

School Climate & Student Fear



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What factors influence a student's feelings of safety and their fear of being victimized at school?

[In this video](#), presenters discuss their research on the ways school climate and previous experiences of victimization can affect a student's feelings of fear and perceptions of safety.

Learning Outcomes

- » Describe victimization and school climate factors that influence student fear.
- » Summarize future prevention efforts to reduce student fear and perceptions of victimization risk.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Researchers examined student fear levels at school in relation to prior victimization, amount of disorder in the school, perceived risk of being victimized, and authoritative school climate (vs. authoritarian or permissive).
- ✓ Student perceptions of school disorder and risk of being victimized at school are the biggest factors that influence student fear.
- ✓ Prevention efforts should focus on student-student relationships rather than teacher-student relationships. How students interact with one another was more influential on student fear than how they interacted with teachers in an authoritative (fair, respected) school climate.
- ✓ Future research should also focus on elementary aged youth since much of the existing research focuses on middle and high schoolers.

Additional Resources

Abad, D., et al. (2020). [A modified approach to in-school victimization, authoritative school climate, and student feelings of safety](https://doi.org/10.1080/0735648X.2020.1810740). *Journal of Crime and Justice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0735648X.2020.1810740> - This is the full literature review that informed the video and this summary.

Fisher, B., et al. (2018). Students' feelings of safety, exposure to violence and victimization, and authoritative school climate. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 43, 6-15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-017-9406-6>

Ferraro, K., et al. (1995). *Fear of crime: Interpreting victimization risk*. State University of New York Press.

Questions for Discussion

- » What kind of school climate is present in your context (permissive, authoritative, or authoritarian)?
- » How might you enhance your students' relationships with one another?
- » Do you know which students in your school have the greatest fear of revictimization? What about students who feel the least safe at school? How can their concerns be addressed on campus?

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