Rates of School Crime

Following nearly two decades of steady decline, the total nonfatal victimization rate at school increased from 35 to 49 victimizations per 1,000 students for students ages 12–18 years old between 2010 and 2011. The victimization rate away from school increased from 27 to 38 victimizations per 1,000 students over the same period.

Between 1992 and 2011, the total nonfatal victimization rate for students ages 12–18 generally declined both at school (including inside the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school) and away from school. Nonfatal victimizations include theft and all violent crime; violent crime includes serious violent crime (rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault) and simple assault.

In 2011, students ages 12–18 reported more nonfatal victimizations at school than away from school. Students ages 12–18 experienced 1,246,000 nonfatal victimizations (theft and violent crime) at school, compared with 965,200 nonfatal victimizations away from school. These data represent total crime victimization rates of 49 crimes per 1,000 students at school and 38 per 1,000 students away from school. Between the two most recent survey years, 2010 and 2011, the total nonfatal victimization rate against students ages 12–18 increased from 35 to 49 victimizations per 1,000 students at school and from 27 to 38 victimizations per 1,000 students away from school. From 1992 to 2011, the rate of nonfatal crime against students declined from 181 to 49 crimes per 1,000 students at school, or from nearly 1 in 5 students in 1992 to about 1 in 20 students in 2011; away from school, the rate of nonfatal crime against students also declined from 173 to 38 crimes per 1,000 students.

For more information, see the Reader’s Guide and the Guide to Sources.
Theft also declined both at and away from school between 1992 and 2011. During this period, theft rates declined from 114 to 26 thefts per 1,000 students at school and from 79 to 21 thefts per 1,000 students away from school. Between 1992 and 2011, the difference in theft rates between at school and away from school narrowed (35 more thefts per 1,000 students at school than away from school in 1992 vs. no measurable difference in the rate of thefts at school and away from school in 2011). In the most recent period between 2010 and 2011, the rate of theft increased from 18 to 26 per 1,000 students at school and from 15 to 21 per 1,000 students away from school.
Violent victimization rates also decreased both at and away from school between 1992 and 2011. During this period, violent victimization rates declined from 68 to 24 violent victimizations per 1,000 students at school and from 94 to 17 violent victimizations per 1,000 students away from school. In 1992, more violent victimizations occurred away from school (94 per 1,000) than at school (68 per 1,000), while in 2011, more violent victimizations occurred at school (24 per 1,000) than away from school (17 per 1,000). Between 2010 and 2011, the rate of violent victimization against students increased from 17 to 24 violent victimizations per 1,000 students at school; the rate away from school did not change measurably.
Serious violent victimization rates also decreased both at and away from school between 1992 and 2011. During this period, serious violent crime rates declined from a peak of 22 serious violent crimes per 1,000 students at school in 1993 to 4 serious violent crimes per 1,000 students at school in 2011. Serious violent crime rates away from school decreased from 43 to 5 serious violent crimes per 1,000 students between 1992 and 2011. Between 1992 and 2011, the difference in serious violent crime rates between at school and away from school narrowed (35 more serious violent crimes per 1,000 students away from school than at school in 1992 vs. no measurable difference in the rate of serious violent victimization at school and away from school in 2011).

There was no measurable difference in the rate of serious violent victimization against students at school or away from school between 2010 and 2011.

The victimization rates at school and away from school differed by type of crime. For example, in most years between 1992 and 2008 the rate of theft at school was generally higher than the rate away from school, while the rate of serious violent victimization at school was generally lower than the rate occurring away from school. Since 2009, there have been no measurable differences between at school and away from school in either victimization rate.

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Figure 5. Rate of nonfatal victimizations against students ages 12–18 at and away from school per 1,000 students, by type of victimization and age: 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of victimization</th>
<th>At school</th>
<th>Away from school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious violent¹</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

¹ Serious violent victimization is also included in violent victimization.

NOTE: “Serious violent victimization” includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. “Violent victimization” includes serious violent crimes and simple assault. “Theft” includes purse-snatching, pickpocketing, and all attempted and completed thefts, with the exception of motor vehicle thefts. Theft does not include robbery in which threat or use of force is involved. Robbery is classified as a violent crime. “Total victimization” includes violent crimes and theft. “At school” includes inside the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Victimization rates for students in 2011 varied according to student characteristics. For example, the rate of theft at school was lower for younger students than for older students: 21 per 1,000 students ages 12–14 were victims of theft, compared with 30 per 1,000 students ages 15–18. In contrast, the rate of violent victimization at school was higher for younger students than for older students: 34 per 1,000 students ages 12–14, compared with 14 per 1,000 students ages 15–18. No measurable differences were found by age group (i.e., students ages 12–14 vs. students ages 15–18) in the rates of total victimization or of serious violent victimization at school.

Away from school, the rates of total victimization, theft, violent victimization, and serious violent victimization were higher for older students (ages 15–18) than for younger students (ages 12–14). The total victimization rate away from school was 23 per 1,000 students ages 12–14, compared with 52 per 1,000 students ages 15–18. The rate of theft away from school was 16 per 1,000 students ages 12–14, compared with 26 per 1,000 students ages 15–18. The violent victimization rate away from school was 7 per 1,000 students ages 12–14, compared with 26 per 1,000 students ages 15–18. The serious violent victimization rate away from school was 2 per 1,000 students ages 12–14, compared with 8 per 1,000 students ages 15–18.

Figure 6. Rate of nonfatal victimizations against students ages 12–18 at and away from school per 1,000 students, by type of victimization and sex: 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of victimization</th>
<th>At school</th>
<th>Away from school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious violent¹</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

NOTE: “Serious violent victimization” includes rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. “Violent victimization” includes serious violent crimes and simple assault. “Theft” includes purse-snatching, pickpocketing, and all attempted and completed thefts, with the exception of motor vehicle thefts. Theft does not include robbery in which threat or use of force is involved. Robbery is classified as a violent crime. “Total victimization” includes violent crimes and theft. “At school” includes inside the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.


At school, the rate of violent victimization was lower for females (19 per 1,000) than for males (28 per 1,000) in 2011. There were no measurable differences between male and female rates of theft at school. Away from school, the rate of theft was higher for females (25 per 1,000) than for males (18 per 1,000) in 2011. No measurable differences were detected by sex for the rates of total and violent victimization away from school.

Reference tables: Indicators of School Crime and Safety 2012, tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, S2.1, S2.2, S2.3