

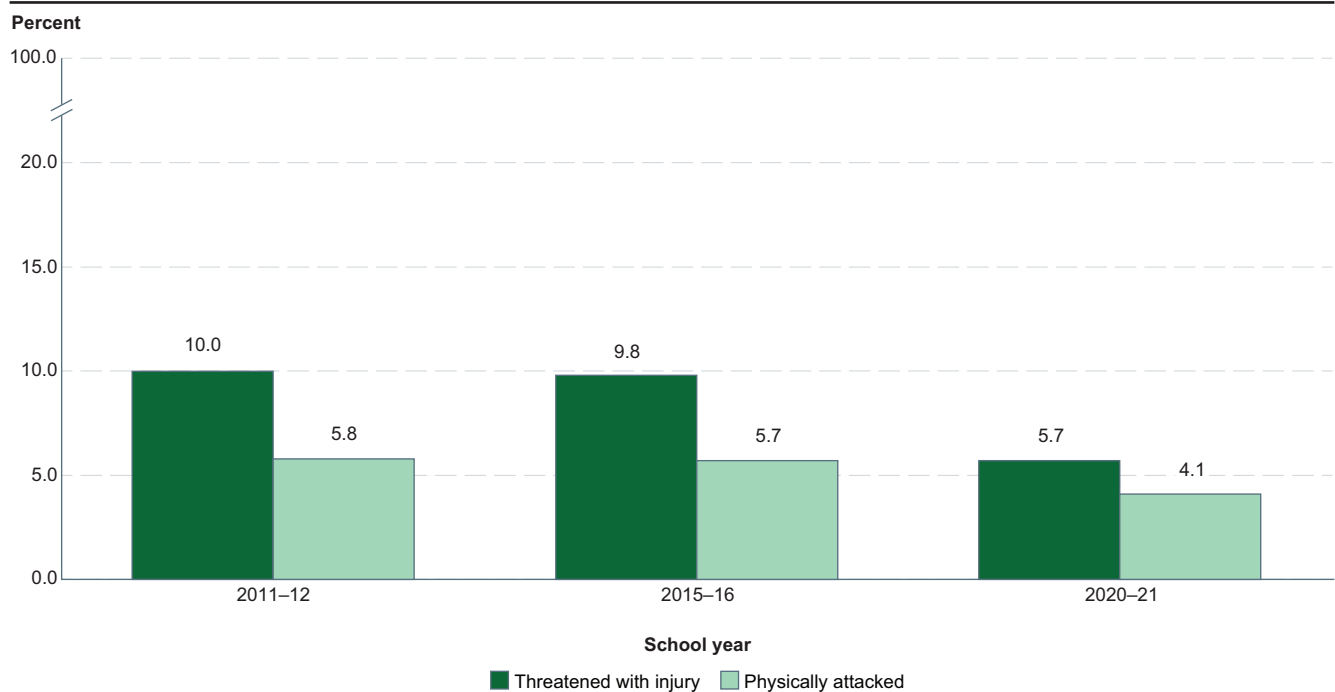
Teachers Threatened With Injury or Physically Attacked by Students

During the 2020–21 school year, a higher percentage of elementary public school teachers than of secondary public school teachers reported being threatened with injury (8 vs. 4 percent) or being physically attacked (7 vs. 1 percent) by a student from their school.

Students are not the only victims of intimidation and violence in schools. Teachers are also subject to threats and physical attacks, and students from their schools sometimes commit these offenses. In 2015–16 and 2020–21, the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) asked public school teachers¹ whether they were threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student from their school in the previous 12 months. These questions were also asked in the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) administered in 2011–12. The

NTPS was designed to allow comparisons with SASS data. However, because the 2015–16 NTPS was only administered to public school teachers, whereas SASS and the 2020–21 NTPS were administered to both public and private school teachers, this indicator focuses on public school teachers only. This indicator presents data on incidents reported on these surveys, which may or may not have been reported to another entity (e.g., the school or law enforcement).

Figure 1. Percentage of public school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student from their school during the previous 12 months: School years 2011–12, 2015–16, and 2020–21



NOTE: Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Excludes teachers who taught only prekindergarten students. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2011–12; and National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2015–16 and 2020–21. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 228.70.

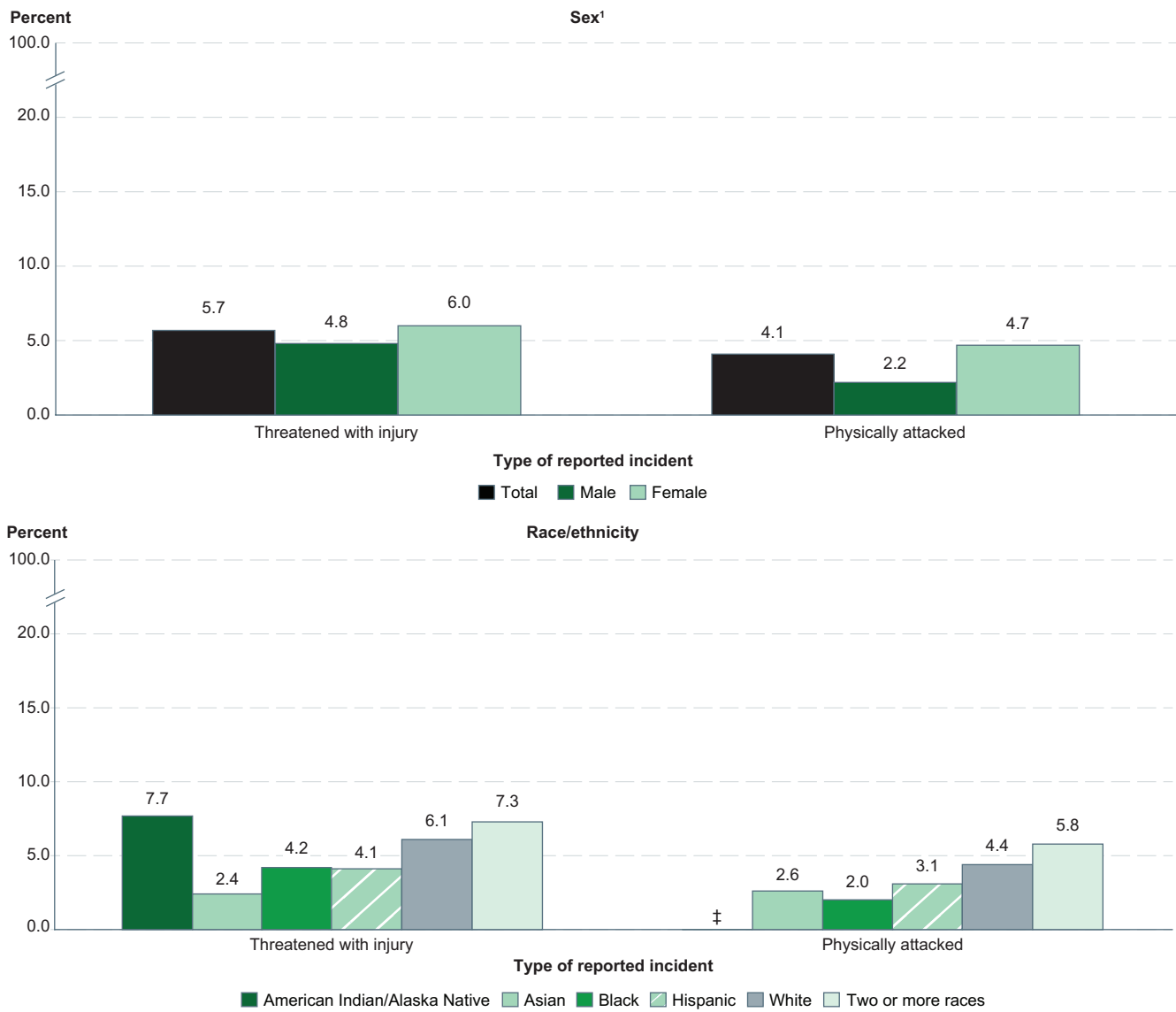
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During the 2020-21 school year, 6 percent of public school teachers reported being threatened with injury by a student from their school. This percentage was lower than in 2011-12 and 2015-16 (10 percent each). Threats of injury were more commonly reported than actual physical attacks in all survey years. The percentage of public school teachers who reported that they had been physically attacked by a student from their school was lower in 2020-21 (4 percent) than in 2011-12 and 2015-16 (6 percent each). These lower reported rates

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of being threatened with injury or physically attacked in 2020-21 were generally observed for both male and female teachers and for teachers of different racial/ethnic backgrounds.² It should be noted that the 2020 calendar year was the first year of the coronavirus pandemic, and many schools shifted instruction from in-person classes to online-only or hybrid education. Thus, in-person interactions between students and teachers may have been limited.

Figure 2. Percentage of public school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student from their school during the previous 12 months, by teacher sex and race/ethnicity: School year 2020–21



‡ Reporting standards not met. Either there are too few cases for a reliable estimate or the coefficient of variation (CV) is 50 percent or greater.
¹ Teachers were asked whether they were male or female. Although the figure refers to “sex,” the questionnaire did not use either the term “gender” or the term “sex.”
 NOTE: Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Excludes teachers who taught only prekindergarten students. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Data for Pacific Islanders did not meet reporting standards. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded data.
 SOURCE: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2020–21. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 228.70.

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During the 2020-21 school year, a higher percentage of female public school teachers than of male public school teachers reported being threatened with injury by a student from their school (6 vs. 5 percent). Similarly, a higher percentage of female public school teachers than of male public school teachers reported being physically attacked by a student (5 vs. 2 percent).

The percentages of public school teachers who reported being threatened with injury or being physically attacked by a student from their school varied by the race/ethnicity of the teacher. In the 2020-21 school year, the percentages of public school teachers who reported being threatened with injury were

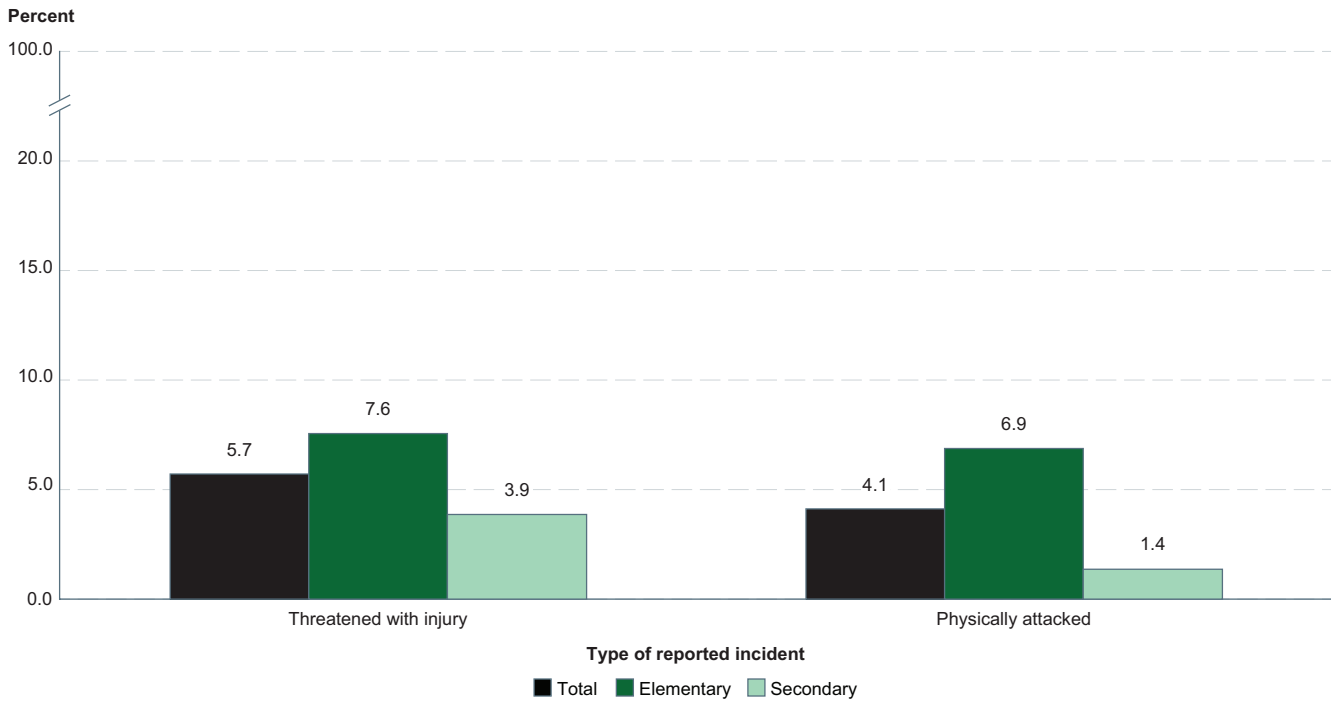
- higher for teachers of Two or more races (7 percent) and White teachers (6 percent) than for Black (4 percent), Hispanic (4 percent), and Asian teachers (2 percent); and
- higher for American Indian/Alaska Native (8 percent), Black, and Hispanic teachers than for Asian teachers.

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In the 2020-21 school year, the percentages of public school teachers who reported being physically attacked by a student ranged from 2 to 6 percent across racial/ethnic groups. Specifically, these percentages were

- higher for teachers of Two or more races (6 percent) and White teachers (4 percent) than for Hispanic (3 percent), Asian (3 percent), and Black teachers (2 percent); and
- higher for Hispanic teachers than for Black teachers.

Figure 3. Percentage of public school teachers who reported that they were threatened with injury or physically attacked by a student from their school during the previous 12 months, by instructional level: School year 2020–21



NOTE: Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Excludes teachers who taught only prekindergarten students. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught. In general, elementary teachers include those teaching prekindergarten through grade 6 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being kindergarten through grade 6. In general, secondary teachers include those teaching any of grades 7 through 12 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being grades 7 through 12 and usually with no grade taught being lower than grade 5.
SOURCE: National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS), “Public School Teacher Data File,” 2020–21. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 228.70.

The percentages of public school teachers who reported being threatened with injury or being physically attacked by a student from their school also varied by the instructional level³ of the teacher. During the 2020-21 school year, higher percentages of elementary public

school teachers than of secondary public school teachers reported being threatened with injury (8 vs. 4 percent) and being physically attacked (7 vs. 1 percent) by a student.

Endnotes:

¹ Includes teachers in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Excludes teachers who taught only prekindergarten students.
² Data for teachers who are Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and of Two or more races were not available in 2011-12. Data for Pacific Islander teachers did not meet reporting standards in 2020-21. Data for American Indian/Alaska Native teachers on being physically attacked by a student from their school did not meet reporting standards in 2020-21.

³ Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught. In general, elementary teachers include those teaching any of grades prekindergarten through grade 6 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being kindergarten through grade 6. In general, secondary teachers include those teaching any of grades 7 through 12 and those teaching multiple grades, with a preponderance of grades taught being grades 7 through 12 and usually with no grade taught being lower than grade 5.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2022*, table 228.70

Related indicators and resources: [Teachers’ Reports on Managing Classroom Behaviors](#)

Glossary: Elementary school; Instructional level; Physical attack or fight; Private school; Public school or institution; Racial/ethnic group; Secondary/High school