

Role of the Media¹

This list presents publications from our literature review in which the role of the media in school violence was a primary topic (e.g., a research question, a primary analysis/interpretation, an emphasized topic with an entire section labeled discussing the topic). The role of the media in school violence is addressed in 25% of the publications overall. The news media’s portrayal of school violence is considered in 21% of the included school shooting publications, compared to 5.7% of the threat assessment publications. Similarly, the school shooting literature is almost twice as likely to examine possible media (e.g., violent games/movies, glorification websites) role in school violence (25% versus 14%). Included are peer-reviewed, published articles, government/organization reports, books and book chapters

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| 5 | American Psychological Association. (2013). Gun violence: Prediction, prevention, and policy. Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/gun-violence-prevention.aspx |
| 5 | Bushman, B. J., Newman, K., Calvert, S. L., Downey, G., Dredze, M., Gottfredson, M., Jablonski, N. G., Masten, A. S., Morrill, C., Neill, D. B., Romer, D., & Webster, D. W. (2016). Youth violence: What we know and what we need to know. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 71(1), 17–39. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039687 |
| 6 | Cornell, D. G. (2006). <i>School violence: Fears versus facts</i> . Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers. |
| 6 | Cornell, D.G. (2015). Our schools are safe: Challenging the misperception that schools are dangerous places. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i> , 85, 217-220. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000064 |
| 7 | Donohue, E., Schiraldi, V., & Ziedenberg, J. (1998). <i>School house hype: School shootings and the real risks kids face in America</i> . Justice Policy Institution, Washington, DC. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED448226.pdf |
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| 7 | Ferguson, C. J. (2008). The school shooting/violent video game link: causal relationship or moral panic? <i>Journal of Investigative Psychology & Offender Profiling</i> , 5(1/2), 25–37. https://doi.org/10.1002/jip.76 |

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| 8 | Fox, J. A., & DeLateur, M. J. (2014). Mass shootings in America: Moving beyond Newtown. <i>Homicide Studies, 18</i> (1), 125–145. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088767913510297 |
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| 9 | Kelly, M. & McBride, A. (Eds). (2020). <i>Safe passage: A guide for addressing school violence</i> . APA Publishing. https://www.appi.org/Safe_Passage |
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¹ This project was supported by Cooperative Agreement No. 2019-YSBX-K001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. Dewey Cornell discloses that he is the principal developer of the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines.

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Allison, J., Canady, M., & Straub, F. 2020. School Resource Officers: Averted School Violence Special Report. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

The NPF defines an averted school violence incident as a shooting, bombing, stabbing, or other violent attack that was prevented—either before or after the potential perpetrator arrived on school grounds—before any injury or loss of life occurred at the educational institution. This definition does not include averted incidents of violence on school grounds that were unrelated to the school (e.g., gang-related violence). The ASV database includes only incidents that occurred in the United States after the Columbine tragedy in 1999. The following 12 case studies describe planned targeted violence at K–12 schools that were averted through the actions of the potential attackers’ peers, SROs, school administrators, and other school safety stakeholders. Each case is followed by an enumeration of the lessons learned from that case. A compilation of lessons learned is provided at the end of this report.

American Psychological Association. (2013). Gun violence: Prediction, prevention, and policy. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/gun-violence-prevention.aspx>

Gun violence is an urgent, complex, and multifaceted problem. It requires evidence-based, multifaceted solutions. Psychology can make important contributions to policies that prevent gun violence. Toward this end, in February 2013 the American Psychological Association commissioned this report by a panel of experts to convey research-based conclusions and recommendations (and to identify gaps in such knowledge) on how to reduce the incidence of gun violence — whether by homicide, suicide, or mass shootings — nationwide.

Bushman, B. J., Newman, K., Calvert, S. L., Downey, G., Dredze, M., Gottfredson, M., Jablonski, N. G., Masten, A. S., Morrill, C., Neill, D. B., Romer, D., & Webster, D. W. (2016). Youth violence: What we know and what we need to know. *American Psychologist*, 71(1), 17–39. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039687>

School shootings tear the fabric of society. In the wake of a school shooting, parents, pediatricians, policymakers, politicians, and the public search for “the” cause of the shooting. But there is no single cause. The causes of school shootings are extremely complex. After the Sandy Hook Elementary School rampage shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, we wrote a report for the National Science Foundation on what is known and not known about youth violence. This article summarizes and updates that report. After distinguishing violent behavior from aggressive behavior, we describe the prevalence of gun violence in the United States and age-related risks for violence. We delineate important differences between violence in the context of rare rampage school shootings, and much more common urban street violence. Acts of violence are influenced by multiple factors, often acting together. We summarize evidence on some major risk factors and protective factors for youth violence, highlighting individual and contextual factors, which often interact. We consider new quantitative “data mining” procedures

that can be used to predict youth violence perpetrated by groups and individuals, recognizing critical issues of privacy and ethical concerns that arise in the prediction of violence. We also discuss implications of the current evidence for reducing youth violence, and we offer suggestions for future research. We conclude by arguing that the prevention of youth violence should be a national priority.

Cornell, D. G. (2006). *School violence: Fears versus facts*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Illustrated with numerous case studies--many drawn from the author's work as a forensic psychologist--this book identifies 19 myths and misconceptions about youth violence, from ordinary bullying to rampage shootings. Using a contrarian approach, the author demonstrates how fear of school violence has resulted in misguided, counterproductive educational policies and practices ranging from boot camps to zero tolerance. He reviews evidence from hundreds of controlled studies showing that well-tested, school-based violence prevention programs and mental health services are often overlooked in favor of politically popular yet ineffective programs such as school uniforms, Drug Abuse Resistance Education, and Scared Straight. He concludes by reviewing research on student threat assessment as a more flexible and less punitive alternative to zero tolerance, and presents recommendations for improving and expanding the use of school-based violence prevention programs and mental health services for troubled students. The book's mission is to translate scientific research into language that educators, students, parents, law enforcement officers, and policy makers can readily understand and to show what can be done to improve things. It is appropriate for courses or seminars dealing wholly or partly with school violence and school safety. It is also indispensable reading for school administrators and safety officers, policy makers at all levels, and for parents concerned about school violence and safety.

Cornell, D.G. (2015). Our schools are safe: Challenging the misperception that schools are dangerous places. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 85, 217-220. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000064>

Massive public attention to school shootings has created the mis-perception that schools are dangerous places, even though crime statistics show that schools are one of the safest places in the United States. The fear of school shootings has caused many school systems to divert their budgets to excessive building security measures and adopt dubious crisis response plans. School disciplinary practices have shifted toward the criminalization of student misbehavior and a zero tolerance philosophy that fails to improve school safety and results in high rates of student suspensions and dropouts. The use of a threat assessment approach to evaluate individual student behavior in context and resolve conflicts and problems before they escalate into violence is one promising alternative that has been adopted statewide in Virginia public schools. School safety should focus on the everyday problems of bullying and fighting, and apply public health principles of primary and secondary prevention using well-established psychological interventions.

Donohue, E., Schiraldi, V., & Ziedenberg, J. (1998). *School house hype: School shootings and the real risks kids face in America*. Justice Policy Institution, Washington, DC.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED448226.pdf>

This report examines risks that children and youth face in America's schools to determine whether there is a trend toward increasing violent school deaths in America and noting the overall incidence of crime, particularly homicides, inside versus outside of the schools. Data come from the Department of Education, Department of Justice, FBI, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National School Safety Center, National Safe Kids Campaign, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Center To Prevent Handgun Violence, Bureau of Justice Statistics, and newspaper clippings (to obtain school-related violence data). Results indicate that recent school shootings were extremely idiosyncratic events and not part of any trend. The likelihood of becoming a victim of school-associated violent death is less than one in one million. While most children killed by guns are killed by adults, children are killed in gun accidents at 23 times the rate they are killed in schools. American children are 12 times more likely to die from guns than children in 25 other industrialized countries. The paper recommends channeling public energy into removing guns from children and adults and providing constructive opportunities for children during peak crime hours (after school programs and restriction on mass gun sales).

Federal Commission on School Safety (2018). Final report of the Federal Commission on School Safety. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/school-safety/school-safety-report.pdf>

The efforts of the Federal Commission on School Safety have been guided by the need to promote state and local solutions to school violence. To that end, the Commission conducted field visits, listening sessions, and meetings with hundreds of Americans all across the country. The input of these individuals—state and local policymakers, administrators, principals and teachers, law enforcement and healthcare professionals, students and their families—was critical in identifying best practices and the recommendations contained in this Report. As set forth in the pages that follow, the work of the Commission falls into three broad categories: a) Prevent—preventing school violence; b) Protect and Mitigate—protecting students and teachers and mitigating the effects of violence; and c) Respond and Recover—responding to and recovering from attacks.

Ferguson, C. J. (2008). The school shooting/violent video game link: causal relationship or moral panic? *Journal of Investigative Psychology & Offender Profiling*, 5(1/2), 25–37.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/jip.76>

In the last 10 years, following the incidence of serious acts of school violence—particularly multiple homicides on school campuses—much attention has focused on the potential causal role of violent video game exposure. Some scholars have attempted to draw links between laboratory and correlational research on video game playing and school shooting incidents. This paper argues that such claims are faulty and fail to acknowledge the significant methodological and constructional divides between existing video game research and acts of serious aggression and violence. It is concluded that no

significant relationship between violent video game exposure and school shooting incidents has been demonstrated in the existing scientific literature, and that data from real world violence call such a link into question.

Fox, J. A., & DeLateur, M. J. (2014). Mass shootings in America: Moving beyond Newtown. *Homicide Studies, 18*(1), 125–145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088767913510297>

Mass shootings at a Connecticut elementary school, a Colorado movie theater, and other venues have prompted a fair number of proposals for change. Advocates for tighter gun restrictions, for expanding mental health services, for upgrading security in public places, and, even, for controlling violent entertainment have made certain assumptions about the nature of mass murder that are not necessarily valid. This article examines a variety of myths and misconceptions about multiple homicide and mass shooters, pointing out some of the difficult realities in trying to avert these murderous rampages. While many of the policy proposals are worthwhile in general, their prospects for reducing the risk of mass murder are limited.

Hall, R.C. W., Friedman, S. H., Sorrentino, R., Lapchenko, M., Marcus, A., & Ellis, R. (2019). The myth of school shooters and psychotropic medications. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law, 37*, 540-558. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2429>

There has been an assertion in certain parts of the media, especially social media, that the majority of individuals who have engaged in a school shooting were prescribed psychotropic medications prior to the event. To determine if there is any validity to this assertion, the authors of this article reviewed publicly available information regarding individuals involved in “educational shootings” per FBI publications for active shooters from 2000 to 2017. Sources of information included news reports with official citations, official reports regarding events, available court records, and FBI Freedom of Information Act requests. Secondary data-points were also collected, such as location, number of weapons used, number of victims, legal outcome, and whether the shooter committed suicide. From the information obtained, it appears that most school shooters were not previously treated with psychotropic medications – and even when they were, no direct or causal association was found.

Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence. (2013). December 2012 Connecticut school shooting position statement. *Journal of School Violence, 12*(2), 119–133. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2012.762488>

In response to the killing of 20 children and 6 adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 17, 2012, this position statement argues that research supports a thoughtful approach to safer schools, guided by four key elements—balance, communication, connectedness, and support—along with strengthened attention to mental health needs in the community, structured threat assessment approaches, revised policies on youth exposure to violent media, and improved policies and practices related to common-sense gun safety. A list of endorsing organizations and individuals is provided.

Kelly, M. & McBride, A. (Eds). (2020). *Safe passage: A guide for addressing school violence*. APA Publishing. https://www.appi.org/Safe_Passage

Safe Passage: A Guide to Addressing School Violence offers expert perspectives and guidance in understanding, assessing, and addressing school violence. Although the book is designed for child and adolescent forensic psychiatrists and psychologists seeking proficiency in youth violence risk assessment, educators, school administrators, mental health clinicians, other health care professionals who work with children, and interested laypersons will also find the book both practical and illuminating. The editors' approach to school violence is informed by their educational, scholarly, clinical, and forensic work with children and adults who have been disenfranchised through the cumulative effects of poverty, trauma, untreated mental illness, and inadequate access to education. This background has fostered a sensitivity to and understanding of critically important developmental factors that can be passed on generationally, which are explored in depth in the volume. Case vignettes and follow-ups are used liberally to illustrate and illuminate the range of violent situations (e.g., bullying, cyberbullying, gang violence, sexual violence) likely to be encountered, as well as the advantages and disadvantages inherent in various interventions. The authors stress that threat assessment must take individual, school, and community variables into account, a complex but necessary task for mental health professionals and educators who wish to safeguard individuals and society from harm.

Kiilakoski, T., & Oksanen, A. (2011). Cultural and peer influences on homicidal violence: A Finnish perspective. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 129. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.385>

In this article, we consider the cultural and peer influences on homicidal violence by closely examining the Jokela and Kauhajoki school shootings. We also make some references to the earlier Raumanmeri case. Pre-investigation reports by the Finnish police and the reports by the government commissions created to investigate the shootings provided background material. The police reports include descriptions of the events, previous behavior by the offender that can be linked to the shootings, and transcribed inter-views of the eyewitnesses and other people involved.

Lawrence, R., & Mueller, D. (2003). School shootings and the man-bites-dog criterion of newsworthiness. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 1(4), 330–345. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204003255842>

School shootings have received considerable media attention in recent years. These widely publicized crimes have provoked fear among parents, school staff, and the public at large despite data indicating that school violence has not significantly increased. This article examines the ways in which school shootings are depicted in the media and contrasts these images with official sources of juvenile crime data. The findings indicate that media reports of school shootings lead to grossly distorted perceptions of the potential for victimization. Recommendations are offered to help provide more accurate and balanced coverage of these tragic events.

Leary, M.R., Kowalski, R.M., Smith, L. and Phillips, S. (2003). Teasing, rejection, and violence: Case studies of the school shootings. *Aggressive Behavior*, 29, 202-214.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.10061>

Media commentators have suggested that recent school shootings were precipitated by social rejection, but no empirical research has examined this claim. Case studies were conducted of 15 school shootings between 1995 and 2001 to examine the possible role of social rejection in school violence. Acute or chronic rejection—in the form of ostracism, bullying, and/or romantic rejection—was present in all but two of the incidents. In addition, the shooters tended to be characterized by one or more of three other risk factors—an interest in firearms or bombs, a fascination with death or Satanism, or psychological problems involving depression, impulse control, or sadistic tendencies. Implications for understanding and preventing school violence are discussed.

Madfis, E. (2017). In search of meaning: Are school rampage shootings random and senseless violence?, *The Journal of Psychology*, 151(1), 21-35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2016.1196161>

This article discusses Joel Best's (1999) notion of random violence and applies his concepts of pointlessness, patternlessness, and deterioration to the reality about multiple-victim school shootings gleaned from empirical research about the phenomenon. Best describes how violence is rarely random, as scholarship reveals myriad observable patterns, lots of discernable motives and causes, and often far too much fear-mongering over how bad society is getting and how violent we are becoming. In contrast, it is vital that the media, scholars, and the public better understand crime patterns, criminal motivations, and the causes of fluctuating crime rates. As an effort toward such progress, this article reviews the academic literature on school rampage shootings and explores the extent to which these attacks are and are not random acts of violence.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission. (2019). Report submitted to the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives and Senate President. Retrieved from <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/MSDHS/msd-Report-2-Public-Version.pdf>

On March 9, 2018, Governor Rick Scott signed the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act (MSDHPSA) into law. This comprehensive legislation focused on identifying and addressing issues surrounding the tragedy that occurred at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. A key component of the legislation was the establishment of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission (Commission), composed of 16 voting members and four non-voting members appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House, Senate President or specified in legislation. The Commission was formed to specifically analyze information from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting and other mass violence incidents, and provide recommendations and system improvements to help mitigate the impacts from and prevent future school shootings. Members of the Commission were appointed to provide a broad and diverse range of expertise and knowledge. Commission members represent state and local law enforcement, mental health professionals, state and local elected officials, educators, school officials and parents of victims.

Markey, P. M., Ivory, J. D., Slotter, E. B., Oliver, M. B., & Maglalang, O. (2019). He does not look like video games made him do it: Racial stereotypes and school shootings. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000255>

Despite a lack of research linking school shootings to video games, video games are frequently associated with school shootings carried out by White perpetrators. Because there is a stereotypical association between racial minorities and violent crime, it is possible that people often look toward video games as a cause for school shootings committed by White perpetrators who do not fit this stereotype. Consistent with this notion, Study 1 ($n = 169$) found that participants who read a mock news story about a school shooting were more likely to blame video games when the shooter was White than when the shooter was Black. Study 2 examined 204,796 news stories of 204 mass shootings committed in the United States and found that, when a shooting occurred at a school, video games were 8.35 times more likely to be discussed when the shooter was White than when the shooter was Black.

Mohandie, K. (2014). Threat assessment in schools. In J. R. Meloy & J. Hoffman (Eds.), *International handbook of threat assessment* (pp. 126–147). New York, NY: Oxford University Press

Lethal school violence incidents, while not new, became a particular focus of threat assessment professionals in the early 1990s—a concern that continues to the present day. While the United States has been the apparent leader in terms of the phenomenon, noteworthy events have occurred in many countries including Russia, Germany, Finland, England, Canada, China, and Afghanistan. This chapter will outline the fundamentals of school violence threat management: categories of potential perpetrators, evolving patterns of violent offending on campuses, dynamics of violent individuals who target schools, essential threat assessment variables, practical aspects of threat assessment in school environments, interviewing techniques with at-risk subjects, threat assessment teams, and threat management strategies. A short history of noteworthy events traces the evolution of school violence threat management as a contemporary international concern.

Muschert, G. W. (2007). Research in school shootings. *Sociology Compass*, 1(1), 60–80. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00008.x>

Studies of school shootings have been conducted in a variety of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, and media studies. However, to date there is no unified body of knowledge about such events. In an effort to synthesize past studies, and to orient future studies in school shootings, this article (i) offers a typology for understanding the varieties of school shooting incidents, including rampages, mass murders, terrorist attacks, targeted attacks, and government shootings; (ii) examines the mass media dynamic of school shootings; and (iii) presents a synthesis of the multilevel causes suggested in the research, including those on the individual, community, and social levels. Suggestions for future studies in school shootings are explored.

Musu, L., Zhang, A., Wang, K., Zhang, J., & Oudekerk, B.A. (2019). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2018* (NCES 2019-047/NCJ 252571). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019047.pdf>

This report is the 21st in a series of annual publications produced jointly by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Institute of Education Sciences (IES), in the U.S. Department of Education, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in the U.S. Department of Justice. This report presents the most recent data available on school crime and student safety. The indicators in this report are based on information drawn from a variety of data sources, including national surveys of students, teachers, principals, and postsecondary institutions. Sources include results from the School-Associated Violent Death Surveillance System, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the National Vital Statistics System, sponsored by CDC; the National Crime Victimization Survey and School Crime Supplement to that survey, sponsored by BJS and NCES, respectively; the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, sponsored by CDC; the Schools and Staffing Survey, National Teacher and Principal Survey, School Survey on Crime and Safety, Fast Response Survey System, and *EDFacts*, all sponsored by NCES; the Studies of Active Shooter Incidents, sponsored by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Campus Safety and Security Survey, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education; and the Monitoring the Future Survey, sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This report covers topics such as victimization, teacher injury, bullying and electronic bullying, school conditions, fights, weapons, availability and student use of drugs and alcohol, student perceptions of personal safety at school, and criminal incidents at postsecondary institutions. Indicators of crime and safety are compared across different population subgroups and over time. Data on crimes that occur away from school are offered as a point of comparison where available.

National Research Council. (2003). *Deadly Lessons: Understanding lethal school violence*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/10370>

The shooting at Columbine High School riveted national attention on violence in the nation's schools. This dramatic example signaled an implicit and growing fear that these events would continue to occur—and even escalate in scale and severity. How do we make sense of the tragedy of a school shooting or even draw objective conclusions from these incidents? *Deadly Lessons* is the outcome of the National Research Council's unique effort to glean lessons from six case studies of lethal student violence. These are powerful stories of parents and teachers and troubled youths, presenting the tragic complexity of the young shooter's social and personal circumstances in rich detail. The cases point to possible causes of violence and suggest where interventions may be most effective. Readers will come away with a better understanding of the potential threat, how violence might be prevented, and how healing might be promoted in affected communities.

Nekvasil, E. K., Cornell, D. G., & Huang, F. L. (2015). Prevalence and offense characteristics of multiple casualty homicides: Are schools at higher risk than other locations? *Psychology of Violence, 5*(3), 236–245. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038967>

Objective: In light of public concern about school shootings, this study examined the prevalence and offense characteristics of multiple casualty homicides across locations.

Method: We used the FBI's National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to examine 18,873 homicide incidents involving 25,180 victims who were either killed or injured from 2005 through 2010.

Results: Multiple casualty homicides were surprisingly common events, with approximately 22% of homicide incidents involving 2 or more victims. Multiple casualty homicides were much more common in residences (47%) versus schools (0.8%), but homicides in residences tended to have 1 victim (78%) rather than multiple victims (22%), whereas homicides in schools were about equally likely to have 1 victim (57%) or multiple victims (43%). Multiple homicides were more likely to involve firearms than weapons such as knives or blunt objects. Finally, there were statistical differences in offense characteristics for homicides with 1, 2, and 3 victims.

Conclusion: These findings suggest that the public perception that schools are a high-risk location for homicides is inaccurate. Although concern about school shootings is understandable, the larger problem of multiple casualty shootings is more common in other locations which do not receive comparable media attention.

Oksanen, A., Kaltiala-Heino, R., Holkeri, E., & Lindberg, N. (2015). School shooting threats as a national phenomenon: Comparison of police reports and psychiatric reports in Finland. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology & Crime Prevention, 16*(2), 145–159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14043858.2015.1101823>

In aftermath of the school shootings in Finland (2007 and 2008), hundreds of schools were threatened with similar acts. These threats of homicidal violence occupied both police and psychiatrists, but little is known about the potential threat these cases posed. Our study compared the threats of homicidal violence communicated by pupils aged 12–18 using both police reports ($n = 20$, 2010) and psychiatric reports ($n = 77$, 2007–2009). We provide both descriptive information about the cases and statistical comparison based on threat assessment. The pupils were on average 14.9 years old, 13% girls. The threats were communicated most commonly in face-to-face situations in school to other pupils or teachers. Mental health problems were prevalent according to both data-sets. Pupils who were sent for adolescent psychiatric evaluation were a riskier group than the group who were only interrogated by the police. Police reports lacked specific information reflecting the fact that in 2010 Finnish police had not adopted tools for structural risk assessment that were already used by Finnish psychiatry. Our results underline the benefits of structural threat assessment approach, which saves resources and helps experts working with adolescents to gather relevant information and systematically assess it. In addition, it would be important to establish proper collaboration between schools, police and psychiatry.

O'Toole, M. (2000). *The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective*. Federal Bureau of Investigation. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED446352>

This monograph presents a systematic procedure for threat assessment and intervention. The model is designed to be used by educators, mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies. Obviously, the same events that led the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) to this subject have also led school administrators and law enforcement officials across the country to consider and develop their own policies and procedures for dealing with threats or acts of violence in schools. This model is offered in the hope that it may help refine and strengthen those efforts. Its fundamental building blocks are the threat assessment standards outlined in Chapter II, which provide a framework for evaluating a spoken, written, and symbolic threat, and the four-pronged assessment approach, which will be described in Chapter III and provides a logical, methodical process to examine the threatener and assess the risk that the threat will be carried out.

Raitanen, J., & Oksanen, A. (2019). Deep interest in school shootings and online radicalization. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 6(3-4), 159–172. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000127>

School shootings and terrorism attacks share many similarities, but these acts are often studied in separate research fields. Therefore, authors of studies on school shootings have not discussed radicalization of the perpetrators in depth, even though in terrorism studies radicalization is a highly researched theme. Online radicalization is even less studied in the school shooting context. Using opinion radicalization theory developed in terrorism studies, we analyzed online interviews (n = 22) with people deeply interested in school shootings. The analysis showed that people deeply interested in school shootings can be divided into three different groups based on the radicalness of their opinions toward school shootings: those with neutral opinions, sympathizers, and those interested in conducting a massacre. Data also indicate that becoming deeply interested in school shootings seems to strengthen an individual's opinions more than it changes them. Research and risk assessment of school shootings should focus more on the radicalization process of school shooters, because it is also done in the area of terrorism studies. The results imply that online school shooting communities have unused potential in the prevention of school shootings.

Rees, C. A., Lee, L. K., Flegler, E. W., & Mannix, R. (2019). Mass school shootings in the United States: A novel root cause analysis using lay press reports. *Clinical Pediatrics*, 58(13), 1423–1428. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0009922819873650>

School shootings comprise a small proportion of childhood deaths from firearms; however, these shootings receive a disproportionately large share of media attention. We conducted a root cause analysis of 2 recent school shootings in the United States using lay press reports. We reviewed 1760 and analyzed 282 articles from the 10 most trusted news sources. We identified 356 factors associated with the school shootings. Policy-level factors, including a paucity of adequate legislation controlling firearm purchase and ownership, were the most common contributing factors to school shootings. Mental illness was a commonly cited person-level factor, and access to firearms in the home and availability of large-capacity firearms were commonly cited environmental factors. Novel approaches, including root cause analyses using lay media, can identify factors contributing to mass shootings. The policy, person, and

environmental factors associated with these school shootings should be addressed as part of a multipronged effort to prevent future mass shootings.

Shultz, J. M., Muschert, G. W., Dingwall, A., & Cohen, A. M. (2013). The Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting as tipping point. *Disaster Health, 1*(2), 65-73.
<https://doi.org/10.4161/dish.27113>

Among rampage shooting massacres, the Sandy Hook elementary School shooting on December 14, 2012 galvanized public attention. In this Commentary we examine the features of this episode of gun violence that has sparked strong reactions and energized discourse that may ultimately lead toward constructive solutions to diminish high rates of fire- arm deaths and injuries in the United States.

Stader, D. L. (2001). Responding to student threats: Legal and procedural guidelines for high school principals. *Clearing House, 74*(4), 221. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098650109599196>

The safe schools issues is a politically charged quagmire that arouses strong emotions. Addressing student rights within the milieu is one of the more difficult challenges facing school principals. Balancing student rights with emotion becomes especially difficult when principals are faced with student threats. To make matters more difficult, legal challenges to administrative responses to student threats are always a possibility. Such challenges typically cite First Amendment (freedom of expression) and/or Fourteenth Amendment (due process) violations. Therefore, in this article I will focus on some of the legal and procedural guidelines pertaining to freedom of expression and due process in how teachers and administrators handle student verbal or symbolic threats.

Towers, S., Gomez-Lievano, A., Khan, M., Mubayi, A., & Castillo-Chavez, C. (2015). Contagion in mass killings and school shootings. *PLoS ONE, 10*(7), 1–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0117259>

Background: Several past studies have found that media reports of suicides and homicides appear to subsequently increase the incidence of similar events in the community, apparently due to the coverage planting the seeds of ideation in at-risk individuals to commit similar acts.

Methods: Here we explore whether or not contagion is evident in more high-profile incidents, such as school shootings and mass killings (incidents with four or more people killed). We fit a contagion model to recent data sets related to such incidents in the US, with terms that take into account the fact that a school shooting or mass murder may temporarily increase the probability of a similar event in the immediate future, by assuming an exponential decay in contagiousness after an event.

Conclusions: We find significant evidence that mass killings involving firearms are incited by similar events in the immediate past. On average, this temporary increase in probability lasts 13 days, and each incident incites at least 0.30 new incidents ($p = 0.0015$). We also find significant evidence of contagion in school shootings, for which an incident is contagious for an average of 13 days, and incites an average of at least 0.22 new incidents ($p = 0.0001$). All p-values are assessed based on a likelihood ratio test comparing the likelihood of a contagion model to that of a null model with no contagion. On average, mass killings involving firearms occur approximately every two weeks in the US, while school

shootings occur on average monthly. We find that state prevalence of firearm ownership is significantly associated with the state incidence of mass killings with firearms, school shootings, and mass shootings.

Twemlow, S. W., Fonagy, P., Sacco, F. C., O'Toole, M. E., & Vernberg, E. (2002). Premeditated mass shootings in schools: Threat assessment. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 41(4), 475–477. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-200204000-00021>

Premeditated mass shootings by students in suburban and rural secondary schools have surprised and even terrified our country. Although school violence overall has decreased measurably since 1993 (U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, 1999), multiple-victim homicides and woundings highlight an emerging problem for schools previously thought to be safe from acts of extreme violence. In the past 5 years, premeditated mass shootings in schools all occurred in rural or suburban communities. The assailant was not the stereotypical angry, poor, minority teen abusing drugs and failing academically. The schools were not overtly violent with gangs in control; Columbine High School prided itself in 82% college placement and 95% daily attendance rates. Psychiatrists are often asked to help after there has been a tragedy, when school shootings create a pressing need for trauma interventions and long-term follow-up. However, child and adolescent psychiatrists can be helpful in preventing such tragedies as well, by dealing realistically with the inexactness of all available techniques for assessing children who threaten homicide in schools, and by careful psychiatric assessment of individual children, family dynamics, the school climate, and factors in the social milieu that have an impact on the child's development. Part of this work might include helping schools develop school threat assessment procedures and select suitable antiviolence programs (Twemlow et al., 2001).

Verlinden, S., Hersen, M., & Thomas, J. (2000). Risk factors in school shootings. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 20(1), 3-56. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-7358\(99\)00055-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-7358(99)00055-0)

Nine incidents of multiple-victim homicide in American secondary schools are examined and common risk factors are identified. The literature dealing with individual, family, social, societal, and situational risk factors for youth violence and aggression is reviewed along with existing risk assessment methods. Checklists of risk factors for serious youth violence and school violence are used in reviewing each school shooting case. Commonalties among the cases and implications for psychologists practicing in clinical and school settings are discussed.

Wang, K., Chen, Y., Zhang, J., and Oudekerk, B.A. (2020). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2019* (NCES 2020-063/NCJ 254485). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020063.pdf>

This report is the 22nd in a series of annual publications produced jointly by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Institute of Education Sciences (IES), in the U.S. Department of Education, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in the U.S. Department of Justice. This report is released primarily as a web-based report, and contents of the report can be viewed at <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/index.asp>. This report presents the most recent data available on school crime

and student safety. The indicators in this report are based on information drawn from a variety of data sources, including national and international surveys of students, teachers, principals, and postsecondary institutions. Sources include results from the School-Associated Violent Death Surveillance System, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the National Vital Statistics System, sponsored by CDC; the K-12 School Shooting Database, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense; the National Crime Victimization Survey and School Crime Supplement to that survey, sponsored by BJS and NCES, respectively; the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, sponsored by CDC; the School Survey on Crime and Safety, Fast Response Survey System, ED-Facts, and Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010–11, all sponsored by NCES; the Teaching and Learning International Survey, sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; and the Campus Safety and Security Survey, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The most recent data collection for each indicator varied by survey, from 2016 to 2019. Each data source has an independent sample design, data collection method, and questionnaire design, or is the result of a universe data collection. Findings described in this report with comparative language (e.g., higher, lower, increase, and decrease) are statistically significant at the .05 level. This report covers topics such as victimization, bullying and electronic bullying, school conditions, fights, weapons, availability and student use of drugs and alcohol, student perceptions of personal safety at school, and criminal incidents at postsecondary institutions. Indicators of crime and safety are compared across different population subgroups and over time. Data on crimes that occur away from school are offered as a point of comparison where available.

Weisbrot, D.M. (2020). "The need to see and respond": The role of the child and adolescent psychiatrist in school threat assessment. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 59(1). 20-26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2019.09.001>

Child and adolescent psychiatrists are increasingly asked to perform extremely challenging school threat assessments. Clinicians may be reasonably concerned that they are assessing the next school shooter. This Clinical Perspectives builds upon basics of school threat assessment described in a 2008 Clinical Perspectives and decades of personal experience performing threat assessments.

Whaley, A. L. (2020). The massacre mentality and school rampage shootings in the United States: Separating culture from psychopathology. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 30(1), 3-13. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2414>

School rampage shootings in the United States are becoming a common occurrence. The purpose of this article is place school rampage shooting in a broader cultural context. Specifically, in this article, I introduce the concept of the "massacre mentality" as a cultural manifestation of western and southern U.S. values. The massacre mentality is a state of mind in which the individual feels justified in committing indiscriminate killings in defense of honour, protection of property, assurance of absolute personal safety, or the elimination of challenges to the "natural order" from the perspective of the offender. A review of the social psychological literature will contrast the massacre mentality with related concepts of "culture of honour" and "sanctioned massacre." The relationship between street violence, another major form of violence, and the massacre mentality is also addressed. A cultural analysis suggests that interactions between individual psychology in the form of U.S. regional values

and sociocultural context of schools contribute to school rampage shootings more often than mental illness. The prevention of school rampage shootings will require the identification of students predisposed to adopt the values contributing to the massacre mentality and challenging social hierarchies by restructuring the context of schools, as well as changing cultural norms in the broader society. The ultimate goal is to create a U.S. culture where the massacre mentality is obsolete.