

# SECONDARY SCHOOL INJURIES

## Facts about secondary school injuries in Utah<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ 2,800 secondary school students on average are injured per year.
- ▶ 2,400 school days are missed each year because of student injuries.
- ▶ One-third of injuries among secondary school students are sports-related.
- ▶ There are 13.1 school injuries for every 1,000 secondary students per year.

### UTAH STUDENT INJURY REPORT DATA SCHOOL YEARS 2001-02 TO 2005-06 GRADES 7-12

#### SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM<sup>1</sup>

##### WHO

- 7th and 8th graders had the highest number of injuries.
- Injuries occur more often to males (63%).

##### WHAT

- 13,974 injuries to secondary school students.
- 11,894 school days missed due to school injuries.
- 904 calls to 9-1-1 due to school injuries.
- 215 hospitalizations due to school injuries.

##### WHERE

- Most common body areas injured: fingers (17%), head (14%), ankle (12%), and wrist (12%).
- Most common locations for injuries: gym (28%), athletic field (16%), classroom (10%), and hall (8%).

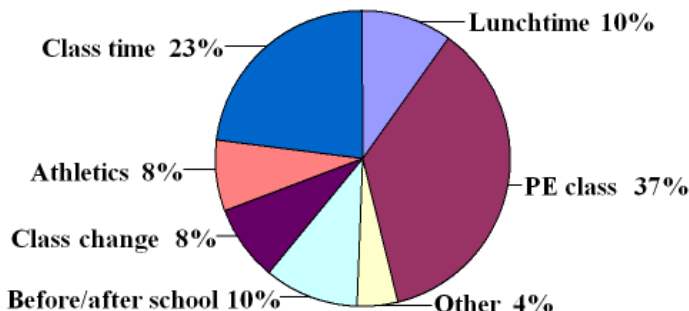
##### WHY

- Most common activities for injuries: classroom activity (13%), walking (11%), basketball (11%), football (8%), and roughhousing (7%).

##### WHEN

- Most injuries occurred during PE and class time.

**Utah Secondary School Injuries  
by Period, 2001-02 to 2005-06**



#### PREVENTION TIPS

- Develop safety rules for school gyms and train students to use equipment properly.
- Ensure that all sports programs include proper physical conditioning, proper hydration for athletes, appropriate personal protective gear, adult supervision, and enforcement of safety rules.
- Ensure that a physician, trainer, or EMT is present at all interschool sports competitions.
- Provide regular injury prevention training for all school staff.
- Establish and enforce safety policies and practices in shop classes.

Criteria for reportable injuries: Any injury severe enough to cause the loss of one-half day or more of school and/or warrants medical attention (e.g., nurse, M.D., ER staff, etc.).

## UTAH SCHOOL INJURY EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1: During class, an 8th grade boy did a backflip off a desk. He collided into another student then fell onto the floor breaking his shoulder.

**PREVENTION: Establish and enforce guidelines for classroom instruction. Supervise students to ensure their safety.**

EXAMPLE 2: A 7th grade boy was walking to the track during PE class when he was hit in the head by a discus. He was hospitalized for a skull fracture and missed one week of school.

**PREVENTION: Ensure that athletic activities take place in appropriate areas that meet safety standards for the designated activity.**

EXAMPLE 3: During an assembly, two students were plastic wrapped back to back from ankles to shoulders. They fell during a race against other students. The 11th grade girl needed 9 stitches for the cut on her chin.

**PREVENTION: Review planned activities for potential dangers and promote safety in all school-related events.**

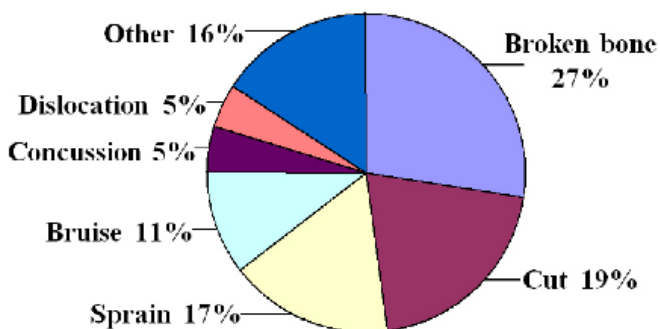
EXAMPLE 4: As part of ongoing bullying, a 9th grade boy required surgery for injuries he sustained in the hallway during class change.

**PREVENTION: Establish a climate that demonstrates respect and that does not tolerate harassment or bullying. Ensure active supervision in halls, bathrooms, and locker rooms.**

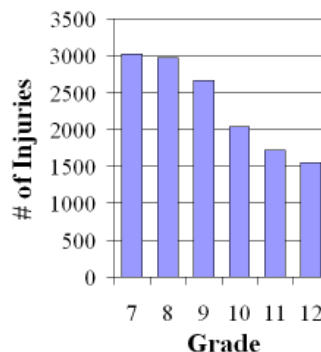
EXAMPLE 5: A 7th grade boy was walking in the hall and tripped over a backpack. He cut his knee and received stitches.

**PREVENTION: Look for potential injury hazards and fix immediately. Ensure active supervision in halls, bathrooms, and locker rooms.**

**Utah Secondary School  
Injuries by Severity  
2001-02 to 2005-06**



**Utah Secondary School  
Injuries by Grade  
2001-02 to 2005-06**

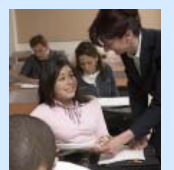


## PREVENTION TIPS FOR SCHOOLS<sup>2</sup>

- Designate a person with responsibility for coordinating safety activities.
- Infuse injury prevention into multiple school activities and classes.
- Establish a climate that demonstrates respect, support, and caring and that does not tolerate harassment or bullying.
- Conduct regular safety and hazard assessments, especially on sports fields.
- Ensure active supervision in halls, bathrooms, locker rooms, and at sporting events.
- Establish a written plan for responding to crises, disasters, and injuries.
- Implement a policy making parking privileges contingent on student seatbelt use, maintaining a clean driving record, and attending a safe driving presentation.

Schools are society's vehicle for providing young people with the tools for successful adulthood. Perhaps no tool is more essential than good health.<sup>3</sup>

Schools can teach students the skills needed to prevent injuries at school, at home, at work, at play, in the community, and throughout their lives.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Utah Department of Health VIPP Student Injury Report Database.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School health guidelines to prevent unintentional injuries and violence. *MMWR* 2001;50(No. RR-22).

<sup>3</sup> Council of Chief State School Officers. *Beyond the health room*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers, 1991.