

# School violence in virgin islands

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



School violence poses a great risk in the development of any nation but not only in the US as a whole or the Virgin Islands. School violence is a very serious problem especially in the public schools and it is both found in urban and sub urban areas of the Virgin Islands. It would be a wasted effort to try to improve the quality of education without taking school violence as a serious problem, thus looking for ways to solve it no matter the quality of teachers we employ or the curriculum since violence makes learning difficult. School violence comes in very different forms which include; o Intimidation o Gang activity Use of guns and other dangerous weapons o Theft of lockers o Assault or o Anything that will cause a victim Victims of school violence could be teachers, students and members of non teaching staff and ranges from planned attacks to unintentional murders of bystanders. There are nearly three million robberies and acts of violence happening in or in the neighborhoods of school campuses yearly according to the National Crime survey of May 2001. This is about sixteen thousand occurrences per school per day and also almost all crimes against teenagers happen in schools or in the neighborhoods (Hurwitz, Menacker, Weldon, 1987 p5).

The chances of a violent incident occurring in a school are increased if there is a student with a gun. Possession of guns by students while in school is a common occurrence and many parents are constantly worried about the safety of their kids who are in school. Around 15% of students in the Virgin Islands report the presence of gangs in their schools and many fear of being attacked while in school or on their way to the school and 61% of all crimes are committed by students (Boyer, 2008, p334).

There is various prevention measures put in place in the Virgin Islands for controlling school violence. School safety is treated as a priority within each campus and the neighborhood. Programs encompassing parents, students, teachers, police officers, religious leaders, the courts and any other leader who is in charge of ethnic and racial balance in the community. These people help in determining case of planned violence and also setting up plans for stopping acts of violence before they happen. The school environment is set up in such a way that it creates a positive climate for the students.

All employees in each school are encouraged to participate in creating this welcoming environment so as to eradicate any negativity in the students, since this goes a long way in reducing cases of violence. Schools have also established a procedures for tracking crimes and for record keeping, it records crime types, when, where and why they happened and any other important data. The data is then examined to determine the trends, the persons involved and any new patterns so as to come with measures of countering it (Furlong, Bates, Smith, 2004 pp240-263).

Establishment of communication centers using the latest technologies for that is capable of getting in touch with the appropriate administrators in case of an emergency. These allows for quick response so as minimize chances of aggravating the injuries which might occur during the violence. Students who have the tendency of bringing weapons to school should be counseled, given the necessary support or referred to the suitable resources in the community and where necessary transferred to other schools.

Probation officers are placed in campuses in communities experiencing severe cases of violence so as to give the students thorough supervision. Some of the above programs might fail to work in some communities but work in others because school settings are different from one school to the other. Students have formed groups which report any violence acts and the culprits. The youth contact patrols in their campuses and neighborhoods and are provided with adequate security without causing confrontations with those they find engaging in crime (United States District Court (Virgin Islands), 1982 pp290- 296).

There is amicable solution of grievances which is done by using dialogue to end conflicts thus making sure that cases of revenge are minimized. This is because if some of these problems are not solved once and for all it might cause planned attacks which can happen even outside the school. Students are encouraged to engage in extra curricular activities during their free time so as to reduce the chances of getting themselves in to drugs, since this is a major cause for violence. Students who are found to be in drugs are counseled and advised to visit rehabilitation centers so that they quit these habits.

Some of the traditional methods for crime prevention particularly in cases of indiscipline are limited either by the legislature or the judiciary but parents have the powers to determine the types of punishments to be administered to their children even if it is corporal punishment. It is also difficult to establish the measures that work best due to the fact that schools are of different settings. Some of these measures are limited in public schools since

the government has the mandate to ascertain that power is not abused in cases where learning is a must and attending given schools is compulsory.

This limitation on public schools makes them more violent as compared to private schools and this encourages the establishment of the private schools since most parents want the best for their children. Some of the legislations are kind of encouraging violence in public schools. But it is advisable for school administrators to keep on innovating new methods for countering this problem and to keep on trying the old ones as well as the established.

Parents are also encouraged to take an active role in the up bringing of their children so as to ensure that they grow up into responsible adults.

It is also advisable to break up large schools into small ones because supervising a small number of students is easier. There should be different schools for boys and girls since there seems to be more violence in mixed schools than there are in boys or girls' only schools. The government should also relax some of its legislations so as to allow teachers and parents of public schools to make their own measures for different types of indiscipline in the students (Preventing School Violence: Top Five Ways To Build Stronger Student-adult Relationships, available online).