

City of Cambridge

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Councillor Henrietta Davis, Chair

Councillor Kathleen L. Born

Councillor Jim Braude

In City Council May 14, 2001

The Health and Environment Committee conducted a public meeting on Wednesday, April 25, 2001 at 6:10 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Public Health Assessment.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Davis, Chair of the Committee; Councillor Braude; John O'Brien, Chief Executive Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance; Harold Cox, Chief Health officer; Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services; and Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk.

Also present at the meeting were the following members of the Cambridge Public Health Sub Committee: Lynn Schoeff, Dr. Melvin Chalfen, Irene Umana-Maxwell, Leroy Cragwell, William L. Cobham, Jolyon Cowan, Carol Cerf, Daniel Curley, Jeff Walker, Stephanie Ackert, Susan Marine, Ellen Kramer, Ricki Lacy, Sam Lipson, Virginia Chomitz and Susan Feinberg.

Councillor Davis opened the meeting and stated the purpose. She stated that Councillor Born was unable to attend the meeting.

Mr. Harold Cox, Chief Public Health Officer, introduced the members of the Public Health Sub Committee.

Mr. John O'Brien, CEO, Cambridge Health Alliance, thanked his staff and the volunteers. He stated that it is the Fifth Anniversary of the Cambridge Health Alliance. The goal of the Public Health Alliance, he said, is to have a viable health system with a focus on clinical medicine, resources and prevention. The Cambridge Health Alliance is one of the strongest health systems, he said. The resources have doubled. The Cambridge Public Health Alliance was awarded a \$1.1 million community access grant. He outlined the Public Health Priority areas for 1998 (**ATTACHMENT A**) and the new priorities for 2001 (**ATTACHMENT B**).

The effectiveness of the Public Health Alliance needs to be evaluated especially where there is shrinking financial resources, including cuts in Medicare, from the Balanced Budget Act. There have been a lot of successes, but there are a lot of barriers, he said.

The committee heard from Mr. Cox who highlighter four key areas:

1. Children's Dental Project;

2. Domestic Violence;
3. Obesity Prevention/Cambridge Walks; and
4. Communicable Diseases.

Mr. Cox stated that the Cambridge Walks Initiative has taken off.

Ms. Lynn Schoeff, Director of the Community Health Program, spoke on the issue of access to health care. There are several aspects to access to health care, she said. The three aspects to health care access she outlined were physical, cultural and financial. Location, hours of operation, convenient public transportation and physical barriers are areas of physical access. Linguistic, ethnic and racial make of the community are areas of cultural access. Making health care affordable and adequate health insurance coverage are financial access. Ms. Schoeff next informed the committee about the Children's Dental Project.

Outreach for the Dental Project was done in the schools. She presented a chart outlining the percentage of children with cavities in grades 1 and 8 in 1994-1995 (ATTACHMENT C). The dental facilities were expanded in the Windsor Health Clinic and hours of services were also expanded. She stated that 270 kids were examined with a cavity rate of 44%. Grant funding was sought. Education and dental screening have been instituted. She further stated that all referrals have been provided to children who needed dental care. She stated that the Bullock funds have been exhausted. The project was funded last year by the Department of Public Health. Next year there is no funding source, she said.

Councillor Davis asked how many children are serviced annually by the dental project. Ms. Schoeff stated that she will get this information. Councillor Davis asked if the Saturday clinic is self-supporting. Ms. Schoeff responded in the affirmative. Mr. Cox stated that soft funding and Alliance funding will continue to be used for this project. Mr. O'Brien stated that the Public Health Alliance is trying to expand the providers. Access, he said, has increased but funding is reduced and additional funding needs to be sought.

Ms. Susan Marine, Domestic Violence Coordinator, addressed the committee about domestic violence. She stated that it is the fourth year of implementation of the Domestic Violence Free Zone. The 1999 Police Data Incident Report (ATTACHMENT D) indicates that there are two types of incidents: domestic disturbances and simple assaults.

Twenty-eight percent of domestic disturbances are reported by persons such as neighbors. There are 1,000 incidents of domestic violence each year. The Cambridge Police Department has a zero tolerance policy on domestic violence. Domestic violence and restraining orders are rising. This increase, she said, is a positive measure that will be reduced in the long run. She stated that 500 municipal employees have been trained on domestic violence awareness. Training has made a difference, she said. Collaboration is important to prevent duplication of services provided by agencies in the city.

Councillor Davis asked how many people does 1,000 incidents represent. Ms. Marine responded that this is hard to equate because most incidents are unique. Councillor Davis asked if there is a research component to this work. Mr. Marine stated that each initiative is being evaluated.

Obesity Prevention and the Cambridge Walks Initiative were discussed next. Ms. Ellen Kramer stated that in 2000, obesity is one of the top health issues. Statistics show that 20% of children aged ten are overweight (ATTACHMENT E). Fitness test show that one in four students failed. One percent of children who took the fitness test received a high rating. (ATTACHMENT F). She informed the committee that there is a grant for a Walk to School Program. This program is supported by the Police Department, community, health and ecology minded persons. There was success in October with the "Walk to School Day." The Walk Summit was changed to "Cambridge Walks." An initiative was started called Cambridge Moves, then Jeff Walker invented the "Golden Shoes" which occurs in May. There are golden shoes hidden around the city and if found, a gift certificate is given to the person who finds the golden shoes. The fitness data, she said, pushed this program along. Councillor Davis stated that she has three pairs of golden shoes. She invited participants to become involved in this initiative. Mr. Cox informed the committee about a Channel 5 initiative called 5 on 5 which encourages losing five pounds from walking.

Communicable diseases was the final key issue discussed by the committee. Mr. Cox stated that the Public Health nurses are the foot soldiers. They spend time talking about wellness, TB prevention and control programs sponsored in Cambridge and Somerville.

Ms. Ricki Lacy stated that there have been 37 active cases of TB diagnosed in Cambridge in four years. The highest age group is 25-44 representing 51% (ATTACHMENT G). Of the active cases of TB, 78% were people born outside of the United States (ATTACHMENT H). Of the newly arriving immigrant population the highest country of origin with TB are from Haiti with India second. A video was produced on TB to target the Haitian community, she said. Latent infection is reviewed, she said. There are two Pilot Programs for latent TB. Of the two programs, there was an 88% completion rate for the second month latent care program and a 44% completion rate for the six month program. Ms. Lacy next discussed Hepatitis.

At the North Charles Center, she said 87 patients were reviewed. Consent for participation and medical record review was received for 49 patients. Hepatitis A & B shots were administered. Of the 32 Hepatitis A shots given, 22 patients finished the series of shots. Of the 17 Hepatitis B shots administered, 9 patients finished the series of shots.

Pertussis, she said, peaks every 2-5 years. There were 32 cases in 2000 and five cases in 2001. All confirmed cases were among school students. A mailing was done by the Public Health nurses because of the 5 confirmed cases of Pertussis. The students at

the high school, she said, did not want to be absent because of the attendance policy. There were also cases of Pertussis at Harvard University, M.I.T. and private schools.

Mr. Cox stated that this is the end of the presentation, but he wanted to highlight an additional initiative - the Institute for Community Health. The institute, he said, is a tri-partnership that will do research. He asked Ms. Virginia Chomitz, Interim Executive Director of the Institute for Community Health, to give an update on the Institute.

Ms. Chomitz stated that in October, a Board of Directors was appointed for the Institute. The Institute was incorporated in December, 2000 as a subsidiary of the Cambridge Public Health Alliance. She informed the committee of the work of the Institute. Screening and family education is being done to develop programs on the issue of obesity. Cambridge and Somerville are working to identify the health behaviors specific to the communities. As part of the education piece of the Institute, students are being brought into the infrastructure.

Mr. Cox stated that the Institute is looking for a permanent Executive Director. He stated that the staff and the Board are talented, gifted individuals and he thanked them for their good work.

Councillor Davis thanked all attendees.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

For the Committee,



Councillor Henrietta Davis
Chair

1998 Public Health Priority Areas

A. Access

B. Violence Prevention

C. Environmental Health

D. HIV/AIDS

E. Substance Abuse Prevention

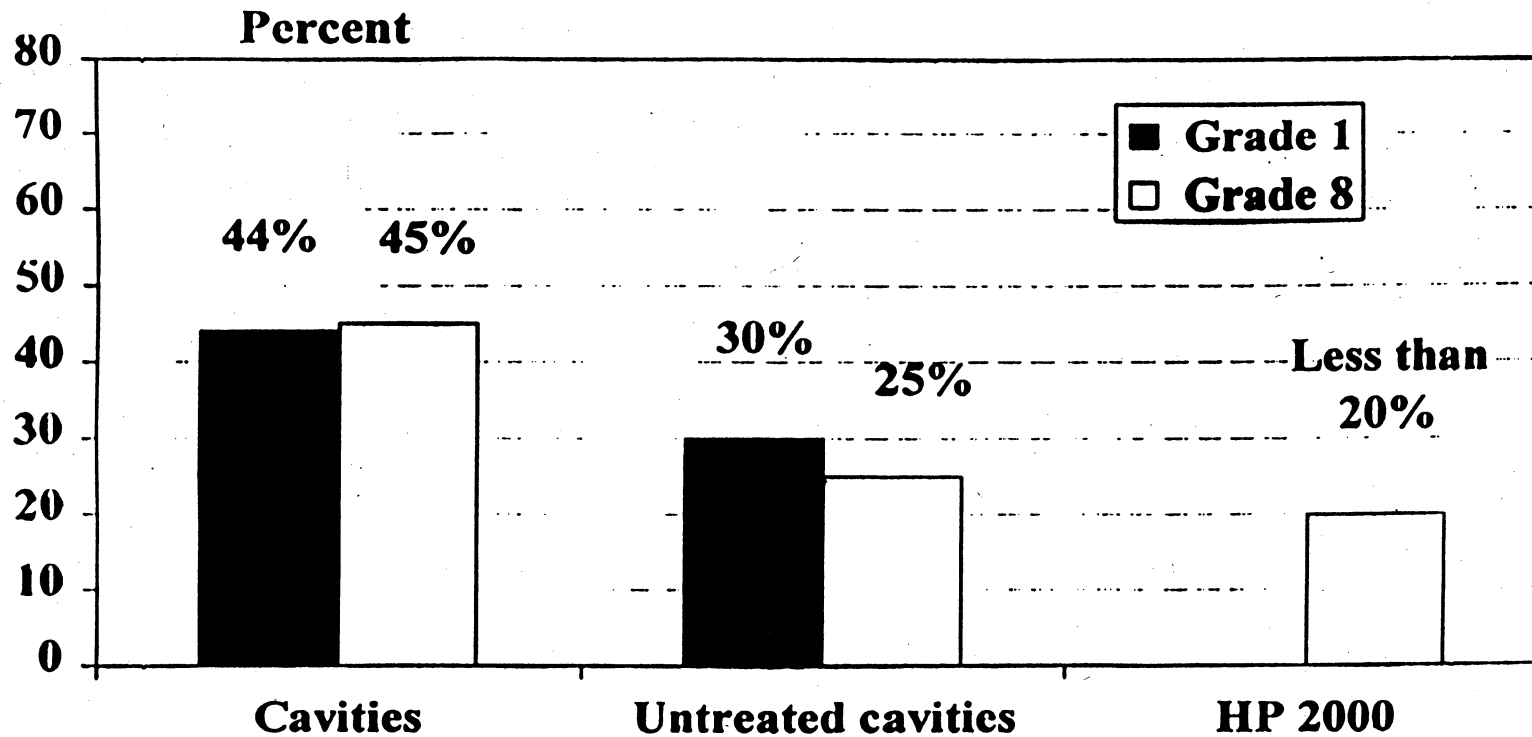
F. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

2001 Public Health Priority Areas

- Mental Health for Youth
- Asthma and Indoor Air Quality
- Obesity Prevention and Physical Activity
- Access to Health Care
- Health of Men of Color

Percent of Children With Cavities

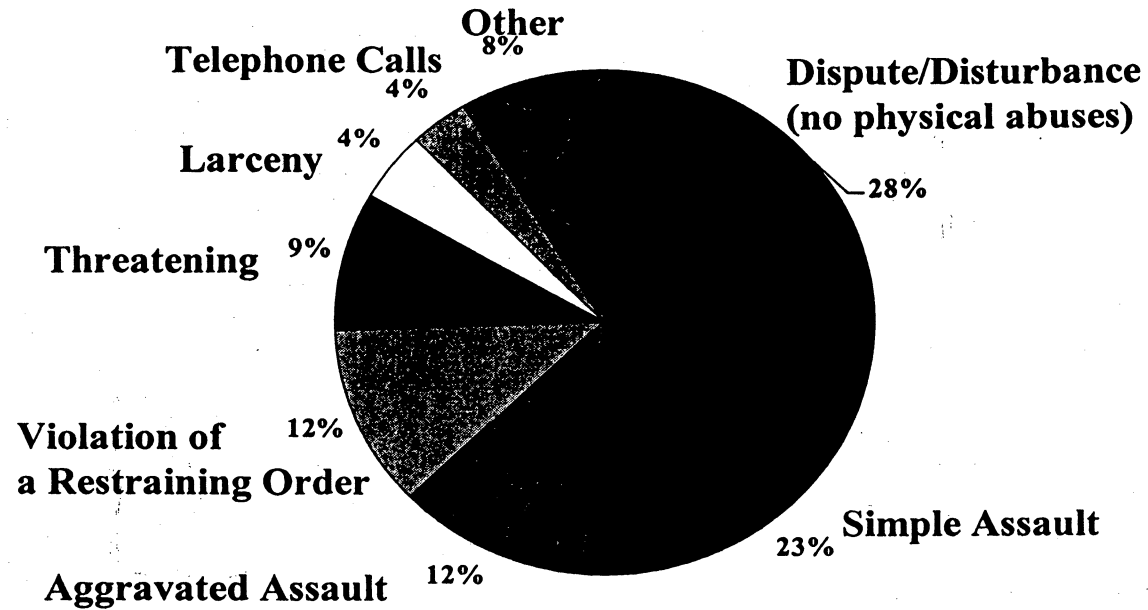
Cambridge, 1994-95



Sample = 270

Police Reports of Domestic Incidents

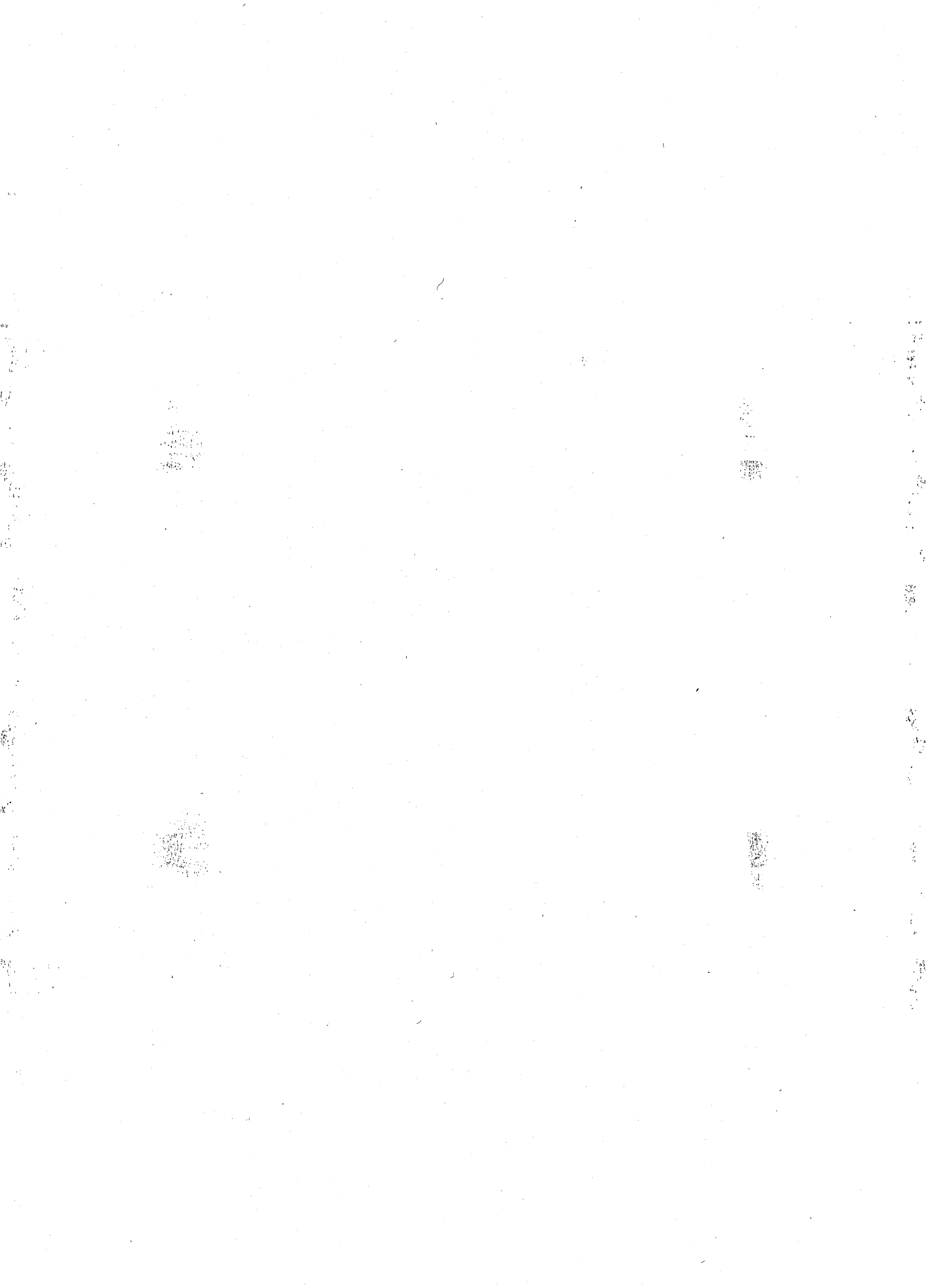
Cambridge: 1999



Domestic crimes include offenses committed against family members, spouses, ex-spouses, roommates, romantic partners, and ex-romantic partners

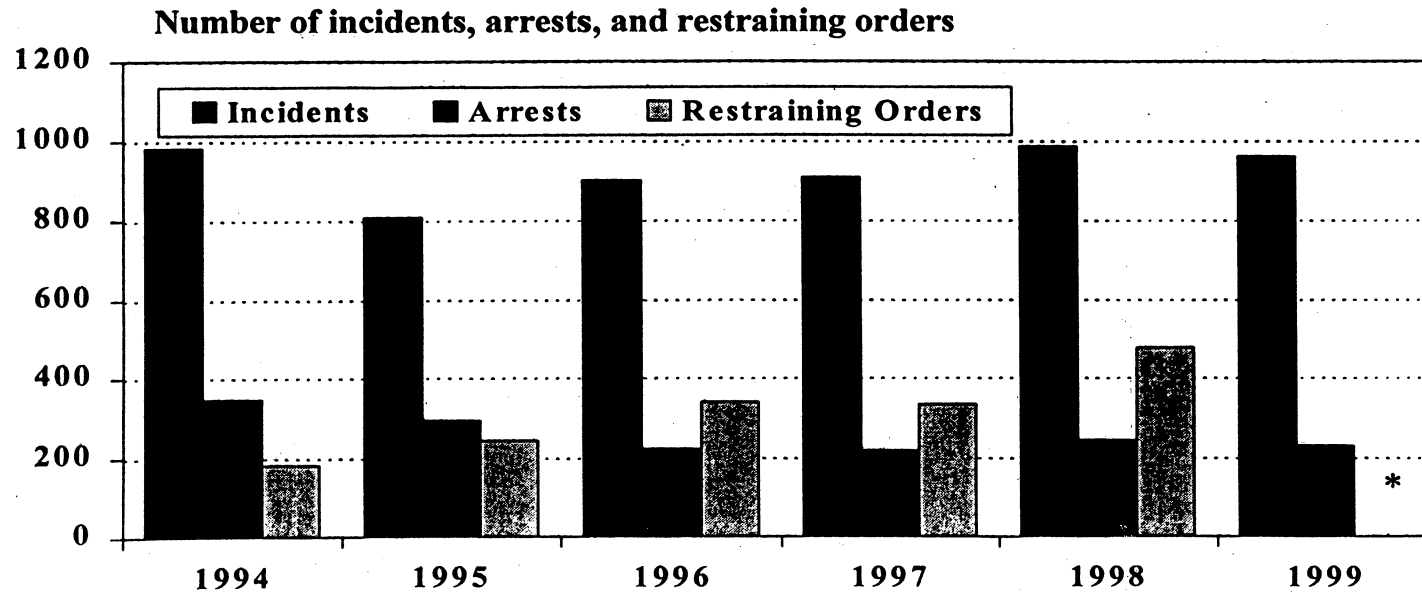
Total number of incidents = 948

Source: 1999 Annual Crime Report, Cambridge Police Department



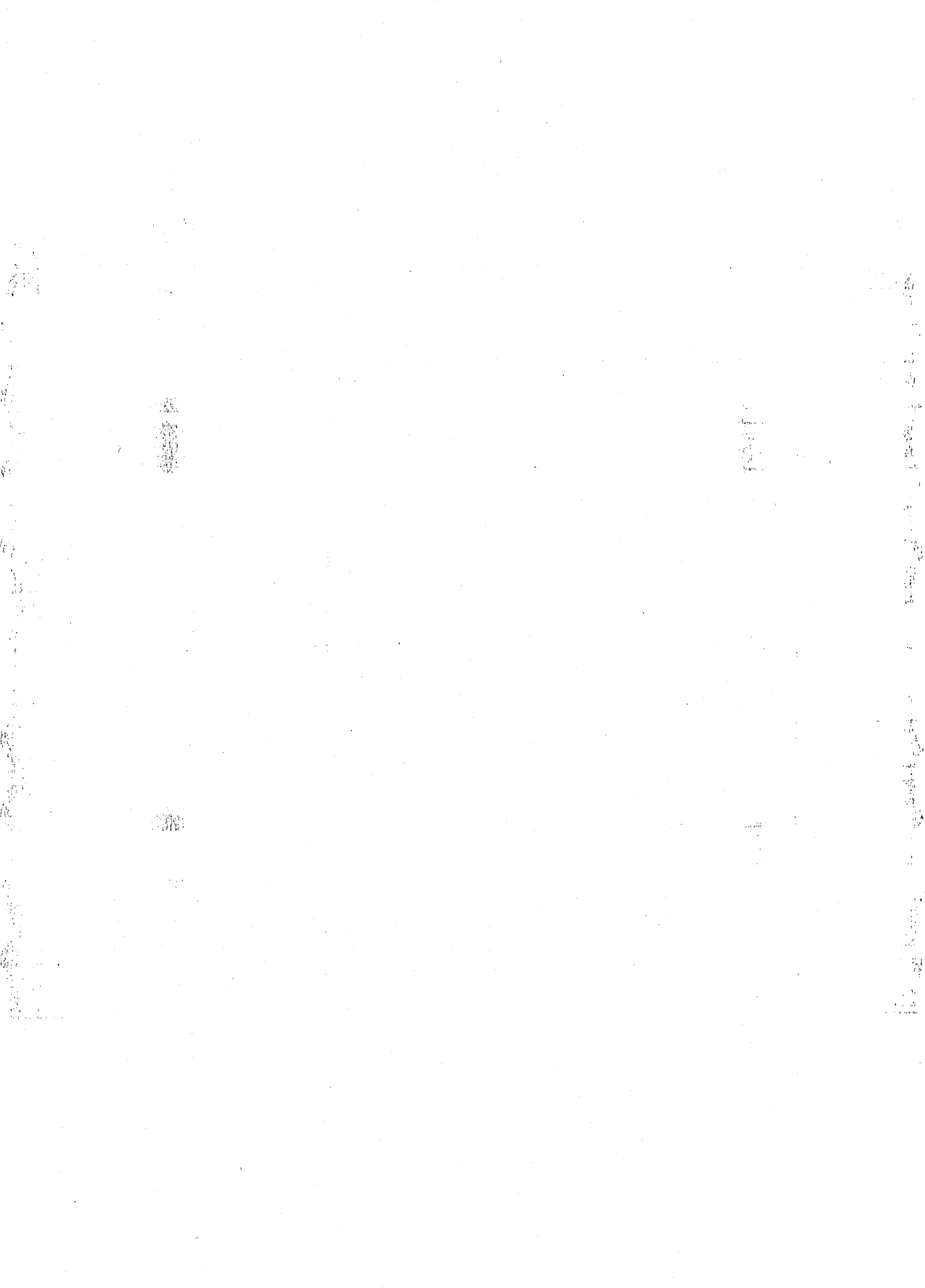
Domestic Violence Incidents, Arrests, and Restraining Orders

Cambridge: 1994–1999



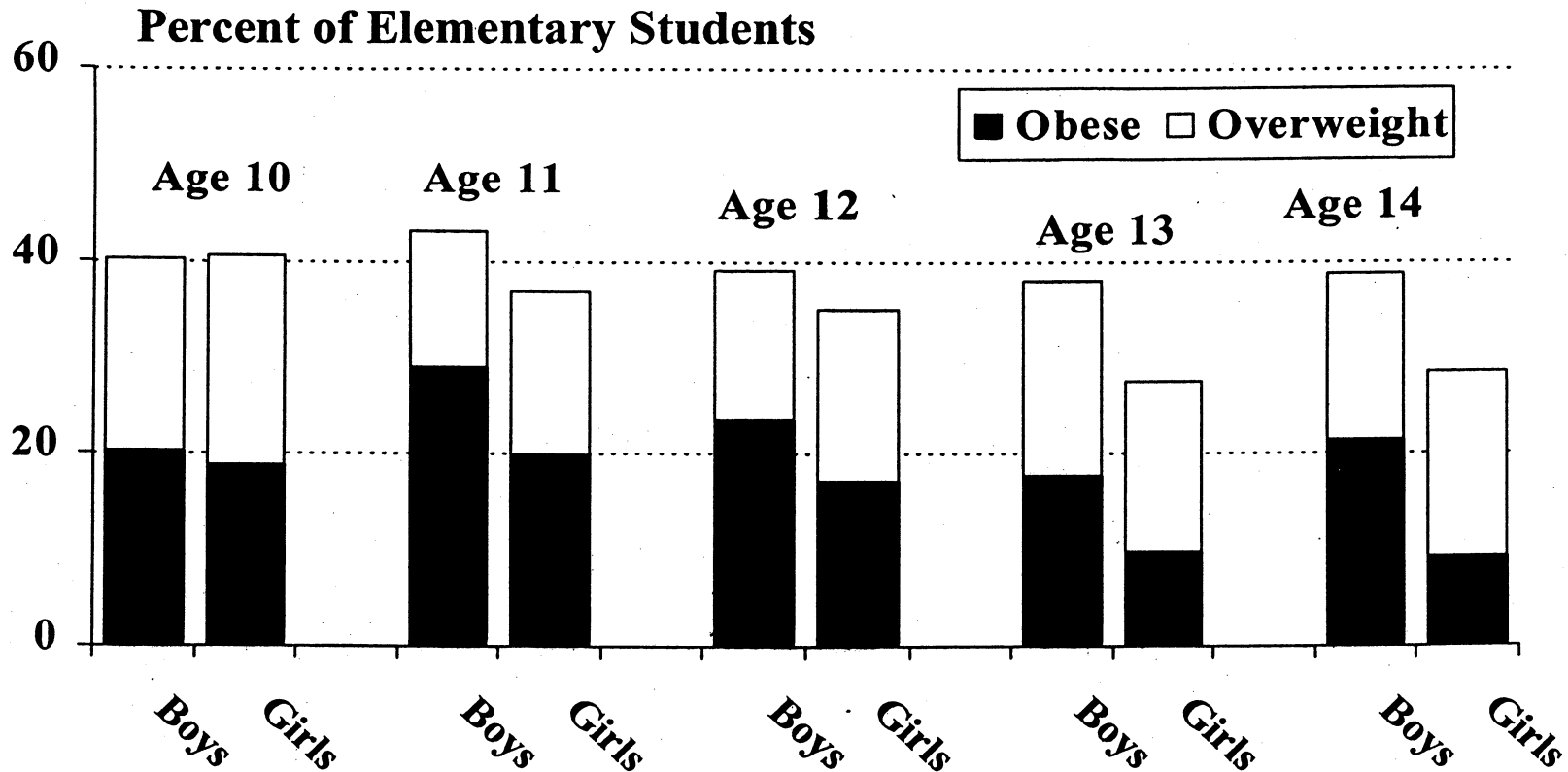
* Data not available

Source: Cambridge Police Department, 1999



Overweight and Obese Children by Age & Sex

Cambridge Elementary Schools: 1999

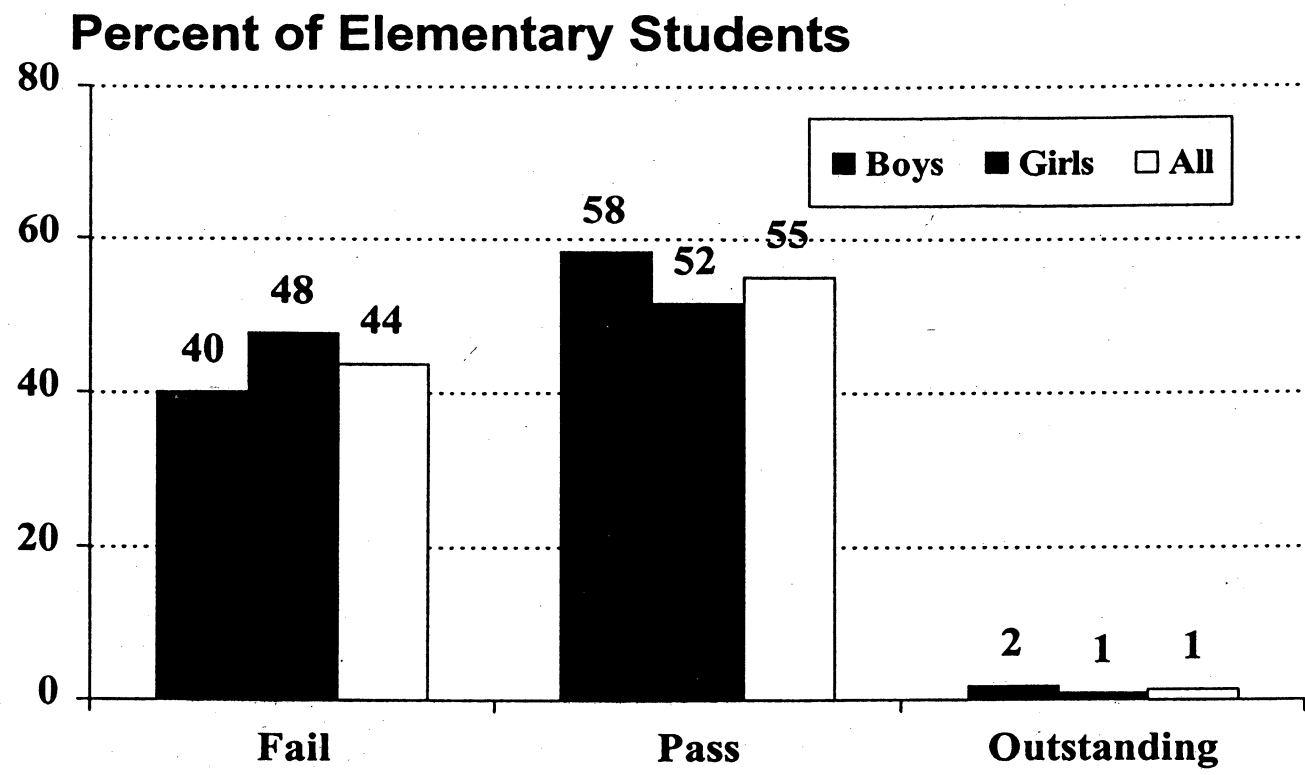


Note: Obese children are above the 95th percentile; overweight children are between the 85th and 95th percentile for BMI per National Center for Health Statistics standards.

Source: Robert McGowan, Physical Education Dept., Cambridge Public Schools

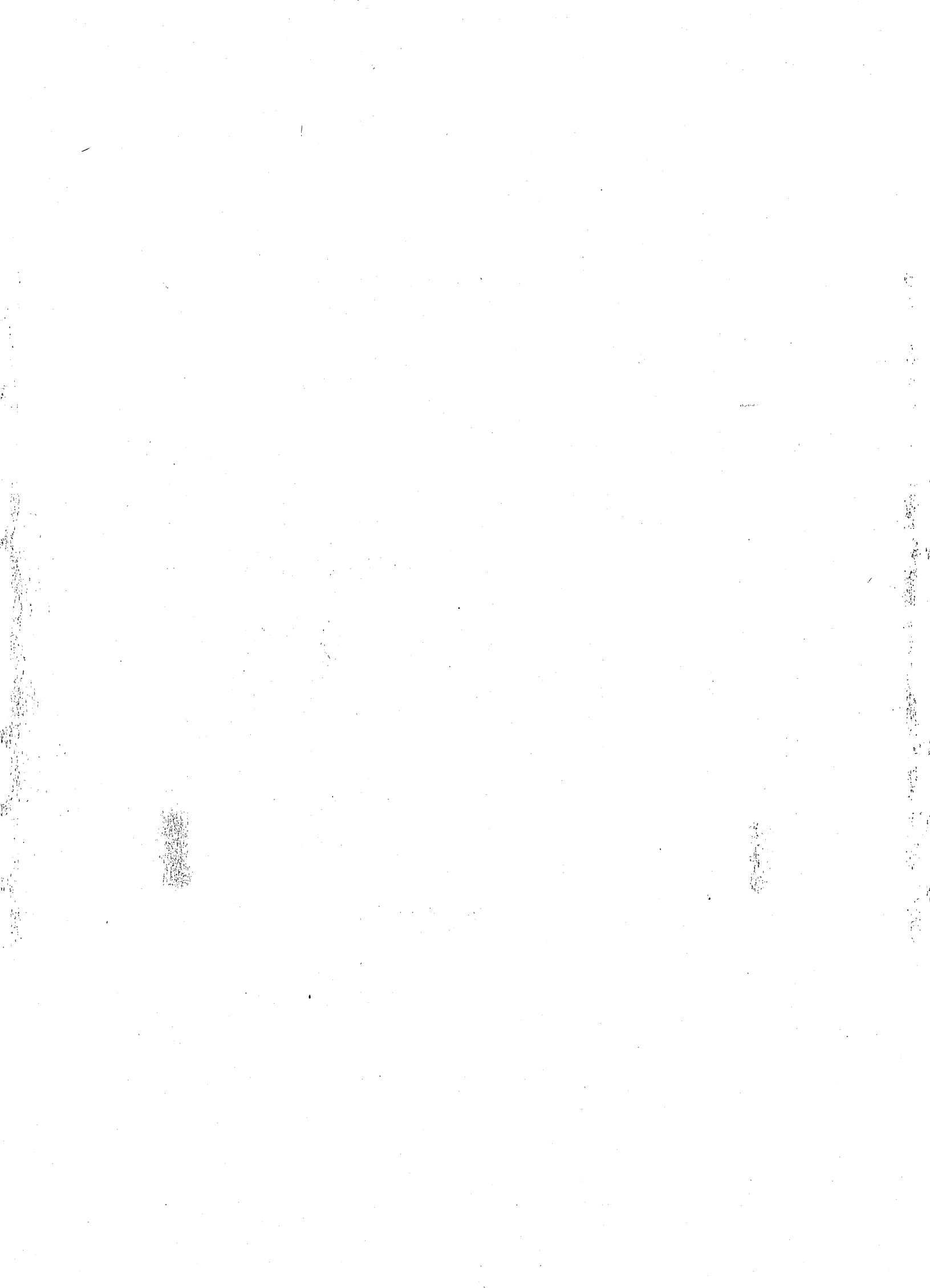
Fitness Testing* by Sex

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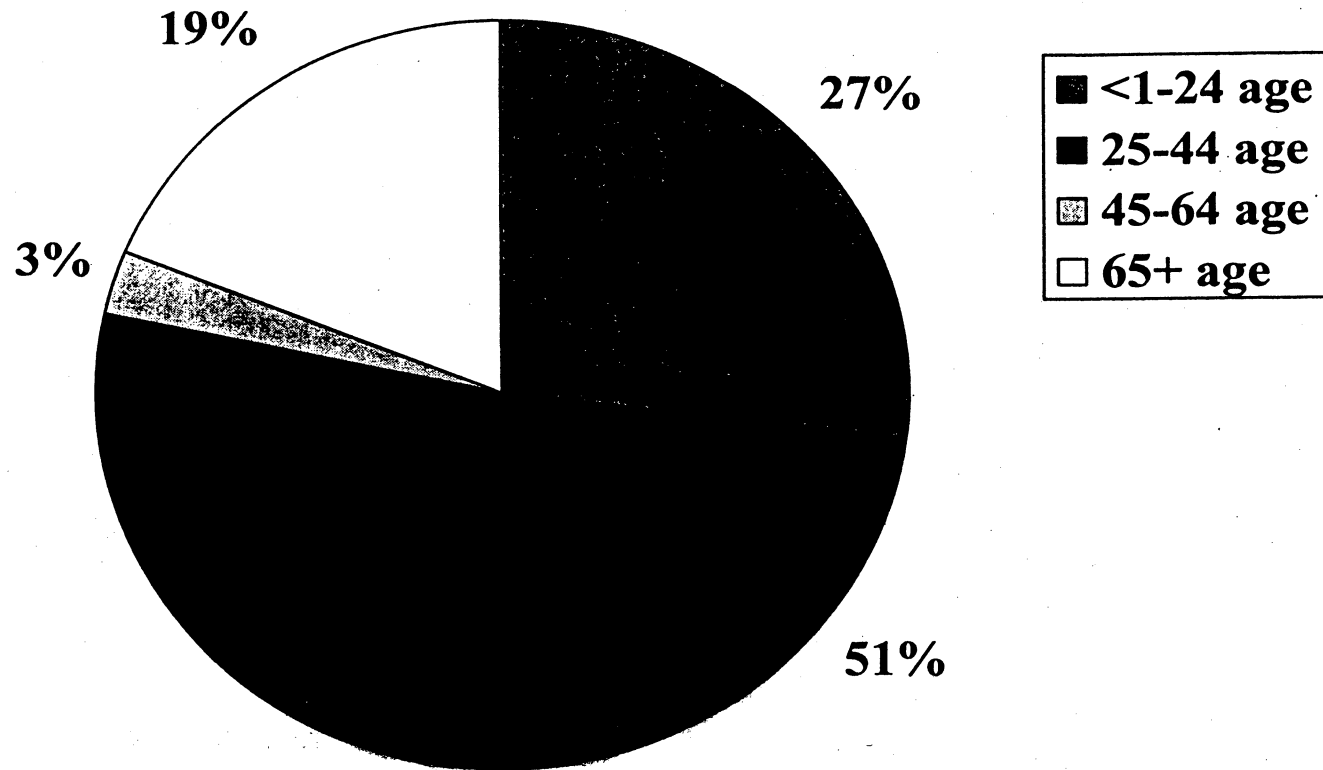
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TB Cases by Age Group

Cambridge: 1997-2000

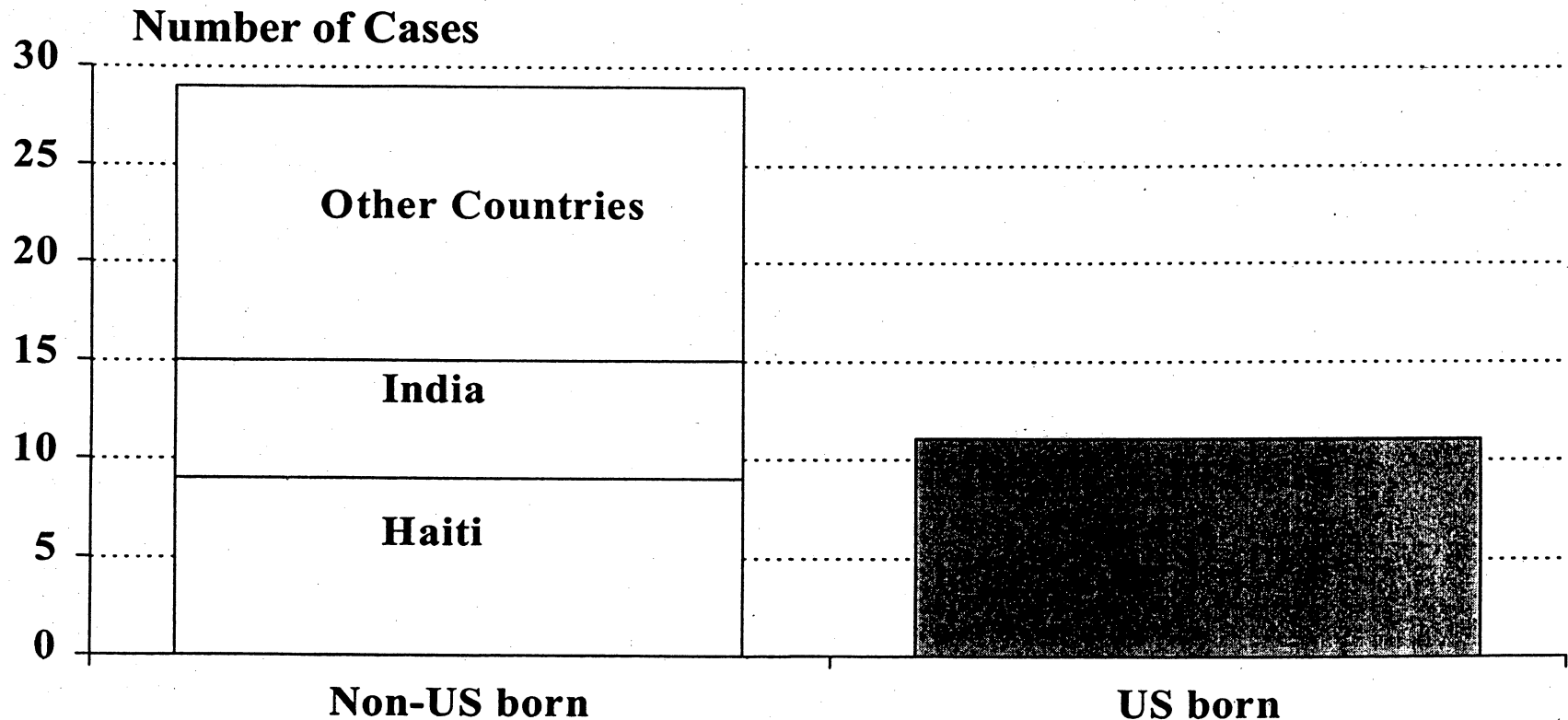


Between 1997 and 2000, 37 TB cases were diagnosed

Source: Division of TB prevention and Control, Mass. DPH

Number of TB Cases by Country of Origin

Cambridge: 1997-2000



Between 1997 and 2000, 37 TB cases were diagnosed;
78% of cases were persons born outside the US and its territory.
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Councillor Davis thanked all attendees.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henrietta Davis', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Henrietta Davis
Chair

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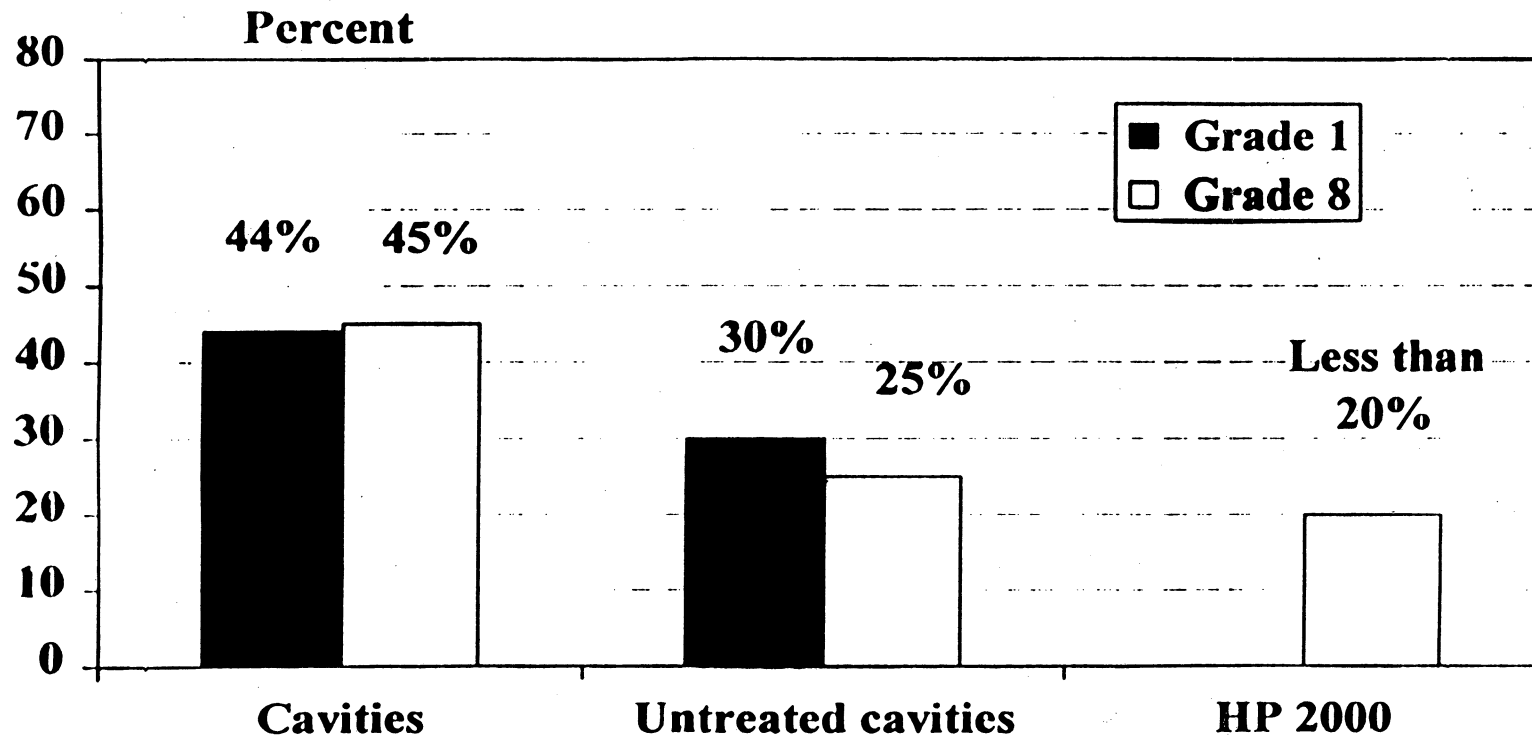
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Percent of Children With Cavities

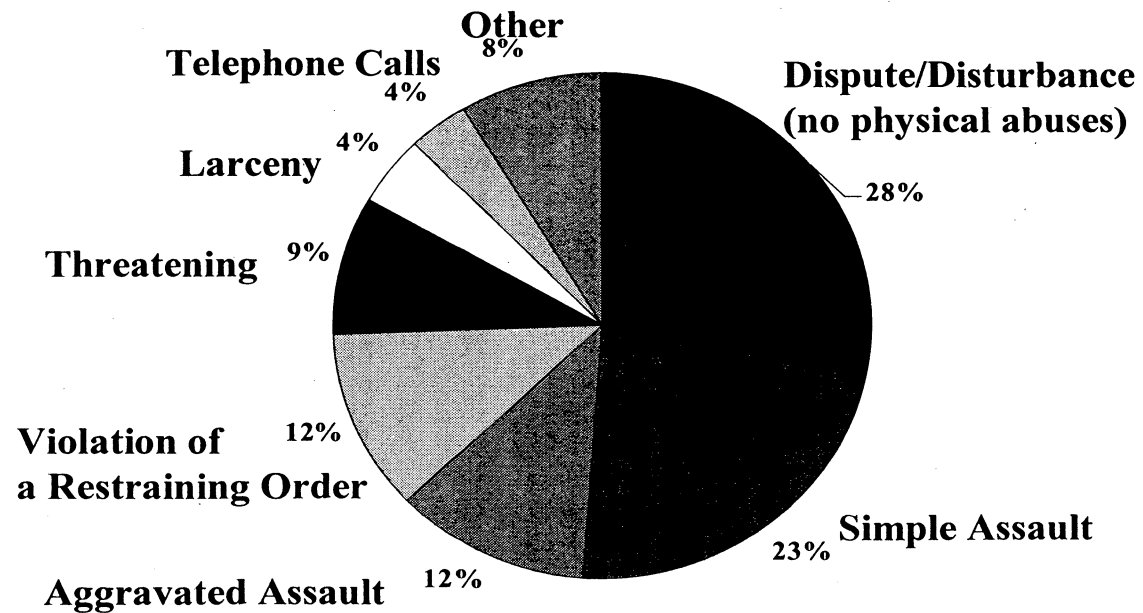
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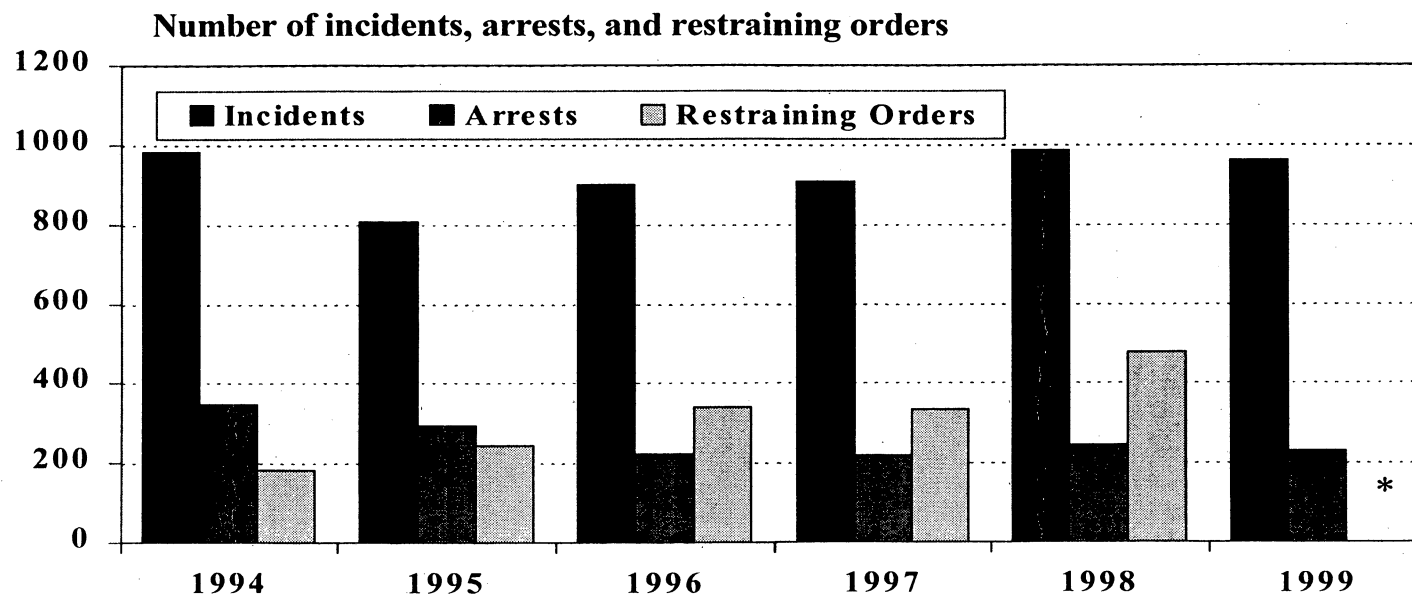
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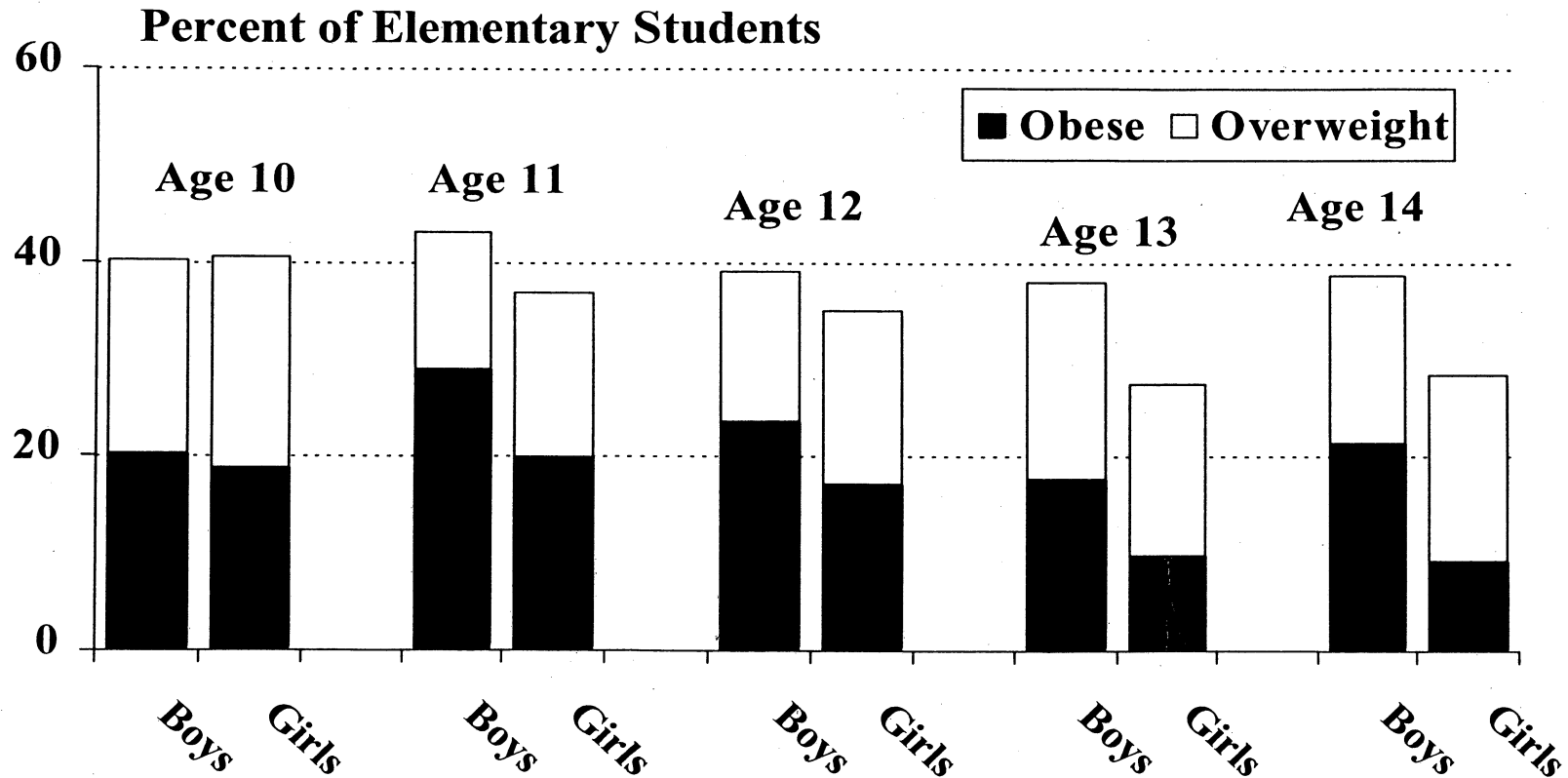


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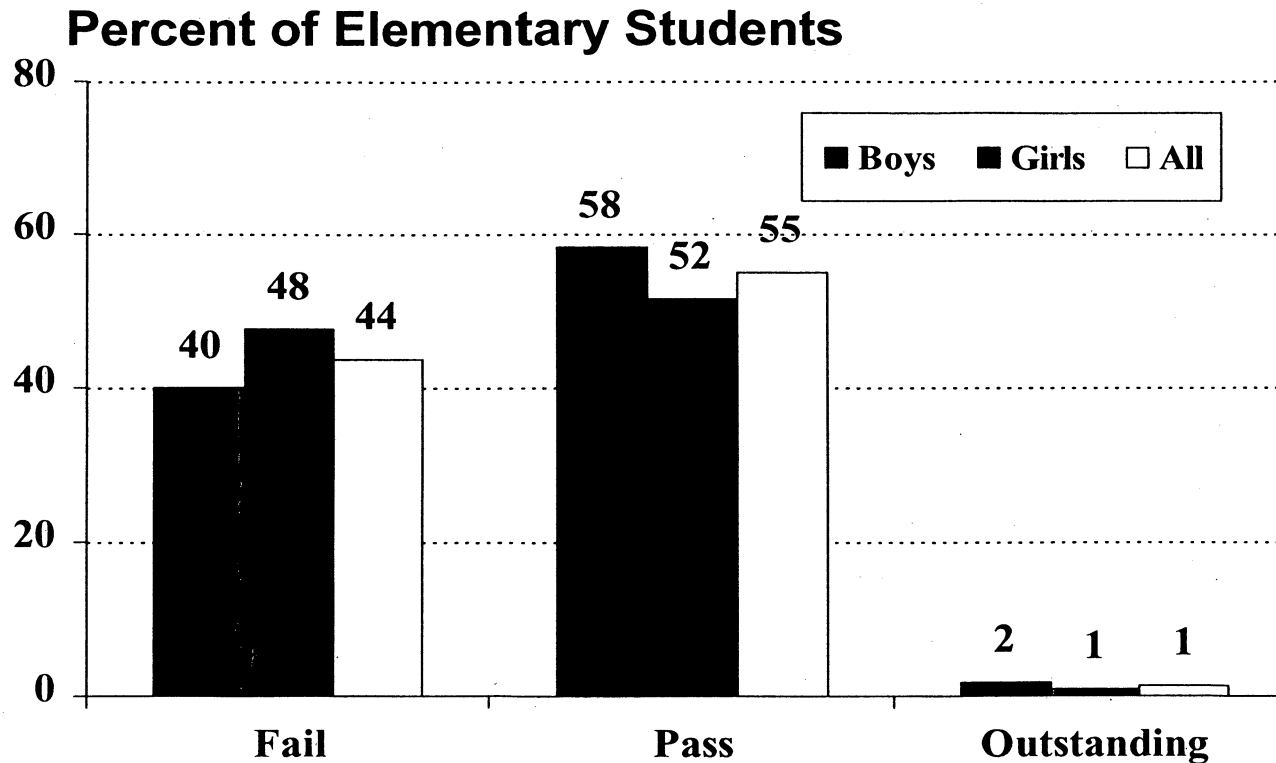


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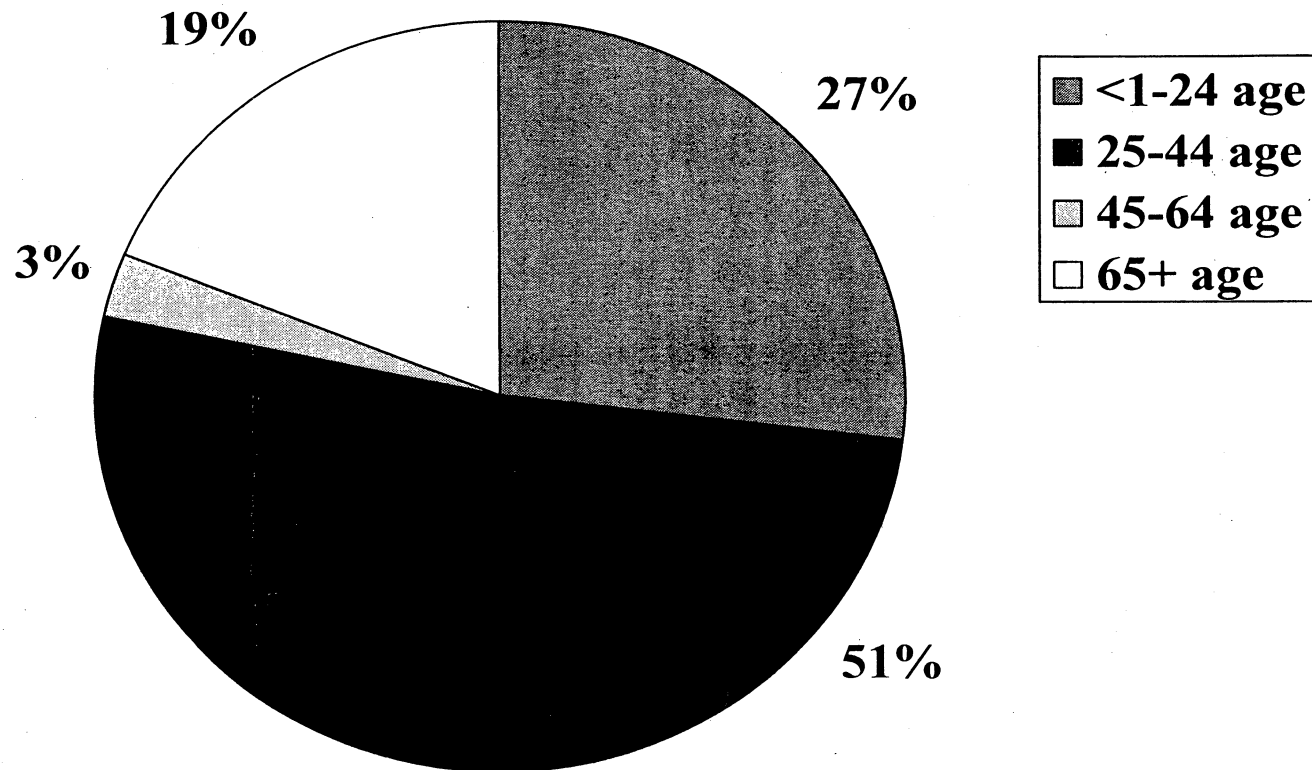


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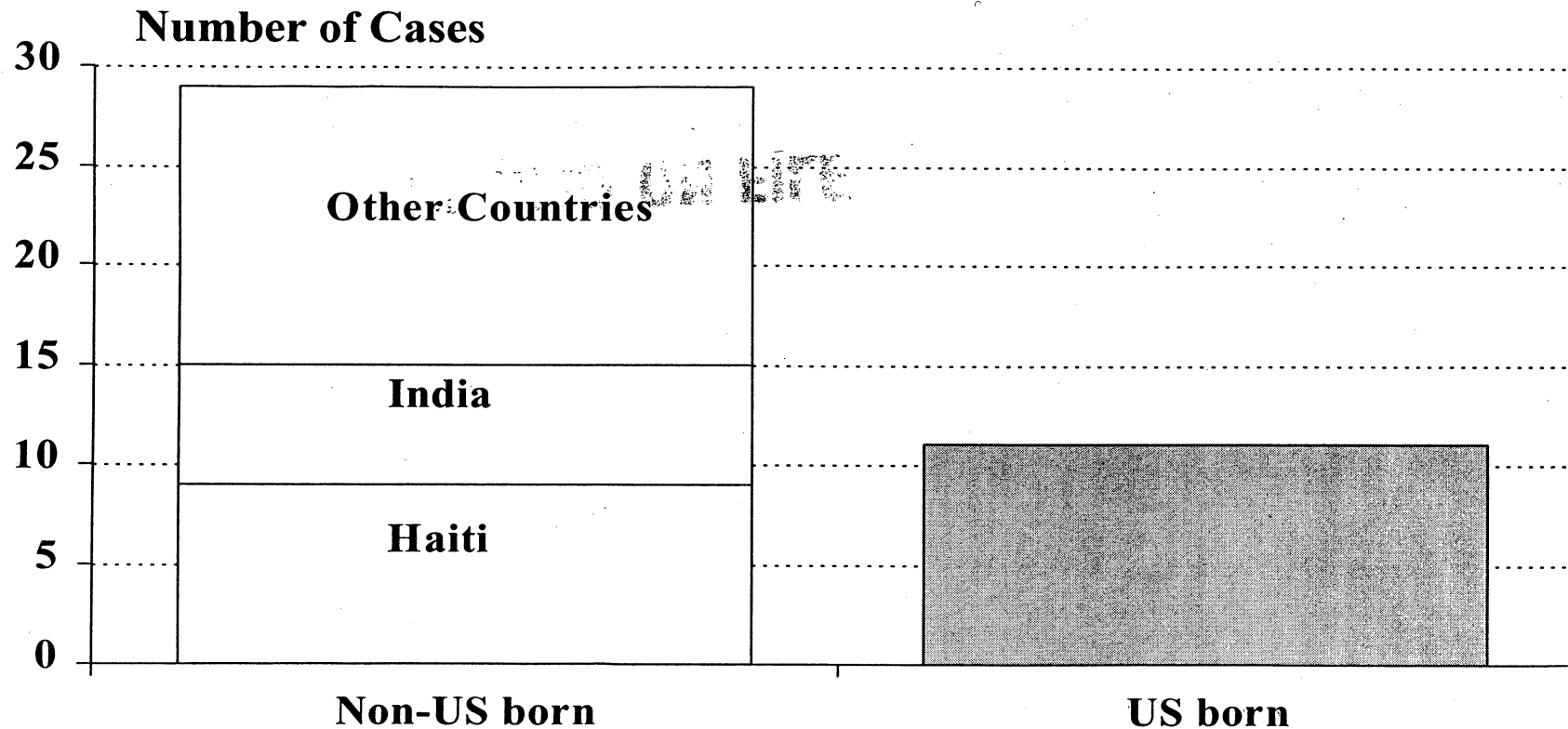


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2105

Committee Report #2

Committee Report from Councillor
Henrietta Davis, Chair of the
Health and Environment
Committee for a meeting held on
April 25, 2001 to discuss the Public
Health Assessment.

In City Council May 14, 2001

Report Accepted

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