

Astor, R. A., Behre, W. J., Fravil, K. A., Wallace, J. M., Jr. (1997). Perceptions of school violence as a problem and reports of violent events: A national survey of school social workers. *Social Work, 42*(1), 55-68.

Abstract

Awareness of violence as a problem is important in developing school-based interventions to reduce violence. How would social workers who reported a potentially lethal event in their schools within the past year rate the seriousness of the problem in their schools? What variables would be associated with the perception of a serious violence problem in a school? These questions were explored in a national survey of school social workers. The results suggest that school social workers did not perceive violence as a serious problem on the basis of a single event even when the event was life threatening. From a zero-tolerance perspective, school violence as a problem was underestimated in all community settings but more often in suburban and rural settings than in inner-city or urban settings. The social workers' perception of a serious problem was contingent on the presence of multiple types of violence and the community setting of the school.