



Violent Crime in Ohio's Primary and Secondary Schools

Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services

1970 W. Broad Street, 4th Floor

Columbus, Ohio 43223

Toll-Free: (800) 448-4842

Telephone: (614) 466-7782

Fax: (614) 466-0308

www.ocjs.ohio.gov



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A survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics¹ during the 2005-06 school year indicated that the overall rate of violent incidents for all public schools was 31 incidents per 1,000 students, with the rate significantly higher in middle schools (51.6 per 1,000) than in primary or high schools (25.2 and 25.7 per 1,000 respectively). Additionally, while 52 percent of all schools reported at least one student threat of physical attack *without* a weapon, nine percent of schools reported such a threat *with* a weapon.

The presence of violent crime in a school setting can have a dramatic impact on the ability of our children to achieve in school. The 2006 *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*² report indicated that in 2005 approximately six percent of students ages 12-18 were afraid of harm at school. Six percent of students in the same age group also reported that they had avoided a school activity or one or more places in school in the previous six months because of fear of attack or harm.

In order for our schools to make policy decisions on how to effectively address school crime, they need to have a full understanding of problem. Complete and timely access to crime statistics can provide insight into the nature and extent of school crime.

One tool that can be used to examine school crime in Ohio is the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System (OIBRS). OIBRS is a voluntary crime reporting program in which Ohio law enforcement agencies can submit crime statistics directly to the state and federal government in an automated format. The use of OIBRS data allows for detailed information to be obtained on the nature of the offense, the victim, the suspect/arrestee, and the use of weapons. As of September 2007, 445 agencies representing 64 percent of the Ohio population were reporting OIBRS data.

This report uses OIBRS data to investigate violent school crime. Included are the offenses of murder, forcible rape/sodomy, sexual assault with an object, forcible fondling, aggravated assaults, simple assaults, and intimidation. The report covers a two-year period beginning January 1, 2005 and ending December 31, 2006.

This report is intended to serve as a snapshot of violent crimes occurring in Ohio's primary and secondary schools. It includes details regarding the offenses reported, weapon use, and victim and arrestee characteristics. However, some limitations of the OIBRS data must be noted. Because crime reporting for Ohio is incomplete the data may reflect more the composition of the OIBRS-reporting jurisdictions than the composition of the state as a whole. Additionally, because the number of agencies submitting OIBRS data increases yearly, no annual comparisons can be made with the data.

¹ National Center for Education Statistics (2007). *Crime, Violence, Discipline, and Safety in U.S. Public Schools, Findings from the School Survey on Crime and Safety: 2005-06*.

² National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics (2007). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2006*.

School Violence by Offense

Of the violent crimes reported in Ohio's primary and secondary schools, 66 percent were simple assaults³. Intimidation made up nearly one-quarter of all reported violent offenses. Sex crimes, including forcible rape/sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling, made up slightly over five percent of all reported violent crimes. Of the sex crimes, forcible fondling was the most frequently reported. Less than two percent of violent offenses were robberies. There was one murder in all of the 9,499 violent offenses examined during the two-year period.

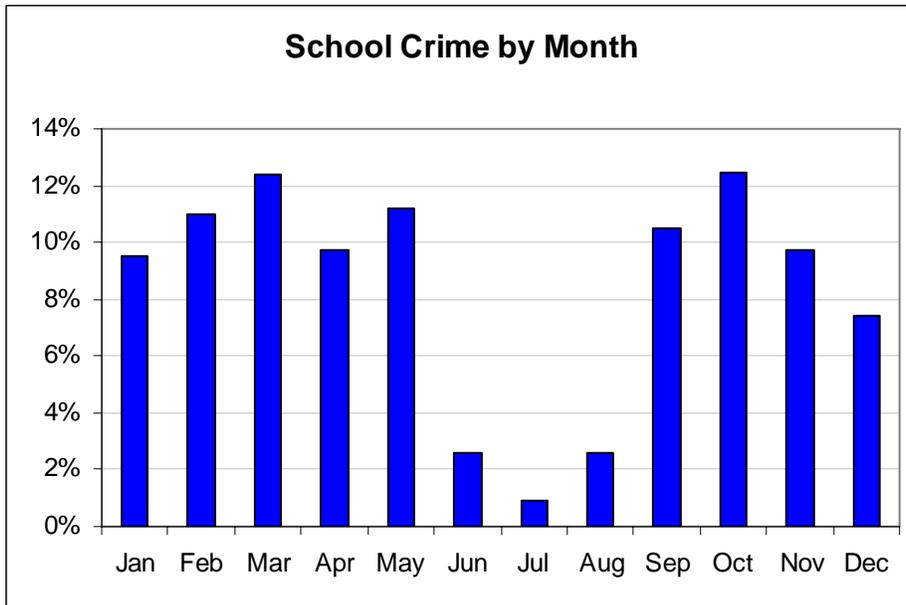
Violent Offense Reported	Percent
Murder	0%*
Forcible rape	0.7%
Forcible sodomy	0.1%
Sexual assault with an object	0%*
Forcible fondling	4%
Robbery	2%
Aggravated assault	2%
Simple assault	66%
Intimidation	25%

* May not add to 100% due to rounding less than one-tenth of one percent

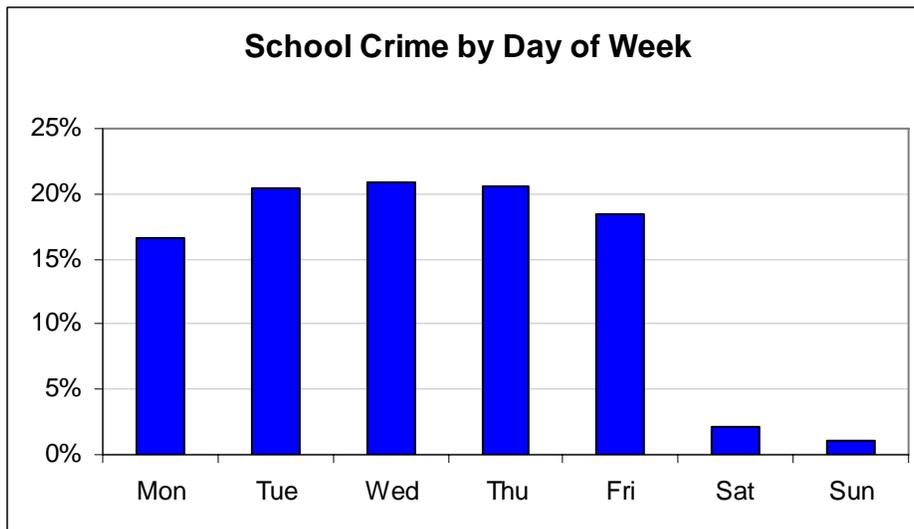
³ Weapon use and extent of injury sustained are typically the deciding factors in distinguishing aggravated assault from simple assault.

School Violence by Month and Day

Violent crimes in schools are predictably lower during the months in which school is not in session—June, July, and August, as well as December, which has fewer school days due to winter break. March and October are the months with the highest percentages of violent crime.



Slightly fewer violent crimes are reported at the beginning and the end of the school week.



Weapon Use in Violent School Crimes

Nearly half of all violent crime occurring in schools involved the use of weapons, *including* personal weapons such as hands, fists, feet, etc. Of those offenses in which a weapon was used, 91 percent involved the use of a personal weapon. Approximately four percent of offenses involved the use of a firearm, knife or other cutting instrument, or blunt object.

Type of Weapon Used	Percent
Firearm	1%
Knife or cutting instrument	2%
Blunt object	1%
Personal weapon (hands, feet, fists, etc.)	91%
Other	5%

Weapons such as guns, knives, and blunt objects were more likely to be used or brandished during the commission of some crimes than others.

When firearms were involved, they primarily were primarily used in the following three offense categories:

- ✓ Robbery (43%)
- ✓ Aggravated assault (30%)
- ✓ Intimidation (26%)

When knives or other cutting instruments were involved, were primarily used in the following two offense categories:

- ✓ Intimidation (54%)
- ✓ Aggravated assault (43%)

Of those instances in which a blunt object was involved as a weapon, 86 percent fell into the aggravated assault offense category.

Victim Characteristics

Victim age - Victims of school violence spanned all age groups. Of the nearly 10,000 victims for whom age information is known, 7 percent were under age 10 and almost four percent were over age 54. Most victims, 32 percent, were between the ages of 13 to 15.

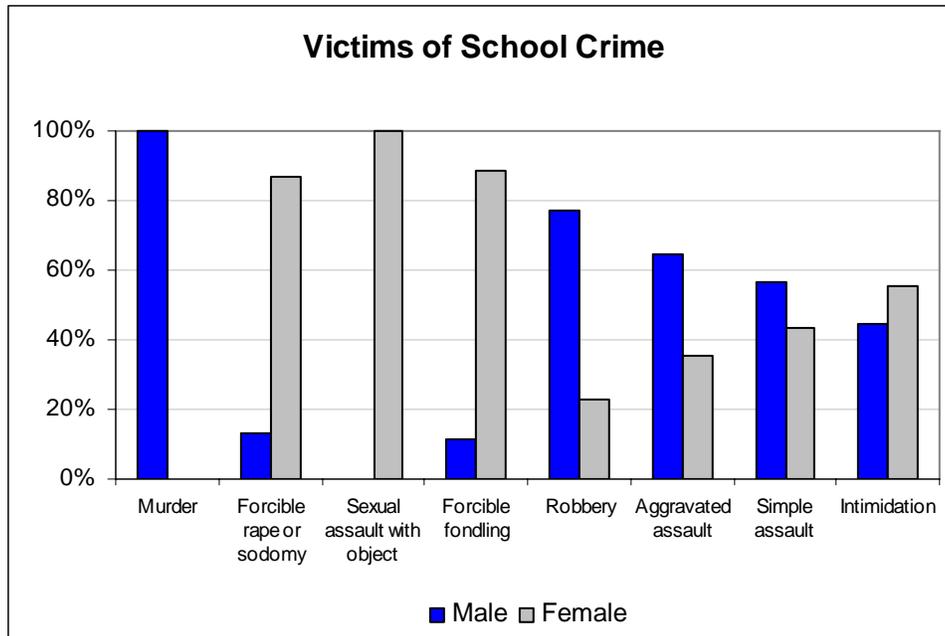
Age Group	Percent
1-4	2%
5-9	5%
10-12	14%
13-15	32%
16-18	18%
19-24	2%
25-34	7%
35-44	8%
45-54	7%
55-64	3%
65 and older	0.3%

May not add to 100% due to rounding

Some offenses were more frequently reported with specific victim age groups. Nearly 87 percent of all rape victims were between the ages of 13-18. Almost 45 percent of victims of forcible fondling fell between the ages of 13 to 15. While one-quarter of victims of intimidation were in the 13 to 15 age category, individuals across all age groups were victims of this crime. Nearly 16 percent of victims of intimidation were over age 44.

Victim Sex - Overall, the number of male and female victims of school violence was nearly evenly split between the sexes. However, differences emerge by type of crime. Females were more often victims of sex crimes, whereas males were more frequently victims of robbery and aggravated assault. The number of male and female victims of simple assault and intimidation was more closely aligned.

Additionally, when gender was looked at by age, the data showed that males were more frequently victimized between the ages of five and 18, and females were more frequently victimized between the ages of 19 and 64.



Victim race - Across race categories, there were more white victims than victims of any other race. There were very few Asian and American Indian victims. White males made up the largest category of school victims, followed by white females, black females, and black males.

Victim Type	Percent
Asian male	0.1%
Asian female	<0.1%
Black male	18%
Black female	18%
American Indian male	<0.1%
American Indian female	<0.1%
White male	34%
White female	30%

May not add to 100% due to rounding

The finding that females were more likely to be victims of sexual crimes and that males were more likely to be victims of aggravated assault and robbery held true across racial categories.

Victim-offender relationship - Of all the incidents in which the victim-offender relationship was reported, most of the offenses were committed by someone known to the victim. Overall, 88 percent of violent school crimes were committed by someone who was considered an acquaintance to the victim (friend, teacher, neighbor, etc.).

The nature of the victim-offender relationship was dependent to some extent on the type of violent crime committed. The majority of sex crimes were committed by acquaintances: 95 percent of forcible rape/sodomy offenses and 97 percent of forcible fondling offenses were committed by acquaintances. In contrast, 61 percent of robberies were committed by acquaintances and 39 percent were committed by strangers.

Offenses committed by strangers occurred relatively infrequently in a school setting. Of all instances in which the victim-offender relationship was noted, violence was committed by a stranger nine percent of the time.

Arrestee Characteristics

Arrestee age - Seventy-seven percent of arrestees fell between the ages of 13 and 18. Two percent of individuals arrested were under age 10. Across all age groups, simple assaults constituted the largest percentage of arrests, at 70 percent. Of the two people arrested for murder, neither was a juvenile. Nearly 30 percent of forcible rape arrestees were between the ages of 19 and 44. Robbery was committed most frequently by offenders in the 16-18 year old age range.

Arrestee Age Group	Percent
1-4	0.1%
5-9	1.8%
10-12	12.7%
13-15	43.9%
16-18	33.4%
19-24	3.0%
25-34	1.8%
35-44	2.0%
45-54	0.7%
55-64	0.4%
65 and older	0.1%

Arrestee Sex - While the number of male and female victims of school violence was nearly evenly split between the sexes, such was not the case with arrestees. Over two-thirds of arrestees were male. Simple assault was the crime for which most males and females were arrested, followed by intimidation. Simple assault comprised nearly 80 percent of all crimes for which females were arrested.

Offense	Male Arrestee	Female Arrestee
Murder	0.1%	0%
Forcible rape/sodomy	0.7%	0.1%
Forcible fondling	3%	0%
Robbery	3%	1%
Aggravated assault	4%	3%
Simple assault	65%	79%
Intimidation	24%	17%

May not add to 100% due to rounding.

Arrestee race - Across race categories, there were more black arrestees than arrestees of any other race. Overall, black males comprised the largest percentage of arrestees, followed by white males, black females, and white females. Other races comprised less than one percent of all arrestees.

Arrestee	Percent
Asian male	0.1%
Asian female	0.1%
Black male	38%
Black female	20%
White male	32%
White female	11%

May not add to 100% due to rounding.

Within each race category, slight differences emerged as a function of crime type.

Crime	Black Arrestee	White Arrestee
Murder	0%	0.1%
Forcible rape/sodomy	0.5%	0.5%
Forcible fondling	2%	2%
Robbery	4%	0.3%
Aggravated assault	4%	3%
Simple assault	70%	68%
Intimidation	20%	25%

May not add to 100% due to rounding.