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ABSTRACT

This is a report of the second phase of a public-school safety study in Arizona. The study resulted from a recommendation of the Safety Answer for Education Commission in 2000 and is in accordance with Arizona law ARS 15-231.03. Data for the study were gathered from surveys of personnel from 317 schools on policies regarding school safety and their incidents of violence; 64 one-on-one interviews of various school personnel; and 6 focus groups, each consisting of 5 students and 5 parents. (The survey instruments are included in the appendices of the report.) Findings of the study are presented in text, tables, charts, and graphs. The study confirmed that public schools in Arizona are mostly safe; no particular data or conversation led to undue concerns regarding school safety. Following are some key recommendations from the report: (1) Schools need to pay attention to the smaller and low-level incidents because they always have the potential to escalate into something worse; (2) policymakers should provide adequate resources to schools to employ safety personnel and to promote professional development for all school staff; and (3) parents should make a conscious effort to be involved in their children's academic and personal concerns. (WFA)

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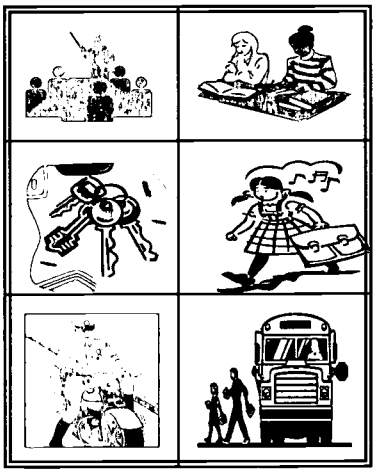

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Alka Arora, Ph.D.
Education Research Associate
Arizona Department of Education

School Safety Study: Phase II, 2001-2002 (ARS 15-231.03)

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

I. Background

The *School Safety Study* resulted from one of the recommendations put forward by the Safety Answers for Education (SAFE) Commission in 2000. The Research and Policy Unit (R&P) of the Arizona Department of Education completed Phase I of the study in September 2001. R&P has completed Phase II of the study and the purpose of this report is to present the findings. Both reports are available online at http://www.ade.az.gov/ResearchPolicy.

II. Methodology

The study includes surveys of schools on policies regarding school safety and their incidents of violence, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups. The random sample for the surveys consisted of 317 schools. The one-on-one interviews were conducted in 16 schools with various school personnel (64 total) in order to capture a wide spectrum of views pertaining to school safety. The focus groups were conducted across 6 schools, with 5 students and 5 parents in each school (60 total), in order to capture information regarding school safety. The study instruments were adapted from a national level study (NCES) to allow for national comparisons.

III. Arizona Findings

(i) General Safety Perceptions

- ✓ Staff members, including principals, teachers, school resource officers, and counselors mostly agree that their school is safe.

- ✓ 90% of the students and their parents agree that students feel safe in school both physically and emotionally. Most students feel safe in most areas of the school such as school buildings, classrooms, cafeterias, hallways, and restrooms.

(ii) Student Access to Adults

- ✓ 95% of the parents and students feel that students have at least one adult to go to if they have concerns they want to discuss. 85% agree that their concerns are taken seriously.

- ✓ Participants perceived that teachers and principals are approached most frequently with safety concerns. While students do approach other adults like school resource officers, counselors, and nurses they feel these adults are not as available as the teachers and principal, or are some times not available in their school at all.

- ✓ With respect to adult interaction outside the school, participants perceived that students approach parents and peers most frequently.

(iii) Safety Violations

Findings on safety violations from the *School Safety Study* can be broadly categorized into low-level incidents that are the most frequent yet least discussed, mid-level or non-violent incidents that are relatively less frequent, and violent and serious violent incidents that are the least frequent yet receive maximum attention from the media.

a) *Low-level incidents*

- Almost all focus group participants perceive that low-level incidents such as name-calling, bullying, and verbal fights exist in their school. Students by and large perceive more of these problems due to their proximity to the school environment when compared to parents or staff.

	Participant perceptions		
Incidents (2000-01)	**Student%**	**Parent%**	**Staff%**
Name calling	100	74	94
Bullying/ teasing	100	89	94
Fights (verbal)	93	82	72
Harassment	90	74	15
Intimidation	86	70	15

b) *Mid-level (non-violent) incidents*

- The percentage of schools in the *survey* that reported existence of non-violent incidents such as possession of weapons and substance abuse in their school is not very high. A relatively higher percentage of *participants* perceive these incidents as existing in their school. However, a much lower percentage of participants perceive the existence of mid-level incidents in their school when compared to the low-level incidents above. See table below for details*. The data is ordered in descending order for schools in the survey with corresponding numbers for student, parent, and staff perceptions.

	Survey data	*Participant perceptions*		
Incidents (2000-01)	**Schools%**	**Student%**	**Parent%**	**Staff%**
Vandalism	57	79	44	44
Possession/ use of alcohol	47	52	41	81
Possession/ use of illegal drugs	47	86	70	81
Theft/ Larceny	45	86	70	9
Possession of knife/ sharp object	44	45	37	75
Sexual harassment	36	--	--	--
Distribution of illegal drugs	17	--	--	--
Possession of firearm/ explosive device	7	--	--	--
Hate crimes	--	45	48	39
Gangs	--	48	22	66
Tobacco	--	55	70	81

* Dashes denote that data was not gathered for the specific category.

c) *Violent and Serious Violent incidents*

- A very small percentage of schools in the *survey* reported high-level/ violent incidents such as physical attacks with weapons. However, none of the *participants* perceive the existence of serious violent incidents like physical attacks or rape on their school premises. See table below for details.

	Survey data	*Participant perceptions*		
Violations (2000-01)	**Schools%**	**Student%**	**Parent%**	**Staff%**
Physical attack/ fight without weapon	60	79	67	22
Threat of attack without weapon	58	79	67	15
Disruptions from Bomb/ Anthrax threats	10	--	--	--
Physical attack/ fight with weapon	3	--	--	--
Threat of attack/ fight with weapon	9	--	--	--
Rape/Attempted rape	0.4	--	--	--
Sexual battery	3	--	--	--
Robbery with weapon	0.8	--	--	--
Robbery without weapon	3	--	--	--
Hazing	--	17	11	19

The frequency of violations for categories b and c above is relatively higher in high schools, in schools with higher enrollments and greater student-to-staff ratios, schools that are located in medium to high crime areas, and also schools that perceive they have unsafe school climates to begin with.

(iv) The Three Cs in School Policy Implementation

As reflected in the policies survey schools have various policies, programs, and procedures in place to address school safety. It is important to note that implementation of the various policies varies from school to school. The issues that surfaced in this study are reflective of the following challenges of implementation.

a) Consistency: Lack of consistency is frequently discussed in conversations pertaining to policies. Just because a policy is in place does not mean that staff members implement it consistently. This is often the case because the staff is not always aware of how to treat low-level incidents that are "gray" as opposed to violent incidents that are more "black and white". Also, they are not always aware of how they need to document or follow up low-level incidents.

b) Confidentiality: Another issue that is discussed is lack of confidentiality, or lack of sensitivity, in dealing with information that students share about matters that are troubling them. Students perceive their information is not always treated confidentially and as a result they sometimes prefer not to discuss their problems with adults.

c) Communication: Lack of open/ appropriate communication is considered a serious problem. Staff members do not always know if a particular issue or concern has been dealt with, who is dealing with it, and how the procedure is being followed through.

IV. Policy Implications for Overall Incidents

(i) *Schools and Districts*

- Schools need to pay attention to the smaller and low-level incidents because they always have the potential to escalate into something worse.
- It is very important for schools to be aware that just because they don't have high-level crimes or violence in their school does not mean that they never can or never will. Hence, they need to constantly update their knowledge and information about any kind of training that is available for such issues and be prepared for any unforeseen circumstances.
- It is very important for schools to provide training to their staff to be consistent and promote an environment of open communication so that they are aware of all issues at any given time. This will help them be proactive.
- Staff members and adults in the school need to make a conscious effort to be accessible and sensitive to students so they do not hesitate to bring up any safety concerns they may have personally or that their peers might have.
- Schools should hire adequate safety personnel such as school resource officers, monitors, and counselors consistent with their local needs.
- And finally, it is very important for schools to make sure they have community partnerships and parental involvement so that they can collaborate in keeping schools safe.

(ii) *Policy Makers*

- Policy makers should provide adequate resources to schools to employ safety personnel and to promote professional development for all school staff.

(iii) *Arizona Department of Education (ADE)*

- ADE should provide resources for professional development and best practices.

(iv) *Parents and Community*

- Parents should make a conscious effort towards being involved in their child's academic and personal concerns.
- Students face the problem of isolation in rural and reservation schools. Schools in these communities are secluded, the result of which is students do not have much to keep them occupied leading them to unsafe behaviors. Hence, the community should also make an effort towards supporting students.

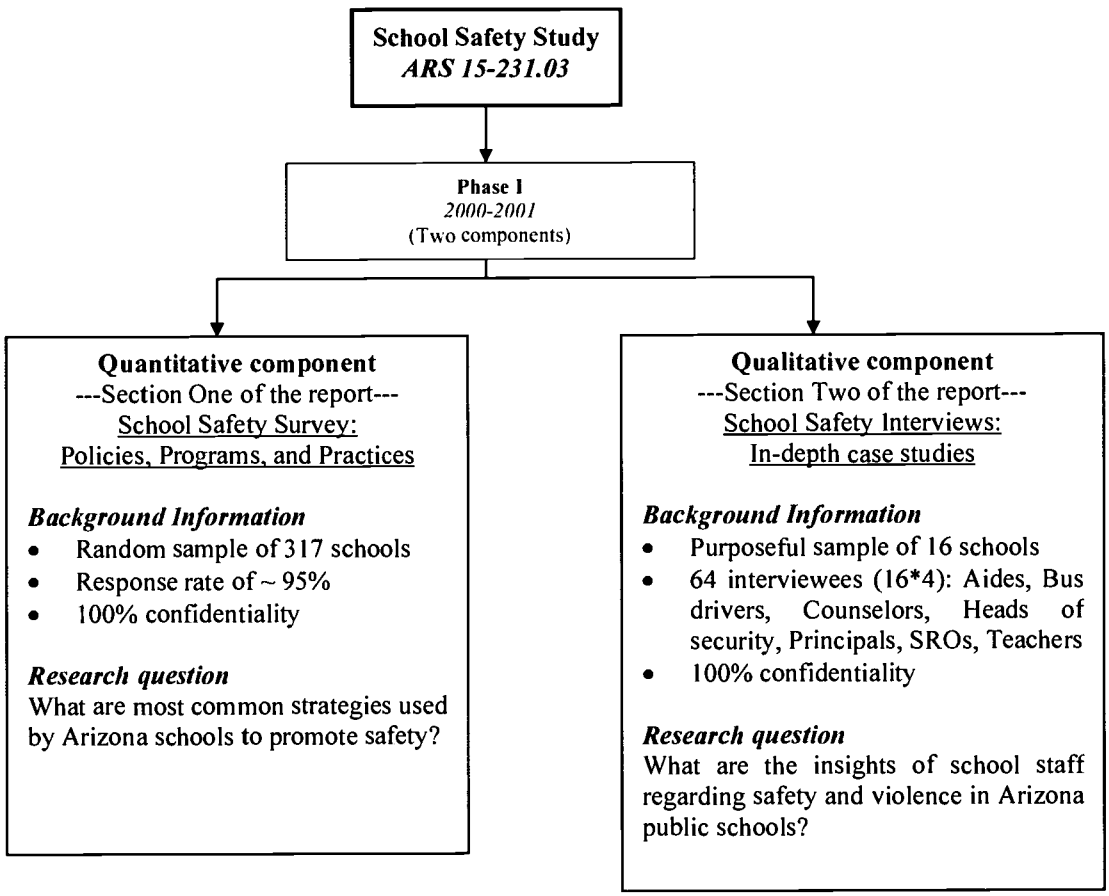
V. Conclusion

In conclusion, the *School Safety Study* confirms that public schools are mostly safe in the state of Arizona. In course of the research no particular data or conversation lead to undue concerns regarding school safety.

It is important to note here that the media tends to highlight high-level and mostly physical crimes that occur at schools even though they are random and infrequent. Unfortunately, these random crimes are not always within the control of schools. It is the low-level and mostly emotional incidents like name calling and bullying that the schools can control to some extent. Such incidents occur frequently and need to be monitored on a regular basis because they can escalate into something worse. Hence, schools need to be proactive. They must periodically assess their safety needs and implement required training and procedures towards maintaining a safe school environment.

Study Framework

School Safety Study: Phase I
(Completed in 9/2001)



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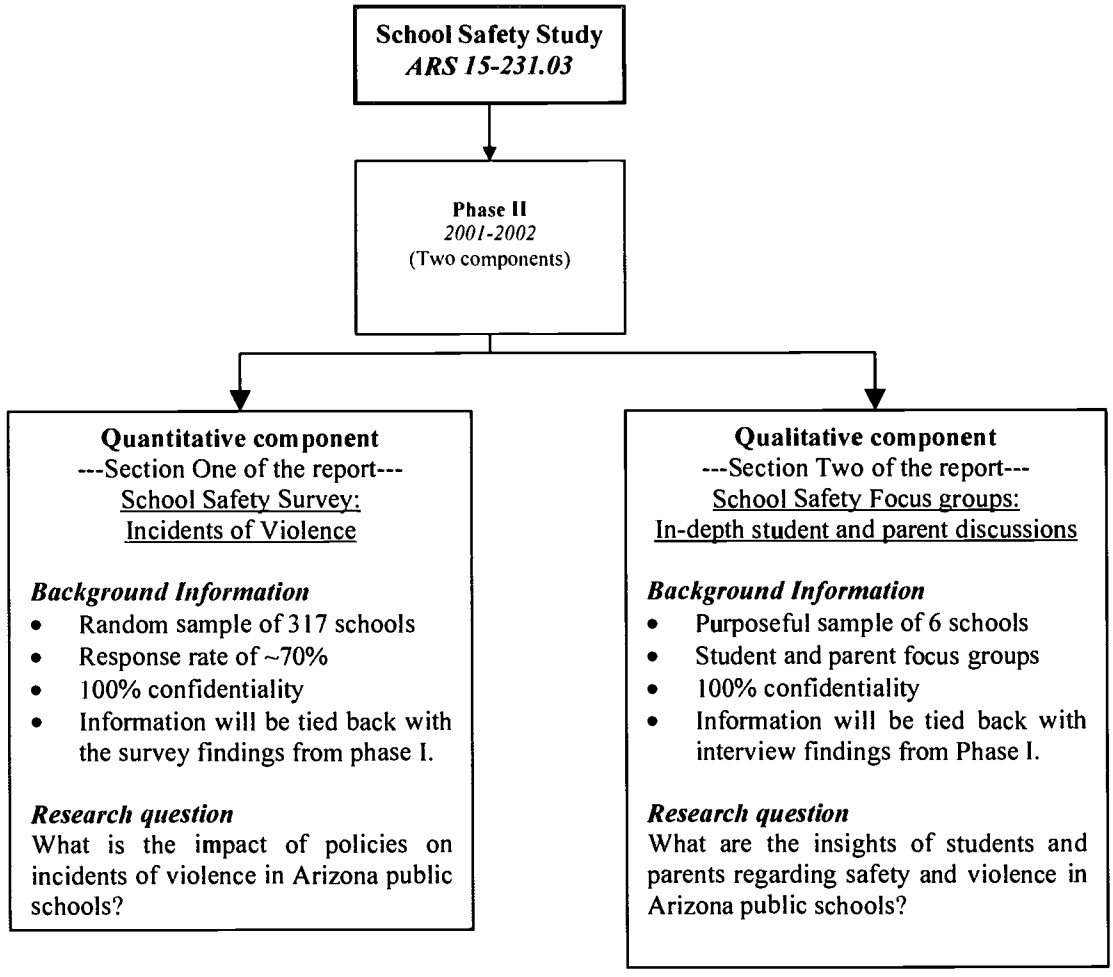
(This Report for 9/2002)



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Background

1. Background

The *School Safety Study* resulted from one of the recommendations put forward by the Safety Answers for Education (SAFE) Commission in 2000. The Commission was created in May 1999 in order to establish a non-legislative working group "to examine the numerous issues surrounding strategies for reducing the risk of violence on school campuses across the state".

Pursuant to ARS 15-231.03 the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is required to conduct a study focused solely on safety issues in public schools. Research and Policy (R&P), ADE, completed Phase I of the study in September 2001. R&P has completed Phase II of the study and the purpose of this report is to present findings of the same. Both reports are available online at www.ade.az.gov/ResearchPolicy.

2. Organization of the study

This study was conducted in two phases.

- ***Phase I** was conducted in 2000-01. This phase had two components.*

  (i) The first component comprised a survey of schools on their policies and programs regarding school safety.
  School Safety Survey: Policies, Programs, and Practices. The random sample for this survey consisted of 317 schools.

  (ii) The second component included in-depth interviews on issues related to school safety.
  School Safety Interviews: In-depth case studies. These in-depth interviews were conducted in 16 schools with various school personnel (64 total) in order to capture a wide spectrum of issues pertaining to school safety.

- **Phase II** was conducted in 2001-02. This phase also has two components.

  (i) The first component comprises a survey of schools on their incidents of violence.
  School Safety Survey: Incidents Of Violence. The random sample for this survey will consist of the same 317 schools as the policy survey in Phase I.

  (ii) The second component includes focus groups with students and parents on issues related to school safety.
  School Safety Focus Groups: In-depth student and parent case studies. These focus groups were conducted across 6 schools, with 5 students and 5 parents in each school (60 total), in order to capture a wide spectrum of issues pertaining to school safety.

  Data from all four components will be kept strictly confidential.

3. Methodology

R&P adapted the School Survey On Crime and Safety (SSOCS), a national survey from the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education to develop the School Safety Survey. Adapting the national survey will allow for meaningful comparisons between Arizona and national results that will be released in January 2003.

R&P adapted the protocols for focus groups with students and parents from the National Study of Delinquency Prevention in Schools, U.S. Department of Education.

The survey instrument on incidents of violence and the focus group protocols (Phase II) were finalized by the end of October 2001. The instruments were shared with school-level representatives before the final drafts were approved.

The School Safety Survey: Incidents Of Violence (Appendix 1) were mailed to the 317 schools by the end of November 2001 and were received by ADE by the end of March 2002.

The School Safety Focus Groups: In-depth student and parent case studies were conducted in January 2002 (Appendix 2-4).

Preparing the schools

Staff members at R&P shared the initial research design with representatives from districts and schools across the state. Involving schools in the planning process provided some very crucial insights for the study. Their suggestions were used to strengthen the survey and the interview protocols. Schools were involved in developing both phases of this study.

Sample Design

Survey component

A sample of 317 (traditional and charter) schools for the survey component was generated using the following steps:

$S = (\chi^2 NP (1-P)) \div (d^2 (N-1) + \chi^2 P (1-P))$

N = Population = 1808
P = Probability = 0.50
d = Degree of accuracy = 0.05
χ^2 based on 0.95 Confidence interval = 3.841

$S = (3.841 * 1808*0.50 (1-0.50)) \div (0.05^2 (1808-1) + 3.841 * 0.50 (1-0.50))$
Sample = S = 317

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was then used to generate the 317 sample schools using its random generation feature.

Focus Group component

1. The matrix included in Appendix 2 was used to determine the 6 schools where the student and parent focus groups were conducted. Note that these 6 schools were part of the 317 schools that were randomly selected for the survey component.

2. Details on the student and parent focus group protocols can be found in Appendix 3 and 4 respectively.

4. Analysis

Once the strategy for analysis was established SPSS was used to input and analyze the survey information. N5, the latest version of the NUD*IST (Analysis of **N**on-numerical **U**nstructured **D**ata by **I**ndexing **S**earching and **T**heorizing) software for qualitative data analysis, was used to code and analyze the focus groups.

5. Importance of this study

This study is the first of its kind to be conducted by ADE. One significant aspect of the study is that it was based on a random sample of public schools in Arizona in order to derive a representative picture of schools. This is different from the "census" model of research traditionally used, where all schools are included in a study. The random sample allows for anonymity and the potential for more accurate responses.

This methodology also helps reduce time and resources spent on the project. The process of random sampling is useful because each and every school does not have to be contacted for every study, rather a different sample of schools can be used for different studies, allowing schools more time for conducting their routine activities.

Another significant aspect of the study is that information from the focus groups has been kept confidential. This has been done with the aim of gathering accurate and reliable information for policy discussions.

The study is of even greater significance because it has been designed to be consistent with a national study. This will help in making meaningful comparisons of school safety issues that exist in Arizona with respect to the nation as a whole.
The national study results will be released in January 2003 and will be available at www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/ssocs.

Given the nature of qualitative studies, the focus group component of this study is not "representative" of school safety issues in the public schools of Arizona. However, it does provide a broad overview of the situation that can assist in meaningful policy

discussion. It also helps in substantiating and scientifically documenting anecdotal evidence that has existed to this point.

6. Caveats in the study

Note that the focus group component is a summation of participant perceptions and the study needs to be understood in that light. What this implies is that a participant's perception on any issue in the study is just that—a perception. As can be noted from the table below, while the perception of the participant might be accurate (cells a and d) it might also include inaccurate perceptions (cells b and c). What this also implies is that when any incident is mentioned for a school it is because individuals in those schools chose to discuss it. It is possible that other schools have similar incidents but the participants chose not to discuss it.

	Incident perceived as existing	Incident perceived as not existing
Incident exists	a	b
Incident does not exist	c	d

The six schools that participated in the focus group process were asked to select five students and parents each for the two respective focus groups. While most schools attempted to provide a representative mix of gender and ethnicity, there might have been some selection bias in a couple of schools where a few parents were also staff members in the school.

The student focus groups could not be tape recorded due to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) regulations. Parents on the other hand did not want to be tape-recorded. As a result the qualitative component of the Phase II report will not have as many candid quotes as the Phase I report.

7. Important note

It is important to note that student participation in the focus groups was preceded by informed parental consent. The focus groups were conducted in accordance with FERPA requirements. Students were specifically instructed *not* to discuss any incidents involving them personally. Rather, they were asked to share information pertaining to the overall classroom/ school environment. Also, since this is a confidential study no information will be provided on school districts or schools in this report. This is applicable to both components of this report. Any reference to schools, in the focus group component, will be made through their cell numbers in the matrix and not by their names. It will be essential to identify the school type for comparisons but the school names will be withheld. See Appendix 2 for details on the focus group matrix.

8.a. Organization of the report

This web-based report has been organized as follows. First, quantitative information from the *School Safety Survey: Incidents of Violence* will be presented. The survey component comprises one section and its' tables. Next, qualitative information from the *School Safety Focus Groups: In-depth student and parent case studies* will be presented. This will be tied back with the Phase I *School Safety Interviews: In-depth staff case studies* for purpose of discussion. The focus group component contains six sections. Finally, a discussion section pertaining to the SAFE commission recommendations from 2000 will be presented. The study will be wrapped up with future directions for the *School Safety Study.*

8.b. How to read this report

- If you are at the end of this section, you probably have already read the executive summary and the preceding background information.
- Before you read the report take some time to skim through the appendices to get an idea about the kind of information that has been gathered for this report.
- Prior to reviewing the two components (quantitative/ survey and qualitative/ focus group) take a look at the respective one- page summaries on pages 8, 34, 50, 65, 84, and 102. This will provide you with some idea regarding the details to follow in each section of the two components. It will also give you an opportunity to prioritize and decide in what order you would like to read the report.
- Once you are ready to read each of the individual sections in the report make sure to look at the tables/ graphs at the end of each section before you actually start reading that section. That way you will have some idea about the tables/ graphs being referred to in the section of interest.

Survey component

Key findings from the *School Safety Survey: Incidents of Violence*

The results from the survey have been highlighted here. It can be inferred from the tables that almost all the public schools in Arizona have some form of disciplinary action in place for the incidents/ violations that occur in their premises.

- *Non-violent incidents* (possession of firearm/ explosive device/ knife/ sharp object, distribution of illegal drugs, possession or use of illegal drugs/ alcohol/ tobacco, sexual harassment, and vandalism) outnumber *violent incidents* (rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with and without weapons, threats of physical attack with and without weapons, and robbery with and without weapons), followed by *theft* and *serious violence incidents* (same as violent incidents minus weapons). Few schools have disruptions from bomb or anthrax related threats.

- Frequency of incidents is highest for middle/high schools, schools with 500 to more than 1000 enrollment, schools with greater than 50% percent minority students/ students in free and reduced lunch, schools with a student-staff ratio of more than 16, schools with more than 6 classroom changes, schools situated in high/ moderate crime areas, and schools with unsafe environments.

- Some of the other disciplinary problems experienced by schools are racial tensions, bullying, verbal abuse of teachers, classroom disorders, disrespect for teachers, and involvement in gangs and cult/ extremist groups.

- Removals/ transfers, suspensions, counseling, punishments/withdrawals, and referrals to law enforcement are some of the common disciplinary actions taken by schools.

It is interesting to note that schools have issues with violence and substance abuse despite zero tolerance policies for violence, fighting, weapons, firearms, substance abuse, tobacco, and alcohol in a good majority of the schools in the sample (Phase I of the *School Safety Study*, page 13-27).

Implication: It is evident from the tables that Arizona public schools are faced with various types of incidents and violations and have various disciplinary actions in place to address the same. It is essential for schools to evaluate their safety concerns (both low level and violent) continually and take proactive steps as dictated by their local needs.

9. Incidents of Violence*

The *School Safety Survey: Incidents of Violence* was mailed to 317 schools and 223 schools responded to the same (N=223, response rate= ~70%). This section summarizes data from the survey.

Please note that schools frequently chose not to answer some questions in the survey resulting in blank cells in the database. This is the reason why the detailed results do not sum to the totals. Schools might have opted not to answer questions for various reasons. They might not have had the data for certain questions or they might not have had it in the required format. Alternatively, they might have had the data but might have made a decision not to input the same. And finally, they could have had zero incidents and could have left the space blank instead of entering a zero.
In other words, the number of incidents is self-reported by schools and the study needs to be understood in that light.

Notes:

Phase I of the *School Safety Study* calculated student/ *teacher* ratio (pages 11-27). However, Phase II of the study has made a minor change and calculates student/ *staff* ratio instead. The reason for this is that with respect to school safety any staff (adult) interaction is beneficial for students. Hence, the ratios are different when tables from the two phases are compared.

Tables 9.3, 9.5, 9.6, and 9.7 aggregate the data under four broad categories of violent incidents, serious violent incidents, theft, and other (non violent) incidents. *Violent incidents* include rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with and without weapons, threats of physical attack with and without weapons, and robbery with and without weapons. *Serious violent incidents* include the same incidents barring the ones without weapons. *Theft* includes theft and larceny. Finally, *other (non violent) incidents* include possession of firearm/ explosive device/ knife/ sharp object, distribution of illegal drugs, possession or use of illegal drugs/ alcohol/ tobacco, sexual harassment, and vandalism.

Summary findings from the survey are presented in the following 20 tables.

* Tables discussed in the text are included in the end of this section.

Table 9.1.—Total number of Arizona public schools in the sample, by school characteristics: 2000-2001 [1]

School characteristic	Total	Percent
Level		
Elementary	125	56.05
Middle	50	22.42
High	48	21.52
Enrollment size		
Less than 300	63	28.38
300 to 499	42	18.92
500 to 999	92	41.44
1,000 or more	25	11.26
Crime level in school area		
High	15	6.73
Moderate	40	17.94
Low	124	55.61
Mixed	34	15.25
Don't Know	10	4.48
Percent minorities		
0 to 5%	10	4.48
6 to 20%	45	20.18
21 to 50%	83	37.22
More than 50%	85	38.12
Free/reduced lunch		
0 to 20%	54	25.35
21 to 50%	57	26.76
More than 50%	102	47.89
Level of safety in school		
Very safe	139	62.33
Safe	80	35.87
Unsafe	4	1.79
Student/staff ratio		
Less than 12	144	65.16
12 to 16	62	28.05
More than 16	15	6.79
Classroom changes		
0 to 3 changes	57	25.79
4 to 6 changes	106	47.96
More than 6	58	26.24

[1]Some schools are omitted from these categories because schools self-reported data on school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals. The survey was sent to 317 schools and 223 responded (N=223; response rate=70.3%).

Note: For all the following tables *Percentage of schools = Number of schools with the incident / Total number of schools.*
Total number of schools: Elementary=125, Middle=50, High School=48.

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Table 9.2.—Total enrollment as of October 1 in the Arizona public school sample, by school characteristics: 2000-2001 [1]

School characteristic	Total number of students	Percent
Level		
Elementary	66729	52.04
Middle	34271	26.72
High	27236	21.24
Enrollment size		
Less than 300	8697	6.78
300 to 499	17237	13.44
500 to 999	66456	51.82
1,000 or more	35846	27.95
Crime level in school area		
High	7888	6.15
Moderate	25295	19.73
Low	72238	56.33
Mixed	17374	13.55
Don't Know	5441	4.24
Percent minorities		
0 to 5%	4510	3.52
6 to 20%	27841	21.71
21 to 50%	52855	41.22
More than 50%	43030	33.56
Free/reduced lunch		
0 to 20%	39349	31.92
21 to 50%	36868	29.90
More than 50%	47075	38.18
Level of safety in school		
Very safe	79791	62.22
Safe	46125	35.97
Unsafe	2320	1.81
Stud./staff ratio		
Less than 12	66006	51.80
12 to 16	48606	38.15
More than 16	12802	10.05
Classroom changes		
0 to 3 changes	21791	17.13
4 to 6 changes	63300	49.75
More than 6	42142	33.12

[1]Some schools are omitted from these categories because schools self-reported data on school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.3.—Frequency of violent and other incidents at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Violent incidents			Serious violent incidents			Theft			Other incidents		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	78	62.40%	1754	13	10.40%	26	37	29.60%	117	82	65.60%	529
Middle	44	88.00%	2061	11	22.00%	28	31	62.00%	290	46	92.00%	1132
High	36	75.00%	837	9	18.75%	23	32	66.67%	161	41	85.42%	882
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	33	52.38%	270	4	6.35%	4	21	33.33%	47	37	58.73%	271
300 to 499	31	73.81%	429	1	2.38%	1	16	38.10%	55	31	73.81%	192
500 to 999	70	76.09%	2799	19	20.65%	42	43	46.74%	292	75	81.52%	1246
1,000 or more	23	92.00%	1153	8	32.00%	29	19	76.00%	173	25	100.00%	812
Crime level in schl. area												
High	13	86.67%	515	3	20.00%	6	10	66.67%	121	13	86.67%	336
Moderate	32	80.00%	1443	9	22.50%	26	29	72.50%	141	36	90.00%	668
Low	80	64.52%	1749	14	11.29%	18	44	35.48%	195	81	65.32%	1013
Mixed	26	76.47%	691	5	14.71%	18	14	41.18%	97	29	85.29%	416
Don't Know	7	70.00%	254	2	20.00%	9	3	30.00%	14	10	100.00%	110
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	6	60.00%	76	--	--	0	2	20.00%	13	4	40.00%	28
6 to 20%	26	57.78%	716	4	8.89%	15	19	42.22%	70	28	62.22%	460
21 to 50%	68	81.93%	2065	16	19.28%	33	39	46.99%	235	66	79.52%	940
More than 50%	58	68.24%	1795	13	15.29%	29	40	47.06%	250	71	83.53%	1115
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	32	59.26%	709	5	9.26%	12	17	31.48%	88	32	59.26%	580
21 to 50%	48	84.21%	1451	12	21.05%	32	36	63.16%	223	48	84.21%	785
More than 50%	71	69.61%	2155	16	15.69%	33	42	41.18%	244	82	80.39%	1075
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	92	66.19%	2015	16	11.51%	46	53	38.13%	217	94	67.63%	1180
Safe	63	78.75%	2430	15	18.75%	28	44	55.00%	310	72	90.00%	1257
Unsafe	3	75.00%	207	2	50.00%	3	3	75.00%	41	3	75.00%	106
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	101	70.14%	2618	18	12.50%	54	59	40.97%	309	107	74.31%	1472
12 to 16	45	72.58%	1624	10	16.13%	16	33	53.23%	197	48	77.42%	894
More than 16	11	73.33%	409	4	26.67%	6	7	46.67%	61	13	86.67%	155
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	33	57.89%	582	4	7.02%	4	19	33.33%	58	37	64.91%	290
4 to 6 changes	74	69.81%	2149	17	16.04%	42	44	41.51%	257	79	74.53%	1198
More than 6	51	87.93%	1921	12	20.69%	31	37	63.79%	253	53	91.38%	1055

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Note: See the discussion section for what comprises *violent*, *serious*, and *other* incidents.

Table 9.4.—Frequency of disruptions for *bomb or anthrax threats* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level			
Elementary	5	4.00%	6
Middle	11	22.00%	19
High	7	14.58%	10
Enrollment size			
Less than 300	2	3.17%	3
300 to 499	2	4.76%	2
500 to 999	13	14.13%	23
1,000 or more	6	24.00%	7
Crime level in school area			
High	2	13.33%	2
Moderate	7	17.50%	12
Low	11	8.87%	13
Mixed	3	8.82%	8
Don't Know	--	--	0
Percent minorities			
0 to 5%	2	20.00%	2
6 to 20%	5	11.11%	7
21 to 50%	5	6.02%	11
More than 50%	11	12.94%	15
Free/reduced lunch			
0 to 20%	3	5.56%	4
21 to 50%	10	17.54%	18
More than 50%	7	6.86%	10
Level of safety in school			
Very safe	14	10.07%	20
Safe	8	10.00%	14
Unsafe	1	25.00%	1
Stud./staff ratio			
Less than 12	14	9.72%	20
12 to 16	7	11.29%	12
More than 16	1	6.67%	2
Classroom changes			
0 to 3 changes	4	7.02%	5
4 to 6 changes	10	9.43%	16
More than 6	8	13.79%	13

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.5.—Frequency of violent and other incidents *reported to police* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Violent incidents			Serious violent incidents			Theft			Other incidents		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	26	20.80%	124	7	5.60%	9	14	11.20%	37	48	38.40%	100
Middle	33	66.00%	623	9	18.00%	24	17	34.00%	95	38	76.00%	555
High	24	50.00%	350	8	16.67%	15	17	35.42%	67	32	66.67%	492
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	18	28.57%	57	3	4.76%	3	14	22.22%	19	28	44.44%	136
300 to 499	16	38.10%	56	1	2.38%	1	7	16.67%	16	17	40.48%	64
500 to 999	34	36.96%	625	12	13.04%	22	19	20.65%	101	52	56.52%	507
1,000 or more	15	60.00%	359	8	32.00%	22	8	32.00%	63	21	84.00%	440
Crime level in school area												
High	8	53.33%	192	1	6.67%	3	8	53.33%	65	12	80.00%	179
Moderate	18	45.00%	401	8	20.00%	18	12	30.00%	39	24	60.00%	236
Low	39	31.45%	373	11	8.87%	14	23	18.55%	77	57	45.97%	529
Mixed	15	44.12%	52	3	8.82%	5	5	14.71%	18	18	52.94%	129
Don't Know	3	30.00%	79	1	10.00%	8	--	--	0	7	70.00%	74
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	2	20.00%	2	--	--	0	--	--	0	3	30.00%	6
6 to 20%	10	22.22%	132	2	4.44%	4	9	20.00%	20	22	48.89%	204
21 to 50%	36	43.37%	428	13	15.66%	28	18	21.69%	62	44	53.01%	400
More than 50%	35	41.18%	535	9	10.59%	16	21	24.71%	117	49	57.65%	537
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	13	24.07%	196	4	7.41%	11	5	9.26%	32	25	46.30%	305
21 to 50%	24	42.11%	208	9	15.79%	20	13	22.81%	37	33	57.89%	295
More than 50%	42	41.18%	603	11	10.78%	17	28	27.45%	125	57	55.88%	475
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	42	30.22%	381	11	7.91%	22	20	14.39%	51	64	46.04%	520
Safe	40	50.00%	715	13	16.25%	26	26	32.50%	143	52	65.00%	625
Unsafe	1	25.00%	1	--	--	0	2	50.00%	5	2	50.00%	2
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	51	35.42%	715	14	9.72%	32	35	24.31%	131	73	50.69%	714
12 to 16	25	40.32%	278	7	11.29%	11	9	14.52%	38	34	54.84%	353
More than 16	7	46.67%	104	3	20.00%	5	4	26.67%	30	10	66.67%	78
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	16	28.07%	75	3	5.26%	3	9	15.79%	10	19	33.33%	77
4 to 6 changes	36	33.96%	405	10	9.43%	17	22	20.75%	95	55	51.89%	519
More than 6	31	53.45%	617	11	18.97%	28	17	29.31%	94	43	74.14%	549

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

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Table 9.6.—Frequency of violent and other incidents that were *hate crimes* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Violent incidents			Serious violent incidents			Theft			Other incidents		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	1	0.80	1
Middle	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
High	1	2.08	2	1	2.08	1	--	--	0	1	2.08	1
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
300 to 499	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
500 to 999	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	1	1.09	1
1,000 or more	1	4.00	2	1	4.00	1	--	--	0	1	4.00	1
Crime level in school area												
High	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Moderate	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Low	1	0.81	2	1	0.81	1	--	--	0	2	1.61	2
Mixed	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Don't Know	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
6 to 20%	1	2.22	2	1	2.22	1	--	--	0	1	2.22	1
21 to 50%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	1	1.20	1
More than 50%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	1	1.85	2	1	1.85	1	--	--	0	2	3.70	2
21 to 50%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
More than 50%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	1	0.72	1
Safe	1	1.25	2	1	1.25	1	--	--	0	1	1.25	1
Unsafe	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
12 to 16	1	1.61	2	1	1.61	1	--	--	0	2	3.23	2
More than 16	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
4 to 6 changes	1	0.94	2	1	0.94	1	--	--	0	2	1.89	2
More than 6	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.7.—Frequency of violent and other incidents that were *gang-related* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Violent incidents			Serious violent incidents			Theft			Other incidents		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	1	0.80%	1	1	0.80%	1	1	0.80%	6	4	3.20%	9
Middle	2	4.00%	17	--	--	0	--	--	0	3	6.00%	16
High	6	12.50%	27	1	2.08%	3	--	--	0	5	10.42%	12
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	2	3.17%	4	--	--	0	--	--	0	2	3.17%	3
300 to 499	1	2.38%	3	1	2.38%	3	--	--	0	1	2.38%	4
500 to 999	3	3.26%	26	1	1.09%	1	--	--	0	6	6.52%	21
1,000 or more	3	12.00%	12	--	--	0	1	4.00%	6	3	12.00%	9
Crime level in school area												
High	2	13.33%	6	1	6.67%	3	--	--	0	2	13.33%	13
Moderate	3	7.50%	19	--	--	0	--	--	0	6	15.00%	17
Low	3	2.42%	8	1	0.81%	1	--	--	0	4	3.23%	7
Mixed	1	2.94%	12	--	--	0	1	2.94%	6	--	--	0
Don't Know	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
6 to 20%	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	2	4.44%	3
21 to 50%	2	2.41%	4	1	1.20%	1	--	--	0	4	4.82%	13
More than 50%	7	8.24%	41	1	1.18%	3	1	1.18%	6	6	7.06%	21
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	1	1.85%	3	--	--	0	--	--	0	3	5.56%	6
21 to 50%	3	5.26%	17	2	3.51%	4	--	--	0	3	5.26%	8
More than 50%	4	3.92%	21	--	--	0	1	0.98%	6	6	5.88%	23
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	4	2.88%	13	1	0.72%	3	1	0.72%	6	3	2.16%	8
Safe	5	6.25%	32	1	1.25%	1	--	--	0	9	11.25%	29
Unsafe	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0	--	--	0
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	4	2.78%	22	1	0.69%	3	1	0.69%	6	7	4.86%	26
12 to 16	4	6.45%	22	--	--	0	--	--	0	5	8.06%	11
More than 16	1	6.67%	1	1	6.67%	1	--	--	0	--	--	0
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	3	5.26%	7	1	1.75%	3	--	--	0	2	3.51%	5
4 to 6 changes	5	4.72%	33	1	0.94%	1	1	0.94%	6	8	7.55%	21
More than 6	1	1.72%	5	--	--	0	--	--	0	2	3.45%	11

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.8.—Frequency *of physical assaults* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Rape or attempted rape			Sexual battery other than rape			Physical attack or fight with weapon			Physical attack/fight w/o weapon		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	–	–	0	3	2.40%	4	1	0.80%	1	61	48.80%	1254
Middle	1	2.00%	1	3	6.00%	9	3	6.00%	3	41	82.00%	1499
High	–	–	0	–	–	0	3	6.25%	5	32	66.67%	459
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	–	–	0	–	–	0	–	–	0	27	42.86%	201
300 to 499	–	–	0	–	–	0	–	–	0	24	57.14%	270
500 to 999	1	1.09%	1	4	4.35%	5	2	2.17%	2	60	65.22%	2067
1,000 or more	–	–	0	2	8.00%	8	4	16.00%	6	23	92.00%	674
Crime level in school area												
High	1	6.67%	1	1	6.67%	1	1	6.67%	1	12	80.00%	425
Moderate	–	–	0	2	5.00%	2	4	10.00%	6	31	77.50%	921
Low	–	–	0	1	0.81%	1	1	0.81%	1	64	51.61%	1208
Mixed	–	–	0	1	2.94%	2	1	2.94%	1	22	64.71%	455
Don't Know	–	–	0	1	10.00%	7	–	–	0	5	50.00%	203
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	–	–	0	–	–	0	–	–	0	4	40.00%	43
6 to 20%	–	–	0	–	–	0	–	–	0	24	53.33%	538
21 to 50%	–	–	0	2	2.41%	8	5	6.02%	7	57	68.67%	1364
More than 50%	1	1.18%	1	4	4.71%	5	2	2.35%	2	49	57.65%	1267
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	–	–	0	1	1.85%	7	–	–	0	28	51.85%	422
21 to 50%	–	–	0	1	1.75%	1	6	10.53%	8	39	68.42%	1006
More than 50%	1	0.98%	1	4	3.92%	5	1	0.98%	1	61	59.80%	1547
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	–	–	0	2	1.44%	3	3	2.16%	5	74	53.24%	1288
Safe	1	1.25%	1	4	5.00%	10	3	3.75%	3	58	72.50%	1734
Unsafe	–	–	0	–	–	0	1	25.00%	1	2	50.00%	190
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	1	0.69%	1	3	2.08%	10	2	1.39%	2	86	59.72%	1889
12 to 16	–	–	0	3	4.84%	3	3	4.84%	3	39	62.90%	1139
More than 16	–	–	0	–	–	0	1	6.67%	3	9	60.00%	184
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	–	–	0	–	–	0	1	1.75%	1	25	43.86%	407
4 to 6 changes	–	–	0	3	2.83%	4	2	1.89%	2	67	63.21%	1605
More than 6	1	1.72%	1	3	5.17%	9	4	6.90%	6	42	72.41%	1200

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.9.—Frequency of *threats of physical attack and robbery* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Threat of attack with weapon			Threat of attack without weapon			Robbery with a weapon			Robbery without a weapon		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	9	7.20%	20	63	50.40%	474	--	--	0	1	0.80%	1
Middle	6	12.00%	9	40	80.00%	534	2	4.00%	2	3	6.00%	4
High	5	10.42%	7	27	56.25%	355	--	--	0	2	4.17%	11
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	2	3.17%	2	24	38.10%	65	1	1.59%	1	1	1.59%	1
300 to 499	--	--	0	29	69.05%	158	--	--	0	1	2.38%	1
500 to 999	14	15.22%	30	57	61.96%	690	1	1.09%	1	2	2.17%	3
1,000 or more	4	16.00%	4	20	80.00%	450	--	--	0	2	8.00%	11
Crime level in school area												
High	1	6.67%	2	9	60.00%	84	1	6.67%	1	--	--	0
Moderate	4	10.00%	5	23	57.50%	496	--	--	0	3	7.50%	13
Low	12	9.68%	15	69	55.65%	523	--	--	0	1	0.81%	1
Mixed	3	8.82%	14	24	70.59%	218	1	2.94%	1	--	--	0
Don't Know	--	--	0	5	50.00%	42	--	--	0	2	20.00%	2
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	--	--	0	5	50.00%	33	--	--	0	--	--	0
6 to 20%	3	6.67%	14	23	51.11%	163	--	--	0	1	2.22%	1
21 to 50%	10	12.05%	13	60	72.29%	668	--	--	0	4	4.82%	5
More than 50%	7	8.24%	9	42	49.41%	499	2	2.35%	2	1	1.18%	10
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	3	5.56%	3	29	53.70%	275	--	--	0	2	3.70%	2
21 to 50%	7	12.28%	12	38	66.67%	413	--	--	0	2	3.51%	11
More than 50%	10	9.80%	21	56	54.90%	575	2	1.96%	2	2	1.96%	3
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	12	8.63%	27	74	53.24%	681	--	--	0	2	1.44%	11
Safe	7	8.75%	7	54	67.50%	668	2	2.50%	2	4	5.00%	5
Unsafe	1	25.00%	2	2	50.00%	14	--	--	0	--	--	0
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	10	6.94%	23	83	57.64%	675	2	1.39%	2	6	4.17%	16
12 to 16	7	11.29%	10	38	61.29%	469	--	--	0	--	--	0
More than 16	3	20.00%	3	9	60.00%	219	--	--	0	--	--	0
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	2	3.51%	2	24	42.11%	171	1	1.75%	1	--	--	0
4 to 6 changes	11	10.38%	24	62	58.49%	502	--	--	0	3	2.83%	12
More than 6	7	12.07%	10	44	75.86%	690	1	1.72%	1	3	5.17%	4

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.10.—Frequency of *theft and possession of weapons* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Theft/larceny			Possess firearm/explosive device			Possess knife or sharp object		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level									
Elementary	37	29.60%	117	4	3.20%	5	40	32.00%	73
Middle	31	62.00%	290	5	10.00%	7	33	66.00%	115
High	32	66.67%	161	7	14.58%	11	26	54.17%	61
Enrollment size									
Less than 300	21	33.33%	47	--	--	0	16	25.40%	26
300 to 499	16	38.10%	55	4	9.52%	5	11	26.19%	15
500 to 999	43	46.74%	292	7	7.61%	9	50	54.35%	130
1,000 or more	19	76.00%	173	5	20.00%	9	21	84.00%	77
Crime level in school area									
High	10	66.67%	121	--	--	0	6	40.00%	22
Moderate	29	72.50%	141	3	7.50%	4	28	70.00%	76
Low	44	35.48%	195	10	8.06%	13	44	35.48%	85
Mixed	14	41.18%	97	3	8.82%	6	16	47.06%	53
Don't Know	3	30.00%	14	--	--	0	5	50.00%	13
Percent minorities									
0 to 5%	2	20.00%	13	--	--	0	1	10.00%	2
6 to 20%	19	42.22%	70	5	11.11%	11	14	31.11%	38
21 to 50%	39	46.99%	235	6	7.23%	6	43	51.81%	111
More than 50%	40	47.06%	250	5	5.88%	6	41	48.24%	98
Free/reduced lunch									
0 to 20%	17	31.48%	88	5	9.26%	10	19	35.19%	45
21 to 50%	36	63.16%	223	5	8.77%	6	30	52.63%	67
More than 50%	42	41.18%	244	5	4.90%	6	48	47.06%	130
Level of safety in school									
Very safe	53	38.13%	217	12	8.63%	14	55	39.57%	128
Safe	44	55.00%	310	4	5.00%	9	42	52.50%	117
Unsafe	3	75.00%	41	--	--	0	2	50.00%	4
Stud./staff ratio									
Less than 12	59	40.97%	309	10	6.94%	14	60	41.67%	154
12 to 16	33	53.23%	197	5	8.06%	8	30	48.39%	76
More than 16	7	46.67%	61	1	6.67%	1	8	53.33%	18
Classroom changes									
0 to 3 changes	19	33.33%	58	2	3.51%	2	13	22.81%	18
4 to 6 changes	44	41.51%	257	6	5.66%	8	49	46.23%	121
More than 6	37	63.79%	253	8	13.79%	13	37	63.79%	110

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.11.—Frequency of *other incidents* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Distribution of illegal drugs			Possess/use alcohol/illegal drugs			Sexual harassment			Vandalism		
	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents	Number of schools	Percent of schools	Number of incidents
Level												
Elementary	8	6.40%	8	31	24.80%	59	30	24.00%	118	58	46.40%	266
Middle	16	32.00%	28	40	80.00%	541	32	64.00%	209	34	68.00%	232
High	14	29.17%	30	34	70.83%	547	18	37.50%	41	35	72.92%	192
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	8	12.70%	12	26	41.27%	134	7	11.11%	16	26	41.27%	83
300 to 499	1	2.38%	1	14	33.33%	83	11	26.19%	22	22	52.38%	66
500 to 999	15	16.30%	21	41	44.57%	480	43	46.74%	232	58	63.04%	374
1,000 or more	14	56.00%	32	23	92.00%	432	19	76.00%	98	20	80.00%	164
Crime level in school area												
High	4	26.67%	7	12	80.00%	171	5	33.33%	51	8	53.33%	85
Moderate	8	20.00%	13	22	55.00%	249	17	42.50%	113	32	80.00%	213
Low	17	13.71%	30	51	41.13%	520	39	31.45%	120	55	44.35%	245
Mixed	8	23.53%	15	16	47.06%	171	15	44.12%	59	24	70.59%	112
Don't Know	1	10.00%	1	4	40.00%	36	4	40.00%	25	8	80.00%	35
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	–	--	0	2	20.00%	10	1	10.00%	4	3	30.00%	12
6 to 20%	4	8.89%	14	19	42.22%	205	17	37.78%	57	24	53.33%	135
21 to 50%	17	20.48%	26	38	45.78%	381	35	42.17%	138	49	59.04%	278
More than 50%	17	20.00%	26	46	54.12%	551	27	31.76%	169	51	60.00%	265
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	8	14.81%	20	21	38.89%	309	19	35.19%	66	24	44.44%	130
21 to 50%	14	24.56%	21	30	52.63%	333	27	47.37%	109	40	70.18%	249
More than 50%	15	14.71%	23	51	50.00%	444	31	30.39%	184	58	56.86%	288
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	21	15.11%	35	55	39.57%	539	36	25.90%	137	67	48.20%	327
Safe	16	20.00%	30	47	58.75%	553	43	53.75%	218	58	72.50%	330
Unsafe	1	25.00%	1	3	75.00%	55	1	25.00%	13	2	50.00%	33
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	22	15.28%	30	68	47.22%	670	47	32.64%	203	79	54.86%	401
12 to 16	13	20.97%	30	28	45.16%	390	27	43.55%	148	36	58.06%	242
More than 16	3	20.00%	6	8	53.33%	69	6	40.00%	17	11	73.33%	44
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	6	10.53%	9	19	33.33%	109	11	19.30%	19	26	45.61%	133
4 to 6 changes	16	15.09%	23	44	41.51%	547	37	34.91%	164	64	60.38%	335
More than 6	16	27.59%	34	42	72.41%	491	32	55.17%	185	37	63.79%	222

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.12.—Frequency of selected disciplinary problems at public schools: 2000-2001

Type of disciplinary problem	Daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	On occasion	Never
Student racial tensions	1 (0.4)	3 (1.3)	7 (3.1)	119 (53.4)	92 (41.3)
Student bullying	19 (8.5)	33 (14.8)	44 (19.7)	117 (52.5)	9 (4.0)
Student verbal abuse of teachers	3 (1.3)	12 (5.4)	27 (12.1)	125 (56.1)	56 (25.1)
Widespread disorder in classrooms	1 (0.4)	8 (3.6)	2 (0.9)	45 (20.2)	166 (74.4)
Student acts of disrespect for teachers	6 (2.7)	26 (11.7)	22 (9.9)	139 (62.3)	30 (13.5)
Undesirable gang activities	1 (0.4)	2 (0.9)	4 (1.8)	50 (22.4)	165 (74.0)
Undesirable cult or extremist group activities	--	--	1 (0.4)	12 (5.4)	209 (93.7)

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.
Percentage in parentheses (%) calculated by dividing number of schools reporting incidents by total number of schools (223) in sample.

Table 9.13.—Frequency of selected disciplinary problems at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Happens daily or at least once a week					(Hardly) Happens at all	
	Student racial tensions	Student bullying	Student verbal abuse of teachers	Widespread disorder in classrooms	Student acts of disrespect for teachers	Undesirable gang activities	Undesirable cult or extremist group activities
Level							
Elementary	1	21	3	2	7	10	1
Middle	1	22	6	6	16	17	5
High	2	9	6	1	9	27	7
Enrollment size							
Less than 300	--	8	4	1	9	16	5
300 to 499	--	4	1	--	3	4	--
500 to 999	3	30	7	6	16	23	4
1,000 or more	1	10	3	2	4	11	4
Crime level in schl. area							
High	--	5	3	1	4	6	1
Moderate	3	16	4	5	10	18	2
Low	1	19	3	1	10	21	7
Mixed	--	10	3	2	7	7	1
Don't Know	--	2	2	--	1	2	2
Percent minorities							
0 to 5%	--	--	--	--	1	--	--
6 to 20%	--	8	1	1	5	3	--
21 to 50%	2	22	4	3	12	24	8
More than 50%	2	22	10	5	14	27	5
Free/reduced lunch							
0 to 20%	--	12	2	1	5	6	2
21 to 50%	2	12	4	2	9	22	6
More than 50%	2	27	9	6	18	25	5
Level of safety in school							
Very safe	1	20	5	2	11	23	4
Safe	3	30	9	7	20	29	9
Unsafe	--	2	1	--	1	2	--
Stud./staff ratio							
Less than 12	2	28	11	6	22	36	7
12 to 16	1	21	3	1	8	14	4
More than 16	1	3	1	2	2	4	2
Classroom changes							
0 to 3 changes	--	5	4	--	3	9	3
4 to 6 changes	2	30	5	4	16	21	4
More than 6	2	17	6	5	13	24	6

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

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Table 9.14.—Percentage of public schools reporting that various *disciplinary actions* were available, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

Disciplinary action	Available, but not feasible to use	Available but not used	Available and used	Not available
Removal or transfer for at least 1 year				
Removal with no continuing school services	20 (9.0)	119 (53.4)	43 (19.3)	39 (17.5)
Transfer to specialized school for disciplinary reasons	12 (5.4)	71 (31.8)	71 (31.8)	65 (29.1)
Transfer to another regular school	12 (5.4)	87 (39.0)	50 (22.4)	68 (30.5)
Transfer to school-provided tutoring/at-home instruction	18 (8.1)	102 (45.7)	31 (13.9)	65 (29.1)
Suspension or removal for less than 1 year				
Out-of-school suspension or removal for less than 1 year				
No curriculum/services provided	17 (7.6)	73 (32.7)	63 (28.3)	56 (25.1)
Curriculum/services provided	9 (4.0)	80 (35.9)	106 (47.5)	21 (9.4)
In-school suspension				
No curriculum/services provided	22 (9.9)	48 (21.5)	33 (14.8)	102 (45.7)
Curriculum/services provided	9 (4.0)	21 (9.4)	159 (71.3)	29 (13.0)
Provide instruction/counseling to reduce problems				
Referral to school counselor	2 (0.9)	3 (1.3)	170 (76.2)	45 (20.2)
Assigned to program designed to reduce disciplinary problem				
During school hours	2 (0.9)	14 (6.3)	138 (61.0)	66 (29.6)
Outside of school hours	5 (2.2)	21 (9.4)	84 (37.7)	106 (47.5)
Punishment/withdrawal of services/other				
Kept off school bus due to misbehavior	5 (2.2)	25 (11.2)	164 (73.5)	26 (11.7)
Corporal punishment	4 (1.8)	16 (7.2)	5 (2.2)	194 (87.0)
Put on school probation with threatened consequences if another incident occurs	6 (2.7)	31 (13.9)	139 (62.3)	39 (17.5)
Detention and/or Saturday school	3 (1.3)	14 (6.3)	148 (66.4)	55 (24.7)
Loss of student privileges	1 (0.4)	10 (4.5)	199 (89.2)	9 (4.0)
Require participation in community service	5 (2.2)	28 (12.6)	96 (43.0)	87 (39.0)
Other	1 (0.4)	5 (2.2)	17 (7.6)	36 (16.1)
Referred to law enforcement	2 (0.9)	51 (22.9)	163 (73.1)	3 (1.3)

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.
Percentage in parenthesis (%)

Table 9.15.Percent of public schools reporting that *removals or suspensions* were available as disciplinary actions, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Removal or transfer for at least 1 year				Suspension or removal for less than 1 year			
					Out of school suspension		In-school suspension	
	Removal with no continuing school services	Transfer to specialized school	Transfer to another regular school	Transfer to school-provided tutoring/at-home instruction	No curriculum/ services provided	Curriculum/ services provided	No curriculum/ services provided	Curriculum/ services provided
Level								
Elementary	76.00%	69.60%	73.60%	68.80%	68.00%	88.80%	50.40%	87.20%
Middle	88.00%	78.00%	60.00%	72.00%	64.00%	88.00%	42.00%	90.00%
High	89.58%	58.33%	56.25%	60.42%	75.00%	83.33%	39.58%	72.92%
Enrollment size								
Less than 300	84.13%	47.62%	58.73%	66.67%	76.19%	85.71%	55.56%	76.19%
300 to 499	83.33%	64.29%	64.29%	61.90%	64.29%	90.48%	42.86%	90.48%
500 to 999	81.52%	79.35%	69.57%	71.74%	67.39%	86.96%	43.48%	88.04%
1,000 or more	76.00%	92.00%	80.00%	64.00%	60.00%	88.00%	36.00%	84.00%
Crime level in schl. area								
High	73.33%	66.67%	60.00%	60.00%	53.33%	86.67%	46.67%	86.67%
Moderate	75.00%	70.00%	72.50%	72.50%	65.00%	97.50%	40.00%	87.50%
Low	83.06%	68.55%	65.32%	67.74%	73.39%	87.10%	48.39%	84.68%
Mixed	85.29%	67.65%	70.59%	67.65%	70.59%	85.29%	47.06%	88.24%
Don't Know	90.00%	80.00%	60.00%	60.00%	40.00%	60.00%	40.00%	60.00%
Percent minorities								
0 to 5%	50.00%	60.00%	70.00%	50.00%	60.00%	90.00%	30.00%	100.00%
6 to 20%	86.67%	71.11%	66.67%	68.89%	73.33%	86.67%	42.22%	82.22%
21 to 50%	81.93%	73.49%	68.67%	72.29%	68.67%	87.95%	43.37%	84.34%
More than 50%	82.35%	64.71%	64.71%	64.71%	67.06%	87.06%	52.94%	84.71%
Free/reduced lunch								
0 to 20%	77.78%	77.78%	74.07%	66.67%	74.07%	85.19%	46.30%	77.78%
21 to 50%	89.47%	82.46%	71.93%	71.93%	70.18%	87.72%	47.37%	91.23%
More than 50%	79.41%	58.82%	63.73%	67.65%	66.67%	88.24%	48.04%	84.31%
Level of safety in school								
Very safe	84.89%	66.91%	64.75%	66.19%	70.50%	86.33%	48.20%	85.61%
Safe	78.75%	72.50%	68.75%	68.75%	67.50%	88.75%	41.25%	82.50%
Unsafe	25.00%	75.00%	100.00%	100.00%	25.00%	100.00%	75.00%	100.00%
Stud./staff ratio								
Less than 12	80.56%	65.97%	64.58%	68.75%	64.58%	86.81%	45.14%	83.33%
12 to 16	83.87%	74.19%	72.58%	67.74%	79.03%	90.32%	48.39%	88.71%
More than 16	86.67%	80.00%	66.67%	60.00%	66.67%	86.67%	46.67%	86.67%
Classroom changes								
0 to 3 changes	82.46%	73.68%	73.68%	68.42%	73.68%	87.72%	54.39%	84.21%
4 to 6 changes	78.30%	63.21%	63.21%	65.09%	68.87%	84.91%	40.57%	82.08%
More than 6	86.21%	75.86%	67.24%	72.41%	63.79%	93.10%	48.28%	91.38%

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.16.—Percent of public schools reporting that actions *other than removals or suspensions* were available as disciplinary actions, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Referral to school counselor	Assigned to program during school hours	Assigned to program outside of school hours	Kept off school bus due to misbehavior	Corporal punishment	Put on school probation	Detention and /or Saturday school	Loss of student privileges	Require participation in community service	Referral to law enforcement
Level										
Elementary	72.00%	65.60%	38.40%	91.20%	11.20%	69.60%	69.60%	95.20%	54.40%	94.40%
Middle	90.00%	80.00%	62.00%	94.00%	14.00%	88.00%	94.00%	92.00%	60.00%	100.00%
High	83.33%	66.67%	64.58%	68.75%	8.33%	93.75%	64.58%	93.75%	64.58%	100.00%
Enrollment size										
Less than 300	73.02%	60.32%	52.38%	71.43%	15.87%	80.95%	57.14%	95.24%	55.56%	96.83%
300 to 499	83.33%	73.81%	42.86%	90.48%	16.67%	83.33%	76.19%	97.62%	61.90%	95.24%
500 to 999	77.17%	68.48%	45.65%	94.57%	6.52%	71.74%	79.35%	92.39%	55.43%	96.74%
1,000 or more	92.00%	88.00%	68.00%	96.00%	8.00%	92.00%	92.00%	92.00%	64.00%	100.00%
Crime level in schl.										
High	93.33%	66.67%	60.00%	73.33%	–	66.67%	86.67%	100.00%	66.67%	100.00%
Moderate	82.50%	65.00%	47.50%	87.50%	7.50%	72.50%	77.50%	90.00%	65.00%	97.50%
Low	74.19%	67.74%	46.77%	87.90%	12.10%	80.65%	69.35%	94.35%	56.45%	95.16%
Mixed	91.18%	79.41%	55.88%	91.18%	14.71%	85.29%	79.41%	97.06%	52.94%	100.00%
Don't Know	50.00%	70.00%	50.00%	80.00%	20.00%	80.00%	80.00%	90.00%	50.00%	100.00%
Percent minorities										
0 to 5%	60.00%	60.00%	40.00%	80.00%	–	80.00%	60.00%	100.00%	70.00%	100.00%
6 to 20%	66.67%	66.67%	42.22%	84.44%	13.33%	86.67%	62.22%	88.89%	46.67%	93.33%
21 to 50%	81.93%	66.27%	51.81%	90.36%	12.05%	85.54%	81.93%	97.59%	66.27%	97.59%
More than 50%	83.53%	74.12%	51.76%	85.88%	10.59%	68.24%	74.12%	92.94%	54.12%	97.65%
Free/reduced lunch										
0 to 20%	68.52%	64.81%	46.30%	81.48%	1.85%	83.33%	62.96%	92.59%	53.70%	96.30%
21 to 50%	73.68%	71.93%	49.12%	91.23%	10.53%	82.46%	82.46%	96.49%	63.16%	92.98%
More than 50%	85.29%	69.61%	50.98%	88.24%	14.71%	73.53%	75.49%	93.14%	56.86%	99.02%
Level of safety in										
Very safe	75.54%	68.35%	53.24%	84.89%	11.51%	79.14%	70.50%	93.53%	57.55%	96.40%
Safe	82.50%	70.00%	42.50%	90.00%	11.25%	80.00%	80.00%	95.00%	58.75%	97.50%
Unsafe	100.00%	75.00%	50.00%	100.00%	–	50.00%	75.00%	100.00%	50.00%	100.00%
Stud./staff ratio										
Less than 12	77.78%	68.75%	52.78%	86.81%	13.19%	81.25%	74.31%	97.92%	57.64%	98.61%
12 to 16	82.26%	70.97%	45.16%	90.32%	4.84%	75.81%	77.42%	91.94%	59.68%	96.77%
More than 16	80.00%	73.33%	40.00%	86.67%	20.00%	73.33%	60.00%	73.33%	53.33%	86.67%
Classroom changes										
0 to 3 changes	70.18%	61.40%	47.37%	73.68%	12.28%	84.21%	68.42%	92.98%	68.42%	96.49%
4 to 6 changes	78.30%	66.04%	43.40%	90.57%	9.43%	75.47%	69.81%	95.28%	46.23%	96.23%
More than 6	87.93%	82.76%	62.07%	94.83%	13.79%	82.76%	89.66%	94.83%	70.69%	100.00%

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.17.—Disciplinary actions for *use of a firearm/explosive device*, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Total offenses		Removals		Transfers to specialized schools		Out-of-school suspensions		Other		No disciplinary action	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Level												
Elementary	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	0.00
Middle	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
High	7	87.50	3	100.00	1	100.00	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	1	12.50	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
300 to 499	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
500 to 999	2	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	33.33	1	100.00	0	0.00
1,000 or more	5	62.50	3	100.00	0	0.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	0	0.00
Crime level in schl. area												
High	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Moderate	5	62.50	3	100.00	0	0.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	0	0.00
Low	2	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	33.33	1	100.00	0	0.00
Mixed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Don't Know	1	12.50	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
6 to 20%	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
21 to 50%	6	75.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	3	100.00	1	100.00	0	0.00
More than 50%	2	25.00	1	33.33	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	0.00
21 to 50%	5	62.50	2	66.67	0	0.00	3	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
More than 50%	2	25.00	1	33.33	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	6	75.00	3	100.00	0	0.00	2	66.67	1	100.00	0	0.00
Safe	2	25.00	0	0.00	1	100.00	1	33.33	0	0.00	0	0.00
Unsafe	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	2	25.00	1	33.33	1	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
12 to 16	2	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	33.33	1	100.00	0	0.00
More than 16	4	50.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	0	0.00
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	1	12.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	100.00	0	0.00
4 to 6 changes	2	25.00	0	0.00	1	100.00	1	33.33	0	0.00	0	0.00
More than 6	5	62.50	3	100.00	0	0.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	0	0.00

NA = not applicable.

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.18.—Disciplinary actions for *possession of a firearm/explosive device* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Total offenses		Removals		Transfers to specialized schools		Out-of-school suspensions		Other		No disciplinary action	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Level												
Elementary	4	14.81	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	8.33	3	75.00	0	0.00
Middle	6	22.22	1	16.67	1	50.00	4	33.33	0	0.00	0	0.00
High	17	62.96	5	83.33	1	50.00	7	58.33	1	25.00	3	100.00
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	1	3.70	0	0.00	1	50.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
300 to 499	9	33.33	3	50.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	75.00	3	100.00
500 to 999	8	29.63	2	33.33	1	50.00	4	33.33	1	25.00	0	0.00
1,000 or more	9	33.33	1	16.67	0	0.00	8	66.67	0	0.00	0	0.00
Crime level in schl. area												
High	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Moderate	3	11.11	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	25.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Low	18	66.67	6	100.00	0	0.00	6	50.00	3	75.00	3	100.00
Mixed	5	18.52	0	0.00	1	50.00	3	25.00	1	25.00	0	0.00
Don't Know	1	3.70	0	0.00	1	50.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
6 to 20%	16	59.26	5	83.33	0	0.00	6	50.00	2	50.00	3	100.00
21 to 50%	5	18.52	0	0.00	1	50.00	2	16.67	2	50.00	0	0.00
More than 50%	6	22.22	1	16.67	1	50.00	4	33.33	0	0.00	0	0.00
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	17	65.38	3	50.00	0	0.00	8	72.73	3	75.00	3	100.00
21 to 50%	4	15.38	3	50.00	1	50.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
More than 50%	5	19.23	0	0.00	1	50.00	3	27.27	1	25.00	0	0.00
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	18	66.67	6	100.00	1	50.00	6	50.00	2	50.00	3	100.00
Safe	9	33.33	0	0.00	1	50.00	6	50.00	2	50.00	0	0.00
Unsafe	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	19	70.37	6	100.00	2	100.00	6	50.00	2	50.00	3	100.00
12 to 16	7	25.93	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	50.00	1	25.00	0	0.00
More than 16	1	3.70	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	25.00	0	0.00
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	2	7.41	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	50.00	0	0.00
4 to 6 changes	15	55.56	5	83.33	1	50.00	4	33.33	2	50.00	3	100.00
More than 6	10	37.04	1	16.67	1	50.00	8	66.67	0	0.00	0	0.00

NA = not applicable.

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Table 9.19.—Disciplinary actions for *use of a weapon other than a firearm* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

School characteristic	Total offenses		Removals		Transfers to specialized schools		Out-of-school suspensions		Other		No disciplinary action	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Level												
Elementary	13	41.94	1	11.11	0	0.00	7	53.85	5	83.33	0	0.00
Middle	9	29.03	4	44.44	2	66.67	2	15.38	1	16.67	0	0.00
High	9	29.03	4	44.44	1	33.33	4	30.77	0	0.00	0	0.00
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	3	9.68	0	0.00	1	33.33	2	15.38	0	0.00	0	0.00
300 to 499	1	3.23	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	16.67	0	0.00
500 to 999	17	54.84	3	33.33	2	66.67	7	53.85	5	83.33	0	0.00
1,000 or more	10	32.26	6	66.67	0	0.00	4	30.77	0	0.00	0	0.00
Crime level in schl. area												
High	2	6.45	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	7.69	1	16.67	0	0.00
Moderate	13	41.94	5	55.56	0	0.00	5	38.46	3	50.00	0	0.00
Low	7	22.58	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	46.15	1	16.67	0	0.00
Mixed	8	25.81	4	44.44	2	66.67	1	7.69	1	16.67	0	0.00
Don't Know	1	3.23	0	0.00	1	33.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
6 to 20%	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
21 to 50%	20	64.52	7	77.78	2	66.67	10	76.92	1	16.67	0	0.00
More than 50%	11	35.48	2	22.22	1	33.33	3	23.08	5	83.33	0	0.00
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	3	9.68	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	23.08	0	0.00	0	0.00
21 to 50%	18	58.06	8	88.89	2	66.67	6	46.15	2	33.33	0	0.00
More than 50%	10	32.26	1	11.11	1	33.33	4	30.77	4	66.67	0	0.00
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	17	54.84	5	55.56	2	66.67	9	69.23	1	16.67	0	0.00
Safe	12	38.71	4	44.44	1	33.33	3	23.08	4	66.67	0	0.00
Unsafe	2	6.45	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	7.69	1	16.67	0	0.00
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	17	54.84	5	55.56	3	100.00	5	38.46	4	66.67	0	0.00
12 to 16	7	22.58	1	11.11	0	0.00	5	38.46	1	16.67	0	0.00
More than 16	7	22.58	3	33.33	0	0.00	3	23.08	1	16.67	0	0.00
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	3	9.68	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	23.08	0	0.00	0	0.00
4 to 6 changes	13	41.94	2	22.22	1	33.33	5	38.46	5	83.33	0	0.00
More than 6	15	48.39	7	77.78	2	66.67	5	38.46	1	16.67	0	0.00

NA = not applicable.

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

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Table 9.20.—Disciplinary actions for *possession of a weapon other than a firearm* at public schools, by school characteristics: 2000-2001

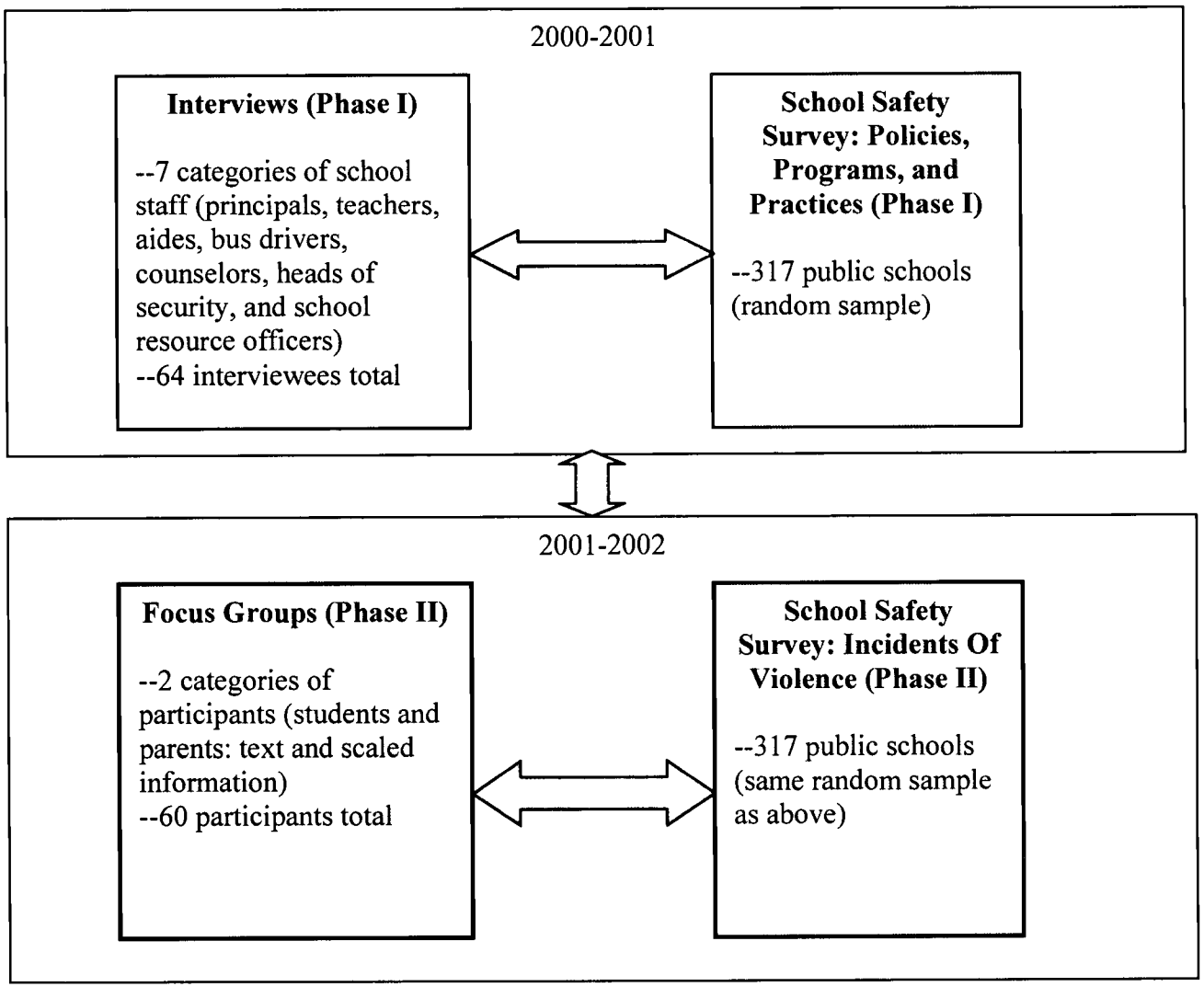
School characteristic	Total offenses		Removals		Transfers to specialized schools		Out-of-school suspensions		Other		No disciplinary action	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Level												
Elementary	51	28.81	3	14.29	2	33.33	21	19.09	24	61.54	1	100.00
Middle	86	48.59	9	42.86	3	50.00	62	56.36	12	30.77	0	0.00
High	40	22.60	9	42.86	1	16.67	27	24.55	3	7.69	0	0.00
Enrollment size												
Less than 300	17	9.66	0	0.00	1	16.67	11	10.00	5	13.16	0	0.00
300 to 499	9	5.11	2	9.52	0	0.00	3	2.73	4	10.53	0	0.00
500 to 999	101	57.39	11	52.38	4	66.67	60	54.55	25	65.79	1	100.00
1,000 or more	49	27.84	8	38.10	1	16.67	36	32.73	4	10.53	0	0.00
Crime level in schl. area												
High	7	3.95	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	6.36	0	0.00	0	0.00
Moderate	59	33.33	8	38.10	3	50.00	37	33.64	11	28.21	0	0.00
Low	65	36.72	4	19.05	1	16.67	37	33.64	22	56.41	1	100.00
Mixed	36	20.34	9	42.86	1	16.67	24	21.82	2	5.13	0	0.00
Don't Know	10	5.65	0	0.00	1	16.67	5	4.55	4	10.26	0	0.00
Percent minorities												
0 to 5%	1	0.56	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	2.56	0	0.00
6 to 20%	25	14.12	2	9.52	0	0.00	22	20.00	1	2.56	0	0.00
21 to 50%	58	32.77	4	19.05	3	50.00	31	28.18	19	48.72	1	100.00
More than 50%	93	52.54	15	71.43	3	50.00	57	51.82	18	46.15	0	0.00
Free/reduced lunch												
0 to 20%	34	19.65	1	4.76	0	0.00	25	22.94	8	22.22	0	0.00
21 to 50%	32	18.50	4	19.05	3	50.00	21	19.27	3	8.33	1	100.00
More than 50%	107	61.85	16	76.19	3	50.00	63	57.80	25	69.44	0	0.00
Level of safety in school												
Very safe	80	45.20	10	47.62	1	16.67	50	45.45	18	46.15	1	100.00
Safe	94	53.11	11	52.38	5	83.33	57	51.82	21	53.85	0	0.00
Unsafe	3	1.69	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	2.73	0	0.00	0	0.00
Stud./staff ratio												
Less than 12	106	60.23	17	80.95	3	50.00	59	53.64	27	71.05	0	0.00
12 to 16	58	32.95	3	14.29	3	50.00	41	37.27	10	26.32	1	100.00
More than 16	12	6.82	1	4.76	0	0.00	10	9.09	1	2.63	0	0.00
Classroom changes												
0 to 3 changes	15	8.47	1	4.76	1	16.67	10	9.09	3	7.69	0	0.00
4 to 6 changes	80	45.20	6	28.57	3	50.00	50	45.45	21	53.85	0	0.00
More than 6	82	46.33	14	66.67	2	33.33	50	45.45	15	38.46	1	100.00

*Some schools are omitted from these categories because of missing data on their school characteristics. For this reason, the detailed results do not sum to the totals.

Focus Group component

ERIC

10. School Safety Study (Phase II): Overall method of analysis



Note: This chart presents the overall method of analysis for the focus group component of the *School Safety Study*. The five sections in this component of the study are school climate, adult interaction, school disorder; policies, programs, and practices; and community influence on school safety. Each section will present information on student and parent perceptions. This will be tied back with findings from the *Incidents of Violence Survey* where relevant. Student and parent perceptions will also be tied back with staff perceptions and policy findings from Phase I. Detailed discussions on each section follow.

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Participant characteristics

10.1. Participant characteristics*

The following student and parent characteristics will help place the sixty focus group participants within a context prior to reviewing findings from the study.

Student characteristics

A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

Table 10.1 provides information on student characteristics of the 29 students who participated in the focus groups across six schools. 52% of the students were in high school, 45% in middle school, and 3% in elementary school.
45% of the students were female and 55% were male. 48% of the students were White, 31% Hispanic, 10% Native American, 7% African American, and 3% Asian.

Parent characteristics

A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).
It is important to note that these participants were parents of the students above. This ensured effectively cross checking perceptions.

Table 10.2 provides information on parent characteristics of the 27 parents who participated in the focus groups across six schools. 19% of the parents were fathers and 81% mothers. 56% of the parents were White, 26% Hispanic, 7% Native American, 7% African American, and 4% Asian. 26% of the parents were in the 45-54 age group, 59% in the 35-44 age group, and 14% in the 25-34 age group. 81% of the parents were married and 19% were single/ unmarried.
59% of the parents were teachers/aides/administrators, 19% managers and health care professionals, 11% in food services, and 11% were not employed. About 41% of the parents had a bachelor's degree or above, 52% had high school and post-high school qualifications, and 4% had less than a high school education.

This concludes this section on participant characteristics. The following section discusses student and parent perceptions pertaining to school climate.

* Tables discussed in the text are included in the end of each section.

Table 10.1.—Total number of students in the six focus groups by student characteristics: January 2002.

Student characteristics	Total	Percent
Grade Range		
1-5	1	3.4
6-8	13	44.8
9-12	15	51.7
Age Group		
≤10	1	3.4
11-13	12	41.4
≥14	16	55.2
Gender		
Male	16	55.2
Female	13	44.8
Ethnicity		
White	14	48.3
Hispanic	9	31.0
Native American	3	10.3
African American	2	6.9
Asian	1	3.4

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

Table 10.2.—Total number of parents in the six focus groups by parental characteristics: January 2002.

Parental characteristics	Total	Percent
Age Group		
45-54	7	25.9
35-44	16	59.3
25-34	4	14.8
Gender		
Male	5	18.5
Female	22	81.5
Ethnicity		
White	15	55.6
Hispanic	7	25.9
Native American	2	7.4
African American	2	7.4
Asian	1	3.7
Employment categories		
Teacher/school administrator	13	48.1
Non-school administrator	3	11.1
Manager/health services	5	18.5
Food services	3	11.1
Unemployed	3	11.1
Educational qualifications		
Higher degree	1	3.7
Bachelor degree	10	37.0
Other post-school qualification	9	33.3
High School qualification	5	18.5
<High School	1	3.7
Missing	1	3.7
Marital status		
Married	22	81.5
Unmarried/ Single	5	18.5

Note: A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).

School climate

Key findings from participant perceptions on school climate

Students (30 total across 6 focus groups) and their parents (30 total across 6 focus groups) were asked to discuss their perceptions of school climate. The following key findings were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

***Student** opinion on safety perceptions of outsiders*

- Percentage students who perceive outsiders feel school is safe: 69%, unsafe: 24%, very unsafe: 3%, don't know: 3%.
- Student perception on reasons why outsiders consider school unsafe: fights, gangs, hazing, racial issues, etc.

***Parent** opinion on safety perceptions of outsiders*

- Percentage parents who perceive outsiders feel school is very safe: 30%, safe: 41%, unsafe: 15%, very unsafe: 4%, don't know: 11%.
- Parent perception on reasons why outsiders consider school unsafe: fights, gangs, shootings, and weapons.

***Student** perceptions of safety*

- Percentage students who perceive school is very safe: 28%, safe: 66%, unsafe: 3%, don't know: 3%.
  - *Percentage students who perceive the following about various areas of school*:
    - *School buildings*—very safe: 31%, safe: 69%
    - *Hallways*—very safe: 3%, safe: 76%, unsafe: 7% (need for controlling running/ students bumping into each other).
    - *Restrooms*—very safe: 7%, safe: 83%, unsafe: 7%, very unsafe: 3% (reduce graffiti, improve hygiene and supervision).
    - *Cafeterias*—very safe: 10%, safe: 69%, unsafe: 3%, don't know: 7% (improve supervision).
    - *Buses/ bus stops*—very safe: 7%, safe: 35%, unsafe: 17%, don't know: 41% (improve supervision to control substance abuse, weapons, vandalism).
    - *Times of day*—(improve supervision at lunch, breaks/after breaks, between classes, after school, and early hours of school).
- Reasons students consider school safe: feel accepted, problems are handled well.
- Reasons students consider school unsafe: other students with discipline issues, inappropriate language.

***Parent** perceptions of safety*

- Percentage parents who perceive school is very safe: 33%, safe: 56%, no response: 11%.
- Reasons parents consider school safe: controlled outside influence, visitor sign-ins, no gangs, no peer pressure, sense of community, staff presence, good SROs/ monitors.
- Reasons parents consider school unsafe: student behaviors, racial issues, weapons, inadequate safety drills.

The *School Safety Study: Policies, Programs, and Practices* (Phase I) had very similar findings (page 11). While 46% of the schools (N=300) perceived that the level of safety in their schools was very safe, 53% perceived it as safe, and only 1% thought that it was unsafe.

Implication: A majority of participants in the study perceived their school is safe for students. However, there are various interpersonal and policy issues that concern them that need to be addressed by their schools through appropriate measures like training in conflict resolution, etc.

10.2. School Climate*

This section highlights the perceptions of students and parents regarding school safety. First, information will be provided on participant perceptions of how safe *outsiders* think the school is. Next, the participants *own perceptions* regarding school safety will be presented. In the case of students this information will be substantiated with perceptions pertaining to various physical areas within the school. Both subsections will conclude with a brief discussion.

Safety perceptions of outsides

Students and parents were asked to comment on how safe outsiders think their school is. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Student perceptions

Table 10.3 and graph 10.1 illustrate student perceptions of how safe their school is considered outside the school, where "outside" or "outsider" denote individuals who are *not* students, their parents, or school staff.

Most students (69%) perceived that outsiders considered their school safe. Only 24% of the students were of the opinion that outsiders felt their school was unsafe, whereas, 3% perceived outsider opinion as very unsafe, and 3% did not know what outsiders felt about the school's level of safety.
Two students were of the opinion that it was due to the principal that outsiders felt the school was safe. One student (cell 12) stated that "*the principal changed the school*" for the better and another (cell 12) stated "*the principal is more personal with the kids*". According to two students (cell 6) outsiders felt the school was safe because "*the teachers are kind and helpful*" and "*the administration is good*".

Student perceptions on why they thought outsiders felt the school was unsafe included presence of fights and gangs in the school, hazing, and racial issues.

Two students referred to fight related perceptions. One student (cell 13) claimed "*many outsiders think it is a ghetto because there are fights*". Another student (cell 5) mentioned "*there is a perception that there are fights and gangs here*".

With respect to hazing one student (cell 15) shared that the school has a "*bad reputation because of the hazing that has taken place*" here. Another student (cell 13) referred to perceptions based on racial profiling. "*It is considered unsafe because there are many Mexican and Black students in the school*".

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* Students: N=29, Parents: N=27, Staff interviewees: N=64, School Safety Surveys: N=300
Tables and graphs discussed in the text are included in the end of each section.
See Appendix 4 for cell references in text.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.4 and graph 10.2 illustrate parent perceptions of how safe their child's school is considered outside the school, where "outside" or "outsider" denote individuals who are not students, their parents, or school staff.

The percentage of parents who perceived that outsiders considered their child's school very safe was 30%. 41% of the parents were of the opinion that outsiders felt their child's school was safe, whereas, only 19% perceived outsider opinion as unsafe/very unsafe, and 11% did not respond to the query on what outsiders feel about the school's level of safety.

Three parents (cell 12) perceived that outsiders considered the school to be safe. One of them noted *"this is a good area of the state; it is isolated from big city problems"*.

On the other hand five parents (cell 5, 13) commented on why the school was considered unsafe by outsiders. One parent stated *"outsiders feel that this school is unsafe because two girls from this school were killed at one time. I am not sure if it is true"*. Another parent shared *"this school is considered unsafe because outsiders think it has gangs, shootings, weapons, and frequent fights in the hallways; and this opinion feeds on itself.* One other parent mentioned *"people wonder why we send our kids here, as it is an unsafe school with gangs. But the curriculum is considered good"*.

Discussion

More students thought outsiders considered their school very safe/ safe than parents. More parents thought the outsiders considered their school unsafe/ very unsafe than students. Also, while students perceived low-level incidents like fights, gangs, hazing, and racism to be of concern to outsiders, parents included more violent incidents like killings and weapons to the list of safety concerns to outsiders. This is understandable given the fact that student and parent views on outsider perception of school safety tend to reflect their own perceptions regarding school safety. The implication from a policy standpoint is to focus on low-level and violent crimes alike when discussing school safety.

Safety perceptions of focus group participants

Students and parents were asked to comment on how safe they think their school is. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Student perceptions

Table 10.3 and graph 10.3 illustrate student perceptions of how safe they consider their school to be.

28% of the students perceived their school to be very safe. 66% of the students were of the opinion that their school was safe, whereas, only 3% perceived the school to be unsafe, and 3% did not know how safe their school was.

One student (cell 1) commented on why he felt safe at school. "*I feel accepted. The school will not do anything bad*". According to another student (cell 6) "*some students were being bullied. The administration recognized there were bullies and so the bullying reduced in the last two years*". One other student (cell 12) felt safe because "*a kid brought a gun last year and the school handled it well*".

According to one student (cell 13) being safe is up to the individual student. "*If you don't talk crap you don't get into trouble*". One other student (cell 15) discussed how feeling safe was sometimes associated with students enrolled in the school. "*All the students who were involved with the hazing have left the school; so it is safe now*".

Only one student (cell 13) felt unsafe because of the way the school handled a crisis. "*I think it is unsafe because there was a bomb threat last year and we were locked inside the school the whole time*".

Student perceptions on various areas of the school

In order to place the above safety perceptions in context the students were asked to scale how safe they felt in different areas of the school, and at various times of the day. The following comments were gathered.

School buildings

As seen in table 10.5 and graph 10.4, 31% of the students felt the school buildings were very safe and 69% felt they were safe.

Hallways

Table 10.5 and graph 10.5 depict that 3% of the students felt the hallways were very safe, 76% safe, and 7% unsafe. One student (cell 13) felt the hallways were unsafe because "*last year a girl got beaten up against the locker*". Another student (cell 5) noted, "*students run in the hallways and run into other students*". Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 83) commented on how students bump into each other in hallways, which in turn triggers fights.

Restrooms

As can be noted from table 10.5 and graph 10.6, 7% of the students felt the restrooms were very safe, 83% safe, 7% unsafe, and 3% very unsafe. One student (cell 6) remarked the restrooms were unsafe because of the "*sexual comments about teachers written in the restrooms. There is also a lot of graffiti and roaches. The eighth graders fight and smoke weed in the restrooms*". Two students (cell 12) discussed the presence of

"unmentionables" like "*sex in bathrooms*" and "*some dark areas where a parent had grabbed a girl by her hair*". One student (cell 5) shared a concern that "*the restrooms are unsanitary*". Interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 83) noted the problems that can potentially exist in restrooms and measures that can be taken to control the same.

Cafeterias

As seen in table 10.5 and graph 10.7, 10% of the students felt the cafeterias were very safe, 69% safe, 3% unsafe, and 7% of the students did not know how safe the cafeterias were. One student (cell 13) was of the opinion the cafeteria was safe "*as there are lots of teachers around*". On the other hand, one student (cell 13) felt it was unsafe because the "*cafeteria caved in once due to the rains*" and another (cell 12) felt it was unsafe because "*it is not well designed from the point of emergency*". Interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 83) observed that fights frequently took place at the cafeteria.

Buses/ bus stops

As can be seen from table 10.5 and graph 10.8, 7% of the students felt the buses and bus stops were very safe, 35% safe, 17% unsafe, and 41% did not know how safe the buses and bus stops were. According to one student (cell 6) buses can sometimes become unsafe due to students that ride on them. "*There was a problematic kid in the bus who would curse, talk back to the driver, and hit other kids*". Three students (cell 12) discussed unsafe behaviors they had observed on the bus. "*There is pot and alcohol aboard the bus; a gun was brought on the bus last year; and the drivers are unsafe and run through reds and also cause accidents*". Interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 85) pointed out various problems that occur on the school bus/ bus stop, viz., bringing of weapons, smoking, fights/ intimidation, and vandalism.

Times of day

Students were asked to discuss when they thought fights occurred most frequently in course of the day. Students from all schools (or cells) contributed to the discussion and the following were the most common responses. Six students felt that fights occurred most frequently after school and three perceived lunchtime to be more common. Two students were of the opinion that the time between classes gave students ample opportunity for friction. One student each felt the more common times of the day for fights were after break, during breaks, during the early hours of the day, and the whole afternoon respectively. Interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 54-55) commented on very similar times of the day when fights were more likely to occur.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.4 and graph 10.9 illustrate parent perceptions of how safe they consider their child's school to be.

33% of the parents perceived their child's school to be very safe. 56% of the parents were of the opinion that their child's school was safe, whereas, 11% did not respond to how safe their child's school was.
Two parents (cell 1) felt the school was safe because there is "*no outside influence, no active gangs, and kids don't drive because they take the bus. Since this is less interactive there is no peer pressure. We will not move out of this school till schooling of child is completed*".
According to one parent (cell 6) "*it is a safe school. There is a sense of community, people looking out, and staff presence. The staff is always walking around in the school*". Another parent from the same school cautioned that just because a school is safe does not mean that it will always remain that way. "*It is safe but something could happen*". On the same lines one other parent (cell 13) shared that "*this school is good but can always do better*".

Parents commented on the practices they felt created a safe school environment. According to one parent (cell 12) "*the SRO here is good. My daughter was threatened but the school handled it well*". One other parent (cell 15) noted, "*the campus is open but the school tries to have visitors check in*".

Some parents discussed how students could contribute to a safe school environment. One parent (cell 15) commented, "*it is up to the students to behave safely*". Another parent (cell 13) observed "*the kids here are well behaved and don't use cuss words*".

Some parents on the other hand had serious safety concerns for their children. One parent (cell 12) said her "*daughter has been harassed with religious remarks against the Jewish faith. Also, the drills here are not good*". Another parent (cell 12) noted that the school was "*not a perfect school, a gun was brought in*".

Discussion

Although more students considered their school very safe/ safe than parents they both agreed that their school was safe. *School Safety Study: Policies, Programs, and Practices* (Phase I) had very similar findings (page 11). While 46% of the schools (N=300) perceived that the level of safety in their schools was very safe, 53% perceived it as safe. While parents were a little more partial to a discussion of school practices with respect to school safety, students discussed more of the inter-personal aspect of school safety as they spend the school day interacting with their peers.

Some common measures to promote school safety that emerge from perceptions of students (focus groups) and school staff (interviews) are as follows: Make students feel "accepted", maintain student confidentiality, monitor and control student language, control bullying, control hazing, control running and "bumping" into students in hallways, reduce graffiti and improve hygiene and supervision in restrooms, improve supervision in cafeterias, improve supervision to control substance abuse and weapons in buses/ bus stops, improve supervision at lunch, breaks/ after breaks, between classes, after school, and early hours of school.

Some common measures to promote school safety that emerge from perceptions of parents (focus groups) and school staff (interviews) are as follows: Require visitor sign-ins, control outside influence/ access, employ SROs and other monitors, increase staff presence, monitor student behavior, eliminate weapons, address racial issues.

This concludes this section on school climate. The following section discusses student and parent perceptions pertaining to adult impact/ interaction with students at school.

Table 10.3.—Student perceptions on how safe their school is considered: January 2002.

Safety perceptions	Total	Percent
Safety perception of outsiders		
Very safe	--	--
Safe	20	69.0
Unsafe	7	24.1
Very unsafe	1	3.4
Don't know	1	3.4
Safety perception of students and staff in school		
Very safe	8	27.6
Safe	19	65.5
Unsafe	1	3.4
Very unsafe	--	--
Don't know	1	3.4

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

Table 10.4.—Parent perceptions on how safe their child's school is considered: January 2002.

Safety perceptions	Total	Percent
Safety perception of outsiders		
Very safe	8	29.6
Safe	11	40.7
Unsafe	4	14.8
Very unsafe	1	3.7
No response	3	11.1
Safety perception of students and staff at school		
Very safe	9	33.3
Safe	15	55.6
No response	3	11.1

Note: A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).

Table 10.5.—Safety perceptions of students regarding different areas of their school: January 2002.

School areas	Total	Percent
School Buildings		
Very safe	9	31.0
Safe	20	69.0
Hallways		
Very safe	1	3.4
Safe	22	75.9
Unsafe	2	6.9
Not applicable	4	13.8
Restrooms		
Very safe	2	6.9
Safe	24	82.8
Unsafe	2	6.9
Very unsafe	1	3.4
Cafeterias		
Very safe	3	10.3
Safe	20	69.0
Unsafe	1	3.4
Don't know	2	6.9
Not applicable	3	10.3
Buses/ Bus Stops		
Very safe	2	6.9
Safe	10	34.5
Unsafe	5	17.2
Don't know	12	41.4

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

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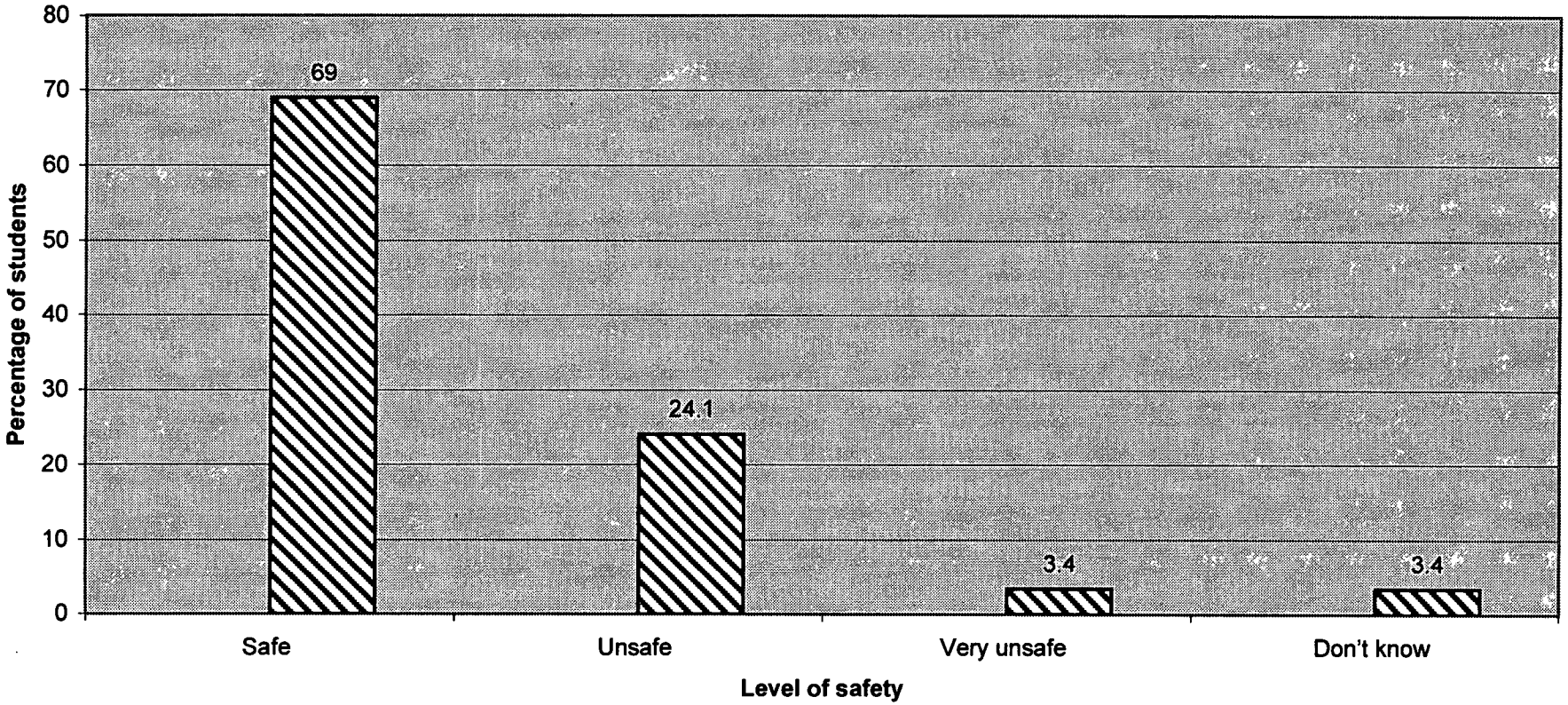
Graph 10.1: Student perception of how safe their school is considered outside the school (N=29)



Source: Table 10.3

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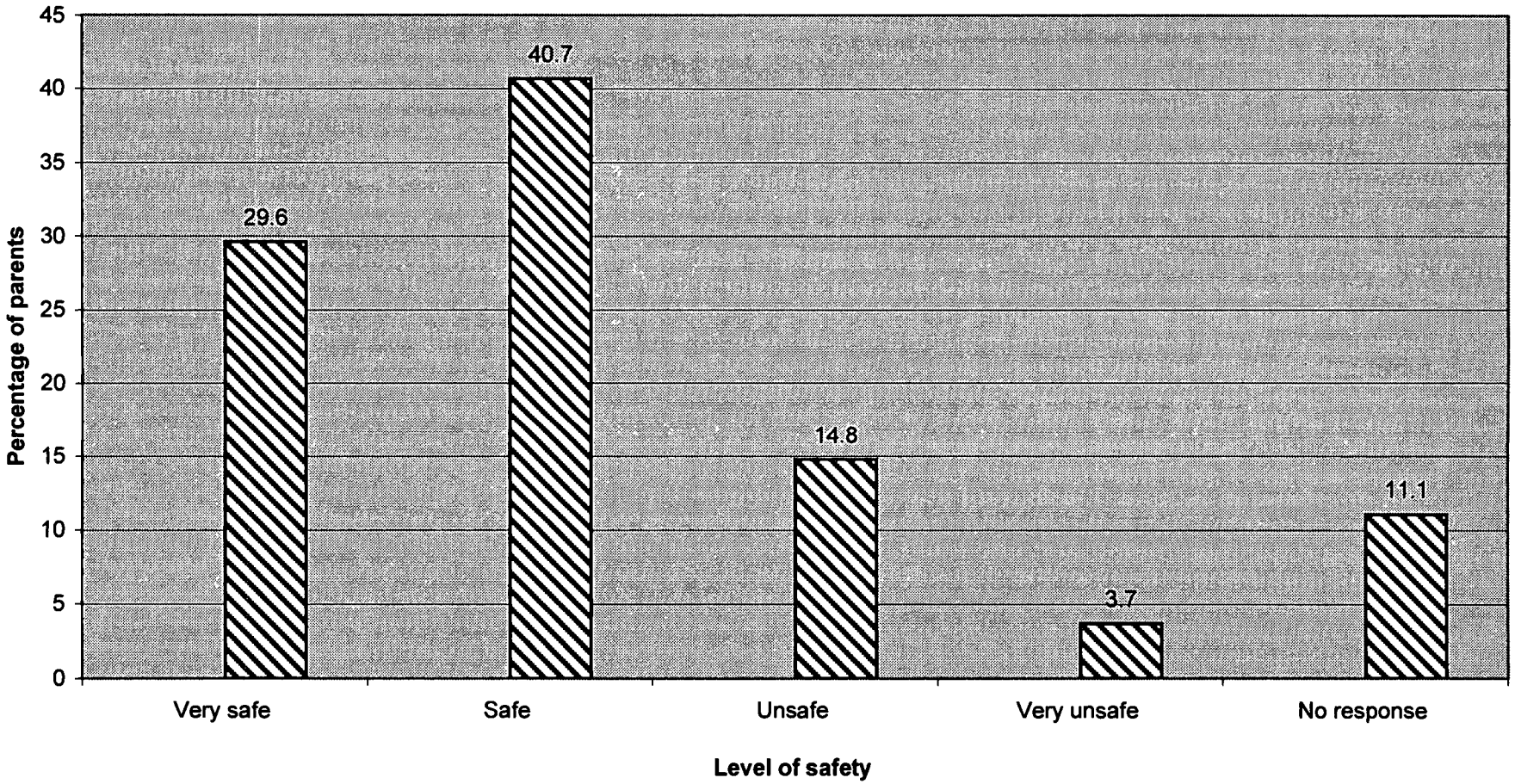
Graph 10.2: Parental perception of how safe their child's school is considered outside the school (N=27)



Source: Table 10.4

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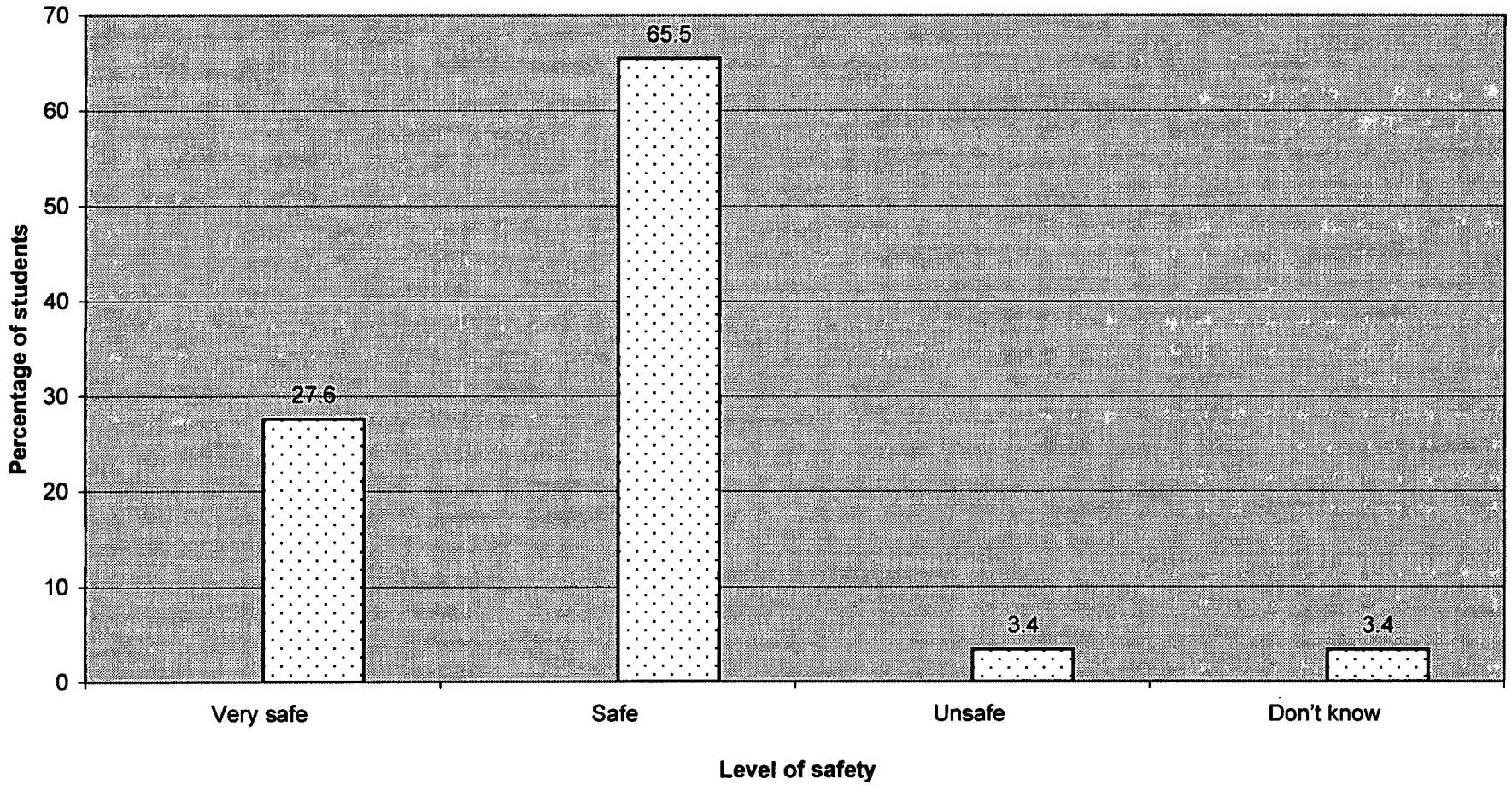
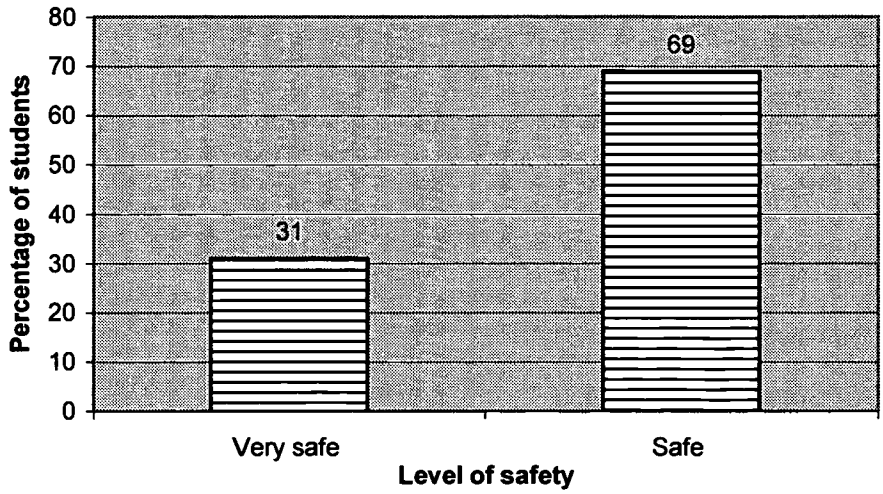
Graph 10.3: Student perception of school safety (N=29)



Source: Table 10.3

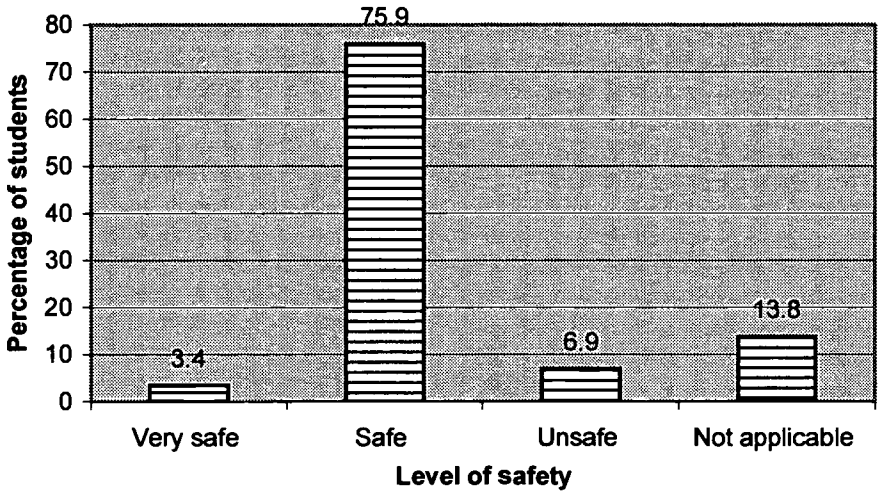
Note: Student perception on safety includes feeling safe from both physical harm and verbal abuse

Graph 10.4: Student perception regarding school buildings (N=29)



Source: Table 10.5

Graph 10.5: Student perception regarding hallways (N=29)



Source: Table 10.5

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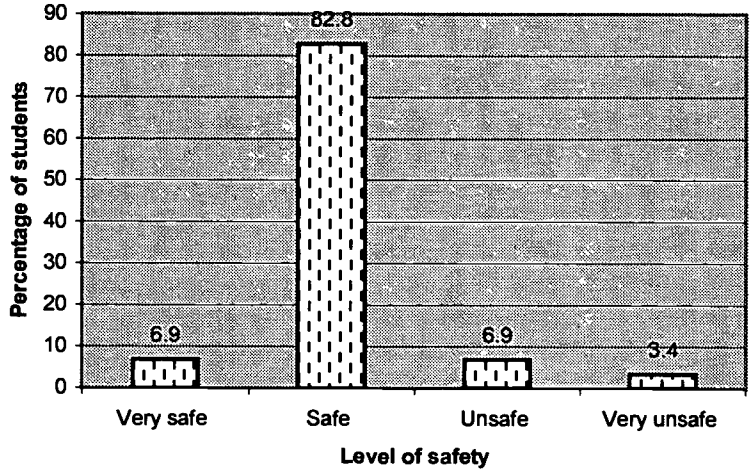
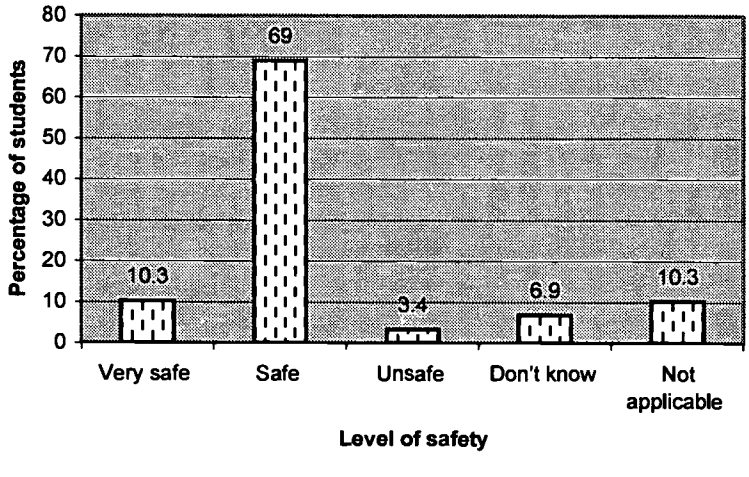
Graph 10.6: Student perception regarding restrooms (N=29)



Source: Table 10.5

Graph 10.7: Student perception regarding cafeterias (N=29)



Source: Table 10.5

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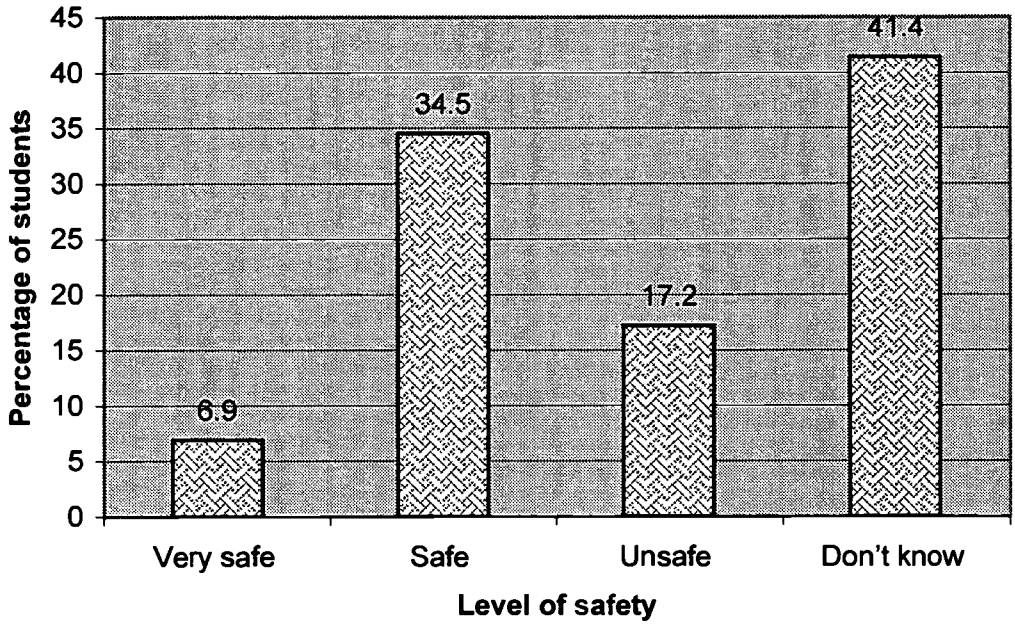
Graph 10.8: Student perception regarding buses and bus stops (N=29)



Source: Table 10.5

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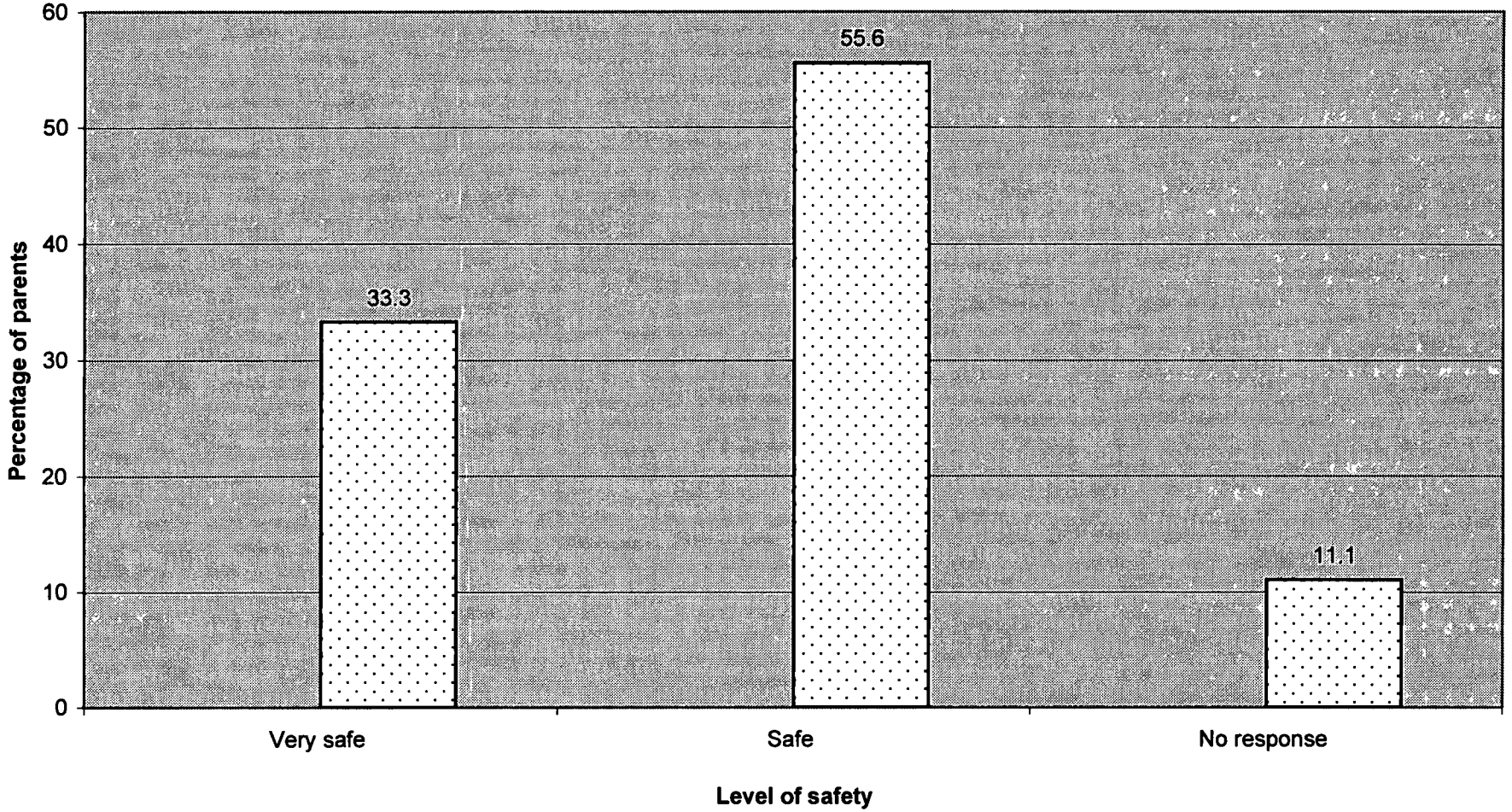
Graph 10.9: Parental perception of how safe they consider their child's school (N=27)



Source: Table 10.4

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Adult interaction/ impact

Key findings from participant perceptions on adult interaction

Students (30 total across 6 focus groups) and their parents (30 total across 6 focus groups) were asked to discuss the amount of accessibility students have to adults in their school. They were also asked to scale the level of impact these adults have on students. The following key findings were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

*Percentage **students** satisfied with adult accessibility*

- Easy access to at least one adult in school: 97%
- Adults take students seriously when approached: 90%
- Students satisfied with adult accessibility: 79%
- Scope for improvement: 21% (with respect to number of adults, their reactions, confidentiality)

*Percentage **parents** satisfied with adult accessibility*

- Easy access to at least one adult in school: 93%
- Adults take their child seriously when approached: 82%
- Parents satisfied with adult accessibility: 82%

*Percentage **students** perceiving a lot/ some impact on feeling of safety from the following adults:*

- Teachers: 100% (inconsistency is sometimes a problem)
- Principal: 86%
- Aide: 31%
- Counselor/ Nurse: 45% (should approach the kids and be around more)
- Bus driver: 66% (not always in control)
- Heads of Security: 17%
- Monitors: 17%
- SRO: 38% (uniforms are good, SRO not around when needed)
- Parents: 97% (not around enough or they are very confining)
- Peers: 93%
- Code of silence: Don't want to be a nark, peer pressure, not willing to reap consequences

*Percentage **parents** perceiving a lot/ some impact on feeling of safety from the following adults:*

- Teachers: 89% (scope for improvement)
- Principal: 74% (positive leadership plays an important role)
- Aides: 22%
- Counselor/ Nurse: 52% (need to be more competent)
- Bus driver: 22%
- Heads of Security: 0%
- Monitors: 41%
- SRO: 37%
- Parent themselves: 93%
- Peers: 67%
- Code of silence: Due to peer pressure, not willing to reap consequences

Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* had similar perceptions regarding adult accessibility albeit in varying degrees.

Implication: Majority of the students and parents perceived that students have easy access to adults in school with maximum impact on feeling of safety from teachers and principal. However, there is scope for improvement in this respect, especially from counselors, nurses, SROs, and monitors.

10.3. Adult interaction*

This section highlights the perceptions of students and parents regarding the amount of access or interaction students have with various adults in the school. First, student and parent perceptions regarding the level of accessibility and satisfaction with adult interaction will be discussed. Next, student and parent perceptions on the impact these adults have on students' feeling of safety will be discussed. This will include a comparison between student and parent perceptions and the perceptions of interviewees from Phase I of the *School Safety Study*. Both subsections will conclude with a brief discussion.

Perceptions regarding adult accessibility and satisfaction

Students and parents were asked to comment on how much access they thought students have to adults in their school and if they are satisfied with the level of accessibility. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 97% of the students felt they had easy access to at least one adult when they needed help. 90% of the students perceived that these adults took them seriously when they were approached. According to one student (cell 12) "*depending on the case students are taken seriously sometimes*". 79% of the students stated they were satisfied with the amount of access they had to adults in the school. In other words, 21% of the students felt there was scope for improvement, viz., in the number of adults who were accessible, in the way they were treated when they approached the adults, and the amount of confidentiality that these adults maintained with their problems or information. One student (cell 15) remarked "*the individuals that we interact with can do a lot better in impacting our feeling of safety*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 93% of the parents felt there was easy access to at least one adult in the school when their child needed it. 82% of the parents perceived that the adults take their child seriously when approached. 82% of the parents were satisfied with the amount of access their child has to adults in the school. One parent (cell 5) stated "*something should be improved. Just in the way the kids feel that they can't approach more adults with their problems*".

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* Students: N=29, Parents: N=27, Staff interviewees: N=64, School Safety Surveys: N=300
Tables and graphs discussed in the text are included in the end of each section.
See Appendix 4 for cell references in text.

Discussion

More students than parents felt that students had easy access to at least one adult when there was a need, and that they were taken seriously when they approached these adults. However, they both agreed there was scope for improvement on this front. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 78-79, 106, 113) shared mixed reactions on whether or not they felt school staff was approachable when students needed help, with many interviewees agreeing that the staff was approachable to students. An important implication that needs to be noted here is that school staff should make a conscious effort to be accessible to students in order for them to feel safe at school.

Perceptions regarding adult impact on feeling of safety

In order to place the above perceptions within context the students were asked to scale how much impact they felt various staff members like teachers, principals, counselors, and schools resource officers had on their feeling of safety at school. The parents were also asked to scale how much impact they thought various staff had on their child's feeling of safety at school. Perceptions were shared regarding the following categories of school staff.

Teacher/ Principal

Student perceptions

Table 10.8 and graph 10.10 illustrate that 28% of the students felt that *teachers* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot and 72% felt teachers impacted their feeling of safety at school sometimes. One student (cell 1) was "*concerned with a teacher because she is strict and also hits students*".

Table 10.8 and graph 10.10 illustrate that 48% of the students felt that *principals* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot. According to one student (cell 13) " *I feel like he is trying to make every thing safer*". 38% felt that principals impacted their feeling of safety sometimes, 10% felt they almost did not impact, and 3% felt principals never impacted their feeling of safety at school. According to one student (cell 6) "*most kids think the principal is mean*" and according to another student (cell 15) "*the principal is an "idiot" because he never punishes anybody, and lets things go by*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.10 illustrates that 78% of the parents felt that *teachers* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot, 11% felt they impacted sometimes, and 4% did not know how much teachers impacted their child's feeling of safety at school. One parent (cell 5) pointed out that it "*depends on the teacher*" how safe they make students feel.

Table 10.10 illustrates that 48% of the parents felt that *principals* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot. One parent (cell 6) commented that the principal "*is open*

and honest with the kids". 26% of the parents felt that the principal impacted their child's feeling of safety sometimes and 7% felt they almost did not impact. One parent (cell 5) pointed out that "*I have to be here at least once a week because the school does not do enough. I have to be constantly involved*". 11% did not know how much principals impacted their child's feeling of safety at school.

In summary, all students thought that *teachers* impacted their feeling of safety a lot/ some times when compared to less than 90% of the parents. However, both students and parents agreed that it depended on teachers as to how they would react to any situation. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 78-80) shared numerous instances where the staff displays interest in and awareness of students thus making the school environment safer. However, they indicated scope for improvement.
More students than parents thought that *principals* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ some times. While some students felt that the principal was trying to keep the school safe, and parents agreed that the principal was honest and open, other students perceived that their principal was "mean", and parents added that the principal was not doing enough. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 111-113) discussed the role of positive leadership in making the school a safer environment, especially with regard to consistency and discipline.

Aide/ Counselor or Nurse/ Bus driver

Student perceptions

Table 10.8 and graph 10.11 illustrate that 17% of the students felt that *aides* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot and 14% felt aides impacted their feeling of safety at school sometimes.

Table 10.8 and graph 10.11 illustrate that 21% of the students felt that *counselors* and *nurses* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot. According to one student (cell 1) the nurse "*is very comforting*". 24% of the students felt that nurses/ counselors impacted some times and 41% felt they almost did not impact feeling of safety. 14% did not know how much the counselors and nurses impacted their feeling of safety at school. One student (cell 12) commented that the nurses and counselors "*should try and approach kids in trouble rather than wait for kids to approach them*". While one student (cell 13) stated that "*the nurse is mean as she never lets us go home even if there is a need*" another student (cell 15) revealed "*we don't have a nice nurse; she is "scary*". According to one other student (cell 5) "*the counselor is not around when we need her the most*".

Table 10.8 and graph 10.11 illustrate that 28% of the students felt that *bus drivers* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot. One student (cell 1) was of the opinion that their driver "*takes precautions and goes by the book*". 38% felt that bus drivers impacted their feeling of safety sometimes. According to one student (cell 15) "*we have a weird bus driver. He does not control the bus and every body goes crazy on the bus*". 28% of the students did not know how much the bus drivers impacted their feeling of safety at school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.10 illustrates that 15% of the parents felt that *aides* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot, 7% felt they impacted some times/ almost never, and 11% did not know how much aides impacted their child's feeling of safety at school.

Table 10.10 illustrates that 30% of the parents felt that *counselors* and *nurses* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot, 22% felt they impacted some times, and 22% felt they almost did not impact. Two parents (cell 5) commented that "*the nurse is incompetent, looses shots and medication, and asks the child what they should take*" and that "*the nurse is ruthless*". 11% of the parents felt that the nurses and counselors never impacted their child's feeling of safety at school.

Table 10.10 illustrates that 19% of the parents felt that *bus drivers* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot and 4% felt they impacted some times. One parent (cell 1) shared that "*the bus driver is strict and sets down rules to be followed*". 4% of the parents felt that the bus drivers almost did not impact their child's feeling of safety at school.

In summary, less than 20% of the students and parents thought that *aides* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ sometimes. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 99) pointed out the need for more aides in classrooms.
On the other hand, more parents than students thought that *counselors/ nurses* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ sometimes. Many students felt that their nurse was "mean", "scary", "never there", and that the counselors and nurses should approach the students and not wait for them to be approached. Some parents agreed that the nurse was "incompetent" or "ruthless" in their child's school.
Finally, many more students than parents thought that *bus drivers* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ sometimes. While some students and parents felt the bus drivers took precautions and set rules, other students felt their bus drivers were not in control.

Head of security/ Monitor/ School Resource Officer (SRO)

Student perceptions

Table 10.8 and graph 10.12 illustrate that 17% of the students felt that *heads of security* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot. 83% of the students said they did not have a head of security.

Table 10.8 and graph 10.12 illustrate that 17% of the students felt that *monitors* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot, 14% felt they almost did not impact, and 3% felt monitors never impacted their feeling of safety at school.

Table 10.8 and graph 10.12 illustrate that 21% of the students felt that *SROs* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot and 17% felt they impacted some times. One student (cell 15) observed "*I have never seen the SRO stopping any body. But she is cool. The very fact that there is a person in uniform keeps people from doing something stupid*".

17% of the students felt that the SRO almost did not impact and 10% never impacted their feeling of safety. According to one student (cell 13) "*we never see the SRO*" and according to another student (cell 5) "*we have two SROs and they are never there when we need them*". 3% of the students did not know how much the SROs impacted their feeling of safety at school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.10 illustrates that 19% of the parents did not know how much the *heads of security* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school and 74% of the parents said their child's school did not have a head of security.

Table 10.10 illustrates that 7% of the parents felt that *monitors* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot, and 33% felt they almost did not impact their child's feeling of safety at school. One parent (cell 5) commented, "*the monitor is not good. This is stressful to parents and students. The late night monitor does not let students get drinks or use the restrooms. She does not allow parents to pick up kids and is rude to parents*".

Table 10.10 illustrates that 19% of the parents felt that *SROs* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot. According to one parent (cell 15) "*the SRO does very well. She goes all around and hinders kids from hanging out*". 19% of the parents felt that SROs impacted some times and 26% felt SROs almost never impacted their child's feeling of safety. One parent (cell 15) revealed, "*I don't even know we have an SRO*" and another parent (cell 5) observed that "*the PO is threatening and intimidating, and picks favorites*". 15% did not know if SROs impacted their child's feeling of safety.

In summary, none of the parents and less than 20% of the students thought that the *heads of security* impacted student feeling of safety a lot.
On the other hand, more students than parents thought that *monitors* impacted student feeling of safety a lot. Some parents shared that monitors in their child's school were not effective/ courteous. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 107) noted the need for more monitors in schools.
Finally, more students than parents thought that *SROs* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ sometimes. While some students shared that their SRO was "cool", and had uniforms on that deterred students from doing anything "stupid", other students and parents said they never saw their SRO or did not know the school had SROs. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 97, 107) discussed the advantages of having SROs in schools.

<u>Parents/ Peers or friends</u>

Student perceptions

Table 10.8 and graph 10.13 illustrate that 76% of the students felt that *parents* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot. Three students (cell 6) shared that parents "*are always there for me*", "*helped find me when I was confused*", and "*easy to talk to and that*

makes me feel safe". One other student (cell 15) observed "*I know my parents want to do what is best for me but it is confining and annoying*". 21% of the students felt that parents impacted some times, and 3% did not know how much their parents impacted their feeling of safety at school. Two students (cell 6) shared regarding their parents that we "*don't see them much*" and "*mom is away a lot, there is a lack of communication*". One other student (cell 5) noted "*both my parents work and I don't share any thing with them*".

Table 10.8 and graph 10.13 illustrate that 66% of the students felt that their *peers* and *friends* impacted their feeling of safety at school a lot, 28% felt they impacted some times, and 3% felt peers never impacted their feeling of safety at school. According to one student (cell 13) "*they don't make me feel safer as they get into trouble all the time too*". One other student (cell 12) pointed, "*the kids who don't like you make you feel unsafe*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.10 illustrates that 74% of the parents felt that *they as parents* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot, and 19% felt they impacted their child's feeling of safety at school sometimes. According to one parent (cell 12) "*other parents don't make my daughter feel safe because of their lack of involvement. There are unsupervised children outside the school and their behaviors reflect that. That makes my child feel unsafe. There is not much interaction between parents and school including with counseling*". Another parent commented, "*parents feel that my child can never do that. Therefore, they don't hold them accountable for their actions at home*".

Table 10.10 illustrates that 41% of the parents felt that *peers* and *friends* impacted their child's feeling of safety at school a lot, 26% felt they impacted some times, 19% felt they almost did not impact, and 7% felt they never impacted their child's feeling of safety at school.

In summary, more students than parents thought that *parents* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ sometimes. While some students felt that their parents were always there for them and helped them feel safe, there were others who felt confined by their involvement. Some other students commented that their parents were not around or that they did not share anything with their parents. On the other hand, parents commented how uninvolved attitudes of other parents, and repercussions thereof, made their child feel unsafe. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 46-50) commented on the benefits from parental involvement in making students safer at school.
More students than parents thought that their *peers/ friends* impacted student feeling of safety a lot/ sometimes. Some students felt that their peers frequently got into trouble and as a result did not make them feel safe.

Code of silence

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to comment on whether/ why students sometimes employ a code of silence.

Student perceptions

Students were asked to discuss if they opted to keep silent sometimes and not approach adults with their problems or complaints. Many students agreed that they often employed a "code of silence" due to the following reasons.

When asked what kind of secrets they kept one student (cell 6) mentioned "*secrets about weed smoking, sexual misconducts, and alcohol*" and another student (cell 12) discussed "*problems like when teachers come on to students, harassment, sexual misconduct*". One other student (cell 5) added "*fights, because adults want to break it up*".

When asked why they kept secrets one student (cell 1) stated that they "*don't want to tell on friends*" and another student said some students prefer keeping silent because they "*like it and don't want it to change*". One other student (cell 1) commented that they prefer keeping silent because "*teachers don't keep the information to themselves*". Yet another student (cell 13) revealed "*making out is kept secret. In any case the adults handle things wrong, so it does not matter even if you tell them*". Lastly, one student (cell 15) added "*getting high between classes, getting trashed and making out in the car. It is all kept a secret because the students don't want parents to know about it and get into trouble*".

Parent perceptions

Parents were asked to discuss if they thought their child opted to keep silent sometimes and not approach adults with their problems or complaints. Many parents agreed that their child often employed a "code of silence" due to the following reasons.

When asked what kind of secrets they kept one parent (cell 13) commented that "*kids keep quiet about sex, rape, drugs, and because they want to be cool*".

When asked why they kept secrets two parents (cell 13) shared "*kids know about other kids that are bad, or that consume alcohol. But they keep quiet because they are afraid of action, don't want to be a nark, and are afraid of peer pressure*". One parent (cell 5) commented that they "*don't tell parents because action will be taken and child will have to reap consequences. This situation is unfair because all adults should collectively resolve issues otherwise the kids get caught at both ends. Hence, "I didn't see it" is the favorite line*". One other parent pointed out that "*no body believes them any way*".

On the other hand, some parents were confident that their child did not keep secrets from them. Four parents (cell 1) remarked, "*the kids are open with us*". Another parent (cell

15) commented, "*no, there are no secrets. I tell my child not to keep secrets to prevent any problems from happening. Also, I keep reminding my child about the same*".

> Note here that while some parents might have been right in their assumption of their child being completely open and honest with them, in certain instances their child had admitted to keeping secrets from their parents/ adults at school in course of the focus groups. This serves as a reminder to the age-old problem of a disconnect between parent and child when it comes to open and honest communication, especially with adolescents at school and the problems/ issues they face in course of the day.

In summary, students and parents perceived that students chose to keep silent most frequently about incidents involving substance abuse and sexual misconducts/ harassment. The most common reason cited for the same was students not wanting to be a nark. Some students felt that incidents were kept secret because they did not want things changed, did not want to get into trouble with parents, and also because adults sometimes did not handle the situation properly. Parents on the other hand felt students kept silent because of peer pressure and also because they did not want to reap the consequences. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 69) similarly commented on the silence code that students sometimes adhere to and the reasons thereof.

Discussion

It is evident from this section that various adults impact student feeling of safety at school. However, teachers, principals, and parents have more impact than others. From a policy standpoint it is imperative that school staff become consistent when it comes to disciplinary actions. It is also important that they communicate with each other when any action is taken. Such measures, along with confidentiality in dealing with information, will ensure student confidence in the staff and this is essential if the issue of student code of silence is to be resolved. Counselors and nurses need to be accessible during school hours in order for students to feel safe. It is also important for schools to have an adequate number of monitors and school resource officers because their presence promotes discipline. Although parents are not part of the school staff they are nevertheless a very important influence on students. It is essential for them to be involved in their ward's life and make them feel safe. Interaction of parents and teachers, viz., through PTAs, is an important step towards this end.

This concludes this section on adult interaction/ impact on school safety. The following section discusses student and parent perceptions pertaining to the most common school disorders and discipline issues.

Table 10.6.—Student perceptions regarding school policy, and actions taken by the school towards their safety concerns at school: January 2002.

School policies and actions towards safety	Total	Percent
Everybody knows what the rules are	29	100
Everybody respects the rules	0	0
The rules are fair...	22	76
The rules are enforced consistently	10	35
Some students break the rules more often than others	28	97
It is easy to get away breaking the rules	16	55
Easy access to an adult is available when I need it	28	97
Adults take me seriously when approached	26	90
I am satisfied with the adult access at school	23	79
The school takes action when there is a need	13	45
Teachers take action when there is a problem	29	100
I know what to expect from the teacher when something goes wrong	29	100
The principal/ staff takes action when something goes wrong	29	100
I know what to expect from the principal/ staff when something goes wrong	24	83
There are incidents that the teachers and staff do not get to know about	28	97

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

Table 10.7.—Parent perceptions regarding school policy, and actions taken by the school towards their child's safety concerns at school: January 2002.

School policies and actions towards safety	Total (%)	# parents who don't know if problem exists (%)
Everybody knows what the rules are	27 (100)	--
Everybody respects the rules	9 (33)	--
The rules are fair...	27 (100)	--
The rules are enforced consistently	17 (63)	2 (7)
Some students break the rules more often than others	24 (89)	2 (7)
It is easy to get away breaking the rules	8 (30)	1 (4)
Easy access to an adult is available when my child need it	25 (93)	--
Adults take my child seriously when approached	22 (82)	3 (11)
I am satisfied with the adult access my child has at school	22 (82)	--
The school takes action when there is a need	22 (82)	--
Teachers/ staff take action when there is a problem	19 (70)	--
My child knows what to expect from the teacher/ staff when something goes wrong	17 (63)	5 (19)
There are incidents that the teachers and staff do not get to know about	24 (89)	3 (11)

Note: A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).

Table 10.8.—Student perceptions on how different individuals impact their feeling of safety at school: January 2002.

Individuals who impact student safety	Teacher	Principal	Aide	Bus Driver	Counselor/ Nurse	Head of Security	Monitor	SRO	Parents	Peers/ Friends
Impacts a lot	8 (27.6)	14 (48.3)	5 (17.2)	8 (27.6)	6 (20.7)	5 (17.2)	5 (17.2)	6 (20.7)	22 (75.9)	19 (65.5)
Impacts some times	21 (72.4)	11 (37.9)	4 (13.8)	11 (37.9)	7 (24.1)	--	--	5 (17.2)	6 (20.7)	8 (27.6)
Almost does not impact	--	3 (10.3)	--	--	12 (41.4)	--	4 (13.8)	5 (17.2)	--	--
Never impacts	--	1 (3.4)	--	--	--	--	1 (3.4)	3 (10.3)	--	1 (3.4)
Don't know	--	--	--	8 (27.6)	4 (13.8)	--	--	1 (3.4)	1 (3.4)	--
Not applicable	--	--	20 (69)	2 (6.9)	--	24 (82.8)	19 (65.5)	9 (31)	--	1 (3.4)

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).
Percentage figures in parentheses.

Table 10.9.—Student perceptions on their school's School Resource Officers (SRO): January 2002.

Perceptions regarding SROs	Total	Percent
My schools has an SRO	18	90
The SRO can be found easily if there is a need	9	45
The SRO makes the students feel safe	10	50

Note: Total number of students whose schools have the SRO program=20. Hence, the percentage values for this table have been calculated with 20 as the denominator.

Table 10.10.—Parent perceptions on how different individuals impact their child's feeling of safety at school: January 2002.

Individuals who impact child's safety	Teacher	Principal	Aide	Bus Driver	Counselor / Nurse	Head of Security	Monitor	SRO	I/we as parent/s	Peers/ Friends
Impacts a lot	21 (77.8)	13 (48.1)	4 (14.8)	5 (18.5)	8 (29.6)	--	2 (7.4)	5 (18.5)	20 (74.1)	11 (40.7)
Impacts some times	3 (11.1)	7 (25.9)	2 (7.4)	1 (3.7)	6 (22.2)	--	9 (33.3)	5 (18.5)	5 (18.5)	7 (25.9)
Almost does not impact	--	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	1 (3.7)	6 (22.2)	--	--	7 (25.9)	--	5 (18.5)
Never impacts	--	--	--	--	3 (11.1)	--	--	--	--	2 (7.4)
Don't know	1 (3.7)	3 (11.1)	3 (11.1)	--	--	5 (18.5)	--	4 (14.8)	--	--
Not applicable	--	--	14 (51.9)	18 (66.7)	2 (7.4)	20 (74.1)	14 (51.9)	4 (14.8)	--	--
No response	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)	2 (7.4)

Note: A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).
Percentage figures in parentheses.

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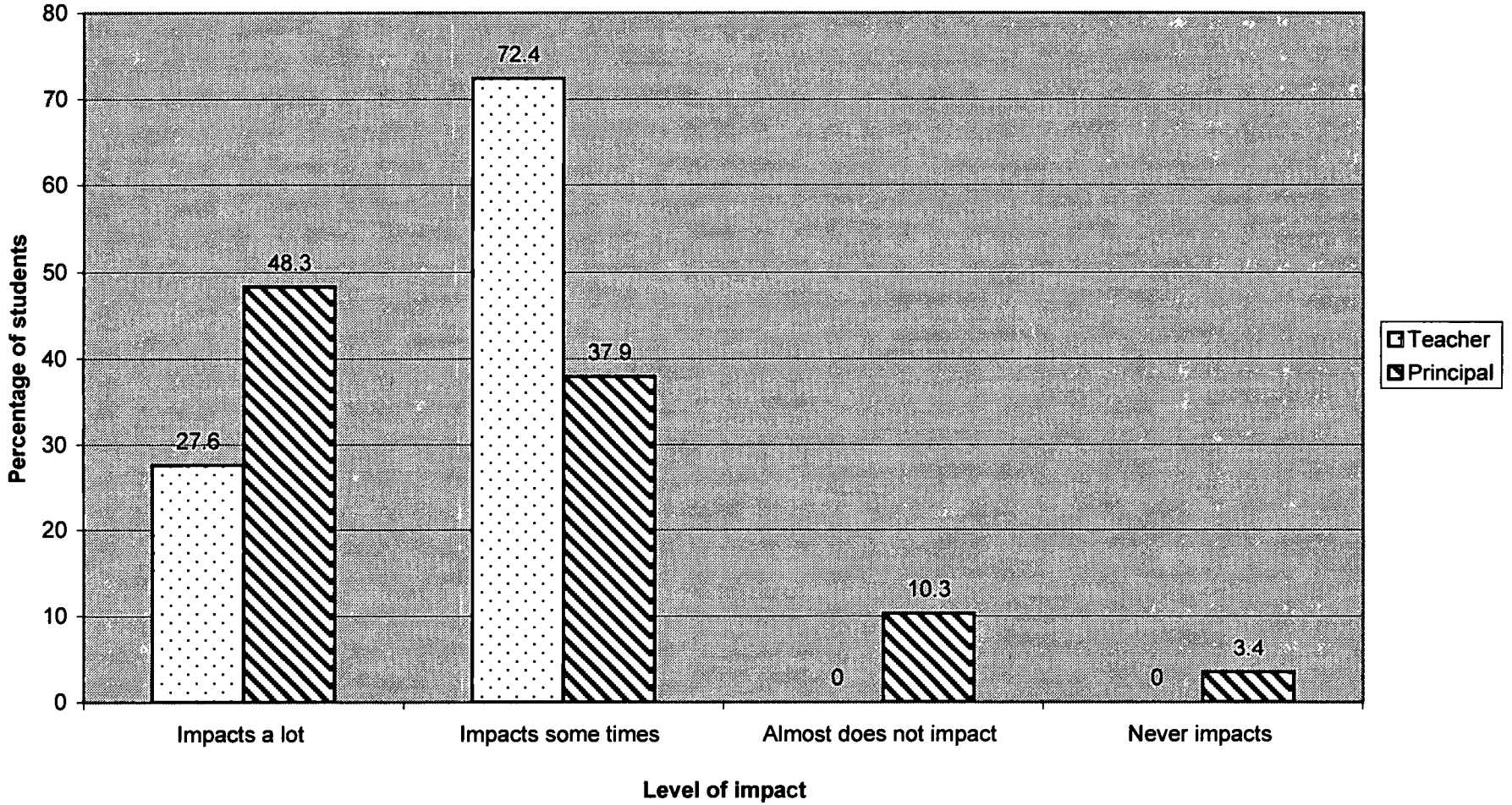
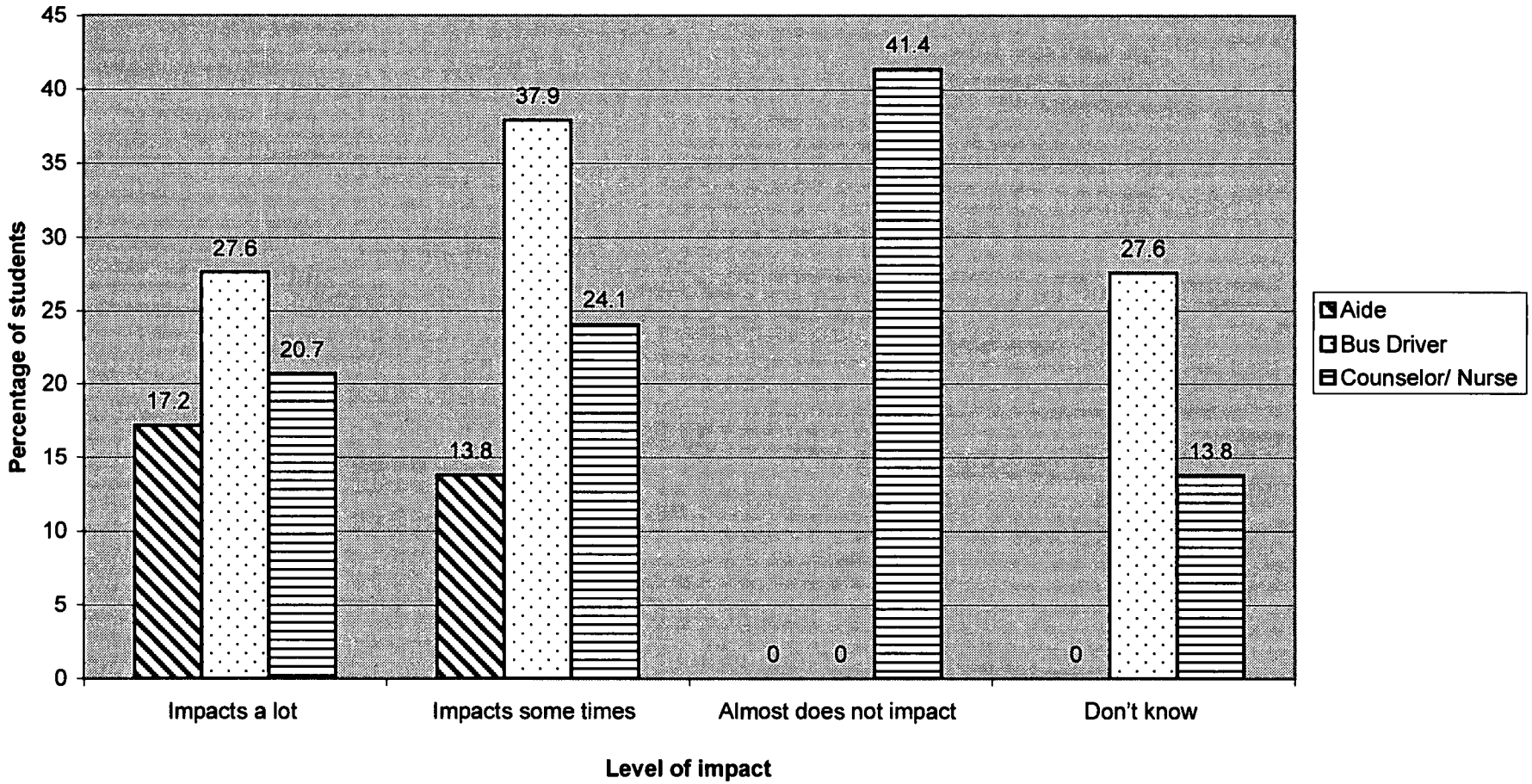
Graph 10.10: Student perception of the impact of teachers and principal on feeling of safety (N=29)



Source: Table 10.8

Graph 10.11: Student perception of the impact of aides, bus drivers, counselors/nurses on the feeling of safety (N=29)



Source: Table 10.8

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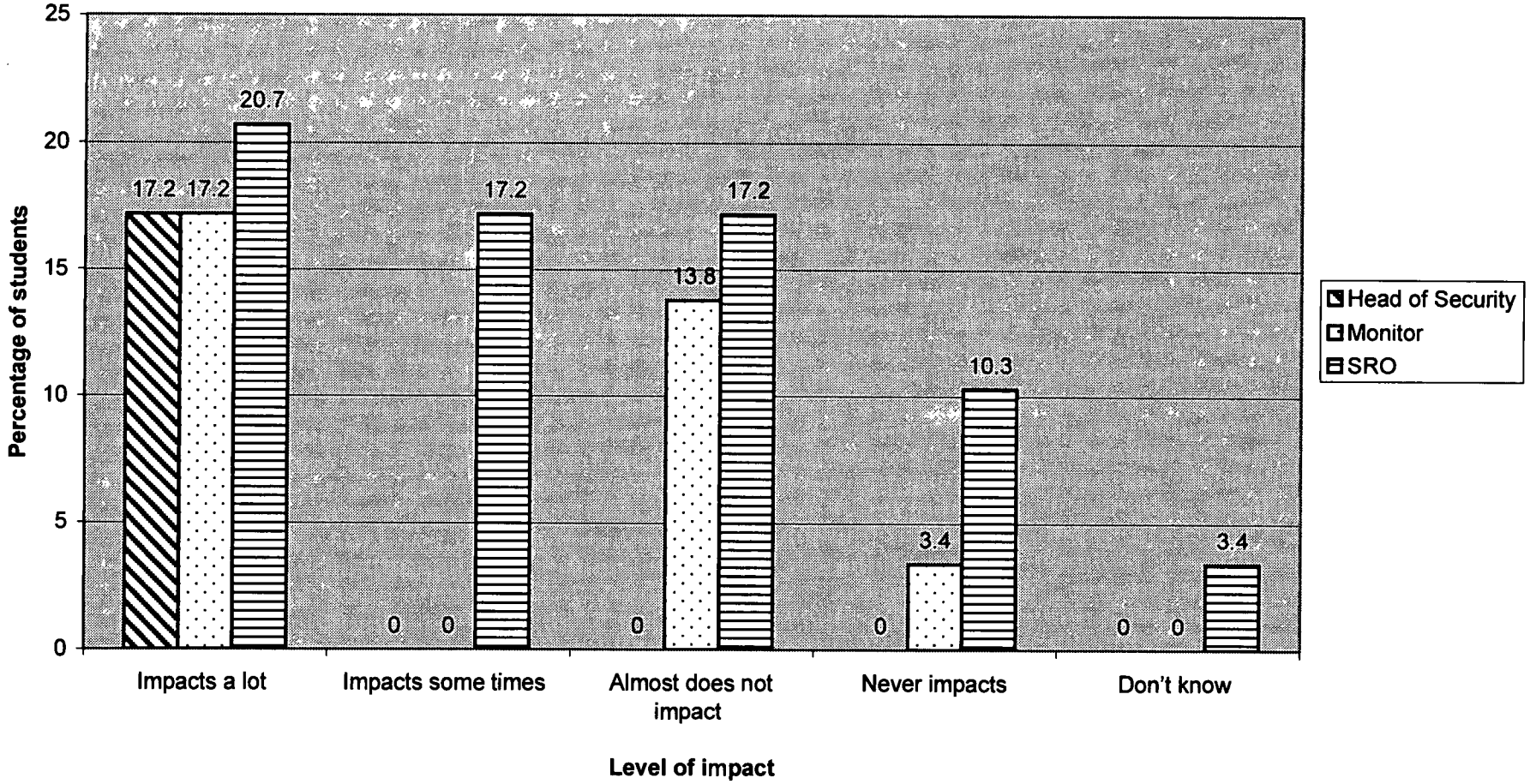
Graph 10.12: Student perception of the impact of heads of security, monitors, SROs on feeling of safety (N=29)



Source: Table 10.8

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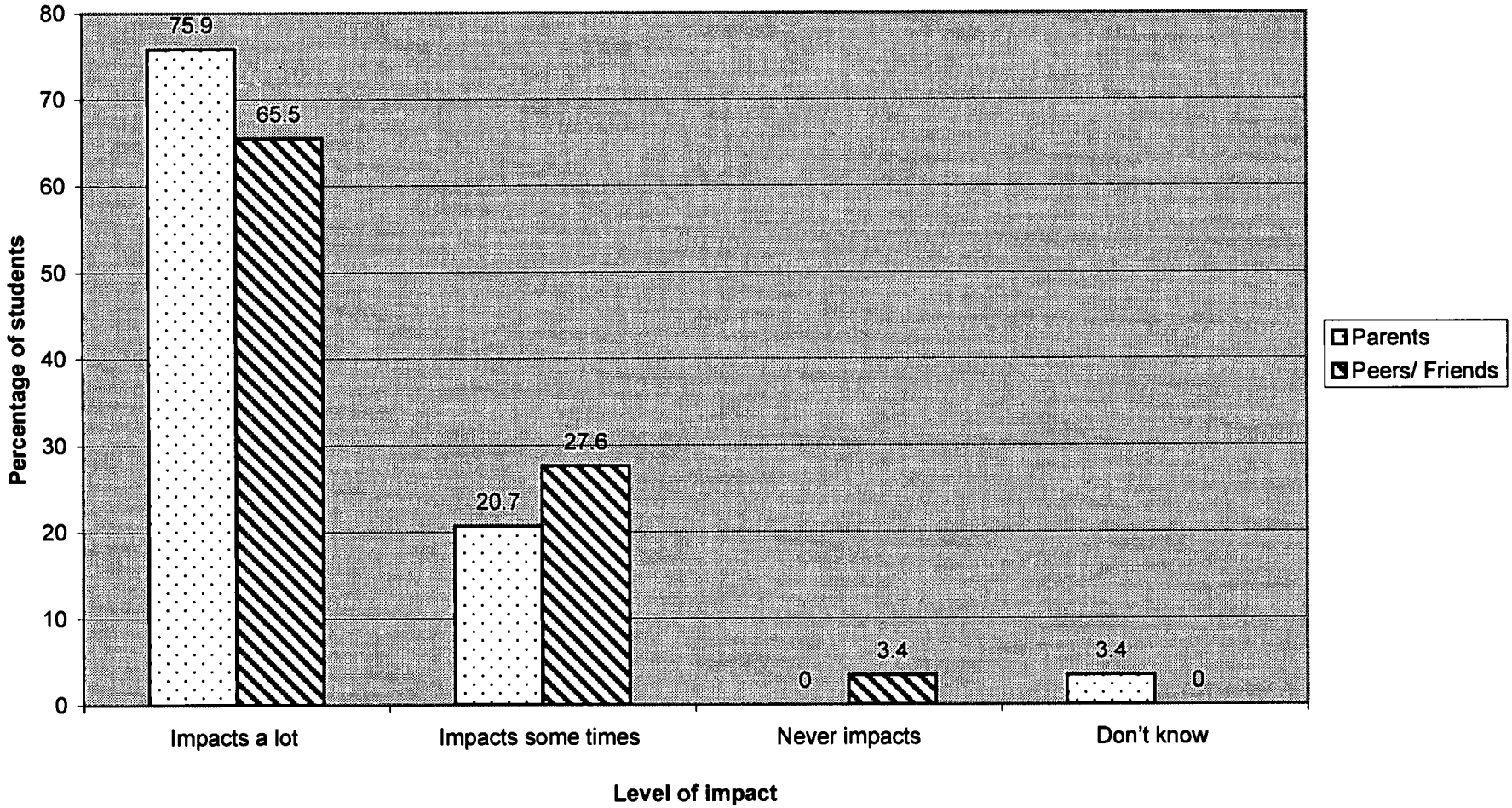
Graph 10.13: Student perception of the impact of parents and peers/friends on feeling of safety (N=29)



Source: Table 10.8

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School disorder

Key findings from participant perceptions on school disorder

Students (30 total across 6 focus groups) and their parents (30 total across 6 focus groups) were asked to discuss the disciplinary/violence problems they have in their school. Students were also asked to discuss the most common reasons for fights in school. The following key findings were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Violations	Student%	Parent%	Staff%
Name calling	100	74	94
Bullying/ teasing	100	89	94
Hate crimes	45	48	39
Intimidation	86	70	Few
Threat	79	67	Few
Harassment	90	74	Few
Fights	93	82	72
Assaults	79	67	22
Weapons	45	37	75
Drugs	86	70	81
Tobacco	55	70	81
Alcohol	52	41	81
Gangs	48	22	66
Graffiti/ vandalism	79	44	44
Theft/ robbery	86	70	9
Hazing	Few	Few	19

Student type with problem: Students with trouble at home/ academics, belonging to lower socioeconomic groups, having uninvolved parents, the louder/ aggressive students, and freshman students.

Common reasons for fights: girlfriend-boyfriend problems, rumors, name-calling, differences (race, gender/ ethnicity, etc.), mad-dogging (staring), gangs.

Implication: In general students perceive more safety issues than adults as they interact more with the school environment on a daily basis. An important policy implication from the data is that a larger percentage of participants perceived low-level crimes like name calling and bullying than violent crimes like weapons and assaults. This goes to show that schools need to address both kinds of violence in order to maintain a safe school environment. Additionally, it is important for schools to be aware of the psychosocial dynamics their students are involved with so they can be proactive where possible.

10.4. School disorder*

This section highlights the perceptions of students and parents regarding the types and amount of disorderly/ violent behaviors in the school. First, student and parent perceptions regarding school disorder will be discussed. This will include a comparison between the perceptions of students and parents and the perceptions of interviewees from Phase I of the *School Safety Study*. Next, student perceptions regarding common reasons for school disorder will be highlighted. Both subsections will conclude with a brief discussion.

Student and Parent perceptions regarding school disorder

Students and parents were asked to discuss various discipline and violence related problems in their school. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Name calling

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 100% of the students felt that name-calling was a problem in their school. One student (cell 6) commented that in their school "*it is nipped in the bud*". Another student (cell 12) shared that "*it is okay as long as friends are joking around*". Two other students stated that "*it gets annoying when it is done all the time*" and they "*try help stop it by intervening*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 74% of the parents felt that name-calling was a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (100%) than parents (74%) thought that name-calling was a problem in the school. 94% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 67-68) discussed problems with name calling, especially in the freshman year, in their school.

Bullying/ Teasing

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 100% of the students felt that bullying/ teasing was a problem in their school.

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* Students: N=29, Parents: N=27, Staff interviewees: N=64, School Safety Surveys: N=300
Tables and graphs discussed in the text are included in the end of each section.
See Appendix 4 for cell references in text.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 89% of the parents felt that bullying/ teasing was a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (100%) than parents (89%) thought that bullying and teasing were a problem in their school. 94% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 67-68) discussed problems with bullying and teasing in their school. More than 70% of the schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 21) were of the opinion that they experienced student bullying on occasion or at least once a month, and close to 9% of the schools felt that bullying was an everyday issue for them.

Hate crimes

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 45% of the students felt that hate crime was a problem in their school. Students commented that hate crimes are commonly experienced by certain students based on their sexual preferences or ethnicities. While one student (cell 12) noted that it was "*against gays and certain religions*" another student (cell 5) pointed out it was "*against Mexicans and White students*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 48% of the parents felt that hate crime was a problem in their child's school.

One parent (cell 6) commented, "*constant hate crime becomes problematic*". Two parents (cell 5) shared instances where hate crime in their child's school had been bad. One parent commented "*my White daughter gets picked on. Kids call her white trash because white is minority here. It is recognized the same as it is for the African Americans or the Native Americans*". Another parent revealed, "*there have been physical attacks due to race. I have been to the district superintendent also but the race issue at this school is not being addressed. I was kept waiting (by the district office) for long before an appointment was given. I wish they could get a new school board. It will also be nice to get monitors who are not scared to tackle situations. Kids should be able to come to school and be safe*".
On the other hand, one parent (cell 1) noted there is "*no hate crime here that is why I like this school*".

In summary, it can be noted that more parents (48%) than students (45%) thought that hate crime was a problem in their school. 39% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 57-59) discussed problems with hate crime in their school, based on race, religion, sexual preferences, and gender. Close to 95% of the schools in

Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 21) were of the opinion that they experienced racial tensions on occasion or never.

Intimidation

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 86% of the students felt that intimidation was a problem in their school. One student (cell 6) perceived about intimidation that "*kids with low self-esteem do this*" and another shared an instance where "*some kids used to pick on every body. They stopped when they were intimidated in turn. Sometimes kids drop out of school when they are intimidated*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 70% of the parents felt that intimidation was a problem in their child's school. One parent (cell 5) pointed out that there is intimidation in this school "*by students and teachers towards students and teachers*".

In summary, it can be noted that more students (86%) than parents (70%) felt that intimidation was a problem at their school. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 67-68) discussed problems with intimidation in their school.

Threat

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 79% of the students felt that threat was a problem in their school. One student (cell 12) commented that threats are "*okay as long as friends are joking around*". Another student (cell 1) revealed that in their school "*there are threats from teachers*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 67% of the parents felt that threat was a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (79%) than parents (67%) felt that threats were a problem in their school. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 67-68) discussed problems with verbal threats in their school. More schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 18) were of the opinion that they experienced threat of attack without weapons than with weapons.

Harassment

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 90% of the students felt that harassment was a problem in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 74% of the parents felt that harassment was a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (90%) than parents (74%) felt that harassment was a problem in their school. More schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) were of the opinion that they experienced sexual harassment than sexual battery other than rape and rape/ attempted rape.

Fights

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 93% of the students felt that fights were a problem in their school. Two students (cell 1) remarked that fights in their school exist both ways: "*teacher to kids and kids to teacher*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 82% of the parents felt that fights were a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (93%) than parents (82%) felt that fights were a problem in their school. 72% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 54-55) discussed problems with fights in their school. The new and violent trends in fights were discussed. The interviewees also discussed variations in fights by time of day and year, gender, and grade level.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) that in the random sample of 317 schools there are zero tolerance policies against fighting in 90% of the elementary schools, 74% of the middle schools, and 93% of the high schools.

Assaults

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 79% of the students felt that assaults were a problem in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 67% of the parents felt that assaults were a problem in their child's school. Three parents (cell 5) shared instances of assaults in their child's school. One parent commented on an assault incident where "*no action was taken as "nothing was seen". They also never discuss with parents what action will be taken. So the parents ask kids to defend them selves. But the defender gets into as much trouble as the perpetrator*". Another parent shared "*rocks were being thrown at a little girl because she was not liked and the monitor who tried to protect her also got hurt*". One other parent revealed, "*a Hispanic girl was beaten up as part of a five-dollars bet and she almost went to hospital*".

In summary, it can be noted that more students (79%) than parents (67%) felt that assaults were a problem in their school. 22% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 52-53) discussed problems with assaults in their school. The interviewees pointed out various reasons for assaults including personal and racial factors.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) that in the random sample of 317 schools there are zero tolerance policies against violence in 93% of the elementary schools, 83% of the middle schools, and 96% of the high schools. More schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) were of the opinion that they experienced physical attack or fight without weapons than with weapons.

Weapons/ Firearms

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 45% of the students felt that weapons were a problem in their school. Three students (cell 15) listed "*spikes, pocket knives, and hand knives*" as some popular weapons that are used in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 37% of the parents felt that weapons were a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (45%) than parents (37%) felt that weapons were a problem in their school. 75% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 64-67) discussed problems with weapons in their school. Knives, bullets, empty guns, explosives, and accessories were some of the weapons that they discussed in course of the interviews. The role of community in student attitudes towards weapons was also pointed out.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) that in the random sample of 317 schools there are zero tolerance policies against weapons in 96% of the elementary schools, 94% of the middle schools, and 99% of the high schools, and against firearms in 98% of the elementary schools, 96% of the middle schools, and 100% of the

high schools. More schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 19) were of the opinion that they experienced possession of knife or sharp object than possession of firearm or explosive device.

Drugs

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 86% of the students felt that drugs were a problem in their school.

One student (cell 12) stated that in their school the "*drugs of choice are Marijuana/ Pot/ Weed and Cocaine*". Another student (cell 13) added the "*drug of choice is Pot because it is cheap*". According to one other student (cell 15) "*over-the-counter Pills, and Glass (Methamphetamine) are the drugs of choice here*".

Two students (cell 13) felt that the use of drugs in their school was not problematic. While one student noted that "*drugs exist in this school but the problem is not out of control*" another student revealed, "*drugs exist but they are not really perceived a problem. Marijuana is okay. LSD/ Acid, Coke, Heroin, and Ecstasy are not okay. However, drugs are okay within limitations*".
One student (cell 13) commented "*the only reason I would ever start doing drugs will be due to peer pressure*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 70% of the parents felt that drugs were a problem in their child's school. Two parents (cell 5, 13) pointed out "*the drug of choice in this school is Marijuana and Ecstasy*". One other parent (cell 1) commented, "*just like there are anti-smoking signs all over the place there ought to be anti-drug signs also*".

> It is important to note that while students and parents mostly agreed on the drug of choice, parents often had a tendency to assume that their child was not doing drugs, which was frequently not the case when the students shared their perceptions.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (86%) than parents (70%) felt that drugs were a problem in their school. 81% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 60-61) discussed problems with drugs in their school. Marijuana, paraphernalia, LSD, cocaine, and prescription medication were some of the drugs that were discussed. Behaviors associated with substance abuse were also pointed out.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) that in the random sample of 317 schools there are zero tolerance policies against substance abuse in 97% of the elementary schools, 85% of the middle schools, and 97% of the high schools. More schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 20) were of the opinion that they experienced possession/ use of alcohol/ illegal drugs than distribution of illegal drugs.

Tobacco

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 55% of the students felt that tobacco was a problem in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 70% of the parents felt that tobacco was a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more parents (70%) than students (55%) felt that tobacco was a problem in their school. 81% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 61) discussed problems with tobacco in their school.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) that in the random sample of 317 schools there are zero tolerance policies against tobacco in 98% of the elementary schools, 80% of the middle schools, and 87% of the high schools.

Alcohol

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 52% of the students felt that alcohol was a problem in their school.

According to one student (cell 15) on occasion "*students come drunk to class*" and according to another student (cell 12) "*more kids come in drunk on Wednesday, which is a late start day*".

While one student (cell 13) felt that "*it is a release*" another felt that "*alcohol is not as bad as drugs but is still bad*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 41% of the parents felt that alcohol was a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (52%) than parents (41%) felt that alcohol was problem in their school. 81% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 61) discussed problems with alcohol in their school.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 17) that in the random sample of 317 schools there are zero tolerance policies against alcohol in 98% of the elementary schools, 84% of the middle schools, and 96% of the high schools.

Gangs

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 48% of the students felt that gangs were a problem in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 22% of the parents felt that gangs were a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (48%) than parents (22%) felt that gangs were a problem in their school. 66% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 55-57) discussed problems with gangs in their school. Some of the issues noted with respect to gangs were intimidation, harassment, discipline, attire and accessories. Variations based on gender, age and ethnicity were also pointed out. More than 96% of the schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 21) were of the opinion that they experienced undesirable gang activities or cult/ extremist group activities on occasion or never.

Graffiti/ Vandalism

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 79% of the students felt that graffiti and vandalism were a problem in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 44% of the parents felt that graffiti and vandalism were a problem in their child's school. One parent (cell 5) commented, "*the floors and restroom are very dirty. Three years ago it was so bad we wanted to home school*" our child.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (79%) than parents (44%) felt that graffiti and vandalism were a problem in their school. 44% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 63-64) discussed problems with graffiti and vandalism in their school. Some schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (page 20) were of the opinion that they experienced vandalism.

Theft/ Robbery

Student perceptions

Table 10.11 and graph 10.14 illustrate that 86% of the students felt that theft and robbery were a problem in their school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.12 and graph 10.15 illustrate that 70% of the parents felt that theft and robbery were a problem in their child's school.

In summary, it can be noted that more students (86%) than parents (70%) felt that theft and robbery were a problem in their school. 9% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 62-63) discussed problems with theft in their school. Thefts and attitudes towards thefts, break-ins, and computer hacking were some of the issues that were pointed out. More schools in Phase II of the *School Safety Study* (pages 18 and 19) were of the opinion that they experienced theft/ larceny, followed by robbery without weapons and robbery with weapons.

Miscellaneous problems

Parent perceptions

One parent (cell 1) noted, "*exclusion is the worst problem faced by some kids*". Another parent (cell 6) revealed "*sexual misdemeanor is present at the school*".

Three parents (cell 15) discussed hazing in their child's school. One parent discussed the "*staff was not aware of the hazing problem. It tore this little town apart as people took sides. Now there are separate buses for boys and girls, and also separate areas within buses for boys and girls. There are new rules. The staff walks around and there is some one sitting on the back, middle, and front of the bus*". Another parent observed, "*no body thought that hazing would ever happen in this school. Now people are getting healed and people are talking again*". One other parent pointed out "*the hazing woke up every body. Kids realized there is a price to pay for it. You end up in jail*".

In summary, it can be noted that just like the parents 19% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 59-60) discussed problems with hazing in their school. Freshman hazing and sexual assault were some of the major issues that were touched upon.

Perceptions of school disorder by participant characteristics

Table 10.13 illustrates that a higher percentage of students with safety concerns are from high school, more than fourteen years of age, and female. Although, there is a good mix of ethnicity, a slightly higher representation exists from the minority students.

Table 10.14 illustrates that a higher percentage of parents with safety concerns are the relatively older parents (44-54 years of age), married, the fathers, and have relatively higher levels of education. Although there is a good mix of ethnicity and employment type, there is a higher representation from minorities and the unemployed parents. A higher representation from older married fathers and fathers with higher education could be either because they have the awareness to have safety concerns, or because they chose to partake in the discussion and share their perceptions.

School action

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked if their school/ staff took any action when they became aware of a problem in the classroom/ school.

Student perceptions

According to one student (cell 6) "*if the problems are filed then action is taken*". One student (cell 1) stated that "*action is taken and students are suspended for theft, assault and fighting*" and two another students (cells 12, 13) added that "*action is taken against drugs, alcohol, and fights*".
Some students discussed the kind of students against whom action was taken. While one student (cell 15) felt that "*action is taken selectively only against certain people, depending on who you are*" another student pointed out that "*every body is disciplined some times instead of certain people who require it*".

On the other hand, one student (cell 1) pointed out that "*no action is taken for name calling and teasing*" and another student (cell 12) added, "*no actions are taken against hate crimes and harassment*". According to one other student (cell 13) "*no action is taken because the school does not find out about many things*". Finally, one student (cell 5) mentioned that their school just "*does not do enough*".

Parent perceptions

Parents were asked to elaborate the actions that their child's school takes to tackle school disorder. According to one parent (cell 1) "*every time there is a problem in the school they talk to all the kids*" and update them.

In summary, it can be noted that while some students feel that school/ staff take action if they become aware of any form of school disorder, other students feel that whether or not action is taken depends on the problem and who the student/ teacher is.

Student type

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked what kinds of students got involved more frequently in fights or discipline related issues.

Student perceptions

One student (cell 1) was of the opinion they are "*usually students who do not do well academically*" and another student (cell 6) added that these students have "*problems at home and not doing well at home*". According to one other student (cell 1) sometimes certain students do "*not get enough respect from teachers because of old reputation*".

Four students (cells 12, 5) commented that these students usually are *male, louder/ aggressive students, or are gang members, the popular kids, or skaters.*

Parent perceptions

One parent (cell 6) shared it was more frequently "*kids from certain socioeconomic groups and kids of poor parenting*" and another parent perceived "*Hispanic kids, kids with poor academic performance, and kids with low parental involvement*" as ones who got into fights.

In summary, it can be noted that in the perception of students those students who get into trouble are usually the ones who have problems at home or in academics, are usually the male students and the louder/ aggressive/ gang-affiliated students. On the other hand parents perceive such students as belonging to the lower socioeconomic groups, certain ethnicities, or those who have lower parental involvement.
According to staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 69-71) students who get into trouble more than others are usually students who are freshman and poor achievers.

Change over time

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked if they had noticed any change in discipline/ violence in their school.

Student perceptions

Students were asked to comment on any changes they observed with regard to disorderly behaviors in their school and the two most common responses were that problems often go away when certain students graduate/ leave the school, and also when there is more control in the school.

Parent perceptions

One parent (cell 6) felt "*the problems have reduced because some kids moved out, especially those with gang affiliations*". Another parent (cell 13) revealed "*this school has become safer over time. The school has taken the perception that this school is unsafe seriously, and action has been taken. The gangs have reduced*". One other parent (cell 15) commented, "*there have been improvements—fights have reduced, as has name-*

calling. The workshops on bullying and DARE have been useful". *Graffiti and vandalism* were seen as are *coming down* by some parents (cell 5).
Proactive teachers (cell 6), *anti-bullying campaigns* (cell 6), and a *new administration* (cell 5, 12) were some of the other factors that were seen as causes for reducing fights and other disorders in the school.

> It is interesting to note (Table 10.12) that many parents were not fully aware of *all* the problems that existed in their child's school. This could be because they don't get to spend as much time at school as their child, or because their child might choose not to discuss all incidents at school with them, or because they might not be spending enough time with their child discussing various aspects of their school day.

Discussion

In general students perceived more safety issues and school disorders than adults. This could be because they interact more with their peers and the school environment on a daily basis. Also, a larger percentage of participants perceived low-level crimes like name calling and bullying than violent crimes like weapons and assaults. An important policy implication from these perceptions is that schools need to address both kinds of violence in order to maintain a safe school environment. This is because it is the low level crimes that often escalate into more serious crimes if left unchecked. Additionally, it is important for schools to be aware of the psychosocial dynamics their students are involved with so they can be proactive where possible.

Perceptions regarding common reasons for school disorder

Students were asked to discuss what they perceived as the most common reasons for fights in their school. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Student perceptions

Two students (cell 1, 13) felt that the most common reason for fights was when "*somebody talks to another's girl friend*" or "*steals another students boyfriend*".

A few students (cell 1, 5, 13) stated the most common reasons as "*rumors/ hearsay/ jealousy*" and because "*students talk about each other*" or just "*talk crap*". According to some students (cells 1, 12, 15) "*some students just want to fight*" for "*no apparent reason*" or a "*stupid reason*" at best.

According to two students (cell 5, 6) "*harassment and name calling*" were common reasons along with "*different student groups, especially preppies who don't even know each other*". Another student added "*clothes, who wears what, who they are, any kind of classification, including race*" as being some of the common reasons for fights.

One student (cell 6) noted, "*guys start more fights than girls*". *Disagreements* (cell 15), *people trying to show they are hard core* (cell 12), *people judging without full facts* (cell 13), *people not liking each other* (cell 5) were some of the other reasons that started fights according to students.

In summary, it can be noted that students perceived various reasons that cause fights most frequently in their school. Girlfriend-boyfriend problems, the language used by students, and differences between students were discussed amongst other reasons.
42% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 72-74) discussed various reasons that cause fights in the school. Girlfriend-boyfriend problems, gossip, inappropriate use of language, mad-dogging, gangs, and an extension of family conflicts to the school were some of the causes as perceived by the interviewees.

Discussion

It is essential for schools to pay attention to what causes fights and problems between students and control those factors as far as possible. Training and counseling students to use appropriate verbal and body language can go a long way towards preventing low-level, and eventually violent, crimes.

This concludes this section on school disorders as perceived by the participants. The following section discusses student and parent perceptions pertaining to the policies, programs, and practices for school discipline.

Table 10.11.—Number of students who perceive the following safety concerns at their school: January 2002.

Safety related concerns at school	Total	Percent
Name calling	29	100
Bullying/ Teasing	29	100
Hate crime	13	45
Intimidation	25	86
Threat	23	79
Harassment	26	90
Fights	27	93
Assault	23	79
Weapons/ Firearms	13	45
Drugs	25	86
Tobacco	16	55
Alcohol	15	52
Gangs	14	48
Graffiti/ Vandalism	23	79
Theft/ Robbery	25	86

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

Table 10.12.—Number of parents who perceive the following problems at their child's school: January 2002.

Safety related concerns at school	Total (%)	# parents who don't know if problem exists (%)
Name calling	20 (74)	--
Bullying/ Teasing	24 (89)	--
Hate crime	13 (48)	5 (19)
Intimidation	19 (70)	1 (4)
Threat	18 (67)	1 (4)
Harassment	20 (74)	1 (4)
Fights	22 (82)	1 (4)
Assault	18 (67)	--
Weapons/ Firearms	10 (37)	9 (33)
Drugs	19 (70)	2 (7)
Tobacco	19 (70)	5 (19)
Alcohol	11 (41)	7 (26)
Gangs	6 (22)	13 (48)
Graffiti/ Vandalism	12 (44)	2 (7)
Theft/ Robbery	19 (70)	4 (15)

Note: A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).

Table 10.13. Student perceptions on school violations by student characteristics, 2002 (%)

	Name-calling	Bullying/ teasing	Hate crimes	Intimidation	Threats	Harassment	Fights	Assaults	Weapons/ Firearms	Drugs	Tobacco	Alcohol	Gangs	Graffiti/ Vandalism	Theft/ Robbery
Grade															
9-12	100.0	100.0	33.3	100.0	86.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	53.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	60.0	86.7	93.3
6-8	100.0	100.0	61.5	76.9	76.9	84.6	84.6	61.5	30.8	76.9	7.7	--	38.5	76.9	76.9
1-5	100.0	100.0	--	--	--	--	100.0	--	100.0	--	--	--	--	--	100.0
Age															
>=14	100.0	100.0	37.5	100.0	87.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	100.0	93.8	93.8	62.5	87.5	93.8
11-13	100.0	100.0	58.3	75.0	75.0	83.3	83.3	58.3	33.3	75.0	8.3	--	33.3	75.0	75.0
<=10	100.0	100.0	--	--	--	--	100.0	--	100.0	--	--	--	--	--	100.0
Gender															
Male	100.0	100.0	37.5	81.3	68.8	87.5	93.8	75.0	50.0	81.3	56.3	50.0	43.8	81.3	81.3
Female	100.0	100.0	53.8	92.3	92.3	92.3	92.3	84.6	38.5	92.3	53.8	53.8	53.8	76.9	92.3
Ethnicity															
White	100.0	100.0	64.3	100.0	92.9	92.9	100.0	78.6	42.9	92.9	64.3	57.1	50.0	92.9	85.7
Hispanic	100.0	100.0	33.3	55.6	44.4	77.8	77.8	77.8	66.7	66.7	33.3	33.3	33.3	55.6	100.0
Native American	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	33.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	100.0	66.7
African American	100.0	100.0	50.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	50.0	50.0	100.0	50.0	100.0
Asian	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	--	--	100.0	--	--	--	100.0	--

Note: N=29

Table 10.14. Parent perceptions on school violations by parent characteristics, 2002 (%)

	Name-calling	Bullying/ teasing	Hate crimes	Intimidation	Threats	Harassment	Fights	Assaults	Weapons/ Firearms	Drugs	Tobacco	Alcohol	Gangs	Graffiti/ Vandalism	Theft/ Robbery
Age															
45-54	85.7	85.7	57.1	71.4	71.4	71.4	71.4	71.4	57.1	71.4	85.7	71.4	--	42.9	57.1
35-44	75.0	87.5	50.0	68.8	68.8	75.0	81.3	68.8	37.5	75.0	62.5	37.5	25.0	43.8	68.8
25-34	50.0	100.0	25.0	75.0	50.0	75.0	100.0	50.0	--	50.0	75.0	--	50.0	50.0	100.0
Gender															
Father	80.0	80.0	60.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	80.0	100.0	80.0	60.0	40.0	80.0	80.0
Mother	72.7	90.9	45.5	63.6	59.1	68.2	77.3	59.1	27.3	63.6	68.2	36.4	18.2	36.4	68.2
Ethnicity															
White	80.0	93.3	46.7	73.3	73.3	73.3	80.0	73.3	33.3	80.0	66.7	46.7	13.3	53.3	66.7
Hispanic	71.4	100.0	42.9	71.4	71.4	85.7	100.0	71.4	42.9	71.4	85.7	42.9	28.6	42.9	100.0
Native American	50.0	50.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	--	--	--	--
African American	50.0	50.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	100.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Asian	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	--	--	--	100.0	--	100.0
Employment															
Teacher/ school administrator	69.2	92.3	46.2	53.8	46.2	53.8	69.2	46.2	30.8	53.8	53.8	15.4	23.1	38.5	61.5
Non-school administrator	66.7	66.7	66.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	100.0	66.7	66.7	33.3	100.0	33.3
Manager/ health services	100.0	100.0	40.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	40.0	100.0	100.0	80.0	20.0	20.0	100.0
Food services	33.3	66.7	--	33.3	33.3	66.7	66.7	33.3	33.3	33.3	66.7	33.3	--	33.3	66.7
Unemployed	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	33.3	100.0	100.0	66.7	33.3	66.7	100.0
Education															
Higher degree	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	100.0	100.0
Bachelor degree	80.0	90.0	70.0	80.0	70.0	80.0	80.0	70.0	50.0	70.0	70.0	50.0	20.0	40.0	70.0
Other post-school qualification	77.8	88.9	33.3	66.7	66.7	66.7	77.8	66.7	22.2	66.7	77.8	44.4	11.1	44.4	66.7
High school qualification	60.0	80.0	40.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	80.0	60.0	20.0	80.0	60.0	20.0	40.0	40.0	60.0
Less than HS	--	100.0	--	--	--	100.0	100.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	100.0
Marital status															
Married	81.8	90.9	54.5	77.3	72.7	77.3	81.8	72.7	40.9	77.3	68.2	45.5	22.7	50.0	68.2
Single/ unmarried	40.0	80.0	20.0	40.0	40.0	60.0	80.0	40.0	20.0	40.0	80.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	80.0

Note: N=27

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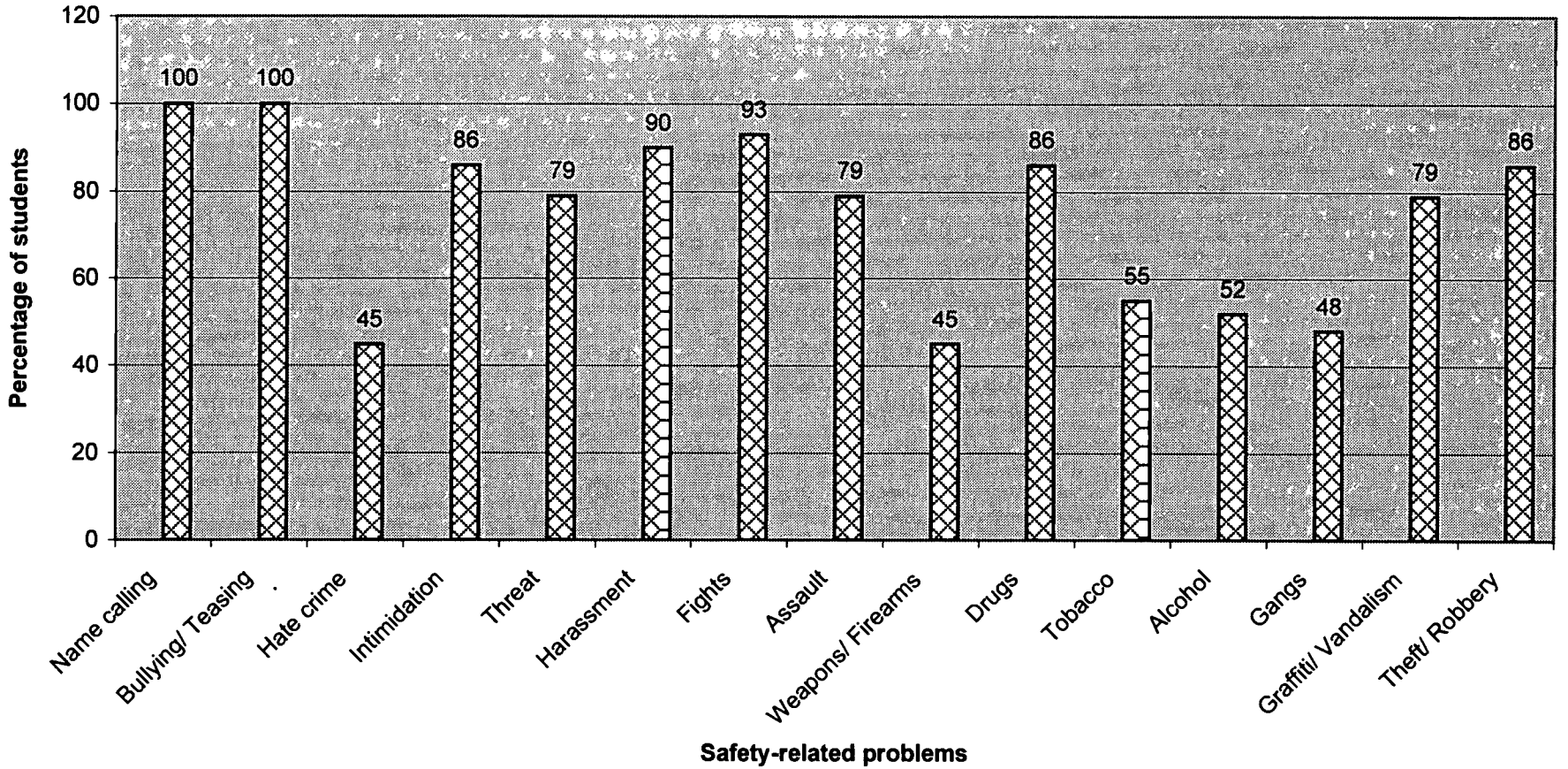
Graph 10.14: Student perception regarding safety-related problems in the school (N=29)



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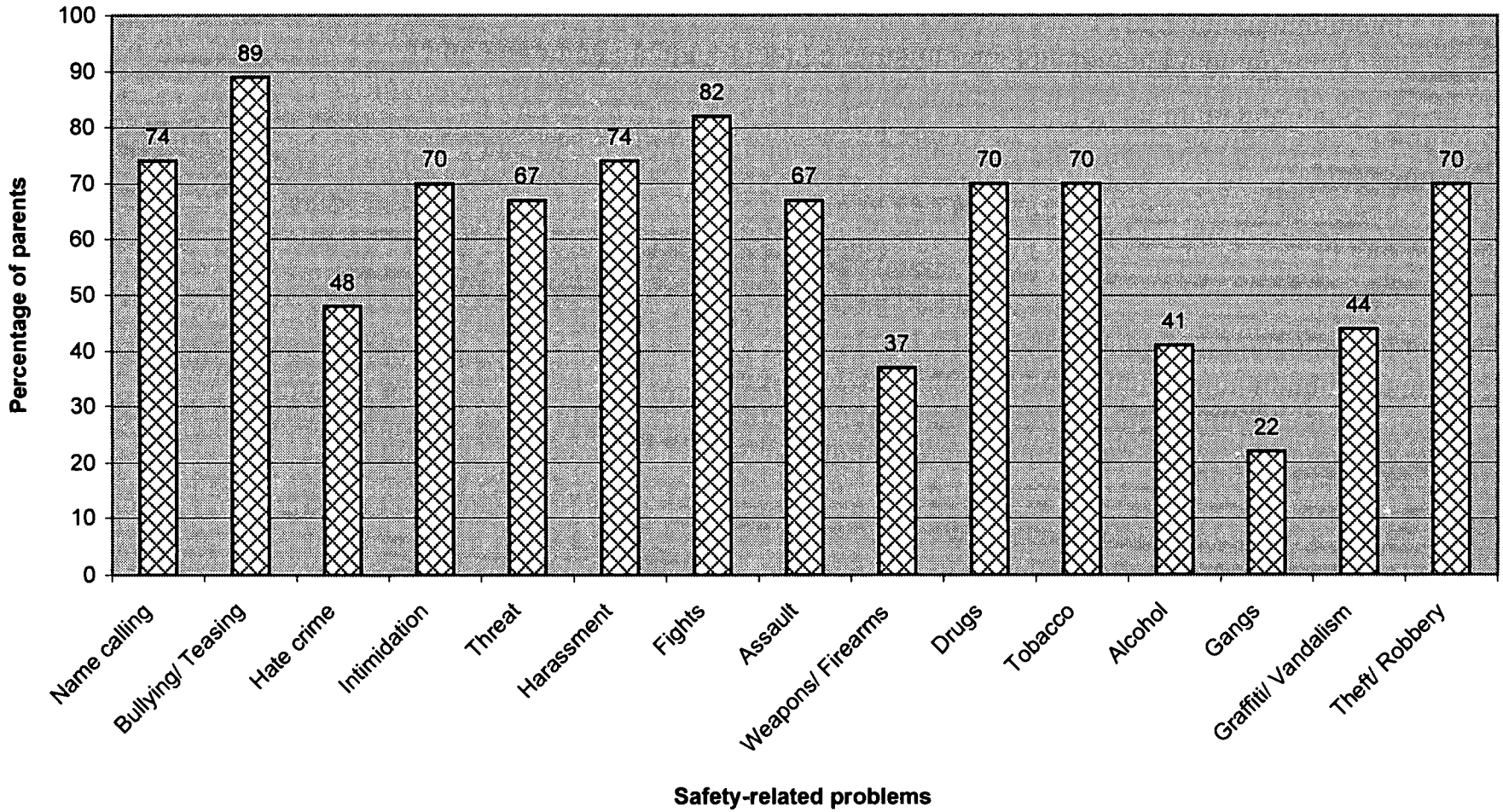
Source: Table 10.11

Graph 10.15: Parental perception regarding safety-related problems in their child's school (N=27)



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Source: Table 10.12

Policies/programs and practices

Key findings from participant perceptions on discipline related Policies and practices

Students (30 total across 6 focus groups) and their parents (30 total across 6 focus groups) were asked to discuss policies and practices pertaining to safety in their school; how the staff handles problems pertaining to school discipline (including disorder/ violence); prevention mechanisms in place in their school against disorder and violence; and what makes their school a safe or unsafe environment for the students. The following key findings were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Perceptions	Student%	Parent%	Staff%
Everybody knows the rules	100	100	96
Everybody respects the rules	0	33	No
The rules are fair	76	100	--
The rules are consistent	35	63	20
Some students break rules more frequently than others	97	89	45
Easy to break rules and get away	55	30	28
Staff takes action when there is a problem	100	70-82	Not always
Students know what to expect when in trouble	83-100	63	--
Staff does not always know about problems (there is a code of silence)	97	89	Code of silence

Some common suggestions for training: Anger management, conflict resolution, empathy, peer mediation, crisis management, and substance abuse.

Implication: While most participants agreed that disciplinary rules are periodically made known to students they also added that students do not necessarily follow them and that the rules are seldom implemented consistently. Hence, training staff to be consistent with discipline is imperative from a policy standpoint. It is also important for staff to understand the benefits of being sensitive to student confessions/ information in order to correct student code of silence and promote communication from them regarding safety issues.

10.5. Policies, programs, and practices regarding school discipline*

First, this section highlights the perceptions of students and parents regarding the policies and practices pertaining to school safety. Second, a discussion follows on how the staff handles problems pertaining to school discipline (including disorder/ violence). Third, comments are gathered on student and parent perceptions pertaining to prevention mechanisms in place in their school against disorder and violence. Finally, students and parents are asked to comment on what in their opinion makes their school a safe or unsafe environment for the students. Each of these sub-sections includes a comparison between the perceptions of students and parents and the perceptions of interviewees from Phase I of the *School Safety Study*. All four subsections conclude with a brief discussion.

Student and Parent perceptions regarding policies/ practices on school discipline

Students and parents were asked to comment on policies and procedures pertaining to school discipline (including disorder/ violence) and how they felt these policies were being implemented in the school. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Knowledge of policies and practices

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 100% of the students were aware of school policies pertaining to discipline, disorder, and violence in the school.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 100% of the parents were aware of school policies pertaining to disorder and violence in the school. According to one parent (cell 1) parents are aware of the rules pertaining to discipline because "*students are provided with handbooks and they are required to have it at all times*".

In summary, it can be noted that 100% of the students and parents were aware of all the safety related policies, practices, and procedures in their school. It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 13) that from the random sample of 317 schools more than 96% of the schools provide a printed code of student conduct to students and parents.

* Students: N=29, Parents: N=27, Staff interviewees: N=64, School Safety Surveys: N=300
Tables and graphs discussed in the text are included in the end of each section.
See Appendix 4 for cell references in text.

Respect for policies and practices

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked whether *all* students respected the policies and practices pertaining to school disorder and violence.

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that none of the students felt that *all* the students respected the rules.

According to one student (cell 1) "*not all students respect the rules*" and according to another he respects the rules only if "*he likes the teacher*". Two other students (cell 12) discussed how respecting the policies depends on the teacher. While one pointed out it "*depends on teachers, some are laid back*" another noted the "*rules are unclear as different teachers use different rules*". One other student (cell 15) shared "*while some teachers are strict you can hide from others*".

Some instances of broken rules as shared by the students were "*no body wears IDs*" (cell 13), the "*dress code is not followed*" (cell 15), and there are incidents pertaining to "*ditching, racial slurs, yelling, not respecting monitors, walking in the hallways, running and pushing*" (cell 5).

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 33% of the parents felt that all the students respected the rules.

One parent (cell 1) commented, "*some rules don't fit all students. Students end up being punished for somebody else's wrong doing*". Another parent (cell 12) added, "*there is inconsistency in enforcing rules between teachers*".

According to one parent (cell 13) "*rules are not respected when it comes to minor things*". Some examples of broken rules were discussed. According to four parents "*the dress code is broken often/ not enforced*" (cells 5, 12, 13, 15) and according to another parent (cell 15) "*teachers can also dress inappropriately at times. It goes both ways*". Other parents added, "*name-calling exists*", "*there are frequent fights between classes*" (cell 5), and "*kids leave the campus though they should not*" (cell 12).

In summary, it can be noted that more parents (33%) than students (0%) thought that *all* students respected safety related rules in their school. There was consensus between some students and parents that dress code was broken frequently and also that action varied by teachers. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 92, 94) discussed problems with sign-out policies, dress codes, and a lack of consistency from staff in their school.

Fairness of rules

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 76% of the students felt that policies pertaining to disorder and violence were fair. Yet, several students discussed the rules they considered unfair.

While one student (cell 1) complained, "*the rules are not fair*" another added "*teachers should think about students and not always get them in trouble*".

Some students commented on some of the rules that are not appropriate/ necessary and that are broken consistently. One student (cell 6) observed, "*some rules are outrageous like the no candy rule that is broken all the time*". Another student (cell 13) noted, "*some rules like the dress code are weird*". Two students added, "*girls can't wear spaghetti-straps and boys can't wear muscle shirts and students can watch only G rated movies in school*".

One student (cell 5) remarked, "*there are only 2-3 passes a day for the restrooms*". One other student (cell 12) pointed out "*the absenteeism rules are not fair and consistent. The absenteeism rules have problems because students loose days even if they are sick or if there is a death in the family. Another problematic rule is that we can't go out for lunch. This is hard because the lunch here is not good and they run out of food, we have less time to eat by the time it is our turn, and there are no microwaves to heat our own food*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 100% of the parents felt that policies pertaining to disorder and violence were fair. However, some unfair rules were also discussed and they are as follows.

One parent (cell 5) commented, "*the rules are fair to a degree. The dress code is inconsistent. Depends on the kid, some kids are favored. Rules must be applied across the board. Also, rules pertaining to substitutes need to be looked at. My sixth grade daughter's substitute was eyeing her up and down. He should not be allowed to sub at any school*".
Another parent (cell 5) added, "*the rules are fair if they are followed. When teacher behavior is inappropriate you never hear of any disciplinary action. But they say they are "dealing" with it. The staff yell and are rude and don't make kids feel emotionally safe*".

One other parent (cell 5) revealed, "*my daughter's teacher commented on a girl's nice lips and told her she should be a dancer. Such inappropriate comments are very wrong. The employee behavior here is bad while they work around kids. This is the worst administration of any school I have ever been involved with. This school will go to hell if the vice principal leaves*".

In summary, it can be noted that more parents (100%) than students (76%) thought that the policies pertaining to school discipline are fair in their school. Some students thought some rules were unfair, like rules on absenteeism, and other students felt "outrageous" rules like the dress code are broken frequently. On the other hand parents felt the rules are mostly fair as long as they are followed, are consistent, and are applied equally to the students and staff alike.

Consistency of rules

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 35% of the students felt that the policies were being enforced consistently.

One student (cell 1) was of the opinion that "*the rules are different for the girls*". Two other students (cell 5) shared that "*teachers ignore the bad students and behave differently with the good students*".

While one student (cell 13) pointed out "*different teachers have different opinions and handle students differently*" another student (cell 15) added, "*some teachers enforce consistently but the others don't. So some students get punished*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 63% of the parents felt that the policies were being enforced consistently. Two parents (cell 13) observed that it "*depends on who the kid is*" and it "*depends on whether the offense is a repeat offense*".

In summary, it can be noted that more parents (63%) than students (35%) felt that policies pertaining to discipline were being enforced consistently in their school. Both students and parents agreed that consistency of rules depended on which student or teacher was involved in the situation. Almost 20% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 94-95) discussed problems pertaining to consistency and uniformity in their school.

Breaking of rules

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 97% of the students felt that some students break the rules more frequently than others. One student (cell 12) perceived "*special education kids and kids with anger management issues*" break rules more often than other students.

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 89% of the parents felt that some students break the rules more frequently than others. One parent felt that the rules were broken more by "*kids with uninvolved parents*".

In summary, it can be noted that more students (97%) than parents (89%) felt that some students broke the rules more than others with regard to discipline policies. While some students felt rules were broken more by the special education students, some parents felt it was students with uninvolved parents who committed more violations. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 88-89, 48-50) discussed problems with breaking of rules in their school by special education students (30%) and students with a lack of parental involvement (45%).

Ease of rules-breaking

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 55% of the students felt that it is easy for students to get away once they have broken a rule.

Students felt it was "*sometimes easy to get away*" breaking rules (cell 1) "*if you know how*" (cell 5). Also, "*the sneaky ones can break the rules*" and get away (cell 6). One other student (cell 15) added "*it depends on who catches you or if you get caught at all*".

One student (cell 6) commented that "*teachers walk around and keep an eye*" and another student (cell 1) added "*the teachers concentrate their attention on some students all the time and get them into trouble*". One other student observed, "*some teachers are more strict than others. Some are cool and some enforce rules even if you are tardy*".

According to one student (cell 13) it all "*depends on the rule. Fights are more difficult to break than cussing*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 30% of the parents felt that it is easy for students to get away once they have broken a rule.

Two parents shared instances where rules are broken most. One parent (cell 6) pointed, "*it goes to the dress code. It is not being used uniformly. Some teachers follow it and others don't*" and another parent (cell 12) noted, "*kids have alcohol and don't get caught*". On the other hand one parent observed (cell 12) "*when rules are broken action is taken. But it should be made harder to break rules*".

In summary, it can be noted that more students (55%) than parents (30%) felt that it was easy for students to break rules pertaining to discipline policies in their school. While

students felt it was easy to get away depending on who the student or teacher was, and also depending on the incident, parents felt that it should be made harder to break rules and get away. 28% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 80-81) discussed the benefits of teacher and staff awareness and training in reducing discipline and violence related problems in their school.

Discussion

While most participants agreed that disciplinary rules are periodically made known to students, they also added that students do not necessarily follow them and that the rules are seldom implemented consistently. Hence, training staff to be consistent with discipline is imperative from a policy standpoint.

Student and Parent perceptions regarding staff reaction to disciplinary issues

Students and parents were asked to comment on how various school staff react to school disorder/ violence and whether or not they take action once they become aware of a problem. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Staff response to violations

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 45% of the students felt that the *school* takes action when there is a need, 100% of the students felt that *teachers* take action when there is a need, and 100% of the students felt that *principal/ school staff* take action when there is a need.

Three students (cell 13) perceived that "*action is taken if the teacher sees the incident*". On the other hand three other students felt that it "*depends on the staff member or teacher*" because "*some teachers just ignore*" the kid or the problem. One other student (cell 5) noted it all "*depends on who you are*". With regard to the principal one student (cell 15) stated, "*for big stuff now action is taken because of the hazing incident. They don't want a repeat*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 82% of the parents felt that the *school* takes action when there is a need and 70% of the parents felt that *teachers* take action when there is a need.

One parent (cell 1) observed with respect to teachers "*the majority are good but some brush off the problems*" and another added, "*some teachers ignore the problems*". One other parent (cell 13) noted it all "*depends on the teacher, the severity of the problem, and the time of the day*". On the other hand one parent (cell 1) discussed how some times the staff cannot take any action because the students don't share any information with them. "*Kids don't trust some of their teachers enough to share their problems*".

In summary, it can be noted that more students (100%) than parents (70%) felt that the teachers/ principal take action when they see a discipline related problem in their school, and more parents (82%) than students (45%) felt that the school as a whole takes action when it becomes aware of a discipline related problem. Both students and parents agreed that the student and teacher involved and the incident determine whether or not action is taken. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 79, 94) discussed the need for student trust in teachers and a need for teachers to attend to incidents when they become aware of the same.

Student awareness of staff response

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 100% of the students know what to expect from the *teachers* when something goes wrong or when there is a disorder or violation, and 83% of the students felt that they know what to expect from the *principal/ school staff* when something goes wrong.

While three students (cells 1, 12, 15) felt it "*depends on the teacher*" because "*different teachers are different*" two students shared it "*depends on the student*" or "*depends on what the person does*".

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 63% of the parents felt their child knows what to expect from the *teacher/ staff* when something goes wrong.

One parent (cell 5) pointed out that "*the rules here are unjust, and students are falsely accused*" and another added, "*the staff behavior is inconsistent*" because of which the students do not know what to expect when some thing does go wrong.

In summary, it can be noted that more students than parents felt the students were aware of what to expect from the school staff when something goes wrong. While 100% of the students felt the students were aware of teacher reaction, 83% of the students felt the students were aware of principal/ staff reaction, and 63% of the parents felt the students were aware of teacher/ staff reaction. While students felt that student awareness was determined by who the student or teacher was, parents added that inconsistency in staff reaction makes it less predictable for the students.

Staff awareness of violations

Student perceptions

Table 10.6 illustrates that 97% of the students felt that there are incidents that the teachers and staff do not get to know about.

Students discussed various types of incidents that are not reported to the school staff. Some of the common incidents are *fights* (cell 1), *selling drugs, touching/ fondling, flashing, and sexual misconducts* (cell 12), *drugs* (cell 15), and *picking on kids* (cell 5).

Parent perceptions

Table 10.7 illustrates that 89% of the parents felt that there are incidents in their child's school that the teachers and staff do not get to know about.

Four parents (cell 6) discussed various incidents that might not get reported to school staff. Some of the incidents discussed were *hitting and pushing, teasing, name-calling, bullying, sexual misconducts, and theft.*

In summary, it can be noted that more students (97%) than parents (89%) felt that there are incidents in their school that the teachers/ staff are not aware of. While students felt that incidents related to substance abuse and sexual misconducts went unreported, parents added name-calling, bullying, teasing, and fights to the list.

Reasons for lack of staff awareness

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to comment on reasons why the teachers and school staff might not be informed/ aware of all the disorders and problems that occur in the school.

Student perceptions

When students were asked to discuss why they did not report the incidents they listed various reasons such as they "*don't want to tell on students and get them into trouble*" (cell 1), "*students just don't want to report sometimes*" (cell 1), or because "*the teachers and counselors do not make it comfortable for students to discuss their problems*" (cell 13).

Parent perceptions

One parent (cell 1) commented "*these kids are at an age where they don't want to tell on people, even to their own parents*". Also, according to another parent (cell 6) sometimes "*kids have a great self-esteem and do not feel the need to report*".

According to two parents (cell 6) kids don't report incidents because they "*feel they were just playing around*" or because they "*see the problem as normal and feel it is not worth reporting; also, the process of reporting is time consuming*". One other parent (cell 6) noted that kids "*will not report unless the problem escalates*".

One parent (cell 1) observed, "*teachers are busy and kids don't want to approach them*" and another (cell 12) added that in any case "*kids feel no action will be taken*".

While one parent (cell 6) was of the opinion that students "*will not report due to peer pressure and also, because does not want to tell on peers*" another (cell 12) agreed, "*kids don't want to squeal on some body. They don't want to be the ones to perpetuate that*".

In summary, while students felt that other students did not report incidents because of peer pressure or because they did not want to seem like a nark, parents added that students don't report incidents because they are at that age when they don't like to discuss these things, or they like to report only serious offenses, or because they feel their teachers are too busy and will not take action. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 69) discussed reasons pertaining to the code of silence adopted by students in their school. They felt it was because the students did not want to seem as narks or because they did not feel that the staff is accessible to them.

Discussion

Participants agreed that staff takes action when they become aware of safety problems at school, albeit the type and extent of action could vary depending on the teacher or student in the situation. This calls for consistency from a policy standpoint. The guidelines for discipline need to be stated very clearly at the school/ district level in order to make sure all staff and students know what action will be taken for any given violation. It is also important for staff to understand the benefits of being sensitive to student confessions/ information in order to correct student code of silence and promote communication from them regarding safety issues.

Student and Parent perceptions regarding prevention based trainings

Students and parents were asked to comment on any prevention-based training in their school. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Trainings for prevention

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to comment whether or not their school had any training pertaining to school disorder and violence.

Student perceptions

Very few students were aware of any prevention-based training that was being offered in their school. Some of the trainings discussed were *peer mediation* (cell 1), *peer counseling* (cell 12), and "*in house suspension, Saturday school, and after school detention*".

Parent perceptions

A few parents perceived their child's school took measures to prevent violence. Five parents (cell 6) felt the *anti-bullying* training in their child's school was effective as a prevention measure. One parent (cell 13) shared that in their child's school "*information is imparted on personal development; health, sex, and drugs related issues*". One other parent (cell 15) observed that in their child's school there were "*workshops and discussions on bullying, diversification, respect for other people, response to conflicts, being responsible about health and nutrition*".

On the other hand, one parent (cell 12) revealed "*if they do it is not very effective as the parent does not hear about them. Even the assemblies after the gun incident were just band-aids. Not much here in general about prevention*" and another parent noted "*there is peer mediation but not sure about the effectiveness of the program*".

> Note that students are not very aware of the prevention mechanisms in place in their school. While parents seem to be better informed there is scope for improvement in the level of their awareness.

In summary, while students revealed that they were only aware of peer mediation as prevention training in their school, parents discussed anti-bullying, conflict resolution, diversity training, health/ substance abuse/ sexual education as the various trainings in their child's school.
It can also be seen from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 19-20) that in the random sample of 317 schools more than 90% of the schools have prevention curriculum, instruction, or training for students; between 80-95% of schools have behavioral modification intervention for students; about 90% of schools have counseling, social work, psychological, or therapeutic activity for students; between 80-85% of schools have individual help of students by students or adults; between 70-90% of schools have recreational enrichment, or leisure activities for students; around 65% of schools have student involvement in resolving student conduct problems; around 75% of schools have training in classroom management for teachers; and about 30% of schools have training for staff in crime prevention.

<u>Opinion on training</u>

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to comment on what they felt about the training pertaining to school disorder and violence in their school.

Student perceptions

One student (cell 1) felt there were "*95% less fights*" due to peer mediation. On the other hand two students (cell 13) stated, "*peer mediation does not help. I don't want others to fix my problem or preach. It makes it worse*". One other student (cell 12) was of the

opinion that training helped when it "*provided useful information via an entertaining mode as it gets the students attention*".

Suggestions for training

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to discuss any suggestions they had for training pertaining to school disorder and violence.

Student perceptions

Two students (cell 1, 12) suggested more training effort from their school in the form of "*using games to learn*", having "*kids do more*", and "*anger management*".

Parent perceptions

One parent (cell 1) perceived "*it will be good to have training on empathy, self-control, and self-awareness—either at the classroom level or school wide*" and another parent (cell 12) agreed that "*there is a need to figure a way to coexist. It starts at home I think*".

One parent (cell 1) was concerned about preparing students when they move from the middle school to high school. The parent perceived a need for "*training on how it feels to be singled out and on transition things towards their move to the high school, like on sexuality. You wouldn't see it. But the kids know it—all of them*". The need for a *student council* was felt by one parent (cell 6).

Two parents brought up the issue of training on substance abuse. One parent (cell 12) pointed, "*it is important to spread awareness on date rape drugs. Also, teachers sometimes get no respect and this needs to be improved*" and another parent (cell 13) noted the need for "*education on drugs, sex, tobacco, diversity, peer pressure, and an exposure to real world consequences with substance abuse through school rotations*".

Two parents touched upon the need for various trainings on anger management and diversity related issues. One parent (cell 6) discussed training on "*anger management, peer resolution, and talking to kids prior to an incident and not after*". Another parent (cell 12) mentioned a need for "*training in cultural diversity. Also, a much stronger emphasis on alcohol and drug prevention. They do some of it (in this school) but it is very small. Follow-up is essential with regard to sexually transmitted diseases. This is an older community and kids have nothing else to do, hence a greater percentage is getting into these things. Also, a general reduction in inconsistencies is called for*".
One parent (cell 5) summarized that "*anything is better than what they are doing now*".

In summary, while students suggested anger management and using more games in training as suggestions, parents suggested training on anger management, empathy, self-awareness, substance abuse, and peer mediation. It can also be seen that 39% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 108-111) discussed some successful training programs that exist/ should exist in their schools, viz., crisis

management, conflict resolution, peer mediation, cultural diversity, sexual harassment, substance abuse, and warning sign recognition.

Discussion

Participants discussed safety benefits from training in anger management, conflict resolution, empathy, peer mediation, crisis management, and substance abuse. It is essential for schools to assess what kinds of trainings would benefit them and implement them in order to prevent both low-level and violent crimes in school.

Student and Parent perceptions regarding safe/ unsafe school environments

Students and parents were asked to comment on what they thought made their school a safe or an unsafe environment. The following perceptions were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

Reasons for a safe school environment

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to comment on why they thought their school was a safe environment for the students or what they thought was a successful safety policy or practice at their school.

Student perceptions

Three students (cell 1,6) felt the school was a safe place to be in because it was "*far away from the city, drugs, and guns*" and also because it was a good neighborhood.

Three students (cell 12) perceived that it was safe because of "*personally knowing each other because it is a small school*". Seven students (cell 5, 13) mentioned the importance of *friends* in feeling safe at school while one mentioned *parents* (cell 13) and one mentioned "*people you can trust*" (cell 5).

One student (cell 6) pointed out that the *faculty* made them feel safe at school while four students (cell 5, 6) mentioned *teachers and the administration*, and three (cell 5, 12) mentioned the *principal*. One other student (cell 5) added *monitors/counselors/nurses* as important in their feeling of safety at school.

Parent perceptions

Seven parents (cells 6, 13, 15) agreed that there was a *caring staff at all levels* and *all over the school* that *makes everything work.* Seven parents (cells 6, 12) perceived that "*the school has many teachers and administrators*" who are *very good.* Also, there is a very competent *leadership/ principal.*

Two parents (cell 13) agreed that "*there is a general awareness regarding everything*" which keeps the school safe.

Four parents discussed various miscellaneous reasons for why they thought their child's school was safe. Some of the reasons were: the school is isolated and has a good uniform policy; the school is well monitored by the adults; parents are involved and the home environment is positive; and there is consistency in the policy regarding discipline.

One parent (cell 1) discussed the dress code and noted, "*I think the dress code helps in safety and security. It equalizes the school. Can't tell who has money and who doesn't*".

Another parent (cell 1) made an observation about the school location. "*Out here in a small rural area I feel our school and its surrounding areas from a scale of 1-10 it is a 10 for safety. Our community watches out for other children as well as their own. We have never had a problem with any kind of weapons. And that has been since I first started coming to this school in 1970*".

One other parent (cell 1) pointed out the feeling of security. "*I think security on campus is wonderful. While we don't need any here, I am glad they do have it at other schools and maybe hire even more where needed. I would like all schools to give training to students and teachers on anger management and tolerance. Also, respect for other peoples property. I think that is a big issue these days. Our children are often times not taught respect*".

Finally, one parent (cell 15) added, "s*ecurity at sporting events is great. There are quite a few security people, and they really watch the crowd. All in all, I feel my child goes to a fairly safe school. She is the kind to come home and speak to us of incidents that happen. We haven't heard much of anything this year. With what the facilities are, I feel the staff does quite well providing a safe environment*".

In summary, *students* felt that their school provided a safe environment because it was far from the influence of a big city, drugs, and guns. Also, there was more of a personal touch because it was a small school. Positive influences were also noted from the teachers, principal, administration, monitors, counselors, and nurses. The *parents* felt the school provided a safe environment for their child because of the positive influence of the staff, teachers, administration, and principal. Also, they felt that the school staff was very aware, there was consistency in their behavior, there was a good dress code, and the parents were involved.

It becomes evident from Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (page 13) that in the random sample of 317 schools, almost all the schools require visitors to sign or check in at all times; between 40-60% of schools control access to classrooms, schools buildings, and school grounds; about 75% of schools close the campus during lunch; 91% of schools enforce strict dress codes; and between 85-100% of the schools have zero tolerance policies against violence, fighting, weapons, firearms, substance abuse, tobacco, and alcohol.

It can also be seen that 97% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 100-108) discussed various aspects of their school that made it a safe environment for the students. Consistency of discipline measures, open communication with students and staff, a secure campus, a small school size, adult access, monitors/ counselors, school

security personnel, dress code, and community involvement were some of the practices that were discussed.

Reasons for an unsafe school environment/ need for improvement

The following perceptions were shared when students and parents were asked to comment on why they thought their school was an unsafe environment for the students or what they thought could be improved.

Student perceptions

Students listed the presence of various problems as a cause for making them feel unsafe at school. Some of the problems discussed were *knives* (cell 1), *fights* (cell 1), *harassment* (cell 12), *threats* (cell 12), *getting jumped by any group* (cell 12), and *drugs* (cell 12). One student (cell 5) added the need for a *dress code*.

The *neighborhood* (cell 6) and an unsafe school campus (cell 15) were also discussed by students as contributing to an unsafe school environment. According to one student "*people that go to this school do not get enough protection. Any body could come on campus. There is no fence and there is only one officer. The school should be watched better*".
Three students (cell 5) observed a need for more *monitors and officers* short of which the students will continue to feel unsafe in the school. According to two students (cell 1, 5) the *negative attitudes of teachers and monitors* also contribute in making students feel unsafe.

Five students (cell 13) commented on the impact of "*personal conflicts*" in making students feel unsafe in the school. One student shared "*people need to learn how to be more accepting*" because "*people differ and start all that goes on*". One other student added, "*with problems people do not know how to act*".

Parent perceptions

Two parents (cells 1, 5) were concerned that "*the school is isolated*". While one parent (cell 6) noted a "*need for controlled access to school during the day*" another parent (cell 15) agreed, "*our campus is way too open. This is scary because you don't know who could be standing outside the door. The children are not isolated to one area. How would students be protected in case of a shooter? The chances of that happening are small, but it does need to be looked at. Also, we need a new building. We are running 21st century technology off of a 1920 building*".

Two parents (cells 5, 12) commented, "*there is a need for improved security*". Another parent (cell 12) agreed, "*more security personnel are needed. One officer for three schools is not adequate for today's climate*". In this regard one parent (cell 6) perceived a need for more counselors, student advisors, and full time SROs. "*Funding of full time SRO on each middle school/ high school would make our school campuses safer.*

Funding schools to accommodate full time counselors in each middle school campus, one for each grade level will be beneficial. Prevention is the key to taking care of social problems in the early stages".

With regard to school policies, four parents perceived "*there should be an annual assembly to update on rules*" (cell 6), there is a "*need for a dress code*" (cell 6), there needs to be "*more involvement with and training for kids to coexist*" (cell 12), and there is a total "*lack of processing problems*" which needs to be improved (cell 5).

Two parents (cell 5) commented on problems pertaining to the *staff attitude* and the "*administration, with a need for a person who listens to all parents. The present principal is a coward*". One other parent (cell 5) revealed, "*safety concerns are not being met in regards to the professionalism of staff. This school has issues in regards to lack of consistency, racism, etc*".

One parent (cell 13) discussed in detail the need for student awareness about real life consequences of their actions. "*A particular problem that teens in general have is understanding the real world long term consequences of their behavior-even if the behavior seems temporary; e.g., use of tobacco, sexual behavior, drugs, alcohol, bad driving, etc. They read and hear of it but I don't believe they fully realize the consequences or believe it will happen to them. They are invincible in their eyes. I would love to see a program instituted in which they could see the consequences. As a nurse I see the consequences and feel it would be a powerful experience for the kids to be taken to an E.R., a rehab facility or mental facility, or a prison, where they could see what happens to the people who do these things-both immediately and long term. It would be great to see such a program instituted in which these kids had to go to these places, spend some time there-and I would be willing to help. They should see the car accident victims (especially DUI), the tobacco addict dying in their 30s-40s, the drug-induced mental illness, the teen moms, and STD consequences*".

Four parents commented on the need for various trainings and workshops for students, especially with regard to student differences. One parent (cell 1) perceived a need for head start programs. "*If we can probably get a kind of education or a head start for the high school. As this is a safe school for them with lots of things they don't see here; they get shocked by the things they start seeing. And the dress policies are very helpful*". While one parent (cell 12) mentioned "*more school follow-up is needed with students identified as being troubled or having a tendency to violence*", another parent revealed "*I would like to see more education for the kids regarding getting along with different kids with respect to diversity, religion/ culture, sexual preference, likes, dislikes, etc. I think this would help tremendously. Understanding will prevent violence caused by ignorance*".

One parent (cell 1) discussed zero tolerance policies. "*I do not want my child around children who may be on probation for a violent crime. Also, zero tolerance is a good idea. However, you must be flexible. Bringing a cold tablet from home and bringing speed are two different things and need to be handled differently. I have seen children*

being punished in the same manner for this and I do not think this is fair". One other parent (cell 12) stated the need for after-school activities. "*This city must take responsibility for its youthful citizens. There is nothing for them to do, so it is inevitable that the potential for problems exists*".

In summary, *students* felt their school was unsafe because of fights, harassment, threats, substance abuse, students getting jumped by other students, and a bad neighborhood. They felt improvements could be made in the dress code, hiring more monitors and officers, and reducing personal conflicts and negative attitude of teachers and staff. *Parents* felt their child's school was unsafe because the school was in an isolated area and had open access. They felt improvements could be made in dress code, security, and by hiring more counselors and SROs. Training for students in sex, in the real world consequences of their violations, and to coexist; improving staff attitude and consistency; and including more after school activities were some of the other suggestions that were provided by parents to enhance the feeling of safety at school.
It can also be seen that 89% of the staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* (pages 91-100) discussed aspects of their school that created an unsafe environment for the students. Inadequate conflict resolution, crisis response, peer mediation, following warning signs, dress code, fencing, prevention measures, consistency, training, security staff/ monitors/ counselors/aides, and zero tolerance policies; and presence of (pages 52-68) weapons, fights, harassment and threat, substance abuse, gangs, hate crime, and inappropriate language were discussed.

Discussion

Participants discussed a wide spectrum of issues pertaining to school safety. They highlighted several aspects that made their school both safe and unsafe. From a policy standpoint it is very important to recognize that what might be a safety concern for one school might not be of concern to another. However, all schools have some form of safety concern, even if small. What draws all schools together is that they recognize the need for safe environments. Hence, a common safety approach for schools is to be proactive and tackle all their safety concerns with equal seriousness because even the smaller violations/ incidents can eventually escalate into bigger crimes.

This concludes this section on policies, programs, and practices as perceived by the participants. The following section discusses parent perceptions pertaining to community/ media influence on school discipline.

Note: Same tables as page. 59.

Table 10.6.—Student perceptions regarding school policy, and actions taken by the school towards their safety concerns at school: January 2002.

School policies and actions towards safety	Total	Percent
Everybody knows what the rules are	29	100
Everybody respects the rules	0	0
The rules are fair...	22	76
The rules are enforced consistently	10	35
Some students break the rules more often than others	28	97
It is easy to get away breaking the rules	16	55
Easy access to an adult is available when I need it	28	97
Adults take me seriously when approached	26	90
I am satisfied with the adult access at school	23	79
The school takes action when there is a need	13	45
Teachers take action when there is a problem	29	100
I know what to expect from the teacher when something goes wrong	29	100
The principal/ staff takes action when something goes wrong	29	100
I know what to expect from the principal/ staff when something goes wrong	24	83
There are incidents that the teachers and staff do not get to know about	28	97

Note: A total of 30 students were included in the student focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29).

Table 10.7.—Parent perceptions regarding school policy, and actions taken by the school towards their child's safety concerns at school: January 2002.

School policies and actions towards safety	Total (%)	# parents who don't know if problem exists (%)
Everybody knows what the rules are	27 (100)	--
Everybody respects the rules	9 (33)	--
The rules are fair...	27 (100)	--
The rules are enforced consistently	17 (63)	2 (7)
Some students break the rules more often than others	24 (89)	2 (7)
It is easy to get away breaking the rules	8 (30)	1 (4)
Easy access to an adult is available when my child need it	25 (93)	--
Adults take my child seriously when approached	22 (82)	3 (11)
I am satisfied with the adult access my child has at school	22 (82)	--
The school takes action when there is a need	22 (82)	--
Teachers/ staff take action when there is a problem	19 (70)	--
My child knows what to expect from the teacher/ staff when something goes wrong	17 (63)	5 (19)
There are incidents that the teachers and staff do not get to know about	24 (89)	3 (11)

Note: A total of 30 parents were included in the parent focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27).

Community/ media influence

Key findings from parent perceptions of community/ media influence on school safety

Parents (30 total across 6 focus groups) were asked to discuss their perceptions of the influence of community and media on school safety. The following key findings were gathered on various issues pertaining to the same.

***Parents** perceived community/ media impact on:*

- Violence/ Weapons
- Fights
- Gangs
- Substance abuse
- Alcohol consumption
- Tobacco use
- Student behavior (bullying)
- Attitude towards women
- Dress Code

***Staff** (School Safety Survey: Phase I) perceived community influence on:*

- Dress code
- Behaviors
- Language
- Unsafe activities
- Substance abuse
- Weapons
- Gangs

School Safety Study: Policies, Programs, and Practices (Phase I) had very similar findings (page 11). Also, while 6% of staff perceived crime level in school area as being high, 76% perceived it as being moderate/ low.

Implication: It is imperative for schools to make the effort to be aware/ informed of the psychosocial dynamics that impact students and which in turn influence their behaviors at school. This will ensure timely interventions and violence prevention.

10.6. Parental perceptions of media/ community influence on school safety*

This section highlights the perception of parents regarding the influence of media and the community on school safety. First, information will be provided on the perceived impact of the *media* on safety and student behaviors. Next, information will be provided on the perceived impact of the *community* on school safety. This section will conclude with a brief discussion.

Media and music influence on school safety

Almost all the parents shared concerns with regard to the impact of media on student behavior and safety at school. Following are some of the issues that were brought up.

Some parents (cell 1) shared concerns regarding the impact of the dance and music culture on student behavior. One parent commented "*my kid tries to act like he is interested in girls and the hip-hop culture. But middle class America has nothing in common with the hip-hoppers*". Another parent noted "*the media is turning them into "smart-asses". It glamorizes the unsafe influences and the hip-hop life*". One other parent (cell 12) added "*music today is problematic. Rap music and the concept of violence towards women is a bad influence*".

One parent (cell 12) discussed problems associated with a lack of dress code in some schools. "*The fashion industry is in direct conflict with the dress code*". Another parent (cell 15) shared that "*we have cable at home as that is the only way we can get some choice of entertainment over here. We let the kids watch as we want them to grow up—but not too fast. In the music videos people don't wear anything and do all the wrong things. And if I tell my daughter anything she says--you are such a prude mom*".

Some parents pointed out the safety-related problems that result from popular media. One parent (cell 12) stated that "*the media impacts children tremendously*". Another parent (cell 13) added "*media and the news give kids idea and negative information*". One other parent (cell 13) discussed how "*studies have shown a relationship between violent shows and behavior. But if we intervene we as parents are the bad guys*".

Parents commented on the impact that movies have on the behavior of adolescents. One parent (cell 12) perceived that "*movies impact fads on smoking*". Another parent (cell 13) observed "*music and movies portray to the teens like life is all about getting a boy, partying, and all such superficial stuff*". Two other parents (cell 15) commented "*these are violent R rated movies that could result in bullying*" and "*I don't like the violent R rated stuff they watch or listen to. I try to put it in a positive way for them as I can't keep it away from them*".

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* Parents: N=27, Staff interviewees: N=64, School Safety Surveys: N=300
See Appendix 4 for cell references in text.

Finally, one parent (cell 1) stressed the need for open communication with the children regarding the media so its influence could be reduced. "*If you talk to the kids about what is shown on the media it does not influence them in a bad way*".

Community influence on school safety

While some of the parents shared concerns with regard to the impact of the community on student behavior and safety at school, others did not have any concerns with regard to the community that surrounded their child's school. Following are some of the issues that were brought up.

Five parents (cell 13) acknowledged that the area where the school was situated was not particularly safe. However, they did not have any concerns regarding their child's safety at school because the school was good. One parent stated "*the kids are from this community but the school is safe*". Another parent pointed out "*this area is considered bad but is not warranted*". Yet another parent said "*I like it here—it is a diversified area with various beliefs*". One other parent commented "*to me the area does not matter. This area has a bad reputation, but the school is good*".

Three parents (cell 15) discussed that problems existed in the areas surrounding the school but were addressed by the community thereby keeping the school safe. One parent revealed "*there was a prison escape two years ago and kids were kept (safe) in the building*". Another parent added that "*if anything happens the community is alerted right away. There is a lot of neighborhood watch. Volunteers look out and patrol*".

On the other hand, five parents (cell 5) pointed out the various problems that exited in the community surrounding the school, thus making it very unsafe for the students. One parent commented on the gunshots and gangs and felt the neighborhood is bad. Another parent discussed how his "*daughter was once followed home*". One other parent commented that the neighborhood was bad and his child "*can't walk to school any more: there have been kidnappings, there are perverts, a girl once got raped behind the church next door*".

It is interesting to note here that while some parents were concerned about the impact of community and felt it was unsafe, a good majority of them were not very concerned and considered the schools safe. However, the parents did acknowledge the importance of community.

In summary, it becomes clear from this section that many parents were concerned with the impact that popular culture (music and dance) has on student behavior, attitude towards women, and the dress code. Some parents also noted the impact of media and movies on student behavior, especially bullying, and the use of alcohol and other substances. The importance of communicating with the kids was stressed. While some parents were very concerned about the impact the community has on school safety, like gangs, weapons and violence, others felt that their communities were proactive and that schools residing in such troubled communities were sometimes pretty safe for the

students. *School Safety Study: Policies, Programs, and Practices* (Phase I) had similar findings (page 11). While only 6% of the schools (N=300) perceived that that the crime level in the school area was high, 76% felt the crime level was moderate/ low. Staff interviewees in Phase I of the *School Safety Study* discussed the impact of media, music, and community on dress code (pages 92, 103), behaviors (pages 35, 39), language (page 37), unsafe/ violence-related activities (page 38), substance abuse (page 33), and weapons and gangs at school (pages 32, 34).

Discussion

Parents discussed various community and media influences on student behavior. It is imperative for schools to make the effort to be aware/ informed of the psychosocial dynamics that impact students and which in turn influence their behaviors at school. This will ensure timely interventions and violence prevention.

This concludes this section on community/ media influence on school safety as perceived by the parents. The following section presents a discussion on the *School Safety Study* with respect to the SAFE commission recommendations as put forth in their 2000 report entitled *Safety Answers for Education Commission: SAFE final report and recommendations*.

Discussion

Discussion (SAFE Commission Recommendations, 2000)

This section presents a discussion on the *School Safety Study* with respect to the SAFE commission recommendations as put forth in their 2000 report entitled *Safety Answers For Education Commission: SAFE Final Report and Recommendations*.

Many issues were raised and discussed in course of this study at the staff interviews in 2001 and student and parent focus groups in 2002. Several of them coincided with the issues that were discussed at the statewide SAFE commission meetings in Phoenix, Tucson, Flagstaff, Prescott, and Yuma. Some of the important points are highlighted below.

Student awareness of school policies

Most schools, staff, students, and parents agree that students are informed periodically--mostly annually—about school policies regarding violence and discipline. However, they are concerned that the policies are not always followed, and even when they are followed the staff is not very consistent.

Recommendation: Update students, staff, and parents about policies; Train staff to be consistent with policy implementation.

Prevention awareness

While most participants agree that students are well aware of the policies and practices in place for school violations, they are not satisfied with student awareness regarding prevention mechanisms in place for school violence.

Recommendation: Communicate information periodically on prevention mechanisms.

Crisis response plans

A good majority of the schools have some written plan for crisis. One of the problems observed here is that very often the crisis plans (e.g., safety drills) are not practiced frequently enough for the staff and students to become fully aware of the process. In other words, despite having handbooks with the school's policies many parents and students are not always aware of the details.

Recommendation: Frequent updates about crisis plans for staff, students, and parents.

Conflict resolution/ tolerance/ peer mediation

Many schools offer trainings like conflict resolution, peer mediation, etc. The staff, parents, and students alike agree on how vital such training can be for a safer school environment.

Recommendation: Continue such trainings as per the school's needs.

Recognizing warning signs

While many staff members, students, and parents agree with the benefits from this process, they are also concerned about "typecasting" students.

Recommendation: Careful monitoring of the situation; Confidential communication/ updates to all concerned.

Monitoring of violations

The staff agrees that violations in the school should be monitored and followed through. However, they are concerned about how they ought to report the lower level incidents. This is because the rules are not very clear about reporting lower level incidents and the staff uses their own discretion.

Recommendation: Staff training on monitoring and reporting of all types of incidents.

Student-teacher ratio

Almost all the schools, staff, students and parents agree that a smaller student-teacher ratio would help in reducing violence in schools through more individualized attention and guidance. However, it is not always possible for schools to attain the same end.

Recommendation: Improved funding to hire more staff.

After-school programs

Many staff members stress the importance of after-school activities in keeping the students engaged and trouble free, especially in rural and isolated communities. However, many of the schools in these areas frequently do not/ are unable to provide their students with these options.

Recommendation: Funding and community partnerships to provide after school programs.

School climate

All the interviewees and focus group participants agree that it is smaller issues like name-calling and bullying that lead to bigger and violent problems. Hence, all participants agree that it is important to curtail and prevent these kinds of behaviors through active intervention.

Recommendation: Student and staff training on empathy, tolerance, etc.

Dress code

Several parents, students, and staff like the school to have a dress code because it provides students with a feeling of equality and belonging, and prevents dress-based sexual misconducts. A few participants even favor uniforms. While several participants are totally opposed to uniforms, none are very opposed to dress codes. However, there is consensus that students do not necessarily follow dress codes.

Recommendation: Implement some form of dress code.

School Resource Officer (SRO)/ Probationary Officer (PO)

School staff, including the officers, parents, and students agree that SROs and POs are very helpful in maintaining discipline in the school. However, very frequently parents and students are not even sure if their school has an SRO or a PO. In some cases students and parents who are aware of their presence in the school complain that they are sometimes hard to find when there is a need. Also, there is concern that the SROs time is frequently spread across various schools, hence, defeating the whole purpose.

Recommendation: Employ more SROs where required.

Counselors/ Nurses

All the interviewees and focus group participants feel the need for counselors and nurses. However, parents and students are not always satisfied with their quality and accessibility.

Recommendation: Hire good quality and accessible nurses and counselors.

Adult accessibility and class time for discussions

Most staff agrees that while it might be useful for teachers and staff to spend some of their class time discussing student problems and solutions it is easier said than done. Most of the staff is concerned about lack of time to do the same. However, some teachers claim that it is their philosophy to make time to discuss student problems on a routine basis. Some other teachers comment that students frequently seek them out to discuss problems.
All student participants and their parents feel that at least one adult in the school is accessible to the student if there is ever a need. However, almost all participants perceive scope for improvement.

Recommendation: Improve staff/ adult accessibility to students.

Parental involvement

There was a lot of discussion regarding the positive impact of parental involvement on student discipline. This also ties back with another important finding from the data that students perceive more safety related issues in their school relative to their parents, viz., substance abuse and fights. Also, while students tend to perceive more inter-personal problems, parents perceive more school policy related problems. This is because students spend the most time at school and perceive a different climate when compared to adults.

Recommendation: Parental involvement at home and in school (provide training if required).

Code of silence

Adults, especially parents, feel that they are accessible and that students have an opportunity to confide in them with their problems. Students on the other hand often prefer to adhere to a "code of silence" because they don't want to be a "nark", or because they don't want to get into trouble with the adults, or because they are not always confident that adults will solve their problem.

Recommendation: Better channels of communication between students and adults; confidentiality.

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Community involvement

All the participants alike discussed how schools are an extension of their communities. It is, therefore, vital for the community to be involved in making their schools safer.

Recommendation: Community partnerships (with law enforcement, Child Protective Services, and health services) for safer schools.

Special Education laws

All the schools, staff and parents agree that laws pertaining to special education students are important in protecting their rights. However, they are equally concerned about how these very laws can sometimes prohibit them from taking the right steps towards disciplining these students and protecting the other students.

Recommendation: Careful review of special education laws.

This concludes the discussion section. The following section presents future direction for the *School Safety Study.*

Future direction

School Safety Study: Future direction (after 9/15/2002)

- Automating of the *School Safety Survey*:
  - The two surveys from Phases I and II will be merged to create a single web-based survey.
  - The survey will be completed each year by a different random sample of schools. The participating schools will be provided with the web address and a password (by mail) to complete the web-based survey (for view only by the participating school and Research and Policy).
  - The data will be analyzed by R&P and a report will be produced.
  - Select data will be displayed using GIS (mapping software).

- An attempt will be made to link the data/ findings from the *School Safety Study* to other data in R&P, viz. dropout and graduation.

- On availability of the national level report (NCES) in January 2003, R&P will compare its' findings with Arizona's *School Safety Study*. Any interesting findings will be reported to the SAFE commission.

- The *School Safety Study* has highlighted some important areas/ issues that will benefit from further investigation and collaborations (with Student Services, ADE; other agencies like the Attorney General; the Police Department, etc.).

This concludes the 2002 School Safety Report. The following section consists of appendices.

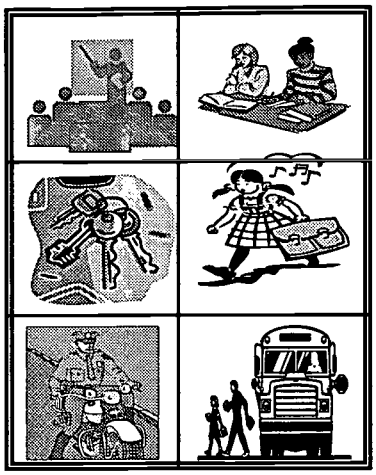
Appendices

1 - Incidents of Violence Survey

2 - Focus Group sample matrix (Students and Parents)

3 - Student Focus Group protocol

4 - Parent Focus Group protocol



School Safety Survey: **Incidents of Violence**

Research and Policy Division
Arizona Department of Education
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Please have this survey completed by the person most knowledgeable about your school's violence and discipline-related problems, like a principal, assistant principal, school resource officer, or probation officer. However, please provide the principal's responses on question 9. The respondent might have to procure some information from the district office in order to complete this survey. *Please keep a copy of the completed survey for your records.*

Please note that this is a new survey and is mandated by the legislature. This survey is not in any way associated with CHAPPS or any other survey regarding school safety.

You are one of the 317 schools that have been randomly selected for this survey and your cooperation is required to make the results comprehensive, accurate, and timely. All information provided will be kept **strictly confidential**, and will be used by the Research and Policy Division, Arizona Department of Education, only for research, analysis, and preparing scientific reports. Any information **publicly released** (such as statistical summaries) will be in a format that does not personally identify you or your school/ district.

CTDS Code:_____
Elementary School_____ Middle School _____ High School _____ (Please check one)
Title/Position:_____
Number of years at this school: _____
Best days and times to reach you (if some input is not clear to the staff):_____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED SURVEY IN THE SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE TO:	**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT**
Research and Policy Division Arizona Department of Education 1535 West Jefferson Street, Bin #16 Phoenix, Arizona 85007	Alka Arora, Ph.D. Phone: (602)-364-4027 or (602)-542-5151 Fax: (602)-364-0887 Email: aarora@ade.az.gov

The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3-5 hours, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.

Please respond before 02/15/02.

Definitions

The following words are underlined wherever they appear in the questionnaire.

At school / at your school — include activities happening in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that are holding school-sponsored events or activities. Unless otherwise specified, only respond for those times that were normal school hours or school activities/events were in session.

Crime — any incident that violates any Federal, State, or local law, or statute, as opposed to simple violations of school rules.

Cult or extremist group — a group that espouses radical beliefs and practices, which may include a religious component, that are widely seen as threatening the basic values and cultural norms of society at large.

Drugs — (illegal drug possession, sale, use, under the influence). The unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance or equipment and devices used for preparing or taking drugs or narcotics. Includes being under the influence of drugs at school, school-sponsored events, and on school-sponsored transportation. Category includes over-the-counter medications if abused by the student. Category does not include tobacco or alcohol.

Firearm/explosive device — any weapon that is designed to (or may readily be converted to) expel a projectile by the action of an explosive. This includes guns, bombs, grenades, mines, rockets, missiles, pipe bombs, or similar devices designed to explode and capable of causing bodily harm or property damage.

Gang — an ongoing loosely organized association of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, that has a common name, signs, symbols or colors, whose members engage, either individually or collectively, in violent or other forms of illegal behavior.

Hate crime — a criminal offense or threat against a person, property, or society that is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias against a race, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

Insubordination — a deliberate and inexcusable defiance of or refusal to obey a school rule, authority, or a reasonable order. It includes but is not limited to direct defiance of school authority, failure to attend assigned detention or on-campus supervision, failure to respond to a call slip, and physical or verbal intimidation/abuse.

Intimidation/ bullying — to frighten, compel, or deter by actual or implied threats. It includes bullying and sexual harassment.

Physical attack or fight — an actual and intentional touching or striking of another person against his or her will, or the intentional causing of bodily harm to an individual.

Rape — forced sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, or oral penetration). Includes penetration from a foreign object.

Robbery — the taking or attempting to take anything of value that is owned by another person or organization, under confrontational circumstances by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. A key difference between robbery and theft/larceny is that robbery involves a threat or battery.

Sexual battery — an incident that includes threatened rape, fondling, indecent liberties, child molestation, or sodomy. Classification of these incidents should take into consideration the age and developmentally appropriate behavior of the offender(s).

Sexual harassment — unsolicited, offensive behavior that inappropriately asserts sexuality over another person. The behavior may be verbal or non-verbal.

Special education student — a child with a disability, defined as mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities, and who needs special education and related services and receives these under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Specialized school — a school that is specifically for students who were referred for disciplinary reasons. The school may also have students who were referred for other reasons. The school may be at the same location as your school.

Theft/larceny (taking things over $10 without personal confrontation) — the unlawful taking of another person's property without personal confrontation, threat, violence, or bodily harm. Included are pocket picking, stealing purse or backpack (if left unattended or no force was used to take it from owner), theft from a building, theft from a motor vehicle or motor vehicle parts or accessories, theft of bicycles, theft from vending machines, and all other types of thefts.

Vandalism — the willful damage or destruction of school property including bombing, arson, graffiti, and other acts that cause property damage. Includes damage caused by computer hacking.

Violence — actual, attempted, or threatened fight or assault.

Weapon — any instrument or object used with the intent to threaten, injure, or kill. Includes look-alikes if they are used to threaten others.

Section One: Violent deaths at school (Questions 1 and 2)

1. In the 2000-2001 school year, did any of your school's students, faculty, or staff die from violent causes (i.e., homicide or suicide, but not accidents)? Do not limit yourself to deaths occurring at school. *(Circle one response.)*

   Yes 1
   No ..... 2 ***If no, skip to question 3.***

2. Please provide the following information about the violent deaths that occurred. When counting deaths at school, please include violent deaths in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses, and at places that are holding school-sponsored events or activities, even if those activities are not officially on school grounds. For this question, count deaths at school, regardless of whether they happened during normal school hours. If the incident occurred at school, but the person died later at a hospital or other location because of the incident, count the death as occurring at school. *(Write the number in each category.)*

Cause of death	Student	Faculty	Staff
a. Homicide at school	_____	_____	_____
b. Suicide at school	_____	_____	_____

Section Two: The frequency of other incidents at schools (Questions 3 through 7)

3. In the 2000-2001 school year, how many incidents at your school involved a shooting with intent to harm (whether or not anyone was hurt)? Please count the number of incidents, not the number of shooters or shots fired. Count only incidents that occurred at school. The same incident could be reported on both lines *a* and *b* below if both a student and a nonstudent performed a shooting during that incident. *(Write "0" if there were no shootings.)*

   Incidents in which either students or nonstudents used firearms with intent to harm ..... _____

   a. Incidents in which students used firearms with intent to harm ..... _____

   b. Incidents in which nonstudents used firearms with intent to harm ..... _____

4. Please provide the number of incidents at your school during the 2000-2001 school year using the categories below. *(Count all incidents, regardless of whether students or nonstudents were involved. Include incidents that happened at school, regardless of whether they happened during normal school hours. Count only the number of incidents, not the number of victims or offenders, regardless of whether any disciplinary action was taken. Write "0" if there were no incidents in a category. Count only the most serious offense when an incident involved multiple offenses. For example, if an incident included rape and robbery, include the incident only under rape. If an offense does not fit well within the categories provided, do not include it.)*

	Total number of incidents	Of the total number of incidents how do the following break down? Number reported to police or other law enforcement	Number that were hate crimes	Number that were gang-related
a. Rape or attempted rape	____	____	____	____
b. Sexual battery other than rape (include threatened rape)	____	____	____	____
c. Physical attack or fight				
1. With weapon	____	____	____	____
2. Without weapon	____	____	____	____
d. Threats of physical attack				
1. With weapon	____	____	____	____
2. Without weapon	____	____	____	____
e. Robbery (taking things by force)				
1. With weapon	____	____	____	____
2. Without weapon	____	____	____	____
f. Theft/larceny (taking things over $10 without personal confrontation)	____	____	____	____
g. Possession of firearm/explosive device	____	____	____	____
h. Possession of knife or sharp object	____	____	____	____
i. Distribution of illegal drugs (not alcohol/ tobacco)	____	____	X	____
j. Possession or use of illegal drugs (not alcohol/ tobacco)	____	____	X	____
k. Possession or use of alcohol	____	____	X	____
l. Possession or use of tobacco	____	____	X	____
m. Sexual harassment	____	____	____	____
n. Vandalism	____	____	____	____

5. During the previous 2 school years, how many of the following incidents occurred at school, regardless of whether they happened during normal school hours or they were reported to police? *(See the instructions for question 4.)*

	1999-2000	2000-2001
a. Physical attack or fight (do not include rape or sexual battery)	____	____
b. Theft/larceny (taking things over $10 without personal confrontation)	____	____
c. Vandalism	____	____

6. How many times in the 2000-2001 school year were school activities disrupted by actions such as bomb threats? Exclude all fire alarms from your response, including false alarms.

   Number of disruptions..... ____

7. How many times in the 2000-2001 school year were school activities disrupted by actions such as threats from anthrax/ hazardous/ biochemical materials?

   Number of disruptions..... ____

Section Three: Disciplinary problems and actions (Questions 8 through 11)

8. To the best of your knowledge, how often do the following types of problems occur at your school? *(Circle one response on each line.)*

	Happens daily	Happens at least once a week	Happens at least once a month	Happens on occasion	Never happens
a. Student racial tensions	1	2	3	4	5
b. Student bullying	1	2	3	4	5
c. Student verbal abuse of teachers	1	2	3	4	5
d. Widespread disorder in classrooms	1	2	3	4	5
e. Student acts of disrespect for teachers	1	2	3	4	5
f. Undesirable gang activities	1	2	3	4	5
g. Undesirable cult or extremist group activities	1	2	3	4	5

9. During the 2000-2001 school year, how available were the following disciplinary actions to your school, and which were actually used by your school? *(Circle one response on each line.)*

Actions taken for disciplinary reasons	Available, but not feasible to use	Available but not used	Available and used	Not available
Removal or transfer for at least 1 year				
a. Removal with no continuing school services	1	2	3	4
b. Transfer to specialized school for disciplinary reasons	1	2	3	4
c. Transfer to another regular school	1	2	3	4
d. Transfer to school-provided tutoring/at-home instruction	1	2	3	4
Suspension or removal for less than 1 year				
e. Out-of-school suspension or removal for less than 1 year				
1. No curriculum/services provided	1	2	3	4
2. Curriculum/services provided	1	2	3	4
f. In-school suspension				
1. No curriculum/services provided	1	2	3	4
2. Curriculum/services provided	1	2	3	4
Provide instruction/counseling to reduce problems				
g. Referral to school counselor	1	2	3	4
h. Assigned to program designed to reduce disciplinary problems				
1. During school hours	1	2	3	4
2. Outside of school hours	1	2	3	4
Punishment/withdrawal of services/other				
i. Kept off school bus due to misbehavior	1	2	3	4
j. Corporal punishment	1	2	3	4
k. Put on school probation with threatened consequences if another incident occurs	1	2	3	4
l. Detention and/or Saturday school	1	2	3	4
m. Loss of student privileges	1	2	3	4
n. Require participation in community service	1	2	3	4
o. Other (Specify) _____	1	2	3	4
Law enforcement				
p. Referred to law enforcement	1	2	3	4

Please have the principal respond here.

10. During the 2000-2001 school year, how many students were involved in committing the following offenses/ crimes, and how many of the following disciplinary actions were taken in response? *(If more than one student was involved in an incident, please count each student separately when providing the number of disciplinary actions. If a student was disciplined more than once, please count each incident separately (e.g., a student who was suspended five times would be counted as five suspensions). However, if a student was disciplined in two different ways for a single infraction (e.g., the student was both suspended and referred to counseling), count only the most severe disciplinary action that was taken.)*

Offense	Removals with no continuing school services for at least 1 year	Transfers to specialized schools for disciplinary reasons for at least 1 year	Out-of-school suspensions lasting 5 or more days, but less than 1 year	Other action: Please specify	No disciplinary action taken
a. Use of a firearm/explosive device	____	____	____	____	____
b. Possession of a firearm/ explosive device	____	____	____	____	____
c. Use of a weapon other than a firearm	____	____	____	____	____
d. Possession of a weapon other than a firearm	____	____	____	____	____
e. Distribution of illegal drugs	____	____	____	____	____
f. Possession or use of illegal drugs.....	____	____	____	____	____
g. Possession/ use of alcohol/ tobacco .	____	____	____	____	____
h. Rape	____	____	____	____	____
i. Sexual battery.....	____	____	____	____	____
j. Hate crime	____	____	____	____	____
k. Physical attacks or fights.....	____	____	____	____	____
l. Intimidation/ bullying.....	____	____	____	____	____
m. Insubordination	____	____	____	____	____
n. Robbery.....	____	____	____	____	____
o. Theft.....	____	____	____	____	____
p. Gang activities.....	____	____	____	____	____
q. Vandalism	____	____	____	____	____
r. Other infractions--specify (not including academic reasons).....	____	____	____	____	____
s. **Total**.....	____	____	____	____	____

11. What were those times during the 2000-2001 school year that special education students committed an offense that normally would result in a suspension or expulsion of more than 10 school days for children without disabilities? Please enter the number of outcomes for each of those offenses, using the categories below.

	All such offenses	Only offenses involving drugs or weapons
a. Placement was changed (including a suspension or expulsion)		
1. After a due process hearing.....	____	____
2. After a court-ordered injunction	____	____
3. Without a due process hearing or court injunction (e.g., parents did not object)	____	____
b. Placement was not changed		
1. No due process hearing or court session was held (e.g., did not seek a change).	____	____
2. Due process hearing did not approve change.....	____	____
3. Court did not approve change	____	____

Section Four: School characteristics (Questions 12 through 21)

12. As of October 1st, 2001, what was the total enrollment at your school? _____

13. What percentage of your current students fit the following criteria?

    a. Eligible for free or reduced-price lunch ..... _____%
    b. Limited English proficient (LEP)..... _____%
    c. Special education students ..... _____%
    d. Male..... _____%
    e. White_____% Hispanic_____% Native American_____% Black_____% Asian_____% Others_____% (Specify)_____

14. How many classroom changes do most students make in a typical day? *(Count going to lunch and then returning to the same or a different classroom as two classroom changes. Do not count morning arrival or afternoon departure.)*

    Typical number of classroom changes..... _____

15. How many paid staff are at your school in the following categories? Please calculate staff time appropriately for staff members who perform multiple duties.

	Full time	Part time
a. Classroom teachers.....	____	____
b. Counselors/mental health professionals	____	____
c. Special education teachers	____	____
d. Classified Staff (aides, security, clerical, support).....	____	____

16. How would you describe the crime level in the area where your school is located? *(Choose only one response.)*

    High level of crime..... 1
    Moderate level of crime 2
    Low level of crime 3
    Mixed levels of crime..... 4
    Don't know 5
    Briefly discuss your response: _____
    _____

17. How would you describe the level of safety in your school? *(Choose only one response.)*

    Very Safe..... 1
    Safe..... 2
    Unsafe 3
    Very Unsafe 4
    Don't know 5
    Briefly discuss your response: _____
    _____

18. Which of the following best describes your school? *(Circle one response.)*

    Regular school..... 1 Grade range _____
    Charter school ..... 2 Grade range _____
    Have magnet program for part of school..... 3 Grade range _____
    Totally a magnet school ..... 4 Grade range _____
    Other *(specify)* _____ 5 Grade range _____

19. On average, what percentage of your students are absent without excuse each day? _____%

20. In the 2000-2001 school year, how many students transferred to or from your school after the school year had started? Please report on the total mobility, not just transfers due to disciplinary actions. *(If a student transferred more than once in the school year, count each transfer separately.)*

    a. Transferred to the school..... _____
    b. Transferred from the school ..... _____

21. Please provide the following dates.

    a. Starting date for your 2000-2001 academic school year..... ____/____/2000
    b. Ending date for your 2000-2001 academic school year..... ____/____/2001
    c. Date you completed this questionnaire ..... ____/____/2001/ 2002

Words that are underlined are defined at the beginning of this questionnaire.

Appendix 2: School Safety Study: Purposeful sample of 6 Schools for focus groups with students and their parents

		Small Enrollment (<500)		Large Enrollment (>500)	
		Low SES	*High SES*	*Low SES*	*High SES*
Middle School (K-8, 6-8)	*Metro*	1 4 students 4 parents	2	5 5 students 5 parents	6 5 students 5 parents
	Rural	3	4	7	8
High School (K-12, 9-12)	*Metro*	9	10	13 5 students 5 parents	14
	Rural	11	12 5 students 5 parents	15 5 students 3 parents	16

Notes: *This is the same matrix that was used to select 16 schools for staff interviews in Phase I of this study. Six of these 16 schools were selected for focus groups with students and <u>their</u> parents for this component of the study.*

30 students were included for focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 29 participated (N=29)

30 parents were included for focus groups across six public schools of Arizona and 27 participated (N=27)

Metro: Maricopa, Pima, Yuma; Rural: Other counties

SES: Socioeconomic status; Low SES: Free and Reduced Lunch > 50%; High SES: Free and Reduced Lunch < 50%.

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GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Introduction

Student categories

Please fill out the cards on your table. I am gathering this information so I will be able to provide details on the "type" of students in the focus group when I write my final report.

Student Code Number: _____		
Grade:		
Age:		
Gender: (check one)	**--Male**	**--Female**
Ethnicity: (check one)	**--White**	**--Hispanic**
	--Native American	**--Black**
	--Asian	
	--Others (specify)_____	
	--Don't know	

School Climate

1. What is your school's reputation outside the school?

Safety scale:
Very safe
Safe
Unsafe
Very unsafe
Don't know
(Discussion)

2. How safe does everybody feel in this school?

Safety scale:
Very safe
Safe
Unsafe
Very unsafe
Don't know
(Discussion: free of physical harm/ verbal abuse?)

3. How safe/ unsafe do you think are the following areas of your school?

Safety scale:
Very safe
Safe
Unsafe
Very unsafe
Don't know

Areas:
a. School buildings
b. Hallways
c. Restrooms
d. Cafeterias
e. Bus/ bus stops
f. Other/ hidden spots

g. Time of day unsafe
h. (Discussion)

Adult interaction

4. How do the following individuals impact your feeling of safety in the school? How do they interact with/ inform you?

Impact scale:
Impacts a lot
Impacts some times
Almost does not impact
Never impacts
Don't know
Not applicable

People impacting:
a. Teachers
b. Principal
c. Classroom/ playground aides
d. Bus driver
e. Counselor/ Nurse
f. Head of Security
g. Monitors
h. Parents/ guardian
i. Peers/ friends
j. Other

k. --Are you satisfied?--
l. (Discussion: do you perceive any code of silence/ secrets from the adults?)

5. Can you easily meet with an adult or authority in some form to report a problem (confidentially/ silence code)?

Accessibility
Are you taken seriously?
Are you satisfied?

6. Tell me about your school's school resource officers and probationary officers.

Probes:
a. Do you know if your school has them?
b. If they are needed can they be found easily (accessible)?
c. Do they make you feel safe/ prevent crime (why?)
d. What do you like/ dislike about having them in the school?

School Disorder (Violence/ Safety)

7. Have you noticed any of the following problems in your classroom or school?

Problems noticed:
a. Name calling
b. Bullying/ teasing
c. Hate crimes
d. Intimidation
e. Threat
f. Harassment
g. Fights
h. Assaults
i. Weapons/ Firearms
j. Drugs
k. Tobacco
l. Alcohol
m. Gangs
n. Graffiti/ Vandalism
o. Theft/ robbery
p. Other

q. School action (if no--why?)

(Discussion):
r. --Quantity
s. --Student type
t. --Any change over time?

8. What are the most common reasons that start violence or fights in your classroom/ school? Are some students involved more frequently?

Policies, programs, and practices

9. Tell me about the school rules pertaining to school safety.

Probes:
a. Does everyone know what the rules are?
b. Does everyone respect the rules?
c. Are the rules fair?
d. Are the rules enforced consistently?
e. Do some students break the rules more than others?
f. Is it easy to get away with breaking the rules?

10. How do teachers/ administrators generally handle problems in your classroom and school?

Probes:
a. How do teachers deal with problems in the classroom?
b. Do you generally know what to expect from the teacher when something goes wrong?
c. How do the principal and other school staff deal with problems at school?
d. Do you generally know what to expect from the staff when something goes wrong?
e. Are there incidents that teachers and staff don't know about?
f. Why are these incidents not reported to school staff?

11. What does the school do to prevent violence?

Probes:
What? Any training?
a. --Symptom recognition
b. --Self-protection
c. --Social/cultural diversity
d. --Anger management
e. --Conflict resolution
f. --Peer mediation
g. Respect/ responsibility/ independence
h. --Other...

i. Do you think what the school is doing is working?
j. What do you think the school should be doing?

12. Can you think of anything in particular that makes your school a safe place and anything that makes it an unsafe place? What more can be done to make it safer?

Additional information

13. Is there anything else that you would like to add--anything related to school safety?

GUIDELINES FOR PARENT FOCUS GROUPS ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Introduction

Parental/ Guardian categories

Please fill out the cards on your table. I am gathering this information so I will be able to provide details on parental/ guardian categories in the focus group when I write my final report.

Parent/ guardian Code Number: _____

Age: _____

Gender: (check one) **--Male** **--Female**

Ethnicity: (check one) **--White** **--Hispanic**
--Native American **--Black**
--Asian
--Others (specify)_____
--Don't know

Employed as: _____

Educational qualification: _____

Marital status: _____

School Climate

1. What is this school's reputation outside the school?

Safety scale:
Very safe
Safe
Unsafe
Very unsafe
Don't know
(Discussion)

2. How safe do you feel this school is for your child/ ward?

Safety scale:
Very safe
Safe
Unsafe
Very unsafe
Don't know
(Discussion: free of physical harm/ verbal abuse?)

Adult interaction

3. In your opinion how do the following individuals impact/ inform your child's/ ward's feeling of safety in the school?

Impact scale:
Impacts a lot
Impacts some times
Almost does not impact
Never impacts
Don't know
Not applicable

People impacting:
a. Teachers
b. Principal
c. Classroom/ playground aides
d. Bus driver
e. Counselor/ Nurse
f. Head of Security
g. Monitors
h. SRO/PO
i. You as a parent/ guardian
j. Peers/ friends
k. Other

l. --Are you satisfied?--
m. (Discussion: do you perceive any code of silence/ secrets from the adults?)

4. Can your child/ ward easily meet with an adult or authority in some form to report a problem (confidentially) in the school?

Accessibility
Are they taken seriously?
Are you satisfied?

School Disorder (Violence/ Safety)

5. Do you know if your child/ ward has noticed any of the following problems in their classroom or school?

Problems noticed:
a. Name calling
b. Bullying/ teasing
c. Hate crimes
d. Intimidation
e. Threat
f. Harassment
g. Fights
h. Assaults
i. Weapons/ Firearms
j. Drugs
k. Tobacco
l. Alcohol
m. Gangs
n. Graffiti/ Vandalism

o. Theft/ robbery
p. Other

q. School action (if no--why?)

(Discussion):
r. --Quantity
s. --Student type
t. --Any change over time?

Policies, programs, and practices

6. Tell me about the school rules pertaining to school safety.

Probes:
a. Do you know what the rules are?
b. Do you think everyone respects the rules?
c. Are the rules fair?
d. Are the rules enforced consistently?
e. Do some students break the rules more than others?
f. Is it easy to get away with breaking the rules?

7. How do teachers/ administrators generally handle problems in your child's/ ward's classroom and school?

Probes:
a. How do teachers/ staff deal with problems in the classroom?
b. Do you/ your child or ward generally know what to expect when something goes wrong?
c. Are there incidents that teachers and staff don't know about?
d. Why are these incidents not reported to school staff?

8. What does the school do to prevent violence?

Probes:
What? Any training?
a. --Symptom recognition
b. –Self-protection
c. --Social/cultural diversity
d. --Anger management
e. --Conflict resolution
f. --Peer mediation
g. --Respect/ responsibility/ independence
h. --Other…

i. Do you think what the school is doing is working?
j. What do you think the school should be doing?

9. Can you think of anything in particular that makes your child's/ ward's school a safe place and anything that makes it an unsafe place? What more can be done to make it safer?

Community information

10. In your opinion what is the influence of your neighborhood / family/ peers/ movies and TV on this school's violence? (e.g., crime, homicide)?

11. Are there areas in your community that have more crime? Are any of these areas located near this school or on the way to and from school?

Additional information

12. Is there anything else that you would like to share--anything related to school safety?

Miscellaneous
-Sample Statutes
-Acknowledgements

Arizona Revised Statutes

This section provides information on some relevant statutes pertaining to school safety in Arizona. Details on the statutes are available at the Arizona State Legislature's web site (http://www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/ars.htm). These are only some examples of laws that can be found using the search feature under the relevant titles. The title for education is Title 15.

School Safety Study report (Phase I and II)	*ARS 15-231.03*
Attendance defined for funding	ARS 13-901
Attendance officer	ARS 15-804
Attendance officer's duties	ARS 15-805
Building safety, fire inspections	ARS 41-2163
Bus drivers	ARS 28-3228
Bus inspections	ARS 28-984
Discipline/ Corporal punishment	ARS 15-843
Expulsion of student	ARS 15-841
Grants for prevention	ARS 41-1966.02
Hazing	ARS 15-2301
Mandatory crime reporting/safety plans/safety training	ARS 15-341 Par. 33,34, & 35
Parental discipline	ARS 15-843
Parental involvement	ARS 15-102
School bus advisory council	ARS 28-3053
School bus rules	ARS 28-900
School roof safety	ARS 15-156
School safety clearinghouse	ARS 15-231.02
School safety program oversight committee	ARS 15-153
School safety program	ARS 15-154
School safety zone	ARS 13-609
Substance Abuse instruction	ARS 15-712
Threats	ARS 13-2911
Truancy/ attendance	ARS 15-803
Weapons	ARS 13-3102

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