

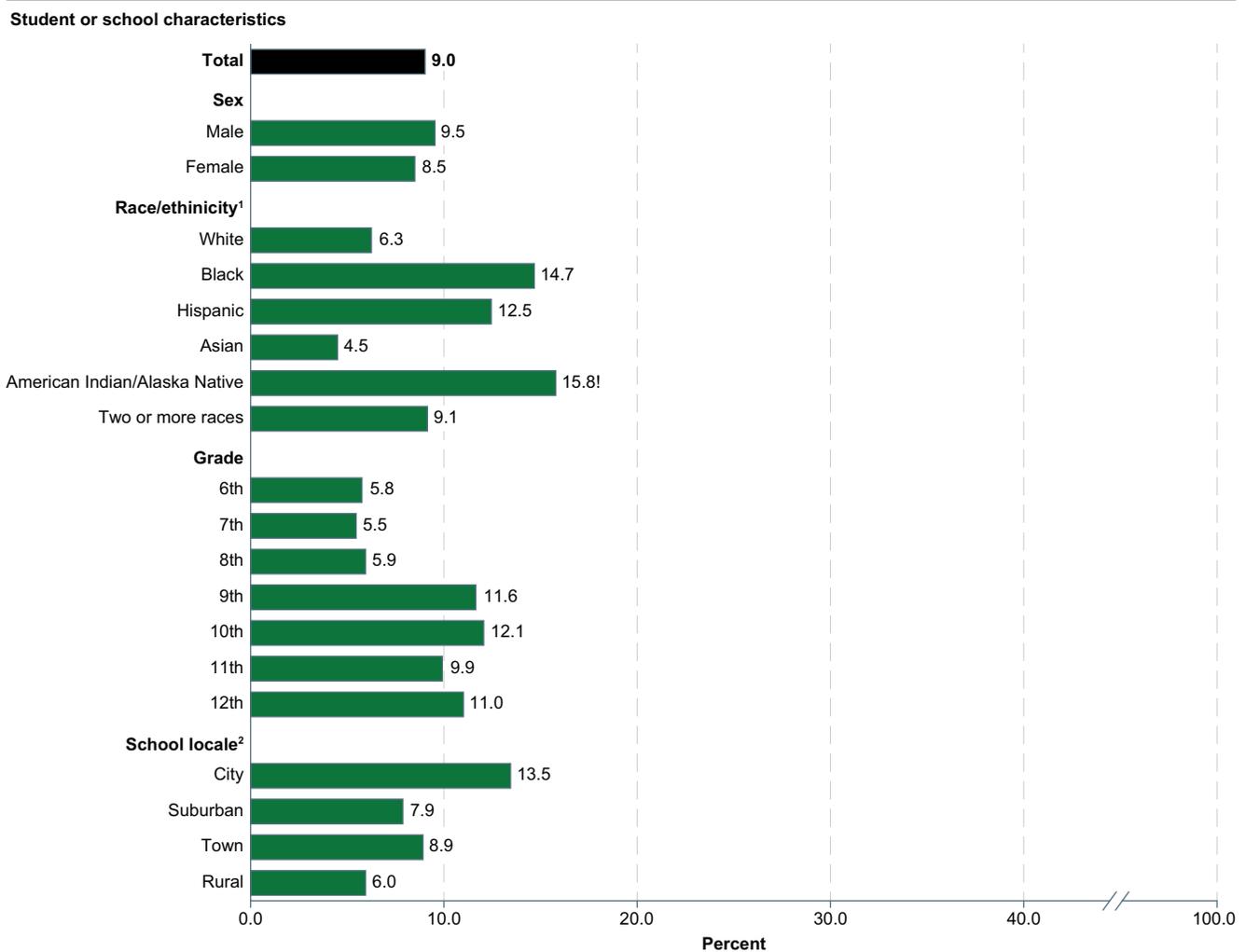
Students' Reports of Gangs at School

Between 2009 and 2019, the percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that gangs were present at their school during the school year decreased overall (from 20 to 9 percent), as well as for students who were White (from 14 to 6 percent), Black (from 31 to 15 percent), Hispanic (from 33 to 12 percent), and Asian (from 17 to 4 percent).

In order to assess gang activity in and around schools, the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey asked students ages 12–18 if gangs

were present at their school¹ during the school year. In 2019, nine percent of students ages 12–18 reported that gangs were present at their school, overall.²

Figure 1. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that gangs were present at school during the school year, by selected student and school characteristics: 2019



¹ Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent.

¹ Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Data for Pacific Islander students did not meet reporting standards in 2019; therefore, data for this group is not shown.

² Excludes students with missing information about the school characteristic.

NOTE: "At school" includes in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2019. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 230.20.

There were some measurable differences in student reports of gang presence by student and school characteristics in 2019. For instance, higher percentages of Black (15 percent) and Hispanic (12 percent) students than of White (6 percent) and Asian (4 percent) students reported the presence of gangs at their school. Additionally, the percentages of students in 9th through 12th grade who reported a gang presence at their school

(ranging from 10 to 12 percent) were higher than the percentages for students in 6th through 8th grade (ranging from 5 to 6 percent). In 2019, the percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported a gang presence at their school during the school year was higher for those enrolled in schools in cities (13 percent) than for those enrolled in schools in towns (9 percent), suburban areas (8 percent), and rural areas (6 percent).

Figure 2. Percentage of students ages 12–18 who reported that gangs were present at school during the school year: Selected years, 2009 through 2019



NOTE: "At school" includes in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2009 through 2019. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 230.20.

In general, the percentages of students ages 12-18 who reported a gang presence at their school were lower in 2019 than in 2009. Over this period, the total percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported that gangs were present at their school decreased from 20 to 9 percent. Similarly, the percentages of students who reported a gang presence at their school decreased over the decade for both male (from 21 to 10 percent) and female (from 20 to 8 percent) students, as well as for White (from 14 to 6 percent), Black (from 31 to 15 percent), Hispanic (from 33 to 12 percent), and Asian (from 17 to 4 percent) students. In addition, the percentages of students age 12-18 who

reported a gang presence at their school were lower in 2019 than in 2009 for students at all grade levels.

For the locale of students' schools, comparable data have only been available since 2015.³ The percentage of students enrolled in schools in suburban areas who reported a gang presence was lower in 2019 than in 2015 (8 vs. 11 percent). For other student subgroups—including students enrolled in schools in other locales, as well as subgroups by sex, race/ethnicity, and grade level—there were no measurable differences between 2015 and 2019 in reported gang presence.

Endnotes:

¹ “At school” includes in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to and from school.

² The 2019 survey included a split sample design to test alternate introductions for the section assessing the presence of gangs at school. Approximately 60 percent of the sample received the version of the questionnaire that was consistent with prior years, where the section introduction included the definition “All gangs, whether or not they are involved in violent or illegal activity, are included.” The remaining 40 percent of the sample received the

alternate questionnaire, which excluded the definition. The 2019 estimates in this indicator include all respondents, regardless of which version of the questionnaire they received. For more information about the 2019 survey collection and experiment, see <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2021/2021016.pdf>.

³ For 2013 and prior years, the four-category school locale information (city, suburban, town, and rural) was not available. Analyses by school locale exclude students with missing information about the school characteristic.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 230.20

Related indicators and resources: [Bullying at School and Electronic Bullying](#); [Students' Reports of Hate-Related Words and Hate-Related Graffiti](#) and [Schools' Reports of Hate Crimes](#)

Glossary: At school; Gang