

SchoolSafety.gov Back-to-School Tip Sheet

Prevention Actions for K-12 Schools and School Districts

Prevention is the foundation of a safer school. Build it at SchoolSafety.gov.

Prevention encompasses the actions K-12 schools and school districts can take to stop, avoid, or deter school safety threats or incidents and create safer learning environments. The following tips can serve as a starting point for integrating prevention strategies into a comprehensive school safety program this school year. *Please note this list is not exhaustive and each school community has unique safety considerations.*



Engage parents and students in bullying prevention.

A [school safety committee](#) provides a mechanism for K-12 leaders to consider the viewpoints of families and youth in bullying prevention activities and reinforce anti-bullying messages at home.

Cultivate trusted relationships between students and school staff. Daily routines such as greeting students at the classroom door can build trust and make students feel valued. Students who have positive relationships with adults at school may be more likely to [report safety concerns](#).

Teach students how to be safe and smart online.

School-based lessons can help students develop skills and behaviors to recognize potentially [dangerous situations](#) and understand the broader implications of their online actions.

Evaluate physical security measures.

A vulnerability assessment can take stock of existing physical security measures and identify potential gaps. Working in coordination with law enforcement can provide greater insight into threats.

Provide access to [school-based mental health services](#) and [community providers](#). School-based mental health services and [tele-health programs](#) reduce barriers to care and provide students with support in familiar and convenient settings.

Consider before and after-school activities in [emergency planning](#). Putting a multidisciplinary team in place can help schools plan for the unique vulnerabilities that these times of day and events can pose.

Minimize exposure to common cyber threats.

Keeping [software up-to-date](#) and [regularly scanning for vulnerabilities](#) across internet-connected assets can help prevent damaging cyberattacks.

Educate students on the dangers of

[substance use](#). Classroom [activities and programs](#) can equip students with an understanding of the harmful effects of substance use and empower them to make informed decisions.

Prevention actions today pave the way for a safer school tomorrow.

Learn more at schoolsafety.gov/back-to-school-campaign.

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