Bullying Experiences Reported by High School Students, 2021

Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System document the prevalence of bullying experiences, on school property and electronically, reported by high school students.

High school freshmen were more likely than juniors and seniors to report being bullied on school property.

Students who identify as heterosexual were less likely to report bullying experiences than their nonheterosexual peers.

High school females were more likely than males to report bullying experiences.

White, American Indian/Alaska Native, and youth of more than one race were equally likely to report bullying experiences.

Notes

Bullying is defined in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) as when 1 or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again. It is not bullying when 2 students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way. Bullying electronically refers to bullying through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other forms of social media.

The 2021 YRBS data, collected in the fall of that year through school-based surveys of a nationally representative sample of high school students, are the first wave collected after the COVID-19 pandemic. While most schools had returned to in-person instruction by that time, the time spent out of school for many students may have impacted the school-related YRBS questions.

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Note: AI/AN refers to American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian does not include Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.