School Violence: Fears vs. Facts
Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia
434-924-8929
Email: youthvio@virginia.edu
Website: youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu

Dewey G. Cornell, Ph. D., is a forensic clinical psychologist and Professor of Education in the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Dr. Cornell is Director of the UVA Youth Violence Project, a Program Director for Youth-Nex, the UVA Center for Effective Youth Development, and a faculty associate of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy.

Dr. Cornell has studied youth violence for nearly 30 years and has assisted numerous schools in the development of violence prevention programs. He has authored more than 200 publications in psychology and education, including two books: Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence and School Violence: Fears versus Facts.

Overview

1. Our schools are safe.
2. Prevention does not require prediction.
3. Prevention works.

Public concern over a recent series of mass shootings:

- Jan 2011 shopping center in Tucson AZ (6)
- Sep 2011 restaurant in Carson City NV (5)
- Jul 2012 movie theater in Aurora CO (12)
- Aug 2012 Sikh temple in Oak Creek WI (7)
- Sept 2012 business in Minneapolis MN (7)
- Dec 2012 school in Newtown CT (28)
- Sept 2013 Washington Navy Yard (12)

The media were quick to assert that mass shootings were increasing.

Why are mass shootings becoming more common?

Department of Awful Statistics: Are Mass Shootings Really On the Rise?

They're not, but the alarmist numbers are more likely to get media attention.

Mass shootings in the U.S., 1976-2011

Cases with 4 or more victims

http://boston.com/community/blogs/crime_punishment/2013/01/responding_to_mother_jones.html

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The Sandy Hook shooting was part of a national problem with gun violence, not school violence.

- Approximately 31,000 gun fatalities each year
- Suicide (62%), homicide (35%), & accidental shootings (3%)
- Approximately 85 deaths per day

Source: National Vital Statistics
http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/dataRestriction_inj.html
Where do homicides occur?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>2005-2010 Homicides in 37 States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td>4415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking lot/garage</td>
<td>1109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoors</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/bar</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store/gas station</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public building/business</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel/hotel</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FBI National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

Should we put armed guards in shopping centers?

2011 Tucson shooting, 6 killed

Should we put armed guards in theaters?

Colorado shooting at 'Dark Knight' opening leaves 12 dead

Should we put armed guards in school buses?

US school bus driver shot dead, child abducted in Alabama

Where do we need police protection?

- Location A  -- highest crime rate
- Location B  -- medium crime rate
- Location C  -- lowest crime rate

Unless we have unlimited police resources, we should place any additional officers in locations with the highest crime rates.

What if the media devotes 95% of its coverage to crime in Location C?

- Location A  -- highest crime rate
- Location B  -- medium crime rate
- Location C  -- lowest crime rate

Media coverage should not compromise an objective assessment of crime rates and security needs.
How many elementary schools in the U.S.?
- 67,000 public elementary
- 16,000 private elementary
- 83,000 total elementary schools

http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=84

How many homicides occur in U.S. elementary schools?
- 30 homicides 1992-2011
- 26 homicides at Sandy Hook
- 56 total homicides in 21 years

http://www.schoolsafety.us/media-resources/school-associated-violent-deaths

Where do homicides occur in U.S. elementary schools?
1992-2011
- 7 (23%) Inside school
- 23 (77%) Outside school
  - 9 Parking lot
  - 6 Playground
  - 8 Other outside areas

http://www.schoolsafety.us/media-resources/school-associated-violent-deaths

Extra security in Hillsborough schools would cost $4 million
School security measures could cost millions locally

Additional Florida School Security Could Cost $100 Million
- School security wish list would cost Marion County $160M
- Armed guards in every Minn. school would cost $138 million
- NFA proposal would cost state schools about $138 million.

Every Per Pupil dollar spent for Security is a Per Pupil dollar NOT spent for Instruction.

How frequently will a homicide occur at the average elementary school?
- Total 56 homicides in 21 years
- $56 \div 21 = 2.67$ homicides per year
- 83,000 elementary schools
- $83,000 \div 2.67 = 31,000$ years

School-Associated Violent Deaths 1992-2010

Total number of violent deaths at U.S. schools

2013 data from CDC School-Associated Violent Death Study -
http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/schoolviolence/savd.html
School violence is not increasing.

![Graph showing the number of serious violent crimes per 1,000 students from 1993 to 2011.](image)

Source: Indicators of school crime and safety; 2012. Table 2.1. National Crime Victimization Study data reported by National Center for Education Statistics

School shootings generate increased fear that can lead to over-reactions.

Arming our teachers is not that easy

Gun group offers training for Utah teachers

Sandy Hook Shooting Inspires Bulletproof Kids Clothing

Fear mongering

Zero Tolerance Suspensions After the Newtown Shootings

6 year old pointed finger and said "pow!"

http://www.sott.net/article/255553-6-year-old-suspended-for-pretend-gunshot
It seems unreasonable to try to make our schools completely secure from attack.

What else can we do?

Prevention does not require prediction.

Prevention means “to keep something from happening”

Crisis response is not prevention.

A crisis occurs when prevention has failed.

Prevention must start before the gunman is at your door.
Critics say, "We can’t predict who will be violent, so prevention is not possible."

However,....

Prevention does not require prediction.

We cannot predict who will have an accident, but safety regulations make safer roads, cars, and drivers.

Prevention does not require prediction.

We cannot predict who will get cancer, but we can identify risk and protective factors that reduce cancer rates dramatically.

3 Tier Model of Prevention

- Intensive Interventions: Students with very serious behavioral problems
- At-Risk Students: Students with some problem behaviors
- Schoolwide Prevention: All students

Reviewed 221 studies of diverse school-based violence prevention programs
Average effect size = .25 for demonstration programs, which would reduce fighting 50% in a typical school

- Routine practice programs much less effective than demonstration programs (ES .10 vs .25)
- Need to study routine school practices.
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Numerous Effective Programs
- Anger management
- Bullying prevention
- Conflict resolution
- Family therapy
- Parenting skills
- Problem-solving
- Social competence
- Substance abuse resistance
- Etc.

Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force
40 members,
Led by Secretaries of Public Safety, Education, and Health and Human Resources

2013 Legislation
1. HB 1871 Bullying; defines term, school boards shall include policies & procedure in code of student conduct.
2. HB 2343 Funding for facility and security upgrades
3. HB 2344 School safety; threat assessment teams, model critical incident response training program, etc.
5. HB 2346 Lock-down drills; every public school is required to have at least two practices per year, etc.
6. HB 2347 Juvenile information sharing, permits principals to share juvenile records with threat assessment teams
7. SB 1376 Certain persons; immunity for those reporting, etc., individual posing credible danger of injury.
8. SB1378 Enhanced penalty for straw man gun purchases

Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force
Community Services
- Suicide prevention training
- Expanded outpatient mental health services, drop-off centers
- Mental health first aid training (response to persons in distress)

Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force
School Security
- Mandatory lockdown drills
- School emergency manager
- Restored SRO funding
- Security checklists and crisis management plans
- Critical incident response training
- Funding for facility upgrades

Governor’s School and Campus Safety Task Force
School-based Prevention
- Statutory definition of bullying
- Anti-bullying training
- Threat assessment teams in all schools
- Civil immunity for reporting threats
Threat Assessment

1. The school shooting that inspired the Columbine shooters
2. The rationale for threat assessment
3. How threat assessment works.

Slides available on website
Google
Virginia Youth Violence Project

Dewey Cornell, Ph.D.
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia

434-924-0793
Email: dcornell@virginia.edu