

# DATA POINT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NCES 2018-096 MARCH 2018

## Students' Relationships in School and Feelings About Personal Safety at School

This report investigates the relationship between students' feelings of safety in school and their perceptions about the level of crime in their home neighborhoods and school neighborhoods. It further examines whether students' reports of feeling safe in school despite being in high crime neighborhoods are related to students' reports that they have supportive relationships with adults and peers in school.

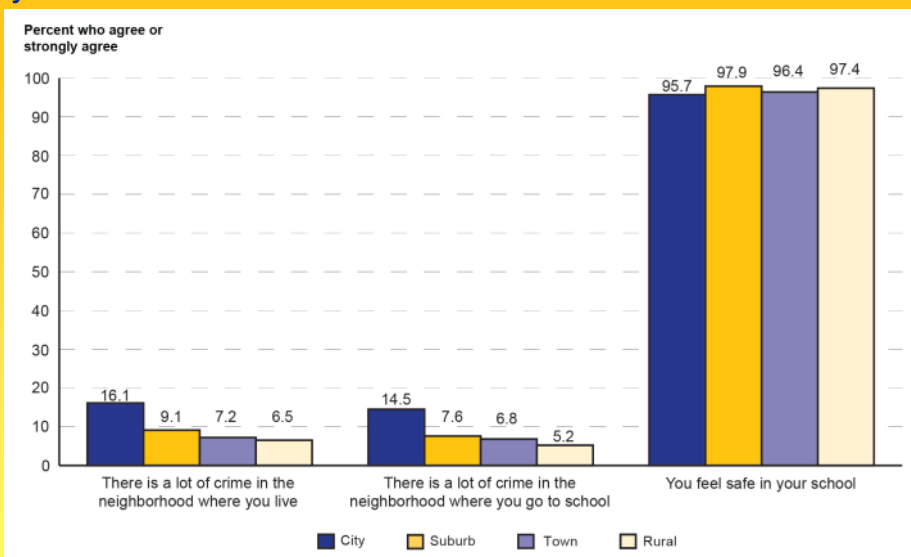
The data used in this report come from the 2015 School Crime Supplement (SCS), a nationally representative sample survey of students ages 12 through 18. The SCS is administered every other year as a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The SCS collects additional information from students in NCVS survey households about their experiences with and perceptions of crime and violence occurring at school, on school grounds, and going to or from school. The SCS questions also cover students' perceptions of crime in the neighborhoods where they live and where they go to school, their feelings of safety at school, and various aspects of school climate and security such as relationships with adults in school.

Analysis for this report is restricted to the SCS respondents who were enrolled in grades 6 through 12 and who did not receive any part of their education through homeschooling during the school year.<sup>1</sup>

**Regardless of their perceptions of the level of crime in their home neighborhoods and school neighborhoods, at least 95 percent of students agreed that they felt safe at school for all school locales (figure 1).**

- In 2015, the percentage of students attending city schools who agreed there was a lot of crime in their home neighborhoods (16.1 percent) and school (14.5 percent) neighborhoods was higher than the percentage of students who agreed and who attended suburban schools (9.1 and 7.6 percent), town schools (7.2 and 6.8 percent), or rural schools (6.5 and 5.2 percent). The percentages for students in suburban schools who agreed with these statements were also significantly higher than the percentages for students in rural schools.
- In the same year, 95.7 percent of students attending city schools

**FIGURE 1. Percentage of students ages 12 through 18 who agree or strongly agree with statements about crime and feeling safe, by school locale: School year 2014–15**



NOTE: Data include only students who reported being enrolled in grades 6 through 12 and not receiving any of their education through homeschooling during the school year reported. Locale codes come from the Common Core of Data or the Private School Survey data for 2013-2014. For more information on locale definitions see [https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural\\_locales.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp). School locale data was not available for approximately 3.4 percent of respondents who were excluded from the analysis. Tabular data for percentages and their standard errors are available at [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/crime\\_tables.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/crime_tables.asp).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2015.

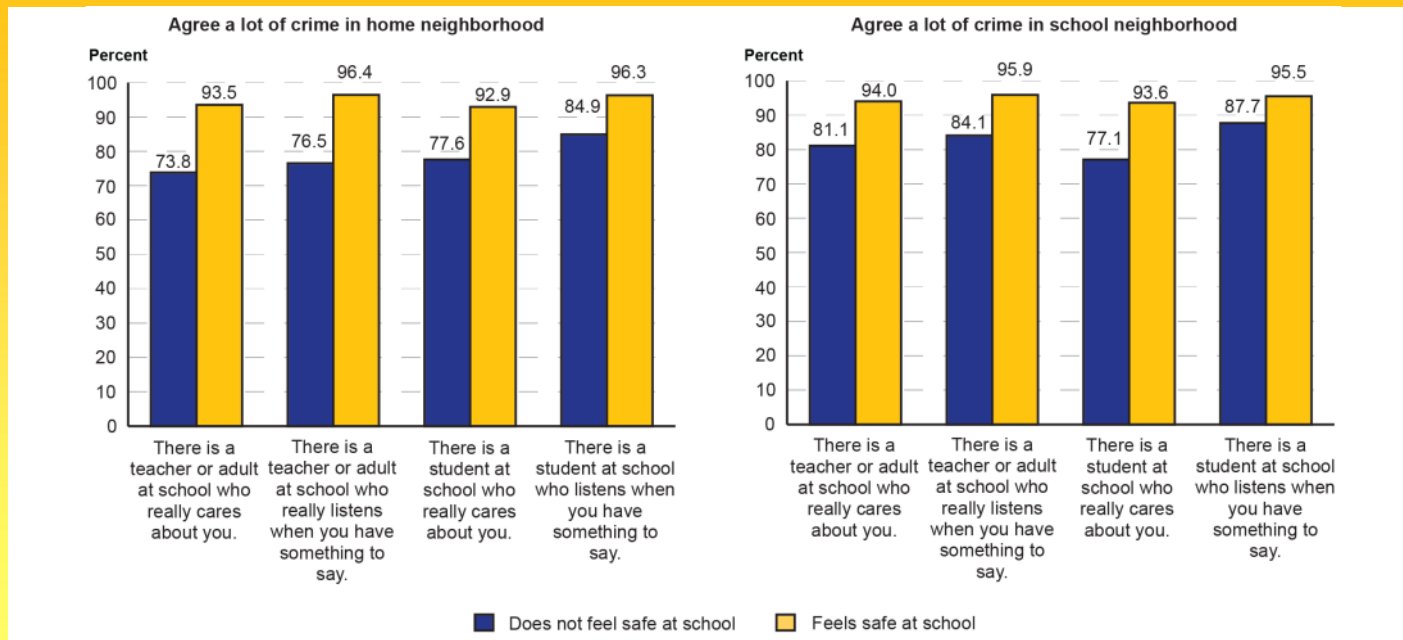
Data in this report are from the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, a nationally representative sample survey of students ages 12 through 18. To learn more about the survey, visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime>. For questions about content or to download additional copies, go to: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

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reported feeling safe in their school, which is lower than the percentage of students attending suburban schools

(97.9 percent) but not significantly different than students in any other areas.

**FIGURE 2. Percentage of students ages 12 through 18 indicating a lot of crime in their home neighborhoods and/or school neighborhoods who agree or strongly agree they have supportive relationships with adults and students in school, by whether they feel safe in school: School year 2014–15**



NOTE: Data include only students who reported being enrolled in grades 6 through 12 and not receiving any of their education through homeschooling during the school year reported. Tabular data for percentages and their standard errors are available at [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/crime\\_tables.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crime/crime_tables.asp).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 2015.

### Among students who agreed that there was a lot of crime in their home neighborhoods or school neighborhoods, one area of difference between those who agreed that they felt safe in school compared to those who did not agree that they felt safe was in their reported relationships with adults and other students at school (figure 2).

- Among students who agreed there was a lot of crime in their home neighborhoods, those who agreed that they felt safe at school also agreed that there was a teacher or adult at school who really cared about them (93.5 percent) and really listened when they had something to say (96.4 percent) at higher rates than students who did not feel safe at school (73.8 percent and 76.5 percent, respectively).
- Among students who agreed there was a lot of crime in their home neighborhoods, those who agreed that they felt safe at school also agreed that there was a student at school who really listened when they had something

to say (96.3 percent) at higher rates than students who did not feel safe at school (84.9 percent).

- Among students who agreed there was a lot of crime in their school neighborhoods, those who also agreed that they felt safe at school more often agreed that there was a teacher or adult at school who really cared about them (94.0 percent) than students who did not feel safe at school (81.1 percent).
- Among students who agreed there was a lot of crime in their school neighborhoods, those who also agreed that they felt safe at school more often agreed that there was a student school who really cared about them (93.6 percent) than students who did not feel safe at school (77.1 percent).

### Endnote

<sup>1</sup>School locale data was unavailable for 3.4 percent of the sample who were excluded from the analysis.

This NCES Data Point presents information on education topics of current interest. It was authored by Deborah Lessne and Christine Yanez of Synergy Enterprises, Inc. All estimates shown are based on samples and are subject to sampling variability. All differences discussed in this report are statistically significant at

the .05 level. In the design, conduct, and data processing of National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) surveys, efforts are made to minimize the effects of nonsampling errors, such as item nonresponse, measurement error, data processing error, or other systematic error.