



# SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY TOOLKIT

A Guide for  
Parents, Schools,  
and Communities



NATIONAL  
CRIME  
PREVENTION  
COUNCIL





The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is a private, nonprofit tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization whose primary mission is to be the nation's leader in helping people keep themselves, their families, and their communities safe from crime. NCPC's strategic plan for 2007 through 2011 is centered on four goals: protect children and youth; partner with government and law enforcement to prevent crime; promote crime prevention and personal safety basics; and respond to emerging crime trends. NCPC publishes books, kits of camera-ready program materials, posters, and informational and policy reports on a variety of crime prevention and community-building subjects. NCPC offers training, technical assistance, and a national focus for crime prevention: it acts as secretariat for the Crime Prevention Coalition of America, more than 400 national, federal, state, and local organizations representing thousands of constituents who are committed to preventing crime. NCPC also sponsors the National Crime Prevention Association, an individual membership association to promote resources and career development to crime prevention practitioners. It hosts two websites: [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org) for adults and [www.mcgruff.org](http://www.mcgruff.org) for children. It operates demonstration programs in schools, neighborhoods, and entire jurisdictions and takes a major leadership role in youth crime prevention and youth service. NCPC manages the McGruff® "Take A Bite Out Of Crime®" public service advertising campaign and the Circle of Respect initiative, which initially focuses on bullying and cyberbullying. NCPC is funded through a variety of government agencies, corporate and private foundations, and donations from private individuals.



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# SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY TOOLKIT

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Parents, Schools,  
and Communities





Dear School Administrator, Teacher, or Counselor:

We are pleased to present you with the second edition of *School Safety and Security Toolkit: A Comprehensive Guide for Schools*. We hope that it will enable you to work together to make our schools safe places in which our children can learn and grow and become the responsible citizens of tomorrow.

Although reports of school shootings dominate the media, we must remember that other less deadly outbreaks of violence take place in schools across the country every day. These events may seem insignificant compared to the horror of the much-publicized shootings, but they are symptoms of problems that should be addressed. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment can serve as the foundation for lethal events in the future, and educators now consider them to be predictors of more serious crimes in schools and elsewhere.

Be Safe and Sound in School (B3S) is an initiative of the National Crime Prevention Council in collaboration with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. It seeks to mobilize parents, policymakers, school officials, and students to take action to prevent violence in our schools by enhancing school safety and security in schools across the nation. The goals of Be Safe and Sound in School are to educate these audiences on the elements of school safety, engage all stakeholders in making schools safer, and facilitate the development of strategic plans that will effectively address each school's unique safety and security concerns.

This toolkit is an easy-to-use guide that will assist administrators in implementing the B3S model in their schools. It includes a step-by-step procedure for assessing school safety and security, forming an action team, identifying problems, holding a forum with stakeholders to brainstorm solutions, developing an action plan and building support for it, and evaluating the results. The appendices provide all the materials you will need to implement this process from surveys to identify the problems to a sample press release and media advisory to publicize your efforts.

We encourage you to fill out the Be Safe and Sound in School registration form in the front of this toolkit. This will enable us to provide you with updates and ideas from other B3S sites.

Our children are our most important resource. Ensuring that they are safe and secure in the schools across our country is our most important task.

Cordially,



Ann M. Harkins  
President and CEO  
National Crime Prevention Council



## Register Your Initiative!

Registering your school with B3S helps us get in touch with updates and ideas from other B3S sites, as well as learn what else you need to make your initiative successful. The form should be completed by the individual who is using the toolkit.

## Be Safe and Sound in School Registration Form

Contact name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us more about the school where this Be Safe and Sound in School initiative will be conducted:

Name of school \_\_\_\_\_

School address \_\_\_\_\_

School website \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students attending the school: \_\_\_\_\_

School setting (check one):     Rural city or town     Urban     Suburban

Grade levels attending the school (circle all that apply):

K    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12

My connection to the school is as (check the most relevant)

Parent                             School counselor                             School resource officer

School principal                             Teacher                             PTA Officer

Other (please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for registering your Be Safe and Sound initiative! Please fold this form so the NCPC address shows, seal it, add a stamp, and drop it in the mail.**

**NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL**  
ATTN: BE SAFE AND SOUND IN SCHOOL  
2345 CRYSTAL DRIVE, SUITE 500  
ARLINGTON, VA 22202-4816



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# Introduction

## School Safety and Security: A Growing Concern

About a mile east of the center of Erie, PA, is a one-story building that was once home to the offices of a paper mill. It is now called the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) Charter School. Striving to make an active contribution to the community and its members, the school dedicates itself to meeting the special education needs of its approximately 320 children who are deemed educationally “at risk.” Unfortunately, in 2006, behavior referrals within the school were as high as 100 per month and the intensive supervision room had as many as 14 referrals each day. Teachers and staff grew increasingly concerned about the bullying, fighting, and overall school climate that hindered their ability to help their students succeed. With the help of the Be Safe and Sound program, the action team outlined its objectives to reduce fighting and bullying in areas such as the hallways and bathrooms and moved forward with concrete activities to address these concerns. Such activities included the installation of a four-camera surveillance system for specific problem areas as well as the implementation of a character development curriculum that stressed respect and responsibility.

Did all of this work pay off? Absolutely! GECAC Charter School experienced a dramatic decrease in disciplinary referrals once the Be Safe and Sound program was fully under way. Referrals involving bathroom areas dropped from 2.7 per day in January to 0.56 per day in May. Similarly, lunchroom referrals fell from 2.4 per day to 0.5 per day. Ultimately, the school achieved a demonstrably safer climate for its students and staff.

Maybe your school hasn't had a crisis that warrants national news coverage, but you've probably become increasingly aware of disturbing incidents that aren't as harmless as they once seemed. Perhaps you've seen graffiti on the bleachers or a broken classroom window. Maybe you've heard that a teacher's car was stolen from the parking lot of a nearby school or that evidence of drug dealing was found at the playground. Even if you haven't noticed anything unusual, it's never too early to start thinking about school safety and security. Preventive action can keep minor problems from turning into serious ones.

Schools are among the safest places for our children, with more victimizations occurring away from school than at school. And yet, in 2005, students ages 12 through 18 were victims of about 1.5 million non-fatal crimes at school, including theft and violent crimes. That same year, about 29

percent of students in grades 9 through 12 reported that someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property.<sup>1</sup> While violence, gangs, and drugs are still present in schools, it's even more likely that students will experience bullying, teasing, or personal property damage and theft during and on the way to and from school. Although such incidents are seemingly minor, they can escalate into crisis situations. Some notable statistics from *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2007* include

- Most school crime is theft, not serious violent crime. In 2005, 33 thefts per 1,000 students occurred at school. Generally, students ages 12 to 18 were more likely to be victims of theft at school than away from school.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2005–06, 86 percent of public schools reported one or more serious violent incidents.<sup>3</sup>
- A higher percentage of middle schools than primary (generally K–5) schools report various types of discipline problems. Additionally, a higher percentage of middle schools than high schools report daily or weekly occurrences of school bullying and sexual harassment.<sup>4</sup>
- During the 2005–06 school year, 48 percent of public schools took serious disciplinary action against a student. Thirty-two percent of schools



reported taking a serious disciplinary action for physical attacks or fights.<sup>5</sup>

- Students are not the only ones affected by school crime. Teachers and other staff members are also intimidated and victimized while at school.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2005, 28 percent of students between the ages of 12 and 18 reported that they had been bullied at least once in the last six months.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2005, more than one-third of the student population had seen hate-related graffiti at school, and 11 percent reported that someone had used hate-related words towards them.<sup>8</sup>

Although it is necessary to address overt safety and security issues, it is also important to note that the perception of crime can be just as debilitating as crime itself. In 2005, 6 percent of students reported that they feared that they would be attacked or harmed at school; 6 percent of students also said that they avoided activities or places within the school because of this fear.<sup>9</sup> The fear of becoming a victim is real and can affect not only a student's social development and well-being but also his or her readiness and ability to learn. Attendance and academic performance are closely

linked to how safe students perceive the school environment to be. It's hard for young people to concentrate on learning when they feel vulnerable, and a climate of fear forces teachers to shift their focus from teaching to policing.

School safety concerns are fast becoming an important part of any dialog about improving school-wide academic performance. Fortunately, educators, like you, have come to realize that the foundation of all learning is safety and security and have begun to take the necessary steps to promote a safe and secure learning environment for all students.

## Notes

1. Rachel Dinkes et al., *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2007* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Center for Education Statistics, 2007), available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008021.pdf>.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.

### Did You Know?

Parent and caregiver involvement is crucial when it comes to creating safer schools. Nearly all parents believe it is important to be involved in their child's education. Most importantly, 68 percent believe that it is important to help plan or implement school activities! Make an effort to engage all parents and caregivers, as you move forward with your B3S program.



# How To Get Involved

Improving the safety and security of your school may seem like a big task; however it is not complicated when you follow a few basic steps. Be Safe and Sound in School (B3S) comprises a seven-step model that encourages schools to establish partnerships among all stakeholders in a collaborative effort to improve school safety and security.

## What This Kit Will Help You Accomplish

Here is an outline of what you'll find in this toolkit.

STEP

**1 Form an Action Team**  
Finding partners who are equally concerned about school safety and security will be important. You'll work to form a Be Safe and Sound in School action team that will include teachers, students, parents, and other community members. This kit will detail the duties and goals of the action team.

**2 Identify Safety and Security Problems**  
The action team will use various research tools to get a clear picture of safety and security risks at the school. NCPC has provided several research tools in this kit.

**3 Hold a School Safety and Security Forum or Focus Group**  
Once the action team has identified a list of school safety and security problems through research, it will convene a larger group of community members in a forum or focus group. Participants will decide which problems need the most attention and will brainstorm strategies for addressing those problems. In this toolkit, NCPC provides an outline and description of this brainstorming process.

**4 Develop an Action Plan**  
Recommendations from the forum or focus group will form the basis for a safety and security action plan. The plan will spell out specific safety and security improvements at the school and how the action team will implement them.

**5 Publicize Your Initiative**  
Your action team will get the word out about its Be Safe and Sound in School initiative and begin follow-through on action plan items. Media coverage of your initiative will build community support for safety and security improvements at the school. This kit provides you with helpful resources such as a sample press release and media advisory.

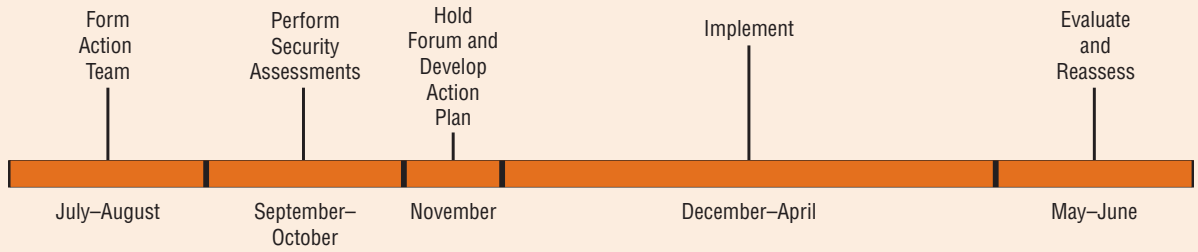
**6 Promote Your Cause**  
Establish relationships and ongoing communication with business leaders and elected officials. This will encourage them to advocate and lobby for your cause and ultimately take your school safety and security efforts to the next level.

**7 Evaluate Success and Revise the Plan**  
Once safety and security improvements have been made at the school, the action team will conduct follow-up research to determine whether the changes are making a difference. This research will help the team make adjustments to the action plan.



## What's the Time Frame?

B3S can be used on an ongoing basis to make school safety and security improvements. Getting an initiative started at your school will take about a year. A typical timeline might look like this:



## Step 1: Form an Action Team

A school safety and security action team is a group dedicated to assessing safety and security threats, developing strategies for action, facilitating improvements, and evaluating outcomes. Your school may already have a safety and security committee or an action team. If not, now is the time to organize one.

To accomplish this, you'll need to build partnerships with other school administrators, staff, counselors, and parents, as well as with the students within your school. Keep in mind that students are vital resources when undertaking a school safety and security action plan as they are most directly affected by the results and can be pivotal in ensuring the continued success of the project if their involvement is encouraged from the onset. If teens have been victims of crime or abuse at school, participating in safety improvements can be empowering and a step toward overcoming their victimization. Students at the high school level are important to include in your efforts to assess and improve school safety and security. When recruiting students for the action team, consider approaching clubs that may have an interest in an element of school safety or classes (such as statistics or art) that can help in analyzing surveys or developing fliers

Other potential recruits for your safety and security action team may include those listed below.

**PTA/PTO officers and other concerned parents**—Research has shown that when parents are involved in any aspect of their children's education, their children do better. Safety is essential to a healthy learning environment and few others would advocate as passionately as a concerned parent. Many parents often have questions or valuable ideas to offer but may feel intimidated by the school system. Send fliers or develop newsletters, and invite parents to your meetings. Encourage their participation in discussions, let them know that their opinions and suggestions are valued and needed.

**Business and community leaders**—Businesses may have access to supplies and resources that they could contribute to your school safety efforts. They are often connected to local, elected policymakers and can advocate for change in your

### Parent Tip: Encourage Parents To Become Involved in Your School Safety Efforts

Only one in three parents has been involved in discussions regarding school safety issues such as bullying or weapons in school. Increasing parental involvement in your school safety efforts must begin with including parents in the conversation.

- Invite parents to meetings about school safety and encourage their participation in the discussion.
- Host a walk-through of the building where parents can learn about your plans for improvement and offer their insight as well.
- Create a discussion forum on your school's website where parents can voice their concerns and suggestions, and receive a response from a school official.

school. Reach out to your local businesses and invite them to events and/or forums and inform them that getting involved in your cause could have a positive impact on their image in the community.

**Law enforcement, school resource officers, and security personnel** are an invaluable asset to any action team as they are often trained on recognizing physical security concerns as well as diffusing conflicts and violent situations. Local police agencies often have officers who are assigned to a particular school or schools. Contact these officers and let them know of your plans and your desire to involve them and use their expertise.



Once formed, the action team should meet on a regular basis. However, it is important to consider each action team member's schedule when deciding meeting times. For example, a parent or school bus driver may not be able to meet until the late evening due to work or other commitments. If you are unable to meet in person, consider a conference call or other meeting alternatives. Try to secure a committed group of about 10 people for the team. Make sure that time

commitments are clear to all action team members. Finally, use the technology available to you to communicate with your team members. You may wish to start an Internet group to post messages, send mass emails, or even post meeting minutes on your school's website.

## Getting Together

The goal of the first meeting will be to get the action team started on collecting research and data about school safety and security. The agenda for your first meeting should look something like this:

### Parent Tip: Fitting School Safety Into Parents' Busy Schedules

Today's parents often have to juggle a variety of commitments, such as varying work schedules and caring for other children and family members. Consequently, these factors tend to limit their involvement in school activities and provide educators with unique challenges to overcome when considering ways in which to engage them. Consider a few of the suggestions below to overcome parent scheduling conflicts.

- Provide alternative ways for parents to get involved. Some parents may not be able to make it to each action team meeting. However, they may be willing to perform at-home tasks such as preparing mailings or posting fliers in their neighborhoods for a school safety event.
- Create a drop-box or email account in which parents can submit their concerns or suggestions.
- Encourage parents to bring their families to your school safety event. Consider planning and conducting activities that will occupy very young children while parents attend the event.

1. Welcome
2. Introduce attendees/participants (and explain what brings each person to the table)
3. Provide an overview of the Be Safe and Sound in School steps in this toolkit
4. Clarify mission/purpose of B3S action team and discuss a timeline for program implementation
5. Discuss potential threats to school safety and security: Are there any lighting concerns? Are hallways monitored between classes to prevent fights?
6. Identify research methods: Would it be best to conduct a survey? What about a focus group?
7. Identify available assets and resources already in place (See Appendix A for helpful inventory guide)
8. Discuss whether additional members should be recruited for the team
9. Set time, date, and location for next meeting and share that the meeting will focus on how to assess concerns
10. Adjourn





## Tips for Your First Safety and Security Action Team Meeting

- Be sure your meeting time doesn't conflict with other important events.
- Plan to keep the meeting fairly brief—less than 60 minutes is enough time.
- Share the work so that people work together from the beginning. Put one person in charge of organizing refreshments. Another can be in charge of setting up the room. Someone else can take notes and write up minutes.
- Allow people to share their concerns, but don't get caught up in a gripe session.
- Make sure that everyone, especially student members, has an opportunity to speak.
- Make clear decisions. Remember, you are there as a group to organize your safety and security campaign, not just to chat.
- List the next steps and who will take them. Assign deadlines for these tasks.
- Build some checkpoints into your timeline so that expectations and deadlines can be adjusted as needed.
- Agree on a date, time, and place for the meeting and the subjects that will be covered.



## Step 2: Identify Safety and Security Problems

Formal research will help the action team confirm or dispute suspected safety and security problems. This process of identifying areas for improvement is called **needs assessment**. In conducting a thorough school safety and security needs assessment, there are three kinds of information your action team should obtain:

- **Existing data:** Statistics about school safety and security that are readily available through the school, police department, or other community groups
- **Survey data:** Opinions about school safety and security collected from students, faculty, and parents
- **Assessment data:** Observations about safety and security threats resulting from a thorough assessment of the school's physical environment

Note that all research must be done in accordance with state laws and the policies of your local board of education. For example, you may not be able to conduct student surveys without first getting signed permission slips from parents and approval from the school district.

### Existing Data

Statistics collected by the school system may be useful in identifying safety and security problems. Your action team should consider collecting information surrounding

- Violations of state and federal laws on school property, including homicide, robbery, sexual assault, drugs, assault, theft, auto theft, arson, and vandalism
- Disruptive incidents on school property (which may or may not be in violation of the law); these include fights, students “acting out,” and other incidents that interrupt the flow of a school day or event
- Accidents or injuries involving students and staff

### PLANNING CHECKLIST

Before your action team begins its research, it will be helpful to consider these questions:

- How and where will you obtain existing data? Who will be in charge of this?
- Who will analyze the data?
- Who will organize the survey process? How and when will surveys be administered?
- Who will tally the survey results?
- Who will secure an outside assessor for the security assessment?
- If an outside assessor cannot be secured, who will conduct the basic security assessment included in this guide?
- Who will compare different sets of data and identify patterns pointing to specific problems?
- Who will be in charge of preparing a report of the research findings for use at the school safety and security forum or focus group?



- Attendance and graduation rates
- Levels of student participation in extracurricular activities

Statistics tracking incidents that occur beyond school grounds may also be relevant to school safety. For example, a high number of juvenile drug arrests in the community suggests drug use is a potential problem at school.

What do you do with all these data? In reviewing incident-related data (such as the number of assaults, drug arrests, or cases of vandalism at school), you'll want to look for patterns. Do incidents all seem to happen in one part of the building? At a specific time of day? On the same day of the week? During basketball season? Just before the end of the school year? Are the perpetrators students or nonstudents? The diverse members of the safety action team will have valuable insights into different facets of the school's environment and should review existing data to pull out any patterns.

If the school hasn't already done so, it is helpful to log incidents into a database that can be sorted by

- Kind of activity
- Date and time of activity
- Location of activity
- Injuries, if any
- Property damage
- Disciplinary action taken

Categorizing data this way will allow your action team to compare incidents by date, time, place, or the nature of the problem. This will make it easier to identify specific patterns that deserve attention.

## Safety and Security Surveys

Safety and security surveys administered to students, school staff, and parents are another helpful tool for assessing safety and security threats (both real and perceived). Survey research reveals information about the school climate—the social and emotional atmosphere inside the school. Surveys might ask respondents to indicate specific areas of the school where they feel unsafe or ask for their

opinions about which types of threats (for example, theft, bullying, or drugs) are the most serious at the school. Surveys can be particularly helpful because they monitor *feelings*, not just physical activities. Keep in mind that it may not be possible to survey every student in the school. In this case, the safety action team can help identify a sample group of students representing all grade levels and the diversity of the student body. Surveys should be administered not only at the beginning of the Be Safe and Sound in School initiative but also after safety and security improvements have been made. As part of the evaluation process, use surveys to determine whether the changes are making a difference. Surveys for students, school staff, and parents can be found in Appendix B. Instructions for administering and evaluating the surveys is provided below.

To gain a clear picture of the school environment, you'll need a variety of perspectives. Consequently you will need to use different surveys for each audience and the approach that you use to obtain surveys may also vary.

### Student Survey

Tell students that an action team has been formed to improve safety and security at the school and it includes student, staff, and community representatives. Explain that the action team values their input regarding existing safety concerns. Assure students that the survey is completely anonymous and that they are not even to put their first names on their papers. Also, be sure to emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers—just the answer each student thinks is best. The survey provided in this toolkit is for high school and middle school students and is designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete. (See Appendix B)

The person administering the survey should ask students to look at it before they begin filling it out to be sure they understand the questions. Questions that are unclear should be identified and answered before students begin. Students may ask how certain questions are meant to be interpreted. In most cases, the “meaning of the question” is whatever it means to the person responding.



Once student surveys are completed, the person administering the survey should circulate a large, sealable envelope or drop box to collect the surveys. The envelope should be marked only with the name of the teacher, the room, the class period (if applicable), the date, and the number of students present.

### Administrators, Faculty, and Staff Survey

It's probably easiest to administer this survey in a staff meeting—again, taking no more than 15 minutes. A process similar to that used with students usually works best. It is important to explain that students and parents are also being surveyed and that all surveys will be handled anonymously and reported only by groups.

### Parent Survey

Reaching parents can be difficult. One way to get input from parents is through a back-to-school night, where every parent is handed a survey and asked to complete it to help improve school safety. Surveys can also be administered at sporting event or other school events. A table set up near the entrance or refreshment stand will be visible to parents.

A sign should state that surveys will be handled anonymously and that students and school staff are being asked similar questions with equal anonymity. Provide a box in which people can drop their completed surveys.

Another approach is to send parent surveys home with students, along with a postage-paid envelope for parents to mail their anonymous, completed surveys back to the school.

### Evaluation

Before administering the survey, you may want to check with your school district's computer technologist to see if surveys can be posted online for electronic completion and tabulation. If that's not an option, a spreadsheet can be set up to allow for question-by-question tallying of answers.

With the above method yes/no questions can be tallied and the percentage of each response calculated. For multiple-choice or scaled ("very safe," "safe," "somewhat unsafe," "very unsafe") questions, numerical values must be assigned. For example, "very safe" would equal four points, "very unsafe" would be one point, and the intermediate answers would be three and two points. In this case, you would add up the values and divide by the total number of questions to get an average score. In the above chart for example, the average score for question five is 3. For the same question, we can also see that 66.7 percent of respondents felt "very safe."

Prepare a report that assigns values to the responses to each question. It will be helpful to show student, teacher/staff, and parent responses to similar questions in a table. This will highlight areas of agreement and differences.

### Safety and Security Assessment

A safety and security assessment of the physical school environment is an invaluable tool. Conducted on-site, a thorough assessment will take note of locations that may be conducive to crime,

Example:

Respondent	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q5	Q6
#1	Yes	Yes	No	Very Safe – 4	Safe – 3
#2	Yes	No	No	Very Safe – 4	Safe – 3
#3	No	No	No	Very Unsafe – 1	Safe – 3
<b>N = 3</b>	<b>66.7% = Y</b>	<b>66.7% = N</b>	<b>100% = N</b>	<b>Avg. = 9/3 = 3</b>	<b>Avg. = 9/3 = 3</b>
				<b>66.7% = 4 = or Very Safe</b>	<b>66.7% = 4 = or Very Safe</b>



as well as any gaps in security equipment and procedures. The assessment should be conducted by the action team with a crime prevention expert who understands state laws and regulations related to school safety and security. To find a qualified assessor, contact your state school safety center, department of education, or local law enforcement department or college campus and ask for someone trained in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). You can also contact a local chapter of ASIS International, the international organization for security professionals, to see if free assistance is available (visit [www.asisonline.org](http://www.asisonline.org)).

What if your action team is unable to secure an outside expert to perform the security assessment? Appendix C includes a basic school safety and security assessment that is based on the principles of CPTED and that can be conducted by the action team. Detailed instructions on how to perform the assessment are also provided.

## The Principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design facilitates and enhances school safety and security by ensuring that the physical layout and organization of the school encourage positive student behavior. The principles of CPTED center on four areas: 1) access control, 2) surveillance, 3) territorial reinforcement, and 4) maintenance. These principles can easily and effectively be applied to schools. For example, schools can

### 1) Practice access control by

- Having a single access point of entry for visitors
- Planting or installing doors, shrubs, fences, and gates that discourage criminal access to the building
- Acquiring physical and mechanical means of ensuring access control

### 2) Reinforce surveillance by

- Ensuring clear lines of sight by removing unnecessary obstacles and trimming vegetation

- Limiting hiding places by raising signs off the ground, lowering bushes, etc.
- Installing convex mirrors in dark or secluded areas

### 3) Reinforce territory by

- Defining the edges of school property with tree plantings or fences to emphasize that the school is not a public-access space
- Individualizing areas of the school (e.g., arts department, science department) to promote boundaries or “ownership” and pride in the school as well as to make it easier to identify unauthorized individuals
- Posting signs that identify the school building and areas within the school

### 4) Maintain a safe environment by

- Keeping up good maintenance; a clean, well-cared-for school fosters school pride and orderliness
- Signaling that an owner, manager, or neighbor is watching out for the school property
- Keeping facilities in working order to promote positive activities

## CPTED and Your School's Physical Security

Security measures reduce the risk of crime and school violence by enabling the school administration to control and monitor access to any area of the facility. In facilities where there is a history of crime, physical security enhancements help to “harden targets,” sending the message that it will be harder to commit a crime or act of violence at the school. Target hardening includes installing video cameras, metal detectors, or alarm systems. Security technologies can increase detection and delay or slow a perpetrator’s progress, but they are not sufficient in themselves to reduce crime and violence. To ensure the security of students, faculty, and staff, schools should

- Require visitors to sign in or show proper identification



- Lock unmonitored doors from the outside at all times to prevent unauthorized persons or items from entering the building unnoticed
- Monitor students entering and exiting the school property
- Check that all doors have high security locks or electronic access control units (this applies especially to closets that have private information or hazardous materials, outside doors, and basements)
- Verify that electronic access control units are protected from unauthorized mechanical override with secure key bypass using patented control of duplication of keys
- Ensure that deadlocks are not accessible from the inside of the restroom
- Install sheet steel covers on both sides of back and basement doors
- Prevent doors from being pried open by ensuring that door frames and hinges are properly maintained
- Secure all windows
- Change locks or re-key cylinders upon change of staff or administration
- Use motion-sensitive lights outside
- Add lighting to dark places around the building, and cut back shrubs so light can penetrate
- Discourage violence by ensuring stairwells and out-of-the-way corridors are well lighted
- Equip the receptionist with a panic button for emergencies, a camera with a monitor at another location, and a high security lock on the front door that can be controlled from the desk
- Secure identification badges, office keys, and codes and develop a process for reporting lost or missing badges and keys
- Develop a formal documentation policy that defines when documents should be destroyed and how

For nontechnical, nonvendor-specific information on security technologies, consult *The Appropriate and Effective Use of Security Technologies in U.S. Schools: A Guide for Schools and Law Enforcement Agencies*, a research report from the National Institute of Justice. It provides information on

- Security products
- Strengths, weaknesses, and expected effectiveness of these products in schools
- Costs of products—installation, operation, maintenance, manpower, and training expenses
- Related legal issues

The report covers video surveillance (cameras, video recording equipment), metal detectors (walk-through, hand-held scanners, x-ray baggage scanners), entry control technologies, and alarm devices. For more information, download or view the report online at [www.ncjrs.org/school/home.html](http://www.ncjrs.org/school/home.html).

## Interpreting the Data

Once you have obtained all statistical, survey, and assessment data, combine the results of these findings and one of three things may happen:

1. The three kinds of data all point toward the same problems. In this case, the action team's focus will be clear.
2. The three kinds of data disagree; two data sets indicate a pattern that the third data set doesn't fit. If this happens, the action team should question whether the data are consistent or somehow distorted. For example, the school may have had one isolated incident that created a lot of fear—even if the incident was minor—that may be affecting survey responses indicating how people feel inside the school. Chances are the two data sets that are in agreement point toward the areas you really need to focus on. But just to be sure, you might want to share your data with an expert or two. The school should have access to experienced research analysts to help with this. Also, your police or sheriff's department should be able to connect you to experts specializing in crime analysis. If not, contact a local college or university to see if a staff member there may be able to provide assistance.
3. The three kinds of data all conflict. If all three data sources (existing data, surveys, and security assessments) fail to identify one clear and



persistent problem, the action team should discuss and determine which issues identified and supported by at least one data source are a priority for the school. If, for example, surveys show that fear is rampant throughout the school, yet that finding is not supported by other data, then fear is a real problem nonetheless and the action team may deter-

mine that it is a primary issue that they wish to address.

Once the action team has reviewed all the data and identified the school's safety and security problems, the team should prepare a report to present to students, parents, school staff, and community members in preparation for the school safety and security forum. The report should clearly present the issues facing the school, providing data and research as support.





## Step 3: Brainstorm Solutions

Once your research and analysis are complete, the action team should invite additional education and community representatives to participate in a school safety and security forum or focus group. This process will be devoted to prioritizing the most critical safety and security problems and then figuring out what to do about them. Inviting other stakeholders to participate will help the action team view its research more objectively. Outside participants will also bring additional expertise and ideas to the table during brainstorming sessions.

### Should a Focus Group or Forum Be Held?

As you approach the task of brainstorming solutions, you may want to consider various ways of collecting input from members of the community or other stakeholders. Two of the ways this can be accomplished are through either a focus group or a community forum. A **focus group** would gather a small group together to discuss the school safety issues and solutions. This group would be composed of representatives from larger groups such as parents, the student body, business leaders, etc. In contrast, a community **forum** would consist of the larger public and provide a medium for open discussion and voicing of opinions and solutions. There are pros and cons to each approach that should be considered when deciding how your action team wishes to proceed.

#### Focus Group

##### Pros

- The smaller environment may help the action team better understand each group's perspective.
- It is comparatively easy to conduct.
- It is easier to encourage and direct group interaction.

##### Cons

- You cannot generalize the opinions of the community based on the small sample.
- Some participants may feel uncomfortable acting as representatives and may not voice their opinions as readily as others.
- Group discussions can be difficult to steer and control.

#### Forum

##### Pros

- Forums allow the action team to invite a greater number of community members.
- They may generate more ideas for solutions to problems, due to the number of participants.
- They can be used to entice the media to get involved in the project early on, especially if there appears to be strong community support.

##### Cons

- Due to the size of the group, the discussion may be difficult to control or keep on track.
- It may be difficult to get a large number of community members to participate, due to location, time, and other commitments.
- If complaints are high, it may be difficult to keep the forum from turning into a gripe session.

### When and Where Should the Forum or Focus Group Be Held?

The school is probably the best location for a forum or focus group. Participants can meet in the school auditorium or gymnasium for the opening and closing sessions. The brainstorming groups can meet in separate classrooms, which will cut down on noise. The action team should provide some means for brainstorming groups to record their ideas, such as flip charts and markers.

### Who Should Participate?

At the very least, your forum or focus group should include groups that each member of your action team represents (e.g., school administrators, faculty and support staff, students, parents, etc.).





## PLANNING CHECKLIST

In preparing for the school safety and security forum or focus group, your Be Safe and Sound in School action team should ask the questions below:

- Who should be invited to participate in the forum/focus group? How will candidates be invited? Who will issue invitations and follow up?
- When is the deadline for participant confirmation? Do you have backup candidates in mind in case your first choices are unavailable?
- Where will the forum or focus group be held? Who will be in charge of securing a location?
- Who will organize refreshments?
- Who will organize supplies, including flip charts and markers (or chalk), paper and pens?
- Who will open and adjourn the forum or focus group?
- Who will be in charge of disseminating the report of research findings to participants in advance of the event?
- Who will organize the participants into brainstorming groups of no more than ten?
- Who will facilitate brainstorming at the forum or focus group? Who is in charge of lining up facilitators and ensuring that they are familiar with the problem-solving process that will be used?
- Who will be in charge of sending thank-you letters and a follow-up report to participants after the session is over?

You may also want to invite other community members such as business leaders, law enforcement officers, and public health professionals. Think about people in the community who have a valuable perspective on school safety and security, as well as the ability to influence public action, opinion, and policy decisions. For example, you may want to invite

- Public health and mental health professionals
- Local emergency service and healthcare providers
- Local business owners and Chamber of Commerce members
- Adult trainers specializing in group processes or conflict resolution or youth trained in peer mediation
- Elected officials such as city council members and the mayor
- Local faith-based leaders
- Law enforcement personnel
- Juvenile and family court judges or other juvenile justice personnel
- Leaders of neighborhood crime watch units and crime prevention groups
- Staff from your state-level school safety center (see Resources) or department of education
- Security specialists (contact ASIS to request pro bono assistance; see Resources)
- Members of the media

### Inviting Stakeholders

Once you've established a list of potential forum or focus group participants, designate an action team member to get in touch with each group or organization. Discuss how each stakeholder will be approached and what will be said. Set a deadline for determining each group's interest in participating. The forum or focus group should either be a



### Parent Tip: Effectively Communicate as Parents Prefer

Telephone and email communication is preferred by 54 percent and 53 percent (respectively) of parents as opposed to online or mailed newsletters. As you begin to prepare for your forum or focus group, ensure that you explore new ways of disseminating information about your surveys and inviting parents to your events.

- Send ecard invitations to your forum or school safety event.
- Make telephone calls instead of sending information home with children. This can be done through an automated message left on parents' answering machines.

half-day event or a series of half-day events, depending on how much research you are asking participants to review. Make sure potential participants understand how much time they will need to commit when you issue invitations. After participants are confirmed, send each one an overview of the major safety and security risks they will be asked to consider. Provide relevant findings from any surveys or security assessments you've conducted. Do this at least two weeks before the date of the forum or focus group to give participants time to review the material.

### Facilitating the Forum or Focus Group

To keep the discussion running smoothly, your action team will need to secure facilitators who are experienced in leading strategy-building or problem-solving sessions.

A facilitator will lead the discussion group and coordinate the work of the group as well as help guide the discussion. It is important to note that

facilitators are not expected to be content experts, and may not have all the answers.

The facilitator may be a school administrator, a businessperson, or someone from a local nonprofit organization. The key here is objectivity. Avoid having action team members' act as facilitators; they may find it difficult to leave their own views and biases out of the discussion.

If you are holding a forum and the group is quite large, you should divide the forum into smaller groups of no more than ten people for the brainstorming sessions. The small groups can work concurrently and report back to the larger group. Determine in advance how forum or focus group participants will be assigned to groups, making sure that the expertise of participants is spread out among the groups. For example, you won't want to have several law enforcement officers working in the same small group. Each small brainstorming group should have its own facilitator.

Your facilitators should use a simple, effective, problem-solving model to guide participants in prioritizing safety and security concerns at the school and discussing potential solutions. Because you've sent out a preliminary research report, participants should arrive with an understanding of the problems your action team wants to address. However, it will be a good idea to go over that data one more time before the brainstorming process begins. Once brainstorming is under way, participants will be asked to prioritize safety and security problems, identify potential barriers, and then discuss how to overcome those barriers to develop workable solutions to the most critical problems.

The agenda for a successful school safety and security brainstorming session might look something like this:

1. Welcome
2. Introduce action team, forum/focus group participants, and facilitators
3. Provide brief overview of the Be Safe and Sound in School campaign
4. Clarify goals and ground rules for the forum
5. Review safety assessment data
6. Provide overview of problems and



problem-solving process

7. Break into brainstorming groups
8. Prioritize problems (30 minutes)
9. Brainstorm and prioritize barriers (90 minutes)
10. Brainstorm and prioritize solutions (90 minutes)
11. Brainstorm potential resources (30 minutes)
12. Reconvene as a forum

### Prioritize Problems

Action team members will present problems that have been identified by the school safety and security assessments and other research. The forum participants should identify and prioritize the top five problems.

### Identify Barriers

Barriers are issues or activities that prevent us from effectively addressing the problems. Barriers represent a diagnosis of what's at the heart of a problem, i.e., what prevents progress toward a safer, more secure school. Participants should brainstorm and prioritize three barriers related to each of the top five identified problems.

For example:

Problem Statement	Barrier Statement	Strong Solution Statement	Weak Solution Statement
<i>Example 1:</i> Multiple thefts have occurred inside the school this year.	It is impossible to distinguish between current students, former students, and other visitors to the school building, so it's hard to know who is stealing.	The assistant principal and school resource officer will establish a check-in station to record visitors to the school and give them ID badges.	Get ID badges.
<i>Example 2:</i> Survey data show that both students and teachers perceive shoving and verbal abuse as a major problem in school hallways.	Students won't report individuals who have pushed or teased them because they are afraid of being teased more or beaten up.	Create a drop box so students can anonymously report bullying incidents. The counselor will check the drop box daily and follow up with a report.	Tell students to report.

### Identify Solutions

To make this exercise work as a tool for developing a concrete action plan, participants should provide solution statements that address specific barriers that have been identified. The idea is that once barriers are removed, resources and programs will be identified easily. **Solution statements should be as specific as possible.** Solution statements should clearly identify the following:

- What is the activity required?
- What is the outcome hoped for from the activity?
- What needs to be accomplished?
- Who should do it?
- Why (if it is not obvious)?

Remember that the people developing the action plan after the forum or focus group may not have been present in each group, so the solutions should be easy for them to understand and should be written in objective form (specifying an action or objective that can be accomplished within a certain time frame).

After the forum/focus group is adjourned, take the time to clearly record each problem statement, its barrier and solution statements, and potential



resources. Use a separate sheet of paper for each problem, and record only the prioritized statements (see example at right). This small step will save a lot of time for the action team and greatly assist in the development of objectives for the school safety and security action plan.

#### *Identify Resources*

Participants will also brainstorm potential resources to identified solutions. When the brainstorming portion of the meeting concludes and participants reconvene, action team members should thank participants for their insights and explain that the action team will be using their ideas to formulate a school safety and security action plan. The action plan will recommend specific school safety and security improvements, with instructions on how the improvements can be accomplished. If you want to recruit additional action team members, this is a good time to ask if any of the participants are interested in a hands-on role.

#### **Problem 1**

Barrier 1:

Barrier 2:

Barrier 3:

Solution 1:

Solution 2:

Solution 3:

Potential Resources:



## Step 4: Develop an Action Plan

Your Be Safe and Sound in School action team should reconvene after the school safety and security forum. The solutions identified by the forum will serve as the basis for the action plan. But before you start working on the action plan, take a moment to celebrate the team’s accomplishments thus far!

### Developing the Plan

The action plan should identify the safety and security improvements you intend to pursue and how you’ll pursue them. If the forum had many brainstorming groups, the action team will have a large amount of information to consider. Start by looking at the problems prioritized by each group. Problems that ranked high in importance, or which multiple groups selected, should be considered priority problems.

As a group, create a succinct, specific statement of what change you want to see around that issue. This will be your goal. For example, if a priority issue is fights in the school cafeteria, a goal statement might be, “By the end of the school year, we want to reduce the number of fights that occur in the cafeteria.” Next, look at the prioritized barriers and solution statements that were developed and narrow the list to a manageable size. You may find that groups came up with similar solutions that can be combined.

If the forum has recommended solutions that are not feasible, the action team will need to make

### Parent Tip: Make Use of Parents’ Skills

As you begin to develop your action plan, remember that some parents may be exceptional at organizing, planning, and implementing activities. Make sure to recognize and tap into these abilities as you begin assigning the tasks for your action plan.

a few judgment calls. Your group should use the ideas generated at the forum to identify a few projects that can help you meet your goal. These are your objectives. For example, to reduce fighting in the cafeteria, your objectives might be

- Purchase rope barriers to guide students through the lunch line in a more orderly manner
- Recruit lunch room monitors to increase supervision

### PLANNING CHECKLIST

Here are some important questions to consider in developing the action plan.

- Which suggested solutions and activities are most feasible?
- Are there action team members who have contacts or professional expertise that will help move specific plan strategies forward?
- Have other schools in your area addressed similar safety and security problems with similar programs? Do they have insights to share?
- Who will be in charge of preparing the action plan and distributing the document to action team members as well as forum participants?
- Who will serve as the lead coordinator on action plan implementation?



- Establish a peer mediation program to give students a nonviolent way to resolve problems

Once you have your goals and objectives, you can develop action plans for implementing your activi-

ties. Identify specific tasks, people, deadlines, and anticipated outcomes. As a courtesy, send copies of the completed action plan to forum participants. See a sample action plan below.

Goal/Problem to Address:			
By June 2008, Jones High School will reduce/eliminate fighting in the cafeteria.			
Objective/Activity to implement:			
Recruit lunch room monitors			
Action Steps to Completeness Activity	Who Will Take Action	Deadlines	Outcome
1. Select students to be lunch room monitors	Mary	November 2010	Empower students to take an active role in solving their problem and improving the environment
2. Train lunch room monitors	John	January 2011	Provide students with the necessary skills to detect and intervene when problems arise

See Appendix D for an action planning chart and Appendix E for an example of an action plan.

### A Note About Funding

If you're planning to implement safety and security strategies that require a lot of money, work to identify financial resources within the local school system. These might include building funds or money from the board of education. If internal funding is not available, you may need to research alternative funding sources in your community and state. Locally based foundations and corporations (or local offices of national corporations) frequently have funds set aside for community projects that local groups can access. Local and state government (and possibly federal agencies) may also make funds available through departments of community action, school safety, drug prevention, public safety, neighborhood revitalization, and economic development.

Check the library for information on funding sources in your community. The library may also have special resources such as *The Foundation Directory*, which lists thousands of grants nationwide. (You can subscribe online at <http://fconline.fdncenter.org/>.) The Chamber of Commerce, the economic development office, and your state or federal legislators may also have some excellent suggestions about and how to secure financial backing. See Step 6: Promote Your Cause to learn more about approaching businesses for funding.



## Step 5: Publicize Your Initiative

You've got a safety and security action plan, and you're moving ahead. Great! Now here's a way to create support for your efforts: publicize your Be Safe and Sound in School initiative and action plan! There are several reasons for publicizing your action team's efforts:

**Passion is contagious.** Media coverage may get the attention of other community experts and volunteers who can help you address your safety and security objectives more effectively and efficiently.

**Positive public image.** Community members will form a more positive view of the school when they see its desire for safety and commitment to creating a safer environment for children.

**Partners.** Broadcast and newspaper coverage may make it easier to attract potential partners or funders (including businesses, corporations, foundations, and other grant-making organizations), not to mention elected officials who can lobby for your cause or connect you to available government dollars. This may be critical if your school lacks sufficient financial resources to implement all the safety and security improvements that are spelled out in the action plan.

**Recognition.** Your Be Safe and Sound in School action team has been working hard and deserves some applause! Savor the opportunity to reflect on how far you've come and to revitalize the team for the work still ahead.

**Momentum.** Your safety and security improvement efforts should be viewed as ongoing, not as a finite project. Increased community awareness will make it easier to generate support for new safety and security improvements as your plan is revised in the future. It may also attract additional action team members.

**Accountability.** Once your plan is made public, there will be more incentive for those who have made commitments—including parents, students, business partners, and legislators—to follow through.

### Working With the Media

#### Determine Your Message

Determining your message may be your most important task in media relations. What exactly is

it you want to communicate? Identify three key statements you can use in all your dealings with the news media, no matter what the story is. These message points will help you frame the issue and make your case consistently. They'll also help you select stories that best convey your action team's priorities and goals for your school safety and security campaign. The message points could relate to how serious your issue is, how the school and students are affected by it, why you believe your activities will improve safety, how others could get involved in your efforts, or what they could personally do to address the problem. Keep these talking points short, make the information relevant to your audience, and use action verbs to create a sense of excitement.

To be successful dealing with the media, you need a story—something compelling to say, something that merits wide dissemination in your community. Put yourself in a reporter's or an editor's place. Think headlines: what is this story about in ten words or fewer? Think public interest: why should people care? And think sources: where can you and the media go for quotes, statistics, and other information that will provide the story's a factual basis and relevancy?

Whatever is newsworthy about a story is called a "hook," and, it's your job to create the hook. Remember that reporters are looking for stories that are full of new information, new research, new programs, and new ideas. They're also looking for compelling feature stories about interesting people, programs, and activities in your community. If your campaign can't offer "breaking news," focus on messages that emphasize the human interest angle. Whatever you can do to play up the local appeal of your story will also improve its chances of being covered.

Note: Decide who will be your action team's point of contact (the person whom reporters or other media representatives should contact) for a





particular issue or story, and make sure he or she is comfortable speaking to the press. Always provide the name and telephone number of the point of contact so that media representatives can get answers quickly.

### Getting Your Story Told

How your action team chooses to get its message out is an important decision. Should you issue a press release? Hold a press conference? Write an op-ed article? Call a reporter and offer an exclusive? What you decide to do will depend on both your community and your story.

#### *Press Releases*

Press releases (also called news releases) form the basis of a news story. An editor may run the release as is or assign a reporter to attend an event, conduct interviews, and write the story. News releases may be sent out prior to an event for advance publicity or after an event to describe what took place. Informational releases can also be sent out whenever you have news or information to share (even if you aren't planning an event).

Write press releases in the inverted pyramid style. This means that the most important facts (who-what-when-where-how-why) come first. The less important facts come next, and the least important facts come last. Note that importance is defined by what the media and the public will find important, not by what your group wants highlighted. Study news articles to see what type of information is usually emphasized. By following the inverted pyramid style of writing, you'll make sure that your audience or readers get the most important information first. Don't bury the most important information at the end of a story or broadcast!

More tips for successful news releases

- Address your release to a specific person. News outlets get tons of news pitches every day; addressing yours to a specific person will increase its chances of being read.
- Include a release date. This tells the editor that the news is timely.
- Include the name and phone number of a con-

tact person for reporters to call if they have questions.

- Create a catchy headline (no more than ten words) that explains your story. Be creative and informative in your headline to make your story stand out.
- Include your city and state on the release, even if the event you are planning is local.
- Limit your release to no more than one or two pages, if possible.
- Develop a strong lead paragraph. The lead paragraph should offer a concise, engaging summary of your news pitch.
- Use # # # at the bottom of the page to tell the reader that your release is finished.
- Include a brief overview of the organization (or organizations) responsible for the news or event.

#### *Media Advisories*

Media advisories alert the media of upcoming events, encouraging news organizations to send a reporter and a photographer or television camera to cover a specific event. An advisory should be sent out by 6:00 a.m. the Monday morning prior to your event (if your event is on Wednesday, the 10th, your advisory should be at the news station by 6:00 a.m. on Monday the 8th). Editors determine what stories will be covered early in the week.

Advisories should be concise, offering bullet points explaining the “who, what, why, where, and when” of your event. The “why” of the event should be explained in one or two short paragraphs offering highlights and/or background information. In telling the “why,” you'll want to include enough details so the assignment editor feels compelled to send someone to cover your event but not so much information that you “scoop” yourself and tell your whole story before it actually occurs. Try to keep the key text of your advisory to one page.

#### *Press Events*

If you have hard news to report (i.e., breaking news that affects your community), or are launching a program, you could hold a press event. Your action team may choose to hold a press event to





announce its safety and security research results or action plan. During a press event, you can announce your new program with the help of local celebrities, experts, and community leaders. Students and parents could also speak in support of the program. Always issue an advisory to notify media of an upcoming press event.

### **News Availabilities**

A news availability, a less structured version of a press event, gives media representatives the opportunity for one-on-one interviews with key spokespersons for your cause. For example, you might schedule a news availability in which a local expert provides background and perspective on new school violence statistics, making sure to mention your action team's local efforts. Or maybe you want to invite a select group of media representatives to talk with the school principal, a student, and key action team members about the school improvements recommended in your action plan.

Each person available for interview should work with the action team to identify talking points about the issue and activities. This will help send a consistent message about the school's efforts.

### **Letters to the Editor**

Usually, letters to the editor are written in response to something that's already in the news. Letters to the editor can commend a newspaper or a reporter for a fine story, offer additional perspective or information about an issue the paper covered, or disagree with opinions expressed in a news article, a story, or an op-ed piece. The key is to keep it short and to the point. Don't forget to reference the article you're responding to by its headline and date. An action team member might write a letter to the editor, for

example, in response to an article discussing a new state government report on youth violence. The letter could highlight your action team's findings and efforts to prevent crimes against local youth.

### **Op-ed Articles**

When a letter to the editor won't suffice, think about writing an op-ed article. In an op-ed article, you can develop your arguments at greater length than in a letter and comment on issues not necessarily covered in the paper. Call the paper to find out its op-ed policy. Generally, articles should be 500–700 words in length. Keep it straightforward and compelling with examples, stories, and facts to back up your argument.

### **Exclusives**

An exclusive is a story pitch made to only one media organization or one reporter. The appeal of an exclusive is that it gives the reporter more time to investigate and develop the story without worrying that the competition will come out with it first. Sometimes an exclusive may be no more than a "heads-up" to a friendly reporter or editor about a possible feature or story. Or it may involve a more strategic and extensively researched pitch. A word of caution: By favoring one media organization over others in your community, you may alienate some important contacts. But perhaps your action team will decide to maximize coverage by engaging a reporter in a long-term exclusive on the school's safety and security efforts and the results.

For more information on working with the media, including guidelines for planning a press event and a sample media advisory refer to Appendices F, G, and H.

## **Reaching Out to Students**

If your school has a journalism class or publishes a school newspaper, reach out to the students active in them. Journalism students can help your action team develop talking points or prepare for interviews or get in touch with local papers. Stories in the school newspaper can keep students updated on your action team's efforts.



## PLANNING CHECKLIST

A successful media campaign requires careful planning and organization. As with all your other action team efforts, you should work together to determine direction and to match team members with specific tasks.

- What are the key messages your action team wants to communicate to the media?
- What is the school's current process for dealing with the media?
- What forms of media outreach will be most effective in getting those messages out?
- What are your local media outlets? What state media outlets would be interested in your story?
- Who will build the media list and obtain contact information?
- Who will write and deliver advisories and press releases to media outlets?
- Who will act as contact point for media inquiries? Are there local experts who could act as resources to the media or participate in a news conference? Who will contact them?
- Who will watch the news for opportunities to write letters to the editor? Who will write the letters?
- Will someone write an op-ed?

If your action team chooses to hold a press event, you will need to consider the questions below.

- Who will serve as the event host and speak on behalf of the action team?
- Who will be in the audience? Will you have a guaranteed audience? If not, how will you get people there?
- Are there other people who should be invited to attend or speak? Who will select and secure speakers?
- Where will the event be held? Who will secure the location?
- Who will coordinate technical needs such as lighting, audio-visual equipment, a podium, and signage?
- Who will head up efforts to generate media interest and attract reporters and camera crews to the event?
- Who will put together the press kits?
- Who will field press inquiries before and after the event?



## Step 6: Promote Your Cause

As you've learned through the partnerships you've established with forum/focus group participants, safe and secure schools are important to the community as a whole, not just to parents, faculty, and students. Law enforcement, social service agencies, businesses, nonprofits, and elected officials can be valuable partners for safety and security on a number of levels. For example, while school officials may agree that safety and security changes are necessary, the school may have limited access to the resources needed for improvements. This is where other community members become crucial to your cause.

Promoting your cause means educating policy-makers and elected officials (such as school board members and state legislators) and business leaders about your school's needs. Your B3S action team can do this in a variety of ways—through site visits, letters, personal meetings, and hearings. Elected officials and businesses have different interests, and your approach should be tailored for each group.

### Elected Officials

The action team should identify elected officials who are working in support of your cause. These might include members of the local school board, the state board of education, and the city or county council, as well as federal, state, and local politicians. As part of its ongoing commitment to improving school safety and security, the action team will need to convince and remind these leaders that its efforts

- Deal with a program of concern to a large segment of the community (e.g., constituents)
- Can get even better results with backing or endorsements from the elected official
- Create a safer, more secure learning environment for current and future voters
- Contribute to a valuable public image for the elected official

### Businesses

Identify businesses that could benefit from the exposure of supporting your cause. These might include companies or retailers that are located near the school, sell safety and security products or

services (such as a locksmith), employ a large number of students, count students among their customers, or have expressed a commitment to youth issues. Remember that businesses are motivated by different factors than politicians. Your action team should remind business decision makers that its efforts

- Deal with a program of concern to a large segment of the community (e.g., customers, suppliers, and partners)
- Can achieve even better results with financial support, in-kind donations, pro bono services, or a visible partnership with the business
- Make the community in which the business operates safer
- Create a valuable public image for the business

Here are some tips on successful strategies that target businesses and elected officials.

- Write to each contact and explain the specific safety and security issues. Explain the action team's current or anticipated impact on the problem and how the business or official can help increase that impact. For businesses, if you are dealing with a large corporation, call to find out where to direct your efforts. You may want to ask who is in charge of community relations or corporate giving. (See Appendix I for a sample letter.)
- Make an appointment to speak with business leaders and/or elected officials about your program and your need for their support. It may be useful to develop a short presentation.
- Share information from surveys and audits to justify your need for the program and their support.



- Make sure business contacts and elected officials are included on guest lists for special events and community meetings organized by the Be Safe and Sound in School action team.
- Ask a business leader or elected official to speak (briefly) at or host one of your events.
- Don't limit communication to times when you have a problem or need money. Send thank-you letters when businesses or legislators have done something in support of your goals or the issue of school safety and security in general.
- Ask candidates to make school safety and security issues part of their platform and companies to make it a priority item in their corporate responsibility plan.
- Keep a log of calls and correspondence with each business or company and elected officials and their staff.
- Remind your contacts that while students may be the perpetrators of some crimes, they are

more often the victims—and they are also an enormous pool of untapped energy, talent, and enthusiasm.

- Mobilize other schools, parents, and safety-oriented community groups to communicate to the same legislators and businesses, so that your group is not a lone voice.

While it is true that your efforts to reach out to businesses and elected officials can be combined, it is important to remember that businesses and legislators have unique goals and concerns of their own. Your efforts will need to appeal to their unique needs and highlight how support of your program will aid in the achievement of their distinct objectives; for businesses this objective would be to secure customers, while legislators have a greater concern in securing voters. Review the table below for tips on how to show elected officials and businesses ways that they can benefit from supporting your program.

<b>ELECTED OFFICIALS</b> Main Objective = Secure Voters	<b>BUSINESS LEADERS</b> Main Objective = Secure Customers
1. National surveys show that crime and safety is a top concern for voters	1. School safety affects their communities
2. State and local grant funding opportunities are available	2. Opportunities to promote their logo or signs with give-away items or through press releases
3. Opportunity to meet and speak with parents who vote	3. Increase visibility in the community by getting employees involved and volunteering



## Step 7: Evaluate Success and Revise the Plan

It's now been about a year since Be Safe and Sound in School was introduced at the school. Your action team has already used a variety of research tools to document school safety and security risks. Once the action team has implemented safety and security improvements (and has given those changes some time to take effect), you'll want to repeat your research. This time the action team will be using its findings to determine whether it has met the goals and objectives stated in the action plan. Follow-up research will also determine whether changes at the school are in fact making a difference.

Remember to follow board of education policies and state laws governing the collection of information from and about students.

Most importantly, try repeating the same surveys and collecting the same indicator data as last time. Then compare the results to your original findings. Have the numbers and attitudes changed? Pull out your original school safety and security assessment, and retrace the steps taken by the original assessor. How many problem areas in the school can you check off as addressed and corrected?

### Measuring Up

In evaluating program success, you will consider three types of measurements: process measures, outcome measures, and impact measures.

**Process evaluation** answers questions such as those below.

- How well is your Be Safe and Sound in School action team functioning as a group?
- Are there changes that would make meetings, events, and deadlines more effective?
- If you experimented with different ways of getting things done, what effect did the variations have? For example, was it easier to coordinate meeting times, dates, and locations by email or by phone? Did more people show up for meetings when you sent out follow-up reminders?
- Have you discovered that the action team lacks a certain type of expertise and could use an additional recruit or two?

**Outcome evaluation** answers questions such as those below.

- Did the action team accomplish the tasks spelled out in the action plan?
- Did your media outreach garner any publicity?
- Did your advocacy efforts lead to new funding opportunities or partnerships with businesses?
- How many people did you reach through your efforts?

**Impact evaluation** answers questions such as those below.

- Did safety and security changes in the school environment have an effect on crime? For example, did the number of assaults in school decrease after a peer mediation program was introduced? Did the incidence of vandalism go down after new lights were installed in the school parking lot?
- Did changes to the school environment affect how safe students, parents, and faculty feel inside the school? Do they feel safer now than they did a year ago?
- Can the safety and security upgrades be correlated to positive changes in the school or community, such as increased school attendance rates or fewer disciplinary actions?
- In short, were the goals stated in the action plan achieved?

### Following Up

The best reward for your evaluation efforts will be confirmation that your Be Safe and Sound in



School action team is meeting (or has met) its goals and objectives to create a safer, more secure school. If your evaluation research provides evidence of positive change, be sure to share the news with the media and other important stakeholders, including past partners, forum participants, funders, elected officials, business contacts, and the community.

Also important will be information about attitudes, events, and unanticipated results. For example, you're likely to discover different feedback when you repeat your surveys. A fresh look

at indicator data may show positive movement in some areas but also previously undetected problem areas. Don't be discouraged by these findings, but use them as a starting point when you plan your next school safety and security forum a year or two after the first one. The ideas generated in the second forum will help you build on past successes, make important adjustments to your safety and security action plan, and continue your efforts to creating a safer, more secure place.

### PLANNING CHECKLIST

Before the action team begins its follow-up research, you will need to answer the questions below.

- Who will be in charge of collecting new indicator data?
- Can the new indicator data be added to the same database we used last time (for comparison purposes)?
- Who will analyze and compare the data?
- Who will organize the second survey process? How and when will surveys be administered? Who will tally the survey results?
- Who will conduct the follow-up security assessment? Will we use an outside assessor again?
- Who will compare different sets of data to track progress and identify new problems?
- Who will be in charge of reporting results to the school, students, and community? When and how? Who will share findings with the media and other important stakeholders? Are the results significant enough to warrant another community event or press event?



# School Resource Inventory Guide

Use this guide to determine what resources, programs, or security policies your school already has in place.

## School Safety Committee

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Others involved \_\_\_\_\_

Primary activities \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Existing Programs

\_\_\_\_\_ Peer mediation/Conflict resolution

\_\_\_\_\_ Teen victimization

\_\_\_\_\_ Gang prevention

\_\_\_\_\_ Drug/Alcohol prevention

\_\_\_\_\_ Bullying prevention

\_\_\_\_\_ Truancy prevention

## Security Hardware

\_\_\_\_\_ Security cameras

\_\_\_\_\_ Check-in desk

\_\_\_\_\_ Visitor badges

\_\_\_\_\_ Metal detectors

\_\_\_\_\_ Swipe card access system

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

## Training and Resources

Name of training \_\_\_\_\_

Who has attended \_\_\_\_\_

What was learned \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Available resources \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Policies**

Bullying \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Visitors \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Behavior \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Drugs/Alcohol \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fights \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vandalism/Graffiti \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





# Sample School Safety and Security Surveys

## School Safety and Security Survey of Students

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**In general, how safe do you feel at this school?**

- Very safe   
  Generally safe   
  Somewhat safe   
  Not very safe   
  Unsafe

**Please indicate all areas where you feel less than “generally safe.”**

- Empty classroom   
  Cafeteria   
  Teachers’/staff lounge   
  Campus grounds/athletic fields  
 Hallways   
  Stairwells   
  Office area  
 Bathrooms   
  Parking lot   
  Gym/locker rooms

**Please indicate the time(s) of day when you feel less than generally safe in any of these areas.**

- Before school opens   
  During class change periods   
  Evenings after school events  
 During class sessions   
  After school is dismissed   
  Working late in building  
 During lunch period   
  Evenings during school events

**Please indicate how much of a problem you think each of the following has been during the most recent school year.**

	Severe	Serious	Somewhat serious	Somewhat of a problem	Hardly or not a problem
Theft of personal property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Theft of school property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandalism to school property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullying/intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting without weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting with weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug use (including alcohol)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug/alcohol sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disrespect among students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disrespect of adults by students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students troubled while walking/biking to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students troubled while at bus stop/on bus to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student misbehavior at afterschool or school-related activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student misbehavior in school’s immediate neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncontrolled/unmonitored access by visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What, from your perspective, is the single biggest crime/school security problem in this school?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Does your school have a student code of conduct or similar rules of behavior?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**IF YES, is it well publicized to students and parents throughout the school year?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**If there is one, does the conduct code or set of rules (or a companion document) describe sanctions for violations and processes for imposing sanctions?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Do you think that these rules are enforced fairly and that punishments are handed out fairly?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does the school have a way of recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors among students?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Who would you go to if you knew about a threat of violence at school? Check all that apply.**

- Principal/Assistant Principal     Teacher     Some other school staff person  
 Counselor     School Secretary     Don't feel I could go to anyone

**If you were to report a problem or concern involving your personal safety or that of another student to an adult at school, how sure are you that he or she would know what action to take and how to take it?**

- Very confident     Somewhat confident     Not very confident     Not at all confident

**Does your school offer any of the following? Please check all that apply.**

- Peer mediation training for students     Referrals for family counseling/parent training  
 Anger management training for students     Parent involvement in school safety  
 Classroom management training for teachers     Parent education on school safety policies, student behavior rules  
 Prompt counseling for disturbed/upset students  
 Afterschool programs for students     Don't know

**Do your teachers know how to maintain a good learning situation in the classroom?**

- All of them do pretty well     Only some of them do pretty well  
 Most of them do pretty well     Only a few do pretty well

**What one thing would you do to improve safety and security at this school?**

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**What grade are you currently in?** \_\_\_\_\_

- Are you a . . .     Male     Female



## School Safety and Security Survey of Administrators, Staff, and Faculty

**Name of School**

**Date**

**In general, how safe do you feel at this school?**

- Very safe   
  Generally safe   
  Somewhat safe   
  Not very safe   
  Unsafe

**Please indicate all areas where you feel less than “generally safe.”**

- |  |                                      |   |   |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empty classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria   | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers'/staff lounge | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus grounds/athletic fields |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hallways        | <input type="checkbox"/> Stairwells  | <input type="checkbox"/> Office area            |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathrooms       | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking lot | <input type="checkbox"/> Gym/locker rooms       |   |

**Please indicate the time(s) of day when you feel less than generally safe in any of these areas.**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before school opens   | <input type="checkbox"/> During class change periods   | <input type="checkbox"/> Evenings after school events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> During class sessions | <input type="checkbox"/> After school is dismissed     | <input type="checkbox"/> Working late in building     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> During lunch period   | <input type="checkbox"/> Evenings during school events |   |

**Please indicate how much of a problem you think each of the following has been during the most recent school year.**

	Severe	Serious	Somewhat serious	Somewhat of a problem	Hardly or not a problem
Theft of personal property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Theft of school property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandalism to school property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullying/intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting without weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting with weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug use (including alcohol)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug/alcohol sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disrespect among students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disrespect of adults by students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students troubled while walking/biking to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students troubled while at bus stop/on bus to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student misbehavior at afterschool or school-related activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student misbehavior in school's immediate neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncontrolled/unmonitored access by visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What, from your perspective, is the single biggest crime/school security problem in this school?**

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**Does your school have a student code of conduct or similar rules of behavior?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**IF YES, is it well publicized to students and parents throughout the school year?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**If there is one, does the conduct code or set of rules (or a companion document) describe sanctions for violations and processes for imposing sanctions?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does the school have a way of recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors among students?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Who would you go to if you knew about a threat of violence at school? Check all that apply.**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Principal/Assistant Principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher          | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other school staff person  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor                     | <input type="checkbox"/> School Secretary | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't feel I could go to anyone |

**If a student were to report a problem or concern to you involving his or her or another student's personal safety, would you know what action to take and how to take it?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does your school offer any of the following? Please check all that apply.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peer mediation training for students           | <input type="checkbox"/> Referrals for family counseling/parent training                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger management training for students         | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent involvement in school safety                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom management training for teachers     | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent education on school safety policies, student behavior rules |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prompt counseling for disturbed/upset students | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afterschool programs for students              |   |

**Do you feel you have appropriate, current training in maintaining a safe, orderly learning environment for the school?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does your school have a crisis management plan?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Do you understand your part in the plan?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**What one thing would you do to improve safety and security at this school?**

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**Length of time at this school:**

- Less than one year     One to two years     Three to five years     Six to ten years     More than ten years

**Please indicate your status:**

- Teacher     Administrator     Other staff



## School Safety and Security Survey of Parents

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: If you have more than one child at the school, please fill out only one survey.**

**In general, how safe do you feel your child is at this school?**

- Very safe    
  Generally safe    
  Somewhat safe    
  Not very safe    
  Unsafe

**Please indicate all areas where your child feels less than “generally safe.”**

- |  |                                      |   |                                 |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empty classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria   | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers’/staff lounge | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hallways        | <input type="checkbox"/> Stairwells  | <input type="checkbox"/> Office area            | grounds/athletic                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathrooms       | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking lot | <input type="checkbox"/> Gym/locker rooms       | fields                          |

**Please indicate the time(s) of day when you believe that your child feels less than generally safe in any of these areas.**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Before school opens   | <input type="checkbox"/> During class change periods   | <input type="checkbox"/> Evenings after school events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> During class sessions | <input type="checkbox"/> After school is dismissed     | <input type="checkbox"/> Working late in building     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> During lunch period   | <input type="checkbox"/> Evenings during school events |   |

**Please indicate how much of a problem you think each of the following has been for your child during the most recent school year.**

	Severe	Serious	Somewhat serious	Somewhat of a problem	Hardly or not a problem
Theft of personal property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Theft of school property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandalism to school property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullying/intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting without weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting with weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug use (including alcohol)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug/alcohol sales	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disrespect among students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disrespect of adults by students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students troubled while walking/biking to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students troubled while at bus stop/on bus to/from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student misbehavior at afterschool or school-related activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student misbehavior in school’s immediate neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncontrolled/unmonitored access by visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What, from your perspective, is the single biggest crime/school security problem in this school?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Does your child's school have a student code of conduct or similar rules of behavior?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**IF YES, is it well publicized to students and parents throughout the school year?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**If there is one, does the conduct code or set of rules (or a companion document) describe sanctions for violations and processes for imposing sanctions?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does the school have a way of recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors among students?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**If a student were to report a problem or concern to an adult in the school involving his or her or another student's personal safety, would that adult know what action to take and how to take it?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does your child's school offer any of the following? Please check all that apply.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peer mediation training for students           | <input type="checkbox"/> Referrals for family counseling/parent training                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger management training for students         | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent involvement in school safety                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom management training for teachers     | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent education on school safety policies, student behavior rules |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prompt counseling for disturbed/upset students | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afterschool programs for students              |   |

**Do you feel that teachers and other staff have appropriate, current training in maintaining a safe, orderly learning environment for the school?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Does your school have a crisis management plan?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**Do you understand your part in the plan?**

- Yes     Uncertain     No

**What one thing would you do to improve safety and security at this school?**

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**How long have you had at least one student in this school?**

- Less than one year     One to two years     Three to five years     Six to ten years     More than ten years

**Please indicate current grade levels of your children at this school:**

- |                                       |                                 |                                 |                                |                                  |                                |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K        | <input type="checkbox"/> First  | <input type="checkbox"/> Third  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fifth | <input type="checkbox"/> Seventh | <input type="checkbox"/> Ninth | <input type="checkbox"/> Eleventh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten | <input type="checkbox"/> Second | <input type="checkbox"/> Fourth | <input type="checkbox"/> Sixth | <input type="checkbox"/> Eighth  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tenth | <input type="checkbox"/> Twelfth  |

**How long have you lived in this neighborhood?**

- Less than one year     One to two years     Three to five years     Six to ten years     More than ten years



## Basic School Safety and Security Assessment

This assessment is designed as an initial scan of the school or as part of a follow-up to a professional safety assessment by a trained law enforcement, school security, or similar specialist. The assessment involves two key concepts: physical climate and social climate. Although these concepts will be examined chiefly on the school campus, the immediate neighborhood will also be considered because the surrounding environment might create safety concerns.

### Who Can Perform This Assessment?

This assessment is designed for school staff, parents, and school safety and law enforcement personnel who have not had specialized training in such work. It may be helpful to work in teams; two or three sets of eyes and ears are more likely to notice problems that need attention. Have one person complete the assessment checklist (see below), while others jot down specific situation notes. One other helpful hint: If you're planning to conduct parent, teacher/staff, and student surveys too (see Appendix B), do those first; the survey results will help your assessment team zero in on problems more quickly.

### How Do You Perform an Assessment?

Full-blown school safety and security assessments require an experienced professional who can look at the school objectively and in the context of similar schools in other settings. If this is not an option, you can do a lot with a less formal assessment. The process will increase your knowledge of the building and the way the school is operated.

1. Collect information. If the school has had a safety assessment before, what were the results? What do the student, teacher/staff, and parent surveys tell you about places and times people feel unsafe? What do school records (indicator data) reveal about when and where there have been problems? What do neighborhood crime data show about incidents involving students?
2. Make a checklist of issues based on these data. Make sure there is space on the checklist to note whether specific problems have been fixed, partially fixed, or not fixed, as well as the follow-up required and who will do it. Use the assessment form so that the person recording that information can quickly note where and when problems are spotted during the assessment. If possible, invite a local law enforcement officer (the school resource officer or an officer familiar with your neighborhood) to go with you on the assessment. The officer may not be trained in school safety assessments, but he or she will most likely have had crime prevention training as well as experience in the field.
3. Get a map or a set of maps of the school, one for each level or floor of the building. Make sure that one of the maps includes all the outside areas, well marked.
4. Recognize that this work will take some time. You may wish to schedule it over two days if your school is big.
5. Consider inviting some students to join you. Students offer a unique perspective and may be able to bring problem areas to your attention that you have not initially considered.
6. Note that the first section of the assessment, "All Areas," should be repeated in each area of the building and grounds that you assess (e.g., play/athletic areas, classrooms, driving/parking areas, etc.). You should make additional copies of this section before the assessment.



# School Safety and Security Assessment

Name of School

Date(s) conducted

Completed by

## All Areas

For each area of the building and grounds listed on the following pages (e.g., play/athletic areas, classrooms, driving/parking areas, etc.), note the following for all areas:

	Yes	Uncertain	No
<b>Doors:</b> They are metal or metal-clad wood, not propped open, glass guarded against breakage, and no external hardware except on entry doors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Windows:</b> They are locked from the inside guarded against breakage and entry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Ladders, fire escapes, etc.:</b> The upper floors are secured against entry.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Boundary lines:</b> School property is clearly defined as viewed from this area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lines of sight:</b> From this area, people can see and be seen easily by others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lines of sight:</b> This area can be seen by persons inside the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lighting (check at night if possible):</b> Sufficient light makes activity in this area visible to passersby on foot, in cars.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Signage:</b> There is a sign in this area telling visitors where to report.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Signage:</b> There is a sign easily visible in the main area of entry that gives school name and street address.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Trash:</b> The area is free of trash, debris, and graffiti.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Trash:</b> Trash bins are available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Pathways:</b> Walkways or other pedestrian paths are clear and well lighted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Bike storage:</b> Any bike racks in area are secured to the ground, in good repair, and visible from the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Shrubbery and trees:</b> All trees and shrubs are trimmed to prevent people from hiding and allow access to upper floors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equipment:</b> All maintenance and other equipment and all utility fixtures are either fenced off securely or under lock and key.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>General:</b> Area is attractive, well kept, and in good repair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Play or Athletic Areas

<b>Line of sight:</b> Play areas are visible from the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Boundaries:</b> Play areas are clearly defined and fenced in.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>







	Yes	Uncertain	No
<b>Access:</b> Emergency vehicles can reach the area easily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Structures:</b> Equipment sheds, field houses, etc., have sturdy doors and locks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Structures:</b> Equipment sheds, field houses, etc., are visible from building and from roadways, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equipment:</b> Freestanding or loose equipment is properly locked up.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Condition:</b> There is no trash, debris, or graffiti.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Classrooms

<b>Lighting:</b> Rooms are well lighted with interior lighting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Access:</b> Doors are lockable, with deadbolt locks if warranted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Access:</b> Vision panels in doors or classroom walls are clean and unobstructed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Access:</b> Classroom doors that open to the outside are locked unless in use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Access:</b> Students are not permitted in classrooms without proper supervision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Communication:</b> There is a two-way communication system between the main office and the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Temporary classrooms (trailers):</b> All are visible from building, connected by communication and alarm systems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Materials:</b> Any chemicals and other hazardous or potentially dangerous materials are kept in locked storage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Driving and Parking Areas

<b>Traffic control:</b> Stop signs and other devices adequately control inflow, outflow of traffic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Surveillance:</b> Parking areas can be seen from within the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Surveillance:</b> Parking areas are visible from adjacent street(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Surveillance:</b> Parking areas are patrolled during school hours; student arrivals and departures are monitored.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lighting (check at night):</b> Adequate lighting is in all areas of all lots to make vandals, car thieves visible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Condition:</b> All areas are clear of trash, debris, and graffiti.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Hallways, Stairways, Bathrooms, Other Common Areas

<b>Lighting:</b> Hallways and stairways are well lighted any time the building is in use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	Yes	Uncertain	No
<b>Lighting:</b> After-hours lighting provides sufficient light for navigation and surveillance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lighting:</b> Bathroom lights are controlled by a key switch rather than by a toggle switch.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lines of sight:</b> Hallways can be monitored by several teachers/staff from their classrooms/offices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Lines of sight:</b> Stairways are equipped, where appropriate, with convex mirrors for surveillance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Condition:</b> All areas are clear of trash, debris, and graffiti.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Traffic control:</b> Signs and floor markings, in good condition, are provided as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Access:</b> Hallways are kept clear and not used for storage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Access:</b> Bathrooms are kept clear and not used for storage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Policies and Practices

	Yes	Uncertain	No
<b>Key control:</b> Keys are kept under strict inventory and secured appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Key control:</b> Master keys are limited and numbered; holders must sign for them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Building management:</b> Policies spell out responsibility for opening and closing security checks and for checks of the building at least once during the day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Student behavior:</b> A code of conduct is established, clearly posted in several location, and reviewed at least twice yearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Student behavior:</b> A code of conduct spells out a procedure for violations and penalties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Student behavior:</b> Students are reasonably orderly and quiet as they walk through hallways for class changes, recess, lunch, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Faculty/staff:</b> Administrators/teachers monitor hallways with friendly “hello” attitude.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Faculty/staff:</b> Faculty are trained (and refresher-trained) in good classroom management techniques.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Faculty/staff:</b> Faculty/staff are kept up-to-date on resources for help for students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Faculty/staff:</b> All know procedures for reporting crimes and agree to do so.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Faculty/staff:</b> When on campus, whether inside or outside building, they reasonably enforce rules and code of conduct.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Parents:</b> Parents are involved in developing discipline process, code of conduct.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Yes	Uncertain	No
<b>Parents:</b> Parents are provided annually with the current code of conduct and disciplinary process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Security:</b> If ID badges are used, all faculty, staff, and students are required to wear them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Crisis management:</b> The school has a crisis management plan in place and faculty, staff, students, and parents understand their roles in that plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Law enforcement coordination:</b> The school and key staff meet regularly with local law enforcement regarding school issues and potential concerns/crises.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Policy development, volunteering:</b> Parents are encouraged to get involved appropriately in school safety/security issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Policy development, volunteering:</b> Students are encouraged to get involved appropriately in school safety and security.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Comments

Be sure to comment on areas marked "no" above.

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# Action Planning Chart

<b>Goal/Problem To Address:</b>			
<b>Objective/Activity To Implement:</b>			
Action Steps To Complete Activity	Who Will Take Action	Deadline(s)	Outcome
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			



# Sample Safety and Security Action Plan

## North County Middle School Action Plan

**Goal:** By June 2005, North County Middle School will have in place strategies and equipment that will make the learning environment more safe and secure.

### Objective 1

Acquire surveillance cameras to improve observation of hallways.

#### Activity 1

Work with school technology coordinator to research and select state-of-the-art video surveillance camera system for installation.

#### Activity 2

Contact companies that might be willing to donate a swipe door lock system.

### Objective 2

Engage and train parents on bullying and student behavior.

#### Activity 1

Send three parents from the community to attend the state behavior instruction academy.

#### Activity 2

Host three evening and afternoon workshops on bullying prevention. Engage presenters from Physicians for Change.

### Objective 3

Train teachers/staff on building positive relationships with students.

#### Activity 1

Invite outside experts to provide three staff workshops on building relationships with students, using the Behave In/Behave Out and Building Champions curriculum models.

#### Activity 2

Select school staff to attend safe schools conference.

#### Activity 3

Hold forum in which teachers can share their success stories concerning positive student/teacher relationships.



## Planning a Press Event

A press or community event to kick off your action plan will not only celebrate your school's commitment to safety and security and build excitement but also recognize the hard work your action team has done to date. The school is a natural choice as an event venue. Consider planning a Be Safe and Sound in School campaign launch in coordination with a back-to-school fundraiser, parent night, PTA/PTO meeting, sporting event, or pep rally. Having a built-in audience for your event will make it easier to attract elected officials and the media.

### Determine Your Message

This is the most critical part of any event. Know what you want to say, and be able to explain why you are having the event. If you are launching a campaign, what is the news and why? Look for the newsworthy angle. Everything that follows will tie back to this decision. Take the time to think this through.

### Select Speakers

Who will be telling your story and why? This decision is second only to the message. Your spokesperson can make or break your message. If you use a local celebrity, business leader, or elected official, make sure his or her personal track record and behavior are parallel with your message. Consider students who may be willing to talk about a personal experience or who represent a student group with which your action team will partner. If you want your speaker to do personal interviews on your message outside of this event, make sure the speaker is comfortable with that and that he or she knows enough about your message to speak unscripted on the topic. Provide talking points for your speaker; everyone who speaks on your issue should convey the same consistent message.

### Determine a Background or Backdrop

If you are using signage, follow the tips below.

- Put your message behind your speaker—use words or pictures. A wallpaper style banner on which the message/logo is small and repeated is the most effective layout.
- Less is more; keep the background simple.
- Use a matte, not glossy background. A shiny

background will create camera glare and distract viewers. To create a matte effect on a glossy sign, spray it with hairspray.

### Lighting

You can almost never have too much light for cameras. If you can stage an event outdoors during daylight hours, you'll get great pictures. If not, try to provide as much light as possible. Avoid locations in which there is back light (i.e., from windows behind the speaker)—the back-lighting will make your speaker appear as a dark image with few features. Ideal light is achieved with white, incandescent (not fluorescent) bulbs and hits the speaker from above and from the front. If poor lighting is unavoidable, be sure to provide advance notice of this in your media advisory so camera crews and photographers can plan accordingly.

### Press Riser and Cut-away

If you have a designated area for the press to film from, it should be

- Directly in front of the speaker (known as a head-on)
- At the same height as the speaker (if the speaker stage is 36 inches, the press riser should be 36 inches)
- No more than 75 feet from the speaker. If that distance (known as the throw) is longer than 75 feet, be sure to inform the media on the advisory so they can plan accordingly.

A cut-away shot allows camera crews to film the event from a different angle, reinforcing your mes-



sage with an alternative visual. For example, your head-on shot may have a wallpaper background with the words “Be Safe and Sound in School” behind the speaker, while the cut-away shot offers a close-up from the right, capturing poster-sized yearbook images of the student body. Cut-aways are a great way to get creative and add interest to your pictures.

### Audio-Visual Equipment

Each event varies in audio-visual (A/V) needs. A good rule is that the larger the event, the more press you’ll have attending and the greater the need for A/V. Possible A/V items include

- Staging. Remember, if you have the speaker on a stage, the press should be seated at equal height, so order accordingly.
- Lighting. See above.
- Sound. Use equipment that can be adjusted for the size of the room and the number of attendees. A/V technicians will give you good advice.
- Mult box. Mult boxes allow press to plug directly into the primary microphone to eliminate excess noise. If you expect to have more than three cameras and/or radio stations attending, or you have a long throw (distance between your speaker and where your cameras will be), provide a mult box as a courtesy. This will ensure that TV viewers get the best possible sound quality to hear your message.

### Press Kits

All media who attend your event should receive a press kit that provides all the information needed to write a story on your event. The kit should include, as available

- A copy of any speech or statement given at the event
- Copies of the media advisory and press release
- Compelling statistics about school safety and security
- An overview of the school safety and security

improvements that your action plan will be introducing

- Biographical information about event speakers, key action team members, and community leaders who participated in the school safety and security forum

### Media Outreach

- Fax, email, mail, or deliver a media advisory to local media outlets. Be considerate of deadlines, as well as preferred lead times for stories. Broadcast stations will need at least 24 hours advance notice if you want camera crews to cover your event. Daily newspaper reporters usually need at least two days advance notice. A good rule of thumb is to send your advisory by 6:00 a.m. on the Monday prior to your event.
- Follow up on your advisory with a phone call 24 hours before the event. Be prepared to give event details and re-send the original advisory.
- At the event: Provide press kits to the media and have your speaker ready for interviews. Have someone at your event who can take quality photos or video, in case the press doesn’t show up.
- Send a press release immediately after your event. Include pictures or film with your release, and be sure to provide the names of people in the photos. If photos include students, be sure to obtain consent from their parents for those photos to be shown.
- Follow up with a phone call to make sure the information was received and to answer any questions.

### Key Terms

**Angle:** A unique or compelling way of telling your story to captivate the interest of a news editor or reporter.

**Lead time:** The amount of time a news organization needs to receive information in advance in order to fit the news into a specific publication or broadcast.



**Media advisory:** A notice of an upcoming event that highlights why media should be interested. See Appendix G for more details and a sample advisory.

**Multibox:** A piece of A/V equipment that allows press to plug directly into the primary microphone.

**Press kit:** A kit of background information, statistics, and quotes provided to reporters about a specific program or event.

**Press release:** A story that tells the “who, what, when, where, how, and why” of an event or

activity that has taken place and provides interesting quotes or illustrations that may form the basis of a news story. See Appendix H for more details and a sample release.

**Talking points:** Key campaign messages that should be communicated consistently in events, correspondence, media interviews, and meetings.

**Throw:** The distance between the speaker and the cameras.





# Sample Media Advisory

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Monday, August 30, 2010**

**CONTACT: Ann Smith**

**xxx-xxx-xxxx**

## **West Lake High School To Launch Be Safe and Sound Campaign**

**WHO:** West Lake High School, in partnership with the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), Acme Lighting Supply, Software Solutions Inc., and the [state] Center for School Safety.

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**WHAT:** Press event to introduce West Lake High School's (WLHS) Be Safe and Sound in School campaign, focusing on school safety and security improvements. Corporate partners Acme Lighting Supply and Software Solutions, Inc., will pledge in-kind support to WLHS in the implementation of a school safety and security action plan. The principal will announce the receipt of \$5,000.00 in funding from NCPC to support the initiative. This event will coincide with the school's annual Open House night, with an expected 150 parents in attendance.

### **Invitees**

The Honorable Diane Smart, xx, State Senate  
The Honorable Charles Lane, xx, State Legislature  
The Honorable Andrew Fletcher, Commissioner, [state] Department of Education  
Ms. Kay Roberts, Director, [state] Center for School Safety  
The Honorable Fred Sanders, Mayor, City of xxx  
Mr. John Jackson, Police Chief, City of xxx  
Ms. Nancy Johnson, Superintendent, City of xxx School District

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**WHERE:** West Lake High School Gymnasium  
200 Main Street  
City, State, Zip  
School Contact Number: xxx-xxx-xxxx

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**WHEN:** Friday, September 3, 2010, 6:00 p.m.

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**WHY:** Over the next few months, WLHS plans to conduct several surveys and audits in order to identify safety and security problems on its campus. Using the Be Safe and Sound in School campaign model of the National Crime Prevention Council, the school plans to engage parents and community members in developing solutions to address safety and security issues and construct a comprehensive action plan.

###



# Sample Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Friday, September 3, 2010

**CONTACT: Ann Smith**  
xxx-xxx-xxxx

## West Lake High School Launches Be Safe and Sound Campaign

**Anywhere, USA.** On September 3, 2010, more than 120 parents, 600 students, 30 Chamber of Commerce representatives, and the xxx city mayor and police chief attended a kickoff event at West Lake High School (WLHS) to introduce the school's new Be Safe and Sound in School campaign. The campaign, adopted from a National Crime Prevention Council model, is dedicated to improving school safety and security with a particular focus on efforts to reduce bullying, vandalism, and theft.

WLHS Principal John Doe—last year's state principal of the year—spoke to attendees about the school's safety accomplishments thus far. During the last semester, the school conducted several surveys and audits in order to identify safety and security problems on campus. The school has since engaged parents, students, faculty, and community members in developing solutions to address these issues and constructing a comprehensive action plan.

"Every child should be able to attend school feeling that he or she is in a safe and secure learning environment," said Doe. "Our Be Safe and Sound in School action team of parents, teachers, students, and local business partners is working to make this a reality."

School improvements this year will include the introduction of anti-bullying curricula in classrooms, an ID badge system for students and faculty, and new outdoor lighting in the west parking lot. WLHS was one of only twelve schools in the country to receive \$5,000.00 in funding from the National Crime Prevention Council to support school safety improvements. Outdoor lighting will be donated by Acme Lighting Supply Co. Software for the ID badge system is being provided by Software Solutions, Inc.

West Lake High School is the largest public high school in the county, with 1,200 students in grades 9 through 12. Last year, the school ranked fifth in the state for academic performance.

Be Safe and Sound in School is a national campaign that seeks to promote awareness about safety and security issues, advocate for safety and security improvements, and challenge those environments where people are potentially at risk. The campaign is an initiative of the National Crime Prevention Council with funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, United States Department of Justice.

For further information, call Ann Smith at xxx-xxx-xxxx.

###



# Sample Promotion Letters

## Sample Letter to Elected Official

April 1, 2010

The Honorable Andrew Fletcher  
Commissioner  
[state] Department of Education  
100 Maple Street  
City, State, Zip

Dear Commissioner:

Last year, students ages 12 through 18 were victims of about 35,000 crimes at schools in our state, including about 2,200 serious violent crimes. While school crime rates in our state are below the national average, students' feelings of vulnerability do not always correlate with actual crime rates. Studies have shown that the fear of being victimized can be as powerful as victimization itself. Students who feel unsafe at school have a harder time focusing on learning, and their academic performance suffers as a result.

That's why we're asking for your support of a new school safety and security initiative at West Lake High School (WLHS) in [city]. During the fall, WLHS conducted several surveys and audits in order to identify safety and security problems on its campus. Using the Be Safe and Sound in School campaign model of the National Crime Prevention Council, the school has engaged parents, students, and community members in developing solutions to address these problems and constructing a comprehensive action plan. The plan's initial focus is on reducing rates of bullying, vandalism, and theft. Initial building improvements (new outdoor lighting and security cameras) have already reduced the number of graffiti-related incidents, and we are introducing anti-bullying curricula to family life classrooms with the start of the new school year. It is our hope that this program will continue to achieve notable results and ultimately serve as a pilot for other schools throughout the state.

In today's communities, it is difficult, if not impossible, to improve academic performance without considering levels of safety and security inside a school. Therefore, we are hoping you will consider incorporating this important issue into your reelection campaign. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like further information about Be Safe and Sound in School and the specific successes we've achieved at West Lake High School.

Sincerely,

John Doe  
Principal



## Sample Letter to Business

April 1, 2010

Ms. Janice Brooks  
Director of Community Relations  
Wild Ride Theme Park  
City, State, Zip

Dear Ms. Brooks:

National news coverage in recent years has shown that bullying and taunting are not the innocuous “rites of passage” we once believed them to be. Chronic bullying can cause low self-esteem, poor academic performance, and depression. In the worst cases, children who are repeatedly bullied respond with violence toward their tormentors, others, or themselves.

Bullying is a problem that sometimes starts at school but can easily spread to other parts of the community—particularly to businesses such as yours that employ large numbers of students and enjoy teenage customers.

That’s why we’re asking for your support of a new school safety and security initiative at West Lake High School (WLHS) in [city]. During the fall, WLHS conducted several surveys and audits in order to identify safety and security problems on its campus. Using the Be Safe and Sound in School campaign model of the National Crime Prevention Council, the school has engaged parents, students, and community members in developing solutions to address these problems and constructing a comprehensive action plan. One of our major areas of focus is on reducing rates of bullying at school. Next year we plan to introduce anger management and conflict resolution curricula to family life classrooms, as well as a series of workshops to help teachers and parents recognize signs of bullying. It is our hope that this program will continue to achieve notable results and ultimately serve as a pilot for other schools throughout the state.

In light of your corporate commitment to youth in our community, I am writing to ask if your company would be interested in becoming an official Be Safe and Sound in School campaign partner. As part of this commitment, we would ask that you publicize the campaign in your internal employee newsletter and community outreach materials, and sponsor one of three bullying prevention workshops we have slated for this summer. I will give you a call later this week to follow up with more details.

Sincerely,

John Doe  
Principal



# Resources

## National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

202-466-6272

www.ncpc.org

### Resources for Elementary Schools

NCPC's publications for children and youth address a wide range of topics including home and neighborhood safety, bullying, alcohol and drugs, conflict management, media violence, diversity, and Internet safety.

Below is a sampling of publications that deal with children's behavior and school-related safety issues.

#### ***Get the Message! McGruff's Tool Kit To Keep Children Safe***

Give children in grades K through five the knowledge and skills to stay safe and prevent crime with this innovative kit featuring McGruff the Crime Dog® and his nephew Scruff®. Topics include bullying, home and neighborhood safety, conflict management, and alcohol and drug prevention. The kit includes background information for educators, daily messages for students to be read over the school's PA system, classroom activities, reproducible brochures for parents (in English and Spanish), and a colorful poster.

#### ***Helping Kids Handle Conflict***

This guide teaches children in grades K through five age-appropriate activities to help learn nonviolent ways to settle arguments, deal with bullying, and avoid fights. Children will build problem-solving and communication skills as they learn about bullying, gender and cultural differences, media violence, and weapons.

#### ***Keeping Kids Safe: A Kit for Caring Communities***

This comprehensive kit for teachers, law enforcement officers, youth organization leaders, and other community members contains a variety of materials for children in grades pre-K through five. Background papers, interactive activities, worksheets, and posters cover topics such as bullies; guns and other weapons; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; conflict management; and much more. The kit includes a cassette tape and songbook.

#### ***Teaching Tales for Caring Kids***

*Teaching Tales for Caring Kids* tells traditional tales from around the world and relates their morals to contemporary issues to help prevent crime, drug, and violence

problems among children in grades K through five. The publication includes learning activities, reproducible handouts, letters to parents, and four brightly colored posters. Topics include anger management, appreciating diversity, treating others with respect, and resisting negative peer pressure.

### Resources for Middle and High Schools

#### **Cyberbullying Media Campaign**

Cyberbullying occurs when teens use the Internet, cell phones, or other devices to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. NCPC's current cyberbullying media campaign offers online information for youth and parents on how to protect youth from online bullying. Visit <http://www.ncpc.org/cyberbullying>.

#### **Teens, Crime, and the Community**

The Teens, Crime, and the Community (TCC) initiative has motivated more than one million young people to create safer schools and neighborhoods. TCC's *Community Works* program is a national youth violence prevention program that supports the concept of education and action to create safer, more caring communities for youth by youth. Since its founding in 1985, thousands of educators, law enforcement officers, and other community members who serve youth have participated in the *Community Works* program.

*Community Works* is a skill-building program that includes 31 topical lessons that are designed to increase crime prevention awareness and teach teens how to resolve conflict nonviolently. The program also includes a service component that supports teens in the development of projects that can create safer, more enriched environments for themselves and their families.

*Community Works* topics include

- Conflict management
- Bullying and intimidation
- Handguns and violence
- Gangs
- Substance abuse and drug dealing
- Violent and property crimes
- Reporting a crime
- Designing a community service project



For more information about the *Community Works* program, visit [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org).

### Theft Presentation Posters

Teens today are faced with theft in schools and the looming threat of identity theft as they become young adults. NCPC offers identity theft and property theft posters that will help teens learn how to protect their identities and possessions. Facts sheets are also available for download at [www.ncpc.org/preventtheft](http://www.ncpc.org/preventtheft).

### Youth Outreach for Victim Assistance (YOVA)

The Youth Outreach for Victim Assistance project mobilizes teams of youth and adults to create outreach campaigns that raise young people's awareness of teen victimization and services that can assist teen victims of crime. In the past three years, 60 organizations in 32 states have participated in YOVA. YOVA sites have directly reached more than 60,000 individuals through youth-led presentations, sociodramas, outreach events, posters and brochures, and millions more have seen or heard public service announcements created by YOVA sites. A key resource for this project is the publication *Reaching and Serving Teen Victims: A Practical Handbook*. This innovative new resource was designed to help adults work more effectively with teenage victims of crime. The handbook gives an overview of adolescent development and the way that victimization affects teens uniquely. It provides strategies for assessing the extent and nature of teen victimization in the community, creating effective outreach, making the service environment teen-friendly, and interacting with teens in helpful and productive ways. It also includes guidance on parent and family involvement and mandatory reporting. To obtain a copy of this publication, visit <http://www.ncpc.org/resources>.

### Youth Safety Corps

Youth Safety Corps (YSC) seeks to recruit, train, and mobilize a diverse student population to improve the learning environment of America's schools by designing and running projects to prevent youth crime, violence, and drug abuse. Through the development of youth/adult partnerships, students learn specific skills, including leadership and team work, to bring about positive changes in their schools. With guidance from their adult partners, students facilitate the development of prevention designs that may include teen courts, school safety audits, mentoring and tutoring, and a

wide array of other service learning projects. For more information about Youth Safety Corps, visit [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org) and click on Programs.

NCPC's *Youth Safety Corps Project Implementation Toolkit* is designed to help start a Youth Safety Corps in your school. The kit includes information on identifying the safety problems in your school, developing a project that addresses that problem, and getting the word out. The kit examines eight specific skill-building areas and 12 project examples.

### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

See Getting Started in this kit to learn more about CPTED.

#### *Designing Safer Communities: A Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Handbook*

A guide to the principles and application of CPTED, this NCPC publication presents a framework for developing policies and partnerships that address situational crime prevention. It reviews the experiences of several states and localities that have successfully incorporated CPTED as part of a strategic approach to public safety

#### *Designing Safe Spaces: Involving Children and Youth in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*

*Designing Safe Spaces* focuses on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), a method of designing or modifying the physical environment in a way that positively influences human behavior. The guide features lessons and field trips to introduce children and youth (ages eight to 15) to CPTED, and it offers ideas for projects that use CPTED principles to make communities safer. *Designing Safe Spaces* is a useful resource for adults who work with young people in schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, or other community settings; crime prevention practitioners and law enforcement officers; Neighborhood Watch groups; and groups already participating in NCPC programs for children and youth.

#### *Safer Schools by Design Training*

*Safer Schools by Design* offers participants an agenda packed with interactive sessions using advanced CPTED strategies and solutions to promote safety, orderly behavior, and a reduction of fear in the school



environment. Technical sessions cover transportation, signage, landscaping, and lighting. Participants are guided through a comprehensive school assessment process followed by a real assessment of a school. Working in teams, participants will develop, prioritize, and present feasible recommendations. This is a three-day training.

For more information on CPTED trainings, visit [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org).

## Additional Resources

### ***Creating a Blueprint for Community Safety: A Guide for Local Action***

Strategic and effective crime prevention planning and action help sustain prevention. This NCPC document provides operational guidelines and suggests resources for those who lead major action planning initiatives at the local level.

### ***How Are We Doing? A Guide to Local Program Evaluation***

This handbook for designing local program evaluations includes checklists, process outlines, methods choices, and key decision and timeline constructs for local programs that want to develop their own evaluations of program activities in crime prevention.

### ***Partner With the Media To Build Safer Communities***

This helpful kit offers information and resources to enlist the media as partners in crime prevention. It presents suggestions for an individual or group on reaching out to the media, tips on getting prevention-oriented public service announcements on the air and in print, and an overview of ways to achieve sustained media coverage for prevention activities. It includes stories of how crime prevention and the media have worked together to make crime prevention a priority.





## Federal Agencies and Clearinghouses

Note: Agency and organizational descriptions are excerpted from the referenced website.

### **Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS)**

**Toll-free: 800-USA-LEARN**

**[www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/)**

OSDFS supports efforts to create safe schools, respond to crises, prevent drug and alcohol abuse, ensure the health and well-being of students, and teach students good citizenship and character. The OSDFS website's Reports & Resources page includes online publications, a directory of print publications, and links to other relevant resources and publications. The Programs/Initiatives page includes information about grant opportunities.

### **Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)**

**[www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov)**

ERIC is a national information system funded by the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education to provide access to education literature and resources. "The world's largest source of education information," ERIC can be intimidating for new users. Before beginning your search, click on Help and visit the New ERIC Users page to orient yourself to the database.

### **National Criminal Justice Reference Services (NCJRS)**

**[www.ncjrs.org](http://www.ncjrs.org)**

NCJRS is a federally funded resource offering justice and substance abuse information to support research, policy, and program development worldwide. It includes resources from the Office for Victims of Crime, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Department of Homeland Security.





## National Associations and Nonprofits

**ASCA (American School Counselor Association)**  
Toll-free: (800) 306-4722  
[www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)

**ASIS International (formerly American Society for Industrial Security)**  
703-519-6200  
[www.asisonline.org](http://www.asisonline.org)

**Communities In Schools (CIS)**  
Toll-free: 800-CIS-4KIDS  
[www.cisnet.org](http://www.cisnet.org)

**National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)**  
Toll-free: 800-386-2377  
[www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org)

**National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO)**  
Toll-free: 888-31-NASRO  
[www.nasro.org](http://www.nasro.org)

**National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)**  
703-860-0200  
[www.nassp.org](http://www.nassp.org)

**National PTA**  
Toll-free: 800-307-4PTA  
[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

**National School Boards Association**  
703-838-6722  
[www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org)

**National School Safety Center**  
805-373-9977  
[www.nssc1.org](http://www.nssc1.org)



## State School Safety Centers and Offices

School safety centers have been established in 20 states. Although some centers are more active than others, they share a common mission: to provide school districts and staff, parents, and students with training, tools, and technical assistance to enhance the safety and security of America's schools. For an up-to-date list, visit [www.ncpc.org/programs/be-safe-and-sound-campaign](http://www.ncpc.org/programs/be-safe-and-sound-campaign)

**California Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office,**  
Department of Education  
916-319-0920  
[www.cde.ca.gov/l/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/l/)

**Colorado Safe Communities-Safe Schools,**  
Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence  
303-492-1032  
[www.colorado.edu/UCB/Research/cspv/safeschools/index.html](http://www.colorado.edu/UCB/Research/cspv/safeschools/index.html)

**Connecticut Safe Schools and Communities Coalition,**  
The Governor's Prevention Partnership  
860-523-8042  
[www.preventionworksct.org/ssc/index.html](http://www.preventionworksct.org/ssc/index.html)

**Florida Office of Safe Schools,**  
Department of Education  
850-245-0416  
[www.fldoe.org/safeschools/](http://www.fldoe.org/safeschools/)

**Georgia School Safety Project,**  
Georgia Emergency Management Agency  
Toll Free: 800-TRY-GEMA  
[www2.state.ga.us/GEMA/broadcast/kids/schoolsafety.htm](http://www2.state.ga.us/GEMA/broadcast/kids/schoolsafety.htm)

**Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy,**  
Department of Education  
317-232-6610  
[www.doe.in.gov/welcome.html](http://www.doe.in.gov/welcome.html)

**Kentucky Center for School Safety,**  
Eastern Kentucky University  
Toll-free: 877-805-4277  
[www.kysafeschools.org](http://www.kysafeschools.org)

**Mississippi Office of Healthy Schools**  
601-359-1737  
[www.healthyschoolsms.org/index.html](http://www.healthyschoolsms.org/index.html)

**Missouri Center for Safe Schools,**  
University of Missouri, Kansas City  
816-235-5656  
<http://education.umkc.edu/safe-school/>

**Nebraska Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities,**  
Department of Education  
402-471-2295  
[www.nde.state.ne.us/](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/)

**New York State Center for School Safety**  
845-255-8989  
<http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org/>

**North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence,**  
Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
Toll-free: 800-299-6054  
[www.juvjus.state.nc.us/cpsv/](http://www.juvjus.state.nc.us/cpsv/)

**Ohio Resource Network for Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities,**  
University of Cincinnati  
Toll-free: 800-788-7254  
[www.ebasedprevention.org](http://www.ebasedprevention.org)

**Oregon Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior,**  
University of Oregon  
541-346-3591  
[www.uoregon.edu/~ivdb](http://www.uoregon.edu/~ivdb)

**Pennsylvania Center for Safe Schools**  
717-763-1661  
[www.center-school.org/viol\\_prev/css/about.html](http://www.center-school.org/viol_prev/css/about.html)

**South Carolina Center for Safe Schools,**  
Department of Education  
Toll-free: 866-300-9326  
[www.myschools.com/offices/ssys/safe\\_schools/sccss/](http://www.myschools.com/offices/ssys/safe_schools/sccss/)



For more information about this campaign and for a detailed list of resources on school safety and security issues, visit the Be Safe and Sound in School website at [www.ncpc.org/programs/be-safe-and-sound-campaign](http://www.ncpc.org/programs/be-safe-and-sound-campaign).

## Be Safe and Sound Founding Partners

### National Crime Prevention Council



[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is a private, nonprofit tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization whose primary mission is to be the nation's leader in helping people keep themselves, their families, and their communities safe from crime.

### The Allstate Foundation



**Allstate**  
FOUNDATION

[www.allstate.com/foundation](http://www.allstate.com/foundation)

The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by funding from the Allstate Corporation. The foundation funds programs in three focus areas: safe and vital communities; tolerance, inclusion, and diversity; and economic empowerment.

### ASSA ABLOY Group

**ASSA ABLOY** [www.assaabloy.com](http://www.assaabloy.com)

ASSA ABLOY is the world's leading manufacturer and supplier of locks and is dedicated to understanding its customers' current and future security and safety needs. Based in Sweden, the ASSA ABLOY Group comprises 100 companies in 40 countries and holds market-leading positions in Europe, Scandinavia, Australia, Canada, and Mexico and is the second largest player in the U.S. market.

### Security Industry Association



[www.siaonline.com](http://www.siaonline.com)

Formed in 1969, SIA provides its members with a full-service, international trade association promoting the growth, expansion, and professionalism of the security industry through providing education, research, technical standards, representation, and defense of members' interests. SIA has more than 300 member companies, including manufacturers, distributors, service providers, and others.



**NATIONAL  
CRIME  
PREVENTION  
COUNCIL**

2345 Crystal Drive  
Suite 500  
Arlington, VA 22202

202-466-6272  
Fax 202-296-1356  
[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

**Tennessee School Safety Center,**  
Department of Education  
615-741-3248  
[www.state.tn.us/education/learningsupport/  
schsafetyctr/](http://www.state.tn.us/education/learningsupport/schsafetyctr/)

**Texas School Safety Center,**  
Texas State University-San Marcos  
Toll Free: 877-304-2727  
[www.txssc.txstate.edu/txssc.htm](http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/txssc.htm)

**Virginia Center for School Safety,**  
Department of Criminal Justice Services  
804-786-4000  
[www.virginiashoolsafety.com/](http://www.virginiashoolsafety.com/)

**Washington State School Safety Center,**  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
360-725-6044  
[www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter](http://www.k12.wa.us/safetycenter)

