School Violence in South Carolina 1996-1998: 
An Incident-Based Descriptive Analysis

Violence in our schools has always been a great concern, and has received increasing 
attention in recent years as a result of several well publicized, horrific incidents. In 
many jurisdictions, the search for effective remedies has been hindered by the lack of 
reliable information concerning the extent and nature of crime in our schools. South 
Carolina has been fortunate in that the South Carolina Department of Education has 
been systematically collecting information concerning criminal incidents in the public 
schools since 1991. Additionally, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division 
(SLED) has been collecting statewide crime incident reports for years, and has been a 
fully compliant participant in the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s National Incident 
Based Reporting System (NIBRS) program since South Carolina was part of the pilot 
program in 1991.

The purpose of this report was to utilize incident-based reporting data to provide a 
descriptive analysis of the problem of school violence. It is important to understand 
that, given the variation in data sources and methodology, the findings of this report 
may vary significantly in a number of respects from other recent reports concerning 
school violence. These differences in data collection and methodology make 
meaningful comparison of results between this and other studies problematic.

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Association, a non-profit research agency based in Washington, D.C. The purpose of 
this grant was two-fold. The first objective was to develop a means of extracting 
specific data-sets from the South Carolina Incident Based Report System (SCIBRS) 
which is maintained by the SLED. This was accomplished in cooperation with the 
University of South Carolina’s Advanced Solutions Group (ASG), which developed 
an internet-based data extraction module for this project. The second objective was to 
analyze those data and produce a report describing the nature and extent of violent 
crime in South Carolina’s schools for the years 1996, 1997 and 1998.