

# Workplace Violence and Harassment Against Teachers:

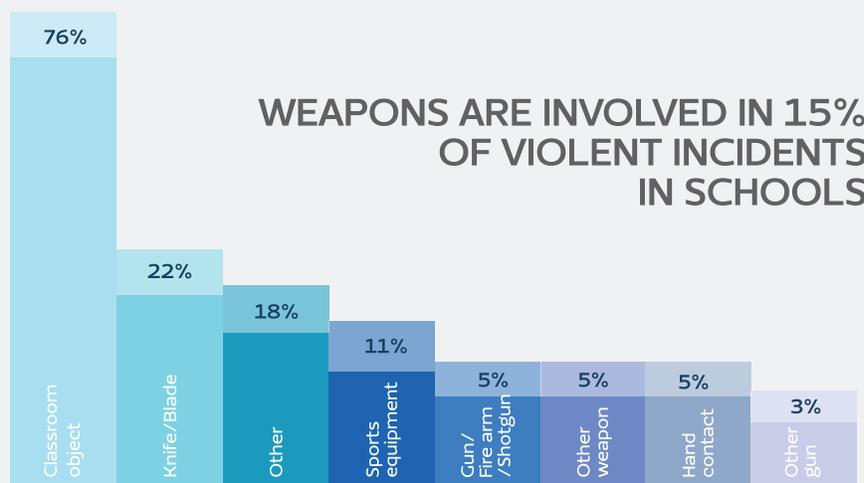
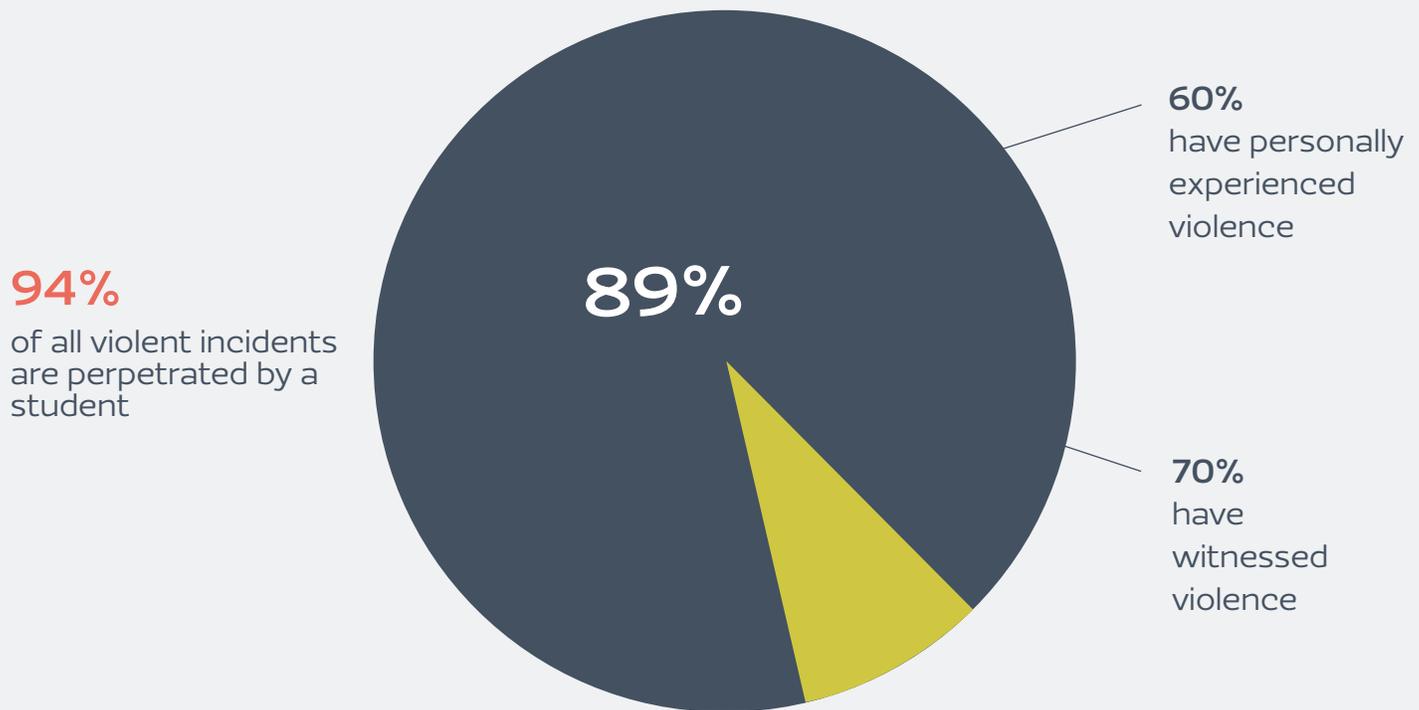
Results of a comprehensive members survey



June 2017

# OECTA SURVEY OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Nearly nine-in-ten teachers have experienced or witnessed violence or harassment in schools.



Elementary schools tend to experience more threats and acts of violence, while high schools experience higher rates of harassment.

	ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY
Been threatened with a physical assault	43%	39%
An attempt at a physical assault	42%	14%
A physical assault	36%	12%

	ELEMENTARY	SECONDARY
Personally experienced harassment	41%	49%
Witnessed harassment	47%	55%

## MORE THAN 75% OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS SAY

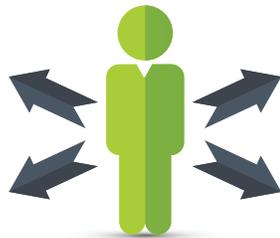
There is lasting damage that results from school violence

- 58% experience significant psychological stress
- 56% experience property damage
- 40% experience physical harm

Violence negatively affects the classroom

- 76% say it makes teaching more difficult
- 74% say it interferes with classroom management

26%



of Catholic teachers had to take time off work because of mental health effects resulting from school violence

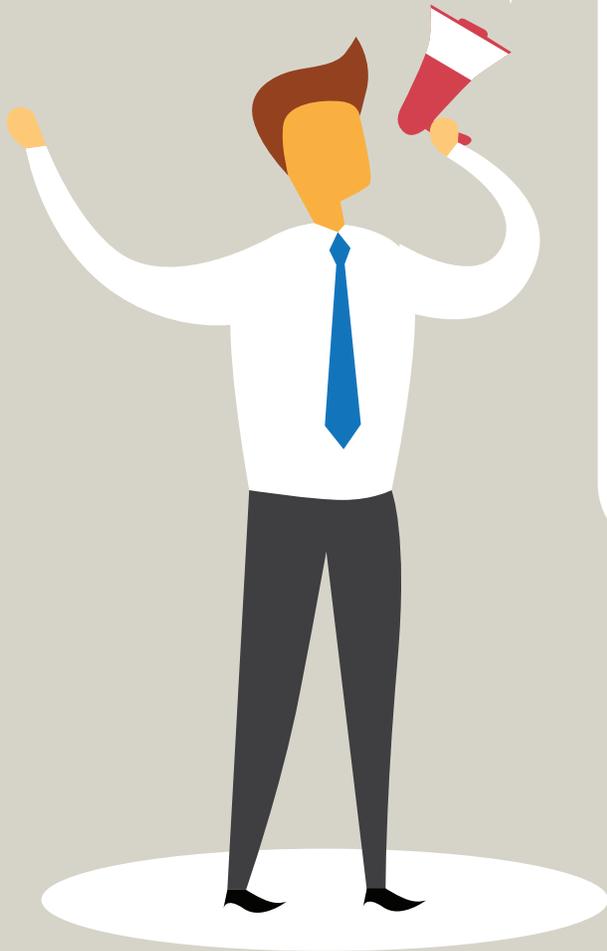
“I have had threats to burn my house down, and pills brought in from home slipped into a water bottle. Luckily they were health food pills, but the student didn't know this. I've had a student who we had to frisk every day before entering the school, because he brought a knife to threaten students at his previous school.”

“I know of a principal and teachers who are required to wear Kevlar due to student violence in their elementary schools.”

“Panic attacks are regular. At the last PD Day, we were taught the proper way to take a stab from a violent student. This was crazy to me. Why would it get to this point that I could potentially be stabbed? Is this [what's] expected of me?”

# UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

The issue of violence in schools is complex and multi-layered. The survey data suggest that it can be characterized into three broad categories: administration, awareness, and policy.



## ADMINISTRATION

Nearly **25%** of teachers were either encouraged or actively pressured by administrators to not fill out a **reporting form**.

Nearly **25%** of teachers who personally experienced violence were encouraged by administration to not report the incident to **police**.

More than **two-thirds** of Catholic teachers feel that school administration **does not take the problem seriously**

- Teachers are not given appropriate resources/tools **82%**
- Victims of violence and harassment do not feel safe in classrooms **74%**
- Students and teachers are not protected against violence or harassment **72%**

## AWARENESS

Although boards are required to conduct annual in-service training, survey results indicate that neglect by school administration has led to teachers being unaware of procedures, as well as the resources available to them.

Per cent of teachers who are **very familiar** with the following policies, plans, and forms regarding school violence.

**22%** Incident Reporting Forms

**19%** Harassment Policy

**17%** Safe Schools Plan

**6%** Risk Assessment Process



**57%** of teachers are not aware of the notification process regarding student violence

"The administrator at the time wanted me to 'forgive' the student. I was also in severe shock, and was not given advice about what to do... nor was counselling offered, or any type of support at that time. I suffer from PTSD because of that incident."

”



**43%** of teachers are the target of workplace harassment and threats



Only one-tenth of these teachers will fill out the necessary reporting form.



## POLICY

Overwhelmingly, teachers feel that the current policy, practices, and procedures in place to deal with violence in schools are inadequate.

- ✓ Only **15%** feel the notification process is adequate
- ✓ Only **9%** feel that IEPs include the appropriate supports
- ✓ Only **8%** feel non-violent intervention training is effective
- ✓ Less than **6%** feel early intervention policies are very effective in modifying behaviour

"[I didn't fill out the proper forms] because there's no follow-up. My principal says the form does nothing. It goes nowhere."

"We need a lot more teaching assistants and youth workers and counsellors. The board has severely cut these positions, leaving teachers and other students vulnerable to students who are overwhelmed and angry at school and home, and take out their frustrations on others at school."

"Teachers need more education on how to deal with these students. We are not behavioural psychologists. We don't have the skills nor the support to deal with these situations."

Fewer than half of Catholic teachers feel that the following professional resources are available to them when dealing with incidents of violence in schools.



CHILD AND  
YOUTH WORKERS

**48%**



SOCIAL  
WORKERS

**42%**



PSYCHOLOGISTS

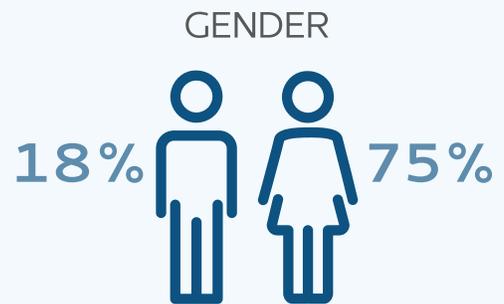
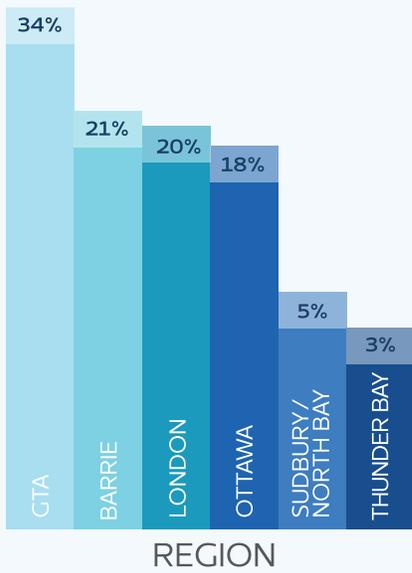
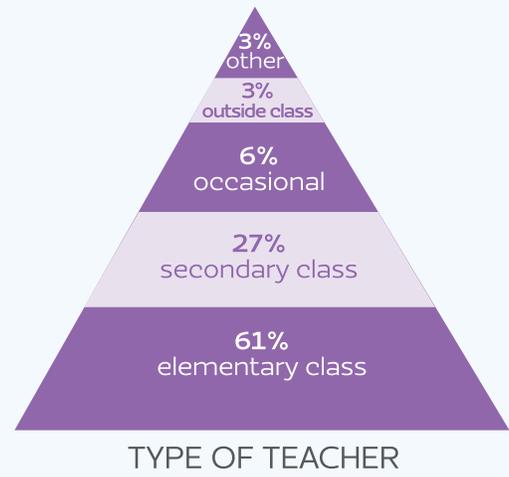
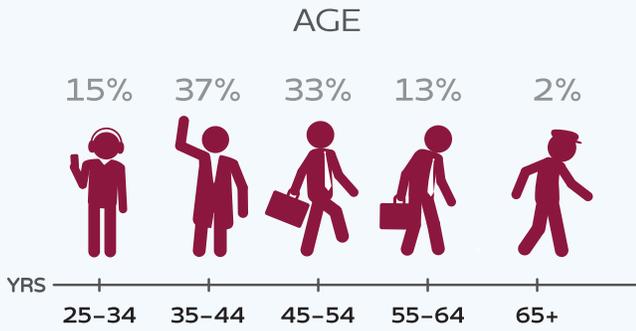
**26%**



PSYCHOMETRISTS

**9%**

# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



\* This survey was conducted in partnership with Pollara Strategic Insights.