

Findings

Violent Offenses

A total of 11,548 violent offenses were reported in South Carolina with a primary or secondary premise code of school (K-12) from 1996 through 1998. The distribution by year was as follows: 3,462 in 1996, 3,767 in 1997 and 4,319 in 1998. Simple assaults were the most frequently occurring offense, accounting for nearly two-thirds (65.7%) of all school violence offenses, followed by intimidation which accounted for 17.5% of the total offenses. Although murder was the least frequently occurring offense, with only two reported cases during the three-year time period, the offenses of forcible sodomy and sexual assault with an object were also infrequently reported.

Table 1

School Violence by Offense

Offense	Number	Pct.
Aggravated Assault	1,303	11.3
Forcible Fondling	337	2.9
Forcible Sodomy	36	.3
Intimidation	2,023	17.5
Murder	2	<.1
Rape	84	.7
Robbery	160	1.4
Simple Assault	7,585	65.7
Sexual Assault w Object	18	.2
Total	11,548	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

Violent crime occurred primarily during months in which school was likely to be in session and on weekdays. More violent offenses were reported during March than any other month, while July had the fewest number of offenses reported. Offenses were more likely to occur during the traditional school months, and were less likely to occur during the summer months.

Table 2

School Violence by Month

Month	Number	Pct.
January	1,041	9.0
February	1,179	10.2
March	1,206	10.4
April	930	8.1
May	1,194	10.3
June	165	1.4
July	110	1.0
August	481	4.2
September	1,477	12.8
October	1,708	14.8
November	1,160	10.0
December	897	7.8
Total	11,548	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

Violent offenses were also more likely to occur during the week rather than on weekends. More violent offenses were reported on Wednesdays than any other day, while the fewest offenses were reported on Sundays. Similar to the distribution of school violence by month, this may be related to schools' operating schedules.

Table 3

School Violence by Day of the Week

Day	Number	Pct.
Sunday	125	1.1
Monday	1,964	17.0
Tuesday	2,250	19.5
Wednesday	2,450	21.2
Thursday	2,388	20.7
Friday	2,210	19.1

Saturday	161	1.4
Total	11,548	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

The majority (68.3%) of school violence occurred from 8:00 AM to 2:59 PM, an approximation of the hours that school is in session. During school hours a greater proportion of school violence (37.5%) was reported during the morning hours than was reported during the afternoon hours (30.8%). This was followed by the 3:00 PM to 5:59 PM time period which accounted for 15% of school violence. The comparison of weekdays and weekend days provides noteworthy differences. On weekdays, 69.5% of school violence occurred during the 8:00 AM to 2:59 PM time period. On weekends (Saturday and Sunday), the 8:00 AM to 2:59 PM time period accounted for 38.1% of school violence. Additionally, school violence was more likely to occur later in the day on weekend days than on weekdays.

Table 4
School Violence by Time of Day

Time Period	Number	Pct.
Midnight to 7:59	939	8.1
8:00 AM to 11:59 AM	4,332	37.5
Noon to 2:59 PM	3,559	30.8
3:00 PM to 5:59 PM	1,732	15.0
6:00 PM to 8:59 PM	614	5.3
9:00 PM to 11:59 PM	372	3.2
Total	11,548	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

For the purpose of this analysis, the offense weapon was defined as the most serious, i.e.; the most potentially deadly weapon involved in the incident. For example, if a handgun and a knife were involved in an incident, the offense weapon was defined as a handgun. The weapons most commonly used in committing school violence were personal weapons, defined for the purposes of SCIBRS as hand, feet, fists, etc.

Personal weapons were the most serious weapons utilized in 72.3% of reported school violence cases. Firearm violence was infrequent. Firearms were used in 113 (1%) of reported school violence cases. Handguns were the most commonly used firearms, accounting for 91 of the 113 firearm cases. It is important to note that the involvement of a firearm does not necessarily mean the weapon was fired.

Table 5
Weapon Use in School Violence

Weapon	Number	Pct.
All Firearms	113	1.0
Knives/Sharp Objects	239	2.1
Blunt Objects	266	2.3
Personal Weapons	8,335	72.2
Other	410	3.6
Unknown	2,104	18.2
None	81	.7
Total	11,548	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

Firearms were more likely to be involved in robberies or aggravated assaults than any other school violence offense (note: both murders involved handguns). Firearms were involved in 16.3% of robberies and 6.3% of aggravated assaults. However, with the exception of intimidation and murder, personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) were the most common weapons of choice for each violent offense.

Graph 1

Source: SCIBRS

Victim Characteristics

There were a total of 14,070 victims of school violence during the 1996 through 1998 time period. Victims ranged in age from very young children to the elderly. The median age was 15 years of age and the mean was 20 years of age. Although this finding may be related to the ages of students, it is worth noting that 26.9% of all victims were either under five years of age, or over 18 years of age, i.e., outside the typical age range of students in the K-12 grade range.

Table 6

School Violence Victims by Age Group

Age Group	Number	Pct.
0 to 4	192	1.4
5 to 9	451	3.2
10 to 12	1,789	12.7
13 to 16	6,541	46.5
17 to 18	1,494	10.6
19 to 24	457	3.2
25 to 34	1,015	7.2
35 to 44	1,034	7.3
45 to 54	913	6.5
55 to 64	164	1.2
65 & older	20	.1
Total	14,070	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

Males made up 53.3% of the school violence victims. Males were more often victims of murder, robbery and aggravated assault than females. Females were more often victims of violent sex offenses (rape, forcible sodomy, forcible fondling and sexual assault with an object) than males.

Table 7

School Violence Victims by Sex

Sex	Number	Pct.
Female	6,533	46.4
Male	7,498	53.3
Unknown	39	.3
Total	14,070	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

School violence victims were more often white than black. There were small numbers of victims who were identified as Asian or Native American. Race was unknown for .7% of all school violence victims.

Table 8

School Violence Victims by Race

Race	Number	Pct.
Asian	29	.2
Black	6,832	48.6
Native American	9	.1
White	7,099	50.5
Unknown	101	.7
Total	14,070	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

In terms of race/sex categorization, white males constituted the largest proportion of victims, followed by black males, white females and black females.

Table 9

School Violence Victims by Race/Sex Category

Race	Number	Pct.
Asian Female	9	.1
Asian Male	20	.1
Black Female	3,196	22.9
Black Male	3,635	26.1
Native American Female	5	<.1
Native American Male	3	<.1
White Female	3,277	23.6
White Male	3,822	27.4
Total	13,967	100.0

Note: For purposes of this chart, cases where race or sex was unknown were excluded.

Source: SCIBRS

Although victimization was distributed relatively evenly among the major race/sex categories, some noteworthy differences were observed. In terms of age, white females had a mean age of 23.58 years, compared to 20.43 for white males, 18.53 years for black females and 17.58 years for black males. The finding noted earlier, that females were more likely to be victims of violent forcible sex offenses and that males were more likely to be victims of other violent offenses, held true across racial categories.

Victim ethnicity was determined by the reporting officer. Ethnicity consisted of three categories, Hispanic, non-Hispanic and unknown, and was reported independent from racial category. Of the 13,787 victims of school violence, only 29 (.2%) were reported to have been Hispanic.

Victims were likely to have known, but not be related to the offender. The NIBRS victim offender relationship category, acquaintance, accounted for 69.2% of all victims. NIBRS allows for 26 victim/offender relationships. For the purpose of this analysis, the NIBRS categories were collapsed to create a new set of categories: family relationships, known to victim, romantic relationships, work relationships and not known to the victim. Family relationships were operationally defined as the victim being the spouse, common-law spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, in-law, stepparent, stepchild, stepsibling, other family member (aunt, cousin, nephew, etc.) or ex-spouse. Known to victim relationships consist of acquaintances, friends, neighbors, babysittees, children of boyfriends or girlfriends and persons who were otherwise known to the victim. Romantic relations were defined as victims who were the boyfriends, girlfriends of the offender, or who were participants in a homosexual relationship with the offender. Work relations were defined as employers or employees of the offender. The not known category consisted of victims who did not know the offender or where the relationship was unknown.

Table 10

School Violence Victims by Victim/Offender Relationship

Relationship	Number	Pct.
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Family	331	2.4
Known to Victim	11,522	81.9
Romantic	175	1.2
Work	9	.1
Not Known	2,033	14.4
Total	14,070	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

The extent of victim injury is determined and reported by the officer taking the incident report. It is important to note that the officer's assessment of the type and extent of injury does not constitute a medical diagnosis, nor is there provision for following up and correcting any reported data concerning undetected or misinterpreted injuries. The most frequently reported injury category was no injury, which was reported in more than half the cases. The next most frequently reported type of injury was a minor injury, reported in nearly one quarter of the cases. The injury category most often reported was none with 56%. The next most often reported injury category was minor injury with 24.2%.

Table 11

School Violence Victims by Injury

Injury	Number	Pct.
Broken Bones	68	.5
Internal Injury	55	.4
Severe Laceration	264	1.9
Minor Injury	3,410	24.2
Loss of Teeth	17	.1
Unconsciousness	2,175	15.5
Other Major Injury	201	1.4
None	7,877	56.0
Total	14,067	100.0

Note: One case was missing injury data. Injuries were not listed for the two murders.

Source: SCIBRS

Arrestee Characteristics

Arrest data are reported whenever a person has been processed by arrest, apprehension, warrant service or Uniform Traffic Ticket. Importantly, arrest data are also reported whenever juveniles are taken into custody, whether they are charged or not (SLED, 1997). There were a total of 7,467 arrestees associated with school violence incidents from 1996 to 1998. The largest offense category for which people were arrested in connection with school violence was simple assault. This offense accounted for 70.9 percent of all arrests. The least frequently occurring offense was murder, with two arrests.

Table 12

School Violence Arrestees by Offense

Injury	Number	Pct.
Aggravated Assault	979	13.1
Forcible Fondling	158	2.1
Forcible Sodomy	23	.3
Intimidation	879	11.8
Murder	2	<.1
Rape	34	.5
Simple Assault	5,276	70.9
Sexual Assault w Object	6	.1
Total	7,467	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

The majority (64.5%) of school violence arrestees were in the 13 to 16 years of age group. The next most commonly occurring age group was the 17 to 18 years of age group (16.3%). Only a small percentage (7%) of school violence arrestees

was outside the 5 to 18 years of age range. Juveniles (16 years old or younger) accounted for 76.8% of school violence arrestees. Juveniles outnumbered adult arrestees in every offense category other than murder. Both murder arrestees were adults.

Table 13

School Violence Arrestees by Age Group

Age Group	Number	Pct.
0 to 4	1	<.1
5 to 9	94	1.3
10 to 12	825	11.0
13 to 16	4,818	64.5
17 to 18	1,214	16.3
19 to 24	228	3.1
25 to 34	131	1.8
35 to 44	90	1.2
45 to 54	46	.6
55 to 64	16	.2
65 & older	4	.1
Total	7,467	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

School violence arrestees were predominately male, and males constituted a majority within each offense category. Males accounted for 71.5% of school violence arrestees. Males were arrested most frequently for simple assault, that offense accounting for 79.1% of male arrests. Males accounted for 97.2% of school violence arrestees where the offense involved sexual violence. The offenses for which females were most often arrested were aggravated assault where they accounted for 24.9% of the total and simple assault, where they accounted for 31.9% of the arrests. The two offense categories of simple and aggravated assault accounted for 90.5% of female school violence arrestees. School violence occurred primarily within sex categories, 78.2% of victims and arrestees were of the same sex category.

Table 14

School Violence Arrestees by Sex

Sex	Number	Pct.
Female	2,130	28.5
Male	5,337	71.5
Total	7,467	100.0

Source: SCIBRS

School violence arrestees were more often black (71.5%) than white (28.5%). Asians and Native Americans accounted for less than 1 percent of all school violence arrestees. School violence was largely intra-racial, 76.1% of victims and arrestees were members of the same racial category.

Table 15

School Violence Arrestees by Race

Race	Number	Pct.
Asian	19	.3
Black	5,439	73.1
Native American	3	<.1
White	2,005	26.8
Total	7,466	100.0

Note: There was one case in which arrestee race was unknown.

Source: SCIBRS

Black males constituted the single largest group of arrestees for school violence by race/sex categorization, followed by black females, white males and white females respectively. Asian and Native American males and females combined accounted for .3% of total arrestees.

Table 16

School Violence Arrestees by Race/Sex Category

Race	Number	Pct.
Asian Female	2	<.1
Asian Male	17	.2
Black Female	1,615	21.8
Black Male	3,797	51.3
Native American Female	1	<.1
Native American Male	2	<.1
White Female	501	6.8
White Male	1,488	20.1
Total	7,466	100.0

Note: This chart does not include one arrestee where race was unknown.

Source: SCIBRS

Within race/sex categorizations for arrestees, there were some noteworthy differences in age. Black males, black females and white males were similar in terms of age, having average ages of 15.35 years, 15.85 years and 15.95 years respectively. However, white female arrestees averaged 17.14 years of age.

Very few Hispanics were reported as arrestees in school violence. Twenty-five arrestees were Hispanic (.3%), 6,956 (93.2%) school violence arrestees were categorized as non-Hispanic, and 486 (6.5%) were reported as being of unknown ethnicity.