



Report of the 2004 Boston Youth Survey

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

**In collaboration with
The Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center
Harvard School of Public Health**

August 2005



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

August 2005

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to present the *Report of the 2004 Boston Youth Survey*, the city's most comprehensive overview of Boston's youth to date. The publication is the latest work by the City of Boston designed to help youth development professionals make the best decisions possible for Boston's teens.

The report provides critical information about our young people and lets us know their aspirations, concerns and hopes. Our youth informed us about how they're doing in school, how they spend their time, how physically active they are, how they feel about their self and their future, how safe they feel and much more.

The survey results are vital to all of us who work with and care about youth. It is my hope that the information in the report will help the city and our partners make sound decisions about program development, funding and service delivery.

I want to thank our collaborating partner, the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center, for all their hard work on developing the survey document, analyzing the data and drafting the report. In addition, I thank the city's Office of Human Services and Boston Centers for Youth & Families for overseeing this effort.

I hope you will find the report a valuable tool as you continue working on behalf of the city's youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas M. Menino".

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston



HARVARD SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center
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This report, summarizing results of the 2004 Boston Youth Survey, marks another milestone in the productive collaboration between the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center and the City of Boston.

After many years of decline, rates of youth violence in Boston have recently increased. In the past, Boston has received national and international attention for its success with youth violence prevention. Collaboration among a variety of community and City organizations and universities was critical to this achievement. A key component of successful future youth violence prevention lies in understanding the day-to-day lives of Boston youth: their strengths and aspirations, the obstacles and dangers they face, and where resources needed for their positive development are lacking. We are delighted with this opportunity to combine our experience as researchers with the expertise of professionals and community leaders to help Citywide efforts to support the development of Boston children and teens. The creation of a detailed survey to pinpoint the peaks and troughs in their lives represents an enormous collaborative success.

The following report identifies a range of areas in which Boston youth struggle. For example, one-third of youth surveyed reported earning mostly Cs, Ds, or Fs in school. Nearly half (43%) indicated that they did not play sports or participate in any after-school activities. Many said that they felt unsafe in several or all of the places they frequent in their daily lives. Forty percent showed signs of depression, and over three-fourths had witnessed violence in the past year. However, there is also much to be proud of. Nearly all (95%) aspired to continue their education after high school. Three-quarters said they were able to talk to a parent or guardian about most things, and the majority (70%) reported high self-esteem.

As this report is released to the public, plans are already underway to put this information to use to improve the lives of Boston youth. Data from the survey will inform ongoing collaborations between the City, the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center and community partners, and will provide vital information to schools, City agencies, and community coalitions working across Boston and within Boston's neighborhoods. Our joint goal is to conduct the Boston Youth Survey biennially, beginning in Spring 2006, as part of a plan to identify and understand changes in the lives of Boston youth over time. We believe readers will find the report interesting and useful and will share our strong enthusiasm for the potential rewards yielded by long-term collaboration between all of us.

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2004 Boston Youth Survey Highlights

Demographics

- Boston youths are a diverse and heterogeneous group, with no racial or ethnic group representing as much as one-quarter of the student population in this sample of youth in the 9th through 12th grades.
- Twenty-three percent (23%) of the sample identified themselves as Bi-or-Multi-racial.
- Of these Bi-or-Multi-racial students, 46% indicated they were partially African-American, over one-third (38%) indicated they were partially Hispanic/Latino, and 16% indicated they were partially white.
- Over half (52%) of youth lived either in two-parent households (32%) or their parents shared joint custody (20%). Forty percent (40%) lived in a one-parent household: 34% with single mothers, 6% with single fathers.
- Nearly one-third (32%) of respondents indicated that they were born outside the U.S. One-third of the sample were immigrants, with 15% living in the U.S. for *four years or less* and 18% living in the U.S. for *more than four years*.

School Performance and Education Plans

- Nearly one-third of the sample (31%) reported receiving As and Bs in the year prior to the survey. However, nearly one-third (29%) reported receiving Cs, Ds, and Fs.
- Younger students, ages 13-14, reported doing significantly better in school (as reflected by their grades) than did older students, with nearly half (48%) of younger students reporting they received mostly As and Bs, compared to less than one-third (29%) of students older than age 14 reporting this.
- More than half (57%) of respondents reported that they spent less than an hour per school day on homework.
- Nearly three-fourths (71%) of students responding (16% of the sample missing data for this question) reported that they had been truant at least one day in the previous four months. Nearly one-third (30%) reported being truant four or more days during this time.
- Nearly all (94%) of the respondents reported that they had tried to do well on the MCAS, with boys and girls equally likely to report trying to do well.
- Most respondents (71%) stated that grades were very important to them; 25% reported that grades were somewhat important, and the remaining 4% said grades were not at all important.
- Nearly all youth (95%) aspired to continue their education after high school. More than half (55%) planned to attend a four-year college, and more than a quarter (27%) hoped to complete graduate school.

Health and Physical Activity

- Overall, almost 9 out of 10 students (87%) reported that they had a physical exam in the previous year; over three-quarters reported having had a dental exam in the past 12 months.
- Slightly over one-third (39%) of youth reported exercising as often as 4 or more days per week. Over one-third (35%) of these 9th through 12th grade youth were either overweight or obese, based on their body mass index. U.S. born teens were significantly *more likely* than non-U.S. born teens to report that they exercised regularly, but also were *more likely* to be overweight or obese than non-U.S. born teens.

Out-of-School Time

- Over half of the total sample (59%) reported playing on a sports team during the previous year and about one-third reported participating in after-school activities or being employed after-school.

- One-quarter (26%) of students said they hung out with friends after school, with one-fifth (20%) stating they went home immediately after school.
- Over one-third (38%) of respondents gave lack of interest in available after-school programs as their reason for non-participation. Nearly one-third (31%) of the entire sample said they would be interested in after-school music programs. However, only 19% said such programs were available in their neighborhoods. Gaps were also evident in photography (18% vs. 5%) and web design (15% vs. 8%).
- Over one-third (36%) of respondents performed volunteer or community service in the past year.
- Almost half (49%) reported that they watched three or more hours of television on average.

Feelings about Self and Future

- The majority of both girls and boys reported fairly high self-esteem (70%) and optimism (61%). However, over 40% *also* scored in the top half of the depression scale.
- Boys had higher scores than girls on aggression as well as on optimism; girls had higher scores on depression.
- Nearly half (49%) of the sample reported that they had trouble getting along with their peers at least once in the previous month, and 43% reported that they had gotten into a yelling argument at school during the previous month.
- Girls were more likely than boys to report that they cooperated with or encouraged others (81% vs. 70%) and that they had helped other students solve a problem (88% vs. 75%).
- Thirty-five percent of respondents said they felt hopeful most or all of the time. Boys were more likely than girls to feel hopeful about the future (67% vs. 57%).

Violence and Victimization

- Over three-quarters (87%) of respondents (8% of the sample missing data on this question) reported witnessing one or more acts of violence in the past year; nearly half of the respondents (44%) reported personally experiencing one or more types of victimization (13% missing data).
- Over 80% of these 9th through 12th grade youth reported that they had seen someone hit, slapped, punched, kicked or beaten up in the past year, and over two-thirds reported seeing another person threatened or chased in the past year when they believed someone could be seriously hurt.
- Over half of the students reported witnessing or being victimized by at least one type of violence: at their school (58%), in their neighborhood (58%), or on the street (54%). Nearly half reported witnessing or experiencing at least one type of violence: one the way to and from school (49%) and/or on the MBTA (47%). Nearly a fifth (18%) reported these experiences at home.
- Boys were more likely than girls to report being victimized by violence in the past year (53% vs. 36%); over half of boys were victimized by violence.
- Immigrants were less likely than those born in the U.S. to report being victimized by violence (39% vs. 46%), but also were less likely to report that they felt safe in all or most places (42% vs. 60%).
- Over half (52%; 11% of the sample missing) felt that gangs in their school were somewhat or very dangerous, and more than two-thirds (70%; 12% of the sample missing) felt that gangs in their neighborhoods were somewhat or very dangerous.
- Forty-one percent (41%; 12% of the sample missing) reported that it would be either *very* or *fairly easy* to get a gun. Boys were more likely than girls to believe that getting a gun would be *very* or *fairly easy* (50% vs. 33%), as were youth who had been *born* in the U.S. (47% vs. 32% of those who immigrated more than 4 years and 20% of those who had immigrated more recently).

Discrimination/Harassment

- Discrimination/harassment on the basis of presumed sexual orientation was relatively rare (7% of the sample).

- GLBT youth, representing 7% of all respondents, were far more likely than their heterosexual counterparts to have experienced this type of discrimination (26% vs. 4%). Racial/ethnic discrimination was more common (15% of the sample).

Resources for Youth

- Over three-quarters (79%) of the sample indicated they would use at least one of fourteen resources (friend, family, doctor/nurse, teacher, guidance counselor, peer counselor, teen hotline, psychologist/social worker, youth worker, religious leader, internet chat/information, coach, local community center, other) if they witnessed violence or were themselves threatened/assaulted.
- Over half (57%) of respondents indicated that they had used one of the listed resources for these reasons.
- Over one-third of respondents (39%) said they trust the police a lot or some. Youth who were born in the U.S. were *least* likely to trust the police (35%), while those living in the U.S. less than five years were *most* likely to trust them (49%).
- Nearly half (48%) of the respondents (17% of the sample missing) reported having contact with the police during the previous year, with boys more likely than girls to have contact (56% vs. 41%).

Relationships with Others

- Nearly half (45%) of the respondents (15% of sample missing) indicated that they thought that more people would try to take advantage of them if they could.
- Three-quarters (75%) of the sample (14% of sample missing) stated that they are able to talk to at least one of their parents/guardians about most things. Youth who reported that they did not feel able to talk to a parent/guardian about most things were more likely than those who did to report being depressed (55% vs. 35%) and aggressive (20% vs. 11%).
- Fifty-four percent (54% with 12% of sample missing) of respondents reported that they trusted teachers and counselors some or a lot.

Introduction

The Boston Youth Survey (BYS), initiated by Mayor Menino in 1997, is a way for the City of Boston to gather vital information about the status of youth. Historically, the Boston Youth Survey was conducted every other year with a sample drawn from youth in summer school and the City's summer jobs program. In 2003, the City of Boston, through Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) approached the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center (HYVPC) and Harvard Prevention Research Center (HPRC) for help in designing a more comprehensive and representative survey of youth attending Boston schools.

The resulting 128-question survey assessed youths' (1) exposure to and involvement in aggressive and violent behavior, (2) involvement in school and extra-curricular activities, (3) knowledge about and use of school- and community-based resources, (4) contact with and trust in adults, (5) nutrition and level of physical activity, (6) emotional well-being, and (7) health status. The paper and pencil survey was administered in classrooms by trained BCYF Streetworkers (street-based youth outreach workers) and BCYF administrative staff to a sample of 1,079 9th through 12th grade youth attending public and charter schools in Boston in the Spring of 2004.

Acknowledgements

Many people contributed to the 2004 Boston Youth Survey. The survey would not have been possible without the participation of the headmasters, principals, teachers, and students of the schools surveyed. Particular thanks go Boston Public Schools, especially Superintendent Thomas Payzant, Chris Horan, Maryellen Donahue, Diego Alvarado, Marjorie Powell, and Christine Hill. Daria Fanelli, Dawn Newcomb and Alicia Savannah of BCYF collaborated with the Harvard team on the overall management of the project, especially in the survey design, administration, and logistics. Daria Fanelli and Chris Byner piloted the survey and spent many hours administering it in Boston classrooms along with BCYF staff, including Alicia Savannah, Brie McDaniels, Dawn Newcomb, Donna Reeves-Jackson, Erin Quigley, Ernest Hughes, Robin Christian, Sean Pitts, Stephen Greig, and Amy Reid. Collaborating staff from the Harvard Prevention Research Center and Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center included Angela Browne, Beth Molnar, Deb Azrael, Steven Lippmann, Mary Vriniotis, Angie Craddock, and David Hemenway. Bruce Smith, of the Harvard School of Public Health Division of Public Health Practice, acted as liaison between the City of Boston, the Harvard team, and the community.

Description of Survey Sample and Methods

The 2004 BYS is a stratified random sample of in-school 9th through 12th grade students. The sampling frame consisted of all Boston public and charter schools. Thirty schools were randomly selected for the survey, with a probability of selection proportional to each school's enrollment size. Using a numbered list of distinct class periods within each selected school, classes were randomly selected for survey administration until the total number of students to be surveyed was approximately 100 per school. End-of-year scheduling restricted the sample size for the 2004 Survey, however 17 of the 30 schools selected were able to participate. To aid in sample selection, *PCSample*, a sampling program developed by Westat for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was used.

All surveys were administered by Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF) staff. Survey administrators completed a two-hour training program prior to going into the schools. This training included information on the importance of reading the survey script verbatim to students to assure uniform survey conditions, supplemental scripts for common questions, and training on how to refer students to counseling if any question on the survey made them feel upset or uncomfortable. In addition, a human subjects training conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health's Human Subjects Committee and research staff was provided to survey administrators and other project staff.

Surveys were not marked with any information that could identify an individual. Passive consent was sought from students' parents prior to survey administration. Any student whose parents sent back a form denying permission for the student to participate in the survey was not given a survey to fill out (fewer than 1% of students were prohibited from completing the survey). Survey administrators read the survey introduction and consent form prior to handing out the survey. At this time, students were given an opportunity to decline to participate. Survey administrators remained in the room and were available to answer questions throughout the 50 minutes allotted for the survey. Response rates to the survey were high; for example, over 80% of the sample completed 90% or more of the survey.

Qualifiers to the Data Analysis

The 2004 BYS sample, although far more representative than the youth surveys administered in summer, falls short of being a true random sample. Due to school schedules and time constraints, not all schools in the sampling frame could be reached. Nonetheless, we do not believe that non-surveyed schools differed systematically from schools that were surveyed, and therefore are confident that the results of the 2004 BYS remain broadly representative of Boston Public School 9th through 12th graders as a whole in the Spring of 2004.

Some neighborhoods are not well-represented in the 2004 Survey. Charlestown, Chinatown, and West Roxbury had only a few (under 25) students who reported living there. Thus neighborhood-level estimates from these neighborhoods may have a sizeable margin of error. Other neighborhoods (e.g., Beacon Hill/Back Bay, Fenway/Kenmore, and North End) had fewer than five respondents who said they lived in those neighborhoods. Given this small number of respondents, data are not reported for these neighborhoods.

Forty-one (44%) out of the 94 questions in the 2004 survey were carried over from the survey instrument used in 2001, although some items were modified slightly to make them clearer or more specific. (Two topic areas—violence and health/physical activity—were greatly expanded during the revision.) Because the sample population from which students were drawn is not the same as that of earlier BYS samples (summer school and summer jobs students versus term students), it is not possible to compare data from the 2004 Survey with earlier data to examine trends. Rather, the 2004 Survey provides a snapshot of Boston youth in the year it was conducted, and baseline data for analysis of trends over the coming years. Questions and scales new to the 2004 BYS were primarily drawn from the literature on youth resiliency and youth violence. The validity of most of these questions and scales has been assessed and deemed appropriate for use by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and others.

Some questions in the 2004 BYS are time-limited (e.g., *“In the last month”*; *“During the past 12 months”*) and reflect only the incidence of various occurrences, regardless of a student's age. However, questions that ask about the lifetime experience of students (e.g., *“Have you ever...”*) reflect different lengths of exposure, depending on a student's age. A typical 18 year old, for example, has had four years of high school in which to participate in after-school activities; a 14 year old has had only one year.

Prior to administering the Survey, it was piloted with high school students for clarity and consistency in question interpretation. Even though BCYF staff were present to answer questions during the pilot and each time it was administered in a classroom, it is possible that some students may not have understood all of the questions, either because they were unclear, too complex, or, as they were in English only, not in their native language. To the extent that students who understood the survey differ from students who did not, the survey may not reflect the characteristics of students less fluent in English. Future surveys will be offered in several languages.

Many of the variables in the 2004 Boston Youth Survey are highly correlated. For example, youth who score high on scales measuring depression in this sample are likely also to score high on scales measuring victimization and involvement in aggression, to report getting worse grades, and to report being truant. This clustering of experiences and behaviors together (victimization, depression, aggression, poor school performance, truancy) poses a challenge to understanding the independent relationship between any of these characteristics (e.g., the relationship between depression and aggression), since part of any association may reflect the influence of the other characteristics as well. Tables in the report examining the relationship between variables two at a time simplify the relationships between the behaviors, characteristics, and experiences of Boston youth and should be understood as descriptive.

This survey reflects the experiences of Boston youth at a point in time. Analyses of the data in the survey highlight associations between co-existing experiences and behaviors, but cannot tell us anything about their cause or the order in which they occurred in a youth's life. For example, while students who report higher levels of depression are more likely to report higher levels of aggression as well (and vice versa), we cannot say that depression causes aggressive behavior in these students, or that aggression causes their depression.

Finally, it is possible that students under-reported some behaviors or experiences (e.g., sexual violence against them), due to worries about sexual identification or uneasiness with the question. Alternatively, some students might over-report some experiences or behaviors due to telescoping (believing earlier events occurred within the time frame in the question) or self-presentation bias (desire to present themselves in the best possible light). It is not possible to assess the degree to which students in the 2004 BYS were subject to these sorts of biases. However, results of the 2004 BYS are comparable to results from the CDC's *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* for Boston youth on comparable questions, supporting the validity of the 2004 BYS Survey protocol and youth responses.

One advantage of comprehensive data collection is that it helps to highlight gaps in our knowledge and to stimulate thinking on areas that invite further exploration. The focus of the Boston Youth Survey over the next years will be on enhancing our understanding of key dynamics in Boston neighborhoods where youth live, as well as learning more about the resources they use, their experiences, and their concerns.

How to Use This Document

This report is organized in sections reflecting the major domains of the 2004 BYS. Each section opens with a brief introduction to the topics covered in the section, followed by tables, pie charts, and graphs presenting results of the Survey. "Additional Findings" sections present additional results that are not depicted graphically. All results presented in bullet form are statistically significant, meaning that the finding is unlikely to be simply the result of chance. Most charts display only statistically significant findings, except where otherwise noted. (Statistical significance was determined using the Chi-square test of significant differences of proportions.)

Although the total sample size was 1079, none of the questions were answered by all of the respondents. Depending on the question being asked, individuals with missing values on a question may be included or excluded in the denominator from which percentages are calculated. Tables and pie charts indicate the denominator being used on a case by case basis.

2004 Boston Youth Survey Results

I. DEMOGRAPHICS

Information on the total number of children and teens in a city by age, ethnicity, immigrant status, and other features is a basic planning tool to develop school- and community-based programs. Race, ethnicity and immigrant status in particular, are often related to children's health, school performance, and access to family and community resources.¹ As Boston's youth population becomes more diverse, it is important that we attend to these characteristics to target services and resources and to design youth programs that are responsive to differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The following table offers a brief overview of respondent characteristics for the 2004 BYS Survey sample. More detail will then be provided below.

Demographics - 2004 Boston Youth Survey

	2004 BYS	
	N	%
Total	1079	100.0
Gender		
Girls	538	49.9
Boys	446	41.3
<i>Missing gender</i>	95	8.8
Age		
13-14 years old	102	9.5
15-16 years old	623	57.1
17-18 years old	295	27.3
19 or older	42	3.9
<i>Missing age</i>	17	1.5
Race/Ethnicity		
White	125	11.6
African-American	175	16.2
African	25	3.1
Cape Verdean	48	5.9
Hispanic/Latino	234	21.7
Haitian, Jamaican, Other Caribbean	110	10.2
Asian	101	9.4
Other (Native American, Middle Eastern)	3	---
Bi/Multi-racial	248	23.0
<i>Missing race</i>	10	1.1
Years Lived in the US		
Always lived in US	723	67.0
Lived in US four years or less	157	14.6
Lived in US more than four years	188	17.4
<i>Missing immigration status</i>	11	1.0
Sexual Orientation/Identity		
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender or Not sure	66	6.1
Heterosexual	908	84.2
<i>Missing sexual orientation</i>	105	9.7

¹ Child Trends. <http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/demo/basic/60RaceandEthnicComposition.htm>, 6/2/03.

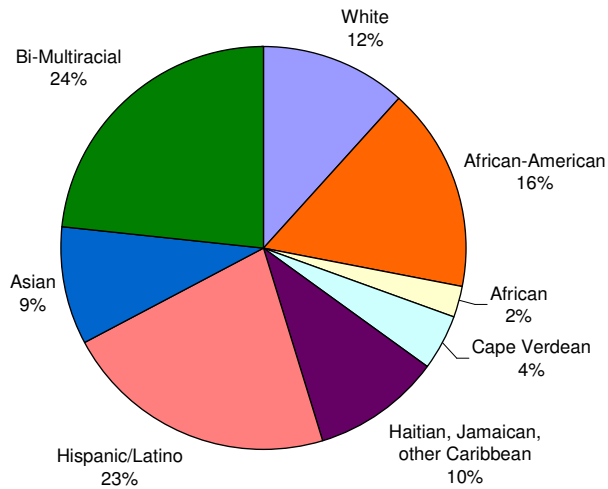
Neighborhood of Residence		
Allston/Brighton	43	4.03
Beacon Hill/Back Bay	3	---
Charlestown	20	1.9
Chinatown	10	0.9
Dorchester	393	36.9
02121	85	7.9
02122	55	5.1
02124	129	12.0
02125	104	9.6
<i>Not sure</i>	20	1.9
East Boston	87	8.2
Fenway/Kenmore	3	---
Hyde Park	67	6.3
Jamaica Plain	49	4.6
Mattapan	76	7.1
North End	3	---
Roslindale	78	7.3
Roxbury/Mission Hill	128	12.0
South Boston	47	4.4
South End	37	3.4
West Roxbury	22	2.1
Other	11	---
Primary Guardians		
Mother and father living together (1 household)	339	31.42
Parent(s), stepparents, or joint custody (2 households)	209	19.37
Single mother	370	34.29
Single father, other single guardian	63	5.9
Grandparents, other relatives	64	6.0

Race/Ethnicity

Students were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity by marking all applicable race/ethnicity categories. This method follows emerging best practices such as those used in the 2000 U.S. Census of letting respondents define their own race/ethnicity, and differs from prior methods in which survey respondents were asked to pick only one category from the options offered. Boston youths are a diverse and heterogeneous group, with no racial or ethnic group representing as much as one-quarter of the student population (see Chart below). Twenty-three percent of these 9th through 12th graders identified as “*bi-racial*” or “*multi-racial*.” Of the students identifying themselves as bi-racial or multi-racial, nearly half (46%) indicated they were partially African-American, over one-third (38%) indicated they were partially Hispanic/Latino, and 16% indicated they were partially white (not shown).

At first glance, these findings appear quite different than earlier Boston Youth Survey years. For example, students who might have identified as “black” in the past, when they could choose only one race/ethnicity option, may now identify as African American and Cape Verdean. When this is taken into account, proportions of blacks* in the 2004 BYS are similar to Boston Public Schools numbers for this age group (46%), although the proportion of Hispanics is somewhat lower.

Race/Ethnicity



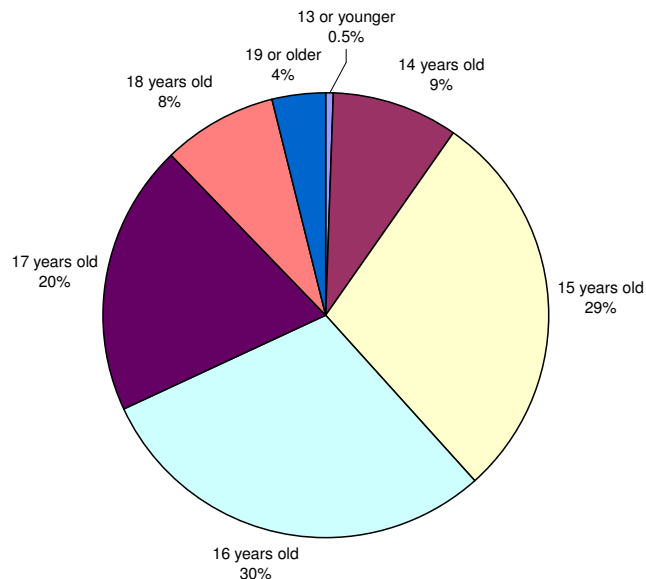
Hispanic/Latino students made up nearly one-quarter (23%) of the survey sample. White and Asian students represented 12% and 9% of the sample, respectively. Overall, non-Caucasian races accounted for 88% of the sample.

* **Note:** Throughout the report, “Blacks” will refer to the collective grouping of African-Americans, Africans, Cape Verdeans, and Haitians, Jamaicans, and groups from the Caribbean. “Caribbean” will refer to a collective grouping of Haitians, Jamaicans, and groups from the West Indies.

Age

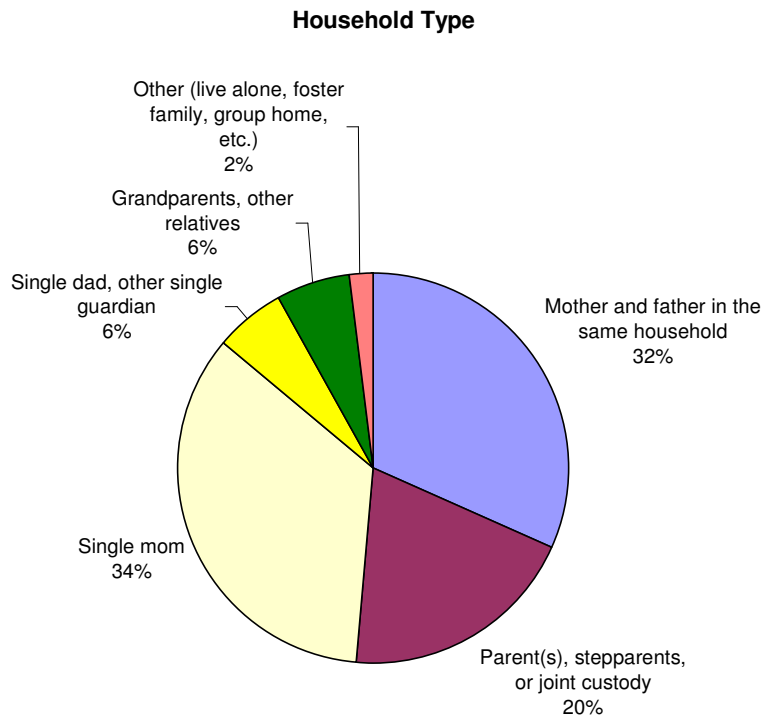
Students were asked to indicate which of the following age categories they belonged to. Over half of respondents (58%) were 15 or 16 years old. Younger students ages 13 and 14 comprised 10% of the sample, while older students ages 19 or over comprised 4%.

Age



Household Type

Respondents were asked “*Who lives in your household(s)? Check all that apply.*” Overall, over half (52%) of youth in the 2004 BYS sample lived either in two-parent households (32%) or their parents shared joint custody(20%). Forty percent (40%) of students lived in a one-parent household: 34% with single mothers, 6% with single fathers. Nearly one-fifth of students (19%) of students said they live in more than one household.



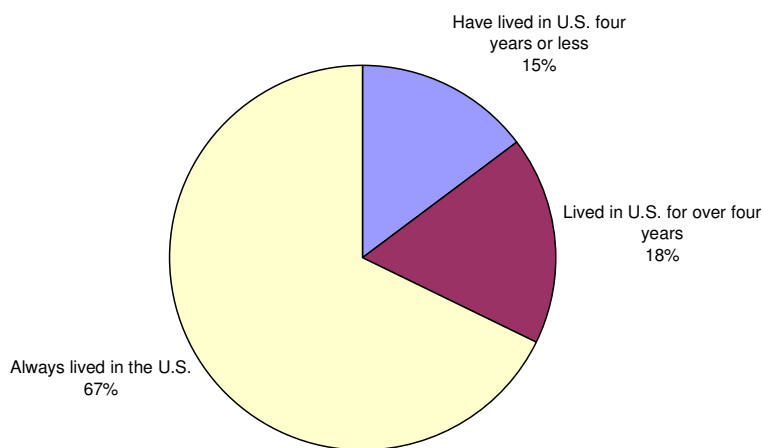
Additional Findings – Household Type

- African-American students were more likely than others to be living with a single mom (49% vs. 31%), whereas Asian and white students were less likely (20% vs. 38%).
- Native-born U.S. residents were more likely than immigrant youth to report living with a single mom (Lived in U.S. less than five years: 23%; 5 or more years: 33%; U.S. born: 38%).

Years Lived in the U.S.

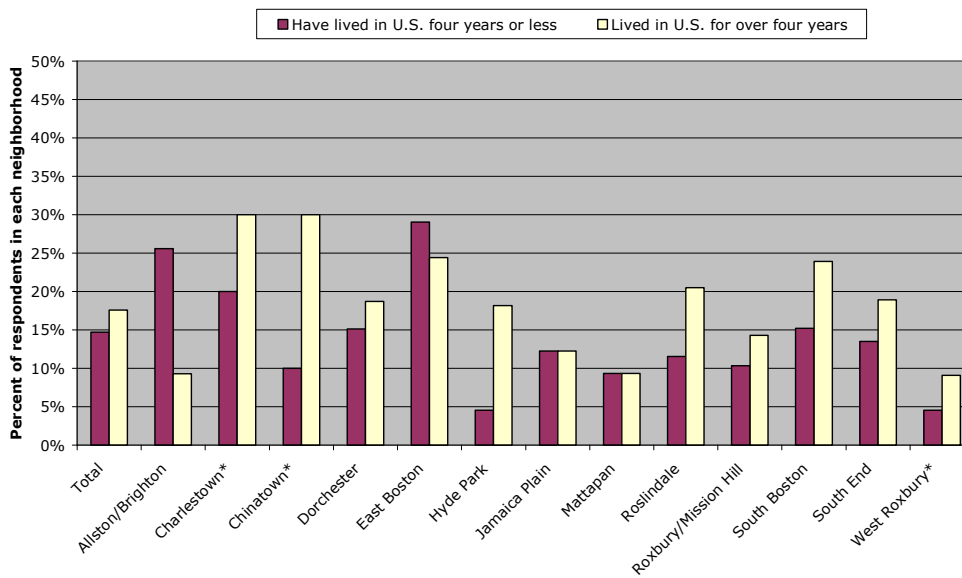
Students also were asked about how long they lived in the United States. Nearly one-third (32%) of respondents indicated that they were born outside the U.S. One-third of the sample were immigrants, with 15% living in the US for four years or less and 18% living in the US for more than four years.

Years Lived in U.S.



The amount of time respondents had lived in the U.S. varied by neighborhood. Neighborhoods with the highest percentage of survey respondents that have lived in the US for four years or less were: East Boston, Allston/Brighton and Charlestown; in Allston and East Boston immigrants outnumbered U.S. born students. Neighborhoods with the highest percentage of survey respondents that have lived in the US for four years or more, but who are not US-born were: Charlestown, Chinatown, East Boston, and South Boston. The chart below displays average length of residence for the 13 neighborhoods for which statistics could be calculated.

Years Lived in U.S. by Neighborhood



*N<25

II. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATION PLANS

More than ever, the competencies and skills acquired through a quality high school education are essential for all youth. As American society has made the transition to a knowledge-based economy, successful completion of high school has become key in achieving economic self-sufficiency in adult life. To succeed both personally and professionally, most youth will require education and training beyond high school.² Optimism about education plans for the future can be an important motivation of student achievement. But no matter how hopeful youth are about their futures, successful transition to adulthood must be supported by real opportunities to receive quality education and training.

This section will provide information about student's education in five areas:

- (1) Grades
- (2) Homework
- (3) Truancy
- (4) MCAS, and
- (5) Future education and career goals.

The following table provides an overview of student reports of grades, time spent on homework per day, and truancy from school when not ill, by respondent characteristics:

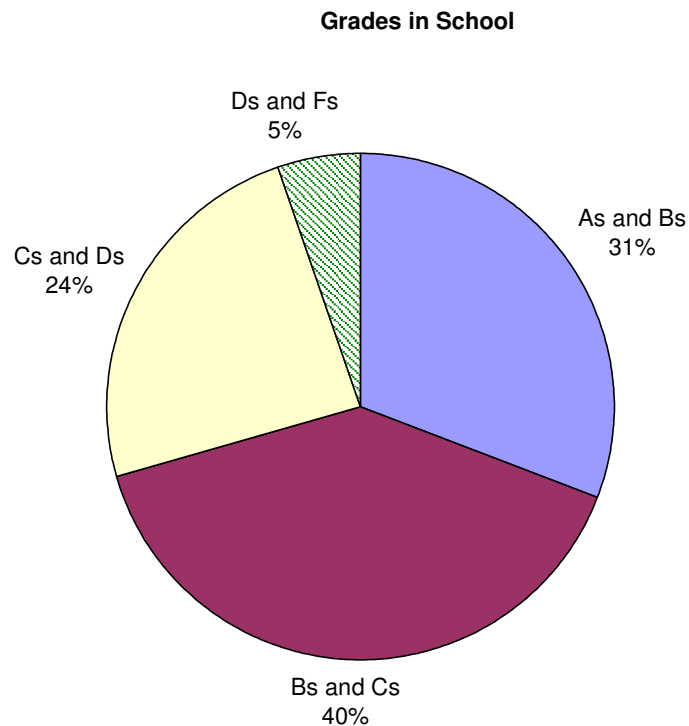
	Grades	Homework	Truancy
	% earned mostly As and Bs last year	% Spending >1 hr/day on homework	% Absent >3 days when not sick (in 4 months)
Total	31	43	30
Gender			
Boys	23*	35*	29
Girls	38	50	32
Years Lived in the U.S.			
U.S. born	28*	39*	34*
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	31	42	30
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	45	60	14
Grade Level			
9 th grade	28	39	28
10 th grade	29	42	33
11 th grade	29	46	31
12 th grade	43	42	42

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender). For example, looking in the grades column, 23% of boys reported getting mostly As and Bs the previous year, compared to 38% of girls. The asterisk by the 23% indicates that this difference is statistically significant, or unlikely to have occurred by chance as a result of the particular sample drawn for this year's survey.

² Kaufman, P., Alt, M.N., & Chapman, C.D. (2001) *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics. http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/droppub_2001/

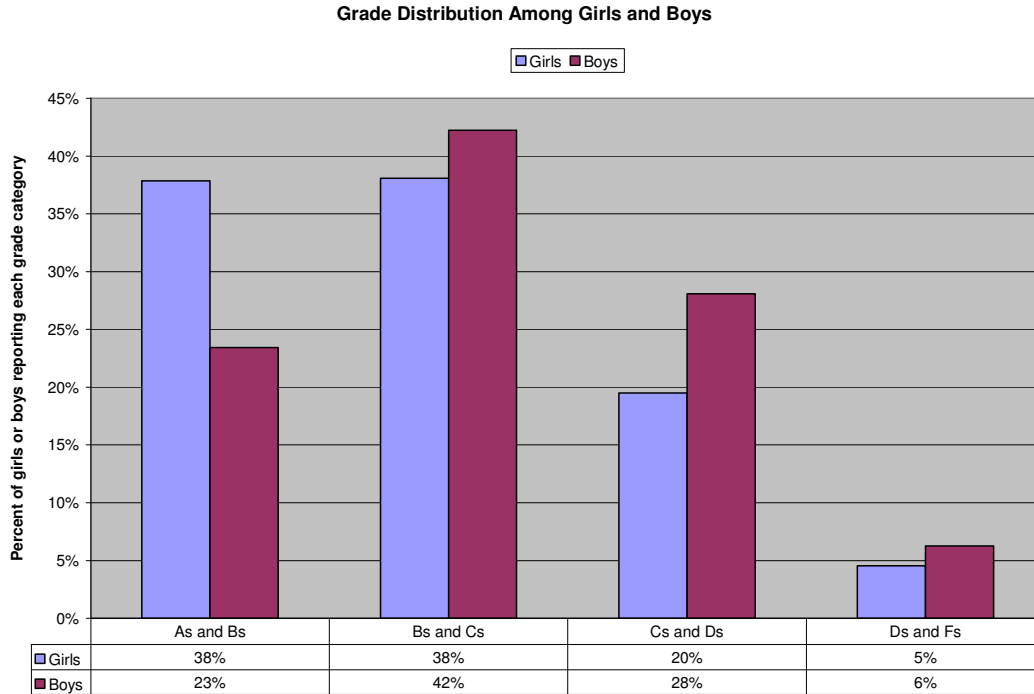
Grades in School

Survey respondents were asked, “*What were MOST of your grades last school year?*” and were instructed to choose from ONE of the four categories shown in the following pie chart. Overall, nearly one-third of the sample (31%) reported receiving As and Bs in the year prior to the survey. However, nearly one-third (29%) of these 9th through 12th grade students reported receiving Cs, Ds, and Fs. Younger students ages 13-14 reported doing significantly better in school (as reflected by their grades) than did older students, with nearly half (48%) of younger students reporting that they received mostly As and Bs, compared to less than one-third (29%) of students older than age 14 reporting this.



Recency of immigration was positively related to getting better grades, with lower grades for students who had been in the U.S. over five years and the lowest grades for students who were U.S. born. Nearly half (45%) of students reporting that they had lived in the U.S. for less than 5 years, and one-third (31%) of students who reported that they had lived in the U.S. for 5 or more years, received mostly As and Bs, whereas only 28% of those born in the U.S. reported receiving mostly As and Bs.

The percentage of students reporting various categories of grades varied significantly by gender as well, with a greater percentage of girls than boys reporting getting mostly As and Bs in school the previous year (38% vs. 23%).



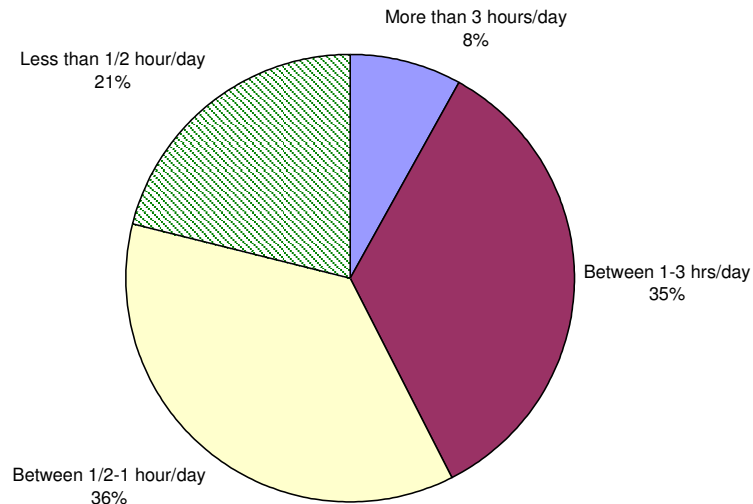
Additional Findings – Grades in School

- More Asian students reported getting As and Bs (59%) than in other racial/ethnic groups (White students are next highest, with 36%).
- Students with single mothers were more likely than those in other types of families to be getting mostly Cs, D’s, or F’s in school (34% vs. 27%).

Time Spent on Homework

Students also were asked: “About how much time do you spend each day working on homework?” and were instructed to choose ONE of the following four possible responses shown in the following pie chart.* More than half (57%) of respondents reported that they spent less than an hour per school day on homework.

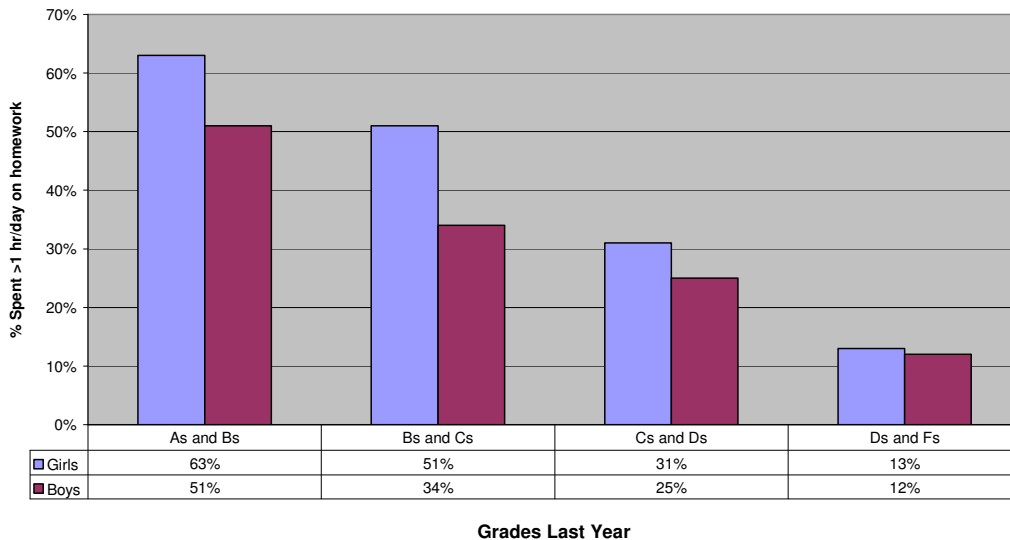
Time Spent Daily on Homework



* Note: Throughout the report, those who spent more than one hour daily on homework (i.e. between 1 and 3 or more than 3 hours per day) will be referred to as those who “spent more time on homework”.

As with grades, time spent on homework within grade categories varied by gender, with girls reporting spending more time on homework than boys. Of the girls who reported receiving As and Bs the previous year, 63% reported that they studied one hour or more per day, compared to 51% of boys earning As and Bs. However, the reduction in time spent on homework as grades decreased was similar among boys and girls.

Within each grade range, what percent of boys and girls spent more than 1 hr/day on homework?



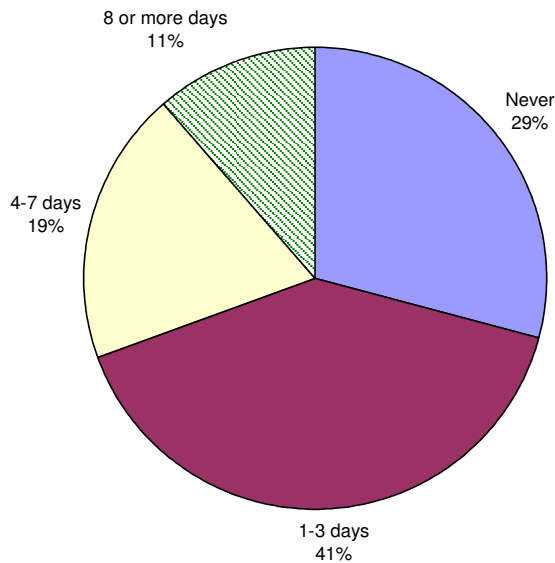
Additional Findings – Time Spent on Homework

- Not surprisingly, students who reported that they spent more time on homework also reported earned better grades (43% of those who studied more than one hour per day earned mostly As and Bs, compared to 22% of those who studied less than one hour daily).
- Asian students reported spending far more time on their homework than their non-Asian peers do (73% spent more than one hour daily on homework); Students whose race was categorized as Caribbean were a distant second (45%). Hispanic/Latinos were least likely to spend more than one hour/day on homework (37%).
- Compared to those in other family types, those with single mothers were less likely to spend more than one hour/day on homework (38% vs. 45%).
- Time spent on homework was not associated with age or grade level.

Truancy

Respondents were asked: “Thinking about September through December 2003, how many days were you absent from school when you were not sick?” Students were instructed to select ONE of the following four possible responses shown in the following pie chart. (Throughout this report, “truancy” will be defined as being absent from school when not ill more than 3 days in the previous four months.) Nearly three-fourths (71%) of students responding to this question (16% of the entire sample missing data for this question) were truant at least once in the previous four months. (See section on qualifiers to data analysis on page 7.) Nearly one-third – 30% – were truant four or more days during this time.

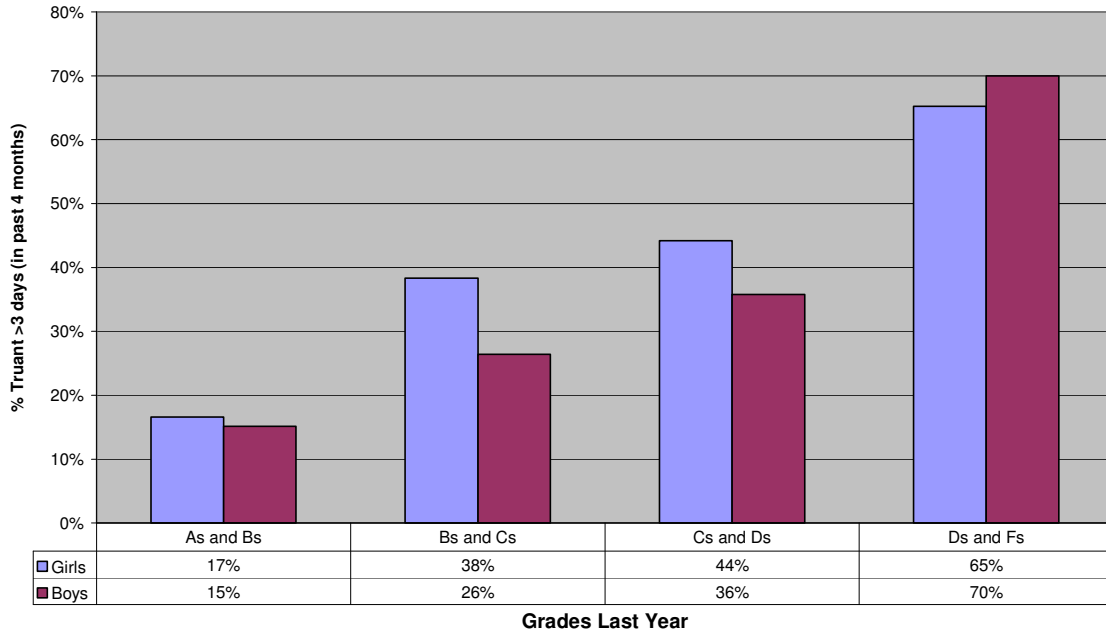
Percent Truant* (in previous 4 months)



* Note: Throughout this report, “truancy” will be defined as being absent from school when not ill more than 3 days in the previous four months.

As with grades and time spent on homework, truancy within grade categories varied by gender.

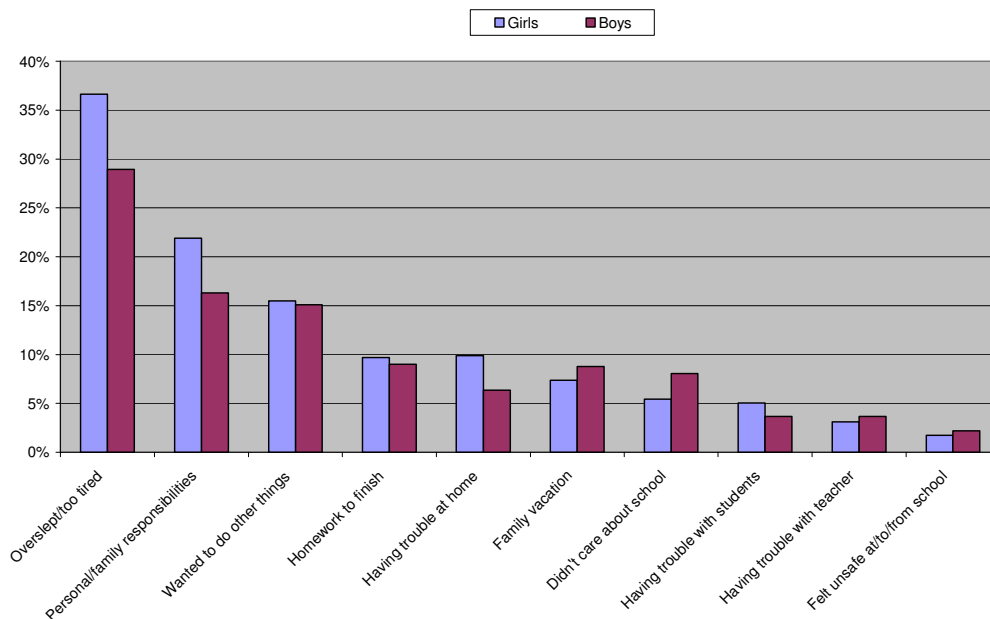
Within each grade category, percent of girls and boys that were truant



For both boys and girls, those who reported that they received better grades were less likely to report being truant. Fewer than 20% of those reporting that they received As and Bs reported being truant more than 3 days in the previous four months, whereas more than 60% of those reporting that they received Ds and Fs reported being truant.

Students also were asked to indicate reasons they had been truant more than 3 days in the preceding 4 months. Oversleeping or being too tired to go to school was by far the most common reason students gave for being truant (33%). A greater percent of girls (36%) than boys (29%) were truant due to oversleeping or being too tired. Percents reporting each reason are displayed below.

Percent of Girls and Boys (in entire sample) Indicating Given Reason for Truancy



Additional Findings – Truancy

- Student who have lived in the U.S. for a longer period of time reported higher truancy than those who have not lived in the U.S. as long. (U.S. born: 34% truant; Lived in the U.S. five or more years: 30%; Lived in the U.S. four years or less: 14%)
- Younger students were more likely than older students to report being truant (13% of 13-14 year-olds, vs. 41% of students 17 and older.)
- Asian students were less likely than others to report being truant more than three times in the previous four months (19% vs. 32%).
- Students who reported that they spent less than one hour per day on homework were more likely to be truant than those who reportedly spent more time on homework (39% vs. 18%).
- Not surprisingly, students who reported being truant were less likely than those who did not report this to report receiving As and Bs in school (16% vs. 38%).
- Compared with those living in other family types, youth living with single mothers were more likely to report being truant from school (35% vs. 28%).

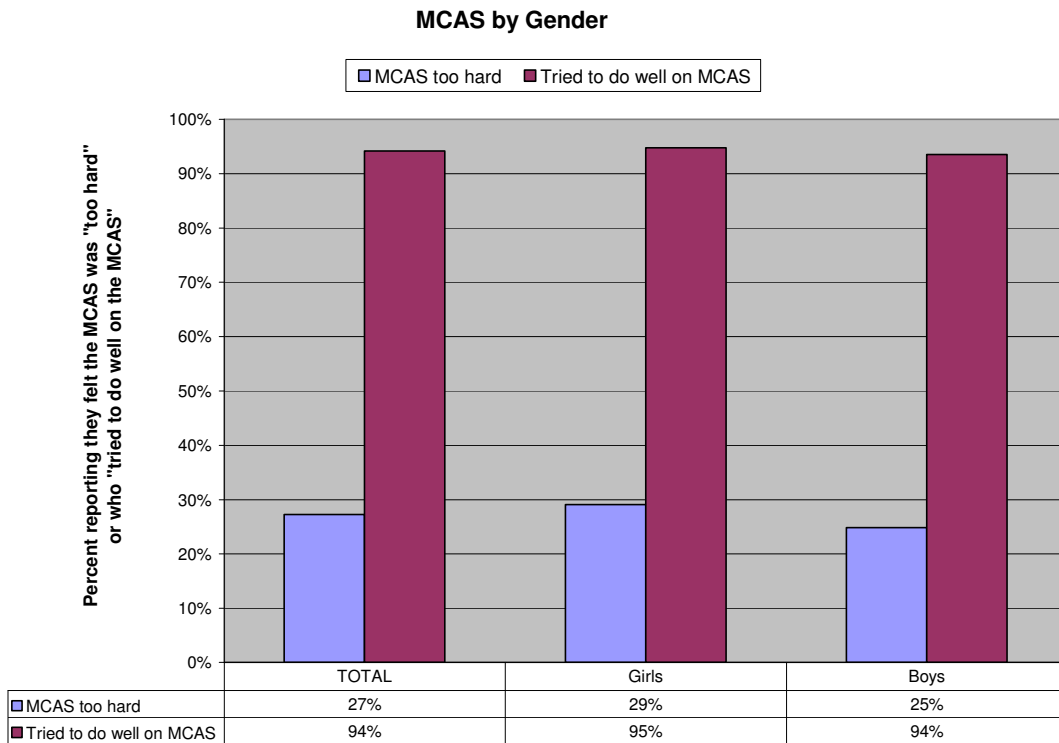
MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) Tests

In order to advance to higher grades and to graduate, students in the Boston Public School system are required to pass the *Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)* tests. Students take the MCAS in the 8th and 10th grade, but may also take a retest if they do not pass the test on the first try. Three-quarters (74%) of the 2004 BYS sample took the test within the 12 months prior to the Survey. The percents reported in this section are from those who had taken the test in the past year; i.e. students who did not take the test are not included in this Report section.

Students were asked to answer two questions about the MCAS:

- (1) *If you took the MCAS test last May or the retest this past November, was it: (a) too hard, (b) just about right, or (c) too easy?* and
- (2) *If you took the MCAS test last May or the retest this past November, did you try to do well?" (Yes or no)*

A little over a quarter (27%) of the respondents thought the MCAS was too hard, with girls slightly more likely than boys to report that it was too hard (29% vs. 25%). Nearly all (94%) of the respondents reported that they had tried to do well on the MCAS, however; boys and girls were equally likely to report trying to do well. Although the effect was slight, the perceived difficulty of the MCAS appeared to affect whether respondents tried to do well on it. A greater percent of those who thought the level of difficulty was just right tried to do well on the MCAS (96%) than of those who thought it was too hard (92%) or too easy (88%).



Additional Findings – MCAS Tests

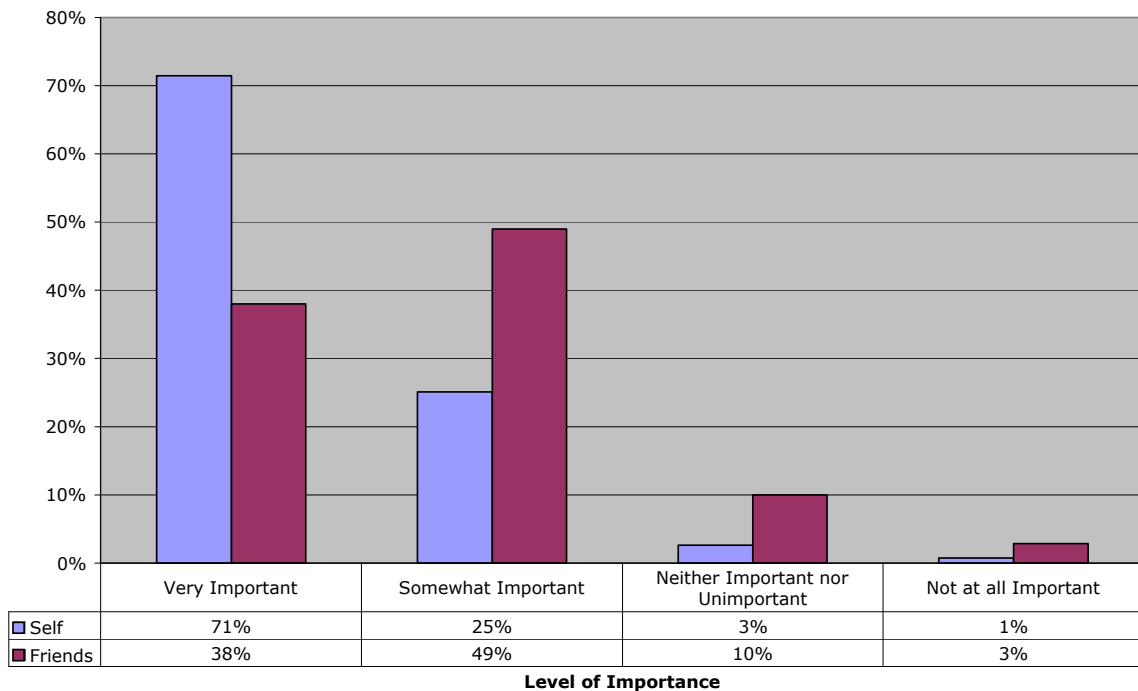
- Students who reported spending more than one hour per day on their homework were more likely to report that they tried to do well on the MCAS than those who reported spending less time on their homework (96% vs. 92%).
- Ninth graders were most likely to think the test was too hard (40%), followed by twelfth graders (30%). Ninth graders were also less likely to try to do well on the test (89% vs. 95%).
- Asian students were least likely to think the test was too hard (21%), while Hispanic/Latinos were most likely (33%). Blacks (African, African-American, Cape Verdean, and Caribbean) were more likely than non-Blacks to report trying to do well on the MCAS (96% vs. 92%). Students from the Caribbean were somewhat less likely than others to try to do well on the test (87% vs. 92%).

- There was no association between perception of MCAS difficulty and: age, grades earned in school, truancy, or time spent on homework.
- There also was no association between trying to do well on the MCAS and: gender, years lived in the U.S., household type, truancy, or grades earned in school.

Importance of Grades

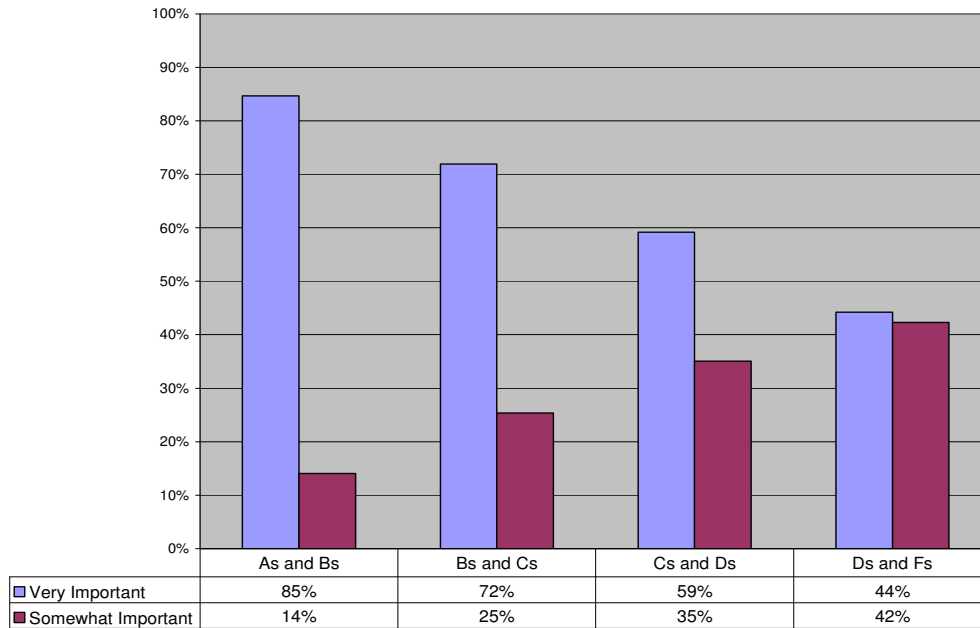
When asked, “*How important is getting good grades to you?*,” most respondents (71%) said grades were very important to them; 25% reported that grades were somewhat important, and the remaining 4% said grades were not at all important. However, when asked, “*How important is getting good grades to your friends?*” respondents were much less likely to report that grades were very important to their friends (38%). They were more likely (as compared to themselves) to report that grades were “somewhat important”(49%), “neither important nor unimportant,” or “not at all important” (13%) to their friends.

Importance of Grades to Self and Perceived Importance to Friends

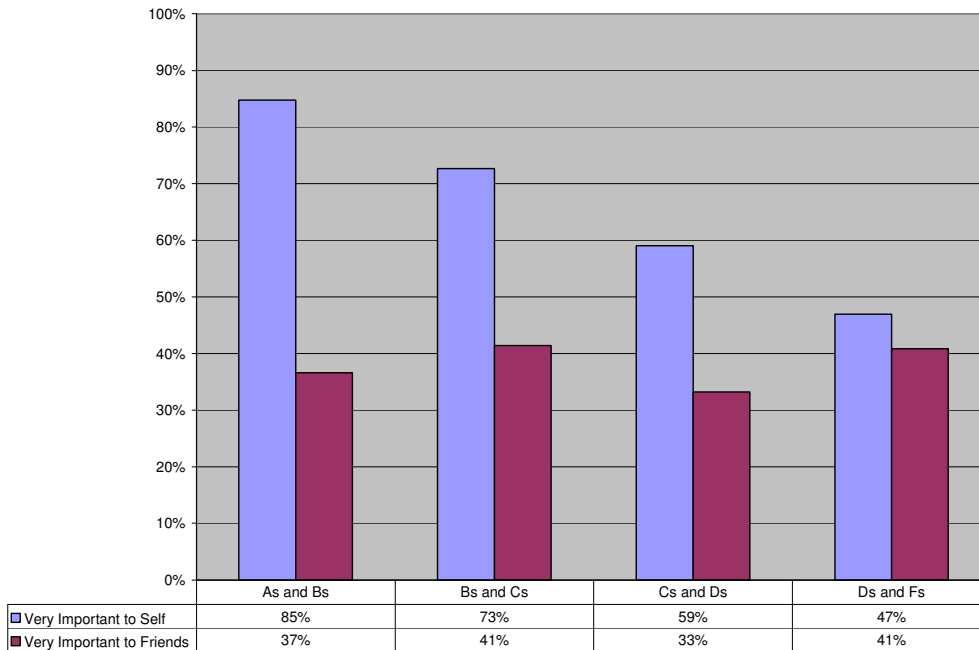


The perceived importance of grades to self and friends varied by grades earned. Of those who reported receiving As and Bs the previous year, 85% said getting good grades was “very important” to them, while 14% said it was “somewhat important.” (Figure 2.8) Even among those receiving mostly Ds and Fs, almost 1/2 (44%) reported that grades were very important to them.

Grades and Their Importance to Self



Grades and Their Perceived Importance to Friends



Of students who earned As and Bs the previous year, 85% said getting good grades was very important to them, while only 37% thought grades were very important to their friends. This discrepancy between importance of grades to self and friends decreased significantly as achievement decreased. (Figure 2.9) This discrepancy existed for both sexes regardless of years lived in U.S., race, or grade, and for immigrants as well as those born in the U.S.

As years lived in the U.S. increased, perceived importance of grades to self decreased, from 84% for those living in the U.S. less than five years reporting grades are very important to them, to 74% of less recent immigrants, to 68% of U.S. born students. The same trend existed for perceived importance of grades to friends (57% to 39% to 33%).

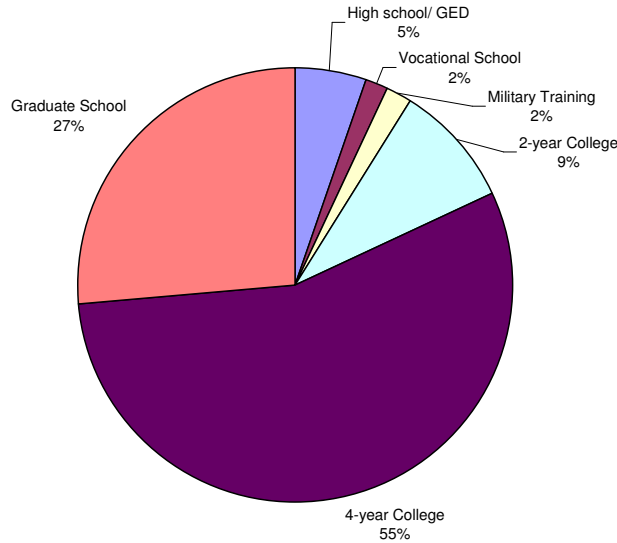
Additional Findings – Importance of Grades

- Students who indicated that grades were very important *to them* were more likely than those who did not to indicate that grades were also very important *to their friends* (47% vs. 16%). Similarly, those who indicated grades were somewhat important to them were more likely to indicate that grades were somewhat important to their friends (63% vs. 44%).
- White students were less likely than non-whites to indicate that grades were very important to them (59% vs. 73%) or to their friends (20% vs. 40%). The same was true when comparing boys to girls (self: 68% vs. 75%; friends: 33% vs. 43%).
- African students were more likely than others to indicate grades were very important to them (92% vs. 71%).
- Students in single-parent homes were less likely than others to indicate grades were very important to them (68% vs. 74%).
- Students who felt grades were very important were less likely (24%) to be truant than those who felt they were somewhat (44%) or not at all important (57%).
- Students who reported that they spent less than an hour per day on homework were less likely than those who spent more time to indicate grades were very important to them (65% vs. 80%) or to their friends (32% vs. 47%), as were those who were truant more than three days in the previous four months (self: 55% vs. 77%; friends: 30% vs. 38%).
- The minority of students who reported that they did not try to do well on the MCAS were less likely than those who did to indicate grades were very important to them (67% vs. 71%).
- No association was found between importance of grades to self and age or grade level.
- No association was found between perceived importance of grades to friends and: grade level, household type, or grades earned in school.

Future Education and Career Goals

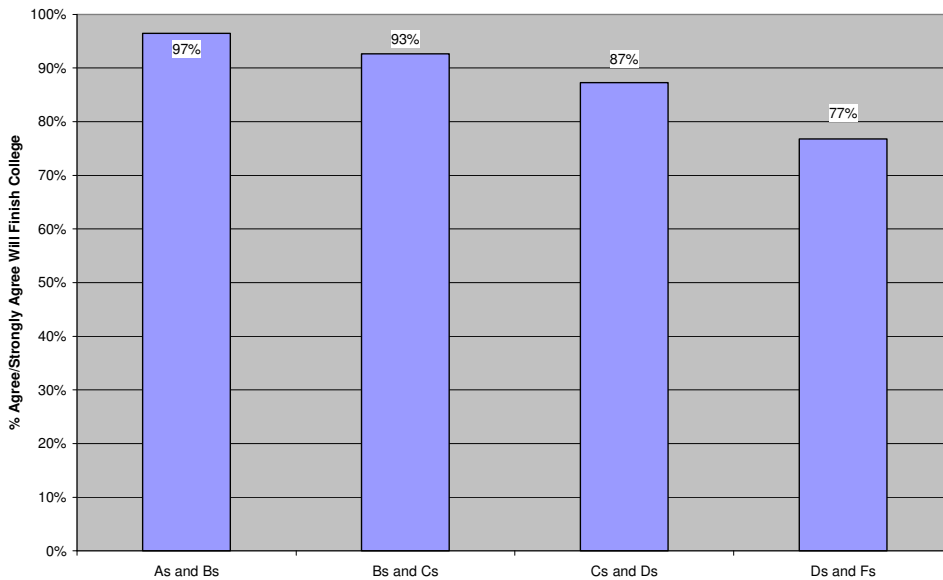
Students were asked, “*What is the highest year of school you would like to complete?*” with the possible responses listed in the chart below. Interestingly, nearly all youth (95%) aspired to continue their education after high school. More than half of respondents (55%) planned to attend a four-year college, and more than a quarter (27%) hoped to complete graduate school. Nine percent (9%) of students reported that they wished to complete a 2-year college program; the remaining 4% wanted to continue their educations with military training (2%) or vocational school (2%).

What is the highest year of school you would *like* to complete in your future?



Students also were asked about their confidence in successfully completing future goals such as graduating from high school and finishing college. Nearly all (97%) of the students who reported receiving As and Bs in the past year believed they will achieve their education goals, compared to 77% of students receiving Ds and Fs – still a high percentage. Girls were more likely than boys to believe they will successfully carry out their future plans.

Grades and Confidence in Attaining Future Education Goals

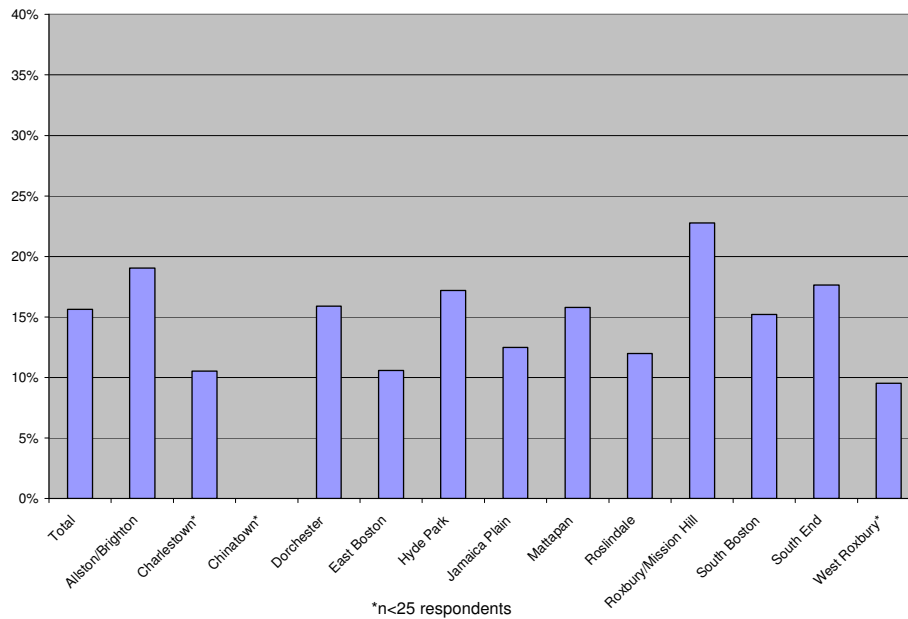


Finally, respondents were asked “*Where do you get information about college?*” Nearly half of respondents (46) reported obtaining information from high school teachers, followed by parents (42%) and the internet (41%).

Sources of Information about College	Percent who get information about college from source
High School Teachers	46%
Parents	42%
Internet	41%
High School Counselors	36%
Siblings	27%
Community Center	15%
At least 3 sources	34%

Common sources of information varied by neighborhood. The chart below displays percentages reporting use of the various resources for 13 neighborhoods. Students living in Roxbury/Mission Hill were most likely to rely on community-based counseling programs to find out about education options, followed by Allston/Brighton.

Percent using community-based counseling programs to find out about education alternatives after high school



Additional Findings – Future Education and Career Goals

- The vast majority of respondents (96%) believed they will graduate high school. Most also believed they will finish college (91%) and get a job they really want (91%).
- Asian students were more likely than non-Asian students to report planning to attend a four-year college (91% vs. 74%).
- A greater percent of 11th and 12th graders (80%) than 9th (70%) or 10th (76%) graders reported planning to attend a four-year college.
- Students who thought the MCAS was too hard were less likely to report planning to attend a four-year college (67%) than those who thought it was just right (81%) or those who thought it was too easy (87%).
- Students who reported that they tried to do well on the MCAS were more likely to report planning to attend a four-year college than those who did not report this (78% vs. 60%), as were those who spent more than an hour per day on their homework (85% vs. 69%).

- These students were also more likely than those who did not try hard to believe they will finish high school (96% vs. 80%) and college (91% vs. 80%).
- Youth who reported receiving lower grades were less likely to report that they planned to attend a four year college. However, more than half (57%) of those getting mostly Ds and Fs did plan to attend a four-year college. Eighty-five percent (85%) of those getting mostly As and Bs had this goal, compared to 78% of those getting Bs and Cs, and 67% of those getting Cs and Ds.
 - The more important grades were to a student, the more likely they were to plan to attend a four year college. (Grades reported as: very important: 81%; somewhat important: 69%; neither important nor unimportant: 41%; not at all important: 13%).
 - Students living in the U.S. four years or less were less likely than others to believe they will finish high school (92% vs. 96%). There was no difference between Americans and immigrants that have been living here longer than four years.
 - Hispanics and Latino/Latinas were less likely than others to believe they will finish college (88% vs. 94%).
 - Blacks were more likely than others to believe they will get a job they really want (94% vs. 90%).
 - Students who reported spending more time on their homework were more likely than those who reported spending less time to believe they will finish college (96% vs. 89%), as were those who were not truant in comparison to those who were (93% vs. 88%).
 - Future education plans were not associated with: sex, age, years lived in the U.S., or truancy.
 - There was no association between believing one will finish high school and: gender, race, grades, time spent on homework, truancy,
 - There was no association between believing one will finish college and years lived in the U.S.
 - There was no association between believing one will get a job one really wants and: grades, time spent on homework, truancy, or effort on the MCAS.
 - There was no association between any of these future goals and age or grade level.

III. HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Although children and teens are generally physically healthier than other age groups, they still face some serious health issues. If children are not healthy, their ability to learn and mature socially and emotionally may be compromised. Asthma, on the rise, is now the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children under age 15 and accounts for 14 million school absences annually.³ The steady rise of childhood obesity and the accompanying increase in childhood diabetes is also a cause for serious concern, considering the physical and psychological negative health impacts of early onset disease and being overweight. Obese children are at risk of developing cardiovascular problems and orthopedic abnormalities and often must live with damaging effects on their social and psychological development.⁴ Being an overweight child also increases one's probability of becoming an overweight adult, creating a situation of lifelong health as well as social concerns. All children should have access to medical and dental care, including annual routine health visits to screen for problems before they become serious.⁵ Participation in regular exercise is psychologically and socially healthy as well and has strong physiological and preventive benefits. In the short term, teens who exercise build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, can control their weight, and have greater energy and stronger immune systems. They are also more likely to experience a sense of mastery and have positive self- and body-images. These benefits create long-term positive results, such as a decreased risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and colon cancer,⁷ as well as long-term habits of exercise and self-care.

Respondents in the 2004 Survey were asked multiple questions about routine medical exams, participation in sports and exercise, nutrition, body mass index, and general health. The table below provides an overview of annual medical care, percent overweight or obese, and routine exercise habits by respondents characteristics for the 2004 sample. Overall, almost 9 out of 10 students (87%) reported that they had had a physical exam in the previous year; over three-quarters reported having had a dental exam in the past 12 months – a relatively high percentage, but one that needs improvement. Only slightly over one-third (39%) of youth reported exercising as often as 4 or more days per week. Over one-third (35%) of youth in the sample were either overweight or obese, based on their body mass index. U.S. born teens were significantly more likely than non-U.S. born teens to report that they exercised regularly, but also were more likely to be overweight or obese than non-U.S. born teens. As years lived in the U.S. increased among immigrant youth, percent overweight or obese increased as well, from 23% of those living in the U.S. less than five years, to 31% of those in the U.S. five or more years, to 39% of those born in the U.S.

³ National Center for Environmental Health. *Asthma's impact on children and adolescents*. www.cdc.gov/nceh/airpollution/asthma/children.htm, 6/4/03.

⁴ Gidding, S., Leibel, R., Daniels, S., Rosenbaum, M., van Horn, L., & Marx, G. *Understanding obesity in youth*. American Heart Association Medical/Scientific Statement, 1996. <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/94/12/3383>, 6/4/03.

⁵ <http://www.aafp.org/afp/980501ap/montalto.html>

⁶ American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

⁷ Childtrends Databank. *Vigorous physical activity by youth*.

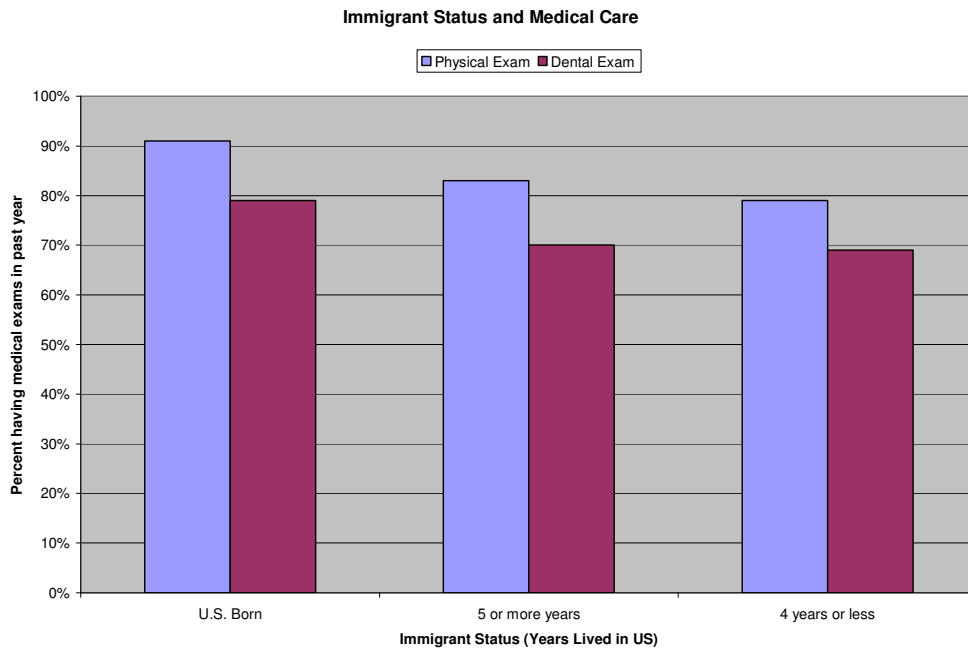
<http://childtrends databank.org/health/behaviors/16physicalactivity.htm>, 6/4/03.

	Health Care		Obesity	Exercise
	% Had a physical exam last year	% Had a dental exam last year	% Overweight or Obese	% Exercise 4 or more days/week
Total	87	76	35	39
Gender				
Boys	86	76	35	54*
Girls	89	74	35	28
Years Lived in U.S.				
U.S. born	91*	79*	39*	42*
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	83	70	31	39
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	79	69	23	30
Grade Level				
9 th grade	88	81*	32	48*
10 th grade	86	76	38	38
11 th grade	88	71	34	32
12 th grade	87	68	45	27

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

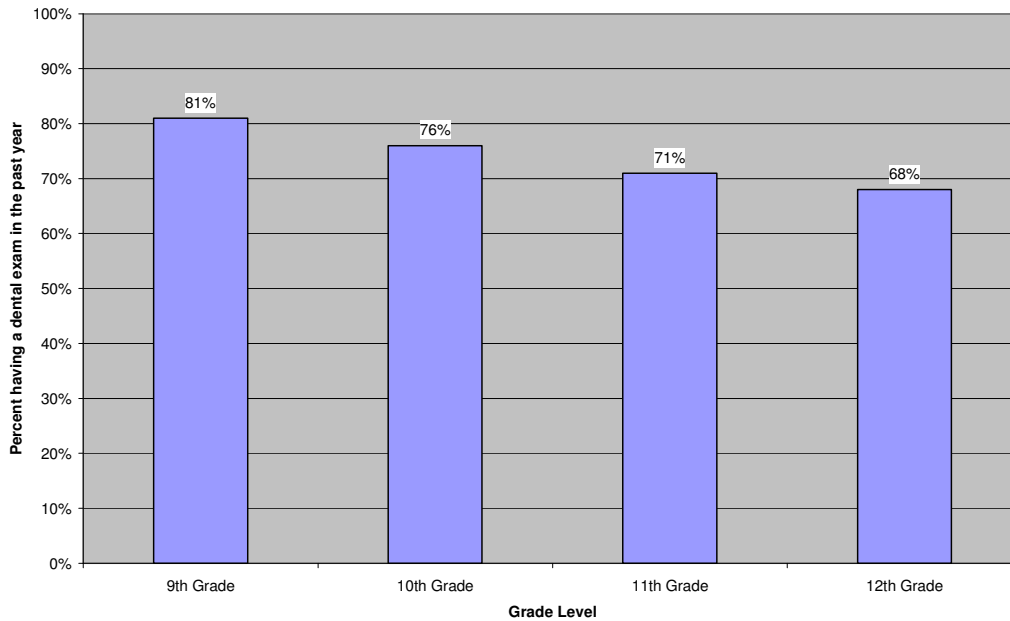
Medical and Dental Exams

Whether or not a student had received a medical or dental exam in the previous year varied by immigrant status and grade level (see following two charts). The less time lived in the U.S., the less likely the respondent had a physical exam or dental exam in the past year.



Students in higher grades were less likely to have had an annual dental exam in the year prior to the survey. Fewer students in 12th grade (68%) than younger grades (81% of students in 9th grade, 76% in 10th grade, and 71% in 11th grade) had made a dental visit in the preceding year.

Grade Level and Dental Exams



Additional Findings – Medical and Dental Exams

- Youth who lived in more than one household were less likely than those who did not to have had a physical exam in the past year (81% vs. 89%).
- Youth who lived in a two-parent household were more likely than others to have had a dental exam in the past year (78% vs. 74%).
- Asian youth were less likely than others to have had a physical exam in the past year (71% vs. 89%), and Blacks were more likely (93% vs. 85%).
- White youth were more likely than others to have had a dental exam in the past year (89% vs. 74%), and African youth were less likely (58% vs. 77%).
- Having a physical exam in the past year was not associated with: gender, age, grade level, or grades.
- Having a dental exam in the past year was not associated with gender.

Weight and Obesity

Weight and obesity issues for children and teens have assumed new urgency as the percent of overweight youth in the U.S. continues to rise. Excess weight among youth is associated with potentially damaging social implications during their formative developmental years, restricted ability and interest in physical activities, and serious risk of physical disabilities and disease in childhood and young adulthood.

The *Body Mass Index (BMI)*, a relative measure combining height and weight, is commonly used to define whether an individual's weight is in a healthy range (see description of calculation, below). This measure will be used in reporting the findings that follow and throughout the Report.

BMI is calculated by: (1) multiplying weight in pounds by .45 (to convert measurement to kilograms), (2) multiplying height in inches by 0.025 (to convert to meters), (3) squaring the height in meters, and (4) dividing the weight in kilograms by the number obtained in step 3.

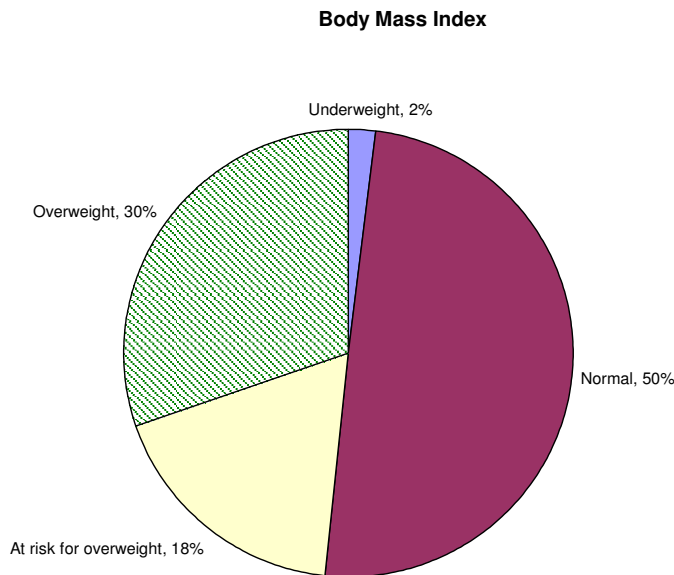
For children and adolescents up to age 20, the BMI is divided into four categories:

- (1) *Underweight*: BMI less than or equal to the 5th percentile of all children the same age and gender
- (2) *Normal weight*: BMI between 5th and 84th percentiles of children the same age and gender
- (3) *At-risk for overweight*: BMI between 85th and 94th percentiles of children the same age and gender, and
- (4) *Overweight*: BMI above the 95th percentile. (The term *obese* is not used to categorize BMI findings for individuals under age 21.)

Examples:

- A 15 year-old girl who is 5'5" tall would be categorized as *underweight* if she weighed less than 98 pounds (BMI<16.3), *normal weight* if she weighed 99-144 pounds (BMI=16.3-24), *at risk for overweight* if she weighed 144-169 or more pounds (BMI=24-28.1), and *overweight* if she weighed 170 or more pounds (BMI>28.3).
- A 17 year-old boy who is 5'8" would be *underweight* if he weighed less than 117 pounds (BMI<17.7), *normal weight* if he weighed 117-164 pounds (BMI=17.7-24.9), *at risk for overweight* if he weighed 164-185 pounds (BMI=24.9-28.2), and *overweight* if he weighed 186 or more pounds (BMI>28.2).

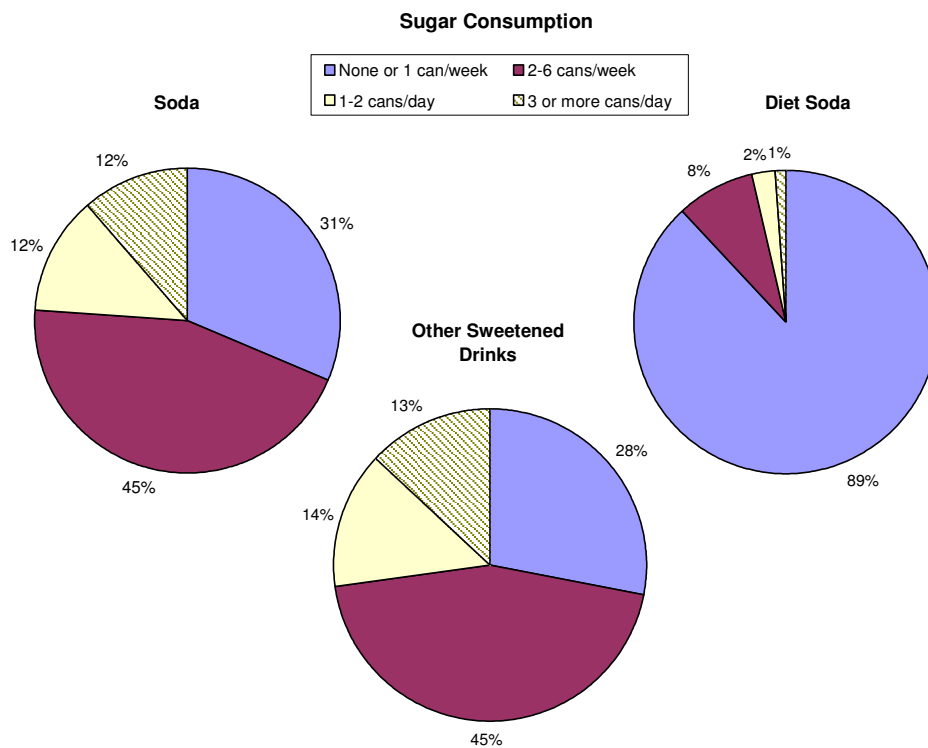
Respondents to the 2004 BYS were asked to provide their height and weight, which were then used to compute their BMI when survey results were analyzed. Nearly half (48%) of all respondents for whom we had full information (only 8% of respondents were missing) were either overweight or at-risk-for-overweight. Boys were more likely than girls to be overweight or at-risk (52% vs. 45%). Younger students (grades 9 and 10) also were more likely than older students to be at-risk or overweight (50% vs. 43%).



Additional Findings – Weight and Obesity

- Asian youth were less likely than others to be overweight or at-risk (30% vs. 50%), whereas black youth were more likely (53% vs. 46%).
- The percent of youth who were overweight or at-risk was higher among students receiving mostly Cs, Ds, or Fs (53%), compared to students earning Bs and Cs (51%) or As and Bs (39%).
- Students who spent less time on their homework were more likely to be overweight or at-risk than those who spent more time (52% vs. 44%), as were students who reported being truant compared to students who did not report truancy (53% vs. 44%).
- Being overweight or at-risk for overweight was not associated with years lived in the U.S.

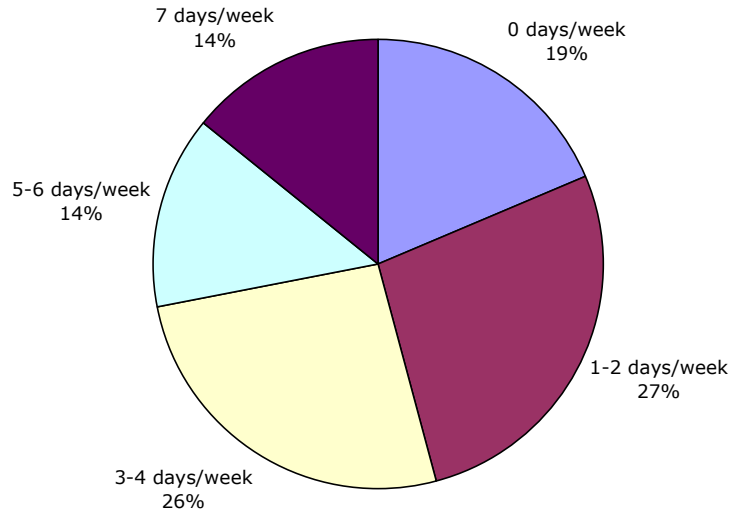
Limiting excess sugar consumption also is a concern of medical, school, and health professionals and is associated with Type II Diabetes and other serious health concerns. Sweetened drinks constitute the primary source of added sugar in the daily diet of youth. In the 2004 BYS, only 13% of respondents reported that they drank one can or less of soda or other sugary beverages a week. An overlapping 11% of the sample reported drinking two or more cans of diet soda per week, over and above their consumption of sugared beverages.



Exercise

Respondents were asked, “On how many of the past 7 days did you exercise or participate in physical activity for at least 20 minutes that made you sweat and breathe hard, such as basketball, soccer, running, swimming laps, fast bicycling, fast dancing, or similar aerobic activities?” More than half of the sample (54%) reported that they exercised at least 3 days per week. Almost all boys (89%) reported that they did some type of exercise at this level at least once a week, compared to three-quarters (75%) of girls.

How often do you exercise?*



* “Exercise” was defined as participating in physical activity that made you sweat and breathe hard for at least 20 minutes

Additional Findings – Exercise

- Asian youth were less likely than others to report that they exercised at least once a week (64% vs. 83%).
- Youth living in the U.S. less than five years were less likely than others to report that they exercised at least once a week. (73% vs. 83%).
- Youth who reported that they did not plan to pursue additional education after high school were less likely to report that they exercised at least once a week than those who reported plans to pursue additional education (65% vs. 82%).
- Youth who scored high on the depression scale were less likely than those who did not to report that they exercised at least once a week (77% vs. 87%).
- Youth in higher grade levels were less likely than those in lower grades to exercise (88% vs. 82% vs. 72% vs. 67%, in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, respectively.)
- Exercise was not associated with: household type, grades, time spent on homework, or truancy.

IV. OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

Young people spend more of their time out of school than in school. How they spend these hours can have a dramatic effect both on their academic success and their social and emotional development. More than many other factors, a lot of time spent “hanging out” is a key indicator of risk for youth. When children and youth have too much unsupervised free time, they are much more likely to engage in risky behaviors like crime, substance use and abuse, and sexual activity.⁸ Peer relationships become increasingly important as children grow into adolescence. The Search Institute identifies positive peer influence – best friends who model positive, responsible behaviors – as one of forty developmental assets essential to healthy development.⁹ However unstructured time with peers may have detrimental effects academic engagement and achievement as well as, not surprisingly, participation in structured activities, a major vehicle for exposing youth to positive peer and adult role models.¹⁰

Structured out-of-school time programs enhance the emotional, social, and physical development. Children who attend high quality after-school programs develop more constructive peer relationships, have better emotional adjustment and conflict resolution skills, and demonstrate better behavioral conduct in school compared to their peers who are not in after-school programs.¹¹ For teens, involvement in organized activities increases the likelihood that they will weather the storms of adolescence successfully. Participation in organized sports, arts and enrichment activities, religious activities, or community service is linked to a variety of positive outcomes including increased self-esteem, and improved academic engagement and performance. Youth who are involved in sports, participate in community service, or who attend religious services also reduce the risk that they will use alcohol and other drugs.¹²

⁸ Jordan, W., & Nettles, S.M. (1999). How students invest their time out of school: Effects on school engagement, perceptions of life chances, and achievement. Washington, D.C. Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk.

⁹ www.search_institute.org/assets/forty.htm (8/23/01)

¹⁰ Jordan, W., & Nettles, S.M. (1999). *How students invest their time out of school: Effects on school engagement, perceptions of life chances, and achievement*. Washington, D.C. Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk.

¹¹ Jordan, W., & Nettles, S.M. (1999). *How students invest their time out of school: Effects on school engagement, perceptions of life chances, and achievement*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk.

¹² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2001). Teen Sports Participation and Substance Use Among Youths, February 8, 2002. http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/2K2/athletes_druguse.htm, 6/2/02.

National Commission on Service Learning. (2001). Learning in deed: The power of service-learning for American schools. <http://servicelearningcommission/slcommission/report.html>, 6/4/03.

Winner, E., & Hetland, L. (2000). *The arts and academic achievement: What the evidence shows*. Boston: Reviewing Education and the Arts Project. <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/research/reap/htm>, 6/4/03.

Bridges, L.J., & Moore, K.A. (2002) *Religious involvement and children's well-being: What the research tells us (and what it doesn't)*. Child Trends Research Brief. Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.

The benefits of being involved in organized activities as an adolescent, however, do not stop when a young person enters adulthood. Adolescents who participate in the arts, for example, reach higher levels of educational attainment as adults.¹³ Youth who participate in community service are more likely to vote, volunteer as adults, and have a strong work ethic.¹⁴ In contrast, teens who spend a lot of time watching television or playing video games are less likely to spend time on homework, exercise, or participation in enriching activities. Teens who watch several hours of television daily tend to have lower grades and test scores than those who watch moderate amounts¹⁵ and higher rates of obesity.

Some current research on the impact of computers on learning suggests that children with access to computers at home demonstrate increased math and reading skills. Access to a home computer and the Internet creates the potential for learning; those that have a computer at home report using it for school work, information research outside of schoolwork, and checking the news, sports and weather.¹⁶ Although supervision of computer use is needed, it is important to strive for equity of access to tools that will enhance educational achievement and future success. Currently, Asian and white children are more likely to have Internet access at home than are black and Latino children.¹⁷ This "digital divide" means that many black and Hispanic children are denied the technology that may enhance their academic achievement and general knowledge base.

The table below displays results from 2004 Survey questions on participation in after-school activities and sports teams, after-school employment, television watching habits, and time spent surfing the internet or playing video games. Overall, over half of the total sample (59%) reported playing on a sports team during the previous year and about one-third reported participating in after-school activities or being employed after school. Boys were more likely than girls to report that they had played on a sports team or that they worked after school. Although 57% of this sample reported spending less than one hour a day on homework, half of the sample (50%) reported that they watched television three hours or more on an average school day, while nearly half – 42% – reported that they surfed the internet or played video games three or more hours on an average school day. U.S. born teens were more likely than non-U.S. born teens to report that they watched television three or more hours on an average school day.

¹³ Zaff, J.F., O'Neill, S.A., & Eccles, J.S. (2002). *What does arts participation in adolescence predict on early adulthood?* Washington, D.C: Child Trends, unpublished paper, as cited at www.childtrendsdatbank.org/family/school/36achoolarts.htm, 6/4/03.

¹⁴ Morgan, W., & Streb, M. (2001). *The Impact of Service-Learning on Political Participation*. <http://pro.harvard.edu/papers/037/037008MorganWill.pdf> as cited at www.childtrendsdatbank.org/family/school/volunteering.htm, 6/4/02.

National Commission on Service Learning (2001). *Learning in deed: The power of service-learning for American schools*. <http://servicelearningcommission/slcommission/report.html>, 6/4/03.

¹⁵ Childtrends Databank. *Watching Television*. <http://childtrendsdatbank.org/eduskills/behaviors/55WatchingTV.htm>, 6/4/03.

¹⁶ Childtrends Databank. *Home computer access and internet use*. <http://childtrendsdatbank.org/eduskills/assets/69HomeComputerUse.htm> 6/4/03

¹⁷ Newburger, E.C. Home computers and internet use in the United States: Special studies. *Current Population Reports*, P23-207, U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau, August 2000.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/p23-207.pdf> 6/4/03

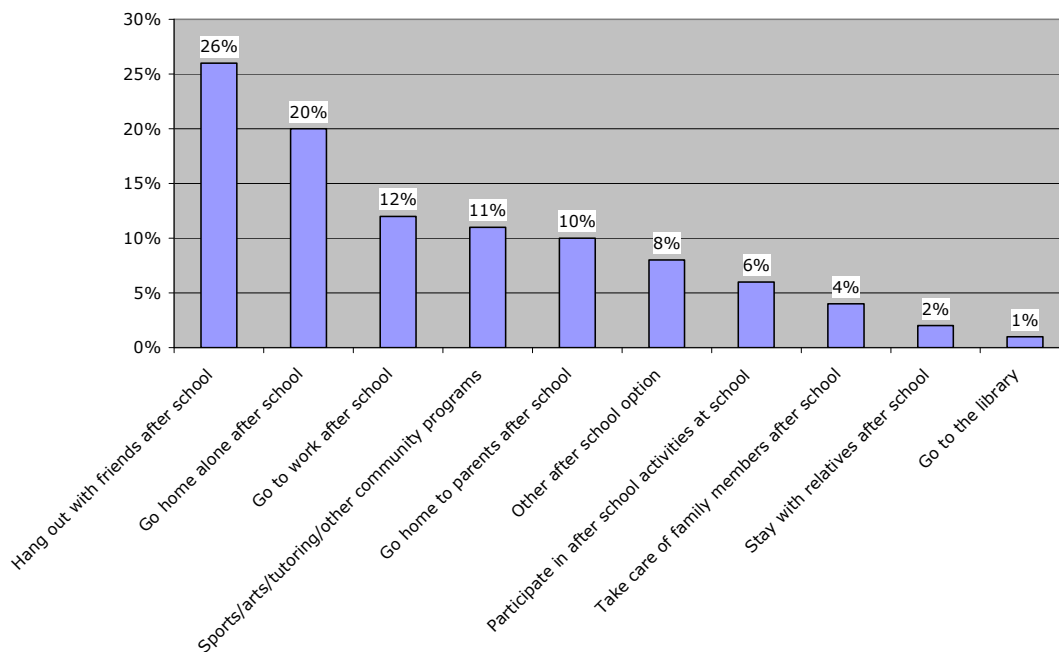
	After-School	Sports	Work	Television	Computer Use
	% Participate in after-school activities	% Played on sports team (past year)	% Work after school	% Watch 3 or more hrs/day	% Surf internet or play games 3 or more hrs/day
Total	33	53	32	50	42
Gender					
Boys	32	59*	35*	52	43
Girls	34	37	29	49	42
Years Lived in the U.S.					
U.S. born	33	45	30	52*	42
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	36	46	37	48	38
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	32	54	36	38	48
Grade Level					
9 th grade	29	47	20	56	44
10 th grade	36	46	31	51	38
11 th grade	36	48	51	38	44
12 th grade	31	45	47	51	45

*indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

After-School Activities

Respondents were asked, “What do you do most of the time after school? Pick only one activity” and if they participated in after-school activities. When asked to characterize what they most often did after school, over one-quarter (26%) of students said they hung out with friends; one-fifth (20%) said they went home immediately after school.

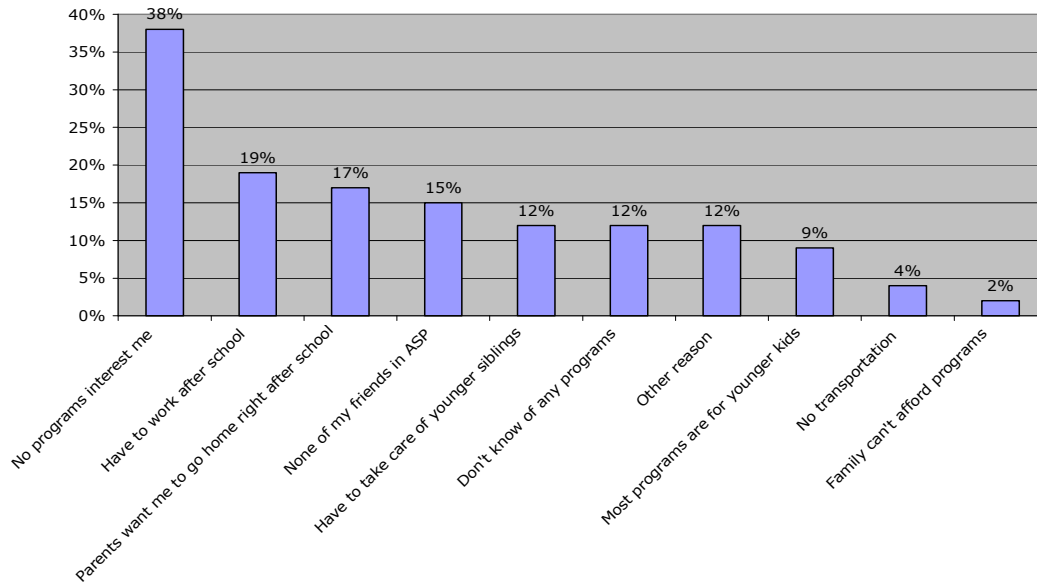
What do you do most of the time after school?



* Note: Students were allowed to select only one response.

Overall, only one-third (33%) of respondents indicated they participated in after-school programs. Those who did not participate were asked, “If you do *not* participate in an after-school program, club or activity, why not?” and asked to pick one or more of the possible barriers on the following chart. Over one-third (38%) of respondents to this question gave lack of interest in available programs as their reason for non-participation. Although approximately one-third (32%) of youth reported they work after school, only 19% said this was a barrier to participation in after-school activities. Seventeen percent gave parents wanting them to go home after school as the reason for non-participation.

Barriers to Participation in After-School Programs*



*Of those who responded to this question (N=976), 33% indicated they do participate in after-school programs and were thus excluded from this analysis

Respondents also were asked, “If you *ARE* interested in attending an after-school program, what kind of program would you participate in? (Check all that apply)” as well as what kinds of programs were available in their neighborhoods.

As the table below shows, there is an apparent gap between youth interests and currently available programming for youth in several areas. For example, although nearly one-third (31%) of the entire sample said they would be interested in after-school music programs, only 19% said such programs are available in their neighborhoods. Gaps were also evident in photography (18% vs. 5%) and web design (15% vs. 8%).

	Percent interested in this kind of program	Percent indicated program is available in their neighborhoods
Music	31	19
Dance	30	28
Photography	18	5
SAT Prep	18	19
Intramural Sports	18	19
Web Design	15	8

Drama	14	12
Martial Arts	14	17
Tutoring	13	34
MCAS Prep	13	22
Peer Leadership or Support	12	17
Visual Arts	11	9
Creative Writing	10	6
Stress Management	8	5
Other	10	18
Not interested in after-school program	16	N/A

Note: These percents are out of the entire sample; missing data were *not* excluded.

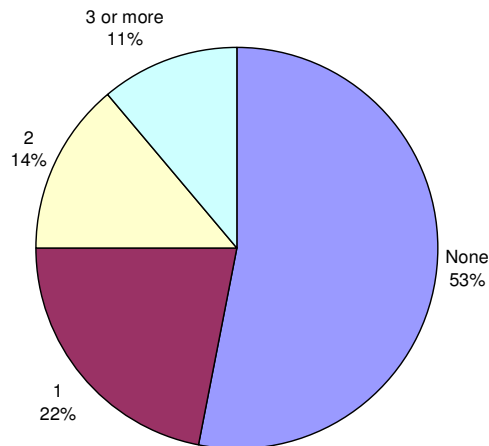
Additional Findings – After-School Activities

- White students were more likely than others to participate in after-school activities (42% vs. 32%), and Asian students were less likely (22% vs. 34%).
- Participation in after-school activities was not associated with: gender, years lived in the U.S., grade level, age, Body Mass Index, or truancy.

Sports

Nearly half of respondents (47%) reported that they had played on a sports team and 64% reported participating in a sports-related activity during the previous year.

How many sports teams were you on last year?



The table below provides more detail on the type of activities reported by youth in the 2004 sample.

Activity	% On a Team (past year)	% Lessons, Camp or Other Related Activity (past year)
None	45	36
Baseball/Softball	13	15
Basketball	19	27
Football	9	13
Gymnastics	1	2
Ice Hockey	2	1
Soccer	7	10
Swimming	4	8
Tennis	1	3
Track and Field	9	8
Volleyball	4	6
Sailing	1	1
Lacrosse	1	N/A
Cheerleading	3	N/A
Judo/Karate	N/A	2
Ballet	N/A	1
Other Dance	N/A	9
Ice Skating	N/A	3
Other Activity or Team	5	8

Note: These percents are out of the entire sample; missing data (N=72) were **not** excluded.

Respondents were also asked a series of specific questions about possible barriers to participation in sports or other physical activities. The following table shows the eight questions that were asked, followed by the percent indicating the potential barrier was not a problem for them. The majority of students did not face significant obstacles to participating in sports or other related activities. Proximity of activity was the barrier that seemed most salient for youth in this sample. Half did not have access to activities they like close to home, and one-quarter reported that conditions in their neighborhood made playing near home difficult.

Potential Barrier	% Not a Problem
Near my home, there are programs for sports and activities I like to do.	50
I usually have the equipment I need to exercise or play sports.	64
At my school, there are programs for sports and activities I like to do.	66
I usually feel safe taking the subway or bus to places where I can do sports or physical activity.	67
I usually have a convenient place to exercise or play sports.	69
It is often difficult to walk, run, or play near my home because of things like crime, gangs, and people who will bother me.	74
It is often difficult to walk, run, or play near my home because of things like traffic, construction, and dogs.	76
My parents won't let me participate in sports or physical activities because they think I might get hurt.	91

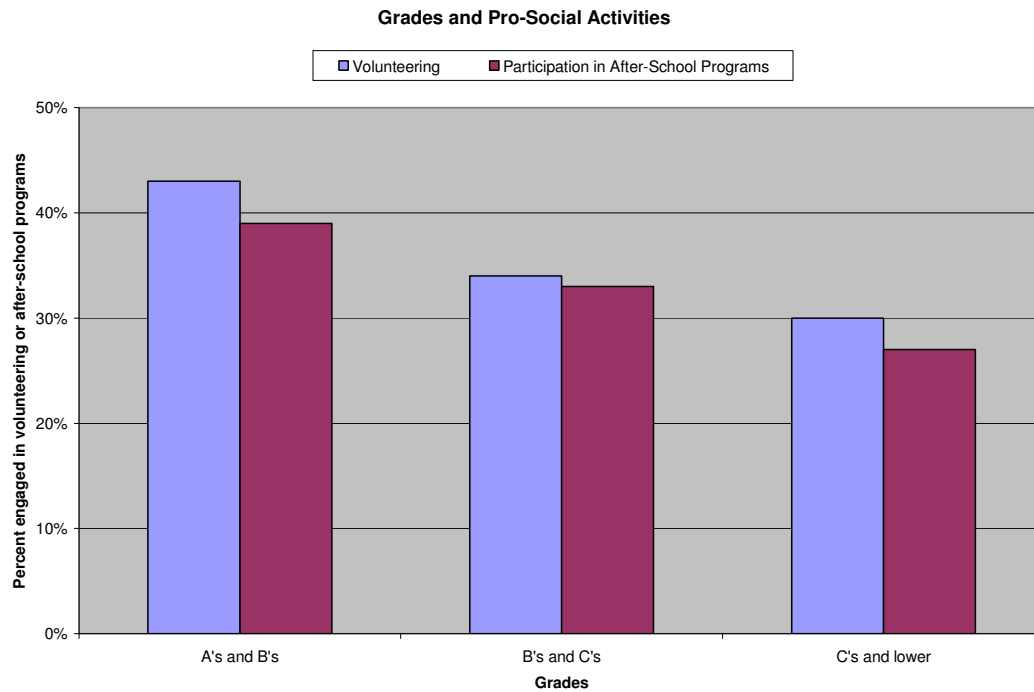
Additional Findings –Sports

- Boys were significantly more likely than girls to report that they had played on at least one sports team in the past year (59% vs. 37%).
- Asian youth were significantly less likely than others to report that they had played on a sports team (22% vs. 49%); Hispanic/Latinos were more likely (52% vs. 45%).
- Youth who reported being were truant were less likely than those who did not report truancy to report that they had played on a sports team in the past year (37% vs. 49%).
- Participation on sports teams was not associated with: years lived in the U.S., grade level, age, or grades.

Volunteering/ Community Service

When asked, “*During the past summer or fall, did you do any volunteer work or community service, through your family, school, faith organization, youth club or some other organization?*” (hereafter referred to just as “volunteering” or “volunteer work”), over one-third (36%) of respondents said yes.

Participation in volunteer and after school activities (“pro social activities”) varied by school achievement; youth with lower grades were less likely than those with higher grades to report volunteering or participation in after school programs.



Additional Findings – Volunteering/Community Service

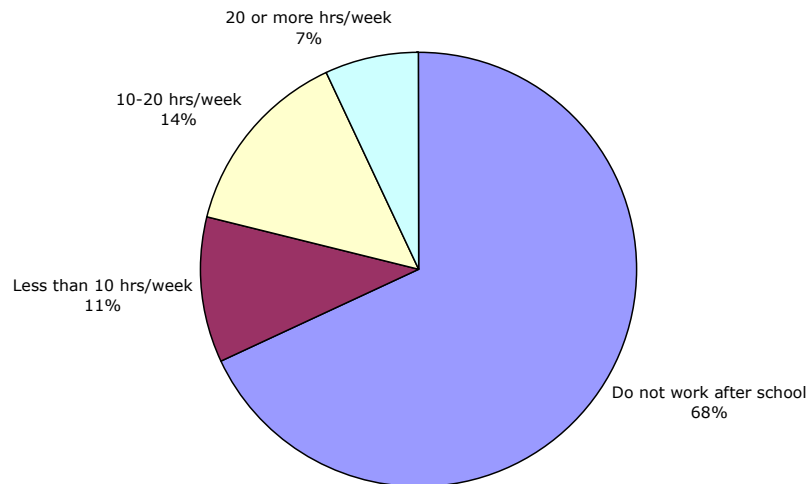
- Volunteering increased with years lived in the U.S. (Lived in U.S. less than 5 years: 20%, Five or more years: 34%, Born in U.S.: 39%).
- Girls were more likely than boys to report that they did volunteer work (42% vs. 29%).

- Students in higher grades (11 and 12) were more likely than students in lower grades (grades 9 and 10) to report that they did volunteer work (43% vs. 32%).
- Whites were more likely than others to report that they did volunteer work (47% vs. 34%), and Hispanic/Latinos were less likely (31% vs. 38%).
- Volunteering was not associated with truancy.

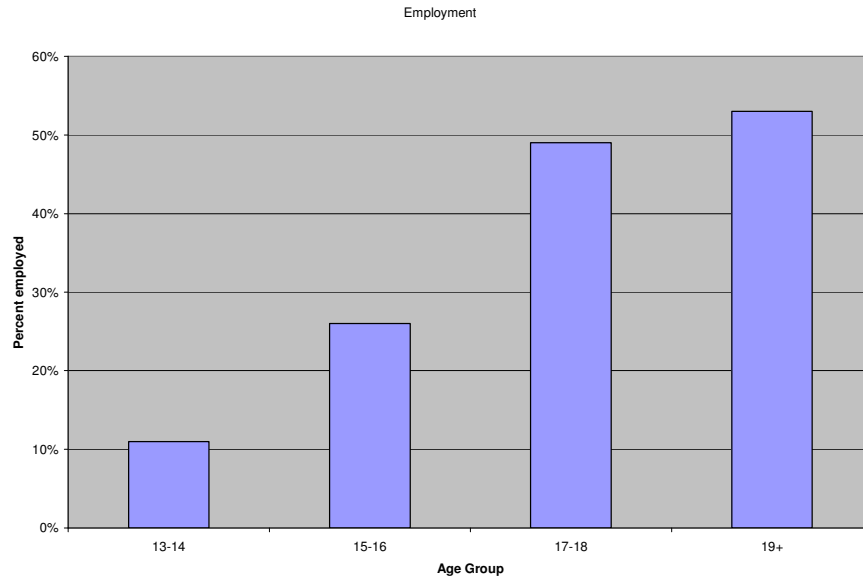
Employment

Students were asked, “If you go to work after school, about how many hours per week do you work?”? The majority (68%) of students did not work after school. Boys were more likely than girls to report working after school (35% vs. 29%). Compared to those who reported that they worked less than 20 hours per week, those who reported that they worked 20 or more hours per week were more likely to: be truant (42% vs. 30%), but to spend more time on their homework (33% vs. 45%).

Student Employment



One-third (32%) of respondents worked after school, a percentage that increased with age.



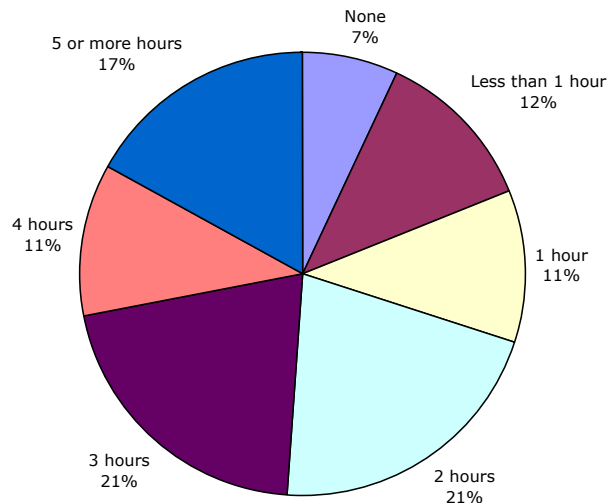
Additional Findings – Employment

- Immigrants were more likely than those born in the U.S. to report that they worked after school (36% vs. 30%).
- Not surprisingly, youth who worked after school were less likely than those who did not to participate in after-school activities (29% vs. 36%).
- Employment was not associated with grades.

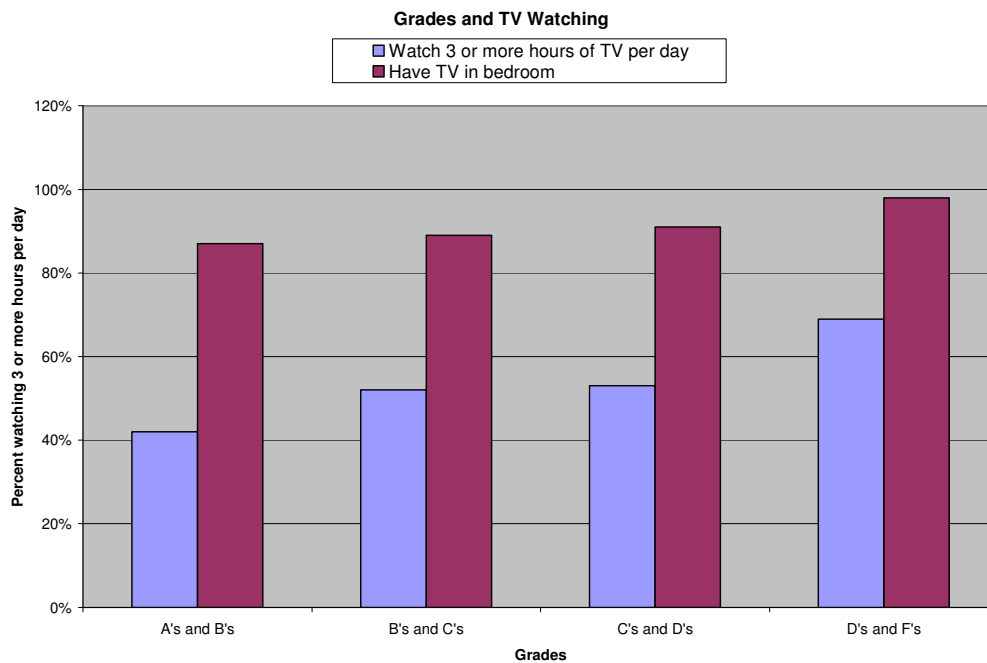
Television Watching

Almost half of the sample (49%) reported that they watched three or more hours of television on an average school day. Students in lower grades (grades 9 and 10) were more likely than students in higher grades (grades 11 and 12) to report that they watched three or more hours of television on an average school day (54% vs. 41%). Ninety percent (90%) of those who answered the question (n=824) had a television in their room at home.

Hours Watching Television on School Days



As displayed in the chart below, a greater percentage of students reporting that they received low grades than students reporting that they received good grades watched three or more hours of television on an average school day.



Students reporting that they received low grades were more likely than students reporting that they received good grades to have a television in their bedroom.

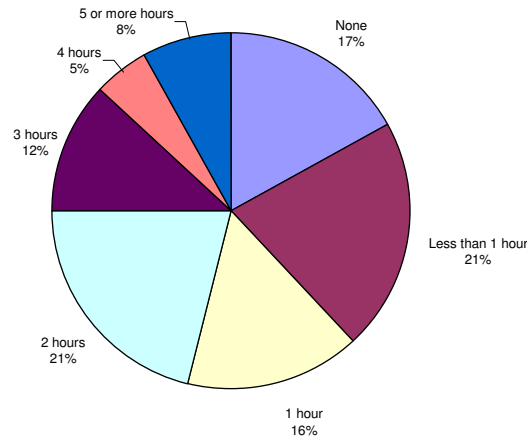
Additional Findings – Television Watching

- Immigrant students were less likely than U.S. natives to report having a television in their bedroom (Lived in U.S. less than five years: 76%; Five or more years: 86%; U.S. born: 93%), and were less likely to report watching 3 or more hours of television on an average school day (Lived in U.S. less than five years: 38%; Five or more years: 48%; U.S. born: 53%).
- Asian students were less likely than others to have a television in their room at home (68% vs. 92%), and African-Americans were more likely (96% vs. 87%).
- Youth who reported that they had a television in their room were more likely than youth who did not who reported that they had a television in their room to watch three or more hours of television per day (54% vs. 36%).
- White students were less likely than others to report that they watched television three or more hours/day (30% vs. 52%), and blacks were more likely (58% vs. 46%).
- Youth who reported spending less time on their homework were more likely to watch television three or more hours daily than youth who reported spending more time (56% vs. 41%), as were youth who reported being truant compared to those who did not report truancy (59% vs. 45%).
- Youth who were overweight or at-risk were more likely than others to report that they watched television three or more hours daily (55% vs. 46%).
- Hours watching television was not associated with gender or exercise.
- Having a television in one's bedroom was not associated with: gender, age, grade level, exercise, or participation in after-school activities or on sports teams.

Use of Technology

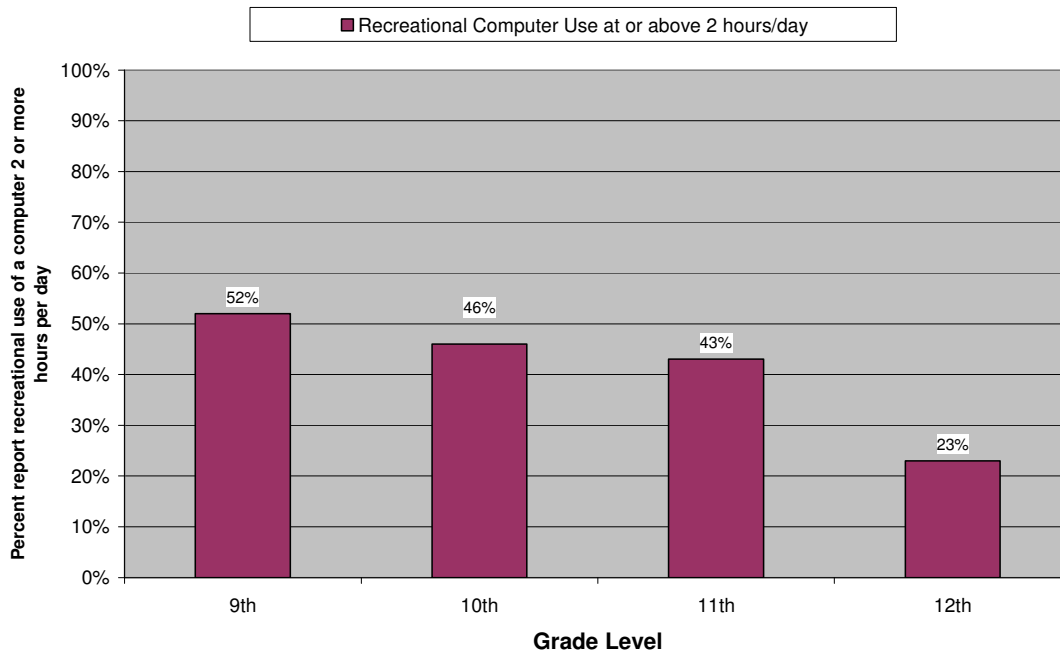
Recreational Computer Use (RCU) is defined as *playing video games, chatting online, or surfing the internet*. These activities increasingly rival television as a source of daily entertainment for children and adolescents, though use varies with age. Respondents in the 2004 Survey were asked, “*On an average school day, about how many HOURS do you play computer or video games OR surf the Internet?*” Almost half the sample (46%) reported spending two or more hours on average school day playing video games, surfing the internet, etcetera. Boys were more likely than girls to spend two or more hours on RCU daily (55% vs. 38%).

Hours Playing Video Games/Surfing the Internet



12th grade students were less likely than students in earlier grades to report that they used a computer recreationally for 2 or more hours per day.

Grade Level and Recreational Computer Use



Additional Findings – Recreational Computer Use

- Asian youth were more likely than others to report that they spent two or more hours daily on RCU (65% vs. 44%), whereas Africans and Cape Verdeans were less likely (30% vs. 47%).
- Youth who reported that they spent less time on their homework were more likely to spend two or more hours daily on RCU than youth who reported spending more time on their homework (48% vs. 43%).
- Youth who reported that they watched three or more hours of television daily were more likely than others to report spending two or more hours daily on RCU (51% vs. 41%).
- RCU was not associated with: years lived in the U.S., Body Mass Index, grades, or truancy.

Other Technology Information

The following table provides more detail on the role of technology in the lives of Boston youth.

	Internet Access	Internet Exposure	Cell Phone	Academic Computer Use
	% Can access internet from home	% Have internet access in their bedroom	% Have own cell phone	% Use computer to do homework at least once a week
Total	74	34	57	54
Gender				
Boys	76	38*	53*	52
Girls	72	31	60	55
Years Lived in the U.S.				
U.S. born	76	32	64*	55
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	74	41	47	55
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	68	31	33	51
Grade Level				
9 th grade	75	33	50*	48
10 th grade	74	32	60	51
11 th grade	76	39	63	65
12 th grade	60	26	69	53

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

Boys were more likely than girls to report having internet access in their bedroom (38% vs. 31%), but less likely to report that they had their own cell phone (53% vs. 60%). Youth born in the U.S. were more likely to own cell phones (64%), followed by those living in the U.S. five or more years (47%) and those living in the U.S. less than five years (33%).

Additional Findings – Other Technology

- The percentage of students reporting owning their own cell phones increased with grade level.
- Eleventh graders were more likely than those in other grades to report that they used a computer at least once a week to do homework (65% vs. 50%)

V. FEELINGS ABOUT SELF AND FUTURE

While teens generally have good physical health, they are at risk for mental or emotional disorders.¹⁸ Common among those is depression – a concern because depressed teens are more at risk for suicide, have more challenges with social and educational functioning, experience poorer physical health, and may have lower academic achievement than non-depressed peers.¹⁹ Even young people whose mental health is typical for teen years face the multiple everyday challenges of being a teenager and must handle stresses posed by the demands of school, family, and friends. The ability to effectively manage stress and solve personal problems without resorting to aggression or self-harm are keys to developing a positive view of their personal future (optimism) and strong self esteem, two of the developmental assets identified by the Search Institute that allow young people to make healthy choices and avoid risky behaviors.²⁰

The 2004 Survey included scales assessing depression and aggression, and individual questions measuring self-esteem and optimism, described in detail in this section. Reports of both depression and self-esteem were high in the 2004 sample and, as you would expect, were inversely related; students reporting higher self-esteem were less likely to report that they were depressed. Overall results by gender and length of residence in the U.S. are summarized in the following table. The majority of both girls and boys in the study reported fairly high self-esteem (70%) and optimism (61%). However, over 40% also scored in the top half of the depression scale. Boys had significantly higher scores than girls on aggression as well as on optimism; girls had higher scores on depression. Boys and girls were not significantly different on self-esteem.

	Depression	Aggression	Self-Esteem	Optimism
	% Scoring 3 or 4 (1=Lowest, 4=Highest) on Depression Scale	% Scoring 3 or 4 (1=Lowest, 4=Highest) on Aggression Scale	% Felt were just as good as others a lot/most/all of the time, past mo	% Felt hopeful about the future a lot/most/all of the time, past month
Total	41	13	70	61
Gender				
Boys	31*	15*	71	67*
Girls	49	11	69	57
Years Lived in the U.S.				
U.S. born	41	16	71	62
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	43	7	73	59
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	37	7	65	60
Grade Level				
9 th grade	39	18	68	60
10 th grade	40	14	76	63
11 th grade	45	8	68	60
12 th grade	41	9	73	68

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

¹⁸ Office of Community Partnerships (2000). *Youth development report: Everybody's out there for youth.*, p.72

¹⁹ Child trends databank. *Adolescents who feel sad or hopeless.*

www.childtrendsdatabank.org/health/mental/30FeelSadorHopeless.htm, 6/4/03.

²⁰ Search Institute. *Forty developmental assets.* www.search-institute.org/assets/forty.htm , 8/23/01.

Depression

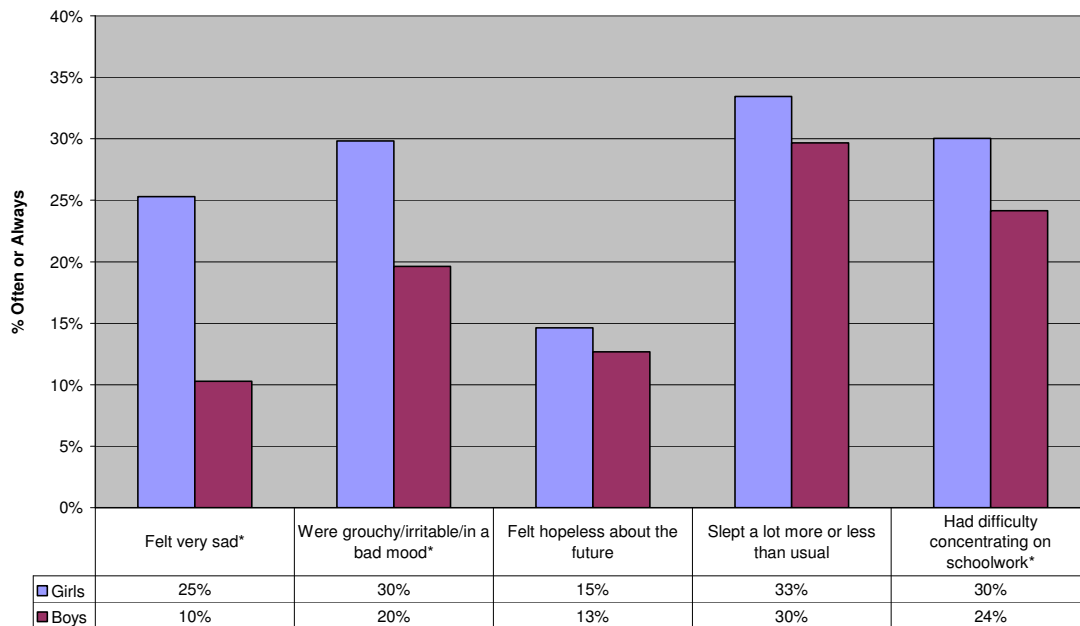
A five-item depression scale was included in the Survey. Each of the five questions had the same five possible answers: *never*, *seldom*, *sometimes*, *often*, or *always*. Respondents were asked: *Now we would like to ask some questions about how life has been for you lately.*

In the past month, how often:

- (1) *Were you very sad?*
- (2) *Were you grouchy or irritable, or in a bad mood?*
- (3) *Did you feel hopeless about the future?*
- (4) *Did you sleep a lot more or a lot less than usual?*
- (5) *Did you have difficulty concentrating on your school work?*

Results for each of these items are reported by gender in the following chart in terms of the percent who indicated they *often* or *always* felt that way in the month prior to the Survey.

In the past month, how often...



*Difference between genders is statistically significant

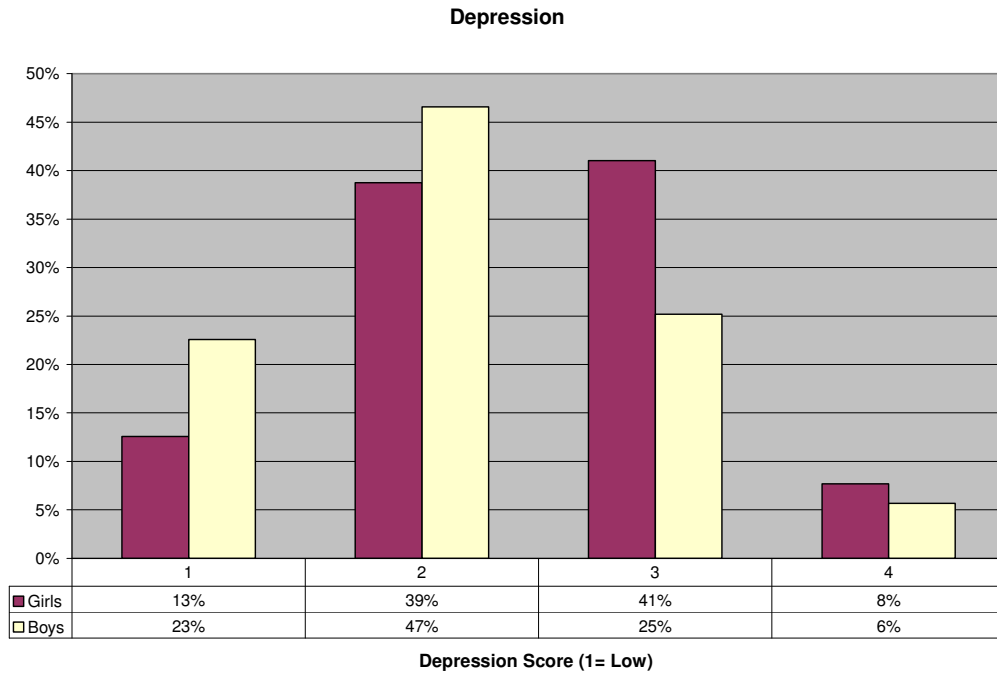
The Depression Scale

Responses to each of the five questions above were assigned a value from 1 to 5, where *never*=1, *seldom*=2, *sometimes*=3, *often*=4, and *always*=5. Responses to the five questions were combined to form a scale ranging from 5 (students who selected “*never*” for all five questions) to 25 (students who selected “*always*” for all five questions). This scale was divided into four categories in order to generate the following four-point scale, used for analyses in this report:

- 1 → Little or no signs of depression (raw scale scores of 5-9)
- 2 → Some signs of depression (raw scale scores of 10-14)
- 3 → Several signs of depression (raw scale scores of 15-19)
- 4 → Frequent signs of depression (raw scale scores of 20-25)

Throughout the Report, ***depression*** is defined as a score of 3 or 4 on this scale.

Girls were significantly more likely than boys to report symptoms of depression in the month prior to the Survey, as shown by a score of 3 or 4 on the scale (49% vs. 31%).



In general, students who were depressed were more likely to report school-related problems.



The percent of respondents with a high depression score was greater among those who felt that getting good grades was “*neither important nor unimportant*” or “*not at all important*” than among those who felt getting good grades was “*somewhat*” or “*very*” important. (There were no responses in the “*somewhat unimportant*” category.)

Additional Findings – Depression

- Students who reported that they received better grades were less likely to be depressed as assessed by the depression scale than students who reported receiving lower grades (As and Bs: 34%; Bs and Cs: 40%; Cs and worse 49%).
- Students who reported being truant were more likely than those reported that they were never or rarely truant to be depressed (51% vs. 36%).
- The more time students spent exercising per week, the less likely they were to be depressed (none: 53%; 1-3 days: 39%; 4 or more days: 35%).
- Youth who were depressed were less likely than those who were not to participate on a sports team (43% vs. 49%).
- Youth who reported that they spent three or more hours per day on recreational computer use were more likely than those who reported that they spent less time on recreational computer use to be depressed (48% vs. 38%).
- Depression was not associated with: age, grade, years lived in the U.S., household type, time spent on homework, future education plans, employment, BMI, hours watching television, volunteering, or participation in after-school programs.

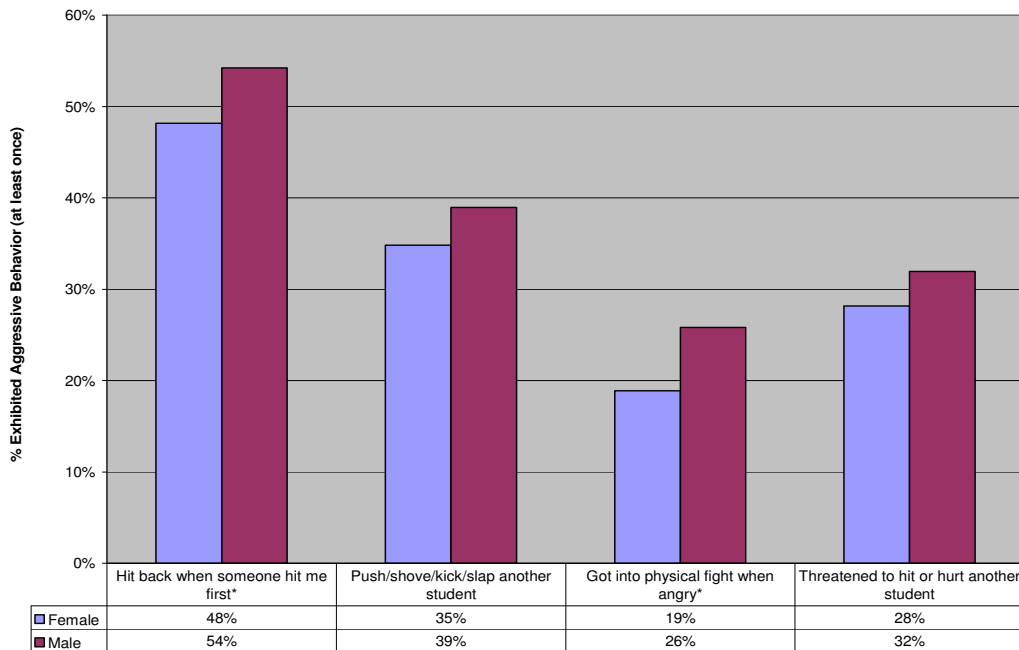
Aggression

The 2004 Survey also included a four-item aggression scale; answers were “Never,” “1-2 times,” “3-4 times” and “5 or more times.” Respondents were asked,

Choose how many times you did EACH of these activities in the past month:

- (1) *Helped someone stay out of a fight*
- (2) *Hit back when someone hit me first*
- (3) *Pushed, shoved, slapped or kicked another student*
- (4) *Got into a physical fight when I was angry*

Results for each item are reported by gender in the following chart. Boys were more likely than girls to exhibit aggression toward others in the previous month, as defined by a score of 3 or 4 on the scale (15% vs. 11%).



*Indicates statistical significance

The Aggression Scale

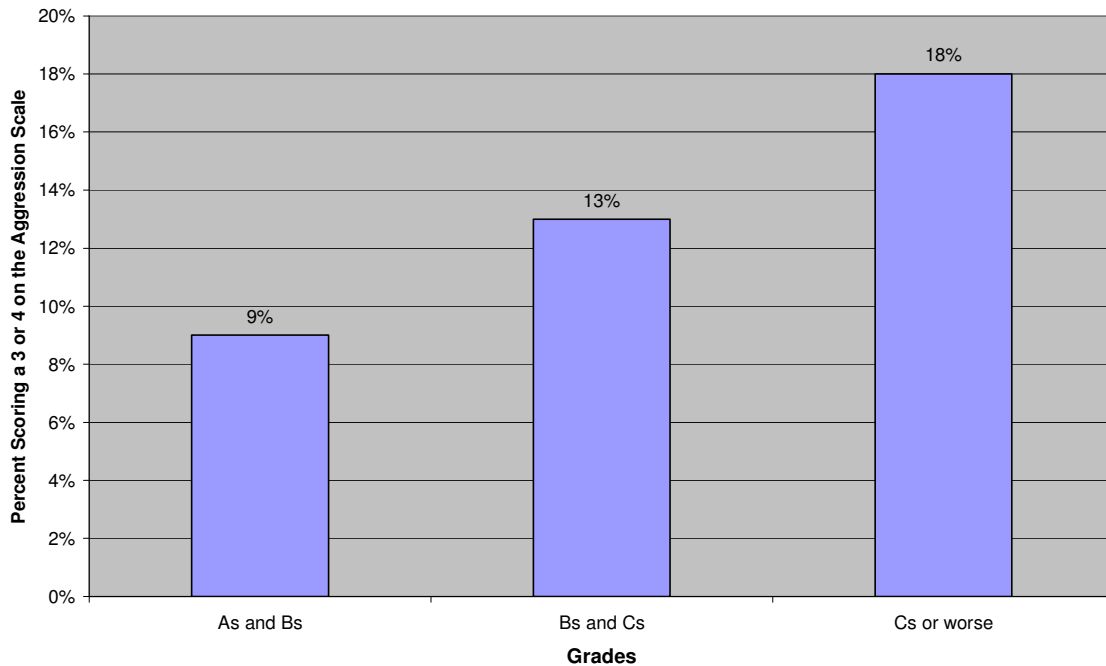
Responses to each question were assigned a value from 1 to 4, where *never*=1, *1-2 times*=2, *3-4 times*=3, and *5 or more times*=4. Responses to the four questions were combined to form a scale ranging from 4 (students who selected “*never*” for all four questions) to 16 (students who selected “*always*” for all four questions). This scale was then divided into four categories in order to generate the following four-point scale, used for analyses in this report:

- 1 → Little or no signs of aggression (raw scale scores of 4-6)
- 2 → Some signs of aggression (raw scale scores of 7-9)
- 3 → Several signs of aggression (raw scale scores of 10-12)
- 4 → Frequent signs of aggression (raw scale scores of 13-16)

In the findings that follow and throughout the Report, **aggression** is defined as a score of 3 or 4 on this scale.

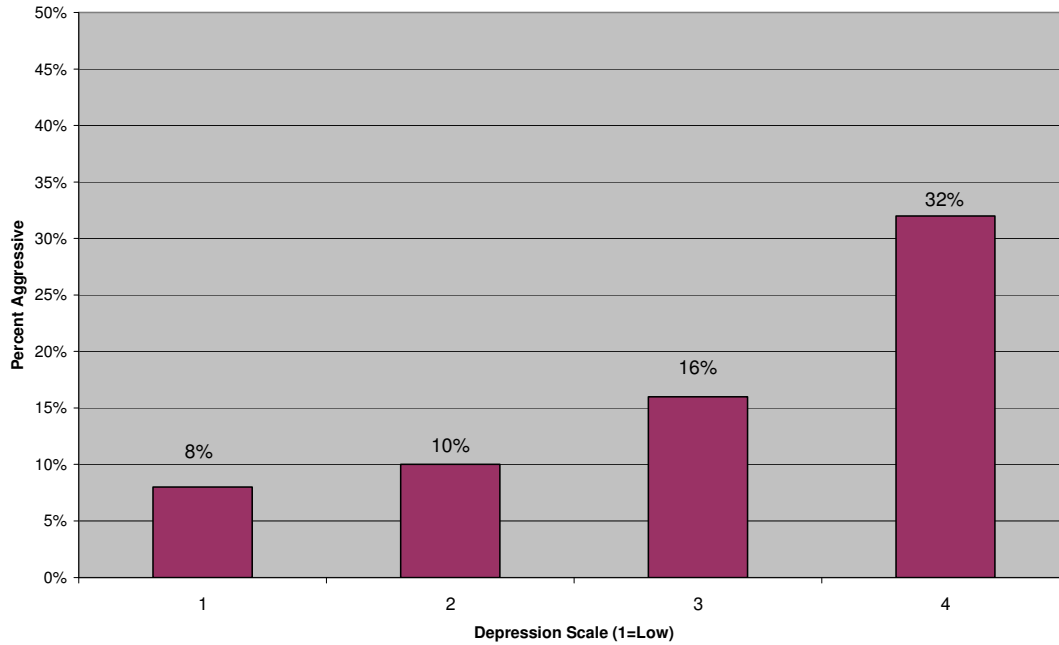
Youth who report having behaved aggressively were more likely to report trouble in school and depression. Approximately one-fifth (18%) of students reporting that they received Cs, Ds, and Fs, as compared to 13% of those reporting that they received Bs and Cs and 9% of those reporting that they received As and Bs, scored high on the aggression scale. Students who reported spending less time on their homework were more likely than those who reported spending more time on their homework to score high on the aggression scale (17% vs. 8%), as were those who reported being truant in comparison to those who did not report truancy (19% vs. 11%).

Aggression and Grades



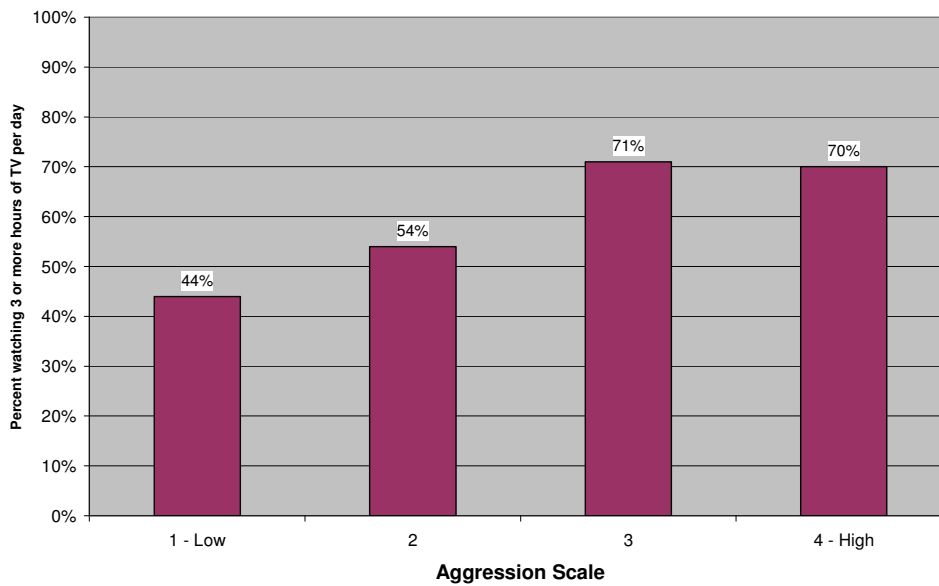
Youth who were more depressed were more likely than those who were less depressed to exhibit higher levels of aggression.

Depression and Aggression



Research suggests that exposure to violent media may make youth more aggressive, desensitize them to violence, and lead them to believe that the world is a dangerous place.²¹ Youth in the Survey who reported more exposure to media also reported higher levels of aggression. Youth who scored higher on the aggression scale were more likely to spend more time on recreational computer use and to report watching 3 or more hours of television per day (43% vs. 31%).

Aggression and TV Watching



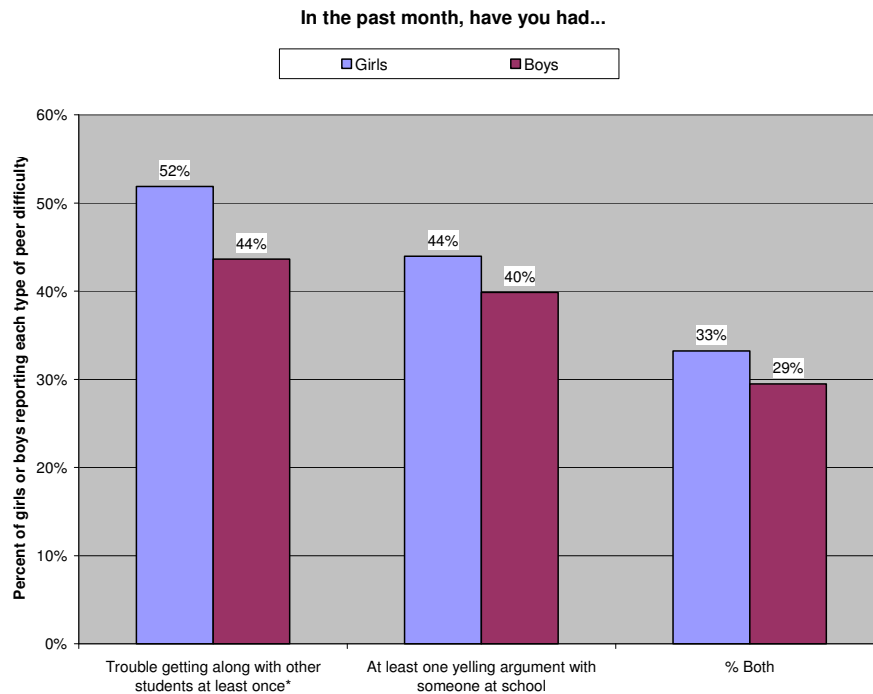
²¹ Robinson, TN, Wilde, ML, Navracruz, LC, Haydel, KF, and Varady, A. Effects of Reducing Children's Television and Video Game Use on Aggressive Behavior: A Randomized Controlled Trial. Archives Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 2001; 155: 17-23

Additional Findings – Aggression

- Youth who were born in the U.S. were more likely than immigrants to exhibit higher levels of aggression (16% vs. 7%).
- Girls were less likely than boys to hit back when hit first (48% vs. 54%), or to get into a physical fight when angry (19% vs. 26%).
- Students in lower grades (grades 9 and 10) were twice as likely to be aggressive as students in higher grades (16% vs. 8%).
- Youth who were aggressive were less likely than those who were not aggressive to participate in after-school activities (23% vs. 35%), and more likely to be overweight or at-risk (56% vs. 46%).
- A greater percentage of those with lower than higher aggression scores did some form of volunteering (37% vs. 27%).
- Aggression was not associated with: race, exercise or sports.

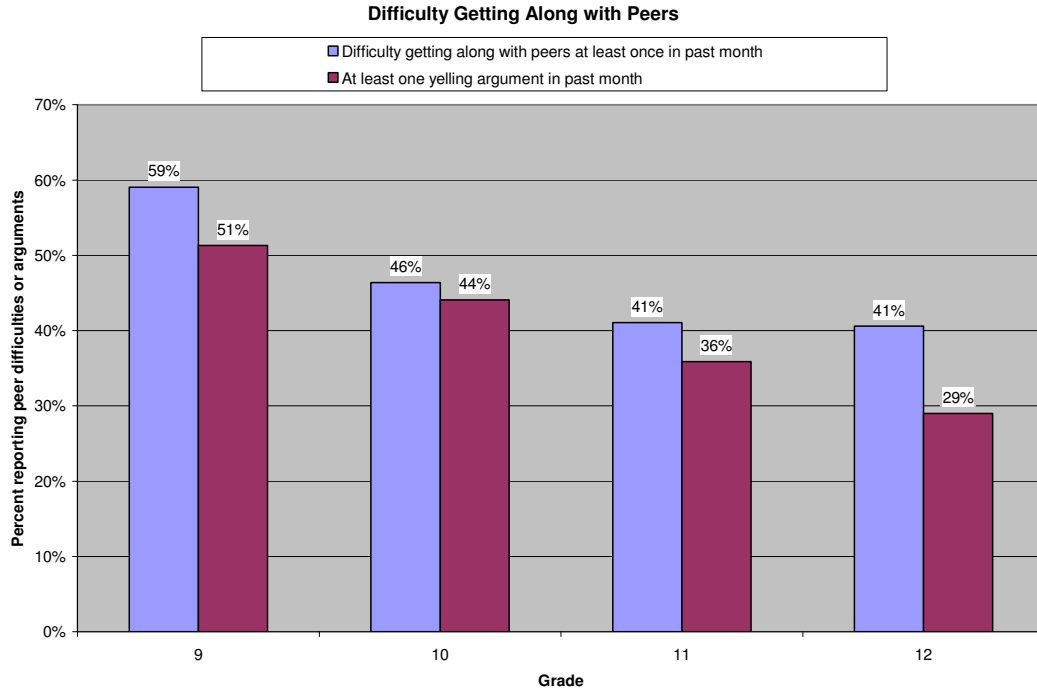
Difficulty Getting Along with Peers

Nearly half (49%) of the sample reported that they had trouble getting along with their peers at least once in the previous month and 43% reported that they had gotten into a yelling argument at school during the previous month. One-third of the sample (33%) indicated that both occurred during the month prior to the survey. Although boys were more likely than girls to report physically aggressive acts, more girls (52%) than boys (44%) reported having trouble getting along with other students in the past month.

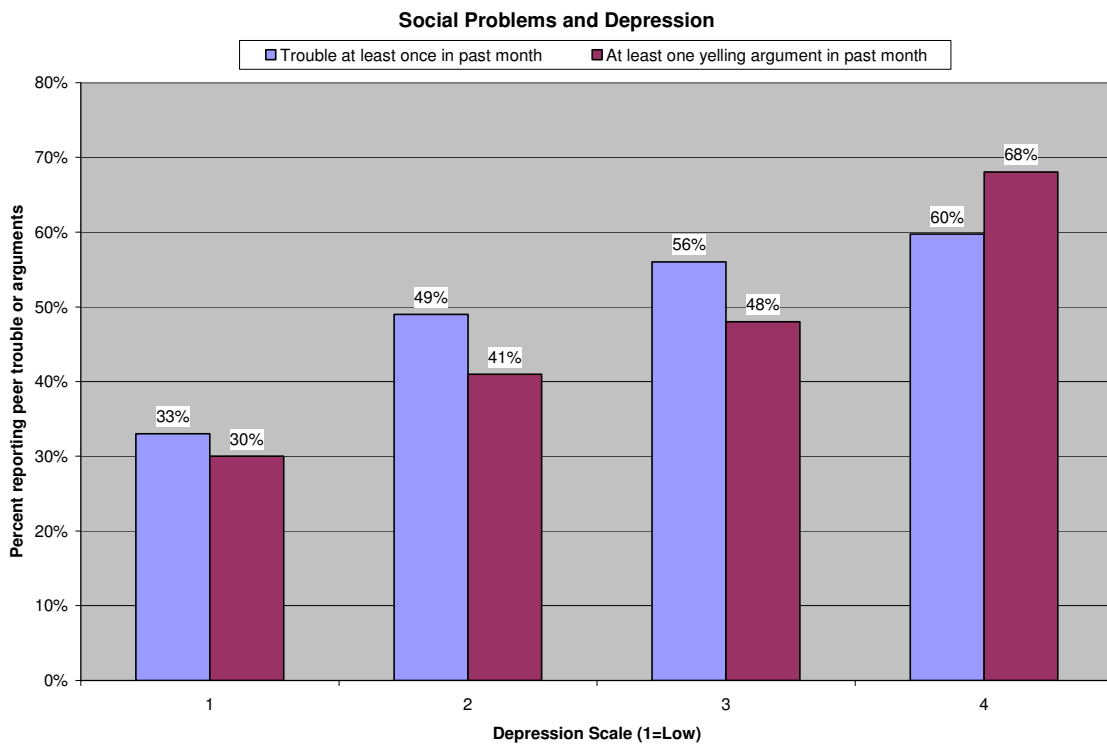


*Indicates statistical significance

As is true of self-reported physical aggression, younger youth were more likely than older youth to report difficulty getting along with their peers. As grade level increased, both the likelihood of having trouble getting along with peers as well as the likelihood of having a yelling argument decreased.



Youth who were more depressed were more likely than those who were less depressed to report having trouble getting along with peers as well as having had a yelling argument at school. U.S. born youth were more likely than immigrant youth to report having trouble with their peers (52% vs. 44%) or getting into a yelling argument at school (46% vs. 35%).



Additional Findings – Difficulty Getting Along with Peers

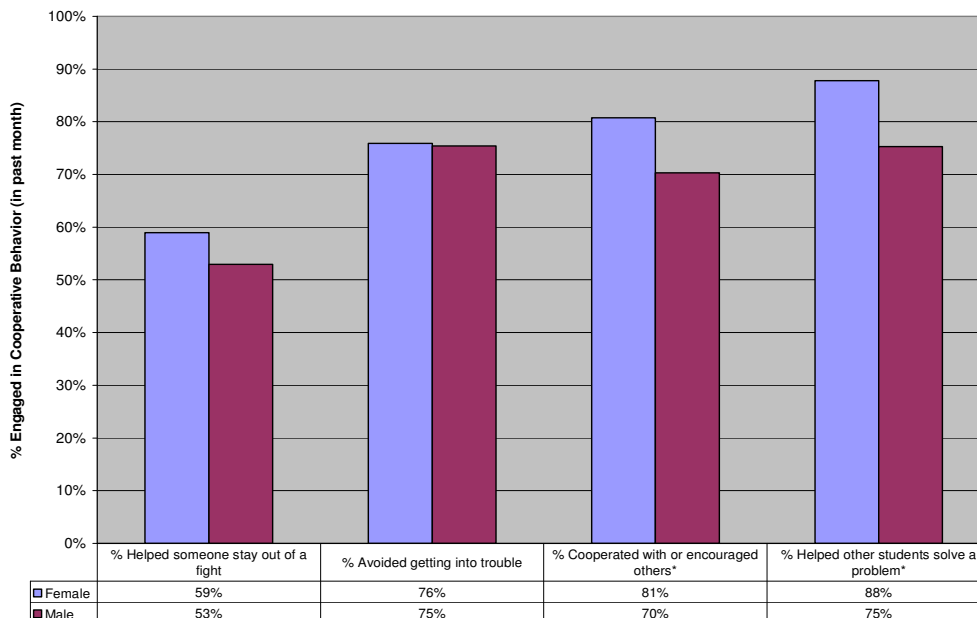
- Asian youth were the least likely to report having trouble with their peers (36%) or getting into a yelling argument (27%).
- As grades decreased, the likelihood of getting into a yelling argument increased, from 36% of those earning As and Bs to 62% of those earning Ds and Fs.
- Youth who reported being truant were more likely than youth who did not report truancy to report having trouble with their peers (53% vs. 47%) and getting into a yelling argument at school (51% vs. 39%).
- Youth who reported having had trouble with peers at least once in the past month were more likely than youth who did not report having trouble with their peers to be overweight or at-risk (52% vs. 43%).
- Youth who reported that they had had a yelling argument at school in the past month were more likely than those who did not report this to report watching television three or more hours daily (54% vs. 46%).
- Having trouble with peers was not associated with household type, grades or participation in after-school activities.

Cooperation

A four-item cooperation scale was also included in the 2004 Survey. Respondents were asked how often in the past month they did each of these activities:

- (1) *Helped someone stay out of a fight*
- (2) *Cooperated with or encouraged others*
- (3) *Helped other students solve a problem*
- (4) *Avoided getting into trouble*

Possible answers were: *Never, 1-2 times, 3-4 times, 5 or more times*. Results for each item are reported by gender below. Of those who answered all 4 questions, girls were more likely than boys to cooperate with or encourage others (81% vs. 70%) and to help other students solve a problem (88% vs. 75%).



*Indicates significant difference between genders

The Cooperation Scale

Responses to each question were assigned a value from 1 to 4, where *never*=1, *1-2 times*=2, *3-4 times*=3, and *5 or more times*=4. Responses to the four questions were combined to form a scale ranging from 4 (students who selected “*never*” for all 4 questions) to 16 (students who selected “*always*” for all 4 questions). This scale was then divided into four categories in order to generate the following four-point scale, used for analyses in this report:

- 1 → Little or no signs of cooperation (raw scale scores of 4-6)
 - 2 → Some signs of cooperation (raw scale scores of 7-9)
 - 3 → Several signs of cooperation (raw scale scores of 10-12)
 - 4 → Frequent signs of cooperation (raw scale scores of 13-16)
- Cooperation** is defined as a score of 3 or 4 on this scale.

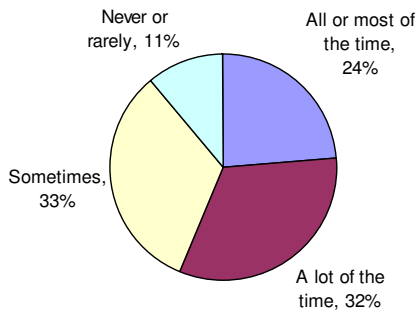
Additional Findings – Cooperation

- Students in lower grades (grades 9 and 10) were less likely than students in higher grades to be cooperative (41% vs. 48%).
- Students who cooperate were more likely than those who did not to participate in after-school activities (37% vs. 30%), as well as to volunteer (42% vs. 31%).
- Students who were less cooperative were more likely than those who were more cooperative to have trouble getting along with peers (56% vs. 43%), as well as to have a yelling argument at school (50% vs. 37%).
- Cooperation was not associated with: gender, years lived in the U.S., grades, truancy, recreational computer use, employment, or sports.

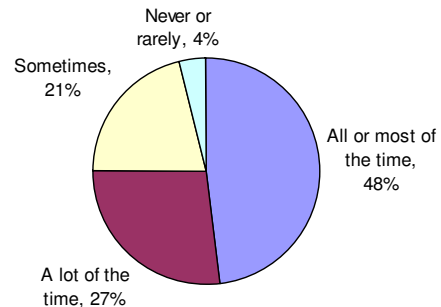
Self-Esteem

In the 2004 Survey, self-esteem was measured by a single question. This question was embedded in a group of questions about relationships and well-being. When asked, “*During the past month, did you feel that you were just as good as other people?*,” 70% of respondents answering this question (14% of the sample is missing) said they felt this way “*a lot, most, or all of the time.*” Importantly, this percentage was greater among those who felt able to confide in at least one parent or guardian (48% of those who said *most or all of to the time*) and lower among those who did not (24% of those who said *most or all of to the time*). Throughout this section “higher self-esteem” or “feeling just as good as others” will be used to refer to those who said they felt they were just as good as others a lot, most, or all of the time during the past month.

Relationship between having a parental confidant and how often respondent feels s/he is just as good as others

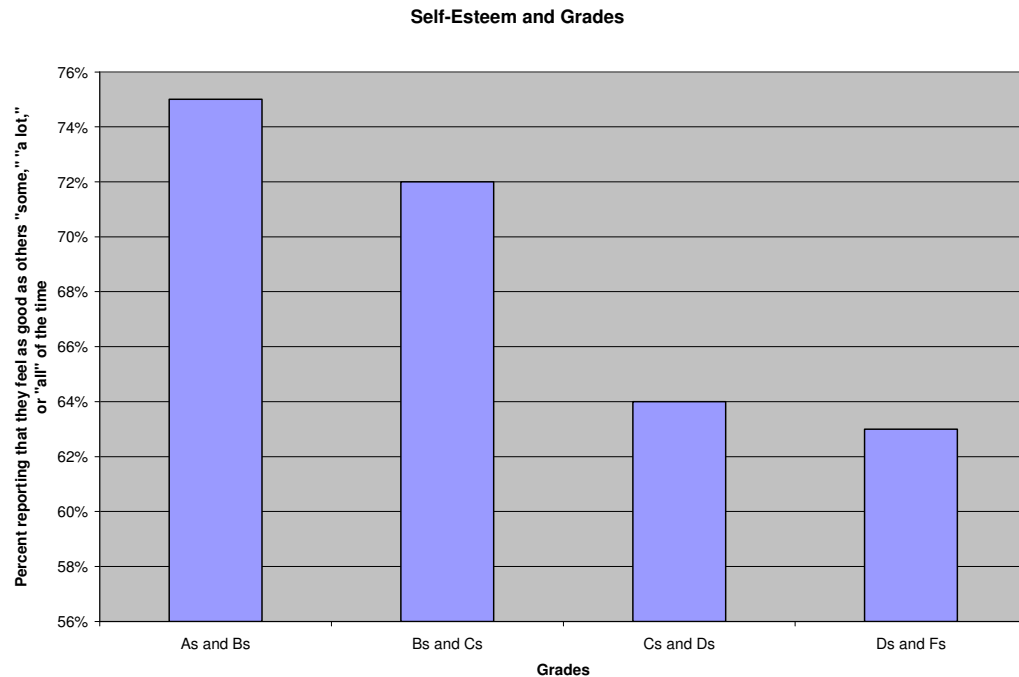


Respondent **can not** talk to at least one parent/guardian about most things



Respondent **can** talk to at least one parent/guardian about most things

Youth who reported receiving better grades were more likely than those reporting receiving lower grades to have higher self-esteem.



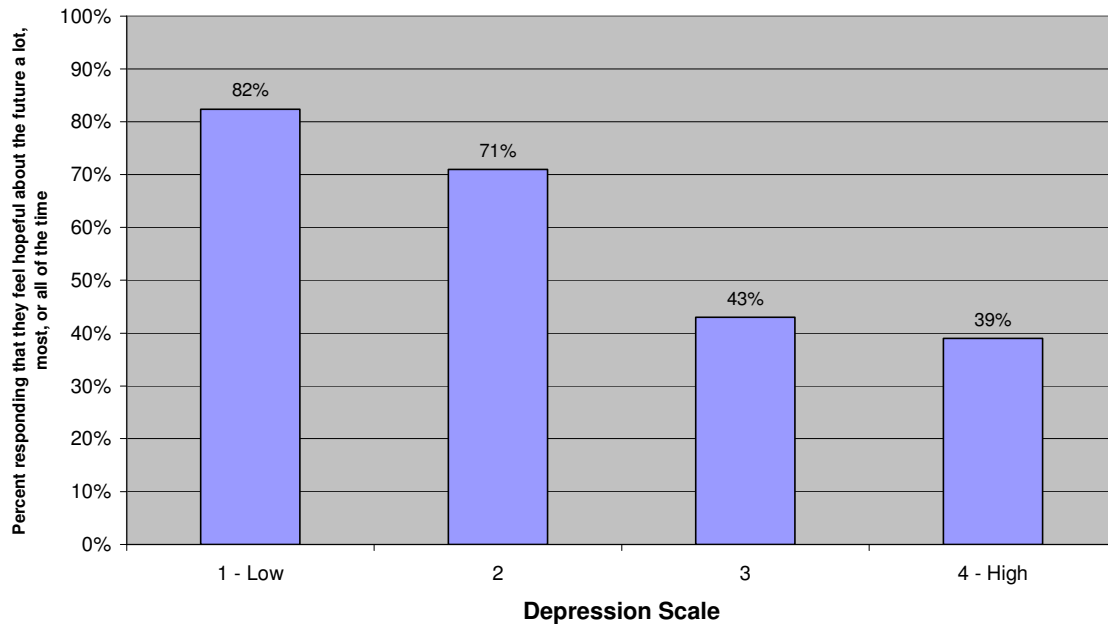
Additional Findings – Self Esteem

- Blacks were more likely than others to feel they were just as good as others a lot or most of the time (77% vs. 68%), and Asians were less likely (59% vs. 71%).
- Youth who reported being truant were less likely than youth who did not report truancy to feel just as good as others (67% vs. 73%).
- Youth who reported that they felt they were just as good as others were less likely than those who did not report this to be depressed (34% vs. 56%), and more likely to be cooperative (48% vs. 37%).
- Youth who reported that they had had trouble with peers were less likely to feel just as good as others as youth who did not report this (67% vs. 74%).
- Youth who reported that they felt safe in their neighborhoods were more likely than those who reported that they did not feel safe in their neighborhoods to feel they were just as good as others (72% vs. 65%).
- Self-esteem was not associated with: gender, years lived in the U.S., grade level, age, household type, aggression, having a yelling argument at school, or participation in after-school activities or on sports teams.

Optimism about the Future

As with the high percentages reporting fairly high self high esteem, when asked, “*During the past month, did you feel hopeful about the future?*,” 61% of respondents (14% missing) said they felt hopeful about the future “*a lot, most, or all of the time.*” Boys were more likely than girls to feel hopeful about the future (67% vs. 57%). Not surprisingly, youth who reported more optimism about the future were less likely than those with less optimism to be depressed.

Depression and Hopefulness About the Future



Additional Findings – Optimism about the Future

- Blacks were more likely than others to feel hopeful about the future (67% vs. 59%), while Asians were less likely (47% vs. 63%).
- Youth with more optimism about the future were more likely than those with less optimism to report receiving better grades.
- Youth who reported being truant were less likely than those who did not report truancy to feel hopeful about the future (57% vs. 63%).
- Youth who reported having trouble with peers were less likely to feel hopeful about the future than youth who did not report having trouble with peers (58% vs. 64%), as were those who reported having had a yelling argument at school (58% vs. 64%).
- Youth who reported that they had ever hit or tried to hurt someone were less likely than youth who had not to feel hopeful about the future (54% vs. 63%), as were those who reported that they had ever threatened to hit or hurt someone (55% vs. 65%).
- Youth who reported that they participated in after-school activities were more likely than those who did not report participating in after-school activities to feel hopeful about the future (65% vs. 59%).
- Feeling hopeful about the future was not associated with: years lived in the U.S., age, grade level, household type, aggression, cooperation, or playing on a sports team.

VI. VIOLENCE

Violence in our communities affects the lives of young people in many ways. The fear of violence may keep them from playing outdoors, crossing neighborhood boundaries, moving around the city, and taking advantage of resources and activities. Fear of assault on the way to and from school or at school can lead to school absences and decreased academic achievement.²² Violence at home also leaves some teens without a safe refuge and may lead to depression, anger, withdrawal, negative peer affiliations, aggression against others, and difficulty in school. The psychological harm of witnessing violence and the physical and emotional injuries that occur when one is a victim of violence may have longer-term effects as well. Experiencing violence as a teenager puts children and adolescents at increased risk of developing substance abuse, mental health, and relationship problems.²³ Teens who have witnessed or been victims of violence also are at risk to be violent in future relationships.²⁴

Youth in the 2004 Survey were asked about their own perpetration of aggression, as well as aggression and violence they might have witnessed or experienced. In assessing *perpetration*, youth were asked if they had ever “*had attacks of anger when all of a sudden you lost control and actually hit or tried to hurt someone?*” and if they “*ever had attacks of anger when all of a sudden you lost control and threatened to hit or hurt someone?*” Youth also responded to a series of questions about *witnessing* or *victimization* (They were asked “*not to include things that you may have seen on TV, radio, the news, the Internet, or in a movie.*”)

Questions on **witnessing** asked whether respondents had *seen someone being*:

- (1) *Threatened or chased when you thought there was serious risk of harm*
- (2) *Hit, slapped, punched, or kicked*
- (3) *Attacked with a weapon, like a knife or bat. (This does not include getting shot or shot at!)*
- (4) *Shot (This does not include seeing someone shot with a BB gun or any type of toy gun, like a paint ball gun or air rifle.)*

Similarly, questions on **victimization** asked whether the respondent had been:

- (5) *Threatened or chased when you thought there was serious risk of harm*
- (6) *Hit, slapped, punched, or kicked*
- (7) *Attacked with a weapon, like a knife or bat. (This does not include getting shot or shot at!)*
- (8) *Shot. (This does not include seeing someone shot with a BB gun or any type of toy gun, like a paint ball gun or air rifle.)*

The following terms are used in this section:

- *Exposure to violence* – means a teenager had had at least one of the experiences listed above (questions 1-8) in the past year;
- *Witnessing violence* – means a teenager had had at least one of the witnessing experiences listed above (questions 1-4) in the past year; and

²² Child Trends Databank. *Youth who feel unsafe at school.*

www.childtrendsdatabank.org/family/school/38UnsafeatSchool.htm, 6/4/03.

²³ Menard, S. (2002). *Youth violence research bulletin: Short- and long-term consequences of adolescent victimization*: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojdp/191210.pdf>, 6/4/03.

²⁴ Wordes, M., & Nunez, M. (2002). *Our vulnerable teenagers: Their victimization, its consequences, and directions for prevention and intervention*: National Council on Crime and Delinquency: 13. <http://www.ncvc.org/teens/> 6/4/03

- *Direct Victimization/ Directly Victimized by Violence* – means a teenager had had at least one of the victimization experiences listed above (questions 5-8) in the past year.

When asked about exposure to the four types of violence, over three-quarters (87%) of respondents (8% of the sample missing data for this question) reported witnessing one or more acts of violence in the past year; nearly half of the respondents (44%) reported one or more types of victimization (13% missing data). Given that witnessing was twice as common as victimization, a more conservative cutoff for witnessing was used throughout these analyses: results are reported comparing those who witnessed *two or more* types of violence, instead of one or more (used for analyses on victimization). Over one-third of girls and one-half of boys had been victimized at least once in the prior year. Over two-thirds of girls and three-fourths of boys had witnessed violence at least twice in that time frame. About one-quarter of the overall sample reported that they had they tried to hit or hurt someone at some time.

	Exposure to Violence**	Victimization**	Witnessing**	Perpetration
	% Witnessed or victimized by at least one type of violence in past year	% Experienced at least 1 type of violence in <u>past year</u>	% Witnessed at least 2 types of violence in <u>past year</u>	% <u>Ever</u> tried to hit/hurt someone
Total	89	44	71	24
Gender				
Boys	91	53*	75*	25
Girls	87	36	67	22
Years Lived in the U.S.				
U.S. born	90	46*	73*	27
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	90	41	68	17
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	80	36	59	18
Grade Level				
9 th grade	91	49	74	24
10 th grade	88	45	70	24
11 th grade	87	35	69	23
12 th grade	90	52	72	24

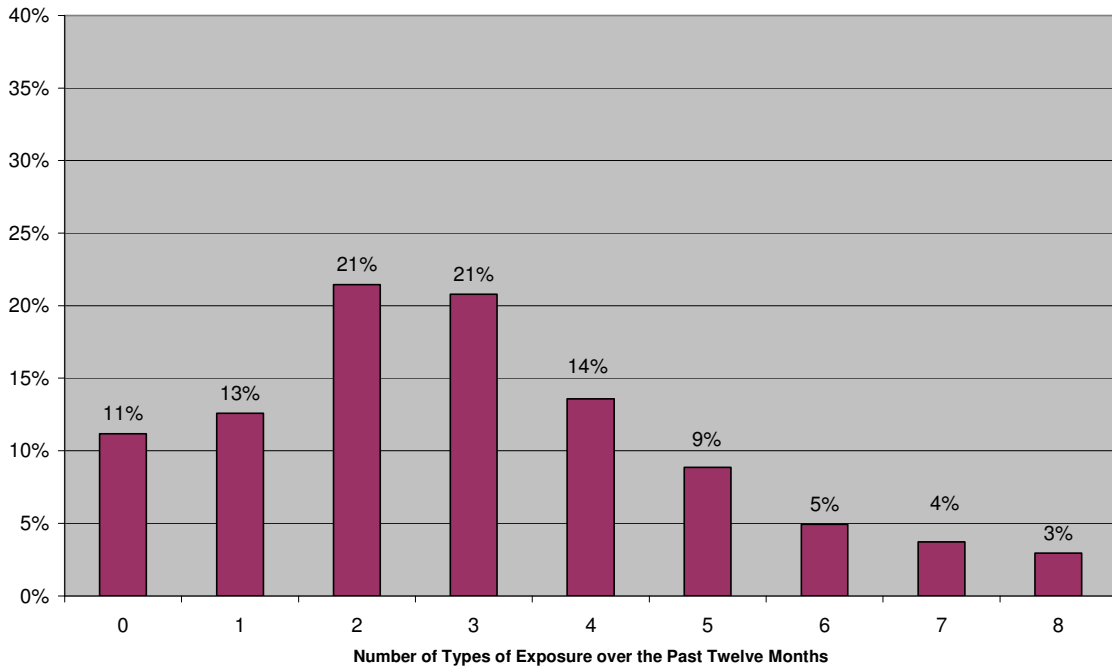
*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender).

** The four types of violence asked about were: (1) threatened or chased when you thought there was serious risk of harm, (2) hit, slapped, punched, kicked, or beaten up, (3) attacked with a weapon, or (4) shot.

Exposure to Violence

Nearly all – 90% – of respondents reported they had either witnessed and/or had been victimized by at least one of the four types of violence; only 11% said they were not exposed to any violence in the past year. Some youth had multiple experiences with witnessing and victimization.

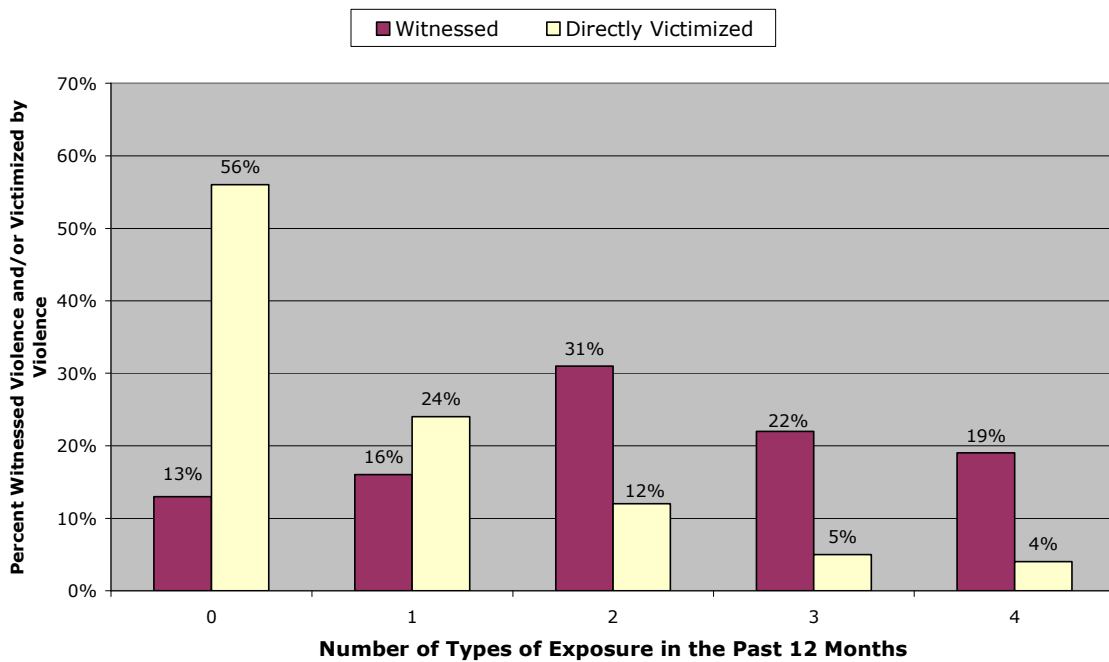
Cumulative Exposure to Violence over the Past Twelve Months*



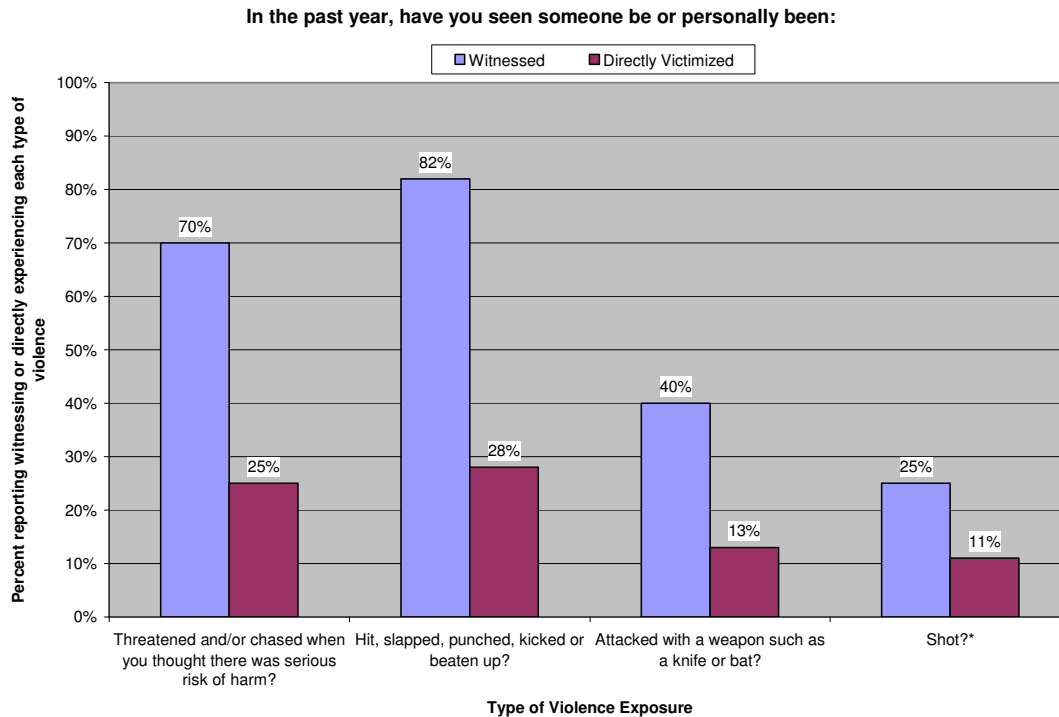
*15% of the entire sample did not answer all questions about exposure and were excluded from analyses involving all eight questions.

If there was more than one exposure, youth were more likely to have witnessed violence over a 12-month period than to have been victimized by violence.

Witnessing Violence vs. Victimization by Violence



Over 80% of youth reported that they had seen someone hit, slapped, punched, kicked or beaten up in the past year, and over two-thirds reported seeing another person threatened or chased in the past year. Over one-quarter of the total sample reported being the victim of these types of violence over the past twelve months.



*Question specifically excluded being shot with a BB gun or any type of toy gun like a paint ball or air rifle.

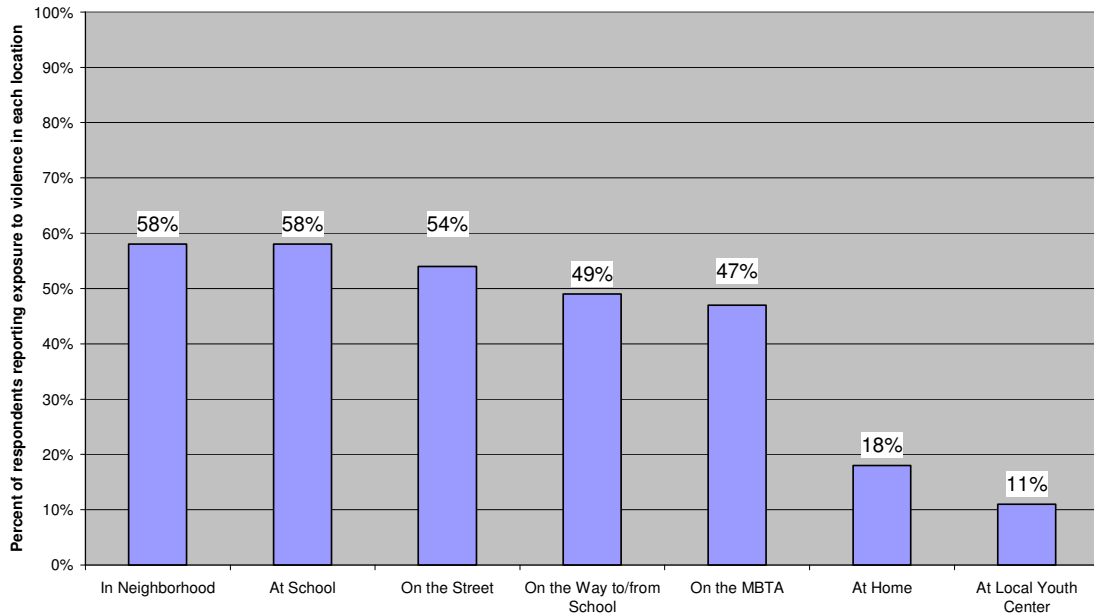
Exposure to Violence by Location

The questions about witnessing and victimization were asked for 7 locations:

- (1) *In your school building*
- (2) *On the way to or from school*
- (3) *At your home*
- (4) *On your street*
- (5) *On an MBTA bus or subway*
- (6) *At your youth center or after school program*
- (7) *In your neighborhood, or*
- (8) *Have not seen this happen/this didn't happen to me.*

Over half of these 9th through 12th graders reported witnessing or experiencing at least one type of violence: at their school (58%), in their neighborhoods (58%), or on the street (54%). Nearly half reported witnessing or experiencing at least one type of violence: on the way to and from school (49%) and/or on the MBTA (47%). Nearly a fifth (18%) reported these experiences at home.

Exposure to Violence by Location



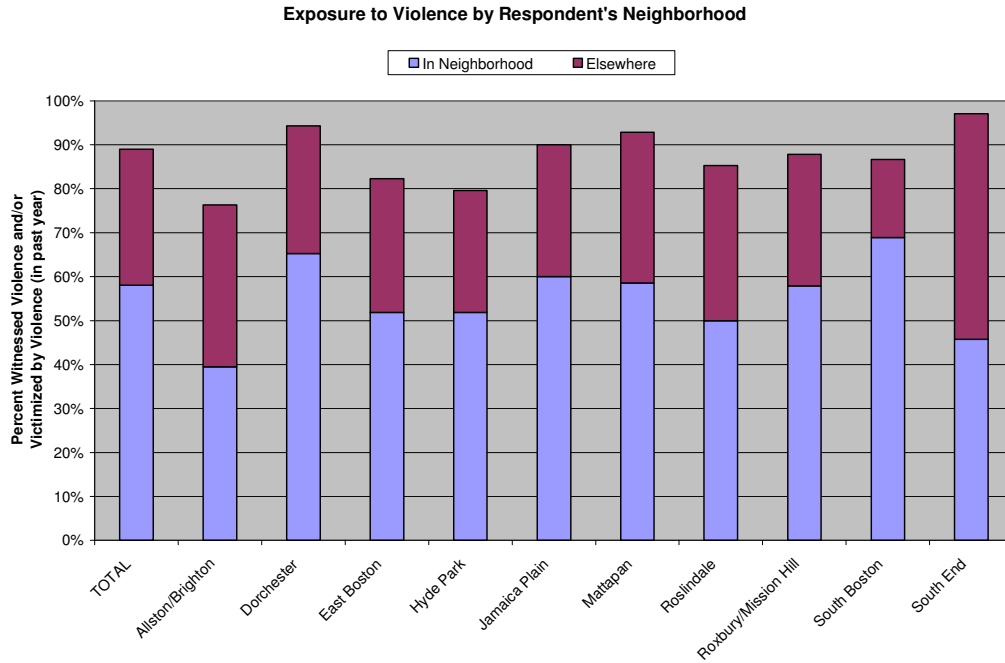
*Includes witnessing **and/or** personally being: (1) threatened or chased when you thought there was serious risk of harm, (2) hit, slapped, punched, kicked, or beaten up, (3) attacked with a weapon or (4) shot.

The following table provides more detail on locations where youth witnessed or were victimized by violence and respondent characteristics:

	MBTA	Neighborhood	To/From School	Own Street	School	Youth Center	Home
Total	47	58	49	54	58	11	18
Gender							
Boys	51*	61*	52*	58*	58	13*	15*
Girls	45	55	45	50	57	9	19
Years Lived in the U.S.							
U.S. born	50*	65*	51*	57*	60*	12*	18
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	46	50	47	51	58	9	18
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	35	34	35	46	47	6	14
Grade Level							
9 th grade	47	59	53	59	61	13	20
10 th grade	51	61	51	60	59	12	17
11 th grade	45	57	40	43	51	8	15
12 th grade	55	57	52	58	68	7	13

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

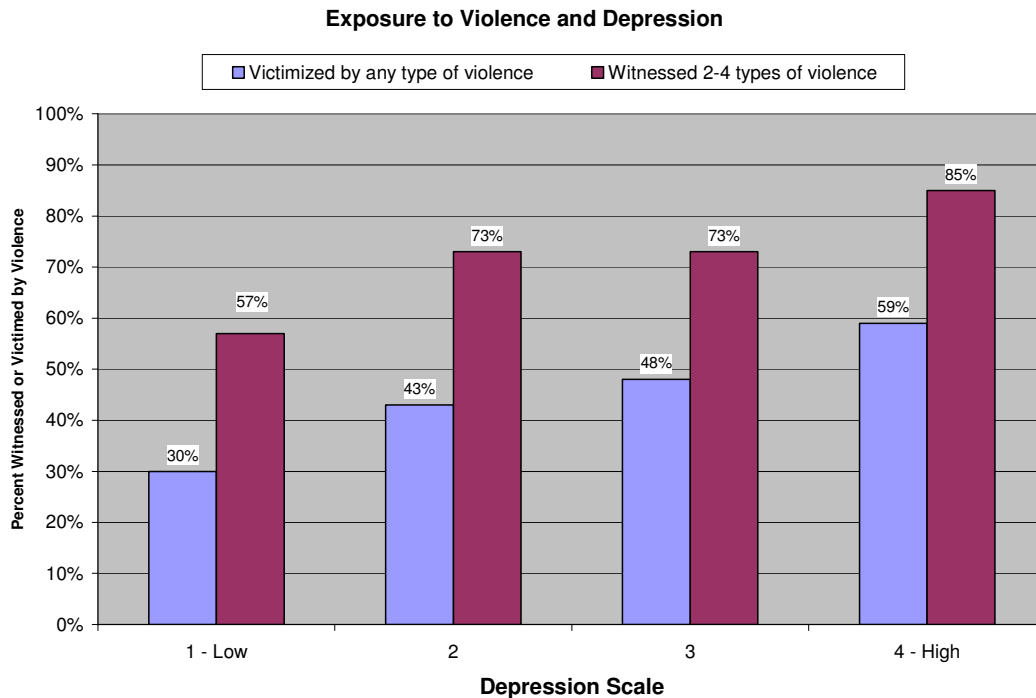
Exposure, including victimization and witnessing, are reported for 10 neighborhoods below.*



*Neighborhoods with n<25 not shown. Differences between neighborhoods were not statistically significant.

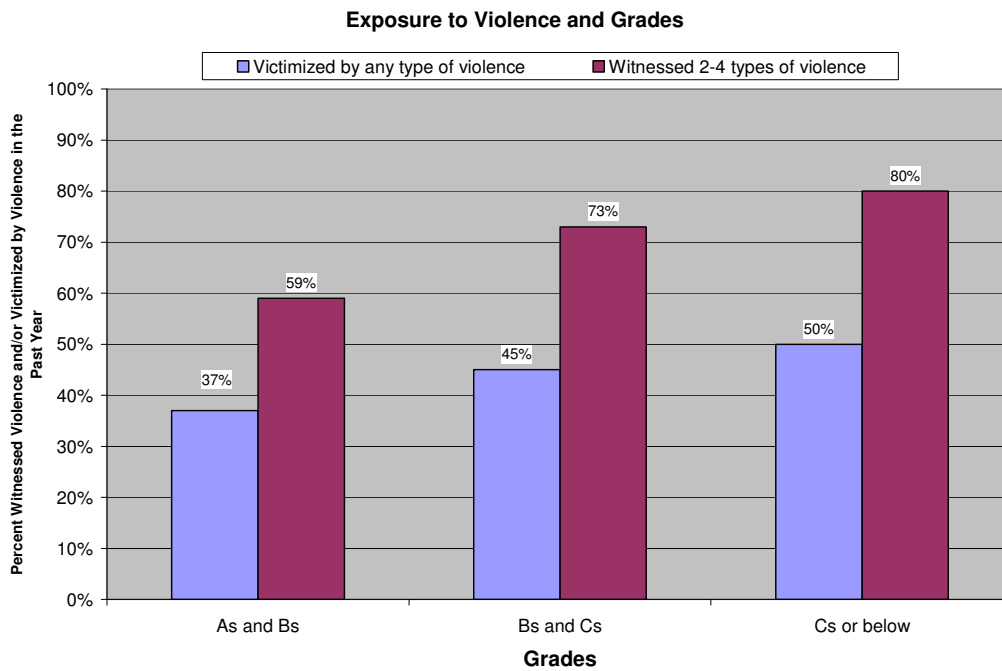
Associations between Exposure to Violence and Depression, Grades, Truancy

Youth with higher scores on the depression scale were more likely than youth with lower depression scores to report witnessing or directly experiencing violence in the past year.

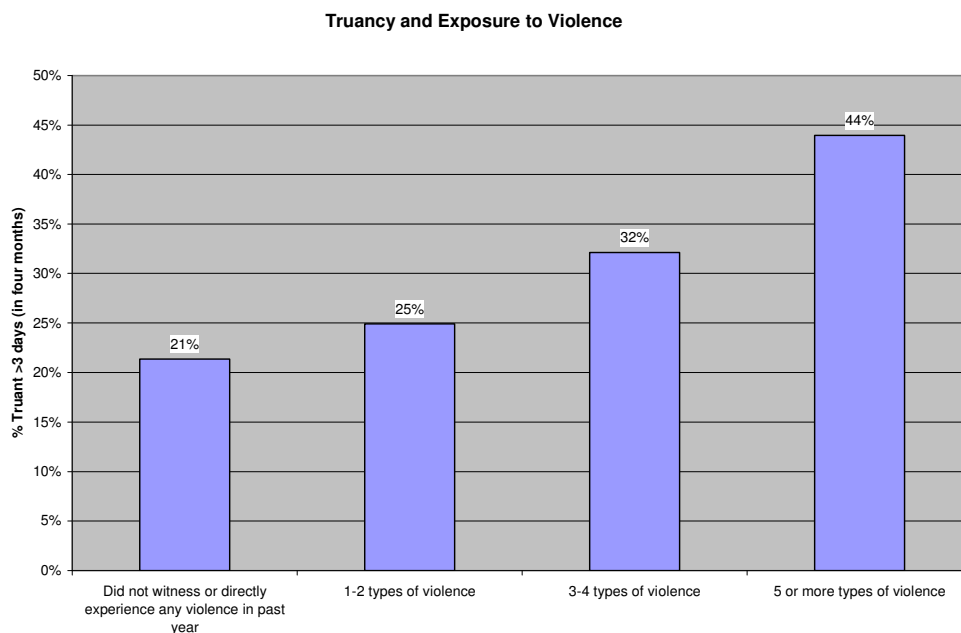


Note: "Depression" is defined as a score of 3 or 4 on a four-point scale. For information about this scale, please refer to the section on depression in this report.

A higher percentage of those with lower grades than higher grades either witnessed or were victimized by violence in the past year.



Students who reported witnessing or being victimized by more types of violence during the past year also were more likely to report being truant three or more days in the four months before the Survey. This trend also appeared when analyzing witnessing and experiencing victimization separately (analyses not shown). Overall exposure to violence was not associated with family type, age, grade level, or gender.

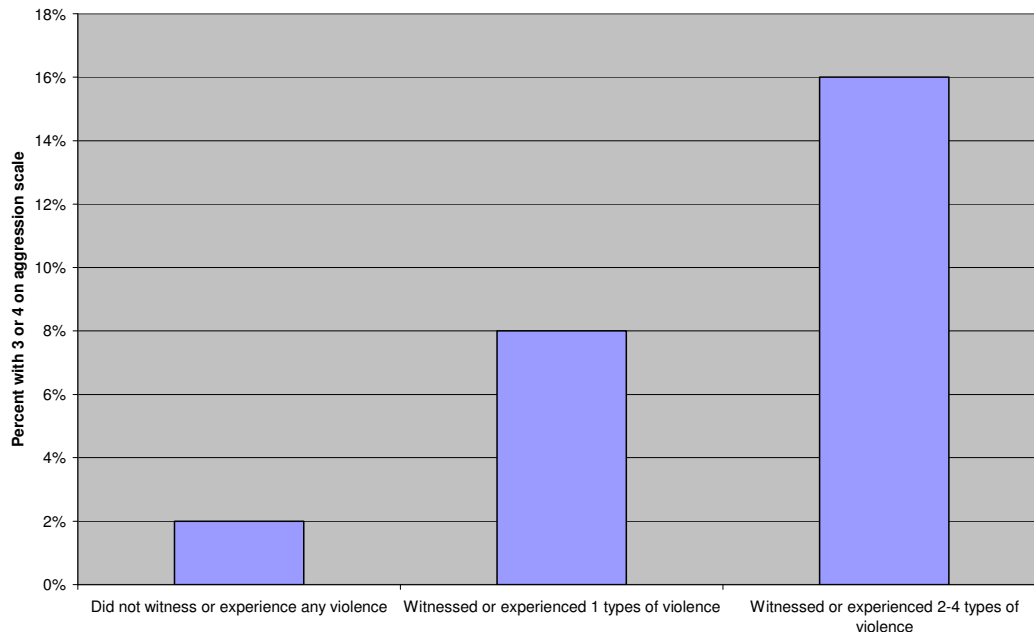


Witnessing Violence

Over three-quarters (87%) of respondents (8% of the sample missing) reported witnessing one or more acts of violence in the past year. Over two-thirds of girls and three-fourths of boys had witnessed violence at least twice in that time frame.

Youth who had witnessed two or more types of violence in the past year were more likely than those who witnessed little or no violence to be aggressive.

Witnessing Violence and Aggression



Additional Findings – Witnessing Violence

- Immigrants were less likely than those born in the U.S. to have witnessed two or more types of violence (64% vs. 73%), but also were less likely to report that they felt safe in all or most places (42% vs. 60%).
- Whites were less likely than others to report having witnessed two or more types of violence (64% vs. 72%), whereas Blacks were more likely to report witnessing two or more types of violence (80% vs. 67%).
- Youth who reported (a) that they had trouble with their peers at least once in the past month (78% vs. 64%) and/or (b) had gotten into at least once yelling argument at school in the past month (79% vs. 64%) were more likely than those who did not report this to have witnessed two or more types of violence.
- Youth who had ever hit or hurt someone were more likely than those who had not to have witnessed two or more types of violence (89% vs. 64%), as were those who had ever threatened to hit or hurt someone (86% vs. 61%).
- Youth who reported that they participated in after-school activities were less likely than those who did not report this to report witnessing two or more types of violence (65% vs. 74%).
- Reports of witnessing violence were not associated with age, grade level, or BMI.

Victimization by Violence

One-fifth (20%) of the respondents (15% of the sample were missing) reported that they had experienced two to four different types of violence in the past year. Another one-quarter (24%) had experienced one type of violence, while the remaining 56% reported that they were not victimized by violence in the past year. Youth who indicated they were directly victimized in the past year were asked to answer an additional question about their relationship to the perpetrator. The following table shows victim-perpetrator relationship for each of the four types of violence surveyed:*

	% Threatened/ Chased	% Hit, Slapped, Punched, Kicked, or Beaten Up	% Attacked with a Weapon such as a Knife or Bat	% Shot**
Family member	8	24	11	14
Friend	14	24	19	12
Acquaintance	41	40	32	29
Stranger	54	31	51	57

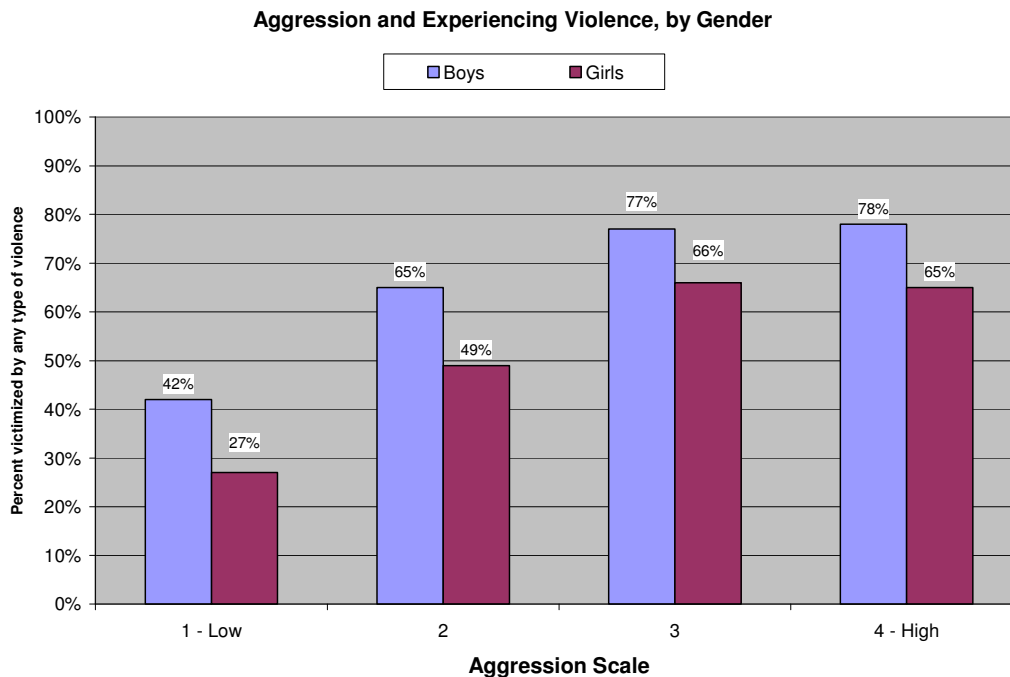
*Percent shown is out of those who answered this follow-up question, not out of all victims. However, the vast majority of victims did provide this information [depending on the question, ranges from 88% to 92% of those victimized]

**Does not include being shot with a BB gun or any type of toy gun like a paint ball or air rifle.

This table shows that, with the exception of victims who were hit or beaten, strangers perpetrated more than half of each type of violence listed. However, a larger percentage of family and friends than other types of perpetrators hit or beat respondents.

Associations between Violence Victimization and Perpetration of Aggression

Boys and girls with higher aggression scores were more likely than those with lower aggression scores to report being victimized by violence during the past year.



Additional Findings – Victimization by Violence

- Boys were more likely than girls to report being victimized by violence in the past year (53% vs. 36%); over half of boys were victimized by violence.
- Immigrants were less likely than those born in the U.S. to report being victimized by violence (39% vs. 46%), but were less likely to report that they felt safe in all or most places (42% vs. 60%).
- Younger youths (grades 9 and 10) were more likely than older youths to report violence victimization (47% vs. 39%).
- Whites were more likely than others to report violence victimization (52% vs. 43%).
- Those who reported violence victimization were more likely than those who did not to be overweight or at-risk for overweight (51% vs. 44%).
- Youth who reported having trouble with their peers at least once in the past month were more likely than those who did not to report violence victimization (58% vs. 30%), as were those who reported getting into at least one yelling argument at school in the past month (55% vs. 35%).
- Youth who reported they had ever hit or hurt someone were more likely than those who did not report this to have experienced violence (68% vs. 36%), as were those who reported that they had (ever) threatened to hit or hurt someone (59% vs. 35%).

Safety

Youth were asked a series of questions on their perceptions of safety in seven locations in their lives:

- (1) *In your school building*, (2) *On the way to/from school*, (3) *At your home*, (4) *On your street*, (5) *On an MBTA bus or subway*, (6) *At your youth center or after-school program*, and (7) *In your neighborhood*.

They also were asked if they “*usually feel safe taking the subway or bus to places where you can do sports or physical activity.*” The following chart displays the percent of youth who indicated that they felt safe in at least six of the seven locations listed. Overall, immigrant youth and students in higher grades felt significantly less safe than U.S. born youth and younger students.

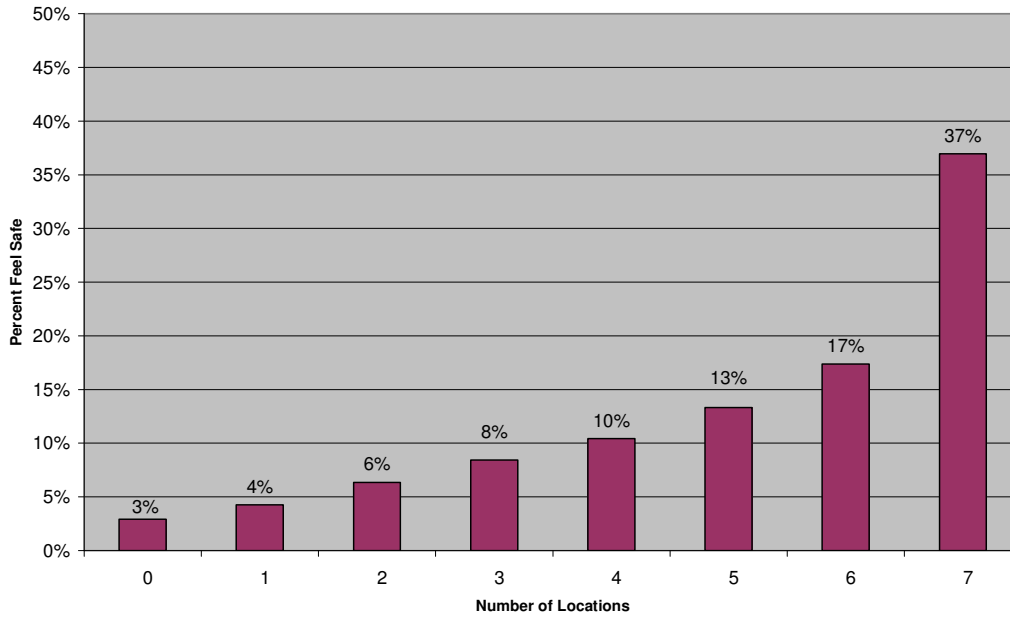
	Safety
	% Felt safe in most places+
Total	54
Gender	
Boys	55
Girls	53
Years Lived in the U.S.	
U.S. born	60*
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	47
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	35
Grade Level	
9 th grade	55
10 th grade	53
11 th grade	60
12 th grade	36

* Indicates statistical significance

+ Out of seven locations listed, percent indicated feeling safe in at least six locations.

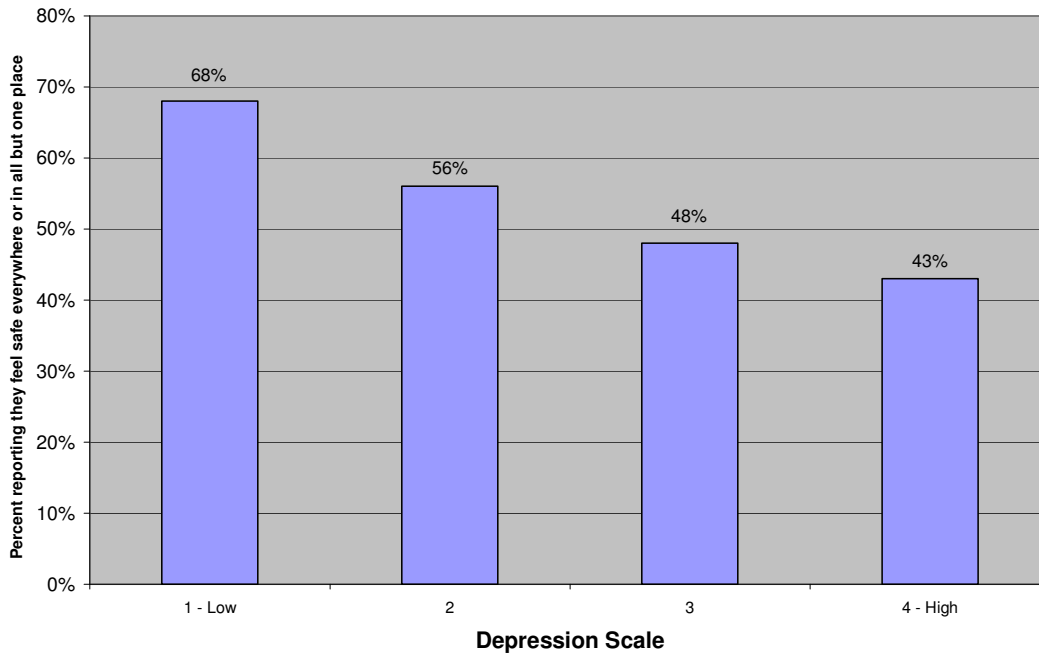
Just over one-third (37%) of the sample felt safe in all 7 of the locations listed. Less than one-fifth (17%) felt safe in 6 of the 7 locations.

At how many of the seven locations listed do you feel safe?



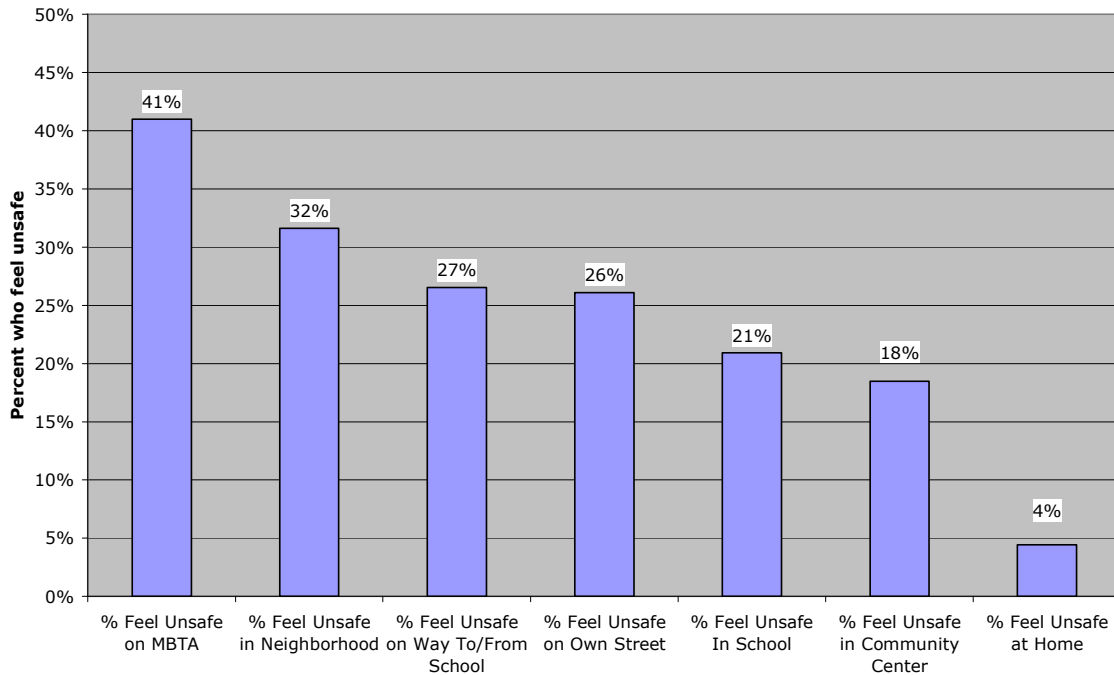
Youth who scored higher on the depression scale were less likely to report that they felt safe in all or most locations than those who scored lower on the depression scale.

Depression and Sense of Safety



The chart below displays the percent of respondents feeling unsafe in each location. Public transportation was where the greatest percent of teenagers reported feeling unsafe (41%). Nearly one-third of teenagers (32%) felt unsafe in their neighborhood; over one-quarter felt unsafe on their way to or from school (27%) and on the street where they lived (26%).

Safety by Location



The following table provides information on characteristics of youth who felt unsafe by location. In all locations but home, students born in the U.S. were more likely to report feeling safe than immigrant students. Students in higher grades felt less safe; 12th graders were more likely than others to feel unsafe going to and from school (38% vs. 26%), at home (11% vs. 4%), on their street (38% vs. 25%), on the MBTA (59% vs. 40%), at their youth center (30% vs. 18%), and in their neighborhood (45% vs. 31%). Boys were more likely than girls to feel unsafe at school (23% vs. 18%).

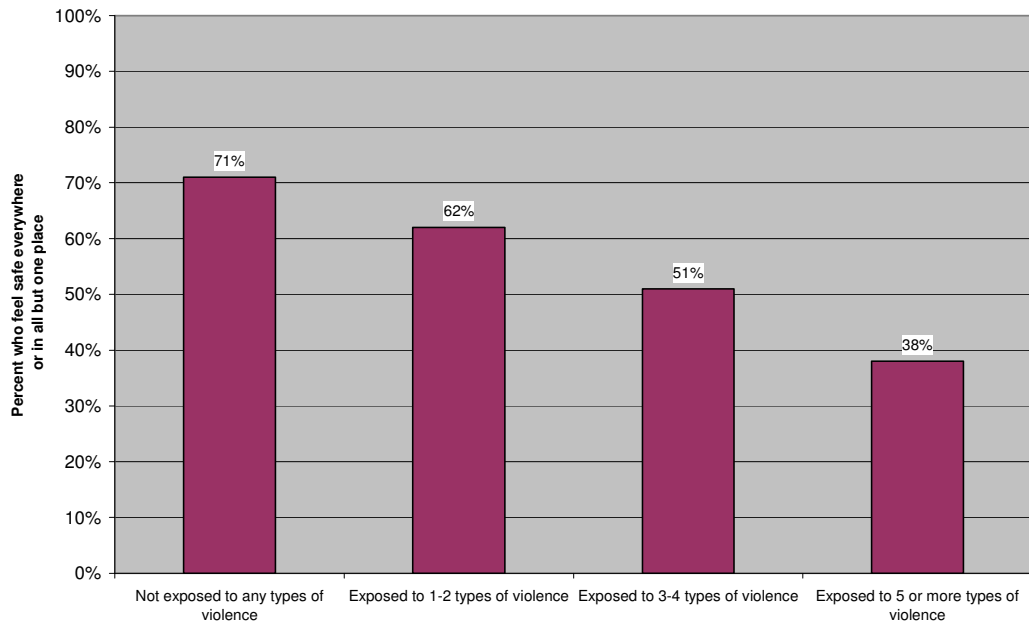
Percent Feeling Unsafe: Results for Seven Locations

	MBTA	Neighborhood	To/From School	Own Street	School	Youth Center	Home
Total	41	32	27	26	21	18	4
Gender							
Boys	39	31	24	24	23*	21	5
Girls	43	33	28	27	18	17	3
Years Lived in the U.S.							
U.S. born	36*	28*	24*	22*	18*	16*	4
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	50	37	30	30	23	21	6
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	53	41	34	42	34	27	5
Grade Level							
9 th grade	35	33	24	25	18	16	4
10 th grade	44	30	30	26	24	22	5
11 th grade	40	28	24	23	21	16	3
12 th grade	59	45	38	38	28	30	11

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

Understandably, respondents who reported more exposure to violence through witnessing and/or victimization were less likely than students with less exposure to report that they felt safe in all or most places. This trend also was evident when looking at witnessing and direct victimization separately (not shown).

Safety and Exposure to Violence



*Exposure to violence includes witnessing someone be or personally being: 1) threatened or chased when you thought there was serious risk of harm, 2) hit, slapped, punched, kicked, or beaten up, 3) attacked with a weapon or shot at.

Additional Findings – Safety

- As years lived in the U.S. decreased, the percent of youth reporting that they felt safe in all or all but one location decreased (U.S. born: 60%; 5+ years: 47%; Less than 5 years: 35%).
- Whites were more likely than others to report that they felt safe in all or most locations (77% vs. 51%); Hispanic/Latinos were less likely (51% vs. 56%).
- Youth struggling with social problems with peers were more likely to feel unsafe at various locations. For example, youth who reported that they had had trouble with their peers at least once in the past month were less likely than those who did not report this to feel safe in all or most locations (49% vs. 59%), as were those who reported getting into at least once yelling argument at school in the past month (48% vs. 59%). Similarly, youth who reported that they had ever threatened to hit or hurt someone were less likely than those who did not report this to report feeling safe in all or most locations (49% vs. 56%).
- Youth who felt unsafe in two or more locations were more likely than those who did not to be aggressive (17% vs. 10%).
- Youth who reported participating in after-school activities were more likely than those who did not report this to report feeling safe in all or most locations (61% vs. 51%).
- Overall, sense of safety was not associated with: gender, truancy, cooperation, threatening to hit/hurt others, or participation on sports teams.

Sexual Abuse and Dating Violence

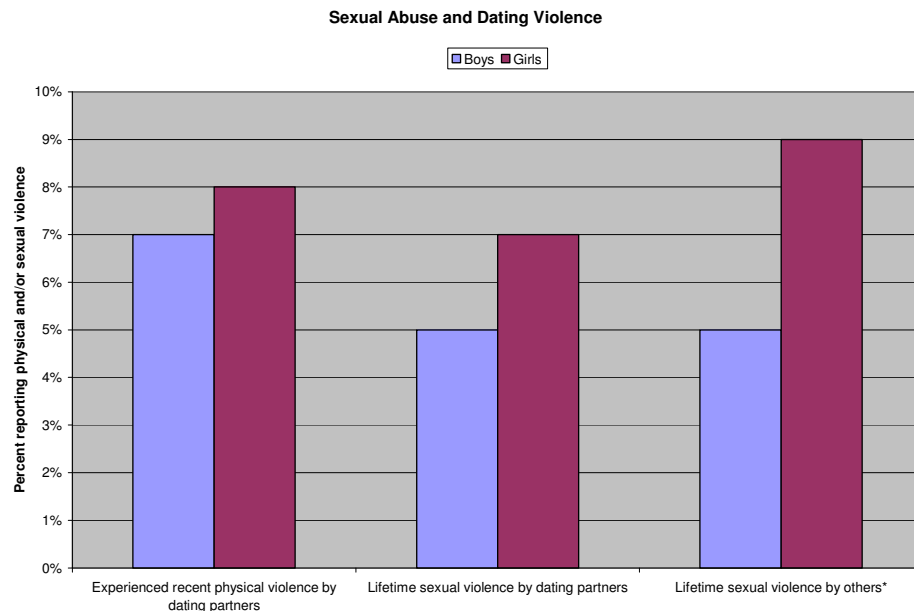
Twelve percent of these 9th through 12th grade respondents reported that they had experienced some form of physical assault by an dating partner during the past 12 months, and 11% reported that they had experienced sexual abuse or sexual violence in that time period. Most studies find that sexual victimization and victimization by intimates are under-reported, due to respondents' sense of shame or a need to deny or forget the experiences. Thus the above figures and those that follow are probably underestimates of the true prevalence of sexual and dating violence experienced by these teenagers.

One question was asked on physical (but non-sexual) violence by a dating partner: *“During the past 12 months, did your boyfriend or girlfriend ever hit. Slap, punch, kick, or beat you up?”*

Two questions were asked on lifetime sexual violence by a dating partner and by other assailants:

- (1) *“Did a current or past boyfriend or girlfriend EVER force you with physical force or threats to have sex when you didn't want to (including intercourse, oral sex, anal sex, and any penetration)?”* and
- (2) *“Has anybody else ever forced you with physical force or threats to have sex when you didn't want to (including intercourse, oral sex, anal sex, and any penetration)?”*

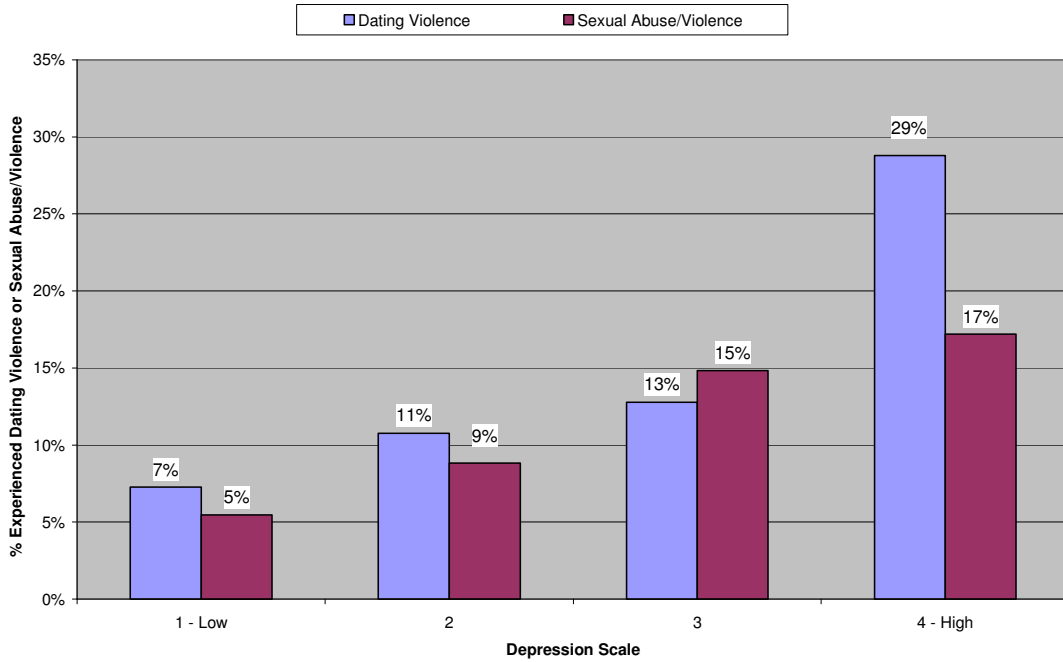
Overall, seven percent (7%) of survey respondents reported being the victim of physical (but non-sexual) assault by a dating partner during the past 12 months. Six percent (6%) reported ever experiencing sexual violence from a dating partner, and seven percent (7%) reported sexual abuse or rape by other assailants. Students in higher grades (11 and 12) were more likely than those in lower grades (9 and 10) to have ever experienced some form of physical or sexual assault by dating partners. Girls were more likely than boys to have experienced sexual abuse/violence by dating partners and other assailants (13% vs. 8%). The following table shows gender differences.



*Indicates statistically significant difference between genders

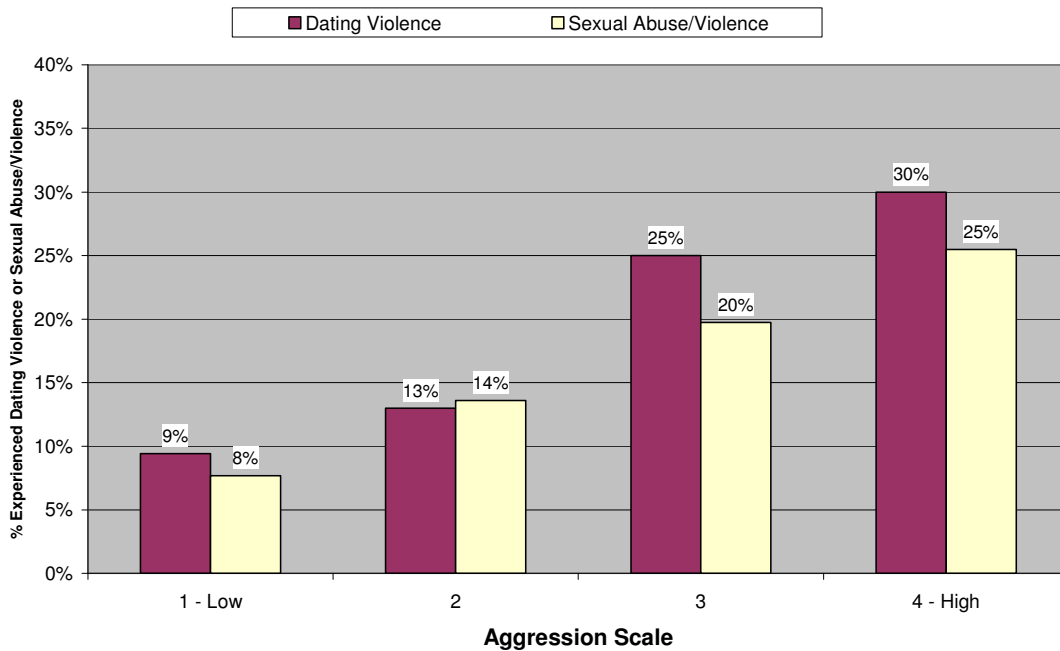
Experiencing some form of dating violence or sexual abuse/violence was associated with higher scores on the depression scale.

Depression, Dating Violence, and Sexual Abuse/Violence



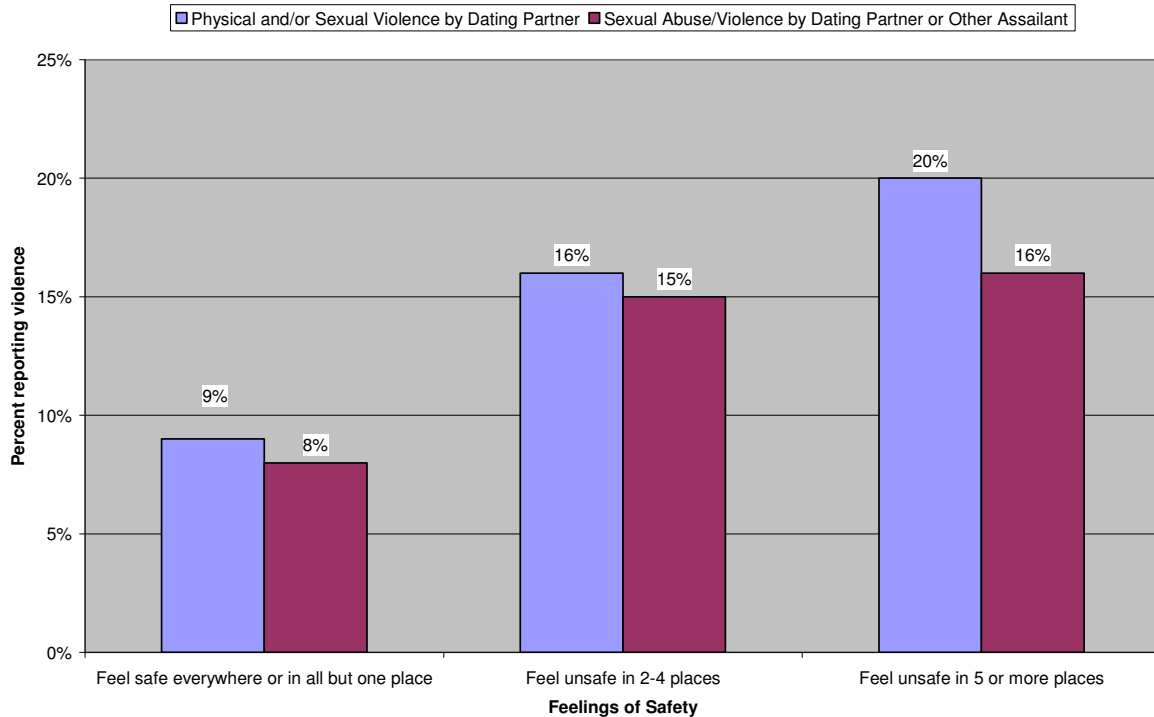
Experiencing some form of dating violence or sexual abuse/violence was also associated with higher scores on the aggression scale.

Aggression, Dating Violence, and Sexual Abuse/Violence



Youth who felt unsafe in more places were more likely than youth feeling less unsafe to report experiences with physical or sexual victimization by a partner or sexual violence by other assailants.

Safety, Dating Violence, and Sexual Abuse/Violence



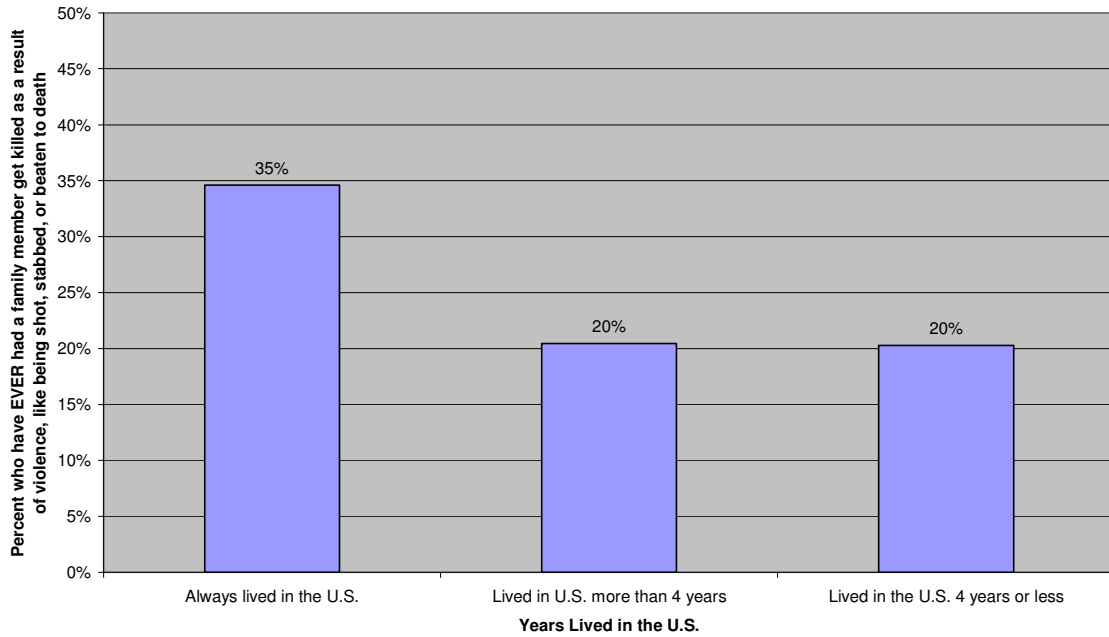
Additional Findings – Sexual Abuse and Dating Violence

- Youth who reported experiencing physical or sexual assault by a dating partner were more likely than those who did not report this to report truancy from school (51% vs. 28%), as were youth who reported sexual abuse/violence by other assailants (49% vs. 28%).
- Youth who reported having experienced physical or sexual violence by a dating partner or sexual violence by other assailants were more likely to report being depressed than were students who had not had these experiences (physical/sexual violence by dating partner: 52% vs. 39% depressed; sexual violence by other assailants: 56% vs. 38% depressed).
- Youth who reported experiencing physical or sexual violence by a dating partner were more likely than those who did not to report having trouble with their peers (67% vs. 47%) and to report having had at least one yelling argument at school (60% vs. 41%).
- Youth who reported experiencing physical or sexual violence by a dating partner were more likely to report that they had ever tried to hit or hurt someone than those who had not report this (33% vs. 23%), and to report having threatened to hit or hurt someone (47% vs. 36%).
- Physical or sexual assault by a partner was not associated with: years lived in the U.S., race, grades, cooperation, or confidence in ability to avoid fights.
- Sexual abuse/violence by other assailants was not associated with: age, grade level, years lived in the U.S., race, grades, cooperation, or confidence in ability to avoid fights.

Exposure to Homicide within the Family

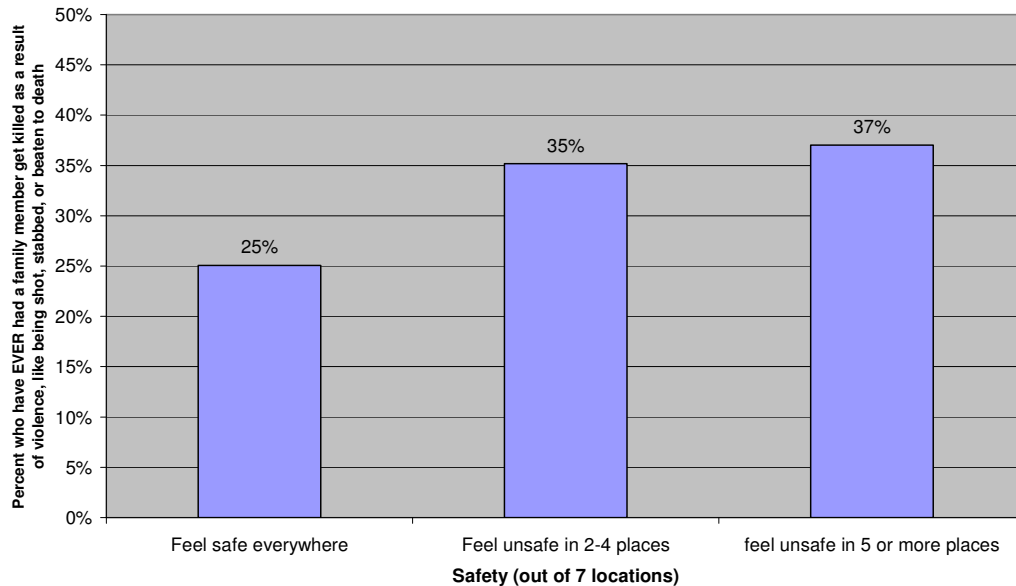
Thirty percent of all youth in the sample said yes when asked “*Have you ever had a family member get killed as a result of violence, like being shot, stabbed or beaten to death?*” Youth who were not born in the U.S. were less likely to have ever had a family member killed than U.S. born youth (20% vs. 35%).

Exposure to Homicide



Not surprisingly, youth who felt unsafe in two or more places were more likely than youth who felt safe to have ever had a family member killed.

Safety and Exposure to Homicide



Additional Findings – Exposure to Homicide within the Family

- Exposure to homicide within the family varied greatly by neighborhood, from 0% to 37%.
- Whites were less likely than other groups (18% vs. 32%), and Blacks were more likely (46% vs. 23%), to have had a family member killed.

- Youth reporting that their grades were mostly Cs or lower in school were more likely than those reporting that they received better grades to have had a family member killed (36% vs. 27%).
- Youth who reported being truant were more likely than those who reported that they had not been truant to have had a family member killed (40% vs. 27%).
- Youth who reported that they had had trouble with their peers at least once in the past month were more likely than those who did not report this to have had a family member killed (36% vs. 24%), as were those who reported that they had gotten into at least once yelling argument at school in the past month (37% vs. 25%).
- Youth who reported that they had ever hit or hurt someone were more likely than those who did not report this to have had a family member killed (42% vs. 26%), as were those who reported that they had at some time threatened to hit or hurt someone (39% vs. 25%).
- Having a family member killed also was associated with higher scores on the aggression scale (20% vs. 10%).
- Youth who believed that *most people would try to take advantage of you if given the chance* were more likely than those who believed that *most people try to be fair* to have had a family member killed (34% vs. 28%).
- Having a family member killed was not associated with: gender, age, grade level, ability to talk with parents, depression, or cooperation with others.

Use of Resources to Cope with Exposure to Violence

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the sample indicated they would use at least one of fourteen resources listed if they witnessed violence or were threatened or physically assaulted. Girls were more likely than boys to report that they would use a variety of resources to avoid fights (85% vs. 73%), as were those born in the U.S. (83%) and those living in one household (82% vs. 71%). Blacks were more likely than others to say they would use at least one resource (83% vs. 78%). (See Section on Community Resources for information on use of specific resources.)

Gangs

Youth gangs are a common feature in the lives of many Boston youth. In the 2004 Survey, the perception of youth gangs as dangerous is associated with youths' exposure to witnessing and victimization by violence and with feelings of safety in specific locations. Youth in this sample were asked "*How serious or dangerous do you think gang activities are in your school?*" and "*How serious or dangerous do you think gang activities are in your neighborhood?: Very serious or dangerous; somewhat serious or dangerous; not serious or dangerous*"?

Over half of respondents (52%; 11% of the sample missing) felt that gangs in their school were somewhat or very dangerous, and more than two thirds (70%, 12% of the sample missing) felt that gangs in their neighborhoods were somewhat or very dangerous. Only 22% of the sample reported that neither gangs in their school nor gangs in their neighborhood were somewhat or very dangerous.

The percentage of students who felt that gangs in their schools and neighborhoods were somewhat or very dangerous did not vary by gender or age. However, more recent immigrants to the U.S. were more likely than immigrants who had been in the United States longer – and they in turn, more likely than those born in the United States – to believe gangs were somewhat or very dangerous both in their schools (71% vs. 64% vs. 46%, respectively) and in their neighborhoods (78% vs. 77% vs. 67%, respectively). The following chart provides more detail on youths' perceptions of gangs by location (school and neighborhood) and respondent characteristics.

	School Gangs	Neighborhood Gangs
	% Said school gang activity is somewhat/very dangerous	% Said neighborhood gang activity is somewhat/very dangerous
Total	52	70
Gender		
Boys	54	70
Girls	51	71
Years Lived in the U.S.		
U.S. born	46*	67*
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	64	77
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	71	78
Grade Level		
9 th grade	58*	71
10 th grade	52	71
11 th grade	48	68
12 th grade	48	68

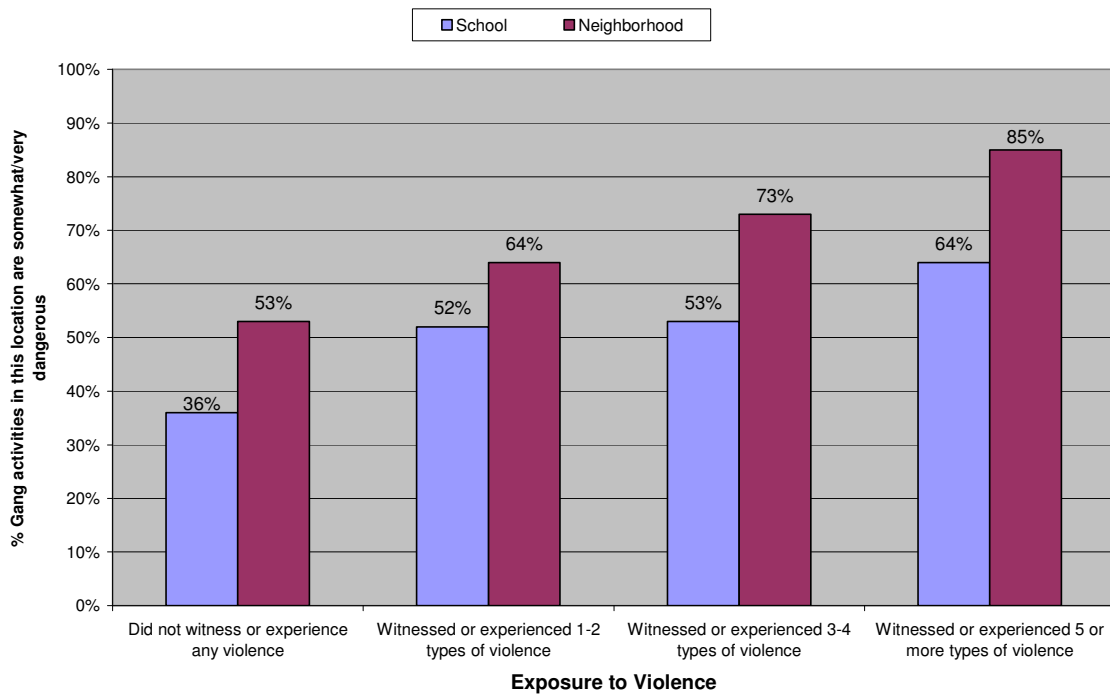
*Indicates statistically significant trend

Most youth (84%) who felt gangs in their school were dangerous or serious felt the same about gangs in their neighborhood, while 63% of those who felt gangs in their neighborhood were dangerous also felt that gangs at their school were dangerous or serious.

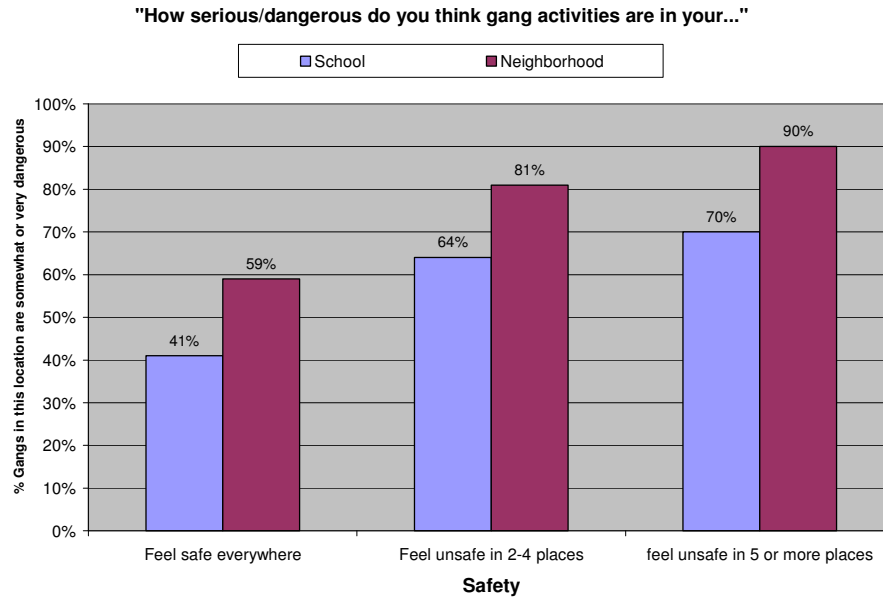
As in other areas, youth who reported that they had more trouble getting along with their classmates and those who reported having had more yelling arguments at school were more likely to report that school gangs were somewhat or very dangerous (56% for those who reported having had one or more episodes of trouble getting along with classmates in the past month, vs. 49% for those who had none; 57% for those who'd had one or more yelling arguments at school in the past month, vs. 49% of those who had none). Youth who reported that school gangs were dangerous were more likely than those who did not to have a higher aggression score (16% vs. 10%) and a higher depression score (42% vs. 38%).

Youth who are exposed to high levels of violence were more likely than youth without such exposure to report that gang problems are serious. Youth who felt gangs were somewhat or very dangerous in their school and those who felt gangs were somewhat or very dangerous in their neighborhoods also were more likely to report that they had been personally victimized and witnessed violent victimization than youth who did not feel gangs were dangerous (e.g., 58% of those who felt gangs in school were dangerous had been personally victimized within the past year, vs. 49% of those who did not feel gangs in school were dangerous).

Gangs and Exposure to Violence



Youth who reported that they felt unsafe in more places were more likely than those who felt safe everywhere to believe that school or neighborhood gangs were somewhat or very dangerous.



Additional Findings – Gangs

- Youth who felt gangs were somewhat or very dangerous in their school or neighborhood were more likely than their counterparts who did not feel that gangs were dangerous to report feeling unsafe at school (46% vs. 74% for those who felt gangs were dangerous at school) and unsafe in their neighborhoods (41% vs. 46% for those who felt gangs were dangerous in their neighborhood).
- Youth who felt that gangs in school were somewhat or very dangerous appeared to be those with a more difficult school experience overall.
- Youth who felt that gangs in school were more somewhat or very dangerous were more likely to have grades of B-C or lower than students whose grades were “mostly A’s and B’s” (47% vs. 55%)
- Youth who felt that gangs in their neighborhoods were somewhat or very dangerous were more likely than those who did not to score higher on measures of depression (41% vs. 36%) and aggression (14% vs. 10%).

Confidence in Ability to Avoid Fights

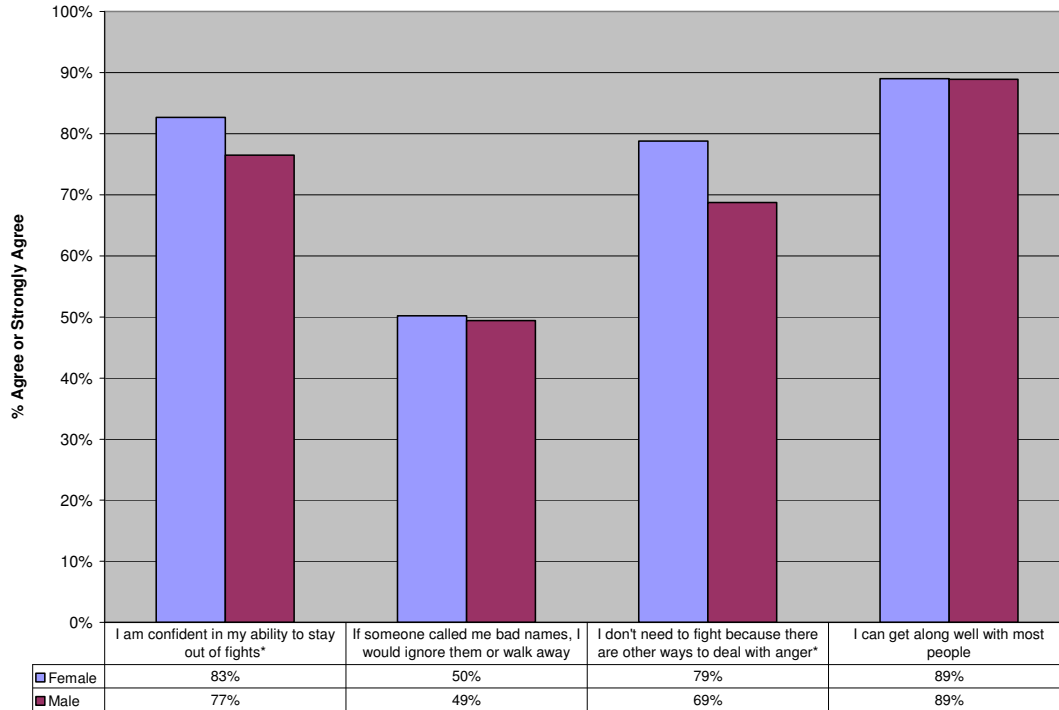
A four-item self-efficacy scale specific to confidence in ability to avoid physical fights was included in the 2004 Survey.

- (1) *I am confident in my ability to stay out of a fight;*
- (2) *If someone called me a bad name, I would ignore them or walk away;*
- (3) *I don’t need to fight because there are other ways to deal with anger;*
- (4) *I can get along well with most people.*

Responses to each of the questions were assigned a value from 1 to 4: *strongly disagree*=1, *disagree*=2, *agree*=3, and *strongly agree*=4. Responses were combined to form a scale ranging from 4 (students who selected “never” for all four questions) to 16 (students who selected “always” for all four questions). This scale was then divided into four categories in order to generate the following four-point scale, used for analyses in this report:

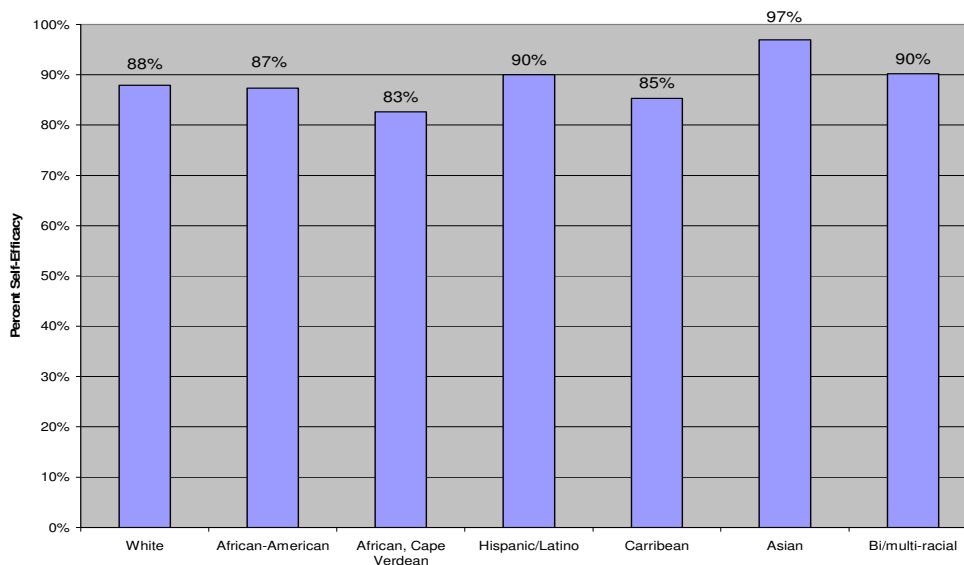
- 1 → Little or no confidence in one's ability to avoid fights (raw scale scores of 4-6)
- 2 → Some confidence in one's ability to avoid fights (raw scale scores of 7-9)
- 3 → Strong confidence in one's ability to avoid fights (raw scale scores of 10-12)
- 4 → High confidence in one's ability to avoid fights (raw scale scores of 13-16)

Throughout the Report, higher or more *confidence in one's ability to avoid fights* is defined as a score of 3 or 4 on this scale. Results for each item are reported by gender in the following chart:



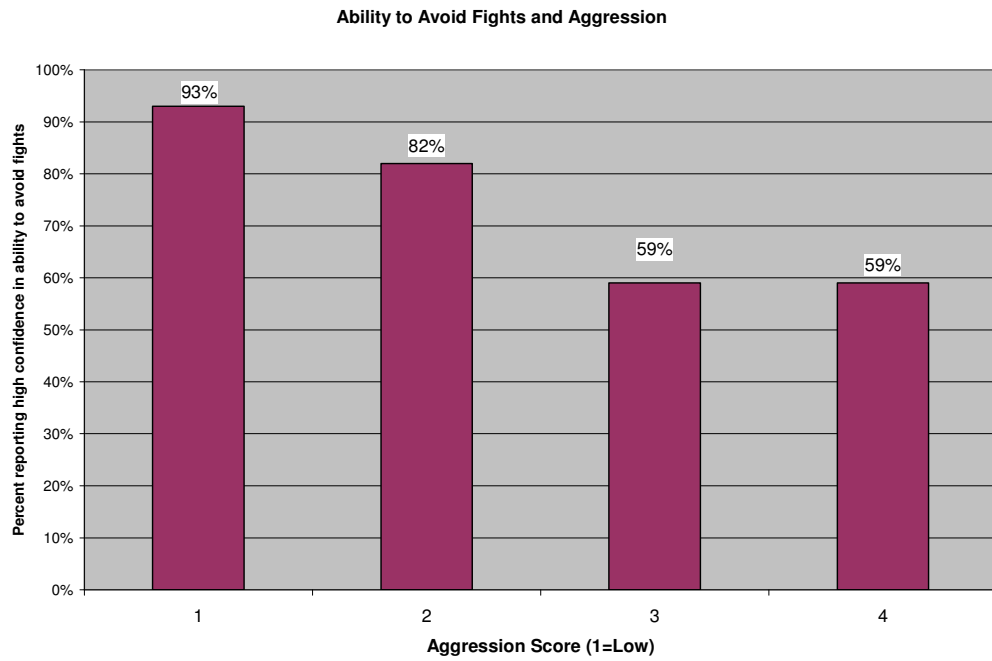
In this sample, there were no significant differences in their confidence in ability to avoid fights.

Race and Confidence in Ability to Avoid Fights

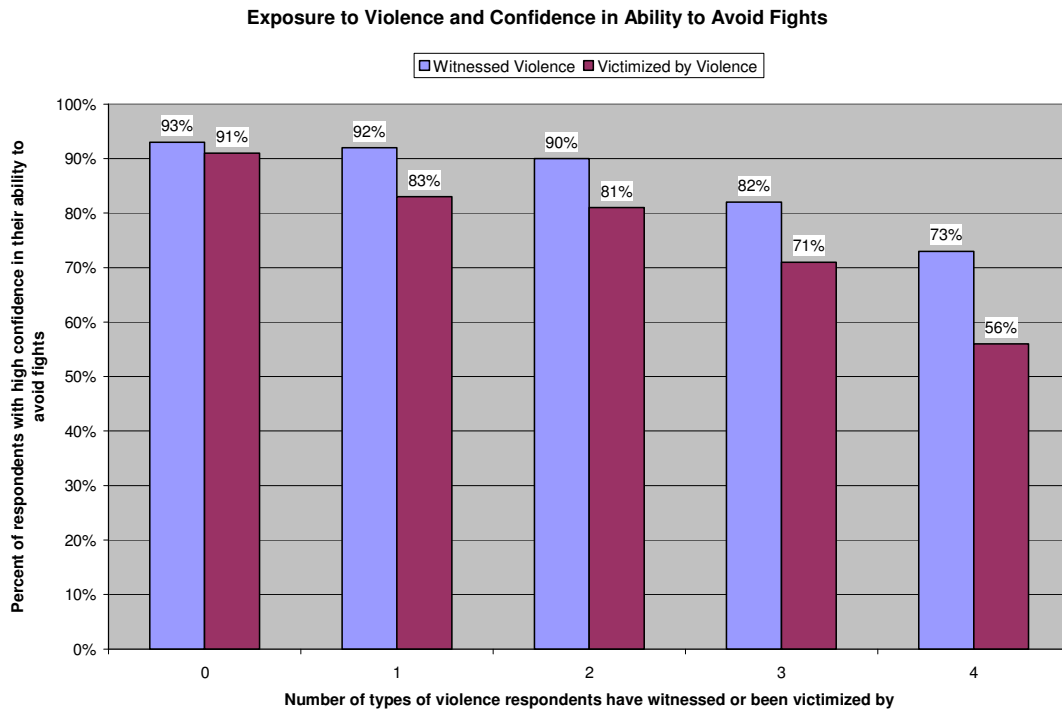


*Difference between races not statistically significant

Students who scored higher on the aggression scale reported lower levels of confidence in their ability to avoid fights.



Youth who reported witnessing more violence were less likely to have confidence in their ability to avoid fights than those who reported witnessing less violence, as were youth who reported more violence victimization.



Additional Findings- Confidence in Ability to Avoid Fights

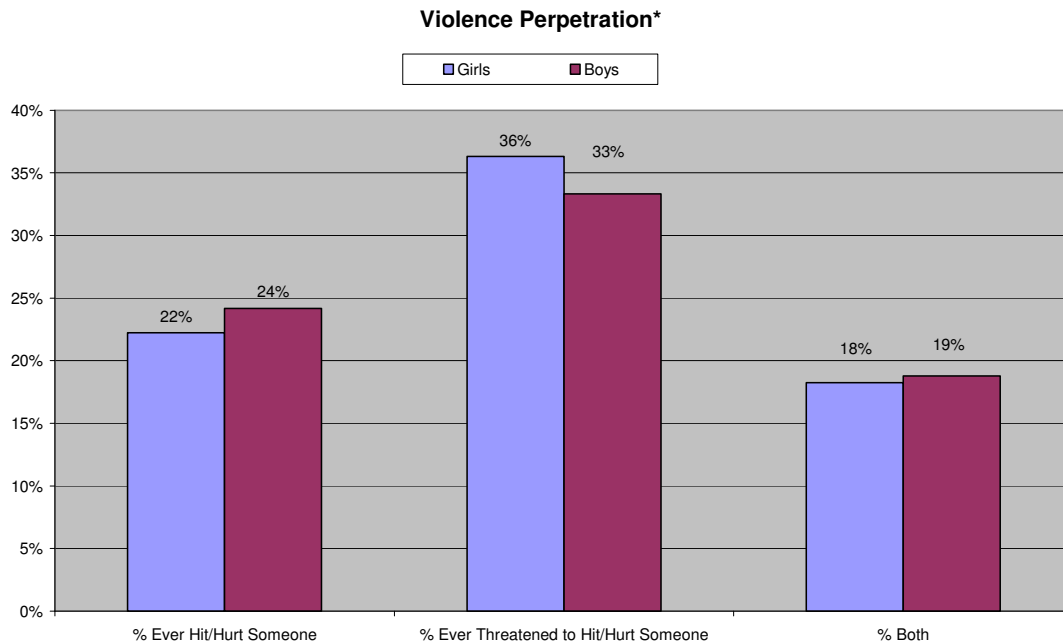
- A smaller percentage of younger (grades 9 and 10) than older students had higher confidence in their ability to avoid fights (83% vs. 90%).
- Youth who felt unsafe in two or more locations were less likely than those who did not to report higher confidence in their ability to avoid fights (83% vs. 88%).
- Youth who watched more than three hours of television per day were less likely than those who did not to have confidence in their ability to avoid fights (84% vs. 88%), as were youth who spent more than three hours per day on RCU (81% vs. 88%), and those who were overweight or at-risk (83% vs. 88%).
- Youth who were more hopeful about the future were more likely than those who were less hopeful to have confidence in their ability to avoid fights (87% vs. 83%).
- Confidence in ability to avoid fights was not associated with: exercise, sports, employment, self-esteem, exposure to homicide within the family, or perceptions of school or neighborhood gang activity, or years lived in the U.S.

Perpetration of Violence

In addition to questions included in the aggression scale, the 2004 Survey included two lifetime questions about violence perpetration. Youth were asked:

- (1) If they had ever “*had attacks of anger when all of a sudden you lost control and actually hit or tried to hurt someone?*” and
- (2) If they “*ever had attacks of anger when all of a sudden you lost control and threatened to hit or hurt someone?*”

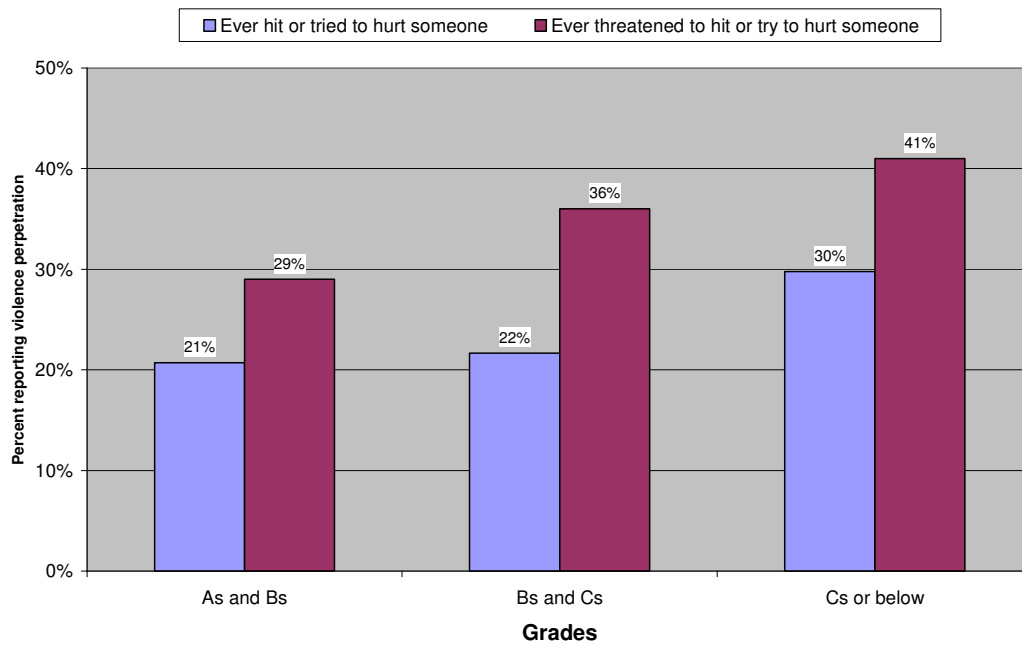
Overall, one quarter of respondents reported that they had actually hit or tried to hurt someone at some time, and over one-third of said they had they had threatened to hit or hurt someone; 19% had done both. The graph below shows gender difference in responses to these questions on violence perpetration. These were not significantly different statistically.



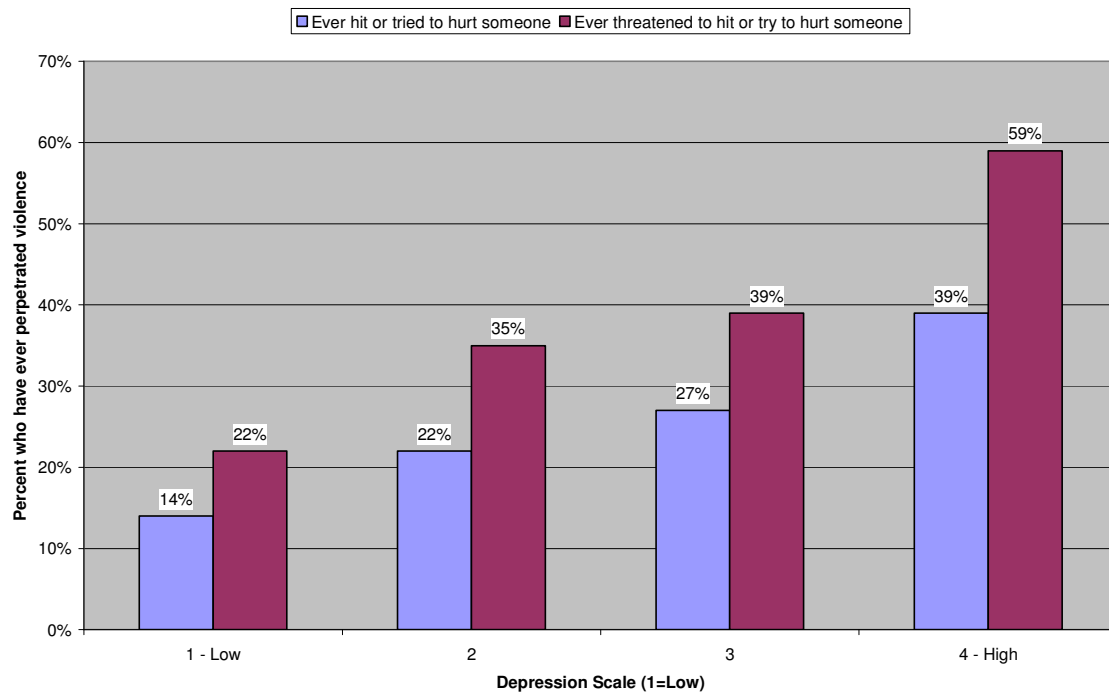
*Difference between genders not statistically significant.

Violence perpetration was associated with lower grades as well as with higher scores on the depression scale.

Grades and Violence Perpetration

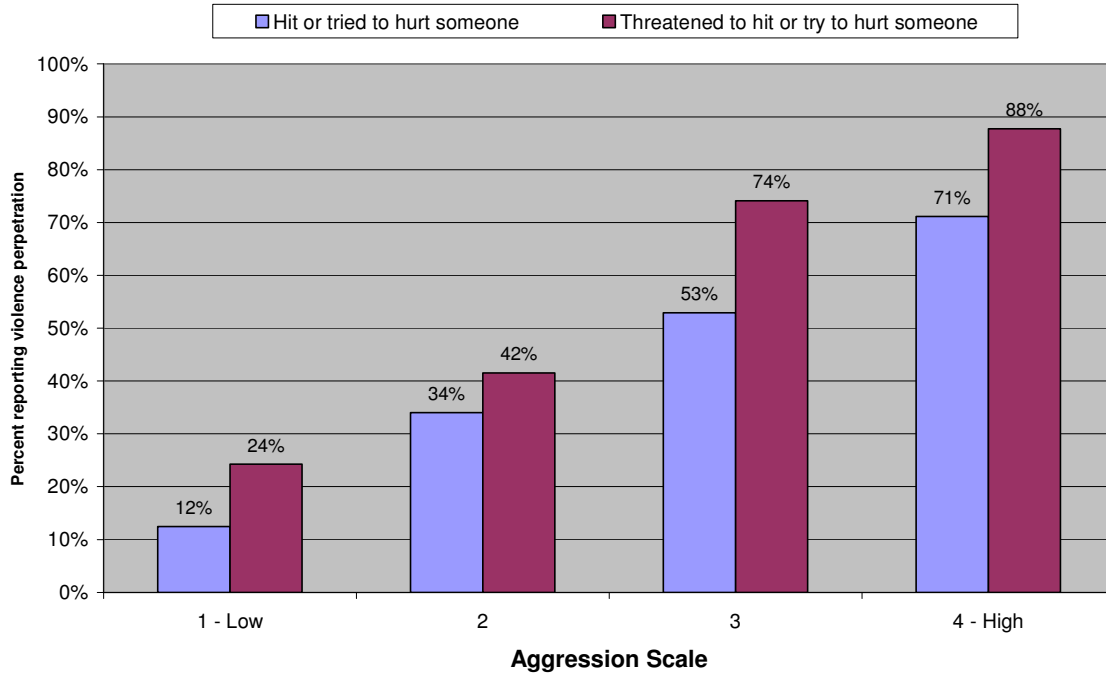


Depression and Violence Perpetration



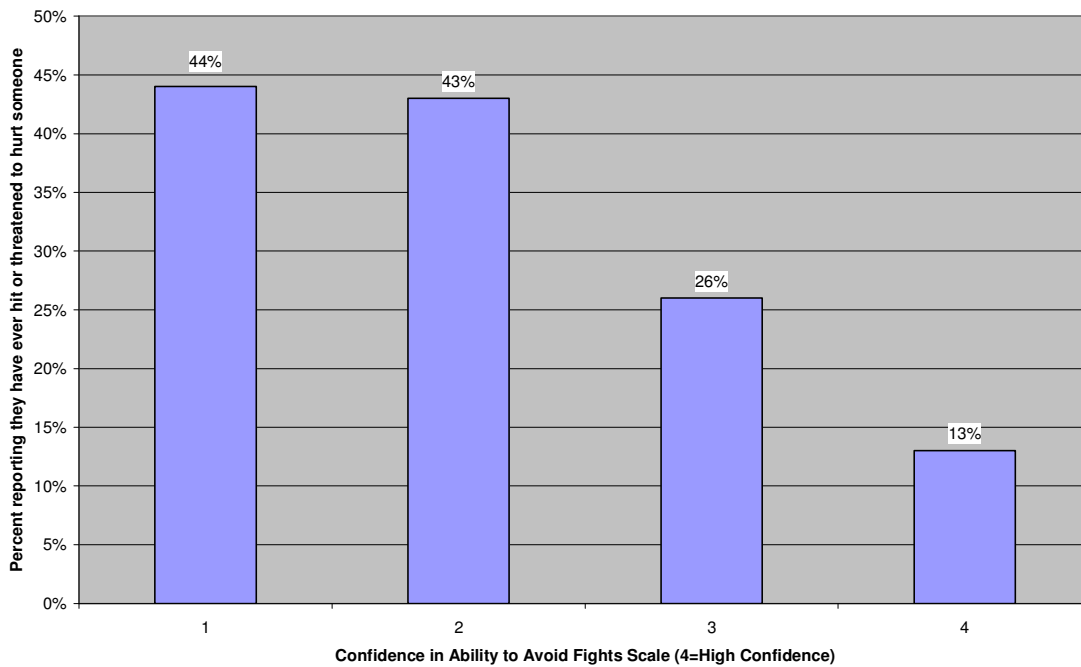
Youths with higher scores on the aggression scale were more likely than those with lower aggression scores to report perpetrating violence (physically or with threats).

Aggression and Violence Perpetration



Youth with more reported confidence in ability to avoid fights were less likely than those with less confidence to report that they had ever hit or tried to hurt someone (four-point scale: 44%, 43%, 26%, 13%).

Confidence in Ability to Avoid Fights and Aggressive Behaviors



Additional Findings – Perpetration of Violence

- As age increased, the percent of youth who reported that they had ever threatened to hit or hurt someone decreased. However, this trend was not evident when looking at grade instead of age.
- Immigrant students were less likely than those born in the U.S. to report perpetration of violence (hit/hurt others: 18% vs. 27%; threaten to hit/hurt others: 25% vs. 41%) than other groups.
- Asian youth were less likely than others to report perpetration of violence (hit/hurt others: 12% vs. 25%; threaten to hit/hurt others: 20% vs. 37%) than youth who reported other racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- Youth who reported being truant more likely than those who did not report being truant to report perpetration of violence (hit/hurt others: 31% vs. 22%; threaten to hit/hurt others: 44% vs. 33%).
- Youth who reported having had trouble with their peers at least once in the past month were more likely than those who did not report this to report perpetration of violence (hit/hurt others: 31% vs. 16%; threaten to hit/hurt others: 45% vs. 26%), as were those reported that they got into at least once yelling argument at school in the past month (hit/hurt others: 34% vs. 16%; threaten to hit/hurt others: 48% vs. 26%).
- Youth who reported participating in after-school activities were less likely than those who did not to report having ever hit or tried to hurt someone (18% vs. 28%).
- Students who reported that they watched 3 or more hours of television per day were more likely than those who reported watching less television to report perpetration of violence (hit/hurt others: 29% vs. 19%; threaten to hit/hurt others: 41% vs. 30%).
- Violence perpetration was not associated with: gender, grade level, cooperation, or safety.

Youth and Guns

When asked, “*How difficult is it, or would it be, for you to get a gun?*” forty-one percent (41%) of respondents (12% of the sample did not answer this question) reported that it would be either *very or fairly easy* to get a gun, 26% (23% of the entire sample) reported that it would be *difficult*, and 33% (29% of the entire sample) reported that it would be *impossible*. Boys were more likely than girls to believe that getting a gun would be very or fairly easy (50% vs. 33%), as were youth who had been born in the United States (47% vs. 32% of those who immigrated more than 4 years and 20% of those who had immigrated most recently). However high school youth of all ages were equally likely to think that they could obtain a gun relatively easily.

	Gun Acquisition	Gun Carrying
	% Said it would be fairly or very easy to get a gun	% Carried a concealed gun in past year
Total	41	8
Gender		
Boys	50*	14*
Girls	33	3
Years Lived in the U.S.		
U.S. born	47*	9
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	32	7
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	20	6

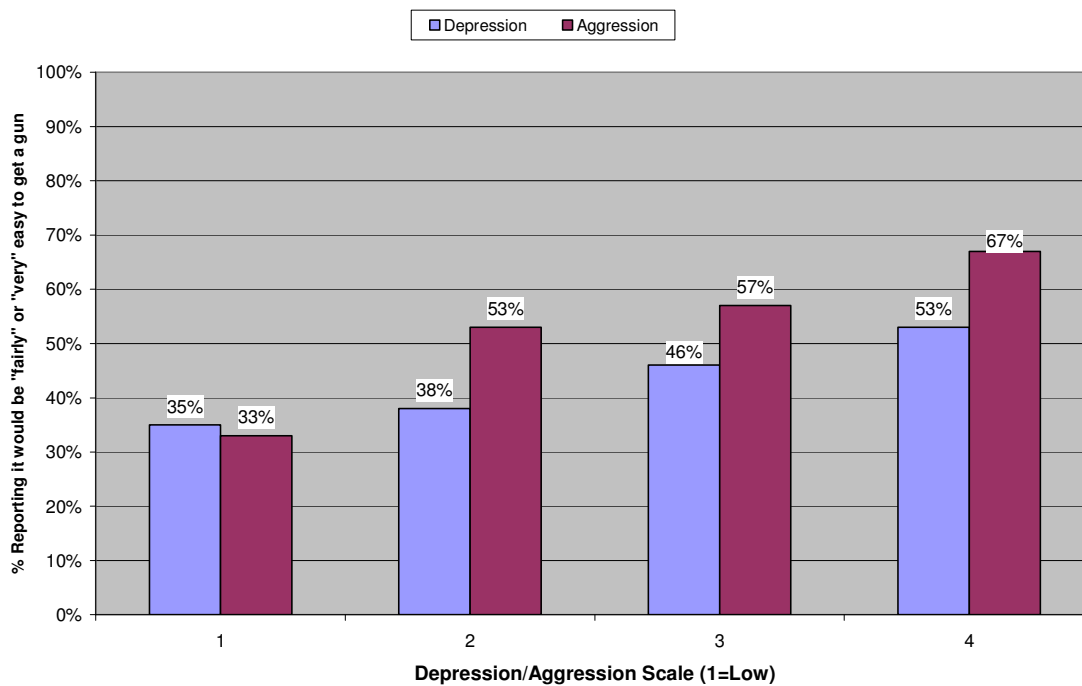
Grade Level		
9 th grade	39	7
10 th grade	46	12
11 th grade	42	6
12 th grade	41	15

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

Obtaining a Gun

Youth who reported that getting a gun would be fairly or very easy typically were those who, on a number of dimensions, reported experiencing school and life difficulties. For example, youth with higher depression scores were more likely than those with lower depression scores to report that getting a gun would be easy (47% vs. 37%), as were those with high scores on aggression (60% vs. 38%). Forty-seven percent (47%) of students who reported that getting a gun would be very or fairly easy also reported one or more yelling arguments at school over the past month, vs. 37% of those who reported that getting a gun would be difficult or impossible. Youth who reported getting a gun would be relatively easy also were more likely to have threatened or actually hit or hurt someone in their lives (58% vs. 36%, threatened; 54% vs. 34% actually hit or hurt) than youth who thought it would be difficult or impossible to get a gun.

Availability of Guns, Depression, and Aggression



Additional Findings on Obtaining a Gun

- Students who reported doing poorly in school and being truant were more likely to report that it was fairly or very easy to get guns than their higher performing peers. Over half (52%) of students who had been truant reported that they thought it would be easy to obtain a gun, compared to 37% of students who reported better attendance. Forty-seven (47%) of those getting mostly Bs, Cs, Ds, and Fs thought it would be easy to get a gun vs. 26% of those getting mostly As and Bs.

- Youth who thought it would be fairly or very easy to get a gun were more likely to feel unsafe in their neighborhoods than those who thought it would be more difficult; 46% of youth who reported feeling unsafe in their neighborhood reported that getting a gun would be fairly or very easy, compared to 38% of those who felt safe.
- More than half of youth (55%) who reported having been victimized by violence reported that it would be fairly or very easy to get a gun, compared to 31% of those who had not been victimized by violence.

Carrying a Concealed Gun

Respondents were asked, “*In the past 12 months, have you carried a concealed gun?*” Twelve percent (12%) of the sample did not answer this question. Eight percent of those who did answer the question reported having carried a concealed gun in the past 12 months. Boys were four times more likely than girls to report that they had carried a concealed gun (13% vs. 4%). Students who scored high on the measure of aggression were four times more likely to have carried a gun than those with the lowest score (24% vs. 6%). The likelihood of reporting that you had carried a gun increased with the number of violent events students reported having witnessed (11% of those who had witnessed 2 to 4 types of violence reported gun carrying, compared to 3% among those who reported witnessing only one type of violence, and less than one percent among those who reported that they had witnessed no violence). Fifteen percent (15%) of students who reported violent victimization, compared to 3% among those who did not report violent victimization, reported carrying a gun.

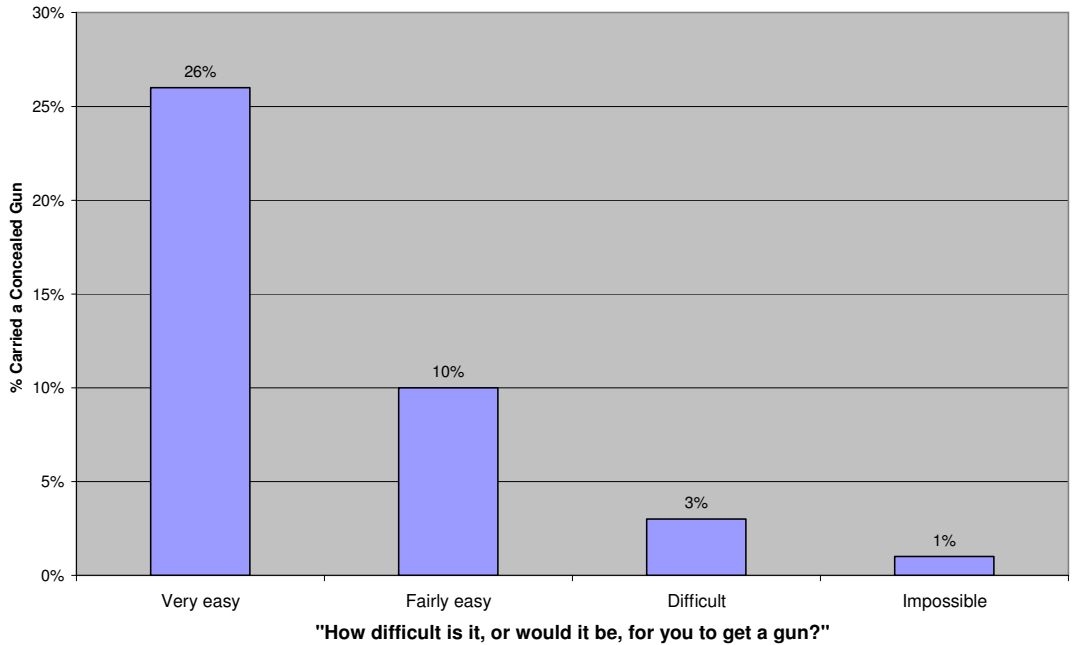
Just over half (55%) of respondents who indicated that they had carried a gun answered an additional question on potential reasons for carrying a gun. About half (49%) of those answering this question indicated feeling unsafe in their neighborhood as their reason for carrying a concealed firearm. Nearly half (42%) reported that they carried a gun in response to threats against them.

Reason for Carrying a Concealed Gun	Percentage*
Felt unsafe in neighborhood	49%
Someone had threatened me	42%
Felt unsafe at school	19%
Friends carried guns	19%
Some other reason	3%

*(Of those who provided a reason [N=43; 55% of gun carriers])

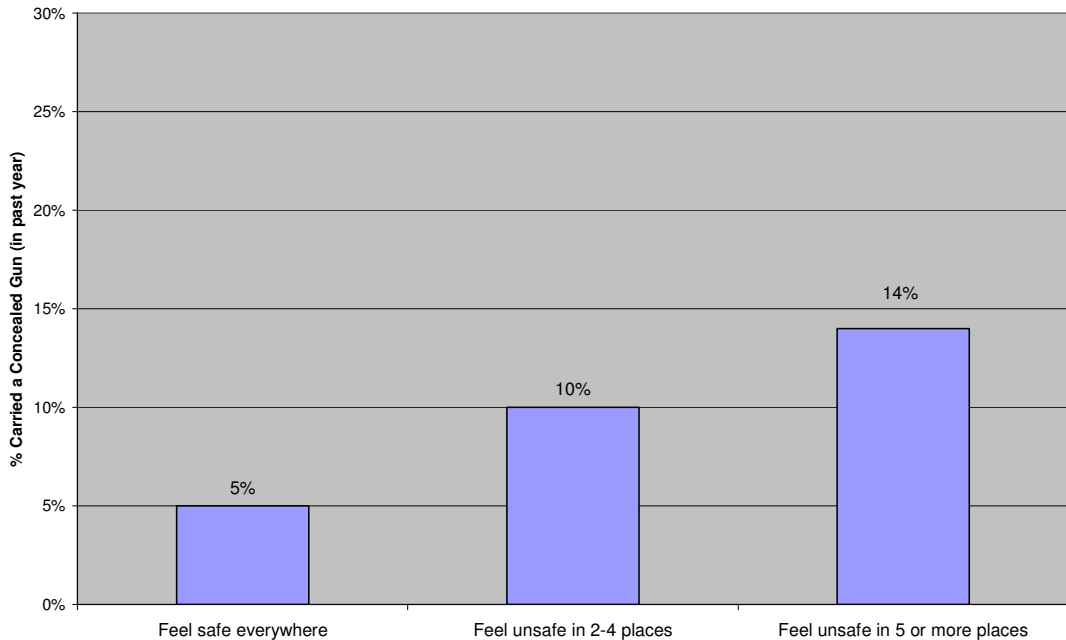
Of youth who reported that getting a gun would be fairly or very easy, 17% reported carrying a gun, while 2% of those who said that it would be difficult or impossible to get a gun reported carrying. The following chart reports responses by category.

"In the past 12 months, have you carried a concealed gun?"



Students who reported feeling less safe overall were more likely than those who felt safer to carry a gun (14% of those who felt unsafe in 5 or more places carried a gun compared to 10% of those who felt unsafe in 2-4 places compared to 5% of those who felt safe everywhere), perhaps because they had experienced and witnessed more violence. Those who reported that they felt unsafe in any specific location (school, home, neighborhood, on the way to school, at a local youth center) also were more likely than those who reported that they felt safe at that location to carry a gun.

In the past 12 months, have you carried a concealed gun?



Those who felt neighborhood gang activities were somewhat or very dangerous were more likely than those who did not to have carried a concealed gun in the past year (10% vs. 5%). However, gun carrying did not vary by perception of school gang activities.

Additional Findings on Carrying a Gun

- Youth who reported that they had carried a concealed gun in the past year, like those who thought getting a gun would be fairly or very easy, reported having more trouble in school and had lives characterized by greater perpetration of and exposure to violence than their non-carrying peers.
- Youth who reported that they received mostly Cs, Ds, or Fs (13%) were more likely than those who reported better grades (6%) to report that they had carried a concealed gun, as were those who reported being truant (12% vs. 7%).
- Students who reported that they had trouble getting along at school (11% vs. 5%), had yelling arguments at school (11% vs. 6%), and/or had ever hit or hurt someone (18% vs. 5%) or threatened to hit or hurt someone (14% vs. 5%) were more likely to report that they had carried a gun than those reporting fewer aggressive interactions.

VIII. DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Discrimination occurs when individuals hold negative stereotypes about a group, and subsequently treat the members of that group unfairly and with harassment. Research has shown that this process can be automatic and even unconscious.²⁵ Perceptions of being discriminated against because of one's race/ethnicity may lead to both physical and mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, lower self esteem, substance use, and self-rated ill health.²⁶ Youth who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender (GLBT) often are the victims of verbal and physical abuse from peers as well as adults as a result of discriminatory attitudes. These youth are more likely to have school-related problems, run away from home, attempt suicide, abuse substances, and exchange sex for money when exposed over time to this chronic and very personalized stress.²⁷

Questions were included in the 2004 Survey about respondent's experiences of discrimination and harassment due to racial/ethnic background, sexual orientation, or for other reasons. Respondents were asked "*Regardless of your identity or orientation, in the past 12 months have you ever been bullied, harassed, or assaulted because someone thought you were gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered?*," and "*Regardless of your race or ethnicity, in the past 12 months have you ever been bullied, harassed, or assaulted because of your race/ethnicity?*"

Discrimination/harassment on the basis of presumed sexual orientation was relatively rare (7% of the sample). GLBT youth, representing 7% all respondents, were far more likely than their heterosexual counterparts to have experienced this type of discrimination (26% vs. 4%). Racial/ethnic discrimination was more common (15% of the sample). Both types of discrimination were equally likely across gender, grade, and duration of residence in the U.S., however, and both were associated with effects and behaviors across a number of dimensions. The following table provides more detail on sexual orientation among youth in the sample, types of discrimination youth experienced, youths' reliance on resources when discrimination occurs, and respondent characteristics.

	Sexual Orientation	Sexual Orientation Discrimination	Racial/Ethnic Discrimination	Reliance on Resources
	% Gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender	% Experienced sexual orientation harassment	% Experienced racial/ethnic harassment	% Would use at least 1 of 14 resources if experienced discrimination
Total	7	6	15	73
Gender				
Boys	5	6	16	66*
Girls	8	6	15	79

²⁵ Hilton, J.L., von Hippel, W. 1996. Stereotypes. Annual Review of Psychology, Vol. 47, 237-271.

²⁶ Williams, D.R. 2004. Discrimination and Health. In Encyclopedia of Health and Behavior, edited by Anderson, N.B., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. pgs. 254-259.

²⁷ Savin-Williams, R.C. 1994. Verbal and physical abuse as stressors in the lives of lesbian, gay male, and bisexual youths: Associations with school problems, running away, substance abuse, prostitution and suicide. Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, 62(2): 261-269.

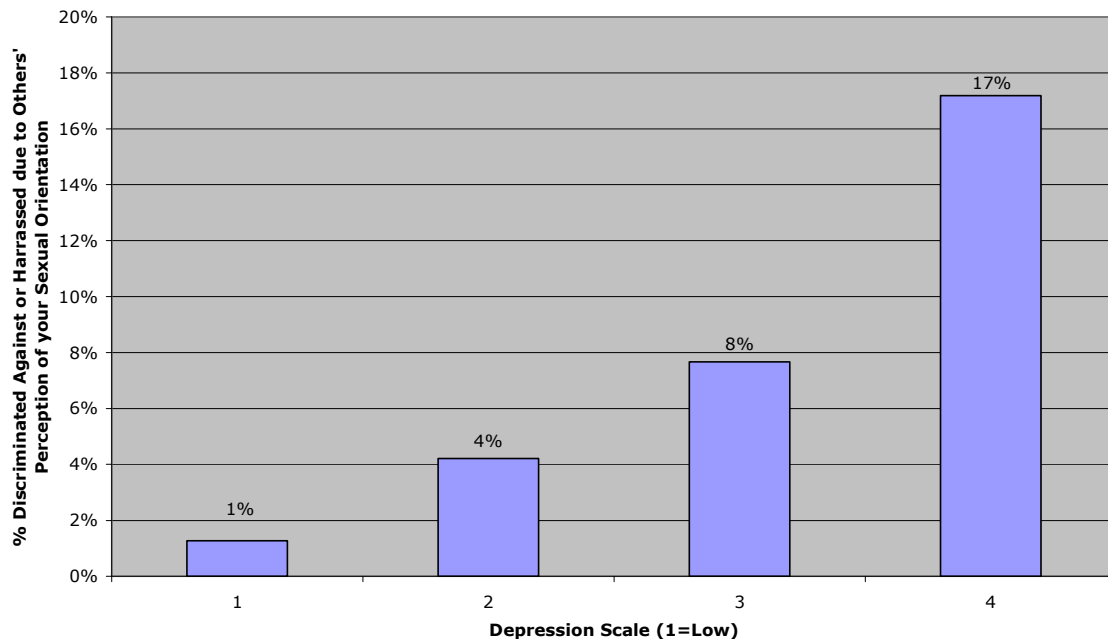
Years Lived in the U.S.				
U.S. born	7*	6	15	76*
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	2	6	16	75
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	12	3	13	59
Grade Level				
9 th grade	6	7	14	74
10 th grade	6	5	18	70
11 th grade	8	5	14	74
12 th grade	6	6	13	70

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

Sexual Orientation Discrimination

Youth who were more depressed were more likely to report having been harassed due to sexual or perceived sexual orientation.

Depression and Other's Perception of Respondent's Sexual Orientation



Victimization was also associated with experiencing sexual orientation discrimination. Sixteen percent of youth who reported being victimized by two or more types of violence reported experiencing sexual orientation discrimination, compared to 6% of youth victimized by one type of violence and only 3% of those who reported no violent victimization.

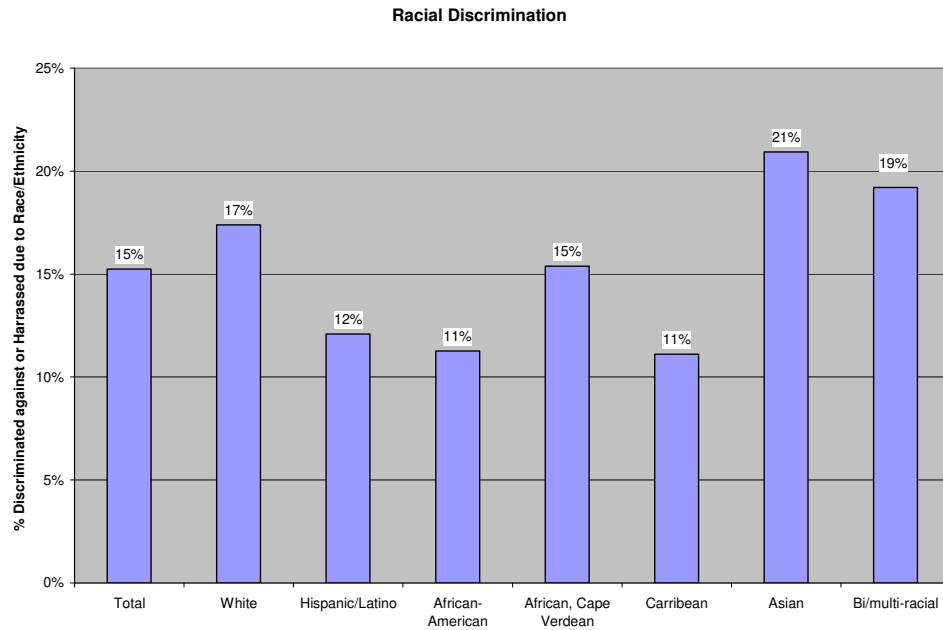
Additional Findings - Sexual Orientation Discrimination

- Youth who reported that they had had trouble with their peers were more likely than youth who did not report having trouble with their peers to have experienced sexual orientation harassment (10% vs. 2%), as were those who reported they had had at least one yelling argument at school (9% vs. 4%).
- Youth who reported feeling less safe were more likely than those who reported that they felt safe in more places to have experienced sexual orientation harassment (Felt unsafe in five or more places: 10%; 2-4 places: 8%; all or most places: 4%).

- Experiencing sexual orientation harassment was not associated with: gender, years lived in the U.S., age, grade level, household type, race, grades, truancy, violence perpetration, or participation in after-school activities or on sports teams.

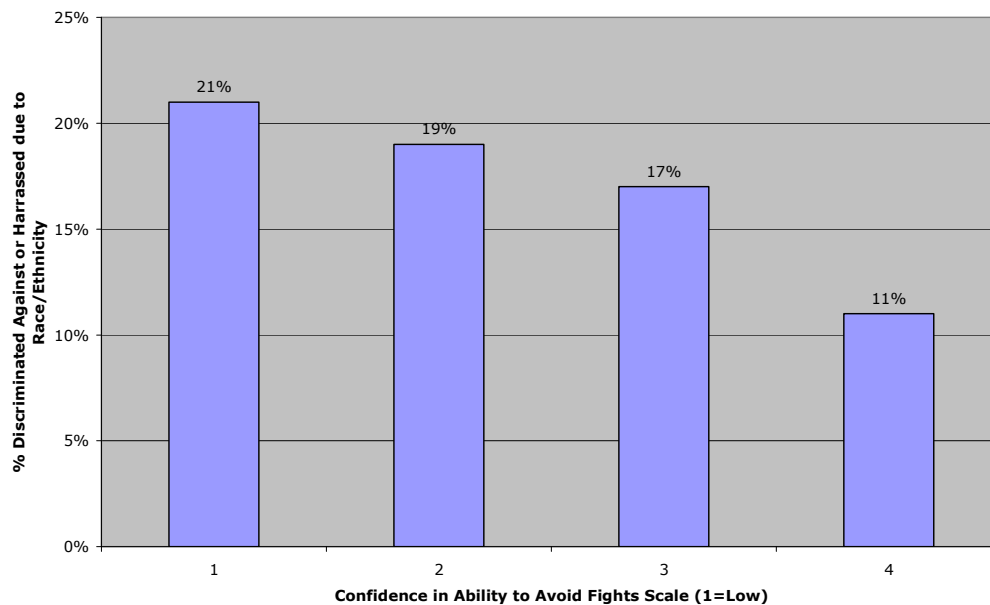
Racial/Ethnic Discrimination

The experience of discrimination due to racial/ethnic backgrounds cut across race/ethnicity in the 2004 Survey sample, although Asian youth were more likely than others (excluding respondents who identified themselves as bi/multi-racial) to report being bullied, harassed, or assaulted due to their race/ethnicity.



Youth with the least confidence in their ability to avoid fights were almost twice as likely to report having experienced racial harassment as their peers who were most confident.

Ability to Avoid Fights and Discrimination due to Race/Ethnicity



Additional Findings - Racial/Ethnic Discrimination

- White youth were more likely than youth from other racial/ethnic groups to report having experienced racial harassment (21% vs. 14%).
- Youth who reported being truant were more likely than those who did not report truancy to have experienced racial harassment (19% vs. 14%).
- Depressed youth were more likely than those who were not depressed to have experienced racial harassment (19% vs. 13%).
- Youth who reported that they had had trouble with their peers were more likely than youth who did not report this to have experienced racial harassment (20% vs. 11%), as were youth who reported that they had had at least one yelling argument at school (20% vs. 12%).
- Youth who reported that they had ever hit or hurt someone were more likely than those who had not to have experienced racial harassment (21% vs. 13%), as were those who reported having threatened to hit or hurt someone (21% vs. 12%).
- Youth who felt less safe were more likely than those who felt safe in more places to have experienced racial harassment (felt unsafe in 5 or more places: 25%; 2-4 places: 19%; 0 or 1 place: 11%).
- A greater percent of those who reported more direct violence victimization than less, or no direct violence victimization, reported experiencing racial harassment (two or more types of victimization: 30%; one type of victimization: 23%; no violence victimization: 8%).
- Youth who reported experiencing racial harassment were more likely than those who did not to say they *have used* (76% vs. 56%) at least one of fourteen resources listed.
- Experiencing racial harassment was not associated with: gender, years lived in the U.S., grade level, age, grades, household type, cooperation, reliance on resources, or participation in after-school activities or on sports teams.

IX. RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

The economic, educational, and service assets of a neighborhood significantly effect outcomes for children and youth. Children who grow up in less affluent neighborhoods tend to do worse in school and to have more social and emotional problems than children in affluent neighborhoods.²⁸ Use of community support services by teens can positively influence their ability to manage the stresses of adolescence, particularly those stresses faced by teens living in less affluent neighborhoods.

Community Resources

The 2004 Survey included several questions about teens' use of resources in certain situations (such as if discriminated against) or for obtaining certain types of information (such as getting a summer job). Respondents were also asked where students would seek out such resources and information. (Percents reported in the following tables represent the whole sample, not just those who indicated they would use at least one of these resources; thus missing data are not excluded.)

Use of Resources if Witnessed Violence or Threatened/Assaulted

Over three-quarters (79%) of the sample indicated they would use at least one of fourteen resources listed if they witnessed violence or were threatened/assaulted. Over half (57%) indicated that they already had used one of the listed resources for these reasons.

Respondents were asked, "If you've witnessed violence or have been threatened or physically assaulted, have/would you use the following services/people?" The following table shows the percent of respondents who have or would use each type of resource. Friends and family were by far the preferred resource for the teens in the Survey. Half or nearly half (50% and 48% respectively) of all respondents indicated that they would use them if confronted with exposure to violence, and about one-third (34% and 29% respectively) said they have already turned to friends or family in this way. About one fifth of the sample indicated that they would turn to a doctor, nurse, or teacher.

Resource	% Have Used	% Would Use
Friend	34	50
Family	29	48
Doctor or nurse	7	18
Teacher	8	17
Guidance counselor	6	16
Peer counselor	4	12
Teen hotline	3	11
Psychologist/ social worker	4	9
Youth worker	3	8
Religious leader	2	6

²⁸ Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G.J., Klebanov, P.K, & Sealand, N. (1993). Do neighborhoods influence child and adolescent development? *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no. 2: 353-95.

Internet chat/ information	3	5
Coach	3	5
Local community center	2	5
Other	12	16
At least one of these	57	79

Use of Resources if Discriminated Against

Respondents also were asked, “If you feel that you’ve been discriminated against, have/would you use the following services/people?” Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the sample indicated they would use at least one of the fourteen resources listed if they felt they were discriminated against, and over half (53%) indicated they already had used one of these resources for this reason. However, older youth (ages 17 and older) were less likely than younger youth to report that they would potentially use these resources (67% vs. 75%). Again, friends and family were the preferred resource, follow by in this case by guidance counselors and peer counselors.

Resource	% Have Used	% Would Use
Friend	34	49
Family	31	48
Teacher	10	18
Guidance counselor	6	13
Peer counselor	3	9
Doctor or nurse	4	8
Psychologist/ social worker	3	7
Youth worker	3	7
Teen hotline	2	7
Coach	4	6
Religious leader	2	6
Local community center	2	5
Internet chat/ information	3	3
Other	8	8
At least one of these	53	73

Additional Findings – Use of Resources if Discriminated Against

- Youth who have lived in the U.S. four years or less were less likely than other groups to report that they would potentially use these resources (59% vs. 76%).
- Youth who reported that they were harassed because someone thought they were gay were more likely than those who were not to say they *would use* (95% vs. 79%) or *have used* (82% vs. 56%) at least one of fourteen resources listed.
- Youth who reported that they received mostly Cs, Ds, and Fs were less likely than those with better grades to report that they would potentially use these resources (69% vs. 75%).
- Youth with higher cooperation scores (3 or 4) were more likely than those with lower scores (1 or 2) to report that they would potentially use resources (82% vs. 70%), as were those with higher confidence in their ability to avoid fights (76% vs. 65%).
- Use of resources to cope with discrimination was not associated with: grade level, race, truancy, depression, aggression, having a yelling argument at school, violence perpetration, or participation in after-school activities or on sports teams.

Use of Resources if Stressed or Upset

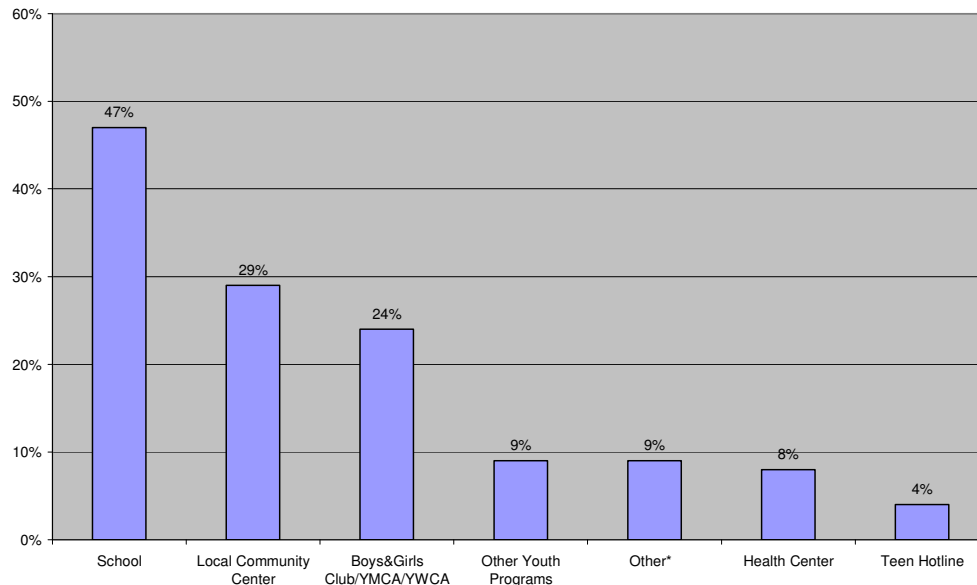
When asked, “If you felt stressed or upset, have/would you use the following services/people,?” three-quarters (76%) of the sample indicated that they would use at least one of these fourteen resources if they felt stressed or upset. Sixty-four percent indicated that they already had used one of these resources for this reason.

Resource	% Have Used	% Would Use
Friend	45	54
Family	39	47
Teacher	9	15
Guidance counselor	6	11
Doctor or nurse	5	9
Coach	4	7
Peer counselor	4	7
Youth worker	4	6
Teen hotline	3	6
Psychologist/ social worker	4	5
Religious leader	3	5
Internet chat/ information	3	4
Local community center	2	3
Other	11	11
At least one of these	64	76

Use of Specific Types of Resources

Nearly all (89%) of the sample indicated that they knew of at least one resource for information on local programs and services that was available to them. The following chart shows where these students seek such information.

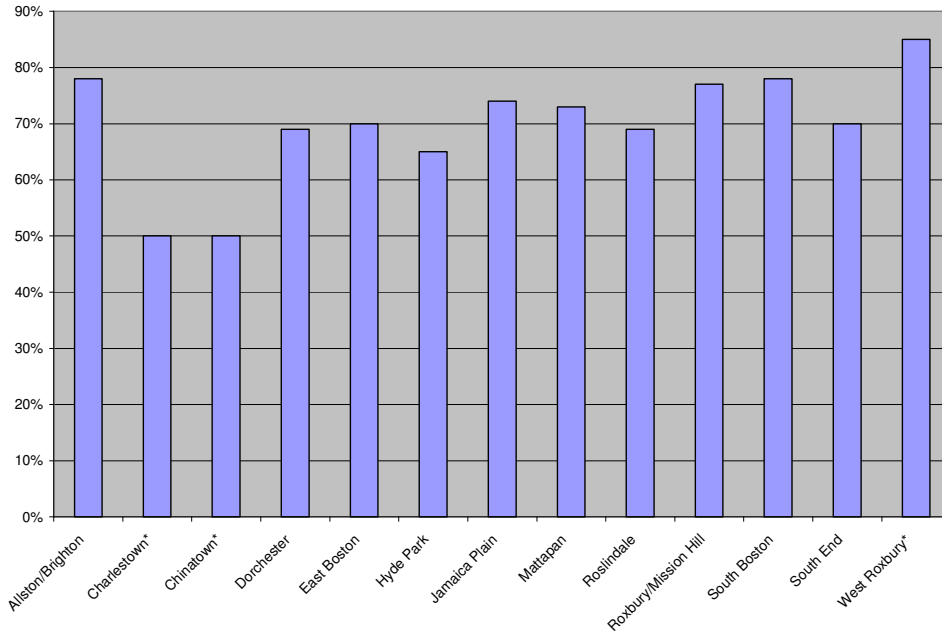
“Where do you go to obtain information on programs and services in your neighborhood?”



* Three percent of the sample wrote in “the internet” as a source of local information

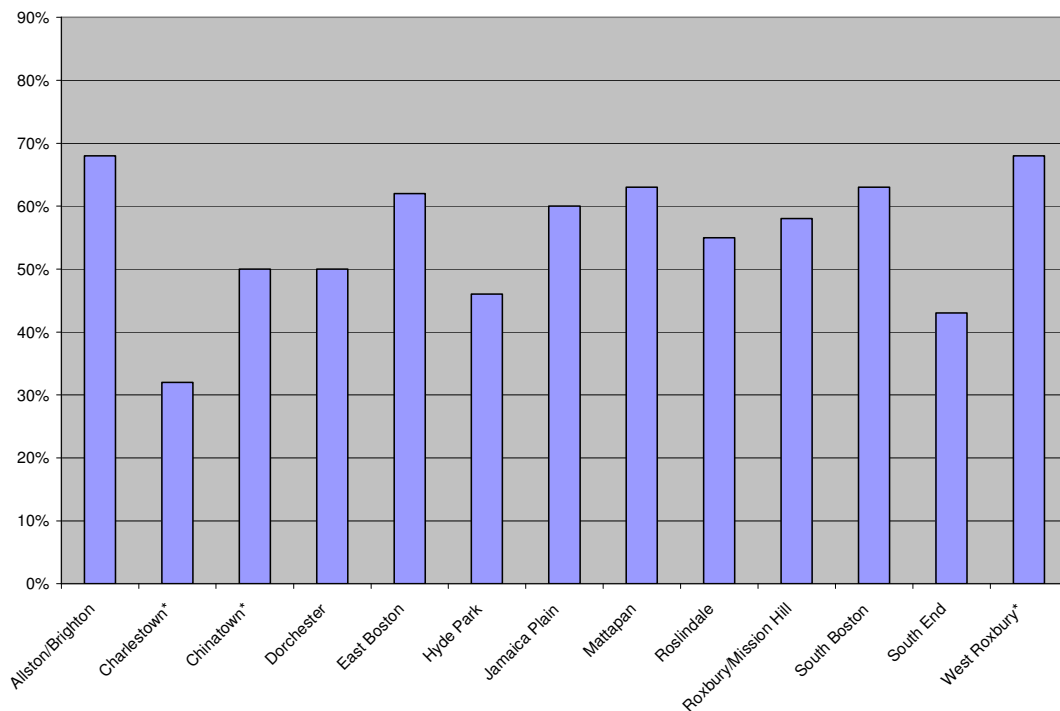
Nearly three-quarters (71%) of youth in the sample indicated there was information available in their neighborhoods to help them find a summer job. The following chart shows the percent of respondents within each neighborhood indicating such information was available:

“Is information available in your neighborhood to help you find a summer job?”



Over half (55%) indicated that there was information available in their neighborhoods to help them find an after-school job. The following chart shows the percent of respondents within each neighborhood indicating such information was available:

“Is information available in your neighborhood to help you find an after-school job?”



Contacts with the Police

The 2004 Survey also asked three questions about perceptions of and interactions with the police:

- (1) *In general, how much do you trust the police in your community/neighborhood?*
- (2) *During the past year, if you have had any contact with a police officer, what were the reasons for the contact? (7 possible answers plus "other" followed)*
- (3) *Do you feel you were treated with respect by the police during this/these encounter(s)?*

The table that follows offers detail on youths' trust in their neighborhood police, contact with the police in the past year, perception of treatment by the police, and respondent characteristics. Boys were much more likely than girls to report having had contact with the police in the past year. U.S. born youth were more likely than immigrant youth to report that they had had contact with police in the past year and to report less trust in their neighborhood police.

	Trust	Contact	Respect
	% Trust neighborhood police some/a lot	% Had contact with police in past year	% Treated with respect most of the time or always**
Total	39	46	36
Boys	41	53*	35
Girls	38	39	37
Years Lived in the U.S.			
U.S. born	35*	50*	36
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	46	38	34
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	49	29	45
Grade Level			
9 th grade	38	46	39
10 th grade	40	50	37
11 th grade	39	43	36
12 th grade	28	41	23

*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

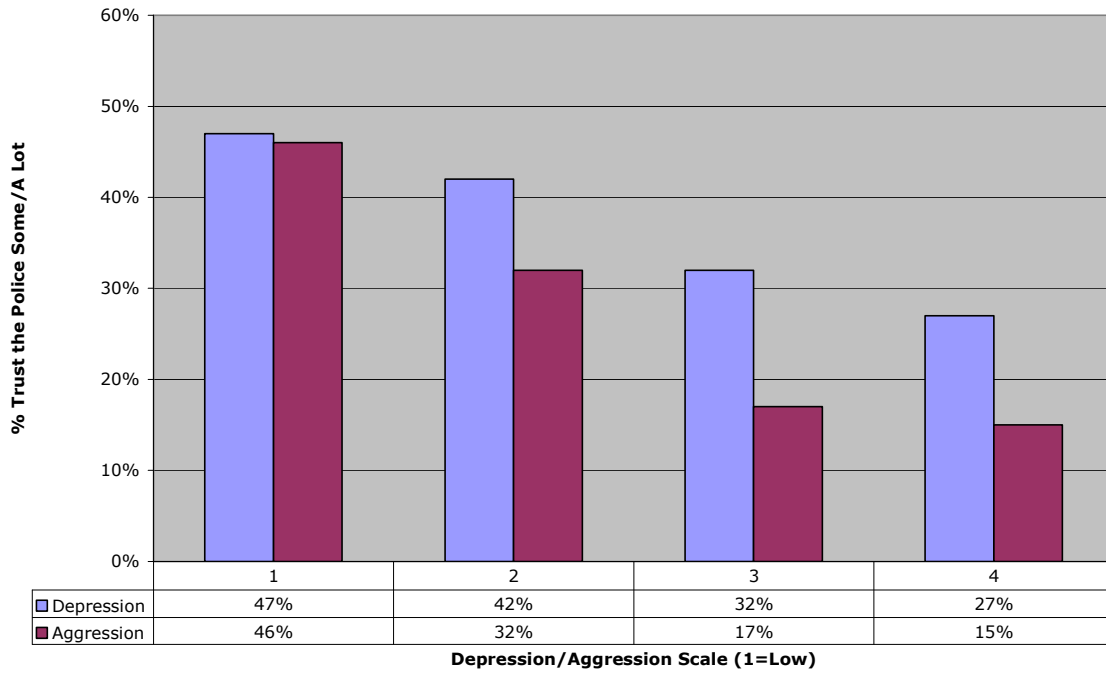
**Percent of those who had contact with police in past year (not of entire sample)

Trust in Police

When asked, "*In general, how much do you trust the police in your community / neighborhood,?*" over one-third of respondents (39%) said they trust the police "*a lot or some.*" Youth who were born in the U.S. were least likely to trust the police (35%), while those living in the U.S. less than five years were most likely to trust them (49%). The more violence youth reported witnessing, the less a respondent trusted the police. Over half of youth who witnessed no violence in the previous year reported that they trusted the police, compared to 44% of those witnessing one type of violence and 34% of those witnessing 2 to 4 types of violence. Youth who had been victimized by violence also were less likely than those who had not to report that they trusted the police (30% vs. 44%), as were youth who had been exposed to violence in their neighborhoods (32% vs. 46%).

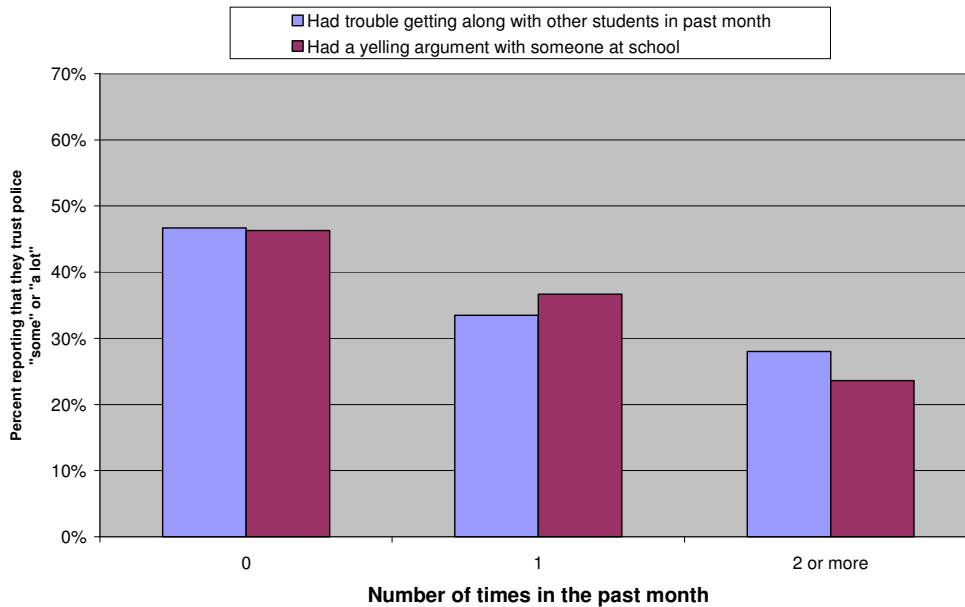
Youth with higher levels of depression and youth who were more aggressive were less likely than those with lower levels of depression or aggression to report that they trusted the police as well.

How much do you trust the police in your neighborhood?



Youth who reported trouble with peers at school also were less likely than youth reporting little or trouble with peers at school to report trusting the police.

Trust in Police and Social Problems at School



Additional Findings- Trust in Police

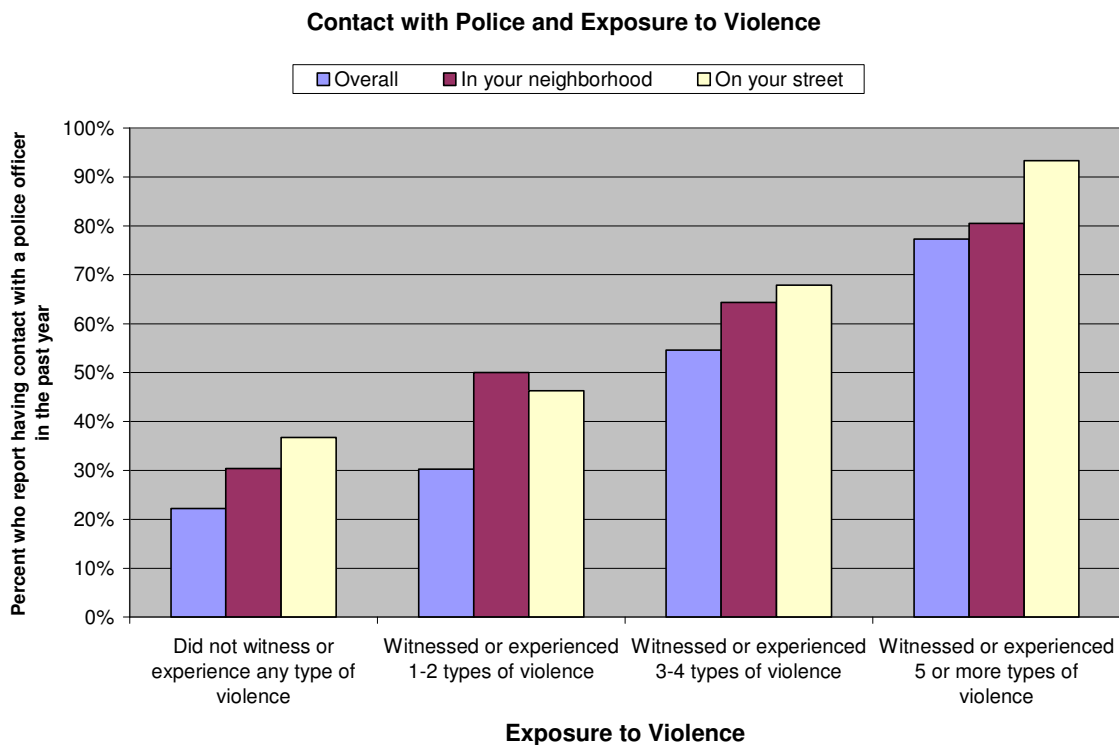
- White youth were more likely than youth from other groups to trust the police (57% vs. 36%), while Blacks were less likely (30% vs. 42%).

- Less trust in police was associated with a number of school-related difficulties, including lower grades (mostly As and Bs: 49%; Bs and Cs: 40%; Cs, Ds, and Fs: 28%), higher reported truancy (22% vs. 52%), and lack of reported participation in after-school activities (36% vs. 45%).
- Youth with more confidence in their ability to avoid fights were more likely to trust police than those with less confidence (42% vs. 20%).
- Youth who reported that they had ever hit or hurt someone were less likely than those who did not report that not to trust police (27% vs. 42%), as were youth who reported that they had ever threatened to hit or hurt someone (28% vs. 45%).
- Youth who reported that they felt safe in their neighborhoods were more likely than those who did not to trust the police (44% vs. 28%).
- Trust in police was not associated with: gender, age, grade level, household type, cooperation, or participation on sports teams.

Police Contact

Nearly half (48%) of respondents (17% of the sample missing) reported having contact with the police during the previous year. (Those who reported that a member of their family was a police officer were treated as not having police contact). Boys were more likely than girls to have contact with the police (56% vs. 41%). White youth were more likely than youth from other racial/ethnic groups to have police contact (55% vs. 46%), while Asians were less likely (32% vs. 49%).

Respondents who reported more exposure to violence (overall, in one’s neighborhood, or on one’s street) were more likely than those who reported less exposure to report having contact with the police in the past year.



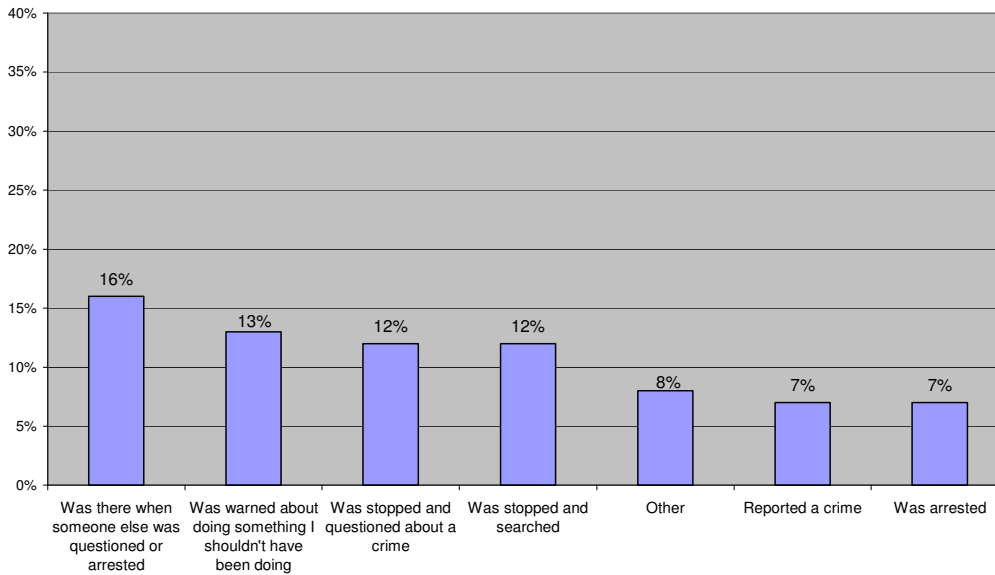
Additional Findings- Contact with Police

- As years lived in the U.S. decreased, a smaller percentage of students reported having contact with the police (U.S. born: 51%; 5+ years: 44%; 4 years or less: 32%)
- A greater percentage of those who reported receiving poor grades reported having contact with the police (mostly As and Bs: 35%; Bs and Cs: 49%; Cs and below: 58%).
- Respondents who reported being truant were more likely than those who did not report truancy to have contact with police (64% vs. 41%)
- Youth who reported having police contact were more likely than those who reported no police contact to be depressed (44% vs. 37%) and aggressive (19% vs. 8%), and less likely to be confident in their ability to avoid fights (80% vs. 91%).
- Youth who reported having trouble with their peers were more likely than those who did not report trouble with their peers to report having police contact (52% vs. 43%), as were youth who reported having had a yelling argument at school (54% vs. 43%).
- Youth who reported that they have ever had hit or tried to hurt others were more likely than youth who did not report this to have police contact (65% vs. 42%), as were those who reported that they had ever threatened to hit or hurt others (59% vs. 40%).
- Youth who reported that they worked more than 20 hours per week were less likely than youth reporting working less than 20 hours per week to have police contact (58% vs. 43%).
- Police contact was not associated with: grade level, age, overall safety, feeling safe in one’s neighborhood or feeling safe on one’s street.

Reasons for Police Contact

Youth who had had contact with the police in the past year (N=406) were asked to choose from a list of seven reasons (including “other”) why they had police contact. The most common reason given was being present while someone else was questioned or arrested (16%).

Reasons for Police Contact*



*Percents are out of those who had contact with the police in the past year (N=406, 38% of sample).

Additional analyses were done on those whose behavior was being questioned by the police – i.e. they were either arrested, stopped and searched, or warned about doing something they shouldn’t have been doing – (“targets” of police contact) versus youth whose police contact was as a

witness or potential witness to a crime – those present when someone else was questioned or arrested, stopped and questioned about a crime, or who reported a crime (“witnesses”). Respondents who indicated that they were both targets and witnesses were grouped with “targets.” Respondents who indicated that they had had “*other*” types of police contact were excluded from these categories.

Over half (52%) of the 2004 Survey respondents indicated they had had contact with the police were the target of interest to the police. The remaining 48% had police contact as witnesses. Two-thirds (66%) of the targets were boys, versus about one-third (35%) of the witnesses. White youth were more likely than non-white youth to be the target of interest to the police (67% vs. 48%). Compared to witnesses, targets of police contact appeared more likely to report having perpetrated violence, to have been victimized by violence, and report having problems at school. For example:

- A much higher percentage of targets than witnesses also reported being truant from school (54% vs. 28%).
- Targets were more likely than witnesses to report having ever hit or tried to hurt someone (39% vs. 29%), as well as having threatened to hit or hurt someone (52% vs. 40%).
- Targets were less likely than witnesses to have confidence in their ability to avoid fights (76% vs. 85%).
- Targets were more than twice as likely as witnesses to have experienced two or more types of violent victimization in the past year (41% vs. 19%).

There also were differences in how targets and witnesses viewed the police. Targets were less likely than witnesses to feel they were treated with respect by the police *always* or *most of the time* (26% vs. 46%), or to trust the police (23% vs. 39%).

Additional Findings- Reason for Police Contact

- A greater percentage of targets than witnesses reported receiving grades of mostly Cs, Ds, and Fs (42% vs. 30%).
- A smaller percentage of targets than witnesses reported participating in after-school activities (26% vs. 35%).
- Targets were more likely than witnesses to report having had a yelling argument at school (55% vs. 42%).
- Targets were more likely than witnesses to be depressed (49% vs. 39%) and aggressive (24% vs. 13%).
- Type of police contact was not associated with: grade level, years lived in the U.S., trouble getting along with peers at school, cooperation, witnessing violence, or feelings of safety.

Treatment by Police

When asked, “*Do you feel you were treated with respect by the police during this/these encounter(s)?*” 36% of those who had contact with the police in the past year felt that they were treated with respect by the police *always* or *most of the time*. (In this section, “*treated with respect*” refers to responses of being treated with respect *always* or *most of the time*.) About one-third (31%) said they were treated with respect *some of the time*, and one-third (33%) said they were never treated with respect when they had contact with the police.

Additional Findings – Treatment by Police

- African-American youth were the least likely to feel they were treated with respect by police (22%), while Cape Verdean youth were the most likely (56%).
- As years lived in the U.S. decreased, a higher percent felt they were treated with respect by the police (U.S. born: 33%; 5+ years: 38%; 4 years or less: 48%).
- Respondents who reported being truant were less likely to feel they were treated with respect by police (25% vs. 41%).
- Youth who reported that they had hit or tried to hurt others were less likely than those who did not report this to feel they were treated with respect by the police (28% vs. 39%).
- Feeling treated with respect by police was not associated with: gender, grade level, age, grades, depression, aggression, cooperation with others, overall safety, or threatening to hit or hurt others, or exposure to violence.

X. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

The ability to do well in school is influenced by many factors in addition to academic potential. The Search Institute has identified a caring school climate and supportive relationships with non-parent adults such as teachers and guidance counselors as two of the forty developmental assets that enable young people to become caring, responsible adults.²⁹ Making our schools safe and supportive environments filled with caring adults for *all students* complements our federal and state obligations to provide a range of targeted services for students with distinctive needs, and to insure that all students are provided with a school environment conducive to success.

Even for teens, parents are the most important adults. In order to become happy, healthy adults, teens need their parents for advice and guidance, inspiration, and affection. Teens whose parents take interest, get involved in what they do, and provide guidance and support are more likely to successfully navigate the difficult terrain of young adulthood. Children and youth who feel connected to their families are much more resilient in the face of life's normal difficulties. Neighbors, teachers, and other adults also play a key role in adolescent lives. Greater and more positive interactions between neighborhood adults, teachers, other adults, and teens has been shown to improve teen and community life.³⁰

Respondents to the 2004 Survey were asked the following questions about their perceptions of and relationships to other people in their lives:

- (1) *In general, do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or most people would try to be fair?*
 - (a) *Try to take advantage*
 - (b) *Try to be fair*
- (2) *Are you able to talk to at least one of your parents/guardians about most things? (yes / no)*
- (3) *In general, how much do you trust teachers/counselors in your school?*
 - (a) *A lot*
 - (b) *Some*
 - (c) *Only a little*
 - (d) *Not at all*
- (4) *In general, how much do you trust people in your neighborhood?*
 - (a) *A lot*
 - (b) *Some*
 - (c) *Only a little*
 - (d) *Not at all*

Student responses here were some of the most hopeful obtained in the survey. Most students reported that they thought people would try to be fair and that adults are trustworthy. The table below gives detail about youths' responses to these questions and characteristics of respondents. Boys were more likely than girls to report trusting trust teachers/counselors and neighbors some or a lot, but also were more likely to believe that people would take advantage of you if they had a chance. U.S. born youth and youth in lower grades were less likely to report that they trusted teachers/counselors.

²⁹ www.search-institute.org/assets/forty.htm, 8/21/01.

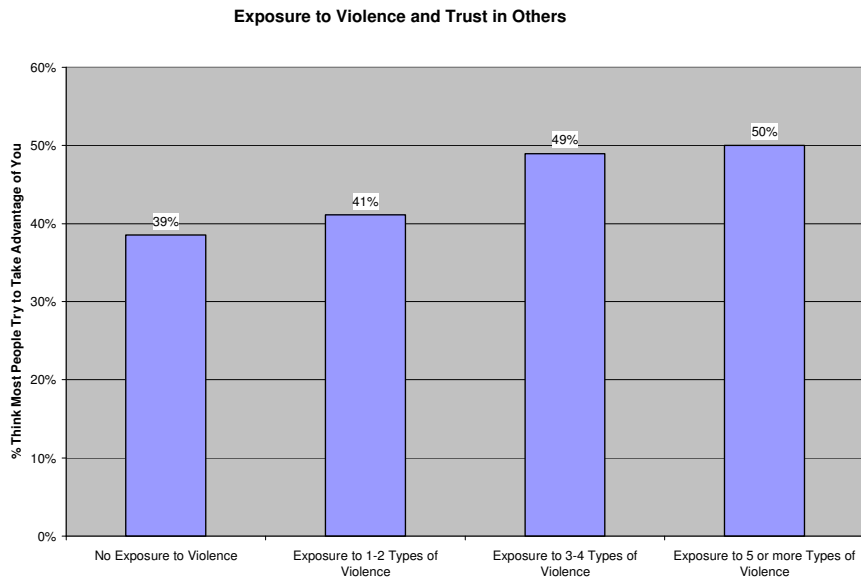
³⁰ Leventhal T, Brooks-Gunn J. The neighborhoods they live in: the effects of neighborhood residence on child and adolescent outcomes. *Psychological Bulletin*. 2000;126(2):309-337.

	Trust	Parents	Teachers	Neighbors**
	% Think most people would try to take advantage of you	% Can talk to at least one parent/guardian about most things	% Trust Teachers/Counselors a lot/some	% Trust Neighbors a lot/some
Total	45	75	54	30
Gender				
Boys	37*	75	58*	36*
Girls	50	75	51	26
Years Lived in the U.S.				
U.S. born	45	76	52*	32
Live in U.S. 5+ yrs.	44	70	58	28
Live in U.S. <5 yrs.	44	77	62	23
Grade Level				
9 th grade	43	75	51*	31
10 th grade	40	73	51	29
11 th grade	49	78	60	31
12 th grade	54	69	62	18

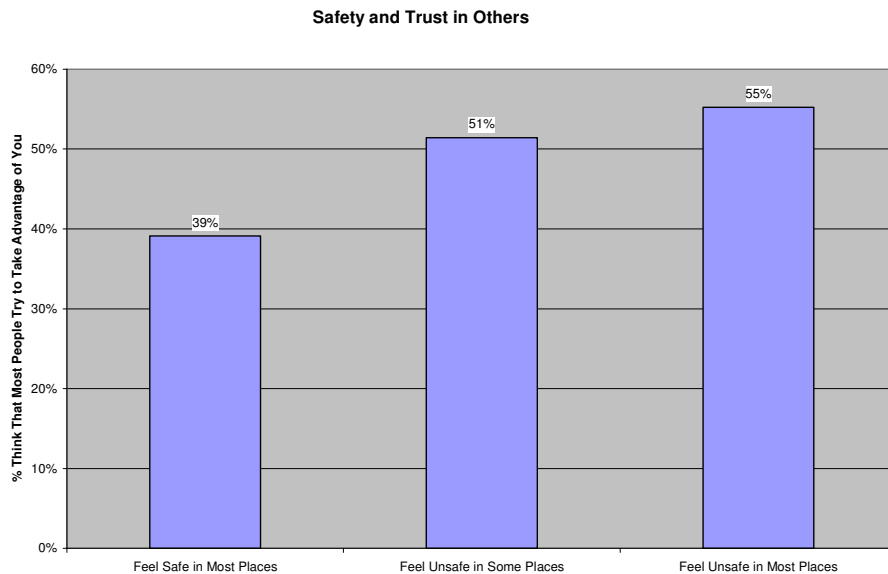
*Indicates statistically significant trend (if grade level or years lived in U.S.) or difference (if gender)

General Trust in Others

When asked “*In general, do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or most people would try to be fair?*,” nearly half – 45% – of respondents (15% of the sample missing) indicated that they thought that most people would try to take advantage of them. Respondents who reported more exposure to violence were more likely than those who reported less exposure to believe most people would try to take advantage of you if they could.



A greater percentage of those who indicated that they felt unsafe in some or most places than of those who reported feeling safe in most places believed most people would try to take advantage of you if they could.



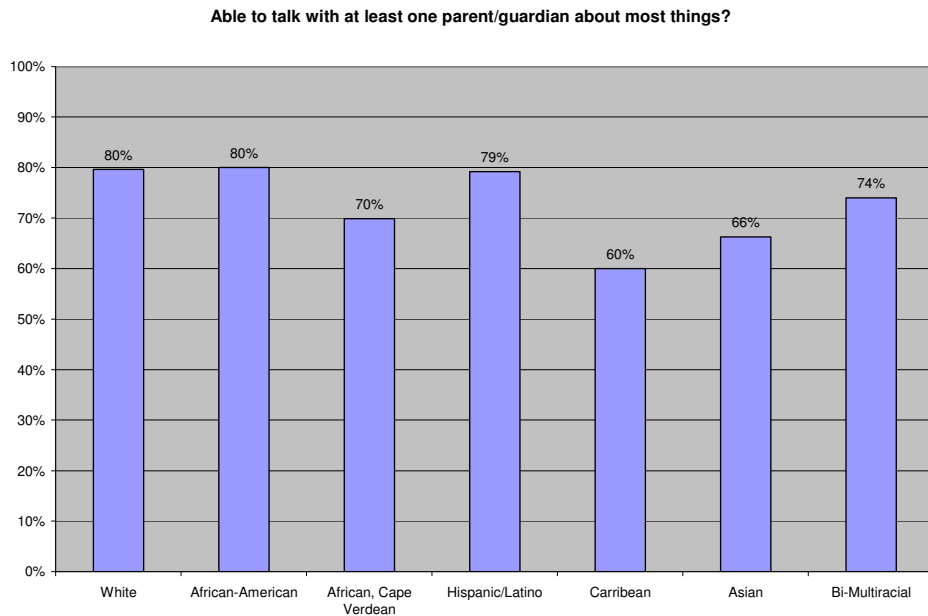
Additional Findings- General Trust in Others

- Girls were more likely than boys to think that most people would try to take advantage of them (50% vs. 37%).
- Youth in higher grades (grades 11 and 12) were more likely than youth in lower grades to think most people would try to take advantage of them (50% vs. 42%).
- Black youth were more likely than youth from other groups to think that most people would try to take advantage of them (50% vs. 42%).
- Youth who believed most people would try to take advantage of them if they could were more likely than those who believed most people would try to be fair to report being truant (35% vs. 28%), to be depressed (51% vs. 32%), and to report having had trouble with their peers (56% vs. 41%).
- Youth who reported that they had ever hit or hurt someone were more likely than youth who did not report this to believe most people would try to take advantage of them (53% vs. 42%), as were those who reported having ever threatened to hit or hurt someone (52% vs. 41%).
- Youth who felt unsafe at school were more likely than those who did not feel unsafe to believe most people would try to take advantage of them (56% vs. 42%), as were youth who felt unsafe in their neighborhood (55% vs. 41%).
- General trust in others was not associated with: years lived in the U.S., household type, grades, aggression, confidence in ability to avoid fights, having a yelling argument at school, gun carrying, or participation in after-school activities or on sports teams.

Ability to Talk to Parents or Guardians

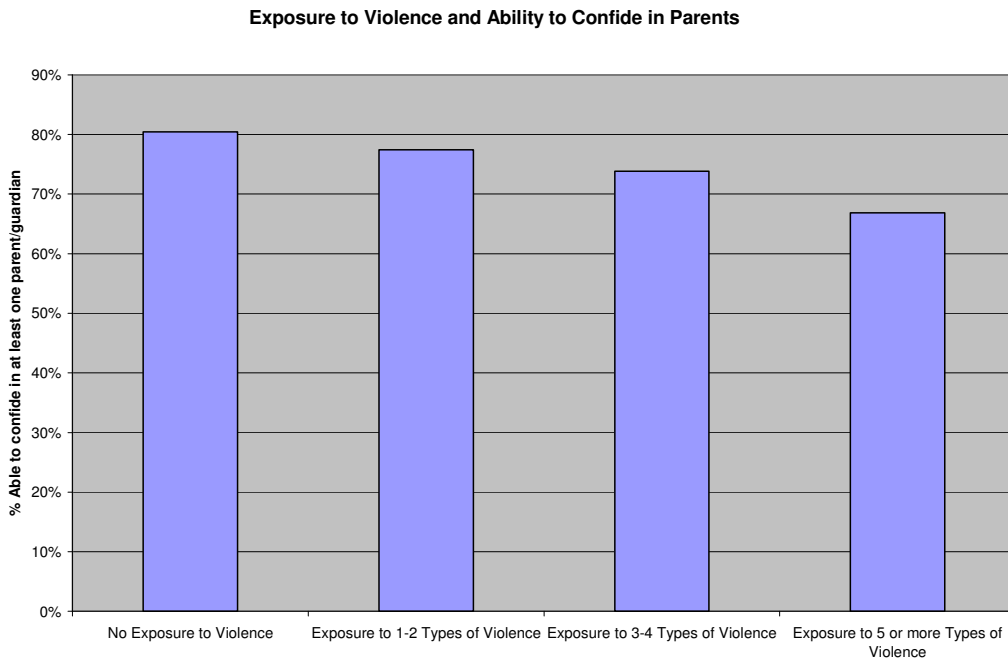
When asked “Are you able to talk to at least one of your parents/guardians about most things?” three-quarters (75%) of this sample of teenagers (14% of the sample missing) said yes. Youth who reported that they did not feel able to talk to a parent or guardian about most things were more likely than those who did to report being depressed (55% vs. 35%) and aggressive (20% vs.

11%). They also were less likely to report having confidence in their ability to avoid fights (81% vs. 88%). The chart below displays these responses by racial/ethnic group. (Differences between groups are not significant.)



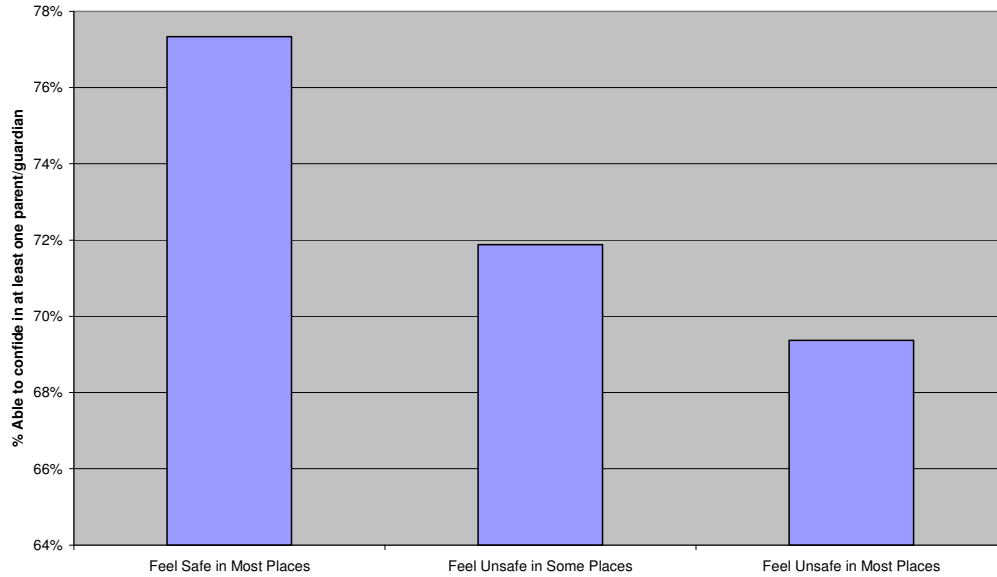
*Difference between races not statistically significant

As exposure to violence increased, the percent of respondents who felt able to talk to a parent or guardian about most things decreased.



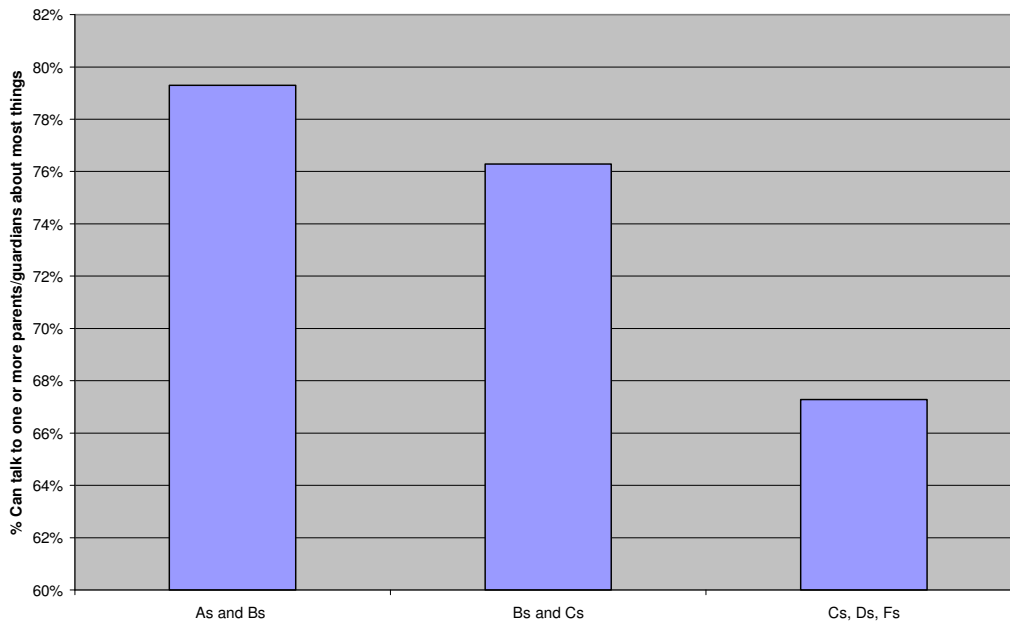
As a sense of safety in specific locations decreased, the percent of respondents who felt able to talk to a parent or guardian about most things also decreased.

Safety and Ability to Confide in Parents



However, not surprisingly, students reporting that they received good grades were more likely to report being able to talk to their parents or guardians about most things.

Academic Performance and Confiding in Parents



Additional Findings- Ability to Talk to Parent/Guardian about Most Things

- Black youth were more likely than youth from other racial/ethnic groups to feel able to talk to a parent or guardian (80% vs. 72%) about most things.
- Youth who reported having had trouble with their peers were less likely than those who did not to feel able to talk to a parent or guardian (71% vs. 78%).
- Youth who reported that they played on at least one sports team during the past year were more likely than those who did not report this to feel able to talk to a parent or guardian (78% vs. 72%).

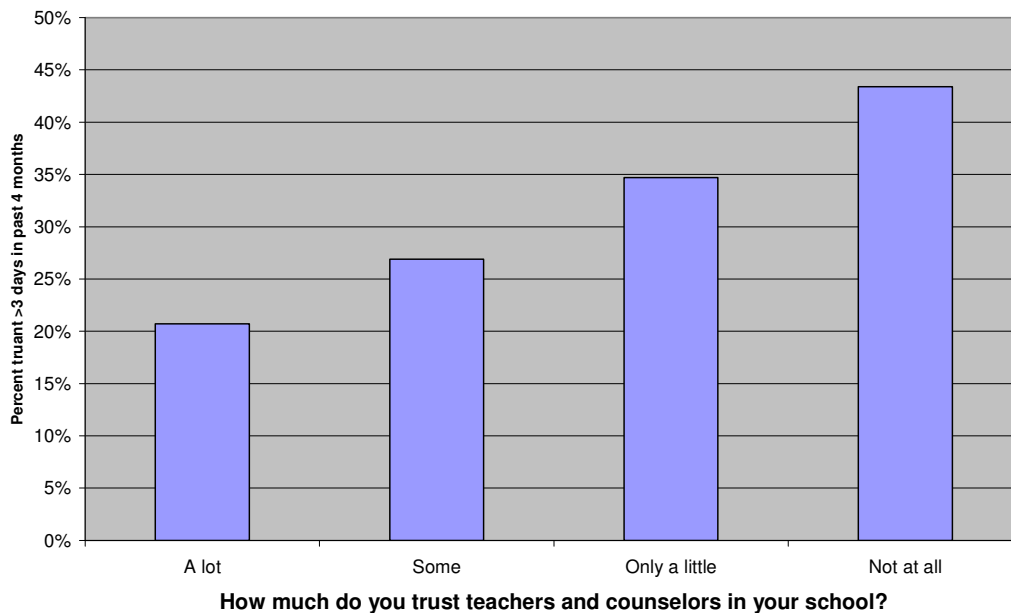
- Youth who reported that they did not feel safe in their neighborhood were less likely than those who did to feel able to talk to a parent or guardian (70% vs. 77%).
- Youth who were not able to talk with at least one parent or guardian about most things were more likely than those who were able to believe most people would try to take advantage of you if given the chance (50% vs. 42%).
- Ability to talk to a parent or guardian about most things was not associated with: gender, years lived in the U.S., age, grade level, truancy, cooperation, having a yelling argument at school, threatening to hit or hurt someone, participation in after-school activities, feeling safe at school, or exposure to violence at school or in one’s neighborhood.

Trust in Teachers/Counselors

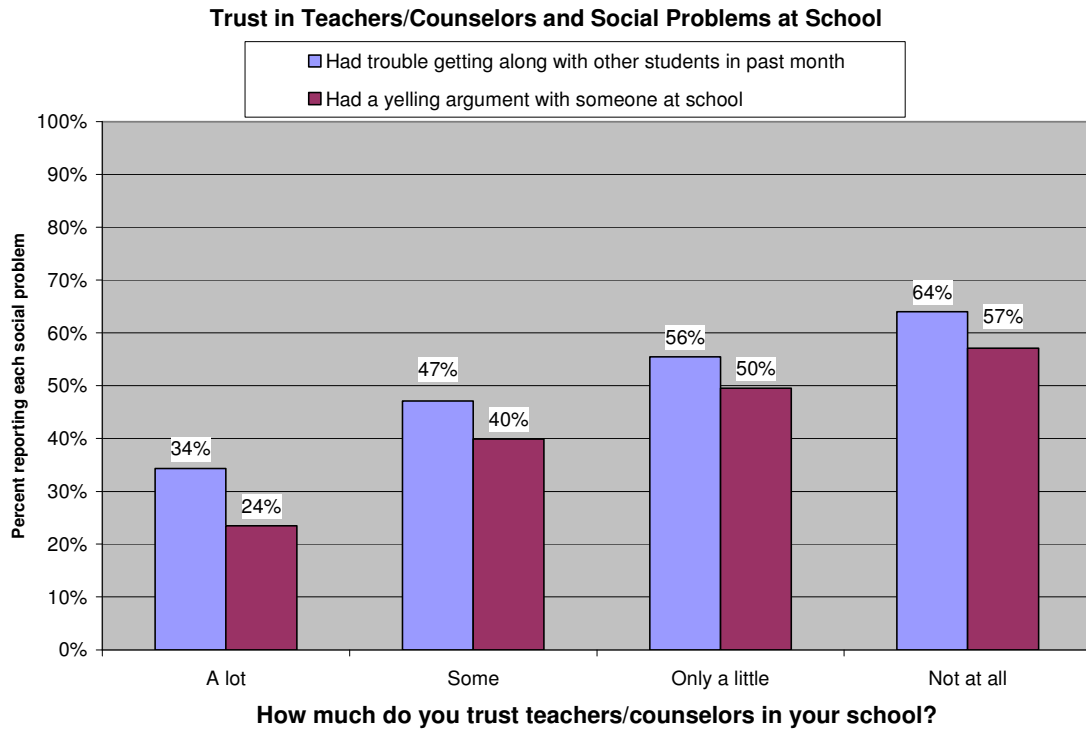
When asked “*In general, how much do you trust teachers and counselors in your school*” 54% of respondents (12% of the sample missing) said they trusted them *some* or *a lot*. (In this section, “*teachers*” refers to teachers and counselors at school. Youth referred to as “*trusting their teachers*” said they trusted them *a lot* or *some*.)

Youth who were less likely to report trusting their teachers were more likely to report being truant from school.

Trust in Teachers/Counselors and Truancy



Youth who were less likely to trust their teachers also were more likely to report having had trouble with their peers and getting into a yelling argument at school.



Students who were more likely to trust their teachers also were more likely to feel safe at school.



Additional Findings - Trust in Teachers

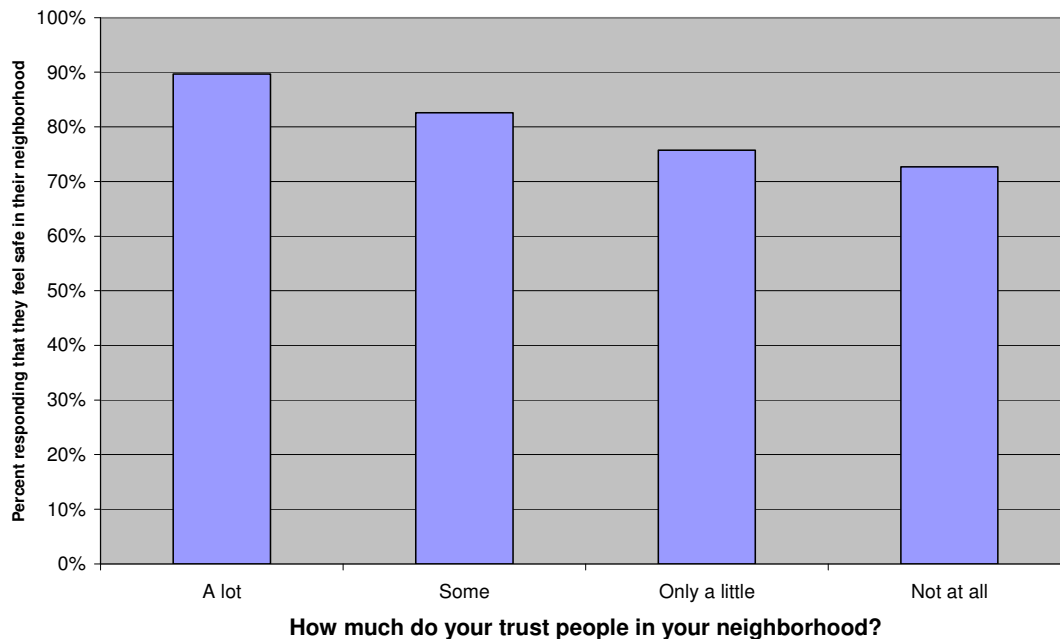
- Youth in higher grades (grades 11 and 12) were more likely than youth in lower grades (grades 9 and 10) to report that they trusted their teachers (60% vs. 51%).

- White youth were more likely than youth from other groups to report that they trusted teachers (69% vs. 52%), while black youth were less likely (48% vs. 57%).
- Students with better grades were more likely to report they trusted teachers a lot or some (mostly As and Bs: 67%; Bs and Cs: 52%; Cs and Ds: 45%; Ds and Fs: 41%).
- Students who trusted their teachers less were more likely than those with more trust in their teachers to report being depressed (46% vs. 35%) or aggressive (19% vs. 8%).
- Youth who trusted their teachers more were more likely than those with less trust in their teachers to have confidence in their ability to avoid fights (90% vs. 81%).
- Youth who were more likely to trust their teachers were more likely than those who with less trust to participate in after-school activities (37% vs. 29%).
- Youth who had been exposed to violence at school were less likely than those who had not been exposed to school violence to report that they trusted their teachers (50% vs. 60%).
- Trust in teachers was not associated with: cooperation with others or participation on sports teams.

Trust in Neighbors

When asked “*In general, how much do you trust people in your neighborhood?*” 30% of respondents (27% of the entire sample) said they trusted them a lot or some. (In this section, “*neighbors*” refers to “people in your neighborhood”; the term is not restricted to those actually living next door. Youth referred to as “*trusting their neighbors*” said they trusted them a lot or some.) Those who trust their neighbors were more likely than those who do not to feel safe in their neighborhood.

Trust of People in Your Neighborhood and Feelings of Safety in Neighborhood



Additional Findings - Trust in Neighbors

- Immigrant youth were less likely than those born in the U.S. to report that they trusted their neighbors (26% vs. 32%).

- White youth were more likely than youth from other racial/ethnic groups to report that they trusted their neighbors (52% vs. 27%), while Black youth were less likely (27% vs. 32%).
- Youth who reported that they did not trust their neighbors were more likely than those who did to be depressed (43% vs. 34%).
- Youth who reported that they had ever threatened to hit or try to hurt others were less likely than those who did not report this to trust their neighbors (26% vs. 33%).
- As the number of places in which respondents felt safe increased, trust in neighbors also increased, from 15% of those who felt unsafe in five or more places reporting that they trusted their neighbors, to 23% of those who felt unsafe in 2-4 places, to 38% of those who felt safe everywhere.
- Trust in neighbors was not associated with: age, grade level, grades, truancy, aggression, cooperation, hitting or hurting someone, participation in after-school activities, or exposure to violence within one's neighborhood.