

# FROM THEFT TO RAPE—ABUSE CONTINUES

In 2005, there was a 19 percent increase in complaints of misconduct over 2004, and a 43 percent increase in substantiated cases. Things got worse in 2006: there was a 38 percent increase in complaints of wrongdoing over 2005, and a 68 percent jump in substantiated claims. In both 2005 and 2006, approximately a third of these cases involved the sexual abuse of minors.

So why isn't this big news? Because the figures apply to New York City school employees, that's why. By the way, these figures show that the rate of substantiated sexual abuse of minors committed by New York City public school workers is approximately three times the rate found among Catholic priests nationwide. Importantly, two-thirds of the school employees of New York City who molest kids are teachers.

Again, none of this will be given the prominence it deserves. There will be no television specials, no new laws passed by state legislators and no cheap-shot jokes aimed at teachers. Remember, in 2005 there were five cases of sexual misconduct confirmed among 42,000 priests. That didn't make much of a stir in the news either, and for the same reason. In other words, when the figures make the public school industry look bad, they're given short shrift by the media. Ditto when the figures don't make the Catholic Church look bad.

Yes, it makes for a bigger story when a priest molests a minor, but what does it say about the media when they treat misconduct by teachers with aplomb? Or consider how they treat a rabbi who molests a minor. The *New York Post* recently did a story about a Brooklyn yeshiva being slapped with its fourth sex lawsuit, the latest involving alleged abuse by a "highly regarded rabbi." It merited four sentences on p. 26. Which was

more coverage than was yielded by the New York *Daily News*, the *New York Times* and *Newsday*, all of which failed to report the story.

As we said to the press, "None of this is a surprise to us—we see stuff like this everyday. But enough is enough."