

In an effort to provide parents, schools and districts with information on steps for promoting school safety, we strongly recommend that all schools and districts have the following programs, policies, and procedures in place to prevent violence and promote safety in schools:



1. Apply the U.S. Secret Service’s seven major components and tasks for creating a safe/connected school climate (<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf>, Page 13):
 - 1) Assessment of the school’s emotional climate;
 - 2) Emphasis on the importance of listening in schools;
 - 3) Adoption of a strong, but caring stance against the code of silence;
 - 4) Prevention of, and intervention in, bullying;
 - 5) Involvement of all of the members of the school community in planning, creating, and sustaining a culture of safety and respect;
 - 6) Development of trusting relationships between each student and at least one adult at school;
 - 7) Creation of mechanisms for developing and sustaining safe school climates.
2. Adopt a Safe Communities Safe Schools planning process which relies on adaptive leadership strategies (www.colorado.edu/cspv) or the equivalent, and includes:
 - a. Building a foundation and identifying goals for school and community safety;
 - b. Collecting data on school climate, as well as student and staff needs;
 - c. Developing an individualized school action plan to address data-identified gaps and needs;
 - d. Implementing the plan, using evidence-based programs and practices; and
 - e. Evaluating the impact of the plan, using data.
3. Train staff on the red flags and warning signs for violence (e.g., social isolation, weapons fascination, anger problems, violent writings or drawings, disciplinary problems and non-compliance).
4. Implement hands-on training for students and staff on using an anonymous bystander reporting system to encourage the sharing of information and prevention of violence (e.g., Safe2Tell in Colorado).
5. Adopt a cognitive-skills based staff training program in threat assessment to provide a comprehensive safety and follow-up plan for students of concern, which follows the U.S. Secret Service and Department of Education’s Threat Assessment in Schools (Fein et al., 2002) and has been empirically validated (e.g., Virginia-Student Threat Assessment Guide).
6. Install an evidence-based bullying prevention program whenever school climate data reveal bullying issues (see Blueprints Programs at <http://www.blueprintsprograms.com>).
7. Adopt an evidence-based suicide risk assessment tool (e.g., Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale) and response system.
8. Complete a school safety audit to evaluate the physical and non-physical aspects of campus security and student and staff safety, including lockdown and lockout drills, target hardening, and reunification planning (e.g., Standard Response Protocol: <http://www.iloveguys.org/srp.html>).
9. Adopt a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CP-TED) approach to physical safety to deter criminal behavior through environmental design.
10. Follow the Colorado Attorney General’s Opinion No. 18-01 on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines for information sharing and complete an Interagency Information Sharing Agreement with law enforcement, mental health, social service, court, and corrections agencies to detail information to be shared and not shared (e.g., Colorado legislation: CRS 22-32-109.1(3), CRS 19.1.303 and 304; see also <https://coag.gov/node/617>).