



Safety in Numbers: Collecting and Using Crime, Violence, and Discipline Incident Data to Make a Difference in Schools



http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2002312.asp

Two priorities have emerged for public schools in recent years. One is for schools to demonstrate that all children are meeting high academic standards as measured by state assessments. The other is for schools to create an environment that is free of violence and other crimes. These are not separate missions. Children need safe and orderly schools in order to learn. Collecting and using incident data are essential steps for creating safe schools. With good data, it is possible to develop effective prevention and intervention plans. Benefits of data collection include helping schools:

- improve overall school safety;
- address specific safety or discipline issues (e.g., bullying);
- conserve resources including staff time; and
- obtain additional resources for school safety.

In 1996, the Forum published *Recommendations of the Crime, Violence, and Discipline Reporting Task Force* (http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_97581.asp), a report that outlined a set of definitions and protocols for the collection of crime, violence, and discipline data. As part of an ongoing effort to promote data-driven educational policymaking, the Forum initiated an update of the original report in 2000. This work was a collaborative effort of state and school district administrators, education policy researchers, and U.S. Department of Education program and research staff who comprised the Crime, Violence, and Discipline Task Force. These individuals possessed a wide range of expertise, including data collection and analysis, school administration, classroom instruction, and policy development and implementation.

Safety in Numbers: Collecting and Using Crime, Violence, and Discipline Incident Data to Make a Difference in Schools is designed to be used by school, district, and state staff to improve the effectiveness of their efforts to collect and use disciplinary incident data. The document presents recommendations about what types of data to collect, why it is critical to collect such data, and how data can be used most effectively to improve school safety and answer policy questions relating to school improvement and the safety of our students.

This publication is available electronically at http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2002312.asp. Instructions for ordering print copies are also available on the National Forum on Education Statistics website.

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