

U.S. Department of Education

Federal Education Priorities and Creating Safe Schools

National Conference on Bullying

February 14, 2011

Orlando, Florida

Kevin Jennings

Assistant Deputy Secretary

Director, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools





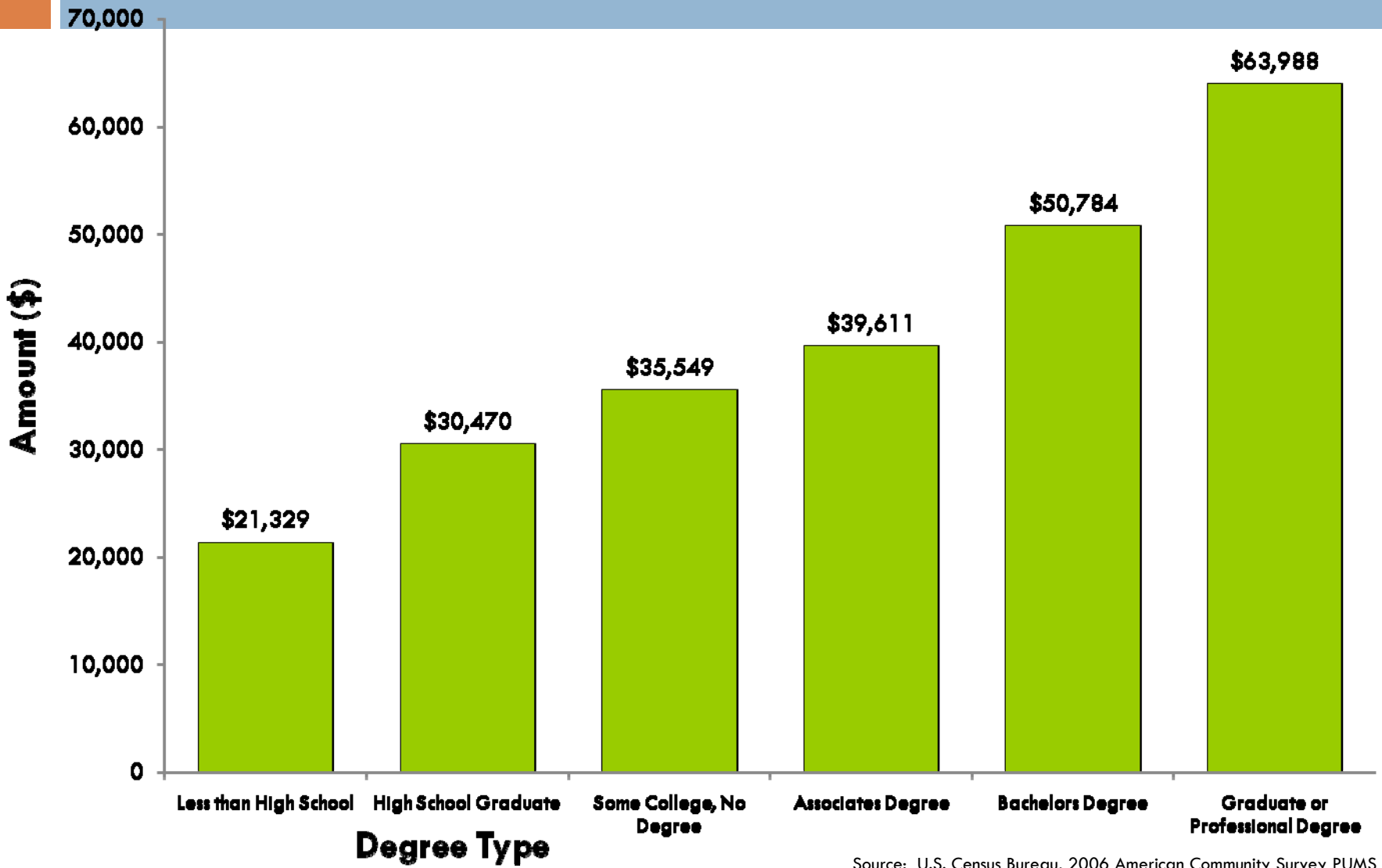
What's the goal at ED?

President Obama:
“Produce a higher percentage of college graduates than any other country in the world by the end of the next decade.”



Education Determines Earnings

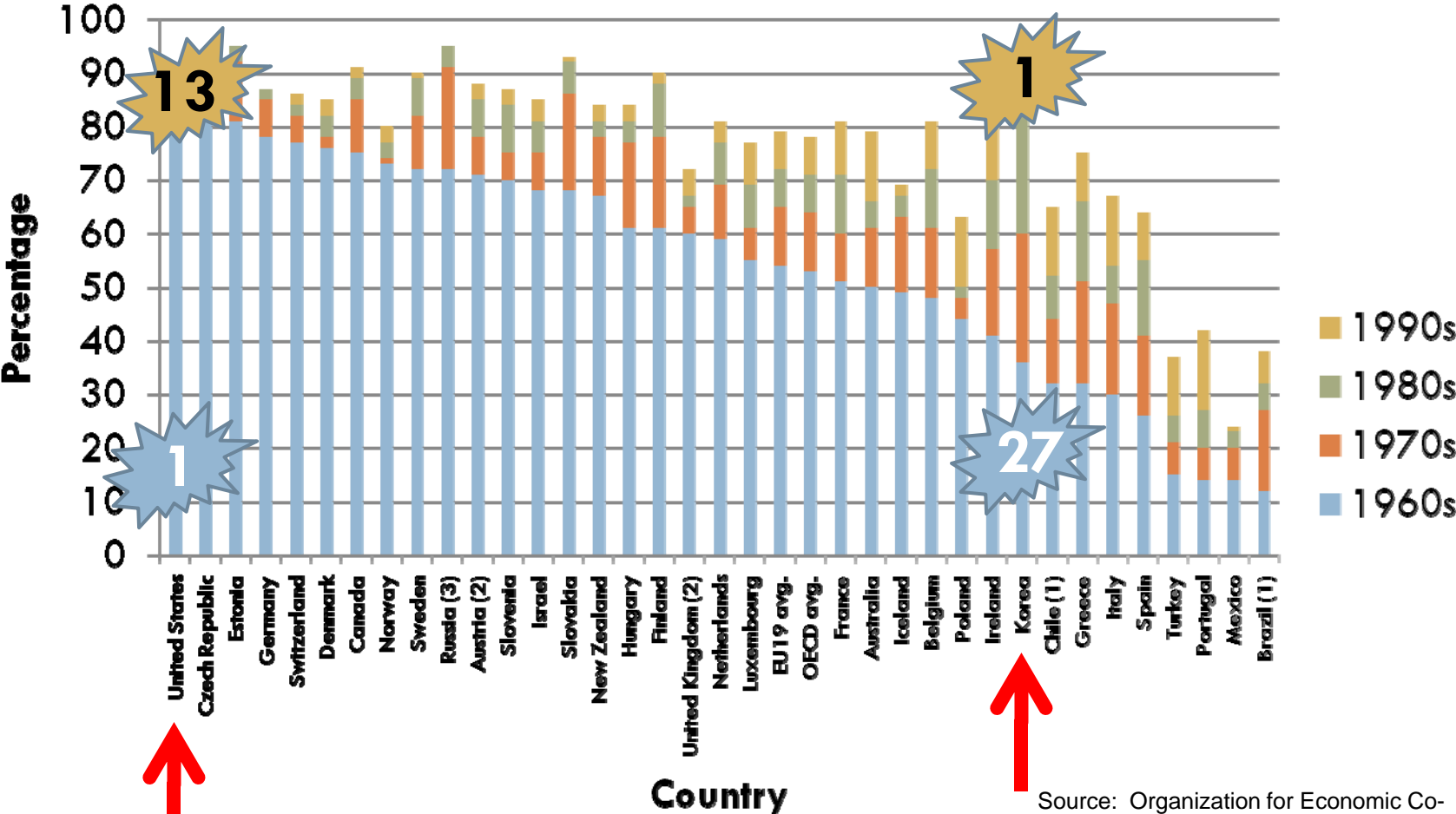
Median Earnings for Population Age 25-64 by Education Attainment, 2006



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey PUMS File.

The US is Falling Behind in HS Graduation Rates

Approximate percentage of persons with high school or equivalent qualifications in the age group 25-64

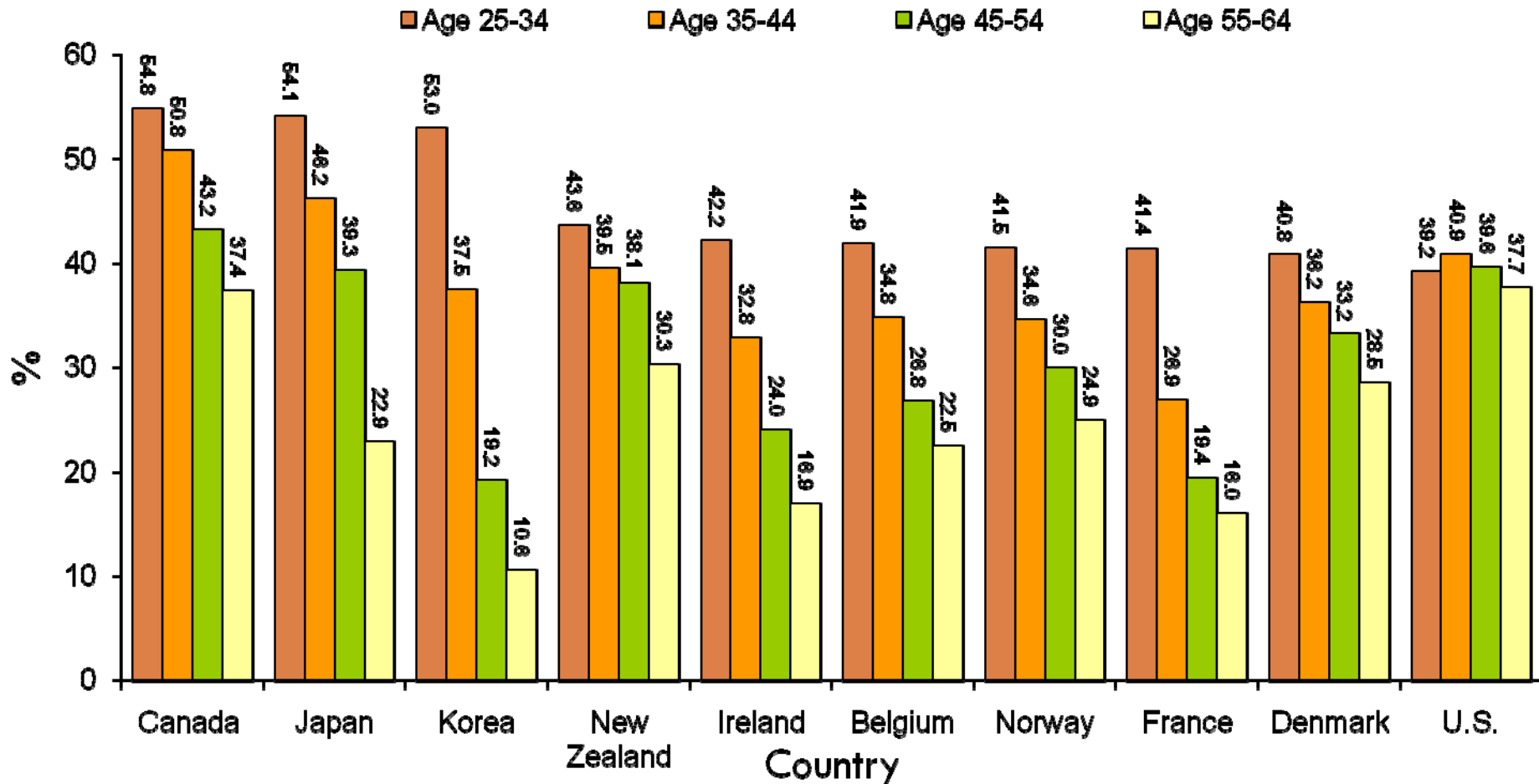


- 1. Year of reference 2004.
- 2. Including some ISCED 3C short programs
- 3. Year of reference 2003.

Source: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Education at a Glance 2008*

U.S. : Higher Ed Leader in the Sixties, the Laggard Today

Percent of Adults with an Associate Degree or Higher by Age Group - U.S. & Leading OECD Countries



Source: OECD, *Education at a Glance 2008*



Where does the Office of Safe & Drug Free Schools fit in?

It's simple.

Students can't learn if they don't feel safe.

Period.

The Traditional View Misses the Boat...or Maybe the Iceberg

“Uncivil behavior” – verbal threats, hate language, bullying, social rejection – is **almost twice as likely** to predict student “self-protection” (skipping school, avoiding areas/activities) as is crime (theft, attacks) at school

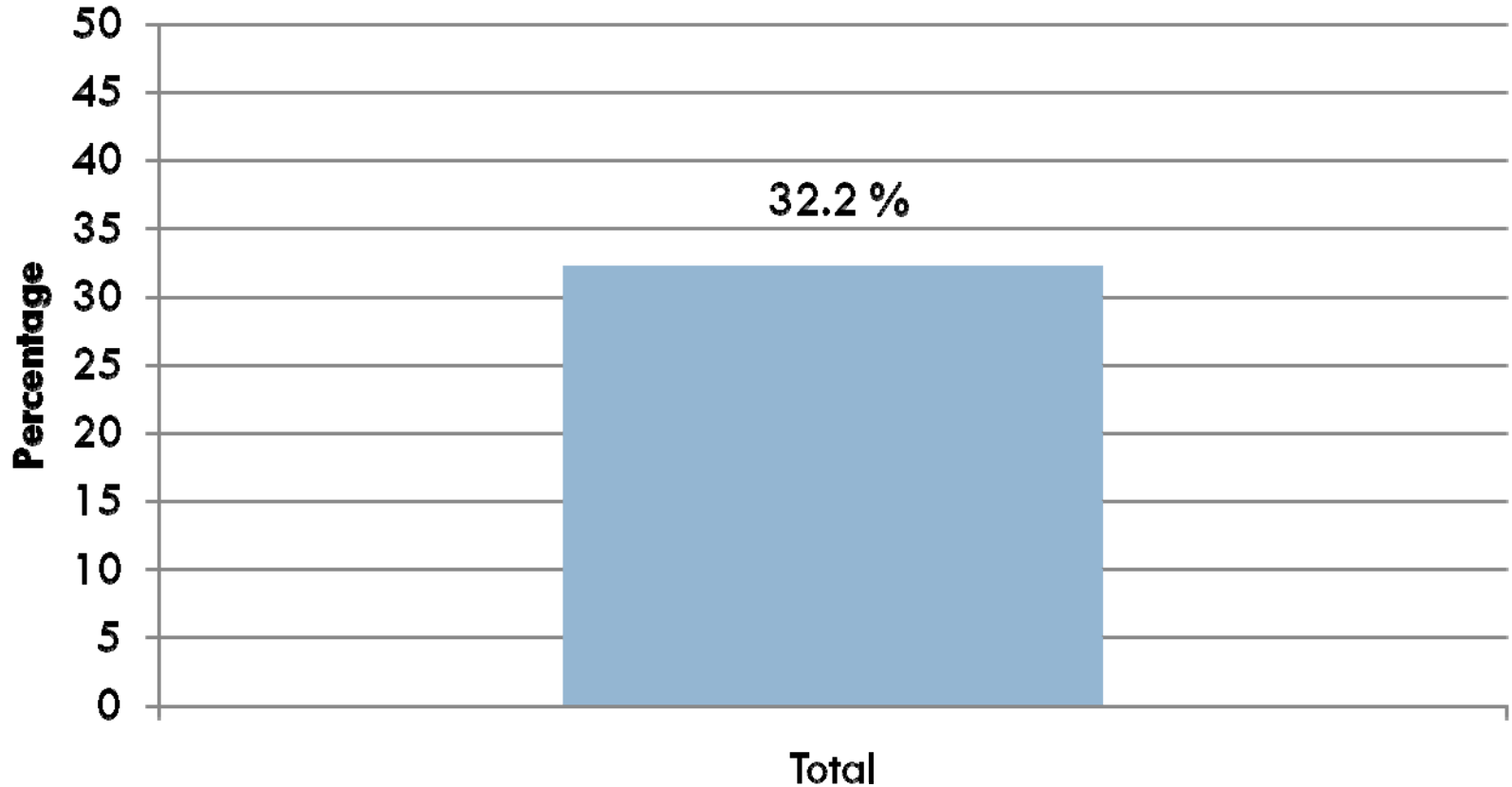




Understanding Bullying

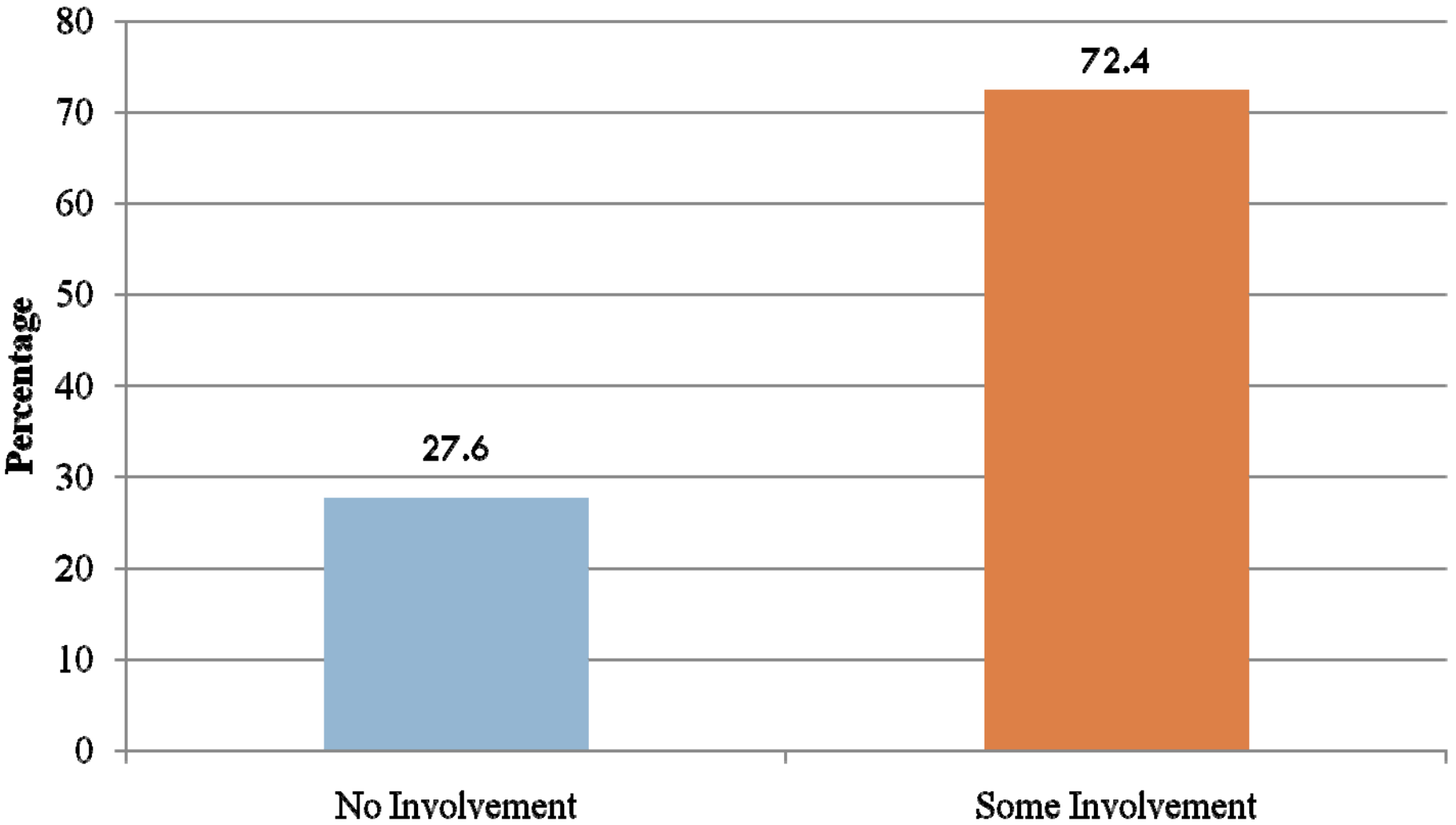
Many Students Experience Bullying

Percentage of students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied at school and being cyber-bullied anywhere during the school year: 2007



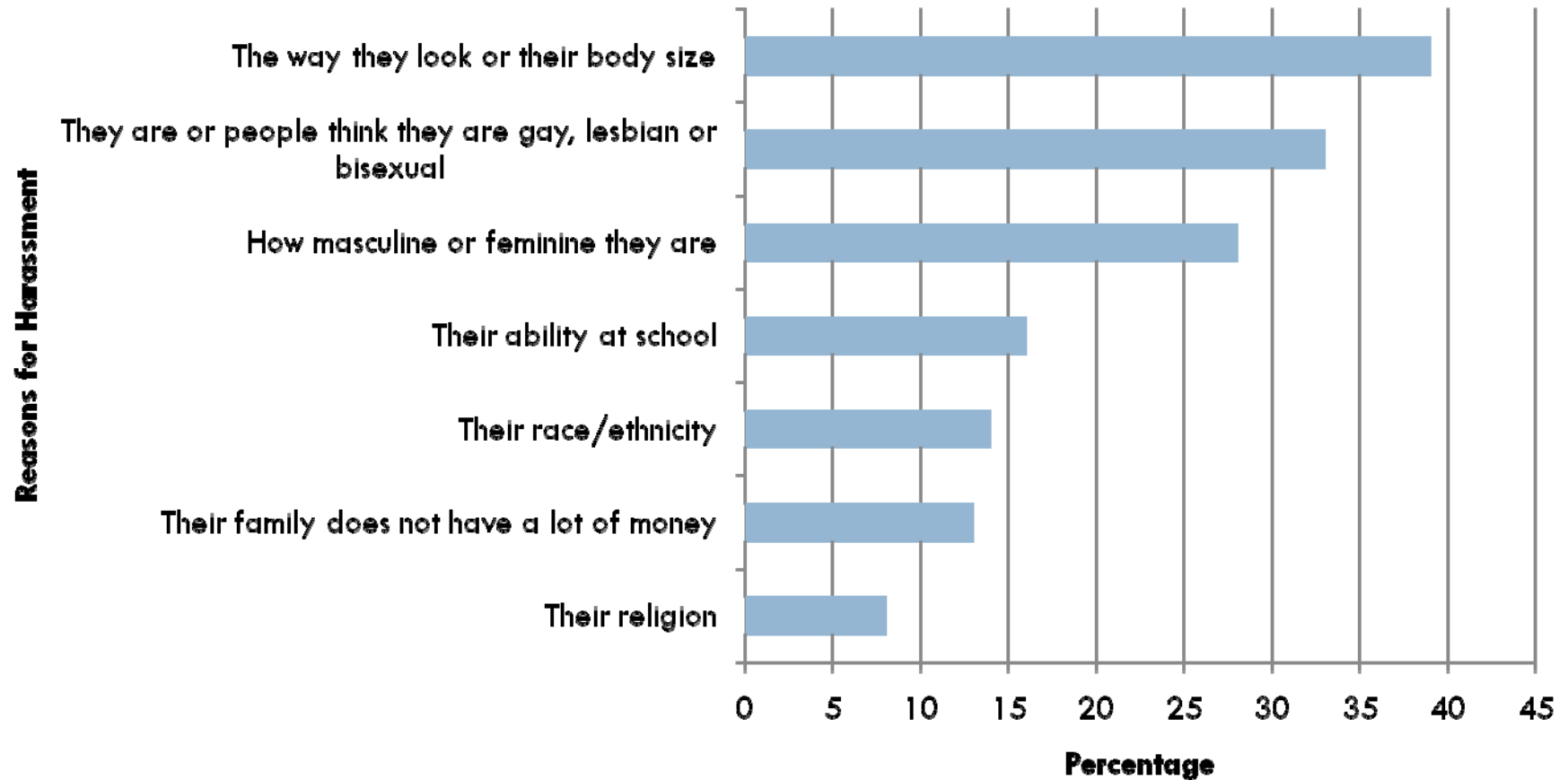
Source: Indicators of Crime and School Safety, 2008

Bullying Affects Most Kids



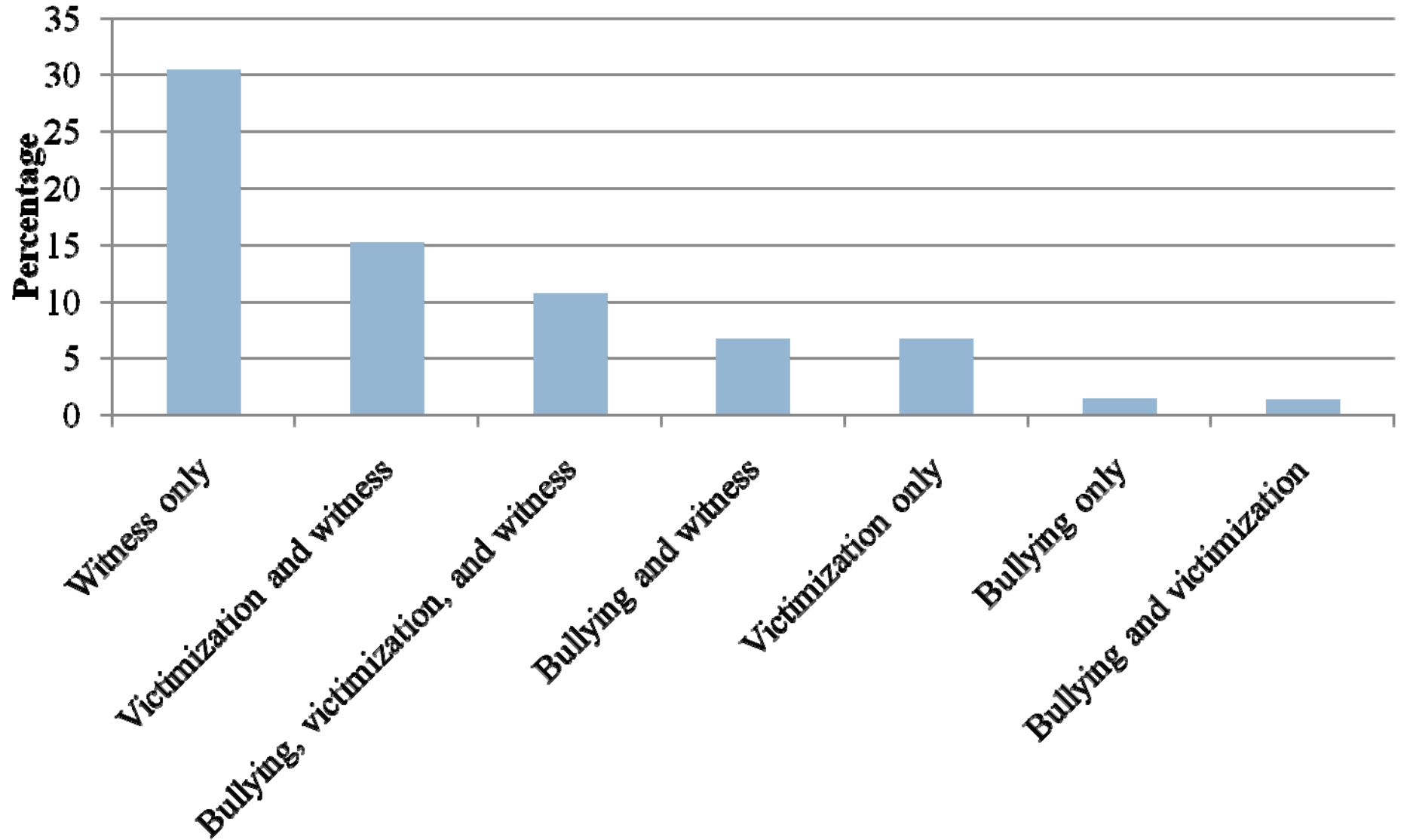
Some Groups are Singled Out for Harassment

Question: "At your school, how often are students bullied, called names or harassed for the following reasons?"



Source: *From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America 2005*

Participant Roles Vary: Few are “Just one thing”



Why the Problem Persists...

and What We Can do



Teachers and Students Make a Difference

In classrooms where both students and teachers had strong attitudes and actions against bullying and aggression rates of aggression were 1/3 to 1/2 of classes where peers alone (and not teachers) had strong attitudes against aggression

Henry, D., Guerra, N., Huesmann, R., Tolan, P., VanAcker, R., & Eron, L. (2000). Normative influences on aggression in urban elementary school classrooms. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(1), 59-81.

Peer Intervention Works, but Isn't Common

- Of bullying episodes in which peers intervened, 57% of the interventions were effective (i.e., the bullying stopped within 10 seconds).
- Peers intervene in only 11-19% of all bullying incidents.

Every *School* Can...

Help to educate faculty, staff & parents about bullying

Have a clear policy against bullying behaviors, and communicate this policy early and often to students, staff, and parents

Train all staff who interact with students (including bus drivers, school resource officers, school nurses, and cafeteria workers) on how to recognize bullying behaviors and intervene effectively to stop them

Ensure that all staff members take immediate action when bullying is observed.

Understand the extent of bullying, the level of staff commitment to address bullying, and parent interest and concerns.

Every *Teacher* Can...

Initiate discussion with students and parents about expected behavior before problems arise

Closely supervise your students and be watchful for possible signs of bullying among students in your classes (sudden changes in behavior, etc)

Take immediate action if you observe or suspect bullying

Remember that actions sometimes speak louder than words, and be sure that you don't inadvertently model bullying behavior

Every Student Can...

Don't be afraid to confide in a teacher or trusted adult. Step in when other students are being bullied or tell a teacher what is going on

Make it clear to others that bullying is not okay.

Support bullied students – make them feel like they are not alone

Help teachers and administrators know what is going on. Work with them to find solutions.

Every Parent Should...

Focus on their child. Be supportive and gather information about the bullying. Don't assume they will tell you. Believe them if they do.

Utilize resources such as HRSA's Stop Bullying Now! Campaign and bullyinginfo.org to become informed about bullying and bullying prevention

Work with the staff at school to find a solution to stop the bullying, for the sake of your child as well as other students. Know your rights and work with the district if necessary.



What are the Administration's Priorities?

“To break the cycle of bullying, we must be bold. The status quo cannot stand. With your courage, with your imagination, with your leadership, let this... be a turning point where America finally tackles the problem of bullying with tenacity-- and leaves the myths of bullying behind, once and for all.”

-Sec. Arne Duncan

In a Truly Safe School Every Student Feels Like...

- They Belong.
- They are Valued.
- They Feel Physically and Emotionally Safe.



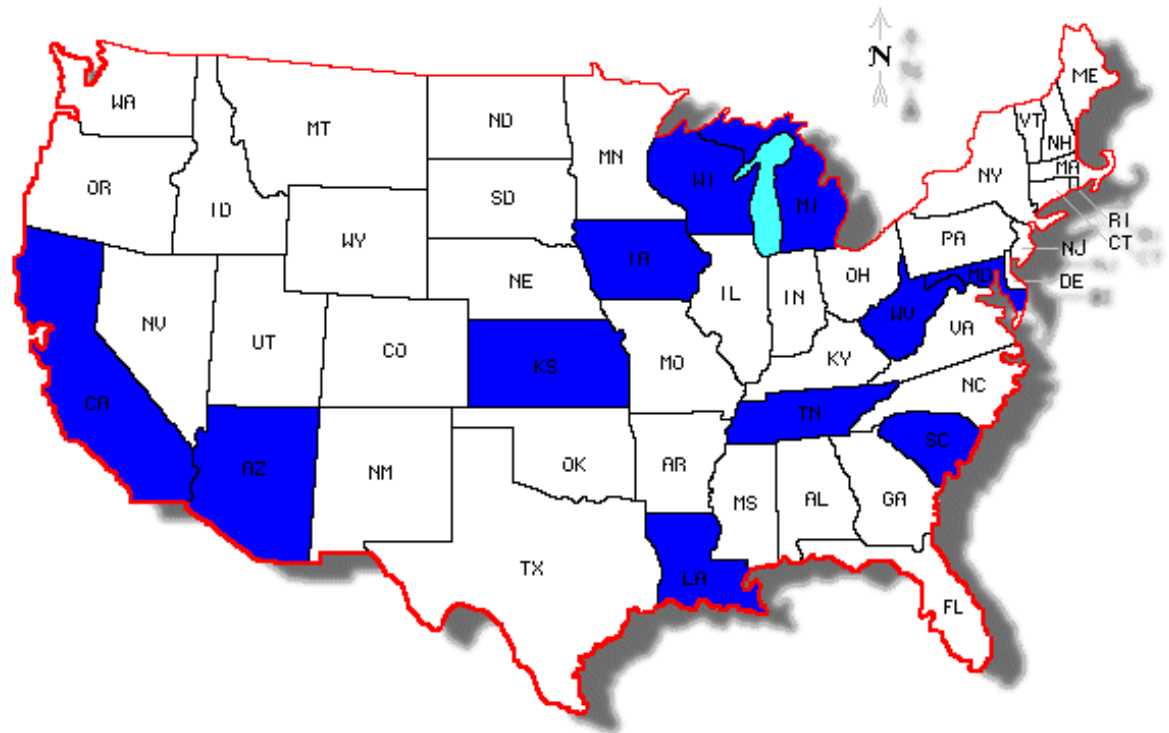
Successful, Safe and Healthy Students

OUR APPROACH

- Comprehensive approach. Supports efforts to improve school climate by improving school safety and promoting students' physical and mental health and well-being.
- Data to drive effective decision-making. State and district-wide school climate needs assessment data would help administrators and districts allocate resources and implement and expand effective programs.
- Simplification and local flexibility. Rather than apply for five or six grants, each with its own application and requirements, states and districts apply for one program and target funds based on local needs.

Winners of Safe and Supportive Schools Grants

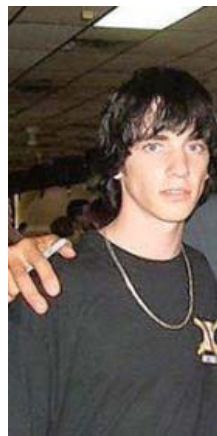
Arizona
California
Iowa
Louisiana
Kansas
Maryland
Michigan
South Carolina
Tennessee
West Virginia
Wisconsin



Carl Joseph Walker Hoover



1998-2009



Keep in Touch!

Kevin.Jennings@Ed.gov

202-245-7830