

Student Perceptions of Violence

Summary of Preliminary Findings

149801

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Central Toronto Youth Services

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September, 1993

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Introduction

Violence in schools is an emotionally charged issue that creates real challenges for open and honest dialogue. Media images of violent urban inner-city American schools are worrisome and can leave many people wondering if we are looking at our own future. In the face of these images it is easy to lose sight of the fact that schools are not *the* hotbed of violence in Canadian society. They are, however, a stage upon which the stresses and strains and violence prevalent in wider society play out in the relationships between students and, more frequently, between students and staff.

There can be little doubt that we have a problem with violence in schools in this country. It is interesting to note that arguments concerning youth violence are often coined in terms of whether we are experiencing an increase in reporting or a real increase in numbers. The fact that there is any violence at all in schools seems to escape most peoples' attention. And, according to both students, educators, and police we are not coping effectively with the level of violence we already have (Mathews, 1993).

Violence frightens most of us and the vulnerable most of all. Adults easily lose sight of the fact that children and youth are dependent on us for more than just sustenance. Young people also look to us for protection and safety. This is equally true in schools. Caring for others is an enormous responsibility and a challenging task under the best of circumstances. Teachers and school officials face enormous pressures and difficulties as they attempt to cope with a rapidly changing Canadian society and student population. Sometimes they lose sight of students' emotional and other needs. Without a forum or process to bring them together teachers and students often stop communicating. When students feel they are not heard by educators they eventually become mistrustful and live in angry silence or take matters into their own hands.

Parents, too, are often out of touch with children's fear of violence. Parents are often exhausted and over-stressed and, in the absence of resources and supports to help them raise their children, frequently look to the schools for assistance. Parents sometimes place enormous, if not unrealistic, expectations on schools to be responsible for socializing and disciplining their children. Schools cannot be all things to all students and the weight of those expectations may be over burdening teachers and administrators and creating schools that have the potential to become unsafe. When teachers and parents cannot find a way to work together to support and assist students and each other in addressing violence in schools everyone loses, including the community.

The purpose of conducting the Student Perceptions of Violence Survey was:

1. *To support and encourage community dialogue on youth violence and violence in schools.*
2. *To add students' voices to the debate and discourse on youth violence and violence in schools.*
3. *To support the process of building partnerships and communication bridges between students, parents, schools, police, social services, and the wider youth-serving community.*
4. *To support and encourage the development of the "open community school" with supports and services for both victims and perpetrators of youth violence, parents, and educators.*

Seven School Boards in southern Ontario were invited to participate in the survey; two accepted. The questions and issues raised in the survey are serious and challenging. The School Boards and school officials who participated in the study deserve special acknowledgment for their commitment to their students.

The study was conducted in two middle level schools. The results presented in Parts I and II of this report are based on the responses of over 850 students to the Student Perceptions of Violence Survey conducted in each of the schools. The survey was designed to solicit students' opinions about the nature and extent of violence in their school. School 'A' was the pilot school for the survey (see Appendix A). Students in School 'A' were in grades 6, 7, and 8. Students in School 'B' were in grades 7, 8, and 9. Questions on the survey for School 'B', though mostly similar, were not all identical (see Appendix B). Slight improvements in wording and the addition of more questions may have yielded some differences in terms of reported perceptions. However, despite these differences in the survey questions, students' responses were remarkably consistent between the two schools. Because the surveys differed slightly, the results are presented in different parts of the report. A brief summary and comparison of responses from students in both schools is provided at the end.

Findings in the study are not necessarily generalizable to all students, schools, and communities in Canada. Also, the research should be considered exploratory, a first step in the process of opening a broader public dialogue on school violence that includes the voices of youth. The report was intended to provide a wide readership with an overall summary of the survey findings. A more detailed analysis of the data will be undertaken at a later date.

Part I

*School 'A':
Student Perceptions Of
Violence*

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Students' Perceptions of Violence And Safety From Violence At School

"Violence in schools has been around for a long time. Now I believe it could start to get out of hand and we should put a stop to it."

(Female, 13 years)

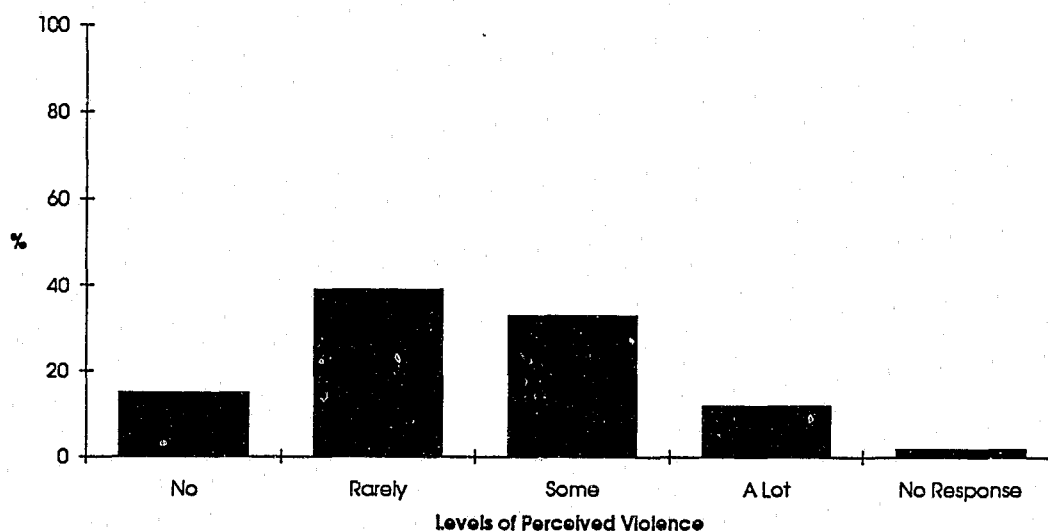
Demographics

A total of 397 students completed the questionnaire, 191 males (48%) and 203 females (51%). Three (1%) did not specify their gender. The average age of the respondents was 12 years. The range was from 10 to 13 years. The total number of students per grade level was 138, 131, 127 for grades 6, 7 and 8 respectively. One student omitted his/her grade.

Students' Perceptions of Violence in Schools

Students were asked to rate the extent to which they believed violence in schools was a problem. Approximately 45% of those responding to this question felt that there was "Some" to "A Lot" of violence in the schools. Approximately 54% stated that there was "Rarely" or "No" violence.

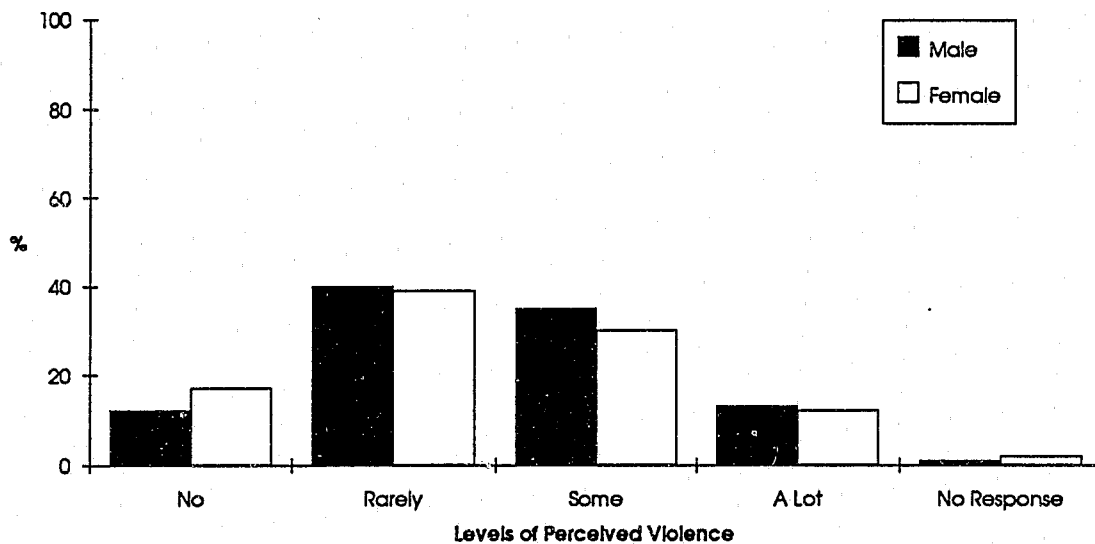
Figure 1: Students' Perceptions of Violence At School



Break Down By Gender

The responses provided by male and female students varied slightly with more male (48%) than female (42%) students indicating that there was "A Lot" or "Some" violence in their schools. Similarly, more female (56%) than male (52%) students believed that there was "Rarely" or "No" violence in their schools.

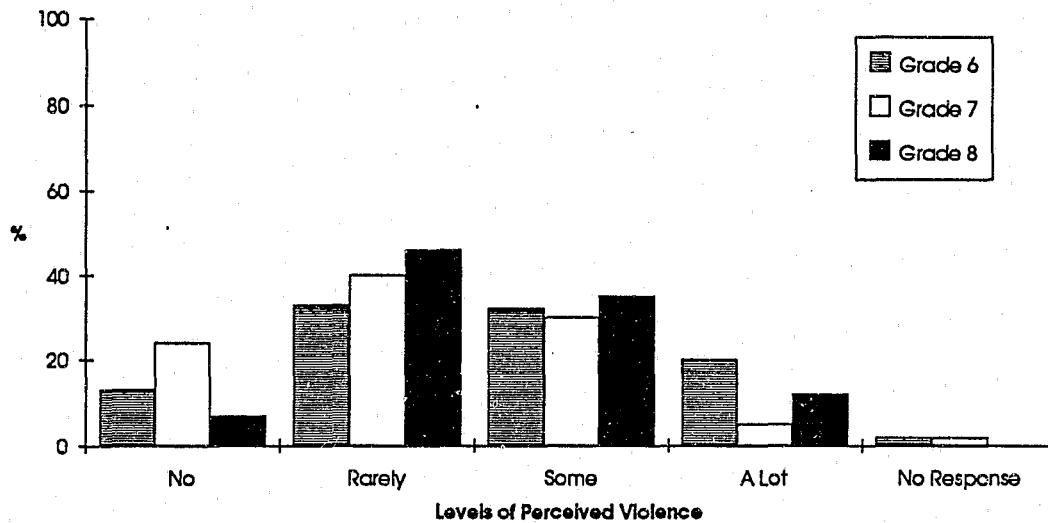
Figure 2: Students' Perceptions of Violence At School By Gender



Break Down By Grade Level

The responses of students in all three grades varied slightly. More grade 7 (64%) students believed that there was "Rarely" any violence or "No" violence at all compared to the responses of the grade 6 (46%) and grade 8 (53%) students. More grade 6 (52%) students indicated that they felt there was "Some" or "A Lot" of violence compared to the rates of grade 7 (35%) and grade 8 (47%) students.

Figure 3: Students' Perceptions of Violence At School By Grade



Generally, the grade 6 students tended to perceive a higher level of violence in schools. This may be due to the fact that they were physically the smallest and least mature individuals at school and may be picked on by older students. Grade 8 students were next highest in terms of perceiving "A Lot" of violence in school.

Approximately 64 (16%) of the students provided additional comments in response to this question. The nature of their comments are summarized below.

1. Of the 64 students who commented on this question, 28 (44%) believed that violence was a problem in the schools they had previously attended. Following are some of their comments: *"I saw three guys harass a girl, kissing her and feeling her privates"; "In one of my schools a boy got beat-up and was unconscious"; "Big students take advantage of little students."*
2. In contrast to the above views, 24 (37%) of the 64 students believed that there had been no problem with violence in the schools they previously attended. Some students felt that there was either no violence or *only* sports-related violence among participants. The following are some representative statements from this group: *"There has rarely been any violence in the schools I've attended so far"; "In football I have seen violence"; and "I think violence rarely happens".*

3. The final category is composed of a mixture of comments from the remaining 12 (19%) students. The following statements are reflective of the ideas expressed by these 12 students: *"Sometimes a little violence leads to big violence"*; *"I think if the schools put their mind to it, they could put a stop to violence"*; *"They should have a police officer in every school"*; and *"I try to stay away from it"*. This group represents a mixture of students who were either trying to avoid potential trouble, hoping that violence could be handled, or believed that a police officer could be useful in addressing problems of violence in schools.

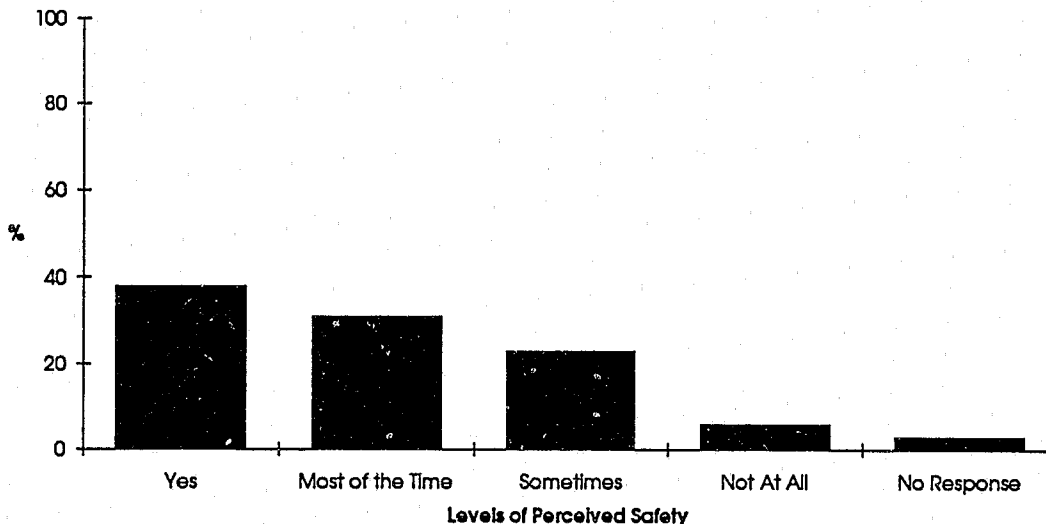
Students' Perceptions of Safety from Violence While At School

Thirty-eight per cent (152) of the students reported that "Yes" they felt safe, 31% (121) stated they felt safe "Most of the Time", 23% (91) indicated that they felt safe "Sometimes", 6% (24) did not feel safe at all, and 3% (9) did not respond.

The results can be broken down into two categories.

1. Approximately 69% (273) of the students felt that they were safe or at least felt safe "Most of the Time" while at school.
2. Twenty-nine per cent (115) of the students stated that they felt safe "Sometimes" or "Not At All" while at school.

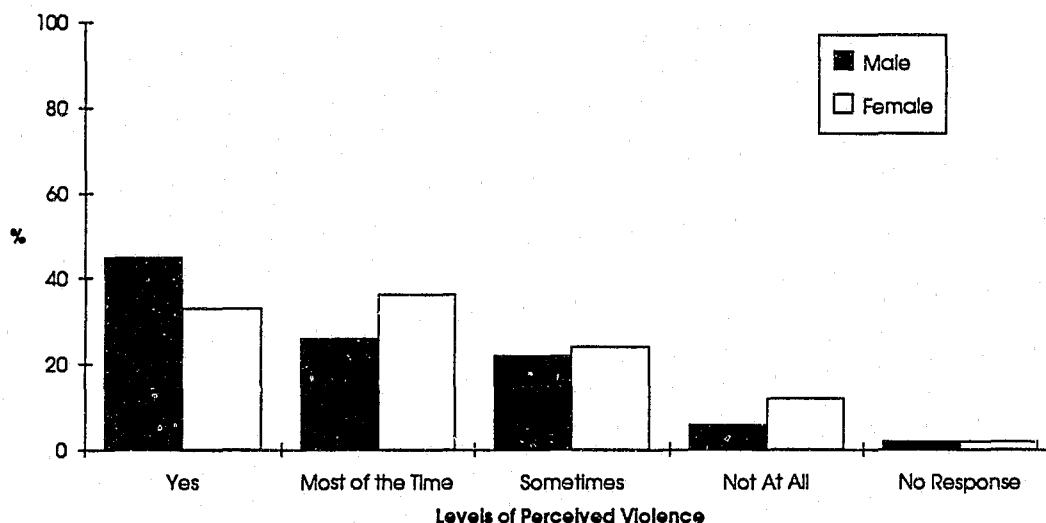
Figure 4: Students' Perceptions of Safety from Violence While At School



Break Down By Gender

Female students were slightly less likely than male students to feel safe from violence while at school. Approximately 71% (135) of the male students indicated that they felt safe at school or felt safe "Most of the Time" compared to 69% (138) of the female students. Similarly, 28% (53) of the male students felt safe from violence while at school "Sometimes" or "Not At All", and 30% (61) of the female students indicated that they felt safe "Sometimes" or "Not At All."

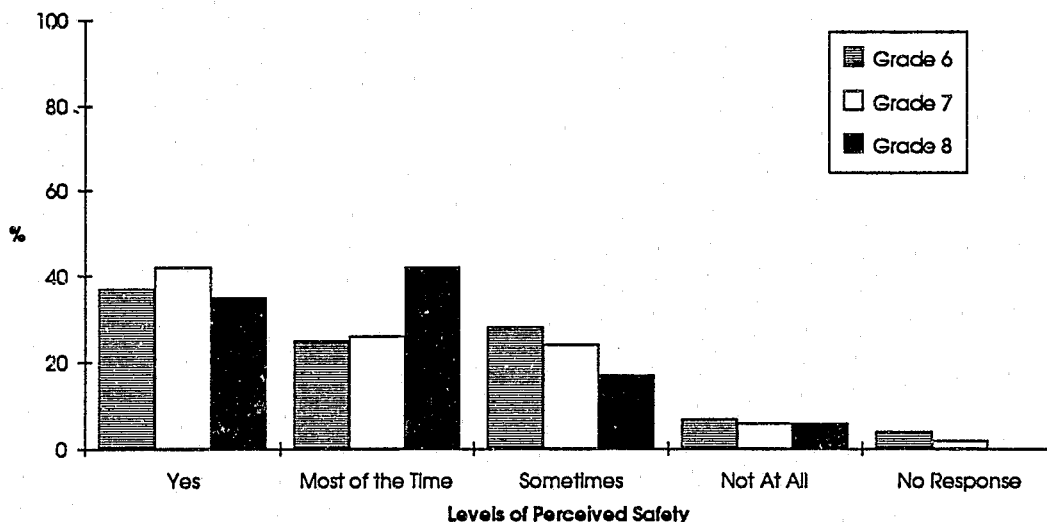
Figure 5: Students' Perceptions of Safety While At School By Gender



Break Down By Grade Level

The grade 6 students reported feeling the least safe from violence while at school. This perception is consistent with the earlier finding that grade 6 students perceived violence in school to be a bigger or more serious issue than the grade 7 and 8 students. Overall, students appeared to feel safer the higher the grade they were in. Approximately 62% (85) of the grade 6 students and 68% (89) of the grade 7 students felt safe while at school "All of the time" or "Most of the Time" compared to 77% (98) of the students in grade 8. Similarly, 35% (47) of the respondents in grade 6 and 30% (39) of the students in grade 7 indicated that they felt safe from violence while at school only "Sometimes" or "Not At All" compared to 23% (29) of grade 8 students.

Figure 6: Students' Perceptions of Safety While At School By Grade



The students were asked for additional comments on whether they felt safe from violence in schools they had previously attended. One hundred and thirty-nine (35%) students made a comment on this question. Three main points emerged concerning their perceptions of safety.

1. Approximately 35% (48) stated that the reason they felt safe was because teachers, the police officer, or friends were around them and could help them if needed.
2. Fifty (36%) stated that they did not really feel safe because they never knew when or if they would be the next target of violence.
3. Thirty-seven (27%) indicated that they felt safe because no one ever "bugged" them.

The additional comments indicate that feeling safe may be related less to whether there was actual violence and more to who was around to provide protection or if the student felt he/she could take care of him/herself.

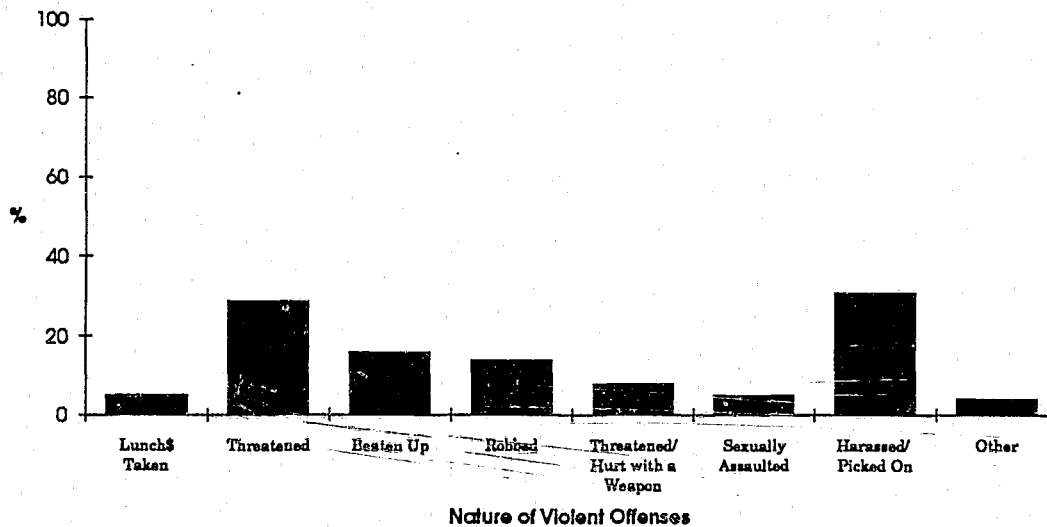
Students' Self-Reported Victimization While At School

"I am kicked and punched because I don't speak English very well."
(Female, 13 years)

Students' Self-Reported Victimization

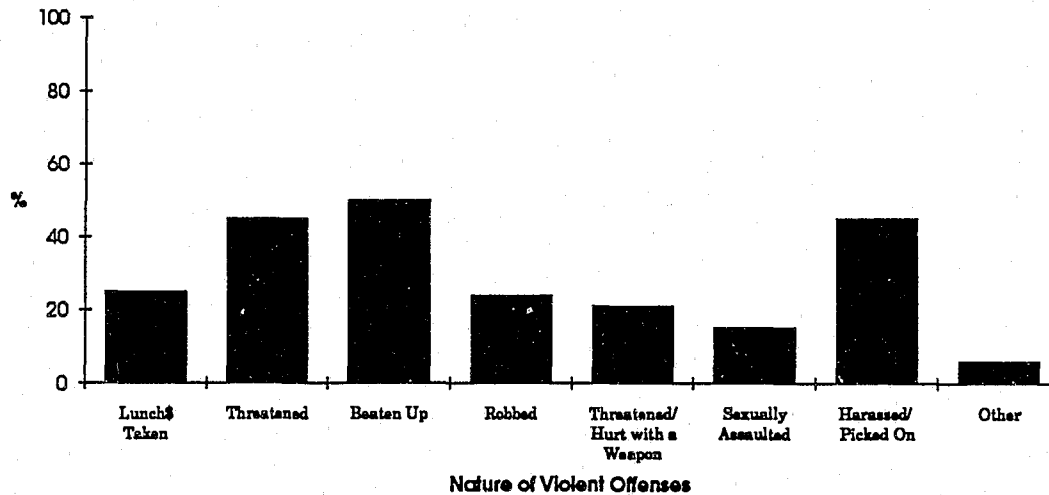
Approximately 19 (5%) of the 397 students responding to this question stated that they had had lunch money taken from them. One hundred and fourteen (29%) of the students reported that they had been threatened. Approximately 63 (16%) students had been beaten-up while in school. Fifty-seven (14%) students reported being robbed and 33 (8%) reported being hurt or threatened with a weapon. Nineteen (5%) students stated that they had been sexually assaulted and 121 (31%) reported being harassed or bullied by others while at school. In the category of "Other," 17 (4%) students had been victims of incidents, such as: verbal assault, racism, forced to do something they did not want to, extortion and blackmail.

Figure 7: Violent Offenses Committed Against Students While At School



Respondents were also asked to identify violent crimes that happened to *someone they know* while at school. Approximately 100 (25%) of the 397 students reported knowing someone who had had their lunch money taken. One hundred and seventy-seven (45%) students stated that they knew someone who had been threatened. Approximately 198 (50%) students knew someone who had been beaten-up while in school. Ninety-six (24%) students reported knowing someone who had been robbed and 83 (21%) reported knowing someone who had been hurt or threatened with a weapon. Fifty-eight (15%) students stated that they knew someone who had been sexually assaulted and 179 (45%) reported knowing someone who had been harassed or bullied by others while at school. In the category of "Other," 24 (6%) students knew someone who had been victims of other forms of violence, such as extortion.

Figure 8: Violent Offenses Committed Against Someone They Know While At School



Break Down By Grade Level

Grade 7 students appear to be experiencing more violent incidents than grade 6 and 8 students and they also reported knowing fewer other students who had been victimized.

Table 1: Self-Reported Victimization By Grade

	<i>The Student</i>			<i>Someone They Know</i>		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Lunch\$ Taken	1%	17%	7%	25%	7%	33%
2. Threatened	27%	44%	32%	39%	28%	51%
3. Beaten-up	24%	50%	11%	36%	12%	64%
4. Robbed	16%	26%	7%	14%	20%	32%
5. Threaten Weapon	9%	22%	7%	15%	9%	27%
6. Sexually Assault	7%	14%	2%	7%	5%	24%
7. Harassed/Bullied	30%	43%	25%	30%	37%	63%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=137	n=131	n=127	n=137	n=131	n=127

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 2 and Table 3 are the self-reported rates of victimization of the students themselves and someone they know broken down by gender and grade.

Table 2: Self-Reported Victimization By Gender and Grade

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Lunch\$ Taken	0%	8%	2%	2%	6%	11%
2. Threatened	35%	34%	21%	19%	31%	33%
3. Beaten-up	29%	11%	12%	19%	11%	11%
4. Robbed	22%	8%	21%	10%	5%	20%
5. Threaten Weapon	9%	5%	11%	9%	8%	9%
6. Sexually Assault	9%	0%	2%	6%	3%	7%
7. Harassed/Bullied	30%	22%	35%	32%	28%	39%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=68	n=65	n=57	n=68	n=64	n=70

The results presented in Table 2 indicate the extent to which male and female students reported being victims of violence while at school. The rates of victimization were similar for male and female students. However, there were some differences worth noting. Male students in grade 6 were more likely than female students in the same grade to be threatened, beaten-up and robbed while at school. Although female students, as a group, were more likely to be victims of sexual assault, male students in grade 6 had

the highest rate of victimization (9% in grade 6) for this category. Female students in grade 8 were more likely than male students in the same grade to: have had lunch money taken; and to have been threatened, sexually assaulted, and harassed/bullied. Female students, as a group, were more likely to report being victims of harassment and bullying.

**Table 3: Students' Reported Victimization of "Someone They Know"
By Gender and Grade**

	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Lunch\$ Taken	12%	29%	37%	24%	20%	30%
2. Threatened	41%	37%	51%	47%	42%	51%
3. Beaten-up	49%	35%	70%	53%	36%	59%
4. Robbed	25%	11%	28%	28%	17%	36%
5. Threaten Weapon	19%	15%	25%	25%	13%	29%
6. Sexually Assault	3%	5%	12%	25%	9%	33%
7. Harassed/Bullied	40%	26%	65%	47%	34%	61%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=68	n=65	n=57	n=68	n=64	n=70

Female students were more likely to know other students who had been victims of violent offenses, particularly victims of sexual assault.

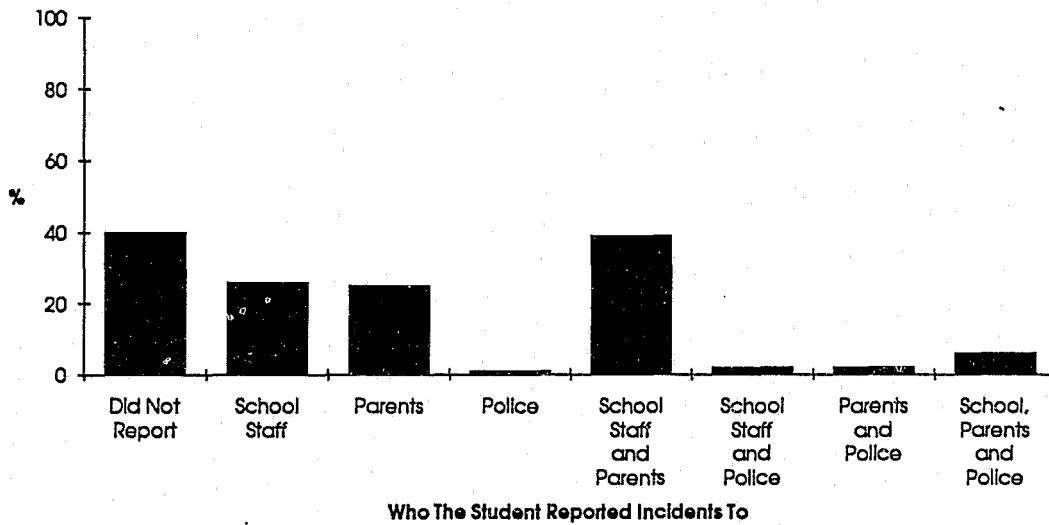
Students were asked to provide additional comments in response to this question. Approximately 95% (375) of the 397 students chose not to comment. Responses from the 5% (22) who did can be broken down into two categories.

1. A small group of students (5) indicated that they were experiencing violent incidents associated with racism.
2. The remainder of the students (17) made statements such as: "I have been forced to do things I don't want to"; "I've been bribed and blackmailed"; "Verbal assault is common"; "They keep bugging my friend because she dresses like where she comes from"; and "I have been picked on and harassed because of my name".

Reporting Rates of Violent Incidents Which Occurred At School

Students were asked if they had reported any of the above incidents, whether they had occurred to them or someone they know, to school staff, parents, or the police. Approximately 84% (335) of the 397 students indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school. Sixty per cent (201) of the students reported the incident(s). A break down of who the students were most likely to report the incidents to is provided below in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Who Students Reported Incident(s) To



Students who reported incidents to parents, teachers or police were asked to provide additional comments on what happened as a result of the disclosure. Of the 174 students who reported the incidents, 148 (85%) responded to the question. The results are grouped into six categories.

1. Fifty-two (35%) students stated that when they told one of the above adult groups, the incident was discussed with the perpetrator, but that was all.
2. Thirty-two (22%) stated that the perpetrator was dealt with in a manner that was satisfactory to the victim, such as, they had to apologize, they were charged, had bus privileges removed, etc.
3. Approximately 15% (22) of the victims indicated that nothing was done.
4. Twenty-one (14%) stated that when they told their parents some form of advice followed, such as: *"My parents told me to stay close to a teacher"; "My parents told me to stay away from them"; "When I told my parents they said I should stand up for myself"; "They told me to change my locker combination"; and "My parents said I should be more careful."*
5. Thirteen (9%) stated that the perpetrator was sent to the office and suspended and/or received a detention.
6. Approximately 5% (8) indicated that the victimization continued and that it got worse as a result of the disclosure. The following statements reflect the negative outcome which followed disclosure for these students: *"I told and they said it would never happen again but it did"; "The people got very mad and did it again"; "I got threatened more"; and "I got threatened and beat-up after"*.

Approximately 38% (127) of the 335 students who indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents also indicated that they did not report the incidents.

Break Down By Gender

Approximately 81% (154) of the male students and 80% (161) of the female students indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school. The results further indicated that 43% (66) of the male students did not report the incidents compared to 36% (58) of the female respondents.

Break Down By Grade Level

Approximately 78% (107) of students in grade 6, 75% (98) of students in grade 7 and 87% (110) of students in grade 8 reported that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents at school. Thirty-eight (36%) of the respondents in grade 6, 38% (37) in grade 7 and 46% (50) in grade 8 did not report the incidents to either the school, their parents or the police.

Students who did not report the incident(s) of victimization of either themselves or others were asked to explain why. Of the total 127 students who did not report the incident(s), 89% (113) provided explanations.

1. Approximately 36% (41) responded that they were scared that if they reported the incident, the violence would happen again or may even be worse the next time.
2. Twenty-nine (26%) indicated that the violence they had experienced was not a "big deal" and that it was not serious enough to report.
3. Twenty-one (19%) stated that the incident involved someone they knew and that it was none of their business. Some did not want to be involved and others did not know why they had not reported the incident.
4. Ten (9%) students stated that they did not want to get anyone in trouble with parents or staff so they did not report the violence to anyone.
5. Approximately 5% (6) of the respondents reported that they just got even with the perpetrators and that they could handle the problem in their own way.
6. Six (5%) students did not report to any adults because they believed that nothing would be done or that they would not be believed.

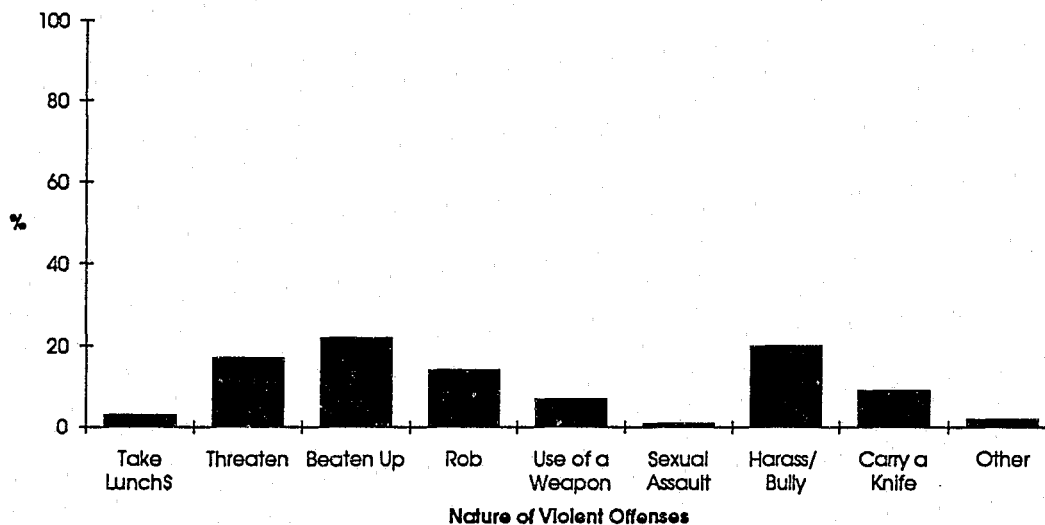
Violent Offenses Committed By Students

"My friend carries a knife to school"
(Female, 13 years)

Violent Offenses Committed By Students

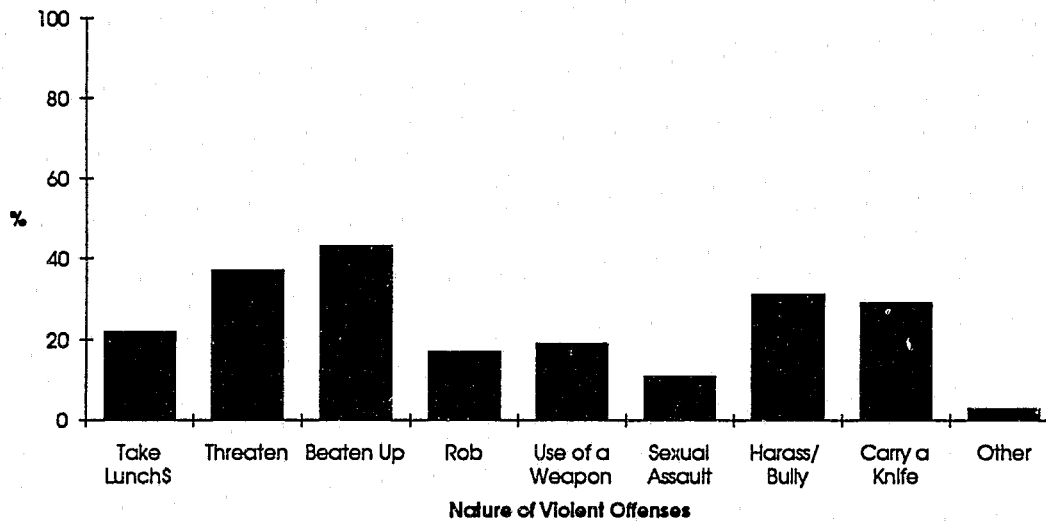
Students were asked to identify violent offenses *they had committed* while at school. Approximately 13 (3%) of the 397 students responding to the survey reported that they had taken lunch money from other students. Sixty-seven (17%) of the respondents stated that they had threatened someone while at school. An even greater number of students, approximately 89 (22%), indicated that they had assaulted or "beaten someone up." Approximately 14 (4%) of the students stated that they had robbed someone, while 28 (7%) of the young people indicated that they had threatened or hurt someone with a weapon on school grounds. One student reported that he/she had sexually assaulted someone while at school. However, 80 of the 397 respondents (approximately 20%) admitted to having harassed or bullied someone and 34 (9%) stated that they carried a knife for protection.

Figure 10: Violent Offenses Committed By Students



Students were also asked to identify violent offenses which had been *committed by someone they know* while at school. Approximately 87 (22%) of the students knew someone who had taken lunch money from someone. One hundred and forty-seven (37%) of the students reported knowing someone who had threatened someone. In addition, 172 (43%) of the respondents indicated that they knew someone who had assaulted or "beaten someone up." Approximately 67 (17%) students knew someone who had robbed someone and 76 (19%) of the students stated that they knew someone who had threatened or hurt someone with a

Figure 11: Violent Offenses Committed By Someone They Know At School



weapon on school property. Forty-three (11%) of the students indicated that they knew someone who had sexually assaulted other students while at school. One hundred and twenty-one (31%) of the 397 respondents knew someone who had harassed or bullied someone and 115 (29%) knew someone who carried a knife for protection. Approximately 10 (3%) of the students stated that "Other" violent offenses had been committed by someone they know on school grounds.

Break Down By Grade Level

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that grade 6 and grade 8 students reported committing more violent offenses than students in grade 7 with students in grade 8 having the highest rates. The highest categories appear to be assaults or "beating someone up" and "harassing/bullying," whether committed by the student themselves or someone they know.

**Table 4: Violent Offenses Committed by Students
or by Someone They Know**

	<i>The Student</i>			<i>Someone They Know</i>		
	<i>Grade 6</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 6</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>
1. Taken Lunch \$	2%	4%	5%	19%	16%	31%
2. Threatened	18%	8%	24%	35%	28%	47%
3. Beaten Someone Up	28%	11%	29%	49%	25%	56%
4. Rob	7%	0%	3%	20%	8%	24%
5. Use of Weapon	9%	4%	9%	20%	8%	28%
6. Sexual Assault	0%	0%	1%	15%	5%	12%
7. Harass/Bully	20%	11%	30%	34%	16%	42%
8. Carry a Knife	10%	3%	13%	31%	20%	35%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	<i>n=137</i>	<i>n=131</i>	<i>n=127</i>	<i>n=137</i>	<i>n=131</i>	<i>n=127</i>

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 5 are the self-reported rates of perpetration of violent offenses while at school broken down by gender and grade. In Table 6 are the reported rates of perpetration of violent offenses at school committed by someone the students know broken down by gender and grade.

**Table 5: Violent Offenses Committed by Students
By Gender and Grade**

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	<i>Grade 6</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 6</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>
1. Taken Lunch \$	2%	2%	7%	2%	5%	3%
2. Threatened	22%	11%	33%	13%	6%	17%
3. Beaten Someone Up	40%	15%	49%	16%	6%	13%
4. Rob	7%	0%	4%	7%	0%	3%
5. Use of Weapon	7%	6%	2%	10%	2%	6%
6. Sexual Assault	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
7. Harass/Bully	25%	12%	40%	16%	9%	21%
8. Carry a Knife	9%	5%	21%	10%	2%	7%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	<i>n=68</i>	<i>n=65</i>	<i>n=57</i>	<i>n=68</i>	<i>n=64</i>	<i>n=70</i>

Male students were more likely overall to report being perpetrators of violent offenses at this school. In particular, male students were more likely than female students to report committing the following violent offenses: threaten someone; beat someone up; and harass or bully someone. However, female students were just as likely to report robbing another student and were more likely to report threatening or hurting someone with a weapon than were male students. The results also indicate that the grade 7 students, both male and female, were less likely to report being perpetrators of violent crime than the grade 6 and grade 8 students.

**Table 6: Violent Offenses Committed by Someone They Know
By Gender and Grade**

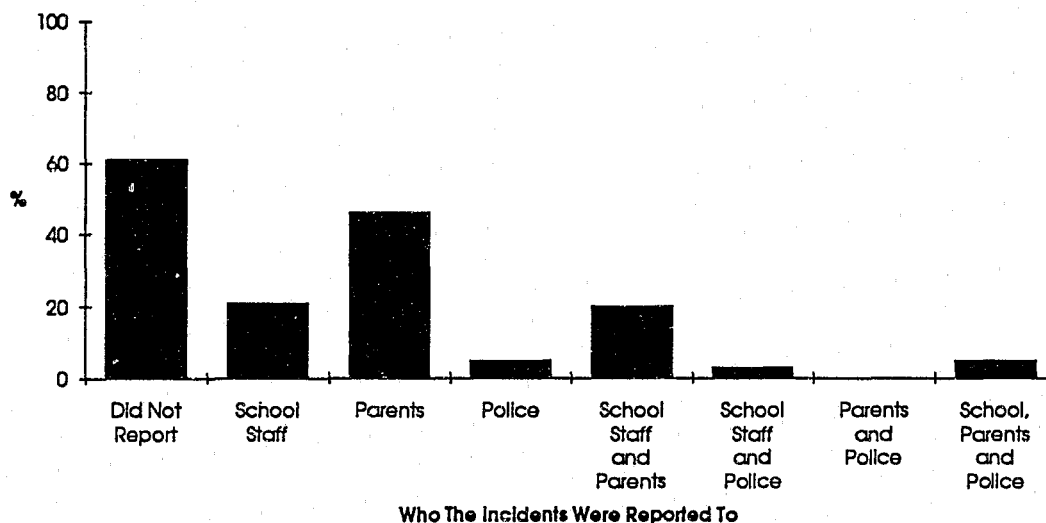
	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Taken Lunch \$	22%	17%	37%	16%	14%	26%
2. Threaten	38%	26%	56%	35%	28%	39%
3. Beaten Someone Up	56%	22%	65%	43%	28%	49%
4. Rob	21%	11%	21%	19%	5%	26%
5. Use of Weapon	15%	9%	33%	27%	8%	24%
6. Sexual Assault	9%	6%	5%	22%	5%	17%
7. Harass/Bully	34%	14%	49%	34%	19%	36%
8. Carry a Knife	34%	22%	40%	29%	19%	31%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=68	n=65	n=57	n=68	n=64	n=70

The results presented in Table 6 indicate the extent to which male and female students knew someone who had committed a violent offense while at school. The percentages found between the male and female students were similar. The only remarkable difference is the fact that the female students were more likely to know someone who had committed a sexual assault than the male students. As indicated in other tables, the grade 7 students, both male and female, were less likely to know someone who had committed a violent offense while at school. Male students in grade 8 were most likely to know someone who had committed a violent offense while on school property.

Reporting Rates of Violent Incidents Committed By Students At School

Students were asked if any of the above incidents had been reported to school staff, parents, and police. Approximately 71% (282) of the 397 respondents indicated that they or someone they knew had committed violent offenses while at school. Thirty-eight per cent (107) of the students reported the incident(s). A break down of who the students were most likely to report the incidents to is provided below in Figure 12. Approximately 7% (21) of the respondents did not know if the incidents had been reported.

Figure 12: Who The Incidents Were Reported To



Students who indicated that incidents had been reported to parents, school staff or police were asked to comment on what happened as a result. Of the 89 students who indicated that incidents had been reported, 52 (58%) responded to the question. Examples of their responses are presented below.

1. Approximately 19% (10) of the respondents indicated that they or someone else reported the incident or discussed why it was reported, such as: *"Told them to help me"* or *"Because I thought that it would be safer if they knew"*.
2. Twenty-eight (54%) respondents indicated that some action had been taken as a result of the incident having been reported. The action taken was often suspension or grounding, but most respondents simply indicated that the perpetrator *"got in trouble"*.
3. Seven (14%) students reported that they had told their parents and were offered some advice on how to deal with the situation, such as *"Told me never to walk with these people"*; *"Don't go near the person"*; or *"Told me if they did something to you then its alright to do it back to them"*.
4. Approximately 13% (7) of the students indicated that nothing happened as a result of the incident having been reported or were unsatisfied with the response.

Students who did not report incidents were asked to indicate why. One hundred and seventy-nine of the students responded to the question. Their responses are summarized below:

1. Approximately 13% (24) of the students indicated that they did not report the incident(s) because they did not want to get themselves or others into trouble.
2. Eighty-two (46%) of the young people stated that they were not directly involved in any of the incidents and therefore did not report them.
3. Twenty-eight (16%) of the respondents indicated that they did not report the incident(s) because they did not want to become involved, such as: *"It was none of my business to tell someone"*; or *"I didn't want to get involved, I thought it wasn't my problem"*.
4. Thirty (17%) students stated that they were afraid of what might happen to them if they reported the incident, such as: *"The person might threaten me"*; *"I was afraid"*; or *"I would get beaten-up"*.
5. Finally, 11% (20) of the respondents did not report the incident(s) because they believed that the incident was not important enough to report or they felt that nothing would be done if they reported it: *"They would only make a big deal about it"*; *"It wasn't so important"*; or *"Because it would keep happening"*.

Relationship Between Being A Victim & Being A Perpetrator

Break Down By Grade Level

Table 7 presents data which indicates the extent to which the students reported being victims or perpetrators of violent crimes while in school. The information is broken down according to grade and nature of violent offense. A between-group comparison indicates that the students in grade 7 had the highest rate of reported *victimization* for each violent offense. Grade 8 students had the highest rate of *committing* violent crimes with the exception of "robbing" where the grade 6 students had a slightly higher rate. A within-group comparison shows that grade 6 and grade 7 students were more likely to report being victims of violent crime than perpetrators, particularly those in grade 7. This finding is surprising given that earlier results indicated that the grade 7 students felt the most safe and felt that violence in school was not a big issue. The results from the grade 8 students' surveys indicated that they were just as likely to report being victims as perpetrators.

Table 7: Violent Offenses Committed and Experienced by Students

	Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8	
	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
1. Lunch\$ Taken	1%	2%	17%	4%	7%	5%
2. Threatened	27%	18%	44%	8%	32%	24%
3. Beaten Someone Up	24%	28%	50%	11%	11%	29%
4. Robbed	16%	7%	26%	0%	7%	3%
5. Threaten Weapon	9%	9%	22%	4%	7%	9%
6. Sexually Assault	7%	0%	14%	0%	2%	1%
7. Harassed/Bullied	30%	20%	43%	11%	25%	30%
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	n=137	n=137	n=131	n=131	n=127	n=127

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 8 and Table 9 are the self-reported rates of victimization and perpetration broken down by gender and grade.

Table 8: Violent Offenses Committed and Experienced by Male Students

	Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8	
	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
1. Lunch\$ Taken	0%	2%	8%	2%	2%	7%
2. Threatened	35%	22%	34%	11%	21%	33%
3. Beaten Someone Up	29%	40%	11%	15%	12%	49%
4. Robbed	22%	7%	8%	0%	21%	4%
5. Threaten Weapon	9%	7%	5%	6%	11%	2%
6. Sexually Assault	9%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%
7. Harassed/Bullied	30%	25%	22%	12%	35%	40%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=68	n=68	n=65	n=65	n=57	n=57

Table 9: Violent Offenses Committed and Experienced by Female Students

	<i>Grade 6</i>		<i>Grade 7</i>		<i>Grade 8</i>	
	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Perpetrator</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Perpetrator</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Perpetrator</i>
1. Lunch\$ Taken	2%	2%	6%	5%	11%	3%
2. Threatened	19%	13%	31%	6%	33%	17%
3. Beaten Someone Up	19%	16%	11%	6%	11%	13%
4. Robbed	10%	7%	5%	0%	20%	3%
5. Threaten Weapon	9%	10%	8%	2%	9%	6%
6. Sexually Assault	6%	0%	3%	0%	7%	0%
7. Harassed/Bullied	32%	16%	28%	9%	39%	21%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	<i>n=68</i>	<i>n=68</i>	<i>n=64</i>	<i>n=64</i>	<i>n=70</i>	<i>n=70</i>

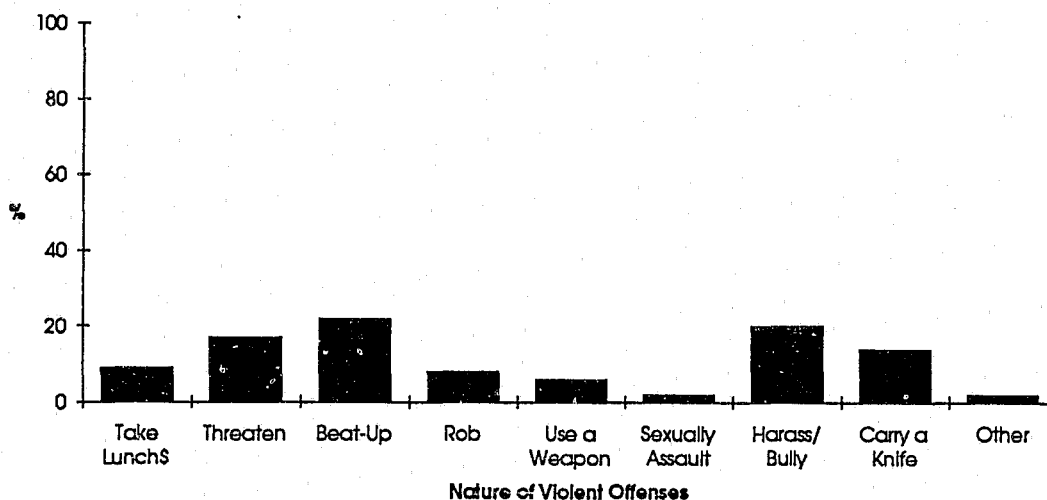
The data presented in Table 8 and Table 9 indicate that the female students were almost always more likely to report being a victim of violent crime than a perpetrator. However, there were two instances where this is not the case. Grade 6 female students were slightly more likely to report being a perpetrator of threatening someone with a weapon than a victim of the same offense and grade 8 female students were also slightly more likely to report beating someone up than report being beaten-up by someone. Male students in grades 6 and 7 were more likely to report being a victim of violent crime than a perpetrator, but the male students in grade 8 were more likely to report being a perpetrator than a victim.

Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"

"I would do more (violent crimes if I thought I could get away with it)."
(Female, 11 years)

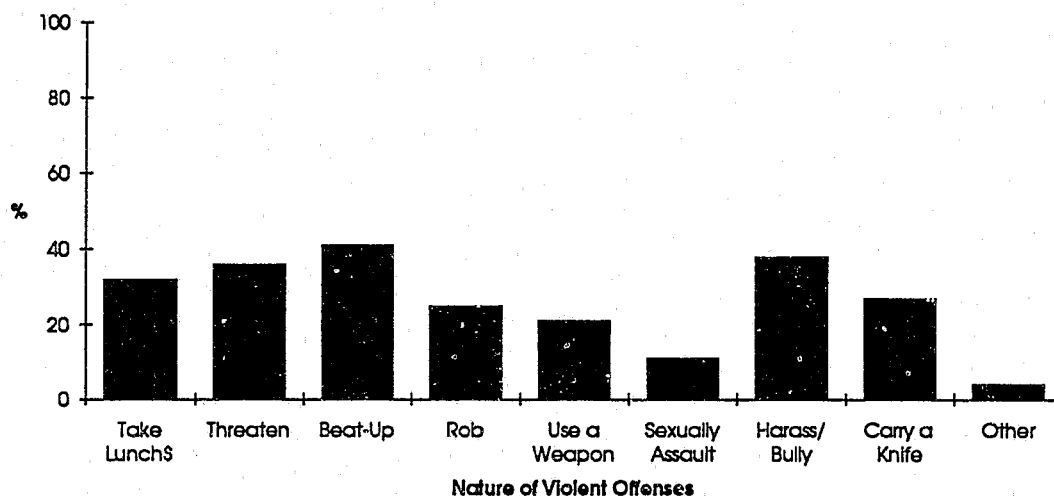
Students were asked to identify violent offenses *they would commit while at school if they thought they could get away with it*. Figure 13 presents the students' responses to this question. Approximately 36 (9%) of the 397 students responding to the survey indicated that they would take lunch money from another student. Sixty-seven (17%) of the respondents stated that they would threaten someone while at school. An even greater number of students, approximately 86 (22%), indicated that they would assault or "beat someone up" while at school. Approximately 30 (8%) students stated that they would rob someone, while 24 (6%) of the young people indicated that they would threaten or hurt someone with a weapon on school grounds. Eight students (2%) indicated that they would sexually assault someone. Seventy-nine of the 397 respondents (approximately 20%) admitted that they would harass or bully someone at school and 55 (14%) stated that they would carry a knife for protection.

Figure 13: Percentage of Students Who Would Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"



Students were also asked to identify violent offenses which would be committed by someone they know while at school if they thought they could get away with it. Approximately 127 (32%) students knew someone who would take lunch money from someone at school. One hundred and forty-one (36%) of the students knew someone who would threaten someone. In addition, 163 (41%) of the respondents indicated that they knew someone who would assault or "beat someone up." Approximately 98 (25%) students reported knowing someone who would rob someone and 84 (21%) of the students stated that they knew someone who would threaten or hurt someone with a weapon on school property if they thought they could get away with it. Forty-three (11%) of the students indicated that they knew someone who would sexually assault another student(s). One hundred and forty-nine (38%) of the 397 respondents knew someone who would harass or bully someone and 109 (27%) knew someone who would carry a knife for protection if they thought they could get away with it.

Figure 14: Percentage of Students Who Know Someone Who Would Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"



Break Down By Grade Level

The grade by grade breakdown for this question is presented in Table 10. Grade 6 and grade 8 students reported higher rates of committing violent offenses than grade 7 students if they thought they could get away with it, with students in grade 8 reporting the highest rates. Table 10 also indicates that more students knew of someone who would commit violent acts if they could get away with it than they themselves would commit. The highest reporting of potential violent crime rates were for assaults and harassing/bullying, whether they would be committed by the student themselves or someone they know.

**Table 10: Percentage of Students Who Would Commit Violent Offenses
"If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"
By Grade Level**

	<i>The Student</i>			<i>Someone They Know</i>		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Taken Lunch \$	7%	8%	12%	33%	20%	43%
2. Threaten	18%	12%	22%	40%	21%	44%
3. Beat Someone Up	25%	11%	30%	45%	25%	54%
4. Rob	10%	6%	7%	28%	15%	32%
5. Use a Weapon	7%	3%	8%	24%	15%	24%
6. Sexually Assault	2%	0%	5%	13%	8%	12%
7. Harass/Bully	18%	10%	33%	37%	25%	50%
7. Carry a Knife	16%	5%	21%	30%	15%	38%
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	n=137	n=131	n=127	n=137	n=131	n=127

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Tables 11 and 12 are the percentage of students who reported that they would commit violent offenses or reported knowing someone who would commit violent offenses at school "if they thought they could get away with it" by gender and grade.

**Table 11: Percentage of Students Who Would Commit Violent Offenses
"If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"
By Gender and Grade**

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Taken Lunch \$	7%	2%	7%	7%	8%	11%
2. Threaten	21%	11%	33%	15%	5%	19%
3. Beat Someone Up	34%	15%	49%	16%	6%	17%
4. Rob	9%	0%	4%	10%	5%	4%
5. Use a Weapon	7%	6%	12%	7%	0%	6%
6. Sexually Assault	2%	0%	2%	2%	0%	3%
7. Harass/Bully	18%	12%	40%	18%	11%	29%
7. Carry a Knife	16%	5%	21%	16%	5%	16%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=68	n=65	n=57	n=68	n=64	n=70

The data in Table 11 indicates that there were no remarkable differences between the reported rates *committed* by students (Table 5) and the reported rates of violent offenses that students *would commit* if they thought they could get away with it. It is surprising to note, however, that female students reported that they *would commit* more violent crime if they thought they could get away with it than they actually reported committing (Table 5), while the male students reported that they *would commit* as much or even less. As indicated in Table 11, male students would be more likely than female students to threaten someone and beat someone up if they thought they could get away with it. Grade 7 students, both male and female, would be less likely to commit violent offenses even if they thought they could get away with it than the grade 6 and grade 8 students.

Table 12: Percentage of Students Who Knew Someone Who Would Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It" By Gender and Grade

	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1. Taken Lunch \$	37%	26%	37%	29%	14%	44%
2. Threaten	43%	22%	56%	38%	22%	44%
3. Beat Someone Up	46%	28%	65%	44%	23%	46%
4. Rob	32%	15%	21%	24%	16%	34%
5. Use a Weapon	24%	15%	33%	25%	14%	20%
6. Sexually Assault	13%	8%	5%	13%	8%	14%
7. Harass/Bully	41%	28%	49%	34%	23%	43%
7. Carry a Knife	34%	15%	40%	27%	14%	34%
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	n=68	n=65	n=57	n=68	n=64	n=70

Grade 7 students, both male and female, were less likely to know someone who would commit a violent offense while at school even if they thought they could get away with it.

Students' Perceptions' of Responses to Violence in Schools

*"The schools that I have attended in the past have just
pushed violence under the rug."
(Female, 13 years)*

Students' Satisfaction Concerning Adult Response to Violent Incidents at School

Students were asked if they were happy with the way violence was dealt with in their schools in the past. Two hundred and eleven (53%) of the 397 students who responded to the question indicated that they liked the way violence was handled, 148 (37%) stated that they did not and 38 (10%) did not comment.

When asked to provide additional comments on how well they believed violence was handled in the past, approximately 23% (93) of the students responded. Their comments have been broken down into three categories.

1. Fifty-six (60%) students stated that they believed violence was not taken as seriously as it should be or handled the way they hoped it would have been. *"I felt that they didn't care if violence happened, they (teachers) would just tell them not to do it again"; "Because teachers don't care and I wished they cared because my friend got hurt"; "The staff didn't do anything"; "It's pretty good, but I think we have to be more strict"; "We could do better. A stronger system would help. More assemblies, videos and talking about violence and how to stop it in schools would be good".*
2. Approximately 22% (20) felt that violence was being handled well. The following comments reflect these students views. *"I feel it has been handled well and I feel safe"; "This school has always done a great job when it comes to violence"; "People are better than last year".*
3. Seventeen (18%) stated that the school was either too strict or should become stricter, giving more detentions and suspensions.

Students' Suggestions on Responding to Violence

Students were asked how they would like to see incidents of violence handled at their present school. Approximately 61% (243) students provided responses to this question, and their comments and suggestions have been categorized below.

1. Approximately 49% (120) indicated that they would like to have more suspensions and detentions or other means of punishment given out to perpetrators of violence: *"The kids should get suspended and shouldn't go anywhere near the person"; "I would like these people suspended or sent to boarding school"; and "Get the people who do all this stuff and expel them".*
2. Seventy-eight (32%) stated that they would like the police or courts involved in dealing with violence in schools: *"(We had a cop in our school and I wish he'd stay)"; "Send them to jail or suspend them"; "I would go up to them and tell them to stop and if it doesn't I will tell (a police officer)"; and "I would like the rules to get tougher, get (a policeman) involved".*
3. Twenty-nine (12%) made general comments related to violence in schools: *"I would like it to be handled fairly"; "No cops"; "Very bad seems normal"; and "It should be handled fast. More people pick on the new grade 6 students".*
4. Approximately 4% (7) made comments that they would like to see a world with no violence where everyone got along well together: *"I would like everyone to be happy and no one being bad and stealing"; "I want to see no violence at our school"; and "I would like for people to help each other in the world".*

Summary of Preliminary Findings - School 'A'

The following is a list of some of the key findings based on the students' responses to the Student Perceptions of Violence Survey in School 'A' (see Appendix A).

Students' Perceptions of Violence and Safety From Violence in School

1. Nearly half of all students felt that there was "Some" to "A Lot" of violence in schools. When students who felt that violence does occur, though "Rarely," are added to the figure, the percentage of students who believed there was violence in schools (in varying degrees) grows to over 80%.
2. Slightly more male than female students believed that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence. Grade 6 students were more likely than the students in grades 7 and 8 to perceive there to be "Some" to "A Lot" of violence at school.
3. Three out of 10 students indicated that they felt safe from violence "Sometimes" or "Not At All" while at school. When students who indicated that they felt safe "Most of the Time" are added into the figure, the percentage of students who did not feel safe at some point or another grows to approximately 60%.
4. Students in grade 6 were least likely to feel safe while at school. This may be due to the fact that they were physically the smallest and least mature individuals at school and thus may be picked on by older students.
5. Comments provided by students indicate that feeling safe may be related less to whether there was actual violence and more to who was around to provide protection or if the student felt he/she could take care of him/herself.

What constitutes "A Lot" versus "Very Little" violence is, of course, subjective. Just how the extent of violence was determined by students was not assessed in the study. The purpose of the study was to solicit student *perceptions* of violence since perceptions are likely to influence thinking or behaviour more than anything else. What is important to understand is that regardless of how students determined or defined the amount of violence in schools, those who believed violence was a problem may be fearful and adversely affected by their perceptions. The impact of this fear on learning and on the quality of life for students has yet to be adequately assessed.

The relationship between reported perceptions of violence and feeling safe from violence while at school is not clear. For example, although students reported that violence was a

problem in schools, a large proportion did not report that the level of violence seriously effected their own perceptions of safety.

However, gender and age differences appear to have some influence on students' perceptions. Grade 6 students were not only most likely to report higher levels of violence, they were also most likely to report not feeling safe from violence while at school. Their higher reported levels of violence and their higher reported levels of feeling unsafe while at school may be related to the fact that they were at a new school and were generally the youngest and smallest students.

Male students were more likely to perceive violence to be a serious problem in schools, yet female students were slightly more likely to not feel safe. This may be an indication of male students' unwillingness to admit that they are frightened by the level of violence they believe exists in schools. Bravado and a belief that they should never show others they are afraid may have influenced their responses to questions about feeling safe. Another possible explanation may be that we, as a society, are still under the impression that "boys will be boys" and that among males certain types of violence such as punching, kicking or pushing are to be expected and, therefore, are accepted, excused, or tolerated.

Students' Self-Reported Victimization While At School

1. The majority of the students indicated that they had been exposed to violence at school either as a victim themselves or through knowing someone who had been victimized.
2. Students reported that they were most likely to be threatened, beaten-up, robbed, verbally harassed, and picked on. The most commonly reported offenses were being verbally harassed and being physically threatened. Students were even more likely to report knowing someone who had been a victim of the same offenses, the most common offenses were being verbally harassed and being beaten-up.
3. Students in grade 7 were more likely to report being victims of violent incidents than students in grade 6 and 8 and they were least likely to know someone who had been a victim of violence at school.
4. *The reported rates of victimization were similar for male and female students.* However, male students in grade 6 were more likely than female students in the same grade to report being threatened, beaten-up and robbed while at school. In addition, male students in grade 6 had the highest reported rate of victimization in the category of sexual assault.
5. Female students in grade 8 were more likely to report having had lunch money taken and to have been threatened, sexually assaulted and harassed/bullied than males in the same grade. Female students were more likely to report knowing someone who had been a victim of violence while at school, particularly victims of sexual assault.

6. Over one-third of those who reported being victimized or knew someone who had been victimized *did not report* the incident to the school, parents or the police. More males than females did not report the violence and more students in the higher grades did not report.
7. Students indicated that incidents were most likely to be reported to the school staff and parents. A very small number of incidents were reported to the police.

The extent to which students reported being victims versus being aware of others who had been victimized is important in understanding the relative impact and magnitude of the problem of violence in schools. Recent research exploring the impact of witnessing family violence suggests that observing violence can have the same negative effect on children as being victimized (Jaffe, Wolfe, and Wilson, 1990). It is possible that students who have been victims and those who have witnessed violence or are aware of the victimization of others while at school may also be at equal risk of harm. Victims and witnesses of violence at school may also be equally at risk of being harmed further.

The reported levels of violence in schools experienced or witnessed by students is only one facet of the problem. The *types* of violent activities are also disturbing. Violent activity in schools ranges from verbal harassment and bullying to common assault, sexual assault and threats with weapons. Students of all grades and both genders were being physically threatened, picked on and beaten-up by fellow students, and occasionally by intruders.

Overall, male and female students appeared to be subject to different types of violence. Males were more likely to report being the victims of crimes of physical violence. They were more likely to report being threatened, beaten-up and robbed (have something stolen using violence). Females reported being more likely to have lunch money taken, to be verbally harassed and picked on, or to be victims of sexual assault. The finding that grade 6 males were *most* likely to report being victims of sexual assault while at school challenges the current thinking that renders male victimization invisible. The sexual exploitation of young males is only now becoming recognized as a serious problem in our society (Mathews, 1993a).

Those who believe violence in schools is not serious or a problem overlook an important fact: young people are still reluctant to come forward to identify themselves or others as victims of violence. The comments provided by students indicate that they did not report incidents of violence because they were afraid of retaliation, they believed that nothing would be done, or that the issue was not serious enough to warrant the involvement of others. The belief that nothing would be done reveals much about students' perceptions of adults. Students' apparent lack of trust in adults may be based on their own experiences or the experiences of people they know or the belief that the adults they have access to do not have enough power to control or alter the situation. Finally, the fact that violence experienced by students was not deemed serious enough to warrant reporting suggests that it may be becoming acceptable or simply tolerated.

It is not surprising that male students and older students were *less* likely to report their own victimization or the victimization of others. Males are socialized to believe that they have no permission to identify themselves as victims or to allow others to see them as victims (Mathews, 1993a). The term "victim" is applied far more to females than males. Males run the risk of not being believed or being criticized for not standing up for themselves. If they complain they are dismissed as "whiners" or "complainers" incapable of taking care of themselves.

It appears that as students get older they begin to view violence as a "normal" part of their adolescence or school experience. The older students may also not report because they have been around long enough to know that nothing or not enough will be done about their disclosures. They simply learn to deal with the problem in their own way and fight violence with violence.

Violent Offenses Committed By Students

1. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents reported that they or someone they know had committed one or more violent offenses while at school.
2. The most frequently reported incidents committed by students included: beating someone up, harassing/bullying, and threatening fellow students.
3. Many more students reported knowing someone who had committed violent acts than they admitted committing themselves. Once again, beating someone up was the most frequently reported offense, followed by threatening, harassing/bullying or knowing someone who carried a knife for protection. Being threatened or hurt with a weapon at school was not a frequently reported form of victimization. Based on these reports, it appears that *nearly one-third of the student population was carrying a weapon for the purpose of protection* rather than with the intention of committing an offense.
4. Students in grade 8 had the highest reported rates of committing violent offenses with the rates for grade 6 students close behind.
5. Male students were generally more likely to report being perpetrators of violent offenses at school. In particular, male students were more likely to threaten, beat-up, harass, or bully someone. Female students were, however, just as likely to rob another student and more likely to report threatening or hurting someone with a weapon.
6. Female students were more likely to report knowing someone who had committed sexual assault while at school.
7. Nearly two-thirds of the students indicated that the violent incidents committed by themselves or someone they know at school *had not been reported* to the teachers, parents or the police.

8. The main reasons stated for not reporting incidents to an adult were that the students were afraid of what might happen to them, they did not want to become involved or they believed that the incident was not serious enough in their minds to report it.
9. Students who indicated that the incidents had been reported identified that parents were most commonly informed of the offense followed by school staff or a combination of school staff and parents. Students stated that very few incidents they committed were reported to police.

The results indicate that committing or being aware of others who commit violence was common for students of all grades and both genders. The belief that "everybody does it" was pervasive. Many students used the reported pervasiveness of violence in schools as a rationalization for their own behaviour. Others viewed the use of violence as necessary for their own protection.

For the most part, offenses committed by students and someone they know were physically threatening in nature. Physical violence in the form of beating someone up or threatening others with bodily harm were two of the most common forms of violence at school. In addition, a number of young people indicated that they were aware of other students who carried knives. Whether students were carrying knives for their own protection or for the intended purpose of committing an offense, *knowledge* of their existence within the school appeared to create a *perception* that they should be afraid of what may happen to them and contributed to the belief that they were entitled to protect themselves in whatever way they felt necessary.

It was surprising to find that the female students reported being as likely to rob and more likely to threaten or hurt someone with a weapon than the male students. This challenges our assumptions about female gender roles. Females tend to be regarded more as victims of violence. Unfortunately, we have ignored or overlooked the extent to which they are perpetrators of violence. There is, however, a growing body of literature that is beginning to document the perpetration of violence by females. We possess few answers to the question of why young women appear to be acting out in more violent ways now than in the past.

It was not surprising that nearly two-thirds of the student population indicated that the violent incidents *had not been reported* to the school, parents or the police. Students who committed violent acts were unlikely to report the incidents themselves. Victims or those who were aware of others who had committed the violence chose not to report the incident because they were afraid of retaliation, because they did not want to get involved and because of an apparent growing acceptance of and tolerance for violence in the school. Unfortunately, the lack of reporting encourages more violence. Students who commit offenses that are not reported experience no consequences which increases the likelihood they will reoffend.

Students reported most often to parents followed by school staff. Understanding why youth did not report to police, particularly when the violent incidents were serious or threatened the physical well-being of students, is an issue worth further investigation.

Relationship Between Being A Victim and Being A Perpetrator

1. A between-group comparison of the relationship between being a victim and being a perpetrator indicates that students in grade 7 were most likely to report being victims of violent crime, while grade 8 students were most likely to report being perpetrators.
2. A within-group assessment indicates that grade 6 and 7 students were more likely to report being victims than perpetrators of violent crime. Students in grade 8 were almost as likely to report being victims as perpetrators.
3. Female students were almost always more likely to report being victims of violence than a perpetrator with two exceptions. Grade 6 female students were slightly more likely to report threatening someone with a weapon than to be threatened. Grade 8 females were slightly more likely to report beating someone up than to have been beaten-up.
4. Male students in grade 6 and 7 were more likely to report being victims of violence than perpetrators, but grade 8 males were more likely to report being perpetrators than victims.

Understanding the relationship between being a victim and being a perpetrator of crime has been the focus of much research in the field of criminology. The literature often focuses on factors associated with chronic or repeat offending. Central to the development of an understanding of victim-perpetrator relationships is the possible link between child victimization and later adolescent and adult offending (Caputo and Ryan, 1991). One of the more popular theories about the relative nature of this relationship is the belief that through repeated victimization, children learn that violence is an acceptable form of behaviour. Victimized children also learn that violence is an acceptable means of getting what they want. In addition, the fact that such incidents of victimization often go unreported and are not addressed, leads the child to believe that this type of behaviour is "normal."

Applying this particular theory to violence within the schools may help us understand the relationship between students as victims and perpetrators. It may even help us to understand the growing nature of violence in schools. The finding that grade 6 and 7 students were more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violence is not surprising. They were the younger and smaller students in the school and hence more likely to be seen as easy targets. However, the relationship between being a victim and being a perpetrator begins to balance out with the grade 8 students. Students in grade 8 who have been victims of violence over the last couple of years may be beginning to view violence as an acceptable form of behaviour.

Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"

1. The most frequently reported incidents that *would be* committed by students if they thought they could get away with it included beating someone up, harassing/bullying someone, threatening someone, and carrying a knife for protection.
2. More students reported knowing someone else who would commit violent crimes while at school if they could get away with it than they admitted they would commit themselves. Beating someone up was the most frequently reported offense, followed by bullying/harassing, threatening someone, and carrying a knife for protection. These reported rates were similar to the actual rates of violent crimes committed by "someone they know."
3. Grade 7 students, both male and female, reported being less likely to commit violent offenses even if they thought they could get away with it than the grade 6 and 8 students.
4. Male students reported being more likely than female students to threaten someone or beat someone up if they thought they could get away with it.
5. Female students reported they would commit more violent crime if they thought they could get with it than they actually committed, while the male students reported that they would commit as much or even less.

Some believe that students may think about using violence but will seldom actually do it. They believe that students "talk a mean game" but know what is within the acceptable realm of behaviour at school. However, a comparison of the actual rates of perpetration with the anticipated rates of violence indicate that the numbers are very similar. In other words, the number of students who reported that they would participate in violent activity if they thought they could get away with it were actually doing it. It is difficult to avoid concluding that students were participating in violent activity because they did in fact believe that they could get away with it.

Students' Perceptions of Responses to Violence at School

1. Students' opinions were split on the way violence was being handled by schools. Just over half indicated that they were happy with the way in which things have been handled, while just under one-half stipulated that they did not approve of the present efforts.
2. Some of the students believed that violence was not being taken seriously enough by school officials.
3. Students advocated for harsher penalties for perpetrators including more school-related punishments, such as detentions, suspensions and expulsions, and more involvement from the police and the courts.

Students' responses to the question about their satisfaction with the way in which violence was handled revealed a lack of trust and faith in educators to protect them. It was interesting to note that many students, some of whom were self-identified as perpetrators of violence in school, asked for harsher penalties. Students requested that schools begin to form clear boundaries around what is and is not acceptable behaviour at the school. The belief that violent students have been allowed to get away with too much for too long was evident in many comments offered by the respondents. Students' identified the need for schools to take the issue of violence more seriously.

Part II

*School 'B':
Student Perceptions Of
Violence*

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Students' Perceptions of Violence and Safety From Violence While in School and While on the Way To and From School

*"(School violence) makes me sick and interrupts my education."
(Male, 14)*

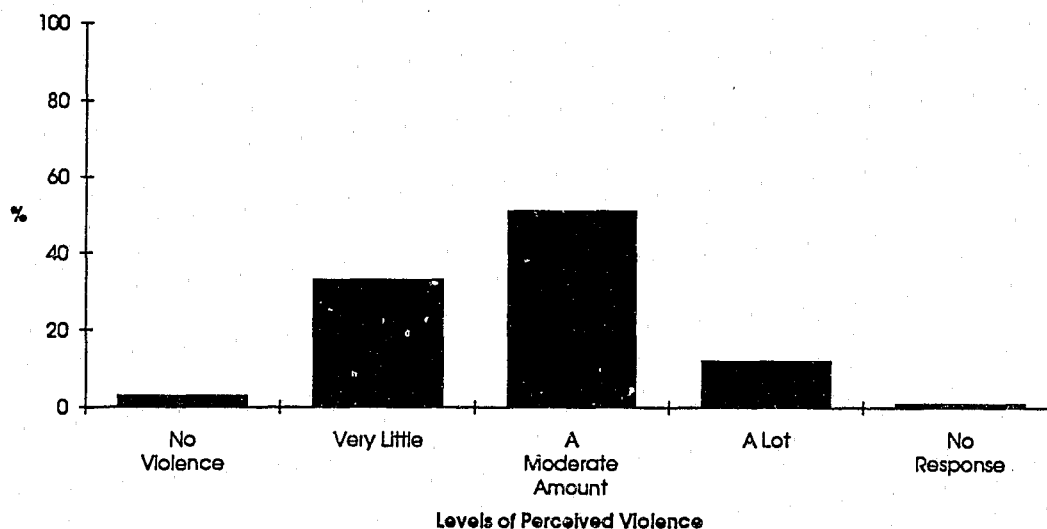
Demographics

A total of 457 students completed the questionnaire, 232 males (51%) and 222 females (48%). Three (1%) students did not indicate their gender. The average age of the respondents was 13.03 years. The range was from 11 to 17 years. The total number of students per grade level was 156 (34%), 160 (35%) and 136 (30%) for grades 7, 8 and 9 respectively. Five students did not record their grade level.

Students' Perceptions of Violence in School

Students were asked to rate the extent to which they believed there was violence in their school. Approximately 63% (285) of those responding to this question felt that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence in their school. One hundred and sixty-six (36%) of the respondents reported that there was either "No Violence" or "Very Little" violence.

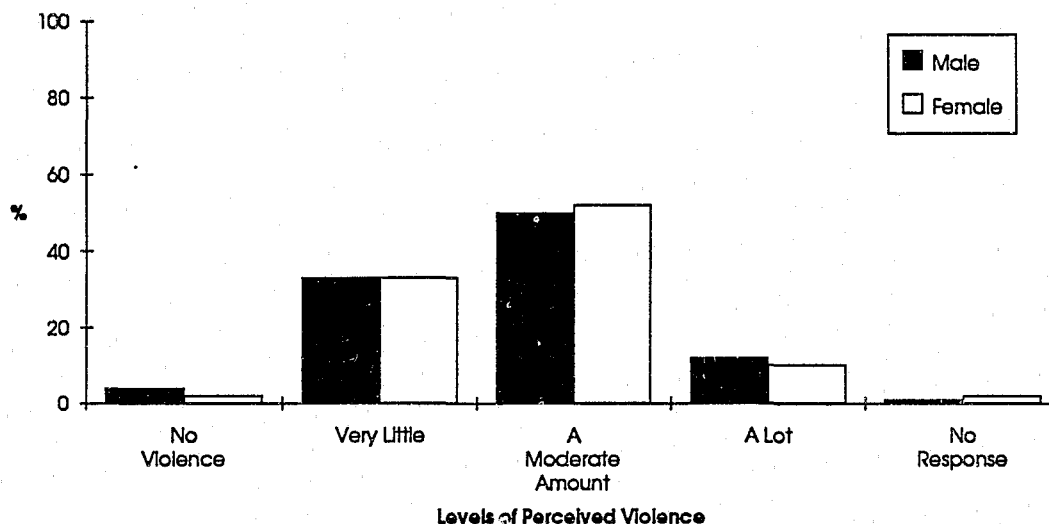
Figure 1: Students' Perceptions of Violence At School



Break Down By Gender

Approximately 62% of both the male (145) and female (139) students believed that there was "A Lot" or "A Moderate Amount" of violence in their school. Similarly, 33% of the male (76) and female (74) students indicated that there was "Very Little" violence, while 4% of the males (10) and 2% of the females (5) felt that there was "No Violence."

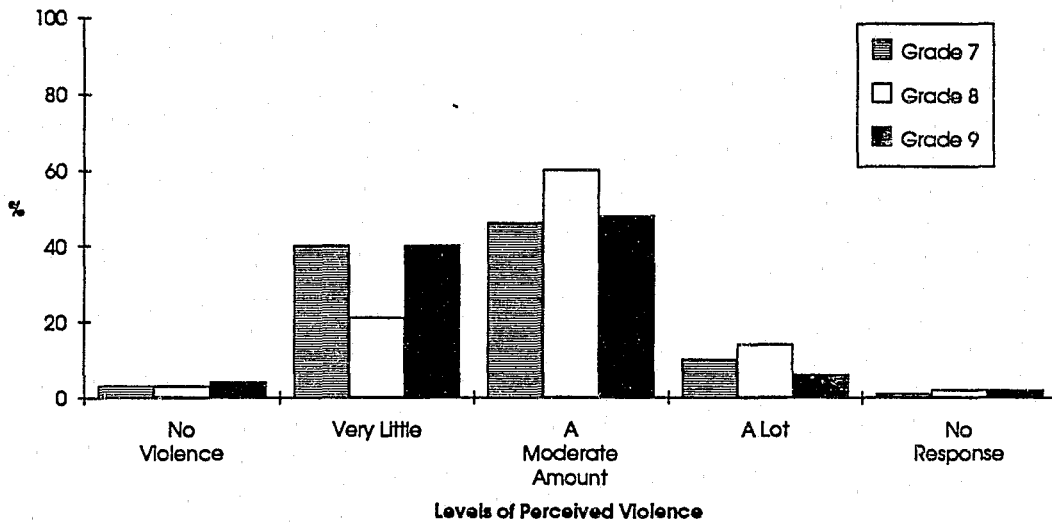
Figure 2: Students' Perceptions of Violence At School By Gender



Break Down By Grade Level

Over half of the grade 7 (56%) and grade 9 (54%) students felt that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence in their school. In comparison, more grade 8 students (74%) believed that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence. Less than half of the grade 7 (43%) and grade 9 (44%) students indicated that there was "Very Little" or "No Violence" in their school compared to less than a quarter of the grade 8 students (24%).

Figure 3: Students' Perceptions of Violence At School By Grade



Students were asked for their comments on the extent to which they believed violence was a problem in their school. Approximately 164 (36%) of the students provided comments in response to this question. The nature of their comments are presented below.

1. Fifty-four (33%) of the respondents commented on the amount of violence in their school. Approximately 54% (29) indicated there was a little violence, while 18 (33%) of the students felt there was a lot. For example, *"It's a great school with little violence"* and *"There is a lot of violence at our school in the halls, in class and outside."* The remaining 7 (13%) offered comments on the extent to which violence at their school had changed over the years or how it fares compared to the violence in other schools. For example, *"I think our school has more violence than other schools"* and *"It has cooled down over the years."*
2. Approximately 37 (23%) of the students offered comments on the type of violence they had witnessed or heard about at school. Twenty-four (65%) students indicated that fights or getting "beat-up" was the most common form of violence, *"People from our school like to pick fights and they get themselves in trouble with someone else from other schools."* Ten (27%) of the respondents felt that other forms of violence also existed such as harassment and verbal abuse, *"I don't think there is that much violence, but some people do verbally abuse people and pick fights."* Approximately 3 (8%) of the students commented on the time or location of where the violence most often occurred, *"There are fights in the cafe at lunch time and outside before and after school."*

3. Thirty-six (22%) of the students offered comments on why they believed there was violence in their school. Twelve (33%) of the respondents believed that many of the violent incidents were racially based, *"A lot of racial disputes"*, *"It's usually for real stupidity. Usually over racism."* Approximately 13 (36%) of the students felt there were a variety of other reasons why students got into fights including: to be cool, being a member of a particularly violent group of kids, looking at people the wrong way or to prove something. The remaining 11 (31%) students indicated that there were no real reasons for the violence or that the reasons were *"stupid."*
4. Thirty-seven (23%) students commented on the relative impact of violence on the students or the school or offered comments on the response to violence in their school. Approximately 21 (57%) commented on the impact of violence in the school. Ten (48%) of the students felt the violence had not effected them or their peers, while the remaining 11 (52%) of the respondents indicated that the violence had a negative impact on the students and the school. For example, *"Everybody says that (our school) is not a real good school and I know why"*, *"Makes me sick and interrupts my education."* Seventeen (43%) respondents commented on what the response to the violence was or indicated what they felt should be done to deal with it. For example, *"There is violence in the whole world, but if we all try to stop it in one place at a time, we will make a less violent world"*, *"No one does nothing about it."*

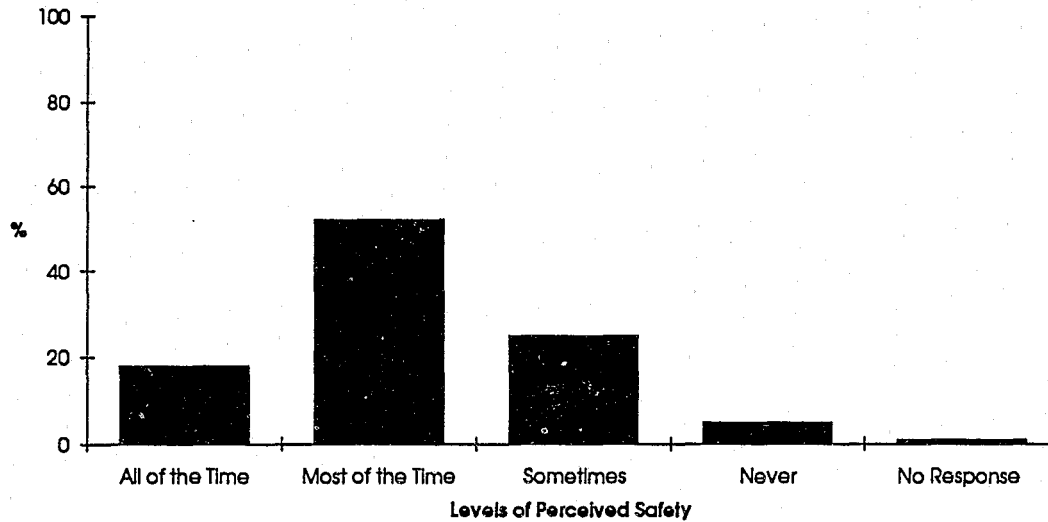
Students' Perceptions of Safety from Violence While at School

Eighteen per cent (82) of the students reported that they felt safe "All of the Time", 52% (236) stated that they felt safe "Most of the Time", 25% (116) stated that they felt safe "Some of the Time", 5% (21) "Never" felt safe. Two students did not respond to the question.

The results can be further broken down into two categories.

1. Seventy per cent of the students felt that they were either safe "All of the Time" or "Most of the Time" while at school.
2. Approximately 30% of the students (3 out of 10) stated that they felt safe "Some of the Time" or "Never" felt safe while at school.

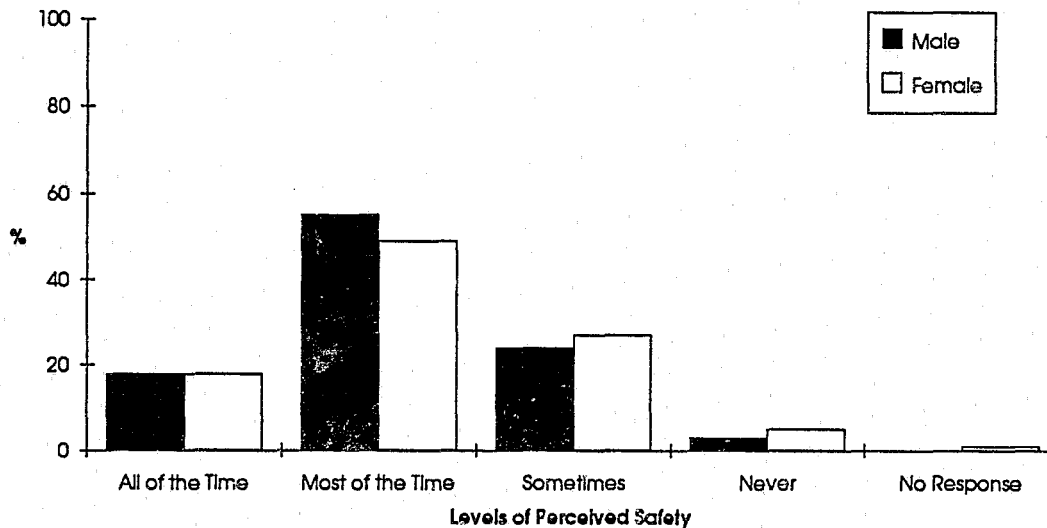
Figure 4: Students' Perceptions of Safety From Violence While At School



Break Down By Gender

Female students were slightly less likely than male students to feel safe while at school. Approximately 73% (168) of the male students indicated that they felt safe at school "All of the Time" or "Most of the Time" compared to 67% (150) of the female students. Similarly, while 27% (64) of the male students felt safe from violence while at school "Sometimes" or "Never," 32% (71) of the female students indicated that they felt safe "Sometimes" or "Never."

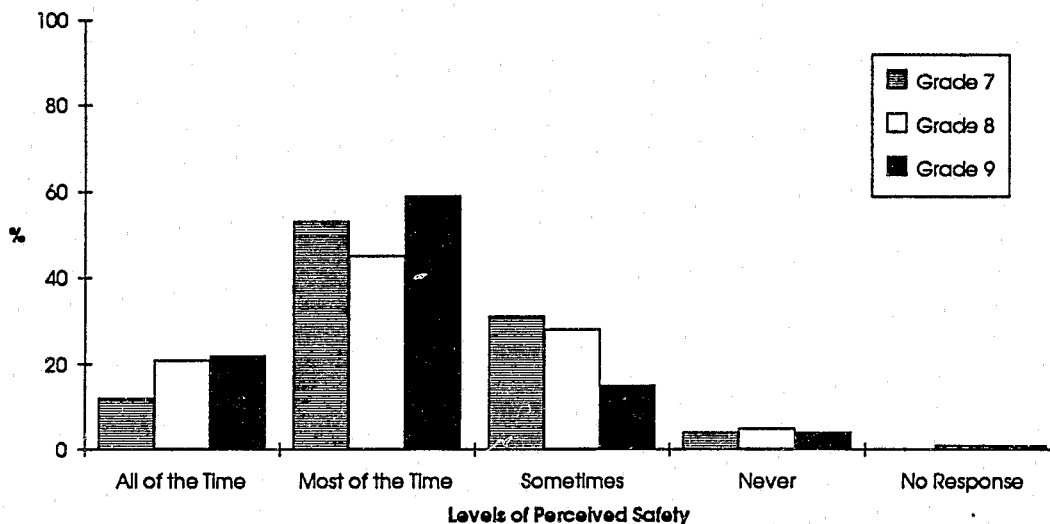
Figure 5: Students' Perceptions of Safety While At School By Gender



Break Down By Grade Level

Grade 7 and 8 students reported feeling less safe from violence while at school than the students in grade 9. This is not surprising given that grade 9 students were less likely to be intimidated by younger and smaller students. Approximately 65% (101) of grade 7 students and 66% (105) of grade 8 students felt safe while at school "All of the Time" or "Most of the Time" compared to 81% (110) of the students in grade 9. Similarly, 35% (55) of the respondents in grade 7 and 33% (54) of the students in grade 8 indicated that they felt safe from violence while at school "Sometimes" or "Never" compared to 19% (25) of grade 9 students.

Figure 6: Students' Perceptions of Safety While At School By Grade



Students were also asked for their comments on whether they felt safe from violence while at school. Among the responses of the 127 (28%) students who made an additional comment, three main points emerged:

1. Approximately 47% (59) commented on why they felt safe while at school. Many of the respondents indicated they felt safe with teachers or friends around. Others felt they could look after themselves. The most common reason noted for feeling safe was that students kept to themselves and did not get involved.
2. Fifty (39%) stated that they did not really feel safe because they never knew when or if they would be the next target of violence.
3. Eighteen (14%) offered more general comments about feeling or not feeling safe while at school.

Students' comments indicate that feeling safe may not be directly related to whether there was violence, but may pertain more to who was around to provide protection or whether they felt capable of taking care of themselves. It is interesting to note that many of the comments reflected fear, not from having been a victim of violence, but from the fact that they felt they were "at risk" of being a victim of violence while at school. For example, "I don't feel safe at school because there are people at school that like to beat people up for fun," "Sometimes I think that some girls will come up to me and start beating me up even though I do nothing" or "Who knows when someone would decide to pounce on you."

Students' Perceptions of Safety from Violence While on Their Way to and from School

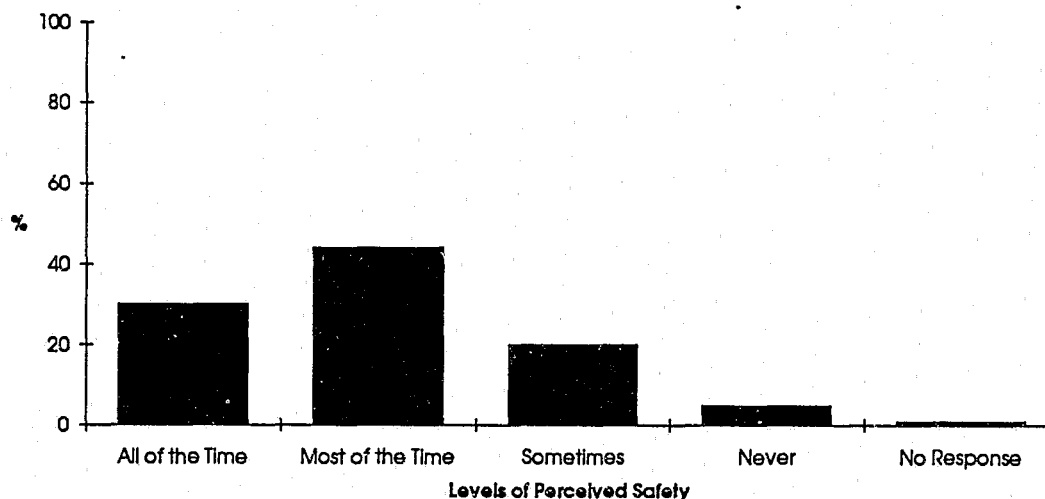
Thirty per cent (137) of students reported that they felt safe "All of the Time", 44% (201) stated that they felt safe "Most of the Time", 20% (89) stated that they felt safe "Some of the Time", and 5% (25) "Never" felt safe. Five students did not respond to this question.

The results can be further broken down into two categories.

1. Seventy-four per cent of students felt they were either safe "All of the Time" or "Most of the Time" while on their way to and from school.
2. Approximately 25% of students (1 out of 4) stated that they felt safe "Some of the Time" or "Never" felt safe while on their way to and from school.

The results indicate that more students felt safer while on their way to and from school than while at school.

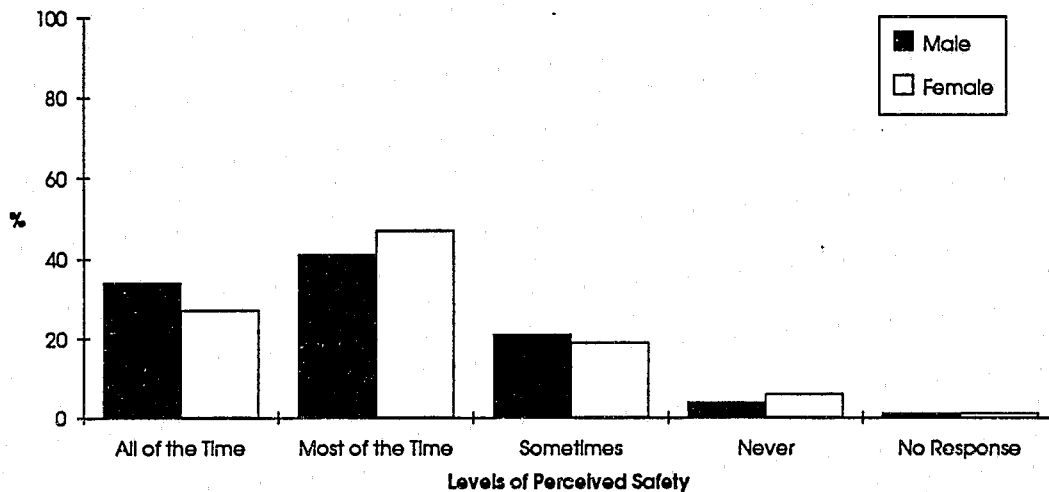
Figure 7: Students' Perceptions of Safety While On Their Way To and From School



Break Down By Gender

Approximately 75% (172) of the male students reported that they felt safe on their way to and from school "All of the Time" or "Most of the Time" compared to 74% (164) of the female students. In addition, 25% of both male (58) and female (55) students felt safe from violence while on their way to and from school "Sometimes" or "Never".

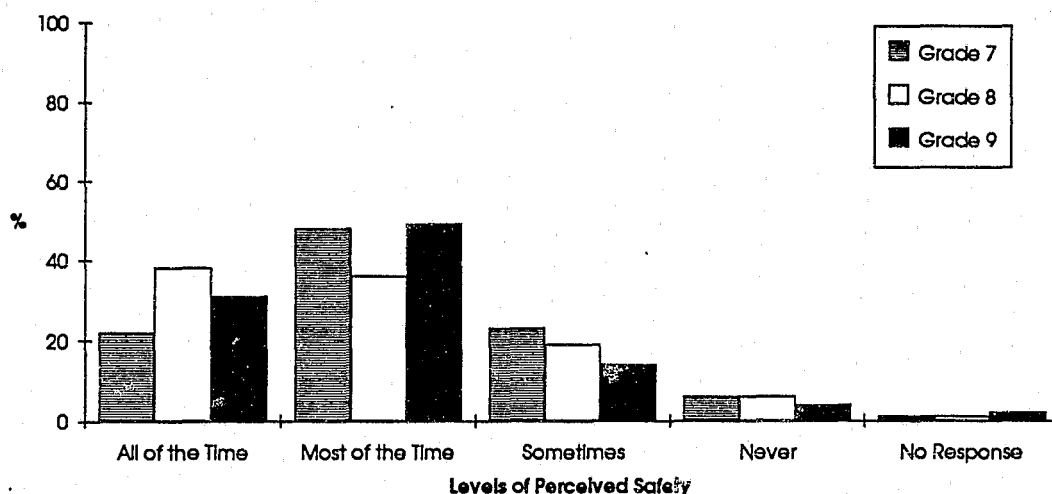
Figure 8: Students' Perceptions of Safety While On Their Way To and From School By Gender



Break Down By Grade Level

Students reported feeling safer with each higher grade. Approximately 70% (109) of grade 7 students, 74% (119) of grade 8 students, and 80% (108) of the students in grade 9 felt safe while on their way to and from school "All of the Time" or "Most of the Time." Similarly, 29% (46) of the respondents in grade 7, 25% (40) of the students in grade 8, and 18% (25) of grade 9 students indicated that they felt safe from violence while on their way to and from school "Sometimes" or "Never."

Figure 9: Students' Perceptions of Safety While On Their Way To and From School By Grade



Students were also asked for their comments on whether they felt safe from violence while on their way to and from school. Among the responses of the 114 (25%) students who answered the question, three main points emerged:

1. Approximately 46% (52) commented on why they felt safe while on their way to and from school. Many of the respondents indicated that they felt safe because they always walked with friends or had their parents drive them to and from school. Others felt safe because they lived so close to the school.
2. Forty-nine (43%) stated that they did not really feel safe because they never knew when or if they would be the next target of violence. Many were concerned with the people who hung around outside the school at the end of the day. Others were frightened by media reports about the abductions of young women.
3. Thirteen (11%) offered more general comments about feeling or not feeling safe while on their way to and from school.

Once again the comments indicate that feeling safe may not be related to whether there was violence, but may pertain more to who was around to provide protection or whether they felt capable of taking care of themselves. Many of the comments about not feeling safe were related to potential dangers posed by strangers and not necessarily by threats posed by other students. Students reported feeling most afraid on their way home from school. For example, *"I never feel safe because of the things you here in the newspaper"*, *"I feel safe when it's light, but not in the dark"* and *"You never know who can see you on the TTC and who may follow you home."*

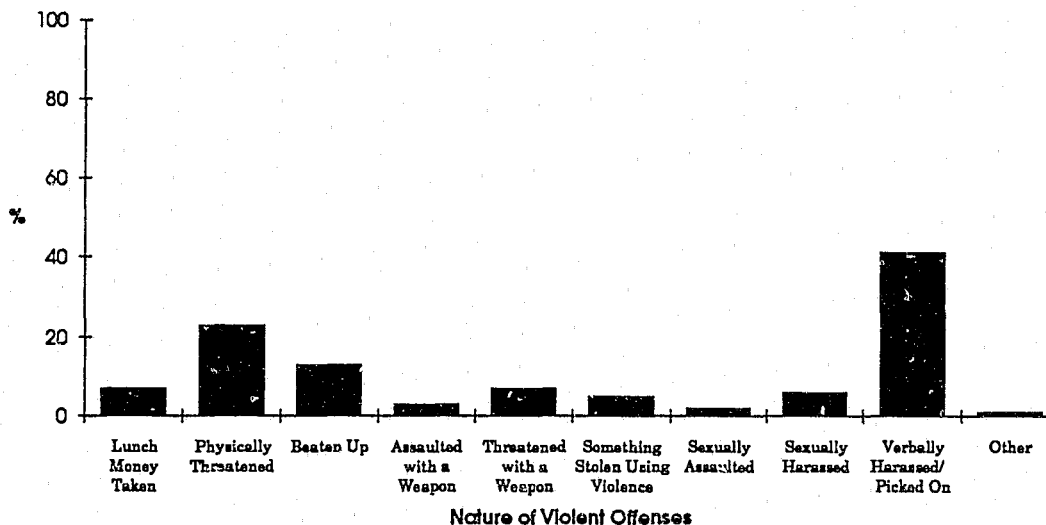
Students' Self-Reported Victimization While At School and While On Their Way To and From School

*"It's not as bad coming and going to school as it is being all bunched together and getting hostile and violent in school."
(Male, 13 years)*

Students' Self-Reported Victimization While At School

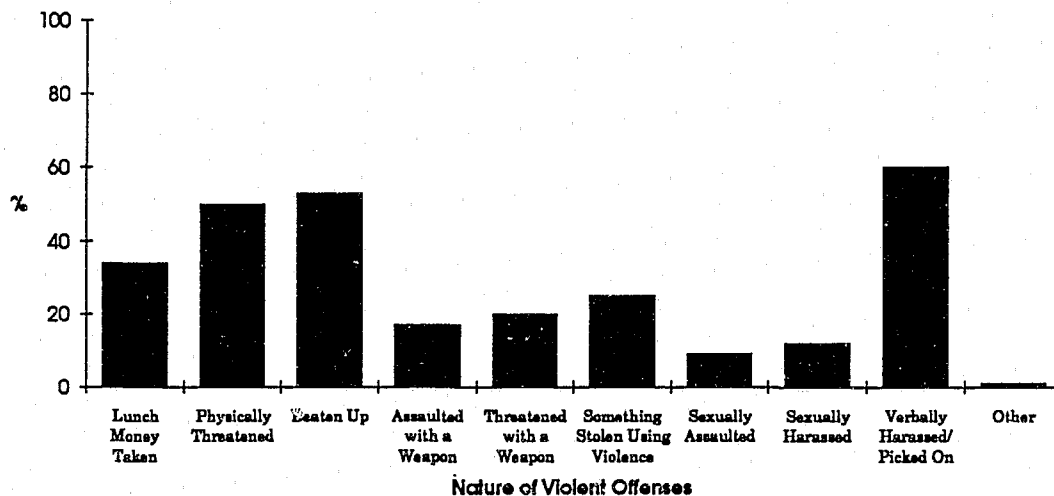
Students were asked to identify violent incidents which had happened to *them* while at school. Approximately 30 (7%) of the 457 students responding to this question stated that they had had lunch money taken from them. Nearly one-quarter (23%) said they had been physically threatened. Approximately 60 (13%) students had been beaten-up while in school. Fourteen (3%) students reported being assaulted with a weapon and 34 (7%) reported being threatened with a weapon. Twenty-five (5%) of the respondents indicated that they had had something stolen with threats or physical violence. Nine (2%) students stated that they had been sexually assaulted and 25 (6%) reported being sexually harassed while at school. One hundred and eighty-eight (41%) reported being verbally harassed or picked on by others.

Figure 10: Violent Offenses Committed Against Students While At School



Students were also asked to identify violent crimes which have happened to *someone they know* while at school. Approximately 157 (34%) of the 457 students reported knowing someone who had their lunch money taken. Approximately 226 (50%) said they knew someone who had been physically threatened. Approximately 242 (53%) of the students knew someone who had been beaten-up while in school. Seventy-six (17%) reported knowing someone who had been assaulted with a weapon and 93 (20%) reported knowing someone who had been threatened with a weapon. One hundred and sixteen (25%) indicated that they knew someone who had had something stolen from them using threats or physical violence. Forty-two (9%) students stated that they knew someone who had been sexually assaulted and 53 (12%) reported knowing someone who had been sexually harassed. Two hundred and seventy-three (60%) reported knowing someone who had been verbally harassed or picked on by others while at school.

Figure 11: Violent Offenses Committed Against Someone They Know While At School



Break Down By Grade Level

Grade 7 and grade 9 students appear to be experiencing more violence than those in grade 8. Grade 7 students were more likely to be physically threatened, beaten-up, assaulted with a weapon, and sexually assaulted. Grade 9 students were more likely to have had lunch money taken, or to be threatened with a weapon, sexually and verbally harassed or picked on. In addition, the older students were more likely to know other students who had been victims of violent crimes while at school.

**Table 1: Students' Self-Reported Victimization
By Grade**

	The Student			Someone They Know		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	5%	6%	10%	28%	40%	34%
2. Threatened	26%	23%	21%	43%	49%	55%
3. Beaten-up	16%	14%	9%	49%	55%	55%
4. Assaulted Weapon	4%	4%	2%	12%	14%	26%
5. Threaten Weapon	8%	4%	10%	17%	18%	29%
6. Something Stolen	5%	6%	7%	23%	29%	24%
7. Sexually Assault	3%	1%	2%	8%	8%	13%
8. Sexually Harass	5%	3%	9%	8%	9%	18%
9. Harassed/Picked on	37%	43%	45%	47%	68%	66%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=156	n=160	n=136	n=156	n=160	n=136

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 2 and Table 3 are the self-reported rates of victimization of the students themselves and someone they know broken down by gender and grade.

**Table 2: Students' Self-Reported Victimization
By Gender and Grade**

	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	5%	3%	9%	4%	10%	10%
2. Threatened	28%	22%	29%	25%	23%	14%
3. Beaten-up	20%	22%	15%	12%	7%	3%
4. Assaulted Weapon	6%	5%	3%	2%	3%	0%
5. Threaten Weapon	11%	7%	15%	6%	1%	6%
6. Something Stolen	6%	7%	6%	3%	4%	24%
7. Sexually Assault	2%	0%	0%	4%	3%	3%
8. Sexually Harass	1%	1%	0%	10%	5%	17%
9. Harassed/Picked on	33%	40%	35%	44%	48%	54%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

The rates of victimization for males and females were, for the most part, similar. However, there were some differences worth noting. On average, the male students were much more likely than the female students to have been beaten-up and threatened with a weapon, while slightly more likely to be physically threatened or assaulted with a weapon. The female students were more likely than the male students to have been sexually or verbally harassed and picked on and slightly more likely to have their lunch money taken and to be victims of sexual assault. Female students in grade 9 were more likely than any other subgroup of either gender to report having something stolen from them using threats or physical violence.

Female students in grades 8 and 9 were more likely than the female students in grade 7 to report knowing someone who had been a victim of violence while at school. Grade 7 male students were more likely than grade 7 female students to report knowing people who had been victims of violence while at school. However, the female students in grade 8 and 9 were more likely than the male students in the same grades to know someone who had been a victim of each violent crime while at school with the exception of having something stolen with threats or physical violence. This last finding is surprising given that Table 2 indicated that the female students in grade 9 were more likely to be victims of this particular violent activity themselves.

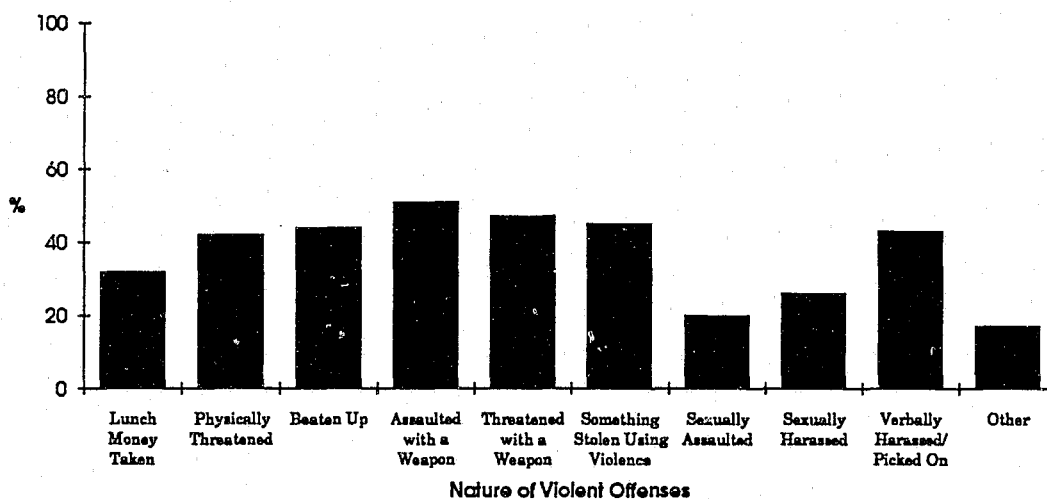
**Table 3: Students' Reported Victimization of "Someone They Know"
By Gender and Grade**

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>
1. Lunch\$ Taken	30%	37%	28%	25%	44%	39%
2. Threatened	48%	43%	48%	38%	57%	62%
3. Beaten-up	58%	56%	45%	38%	56%	65%
4. Assaulted Weapon	15%	11%	22%	9%	17%	30%
5. Threatened Weapon	20%	16%	23%	13%	20%	34%
6. Something Stolen	28%	35%	25%	17%	23%	24%
7 Sexually Assault	11%	1%	5%	6%	14%	20%
8. Sexually Harass	7%	4%	5%	10%	16%	31%
7. Harassed/Bullied	47%	63%	55%	48%	74%	72%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

Incidents Involving A Gang/Group

Students were asked to identify which of the violent crimes that had happened *to them or someone they know*, had been committed by a gang/group of 2 or more people. Approximately 60 (32%) of the 187 incidents of having "lunch money taken" were committed by a gang/group. Approximately 140 (42%) of the 332 "physically threatened" incidents were committed by a gang/group. Similarly, 134 (44%) of the total 302 "beaten-up" incidents reported by the respondents were committed by a gang/group. Forty-six (51%) of the 90 incidents of having been "assaulted by a weapon" and 60 (47%) of the 127 incidents of having been "threatened with a weapon" were identified as having been committed by a gang/group. Sixty-three (45%) of the total 141 incidents of "something stolen with threats or physical violence" were committed by a gang/group of 2 or more people. Ten (20%) of the 51 incidents of sexual assault reported and 20 (26%) of the 75 incidents of sexual harassment reported were committed by a gang/group. One hundred and ninety-six (43%) of the total 461 incidents of verbal harassment or being picked on were also committed by a gang/group.

Figure 12: Percentage of Violent Offenses Committed Against Students or Someone They Know That Were Perpetrated By A Gang/Group



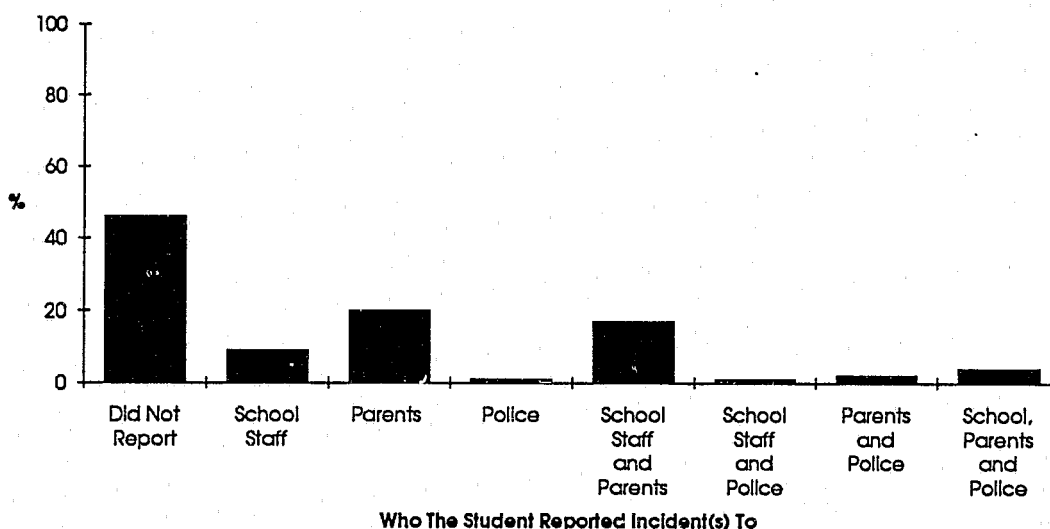
Students were asked to provide additional comments on the self-reported data. Approximately 87% (398) of the 457 students chose not to answer this question. The majority (52%) of the 58 respondents provided further comments on the nature of the incident(s) that happened to them or someone they know, such as *"Get teased about body parts, rude sick comments. I hate it, but I try to ignore it."* The remaining comments provided by the respondents can be collapsed into four categories.

1. Eight (14%) students voiced opinions about what is or is not being done or should be done to address violence. For example, *"I think that when someone does something to you, they'll continue doing it unless you do something about it"* and *"I think that if problems happen, then you should tell someone."*
2. Eight (14%) respondents offered their general reactions to the amount of violence in their school. For example, *"It's scary"* and *"Our school is better in this way than many other schools."*
3. Seven (12%) discussed why they believe the violence was occurring, such as *"I think all this just happens because they want to feel strong and look cool in class if someone teases you."*
4. Approximately 8% (5) of the students commented on why none of the incidents had happened to them, such as *"I try not to get involved with these incidents."*

Reporting Rates of Violent Incidents Which Occurred At School

Students were asked if they had reported any of the above incidents to school staff, parents, or the police. Approximately 86% (391) of the 457 respondents indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school. Fifty-four per cent (209) of the students reported the incident(s). A break down of who the students were most likely to report the incidents to is provided below in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Who Students Reported Incident(s) To

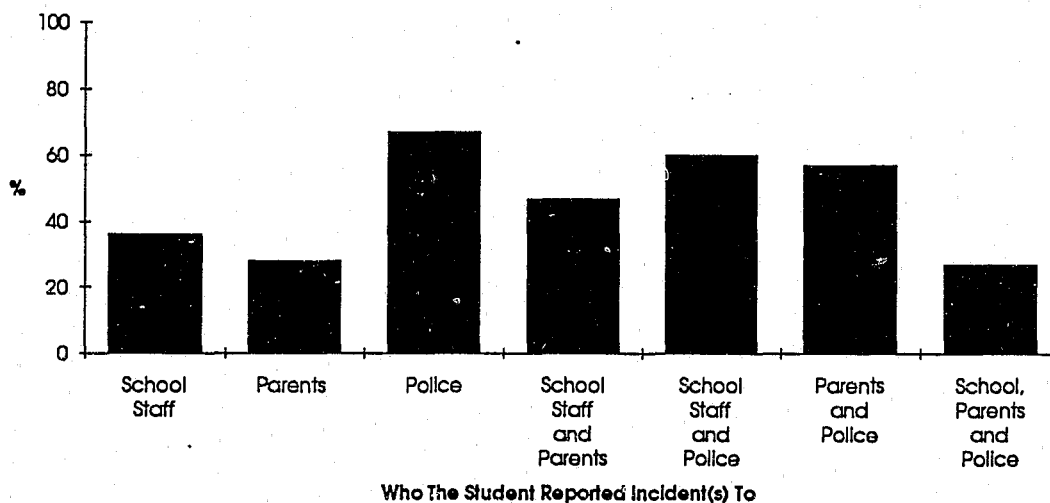


Students who reported incidents to parents, teachers or police were also asked to comment on what happened as a result of the disclosure. Of the 209 students that reported the incident(s), 126 (60%) responded to this question. The results are grouped into six categories.

1. Fourteen (11%) of the students chose to provide further details on the nature of the incident(s).
2. Forty-eight (38%) responded by stating that "nothing" or "not too much" happened as a result of reporting the incident(s).
3. Approximately 18% (23) stated that some sort of disciplinary action was taken such as a suspension, expulsion, punishment, or arrested or charged.
4. Twenty-one (17%) of the students who reported violent incidents indicated that the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) were spoken to by the principal, guidance counsellor, parents, or police.
5. Eleven (9%) stated that when they told their parents/staff some form of advice followed, such as: *"The school staff told us to stay away from each other"* and *"My parents told me to avoid him and to report to them when things like that happen."*
6. Approximately 7% (9) of the respondents indicated that the perpetrator was given a warning by school staff or the police.

Students who reported the incident were also asked to indicate whether or not they were happy with the way in which the incident was handled. Seventy-eight (37%) of the 209 young people that had reported the incident to one of more of the three parties indicated that they were happy with the way the incident was addressed. Below is a breakdown of the percentage of students who were happy with the way the incident was handled based upon who they had reported the incident(s) to.

**Figure 14: Students Who Were Happy With How Incident(s) Was Handled
Based On Who They Reported To**



Although students were less likely to report the incident(s) to the police, those who did were more happy with the way in which it was handled. This was the case for incidents where the students reported to the police only, to the police and school staff, and to police and parents.

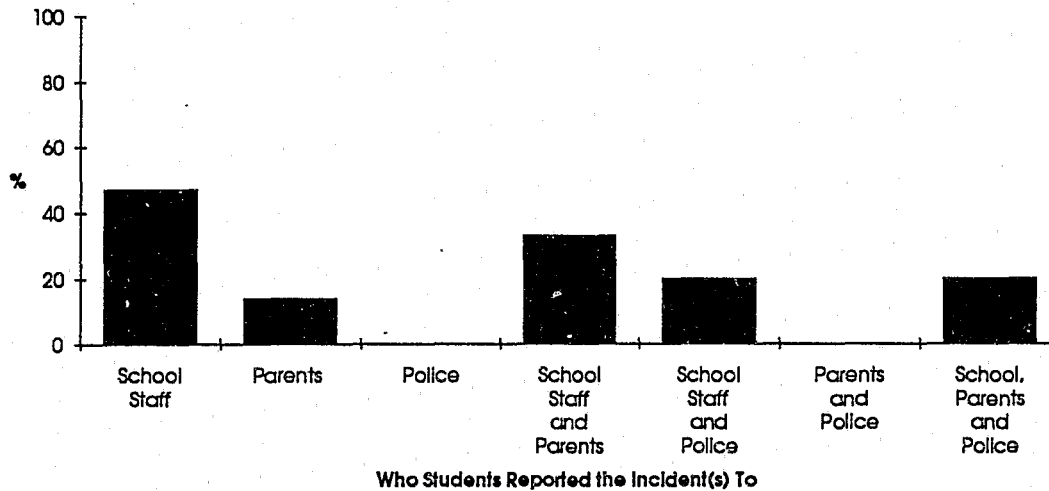
Of the 209 students who reported the incident(s), 28% (58) also provided comments about why they were or were not happy with the way in which the incident(s) was/were handled.

1. Approximately 40% (23) of the students offered comments related to being happy with the way in which the situation(s) was/were handled. The majority (57%) of the comments indicated that the students were happy with the way the situation was handled because the incident(s) did not occur again. Four (17%) of the respondents were happy because someone did something about the incident(s) and six (26%) offered more general comments about being happy with the way things were handled.
2. Twenty-seven (47%) of the respondents provided additional comments about being unhappy with the way in which the incident(s) was/were handled. Seven (26%) of the respondents provided very general comments about the fact that they did not like the way things were handled. Eleven (41%) offered more specific information about why they did not like the way the situation(s) was handled. For example, *"I don't think it (the repercussions) was enough"* and *"Nothing happened to them (the perpetrators)."* Nine (33%) of the students indicated that they were not happy because the way it was handled had no significant impact on stopping the incident(s) from happening again.
3. Eight (13%) indicated that they were unsure of whether or not they were completely happy with the way in which the incident(s) was/were addressed.

Students who reported the incident(s) were asked to indicate whether or not the incident had occurred again. Of the 209 students that reported the incident(s), 56 (27%) indicated that it had occurred again. Figure 15 provides a breakdown of the percentage of young people that indicated that the incident(s) had occurred again based upon who they had reported the incident(s) to.

As the figures in Figure 15 indicate, incidents were less likely to occur again when reported to the police, whether it was reported to the police alone or in conjunction with another party. The results also indicate that a high percentage of incidents reoccurred when reported to school staff, whether reported to school staff alone or in addition to parents and/or the police.

Figure 15: Percentage of Incident(s) Which Occurred Again Based Upon Who The Students Reported the Incident(s) To



Incidents Not Reported

Approximately 45% (175) of the 391 who reported that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school also indicated that they had not reported the incidents.

Break Down By Gender

Approximately 85% (196) of the male students and 87% (194) of the female students indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school. The results further indicate that 45% (88) of the male students did not report the incidents compared to 40% (77) of the female respondents.

Break Down by Grade Level

Approximately 82% (128) of students in grade 7, 85% (136) of students in grade 8 and 90% (122) of students in grade 9 reported that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents. Forty (31%) of the respondents in grade 7, 46% (62) in grade 8 and 52% (63) in grade 9 did not report the incidents to either the school, their parents or the police.

Students who did not report the incident(s) were asked to comment on why they did not report. Of the total 175 students who did not report the incident(s), 98% (172) provided comments explaining why.

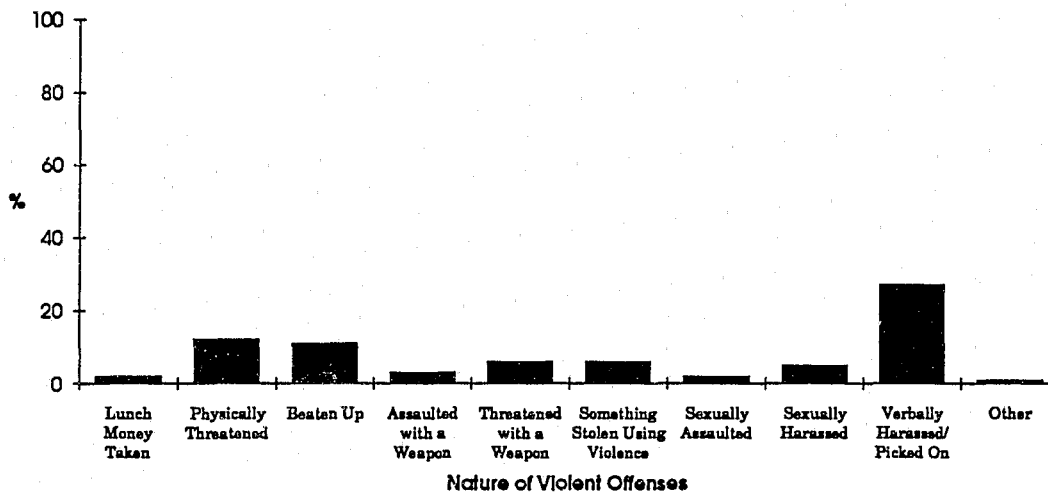
1. Approximately 52 (30%) of the respondents were concerned for their own personal safety or the safety of their friends. Students feared that reporting to anyone would result in retaliation from the perpetrator(s). For example, *"Because I thought that if I report the incident to the school, then I will get in trouble by the people who were involved"* and *"Because I don't want to get beat-up."*
2. Fifty-five (32%) of the students did not report the incident(s) because they felt that it was not serious enough to warrant involvement from others. Many of these respondents felt that they could take care of the incident themselves or that it was not important enough to be reported. For example, *"Because I can stick up for myself"* and *"Sometimes if it's a little thing, you wouldn't want to get into all that trouble."*
3. Forty-seven (27%) of the respondents indicated that they did not report the incident because they did not want to get involved. Some of the students felt that it was not their responsibility to report the incident if it happened to someone else. Others did not want to get involved and risk getting a reputation for being a tattletale. For example, *"Didn't want to get involved"* or *"I didn't think it was my place to tell on someone else if they didn't do anything to me."*
4. Approximately 11% (18) of the students stated that the incident had already been reported by someone else or they believed that no one would do anything even if they did report it. For example, *"Because I thought that nobody would believe me because there was a gun involved"* and *"There was already a teacher there who took care of it."*

Students who had not reported the incident(s) were asked to indicate whether or not the incident had occurred again. Of the 175 students who had not reported the incident(s), 69 (39%) indicated that it had occurred again. This rate is approximately 10% higher than the rates of reoccurrence experienced by those that had reported the incident(s).

Students' Self-Reported Victimization While On Their Way To And From School

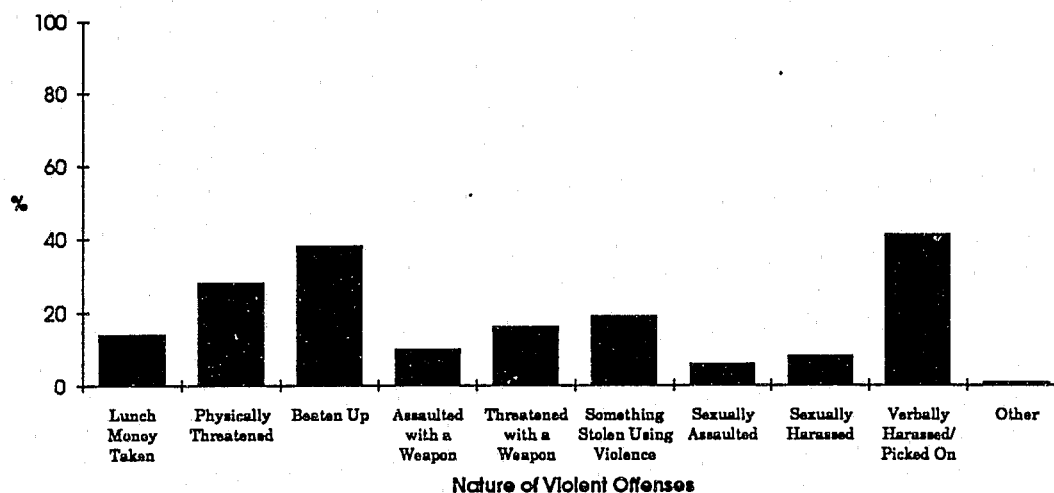
Students were also asked to identify violent incidents which had happened to *them* while on their to and from school. Approximately 11 (2%) of the 457 students responding to this question stated that they had had lunch money taken from them. Fifty-six (12%) of the students stated that they had been threatened. Approximately 51 (11%) of the students had been beaten-up while on their way to or from school. Thirteen (3%) students reported being assaulted with a weapon and 25 (6%) reported being threatened with a weapon. Twenty-five (6%) of the respondents indicated that they had had something stolen with threats or physical violence. Eight (2%) students stated that they had been sexually assaulted and 23 (5%) reported being sexually harassed while on their way to or from school. One hundred and twenty-three (27%) reported being verbally harassed or picked on by others. Six (1%) students had been victimized by "other" forms of violence while on their way to and from school.

Figure 16: Violent Offenses Committed Against Students On Their Way To and From School



Students were also asked to identify violent crimes that had happened to *someone they know* while on their way to and from school. Approximately 64 (14%) of the 457 students reported knowing someone who had had their lunch money taken. Approximately 127 (28%) of the students stated that they knew someone who had been physically threatened. Approximately 172 (38%) students knew someone who had been beaten-up while on their way to or from school. Forty-six (10%) students reported knowing someone who had been assaulted with a weapon and 72 (16%) reported knowing someone who had been threatened with a weapon. Eighty-eight (19%) indicated that they knew someone who had had something stolen from them using threats or physical violence. Twenty-seven (6%) students stated that they knew someone who had been sexually assaulted and 38 (8%) reported knowing someone who had been sexually harassed. One hundred and eighty-eight (41%) reported knowing someone who had been verbally harassed or picked on by others while on the way to or from school. In the final category of "other," 5 (1%) students knew someone who had been victimized by another form of violence, such as being "followed by someone."

Figure 17: Violent Offenses Committed Against Someone They Know While On Their Way To and From School



Break Down by Grade Level

Grade 7 and grade 8 students appear more likely to have been victimized than the grade 9 students. This finding differs from the rates of violence experienced while *at school*. Grade 8 students reported feeling safer in school, while grade 9 students were more likely to feel safe from violence while on their way to and from school. The students in grade 7 appear to have higher rates of victimization in school as well as on their way to and from school. Students in grade 7 reported that they were more likely to be physically threatened, beaten-up, and sexually assaulted while on their way to and from school. Grade 8 students were more likely to have been threatened with a weapon and verbally harassed or picked on. Students in grade 9 were most likely to report being victims of sexual harassment while on their way to and from school.

Students in grades 8 and 9 were more likely to know someone who had been a victim of violence on their way to or from school. In particular, students in grade 9 indicated that they were more likely to know someone who had been physically threatened and assaulted or threatened with a weapon. Grade 8 students were more likely to know someone who had had lunch money taken from them, had been beaten-up or had been harassed or picked on while on their way to and from school.

**Table 4: Students' Self-Reported Victimization
By Grade**

	<i>The Student</i>			<i>Someone They Know</i>		
	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>
1. Lunch\$ Taken	2%	3%	2%	13%	19%	10%
2. Threatened	17%	13%	7%	24%	28%	33%
3. Beaten-up	15%	13%	4%	39%	41%	35%
4. Assaulted Weapon	3%	4%	2%	10%	7%	14%
5. Threaten Weapon	5%	7%	4%	12%	18%	18%
6. Something Stolen	7%	5%	4%	19%	19%	21%
7. Sexually Assault	3%	1%	2%	7%	4%	7%
8. Sexually Harass	2%	6%	8%	3%	11%	11%
9. Harassed/Picked on	26%	31%	24%	31%	51%	43%
	----- n=156	----- n=160	----- n=136	----- n=156	----- n=160	----- n=136

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 5 and Table 6 are the self-reported rates of victimization of *the students themselves and someone they know* while on their way to and from school broken down by gender and grade.

The results presented in Table 5 indicate the extent to which male and female students reported being victims of violence while on their way to and from school. The rates of reported victimization were, for the most part, higher for the male students. However, the female students were more likely to be victims of sexual assault and sexual and verbal harassment. The greatest distinction in the rates of reported victimization appear to be between the male and female students in grade 7.

**Table 5: Students' Self-Reported Victimization
By Gender and Grade**

	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	1%
2. Threatened	23%	15%	14%	9%	11%	1%
3. Beaten-up	22%	12%	6%	7%	14%	3%
4. Assaulted Weapon	5%	4%	2%	2%	4%	1%
5. Threaten Weapon	7%	10%	5%	3%	4%	4%
6. Something Stolen	12%	5%	6%	2%	5%	3%
7. Sexually Assault	1%	0%	2%	4%	1%	3%
8. Sexually Harass	0%	3%	0%	4%	9%	16%
9. Harassed/Picked on	27%	31%	17%	26%	33%	30%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

**Table 6: Students' Reported Victimization of "Someone They Know"
By Gender and Grade**

	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	20%	17%	8%	4%	22%	11%
2. Threatened	31%	22%	31%	16%	34%	35%
3. Beaten-up	49%	35%	28%	26%	48%	41%
4. Assaulted Weapon	15%	4%	12%	4%	10%	16%
5. Threatened Weapon	15%	17%	15%	9%	20%	20%
6. Something Stolen	29%	16%	19%	7%	22%	23%
7 Sexually Assault	9%	1%	6%	4%	7%	9%
8. Sexually Harass	2%	3%	5%	4%	21%	17%
7. Harassed/Bullied	31%	51%	32%	32%	52%	52%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

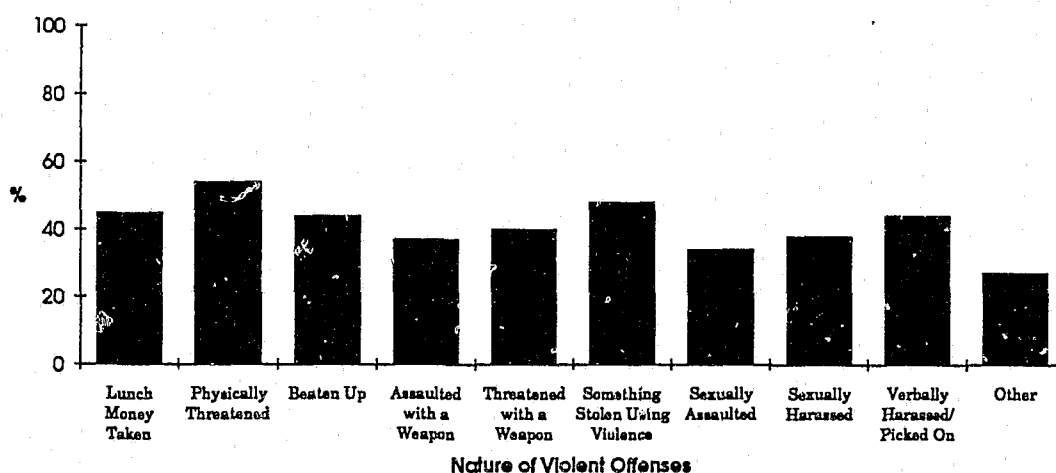
Female students in grade 8 and 9 were more likely than the female students in grade 7 to report knowing someone who had been a victim of violence while on their way to or from school. Males in grade 7 were more likely than the older males to report knowing someone who had been a victim of violent offenses while on their way to or from school. Male grade 7 students were more likely than the female grade 7 students to know people

who had been victims of violent incidents while at school. However, the female students in grade 8 and 9 were more likely than the male students in the same grades to report knowing someone who had been a victim of violent crime while on their way to or from school

Incidents Involving a Gang/Group

Students were also asked to identify which of the violent crimes that had happened to them or someone they know while on their way to or from school, had been committed by a gang/group of 2 or more people. Approximately 34 (45%) of the 75 reported incidents of having "lunch money taken" were committed by a gang/group of two or more people. Approximately 98 (54%) of the 183 "physically threatened" incidents were committed by a gang/group. Similarly, 98 (44%) of the total 223 "beaten-up" incidents reported by the respondents were committed by a gang/group. Twenty-two (37%) of the 59 incidents of having been "assaulted by a weapon" and 39 (40%) of the 97 "threatened with a weapon" reported by students, whether the incidents occurred to the student or someone they know, were identified as having been committed by two or more people. Fifty-four (48%) of the total 113 incidents of "something stolen with threats or physical violence" were committed by a gang/group of 2 or more people. Twelve (34%) of the 35 incidents of sexual assault reported and 23 (38%) of the 61 incidents of sexual harassment reported were committed by a gang/group. One hundred and thirty-seven (44%) of the total 311 incidents of verbal harassment or being picked on were also committed by a gang/group. In the final category of "other," 3 (27%) of the 11 "other" incidents reported were committed by a gang/group of two or more people.

Figure 18: Percentage of Violent Offenses Committed Against Students or Someone They Know While On Their Way To and From School That Were Perpetrated By A Gang/Group



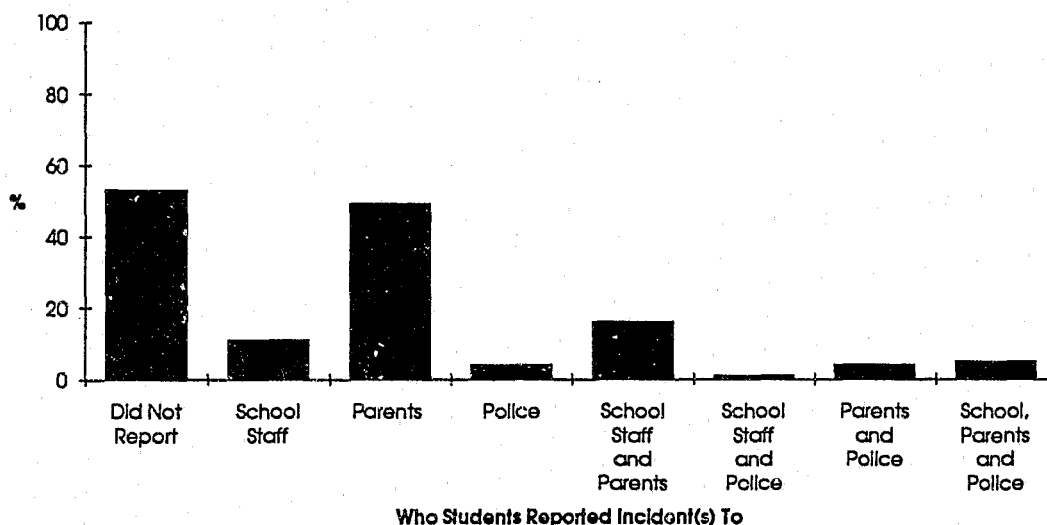
Students were also asked to comment on the self-reported data. Approximately 93% (425) of the 457 students chose not to offer additional comments to this question. Thirty-four (47%) students provided further comments on the nature of the incident(s) that happened to them or someone they know, and can be summarized into four categories.

1. Seven (20%) of the students voiced their opinions on why they believed the violence was occurring. For example, *"Most of the violence is racially motivated."* and *"I think most of these incidents occur on the way to and from school because there are no teachers or adults."*
2. Five (15%) of the respondents offered comparative statements about the amount of violence in their school versus outside the school. For example, *"It's not as bad coming and going to school as it is being all bunched together and getting hostile and violent in school."*
3. Three (9%) discussed how they felt about the violence, such as *"I hate it"* and *"I don't want it to happen."*
4. Approximately 9% (3) of the students commented on why none of the incidents had happened to them, such as *"I guess the reason why hardly any of these things happen to me is because I'm always with a group of people."*

Reporting Rates of Violent Incidents Which Occurred While On The Way To And From School

Students were asked if they had reported any of the above incidents, whether they had occurred to them or someone they know, to school staff, parents, or the police. Approximately 70% (318) of the 457 respondents indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while on their way to and from school. Forty-seven per cent (151) of the students reported the incident(s). A break down of who the students were most likely to report the incidents to is provided below in Figure 19.

Figure 19: Who Students Reported Incident(s) To



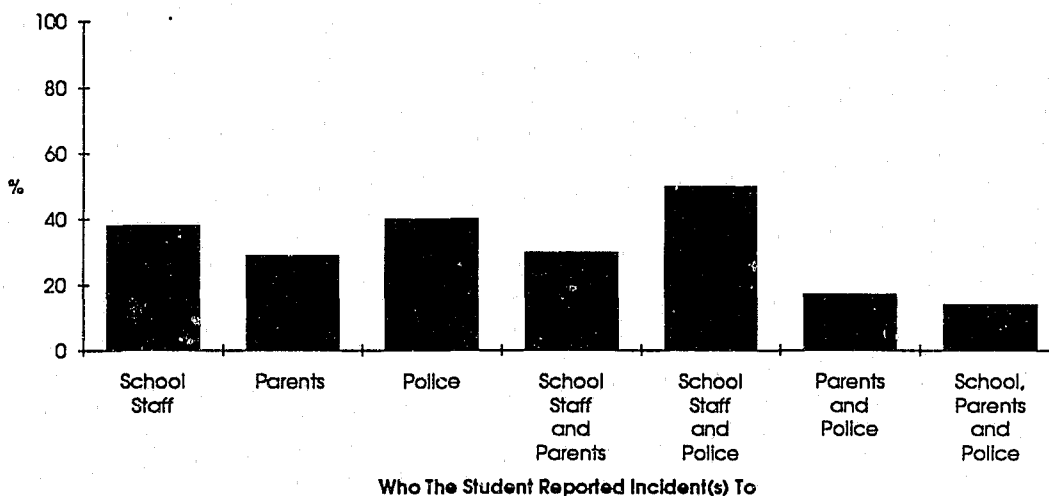
Students were less likely to report the incident(s) to the police, whether it be to the police alone or in combination with school staff and/or parents, than any other group or individual. The results also indicate a remarkable increase in the percentage of youth that reported incident(s) to parents and a remarkable decrease in the number of young people that reported incident(s) to school staff in comparison to the rates of reporting for incident(s) of violence that occurred while at school (see in Figure 13). These results were not surprising. Parents are often the first people students have contact with following the commission of an offense outside of the school, whereas school staff are the most immediate authority figures available when an incident occurs within the school.

Students who reported incidents to parents, teachers or police were also asked to comment on what happened as a result of the disclosure. Of the 151 students that reported the incident(s), 68 (45%) responded to this question. The results are grouped into four categories.

1. Approximately 46% (31) responded by stating that *"nothing"* or *"not too much"* happened as a result of reporting the incident(s).
2. Eighteen (27%) stated that some sort of disciplinary action was taken against the perpetrator such as a suspension, expulsion, punishment or the person being arrested or charged.
3. Thirteen (19%) of the students indicated that the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) were spoken to by the principal, guidance counsellor, parents or police.
4. Six (9%) stated that when they told their parents/staff some form of advice followed, such as: *"My parents told me to be really careful while walking on the streets."*

Students who had reported the incident(s) were also asked to indicate whether or not they were happy with the way in which the incident was handled. Forty-two (28%) of the 151 young people that had reported the incident(s) to one of more of the three parties indicated that they were happy with the way the incident was handled. The results indicate that less students were happy with the way incidents which occurred on their way to and from school were handled compared to the handling of offenses which occurred while in school. Provided below in Figure 20, is a breakdown of the percentage of students who were happy with the way the incident was handled based upon who they had reported the incident(s) to.

Figure 20: Students Who Were Happy With How Incident(s) Was Handled Based On Who They Reported To



Although students were less likely to report the incident(s) to the police, those who did were more happy with the way in which it was handled. The results also indicate that students who reported the incident(s) to school staff were also happy with the way in which it was handled.

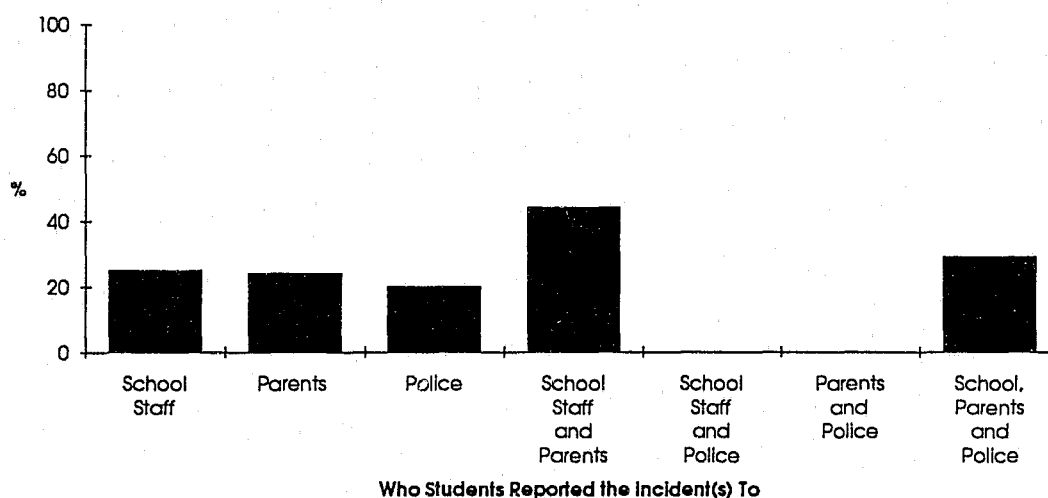
Of the 151 students who reported the incident(s), 15% (23) also provided comments about why they were or were not happy with the way in which the incident(s) was handled.

1. Approximately 17% (4) of the students offered comments related to being happy with the way in which the situation(s) was or (were) handled. The comments indicated that students were happy because the incident(s) did not occur again or because someone did something about the incident(s).
2. Thirteen (57%) of the respondents provided additional comments about being unhappy with the way in which the incident(s) was handled. They did not like the way things were handled because the response was seen as not being severe enough or unfair or had no significant impact on stopping the incident(s) from happening again.

3. Six (26%) indicated that they were unsure of whether or not they were completely happy with the way in which the incident(s) was handled.

Students who reported the incident(s) were asked to indicate whether or not the incident had occurred again. Of the 151 students that reported the incident(s), 34 (23%) indicated that it had occurred again. Figure 21 provides a breakdown of the percentage of young people that indicated that the incident(s) had occurred again based upon who they had reported the incident(s) to.

Figure 21: Percentage of Incident(s) Which Occurred Again Based Upon Who The Students Reported the Incident(s) To



The results presented in Figure 21 indicate that incidents were less likely to occur again when reported to the police, particularly when reported to the police and either school staff or parents. The results also indicate a high percentage of repeat occurrences among those incidents that were reported to school staff and parents and to all three parties. This rate was also high for reported incidents that occurred in the school.

Incidents Not Reported

Approximately 53% (167) of the 318 who indicated that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school also indicated that they had not reported the incidents.

Break Down By Gender

Approximately 70% (163) of the male students and 70% (155) of the female students reported that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents while at school. The results further indicated that 51% (83) of the male students did not report the incidents compared to 54% (84) of the female respondents.

Break Down by Grade Level

Approximately 66% (103) of students in grade 7, 76% (121) of students in grade 8 and 67% (91) of students in grade 9 reported that they or someone they know had been a victim of one or more violent incidents. Fifty (49%) of the respondents in grade 7, 50% (61) in grade 8 and 62% (56) in grade 9 did not report the incidents to either the school, their parents or the police.

Students who did not report the incident(s) were asked to comment on why they did not report the incident(s). Of the total 167 students who did not report the incident(s), 83% (139) provided comments explaining why.

1. Thirty-five (25%) of the respondents were concerned for their own personal safety or the safety of their friends. Students feared that reporting to anyone would result in retaliation from the perpetrator(s). For example, *"I was too scared. I felt it might happen again."*
2. Forty-one (29%) of the students did not report the incident(s) because they felt that it was not serious enough to warrant involvement from others. Many of these respondents felt that they could take care of the incident themselves or that it was not important enough to be reported. For example, *"I didn't think it was necessary"* and *"I didn't think it was that important, and neither did the victim."*
3. Forty-seven (34%) of the respondents indicated that they did not report the incident because they did not want to get involved. Some of the students felt that it was not their responsibility to report the incident if it happened to someone else. Others did not want to get involved and risk getting a reputation as a tattletale. For example, *"Because it was none of my business and I didn't want to get involved"* and *"I shouldn't be the one to squeal. It's not my problem."*
4. Approximately 12% (16) of the students stated that the incident had already been reported by someone else or that they believed that no one would do anything even if they did report it. For example, *"Why report an incident that happened outside the school, when they can't deal with incidents inside the school."*

The students' reasons for not reporting incidents which occurred while on the way to and from school were remarkably similar to the reasons offered for not reporting incidents which took place while in school. While the most common reason for not reporting violence which occurred outside the school was the unwillingness of the students to become involved, the lack of reporting for offenses which occurred while in school was most commonly attributed to the students' perceptions that the situation did not warrant it or was not serious enough to involve others.

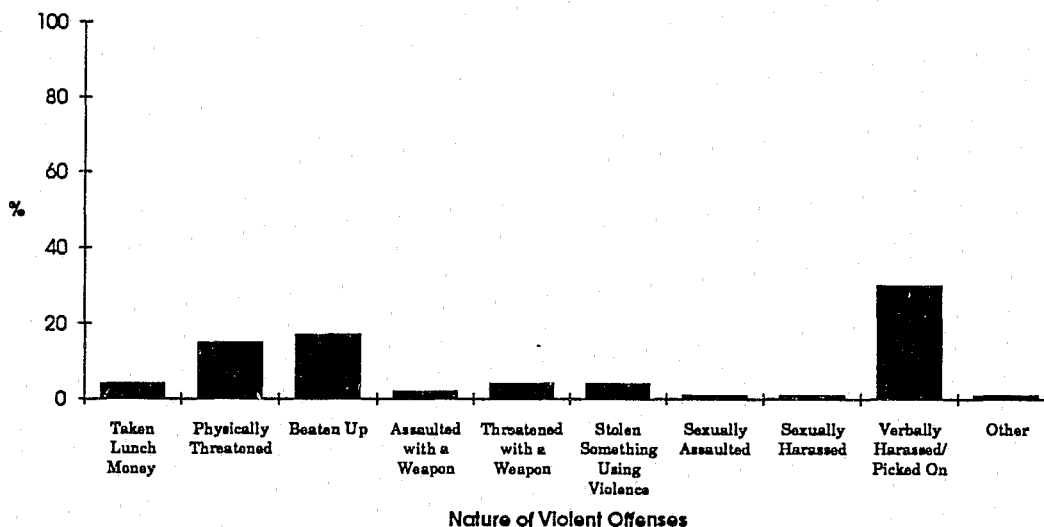
Students that had not reported the incident(s) were asked to indicate whether or not the incident had occurred again. Of the 167 students that had not reported the incident(s), 44 (26%) indicated that it had occurred again. This rate is 3% higher than the rates of reoccurrence experienced by those that had reported the incident(s).

Violent Offenses Committed By Students

*"I did the one (violent incident) because I was mad, but it was no big deal. That person
(the victim) was doing it back to me."
(Female, 12 years)*

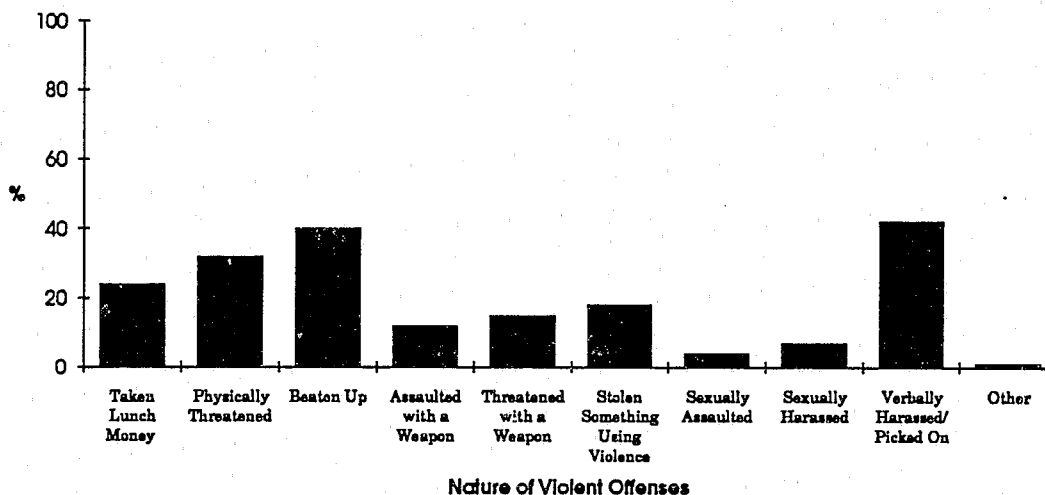
Students were asked to identify violent offenses which *they had committed* while at school. Approximately 20 (4%) of the 457 students responding to the survey indicated that they had taken lunch money from other students. Sixty-seven (15%) of the respondents stated that they had physically threatened someone while at school. An even greater number of students, approximately 78 (17%), indicated that they had assaulted or "beaten someone up" while at school. Approximately 8 (2%) students stated that they had assaulted someone with a weapon, while 16 (4%) of the young people indicated that they had threatened someone with a weapon on school grounds. Approximately 16 (4%) of the students indicated that they had stolen something from someone using threats or physical violence. One student had indicated that he/she had sexually assaulted someone, and three (1%) indicated that they had sexually harassed someone while at school. One hundred and thirty-six (30%) admitted to having verbally harassed or picked on someone while at school. Finally, the students were asked to indicate whether there were "other" violent offenses that they had committed while at school that were not listed. Approximately 2 (1%) students stated that they had committed other types of violent offenses at school.

Figure 22: Violent Offenses Committed By Students



Students were also asked to identify violent offenses which had been *committed by someone they know* while at school. Approximately 109 (24%) of the students reported knowing someone who had taken lunch money while at school. One hundred and forty-eight (32%) of the students knew someone who had physically threatened someone at school. In addition, 183 (40%) respondents indicated that they knew someone who had assaulted or "beaten someone up" while at school. Approximately 55 (12%) students knew someone who had assaulted someone with a weapon, and 70 (15%) students stated that they knew someone who had threatened someone with a weapon on school property. Eighty-two (18%) of the respondents knew someone who had stolen something from another student using threats or physical violence. Sixteen (4%) of the students indicated that they knew someone who had sexually assaulted another student(s), and 32 (7%) students stated that they knew someone who had sexually harassed another student(s) while at school. One hundred and ninety-two (42%) of the 457 respondents knew someone who had verbally harassed or picked on someone at school. Finally, the students were asked to indicate whether there were "other" violent offenses that had been committed by someone they knew while at school that were not listed. Approximately 1% (2) of the students stated that other violent offenses had been committed by someone they know on school grounds.

Figure 23: Violent Offenses Committed By Someone They Know While At School



Break Down By Grade Level

The grade by grade break down for this question is presented in Table 7. Grade 8 students had the highest reported rates of committing violent offenses while at school with the exception of stealing something using threats or physical violence. In addition, the grade 8 students also had the highest reported rates of knowing someone who has committed violent offenses while at school with the exception of sexual assault and sexual and verbal harassment.

**Table 7: Violent Offenses Committed by Students
or by Someone They Know**

	<i>The Student</i>			<i>Someone They Know</i>		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	1%	8%	5%	17%	33%	22%
2. Threatened	12%	18%	15%	24%	38%	36%
3. Beaten-up	18%	21%	12%	33%	46%	42%
4. Assaulted Weapon	1%	3%	2%	6%	14%	16%
5. Threaten Weapon	2%	6%	3%	11%	18%	18%
6. Something Stolen	3%	3%	5%	12%	25%	17%
7. Sexually Assault	0%	1%	0%	2%	3%	6%
8. Sexually Harass	1%	1%	0%	5%	7%	10%
9. Harassed/Picked on	25%	34%	32%	30%	46%	52%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=156	n=160	n=136	n=156	n=160	n=136

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 8 are the self-reported rates of perpetration of violent offenses while at school broken down by gender and grade. Table 9 indicates the reported rates of perpetration of violent offenses while at school committed by *someone the students know* broken down by gender and grade.

**Table 8: Violent Offenses Committed by Students
By Gender and Grade**

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	1%	6%	3%	0%	30%	7%
2. Threatened	24%	20%	14%	10%	16%	16%
3. Beaten-up	23%	28%	14%	12%	14%	10%
4. Assaulted Weapon	1%	4%	2%	0%	3%	1%
5. Threaten Weapon	2%	7%	0%	2%	4%	6%
6. Something Stolen	2%	5%	3%	3%	1%	7%
7. Sexually Assault	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
8. Sexually Harass	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	0%
9. Harassed/Picked on	26%	42%	28%	25%	26%	35%
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	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

Grade 7 and grade 8 male students were more likely to report being perpetrators of violent offenses at school than the female students in the same grades. It is interesting to note, however, that the female students in grades 7 and 8 identified themselves as perpetrators of sexual assault and sexual harassment, while none of the males in any of the grades had committed similar offenses. The grade 9 female students were more likely than the grade 9 male students to report committing violent offenses such as taking lunch money, beating someone up, threatening someone with a weapon, stealing something with threats or physical violence, and verbally harassing or picking on someone while at school.

**Table 9: Violent Offenses Committed by Someone They Know
By Gender and Grade**

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>
1. Lunch\$ Taken	24%	36%	17%	9%	30%	27%
2. Threatened	31%	41%	29%	16%	36%	42%
3. Beaten-up	40%	53%	32%	26%	40%	51%
4. Assaulted Weapon	8%	16%	11%	4%	13%	21%
5. Threaten Weapon	12%	22%	12%	10%	14%	23%
6. Something Stolen	17%	31%	17%	6%	20%	17%
7. Sexually Assault	2%	3%	5%	2%	1%	7%
8. Sexually Harass	5%	7%	9%	4%	7%	11%
9. Harassed/Picked on	29%	52%	42%	32%	42%	61%
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	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

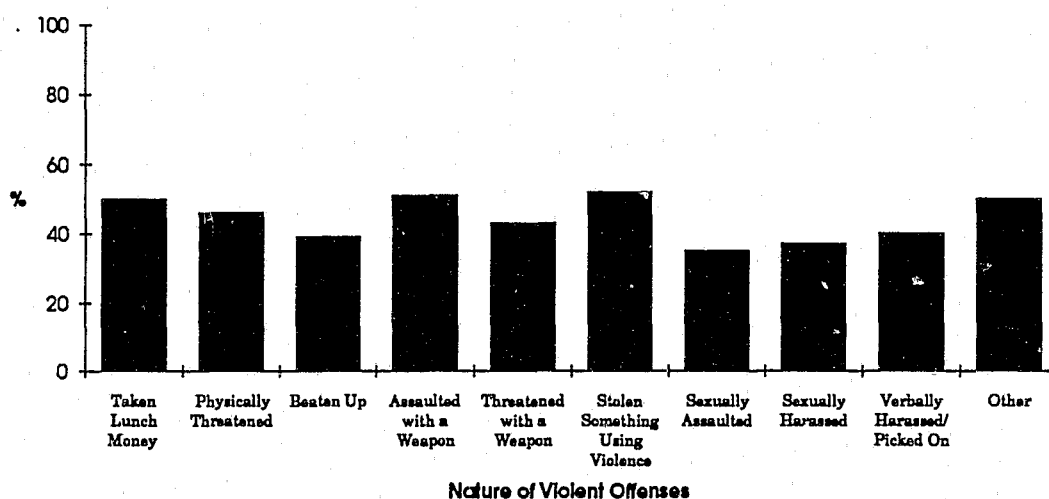
The results presented in Table 9 indicate the extent to which male and female students report knowing someone who had committed a violent offense while at school. Once again, the grade 7 and 8 male students were more likely to know someone who had committed a violent offense while at school than the female students in the same grades. The grade 9 female students, however, were more likely than any other group to report knowing someone who had committed each offense with the exception of knowing someone who had stolen something using threats or physical violence.

Incidents Involving a Gang/Group

Students were also asked to identify which of the violent crimes that had been committed by them or someone they know while at school, had been committed by/with a gang/group of 2 or more people. Approximately 64 (50%) of the 129 reported incidents of having "taken lunch money" were committed by a gang/group of two or more people. Approximately 98 (46%) of the 215 "physically threatened" incidents were committed by a gang/group. Similarly, 101 (39%) of the total 261 "beaten-up" incidents reported by the

respondents were committed by a gang/group. Thirty-two (51%) of the 63 incidents of having been "assaulted by a weapon" and 37 (43%) of the 86 "threatened with a weapon" incidents reported by students, whether the incidents were committed by the student or someone they know, were committed by two or more people. Fifty-one (52%) of the total 98 incidents of "something stolen with threats or physical violence" were committed by a gang/group of 2 or more people. Six (35%) of the 17 incidents of sexual assault reported and 13 (37%) of the 35 incidents of sexual harassment reported were committed by a gang/group. One hundred and thirty-one (40%) of the total 328 incidents of verbal harassment or being picked on were also committed by a gang/group. In the final category of "other," 2 (50%) of the 4 "other" incidents reported was committed by a gang/group of two or more people.

Figure 24: Violent Offenses Committed By Students or Someone They Know
As Part of a Gang/Group



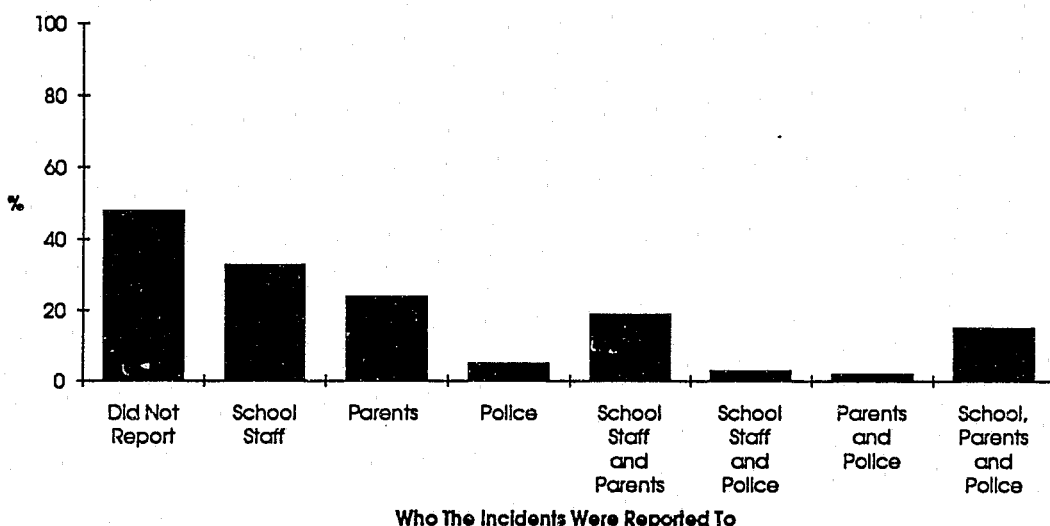
Students were asked to comment on the self-reported data. Approximately 94% (431) of the respondents offered no comments. The comments that were provided by 8 (2%) of the students were related to the nature of the offense committed, such as *"I got into a fight with someone because they were harassing me for three weeks and I lost it"* or *"I did the one because I was mad, but it was not a big deal. That person was doing it back to me."* Some indicated their feelings about having been involved or not involved in such violent incidents, such as: *"I don't like doing these things, because I know how bad it feels"* and *"It's sad that some people would do this."* The remaining comments related to the students' understanding of why such incidents took place. For example, *"It's all about who has power," "Racial comments. It stinks"* and *"I thought I knew these people so well in grade 6, but they are so different now. I wonder what's going to happen if they ever turn against me."*

Reporting Rates of Violent Incidents Committed By Students At School

Students were asked if any of the above incidents had been reported to school staff, parents, and police. Approximately 63% (287) of the 457 respondents had indicated that they or someone they know had committed violent offenses while at school. Forty-three per cent (123) of the students reported the incident(s). A break down of who the students were most likely to report the incidents to is provided below in Figure 25.

Incidents were more likely to be reported to the school and parents rather than the police. The results also indicate a remarkable increase in the number of incidents that were reported to all three parties when compared to the report rates for victimization (see Figures 13 and 19).

Figure 25: Who The Incidents Were Reported To



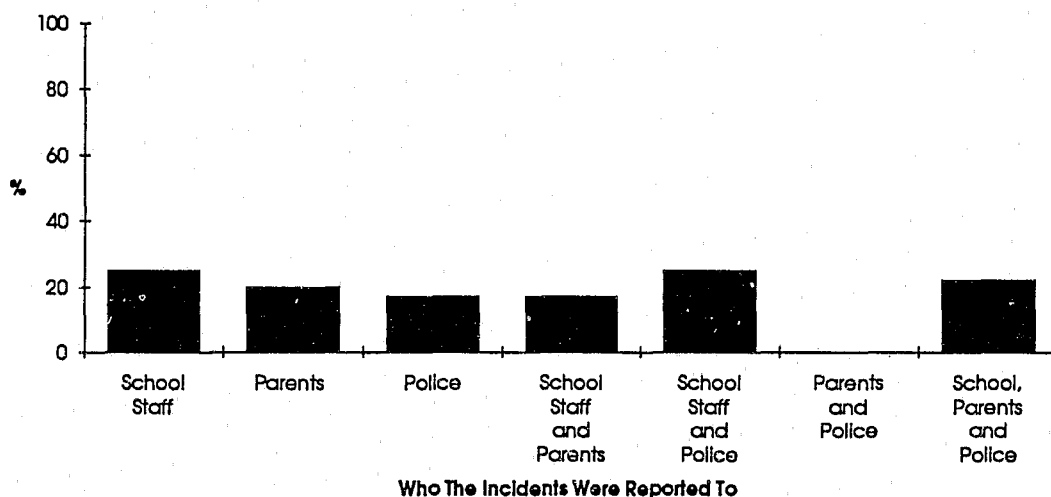
Students who indicated that incidents had been reported to parents, school staff, or police were asked to comment on what happened as a result. Of the 123 students who indicated that incidents had been reported, 58 (47%) responded to the question. Their responses are summarized below.

1. Thirty-one (53%) of the respondents indicated that disciplinary action had been taken when the incident(s) was/were reported. Perpetrators were either charged, suspended or grounded, though most respondents indicated that the perpetrator simply "got in trouble".
2. Fifteen (26%) of the students reported that the perpetrators had been spoken to or given a warning.
3. Approximately 16% (9) of the students indicated that nothing happened as a result of the incident being reported.

4. The remaining three (5%) respondents provided further details on the nature of the crime committed, such as *"He started to call us names and hit us, so we did it too, but a little harder. He was younger we were stronger."*

Students who indicated that incidents had been reported were asked to indicate whether or not the incident(s) had occurred again. Of the 123 students that reported the incident(s), 26 (21%) indicated that it had occurred again. Figure 26 provides a breakdown of the percentage of young people that indicated that the incident(s) had occurred again based upon who they had reported the incident(s) to.

Figure 26: Percentage of Incidents Which Occurred Again Based Upon Who The Students Reported the Incident(s) To



The results presented in Figure 26 indicate that incidents were less likely to occur again if reported to the police alone, to the school staff and parents, and in particular when reported to the police and parents.

Students who indicated that incidents were not reported were asked if the incidents occurred again. Fifty (36%) of the 139 respondents indicated that the incident(s) did occur again. As expected, incidents that were not reported were more likely to occur again.

Relationship Between Being A Victim & Being A Perpetrator

Break Down By Grade Level

A "between-group" comparison indicates students in grade 7 and 9 had the highest rates of reported victimization. Students in grade 8 have the highest rates of reported perpetration for each violent offense with the exception of "stealing something" and "sexually harassing" someone. A "within-group" comparison shows that students from

each grade were more likely to be victims of violent crime than perpetrators with the exception of "beaten-up" where students in each grade were more likely to be perpetrators than victims of this particular crime.

Table 10: Violent Offenses Committed and Experienced by Students

	Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9	
	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
1. Lunch\$ Taken	5%	1%	6%	8%	10%	5%
2. Threatened	26%	12%	23%	18%	21%	15%
3. Beaten-up	16%	18%	14%	21%	9%	12%
4. Assault Weapon	4%	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%
5. Threaten Weapon	8%	2%	4%	6%	10%	3%
6. Something Stolen	5%	3%	6%	3%	7%	5%
7. Sexually Assault	3%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%
8. Sexually Harass	5%	1%	3%	1%	9%	0%
9. Harassed/Picked On	30%	25%	43%	34%	45%	32%
	n=156	n=156	n=160	n=160	n=136	n=136

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 11 and Table 12 are the self-reported rates of victimization versus perpetration broken down by gender and grade.

Table 11: Violent Offenses Committed and Experienced by Male Students

	Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9	
	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
1. Lunch\$ Taken	5%	1%	3%	7%	9%	3%
2. Threatened	28%	24%	22%	20%	29%	14%
3. Beaten-up	20%	23%	22%	28%	15%	14%
4. Assault Weapon	6%	1%	5%	4%	3%	2%
5. Threaten Weapon	11%	2%	7%	7%	15%	0%
6. Something Stolen	6%	2%	7%	5%	6%	3%
7. Sexually Assault	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8. Sexually Harass	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
9. Harassed/Picked On	33%	26%	40%	42%	35%	28%
	n=86	n=86	n=81	n=81	n=65	n=65

Table 12: Violent Offenses Committed and Experienced by Female Students

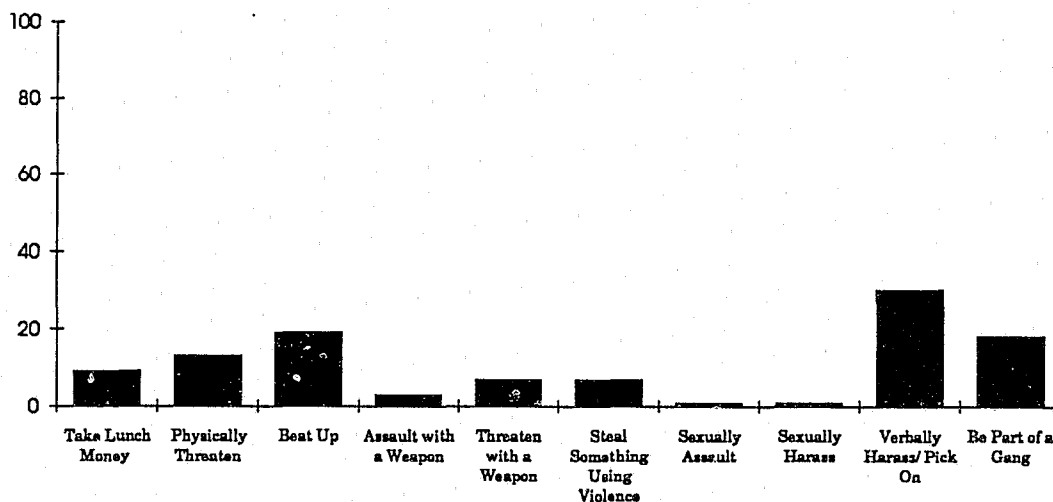
	Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9	
	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
1. Lunch\$ Taken	3%	0%	3%	30%	1%	7%
2. Threatened	9%	10%	11%	16%	1%	16%
3. Beaten-up	7%	12%	14%	14%	3%	10%
4. Assault Weapon	2%	0%	4%	3%	1%	1%
5. Threaten Weapon	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	6%
6. Something Stolen	2%	3%	5%	1%	3%	7%
7. Sexually Assault	4%	0%	1%	1%	3%	0%
8. Sexually Harass	4%	2%	9%	3%	16%	0%
9. Harassed/Picked On	26%	25%	33%	26%	30%	35%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=69	n=69	n=77	n=77	n=71	n=71

The data presented in Table 11 and Table 12 indicate that the male students were more likely to report being victims than perpetrators of violence. However, the female students in grade 8 and 9 were as likely or more likely to report being perpetrators than victims of violence at school. In particular, the female students in grade 9 were more likely to report being perpetrators than victims of each violent crime category except for "sexual assault" and "sexual harassment." The male students in grade 9 were more likely to report being victims than perpetrators of each violent crime category with the exception of "sexual assault" and "sexual harassment" where they were neither a victim nor a perpetrator. Male and female students in grade 7 were more likely to report being victims than perpetrators except in the categories of "beaten-up" for the males and "physically threaten", "beaten-up" and "stealing something" for the female students.

Commit Violent Offenses "If They Could Get Away With It"

Students were asked to identify violent offenses which *they would commit while at school if they thought they could get away with it*. Approximately 9% (42) of the 457 students responding to the survey indicated that they would take lunch money from other students. Sixty-one (13%) of the respondents stated that they would physically threaten someone while at school. Approximately 19% (86), indicated that they would assault or "beat someone up" while at school. Approximately 3% (13) of the students stated that they would assault someone with a weapon, while 7% (30) of the young people indicated that they would threaten someone with a weapon on school grounds. Thirty-two (7%) indicated that they would steal something from someone using threats or physical violence. Five students (1%) indicated that they would sexually assault someone if they thought they could get away with it, while an additional 5 (1%) said that they would sexually harass someone. One hundred and thirty-five (30%) of the 457 respondents admitted that they would verbally harass or pick on someone at school and 81 (18%) stated that they would be part of a gang.

Figure 27: Percentage of Students Who Would Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"



The results presented in Figure 27 were similar to, and in many cases, higher than the actual rates of violent crimes committed by the students (see Figure 22). These results indicate that although there was a large number of young people who would commit violent crimes while at school if they could get away with it, a certain percentage of them were not actually committing these crimes. This suggests that some deterrents currently exist to discourage students from committing some types of violent crime.

Break Down by Grade Level

The grade by grade break down for this question is presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Percentage of Students Who Would Commit Violent Crimes While At School "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It" By Grade

	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>
1. Take Lunch Money	6%	11%	11%
2. Physically Threaten	9%	13%	19%
3. Beat-up	17%	22%	18%
4. Assault Weapon	1%	4%	4%
5. Threaten with Weapon	1%	9%	10%
6. Steal Something	6%	8%	7%
7. Sexually Assault	0%	1%	2%
8. Sexually Harass	1%	1%	2%
9. Harass/Pick on	25%	33%	32%
10. Be Part of A Gang	10%	23%	21%
	-----	-----	-----
	<i>n=156</i>	<i>n=160</i>	<i>n=136</i>

Students in grades 8 and 9 reported they would be more likely to commit violent crimes if they thought they could get away with it than grade 7 students.

Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Provided below in Table 14 are the self-reported rates of violent offenses that students would commit if they thought they could get away with it broken down by grade level and gender.

Table 14: Percentage of Students Who Would Commit Violent Crimes While At School If They "Thought They Could Get Away With It" By Gender and Grade

	Male Students			Female Students		
	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
1. Lunch\$ Taken	7%	16%	12%	6%	5%	10%
2. Threatened	11%	20%	23%	7%	7%	16%
3. Beaten-up	19%	31%	25%	16%	13%	11%
4. Assaulted Weapon	1%	7%	5%	2%	0%	3%
5. Threaten Weapon	1%	17%	11%	2%	0%	10%
6. Something Stolen	8%	14%	9%	3%	3%	6%
7. Sexually Assault	0%	3%	3%	0%	0%	1%
8. Sexually Harass	1%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%
9. Harassed/Picked on	23%	43%	35%	28%	23%	28%
10. Be Part of A Gang	8%	32%	20%	13%	14%	21%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	n=86	n=81	n=65	n=69	n=77	n=71

The results presented in Table 14 indicate that more male students would commit violent crimes while at school if they thought they could get away with it than female students. Both male and female students indicated that, on average, they would commit more crimes if they thought they could get away with it than they actually do commit.

Students' Perceptions' of Responses to Violence At School

*"Nothing is ever done! So people are afraid to tell anyone."
(Female, 15 years)*

Students' Satisfaction With The Responses to Violence at School

Students were asked if they were happy with the way violence had been dealt with in their school. One hundred and eighty-two (40%) of the 457 students who responded to the question indicated that they liked the way violence had been addressed, 206 (45%) stated that they did not, and 69 (15%) did not comment or were unsure. The above results indicate that there were more students who were unhappy with the way the school dealt with violence than those who were happy. Some of the students were unsure because they were aware of situations that were handled well and others that were not.

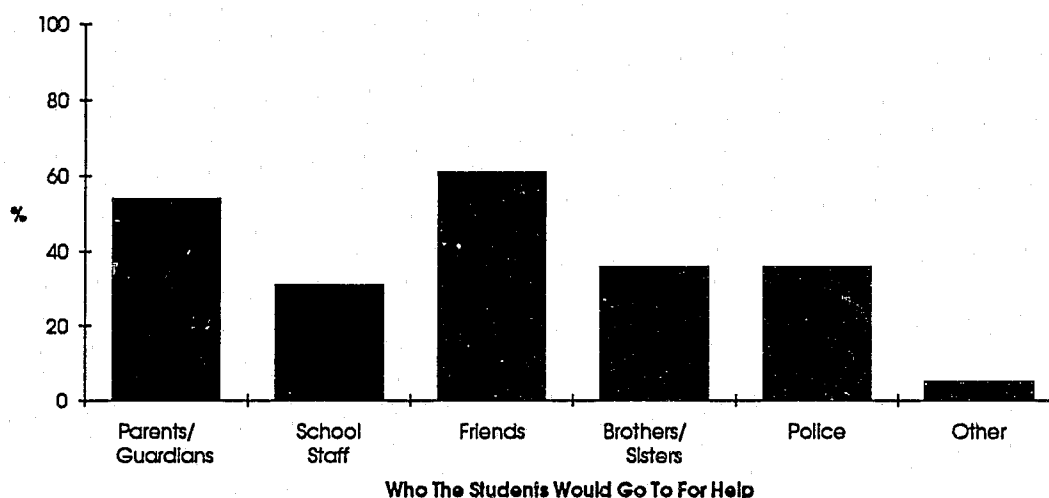
One hundred and eighty-one (40%) students made additional comments on how they felt violence had been handled in the school. Their responses can be broken down into three categories.

1. One hundred and one (56%) students stated that they believed violence was not being taken as seriously as it should be or handled in the way they hoped it would be. Students felt that the school had been too lenient in dealing with violent incidents. School personnel were chastised for not doing anything or not doing enough to stop the violence. The following comments reflect some of the more typical comments in this category: *"I feel that the school should do more than talk with those causing the violence," "The school doesn't do very much. Teachers and principals don't walk around seeing if everything is o.k. Personally, this school is really racist," "They don't have the respect of the students involved," "I think it sucks. If someone gets beat-up in the school they will find the kid who did it and have a talk with both of you to 'try to work it out'." "If it's serious enough, they suspend them. It's not fair, you get the crap kicked out of you and that's all they do," and "More in terms of prevention has to be done."*
3. Approximately 33% (60) felt that violence was being handled well or to the best of the school's ability. The following comments reflect these students' views. *"I am happy because they talk to people, staff and police talk to people in our school," "It is improving day by day," and "I think the school is doing its best to keep violence away. But there are occasional fights once in a while."*
4. Twenty (11%) stated that they did not know what the school did or did not care.

Who Students Would Go To For Help

Students were asked to indicate who they would go to for help if they were a victim of violence. Over one-half said they would go to their parents (54%) or friends (61%) for help, while over one-third would go to siblings (36%) or the police (36%). Less than one-third of the students said they would go to school staff (31%). The individuals who indicated that they would go to "others" for help (5%) identified extended family members such grandparents or aunts and uncles, or reported they would rely on themselves.

Figure 35: Who the Students Would Go To For Help If They Were Victims of Violence



Break Down By Grade Level and Gender

Male and female students in grade 7 were most likely to go to their parents, while male and female students in grade 8 and grade 9 were most likely to go to their friends. A much higher percentage of female students in grade 7 would turn to their parents for help than grade 7 male students. Similarly, over three-quarters of all female students would turn to friends for help, while just over one-half of all male students would rely on their friends.

**Table 15: Who Students Would Go To For Help If They Were Victims
of Violence By Grade and Gender**

	<i>Male Students</i>			<i>Female Students</i>		
	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 7</i>	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>
1. Parents/Guardians	45%	49%	51%	71%	60%	52%
2. School Staff	27%	32%	38%	39%	27%	27%
3. Friends	44%	52%	51%	59%	84%	79%
4. Brothers/Sisters	34%	25%	34%	44%	51%	34%
5. Police	36%	32%	34%	51%	36%	31%
6. Other	2%	1%	5%	15%	1%	10%
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	<i>n=86</i>	<i>n=81</i>	<i>n=65</i>	<i>n=69</i>	<i>n=77</i>	<i>n=71</i>

Respondents were also asked to comment on why they would or would not go to certain people for help if they were victims of violence. The comments are broken down by *who* they would or would not go to.

Parents

Approximately 57% (261) of the students provided comments on why they would or would not go to their parents/guardians for help. The majority (68%) of the comments were related to why they *would* go to their parents. A breakdown of the variety of reasons they proposed is provided below:

- Eighteen (10%) of the students felt that they *should* report the incidents to their parents because they were family and had a right to know.
- One half (89) of the respondents felt that they could trust their parents and that they would understand.
- Approximately 40% (71) believed that by telling their parents of the incidents, they would be able to get help in solving the problem.

Approximately 31% (81) of the students provided comments on why they *would not* tell their parents. Their reasons are outlined below.

- Fifteen (19%) of the students offered very general comments indicating that they just could not or would not tell their parents.
- Thirty-eight (47%) would not tell their parents because they were either scared or embarrassed or because they felt they could not trust their parents or that they would not understand.
- Approximately 6% (5) of the respondents indicated that they would not tell their parents because they would not be able to help them deal with the problem.

- Some of the students (28%) felt that telling their parents would only worry them or that they would blow it out of proportion.

Two (1%) of the respondents indicated that whether or not they told their parents depended on the nature of the incident.

School Staff

Approximately 49% (224) of the students provided comments on why they would or would not go to the school staff for help. Ninety-five (42%) of the comments were related to why they *would* go to school staff for help if they were victims of violence. A breakdown of the variety of reasons they proposed is provided below:

- Four (4%) of the students felt that they *should* report the incidents to the school staff because it would be "*the right thing to do.*"
- Thirty-three (35%) of the respondents felt that they could trust the school staff and that they would care and understand.
- The majority (61%) of the comments reflected a belief that by telling the school staff, they would be able to get help solving the problem.

Over half (55%) of the respondents provided comments on why they *would not* tell the school staff. Their reasons are outlined below.

- Twenty-six (21%) of the students offered very general comments indicating that they just could not or would not tell school staff.
- Sixty-two (51%) would not tell the school staff because they were either scared or embarrassed or because they felt they could not trust the staff or that they would not understand. Many of the respondents indicated that their victimization would be considered "*too personal*" to disclose to the staff.
- Approximately 10% (12) of the respondents indicated that they would not tell the school staff because they believed that they would not be able to help them deal with the problem.
- Some of the students (12%) felt that telling the school staff would only make things worse and that they did not want to be considered a tattletale.
- A smaller number (6%) of students felt that the situation was not serious enough to warrant informing the school staff.

Seven (3%) of the respondents indicated that they were unsure whether or not they would tell the school staff. Some students specified that it would depend on the nature of the incident.

Friends

Over half (54%) of the students provided comments on why they would or would not go to their friends for help. The majority (82%) of the students offered comments on why they *would* go to friends for help if they were victims of violence. A breakdown of the variety of reasons they proposed is provided below:

- . Four (2%) of the students stated very general reasons for reporting the incidents to their friends, such as "*Because they are your friends.*"
- . Over one half (66%) of the respondents felt that they could trust their friends and that they would care and understand.
- . Sixty-five (32%) of the students believed that their friends would be able to help them. Some of the comments indicated that the type of help that they would get from their friends was to "*get back*" at the perpetrator.

Forty-two (17%) of the respondents provided comments on why they *would not* tell their friends. Their reasons are outlined below.

- . Eight (10%) of the students offered very general comments indicating that they just could not or would not tell their friends.
- . Twenty-eight (67%) would not tell their friends because they were felt that their friends would not understand or may even make things worse.
- . Approximately 14% (6) of the respondents indicated that they would not tell their friends because they believed that they would not be able to help them deal with the problem.

Two (1%) of the respondents indicated that they were unsure whether or not they would tell their friends.

Siblings

Approximately 44% (202) of the students provided comments on why they would or would not go to their siblings for help. Over half (55%) of the respondents provided comments on why they *would* go to their siblings for help if they were victims of violence. A breakdown of the variety of reasons they proposed is provided below:

- . Seven (6%) of the students offered very general comments about reporting incidents to their siblings such as "*Because they are family.*"
- . Fifty-eight (52%) of the respondents felt that they could trust their siblings and that they would care and understand.
- . Forty-seven (42%) students indicated that they would tell their siblings so that they could help them deal with the problem.

Approximately 43% (86) of the respondents provided comments on why they *would not* tell their siblings. Their reasons are outlined below.

- . Ten (12%) students offered very general comments indicating that they just could not or would not tell their siblings.
- . Thirty-five (41%) would not tell their siblings because they felt that they could not trust them. They feared that their siblings would laugh at them or tell others or would not understand
- . Approximately 47% (41) of the respondents indicated that they would not tell their siblings because they believed that they would not be able to help them deal with the problem. Many of the respondents indicated that their brothers or sisters were too young to help.

Four (2%) of the respondents indicated that they were unsure whether or not they would tell their siblings. Some students specified that it would depend on the situation.

Police

Approximately 50% (229) of the students provided comments on why they would or would not go to the police for help. Ninety-four (41%) of the respondents provided comments related to why they *would* go to the police for help if they were victims of violence. A breakdown of the variety of reasons they proposed is provided below:

- . Five (5%) of the students felt that they *should* report the incidents to the police because it would be "*the right thing to do.*"
- . Ten (11%) of the respondents felt that they could trust the police and that they would care and understand.
- . The majority (84%) of the comments were reflected a belief that by telling the police, they would be able to get help in solving the problem.

One hundred and two (45%) of the respondents provided comments on why they *would not* tell the police. Their reasons are outlined below.

- . Nineteen (19%) of the students offered very general comments indicating that they just could not or would not tell the police.
- . Thirty-nine (38%) would not tell the police because they did not trust them and believed that they did not care what happened to them.
- . Thirty-three (32%) of the respondents indicated that they would not tell the police because they believed that their victimization would not warrant calling the police. The incidents were deemed not serious enough to involve the police.
- . Some of the students (11%) felt that telling the police would only make things worse and that they did not want to be considered a rat. Some of the students indicated that they could look after themselves.

Thirty-three (14%) of the respondents indicated that they were unsure whether or not they would tell the police. Each of these respondents felt that it would depend on how serious the incident was.

Others

Students were also asked to identify if there were other people that they would go to for help if they were victims of violence. Twenty-three (5%) of the respondents identified others they would turn to for help. Over half (13) indicated that they would go to relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins. Four (17%) of the respondents said that they would rely on themselves to deal with the incident. Two (8%) students said that they would go to a doctor, and two (8%) stated they would turn to a counsellor for help. One (4%) student felt comfortable confiding in a friend's parents and one (4%) indicated that they would turn to "someone."

Students' Suggestions For Responding to Violence at School

Students were asked how they would like to see incidents of violence handled at school. The respondents were asked to identify: a) what students could do; b) what the school staff could do; and c) what the police could do.

What Students Can Do

Approximately 60% (273) of the respondents provided comments on how they felt students could help in addressing the violence in their school.

1. Fifty-five (20%) respondents suggested that students should report the incidents to the appropriate authorities such as school staff or the police.
2. Seventy-nine (29%) indicated that they would like to see students help eliminate the violence. Thirty-three (42%) of these respondents felt that this could be accomplished by not getting involved in or walking away from potentially violent situations. For example, *"Not to get involved in violence and protest against it."* The remaining 58% (46) of the students believed that violence could be eliminated if those involved stopped fighting and harassing other students. For example, *"Stop beating each other up and bothering each other."*
3. Approximately 23% (64) of the students believed that altering the way in which students responded to potentially violent situations would help to reduce the amount of violence at their school. Some of the respondents believed that talking instead of fighting would help to improve the situation. Others felt that if students stopped acting so cool and were friendlier, violent situations would seldom be an issue. For example, *"Stop acting like kids," "Be polite and respect all students"* or *"They can get to know a person before they judge them."*

4. Fifty-one (19%) suggested a variety of prevention/intervention strategies for reducing violence in the school. Some wanted to encourage students to be more concerned about and intervene in situations before they lead to violence. For example, *"Students can try and prevent their friends from engaging in violent activity instead of participating or encouraging it"* or *"Students should care more for the school and its properties."* Other students recommended a variety of prevention strategies to help eliminate violence. For example, *"Stay with a group of people at or after and before school," "Students can get educated and know how to deal with a bad situation"* and *"Form an anti-violence group."* Three of the respondents advocated for identifying and addressing some of the underlying causes of the violence, such as racism.
5. Twenty-four (9%) respondents indicated that they did not think there was anything that students could do to deal with the violence or did not know what students could do.

What School Staff Can Do

Approximately 61% (280) of the respondents provided comments on how they felt school staff could help address violence in the school.

1. Forty-one (15%) respondents suggested that school staff take a more active role in looking out for students and being constantly aware of what is going on within and just outside of the school. For example, *"School staff can be more on the look out for this kind of violence."* Several of the students offered suggestions on how the staff could be more aware of what is going on, for instance, *"They could maybe keep watch on what happens after school and at lunch time and be more alert"* or *"After school, have 1 or 2 teachers standing outside."*
2. Sixty-one (22%) indicated that they would like to see the school staff put more time and effort into helping the students deal with the violence. Forty-one (67%) of these respondents felt that this could be accomplished by taking advantage of opportunities to talk to students about violence, the consequences and the impact. For example, *"The staff can have more assemblies where the students come together and express their point of view"* or *"They can provide info and hot-lines to call to receive help and courses on it."* Thirteen (21%) respondents indicated that they would like the school staff to help the victims of violence more. For example, *"Support students who have been a victim."* Seven (11%) students would like the staff to help the perpetrators of violence, such as *"Try to help these people with these problems."*

3. Approximately 21% (58) of the students believed that the school staff should be attempting to reduce the amount of violence at the school. The majority (71%) of the respondents provided very general comments about the role of the school in dealing with violence. Many indicated that the school should simply *"Stop it."* Others (29%) suggested that the school should be doing more to alter the level of violence. For example, *"Deal with it better"* or *"They can try to prevent violence before it even starts."*
4. Eighty-nine (32%) students suggested a variety of things that the school could be doing to reduce the violence. Twenty-three (26%) felt that the school should be *"more strict"* in dealing with the perpetrators. For example, *"Start getting tougher with violent students."* The majority (74%) offered a variety of suggestions for consequences which should be handed down by the school such as suspensions, expulsions, involving the police or putting all the violent students in the same class.
5. Thirty-one (11%) respondents indicated that they did not think there was anything the school staff could do to deal with the violence or did not know what they could do. For example, *"Not much. It doesn't seem teachers get too much respect from students anyway"* or *"Nothing. If kids want to have violence, they'll find a way."*

What Police Can Do

Approximately 54% (247) of the respondents provided comments on how they felt the police could help in addressing violence in the school. Their comments and suggestions have been categorized and are presented below.

1. Thirty (12%) respondents provided very general comments about what they thought the police should do to help the school address the issue of violence. Many suggested that the police *"Do their job"* and *"Help us"* in dealing with violence in the school.
2. Sixty-nine (28%) indicated that the police should be involved in more preventive strategies designed to deter and reduce the level of violence in their school. Twenty-four (35%) suggested that the police come to the school to talk to young people about violence, particularly about the prevalence of violence and what is right and wrong. For example, *"Visit regularly to talk about violence"* or *"Talk to us about facts and statistics."* Forty-five (65%) believed that an increased police presence in and around the school would have a significant impact on deterring violent crime. For example, *"They should have a special police squad for going around the schools"* and *"Stick around after school and stay in the areas where gangs usually hang out."*

3. Approximately 43% (106) of the students suggested a variety of intervention strategies that the police should be responsible for in dealing with violence at the school. The suggestions offered included such things as charging, arresting and "putting the perpetrators away."
4. Thirty (12%) respondents indicated that they did not think that there was anything the police could or should do to deal with the violence or did not know what they could do. Other students felt the police should do "*Nothing until asked.*"

Summary of Preliminary Findings - School 'B'

The following is a list of some of the key findings based on the students' responses to the Student Perceptions of Violence Survey in School 'B' (see Appendix B).

Students' Perceptions of Violence and Safety From Violence While at School

1. Nearly two-thirds of the students in School 'B' felt that there was "Some" to "A Lot" of violence in schools. When students who felt that violence does occur, though "Rarely," are added to the figure, the percentage of students who believed there was violence in schools (in varying degrees) grows to 96%.
2. There was no distinction between male and female perceptions of violence. Grade 8 students, however, were more likely than the students in grades 7 and 9 to report the existence of "Some" to "A Lot" of violence at school.
3. Three out of 10 students reported that they felt safe from violence "Sometimes" or "Not At All" while at school. When students who reported feeling safe "Most of the Time" are added to the figure, the percentage of students who do not feel safe at school at some point or another grows to approximately 82%.
4. Female students were slightly less likely to report feeling safe from violence while at school than male students.
5. Students in grade 9 were *most* likely to report feeling safe while at school. This may be due to the fact that they were less likely to be intimidated by younger and smaller students.
6. Comments provided by students indicate that feeling safe may be related less to whether there was actual violence and more to with who was around to provide protection or if students thought they could take care of themselves.

The percentage of students who believed that violence existed within this school was high. There were some notable differences in the students' perceptions of violence between grade levels. One might anticipate that either the grade 7 or grade 9 students would have perceived higher levels of violence. The grade 7 students' perceptions would likely be affected by the fact that they were the youngest and smallest students at a new school. The grade 9 students' perceptions would likely be affected by having been at the school longer or by having witnessed violence over more years. However, more students

in grade 8 indicated that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence at the school.

Students' reported perceptions of violence may not be directly related to their feelings of safety. Given that nearly two-thirds of the students believed that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence at the school, one would assume that a similar percentage of students would therefore feel safe only "Sometimes" or "Never" at school. However, less than one-third of the students indicated that this was the case. If the number of students who felt safe "Most of the Time," but not always, was combined with those who felt safe "Sometimes" or "Never," the percentage of students who reported feeling unsafe, regardless of how often, jumps to over three-quarters of the student population. Evidently, for some students the belief that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence in the school resulted in their still feeling safe "Most of the Time." Students seem to be suggesting that violence is part of school life and that they just take it in stride.

An exploration of gender and grade level differences may provide some indication of who is more affected by their perceptions of violence and how. Although the females' perceptions of violence were similar, if not identical, to those of the males, the females were slightly more likely to report feeling unsafe while at school. Evidently, there is a closer relationship between perceptions of violence and feelings of safety for females. The differences witnessed around feelings of safety may simply be due to the fact that the males feel more capable of taking care of themselves or to male bravado, i.e., they are unwilling to admit that they are frightened by violence at their school.

There was also some variation in terms of grade levels. Students in grade 7 and grade 8 reported feeling less safe from violence while at school than did students in grade 9. The results of the survey indicate that violence was perceived as being more serious by the grade 8 students. However, the grade 8 students felt just as safe as the grade 7 students. One would assume that if a student perceived there to be a more serious problem with violence, then he/she would also feel less safe. This does not appear to be the case. Based on comments provided by students in response to this question, it may be that the grade 8 students reported feeling safer because they were always with their friends, whereas the grade 7 students may have felt more isolated because they were younger and had had less time to develop friendships in their new school.

Students' Perceptions of Safety From Violence While On Their Way To And From School

1. One out of four students indicated that they felt safe from violence only "Sometimes" or "Not At All" while on their way to and from school. When students who indicated that they felt safe "Most of the Time" are added to the figure, the percentage of students who reported not feeling safe while on their way to and from school, at some point or another, grows to approximately 69%.

2. The results indicate that *more students felt safe while on their way to and from school than while at school*. This may be due to the fact that some students get rides to and from school or the fact that they encounter their perpetrators only while at school.
3. There were no remarkable differences between the male and female students' perceptions of safety. However, students did appear to feel safer with each higher grade.
4. Comments provided by students indicate that feeling safe may not be related to whether there was violence, but more to who was around to provide protection, how close they lived to the school or whether they felt capable of taking care of themselves.
5. Many of the comments about not feeling safe were related to potential dangers posed by strangers and not necessarily to threats posed by other students.

There were no remarkable differences between males and females concerning their feelings of safety while on their way to and from school. A look at the responses of the students from the three grade levels indicates some differences in terms of their feelings of safety while on the way to and from school. The students appear to feel safer with each ascending grade, though the rates for grade 7 and grade 8 students were very similar.

Students' Self-Reported Victimization While At School

1. The majority (86%) of the students reported that they had been exposed to violence at school either as a victim themselves or through knowing someone who had been victimized.
2. Students were most likely to report being physically threatened, beaten-up, and verbally harassed and picked on while at school. The most common offenses were being verbally harassed and being physically threatened. Students were even more likely to have known someone who had been a victim of the same offenses or who had their lunch money taken. The most common offense was being verbally harassed and being beaten-up.
3. Students in grade 7 and grade 9 were more likely to be victims of violent incidents. In particular, grade 7 students were more likely to be physically threatened, beaten-up, assaulted with a weapon, and sexually assaulted. Grade 9 students were more likely to have had lunch money taken or to have been threatened with a weapon, sexually and verbally harassed, or picked on.
4. *The reported rates of victimization were similar for males and females*. However, males were more likely to be beaten-up and threatened with a weapon and only slightly more likely to be physically threatened and assaulted with a weapon. The female students were more likely to be sexually and verbally harassed and only slightly more likely to have their lunch money taken and to be victims of sexual assault.

5. Students indicated that between one-quarter and one-half of all offenses were committed by a gang/group. The *most* common offenses committed by a gang/group were *those which involved the use of a weapon*. The *least* common offenses were those that were sexual in nature.
6. *Nearly one-half of those who had been victimized or knew someone who had been victimized did not report the incident* to the school, parents or the police. More males than females did not report the violence and more students in the higher grades did not report.
7. Students indicated that incidents were most likely to be reported to parents or a combination of parents and the school staff. A very small number of incidents were reported to the police.
8. The highest percentage of students who were happy with the way in which the incident was handled following disclosure were those who reported the incidents to the police or a combination of the police and school staff or the police and parents.
9. Comments provided by the students indicated that they were *happy* with the way incidents were handled because they did not occur again or because something was done about it. Students who were *unhappy* with the way incidents were handled indicated that it was not enough or that it had no significant impact on stopping the incident from happening again.
10. *Incidents were less likely to occur again when reported to the police*, whether they were reported to the police alone or in conjunction with another party.
11. Incidents were *more* likely to occur again when they were not reported at all.

The number of students who had been exposed to violence as victims themselves or through knowing others who had been victimized was large. Victimization, whether experienced or witnessed, has a profound impact on the ability of young people to learn. Whether a student is constantly exposed to violence or simply exposed to one incident, each episode can increase a student's level of fear, particularly if the incident was not handled well. Fear of further victimization or just the uncertainty of who will be next, and when, inhibits the ability of young people to concentrate fully on their education.

Insight into the impact of witnessing or being aware of the victimization of others on students' perceptions of violence and feelings of safety can be obtained by exploring the responses of grade 8 students. Students in grade 8 were the least likely to be victims of violence. However, they and the students in grade 9 were most likely to know others who had been victimized. The findings related to students' perceptions of the level of violence in schools and their feelings of safety from violence at school indicate that the grade 8 students were most likely to define the problem as more serious than the students in

grades 7 and 9 and they were also the most likely, along with the grade 7 students, to fear for their own safety at school. Their reported perceptions of violence and safety from violence may have been directly related to their knowledge of others who had been victims of violence while at school.

Students were asked to identify the violent incidents which were committed by a gang/group of two or more people. The extent to which gangs/groups were involved in violence at school varied with the nature of the violent activity. *The most common offenses committed by a gang/group were those which involved the use of a weapon.* The presence of weapons in schools, including guns, has become a serious issue for schools and police. The presence of weapons produces a high level of fear in students.

Nearly half of these students who were victims or witnessed violence did not report the incidents. Males and students in the higher grades were less likely to report incidents of violence than females and younger students. Males felt that they could look after themselves and the older students did not believe that the school, parents or the police would do anything about the incidents. It appears that young people are beginning to feel that in order to have violence addressed in the school they must deal with it themselves.

A lack of trust and faith in adults is best exemplified by students' responses to the question concerning how happy they were with the way the incident was dealt with (based upon who they reported the incident to). Students were most happy with the response when the incident was reported to the police. However, incidents were seldom reported to the police. There was a large number of young people who were unhappy with the way incidents were handled by other adults such as school staff and parents. Students reported that they were most happy with the response when it resulted in stopping the incident from occurring again.

Students' Self-Reported Victimization While On Their Way To And From School

1. More students were exposed to violence either as a victim themselves or through knowing someone who had been victimized while at school than while on the way to and from school.
2. Students were most likely to be victims of the same violent offenses while on their way to and from school as they were while at school, namely, being physically threatened, beaten-up and verbally harassed and picked on. The most common offenses were being verbally harassed and being physically threatened. Students were, once again, *more* likely to know someone who had been a victim of the same offenses although they were *less* likely to know someone who had been a victim of violence on their way to and from school than while at school.
3. Students in grade 7 and grade 8 were more likely to be victims of violent incidents while on their way to and from school. These findings differ from the rates of violence

experienced while at school. Grade 8 students reported feeling safer in school, while grade 9 students reported feeling safer from violence while on their way to and from school.

4. Students in grades 8 and 9 were more likely to know someone who had been victimized while on their way to and from school than while at school.
5. *The overall reported rates of victimization were slightly higher for the male students. However, the female students were more likely to be sexually and verbally harassed and to be victims of sexual assault while on their way to and from school.*
6. *Students indicated that between one-quarter and one-half of all offenses were committed by a gang/group. The rates were slightly higher for offenses which took place outside of the school than for those that occurred while in school. The most common offenses committed by a gang/group while on the way to and from school were being physically threatened, having something stolen using violence, having lunch money taken, being beaten-up, and being verbally harassed and picked on. The least common offenses were those that were sexual in nature and those involving a weapon, the latter of which was the most common type of offense committed by a gang/group while at school.*
7. Over one-half of those who had been victimized or knew someone who had been victimized *did not report* the incident to the school, parents or the police. More males than females did not report the violence. More students in the higher grades did not report.
8. Students indicated that incidents were most likely to be reported to parents or a combination of parents and the school staff. A very small number of incidents were reported to the police.
9. The highest percentage of students who were happy with the way in which the incident was handled following disclosure were those who reported the incidents to the school staff or the police or a combination of the two parties.
10. Overall, a higher percentage of students were happy with the way in which incidents that occurred at school were addressed, regardless of who the incidents were reported to, than those which occurred on the way to and from school.
11. Comments provided by the students indicated that they were *happy* with the way incidents were handled because they did not occur again or because something was done about it. Students who were *unhappy* with the way incidents were handled indicated that consequences to the perpetrator were not severe enough or that it had no significant impact on stopping the incident from happening again.

13. Incidents were only slightly *more* likely to occur again if they were not reported at all.

It was surprising to find that *more* students were exposed to violence either as a victim themselves or through knowing someone who had been victimized *while at school than while on the way to and from school*. It may be that a closed setting provides an environment where students are more likely to witness or be aware of violence when it occurs. It may also be that there is in fact more violence occurring within the school. Some of the comments provided by the students indicate their belief that violence was more likely to occur in schools where young people are "*bunched together getting more and more hostile*." According to students, the school is a place ripe for potentially violent situations to occur. This is true of any institution which places many people together with widely differing attitudes, opinions, values and beliefs. However, the school is also in an optimal position to establish and enforce a universal code of conduct regardless of differing attitudes, values, and beliefs among students.

The findings indicate that gang/group activity was more likely to occur outside the school than inside the school. However, the most common offenses committed by a gang/group outside the school differ markedly from those most likely to be committed in the school. The *most common* offenses committed by a gang/group while on the way to and from school were: physically threatening someone; stealing something using violence; taking lunch money; beating someone up; and verbally harassing or picking on someone. The *least common* offenses were those that were sexual in nature or involved the use of weapons. Although the use of weapons was the *least common* offense committed by a gang/group outside of the school, it was the *most common* offense committed by a gang/group in the school.

Although less students were exposed to violence while on the way to and from school than while in school, just as many did not report the incidents to school staff, parents or the police. Males and older students in the higher grades were less likely to report the incidents.

Incidents were *most* likely to be reported to school staff or parents and were *least* likely to be reported to the police. This is the same for reporting violence which occurred in schools. The highest percentage of students who were happy with the way in which the incident was handled were those who reported the incidents to school staff and the police or a combination of the two.

Violent Offenses Committed By Students

1. Nearly two-thirds of the students indicated that they or someone they know had committed one or more violent offenses while at school
2. The most frequently cited incidents committed by students included: verbally harassing, beating someone up, and threatening fellow students.

3. More students reported knowing someone who had committed violent crimes than they admitted committing themselves. Beating someone up was the most frequently reported offense, followed by harassing/bullying, physically threatening someone and knowing someone who had taken lunch money from another student.
4. Students in grade 8 had the highest reported rates of committing violent offenses and were also most likely to know someone who had committed violent acts at school.
5. Grade 7 and 8 male students were more likely to be perpetrators of violent offenses than the female students in the same grades. The grade 9 female students, however, were *more* likely than the grade 9 males to commit violent offenses such as taking lunch money, beating someone up, threatening someone with a weapon, stealing something with threats or physical violence, and verbally harassing or picking on someone while at school.
6. Those who were more likely to report committing crime themselves were also more likely to report knowing someone who had participated in violent activity, namely grade 7 and 8 males and grade 9 females.
7. Students indicated that between one-third and one-half of all offenses that they or someone they know committed were perpetrated in a gang/group. The *most* common offenses committed by a gang/group while at school were "assaulting with a weapon" and "stealing something using violence," closely followed by "taking lunch money" and "physically threatening someone." The *least* common offenses were those that were sexual in nature.
8. Nearly one-half of the students indicated that the violent incidents committed by themselves or someone they know *had not been reported* to the school, parents or the police.
9. Students who indicated that the incidents had been reported identified that parents were most commonly informed of the offense followed by school staff or a combination of school staff and parents. Students stated that very few incidents were reported to police.
10. Incidents were *less* likely to occur again when reported to the police and parents jointly.
11. Incidents were *more* likely to occur again if they were not reported at all.

The rates of perpetration reported by the students reveal that more students were victims than perpetrators of violence. This suggests that perhaps a small number of young people were responsible for a sizable amount of the incidents.

Students in grade 8 had the highest reported rates for committing violent offenses and were also most likely to report knowing someone who had committed acts of violence at school. This finding may help to explain why students in grade 8 were most likely to view violence as a serious problem in school and why they were least likely to feel safe from violence.

Exploration of the extent to which males and females were perpetrators of violence at school points to some interesting findings. While grade 7 and 8 males were more likely to commit violent crimes than the females of the same grade, female students in grade 9 were more likely than the males in the same grade to participate in violent activity. The violent offenses committed by grade 9 females were often physical in nature. The use of weapons and the threat of physical violence was used by these females to extort or intimidate fellow students. This type of "bullying" perpetrated by female students challenges our current thinking about females as "victims only" of violence.

Incidents were, once again, most likely to be reported to parents and then school staff. Incidents were seldom reported to the police. However, once again, violent offenses were least likely to happen again when the police and parents were informed. Incidents were more likely to reoccur when they were not reported to anyone.

Relationship Between Being A Victim and Being A Perpetrator

1. A between-group comparison of the relationship between being a victim and being a perpetrator indicated that students in grade 7 and grade 9 were most likely to be victims of violent crime, while grade 8 students were most likely to be the perpetrators.
2. A within-group analysis indicated that students from each grade were more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violent crime with the exception of being "beaten-up" where students in each grade were more likely to be perpetrators than victims of this particular crime.
3. *Male students were more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violent crime at this school.* Female students in grade 8 and 9 were as likely or more likely to be perpetrators than victims of violence. In particular, the female students in grade 9 were more likely to be perpetrators than victims of each violent crime except for "sexual assault" and "sexual harassment."
4. Females and males in grade 7 were more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators with the exception of being "beaten-up" for the males and being "physically threatened," "beaten-up" and "stolen something" for the females.

The factors most associated with being victimized were male gender and being younger. The finding that the younger students were most often the victims is not surprising given that they were the smallest, youngest and newer students in the school and likely to be viewed

as easy target. The finding that males were most often the victims of violent acts is also not surprising. The criminology literature and Canadian crime statistics indicate that males are more likely to be victims of most types of violent offenses with the exception of sexual assault.

Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"

1. The most frequently cited incidents which would be committed by students if they thought they could get away with it included beating someone up, harassing/bullying someone, physically threatening someone, and being part of a gang.
2. Roughly equal numbers of students reported that they would commit violence "if they thought they could get away with it" or actually did, with the exception of "taking lunch money." More students would take lunch money from fellow students if they thought they could get away with it than those that actually did.
3. More male students reported that they would commit violent crimes while at school if they thought they could get away with it than female students.
4. Nearly one out of five students reported that they would like to be part of a gang.

The results indicate that just as many young people would commit violent offenses "if they thought they could get away with" as those who actually did. There were no remarkable differences between anticipated and actual rates of perpetration with the exception that 5% more students would take lunch money from fellow students if they thought they could get away with it. The lack of discrepancy between anticipated and actual perpetration rates suggests that those who would commit violent crimes if they thought they could get away with it were actually committing those crimes. On the basis of these findings it is difficult to avoid concluding that students were participating in violent activity because they did believe they could get away with it.

Students' Satisfaction with Responses to Violence at School

1. More students were unhappy with the way violence was being handled by schools than were happy.
2. Over half of the respondents believed that violence was not being taken seriously by their school.

Who Students Would Go To For Help

1. Students were *most* likely to go to parents or friends for help if they were victims of violence. They were just as likely to go to their siblings or the police and *least* likely to go to the school staff.

2. Students in grade 7 were most likely to go to their parents, while students in grade 8 and 9 were most likely to go to their friends.
3. Comments provided by the students indicate that they were *most* likely to turn to their parents or friends for help because they felt they would understand, they felt they could trust them, and believed that they would be able to help them address the problem.
4. Other comments provided by the students indicate that they were least likely to turn to school staff because they felt they would not be understood, they believed that they could not trust staff, or thought that they would not be able to help them resolve the problem or could even make it worse.

Students' Suggestions on Responding to Violence at School

1. Participants felt that students could help reduce violence by: reporting the incidents; not getting involved in or walking away from potentially violent situations; encouraging those currently involved in violence to stop fighting and harassing other students; altering the way in which students respond to violent situations; and becoming more involved in a number of prevention/intervention strategies at the school such as addressing some of the underlying causes of racism.
2. Students suggested that the school staff take a more active role in looking out for students by being constantly aware of what is going on within and just outside the school. In addition, they wanted to see the school put more time and effort into helping students deal with violence by creating more opportunities to talk about violence or establish programs to help both victims and perpetrators. Students also suggested that the school begin to try and reduce the amount of violence at the school by being stricter and handing down more severe penalties to the perpetrators.
3. Students suggested that the police should be more involved in prevention strategies designed to deter and reduce the rate of violence in their school. In particular, the students suggested that the police come to the school to talk to young people about violence and increase their presence in and around the school. In addition, the students suggested a number of intervention strategies including arresting and charging the perpetrators.

Summary Comments

Students' Perceptions of Violence and Safety From Violence At School

There was a notable difference found between the students' perceptions of violence in the two schools. Students in School 'B' reported generally higher levels of violence than students in School 'A'. Approximately 63% of the students in School 'B' believed that there was "A Moderate Amount" to "A Lot" of violence in school compared to 45% of the students in School 'A'. This discrepancy may be related to a variety of factors. First, the age range of students in the two schools varied somewhat. Students in School 'B' (age range from 11 to 17 years) were older than the students in School 'A' (age range from 11 to 13 years) and may have had more experiences with violence which in turn may be reflected in their responses to the survey. Second, differences in perceptions may reflect variation in student population demographics. Third, School 'B' may simply have a more serious problem with violence. Because questions were sometimes worded differently and the categories provided to the respondents varied slightly, it is difficult to know the relative impact these variations had on students' responses.

There were no remarkable differences between male and female students' perceptions of violence. Grade level variations existed in both schools, but no clear pattern emerged that could help explain why.

Depending on the school, between 60% and 82% of students did not feel safe at school at one point or another. The percentage of students who felt safe at school "Sometimes" or "Not At All" was consistent between the two schools. Three out of 10 students in each school indicated that they were concerned about their safety. Given that more students in School 'B' perceived there to be higher levels of violence than students in School 'A', one would assume they would fear for their safety more. However, they reported higher rates of feeling safe, a perception that may be related to their higher age.

Explanations offered by students in both schools relative to their perceptions of violence and safety from violence while at school indicate that feeling safe may be related less to whether there was actual violence and more to who was around to provide protection or to the fact that students believed they could take care of themselves. The latter point may be more applicable to the males. Although male students perceived higher or similar levels of violence compared to the female students, they were less likely to report feeling frightened and felt that they could "*take care of themselves*." Relying on their own means to deal with the problem without asking for help from those around them is an expectation we place on males. Asking for help would indicate that they were unable to look after themselves or would imply that they were frightened by the violence. Neither of these choices is very desirable for young males approaching or passing through puberty and acquiring a male gender role which denies them the status of "victim."

The younger students in each school were more fearful for their safety than the students in the higher grades. The grade 6 students in School 'A' and the grade 7 and 8 students in School 'B' reported feeling the least safe. The grade 6 and 7 students may be more afraid because they were the smallest and youngest students and have yet to form friendships or trusting relationships with other students or the staff in their new school. They may feel isolated and uncertain about who they could turn to if they were a victim of violence.

Students' Self-Reported Victimization While At School

The majority of students in both schools were exposed to violence either as a victim themselves or through knowing someone who had been victimized. The rates for both schools were virtually identical; more than 8 out of 10 students had been exposed to violence.

Grade 8 students in both schools were *least* likely to be victims of violence, while the students in grade 7 in both schools, and students in grade 9 in School 'B', were *most* likely to be victims. Why this common distinction occurred in both schools is difficult to understand and will require further study and analysis.

Overall, males and females had similar rates of victimization. However, males and females in both schools were more likely to be victims of different types of violent activity. Male students were more likely to be victims of more physically violent crimes. Females were more likely to be victims of sexual assault and less physically violent crimes. It is important to note, however, that the grade 6 male students in School 'A' reported the highest overall reported rate of victimization for sexual assault.

Although the majority of students in both schools had been exposed to violent incidents, between one-third and one-half of the students *did not* report the incidents to school staff, parents or the police. More males than females and more students in the higher grades in both schools did not report the incidents. Male students may be less willing to ask others for assistance and may tend to believe that they can look after themselves. Older students, based on past experiences, may have less faith in the ability of adults to help them and choose to settle their own scores. Students that *did* report incidents were most likely to report to school staff or parents. Students in both schools rarely reported to the police.

Violent Offenses Committed By Students

Students in both School 'A' and School 'B' were more likely to be victims than perpetrators. However, between two-thirds and three-quarters of all the students had committed or knew someone who had committed acts of violence. The three most common offenses committed by students in both schools were verbally harassing/bullying someone, threatening someone, or beating up a fellow student. A majority of students in both schools reported that their exposure to violence committed by other students was based upon knowing others who were perpetrators rather than on their own personal experiences. Students in grade 8 at both schools had the highest rates of perpetrating.

The extent of female perpetrated violence was a surprise finding in the study. In School 'A,' female students reported that they were as likely to rob another student as male students, but more likely to threaten or hurt someone with a weapon. The older female students in School 'B' were more likely than the males to be perpetrators of most categories of violent offenses in the study with the exception of sexual violence.

The rates of reporting were very low. Between one-third and one-half of the students reported incidents to parents and school staff. Students in both schools indicated that they or others did not report the incidents because they were afraid of what may happen to them, they did not want to become involved or they believed that the incident was not serious enough in their minds to report. The explanations given for underreporting were consistent between the schools.

Relationship Between Being A Victim and Being A Perpetrator

Grade 7 students in both schools along with the grade 9 students in School 'B,' were *most* likely to be victims. Students in grade 8 in both schools were *most* likely to be the perpetrators of violent crime. There appears to be no clear relationship between being a victim and being a perpetrator. In these two schools, those who were *most likely to be the perpetrators* were *least likely to be the victims* of violence.

Overall, most students, with the exception of students in grade 8 in School 'A,' were more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violence. However, female students in grade 6 and grade 8 in School 'A' were slightly more likely to have threatened someone with a weapon than to have been threatened and slightly more likely to have beaten someone up than to have been beaten-up. Female students in grades 8 and 9 in School 'B' were as likely or more likely to be perpetrators than victims of most types of violent offenses. In particular, the female students in grade 9 were more likely to be perpetrators than victims of *each* violent offense with the exception of "sexual assault" and "sexual harassment."

Commit Violent Offenses "If They Thought They Could Get Away With It"

It was hoped that by exploring the extent to which students would commit violent crime "if they thought they could get away with it," we would be able to ascertain the level of untapped violence that may exist within the school. Whether we should be relieved or disturbed by the findings is an issue for debate. Overall, the percentage of students in both schools who would commit violence "if they thought they could get away with it" is similar, if not identical, to the actual percentage of students who were currently committing violent acts. It appears that students were committing violent acts because they did in fact believe that they could get away with it.

Students' Perceptions of Responses to Violence in School

Approximately one-half of the students from both schools were unhappy with the way in which schools were responding to violence. A lack of effective response was evident in

the high reported rates of victimization and perpetration of violence in schools. Students in both schools argued that school officials were far too lenient in the way they dealt with perpetrators. Students reported having little faith that their victimization would be dealt with effectively which, ultimately, affected their willingness to report. Students reported that incidents which were not dealt with effectively lead to retaliation against the young person who reported the incident. Students believed that the lack of an appropriate response is indicative of the fact that school officials do not take the issue of violence seriously or do not see it as a source of fear and concern to students.

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Appendix A

School 'A'

Student Perceptions of Violence Survey

Some believe that there is little if any violence happening in schools. However, others believe that school violence is a real problem. We would like to know what you believe or have experienced with regard to school violence and how it has been handled. Please answer the following questions. Feel free to say as much as you like. All your comments will remain confidential.

1. Age?_____
2. Are you: (please circle your answer).
 1. Male
 2. Female
3. Grade?_____.
4. Do you believe there has been a problem with violence in schools that you have attended?
 1. No.
 2. Rarely (very little violence).
 3. Some (a moderate amount of violence).
 4. A Lot.

Comments:

5. Have you felt safe from violence while you're at school?

1. Yes.
2. Most of the Time.
3. Sometimes.
4. Not at All.

Explain:

6. While at school, have any of these incidents ever happened to you or someone you know?

	Yourself	Someone You Know
1. Lunch Money Taken from You:	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
2. Threatened:	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
3. Beaten-up (Kicked/Punched):	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
4. Robbed:	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
5. Threatened/Hurt with a Weapon:	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
6. Sexually Assaulted:	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
7. Harassed/Picked on/Bullied:	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
8. Other (Please specify what):	Yes ___ No ___	Yes ___ No ___
Other _____		

Comments:

6A. Did you report any of the above incidents to:

- 1) school staff
- 2) parents
- 3) the police

Yes ___	No ___
Yes ___	No ___
Yes ___	No ___

B. If yes, what happened when you reported the incident(s)?

C. If no, why didn't you report it?

7. While at school, have you or someone you know ever participated in any of the following activities?

	Yourself	Someone You Know
1. Taken Lunch Money from Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
2. Threatened Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
3. Beaten Someone Up : (Kicked/Punched)	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
4. Robbed Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
5. Threatened/Hurt Someone With a Weapon:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
6. Sexually Assaulted Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
7. Harassed/Picked on/ Bullied Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
8. Carried a Knife for Protection:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
9. Other (Please specify what):	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
Other _____		

Comments:

7A. Were any of the above incidents reported to:

- 1) school staff
- 2) parents
- 3) the police

Yes _____	No _____
Yes _____	No _____
Yes _____	No _____

B. If yes, what happened when the incident(s) was reported(s)?

C. If no, why wasn't it reported?

8. In the past, while at school, would you or someone you know participate in any of the following activities if you thought you could get away with it?

	Yourself	Someone You Know
1. Take Lunch Money from Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
2. Threaten Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
3. Beat Someone Up : (Kicked/Punched)	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
4. Rob Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
5. Threaten /Hurt Someone With a Weapon:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
6. Sexually Assault Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
7. Harass/Pick on/Bully Someone:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
8. Carry a Knife for Protection:	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
9. Other (Please specify what):	Yes ____ No ____	Yes ____ No ____
Other _____		

Comments:

9. Are you happy with the way that violence has been dealt with in the schools that you have attended in the past?

1. Yes.
2. No.

Comments:

10. How would you like to see incidents of violence handled at your present school?

Appendix B

School 'B'

Student Perceptions of Violence Survey

Central Toronto Youth Services is a social service agency committed to helping young people and the caregivers who serve them. Learning what young people think about issues that affect them is an important part of the research we do.

Today, we want to ask what you think about the issue of youth and violence. Your answers to the following questions will provide information that will be of benefit to other young people and help us keep kids and teens safe. Your answers will be kept completely confidential so remember not to put your name on any of the pages. Feel free to say as much as you like. You can use the back of the page if you want. Thank you for your help.

1. Age? _____.
2. Are you: (please circle your answer).
 1. Male?
 2. Female?
3. Grade? _____.
4. Generally, do you believe there is violence at your school?
 1. No Violence
 2. Very Little Violence
 3. A Moderate Amount of Violence
 4. A Lot of Violence

Comments:

5. Do you feel safe from violence *while at school?*

1. All of the Time
2. Most of the Time
3. Sometimes
4. Never

Comments:

6. Do you feel safe from violence *on your way to and from school?*

1. All of the Time
2. Most of the Time
3. Sometimes
4. Never

Comments

7. While *at school*, have any of these incidents ever happened to you or someone you know? In the last column, please check-off whether any of these incidents have been carried out by a gang or group of 2 or more people.

	<i>You</i>		<i>Someone You Know</i>		<i>By Gang/Group of 2 or More</i>	
1. Lunch Money Taken:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
2. Physically Threatened:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
3. Beaten-up (Kicked/Punched):	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
4. Assaulted with a Weapon:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
5. Threatened with a Weapon:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
6. Have Something Stolen with Threats or Physical Violence:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
7. Sexually Assaulted:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
8. Sexually Harassed:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
9. Verbally Harassed/Picked on:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
10. Other (Please specify what):	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___

Other _____

Comments:

7A. Did you report any of the above incidents to:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|
| 1. School Staff? | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| 2. Your Parents/Guardian? | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| 3. Police? | Yes ___ | No ___ |

7B. If you reported the incident what happened to you and to the individual(s) involved?

7C. Were you happy with how it was handled?

7D. After you reported the incident, did it happen again?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Applicable

7E. If you didn't report the incident, why didn't you?

7F. If you didn't reported the incident, did it happen again?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Applicable

8. While *on the way to and from school*, have any of these incidents ever happened to you or someone you know? In the last column, please check-off whether any of these incidents have been carried out by a gang or group of 2 or more people.

	<i>You</i>		<i>Someone You Know</i>		<i>By Gang/Group of 2 or More</i>	
1. Lunch Money Taken:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
2. Physically Threatened:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
3. Beaten-up (Kicked/Punched):	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
4. Assaulted with a Weapon:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
5. Threatened with a Weapon:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
6. Have Something Stolen with Threats or Physical Violence:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
7. Sexually Assaulted:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
8. Sexually Harassed:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
9. Verbally Harassed/Picked on:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
10. Other (Please specify what):	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___

Other _____

Comments:

- 8A. Did you report any of the above incidents to:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|
| 1. School Staff? | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| 2. Your Parents/Guardian? | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| 3. Police? | Yes ___ | No ___ |

- 8B. If you reported the incident what happened to you and to the individual(s) involved?

8C. Were you happy with how it was handled?

8D. After you reported the incident, did it happen again?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Applicable

8E. If you didn't report the incident, why didn't you?

8F. If you didn't reported the incident, did it happen again?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Applicable

9. While at school, have you or someone you know *ever participated* in any of the following activities? In the last column, please check-off if your participation in these activities was as part of a gang or group of 2 or more people.

	<i>You</i>		<i>Someone You Know</i>		<i>By Gang/Group of 2 or More</i>	
1. Taken Lunch Money from Someone :	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
2. Physically Threatened:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
3. Beaten-up (Kicked/Punched):	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
4. Assaulted with a Weapon:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
5. Threatened with a Weapon:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
6. Have Something Stolen with Threats or Physical Violence:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
7. Sexually Assaulted:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
8. Sexually Harassed:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
9. Verbally Harassed/Picked on:	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___
10. Other (Please specify what):	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___	Yes ___	No ___

Other _____

Comments:

- 9A. Were any of these incidents reported to:

1. School Staff?	Yes ___	No ___
2. Parents?	Yes ___	No ___
3. Police?	Yes ___	No ___

- 9B. If you reported the incident what happened to you or to the other individual(s) involved?

9C. After the incident was reported did you do it again?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Applicable

Comments:

9D. If the incident wasn't reported did you do it again?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not Applicable

Comments:

10. While at school or on the way to school, *would you participate* in any of the following activities *if you thought you could get away with it?*

- | | | |
|--|----------|---------|
| 1. Take Lunch Money from Someone: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 2. Physically Threaten Someone: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 3. Beat Someone Up :
(Kicked/Punched) | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 4. Assault Someone With a Weapon: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 5. Threaten Someone With a Weapon: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 6. Steal from Someone Using Threats
or Physical Violence: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 7. Sexually Assault Someone: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 8. Sexually Harass: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 9. Verbally Harass/Pick on Someone: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 10. Be Part of a Gang: | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| 11. Other (Please specify what): | Yes ____ | No ____ |
| Other _____ | | |

Comments:

11. Are you happy with the way your school is dealing with violence?

1. Yes.
2. No.

Comments:

12. If you were a victim of violence, who would you go to for help?

If Yes, Why?

If No, Why?

- | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|-------|
| 1. Your Parents/Guardian? | Yes ____ | No ____ | _____ |
| 2. School Staff? | Yes ____ | No ____ | _____ |
| 3. Friends? | Yes ____ | No ____ | _____ |
| 4. Brothers and or Sisters? | Yes ____ | No ____ | _____ |
| 5. Police? | Yes ____ | No ____ | _____ |
| 6. Other? (Please specify who)
_____ | Yes ____ | No ____ | _____ |

13. What suggestions do you have about how your school should deal with violence?

A. What can students do?

B. What can school staff do?

C. What can police do?