

# School Violence

On a sunny spring day in April 1999, a suburban high school in Jefferson County, Colorado, found itself under attack by two of its own. In less than fifteen minutes of the first-lunch period on that Tuesday, two student gunmen killed 13 and wounded 21 before they turned the guns on themselves – the most devastating school shooting in U.S. history.

## **Response to the Columbine School Incident**

Schools are no longer safe havens. Like many social environments in our society today, schools are feeling the impact of our country's juvenile violence problem. Although the youth violence problem is often perceived as continually increasing, recent rates of juvenile violence actually have decreased. What has changed is the lethal nature of juvenile violence. Youth violence today more often results in serious injury or homicide.

Between 1988 and 1993 the youth homicide rate more than doubled, while adult homicide rates stayed the same. The violence that is being committed by adolescents has become more deadly. This lethality is almost entirely attributed to guns. What once was a schoolroom brawl with fists may now be a school-ground shooting spree.

No two school shooting incidents are the same. As evidenced by the tragic Columbine High School shootings, it is not just urban high schools that are vulnerable to school violence. The access, availability and use of guns is a common theme for most of the school shooting incidents during the 1990s. Guns give youth the feeling of power, and during adolescence, abstract reasoning about the consequences of gun use and the capacity to read social cues are incomplete. Therefore, guns and youth are a particularly deadly combination.

### [Teen Violence](#)

Why Do Kids Kill?

### [Littleton](#)

Darrel Scott Testimony

### [Families](#)

What Families Can Do