

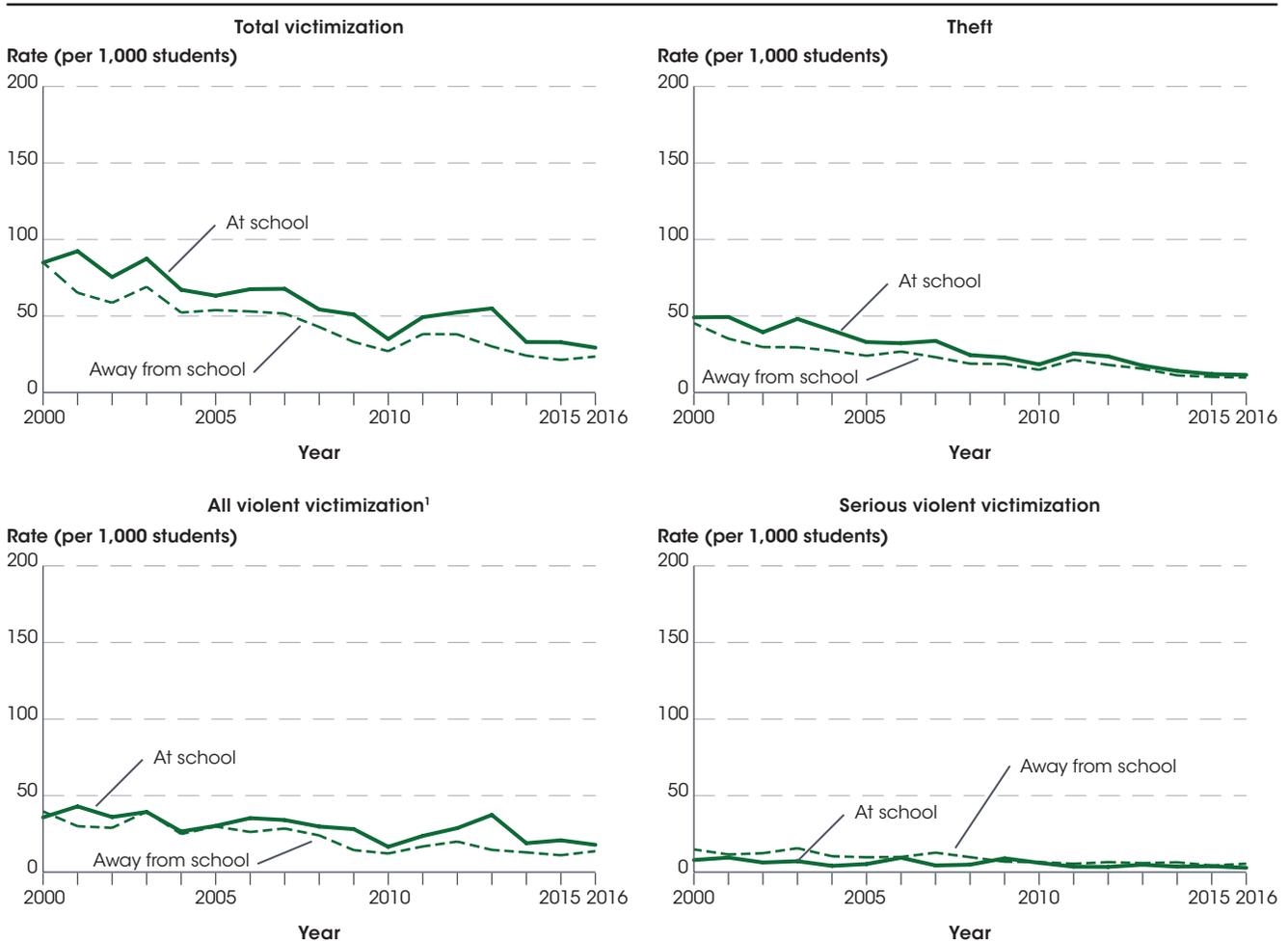
# School Crime and Safety

*Between 2000 and 2016, the rates of nonfatal victimization both at school and away from school declined for students ages 12–18. The rate of victimization at school declined 65 percent, and the rate of victimization away from school declined 72 percent.*

In 2016, students ages 12–18 reported 749,000 nonfatal victimizations at school<sup>1</sup> and 601,000 nonfatal victimizations 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. These figures

translate to a total rate of victimization at school of 29 victimizations per 1,000 students and a total rate of victimization away from school of 24 per 1,000 students; the apparent difference between these two rates was not measurable.

**Figure 1. Rate of nonfatal victimization per 1,000 students ages 12–18, by type of victimization and location: 2000 through 2016**

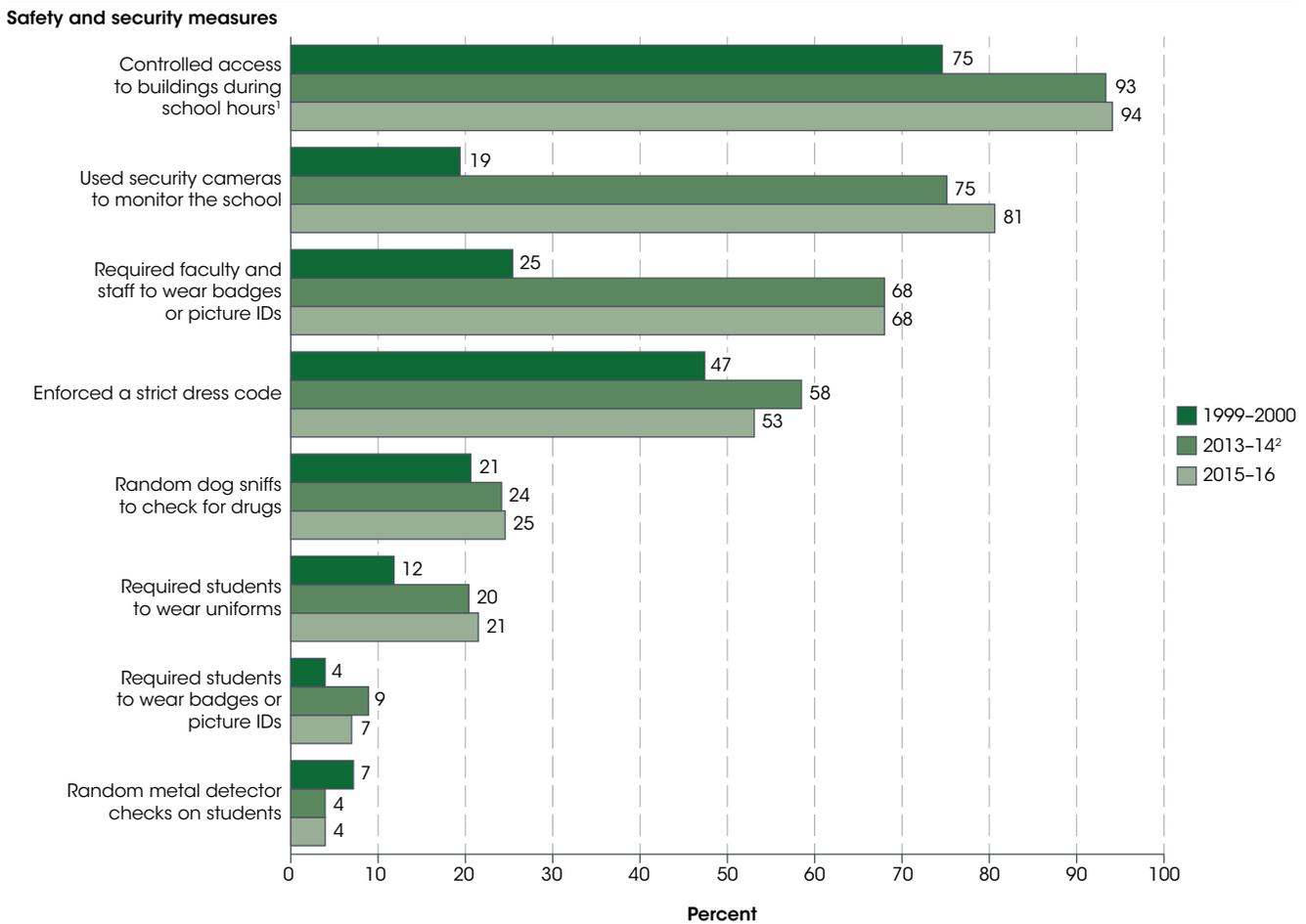


<sup>1</sup> Violent victimization includes serious violent victimization.  
 NOTE: "Total victimization" includes theft and violent crimes. "Theft" includes attempted and completed purse-snatching, completed pickpocketing, and all attempted and completed thefts, with the exception of motor vehicle thefts. Theft does not include robbery, which involves the threat or use of force and is classified as a serious violent crime. "All violent victimization" includes serious violent crimes as well as simple assault. "Serious violent victimization" includes the crimes of rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault. "At school" includes inside the school building, on school property, on a school bus, and going to or from school. The survey sample was redesigned in 2006 and 2016 to reflect changes in the population; consequently, use caution when comparing data from 2006 through 2015 to earlier years, and when comparing data from 2016 to other years. For more information, see *Criminal Victimization, 2016* (available at <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbse&sid=6>).  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 2000 through 2016. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 228.20.

Between 2000 and 2016, the total rates of nonfatal victimization both at school and away from school declined for 12- to 18-year-old students. The total rate of victimization at school declined 65 percent, and the total rate of victimization away from school declined 72 percent.

The rates of specific types of victimization—thefts, violent victimizations, and serious violent victimizations—both at school and away from school all declined between 2000 and 2016.

**Figure 2. Percentage of public schools that used selected safety and security measures: School years 1999–2000, 2013–14, and 2015–16**



<sup>1</sup> For example, locked or monitored doors.

<sup>2</sup> Data for 2013–14 were collected using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), while data for all other years were collected using the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS). The 2013–14 FRSS survey was designed to allow comparisons with SSOCS data. However, respondents to the 2013–14 survey could choose either to complete the survey on paper (and mail it back) or to complete the survey online, whereas respondents to SSOCS did not have the option of completing the survey online. The 2013–14 survey also relied on a smaller sample. The smaller sample size and difference in survey administration may have impacted the 2013–14 results.

NOTE: Responses were provided by the principal or the person most knowledgeable about crime and safety issues at the school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1999–2000 and 2015–16 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2000 and 2016; Fast Response Survey System (FRSS), “School Safety and Discipline: 2013–14,” FRSS 106, 2014. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 233.50.

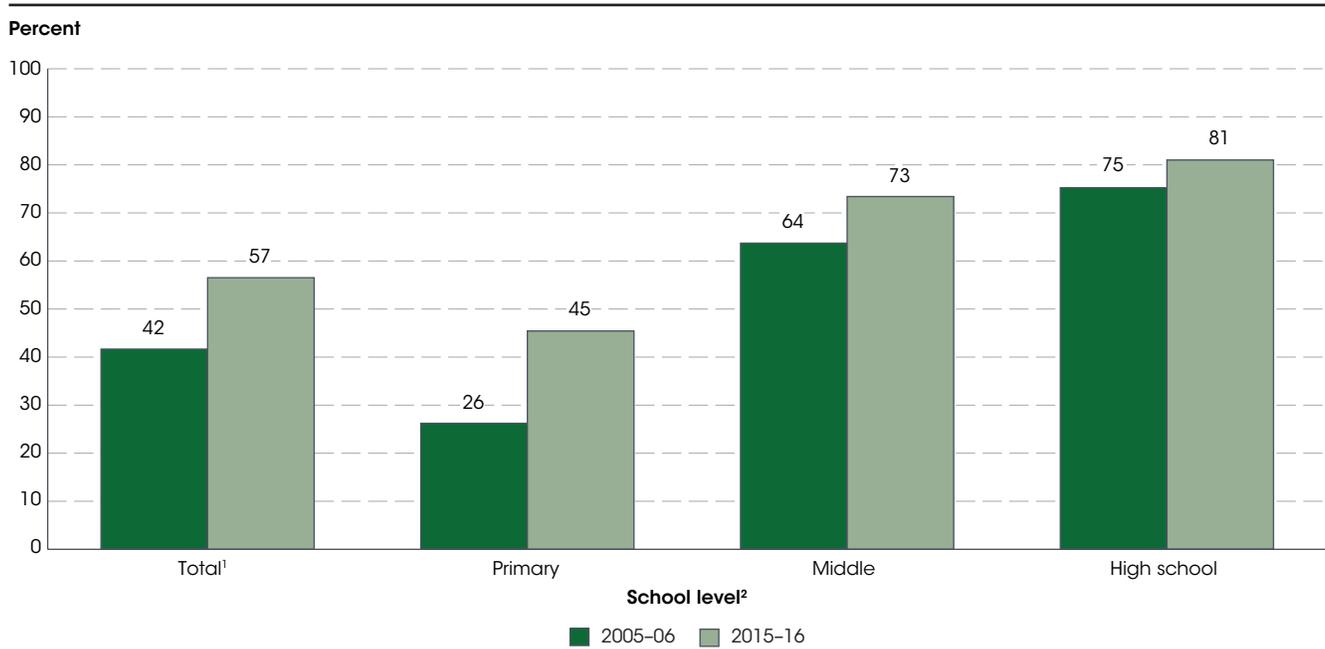
Some security practices, such as locking or monitoring doors and gates, are intended to limit or control access to school campuses, while others, such as the use of metal detectors and security cameras, are intended to monitor or restrict students’ and visitors’ behavior on campus. The percentages of public schools reporting the use of various safety and security measures tended to be higher in 2015–16 than in prior years. For example, the percentage of public schools reporting the use of security cameras increased from 19 percent in 1999–2000 to 81 percent

in 2015–16, and the percentage of public schools reporting that they controlled access to school buildings increased from 75 percent to 94 percent during this time. Additionally, the percentage of schools reporting that they enforced a strict dress code increased from 47 percent in 1999–2000 to 58 percent in 2013–14, although the percentage in 2015–16 (53 percent) was lower than the percentage in 2013–14. From 1999–2000 to 2015–16, use of the following safety and security measures also increased: requiring faculty and staff to wear badges or

picture IDs, using random dog sniffs, requiring school uniforms, and requiring students to wear badges or picture IDs. Conversely, the percentage of schools that reported

using random metal detector checks decreased from 7 percent in 1999–2000 to 4 percent in 2015–16.

**Figure 3. Percentage of public schools with one or more security staff present at least once a week, by school level: School years 2005–06 and 2015–16**



<sup>1</sup> Total includes combined schools that are not shown separately in this figure.

<sup>2</sup> Primary schools are defined as schools in which the lowest grade is not higher than grade 3 and the highest grade is not higher than grade 8. Middle schools are defined as schools in which the lowest grade is not lower than grade 4 and the highest grade is not higher than grade 9. High schools are defined as schools in which the lowest grade is not lower than grade 9 and the highest grade is not higher than grade 12.

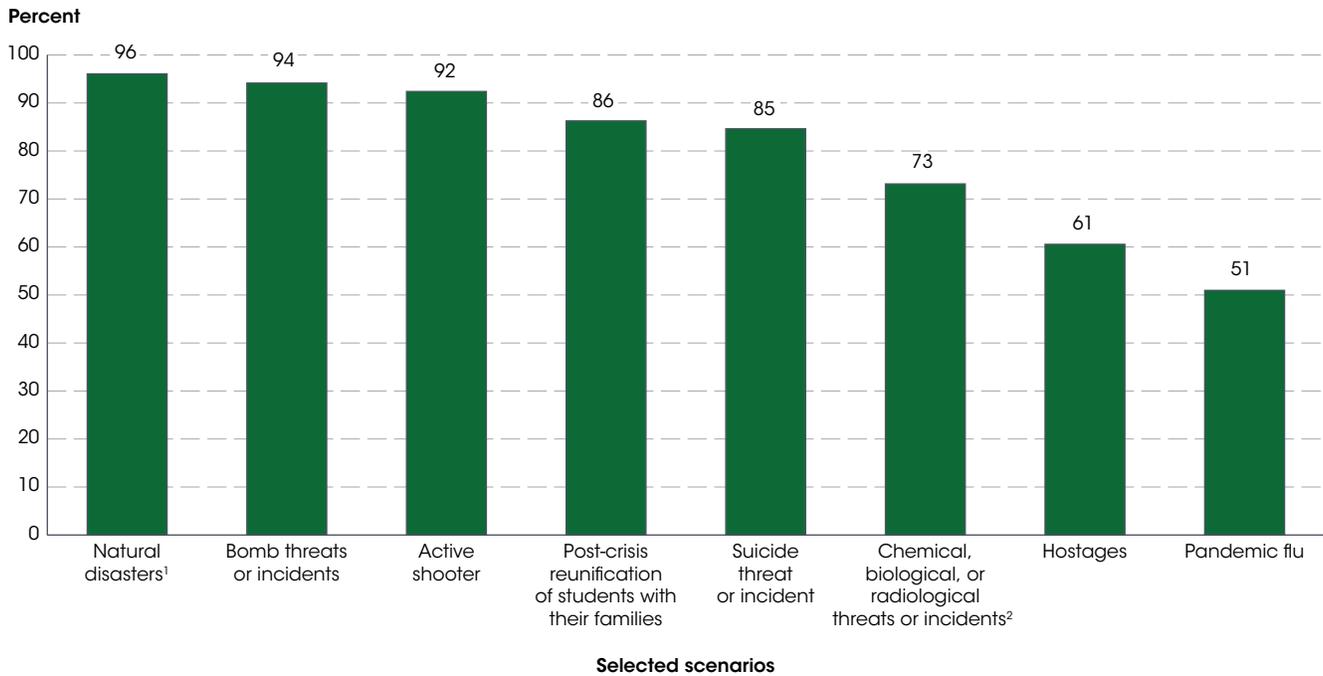
NOTE: Security staff include security guards, security personnel, school resource officers (SROs), and sworn law enforcement officers who are not SROs. SROs include all career law enforcement officers with arrest authority who have specialized training and are assigned to work in collaboration with school organizations. Responses were provided by the principal or the person most knowledgeable about crime and safety issues at the school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2005–06 and 2015–16 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2006 and 2016. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 233.70.

In the 2015–16 school year, 57 percent of public schools reported the presence of one or more security staff at their school at least once a week during the school year.<sup>2</sup> The percentage of public schools reporting the presence of any security staff was higher in 2015–16 than in 2005–06. This same pattern of a higher percentage of public schools overall reporting the presence of any security staff in 2015–16 than in 2005–06 was observed for primary,

middle, and high schools. The percentage point change from 2005–06 to 2015–16 was larger for primary schools (19 percentage points) than for middle schools (10 percentage points) or high schools (6 percentage points). Despite these changes, the percentage of primary schools reporting the presence of any security staff in 2015–16 (45 percent) remained lower than the percentage of middle schools (73 percent) or high schools (81 percent).

**Figure 4. Percentage of public schools with a written plan for procedures to be performed in selected scenarios: School year 2015–16**



<sup>1</sup> For example, earthquakes or tornadoes.

<sup>2</sup> For example, release of mustard gas, anthrax, smallpox, or radioactive materials.

NOTE: Responses were provided by the principal or the person most knowledgeable about crime and safety issues at the school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015–16 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), 2016. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, table 233.65.

Schools use a variety of practices and procedures to promote the safety of students, faculty, and staff. One aspect of school safety and security is ensuring that plans are in place to be carried out in the event of specific scenarios. In 2015–16, about 96 percent of public schools reported they had a written plan for procedures to be performed in the event of a natural disaster, 94 percent of public schools reported they had a plan for procedures to

be performed in the event of bomb threats or incidents, and 92 percent reported they had a plan in place for procedures to be performed in the event of an active shooter. The percentage of schools reporting that they had a plan for procedures to be performed in response to other events included in the survey questionnaire ranged from 86 percent for post-crisis reunification of students with their families to 51 percent for a pandemic flu.

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> At school includes inside the school building, on school property, or on the way to or from school.

<sup>2</sup> Security staff include security guards, security personnel, school resource officers (SROs), and sworn law enforcement officers who are not SROs. “Security guards” and “security personnel”

do not include law enforcement. SROs include all career law enforcement officers with arrest authority who have specialized training and are assigned to work in collaboration with school organizations.

**Reference tables:** *Digest of Education Statistics 2017*, tables 228.20, 233.50, 233.65, and 233.70

**Related indicators and resources:** *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*; *Safety at School* [*Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups*]

**Glossary:** Public school or institution