

# School Shootings: Fast Facts

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## Do school shooters fit a profile?

No. Shooters vary across many dimensions such as family background, socioeconomic status, age, educational histories, and so on.

For more on the three psychological types, see the [About the Site](#) page and [“Rampage School Shooters: A Typology”](#) on the Articles page.

## Are there common psychological issues among school shooters?

Yes. School shooters typically fall into one of three psychological types:

- Psychopathic
- Psychotic
- Traumatized

In addition, approximately 50% of shooters have been suicidal.

For data on bullying, see [“Statistics on Bullying and School Shootings”](#) on the Edited Data page.

## Does bullying cause school shootings?

No. The overwhelming majority of students who are bullied never commit a school shooting.

Though bullying was a factor in some attacks, it was never the only factor; in many attacks, it wasn't a factor at all.

## Do school shooters seek retaliation against those who picked on them?

Shooters rarely targeted those who harassed them.

Only 2 out of 80 perpetrators singled out bullies in their attacks.

For details on targeted victims, see [“Intended and Targeted Victims”](#) on the Edited Data page.

## Who are the most common targets of school shooters?

- School personnel
- Girls or women
- Family members
- Romantic or academic rivals
- Peers they envied

For more on the diversity of shooters, see [“School Shooters Who Were Not White Males”](#) on the Edited Data page.

## Are school shootings a white male phenomenon?

No. There is significant diversity among the perpetrators.

In a sample of 32 secondary school shooters in the U.S., 66% were white males.

In a sample of 28 college and adult school shooters in the U.S., 39% were white males. Thus, white males were a *minority* among the older perpetrators.

Overall, 32 out of 60 perpetrators in the U.S. were white males (53%).

For documents on threat assessment, see the [Prevention & School Safety](#) page.

## How can school shootings be prevented?

The most effective approach is for schools to implement threat assessment procedures to detect potential perpetrators before they become violent.

For more information on all of these issues, see my books [School Shooters: Understanding High School, College, and Adult Perpetrators](#), and [Why Kids Kill: Inside the Minds of School Shooters](#).