



# *School Crime* 2012-2014



*Tennessee Bureau of Investigation  
CJIS Support Center*



**Bill Haslam**  
Governor

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**Mark Gwyn**  
Director

June 22, 2015

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation is releasing its annual School Crimes Study. This study presents the nature, volume, and extent of reported crimes on school campuses, excluding college and universities, from 2012 to 2014.

The study is based on data submitted to the TBI through the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) program, which collects data on all crimes occurring in Tennessee. All law enforcement agencies as well as colleges and universities, are mandated to report crime statistics to the TBI. This study is produced from the TIBRS program and includes comparison statistics.

This study will hopefully assist law enforcement, school administrations, and government officials in planning their efforts in the fight against crime and continue to create an awareness that crime exists as a threat in our communities. The threats to society by criminal activity must be addressed by efforts from all law-abiding citizens, as well as law enforcement agencies.

I would like to thank all participating law enforcement agencies for their hard work and contributions to making this report a thorough and accurate picture of crime in Tennessee. It is only with their support that the state continues to maintain such a successful program.

Sincerely,

Mark Gwyn  
Director



## Introduction

This study presents information about the characteristics surrounding crime in Tennessee schools, focusing upon public and private school systems, excluding colleges/universities and technical schools. The time frame covered by the study was the years 2012 through 2014. The study was completed using data provided to the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS).

**Explanatory Note:** This report is based on incidents submitted by law enforcement agencies and excludes offenses reported by colleges and universities. Data submitted by colleges and universities is contained in the annual Crime on Campus report which can be viewed on the TBI website at [www.tbi.tn.gov](http://www.tbi.tn.gov). Since the offense of Justifiable Homicide is not considered a crime, the offense is excluded from the study.

It is important to understand the characteristics surrounding school crime; the offenders who reportedly commit these offenses; and the demographics of the victims. A better understanding of these characteristics will help law enforcement, policy makers, school administrators, and the public properly combat and reduce the amount of crime occurring at Tennessee schools.

Situations surrounding school crime vary based on the offender's motive and the intended victim. For example, incidents involving student offenders and student victims constitute the stereotypical definition of crime at schools where the offender and victim are present to participate in school related activities. However, there are situations involving adult and/or juvenile offenders and victims where the school serves only as an offense location. Crimes perpetrated by offenders against victims who are not instructors or students and have no other relation to the school, i.e. a drug deal committed in a campus parking lot or an assault involving multiple offenders and victims would be examples of such situations.

### What is Incident Based Reporting?

Incident based reporting views a crime and all of its components as an incident. In order to obtain incident data, facts recorded and preserved about the incident are organized into specific categories or segments. The mechanism used for recording these facts is a data element. Data elements provide information about crime and its involvement with victims, offenders, property, arrestees, etc.

### What is TIBRS?

The Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) program is designed to collect data on every single crime occurrence and on each incident and arrest within the occurrence. TIBRS differs from the national crime statistics data released by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR). The most significant difference between TIBRS and the national UCR summary data is the degree of detail in reporting. Unlike the summary system that collects only eight Part 1 crimes (Murder, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny, Motor Vehicle Theft, and Arson), TIBRS collects 22 crime categories made up of 47 specific crimes called Group A offenses. Additionally, arrests are reported for 11 Group B offense categories. Under the summary UCR program, only the most serious offense was reported. In TIBRS, up to ten offenses can be reported in an incident, providing a more accurate picture of crime. Because of the differences between UCR summary data and TIBRS data, any cross-comparisons would provide inaccurate results in trend analysis.

Additionally, the ability to conduct the type of data analysis found in this report is due in large part to the amount of detailed information collected through an incident based reporting system.



## Methodology

The study specifically addresses incident characteristics, offender characteristics, arrestee characteristics, offense characteristics, victim characteristics and victim to offender characteristics.

Throughout this study, age groups are used versus individual age. The age groups are: Under 18, 18 – 24, 25 – 34, 35 – 44, 45 – 54, 55 – 64, 65 and Over, and Unknown.

An additional consideration for this study is that Victim to Offender relationships are only collected for those offenses that are considered as Crimes Against Persons and Robbery. Crimes Against Persons consist of the offenses: Murder, Non-negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Manslaughter, Kidnapping/Abduction, Forcible Rape, Forcible Sodomy, Sexual Assault with an Object, Forcible Fondling, Aggravated Assault, Simple Assault, Intimidation, Stalking, Incest, and Statutory Rape.

## Quick Facts

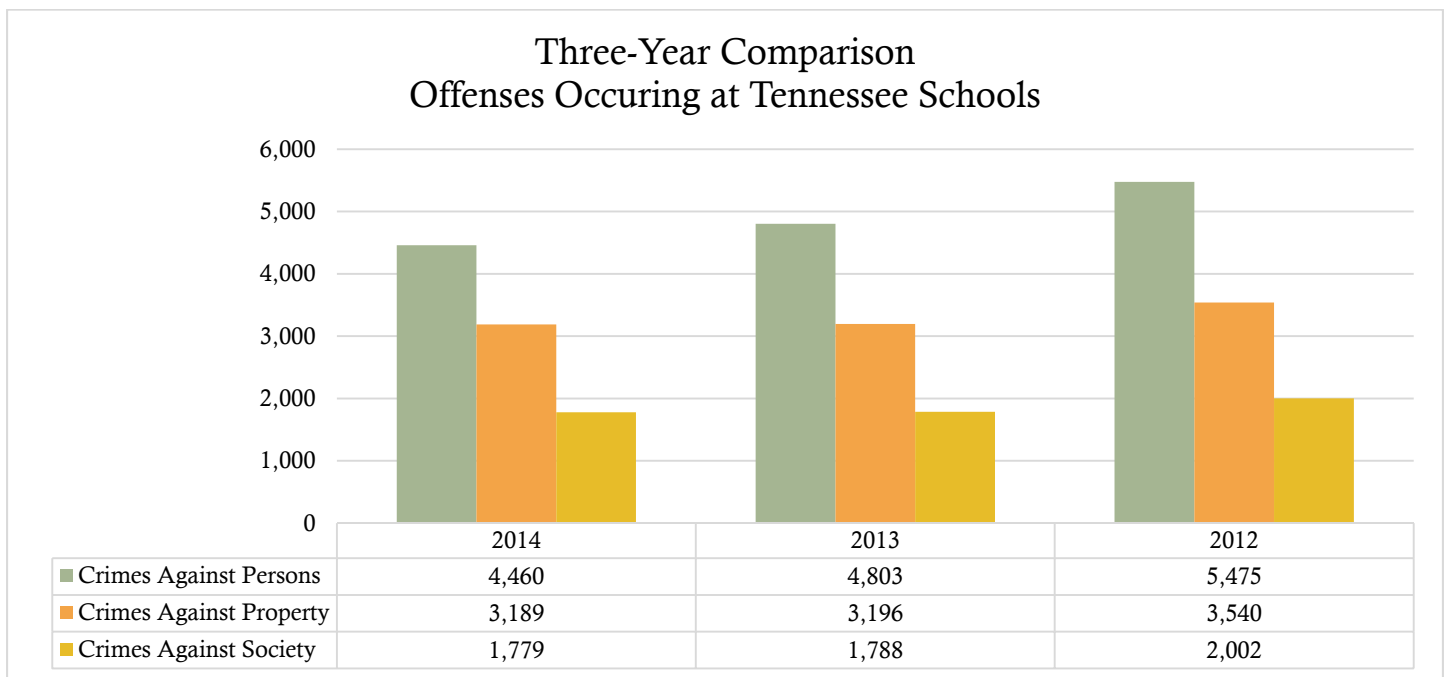
- ❖ From 2012 to 2014, a total of 30,232 offenses that included 21,813 victims were reported by Tennessee law enforcement agencies with a school location code
- ❖ Overall, the number of offenses occurring in school decreased 14.4% from 11,017 offenses in 2012 to 9,428 offenses in 2014
- ❖ Simple Assault was the most frequently reported offense (35.4%)
- ❖ The month of February had the highest frequency of school crimes
- ❖ The largest percentage of School Crime offenses occurred between 8:00am and 11:59am
- ❖ Friday was the most frequently reported day of week for school crimes from 2012 to 2014 with 6,132 offenses
- ❖ The most common weapon type was Personal Weapons (hands, fist, feet, etc.) at 87.0%
- ❖ Females accounted for 52.9% of total victims and 46.6% of the victims were Male
- ❖ Males contributed to 56.9% of the offender total compared to 23.9% reported as Female. The remaining 19.2% of offenders were reported as having an Unknown gender
- ❖ Males age 13-15 were the most common arrestee (29.3%) when analyzing arrestee age and gender demographics
- ❖ Black or African-American males were the most common arrestee (36.6%) when analyzing arrestee race and gender demographics
- ❖ From 2012 to 2014, 42.6% of school crime offenses were cleared by arrest and 6.0% were exceptionally cleared



## School Crime Offenses

School crime reported in Tennessee elementary and secondary schools has shown a steady decline over the past three years. Over this study period, reported crime in Tennessee schools decreased 14.4% from 11,017 offenses in 2012 to 9,428 offenses in 2014. More specifically, each of the three TIBRS Group A categories have shown a year-to-year decline in reported offenses. Reported Crimes Against Persons offenses saw the most significant decrease at 18.5% from 2012 to 2014, followed by Crimes Against Society with a 11.1% decrease, and Crimes Against Property decreasing 9.9%.

- ❖ Crimes Against Persons are those crimes in which victims are always individuals, e.g., Murder, Forcible Rape, Aggravated Assault, etc.
- ❖ Crimes Against Property are those crimes in which the offender's intent is to obtain money, property, or some other benefit, e.g., Robbery, Bribery, Burglary, etc..
- ❖ Crimes Against Society are those crimes which represent society's prohibition against engaging in certain types of activity, e.g., Gambling, Prostitution, Drug Violations, etc.



Simple Assault was the most common offense reported during this time frame accounting for 35.4% of the 30,232 overall offenses, but had decreased 19.5% from 2012 to 2014. Theft from a Building had the next highest frequency with a total of 5,096 offenses (16.9%) and has increased steadily over the three-year period with a 6.2% overall increase. Drug/Narcotic Violations offenses decreased 16.8% over this time frame, but still accounts for 11.4% of the total offenses happening at Tennessee schools.

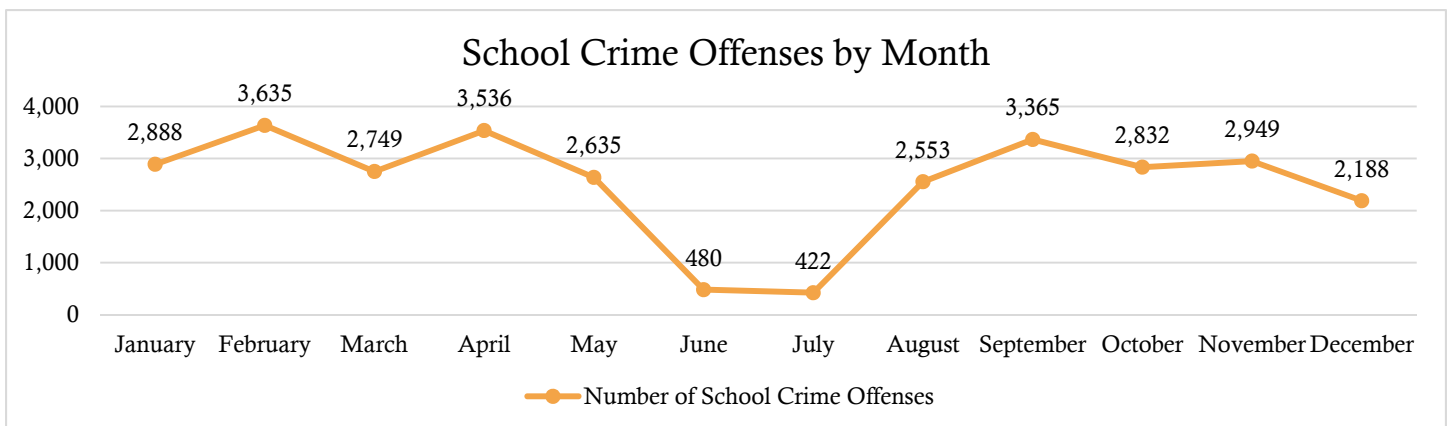
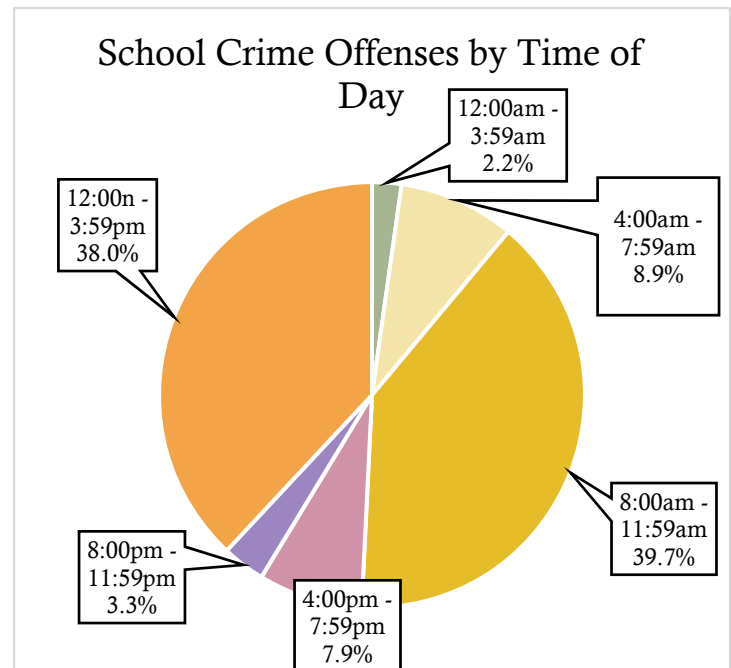
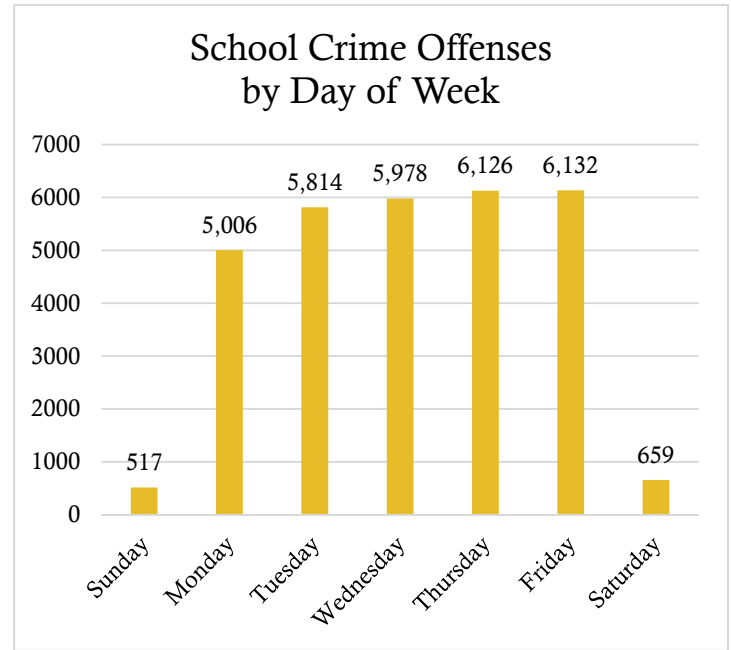


## School Crime Offenses

Thursday and Friday resulted in the greatest number of offenses reported with 40.5% of offenses occurring over the two days. Friday had a slight lead over Thursday with 6,132 offenses. Sunday and Saturday had the lowest number of reported offenses with a combined total of 1,176 offenses.

The incident time frame of 8:00am – 11:59am was the most common time for offense occurrences at 39.7%, followed by the time frame of 12:00n – 3:59pm with 38.0% of offenses occurring during that time. Simple Assault was the offense occurring most often during both time frames.

February has the greatest number of reported offenses representing 12.0% of all offenses. The months of June and July had the lowest number reported offenses accounting for a combined 3.0% of the overall offenses. This may be due to the fact that the majority of schools were not in session during these months.



## School Crime Offenses

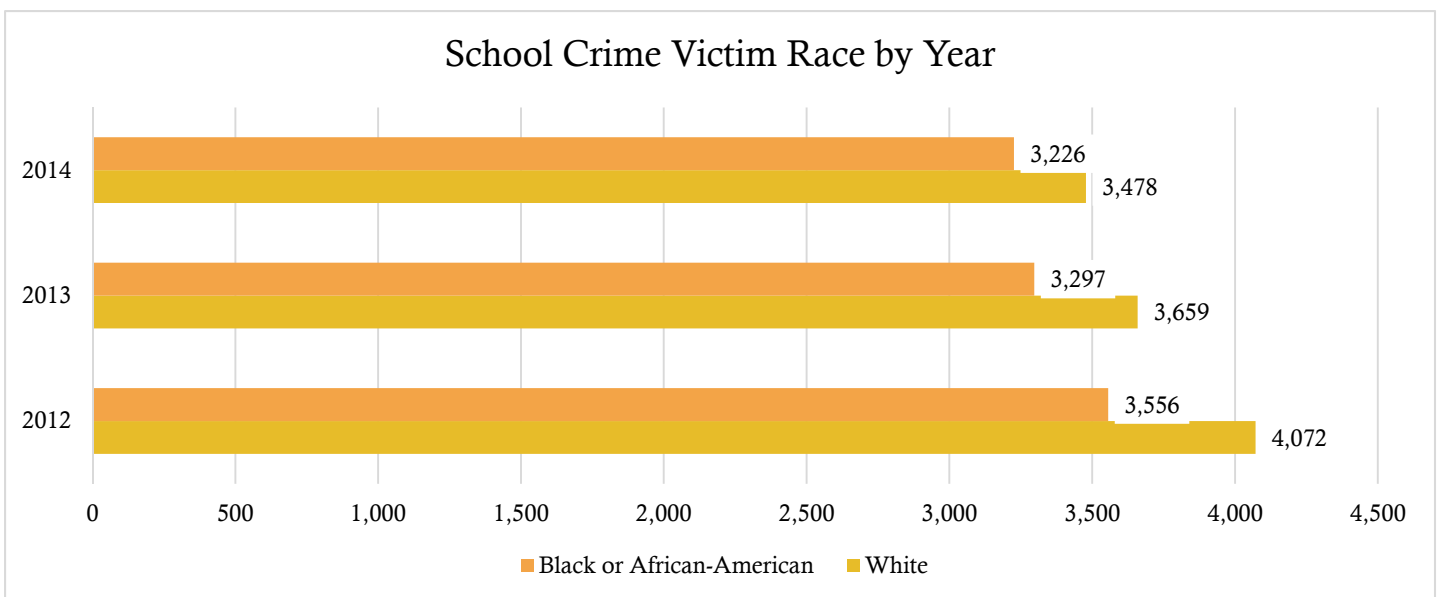
Of the 30,232 reported offenses, 35.9% reported a weapon being involved. The largest percentage of weapons used in offenses at Tennessee schools was Personal Weapons (i.e. hands, fist, feet, etc.) accounting for 87.0% of offenses where a weapon was used. The second most often reported weapon category was Dangerous Weapons (i.e. knife/cutting instrument, blunt object) at 3.0%.

Weapon Types Involved in School Crime Offenses	
Weapon Type Category	Number of Offenses
Firearm	264
Dangerous Weapons	917
Motor Vehicle as Weapon	21
Asphyxiation	10
Personal Weapons	8,833
Poison/Drugs	8
Fire Explosives	26
Other/Unknown	788

There were 5,173 offenses with a reported injury with 96.1% of injuries being reported as an Apparent Minor Injury. All other reported injury types account for less than one percent of the reported injury total.

## School Crime Victims

From 2012 to 2014, a total of 21,813 victims were involved in a school crime. This number includes victims of multiple offenses (i.e. a victim involved in a Simple Assault offense and a Theft offense will be counted twice). The number of school crime victims has been steadily declining with a 12.0% decrease from 2012 to 2014. Females accounted for 52.9% of total victims and 46.6% of the victims were Male. There were a total of 105 victims with an Unknown gender. The most frequently reported victim race was White (51.4%) followed by Black or African-American (46.2%). The remaining 2.4% of victims had a race of Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaskan Native, or Unknown race.



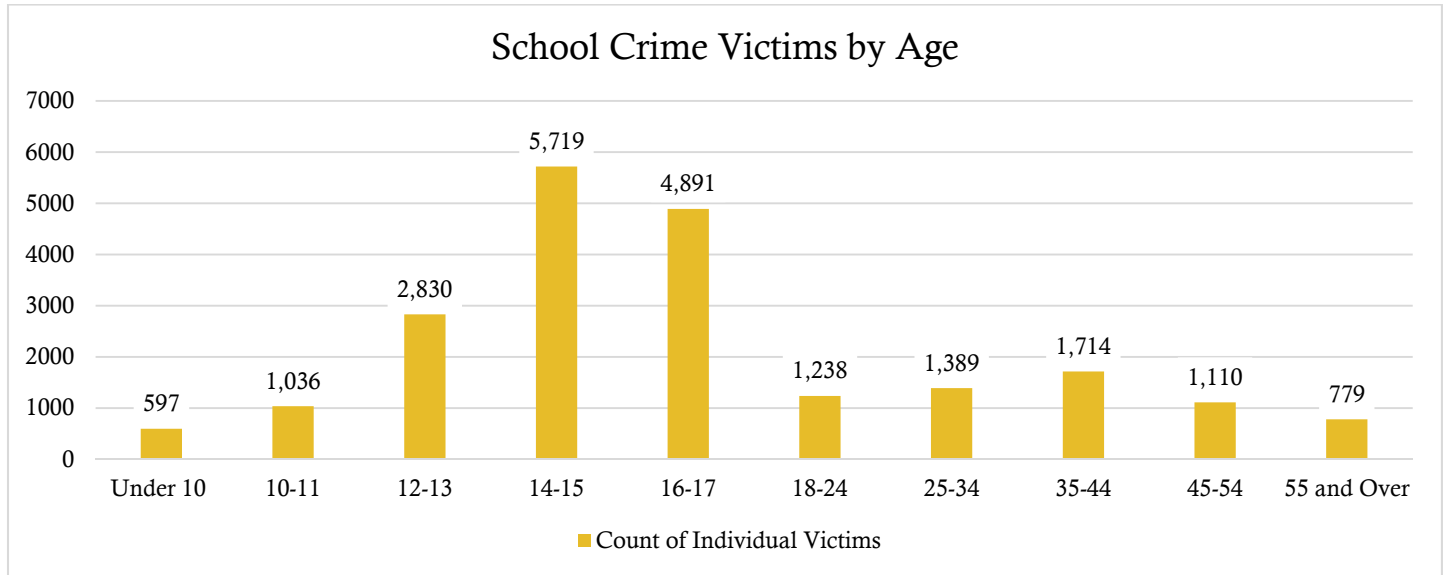
Please note: Adding only given figures for Black or African-American and White victims will not give an overall total.



## School Crime Victims

The 14-15 year old age category had the highest percentage of victims (26.4%) followed by the 16-17 year old category (22.5%). There were 14 victims identified under the Neonate and Baby age categories.

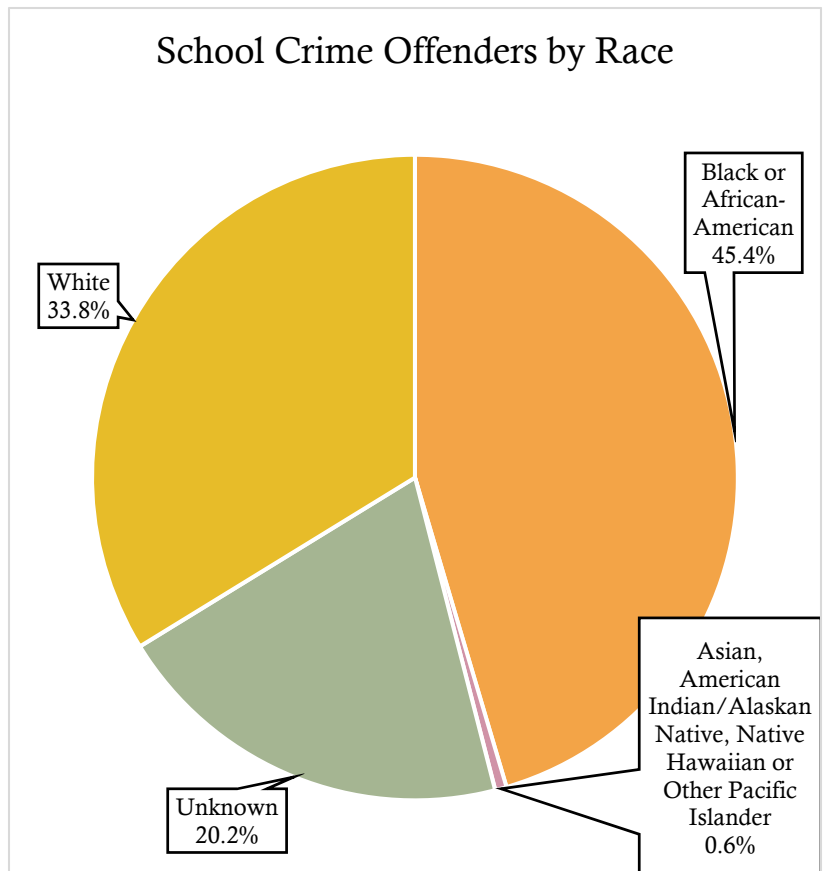
Victims with an age of Unknown accounted for 1.8% of the victim total.



Please note: The above graph does not include victims involved in multiple offenses; it is only a count of individual victims.

## School Crime Offenders

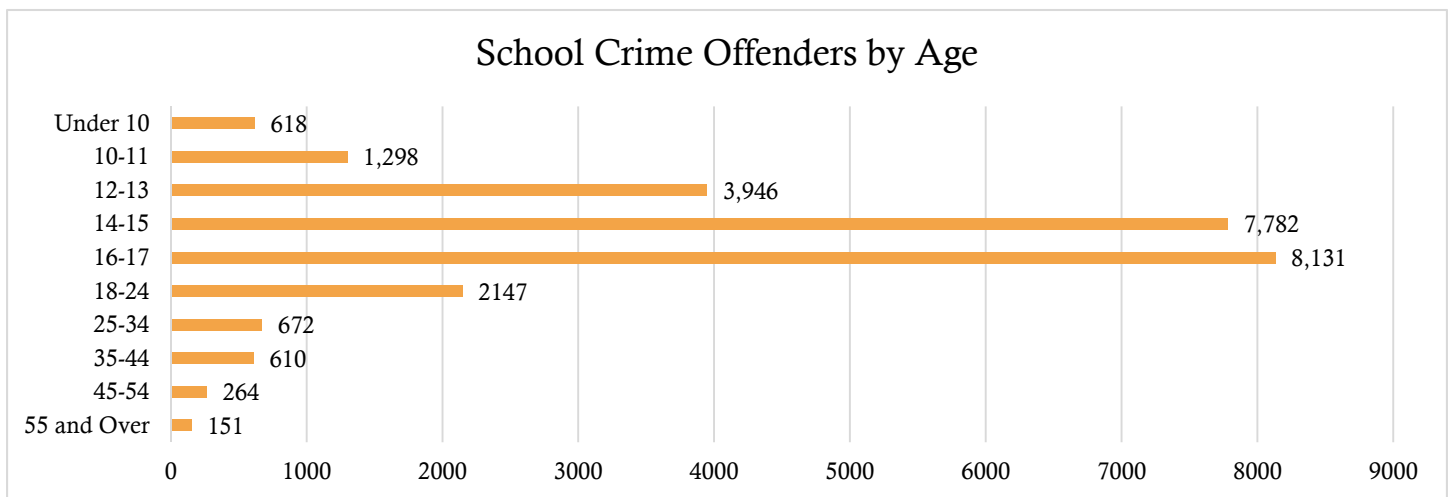
A total of 32,747 school crimes offenders were reported in 2012 through 2014. Males contributed to 56.9% of the offender total compared to 23.9% reported as Female. The remaining 19.2% of offenders were reported as having an Unknown gender. The most frequently reported offender race was Black or African-American (45.4%) followed by White (33.8%). A total of 6,626 offenders (20.2%) were reported with a race of Unknown. Offenders with a reported race of Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander accounted for less than one percent of the total.





## School Crime Offenders

Offenders under the age of 18 accounted for 66.5% of school crime offenders. The 16-17 age category housed the largest number of offenders (24.8%) followed by offenders aged 14-15 (23.8%). Offenders with an Unknown age accounted for 21.8% of the total. The Unknown category should be used only when the officer is unable to determine the age or age range of an offender. Quality control tools have been established within the TIBRS program to confirm that the category of Unknown is properly used. However, in many instances nothing is known about the offender so the Unknown demographic is all that can be reported.



Please note: One offense can have up to 99 offenders. The number of offenders compared to the number of offenses will rarely match.

## School Crime Arrestees

There are three types of arrests that are captured in the TIBRS program: On View, Summoned or Cited, and Taken into Custody.

- ❖ On View arrests occur when the offender is taken into custody at the scene without a warrant or previous incident report
- ❖ Summoned or Cited occurs when the offender is not taken into custody but a summons or citation is issued
- ❖ Taken Into Custody occurs when the offender is arrested based on a warrant and/or previously submitted incident report

During this study period, 12,994 arrests were made. Summoned and Cited arrests accounted for 53.4% of the total arrest types followed by On View arrests with 31.4%. There were only 1,979 arrestees Taken Into Custody for a school crime in 2012 to 2014.

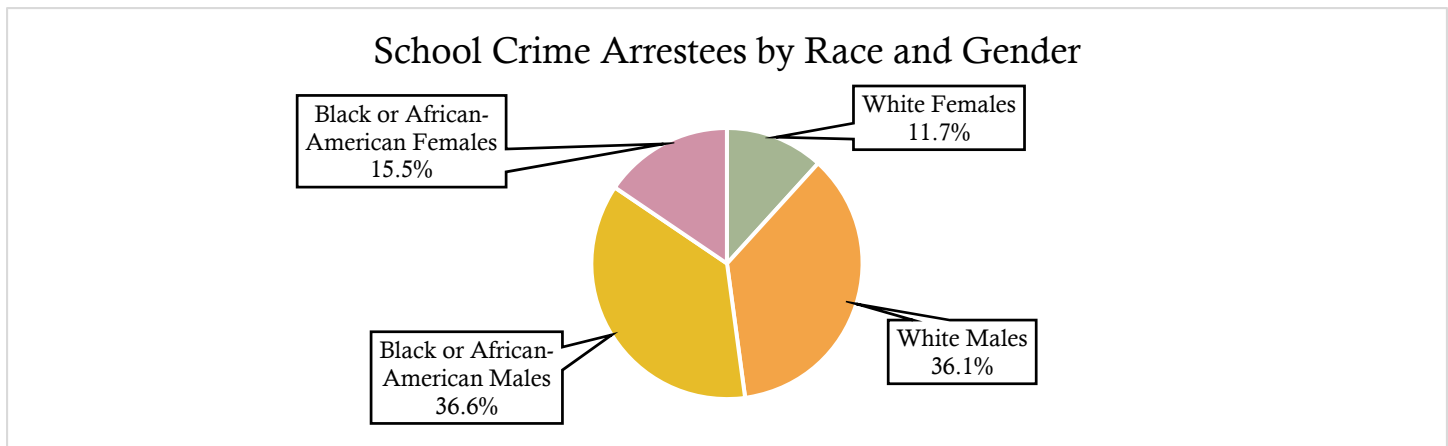


## School Crime Arrestees

The number of arrestees has decreased over the three-year study period by 25.9% from 4,945 arrestees in 2012 to 3,666 arrestees in 2014. Males comprised the greatest majority of arrestees at 72.8% as compared to the 27.2% of Female arrestees. Arrestees under the age of 18 accounted for 88.2% of all arrestees with Males age 13-15 being the most common arrestee (29.3%) when analyzing age and gender demographics. There were two male arrestees with an age of Unknown.

Black or African-American was the most common arrestee race (51.5%) followed by White (47.3%). Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaskan Native accounted for less than one percent of school crime arrestees. There were 70 arrestees with an Unknown race. Black or African-American males were the most common arrestee (36.6%) when analyzing race and gender demographics.

School Crime Arrestees by Age		
Age	Male	Female
Under 10	189	22
10-12	973	302
13-15	3,803	1,658
16-17	3,338	1,179
18-24	889	196
25-34	129	62
35-44	78	85
45-54	44	16
55 and Over	20	9



## School Crime Juvenile Arrestees

When reporting an arrestee under age 18, agencies are also required to report the disposition of arrestee under 18. The information to be reported in this category relates to law enforcement disposition of juveniles (age 17 or younger only) who are taken into custody or arrested. An adult is usually held for prosecution for some charge or is released for future handling in court. However, a juvenile, depending on the seriousness of the offense and the offender's prior criminal record, may be warned by the police and released to parents, relatives, friends, or guardians. Juveniles may also be referred to the probation department or some other branch of juvenile court; to welfare agencies; to other law enforcement agencies; or in the case of a serious offender, to criminal or adult court by transfer from juvenile court.



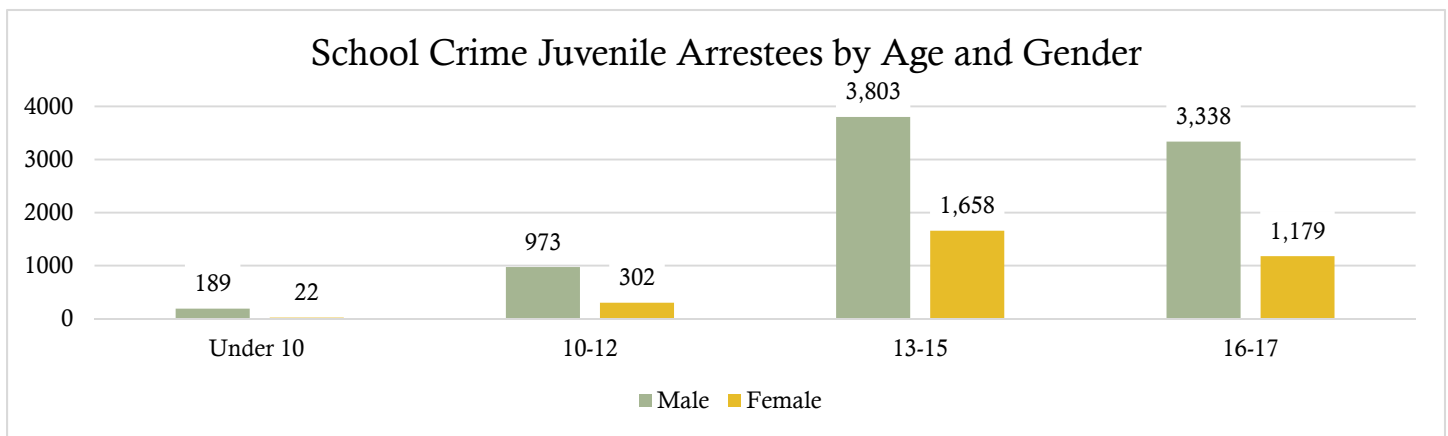
## School Crime Juvenile Arrestees

The juvenile disposition types are:

Handled within the Department is used when the juvenile is released to the parents with an oral warning only.

Referred to Other Authorities is used when the juvenile is turned over to juvenile court, probation, welfare agency, other police agency, criminal or adult court.

During this study period 71.4% of juvenile arrestees were Referred to Other Authorities while the remaining 28.6% were Handled within the Department. Of the 11,464 juvenile arrestees, 74.2% were male and 25.8% were female. Black or African-American juveniles accounted for 51.9% of juvenile school crime arrestees followed by White juveniles at 46.8%. Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaskan Native juveniles made up less than one percent of juvenile arrestees. There were 49 juvenile school crime arrestees with an Unknown race. The 13-15 age group had the most arrestees accounting for 47.6% of all juvenile arrestees. Less than two percent of juvenile arrestees were under the age of ten.



## School Crime Incident Clearances

There are two ways to clear an offense. The offenses can be Cleared by Arrest or Cleared by Exceptional Means.

An offense is cleared exceptionally when an element beyond law enforcement control prevents a physical arrest. From 2012 to 2014, 42.6% of school crime offenses were cleared by arrest and 6.0% were exceptionally cleared. Victim Refused to Cooperate was the most common exceptional clearance with 62.5% of all exceptional clearances during this time period.

