

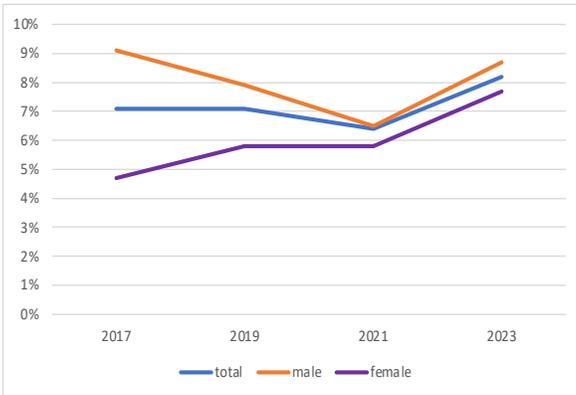
Safe Kids/Safe Schools

School safety is shaped by various factors that can impact student safety, well-being, academic performance, risk behaviors, absenteeism, and school connectedness. Some factors undermine school safety, such as bullying, exposure to violence and personal threats, and perceptions of being unsafe at school, while other factors—such as the presence of a trusted adult in the school, parental engagement, school resource officers, and antibullying and trauma-informed school programs—can improve school safety by preventing and mitigating risk.^{1,2}

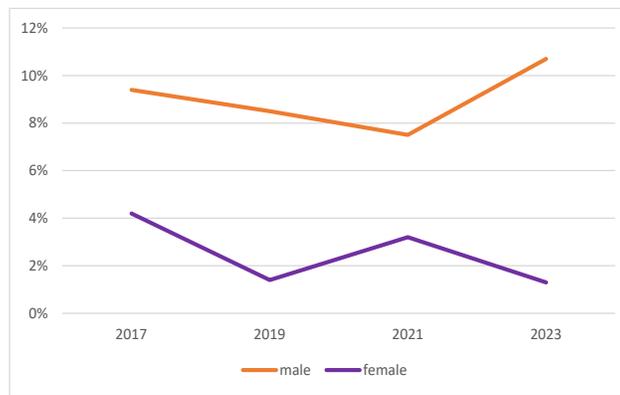
According to the results of the Kentucky High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), school safety is affecting Kentucky students:

- More than 11% of Kentucky high school students missed at least one day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.
- 23% of students were bullied on school property in 2023. The percentage of female students was even higher—with almost 28% of female students being bullied on school property, a significant increase from 2021.
- Bullying does not end at school—it is 24/7/365. More than 18% of Kentucky high school students reported being electronically bullied in the past year. This significantly increased from 2011-2023.

The percentage of students who were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the previous year is increasing, especially among female high school students.



The percentage of boys who carried a weapon (not for hunting) in the past year increased by more than 42% between 2021 and 2023.



In 2023, almost 20% of high school students reported seeing someone get physically attacked, beaten, stabbed, or shot in their neighborhood.

Students who feel unsafe at school are more likely to miss school and to have poorer academic performance than students who feel safe at school.

The presence of a trusted adult who will step up when needed can increase protective factors against adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), risky behaviors, and improve school safety and connectedness.³

67% Percentage of students who reported in 2023 that there was at least one teacher or other adult in their school that they could talk to if they had a problem

85% Percentage of students who have an adult in their life that they trust and can talk to about serious problems

See reverse for resources for parents and educators to help children feel more confident about the safety of their schools.

Prevention Strategies to Reduce School Violence

Research shows that prevention strategies are the most effective approach for reducing school violence. Some common strategies and their evidence base are listed below⁴:

School safety strategies with clear and consistent evidence bases:

- School climate, social-emotional learning, and anti-bullying programs
- Threat assessment and related screening programs
- Restorative practices/non-exclusionary discipline
- Trauma-informed responses and resilience orientation
- Non-remedial after-school and youth empowerment programs

School safety strategies with developing evidence bases:

- Interpersonal surveillance such as reporting systems
- School resource officers (SROs)
- Extreme risk protection orders (ERPOs)

School safety strategies with limited or mixed evidence bases:

- Technology-aided identification/monitoring

Resources

- [Kentucky Center for School Safety](#)
- [Community Mental Health Centers by County](#)
- [Parent Guidance Tools, Courses, Coaching and More](#)
- [School Violence Prevention: Tips for Parents & Educators](#)
- [Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Families and Educators](#)
- [FindHelpNowKY.org](#) for treatment and resources

Helplines

- Safety Tipline, Online Prevention (STOP!) Tip Line, (866) 393-6659 or visit <https://safeschools.ky.gov/>
- National Helpline, 1 (800) 662-HELP (4357)
- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, dial/text 988 or visit <https://988lifeline.org>
- Veterans Crisis Line, dial 988 and press '1' or visit <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>
- Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990 or or text Talk WithUs to 66746

References

- ¹Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research*, 83, 357–385. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654313483907>
- ²Kutsyruba, B., Klinger, D. A., & Hussain, A. (2015). Relationships among school climate, school safety, and student achievement and well-being: A review of the literature. *Review of Education*, 3(2), 103–135. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3043>
- ³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Protective Factors in Schools*. Division of Adolescent and School Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
- ⁴National Center for School Safety, *School Safety at a Glance* <https://www.nc2s.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/School-Safety-at-a-Glance.pdf>

This document is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of cooperative agreement 5 NU87DP000047-02 totaling \$215,000 with 0% financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CDC, HHS, or the U.S. government. For more information, please visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). Produced March 2026.

841

The number of school resource officers in Kentucky schools, according to the Kentucky Center for School Safety

