

## PHYSICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

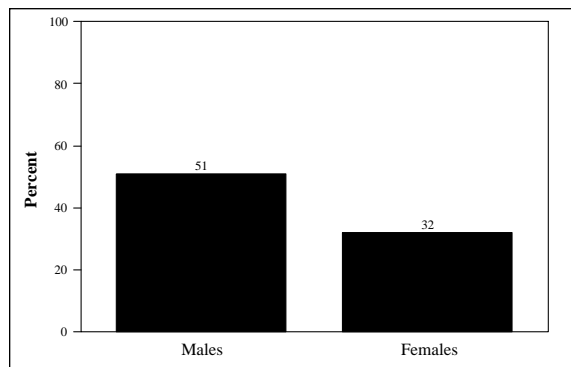
### SD 2.1 PHYSICAL FIGHTING BY YOUTH

Physical violence is a major cause of injury and homicide among adolescents.<sup>33</sup> Figure SD 2.1 presents data for 1993 indicating the percentage of male and female high school students who, by their own report, have been in a physical fight during the previous year. The data indicate that physical violence among youth is disturbingly common, with slightly over one half of all male students and nearly a third of female students reporting having been in a physical fight during that time.

Data presented in Table SD 2.1 indicate that the percentage of students who report being involved in fights decreases with age from 50 percent among ninth grade students down to 35 percent among twelfth grade students. It is unclear, however, whether this reduction reflects the effects of increasing maturity, a change in the propensity to report having been in a fight, or a tendency for violence-prone youth to drop out of school, leaving a less violent pool of students in the higher grades. Finally, white students appear somewhat less likely than black students to engage in physical fights (40 percent versus 50 percent).

<sup>33</sup>University of California at Los Angeles, CDC. "The Epidemiology of Homicide in Los Angeles, 1970-79." Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, CDC, 1985. Cited in *Chronic Disease and Health Promotion, Reprints from the MMWR: 1990-1991 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, CDC, 1992. P. 37.

**Figure SD 2.1 PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO REPORT HAVING BEEN IN A PHYSICAL FIGHT IN THE LAST YEAR: 1993**



Source: Data for 1993 from *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States 1993*, Vol. 44, No. SS-1.

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**Table SD 2.1 PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO REPORT THAT THEY HAVE BEEN IN A PHYSICAL FIGHT WITHIN THE LAST YEAR: 1993**

	1993
Total	42
Male	51
Female	32
Grade	
9	50
10	42
11	41
12	35
Race/Ethnic Group	
White, non-Hispanic	40
Black, non-Hispanic	50
Hispanic	43

Sources: Data for 1993 from *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States 1993*, Vol. 44, No. SS-1.

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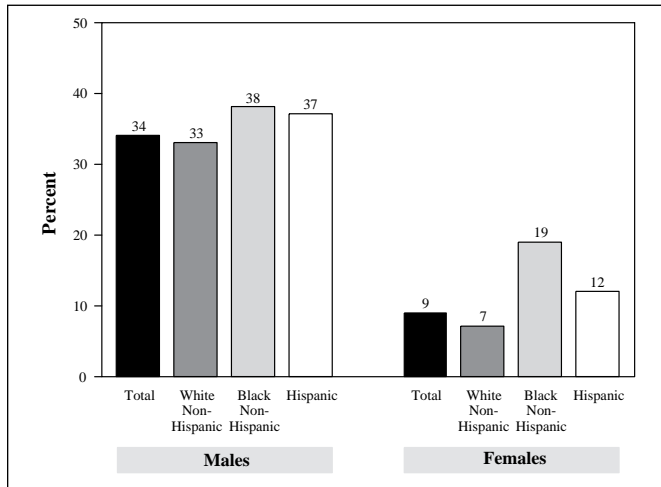
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### SD 2.2 WEAPONS CARRYING AMONG HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

Figure SD 2.2.a presents national estimates of the rate of weapons-carrying among high school students in 1993. The data refer to the percentage of students who report having carried a weapon at least once during the previous 30 days. Weapons include knives, razors, clubs, or firearms. The figure shows that weapons carrying is disturbingly common, with over one third (34 percent) of male students and nearly one in ten (9 percent) female students reporting that they have carried a weapon within the previous month. Among male youth, whites, blacks, and Hispanics report similar rates of weapons carrying. Among female youth, however, blacks appear to be the most likely to report carrying a weapon (19 percent), followed by Hispanics (12 percent) and then whites (7 percent).

Figure SD 2.2.b presents national estimates of the percentage of high school students who have carried a gun within the last month. Overall, 14 percent, or approximately one in seven, male students in grades nine through twelve report having carried a gun within the last month. Reported gun carrying among females is much lower at 2 percent. Across race/ethnic groups, the percentage of males who report having carried a gun within the previous month ranged from 12 percent for white youth to 21 percent for black youth, with Hispanic youth at 17 percent.

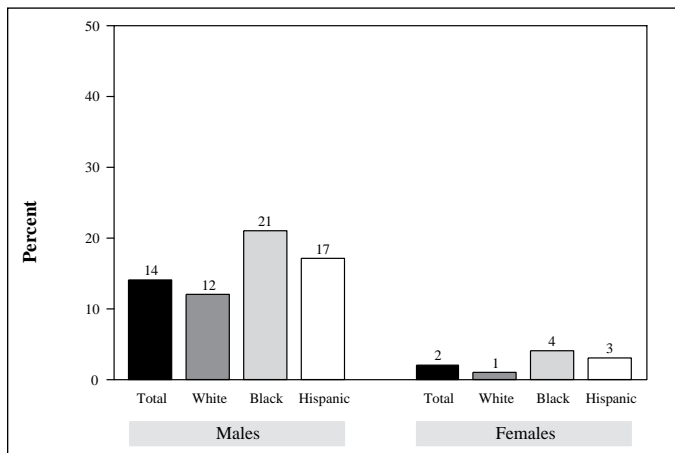
Figure SD 2.2.A WEAPONS: PERCENT OF TEENS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO REPORT HAVING CARRIED A WEAPON WITHIN THE LAST 30 DAYS: 1993



Note: Weapons included knives, razors, clubs, and firearms (including handguns).

Sources: *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States 1993*, Vol. 44, No. SS-1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Figure SD 2.2.B GUNS: PERCENT OF TEENS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO REPORT HAVING CARRIED A GUN WITHIN THE LAST 30 DAYS: 1993



Note: Percentages reflect those who carried a gun during the 30 days preceding the survey.

Source: *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 1993*, Volume 44, No. 55-1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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**Table SD 2.2.A PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN GRADE 9-12 WHO REPORT HAVING CARRIED A WEAPON<sup>a</sup> AT LEAST ONCE WITHIN THE LAST MONTH: 1991 AND 1993**

	1991			1993		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	26	41	11	22	34	9
Grade						
9	28	—	—	26	39	11
10	27	—	—	21	33	10
11	29	—	—	22	33	9
12	21	—	—	20	33	7
Race/Ethnicity Group						
White, non-Hispanic	25	—	—	21	33	7
Black, non-Hispanic	33	—	—	29	38	19
Hispanic	26	—	—	24	37	12

Note: <sup>a</sup>Weapons included knives, razors, clubs, and firearms (including handguns).

Source: Data for 1991 from Public Health Reports, Vol. 108, Supplement 1, U.S. Public Health Service. Data for 1993 from *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States 1993*, Vol. 44, SS-1, U.S. Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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Table SD 2.2.B PERCENT OF TEENS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO REPORT HAVING CARRIED A GUN WITHIN THE LAST 30 DAYS, 1993

	Total	Male	Female
Total	8	14	2
Grade			
9	9	16	2
10	9	15	2
11	7	13	1
12	7	12	1
Race/Ethnic Group			
White non-Hispanic	7	12	1
Black non-Hispanic	12	21	4
Hispanic	10	17	3

Note: Percentages reflect those who carried a gun more often than other weapons.

Source: *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States 1993*, Volume 44, No. 55-1, U.S. Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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### SD 2.3 SEAT BELT USE

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that, in 1993, 55 percent of all children under age five who were killed while occupants of a motor vehicle were not protected by seat belts.<sup>34</sup> Further, among youth ages 15-19, motor vehicle deaths were the leading cause of death in 1992, accounting for one third of all fatalities in that age group.

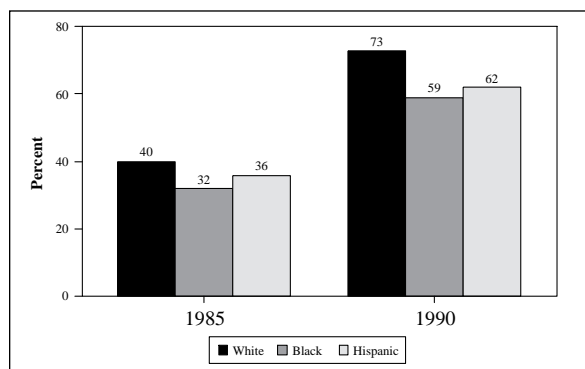
Figure SD 2.3 presents data for 1985 and 1990 on the percent of white, black, and Hispanic children ages 5-17 who were reported to wear seat belts all or most of the time. The data indicate a clear and dramatic increase in regular seat belt use among these children during that five year period from 40 to 73 percent among whites, from 32 to 59 percent among blacks, and from 36 to 62 percent among Hispanics.

Among children ages 0-4, both white and black children experienced increased rates of regular seat belt use during that same period, though the gains have been less dramatic: from 84 to 88 percent among white children, and from 67 to 79 percent among black children. (See Table SD 2.3) Only Hispanic children below the age of five appear to have lost some ground, with rates of regular seat belt use decreasing from 73 percent to 71 percent between 1985 and 1990.

Table SD 2.3 includes data with more refined age categories including less than 1 year of age, 1-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, and 15-17 years. Rates of regular seat belt use decreased substantially with age in both 1985 and 1990, though the differences were less pronounced in the more recent year. In 1990, age-specific rates of regular seat belt use were as follows: 93 percent for children under the age of one; 87 percent for ages 1-4; 76 percent for ages 5-9; 67 percent for ages 10-14; and 68 percent among youth ages 15-17.

<sup>34</sup>National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. 1994. *Traffic Safety Facts 1993*. DOT HS 808 169. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Transportation.

**Figure SD 2.3 SEAT BELT USE: PERCENT OF CHILDREN AGES 5-17 WHO ARE REPORTED TO HAVE WORN SEAT BELTS ALL OR MOST OF THE TIME: 1985 AND 1990**



Sources: National Health Interview Survey data were published in *Vital and Health Statistics Series 10: No. 185, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention United States, 1990*; and *Series 10: No. 163 Health Promotion and Disease Prevention United States, 1985*.

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Table SD 2.3 PERCENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH WHO ARE REPORTED TO HAVE WORN SEAT BELTS ALL OR MOST OF THE TIME : 1985 AND 1990

	1985	1990
Children by Age:		
<1 year	92	93
1-4 years	82	87
5-9 years	49	76
10-14 years	33	67
15-17	31	68
White		
Ages 0-4	84	88
Ages 5-17	40	73
Black		
Ages 0-4	67	79
Ages 5-17	32	59
Hispanic		
Ages 0-4	73	71
Ages 5-17	36	62

Sources: National Health Interview Survey data were published in Vital and Health Statistics Series 10: No. 185, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention United States, 1990; and Series 10: No. 163 Health Promotion and Disease Prevention United States, 1985.



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### SD 2.4 REGULAR PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Vigorous physical activity is associated with a wide range of positive health outcomes for children and youth including reduced rates of obesity and hypertension. Further, habits of physical exercise formed in childhood can carry into adulthood producing life-long health benefits.<sup>35</sup> According to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, nationwide only about half of all students in grades 9 through 12 are enrolled in a physical education class in school, and only about one third attend a physical education class daily.

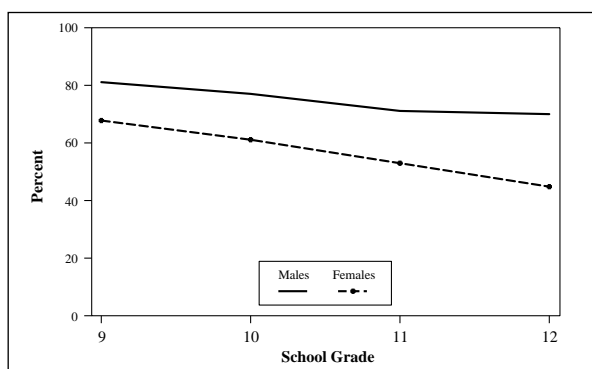
Table SD 2.4.a shows the percent of high school seniors from 1976 through 1994 who reported participating in sports or exercising “almost every day.” The percentage has remained remarkably constant during that period, varying between 44 percent and 48 percent. Only among black youth do the rates of physical exercise appear to have changed substantially, dropping from a high of 53 percent in 1981 down to 39 percent in 1994.

Table SD 2.4.b presents 1993 data on the percentage of youth in grades nine through twelve who reported that they exercised vigorously three or more times per week.<sup>36</sup> These data demonstrate that males are considerably more likely than females to exercise vigorously (75 percent versus 56 percent). In addition, they show that the percent of youth who report exercising vigorously drops off between grades nine and twelve, dropping by 11 percentage points for males (81 percent to 70 percent) and by 23 percentage points for females (68 percent to 45 percent). (See also Figure SD 2.4). Finally, white students appear to be more likely than black and Hispanic students to exercise vigorously (68 percent versus 60 percent and 59 percent, respectively).

<sup>35</sup>*Chronic Diseases and Health Promotion, Reprints from the MMWR: 1990-1991 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service. p. 33.

<sup>36</sup>Vigorous exercise” is defined as activities that caused sweating and hard breathing for at least 20 minutes.

**Figure SD 2.4 PERCENT OF 9TH-12TH GRADERS WHO REPORT HAVING EXERCISED VIGOROUSLY 3 OR MORE TIMES IN THE PAST 7 DAYS: VARIATIONS BY GENDER AND SCHOOL GRADE, 1993**



Source: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States 1993, Volume 44, No. SS-1.

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**Table SD 2.4.A PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS WHO REPORT THEY ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS OR EXERCISING "ALMOST EVERY DAY", 1976 - 1994**

Actively participate in sports or exercising	1976	1981	1986	1991	1992	1993	1994
Total	44	48	44	46	46	44	45
Gender							
Male	52	56	54	55	59	55	56
Female	36	39	36	36	33	33	36
Race/Ethnicity							
White	43	47	46	48	48	46	49
Black	49	53	43	43	41	39	39

Source: Bachman, J. G. , Johnston, L. D. & O'Malley, P. M. "Monitoring the Future: Questionnaire Responses from the Nations' High School Seniors" 1992, 1994 Questionnaire Form 2 number A02H in each report.

Johnston, L. D., Bachman, J. G. & O'Malley, P. M. "Monitoring the Future: Questionnaire Responses from the Nations' High School Seniors" 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1993 Questionnaire Form 2 number A02H in each report.

**Table SD 2.4.B PERCENT OF TEENS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO REPORT HAVING EXERCISED VIGOROUSLY 3 OR MORE TIMES IN THE PAST 7 DAYS, 1993**

	Total	Male	Female
Total	66	75	56
Grade			
9	75	81	68
10	70	77	61
11	63	71	53
12	58	70	45
Race/Ethnic Group			
White, Non-Hispanic	68	76	59
Black, Non-Hispanic	60	71	49
Hispanic	59	69	50

Note: Vigorous physical exercise is defined as activities that caused sweating and hard breathing for at least 20 minutes.

Source: *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States 1993*, Volume 44, No. SS-1.