

Victims of Hate Speech

Headline

Hate speech directed at teens declined slightly between 1999 and 2003, from 13 percent to 12 percent. ([See Table 1](#))

Importance

For students, there can be many negative consequences of being a victim of hate-related words. It can affect students' performance in school. Victims are more likely to express fear of violence traveling to and from school, and being at school, which can lead to avoidance of school, classes and extracurricular activities.¹ They may also feel anger, personal hurt and betrayal, and/or a sense of powerlessness and isolation.² Targets of peer harassment (which may include hate speech) experience loneliness, depression and low self-worth.^{3,4} There is also data to suggest that victims of peer harassment tend to blame themselves for their victim status.⁵

Hate-related words based on a youth's race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, or sexual orientation can co-occur with or lead to hate-related violence or crimes at schools.⁶ Students (ages 12-18) who reported having been a target of hate speech were 1.5 times more likely than other students to report being nonviolently victimized and 3.1 times more likely to report being violently victimized while at school.⁷

Studies have shown that most hate crimes are committed by young males in their late teens and early twenties.⁸ This is of particular concern since hate-related words can lead to hate crimes.

Trends

The total percentage of students ages 12 to 18 who reported being targets of hate-related words at school during the previous six months decreased modestly between 1999 and 2003 from 13 percent to 12 percent. A large part of that decrease results from a reduction in the percentage of females who were targets of hate-related words (from 14 percent in 1999 to 11 percent in 2003). ([See Table 1](#))

Students were most likely to report hate-related words targeted at a student's race (4 percent in 2003). Two percent of students reported being targeted based on their ethnicity, and between 1 and 2 percent of students reported being targeted for religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation, respectively. ([See Table 1](#))

Differences by Gender

While the overall percentage of students reporting being victims of hate speech is not significantly different for males and females, females were more likely to report being targets of hate-related words based on gender discrimination than were males (4 percent compared with 1 percent, in 2003). However, males were more likely to report being targets of hate-related words based on race discrimination compared with females (5 percent compared with 3 percent, in 2003). ([See Figure 1](#))

Differences by Race and Ethnicity

In 2003, non-Hispanic black students were more likely than non-Hispanic white and Hispanic students to report being victims of hate-related words (14 percent compared with 11 percent among both non-Hispanic white and Hispanic students). ([See Figure 2](#))

Much of this difference can be accounted for by the large percentage of non-Hispanic black students who reported being targets of hate-related words regarding their race (7 percent for non-Hispanic black students, in 2003). ([See Table 1](#)) A high proportion of Hispanic students also reported being targets of hate-related words based on race or ethnicity (6 percent and 5 percent, respectively, in 2003). ([See Table 1](#))

Note: In 2003, students were given the option of identifying themselves as more than one race. For the 2003 report, non-Hispanic students who identified themselves as more than one race (1 percent of all respondents) were included in the other category. Respondents who identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin are classified as Hispanic, regardless of their race.

Differences by Urbanicity

While there may be a tendency to assume children living in urban areas are targets of hate speech significantly more than children living in both suburban and rural areas, 2003 data show that differences between victims of hate speech based on urbanicity are small (13 percent of students living in urban areas compared with 11 percent of students living in suburban areas and 12 percent of students living in rural areas). ([See Table 1](#))

State and Local Estimates

None available

International Estimates

None available

National Goals

None available

Definition

For this indicator, a hate-related word is “‘a derogatory or bad name’ concerning ‘race, religion, Hispanic origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation.’ Students were asked if anyone had called them a hate-related word in the last six months.”

Data Source

Data from 1999: Kaufman, P., Chen, X., Choy, S.P., Peter, K., Ruddy, S.A., Miler, A.K., Fleury, J.K., Chandler, K.A., Planty, M.G., and Rand, M.R. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2001*. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. NCES 2002. 113/NCJ-190075. Washington, DC: 2001.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/iscs01.pdf>

Data from 2001: DeVoe, J.F., Peter, K., Kaufman, P., Ruddy, S.A., Miller, A.K., Planty, M., Snyder, T.D., and Rand, M.R. *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2003*. NCES 2004–004/NCJ 201257. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC: 2003.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/iscs03.pdf>

Data from 2003: DeVoe, J.F., Peter, K., Kaufman, P., Miller, A., Noonan, M., Snyder, T.D., and Baum, K. (2004). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2004* (NCES 2005–002/NCJ 205290). U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/iscs04.pdf>

Raw Data Source

U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999-2003.

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm#ncvs>

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pubalp2.htm#indicators>

Approximate Date of Next Update

2006

¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. “Are America’s Schools Safe? Students Speak Out: 1999 School Crime Supplement,” (NCES 2002-331), by Lynn A. Addington, Sally A. Ruddy, Amanda K. Miller, and Jill F. DeVoe. Project Officer: Kathryn A. Chandler. Washington DC: 2002. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002331.pdf>

² Juvonen, J., Nishina, A., and Graham, S. (2000). "Peer Harassment, Psychological Adjustment, and School Functioning in Early Adolescence." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *92*, 349-359.

³ Graham, S. and Juvonen, J. (1998). "Self-blame and Peer Victimization in Middle School: An Attributional Analysis." *Developmental Psychology*, *34*, 587-599.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Van Dorn, R. (2002). "Unrecognized Warning Signs." *Education Week*, *22*, 41. Available online through edweek.org at

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2002/11/13/11vandorn.h22.html?querystring=Unrecognized%20Warning%20Signs>

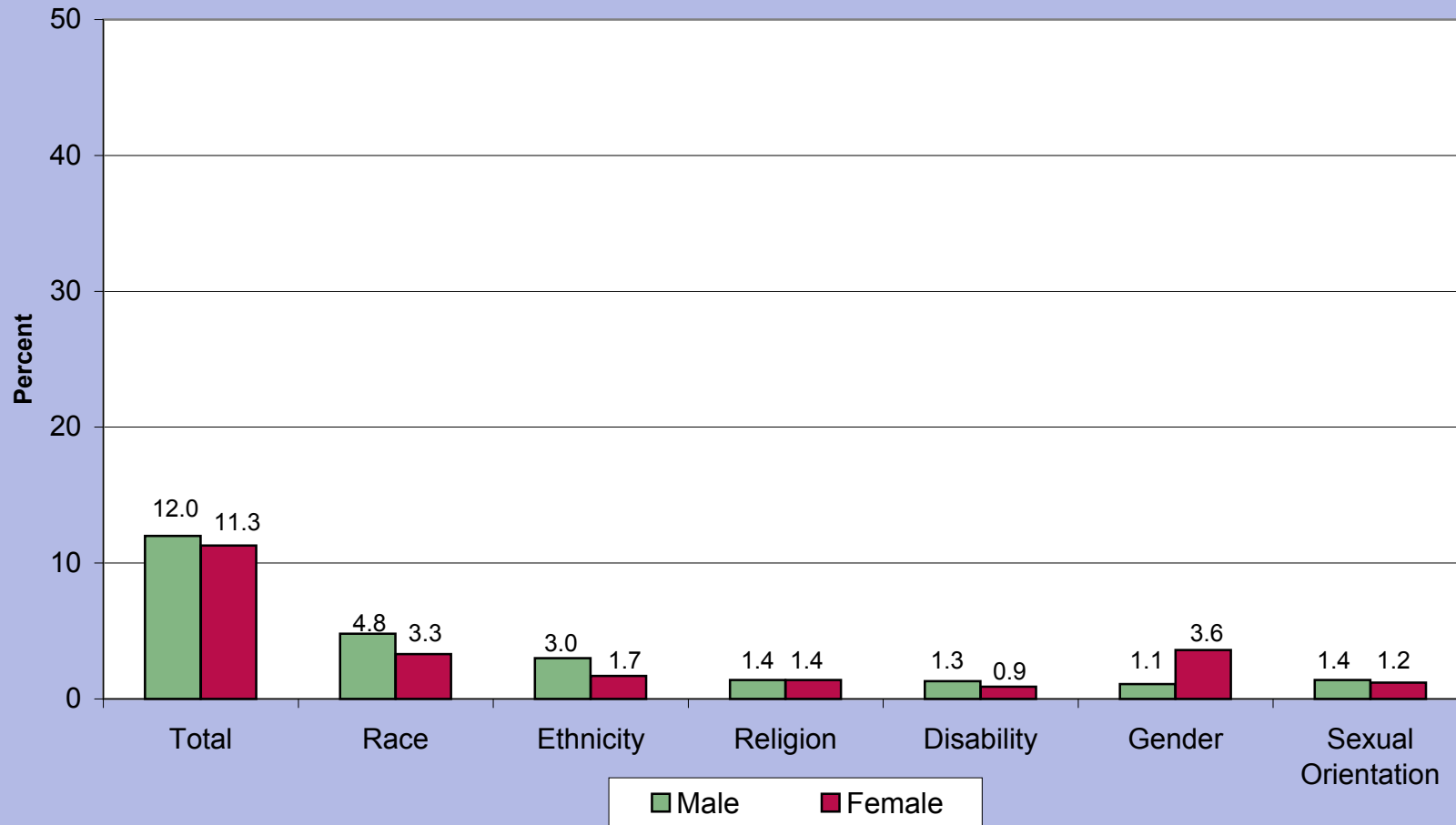
⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Steinberg, A., Brooks, J. and Remtulla, T. (2003). "Youth Hate Crimes: Identification, Prevention, and Intervention." *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *160*, 979-989.

<http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/reprint/160/5/979>

Figure 1

Percentage of Students Ages 12 to 18 Who Reported Being Targets of Hate Speech at School By Type of Hate Speech and Gender, 2003



Note: Students were asked to report being targets of hate speech based on the past six months.

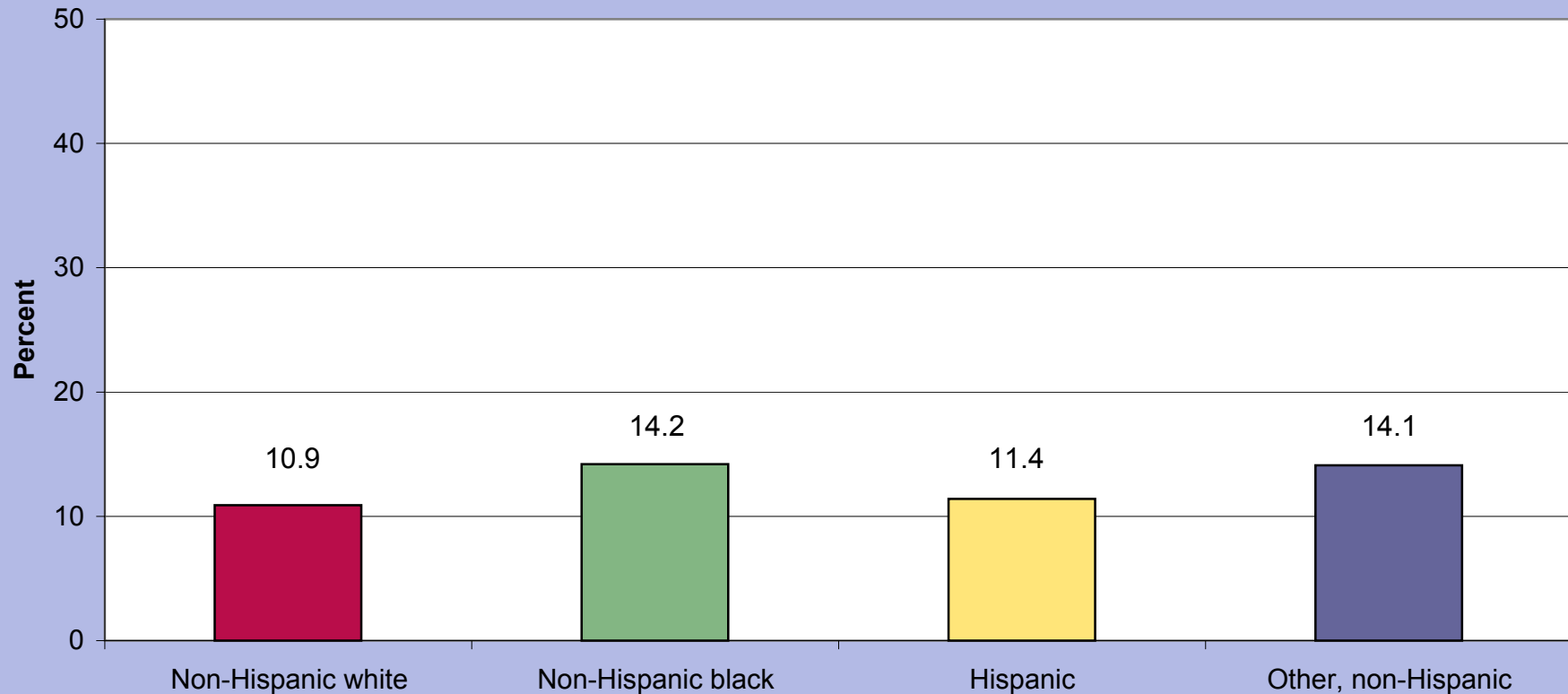
Note: "At school" means in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999-2003



Figure 2

Percentage of Students Ages 12 to 18 Who Reported Being Targets of Hate-Related Words in the Past Six Months Due to Race/Ethnicity,¹ 2003



¹Other includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians (including Alaska Natives). In 2003, students were given the option of identifying themselves as more than one race. For the 2003 report non-Hispanic students who identified themselves as more than one race (1 percent of all respondents) were included in the other category. Respondents who identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin are classified as Hispanic, regardless of their race.

Note: "At school" means in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999-2003

Table 1

Percentage of Students Ages 12-18 Who Reported Being Targets of Hate-Related Words at School During the Previous Six Months, by Selected Student Characteristics

	1999	2001							2003						
	Total	Total ¹	Race	Ethnicity	Religion	Disability	Gender	Sexual Orientation	Total ¹	Race	Ethnicity	Religion	Disability	Gender	Sexual Orientation
Total	13.2	12.3	4.2	2.7	1.8	1.1	2.8	1.2	11.7	4.0	2.4	1.4	1.1	2.3	1.3
Gender															
Male	12.3	12.8	4.6	3.2	2.0	1.2	1.2	1.3	12.0	4.8	3.0	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.4
Female	14.3	11.7	3.7	2.2	1.6	0.9	4.4	1.2	11.3	3.3	1.7	1.4	0.9	3.6	1.2
Race/Ethnicity²															
White, non-Hispanic	12.6	12.1	2.8	1.6	2.0	1.2	3.3	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White, non-Hispanic only	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.9	2.4	1.3	1.6	1.2	2.5	1.7
Black, non-Hispanic	16.5	13.9	7.8	3.3	1.3	1.1	2.7	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black, non-Hispanic only	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.2	7.0	3.3	0.9	1.2	2.7	1.1
Hispanic	12.1	11.0	4.9	6.0	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.5	11.4	5.5	4.8	1.1	0.9	1.4	0.5
Other, non-Hispanic	15.5	13.6	9.7	5.9	2.7	0.4	0.8	0.0	14.1	9.0	4.2	1.3	1.0	1.7	0.4
Grade															
6th	13.0	12.1	2.7	1.9	1.1	2.1	2.1	0.4	11.9	3.9	2.7	0.7	1.8	1.3	0.7
7th	15.7	14.1	5.0	3.4	1.8	1.6	3.2	1.1	12.5	4.4	3.2	1.4	1.6	2.3	1.0
8th	16.0	13.0	5.3	3.1	2.2	1.0	2.2	1.0	12.8	4.0	1.8	1.2	1.1	2.8	1.5
9th	13.2	12.1	3.6	2.1	1.3	1.0	3.4	1.2	13.5	4.5	1.9	1.9	1.0	3.1	1.9
10th	11.8	13.1	4.6	2.6	2.1	0.8	3.1	1.9	11.6	3.9	2.8	1.6	1.2	2.5	1.8
11th	10.5	12.7	4.7	3.1	2.3	1.1	2.7	1.7	8.3	3.3	2.5	1.0	0.7	1.5	0.7
12th	11.7	7.9	2.2	2.3	1.7	0.2	2.3	1.1	10.8	3.9	2.0	1.4	0.7	2.2	1.2
Urbanicity															
Urban	14.0	11.9	5.0	3.3	1.6	0.9	2.5	0.9	13.2	5.4	3.5	1.3	1.2	2.4	1.3
Suburban	13.3	12.4	4.2	2.8	1.9	1.1	2.9	1.5	10.7	3.6	2.0	1.3	1.0	2.4	1.3
Rural	12.2	12.4	2.9	1.7	2.1	1.1	2.7	1.0	12.2	3.1	1.7	1.9	1.4	1.9	1.3
Type of School															
Public	13.8	12.7	4.4	2.8	1.9	1.2	2.8	1.2	11.9	4.0	2.4	1.3	1.1	2.3	1.3
Private	8.1	8.2	1.5	1.6	1.5	0.3	2.0	1.3	9.7	3.7	1.9	1.7	0.6	2.1	1.4

¹ "-" = Indicates data not available

²In the SCS questionnaire, students were asked if they were the targets of hate-related words at school. If the students responded that they were called a hate-related word, they were asked to choose the specific characteristics that the hate-related word targeted. Students were allowed to choose more than one characteristic. If a student chose more than one characteristic, he or she is counted once under the "total" category. Therefore, the percent of students who reported being called a hate-related word is less than the sum of all the individual characteristics.

³Other includes Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians (including Alaska Natives). In 2003, students were given the option of identifying themselves as more than one race. For the 2003 report non-Hispanic students who identified themselves as more than one race (1 percent of all respondents) were included in the other category. Respondents who identified themselves as being of Hispanic origin are classified as Hispanic, regardless of their race. Due to changes in race/ethnicity categories, comparisons across years should be made with caution.

Note: "At school" means in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey, 1999-2003