



## *Fact Sheet: School Violence in Boston High Schools*

### *From the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) monitors key health risk behaviors that contribute to leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth in the United States. The survey is conducted every two years and provides data representative of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students in public and private schools throughout the country. Selected cities, including Boston, are able to provide data representative at the local level. The following are Boston findings from the 2003 YRBS. For more information visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's YRBS website at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/>.

- Eight percent of students did not go to school on one or more of the previous 30 days because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school. (National average: 5%)
- Eight percent were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property one or more times during the previous 12 months. (National average: 9%)
- Twelve percent were in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the previous 12 months. (National average: 13%)
- Nine percent carried a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on school property on one or more of the previous 30 days. (National average: 6%)

### *From the 2004 Boston Youth Survey*

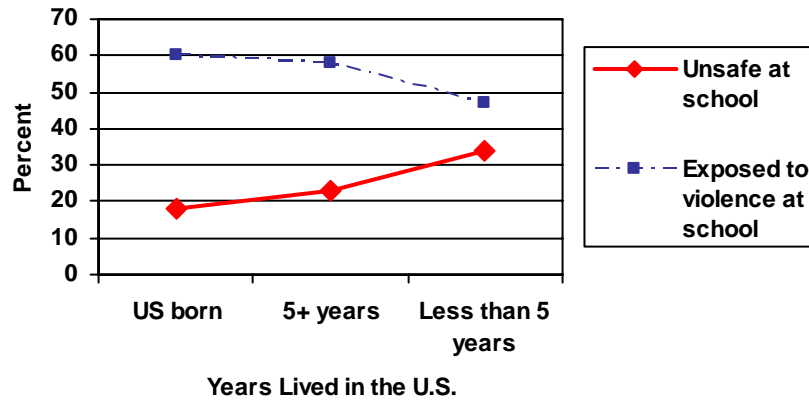
The Boston Youth Survey (BYS), the product of a partnership between Boston's Office of Human Services and the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center, is a more in-depth examination of the lives of youth attending public high schools in Boston. This survey is also conducted every two years. The following are findings from the 2004 BYB, the first year the survey was designed to draw a representative sample of Boston youth. For more information or to download a copy of the 2004 BYB report, visit the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center website at <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/hyvp/>.

- Fifty-eight percent of students were exposed to some form of violence at school during the previous 12 months.
- Forty-nine percent said they were exposed to violence on the way to or from school during the previous 12 months.
- Fifty-two percent said school gang activity was somewhat or very serious/dangerous.
- Twenty-one percent said they felt unsafe at school.
- Twenty-seven percent said they felt unsafe on the way to or from school.
- Immigrants were more likely than those born in the US to feel unsafe at school, but *less* likely to be exposed to violence there (*see chart A on reverse side*).
- As exposure to violence at school increased, the percent who felt unsafe there increased, as did the percent who carried guns in the past year (*see chart B on reverse side*).
- Those who have been exposed to violence at school were more likely than those who have not to have ever hit or tried to hurt someone (30% vs. 17%), and to have ever threatened to hit or hurt someone (44% vs. 29%).
- Those who have been exposed to violence at school were less likely than those who have not to trust teachers and counselors at their school some or a lot (50% vs. 60%), as were those who felt unsafe there (44% vs. 61%).
- As exposure to violence at school increased, the percent of students who had negative interactions with their peers at school also increased (*see chart C on reverse side*).
- Those who felt safe at school were more likely than those who did not to participate in after-school programs (35% vs. 26%).

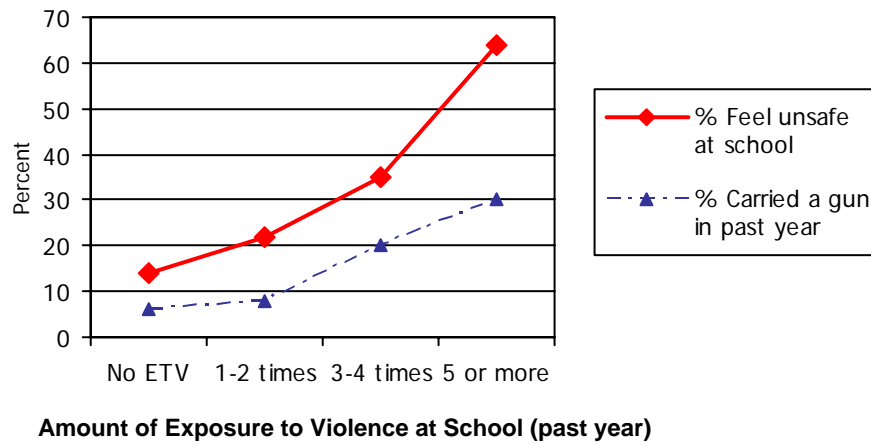


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**Chart A: Immigrants and School Violence**



**Chart B: School Safety and Exposure to Violence at School**



**Chart C: Interactions with Peers at School and School Exposure to Violence**

