



Report

Gun Violence in America: The Impact on Educators

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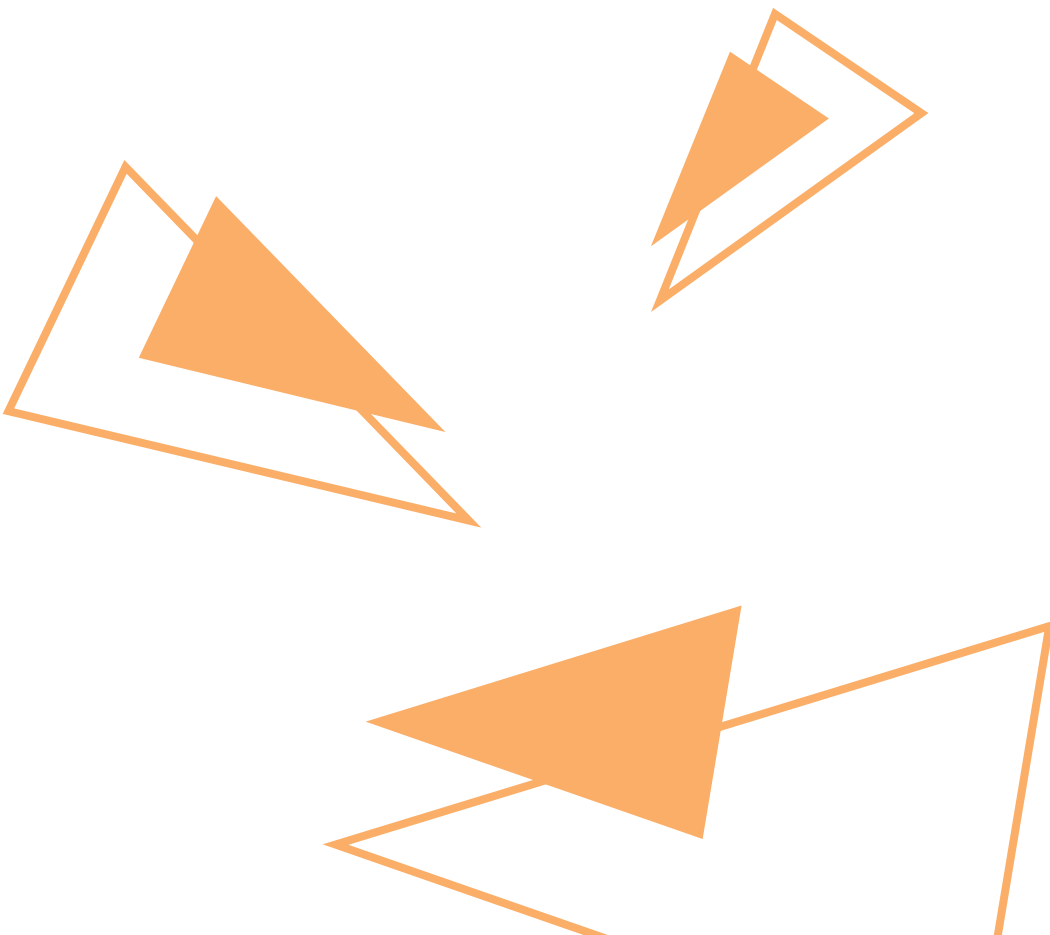
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Introduction

In the beginning days and weeks of 2023, America has seen nearly 40 mass shootings and more than [3,800 gun-related deaths, which included more than 20 children](#)¹. We ended 2022 with more than [20,000 firearm deaths](#)² (excluding suicides), 51 school shootings that resulted in injuries or death and at least [300 shooting incidents on school grounds](#)³.

Last year, when we measured Americans' anxiety around gun violence for our [inaugural report](#), we found people were carrying a tremendous amount of anxiety around – even for everyday activities, like going to the movies. But following a year that broke the record for the most school shootings in more than four decades, we wanted to not only understand if/how Americans' anxiety has changed, we wanted to paint a picture of what all of this gun violence is doing to our teachers. In our inaugural Gun Violence in America: The Impact on Educators report, we discovered that teachers are not OK. As a result of gun violence, they are more anxious, less patient and considering leaving the profession.

As a father whose daughter walks into a school building every day to teach second graders, these findings hit super close to home. When one in three teachers has experienced a shooting at work and one in four has been threatened by a student, it's time for us to come together to find ways to support them in the critical work they do. We need to recognize that a nation without healthy, happy and supported teachers cannot be a place where new ideas thrive and innovation is cultivated.

I'm hopeful we can learn from these findings and use them to identify new ways to create safer, more supportive environments for the people laying the foundation for the next generation of Americans.

Peter George

CEO, Evolv Technology

¹ [Gun violence archive](#) (no date) Gun Violence Archive. (Accessed: March 10, 2023).

² Brownlee, C. (2022) [Gun violence in 2022, by the numbers](#), The Trace. (Accessed: March 10, 2023).

³ Modan, Naaz, and Kara Arundel. "[School Shootings Reach Unprecedented High in 2022](#)," K-12Dive, 21 Dec. 2022.



Educators Are on the Frontlines

When we think about gun violence in schools, it's easy to jump to the mass shootings, like Sandy Hook, Parkland and Uvalde, that generate so much media attention. While absolutely horrific, those events are not common. What is common – and getting to be more so – is students taking guns to school for other reasons, such as [fear and feeling threatened](#)⁴.

For example, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District noticed [an uptick in guns on campus](#)⁵ – a record 22 guns on campus between August and December 2021.

That increase in guns in school buildings and campuses around the country puts educators and administrators on the frontline of this terrifying trend. In fact, 1 in 3 report that they have experienced a shooting at work/in a school setting, and 51% believe they are likely or extremely likely to encounter an active shooting at work in their lifetime.

▶ 1 in 18 teenagers are carrying



The impact on educators' mental health and performance.

What is your level of anxiety about going to work?

58%

Report being extremely/moderately anxious about going to work

61%

Say their anxiety has increased over the past 12 months

In order to cope with their increased levels of anxiety, nearly 3 out of 10 educators say they have to take more mental health breaks.

▶ Increase in educators' anxiety has impacted how they do their job



The risk of losing more teachers is very real

Since the COVID-19 pandemic placed such a vast and outsized burden on America's educators, we've heard about a shortage of people going into – and remaining in – the teaching profession. Three years later, our research finds



that purge is likely to continue. Nearly 4 in 10 teachers report they are considering looking for another job because they don't feel safe at work. Of those, 82% would like to change jobs within the next six months.

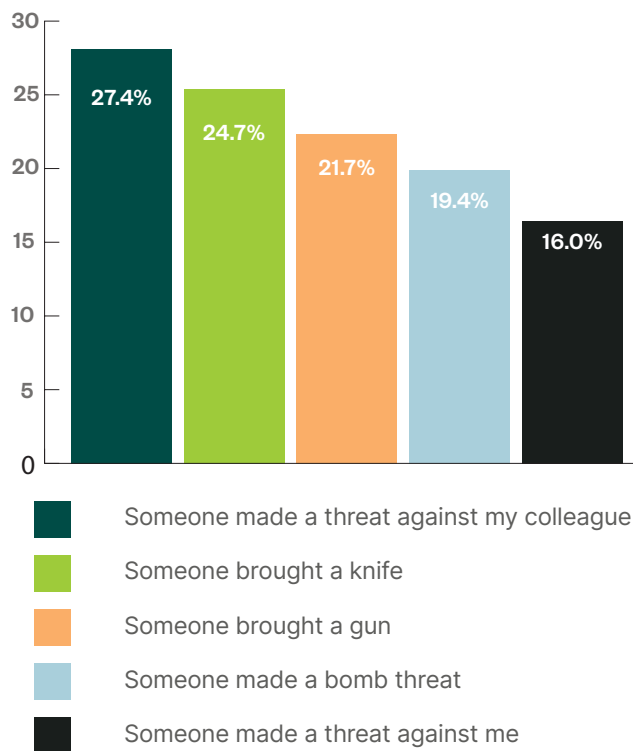
⁴ Reinburg, Steven. "1 In 18 U.S. Teens Carries a Gun to School: Study." WebMD. WebMD, December 2, 2019.

⁵ Arundel, Kara, and Anna Merod. "Districts Turn to Ai to Keep Guns out of Schools."

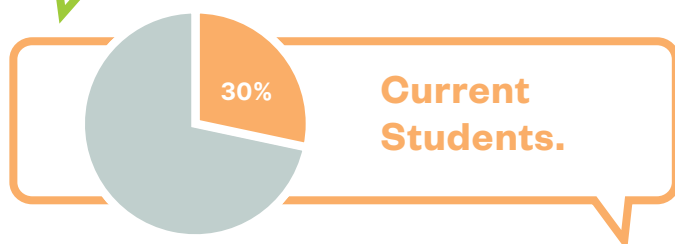
Educators' Reality in America

Since our educators are on the frontlines every day, we wanted to shed a light on their experiences and paint a picture, from their perspective, of the threat environment. When asked who presents the highest risk of violence in a school setting, 30% of respondents said current students.

In the past 6 months, have any of the following happened at work?

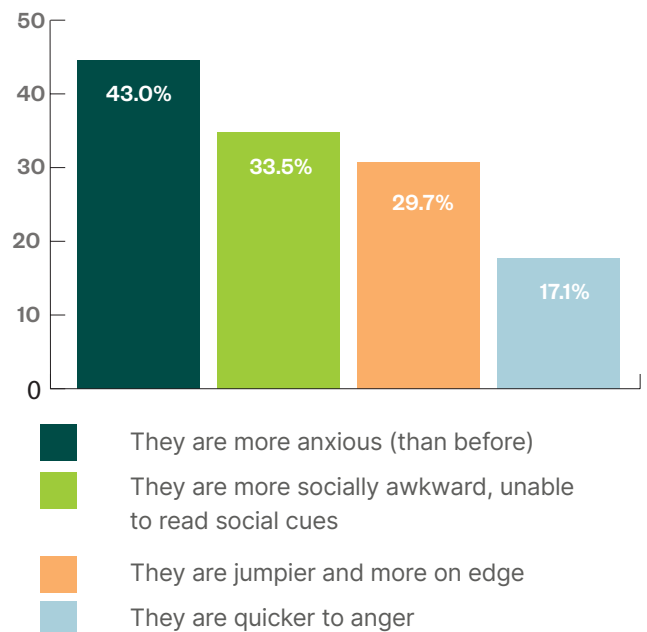


In your experience, who presents the highest risk of violence in a school setting?

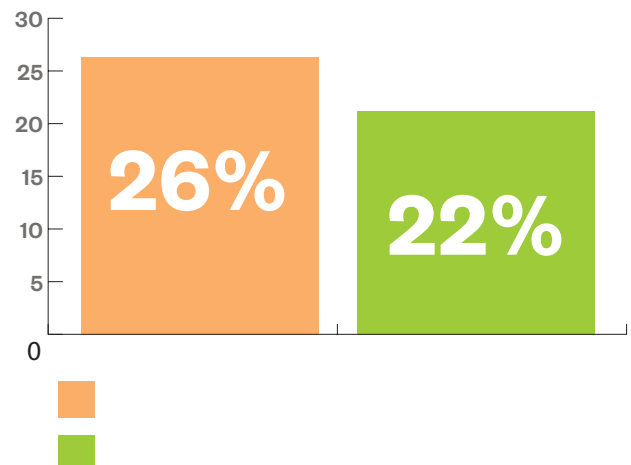


We asked educators about their experience with students over the past 12 months. The picture they paint reinforces the message we've been hearing a lot these days: America's youth are **suffering a mental health crisis**⁶.

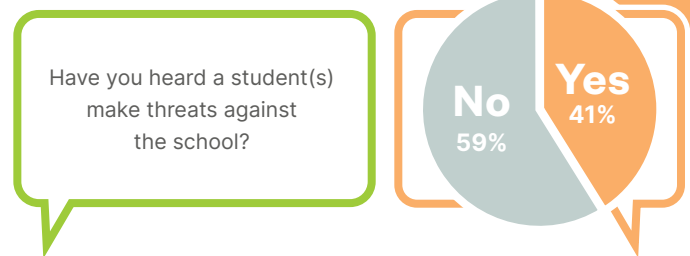
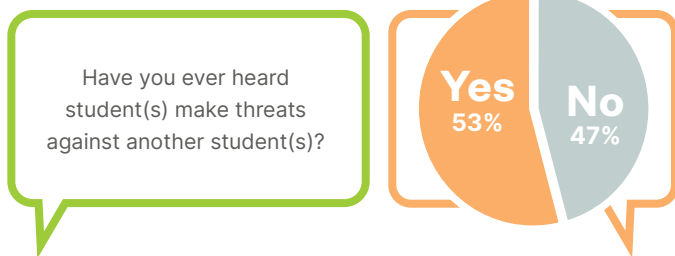
What is your experience with students over the past 12 months?



Some educators reported being threatened directly and/or were afraid of one of their students.



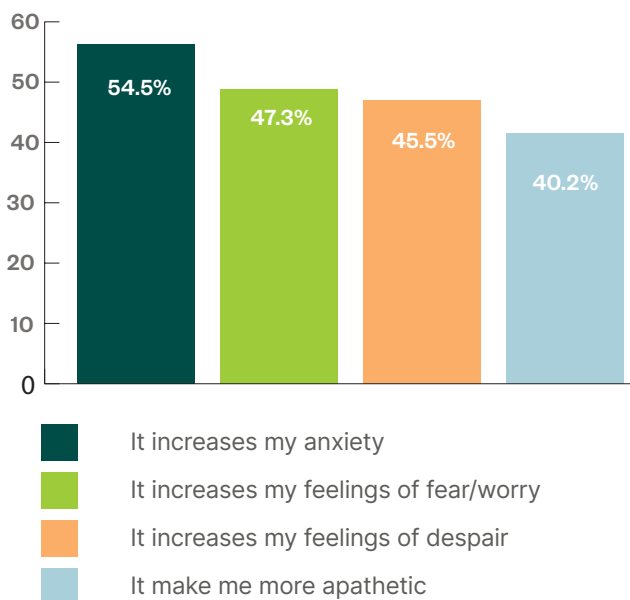
⁶ Prinstein, Mitchell J. "US Youth Are in a Mental Health Crisis-We Must Invest in Their Care." American Psychological Association, February 7, 2022.



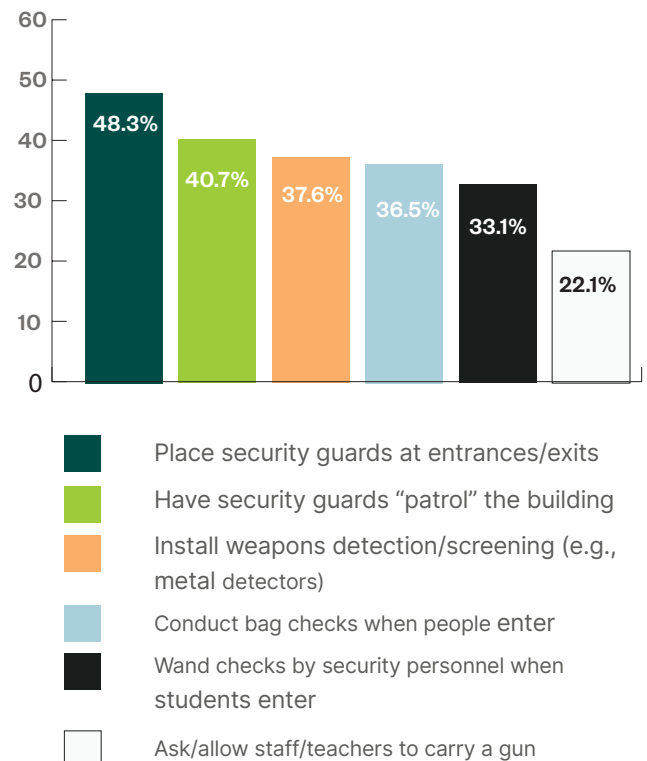
The rise of swatting

Four out of 10 respondents report that they have experienced swatting, the action or practice of making a prank call to emergency services in an attempt to bring about the dispatch of a large number of armed police officers to a particular address. As a result of the threat, schools increased security the days following the threat (63%); law enforcement was deployed (46%); school was canceled (45%) and school went into lockdown (42%).

The impact of swatting on educators' mental health



Educators would feel better about swatting threats if schools put in the following protocols



Are Schools Doing Enough?

The uptick in gun violence in and outside of schools has most reconsidering their safety strategy. Our findings reveal the majority of schools – 87% – are actively taking steps to prevent gun violence.

What Steps are your Schools Taking to Ensure Safety?

50% Lock entrances after hours

50% Security guards are placed at entrances/exits

43% They administer active shooter training/drills

42% Security guards “patrol” the building

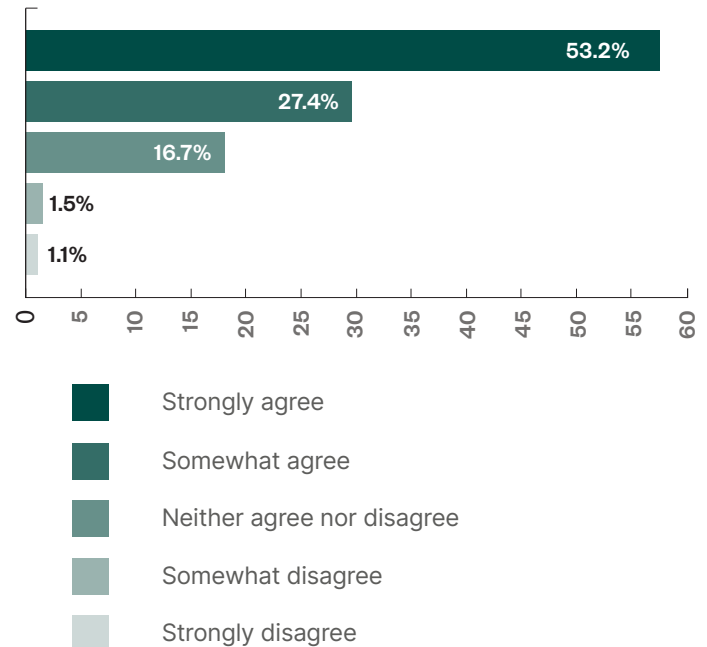
39% They have installed weapons detection/screening (e.g., metal detectors)

39% Security personnel do wand checks when students enter the building

34% There are bag checks when people enter the building

18% They ask/allow staff/teachers to carry a gun

▶ Educators would feel better about swatting threats if schools put more protocols in place.



Conclusion

“These findings highlight a need for us, as a country, to do better for our educators. Unfortunately, we haven’t equipped schools to deal with the anxiety, fear, and trauma students are bringing into the classroom. As a result, those on the frontlines – most of whom haven’t been trained in mental health – are bearing the burden of this national crisis. We are asking too much of them, and this research reveals the toll that is taking,” Jill Lemond, director of education at Evolv Technology & former assistant superintendent of safety and school operations for Oxford Community Schools.

But there is hope. By having the right conversations and prioritizing people’s safety – administrators, teachers, students – we can begin to create safer, more welcoming spaces where our educators can focus on teaching, and our students on learning. It’s not impossible to imagine or make that a reality. This report is the first step. Now that we’ve identified the scale of the problem, we can begin taking the additional steps needed to paint a different picture for educators in America.

Research Methodology

Evolv Technology commissioned Equation Research to conduct the survey, which ran from December 7 to December 12 2022. The survey captured responses from 263 education professionals in the U.S.

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About Evolv Technology

Evolv Technology (NASDAQ: EVLV) is a leader in weapons detection for security screening, securing the world’s most iconic venues and companies. Its mission is enabling a better experience and better security for venues, creating a safer world to work, learn, and play by transforming physical security to make everywhere safer.

For more information, visit www.evolvtechnology.com