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AMERICA/GUATEMALA-Most Guatemalan children are insecure and fear violence

Guatemala City (Agenzia Fides) - There are many Guatemalan children who feel insecure and fear violence as they go to school. According to a recent survey, 8 out of 10 fear theft, bus accidents, dangerous situations. The study, conducted by the private company Vox Latina, examined 817 students, 817 teachers and 253 parents. 35.8% said that fear is caused by the feared gangs and 21.1% from theft. 64.5% of the main attacks on students are verbal, and 25.2% are physical. In addition, 77% of teachers do not know how to react or how to deal with such incidents, since there is no law that protects them. It turns out that 28.4% of teachers have been a victim or know of someone who has suffered harassment by the band, while 11, 6% reported cases of drug smuggling and 28.4% drink alcohol around school premises. Sexual harassment is the less reported violence by the students, only 19.3% declare to be a victim. The lack of confidence in the police in Guatemala is very high, 77% of school children do not feel protected by the National Civil Police, although there is a program called "safe schools". And, when it comes to seeking help, 37.7% had not trust in hospitals or health centers, as opposed to 15.3%. Despite Guatemala is a country notoriously violent and insecure, the schools continue to be a safe space for students. 81,2% of pupils reported that external factors (outside the classroom) are the most dangerous. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 13/12/2011)

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