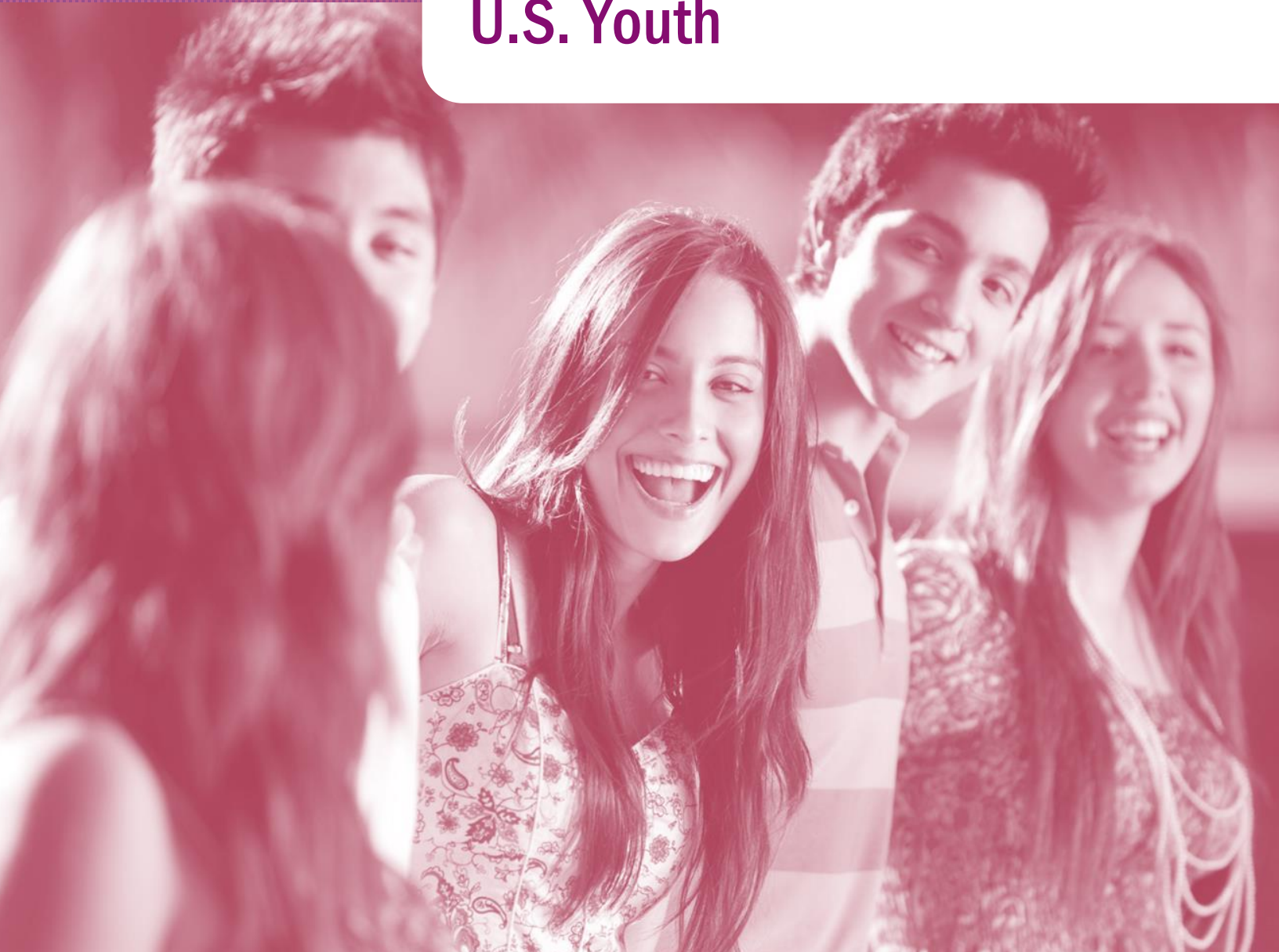




Bullying Victimization among U.S. Youth



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20%
of high school students
experience bullying on
school property



15%
of high school students
experience cyberbullying



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines bullying as repetitive aggressive behavior that is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power or strength (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2017a). Bullying behaviors may include:

- teasing
- name calling
- mockery
- threats
- harassment
- taunting
- hazing
- social exclusions
- rumors

Bullying can be in the form of physical aggression, verbal aggression, efforts to isolate or harm a youth by attacking his or her relationships with others, or damaging property (Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, & Lumpkin, 2013). Bullying is common and frequent among youth, making it an important public health issue.

The Burden of Bullying Victimization among Youth

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Report (CDC, 2016), approximately 15% of high school students in the U.S. experience cyberbullying and 20% experience bullying victimization on school property. Bullying is a serious public health problem, given its negative consequences on a child's self-esteem, sense of belonging, sense of control, and meaningful existence. According to Srabstein & Piazza (2008), children who are bullied are at increased risks for:

- depression
- anxiety
- feelings of sadness and loneliness
- school absenteeism
- health complaints
- injuries

Surveillance of Bullying Victimization among U.S. Youth

This document includes data on bullying victimization among youth from two large national data sources:

- The 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS; CDC, 2017b)
- The 2016 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH; Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, 2016)

The YRBSS is a national school-based survey that collects self-report data on priority health behaviors among high school youth. This survey collects data on bullying victimization that occurs on school property and cyberbullying, which includes bullying victimization through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media.

The NSCH is completed by parents/guardians of children ages 12-17 years. In this survey, parents/guardians report on whether their child was bullied, picked on, or excluded by other children.

Figure 1. Bullying victimization reported by youth and parents/guardians

Nearly 1 in 5 youth in high school report bullying victimization on school property and 1 in 7 report cyberbullying. Also, parents/guardians report that more than 1 in 5 children ages 12-17 are bullied, picked on, or excluded by other children.

Sources: YRBSS, 2017; NSCH, 2016

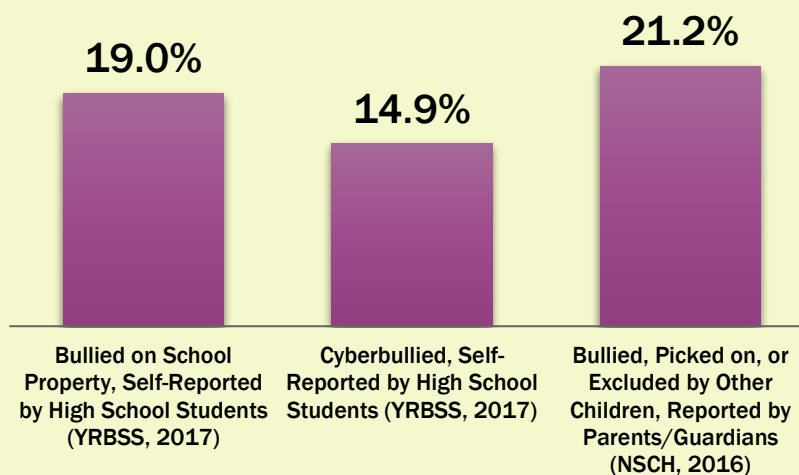
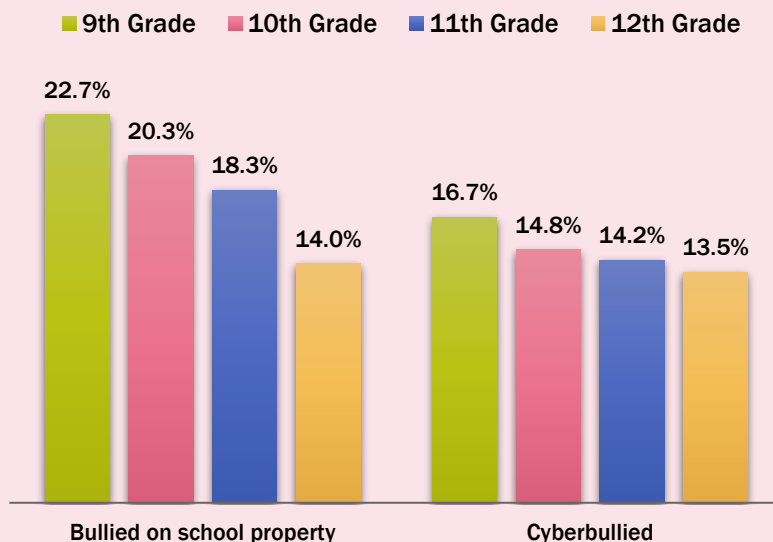


Figure 2. Bullying victimization by grade level

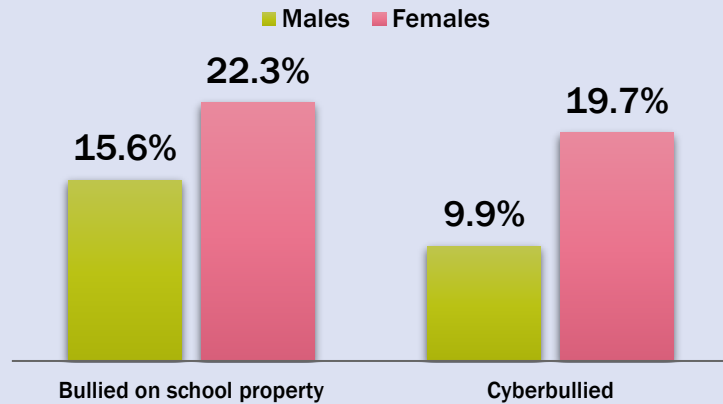


Younger youth experience more bullying victimization than older youth. Among youth in 9th grade, 22.7% report bullying victimization on school property and 16.7% report cyberbullying. In comparison, 14.0% of youth in 12th grade report bullying victimization on school property and 13.5% report cyberbullying.

Source: YRBSS, 2017

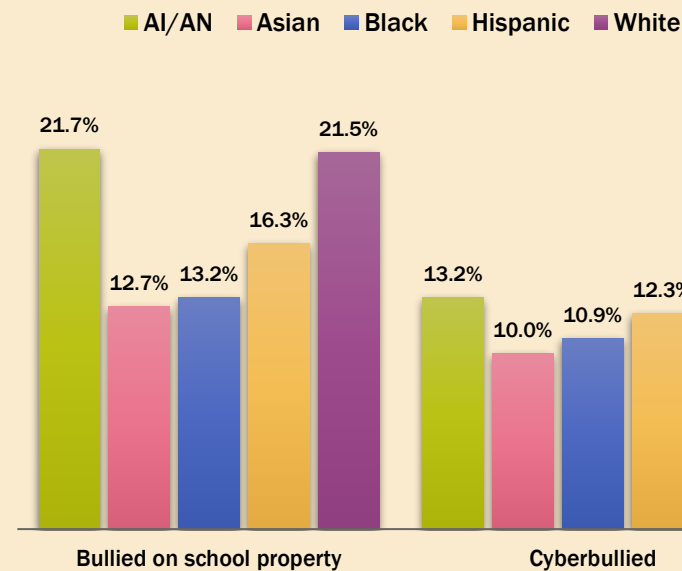
Figure 3. Bullying victimization by sex

Bullying victimization is more common in female than male youth. Among female youth, 22.3% report bullying victimization on school property and 19.7% report cyberbullying. Among male youth, 15.6% report bullying victimization on school property and 9.9% report cyberbullying.



Source: YRBSS, 2017

Figure 4. Bullying victimization by race/ethnicity

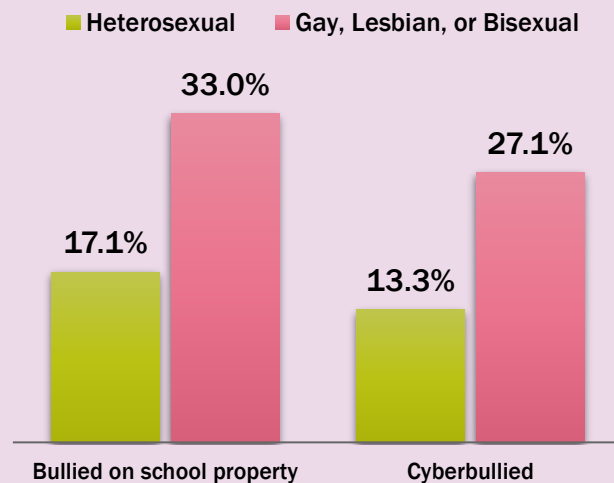


Bullying victimization is higher among American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) and White youth than those in other racial/ethnic groups. Among AI/AN youth, 21.7% report bullying victimization on school property and 13.2% report cyberbullying. Among White youth, 21.5% report bullying victimization on school property and 17.3% report cyberbullying.

Source: YRBSS, 2017

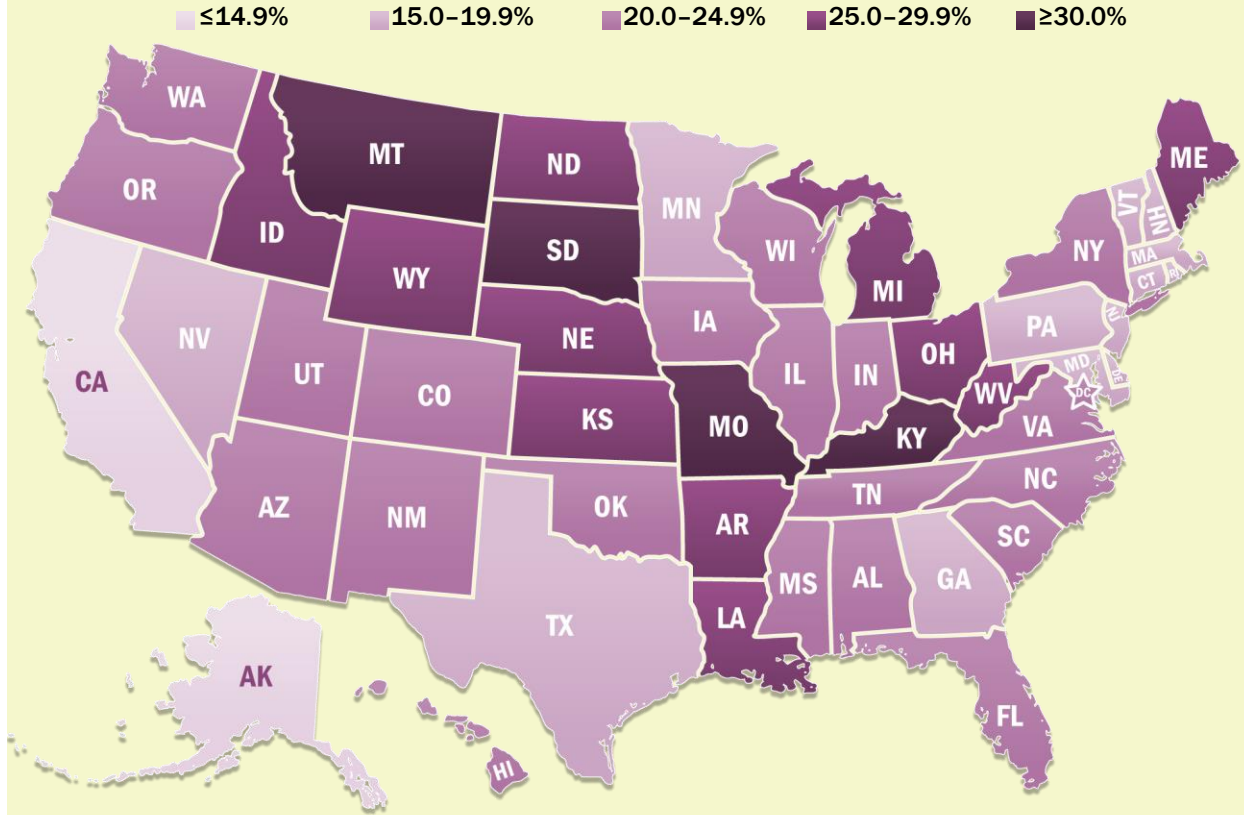
Figure 5. Bullying victimization by sexual identity

Youth who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual encounter more bullying victimization than youth who self-identify as heterosexual. Among gay, lesbian, or bisexual youth, 33.0% report bullying victimization on school property and 27.1% report cyberbullying. In comparison, among heterosexual youth, 17.1% report bullying victimization on school property and 13.3% report cyberbullying.



Source: YRBSS, 2017

Figure 6. Bullying victimization by state



Bullying victimization varies by state. Four states that report the highest bullying victimization are: South Dakota (35.0%), Montana (32.6%), Kentucky (32.6%), and Missouri (32.2%).

Source: NSCH, 2016

State	Percent Bullied	State	Percent Bullied	State	Percent Bullied
Alabama	21.4%	Kentucky	32.6%	North Dakota	27.3%
Alaska	14.6%	Louisiana	26.8%	Ohio	26.9%
Arizona	24.1%	Maine	28.4%	Oklahoma	20.6%
Arkansas	27.4%	Maryland	17.3%	Oregon	21.7%
California	14.7%	Massachusetts	18.0%	Pennsylvania	18.9%
Colorado	24.8%	Michigan	25.6%	Rhode Island	16.4%
Connecticut	19.8%	Minnesota	19.1%	South Carolina	20.9%
Delaware	18.9%	Mississippi	21.9%	South Dakota	35.0%
District of Columbia	20.9%	Missouri	32.2%	Tennessee	22.5%
Florida	22.3%	Montana	32.6%	Texas	18.2%
Georgia	15.0%	Nebraska	25.1%	Utah	20.5%
Hawaii	20.2%	Nevada	18.0%	Vermont	18.0%
Idaho	27.1%	New Hampshire	18.7%	Virginia	20.6%
Illinois	21.7%	New Jersey	19.8%	Washington	23.8%
Indiana	22.0%	New Mexico	21.8%	West Virginia	27.4%
Iowa	24.5%	New York	23.1%	Wisconsin	24.6%
Kansas	25.0%	North Carolina	22.8%	Wyoming	28.3%

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Preventing Bullying Victimization

The Healthy People 2020 objective is to reduce bullying among adolescents (IVP-35) (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2014). Findings in this fact sheet indicate priority areas for bullying prevention.

Strategies

Bullying varies from state to state. [Anti-bullying laws and policies in states](#) can be accessed on the StopBullying.gov website. Development and enforcement of laws and policies are effective ways to prevent bullying.

Addressing bullying requires concerted and coordinated efforts from health-care providers, youth-serving organizations, policy-makers, and families. These promising approaches may guide bullying prevention:

- Monitor the problem in children and adolescents
- Promote norms and a culture of safety, support, and respect
- Educate students, parents, and teachers about bullying
- Implement and enforce anti-bullying policies and procedures
- Increase community awareness

Certain demographic populations continue to be at higher risk for bullying victimization, including youth who are:

- Younger
- Female
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- those who self-identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual

Public health policies and programs should give warranted attention to these high-risk populations when developing bullying interventions.

Additional Resources

The Children's Safety Network has prepared [a report](#) to underscore the extent of the bullying problem, as well as to emphasize the role of public health in addressing this problem.

Moreover, the Health Resources and Services Administration is [actively working in bullying prevention](#). More information and resources on bullying prevention are available at www.StopBullying.gov.