

The Research on Lowering Violence in Schools and Communities (ReSOLV) study is a nine-year study of relationships between school safety and student outcomes with community and school-based factors in California.

ReSOLV's results demonstrate the need to involve all stakeholders in the school and community to create safe places to live, work, and learn.

What You Can Do School Boards

- Recognize that risk and need in the community have a substantial impact on student educational and behavioral outcomes that may exceed what any single school can overcome on its own.
- Support schools to partner with community-based organizations that build student and family well-being outside of school, such as those focusing on economic empowerment, safe and stable housing, and food security.
- Develop new ways to connect more broadly and deeply with community members, prioritizing stakeholders who have difficulty engaging in traditional school board practices.
- Support the use of school climate surveys and other local data to learn more about community conditions that affect students, teachers, staff, and parents and use those insights to inform planning and training for staff
- Support school board recruitment/appointment plans that prioritize representation from diverse walks of life and vulnerable segments of the community where students live, including having parent and student representation on the school board.

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STUDY GOALS

- To help schools understand how risk and need factors in the community influence student engagement and outcomes in school, while helping community leaders understand how violence prevention efforts in the community may benefit educational outcomes for youth, which in turn can prevent future violence.
- Provide insights on building the readiness for individuals, organizations, and the broader community to work together to address violence and safety issues using inclusive, equitable, and comprehensive strategies that are rooted in evidence of effectiveness.

STUDY HYPOTHESIS

Schools operate within a broader ecological framework and risk factors in the community can negatively affect student and school outcomes if schools are not actively working to recognize and mitigate these influences.



STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

- Study period: Jan. 1, 2014, to Dec. 31, 2022
- Study sites: Hanford, Mendota, and Los Angeles
- Study design: Three independent case studies
- Study methods: Mixed, quantitative (census, crime, geo-spatial, survey, achievement, discipline), and qualitative (documents, focus groups, interviews, observation, social media)

STUDY RESULTS

- Crime and concentrated disadvantage had an influence on higher chronic absentee rates, lower graduation rates, higher suspension rates, and lower percentages of students scoring at or above the median on standardized test results for English Language Arts and Math.
- Community risk factors explained school and student outcomes much better than did measures of the internal school climate, including feelings of safety, relationships, engagement, and learning supports.
- School climate was universally worse in schools surrounded by the greatest amount of community risk and need.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

- It is not sufficient to simply “fix schools” in otherwise disadvantaged areas and expect to produce better safety and educational outcomes.
- To create safe and supportive learning environments within schools, equal attention must be paid to creating safe and supportive living environments using equitable strategies that engage a broader set of stakeholders.
- To this end, ReSOLV has developed an alternative response model for organizing school and community collective action. The model is forthcoming in the Journal of School Violence.

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