

Introduction

[SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) is a collaborative, interagency website created by the Federal government to provide schools and districts with actionable recommendations to create a safe and supportive learning environment where students can thrive and grow. The site serves as a one-stop access point for the American public and school communities to find information, resources, guidance, and best practices on a range of school safety topics and threats. Through the site, members of the **kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) academic community** can also utilize specific tools to prioritize school safety actions, find applicable resources, connect with state-specific and local school safety officials, and develop school safety plans.

[SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) is the public-facing vehicle of the Federal School Safety Clearinghouse, an **interagency effort** among the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Justice. The Clearinghouse serves as an ongoing and coordinated effort that includes regular interagency review of content and recommended best practices to keep schools safe, as well as the curation and distribution of resources, guidance, and tools for school communities across the country.



School Safety Topics

On [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov), the K-12 community can find the latest Federal government resources, guidance, and tools on a range of topics related to school safety, including:



Bullying and Cyberbullying



Cybersecurity



Emergency Planning



Infectious Diseases and Public Health



Mental Health



School Climate



Targeted Violence



Threat Assessment and Reporting

Actionable Features and Tools

Specific resources and tools available on SchoolSafety.gov include:



Safety Readiness Tool

Assists users in evaluating their respective school's safety posture across ten elements and provides a tailored Action Plan with options for consideration, aligned resources, and grant opportunities specific to their individual school's needs

Link: <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/safety-readiness-tool>



State Information Sharing Tool

Enables schools to locate and access state-specific school safety resources, programs, contacts, and opportunities

Link: <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/state-search-tool>



Resource Library

Provides actionable resources, guidance, training, and fact sheets from the four Clearinghouse agencies to help schools create and maintain a safe learning environment

Link: <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/find-school-safety-resources>



Calendar of Events and Opportunities

Features upcoming webinars, training sessions, grant programs, and conferences for school safety personnel, administrators, educators, and parents

Link: <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/opportunities>



Informational Webinar Series

Addresses emerging school safety topics, threats, and risks, and provides information on related Federal government resources, tools, and best practices

Link: <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/opportunities>



Monthly School Safety Community Bulletin

Delivers regular updates on the latest school safety-related news, events, opportunities, and resources

Link: <https://bit.ly/2XeJdAO>

For additional SchoolSafety.gov news, resources, and events:



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Bullying and Cyberbullying Resources



Create a Safer School Environment by Addressing Bullying and Cyberbullying.

While there are a number of reasons behind school violence, [bullying and/or cyberbullying](#) can play a contributing role in some cases. Bullying is [widespread](#) in the United States, and the behavior can threaten students' physical and emotional safety as well as impact their social and academic success at school.

Educators, school staff, and parents can help students prevent bullying by talking about it, building a safe school environment, and creating a community-wide bullying prevention strategy. Districts and schools should also adopt [school climate](#) initiatives and support for digital citizenship and positive character development, as well as procedures for monitoring student behavior in school and online to identify at-risk behaviors and provide interventions before they create safety issues.



Visit [SchoolSafety.gov](#) and follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](#) on Twitter for additional [bullying and cyberbullying](#) resources.

Resources

SchoolSafety.gov offers resources, programs, and tools school communities can use to establish and maintain bullying and prevention strategies in the classroom, on school grounds, and online.

Bullying

- [StopBullying.gov](#): This interagency website provides information and resources on bullying, cyberbullying, prevention, and response.
- [Preventing Bullying](#): This webpage provides background information on bullying, including bullying statistics in the United States, as well as prevention strategies to stop bullying before it starts.
- [KnowBullying Mobile App](#): Through this app, parents, caregivers, and educators can find information to start conversations with children, share successful bullying prevention strategies, recognize the signs of bullying, and support children who are being bullied.
- [Assessing Capacity for Bullying Prevention and Implementing Change](#): This evidence-informed and evidence-based resource package provides professionals working to prevent bullying with tools to assess their environment's current capacity to address bullying and to determine where there may be gaps and needs.
- [The Relationship Between Bullying and Suicide: What We Know and What it Means for Schools](#): This resource provides school administrators, teachers, and other school staff with concrete, action-oriented information based on the latest science to help improve schools' understanding of and ability to prevent and respond to bullying.
- [Measuring Bullying Victimization, Perpetration, and Bystander Experiences: A Compendium of Assessment Tools](#): This compendium provides the school community with tools to measure a range of bullying experiences, including assessing self-reported incidents and the prevalence of bullying.

Cyberbullying

- [Cyber Safety Considerations for K-12 Schools and School Districts](#): This fact sheet provides guidance to educators, administrators, parents, and law enforcement officials on various online threats to students, including cyberbullying.
- [Cyberbullying in Schools: Meta-Analysis Finds That Tailored Programming Protects Students](#): This report synthesizes findings from Federal research done on school programs specifically designed to prevent or curb cyberbullying.
- [Dealing with Cyberbullies](#): These tips and recommendations outline what cyberbullying is, why it has become a problem, and how to protect students.
- [Tips for Teachers](#): This webpage provides information for teachers, school personnel, and staff to identify warning signs a child is being cyberbullied or is cyberbullying, as well as strategies to prevent and address it.





#BeCyberSmart. Defend Against Cybersecurity Threats to Your School.

Across America, kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) educational institutions are experiencing a significant increase in cyberattacks, especially during the transition to remote and virtual learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Malicious cyber actors are targeting school computer systems, slowing access, and rendering the systems inaccessible to basic functions.

Our Nation's students are also spending more time online than ever before, using technology to complete homework, communicate with peers, and engage with teachers and school staff. Our growing dependence on technology systems - coupled with emerging, evolving, and increasingly deceptive cyber threats - demands enhanced awareness and vigilance when it comes to our online world. It is important for schools, parents, and students to stay safe online by taking proactive steps to defend against risks and strengthen cyber safety and security both at home and within schools.



Visit SchoolSafety.gov and follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](https://twitter.com/SchoolSafetyGov) on Twitter for additional cybersecurity resources.

Resources

SchoolSafety.gov offers resources, programs, and tools school communities can use to prevent, respond to, and if needed, recover from [cybersecurity threats](#) and cyberattacks.

General Cybersecurity Resources

- [Cyber Threats to K-12 Remote Learning Education](#): This fact sheet is a primer for non-technical educational professionals, and includes general cybersecurity best practices, video-conferencing best practices, and a list of available resources.
- [Cyber Safety Considerations for K-12 Schools and School Districts](#): This fact sheet provides information to students, teachers, and administrators on identifying cyber threats, educating students on responsible online behavior, and learning how to prevent, prepare for, and respond to a potential cybersecurity incident.
- [Cyber Safety Series](#): This series of short videos – centered around themes such as social media safety, ransomware, phishing, and making strong passwords – outlines tips and best practices to help schools, students, and educators stay safe online.
- [Stop.Think.Connect. Parent and Educator Resources](#): These resources cover information on how to talk to your children and students about the importance of internet safety.
- [Keeping Children Safe Online](#): This website offers guidance for teachers, parents, guardians, and caregivers on protecting children from becoming victims of online exploitation.
- [Understanding Patches and Software Updates](#): This resource defines patches (software and operating system updates) and outlines best practices for software updates.

Ransomware and Phishing Resources

- [StopRansomware.gov](#): This website is a one-stop resource where public and private sector entities can find U.S. government tools, information, and resources to help reduce the risk of ransomware attacks and improve resilience. The site includes a specific K-12 resource section, which includes information geared towards IT staff, students, parents, and administrators.
- [Cyber Actors Target K-12 Distance Learning Education](#): This joint advisory details the threat of ransomware attacks, the theft of data, and the disruption of distance learning services to K-12 educational institutions.
- [Protecting Sensitive and Personal Information](#): This fact sheet provides information for organizations to use in preventing and responding to ransomware-caused data breaches.
- [Phishing \(General Security Postcard\)](#): This postcard explains phishing and provides signs and tips to prevent attacks.
- [Cyber Security Evaluation Tool - Ransomware Readiness Assessment \(RRA\)](#): This tool is a stand-alone desktop application that guides asset owners and operators through a systematic process of evaluating Operational Technology and Information Technology. The RRA module is a self-assessment based on a tiered set of practices to help organizations better assess how well they are equipped to defend against and recover from a ransomware incident.



Emergency Planning Resources



Plan for emergencies and know how to respond.

Each school day, our Nation's schools are entrusted to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for approximately 56 million primary and secondary students. Families and communities expect schools to keep their children safe from a range of threats and hazards, including targeted violence, natural disasters, and accidents. Emergencies can happen at any time, and schools should have a plan in place to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events.

A key component of emergency planning is the creation of an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that describes the actions schools should take before, during, and after incidents. By having plans in place to keep students and staff safe, schools play a key role in taking preventative and protective measures to stop an emergency from occurring or reducing the impact of an incident.

Strategies to Consider



Develop a comprehensive EOP.

Address what happens before, during, and after an incident.



Form a planning team.

Include a wide range of school personnel such as administrators, teachers, school psychologists, and community partners.



Establish a regular review period.

Review, evaluate, and update the school EOP at least every two years.



Provide regular training.

Facilitate training on the school EOP for staff and students.

Resources

[SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) offers resources, tools, and products schools and districts can use to support the implementation of emergency planning initiatives. Resources also highlight ways schools can incorporate mental health supports in their [emergency planning](#) efforts to ensure the mental health needs of students and staff are met before, during, and after an emergency.

- [Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans \(School Guide\)](#) (Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Justice) – This interagency guidance provides information to school administrators on emergency management planning, and includes a process for developing, implementing, and refining a school EOP with community partners.
- [The Role of Districts in Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#) (Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Justice) – Developed to serve as a complement to the School Guide, this report recommends specific roles and responsibilities for district-level administrators and staff in the emergency planning process.
- [Sample School Emergency Operations Plan](#) (Department of Homeland Security) – This document presents excerpts from a sample school EOP and is intended to be used for training purposes.
- [EOP Interactive Tools](#) (Department of Education) – The Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center offers a suite of emergency management planning tools for school administrators, law enforcement, and state officials.
- [K-12 Exercise Starter Kits](#) (Department of Homeland Security) – These self-conducted tabletop exercises are tailored for the academic community and include a set of scalable tools aimed to test existing emergency plans, protocols, and procedures.



Visit [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) to access emergency planning resources and guidance and follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](https://twitter.com/SchoolSafetyGov) on Twitter for additional school safety updates.



Mental Health Resources

We can make schools safer by improving access to mental health services.

By supporting kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) students experiencing mental health challenges, schools can help foster a sense of safety and promote better academic and behavioral outcomes. Access to mental health services helps reduce mental, emotional and behavioral difficulties with students at risk. Public health emergencies such as COVID-19 have a significant impact on students and their families, educators and the school mental health workforce. Addressing the mental health needs of our school communities has become more important and necessary than ever before.

Facts and Figures



1 out of 5 children living in the United States experience a **mental disorder** in a given year. ¹



7.1% of children aged 3-17 years (approximately 4.4 million) have **diagnosed anxiety**. ²

Ages 6-11

Behavior problems are more common among children aged 6-11 years than children younger or older. ²



1 in 6 U.S. children aged 2-8 years had a diagnosed mental, behavioral or developmental disorder. ²

Sources: ¹ [National Research Council and Institute of Medicine Report](#)

² [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)



Visit [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) to access mental health resources and guidance and follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](https://twitter.com/SchoolSafetyGov) on Twitter for additional school safety updates.

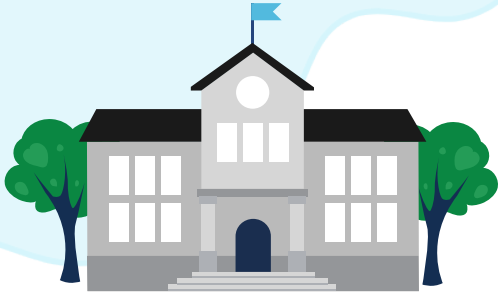
Resources

SchoolSafety.gov is home to [mental health resources](#) and strategies schools can use to help implement school-based mental health support in their communities. Take the first steps to creating a safer school environment with these helpful resources.

- [School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System](#) – National Center for School Mental Health
- [National School Mental Health Best Practices: Implementation Guidance Modules](#) – Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network Coordinating Office and National Center for School Mental Health
- [Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool](#) – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Responding to COVID-19 School Mental Health](#) – Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
- [Guidance to States and School Systems on Addressing Mental Health and Substance Use Issues in Schools](#) – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services



Physical Security Resources



Schools can work to prepare for potential acts of violence and other threats by improving their campuses' physical security and involving school personnel who are trained to prevent, recognize, and respond to threats of violence, as well as implementing other prevention strategies.

While there is not a universal plan for every school's unique needs, implementing physical security measures can mitigate threats at schools and reduce the amount of harm inflicted if incidents occur. Proactive measures include conducting regular site assessments and developing building security plans to identify existing vulnerabilities and enhance overall school security.

Additionally, schools should prioritize information sharing between stakeholders and community partners to help build in best practices around the security and resilience of physical spaces.



Visit [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) and follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](https://twitter.com/SchoolSafetyGov) on Twitter for additional physical security resources.

Resources

SchoolSafety.gov offers resources, programs, and tools school communities can use to improve their physical security.

- [K-12 School Security Guide \(2nd Edition\) and School Security Survey](#): This guidance provides preventive and protective measures to address the threat of gun violence in schools and offers action-oriented security best practices and options for consideration.
- [SITE ASSESS](#): This free, secure mobile app designed specifically for education agencies allows personnel to walk around buildings and grounds and examine their safety, security, accessibility, and emergency preparedness. It generates a customized to-do list that may be used to address facility improvements, prompts teams to share pertinent information with first responders, and contains relevant resources on several education facility and preparedness topics.
- [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design \(CPTED\) School Assessment \(CSA\)](#): CPTED is an approach that focuses on improving the design of the built environment to help reduce opportunities for disputes and violence and promote positive behavior. The CSA is a tool that assesses the use of CPTED principles in three areas of schools: grounds, buildings, and interiors.
- [Campus Resilience Program: K-12 Active Shooter Exercise Starter Kits](#): This tool helps K-12 school communities self-conduct a tabletop exercise and reinforces a school's specific emergency plans, protocols, and procedures, while also testing and strengthening its preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities when responding to an active shooter incident.
- [Active Shooter Preparedness: School Security and Resilience](#): This video provides information geared towards educators, school resource officers, and school administrators who serve in important roles in safeguarding schools.
- [Bomb-Making Materials Awareness Program \(BMAP\)](#): BMAP prevents bad actors from using everyday household products to build bombs. Through engaging videos, posters, and other materials, BMAP educates people on how to recognize and report suspicious bomb-making activity to keep communities safe across the country.
- [Free Bomb Prevention Trainings](#): CISA's Office for Bombing Prevention (OBP) training programs have equipped over 140,000 participants in more than 100 major U.S. cities with the tools they need to prevent, protect against, respond to, and mitigate bombing incidents. Take a free, online training at <https://cdp.dhs.gov/obp> to learn how to protect your institution against improvised explosive devices, or find out about OBP trainings by emailing OBPTraining@cisa.dhs.gov or visiting www.cisa.gov/bombing-prevention-training.
- [The Design of Safe, Secure, and Welcoming Learning Environments](#): This report follows a summit that brought together architects, policymakers, students, educators, school administrators, law enforcement and building code officials, mental health experts, and others to examine violence in schools and explore ways to holistically improve safety and security in our school communities.



Threat Assessment and Reporting Resources



Identify and address threatening or concerning behaviors before they lead to violence.

Reporting on a variety of concerning student behaviors and other suspicious activities provides authorities and school personnel with the information they need to stop violence before it occurs. Schools should establish a reporting system that is continually monitored and allows for anonymous reporting. Having a threat assessment program, or a multidisciplinary group process, to evaluate these reports and respond to threats can significantly reduce violence, including mass casualty attacks.

5 Key Strategies



Form a threat assessment team. Start with one or two school administrators, then expand the team to include representation from a variety of disciplines, including teachers, school counselors, law enforcement, and mental health providers.



Provide training to team members. Set up a schedule for the team to meet and train together regularly.



Create a plan. Establish comprehensive written plans and procedures for the threat assessment process.



Communicate with stakeholders. Share information about your school's threat assessment policy with faculty, staff, students, and families.



Assess outcomes. Continually review the results and outcomes associated with reported threats and other concerning behaviors to improve the threat assessment process.



Visit SchoolSafety.gov to access threat assessment and reporting resources and guidance and follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](https://twitter.com/SchoolSafetyGov) on Twitter for additional school safety updates.

Resources

SchoolSafety.gov is home to resources, strategies, and tools the kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) academic community can reference to support the implementation of [threat assessment and reporting](#) initiatives at schools.

- [Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence](#) (Department of Homeland Security) – Guidance from the U.S. Secret Service provides actionable steps schools can take to develop comprehensive targeted violence prevention plans.
- [School Safety: Research on Gathering Tips and Addressing Threats](#) (Department of Justice) – New research suggests that schools should have a systematic and coordinated approach in place to gather and process information on threats, respond appropriately, and document the response.
- [Averting Targeted School Violence: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Plots Against Schools](#) (Department of Homeland Security) – This recently released U.S. Secret Service report, which examines 67 plots to conduct a school attack that were averted, identifies key findings and commonalities across potential targeted violence incidents.
- [Addressing the Risk of Violent Behavior in Youth: Know the Signs of Youth Violence and How to Identify and Reduce Risk in Schools](#) (Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services) – This 90-minute presentation, produced by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in partnership with the Department of Education, is designed to help teachers and school personnel identify behaviors and other signs that could result in youth violence.
- [REMS TA Center School Behavioral Threat Assessments: An Introduction](#) (Department of Education) – This one-day training, offered through the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center, familiarizes schools and school districts with school behavioral threat assessments in preventing and reducing targeted violence at K-12 schools.
- National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Program (Department of Homeland Security) – The National Threat Evaluation & Reporting (NTER) Program offers a Behavioral Threat Assessment Train-the-Trainer Program. This Master Trainer Program (MTP) certifies federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial homeland security partners in behavioral threat assessment. The MTP teaches candidates to identify and assess risk and warning signs, and manage potential threats of future, targeted violence, regardless of motive. For more information, please email NTER.MTP@hq.dhs.gov.

