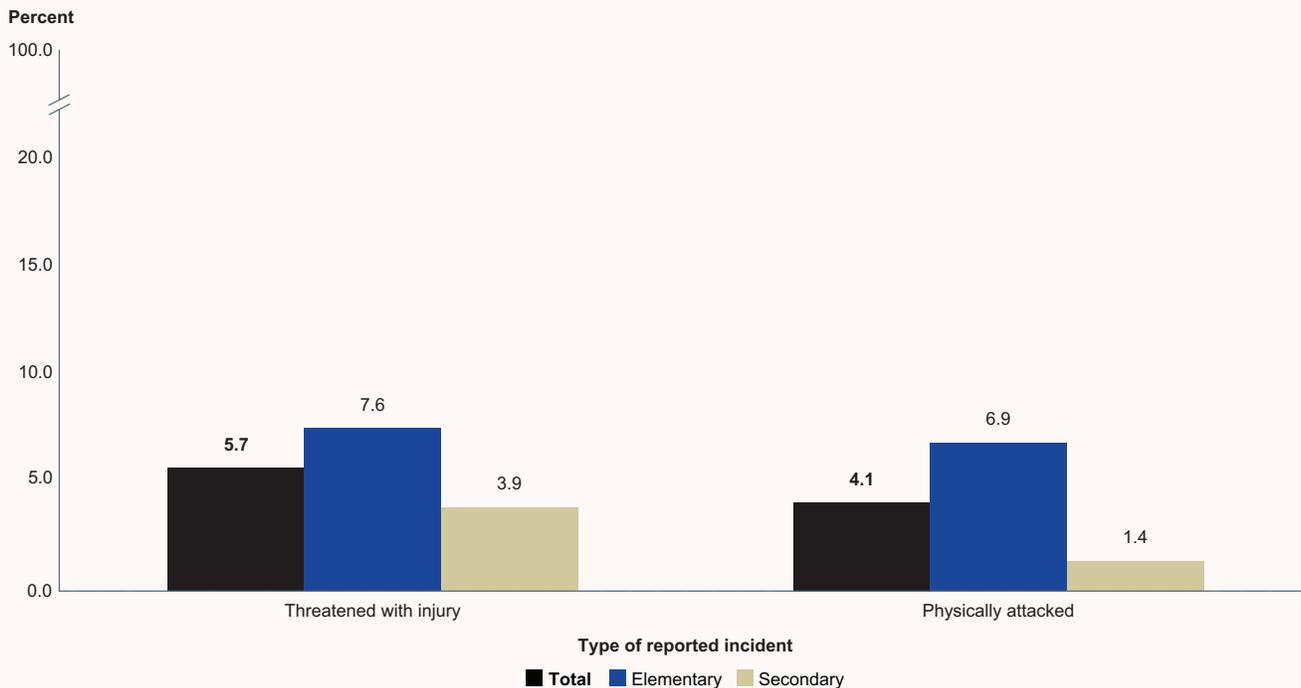
<sup>33</sup> Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Excludes teachers who taught only prekindergarten students.

<sup>34</sup> The 2020 calendar year was the first year of the coronavirus pandemic, so many schools shifted instruction from in-person classes to online-only or hybrid education. Thus, in-person interactions between students and teachers may have been limited.

<sup>35</sup> The 2011-12 data were collected in the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). The NTPS was designed to allow comparisons with SASS data.

**FIGURE 5.**

**Percentage of public school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student from their school during the previous 12 months, by instructional level: School year 2020–21**



NOTE: Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Excludes teachers who taught only prekindergarten students. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught. In general, elementary teachers include those teaching prekindergarten through grade 6 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being kindergarten through grade 6. In general, secondary teachers include those teaching any of grades 7 through 12 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being grades 7 through 12 and usually with no grade taught being lower than grade 5. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.  
 SOURCE: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2020–21. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 228.70.

During the 2020-21 school year, higher percentages of elementary public school teachers than of secondary public school teachers reported being threatened with injury (8 vs. 4 percent) and being physically attacked (7 vs. 1 percent) by a student from their school (figure 5).<sup>36</sup> (*Teachers Threatened With Injury or Physically Attacked by Students*)

<sup>36</sup> Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught. In general, elementary teachers include those teaching any of grades prekindergarten through grade 6 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being kindergarten through grade 6. In general, secondary teachers include those teaching any of grades 7 through 12 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being grades 7 through 12 and usually with no grade taught being lower than grade 5.

# School Environment

**Some aspects of the school environment showed improvements over time. For instance:**

- Lower percentages of students ages 12–18 in 2021–22 than in 2010–11 reported the following unfavorable conditions at their school: gang presence (6 vs. 18 percent), being called hate-related words (7 vs. 9 percent), and seeing hate-related graffiti (23 vs. 28 percent).
- A lower percentage of public school teachers in 2020–21 than in 2011–12 agreed that student misbehavior interfered with their teaching (32 vs. 41 percent).

**However, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being afraid of attack or harm at school in 2021–22 was not measurably different from that in 2010–11.**

## Gangs and Hate-Related Speech

One aspect of the school environment for which national data are available is unfavorable conditions related to crime and safety, such as the presence of gangs and of hate-related<sup>37</sup> words and graffiti. These data are captured in the SCS based on student reports of conditions at school<sup>38</sup> during the school year. Lower percentages of students ages 12-18 in 2021-22 than in 2010-11 reported these unfavorable conditions:

- gang presence (6 vs. 18 percent; figure 6);
- being called hate-related words (7 vs. 9 percent); and
- seeing hate-related graffiti<sup>39</sup> (23 vs. 28 percent).

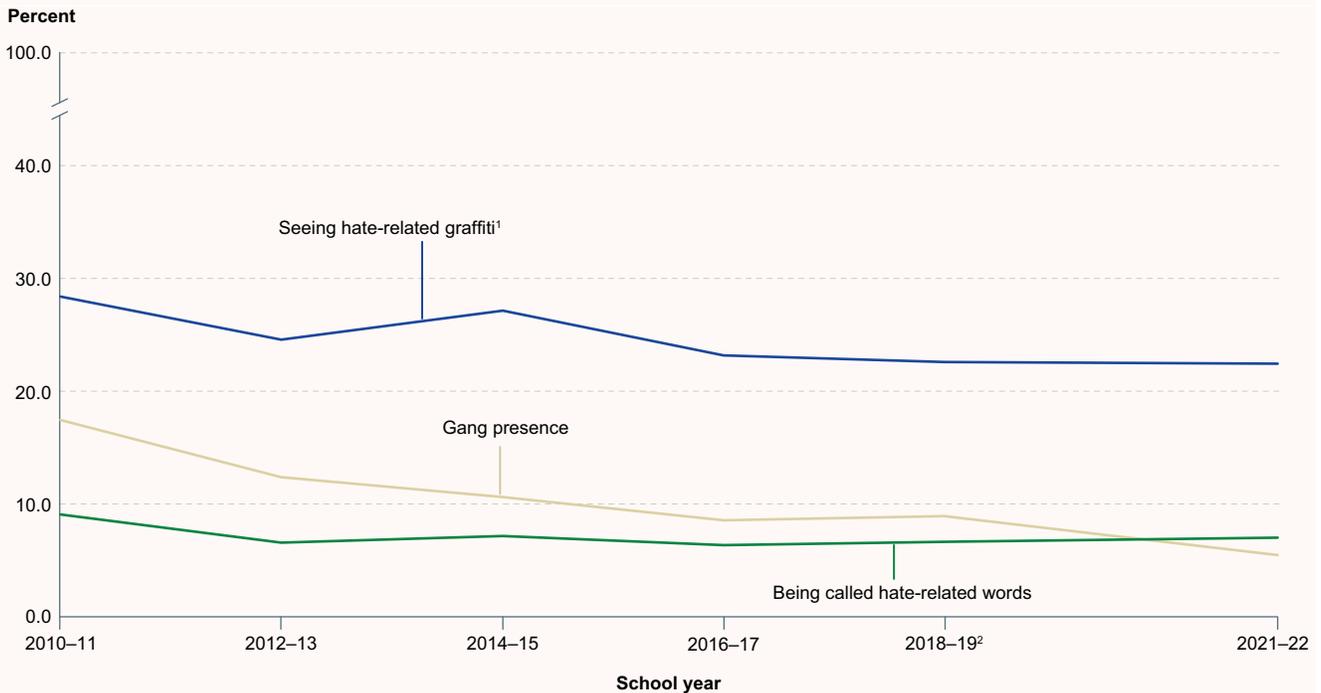
<sup>37</sup> “Hate-related” refers to derogatory terms used by others in reference to students’ personal characteristics.

<sup>38</sup> For 2021-22 data on gangs and hate-related speech only, “at school” for students who received online schooling or virtual learning for some time during the school year also includes virtual classes.

<sup>39</sup> Includes students who reported seeing any hate-related words or symbols written in school classrooms, in school bathrooms, in school hallways, or on the outside of their school building during the school year. In 2021-22, some 4 percent of students also reported seeing any hate-related words, pictures, videos, or symbols posted on school-sponsored websites or applications. For comparability over time, these reports of hate-related posts on school-sponsored websites or applications are not included in this report.

**FIGURE 6.**

**Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported a gang presence, being called hate-related words, and seeing hate-related graffiti at school: Selected school years, 2010–11 through 2021–22**



<sup>1</sup> Includes students who reported seeing any hate-related words or symbols written in school classrooms, in school bathrooms, in school hallways, or on the outside of their school building during the school year. In 2022, about 4 percent of students also reported seeing any hate-related words, pictures, videos, or symbols posted on school-sponsored websites or applications. For comparability over time, these students are not included in this figure.

<sup>2</sup> The 2019 survey included a split sample design to test alternate introductions for the section assessing the presence of gangs at school. Approximately 60 percent of the sample received the version of the questionnaire that was consistent with prior years, where the section introduction included the definition “All gangs, whether or not they are involved in violent or illegal activity, are included.” The remaining 40 percent of the sample received the alternate questionnaire, which excluded the definition. Estimates in this figure include all respondents, regardless of which version of the questionnaire they received. For more information about the 2019 survey collection and experiment, see *Split-Sample Administration of the 2019 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey* (NCES 2022-033) (<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2022/2022033.pdf>).

NOTE: Excludes students who received any homeschooling education during the school year. In 2022, also excludes students who only attended virtual public or private schools. “At school” includes in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school. For 2022 only, “at school” for students who received online schooling or virtual learning for some time during the school year also includes virtual classes. “Hate-related” refers to derogatory terms used by others in reference to students’ personal characteristics. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2011 through 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, tables 230.20 and 230.30.

In 2021-22, there were some differences in the reports of these unfavorable conditions by student and school characteristics. For instance, a higher percentage of 10th-graders (8 percent) than of 6th-, 8th-, and 11th-graders (3, 4, and 4 percent, respectively) reported observing a gang presence at their school. The percentage of students who reported being called a hate-related word at school was higher for 7th- and 8th-graders (9 and 10 percent, respectively) than for 9th-, 11th-, and 12th-graders (6, 5, and 5 percent, respectively). There were no measurable differences by students’ grade level in the percentage of students who reported seeing hate-related graffiti at school. (*Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, tables [230.20](#) and [230.30](#))

Students who reported being called hate-related words at school during the school year were asked whether these words referred to their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. Students could report being called more than one type of hate-related word. In 2021-22, some 4 percent of students ages 12-18 reported being called a hate-related word referring to their race, which was higher than any other category. The percentage of students who reported being called a hate-related word referring to their race was lower for White students (2 percent) than for students of any other race/ethnicity for which data were available<sup>40</sup> (ranging from 4 percent of Hispanic students to

<sup>40</sup> In 2021-22, for American Indian/Alaska Native and Pacific Islander students, data on being called a hate-related word referring to their race did not meet reporting standards.

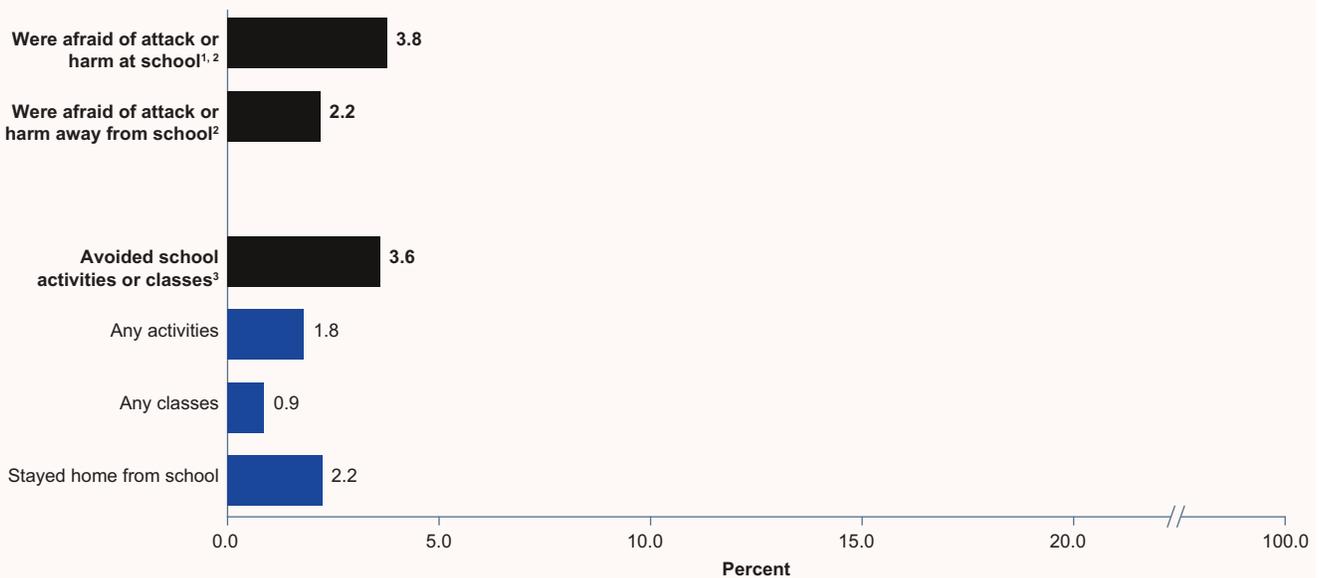
11 percent of students of Two or more races).<sup>41</sup> Similarly, among students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied during school in 2021-22, the percentage who reported that they thought the bullying was related to their race was lower for White students (6 percent) than for Hispanic students (15 percent), Black students (26 percent), and students of Two or more races (27 percent). (*Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 230.35; *Student Bullying*)

### Student Fear and Avoidance

Another aspect of the school environment to consider is students’ perceptions of personal safety at school. The SCS collected such data by asking students ages 12-18 about their fear of attack or harm at and away from school. In 2021-22, some 4 percent of students ages 12-18 reported that they had been afraid of attack or harm<sup>42</sup> at school, which was higher than the percentage of students who reported that they had been afraid of attack or harm away from school (2 percent; figure 7). The percentages of students who reported being afraid of attack or harm at school and away from school in 2021-22 were not measurably different from those in 2010-11. The SCS also asked students whether they avoided school activities or classes<sup>43</sup> because they were fearful that someone might attack or harm them. In 2021-22, the percentage of students who reported avoiding school activities or classes because they thought someone might attack or harm them was 4 percent, which was higher than the percentage who did so in 2010-11 (2 percent).

**FIGURE 7.**

**Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported being afraid of attack or harm, and percentage who reported avoiding school activities or classes because of fear of attack or harm: School year 2021–22**



<sup>1</sup> “At school” includes in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school.  
<sup>2</sup> Students were asked if they were “never,” “almost never,” “sometimes,” or “most of the time” afraid that someone would attack or harm them at school or away from school. Students who responded “sometimes” or “most of the time” were considered afraid.  
<sup>3</sup> Students who reported more than one type of avoidance of school activities or classes (e.g., reported that they avoided “any activities” and also reported that they stayed home from school) were counted only once in the total for avoiding activities or classes.  
 NOTE: Excludes students who received any homeschooling education during the school year. Also excludes students who only attended virtual public or private schools. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, tables 230.70 and 230.80.

<sup>41</sup> These data reflect of a subset of hate-related incidents. The FBI collects information on hate crimes, including those that take place in schools. For more information, see the special report from the FBI’s *Crime Data Explorer*, called Reported Hate Crime at Schools: 2018-2022.  
<sup>42</sup> Students were asked if they were “never,” “almost never,” “sometimes,” or “most of the time” afraid that someone would attack or harm them at school or away from school. Students responding “sometimes” or “most of the time” were considered afraid.  
<sup>43</sup> Students who reported more than one type of avoidance of school activities or classes (e.g., reported that they avoided “any activities” and also reported that they stayed home from school) were counted only once in the total for avoiding activities or classes.

In 2021-22, there were some differences by student and school characteristics in the percentages of students ages 12-18 who reported fear and avoidance. Specifically, the percentage of students who reported being afraid of attack or harm at school was

- higher for female students than for male students (5 vs. 3 percent);
- higher for Black students than for Asian students (5 vs. 2 percent);
- higher for 7th-graders (6 percent) than for 9th-, 10th-, and 12th-graders (3, 2, and 3 percent, respectively);
- higher for 8th-graders (4 percent) than for 10th-graders; and
- higher for those enrolled in schools in cities (5 percent) than for those enrolled in schools in rural areas and suburban areas (3 percent each). (*Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, tables [230.70](#) and [230.80](#))

### Teachers’ Reports of Student Behavior and Rule Enforcement

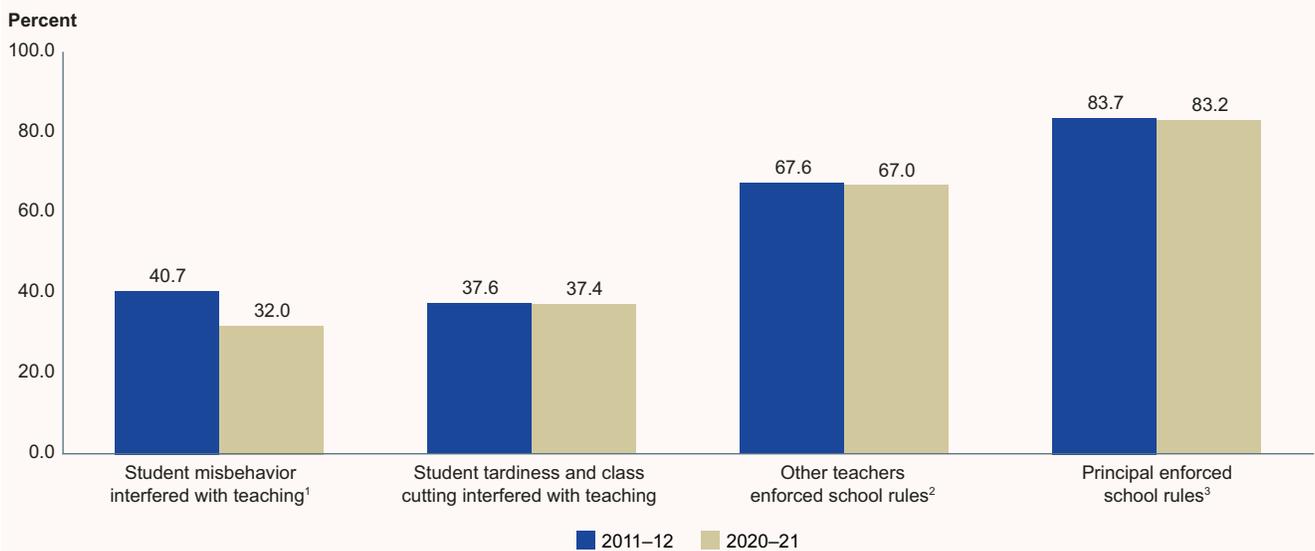
Finally, teachers also reported on school order and conditions in the 2020-21 NTPS. In 2020-21,<sup>44</sup> of all public school teachers,<sup>45</sup>

- 32 percent agreed that student misbehavior interfered with their teaching;
- 37 percent agreed that student tardiness and class cutting interfered with their teaching;
- 67 percent agreed that other teachers at their school enforced the school rules for student behavior; and
- 83 percent agreed that the principal enforced the school rules for student behavior (figure 8).

A lower percentage of public school teachers in 2020-21 than in 2011-12 agreed that student misbehavior interfered with their teaching (32 vs. 41 percent), while the other percentages were not measurably different between the 2 years. (*Teachers’ Reports of Disruptive Student Behaviors and Staff Rule Enforcement*)

**FIGURE 8.**

**Percentage of public school teachers who agreed that student misbehavior and student tardiness and class cutting interfered with their teaching and percentage who agreed that other teachers and the principal enforced school rules: School years 2011–12 and 2020–21**



<sup>1</sup> The questionnaire provided the following examples of student misbehavior: noise, horseplay, or fighting in the halls, cafeteria, or student lounge.

<sup>2</sup> Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement “rules for student behavior are consistently enforced by teachers in this school, even for students who are not in their classes.”

<sup>3</sup> Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement “my principal enforces school rules for student conduct and backs me up when I need it.”

NOTE: Teachers who taught only prekindergarten students are excluded. Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Percentages represent both teachers who “strongly” agreed and those who “somewhat” agreed that student misbehavior and student tardiness and class cutting interfered with their teaching, as well as teachers who “strongly” agreed and those who “somewhat” agreed that school rules were enforced by other teachers and the principal.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2011–12; and National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2020–21. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, tables 230.90 and 230.92.

<sup>44</sup> The 2020 calendar year was the first year of the coronavirus pandemic, and many schools shifted instruction from in-person classes to online-only or hybrid education. Thus, in-person interactions between students and teachers may have been limited.

<sup>45</sup> Percentages represent both teachers who “strongly” agreed and those who “somewhat” agreed with the statement.

# Fights and Weapons

**The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported having been in a physical fight on school property in the previous 12 months was lower in 2021 than in 2011 (6 vs. 12 percent).**

**A lower percentage of students reported carrying a weapon (such as a gun, knife, or club) on school property in 2021 than in 2011. However, public schools reported higher incident rates of firearm possession in the 2021–22 school year than in any other school year over the previous decade.**

- The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon on school property at least 1 day during the previous 30 days decreased from 5 percent in 2011 to 3 percent in 2021.
- During the 2021–22 school year, 5,000 public school students from kindergarten to 12th grade were reported to have possessed firearms at school. This translates to an overall rate of 10 firearm possessions per 100,000 students, which was higher than in any other school year over the previous decade (ranging from 2 to 7 possessions per 100,000 students).

## Student Involvement in Physical Fights

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) asked students in grades 9–12 about their involvement in physical fights, anywhere<sup>46</sup> or on school property, during the previous 12 months. The percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported having been in a physical fight anywhere during the previous 12 months was lower in 2021 than in 2011 (18 vs. 33 percent), and the percentage who reported having been in a physical fight on school property in the previous 12 months was also lower in 2021 than in 2011 (6 vs. 12 percent).<sup>47</sup> The percentage of students who reported having been in a physical fight on school property during the previous 12 months in 2021 was

- higher for male students than for female students (8 vs. 3 percent; figure 9);
- higher for students who were Black (9 percent), of Two or more races (8 percent), Hispanic (5 percent), and White (5 percent) than for students who were Asian (2 percent);
- higher for Black students and students of Two or more races than for American Indian/Alaska Native students (3 percent); and
- higher for 9th-graders (8 percent) than for 11th-graders and 12th-graders (5 and 4 percent, respectively).

There were no measurable differences by sexual identity<sup>48</sup> in the percentages of students who reported having been involved in a physical fight on school property in 2021. (*Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table [231.10](#))

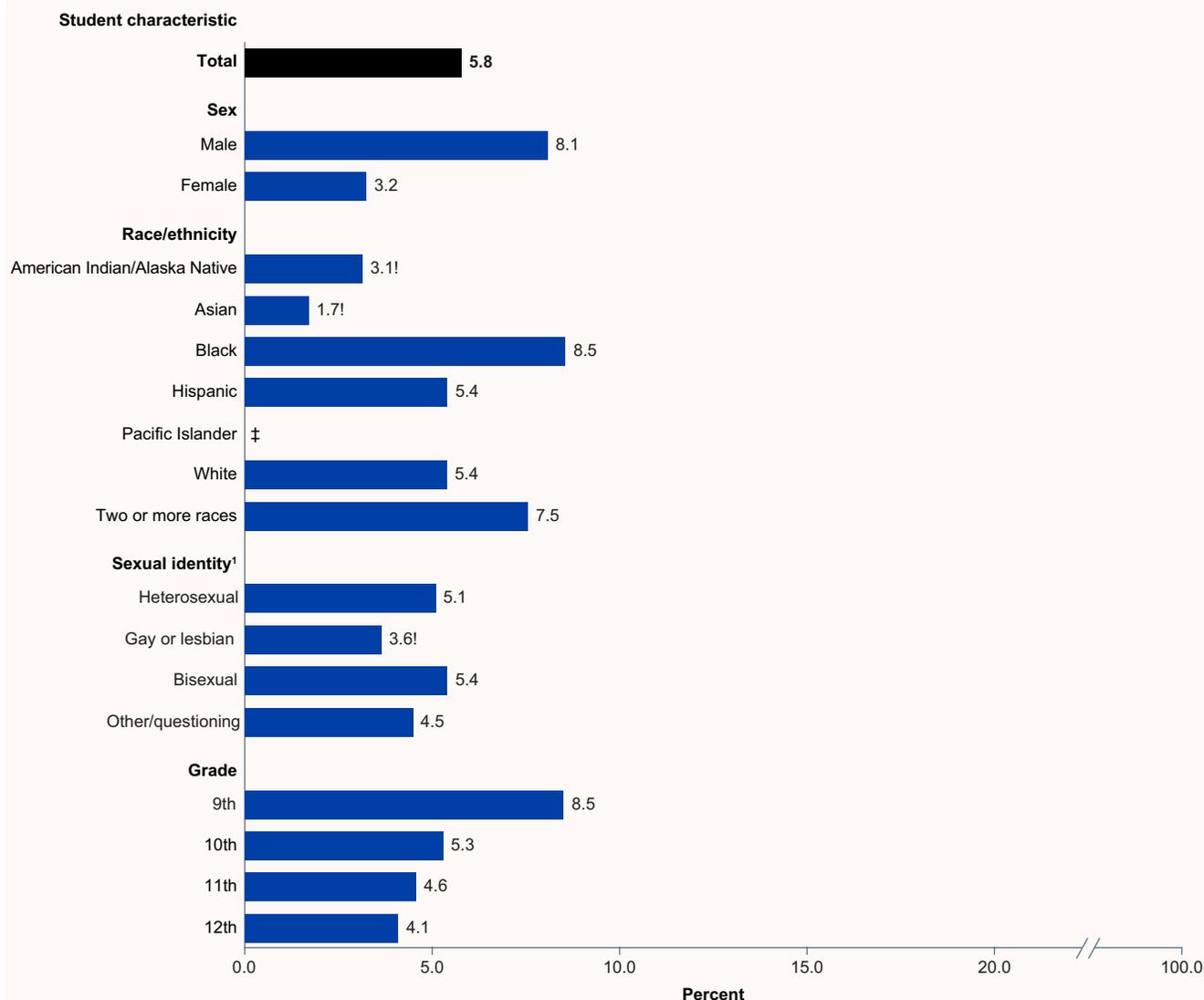
<sup>46</sup> “Anywhere” includes occurrences on school property. The term “anywhere” is not used in the YRBSS (students were simply asked how many times in the past 12 months they had been in a physical fight), and the survey did not define “on school property” for respondents.

<sup>47</sup> The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a component of YRBSS. The national YRBS is conducted biennially, typically during the spring (January–June) of odd-numbered years. However, the 2021 national YRBS administration was postponed until fall (September–December) 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic and the shift to virtual and hybrid school instructional models and ongoing school closures during spring 2021. For more details, see [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/su/su7201a1.htm?s\\_cid=su7201a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/su/su7201a1.htm?s_cid=su7201a1_w).

<sup>48</sup> In 2021, students were asked which of the following best described them: “heterosexual (straight),” “gay or lesbian,” “bisexual,” “I am not sure about my sexual identity (questioning),” “I describe my sexual identity in some other way,” or “I do not know what this question is asking.” Students who selected “I do not know what this question is asking” are considered to be missing the sexual identity data and thus excluded from the analyses.

FIGURE 9.

### Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported having been in a physical fight at least one time on school property during the previous 12 months, by selected student characteristics: 2021



! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.

‡ Reporting standards not met. Either there are too few cases for a reliable estimate or the coefficient of variation (CV) is 50 percent or greater.

<sup>1</sup> In 2021, students were asked which of the following best described them: "heterosexual (straight)," "gay or lesbian," "bisexual," "I am not sure about my sexual identity (questioning)," "I describe my sexual identity in some other way," or "I do not know what this question is asking." Students who selected "I do not know what this question is asking" are considered to be missing the sexual identity variable and thus excluded from the analyses.

NOTE: "On school property" was not defined for respondents. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 231.10.

### Students Carrying Weapons and Threats and Injuries With Weapons

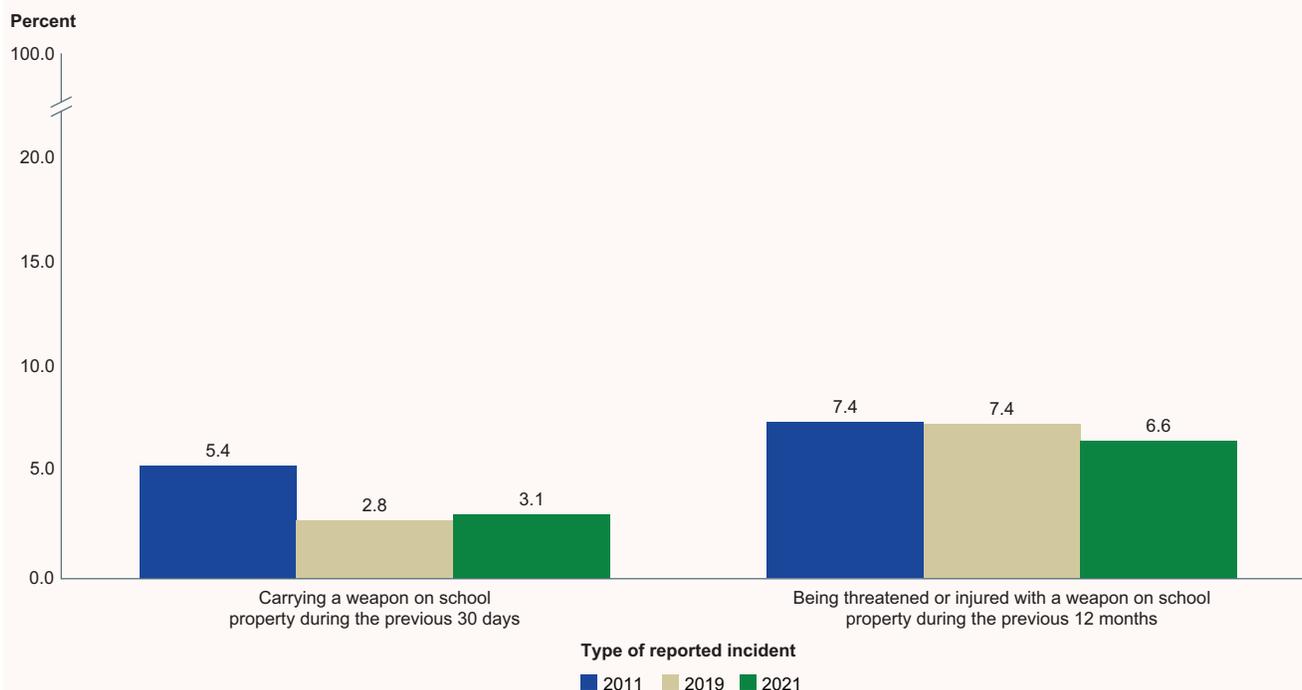
On the topic of weapons, data are available in the YRBSS for the percentages of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon<sup>49</sup> on school property<sup>50</sup> at least 1 day during the previous 30 days and for the percentage of students who reported having been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property at least 1 time during the previous 12 months. These data show that the percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon on school property during the previous 30 days decreased from 5 percent in 2011 to 3 percent in 2021 (figure 10). However, the percentage of students who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the previous 12 months in 2021 (7 percent) was not measurably different from the percentage in 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Examples of weapons provided for respondents include guns, knives, or clubs.

<sup>50</sup> In the question asking students about carrying a weapon at school, "on school property" was not defined for respondents.

FIGURE 10.

**Percentage of students in grades 9–12 who reported carrying a weapon at least 1 day on school property during the previous 30 days, and percentage who reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property at least one time during the previous 12 months: 2011, 2019, and 2021**



NOTE: Examples of weapons provided for respondents include guns, knives, or clubs. "On school property" was not defined for respondents. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), 2011, 2019, and 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, tables 228.40 and 231.40.

In addition to the YRBSS collecting student reports about carrying weapons, *EDFacts* collects state reports of school and district counts of public school students known to have brought firearms to or possessed firearms at school. During the 2021-22 school year, 5,000 public school students from kindergarten to 12th grade were reported to have possessed firearms at schools in the United States. This translates to an overall rate of 10 firearm possessions per 100,000 students, which was higher than in any other school year over the previous decade (ranging from 2 to 7 possessions per 100,000 students). Across the United States in 2021-22,

- 30 states had rates below 10 firearm possessions per 100,000 students;
- 15 states had rates between 10 and 20 firearm possessions per 100,000 students; and
- 5 states—Louisiana, South Carolina, New Mexico, Illinois, and Alabama—and the District of Columbia had rates above 20 firearm possessions per 100,000 students.

The latest data from each of these sources on weapons at schools generally correspond to the 2021-22 school year. Overall, these data show a lower percentage of students reporting carrying weapons at school in 2021 compared with 2011. However, over the same period, the percentage of students reporting being threatened or injured with a weapon at school did not measurably differ, and public schools reported higher incident rates of firearm possession in the 2021-22 school year than in any other school year over the previous decade. While contrasting, these results are not necessarily contradictory. Readers should take note of the differing data sources, which measure different phenomena (e.g., self-report of carrying a weapon vs. school report of firearm possession) for different populations (students in particular grades vs. school-level incidents) over different reference periods (e.g., previous 30 days vs. entire school year). In combination, these different sources offer a more complex understanding of the issue of weapons at school. (*Students Carrying Weapons and Students' Access to Firearms*; *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 228.40)

# Safety, Security, and Mental Health Practices

## **Lower percentages of public schools in 2021–22 than in 2019–20 reported**

- having one or more security staff present at school at least once a week (61 vs. 65 percent); and
- having sworn law enforcement officers who routinely carried a firearm (45 vs. 51 percent).

## **Lower percentages of public schools in 2021–22 than in 2019–20 provided mental health services to students; these services included**

- diagnostic services (49 vs. 55 percent); and
- treatment services (38 vs. 42 percent).

**However, 90 percent of public schools reported providing increased social and emotional supports for students in 2021–22, and 78 percent reported doing so for staff.**

**The percentage of public schools reporting a written plan for procedures to be performed in the event of pandemic disease was higher in 2021–22 (92 percent) than in 2019–20 (52 percent), the first school year impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.**

## **Safety Measures and Crisis Planning**

To maintain order and safety, schools across the United States have implemented preventive and responsive measures. Data on school practices have been collected through the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) by asking public school principals about their school's use of safety and security measures<sup>51</sup> and whether their school had written procedures for responding to certain scenarios.

In 2021-22, SSOCS asked public schools about 20 safety and security measures. Of these, 10 were reported as being used by more than half of schools. These commonly used measures were generally related either to controlling access to the school during school hours or using communication systems and technology. The most commonly reported safety and security measures (reported by more than 90 percent of schools) were

- controlling access to school buildings during school hours (97 percent);
- requiring visitors to sign or check in and wear badges (97 percent); and
- using security cameras to monitor the school (93 percent).

The 10 safety measures reported by less than half of schools tended to focus on student conduct (for more information, see *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table [233.65](#)).

Of the 20 safety and security measures asked about in 2021-22, all but two were also asked about in 2009-10. Of the measures asked about in both survey years, 10 were reported by a higher percentage of public schools in 2021-22 than in 2009-10.<sup>52</sup> The largest increases over this period were for

- using security cameras to monitor the school (from 61 to 93 percent); and
- providing a structured anonymous threat reporting system<sup>53</sup> (from 36 to 62 percent).

<sup>51</sup> In addition to data collected at the *school* level from SSOCS, data based on student reports of safety and security measures are available from the SCS. For information based on students' awareness of a particular measure rather than on documented practice, see *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table [233.80](#).

<sup>52</sup> In addition to data from the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), this section uses 2013-14 data from the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS) for selected trend analyses. The 2013-14 FRSS survey was designed to allow comparisons with SSOCS data. However, the mode of the 2013-14 FRSS survey differed from that of SSOCS, which evolved over time. Specifically, all respondents to the 2013-14 survey could choose either to complete the survey on paper (and mail it back) or to complete the survey online. All respondents to SSOCS had only the option of completing a paper survey prior to 2017-18. In 2017-18, SSOCS experimented with offering an online option to some respondents. In 2019-20 and 2021-22, SSOCS switched to using primarily an online survey instrument. The 2013-14 FRSS survey also relied on a smaller sample than SSOCS. The FRSS survey's smaller sample size and difference in survey administration may have impacted the 2013-14 results.

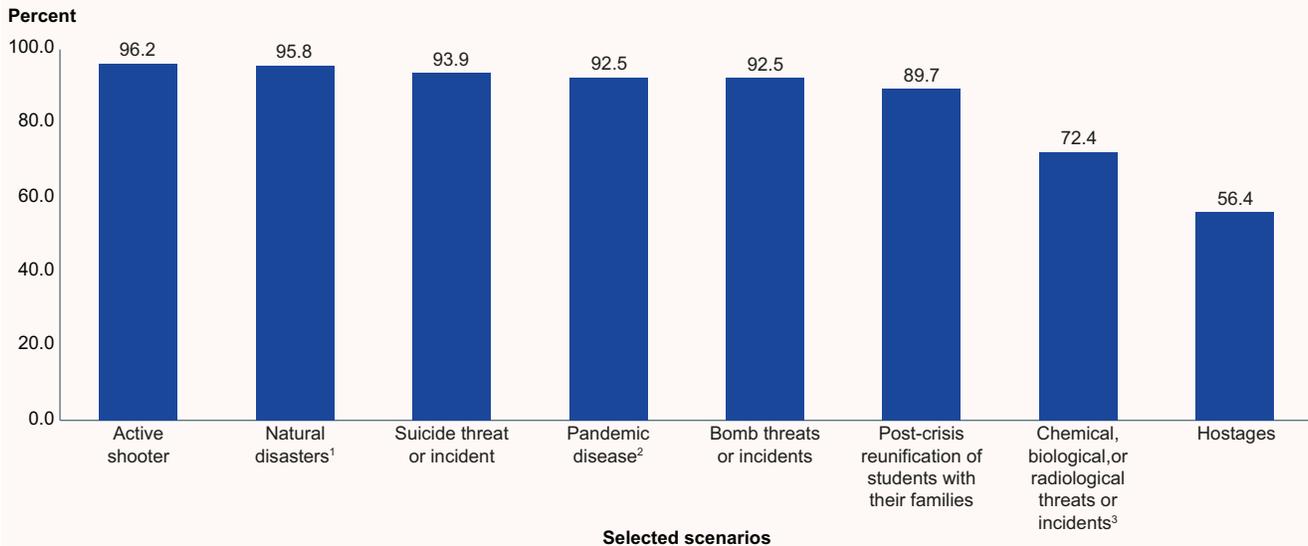
<sup>53</sup> For example, a system for reporting threats through online submission, telephone hotline, or written submission via drop box.

Of the 18 measures with data for both 2009-10 and 2021-22, six measures were reported by a lower percentage of public schools in 2021-22 than in 2009-10. The largest reductions over this period were for

- enforcing a strict dress code (decreased from 57 to 37 percent); and
- prohibiting nonacademic use of cell phones or smartphones<sup>54</sup> (from 91 to 76 percent), although there was no consistent trend throughout the period.

**FIGURE 11.**

**Percentage of public schools with a written plan for procedures to be performed in selected scenarios:  
School year 2021–22**



<sup>1</sup> For example, earthquakes or tornadoes.

<sup>2</sup> In 2021–22, respondents were asked if they had a “formal plan in place to prepare for and respond to multi-country or worldwide pandemic diseases (such as the coronavirus pandemic, COVID-19).”

<sup>3</sup> For example, release of mustard gas, anthrax, smallpox, or radioactive materials.

NOTE: Responses were provided by the principal or the person most knowledgeable about crime and safety issues at the school. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2021–22 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 233.65.

In 2021-22, more than 90 percent of public schools had a written plan for procedures to be performed in the event of each of the following scenarios (figure 11):

- active shooter (96 percent)
- natural disasters<sup>55</sup> (96 percent)
- suicide threat or incident (94 percent)
- pandemic disease (92 percent)
- bomb threats or incidents (92 percent)

From 2009-10 to 2021-22, the percentage of schools that had written plans increased for active shooter scenarios (from 84 to 96 percent) and suicide threats or incidents (from 75 to 94 percent). There was no consistent trend in the percentage of public schools that had a written plan for pandemic disease from 2009-10 to 2021-22, but the percentage was higher in 2021-22 (92 percent) than in 2019-20 (52 percent), the first school year impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.<sup>56, 57</sup> (*Safety and Security Practices at Public Schools*)

<sup>54</sup> Prior to 2017-18, the questionnaire asked about prohibiting the “use of cell phones and text messaging devices during school hours.” It did not refer to “nonacademic” use or “smartphones.”

<sup>55</sup> For example, earthquakes or tornadoes.

<sup>56</sup> Prior to 2017-18, respondents were asked if they had a written plan that describes procedures to be performed in the event of a “pandemic flu.” In 2017-18 and 2019-20, respondents were asked if they had a written plan that describes procedures to be performed in the event of a “pandemic disease.” In 2021-22, respondents were asked if they had a “formal plan in place to prepare for and respond to multi-country or worldwide pandemic diseases (such as the coronavirus pandemic, COVID-19).”

<sup>57</sup> The coronavirus pandemic affected the 2019-20 data collection activities. The change to virtual schooling and the adjusted school year may have impacted the data collected by SSOCS. Readers should use caution when comparing 2019-20 estimates with those from other years. For more information, see *Crime, Violence, Discipline, and Safety in U.S. Public Schools in 2019-20: Findings From the School Survey on Crime and Safety* (NCES 2022-029).

### ***Security Staff and Officers Carrying Firearms***

SSOCS also asks schools about the presence of security staff.<sup>58</sup> Between 2009-10 and 2019-20, the percentage of public schools that reported having one or more security staff present at school at least once a week increased from 43 to 65 percent, although the percentage in 2021-22 (61 percent) was lower than the percentage in 2019-20.

In 2021-22, about 45 percent of public schools reported having sworn law enforcement officers who routinely carried a firearm. This percentage was lower than the percentage in 2019-20 (51 percent). The percentage of schools that reported having sworn law enforcement officers who routinely carried a firearm differed by school characteristics. For example, in 2021-22, this percentage was

- higher for secondary/high schools (63 percent) and middle schools (62 percent) than for elementary schools (34 percent) and combined/other schools (24 percent);
- higher for schools in rural areas (55 percent) and towns (54 percent) than for schools in suburban areas (45 percent) and cities (30 percent); and
- lower for schools where 76 percent or more of their students were students of color (29 percent) than for schools with lower percentages of students of color (ranging from 46 to 55 percent). (*Safety and Security Practices at Public Schools*)

### ***Mental Health Services and Support***

In addition to practices and measures addressing specific crime and safety concerns, schools may provide mental health services to evaluate and treat students for mental health disorders. Based on data from the 2021-22 SSOCS survey, 49 percent of public schools reported providing diagnostic mental health assessment<sup>59</sup> services to evaluate students for mental health disorders.<sup>60</sup> Fewer public schools (38 percent) offered mental health treatment<sup>61</sup> services to students for mental health disorders. The percentage of public schools providing diagnostic services in 2021-22 was lower than the percentage in 2019-20 (49 vs. 55 percent), but not measurably different from the percentage in 2017-18. Similarly, the percentage of public schools providing treatment services in 2021-22 was lower than the percentage in 2019-20 (38 vs. 42 percent), but not measurably different from the percentage in 2017-18.

<sup>58</sup> Includes security officers, security personnel, School Resource Officers (SROs), and sworn law enforcement officers who are not SROs. “Security officers” and “security personnel” do not include law enforcement. SROs include all career law enforcement officers with arrest authority who have specialized training and are assigned to work in collaboration with school organizations.

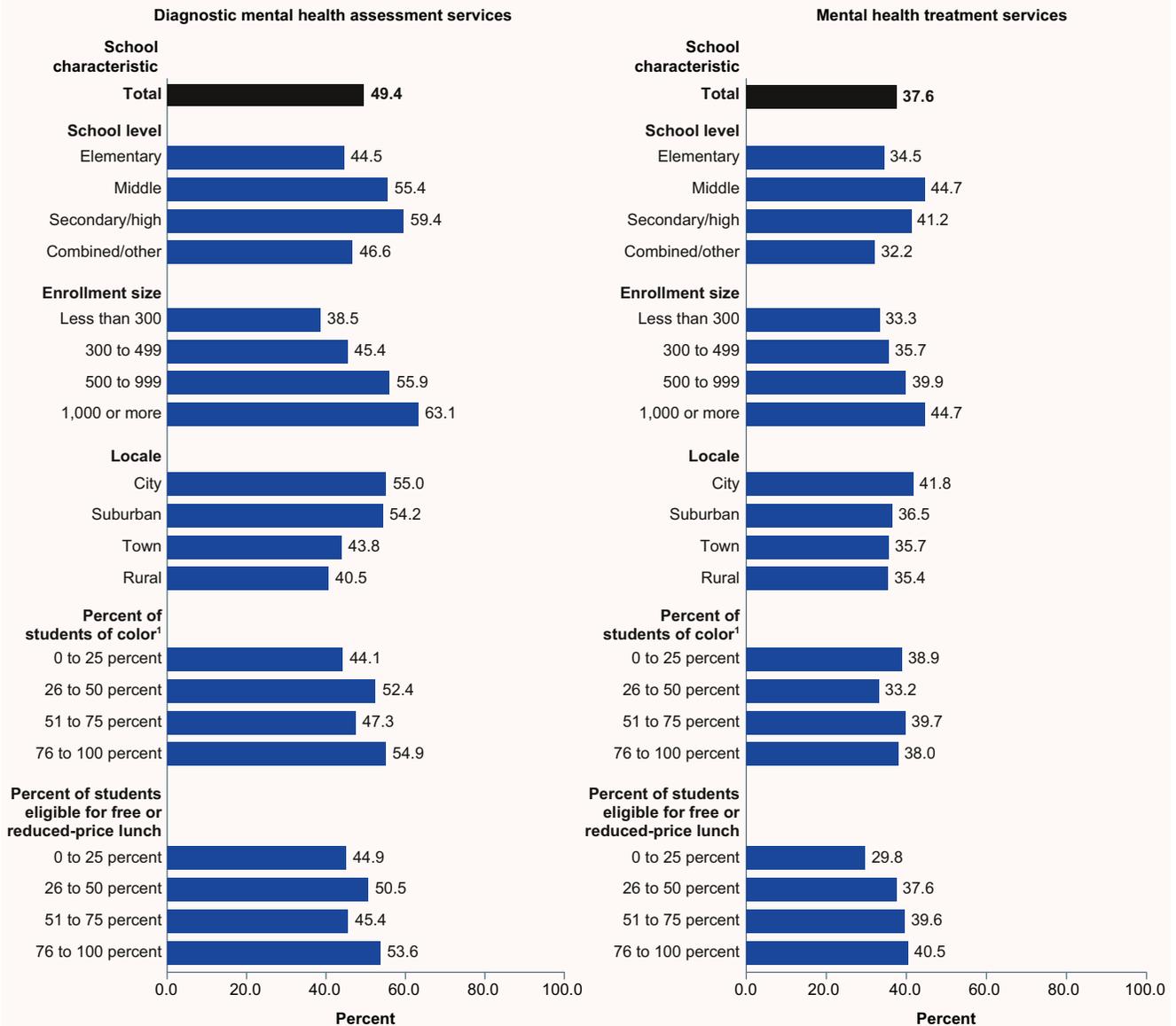
<sup>59</sup> A diagnostic mental health assessment is an evaluation conducted by a mental health professional that identifies whether an individual has one or more mental health diagnoses.

<sup>60</sup> Mental health disorders collectively refer to all diagnosable mental disorders or health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.

<sup>61</sup> Treatment is a clinical intervention—which may include psychotherapy, medication, and/or counseling—addressed at lessening or eliminating the symptoms of a mental health disorder.

**FIGURE 12.**

**Percentage of public schools providing diagnostic mental health assessments and treatment to students, by selected school characteristics: School year 2021–22**



<sup>1</sup> "Students of color" include students who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races.  
 NOTE: A diagnostic mental health assessment is an evaluation conducted by a mental health professional that identifies whether an individual has one or more mental health diagnoses. This is in contrast to an educational assessment, which does not focus on clarifying a student's mental health diagnosis. Treatment is a clinical intervention—which may include psychotherapy, medication, and/or counseling—addressed at lessening or eliminating the symptoms of a mental health disorder. Schools were instructed to include only services provided by a licensed mental health professional employed or contracted by the school. Mental health professionals were defined for respondents as including providers of mental health services within several different professions, each of which has its own training and areas of expertise. The types of licensed professionals who may provide mental health services may include psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioners, psychiatric/mental health nurses, clinical social workers, and professional counselors. Mental health disorders collectively refer to all diagnosable mental disorders or health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning. Responses were provided by the principal or the person most knowledgeable about school crime and policies to provide a safe environment. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2021–22 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2022. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 233.69a.

The percentage of public schools providing diagnostic services and the percentage of public schools providing treatment services varied by some school characteristics in 2021-22 (figure 12):

- Both types of mental health services were more prevalent among middle schools and secondary/high schools than among elementary schools.
- The percentages of public schools providing these services were generally higher for schools with an enrollment size of 1,000 or more students than for smaller schools.
- Diagnostic services were more prevalent in schools in cities (55 percent) and suburban areas (54 percent) than in towns (44 percent) and rural areas (41 percent). However, the percentage of schools reporting treatment services did not vary measurably by locale.
- Diagnostic services were more prevalent among schools in which 76 percent or more of their enrollment was students of color<sup>62</sup> (55 percent) and in which 26 to 50 percent of their enrollment was students of color (52 percent) than among schools in which 25 percent or less of their enrollment was students of color (44 percent). The percentage of schools providing treatment services did not vary measurably by percentage of students of color enrolled.
- Both types of mental health services were more prevalent among high-poverty schools than among low-poverty schools.<sup>63</sup>

The 2021-22 SSOCS collected data on limitations<sup>64</sup> in public schools' efforts to provide mental health services regardless of whether the school provided mental health services. In 2021-22, the two most commonly reported major limitations were inadequate access to licensed mental health professionals<sup>65</sup> and inadequate funding (39 percent each). The percentage of public schools that reported inadequate funding as a major limitation was 15 percentage points lower in 2021-22 than in 2019-20 (54 percent). In 2021-22, other major limiting factors were reported by 8 to 14 percent of schools.

To understand school practices in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the 2021-22 SSOCS asked whether public schools increased supports for social and emotional needs of students and staff at any time during the 2021-22 school year. Although the percentages of schools reporting that they provided diagnostic mental health assessments and treatment services were lower in 2021-22 than in 2019-20, some 90 percent of public schools reported that they increased social and emotional supports for students in 2021-22, and 78 percent reported doing so for staff. (*Prevalence of Mental Health Services Provided by Public Schools and Limitations in Schools' Efforts to Provide Mental Health Services*)

<sup>62</sup> "Students of color" include students who are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and of Two or more races.

<sup>63</sup> Low-poverty schools are defined as public schools where 25 percent or less of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL). Mid-low poverty schools are those where 26 to 50 percent of the students are eligible for FRPL. Mid-high poverty schools are those where 51 to 75 percent of the students are eligible for FRPL. High-poverty schools are those where 76 percent or more of the students are eligible for FRPL. FRPL can provide a substitute measure for the concentration of low-income students in a school. For more information on eligibility for FRPL and its relationship to poverty, see the NCES blog post "[Free or reduced price lunch: A proxy for poverty?](#)"

<sup>64</sup> These seven limiting factors were included in the survey: inadequate access to licensed mental health professionals; inadequate funding; potential legal issues for school or district; concerns about reactions from parents; lack of community support for providing mental health services to students; written or unwritten policies regarding the school's requirement to pay for the diagnostic mental health assessment or treatment of students; reluctance to label students with mental health disorders to avoid stigmatizing the child.

<sup>65</sup> Licensed mental health professionals may include psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioners, psychiatric/mental health nurses, clinical social workers, and professional counselors.

# Postsecondary Campus Safety and Security

**Crimes were generally less prevalent in 2021 than a decade earlier at the postsecondary level.**

- The overall rate of crimes reported on campuses of postsecondary institutions per 10,000 FTE students enrolled was 16 percent lower in 2021 (16.9) than in 2011 (20.0) but showed no consistent trend for this period.
- The number of reported on-campus hate crimes was 12 percent lower in 2021 (667 incidents) than in 2011 (761 incidents). In 2021, race, sexual orientation, and religion were the three most commonly reported categories of bias motivating these hate crimes.

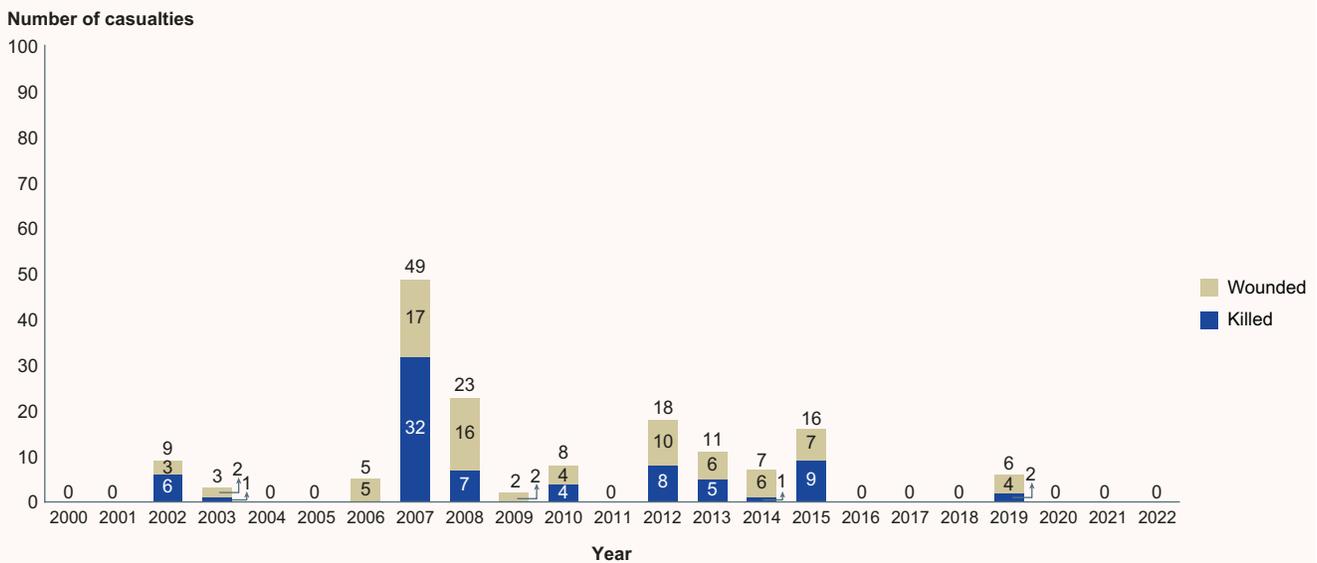
**However, the rate of forcible sex offenses increased between 2011 and 2021 (from 2.2 to 7.5 per 10,000 students).**

## Active Shooter Incidents

From 2000 through 2022, there were a total of 18 active shooter incidents documented by the FBI at postsecondary institutions, with the annual number ranging from 0 to 2. These incidents resulted in 157 casualties (75 killed and 82 wounded; figure 13).<sup>66</sup> Nineteen active shooters were responsible for these 18 incidents; 2 shooters were 12 to 18 years old, 6 were 19 to 24 years old, and 11 were 25 years old and above. Active shooter incidents represent a small subset of the possible gun violence or serious violent incidents that occur at schools. (*Violent Deaths at School and Away From School, and Active Shooter Incidents*)

**FIGURE 13.**

**Number of casualties in active shooter incidents at postsecondary institutions: 2000 through 2022**



NOTE: The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines an active shooter as “one or more individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area” (see *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2022*, available at the URL in the SOURCE note). Number of casualties excludes active shooters and may include casualties that occurred as part of the same incident but at different locations.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 and 2013*, *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2014 and 2015*, *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2016 and 2017*, *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2018*, *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2019*, *Active Shooter Incidents: 20-Year Review 2000–2019*, *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2020*, *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2021*, and *Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2022*, retrieved August 7, 2023, from <https://www.fbi.gov/about/partnerships/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-resources>. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 228.15.

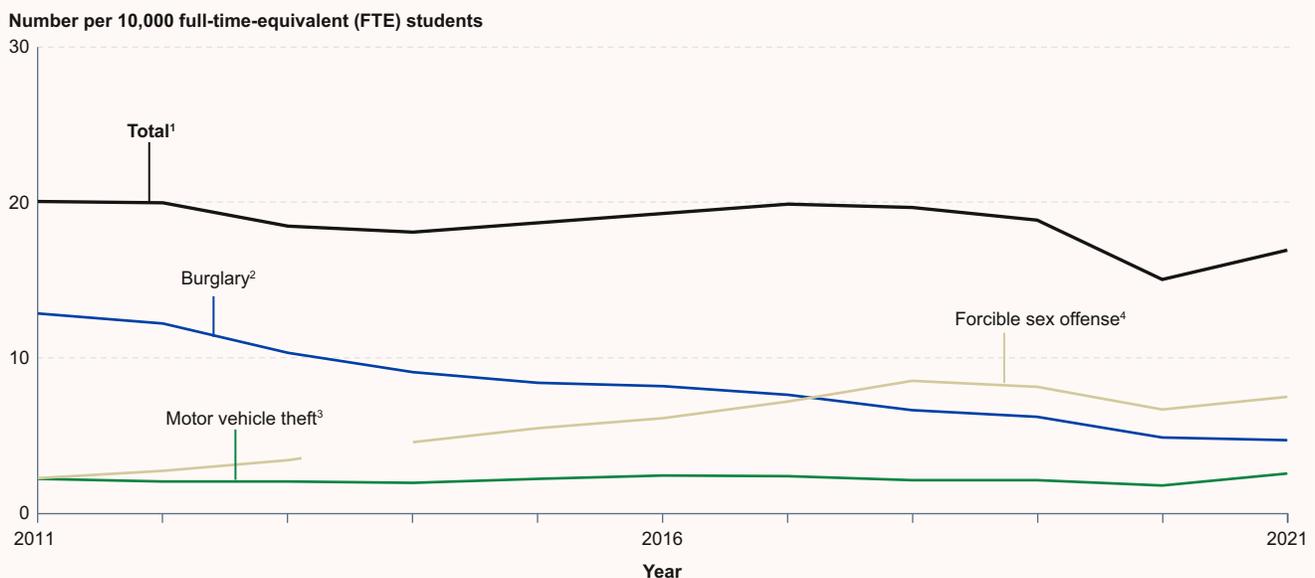
<sup>66</sup> Number of casualties excludes active shooters and may include casualties that occurred as part of the same incident but at different locations.

## Criminal Incidents

Since 1999, data on campus safety and security have been reported by postsecondary institutions through the Campus Safety and Security Survey in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, known as the Clery Act. At the postsecondary level, 23,426 criminal incidents against persons and property on campuses of postsecondary institutions were reported in 2021.<sup>67, 68, 69</sup> This translates to 16.9 on-campus crimes reported per 10,000 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students enrolled (figure 14). Among the various types of on-campus crimes reported in 2021, some 44 percent—or 7.5 incidents per 10,000 students—were forcible sex offenses.<sup>70</sup> Other commonly reported crimes included burglaries<sup>71</sup> (28 percent of reported on-campus crimes, or 4.7 incidents per 10,000 students) and motor vehicle thefts<sup>72</sup> (15 percent of reported on-campus crimes, or 2.5 incidents per 10,000 students).

**FIGURE 14.**

### Number of on-campus crimes reported per 10,000 full-time-equivalent (FTE) students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by selected type of crime: 2011 through 2021



<sup>1</sup> Includes other reported crimes not separately shown.  
<sup>2</sup> Unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft.  
<sup>3</sup> Theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

<sup>4</sup> Any sexual act directed against another person forcibly and/or against that person's will. Reporting guidelines for forcible sex offenses changed in 2014. In years prior to 2014, schools reported a total number of forcible sex offenses, with no breakouts for specific types of offenses. Beginning in 2014, schools were asked to report the numbers of two different types of forcible sex offenses: rape and fondling. These two types were added together to calculate the total number of reported forcible sex offenses.

NOTE: Data are for degree-granting institutions, which are institutions that grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some institutions that report Clery Act data—specifically, non-degree-granting institutions and institutions outside of the 50 states and the District of Columbia—are excluded from this figure. Includes on-campus incidents involving students, staff, and on-campus guests. Excludes off-campus incidents even if they involve students or staff. Duplicate reporting of a small number of incidents may occur among institutions sharing all or part of a building, institutions in close proximity to each other that rely on the same crime statistics from local law enforcement agencies, or institutions operating more than one campus in close proximity to each other. Caution should be used when comparing on-campus data for 2020 with those of other years due to the switch to online learning in many postsecondary institutions in fall 2020 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Some data have been revised from previously published figures. Figures are plotted based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, Campus Safety and Security Reporting System, 2011 through 2021; and National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall Enrollment component, Spring 2012 through Spring 2021 (final data) and Spring 2022 (provisional data). See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 329.20.

<sup>67</sup> The Clery Act of 1990 specifies several types of crimes that all Title IV institutions are required to report through the Campus Safety and Security Survey, including the following seven against persons and property on their campuses: murder, sex offenses (forcible and nonforcible), robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson. In addition to the seven crimes against persons and property reported in this report's main findings, degree-granting institutions are also required to report data on negligent manslaughter. Manslaughter is not reported in this report because of its relatively rare occurrence, with an average of 2 manslaughter incidents reported annually across all institutions since 2010. A ninth category of crime is arrests or persons referred for campus disciplinary action for liquor law violations, drug-related violations, and weapons possession. The Clery Act requires additional reporting for hate crimes.

<sup>68</sup> Data are for degree-granting institutions, which are institutions that grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Duplicate reporting of a small number of incidents may occur among institutions sharing all or part of a building, institutions in close proximity to each other that rely on the same crime statistics from local law enforcement agencies, or institutions operating more than one campus in close proximity to each other.

<sup>69</sup> As of October 9, 2020, the Department of Education has rescinded and archived the *Handbook for Campus Safety and Security Reporting*, which in previous years was provided to assist institutions, in a step-by-step manner, in understanding and meeting the various Clery Act requirements. The Department has instead provided a *Clery-related Appendix to the Federal Student Aid Handbook*. For more information about the rescission and replacement of the previous Handbook, see: <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2020-10-09/rescission-and-replacement-2016-handbook-campus-safety-and-security-reporting-updated-jan-19-2021>. Due to this change, readers should exercise caution when comparing data for 2020 and later to those from previous years.

<sup>70</sup> Refers to any sexual act directed against another person forcibly and/or against that person's will.

<sup>71</sup> Refers to the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft.

<sup>72</sup> Refers to theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

The overall number of on-campus crimes reported per 10,000 FTE students was lower in 2021 than in 2011 (16.9 vs. 20.0) but showed no consistent trend for this period (figure 14). Specifically, the overall rate of reported on-campus crimes

- was 6 percent lower in 2019 than in 2011 (18.8 vs. 20.0 per 10,000 FTE students);
- decreased by 20 percent between 2019 and 2020, during the first year of the coronavirus pandemic<sup>73</sup> (from 18.8 to 15.0 per 10,000 FTE students); and
- increased by 12 percent between 2020 and 2021.

Despite the overall rate of reported crime being lower in 2021 than in 2011, the rate for forcible sex offenses<sup>74</sup> increased between 2011 and 2021 (from 2.2 to 7.5 per 10,000 students), surpassing burglary as the most reported crime and peaking in 2018 (8.5 per 10,000 students). (*Criminal Incidents at Postsecondary Institutions*)

### Hate Crime Incidents

A 2008 amendment to the Clery Act requires postsecondary institutions to report hate crime incidents. A hate crime is a criminal offense that is motivated, in whole or in part, by the perpetrator's bias against the victim(s) based on race, ethnicity,<sup>75</sup> religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability.<sup>76</sup> In 2021, of the 23,426 reported criminal incidents that occurred on the campuses of postsecondary institutions, 667 incidents (3 percent of all reported criminal incidents) were classified as hate crimes.<sup>77</sup> This translates to an average of 0.5 hate crime incidents occurring per 10,000 FTE students enrolled. The three most common types of hate crimes reported by institutions were intimidation (300 incidents); destruction, damage, and vandalism (243 incidents); and simple assault (61 incidents; figure 15).

Over the decade between 2011 and 2021, the number of hate crimes peaked at 1,057 in 2016 and then declined through 2020. In 2021, the number of reported on-campus hate crimes (667 incidents) was 17 percent higher than in 2020 (571 incidents), when many postsecondary institutions shifted instruction from in-person classes to online-only or hybrid education during the coronavirus pandemic,<sup>78</sup> but 12 percent lower than in 2011 (761 incidents).

<sup>73</sup> In calendar year 2020, many postsecondary institutions shifted instruction from in-person classes to online-only or hybrid education during the coronavirus pandemic, which meant fewer students on college campuses. According to the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20), 84 percent of undergraduate students reported having some or all classes moved to online-only instruction in spring 2020 due to the pandemic. For more information, see the *2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20): First Look at the Impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic on Undergraduate Student Enrollment, Housing, and Finances (Preliminary Data)* (NCES 2021-456).

<sup>74</sup> Reporting guidelines for forcible sex offenses changed in 2014. In years prior to 2014, schools reported a total number of forcible sex offenses, with no breakouts for specific types of offenses. Beginning in 2014, schools were asked to report the numbers of two different types of forcible sex offenses: rape and fondling. These two types were added together to calculate the total number of reported forcible sex offenses.

<sup>75</sup> Includes national origin bias. For more information, see <https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/resource/hate-crime-data-collection-guidelines-and-training-manual-version-30>.

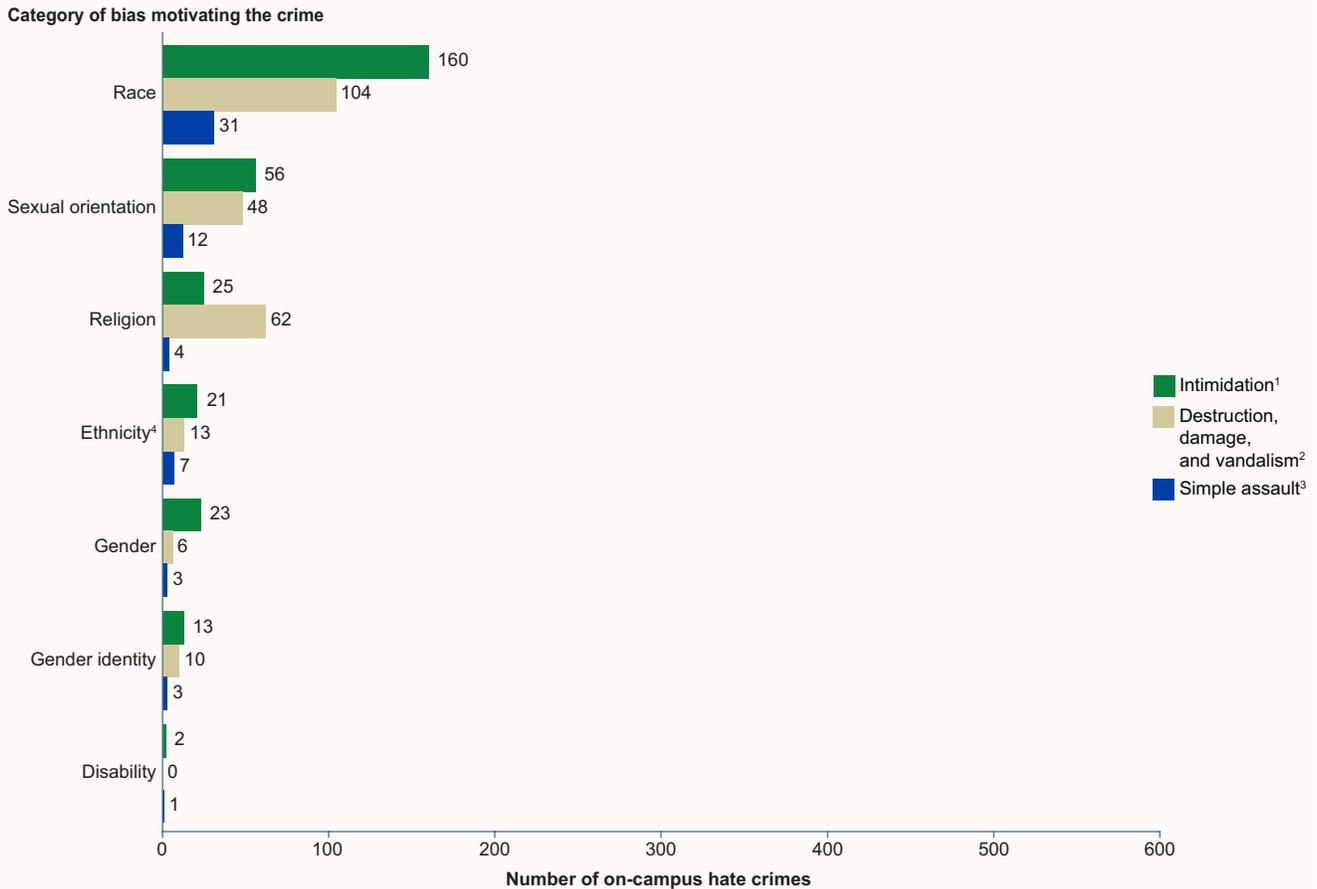
<sup>76</sup> In addition to reporting data on hate-related incidents for the types of crimes already specified in the Clery Act, a 2008 amendment to the Clery Act requires campuses to report hate-related incidents for four additional types of crimes: simple assault; larceny; intimidation; and destruction, damage, and vandalism.

<sup>77</sup> Data are for degree-granting institutions, which are institutions that grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Duplicate reporting of a small number of incidents may occur among institutions sharing all or part of a building, institutions in close proximity to each other that rely on the same crime statistics from local law enforcement agencies, or institutions operating more than one campus in close proximity to each other. Includes on-campus incidents involving students, staff, and on-campus guests. Excludes off-campus crimes and arrests even if they involve college students or staff.

<sup>78</sup> According to data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), in fall 2020, some 75 percent of undergraduate students enrolled in at least one distance education course, and 44 percent took distance education courses exclusively. In fall 2021, some 61 percent of undergraduate students enrolled in at least one distance education course, and 28 percent took distance education courses exclusively. For more information, see [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2023/cha\\_508.pdf](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2023/cha_508.pdf).

**FIGURE 15.**

**Number of on-campus hate crimes at degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by category of bias motivating the crime and selected types of crime: 2021**



<sup>1</sup> Placing another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words and/or other conduct but without displaying a weapon or subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

<sup>2</sup> Willfully or maliciously destroying, damaging, defacing, or otherwise injuring real or personal property without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it.

<sup>3</sup> Physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness.

<sup>4</sup> Includes national origin bias.

NOTE: Data are for degree-granting institutions, which are institutions that grant associate's or higher degrees and participate in Title IV federal financial aid programs. Some institutions that report Clery Act data (data on campus security and crime)—specifically, non-degree-granting institutions and institutions outside of the 50 states and the District of Columbia—are excluded. A hate crime is a criminal offense that is motivated, in whole or in part, by the perpetrator's bias against a group of people based on their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. Includes on-campus incidents involving students, staff, and guests. Excludes off-campus crimes and arrests even if they involve students or staff. Duplicate reporting of a small number of incidents may occur among institutions sharing all or part of a building, institutions in close proximity to each other that rely on the same crime statistics from local law enforcement agencies, or institutions operating more than one campus in close proximity to each other.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, Campus Safety and Security Reporting System, 2021. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 329.30.

In 2021, race, sexual orientation, and religion were the three most commonly reported categories of bias motivating on-campus hate crimes at postsecondary institutions, accounting for 81 percent of all reported hate crimes.<sup>79, 80</sup> Of all reported hate crimes at postsecondary institutions,

- 47 percent were motivated by race (313 incidents);
- 19 percent were motivated by sexual orientation (130 incidents);
- 15 percent were motivated by religion (99 incidents);
- 6 percent were motivated by ethnicity (43 incidents);
- 6 percent were motivated by gender<sup>81</sup> (42 incidents);
- 5 percent were motivated by gender identity<sup>82</sup> (31 incidents); and
- less than one half of 1 percent were motivated by disability (3 incidents).

In 2020, during the first year of the coronavirus pandemic, nearly two-thirds (66 percent) of on-campus hate crimes were motivated by either race or ethnicity. In 2021, this decreased to 53 percent. Meanwhile, the percentage motivated by religion increased from its lowest point over the past decade (9 percent in 2020) to 15 percent in 2021. (*Hate Crime Incidents at Postsecondary Institutions*)

<sup>79</sup> A single category of motivating bias was reported for each hate crime.

<sup>80</sup> The reported total of 667 incidents also includes one arson and five robbery incidents, which were not shown separately in the source table *Digest of Education Statistics 2023*, table 329.30 (less than 1 percent of all reported hate crimes).

<sup>81</sup> Defined for the respondents as a “preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a person or group of persons based on their actual or perceived gender, e.g., male or female.”

<sup>82</sup> Defined for the respondents as a “preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a person or group of persons based on their actual or perceived gender identity, e.g., bias against transgender or gender nonconforming individuals. Gender nonconforming describes a person who does not conform to the gender-based expectations of society, e.g., a woman dressed in traditionally male clothing or a man wearing makeup. A gender nonconforming person may or may not be a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender person but may be perceived as such.”

