

**National Evaluation of the  
Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T) Program**

**2010 Report to Schools and Communities:  
School Safety and Victimization**

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This research was made possible, in part, by the support and participation of seven school districts, including the School District of Philadelphia. This project was supported by Award No. 2006-JV-FX-0011 awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. We would also like to thank the numerous school administrators, teachers, students, and law enforcement officers for their involvement and assistance in this study. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice or of the seven participating school districts.

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# The Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program

The Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program is a gang and delinquency prevention program delivered by law enforcement officers within a school setting. Developed as a local program in 1991 by Phoenix-area law enforcement agencies, the program quickly spread throughout the United States. The original G.R.E.A.T. program operated as a nine-lesson lecture-based curriculum taught primarily in middle-school settings. Results from an earlier National Evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. program (1995-2001) found no differences between G.R.E.A.T. and non-G.R.E.A.T. youths in terms of behavioral characteristics (i.e., gang membership and involvement in delinquent behavior).

Based in part on these findings, the G.R.E.A.T. program underwent a critical review that resulted in substantial program modifications. The revised curriculum (see box at right) consists of 13 lessons aimed at teaching youths the life-skills (e.g., communication and refusal skills, as well as conflict resolution and anger management techniques) thought necessary to prevent involvement in gang behavior and

## The G.R.E.A.T. Lessons

1. **Welcome to G.R.E.A.T.** – An introductory lesson designed to provide students with basic knowledge about the connection between gangs, violence, drug abuse, and crime
2. **What’s the Real Deal?** – Designed to help students learn ways to analyze information sources and develop realistic beliefs about gangs and violence
3. **It’s About Us** – A lesson to help students learn about their communities (e.g., family, school, residential area) and their responsibilities
4. **Where Do We Go From Here?** – Designed to help students learn ways of developing realistic and achievable goals
5. **Decisions, Decisions, Decisions** – A lesson to help students develop decision-making skills
6. **Do You Hear What I Am Saying?** – Designed to help students develop effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills
7. **Walk in Someone Else’s Shoes** – A lesson to help students develop active listening and empathy skills, with a particular emphasis on understanding victims of crime and violence
8. **Say It Like You Mean It** – Designed to help students develop effective refusal skills
9. **Getting Along Without Going Along** – A lesson to reinforce and practice the refusal skills learned in Lesson 8
10. **Keeping Your Cool** – A lesson to help students understand signs of anger and ways to manage the emotion
11. **Keeping It Together** – Designed to help students use the anger skills learned in Lesson 10 and apply them to interpersonal situations where conflicts and violence are possible
12. **Working It Out** – A lesson to help students develop effective conflict resolution techniques
13. **Looking Back** – Designed to conclude the G.R.E.A.T. program with an emphasis on the importance of conflict resolution skills as a way to avoid gangs and violence; students also present their projects aimed at improving their schools

delinquency. The revised G.R.E.A.T. curriculum was piloted in 2001, with full-scale implementation occurring in 2003.

The program's two main goals are:

1. To help youths avoid gang membership, violence, and criminal activity.
2. To help youths develop a positive relationship with law enforcement.

## **The National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T.**

In 2006, following a competitive peer review process, the National Institute of Justice awarded the University of Missouri-St. Louis funding to conduct the National Evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. program. The evaluation consists of a number of different components, including student surveys; classroom observations in both G.R.E.A.T. and non-G.R.E.A.T. classrooms; surveys of teachers, school administrators, and law enforcement officers; interviews with G.R.E.A.T. officers and G.R.E.A.T. supervisors; and observations of G.R.E.A.T. Officer Training (G.O.T.) and G.R.E.A.T. Families sessions.

The current report provides information obtained from more than 2,880 students enrolled in 216 schools in seven cities across the continental United States during the 2009-2010 school year. This report is the fourth in a series of annual reports intended to provide school personnel, law enforcement, and other interested community members with information about issues related to self-reported youth attitudes and behaviors in their schools and communities. Data described herein are drawn largely from the three-year follow-up survey of students (i.e., assessments three years following G.R.E.A.T. program implementation), conducted during the 2009-2010 school year. The survey questions were drawn from a variety of empirical studies assessing key risk and protective factors associated with youth problem behaviors. **In this year's report, we focus upon youths' perceptions of disorder, and fear of and actual victimization in schools and communities. We also include students' reports of the likelihood they would report a variety of school-based offenses and their perceptions of school safety.**

## *Site Selection*

During the summer of 2006, efforts were made to identify cities for inclusion in the National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T. Site selection was based on three main criteria: 1) existence of an established G.R.E.A.T. program, 2) geographic and demographic diversity, and 3) evidence of gang activity. This site selection process was carried out in a series of steps. First, the research staff contacted the G.R.E.A.T. Regional Administrators<sup>1</sup> and Bureau of Justice Assistance<sup>2</sup> personnel to identify locales with institutionalized programs. Consideration was given to factors such as the length of time the program had been in operation, number of G.R.E.A.T.-trained officers, number of schools in which the program was offered, and the components of the G.R.E.A.T. program implemented.<sup>3</sup> Second, once this list of agencies was constructed, the research staff contacted representatives in these cities to obtain more information about the delivery of the G.R.E.A.T. program. Third, given the focus of the program, information about gang activity in these potential cities was obtained from the National Gang Center. Ultimately, a list of seven cities varying in size, region, and level of gang activity were identified: Albuquerque, New Mexico; Chicago, Illinois; Greeley, Colorado; Nashville, Tennessee; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; and a Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW), Texas area location.

Once the cities were selected, the research staff worked with the primary local law enforcement agency and the school district in each city to secure their cooperation. Upon district approval, schools were identified for study participation, and principals were contacted. The goal of the school selection was to identify schools that, taken as a whole, would be representative of the districts. Once initial agreement to participate was obtained from the school administrator, more detailed discussions/meetings were held between school personnel,

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<sup>1</sup> G.R.E.A.T. is a national program overseen by the G.R.E.A.T. National Policy Board (NPB). For administrative purposes, responsibilities for program oversight are held by (or “given to”) agencies operating in different geographic regions: 1) West, 2) Southwest, 3) Southeast, and 4) Midwest Atlantic. Additionally, two federal partners—the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)—are involved in program training and oversight.

<sup>2</sup> The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) oversees the allocation of federal funds and grant compliance associated with the G.R.E.A.T. program.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the “core” middle school curriculum described in this report, three additional components are available for communities to adopt: an Elementary School component, a Summer component, and G.R.E.A.T. Families. Funders required the National Evaluation to assess both the middle school and Families components; thus, implementation of these components became part of the site selection criteria.

G.R.E.A.T. officers, and the research team. Whenever possible, face-to-face meetings were held, but in some instances final arrangements were made via telephone. School and police personnel were informed of the purpose of the evaluation, issues related to the random assignment of classrooms to the treatment or control condition (i.e., receive G.R.E.A.T./not receive G.R.E.A.T.), procedures to obtain active parental consent for students in these classrooms, scheduling G.R.E.A.T. program delivery, and other logistical issues associated with the study design.

### *Student Sample*

To maintain the scientific rigor of the evaluation design, in each participating school, classrooms were randomly assigned to the treatment (i.e., G.R.E.A.T.) or control condition. All students in the selected classrooms were eligible to participate in the evaluation. The 195 participating classrooms had a total of 4,905 students enrolled at the beginning of the data collection process.

Federal law considers youth under the age of 18 to be a “special population” requiring additional safeguards in research. The consent of the youth’s parent/guardian is required for the youth’s participation in any research study. Parental consent generally takes one of two forms: 1) passive consent (i.e., parents must specify in writing that their child be excluded from participation) or 2) active consent (i.e., parents must specify in writing that their child may be included in the study).

Active parental consent procedures were implemented in this evaluation. The research staff worked closely with the principals and classroom teachers during the consent process. Teachers distributed and collected “consent form packets.” Each packet included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the evaluation and an informed consent form (explaining the risks and benefits of the students’ participation) for parents/guardians to read, sign, and return to the teacher. When allowed by the districts, the research staff provided monetary compensation to the teachers directly for their assistance. In some instances, district regulations prohibited such compensation; in these cases, compensation was provided as a donation, made in honor of the teachers, to the school or district. Students were also given a small personal radio, calculator, or tote bag in exchange for returning a completed consent form. These rewards were provided to students regardless of whether the parent/guardian granted or withheld consent for the youth to

participate in the study. Overall, 89.1 percent of youths (N=4,372) returned a completed consent form, with 77.9 percent of parents/guardians (N=3,820) allowing their child's participation.

To date, students from all of the original 31 schools have completed pre-test surveys (prior to implementation of the G.R.E.A.T. program) with a completion rate of 98.3 percent, post-test surveys (shortly after completion of the G.R.E.A.T. program) with a completion rate of 94.6 percent, one-year follow up surveys with a completion rate of 87.3 percent, and two-year follow-up surveys with a completion rate of 82.8 percent. Students from 29 of the original 31 schools have also completed the three year follow-up survey with a completion rate of 75.2 percent. Because one original school in the Chicago sample was ultimately unable to adhere to the research design and was excluded from the study, two additional schools in Chicago were added to the sample one year after the evaluation began in the other 29 schools; thus, students from those two new schools have completed the two year follow-up, but they will not complete their third year follow-up survey until the 2010-2011 school year.

This report utilizes the results of the three year follow-up survey from the 29 original schools and the two year follow-up survey results from the two additional Chicago schools. **Although the sample was originally drawn from 31 middle schools in 2006-2007, by the time these surveys were completed during the 2009-2010 school year, students were enrolled in 216 different schools. A majority (95.8%) of the students we surveyed were in high school during this survey period, with the remaining 4.2 percent in middle school.**

### *Student Sample Characteristics*

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics and academic grades of the National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T. sample for the group of youths surveyed at the three year follow-up and the two additional Chicago schools who completed their two year follow-up in AY 2009-2010. In total, the responses from 2,881 students were included in this report. The sample was evenly split between males and females and was racially/ethnically diverse, though the race/ethnic breakdown varied by site. Overall, Latino youth accounted for 40 percent of the sample, White youth were a little over one quarter of the sample (26.7%), and Black youth were 17.1 percent of the sample. In addition, 8.8 percent and 7.4 percent of youths identified their race/ethnic backgrounds as "multi-racial" or "other" (such as Native American or Asian),

respectively. The mean age of the sample this year was 14.49 years. As stated earlier, most of the youth made the transition from middle to high school in this academic year.

To assess students' academic achievement, the survey asked, "Looking at all of your grades at school, would you say you were closest to a... 1) straight A student, 2) B student, 3) C student, 4) D student, 5) F student, 6) Something else." Students most commonly reported they were B students (46.3%), then C students (29.3%), straight A students (16.2%), D (5%), and F (2.1%). There were statistically significant differences (i.e., the differences were greater than expected by chance) in academic achievement by site, sex, and race/ethnicity. Table 1 shows students in Portland and Nashville report the largest proportion of straight As. A majority of students in the DFW area report being B students. Chicago, Albuquerque, and Philadelphia students were overrepresented as C students. Academic achievement also varied by sex and race/ethnicity (not shown in table). Females reported greater academic achievement than male students (Females: A=19.3%, B=47.4%, C=26.5%, D=4.5%, F=1.4%, Males: A=13.0%, B=45.0%, C=32.4%, D=5.6%, F=2.8%). White youth were more likely to report being straight A students than any other racial/ethnic group, while Latino youth were least likely to report straight As (Straight As: White=27.6%, Black=10.3%, Latino=9.6%, Other=24.5%, Multi-racial=16.7%).

Students provided information on their perceptions of **school disorder** and **neighborhood disorder**, their **fear of victimization at school and in the neighborhood**, their **actual victimization experiences** in the six months prior to the survey administration, their **likelihood of reporting school-based crimes**, and their perceptions of **school safety**. In this report, we detail students' responses in each of these areas. We also explore how experiences with school and neighborhood safety differ across sex, race/ethnicity, and academic achievement.

**Table 1: Sample Characteristics at Wave 5**

	<b>Full Sample</b>	<b>ABQ</b>	<b>CHI</b>	<b>DFW area</b>	<b>GRE</b>	<b>NSH</b>	<b>PHL</b>	<b>POR</b>
	N=2,881	N=356	N=395	N=479	N=439	N=470	N=335	N=407
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Sex</b>								
--Male	49.1	49.2	50.4	52.5	49.1	52.1	43.6	45.2
--Female	50.9	50.8	49.6	47.5	50.9	47.9	56.4	54.8
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>								
--White	26.7	13.6	9.9	18.6	29.5	41.6	14.4	53.9
--Black	17.1	2.8	28.0	16.7	.7	24	43.2	7.4
--Latino	40.1	62.1	56.5	50.5	59.2	18.0	21.9	11.8
--Other	7.4	6.5	1.8	9.3	3.7	10.5	7.8	11.6
--Multi-Racial	8.8	15.0	3.8	4.9	6.9	5.8	12.6	15.3
<b>Age</b>								
--Mean	14.49	14.91	14.85	14.26	14.37	14.24	14.61	14.34
--Range	12, 18	13, 17	13, 17	13, 16	13, 18	12, 16	13, 17	13, 16
<b>Academic Achievement</b>								
--Straight As	16.2	10.2	9.1	8.0	20.9	21.6	15.6	27.3
--B	46.3	44.1	38.1	67.0	36.2	49.9	43.1	40.9
--C	29.3	37.1	42.9	21.2	30.0	23.3	31.4	23.4
--D	5.0	5.6	6.6	2.5	6.9	3.0	6.6	4.9
--F	2.1	1.7	2.8	.6	3.9	.9	1.5	3.2
--Something else	1.1	1.4	.5	.6	2.1	1.3	1.8	.2

## School and Neighborhood Disorder

We asked students seven questions to measure their perceptions of the level of disorder present in their schools. The questions reflect a wide range of potential problems. For example, students were asked their perceptions of the extent of school theft as well as extent of students bringing guns to school (see School and Neighborhood Disorder box). Students could indicate that each issue was “not a problem,” “somewhat of a problem,” or “a big problem” at their school.

In general, there was a wide variation in students’ perceptions of disorder in their schools (see Table 2). A majority reported that students bringing guns to school was not a big problem (81.6%) and that places

at school where students were afraid to go was not a big problem (69.8%). There was less agreement that bullying (42.4%), threats of assault (45.4%), and racial tension (54%) were not a problem. Only around half of students responded that each of these types of disorder was not problematic. On the other end of the spectrum, a majority of students reported that theft at school was an issue. About 72 percent of students reported that school theft was “somewhat of” or a “big” problem in their school.

We found no consistent differences in perceived school disorder by sex or academic achievement, with the exceptions that females were more likely to identify bullying and students beating up or threatening other students as big problems while males were more likely to state that guns in school were a big problem (results not shown in table). However, we did find systematic differences in the perceived level of school disorder by race/ethnicity of the students.

### School and Neighborhood Disorder

*Thinking about your school and neighborhood, please indicate how much of a problem each of the following is in your school and neighborhood.*

#### School Disorder

1. Kids bullying or teasing other children at your school?
2. Places in your school where some students are afraid to go?
3. Students beating up or threatening other students at your school?
4. Kids of different racial or cultural groups at your school not getting along with each other?
5. Students bringing guns to school?
6. Having things stolen at school?
7. Use illegal drugs?

#### Neighborhood Disorder

1. Run-down or poorly kept buildings in your neighborhood?
2. Groups of people hanging out in public places causing trouble in your neighborhood?
3. Graffiti on buildings and fences in your neighborhood?
4. Hearing gunshots in your neighborhood?
5. Cars traveling too fast throughout the streets of your neighborhood?
6. Gangs in your neighborhood?

*Not a problem, Somewhat of a problem, A big problem*

White students in our sample were more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to report that each type of school disorder was “not a problem.” In contrast, Black students were more likely to report that each type of disorder was “a big problem” in their school. The other racial/ethnic groups and the multi-racial students reported lower levels of perceived disorder than Black students, but consistently higher levels of disorder than White students in the sample.

Table 2 shows the percentage of youth who reported disorder as a “big” problem by racial/ethnic category. As can be seen in the table, over four times the number of Black students reported guns being brought to the school as a big problem compared to their White counterparts. A similar pattern was true for every measure of school disorder. In an attempt to better understand racial/ethnic differences, we expanded our comparison to students’ responses regarding their neighborhood. Expanding the analysis helps to clarify whether disorder was restricted to students’ schools or was a characteristic of the general community (with schools simply one aspect of that larger community). The “School and Neighborhood Disorder” box contains the six items students were asked to rate.

At least some proportion of students reported each type of neighborhood disorder as a big problem in their communities. The most commonly (16.4%) reported type of neighborhood disorder was cars speeding through the community (see Table 2). Only 36.2 percent of students responded that this was NOT a problem (not shown in table). A majority of students reported that each of the other issues was not a problem in their neighborhoods; however, as with school disorder, a non-trivial portion of students considered each of these measures to be a big problem (16.4% speeding cars, 14.6% gangs, 12.1% hearing gunshots, 11.5% graffiti, 11.2% people in public causing trouble, and 7.3% run-down buildings). The racial/ethnic differences in the perceptions of school disorder were further illuminated when examining neighborhood differences. As with school disorder, White students reported less neighborhood disorder and Black students reported the most disorder on every measure. Again, other minority youth reported less neighborhood disorder than Black youth, but more than White students. These results suggest that students’ perception of school disorder fit very closely with their perceptions of the overall neighborhood context, which varied by race/ethnicity of the student.

We examined this issue further by looking at whether there were site differences present across the seven cities, differences that might account, at least in part, for the race/ethnic differences discussed above. On nearly every measure of school and neighborhood disorder,

students in Philadelphia, where the sample is largely Black, were most likely to report these as a big problem (results not shown in table); conversely, students in Portland and Nashville, where the sample is largely White, were among those least likely to report these issues as a big problem. These findings provide some support for context and environment, rather than racial/ethnic background per se, influencing differences in students' perceptions of disorder.

**Table 2: School and Neighborhood Disorder by Student Race/ Ethnicity**

	<b>Full Sample</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>Multi-racial</b>	<b>Other</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b><u>School Disorder</u></b>						
<i>Bullying at school</i>	9.5	5.4	16.6	9.0	8.8	10.0
<i>Places in school afraid to go</i>	6.0	3.6	10.5	6.0	2.8	7.7
<i>Beaten or threatened at school</i>	14.2	8.2	23.4	13.4	13.3	17.6
<i>Racial tension</i>	10.0	6.2	13.8	11.0	7.2	12.4
<i>Guns brought to school</i>	10.8	4.0	17.7	12.6	4.4	18.7
<i>Things stolen at school</i>	20.9	16.4	30.3	19.1	23.6	20.5
<b><u>Neighborhood Disorder</u></b>						
<i>Run down buildings</i>	7.3	2.4	14.0	7.6	6.4	8.2
<i>Groups of people causing problems</i>	11.2	3.8	18.0	13.1	8.8	14.4
<i>Graffiti</i>	11.5	7.7	16.4	13.1	7.6	11.4
<i>Hearing gunshots</i>	12.1	4.1	22.0	13.1	7.6	18.1
<i>Speeding cars</i>	16.4	14.2	21.2	16.0	14.0	17.6
<i>Gangs in neighborhood</i>	14.6	5.3	23.8	17.2	8.8	19.5

*Percentage of individuals reporting each issue is "a big problem."*

## Fear of Victimization at School and in Neighborhood

In addition to perceptions of disorder or crime in students' schools and neighborhoods, we assessed students' fear of victimization. Students were asked to report their level of fear of being the victim of three crimes at school and five in their neighborhood (see box at right). For ease of presentation, we collapsed the five response categories into three that reflected students who answered 1) "not at all afraid" or "a little afraid," 2) "somewhat afraid," or 3) "afraid" or "very afraid."

A majority of students did not report extensive fear of victimization at school (not reported in table). Around 60 to 70 percent of students reported little to no fear of all three types of victimization at school (60.5% little to no fear of being attacked on the way to or from school, 71.3% things being stolen at school, 71.7% attacked or threatened at school). The type of victimization that students most often (over 25%) reported being "afraid" or "very afraid" of was being attacked or threatened on their way to or from school (see Table 3). Far fewer students reported fearing attacks at school (15.1%) and things being stolen at school (10.5%).

As with perceptions of school disorder, there were racial/ethnic differences in fear of victimization at school. Table 3 presents the percent of students who reported being afraid or very afraid of school-based victimizations by race/ethnicity and sex. Just as White youth perceived lower levels of school disorder, they also did not report much fear of victimization. Conversely, Black youth perceived a lot of school disorder, and they reported more fear of victimization than White students. However, the students who reported the most fear of victimization at school were those classified in the "other" racial/ethnic categories (e.g., Asian, Native American). For example, almost 40 percent of youth in the "other" racial/ethnic category reported being afraid or very afraid of being attacked going either to or from school, as compared to a little over 25 percent of the entire sample.

### Fear of Victimization at School and in Neighborhood

*Please indicate how afraid you are of the following things happening to you...*

#### School Victimization

1. Being attacked or threatened on your way to or from school?
2. Having your things stolen from you at school?
3. Being attacked or threatened at school?

#### Neighborhood Victimization

1. Having someone break into your house while you are there?
2. Having someone break into your house while you are away?
3. Having your property damaged by someone?
4. Being robbed or mugged?
5. Being attacked by someone with a weapon?

*Not at all afraid, A little afraid, Somewhat afraid, Afraid, Very afraid*

**Table 3: Fear of Victimization at School and in Neighborhood**

	Full Sample	White	Black	Latino	Multi-racial	Other	Male	Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b><u>Fear of School Victimization</u></b>								
<i>Attack to or from school</i>	25.9	17.2	28.7	28.7	22.8	38.6	16.0	35.4
<i>Things stolen at school</i>	10.5	8.2	10.5	11.5	10.0	13.3	7.9	13.0
<i>Attack or threat at school</i>	15.1	10.5	14.2	16.7	12.0	27.1	9.7	20.1
<b><u>Fear of Neighborhood Victimization</u></b>								
<i>Break in while home</i>	27.6	17.2	31.8	30.6	26.8	39.8	16.8	37.9
<i>Break in while away</i>	16.8	10.3	20.7	18.3	15.2	23.7	11.7	21.5
<i>Property damaged</i>	11.1	6.9	12.2	12.1	6.4	23.2	7.2	14.7
<i>Robbed or mugged</i>	27.7	19.4	33.3	29.2	25.0	40.5	19.9	35.2
<i>Attack or threatened with a weapon</i>	37.7	25.4	42.4	42.4	33.1	51.9	28.4	46.7
<i>Individuals reporting “afraid” or “very afraid”</i>								

Female students reported more fear of victimization in school than their male counterparts on every measure. Approximately twice as many females than males reported fear of physical victimization (Table 3). In addition, high achieving students (straight As and Bs) reported greater fear of victimization at school than other students. Students who reported receiving mostly Ds and Fs actually reported the least amount of fear on every measure (not reported in table).

Table 3 also includes the students’ reports of fear in their neighborhoods. In our sample, being attacked by someone with a weapon was the crime feared by the largest proportion of students (38% reported being afraid or very afraid). Almost 30 percent of students reported fear of someone breaking into their home while they are there (27.6%) or of being robbed or mugged (27.7%). Consistent with the previous section, patterns of fear in school were a reflection of fear in the broader community. Youth in the “other” race/ethnic category reported the greatest amount of fear of victimization in school and the community, while White youth reported the least amount of fear in their neighborhood. Females were far more likely to report fear of each type of community victimization, and high achieving students were more likely to report fear of crime in their communities (though not all differences were statistically significant).

## Actual Victimization

Students reported whether they had been victimized in school or in the neighborhood in the six months prior to the survey. We asked about a range of victimizations, from verbal threats or attacks (e.g., having mean rumors of lies spread about you in school and sexual jokes, comments or gestures made to you at school) to physical victimizations (e.g., had someone use a weapon or force to get money or things from you). We also included a measure of cybervictimization, as advances in technologies have broadened the methods by which students can be targeted (see box at right for the six school and five neighborhood victimization items).

<b>Actual Victimization</b>
<i>Have the following things happened to you in the past 6 months?(Yes or No)</i>
<u>Victimization at School</u>
1. Been attacked or threatened on your way to or from school?
2. Had your things stolen from you at school?
3. Been attacked or threatened at school?
4. Had mean rumors or lies spread about you at school?
5. Had sexual jokes, comments, or gestures made to you at school?
6. Been made fun of at school because of your looks or the way you talk?
<u>Victimization in the Community</u>
1. Had any mean, threatening, or embarrassing things said about you or to you through text messages, phone calls, emails or websites? (Cybervictimization)
2. Been hit by someone trying to hurt you?
3. Had someone use a weapon or force to get money or things from you?
4. Been attacked by someone with a weapon or by someone trying to seriously hurt or kill you?
5. Had some of your things stolen from you?

The proportion of youth responding that they had been victimized is reported in Table 4. Students most commonly reported having sexual jokes, comments or gestures made to them in school (34.5%) and often (33.7%) reported having rumors and lies spread about them. In fact, overall, the most common type of victimization was verbal. Physical assaults, both at school and in the community, were less often reported to have occurred in the six month window. Cybervictimization was reported by almost 20 percent of the total sample. The percent of students reporting victimization away from school (i.e., in the community) ranged from 3.4 percent (robbed) to 25.5 percent (theft away from school). One direct comparison of in school versus away from school victimization is available: More students reported being a victim of theft at school (31%) as opposed to away from school (25.5%).

Table 4 also reports victimization experiences by race/ethnicity, sex, and academic achievement. Multi-racial youth were overrepresented in most types of victimization, most notably verbal assaults. For example, 43 percent of multi-racial youth reported having rumors spread about them, as compared to approximately one-third of White, Black, and Latino youth. Multi-racial youth were also overrepresented in other victimization categories (i.e., assaults and theft away from school). Females more commonly reported being verbally victimized than their male counterparts. Over 40 percent of females reported having rumors or lies spread about them, compared to 26.8 percent of males. Males were overrepresented as victims of physical assault both in school and away. In terms of academic achievement, youth who reported being D or F students more commonly reported physical victimizations in school and in the community, while high achieving students (those reporting straight As and Bs) were statistically significantly more likely to report being made fun of and being exposed to sexual jokes/gestures.

**Table 4: Actual Victimization in School and in the Community**

	Race/ Ethnicity						Sex		School Achievement		
	Full Sample	White	Black	Latino	Multi-racial	Other	Male	Female	A & B	C	D & F
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b><u>School Victimization</u></b>											
<i>Attacked to or from school</i>	8.9	4.5	10.9	11.1	10.8	4.8	10.4	7.4	7.0	10.3	18.6
<i>Things stolen</i>	31.0	28.5	34.4	30.1	37.3	28.8	29.0	33.0	31.7	28.6	31.7
<i>Attack/threat at school</i>	10.8	9.3	10.7	12.0	12.9	7.7	12.6	9.2	9.2	11.7	18.7
<i>Rumors or lies spread</i>	33.7	33.5	34.3	33.3	43.0	25.6	26.8	40.6	33.9	32.5	36.7
<i>Sexual jokes/gestures</i>	34.5	37.4	35.7	32.1	43.0	25.1	25.7	43.0	36.7	30.4	31.6
<i>Made fun of for looks/talk</i>	26.5	29.1	28.7	22.1	35.3	25.1	24.2	28.8	28.7	21.6	25.8
<b><u>Neighborhood Victimization</u></b>											
<i>Cybervictimization</i>	19.7	21.2	20.5	18.5	25.8	11.0	14.4	24.7	19.8	17.9	25.9
<i>Hit by someone</i>	17.6	14.9	19.0	18.8	21.3	12.9	20.2	15.1	15.3	19.5	29.0
<i>Weapon/ force to get things</i>	3.4	2.3	4.3	3.5	5.2	2.4	4.9	2.0	2.3	3.6	11.6
<i>Attacked by weapon</i>	4.2	2.4	5.0	5.3	4.0	2.4	5.9	2.4	2.3	5.8	13.6
<i>Theft away from school</i>	25.5	24.0	26.5	25.0	35.6	18.7	24.8	26.2	24.4	25.6	33.7

## Likelihood of Reporting School Crimes

The survey also included questions designed to assess students' willingness to report offenses they might observe at school. Students were asked to assess the likelihood that they would report if they saw someone breaking into a locker, bullying another student, or cheating on a test at school (see "Reporting School Crimes" box). In general, a majority of students reported that it was not likely that they would report any of these events: 53.1 percent reported it was not at all or a little likely they would report a locker break in, 54.8 percent bullying, 68.5 percent cheating on a test (see Table 5).

The likelihood of reporting someone cheating on a test did not differ significantly by sex, race/ethnicity, academic achievement or city. In other words, students overwhelmingly reported that they were not likely to report if they witnessed someone cheating on a test, and this did not significantly vary across student characteristics.

There were differences in likelihood of reporting a locker break in and bullying across sex, race/ethnicity, city, and academic achievement, with females, Whites, and high achieving students more likely to report either type of incident. Students in the DFW area and Philadelphia were the least likely to report either offense (not shown in table), with Chicago students also indicating unwillingness to report bullying. Portland and Greeley students were most likely to report both offenses.

### Reporting School Crimes

*How likely is it that you would report the following events if you saw someone doing the following things?*

1. Breaking into a locker at school?
2. Bullying another student at school?
3. Cheating on a test at school?

*Not at all likely, A little likely, Somewhat likely, Likely, Very Likely*

**Table 5: Likelihood to Report**

		Race/ Ethnicity					Sex		School Achievement		
	Full Sample	White	Black	Latino	Multi-racial	Other	Male	Female	A & B	C	D & F
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b><u>Locker Break in</u></b>											
<i>Not or Little Likely</i>	53.1	45.8	65.5	57.0	56.5	49.4	59.6	50.2	47.3	61.9	67.0
<i>Somewhat</i>	20.8	22.9	17.1	21.0	20.6	19.6	19.8	21.8	21.8	19.7	16.3
<i>Likely or Very Likely</i>	27.0	39.6	17.5	22.0	27.1	31.4	24.0	30.1	32.1	19.3	13.7
<b><u>Report Bullying</u></b>											
<i>Not or Little Likely</i>	54.8	45.8	65.5	57.0	56.5	49.4	59.6	50.2	49.5	62.8	67.9
<i>Somewhat</i>	20.8	22.9	17.1	21.0	20.6	19.6	19.8	21.8	21.8	19.7	16.3
<i>Likely or Very Likely</i>	24.4	31.3	17.4	22.0	23.0	31.1	20.6	28.0	28.7	17.5	15.8
<b><u>Cheating on a test</u></b>											
<i>Not or Little Likely</i>	68.5	66.6	70.7	69.4	69.0	63.8	69.1	67.7	66.3	72.1	73.0
<i>Somewhat</i>	16.7	16.3	14.2	17.0	16.4	21.0	16.0	17.5	18.1	14.3	13.3
<i>Likely or Very Likely</i>	14.8	17.1	15.1	13.7	11.7	15.2	14.9	14.8	15.6	13.6	13.8

## Perceptions of School Safety

Finally, we asked students to report some additional perceptions regarding school safety. First, we asked students whether they felt safer when police officers were present in their schools. Almost half of all students (48.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safer when police officers were in their schools (results not shown in a table). High achieving students, White and other race/ethnic youth, and females were more likely to report that they felt safer. Students reporting mostly Ds and Fs, Black youth, and males most often disagreed or strongly disagreed with that sentiment.

We also asked students whether there was someone they could talk to if they had a problem at school. Students were asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that they had someone. Almost three-fourths (71.7%) of all students agreed or strongly agreed that they had someone they could talk

to about their school problems (not reported in a table). Importantly, youth with low levels of school achievement were least likely to report that they had someone to speak to about their school problems. Almost 77 percent of straight A and B students agreed or strongly agreed that they had someone to speak to about their school problems as compared to only 58.3 percent of students who reported earning mostly Ds and Fs. White youth were most likely to report having someone to speak to about school problems (79.1%) as compared to 65.6 percent of Latino youth, who were least likely to report this. Recall also that Latino youth were the least likely to report straight As. In addition, females were more likely than males to report having someone to speak to about their school problems (75.4% v. 67.9% respectively). Thus, having someone to speak to about school related issues may be an important contributor to school achievement, or, conversely, high achieving students may be more connected with and have more access to others, be they adults or students, who can provide support.

## **Summary**

This report provides descriptive information about some areas of interest for schools, law enforcement, and communities participating in the National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T. This year we have focused on issues related to youths' safety in their school and neighborhood. Though the evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. program began when the sample was in middle school, most of the students made their transition to high school in the 2009-2010 school year. These data are based on the most recent evaluation data and reflect youths' attitudes and perceptions in high schools across the seven cities. In short, we offer a recent snapshot of students' perceptions of disorder, fear of and actual victimization, the likelihood of reporting school problems, and perceptions of school safety.

In general, most youth perceived their schools and neighborhoods to be orderly and safe places. Despite the fact that school and community safety was not an overwhelming problem for all students, disorder, fear, and actual victimization were still real and noticeable problems for students. In addition, perceptions of school and community safety differed in important ways.

White youth were least likely to perceive school disorder, fear victimization, and (in most cases) experience actual victimization. They were also the highest academically achieving group and the most likely to report problems they might witness in their schools. While all minority

youth groups experienced more disorder, fear, and victimization than White youth, Black youth were the most likely to perceive disorder, youth of other race/ethnicity were the most likely to fear victimization, and multi-racial youth were the most likely to actually be victimized. Females were more likely than males to report fear of all types of victimization, but males were more likely to actually be physically victimized, while females were more likely to be verbally victimized. These data also show that trends in school-related disorder and fear mirrored the broader neighborhood. In other words, racial/ethnic- and sex-based differences in perceived disorder, fear of victimization, and actual victimization in school followed the same general trends as in the community. Males, for example, were more likely than females to be physically victimized both in school and in the community, and Black youth were more likely than others to perceive disorder as problematic in their schools and neighborhoods.

Finally, a majority of youth reported having someone to talk to about their school problems, though the youth who were least likely to report support in this area were also most likely to be lower achieving students (i.e., male, Latino, and D & F students). Students did indicate that having police officers in their schools made them feel safer, but it was clearly not a consensus. Thirty-three percent of students reported that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the sentiment, and only 48.5 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the notion. Thus, while having police officers in schools may provide some perception of safety, results indicate that having any supportive person in youths' lives may be more important in helping them cope with problems at school, such as their perception of disorder and their fear of or actual victimization.

For more information about the National Evaluation of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program, see the website located at [http://www.umsl.edu/~ccj/html\\_files/great\\_evaluation.html](http://www.umsl.edu/~ccj/html_files/great_evaluation.html).

For more information about the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program, see the official G.R.E.A.T. website located at <http://www.great-online.org/> .

For more information about youth gangs and effective responses, see the official website of the National Gang Center located at <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/> .

For more information on the earlier National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T., consult the following:

Esbensen, Finn-Aage. 2004. *Evaluating G.R.E.A.T.: A school-based gang prevention program – Research in Policy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs. Available online at: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/198604.pdf> .

Esbensen, Finn-Aage, Adrienne Freng, Terrance J. Taylor, Dana Peterson, and D. Wayne Osgood. 2002. The National Evaluation of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program. Pp.139-167 in Winifred L. Reed and Scott H. Decker (Eds.), *Responding to Gangs: Evaluation and Research*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. Available online at: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/190351.pdf> .

Esbensen, Finn-Aage, D. Wayne Osgood, Terrance J. Taylor, Dana Peterson, and Adrienne Freng. 2001. How Great is G.R.E.A.T.?: Results from a quasi-experimental design. *Criminology & Public Policy* 1 (1): 87-118.

Winfrey, L. Thomas, Jr., Dana Peterson Lynskey, and James R. Maupin. 1999. Developing Local Police and Federal Law Enforcement Partnerships: G.R.E.A.T. as a case study of policy implementation. *Criminal Justice Review* 24 (2): 145-168.





