



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

ISSUE: EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS

POLICY DESCRIPTION: This policy recommendation addresses the collection and publication of statistics relating to school crime and student safety. Better collection of data relating to the actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of student victims will allow stakeholders to develop more responsive policies and interventions. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the U.S. Justice Department annually publish a report on school crime and student safety.

The NCES report draws on data collected by the: Department of Education (NCES); Department of Health and Human Services (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention); and Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics). The surveys represented in the report include the: (1) Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDC); (2) National Crime Victimization Survey (BJS); (3) National Crime Victimization Survey-School Crime Supplement (BJS and NCES); (4) Schools and Staffing Survey (NCES); (5) School Survey on Crime and Safety (NCES); (6) School-Associated Violent Deaths Surveillance Study (CDC led with NCES and BJS); and (7) Supplementary Homicide Reports (DoJ/FBI).

The National Crime Victimization Survey-School Crime Supplement currently includes a question seeking respondents' experiences with being called "derogatory or bad names at school having with race, religion, ethnic background or national origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation." The NCVS-School Crime Supplement also includes questions about student's experiences with bullying. Likewise, the School Survey on Crime and Safety includes a general question about whether specified activities (including bullying and harassment) occur at the respondent's school.

The NCVS-SCS and the SSOCS do not, however, specifically collect information about the link between bullying/harassment and sexual orientation and gender identity. Furthermore, the other five surveys cited in the NCES report do not appear to ask questions about how bullying



or harassment or hate speech may be related to the school violence /safety issues collected in the reports.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CHANGE: The next administration should ensure that the: (1) Youth Risk Behavior Survey (CDC); (2) National Crime Victimization Survey (BJS); (3) National Crime Victimization Survey-School Crime Supplement (BJS and NCES); (4) Schools and Staffing Survey (NCES); (5) School Survey on Crime and Safety (NCES); (6) School-Associated Violent Deaths Surveillance Study (CDC led with NCES and BJS); and (7) Supplementary Homicide Reports (DoJ/FBI) collect detailed information about bullying, harassment and other school violence incidents, including information concerning whether the victim's sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics were at issue.

For example, the NCVS-SCS's bullying questions should ask respondents to indicate the nature of the bullying experienced, including whether the behavior was tied to the student's sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics. The SCS should continue to ask students generally about whether bullying occurs at their schools, but should also seek information on specific instances of bullying and harassment and whether they were attributed to the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Additionally, the SCS should include questions clearly related to interventions by school personnel that may mitigate negative experiences by students (such as hate behavior, gangs or weapons). Questions that more closely link incidents and interventions, as well as their outcomes, should be added to the SCS. Finally, these surveys should include questions relating to sexual orientation and gender identity among other demographic questions.

These changes will provide a more clear understanding of the possible motivations for hate behavior, and allow policy makers and educators to devise more responsive interventions.

DESCRIBE THE PROCESS BY WHICH YOUR RECOMMENDATION CAN BE IMPLEMENTED: The National Crime Victimization Survey-School Crime Supplement is published jointly by the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and



the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics. These agencies can implement changes to the questionnaires.

Additionally, NCES, BJS and the Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may add the recommended questions regarding sexual orientation and gender identity to the relevant surveys cited above.