SHARING IDEAS & RESOURCES

to Keep Our Nation's Schools Safe!

VOLUME V

NLECTC
National Law Enforcement and
Corrections Technology Center System

JTIC
Justice Technology
Information Center

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Visit http://www.schoolsafetyinfo.org for access to up-to-date publication and website resources. New success stories similar to the ones in this publication are added on an ongoing basis. To suggest a success story topic, contact Senior Writer Becky Lewis at rebecca.l.lewis@leidos.com

INTRODUCTION

In this fifth volume of *Sharing Ideas and Resources To Keep Our Nation's Schools Safe,* the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Justice Technology Information Center (JTIC), part of the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) System, present a new compilation of articles posted on the SchoolSafetyInfo.org website in the past year. While at first glance these articles seem to profile a wide variety of projects and programs, all of them have at least one thing in common. That is, their planners, coordinators and organizers told us the same thing: We want to help other schools. We want them to know what we're doing, and we want them to feel free to call us with questions, to help them start similar projects of their own.

In 2017, schools, law enforcement agencies and communities keep on coming together across the United States as they create innovative and groundbreaking solutions to the persistent problems of violence, bullying, security breaches, gang tensions and social media abuse. For the past five years, SchoolSafetyInfo.org has worked toward ensuring that schools and school administrators, local law enforcement agencies and school resource officers know that they're not alone in their quest to make their schools safer, that others are working toward the same goal. We reach out to small rural school districts and to federal government agencies, and we always get the same answer: "We're taking a proactive approach here, and we want the rest of the country to know about it."

These are just some of the projects you'll read about in this fifth volume:

- Training for school bus drivers that emphasizes good communications skills and situational awareness.

- A free video on how to handle bomb threats.

- A simple reverse checkout procedure initiated by a school in rural Alabama.

- A New Jersey program for a new class of Special Law Enforcement Officers.

- A wide-ranging bullying prevention program that started with a group of concerned students.

Through the five volumes of *Sharing Ideas and Resources to Keep Our Nation's Schools Safe!* and SchoolSafetyInfo.org, we let you know about the people who are searching for, and finding, positive ways to address school climate and school safety. We also want to hear from you about what's going on in your area. We continually post new success stories on SchoolSafetyInfo.org, which also includes links to a wide range of resources and materials produced at the federal, state and association levels, and provides access to school safety-related publications and videos from NIJ and the NLECTC System. There, you can also learn about School Safe – JTIC's Security and Safety Assessment App for Schools, and obtain instructions on how to download it.

We encourage you to investigate and decide what is right for you and what has a place in your school setting. First responders, school staff, students, parents and community leaders continue to work cooperatively to combat the myriad safety issues that affect our nation's schools and provide safe and healthy environments in which to learn. As your schools and your communities work together with local public safety professionals to do the same, we hope that you will continue to use NIJ, JTIC and SchoolSafetyInfo.org as resources.

Sincerely,

Lance Miller
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CHAPTER 1

YOUTH COURT IN SCHOOLS PROJECT PRODUCES POSITIVE RESULTS

By Becky Lewis
June 2017

The sanctions came down, taking no more than 15 minutes each to decide: Write a letter of apology. Clean graffiti off the bathroom walls. Assist the basketball coach and team. Paint the bleachers.

No, this isn't municipal court, nor is it some new television show a la "Judge Judy." It's school-based Youth Court, and it's proving to be a success in North Carolina's Robeson and Columbus counties.

Funded under the National Institute of Justice's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative, the Youth Court in Schools Project involves four high schools and eight middle schools each in the two low-income, racially/ethnically diverse rural counties where incidence of youth violence high. For the length of the three-year study, schools were randomly assigned to either a control or an experimental group, and results indicate that the Youth Court Project reduced violent behavior, bullying, rejection by friends and anxiety.

Dr. Paul Smokowski, lead researcher from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, explains that both counties had previously used the concept of community-based teen court, and a group of school administrators and school resource officers (SROs) approached the university about applying for CSSI funds to initiate the concept in schools. Referrals to Youth Court come from principals, assistant principals and SROs, and to participate, students must admit both their guilt and their willingness to accept their peers' sanctions. Parents/guardians must also give consent. Some offenses, usually first-time ones, that merit referrals include disrespecting a teacher, skipping class and other behavior that might previously have earned the student a trip to in-school suspension.

"The dispositions don't involve punishment. They involve what the student needs to do to restore and repair the situation," Smokowski says. "One of the powerful aspects of Youth Court is you have other teens serving as jury members who ask the defendants why they did what they did and what they think they could have done differently. They hear that sort of thing from adults all the time, but they don't often hear it from their peers, and it really makes an impact. They take peers' opinions very seriously."

The students participating as legal counsel, defense advocate, jury members and so on take the task equally seriously, Smokowski says, and they benefit from the process as well by sharpening their public speaking and critical thinking skills. (A school staff member serves as judge and program coordinator.) Most schools designate a specific class to take on the task of running the Youth Court, and juries often are a mixture of students from that class and previous Youth Court defendants. Some of the latter participate as their disposition, while others simply want to assist with the project because they've seen the benefits themselves. But both Smokowski and Dr. Martica Bacallao, director of implementation for the project and assistant professor at University of North Carolina, Pembroke, say that getting principals on board with accepting those peer-directed sanctions is the biggest challenge in a school's successful implementation of Youth Court.

"Some principals wrestle with what they see as surrendering control of the discipline process," Smokowski says. "Ultimately the administration and SROs decide what kids are eligible for Youth Court, but if there are no referrals, the court won't work."

Bacallao says that principals often open their minds after watching a Youth Court hearing, and she thinks it is necessary to get principals to buy into the Youth Court Project as they are an important referral source for it.

"The whole purpose is to engage students in a way that repairs the damage or hurt that they have caused in the school community while also being held accountable for it. In traditional punishment approaches, the students don't get an opportunity to make amends or reflect on the consequences of their actions. That approach is sometimes an adjustment for principals," she says.

But once that buy-in takes place, Smokowski says Youth Court is very easy to implement: "All it takes is training for a teacher coordinator and placing it within a class that's stable, like social studies, or making it an extracurricular activity and developing a referral process. We did give a small amount of the grant funds to the schools to give the coordinators a stipend, but overall, it's one of the least expensive interventions I've ever seen – and its results are dramatic."

One of those teacher coordinators, Bobby Godwin of Tabor City Middle School in Columbus County, agrees with that assessment of results: "My kids really grabbed hold of it. We used the seventh and eighth grade studio and media

classes as the host classes. The eighth graders served in the key positions, and the seventh graders served as jurors and shadowed the positions they were interested in filling the next year. The second year, those students were ready to take on those positions right from the start of the school year, and we plan to continue that process past the end of the grant."

Godwin explains that Tabor City used Youth Court for first-offense cases that normally would have been sent for in-school suspension, such as talking back to a teacher, horseplay or otherwise disturbing class.

"We saw a huge decrease in repeat offenders and we were able to keep the kids in the classroom and engaged in learning. Youth Court only pulled them out for about 15 minutes instead of the two to three days they would miss with in-school suspension. And receiving consequences from their peers instead of administrators really hit home to them," he says. "It allows them to realize 'if my peers think this is wrong, I definitely need to change my actions.' "

An example of an action that needed changing could involve being disrespectful to a teacher and disturbing a class. The student might be tasked with writing a letter of apology, which must be well thought out. And Godwin reviews and revises initial drafts to ensure that plenty of thought takes place.

"We had a kid writing profanity and drawing pictures on the bathroom walls. He was tasked with cleaning up all of his graffiti and other areas of the school as well," Godwin says. "It's been really good to see that they take it seriously. In fact, as we moved into the end of the school year, with testing and other wind-down activities, we had to stop court cases, and the students were upset about that. They're already looking forward to continuing it next year."

At Robeson County's Red Springs High School, however, although coordinator Eduardo Torres says the program was a great experience for those involved, he would have preferred for the administrators to send more respondents their way. Students there put in a lot of time training with some experts from the local judicial system, but spent more time conducting mock trials than actual ones.

"The program itself is really great. The students who made up the court took it very seriously and thought it was an important thing for them to do for the school and for the other students. The respondents came in feeling nervous, but once we started working with them, they realized this was better than being taken out of school," Torres says. "And for myself, it was a great experience too. We did 14 cases, and 11 of them stayed on a good track."

Keeping students on track and letting them know that "they are worthy, they are valued members of their school community and they can fix the damage" is what Youth Court does very well, Bacallao says, adding, "The whole idea is moving away from a punishment mentality to restorative justice actions within the school and holding students accountable for repairing the hurt or damage they've caused."

For more information on the Youth Court in Schools Project, contact Dr. Paul Smokowski at smokowski@ku.edu

USING TECHNOLOGY TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

By Becky Lewis
March 2017

Incidents of extreme violence in our nation's schools have helped lead to an increased emphasis on school safety, which in turn has spurred an accompanying wave of school safety-related technology development. School districts across the country now commonly employ technologies to prevent, respond to and mitigate criminal acts of violence.

As part of the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative, NIJ funded two complementary projects to help answer some basic questions: What technologies are currently in use and how are those technologies being used? What factors may affect the deployment

of those technologies? What are the limits of those technologies and what improvements are needed? And ultimately, how much is known about the effectiveness of those technologies in keeping schools safe?

Results from *The Role of Technology in Improving K-12 School Safety Technology,* completed by the RAND Corporation, include recommendations for researchers and technology developers, as well as for school administrators. With regard to research and evaluation, the study recommendations include the need for more evidence as to what works in the area of school safety technology. The study team notes the need for rigorous research designs to instill trust in school safety technology evaluation results, including measures of proximal outcomes that might be used to assess the effectiveness of new technology. They also note the need to test technology solutions outside the laboratory in real-world settings because of the many factors that affect the implementation of safety technology in schools.

RAND's research indicated that technology developers should turn their focus to the general area of communications, including:

- Devising low-cost ways to allow teachers to have direct, layered, two-way communication with a central command and control system.

- Making anonymous tip line technology easier to monitor and permitting uploads from multiple media.

- Creating "all-in-one" portals that provide access to changes in state and federal laws, training modules, violence alerts, prevention information and incident response information.

- Developing sophisticated social media scanning tools.

The report recommends that technology solutions be tested in real-world settings that include environmental challenges and the potential for human error.

The second study resulted in *A Comprehensive Report on School Safety Technology* by Johns Hopkins University, which presents a detailed picture of existing school safety technology at a particular point in time. The report examines the technologies currently being used, how they are used, how those technologies were chosen, legal considerations and how technology is used in a sampling of countries from around the world.

JHU's research classifies the technologies currently in use in schools under the headings of access control, alarms and sensors, communications, lighting, software applications, surveillance, weapons detection and "other;" although a thorough evaluation process is key prior to administrators selecting a technology appropriate for a particular school or district, and numerous tools and literature references are available in print or electronic form to assist with this process, the usefulness of these tools often has not been evaluated.

The two reports share the conclusion that the recent increase in the use of technology has not been accompanied by rigorously designed research into its effectiveness. Study participants that helped inform both reports indicated a need for information on what works that is evidence-based, vetted and presented to the audience of school administrators, IT planners and safety professionals in clear, easy-to-understand language. This research should include design outcomes.

Both reviews of school safety technology also shared another major conclusion: that no one technology, school climate intervention or other school safety strategy can guarantee school security or eliminate the underlying causes of school violence. An integrated approach that includes emergency response plans, drills, a positive school climate and situational awareness is called for, and plans need to be tailored to the needs of each individual school.

NIJ is taking steps to remediate this lack of research through its Comprehensive School Safety Initiative; *learn more by visiting its page on the NIJ website.*
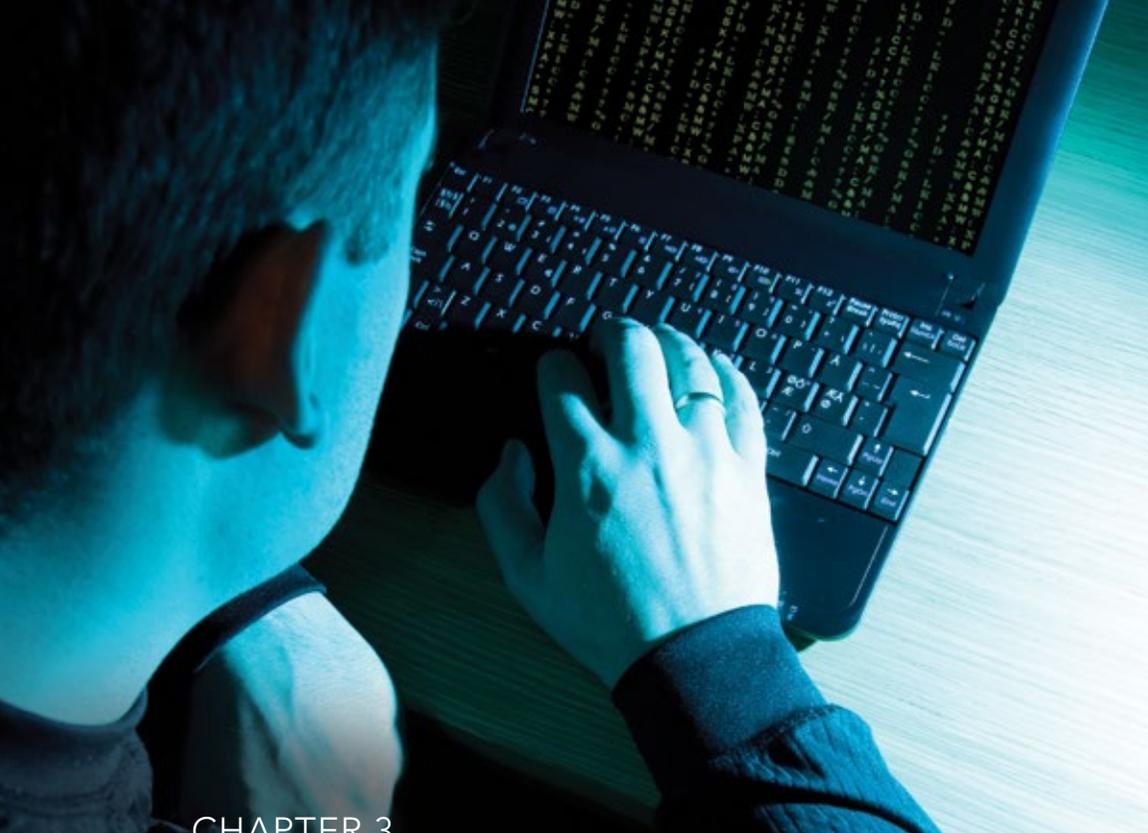
CHAPTER 3

FIELD SEARCH: FIELD-BASED COMPUTER FORENSICS SOFTWARE WIDENS ITS SCOPE

By Becky Lewis
January 2017

A school resource officer (SRO) and an administrator reviewing content on school-issued tablets. A soldier doing a field check on a computer recovered at an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion site. A police officer doing a "knock and talk" investigation. A computer forensics expert doing triage on a number of suspect computers. A federal agent searching for intelligence related to counterterrorism activities. And a probation and parole officer, checking up on a sex offender's Internet use.

What do they all have in common? They're all using Field Search, the free forensics software provided by the Justice Technology Information Center (JTIC).

When the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) System began providing Field Search in 2006, probation and parole agents who needed a nontechnical tool to check up on client computers while in the field made up the target audience. As the software has morphed through five iterations — the most recent (5.0) released in 2016 — more and more users in a wider variety of criminal justice fields and including those involved in school safety, and even the U.S. military, have found that Field Search meets needs far beyond the suite's original scope.

Field Search, provided by JTIC to only vetted active professionals, allows users to quickly and efficiently search a target computer and create a detailed report of the findings. Originally developed with funding from NIJ and since upgraded by the developers at no charge to the federal government, Field Search can be launched from a USB drive and works live on a suspect computer to quickly find potential evidence such as Internet histories, images, multimedia files and results from text searches.

For Version 5.0, the software developer completely recompiled, recoded and rebuilt Field Search to improve its compatibility with today's hardware and software. Although those changes aren't apparent to the end user, the end result still allows the software to run a complete scan of a hard drive, analyze the contents and produce a report in less than an hour – even though the hard drives of 2016 are much larger than those of 10 years ago, and even though the Field Search of 2016 has vastly expanded capabilities compared to those of the original version.

"Field Search was originally developed Field Search to help monitor sex offenders and protect children," says Joe Russo, the JTIC corrections technology subject-matter expert who has worked with the software since its initial development. The developers have also provided numerous train-the-trainer sessions to criminal justice professionals over the years, equipping them to return to their agencies and share their knowledge as Certified Field Search Instructors. "As its use expanded into school safety and law enforcement, military, border security and counterterrorism arenas, we realized the need and importance of providing quality tools for nontechnical users at no cost, and even after the initial funding ended, we remain committed to this project because it's the right thing to do."

 Although many of Version 5.0's changes run behind the scenes, it includes a number of new features and upgrades that will directly benefit users. One of the

most significant expands the keyword search function to include the capability to search for a word or phrase in any language. Not just any language that uses the Latin alphabet; that function came with Version 4.0 in 2012 (see "In Any Language, Field Search Translates to Success," *TechBeat,* Summer 2012, https://justnet.org/InteractiveTechBeat/summer_2012/FieldSearch.pdf.) Rather, Version 5.0 adds the capability to query in any language spoken on this planet, whether it uses the Latin alphabet, the Arabic, Cyrillic or Eastern language characters, or anything else.

A second major change adds chat history tools to allow users to examine activity for Skype, Windows Live, ICQ and Yahoo Messenger. The tool provides information on who the user sent messages to, what they said and when they said it. Another new addition is a search function that provides the ability to scan a drive for hits against HASH sets. A HASH, Russo explains, is a virtual "fingerprint" of a computer file. Each computer file, via a mathematical algorithm, produces a unique set of letters and numbers that identifies it; change one letter in a file or one pixel in a picture, and the file generates a new HASH. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children maintains a HASH database of all known child pornography files, and if a law enforcement agency has access to that database, analysts can use Field Search to compare the files on a computer hard drive and locate matches. This function can also tell probation and parole officers if clients have downloaded software they are not permitted to access.

Yet another significant change makes Field Search fully compatible with Windows 8 and 10, as well as the most current versions of Internet Explorer, Edge, Opera, Chrome and Mozilla Firefox. The software maintains compatibility with older versions as well.

Additional new features/upgrades include:

• Pictures in the Image Gallery can now be sorted by date accessed, allowing Field Search users to see which pictures were accessed most recently.

• When a user is running Field Search off one computer and remotely searching a hard drive, the registry tool now pulls the registry information (e.g., when a drive was installed, the user's email address) from the remote drive rather than from the computer running the software. Improved reporting speed and greater ability to export reports as PDFs.

• Improved and faster media rendering.

"The upgraded Field Search software allows agencies access to an easy-to-use, yet powerful, forensics tool, and the best part is that it is completely free," he says. "We are deeply indebted to the developers for their tireless dedication to the Field Search effort. They both have a deep desire to support public safety and have each volunteered countless hours to improving Field Search and keeping it viable."

Field Search is available free of charge to qualified professionals. For more information on Field Search, including how to download a copy, please visit www.justnet.org/fieldsearch/fs_main.html.

CHAPTER 4

NEW JERSEY LAUNCHES PROGRAM FOR SRO-TRAINED SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

By Becky Lewis
April 2017

There will be new faces at many New Jersey schools when the 2017-2018 school year starts. But unlike the students attending new schools for the first time, these Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEOs) will have already completed their classwork.

Their School Resource Officer (SRO) training, that is.

With the official start of a new academic year on July 1, 2017, New Jersey schools looking to add to, or implement, a law enforcement presence on their campuses have a new option: Schools may now hire retired law enforcement officers who meet specific conditions. And thanks at least in part to the actions of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers (NJASRO), these officers will go into their new posts with the same training taken by sworn SROs.

Requiring that training played a key role in Gov. Chris Christie's eventually signing Bill S86 on Nov. 30, 2016; prompted by NJASRO, he had conditionally vetoed the measure in September 2016 pending restoration of the training requirement. The law permits the hiring of a third special classification of officers in New Jersey (Class 1 officers have no law enforcement powers and are used in some jurisdictions to write parking tickets, while Class 2 officers, hired to expand shore town police departments during beach season, have law enforcement authority only when performing their seasonal duties.) The new Class III SLEOs can be hired to work as SROs under the following terms:

- No benefits.

- Can work full-time hours, limited to when students are present in the schools.

- No older than age 65.

- Retired within the past three years (with a one-year start-up exemption of five years for the 2017-2018 school year only.)

And most importantly to NJASRO – according to Executive Director Capt. Patrick Kissane of the Ft. Lee Police Department – certified as having completed the association's SRO training.

"New Jersey was one of the first states to make training mandatory for SROs, in 2006, and we had to put up a fight to keep that training requirement for the Class III SLEOs, but we knew it was necessary," Kissane says. In 2006, the Police Training Act (N.J.S.A. 52:17B-66 et seq.) required the Police Training Commission, in consultation with the New Jersey Attorney General, to develop a 40-hour training course for school resource officers. A course developed by NJASRO was then implemented in police academies throughout the state, and before SROs can begin working in New Jersey schools, they must complete this comprehensive training. The 40-hour course, currently in the process of being updated, covers areas including the roles and responsibilities of an SRO, such as instructional time, threat and risk assessment, and working with school personnel; legal issues, such as search and seizure, outreach programs, interviews and processing; teaching methodologies, such as lesson plan development, classroom management and how children learn; mentoring;

working with administrators; bullying prevention; and a new section on community college policing and how it differs from policing in public schools.

"This is an opportunity to get more cops in schools, which we want, but we want it to be with the right model. I want a cop in every school, but at the same time, I want less policing. I want our SROs to be community police officers, mentors, coaches, teachers," Kissane says.

"I hope this new program piques a lot of interest. I hope there will be officers all over the country saying 'Did you see what they're doing in Jersey? They're recognizing the value of using retired cops in schools,' " Kissane says, adding although other states may already allow schools to hire retired officers, no other state has a formalized program like the one in New Jersey.

The majority of just-retired officers range from their mid-40s to early 50s, he says, and they have years of valuable experience. However, these officers need to learn all the ways that school policing differs from what they've done in the field as SWAT team members, detectives and narcotics officers. Most schools are safe places, Kissane explains, and the NJASRO training focuses on the need to put the right officers in the right schools so that they can help shut down the "school-to-prison pipeline" by not criminalizing petty offenses and keeping the students from becoming adult offenders.

"This isn't a security guard post. We want them to go back to the roots of walking the beat and we want them to be a member of the school community," Kissane says.

That position agrees with the one taken by the New Jersey Safe Schools Task Force in its April 2013 report, which states serving as an SRO is essentially a type of community policing where the officer's beat happens to be in a school. Emphasizing positive interactions with students and staff allows them to understand that SROs are much more than armed security guards, and the resulting trust can help make students comfortable sharing information that might help stop bullying or violent behavior before it escalates.

"The new Class III SLEOs will be playing a valuable role. It will make students and staff feel good to know the new SRO has 25 years of law enforcement experience, and we hope they become the 'Andy Griffith' for the school community, the good cop that's a helpful resource," Kissane says.

For more information, contact Capt. Patrick Kissane, executive director of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers, at flpdsro@gmail.com.

CHAPTER 5

NEW FBI RESOURCES PROVIDE BEST PRACTICES FOR SROS

By Becky Lewis
May 2017

Like any other morning, the school resource officer leaned comfortably against the wall near the main entrance, responding to and calling out greetings with the arriving students. Like any other morning, some answered, some ignored him, and they all rushed on past, anxious to get to their lockers, to meet their friends, to get to class.

Except on this morning, one girl hesitated, walked past, came to a stop and slowly walked back. And soon, the SRO had details about a planned cafeteria fight between two squabbling groups of eighth-grade boys.

And all it took to get that information was eight months of "good mornings."

In a two-part series available online, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) interviewed experts in school security, who pointed out that one of the most important aspects of being a good SRO is playing a part in fostering a healthy school climate, and it can all start with something as simple as greeting students by name. Following that and some of the other simple tips provided can help SROs build trusting relationships. Those trusting relationships can in turn help create a healthy school climate with reduced tolerance for bullying and violent conflict resolution, and a greater likelihood of students' reporting threats and suspicious behavior. These tips come from the second article, "School Resource Officers and Violence Prevention: Best Practices Part Two," found on the FBI website at https://leb.fbi.gov/2017/may/school-resource-officers-and-violence-prevention-best-practices-part-two. Part One, located at (https://leb.fbi.gov/2017/april/school-resource-officers-and-violence-prevention-best-practices-part-one), provides basic information on how schools and law enforcement can work together to establish strong working partnerships.

The two articles grew out of a follow-on effort to the 2013 Comprehensive School Safety Program, a U.S. Department of Justice funding incentive for more schools to hire SROs. Realizing that these new SROs needed training and support, FBI staff interviewed a group of SROs with more than 150 years of combined experience, then compiled the results of these individual interviews with research to produce the two-part series. The FBI also summarized the key points from both articles in a new free guide, *Violence Prevention in Schools: Enhancement Through Law Enforcement Partnerships* (https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/violence-prevention-in-schools-march-2017.pdf/view.)

"We've been working since 2013 on the whole concept of how to make not only schools, but everyone in the nation, safer. This effort has allowed us to target the group that serves schools and provide them with best practices," says the FBI's Katherine Schweit, co-author of the articles. "Many of the SROs who we interviewed were recommended by the U.S. Department of Education, and the group includes some of the finest and most forward-leaning officers working in the field. It's important for the FBI to look for best practices conducted by the people who know the business. There's no better resource for us to go to."

And when it comes to establishing a good working partnership between law enforcement and school administration, some of the key points noted by those subject-matter experts included determining a school's specific needs, involving the administration in selecting the officer and writing a memorandum of understanding that outlines roles, responsibilities and duties. SROs also need specialized training in school policing, covering areas such as privacy, search and seizure, and information sharing laws regarding juveniles; being sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences; problem-solving skills; and threat assessment.

School discipline and code of conduct policies, and access to services such as drug and substance abuse treatment, mental health services and diversion programs, are also key (more details can be found in Part One.)

"I think the idea of how to communicate with the school officials themselves to set up a quality SRO program is something that hasn't been put out before," Schweit says. "And we tried to ensure that the article provided concepts for school policing whether your school district has a full budget for SROs or simply officers working with schools on a more limited basis. I think that will be very helpful because it's broad based. We didn't want to create an ideal plan for school resource officers that many districts couldn't afford to execute. We wanted a plan that all schools could use regardless of their budget."

Regardless of whether the relationship is a full-time one, or one where officers stop by schools as part of their patrol duties, good communication plays a key role in success. It's also important to maintain a distinction between school disciplinary matters and actual violations of the law; Part One points out that "School administrators and teachers, guided by district and school rules and procedures, hold responsibility for disciplinary actions, while the SRO addresses legal violations and threats to the security of the school, students, and employees."

Schweit adds to that by saying: "It's not unusual for an outsider who doesn't deal with school discipline matters to say the easy answer is to call the police officer. But it's just exactly like a home situation: you discipline your child, you don't call the police."

Once that relationship is in place and the officer's duties are clearly understood, the tips in Part Two come into greater play. Using the healthy school climate and their role in establishing it as a basis, SROs can help schools in areas such as crisis response training and bullying prevention. Part Two notes that although rates of violence in schools continue to decline, 65 percent of schools still report incidents of serious violent crimes such as use of weapons, robberies and sexual assaults. Confidential/anonymous reporting mechanisms can help bring threats to the attention of SROs and administrators, and threat assessment teams can use established policies and procedures to address them, but it all starts with promoting and maintaining a healthy school climate.

"I think it's easy for anyone to say it's important to keep track of the kids and to make sure that they're not at risk, but those are just concepts. I think the officers provided us with very practical ideas based on their experience with students, and that's one of the things I think is most valuable about this project," Schweit says. "We hope this will be a valuable resource, and we'll continue the effort as an ongoing project."

For more information on FBI efforts in the area of school safety, please contact the FBI's Office of Public Engagement at FBI_OPE_Information_Sharing@ic.fbi.gov.

CHAPTER 6

AN SRO TALKS ABOUT FEMALE BODY ARMOR

By Becky Lewis
April 2017

Check out information on proper fit for female officers on the Justice Technology Information Center's Policearmor.org website, and it will tell you: "Proper fit is an important element of the protective capability of any officer's vest because it helps to ensure sufficient coverage of the torso and vital organs, while allowing range of motion to perform expected tasks. Proper fit is even more important for female officers because of their unique features."

Deputy First Class Teresa Holland of the Frederick County (Md.) Sheriff's Office, assigned as school resource officer (SRO) for Walkersville High School and its feeder schools, couldn't agree with those statements more. The 14-year veteran says wearing a vest was uncomfortable at first, but she realized she just had to get used to it. She chooses to wear her gender-neutral vest in an external carrier to increase her comfort while maintaining her safety: "I like the outer carrier because I'm able to breathe more easily. I have worn an internal carrier and I had issues with it being uncomfortable. Also, as an SRO I'm on my feet a lot and moving around all the time, and wearing the external carrier gives me a lot more mobility.

"I love Walkersville and the kids are great, but I still have to get in there and de-escalate things sometimes, and when I do, I need to be mobile," she adds. "There are times the vest does limit movement, but I'll take that any day as opposed to not wearing it and having no protection."

In addition to learning that she preferred the external carrier, Holland also learned that the type of undergarment she wears has an impact on the vest's comfort: "I learned that I can't wear a "normal" bra with it. I need to wear a sports bra because it doesn't create any contours. If a female officer changes around and wears different bras that have different contours, they can change the shape of the vest and overall, it won't fit as snugly. Sticking with the sports bra helps it maintain the same fit day in and day out."

Just like male officers, female officers come in a wide variety of body shapes and sizes, and it can be difficult for them to obtain armor that fits them properly. Holland has noticed those difficulties in other areas as well; for example, she orders her uniform pants "big and baggy" to accommodate the difference in female shape.

"Because I've aged in this job, I see changes in my body over time," says Holland, who served as a military police officer, tried a government desk job and then ended up in law enforcement, first in narcotics and now as an SRO. "Women who have had babies while they're serving in law enforcement also face changes in their bodies, and all of those issues need to be considered when developing equipment that meets our needs."

Still, even while acknowledging the issues, Holland says she would feel undressed if she were ever to put on her uniform without her vest. Frederick County has a mandatory wear policy, which she likes and honors, and "I've never faced gunfire, but I trust that if I ever do, my vest will protect me."

In her attitude toward vest wear and the way she goes about her daily duties, Holland sets a good example for her students and for others in her profession, says Lt. Mark Landahl, formerly supervisor of the county's School Resource Officer Unit and now its Homeland Security Coordinator.

"I can't say enough good things about her. She's a terrific role model for the students," he says.

For more information on female body armor and body armor in general, including how to determine proper vest fit, visit Policearmor.org. For more information about the Frederick County Sheriff's Office, its SRO Unit and its mandatory wear policy, call (301) 600-1046 or visit https://frederickcountymd. gov/677/Sheriff-Adult-Detention

CHAPTER 7

MARION COMMUNITY SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED FOR BULLYING PREVENTION EFFORTS

By Becky Lewis
April 2017

It started with a small group of students calling themselves TAXII, for Teens Against Extreme Inappropriate Interactions. Five years later, it's grown into a districtwide "kindness campaign" that has changed the culture and climate, decreased the number of reported bullying incidents by 83 percent and resulted in a 2017 National Exemplary Program Award from the School Safety Advocacy Council's National Conference on Bullying.

In 2012, that group of students approached the administration, including Safety Director Justine Pond, with their concerns and "we started to look at what we were doing as a district and realized that we needed a message that was consistent from grade to grade and school to school. We spent a year writing a program and assembling a team with members from every school, and we've been building since then."

The Bullying Prevention Program in the Marion Community Schools encompasses a number of components, ranging from cyberbullying training facilitated by the Indiana State Police to an annual Kindness Assembly where nominated students and faculty are recognized for their efforts and the entire district participates in presenting a paper "kindness chain," with one link added throughout the year for each kind act carried out by a student.

"It's a very strong visual for our guests who come to hear about the good things that the students do," Pond says. In recent years, the chain has wrapped completely around the gymnasium – not once but twice.

Those efforts have not only combined to reduce the incidence of bullying in the school system, they've also promoted a greater understanding of what bullying is – and what it isn't. As Anita Brown, social service specialist at Justice Thurgood Marshall Intermediate School, explains: "Our focus has changed the actual definition of bullying. All of us have seen an increase in using the word in recent years, and a lot of times when we investigate, it's not really bullying. Bullying is behavior that is unwanted, one-sided and repetitive. We're teaching both students and parents that, unfortunately, there are mean people in the world, but that is different from bullying."

And according to Pond, conveying an understanding of what is and isn't bullying, especially to adults, plays a key role in the education process.

"We investigate all allegations. Even if we think it doesn't really seem like bullying, we still go through the process and interview everyone involved," she says. "And if it is bullying, we address the behavior and try to figure out how to stop it, all the while remembering that the person doing the bullying is still just a kid too."

"Many times the process starts when a student comes to me and tells me something that is going on," says Ed Velazquez, social service specialist at Marion High School. "Once we're sure it is bullying, I bring the perpetrators in and read them the riot act. They get a warning and they're told if it happens

again, there will be discipline. Yesterday I had to do that, and the boy who was in trouble came back, kind of sheepishly, at the end of the day, and we had a good talk about why what he was doing was inappropriate. Often, that's the end of it."

And while the district continues to work on teaching both students and parents the definition of bullying and also deals with the incidents that actually are bullying, it also focuses on teaching them about social media and cyberbullying, according to Brown: "We want to get everyone using the same language, and we want parents to get used to checking things out with their children. This week alone, I've had to deal with three serious incidents involving social media use among children ages 10 to 12."

"We're working on rolling out cyberbullying education at all levels, even in preschools," says Corry Hawkins, social service specialist at Riverview Elementary. "Students are gaining access to technology earlier and earlier, and it's becoming a bigger and bigger problem. Students don't know how to interact and be social, not only face to face but online too."

The Indiana State Police Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and Internet Crimes Against Children Youth Educator Trooper Cathie Bledsoe have also played a key role in helping to promote cyberbullying education. In 2016, Bledsoe gave presentations tailored to grade level to the 3,700 students

enrolled in the nine district schools, in addition to presenting to the Grant County School Safety Commission and at a community meeting. Her presentations focused on online safety, privacy protection, and sending and receiving inappropriate pictures, among other topics. Her work supplements that of the Marion Police Department, which places a roving school resource officer in the district schools. Alex Kenworthy, now deputy chief, filled that position for a number of years, and still serves on the Bullying Prevention Program steering committee.

"Everybody pretty much throws the word bullying around these days. Parents call and say their child's being bullied, and usually, it doesn't fit the definition," Kenworthy says. "In the Marion Community Schools, they've done a wonderful job of explaining the concept and addressing the actual incidents that unfortunately do occur."

In fact, Marion Community Schools have done such a good job that after the state adopted a new bullying prevention law, the district served on a committee to help create guidelines and resource materials for the state.

"We want to put what we've done out there and make it available for other schools to adapt for their own use," Pond says.

For more information about how Marion Community Schools won the Exemplary Program Award, visit http://allen.marion.k12.in.us/index.cfm?event=news&pageid=1243. For more information on the program overall, contact Justine Pond at (765) 662-2546 x144, email jpond@marion.k12.in.us. For more information on the Indiana State Police Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and its Cyber Safety program, contact Trooper Cathie Bledsoe at ICACYouthEd@isp.in.gov.

CHAPTER 8

CRANFORD COMMUNITY EMBRACES ANTI-DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE MESSAGE

By Becky Lewis
November 2016

For more than 35 years, the phrase "Just Say No" has been part of the American consciousness as the cornerstone of numerous anti-drug and alcohol abuse programs and curricula. But as the opioid epidemic continues to grow and concerns about adolescent and pre-adolescent substance abuse remain, communities have begun searching for other approaches. In Cranford, N.J., the police department's school resource officers have taken the lead in what has become a communitywide effort based not on "Just Say No," but rather on "Why do people keep saying 'Yes?' "

Although Cranford's Project A.L.E.R.T. (Adolescent Learning Experience Resistance Training) had its origins with a published curriculum, Det. Sgt. Matt Nazzaro and Det. Kelly Rieder, the department's school resource officers, have refined and expanded the program, taking ownership of a community-wide effort that only starts with sixth-grade education classes that have replaced the existing D.A.R.E. program.

Nazzaro explains that when James Wozniak took over as police chief in 2014, he reviewed existing programs, including D.A.R.E.: "We wanted to retain the positive and proactive interaction between 'the cops and the kids,' " Nazzaro says. "We had a strong relationship with the Cranford Board of Education and we worked closely with the Board in developing a creative approach that continued our presence in the classroom, working with health teachers to present our message."

Starting with classes geared toward students in the sixth grade, Project A.L.E.R.T. sessions meet twice a week for five weeks to cover topics related to the use of tobacco, drugs and alcohol, focusing on how to deal with internal and external pressures coming from peers and the media (both mainstream and social). Students receive additional instruction in the eighth grade, and the Cranford Police Department and the Cranford High School Student Assistance Counselor developed an original course called High School 101 for incoming freshmen, in which the officers team up with high school counselors to reinforce the lessons learned in the lower grades. And the whole community of approximately 24,000 residents has gotten involved through projects such as a Red Ribbon Week carnival against drug abuse, a townwide barbecue put on by the Cranford Municipal Alliance and other projects to keep reinforcing the message during the summer months.

"All the stakeholders come together to try to complement our efforts. It's not just something that happens in the classroom, it's a philosophy that prevails throughout our township," Nazzaro says. "One of my favorite parts of the project is a pre-meeting with all the sixth-grade parents to familiarize them with what we'll be talking about. I show them slides of the different drugs and I tell them about an individual we arrested in town who was selling all kinds of marijuana and its derivatives to our youth. Then I tell them he was only 16 years old. I've had parents tell me afterward that they couldn't get that story off their minds, and it helps them realize that although for them underage drinking may have been a rite of passage and they turned out fine, things are a lot different today."

Those differences include a demanding routine of classwork, homework and afterschool activities, generating a pressure-filled schedule that Nazzaro says he couldn't have coped with as a teen: "It's not just peer pressure, it's internal pressure. Kids are so overwhelmed and so tightly wound they say they need a

way to decompress and relax. They're growing up faster, they have to deal with social media, and there's an overabundance of substances that weren't available when I was growing up and when their parents were growing up."

The classroom curriculum does not use a lecture format, but rather a variety of activities such as skits and role play that generate involvement between the students and the officers. The published materials target use by teachers, but the Cranford Police Department saw the value in using officers as instructors instead. Both officers work with health teachers, who reinforce the message the next day in class, and homework includes fostering an honest discussion between students and their parents by requiring the children to ask how their parents how they dealt with peer pressure and substance abuse. (The pre-program meeting includes tips for parents on how to handle the questions they'll face during the discussion.)

One of those parents came up to Nazzaro at a recent Police Athletic League football game to tell him how much his child enjoyed the program. When Nazzaro asked why, the parent told him it's because of the way the curriculum relates to real life, such as asking the students to find examples in their daily use of Twitter, television, Pandora or other media of tobacco-, drug- and alcohol-related advertising.

"Deploying the curriculum in the right way ties it all together. We educate the students and we connect with the community. The students are engaging in a positive relationship with law enforcement, and we hope this will help combat the divide between law enforcement and the communities they serve, and allow them to see us a valuable resource in the community," Nazzaro says. "Time will tell if we're able to cause the paradigm to shift in our town so that our kids make informed decisions about risky behaviors. We're proud of what we've started, and having strong support from the community and the township makes my life easier."

"One of my top priorities when I took over as chief was to implement a school resource officer program. We needed to fill a void that existed between the youth of Cranford and our officers," Wozniak says. "Sgt. Nazzaro and Det. Rieder have bridged that gap, and we have achieved a great amount of success with our SRO program to include a fantastic relationship with teachers and school administrators. This is something we are very proud of."

For more information about how the Cranford Police Department has worked to engage the community in education and discussion about drug and alcohol abuse, contact Det. Sgt. Matthew Nazzaro at m-nazzaro@cranfordnj.org.

CHAPTER 9

"PLAN, PREPARE, ACT" WINS AWARD, ENCOURAGES PLANNING

By Becky Lewis
June 2016

An ordinary school day. Students hurrying through the halls, earning a "no running!" warning from a teacher. Study groups meeting in the library. Classroom lessons underway.

And suddenly, the sound of gunfire.

The state of Illinois mandates that all schools hold drills every year: fire drills, tornado drills, active shooter drills. Although the odds are against any of these events striking any one school during a given school day, preparing, planning and practicing help ensure that teachers, students and staff know how to react

if called on to do so. "Plan, Prepare, Act," an 11-minute video produced by the Orland Park Police Department with donated assistance from local business Eyelight Studios, encourages viewers to think about evacuating safely, locating safe hiding places and planning how to fight back if absolutely necessary. Available for viewing at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0NPcbAuJ84, the video received the People's Choice Award in the 36th Annual Telly Awards competition held in 2015.

In the introduction to the video, Orland Park Police Chief Timothy McCarthy says that although it's hard to even think about the possibility of a school shooting, planning what to do before an incident occurs is critical.

"Active shooters, school shootings and of course school safety in general is a high priority here," McCarthy says in an interview. "We wanted to create something for schools to use outside of the annual drill, where we go out to the schools and practice with them. We wanted to tell them about all the options available, then give them time to study them and think about them. If an incident ever does happen, it's not likely the police will be there at the onset. In those first few minutes, administrators have to make life or death decisions. It's important for them to receive information ahead of time and to have time to review it. We don't want them to considering their options for the first time while a crisis takes place."

With the message in mind and Commander Joe Mitchell overseeing the production process, Orland Park recruited volunteers from among officers' family members to play the roles of administrators, teachers and students, and obtained cooperation from Orland Park Fire Protection and other local emergency services agencies. Although the department incurred some production costs, overall expenses remained low, and the video itself is made freely available to local schools in the suburb of 50,000-plus residents, located 25 miles southwest of Chicago.

"We passed it out to every school in our community. We'll pass it out to anyone who wants it, frankly. Our local schools are using it on a regular basis on institute days, where they play it as a refresher. We don't want it to sit in a drawer at the school, instead we want it to be used on a routine basis," McCarthy says.

Not keeping the video in a drawer and showing it to staff repeatedly also ensures that substitutes come in for their fair share of training and repetition: "When subs come in, we want them to know the policies too. Substitutes are used far more than most of us realize. When it's flu season, teachers get the flu too, and on any given day, substitutes could make up a significant part of the staff working in a school."

The need to train substitutes, plan in advance and practice plans is shared by schools throughout the nation, and McCarthy encourages departments and school systems across the country to use the "Plan, Prepare, Act" video: "Different departments respond differently, of course, but the video covers the basics of school safety, lockdown drills, rapid deployment and evacuation. These are almost universal principles being used across the country."

"Plan, Prepare, Act" is the second video produced by the Orland Park Police Department, following a video on community drug concerns and the heroin epidemic produced several years ago. Public Information Officer Margie Owens submitted it for the Telly Award without McCarthy's knowledge, and he was "surprised and proud" over the win and the way the video has resonated in the community.

"We're very proud of "Plan, Prepare, Act" and the award, and we hope it's something that people find useful for a long time," he says.

For more information on the project, contact Chief Timothy McCarthy at tjmccarthy@orlandpark.org.

CHAPTER 10

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA LEADS DEVELOPMENT OF BOMB THREAT TRAINING VIDEO

By Becky Lewis
August 2016

Around the country, it seemed the headlines were the same: Bomb threats strike school systems and postsecondary institutions in California. In New York. In Massachusetts. In New Jersey.

At the University of Central Florida, Department of Security and Emergency Management staff knew that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

provided the "go to" site for information on handling bomb threats, so the university immediately turned there to look for video training on how to handle a bomb threat call. Surprisingly, the extensive DHS resources lacked a video component. So UCF partnered with the DHS Office of Bombing Prevention to make one for everyone's use.

And now, it's become the standard not only for the university, but also for DHS, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and numerous other institutions of higher education around the country.

Jeff Morgan, the department's director, says UCF worked with the Office for Bombing Prevention, part of the National Protection and Programs Directorate's Office of Infrastructure Protection, to ensure that the script stayed on message and the resulting video would be useful to not only colleges and universities, but also to any type of organization ranging from a hospital to a "mom and pop" store, from an elementary school to a bank. The result, "What You Can Do When There Is a Bomb Threat," can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pg7yVTBciWg, as well on the DHS What To Do When There Is a Bomb Threat resource page (https://www.dhs.gov/what-to-do-bomb-threat) and on the websites of a number of other universities and police departments across the country.

"In the past couple of years, there has been a rash of automated bomb threats to not only schools and universities, but also to airports, hospitals and large organizations," says Morgan. "Universities are required to notify the campus community within minutes of receiving a potential threat. Because UCF is the second largest university in the country with more than 60,000 students, we're just as vulnerable to these threats as any other organization."

That realization led to revamping the UCF policy on how to deal with a bomb threat, and Morgan says he understood that most people didn't know how to handle a bomb threat phone call.

"Let's face it, we now live in a visual world and it's a preferred method of learning," says UCF Police Chief Richard Beary, who was serving as IACP president at the time of the video's production. "By creating the video, we've provided a new resource for the DHS tool kit. At the same time, IACP also realized the need and helped with promotion.

"The beauty of it is how well it applies to a vast realm of organizations that could receive bomb threats. Our main focus was to fill a void, and we've heard from other departments around the country how useful they find it as a resource," he adds.

In four minutes, 12 seconds, "What You Can Do When There Is a Bomb Threat" uses a generic workplace scenario to walk viewers through the steps listed on the DHS Bomb Threat Checklist (https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/dhs-bomb-threat-checklist-2014-508.pdf), and suggests keeping printed copies on hand for use should a bomb threat call come in. Tips include attracting a co-worker's attention to initiate 911 contact, listening for clues in the caller's voice and in background noise, and leaving the line open after the call ends. On the DHS website, it joins such resources as the checklist, a brochure that provides guidance on pre-threat preparation, evacuation and shelter-in-place considerations, and more.

Once the university completed production of "What You Can Do When There Is a Bomb Threat," in addition to promotion through DHS and IACP, the Department of Security and Emergency Management pushed it out to emergency managers from every university in the country via a listserv and to the UCF community via the university website.

"We wanted to make something that could be used anywhere in the country. If you just look through the news headlines, bomb threats are happening all the time at universities and schools," Morgan says. "The video promotes a message on how you should train so that if something happens, you can provide law enforcement with the information they need to do their job. And of course we want you to do it safely and minimize the threat as well. We hope others will post the video on their websites and utilize this as a standard training tool for their organization."

For more information on the project, contact Jeff Morgan at (407) 882-7111, email Jeff.Morgan@ucf.edu.

CHAPTER 11

IDAHO TAKES SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO SCHOOL SAFETY PLANNING

By Becky Lewis
September 2016

In Idaho, a llama shares top billing in the state's new school safety PSA. Yes, a llama. Big. Brown and white. In a school hallway.

But the state's newly created Office of School Safety and Security has a lot more going for it than just a gimmick.

The llama stars along with State First Lady Lori Otter in a 33-second PSA for Idaho's "See, Tell, Now" campaign, which encourages faculty, students and staff "If you See something, Tell someone, Now." Brian Armes, manager of the new office, explains that

the llama's appearance isn't as far-fetched as it might seem: llamas and alpacas are used as pack animals in the state's mountains That campaign, with its llama mascot, was created by an ad agency with a goal of producing a take on the concept of "stranger danger" with which younger children could connect and not feel frightened. (View the PSA at https://schoolsafety.dbs.idaho.gov/see-tell-now/).

Armes says the campaign is based on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's "See Something, Say Something" campaign, with an ultimate objective of involving the community in addition to school campuses. It's all part of the purpose for which the 2016 Idaho Legislature created the Office of School Safety and Security; a purpose which is, according to the Office's website, "to support Idaho public schools in the creation of safe learning environments in the midst of an evolving threat environment." Although Idaho's school safety center opened several years after many other states began their own concentrated efforts, Armes says a great deal of careful and directed planning went into the center's creation, and the state won't be starting out by playing catchup.

"People wonder 'Why did Idaho wait?' " Armes says. "Fortunately, we haven't had any headline-making tragedies, and it made sense to hold off and come up with a well thought-out plan."

That plan included placing the Office in the Division of Building Safety, rather than the Department of Education or the Department of Justice. Armes and two of his four staff members have backgrounds in education, but as the state's economy begins to recover and Idaho sees new growth in population and construction, a concurrent effort to update existing schools and build new ones gives the state an opportunity to incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into their infrastructures.

"Operations is an area where we have an opportunity to make a big change," he says. "We're here to serve the community and we can have a big impact through policies, practices and procedures that use and enforce safety principles."

To review the effectiveness of that approach, the Office plans a three-year cycle of assessments, with one-third of the state's schools under review every year: "Every effort should begin with an assessment, followed by long-term planning, and we believe a systematic approach will work best for Idaho."

The assessments are all part of a sustained planning approach begun in 2013 after the shooting at Connecticut's Sandy Hook Elementary School. That approach began with selection of 75 schools – large, small; elementary,

secondary; urban, rural – for an initial assessment that helped inform the legislature in its decision to create the Office. Armes says the plan also includes a regional approach, because "in Idaho we have a saying that the water doesn't get to the end of the row. It's based on the irrigation we do here, but what it means is sometimes benefits don't make it all the way from the state capital to the schools at the end of the line. If you shorten the row – if you use a regional approach – the water has a greater chance of reaching the area where it's needed."

And part of that regional approach includes leveraging regional resources such as local Crimestoppers organizations to expand the Office's efforts, rather than setting up parallel efforts like hotlines and mobile apps.

"We want to involve the community and use what's already there to help encourage our educators and our students to look out for each other. If we get children thinking that way from a young age, they are likely to take that attitude into adulthood," Armes says. "There's a tendency to think that out West where communities are smaller we naturally do that, but with people moving around frequently, there's less thought given to community responsibility than before. I think our approach makes a lot of sense for Idaho, and it's a good way to get people 'back in the saddle' and caring for each other."

For more information on the programs of the new Idaho Office for School Safety and Security, visit https://schoolsafety.dbs.idaho.gov/ or contact Brian Armes at (208) 332-1753, email Brian.Armes@dbs.idaho.gov.

CHAPTER 12

INDIANA COUNTY IMPLEMENTS "ONE COUNTY, ONE PROTOCOL"

By Becky Lewis
June 2017

When the Valparaiso Community Schools District asked the Porter County Sheriff's Office to review its school safety plan, it seemed like a good time to review all plans from throughout the county's seven school districts, with a goal of possibly condensing and unifying them. The sheriff's office ended up with the overwhelming task of dealing with a room filled with well-written but probably unread paper plans, each one different from the next.
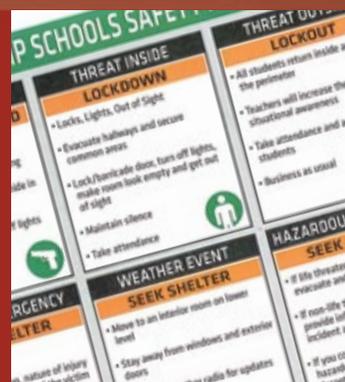
Then Sheriff David Reynolds went to a basketball game at Indiana University in Bloomington, and saw a poster that changed their whole approach. Now, more than a year later, the seven school districts are united under "One County, One Protocol."

The poster listed, in simple terms, the steps to follow in the event of an active shooter situation, and inspired the idea to develop something similar for the schools in Porter County. The sheriff's office developed a message that would ensure all schools followed the same procedures and used the same terminology, then created versions for each school that included their colors and mascots.

But "One County, One Protocol" doesn't end there. With funding from the school districts and the Lake County High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), the sheriff's office and the other law enforcement agencies in the county worked together to produce a 22-minute video that focuses on the plan in more detail (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX9C20pqBAI), encouraged the school districts to sign up for a particular smartphone app that allows teachers and staff to connect directly with local law enforcement and began working on implementing training on the plan. The project has drawn attention from other counties in the state, some of which have adapted all or part of the program, and recently Chief Deputy Jeff Biggs and Dr. Julie Lauck, associate superintendent of the Valparaiso Community Schools, presented information on "One County, One Protocol" as a potential best practice at the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy. (The academy is an annual re-certification event for the state's school resource officers and others who have completed the state's basic school safety specialist training.)

And it all started with the posters.

"I think the posters are very important tools in promoting 'One County, One Protocol.; The schools have them posted in the lunchroom, in the hallways, all around the school," Reynolds says, adding that the posters were inexpensive to produce. "Parents are always saying 'What are you doing to keep my kids safe?' I'm not saying this is a panacea, but it's a constructive way of working together."

Although other aspects of the project have entailed greater expenses than did the poster, teamwork and a variety of funding sources got schools on board with the smartphone app and led to the creation of the video. The video does use teachers, students and local law enforcement officers to act out scenarios that take place in the school buildings, rather than calling on acting talent and staged environments (which would have escalated the costs). And although

the opening moments set the stage with some information directly related to Porter County, the majority of the video focuses on executing the simple steps outlined on the posters. With its availability on YouTube, it's accessible by any law enforcement agency or school system in the country that wants to use it.

"Regardless of whether you're in Utah or New York or Georgia, schools are facing the same issues," Reynolds says. "We tried to use the video to show students, teachers and staff how to follow instructions on the PA when they're given, and also to empower them to make decisions on their own when it becomes necessary to follow the principles of Run Hide Defend."

The video and the rest of the project emphasize that message so well that representatives from the state Department of Homeland Security came to a Porter County Safe Schools Commission meeting earlier this year to discuss the possibility of presenting parts of the project to the governor as a potential "One State, One Protocol" project.

"With 92 counties in Indiana, that could prove difficult, but there definitely is talk about getting everyone on board," Reynolds says.

For more information on the Porter County "One County, One Protocol" project, contact Porter County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Sgt. Jamie Erow at pio@porterco-ps.org.

CHAPTER 13

COOPERATION, PARTNERSHIPS LEAD TO CREATION OF YAKIMA VALLEY CENTER

By Becky Lewis
May 2017

It started with Friday morning coffee, not long after the Dec. 14, 2012, mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary. Some of them came from law enforcement, some from the school system. All of them were hearing the same question from parents and the community, "What are you going to do to protect our kids?"

More than four years later, the Friday meetings continue, no longer an informal gathering over coffee but a regularly scheduled meeting of a cooperative

effort that includes representatives from 23 Central Washington School Districts representing five counties; Educational Service District 105, which provides services to those school districts; multiple local law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency medical services and hospitals; and other community partners, such as insurance companies. It's a project that has taken the lead in innovations in law enforcement and school staff training, lobbied for changes in the state's mandatory emergency drills and been the driving force behind the creation of a School Safety Operations and Coordination Center (SSOCC) that uses enhanced technology to help provide safety and security to those school districts.

Although the SSOCC – which offers live access for law enforcement to school cameras during emergencies, immediate notifications to schools whenever there is law enforcement activity nearby, the ability to seal off parts of some schools, online access to school safety plans and more – has been termed "a game changer," co-op members emphasize that partnerships and people make up the project's foundation.

"We built our program on the premise that technology in and of itself does not save people. It's the training and the knowledge of how and when to apply that technology appropriately that saves people," says Chris Weedin, ESD 105 School Safety Technology Coordinator. "I can't say that often enough. What's going to save people is people, and they need to know what they're capable of doing in a crisis."

"One of the things that has made us successful is flexibility and a focus on making progress," says Yakima County Sheriff Brian Winter. "We're not waiting for the federal government to fix the problem, we're not waiting for the state, we're not waiting for 'somebody else.' If someone comes to the group looking for help, either somebody sitting there has already dealt with the same issue, or we can point them to a resource that will help. Our partners are on board that 'it's not somebody else's job' and that's why we're making progress."

That progress has moved local schools from answering a post-Sandy Hook short survey of basic school safety questions to developing comprehensive, individualized safety plans that can be immediately accessed by law enforcement through the SSOCC. And through the co-op, Weedin explains, ESD 105 has developed leading practice guidelines schools can use as templates. When a district initially contracts with the ESD (although Washington's nine regional ESDs are state agencies, they rely on individual school districts to

fund part of their operating costs), staff perform an initial assessment of assets such as:

• Cameras.

• Access control.

• Trauma kits.

• AEDs.

They also look at procedures for calling lockdowns and alerting local law enforcement.

"We do a top-to-bottom analysis that goes into the school's Safety Assets Portfolio, where it's reviewed annually. We usually start by preloading information from the school's website, and the administration almost always tells us it's inaccurate and asks where we got it. They're floored when we tell them it came from their own sites," Weedin says. "Once we have accurate information in place, we migrate it to the leading practices, show the school administration the gaps and make a plan for closing those gaps. "

Prior to the implementation of the SSOCC, Weedin says, many of those leading practice ideas were discussed in the co-op, but not necessarily implemented. Now there's a repository for storing them and a mechanism for distributing them via Web, smartphones and other devices: "We focus on school staff as first

responders. We want to equip them to handle whatever crisis comes along, whether it's a kid falling off a swing, an ammonia leak or an active shooter. We want to be sure they understand there's a leading practice for dealing with all of those situations."

Randy Town, long-time ESD 105 coordinator of school safety and security, and a retired Yakima County reserve deputy sergeant, agrees that partnerships have played a key role in developing a co-op among systems as diverse as the 15,000-student complex that makes up the school district in Yakima itself to a half-dozen rural one-room school districts with less than 100 students: "The majority of our services do go to the smaller districts, because the larger ones are more self-sufficient. Some of the rural schools can have a long wait for law enforcement to arrive, and they need to know what they can do to help themselves."
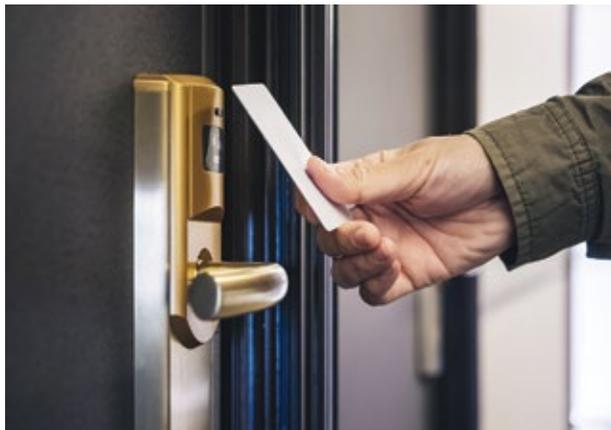
Schools learning what to do to help themselves is the latest evolution in crisis response, says Winter, who notes that after Columbine in 1999, local law enforcement moved from taking the passive role of waiting for the SWAT team to reacting actively, and that after Sandy Hook, schools began to realize their staffs too needed to become more active rather than solely waiting for law enforcement: "With the co-op and the SSOCC, we try to define what the schools can do with the tools and the training they have. It might be using a one of the 100-plus trauma first aid kits we've installed in county schools or using skills they've learned to defend the classroom. Each school district has taken a different tack, but every school in the county has done something to improve safety and security. It doesn't have to be done with firearms; it can be tools to break out windows and mats to put over the broken glass, it can be pepper spray or even a fire extinguisher. What matters is that you have a plan and you've practiced it."

Local law enforcement has been planning and practicing as well, starting with the formation of a group of instructors from 19 local agencies that began teaching a standard active shooter response protocol in 2004-2005. Chief Greg Cobb of the Union Gap Police Department says his agency was one of the first in the country to put active shooter response kits in their patrol cars to include rifle armor specifically ordered for patrol officers. A countywide memorandum of understanding to start the training group followed shortly thereafter.

"This area has always been very proactive when it comes to active shooter response," Cobb says. "We're very supportive of each other, and when I talk to chiefs from outside the county, they tell me they don't see that in their areas. But with our history, it was no surprise when the call went out for that first co-op meeting right after Sandy Hook."

Cobb says not long after the group began meeting, members realized a need for changes in the state's mandated emergency drills. At that time, Washington required six fire drills per year, and no drills related to active threat response.

"We did some research and found that the nation hadn't lost a child in a school fire since the 1950s. Fire drills were originally mandated because children were dying in school fires, so drills and codes were implemented to make sure it never happened again. So here we were, 60 years later, ignoring active threats instead of addressing them with the same rigor," Cobb says.

Co-op members joined in lobbying efforts to change that, and the state now requires three fire drills and three lockdown/hostile event drills per year, and "the hope is that our successors, 50 years from now, will be saying 'we haven't lost a child in a hostile event in many years, so why are we still doing this?', just the way we look at fire drills now."

And all of this – active shooter training, increased emphasis on Run Barricade Fight, drills, assessments – led directly to the creation of the SSOCC where everything is tied together and distributed through technology to the people who may someday need to implement it in a crisis situation.

"It's a big big deal when it comes to communication and making sure things happen in the order they're supposed to happen. I think it's a game-changer for us," Cobb says.

"If it helps save just one life, it's worth it," Winter says. "Yakima County is much better prepared than we were several years ago, and if the idea of pooling information and working together in a co-op like this spreads to other areas, so much the better."

For more information on the Yakima Valley School Safety Cooperative and the School Safety Operations and Coordination Center, contact Chris Weedin at (509) 853-2047, email chris.weedin@esd105.org.

CHAPTER 14

FAST, FREE REVERSE CHECKOUT PLAN RECOGNIZED AS BEST PRACTICE

By Becky Lewis
May 2017

Allan Robertson, principal of Wedowee Middle School in Wedowee, Ala., recognized one thing in common among every active threat incident he saw on the news: parents. Frightened parents. Worried parents. Parents who wanted to see their children NOW.

So he came up with a fast, easy way to reduce that stress. And it's free.

"In the event of any crisis where we need to evacuate, when the lockdown is over, we'll take them all to the gym. Parents can come straight to the school, come into the gym and find their child," Robertson says.

"But that doesn't mean someone might come in and take a child. Whoever is picking the child up must go to the homeroom teacher, who has a stock of neon-bright cards that would be hard to duplicate on the spur of the moment. After confirming the person is authorized to pick up the child, the teacher writes both names on the card, and the adult must present the card at the door to leave."

In addition to being easier for parents, Robertson says it's also easier for school staff, because they don't have to organize an evacuation to another location such as a nearby church or the courthouse. And law enforcement also benefits from not needing to secure two separate locations.

"I commend Principal Robertson for his thinking outside the box to help find a solution to protect our children. It's a neat concept because it's kind of going against what we've been taught before, but it works. It was quite successful when we ran a drill on it," says Wedowee Police Chief Jay Stone. "It helps us with personnel because we only need to secure an additional location in the school, instead of a second site."

Another aid to both law enforcement and school staff can be found on the outside of every window: the classroom number. Inside each classroom, under the light switch, the school has placed signs reading "911. Room XXX."

"If dispatch gets a call from a child who is panicking because the teacher is down, the operator can remind the child to look at the light switch and give the room number. That information goes to arriving officers, who immediately know the correct room to go to by looking at the windows. It makes it a lot easier to identify the site of a problem and to tell which rooms are clear," Robertson says. And those arriving officers have a clear road into the school as well; dispatch also calls for an automatic closure of the main road to the school, turning it into a one-way avenue for law enforcement only. Parents need to find an alternate route into the school – and they do, he says, pointing out that in a rural area like Wedowee (population approximately 1,000), parents often begin to arrive before law enforcement has operations fully in place.

The simplicity of Wedowee's plan has drawn attention from the Alabama Attorney General's Office, which has promoted it as a best practice throughout the state. That recognition didn't come without some extra effort on Robertson's part, however.

"I applied for the Alabama Safe Schools Award two years in a row, and when we didn't receive recognition the second year, I called the Attorney General's Office and told them they really needed to see this for themselves," Robertson says. The office's law enforcement coordinator, Chris Carden, made a site visit in April 2017, and said he was impressed with the plan's simple, inexpensive effectiveness. The result was a letter recommending the Reverse Checkout Plan

to the state superintendent of schools in addition to all police chiefs and sheriffs in the state. Since that letter went out, Robertson has heard from several schools in the Birmingham area, where he worked before moving to Wedowee.

"The community has been very appreciative and the parents really like it. We've had two trial runs and will continue to practice it, and once they realized how quickly and easily they can get their children back without having to go to another location, they were thrilled," he says. "Whenever you see one of these incidents on television, you see that parents instinctively come to the school and then they've been directed to go somewhere else. But not here."

Although the plan started with a small school (Wedowee has 215 students in grades 4-6), it can be modified to fit the needs of any size school, and is portable as well: Wedowee has several alternate locations for carrying out the plan in addition to the gym. And all for nothing more than purchasing sheets of colored card stock or pulling them from supplies.

"It costs essentially nothing, it's easy to organize, it's easy to practice and the parents appreciate it," Robertson says. "I hope that any principal or law enforcement administrator who reads this realizes how easy this would be to

implement at any school."

For more information on Wedowee's Reverse Checkout Procedure, contact Allan Robertson at arobertson@randolphboe.org, phone (256) 357-4636, or Chief Jay Stone at (256) 610-0123.

AUTOMATED STUDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BRINGS "PEACE OF MIND" TO KENTUCKY SCHOOL

By Becky Lewis
September 2016

It's a nightmare that has caused numerous elementary school administrators and teachers to wake up in a cold sweat: A distraught woman approaches a few minutes after school ends, asking "Where's my son?"

"Oh, he went with his father today. Did the two of you get your schedules crossed?"

"I took my son and left my husband... he can't pick him up anymore! I told them in the office this morning, didn't the word get to you yet?"

But in Albany, Ky., that nightmare has been banished for good with the development of Albany Elementary's Student Management Transportation Solution (SMT), a QR code-based system that ensures incidents like the one described above will never happen.

Tim Armstrong, who has served as the school's principal for 18 years, knew the potential problems in the school's paper-based afterschool pick-up program, which ranged from a lag in updating pickup authorization to children racing through the parking lot in front of oncoming cars. For several years, he searched for a system to meet his needs and couldn't find what he wanted anywhere, so he worked with a local company to create SMT at no charge to the school system. In its first full year of use during the 2015-2016 school year, Albany Elementary averaged 147 student pickups daily, with no problems.

"Previously, after the buses left, the adults who were picking up children came to a specific door into the gymnasium, and we paired them up. We're located in a beautiful rural area between two lakes, and there was a time when I knew all of our parents and guardians personally, but that's changing," Armstrong says. "And then one winter day, we had two children who ran ahead in the parking lot as they left the building, and both were nearly hit by drivers who weren't paying enough attention. These are my kids and I feel responsible, and I decided then we had to come up with our own solution."

Using SMT, Armstrong staffs a Wi-Fi-equipped booth outside the building, where he uses a tablet computer to check in adults making a pickup. Each authorized adult – not each family – has a unique assigned QR code, which is associated with a photo of the authorized individual and the names and photos of children that the adult may pick up. If a mother makes the pickup on Monday, the father on Tuesday and a grandparent on Wednesday, that's all recorded in the system. Updates occur in real time: if that father is called out of town on a specific Tuesday, and a grandparent is coming in his place, that reported change gets to Armstrong instantly.

In the booth, Armstrong submits the names of children waiting for pickup into the system, and their names appear, in order, on a monitor in the gym. Staff members in the gym line the children up in pickup order and escort them to the door, where they put the children directly into the back seat of authorized, waiting vehicles. At that point, staff once again scan the QR code, and the school has documentation of the date and the time the child was picked up, who made the pickup and who escorted the child to the vehicle. And compared to the previous system, it takes place in a small fraction of the time.

"We have some 2,200 people authorized to pick up more than 550 children, in various combinations of children and days. Custody constantly changes. Children move from home to living with a near-relative to foster care. We couldn't carry around the amount of paperwork required to keep track of all that, but now, if we've been told about restrictions, we know it," Armstrong says. "And our parents think this is the greatest thing ever. I had some the first year who tested it by trying to use someone else's QR code, and they were very pleased when I caught them."

From his position in the booth, Armstrong can also call an immediate lockdown inside the school if he sees something suspicious in a vehicle, such as a weapon, and he can use a two-way radio to make immediate contact with 911 and the state police. Albany Elementary also uses SMT to generate visitors' passes during the school day, and monitors show the names of all visitors in the building at a given time, along with the reason for their visit. When a visitor leaves, SMT creates a time-stamped record of the checkout.

The school also uses the system to track the comings and goings of roving teachers for classes such as art and physical education, and can generate a watch list of individuals who are considered potential troublemakers. And in the event of an electrical failure, teachers do have printed information for each student, which is regenerated every time information is updated in the system. Plans call for ongoing improvements to include incorporating bus information into the system.

"We created this to solve the problem we had here at Albany Elementary, but other schools are interested as well," Armstrong says. The Walker Early Learning Center in nearby Wayne County has begun using the system for its young pupils, and Armstrong has given presentations on SMT throughout the state, including at the summer 2016 Kentucky Association of School Administrators conference.

"It solves so many problems that principals face nowadays, and principals and teachers have enough stress in their lives already. It was an undertaking to get it in place, but now we only have to do updates and add each year's incoming class," Armstrong says. "I could have retired two years ago, but this gives me the peace of mind I need to stay on."

For more information on Albany Elementary's Student Management Transportation Solution, contact Tim Armstrong at timarmstrong@windstream. net or call (606) 688-9511.

CHAPTER 16

MISSOURI SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING EMPHASIZES SITUATIONAL AWARENESS, COMMUNICATION SKILLS

By Becky Lewis
June 2016

First stop. "Hey Mr. B, hot one today!" "Sure is, finally warm enough for those shorts you boys wore all winter!"

Second stop. There they are, more yelling, giggling youngsters in shorts and flip-flops. Third stop. And here's more of the same, marked by the high spirits that indicate the school year is almost over.

Fourth stop....wait a sec. A hoodie? Sweats? He wore shorts when it was below freezing. And what's up with the second backpack?.... What did they say in that training we had last fall, JDLR...somebody or

something that Just Doesn't Look Right, that's it…I'm going to roll right on by, and I'm going to call in.

According to the American School Bus Council, some 480,000 school buses transport 26 million children to school every day, yet few school systems train their drivers on what to do if an intruder enters their bus, says Gary Moore, safety coordinator at the Missouri Center for Education Safety. In the aftermath of the December 2012 shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary and a January 2013 incident in rural Alabama where a bus driver was killed and a child taken hostage, Moore was tasked with developing a safety training program for school bus drivers; he has since presented it more than 150 times in the past three years in 12 states and Canada. Initially offered free of charge to schools in Missouri under a U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant, the Center continues to offer the training throughout the state at a low fee. And although jurisdictions in some other states have been willing to pay the fee to have Moore make the presentation, he also willingly shares his slides and talking points at no charge, allowing other agencies to create their own training programs.

Moore says he didn't "invent anything new;" rather, he applied knowledge gained during his 34 years in law enforcement (29 as a member of the Missouri Highway Patrol) to school bus safety. He worked with the sheriff's department in Dale County, Ala., where the hostage situation took place while developing the training, which covers the basic rules of safety, the importance of good communication and dealing with a physical altercation.

"I hear from the drivers that 'JDLR' sticks in their heads," Moore says. "Anything that strikes you as out of your range of normal becomes a JDLR. It could be somebody wearing inappropriate clothing or carrying a strange object. When you see it, you need to act on it and report it."

In addition to emphasizing JDLR awareness, Moore focuses on the importance of good communication: "If I only had time to talk about one topic, it would be communication. Good skills defuse problems, poor skills only escalate them."

If a driver is confronted by an angry parent or student (a more likely scenario than facing an active threat), it is important to listen actively and look engaged while not interrupting, then paraphrase some of the individual's statements in a response, Moore says, noting that the vast majority of physical altercations start with a verbal confrontation. In the event an altercation does become physical, he says, it's important to be able to get out of your seat, and don't hesitate to use anything at your disposal as a weapon: a fire extinguisher, wasp spray, the bus itself.
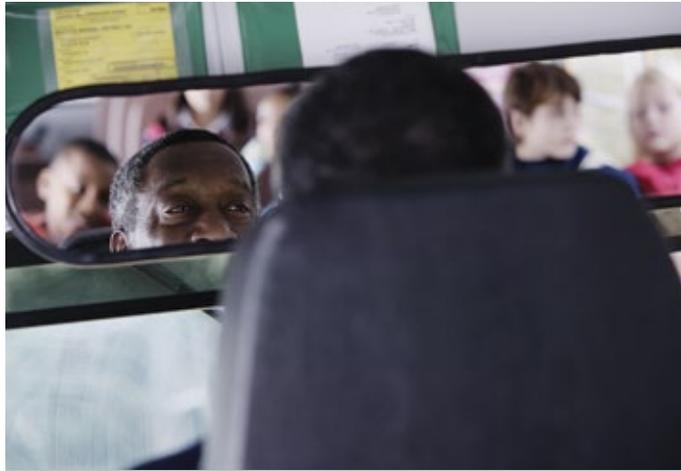
In addition to covering those topics in more depth, the Missouri training also presents the following Basic Rules of School Bus Safety:

- Never let any unauthorized person on the bus, unless there is a need to assist a student on or off the bus.

- Never allow a stranger to get onto the bus.

- Conduct all communication at the driver's window; if necessary for safety, advise the individual that the conversation needs to be moved to the school or bus transportation office.

And just like with any other training, the best way to be sure all of this kicks in in the event of an emergency is to practice, practice, practice. Moore says school districts should run appropriate drills more than once a year, and that local law enforcement needs to be involved in training events: "Every local law enforcement agency has its own way of doing things. Training needs to focus on including their procedures."

One drill that drivers can implement on their own, though, is conducting a personal inspection to make sure the brakes and the emergency exit work properly prior every single time they start their bus.

"I don't care if they've only been parked somewhere for an hour, they need to check those two things, which can be tampered with so easily. I try to emphasize that during the training, and I hear feedback from safety directors that they've

seen their drivers doing this," Moore says. "When I spoke at the Missouri State Emergency Management Conference last year, a member of the audience stood up and said 'after you provided training in our area, it had a profound effect on how the drivers do their business. What you're doing is working.' "

In addition to emphasizing the need for training, Moore also emphasizes the need for school districts to have formal written policies regarding intrusion onto buses. Missouri has enacted a statute backing up such written policies, as did Alabama in the wake of the 2013 hostage situation.

"For whatever the reason may be, safety and training for our school buses have been ignored too long. I never gave it much thought as a trooper, but providing this training has raised my awareness," Moore says. "Sometimes drivers think 'I'm just a bus driver,' but they have the lives of our children in their hands."

For more information on school bus driver training offered by the Missouri Center for Education Safety, including free information on developing training programs, contact Gary Moore at (573) 638-7501, ext. 415, or email moore@ moces.org.

FREE MOBILE PHONE SAFETY APPLICATION TRACKS LOCATION, SENDS ALARMS AND RECORDS DATA

By Becky Lewis
September 2016

Sometimes, when confronted by an attacker, even the time it takes to make three jabs of the finger – nine-one-one – is too long.

With PhoneFlare, a new free security app, it takes only a single ripping gesture on the headphone cord to raise an alarm for help.

PhoneFlare, launched by a nonprofit group in August 2016, can be downloaded from both Apple and Google Play at no charge. Targeting primarily college students, but available to anyone, the app activates an alarm when the user either misses a designated

check-in time or makes a manual call for help by pulling headphones or another accessory out of a phone's audio jack or charging port. In either instance, the phone automatically texts designated friends and family and sends them the GPS coordinates of the user's location. For students at participating colleges and universities, the app also sends a message to the school's security dispatch.

To help cut down on false alarms, PhoneFlare sends reminders at five-minute intervals as check-in time approaches, giving the user the opportunity to reset the designated check-in time. Once the deadline has passed, PhoneFlare begins sending emergency messages, but the user still has a chance to call it a false alarm and stop the messages. However, as an additional safeguard against a user's being coerced by an attacker to turn off the app, the disarm function includes a request to choose a color; an incorrect color choice gives the appearance that the alarm has been disabled, while in actuality it continues to broadcast the user's GPS coordinates.

Funded entirely by grants and donations, PhoneFlare is the brainchild of app developer and filmmaker Christopher Cinq-Mars Jarvis. As a student at New York University, he became aware of the many issues surrounding campus sexual assault and the need for additional resources to help his female friends.

According to Kristina Clark, spokesperson for PhoneFlare, the original concept dealt with creating a resource that would help gather evidence; hence, PhoneFlare's option to record audio to the phone and to catalog the UDIDs of nearby devices. Should a user want to retrieve the UDID log, PhoneFlare staff will provide assistance with retrieving the data and emailing it to a personal account.

"After they developed a way to gather potential evidence, the developers came up with the idea of pulling an accessory out of its connection to trigger an alarm as an easy way to call for help," Clark says. Some of the funds raised to cover PhoneFlare's operating expenses have gone toward the purchase of so-called "dust plugs," which are non-functional plugs that can be inserted into a port, then pulled out to raise an alarm. PhoneFlare plans to hand these plugs out free of charge on campuses and also at women's shelters.

"We are partnering with colleges to make sure this easily accessible resource is communicated to their faculty and students, and we have high schools pushing it out to their students as well," Clark says, adding that PhoneFlare has also received interest from hospitals and from retirement communities. Although there is no automatic alarm to a security dispatch outside of campus settings, anyone can use the option to have the app send text messages to designated friends and family, along with the user's GPS coordinates. (A disposable link

opens Google Maps and updates the individual's position every 10 seconds.) For those institutions of higher learning listed in a crowdsourced database – more than 700 signed up in the first month – the automated call to security/law enforcement dispatch relays the students' verified school email as well as the GPS coordinates.

"We hope this app will continue to grow and evolve as an important resource for sexual assault prevention," Clark says.

For more information, visit http://www.phoneflare.com/ or contact Kristina Clark at (931) 308-2977, email press@phoneflare.com.
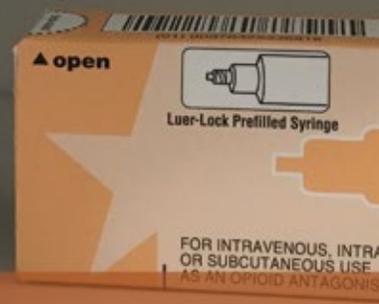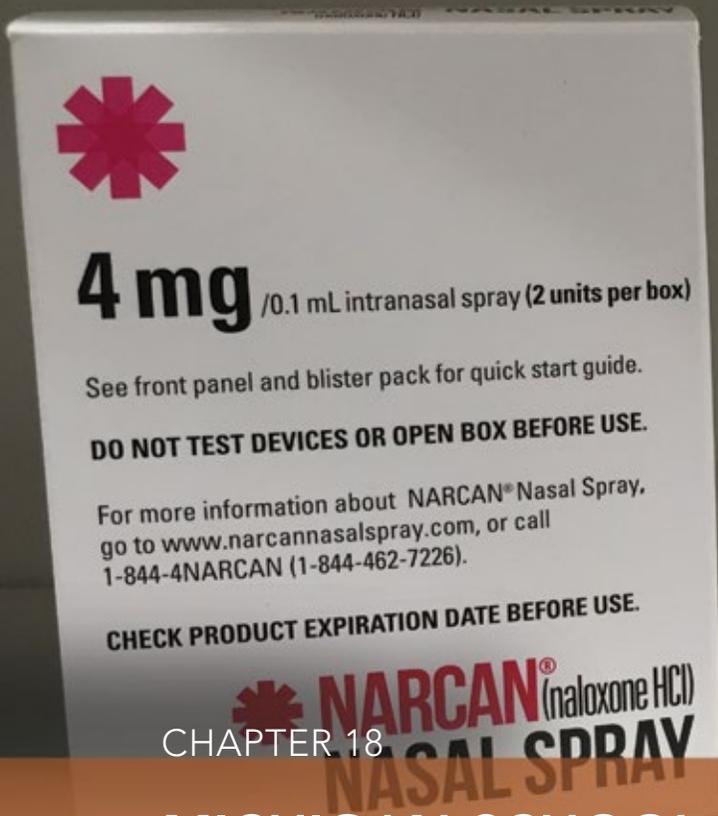
CHAPTER 18

MICHIGAN SCHOOL INTRODUCES NALOXONE KITS, TRAINING

By Becky Lewis
June 2017

Not that many years ago, portable AEDs were the tools of emergency medical personnel, used judiciously under physician supervision. Today, they hang on the walls of office buildings, airports, shopping malls, houses of worship, schools and other locations.

Now there's another lifesaving tool slowly making its way from the EMS toolkit into more mainstream areas: naloxone. In Gaylord, Mich., administrators and staff at Gaylord High School and Gaylord Middle School will receive training this summer to ensure they know how, and when, to use the naloxone kits available in the school offices come fall.

"Our take is, we hope we never have to administer it, but if it can save a life, the downside of using it doesn't come close to the downside of not using it," says Brian Pearson, superintendent of Gaylord Community Schools. The free naloxone kits, supplied to the school through a partnership between a pharmaceutical company and a national foundation, were brought to the school district's attention by Up North Prevention, a community initiative to advance substance abuse prevention efforts in northern lower Michigan. Up North's Linda Gall, a certified prevention specialist, learned about the program at a conference and brought it to the school for consideration. The district school safety committee made the decision earlier in 2017 to implement the project for the 2017-201 school year.

Pearson explains that committee includes local law enforcement, EMS, the district attorney, various community organizations and parents, and it meets regularly to discuss current issues and how the members can work together to continue to make Gaylord a safe place to learn: "Our goal is to foster a safe and collaborative culture. You need to ensure safety first for kids to learn. You can have the best teachers in world, and if your students don't feel safe, they won't learn well."

The committee worked with the board of education to develop a clear policy on how and when to use the naloxone, and that protocol starts with calling 911 before administering the drug. All teachers will receive basic training from the state police and local EMS on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of an overdose, and office staff will receive more detailed training on using the kits. Corey Hebner, the community state trooper for the Gaylord area, has conducted numerous train-the-trainer sessions for his fellow law enforcement officers, and he will provide oversight to the training at Gaylord. He says its basic focus is on awareness of the signs and symptoms of an overdose, which can include heavy perspiration, a grayish hue to skin, shallow breathing, skittish behavior and/or passing out.

In northern lower Michigan, as in much of the rest of the country, first responders are being faced with heroin mixed with fentanyl or carfentanil, sometimes requiring multiple doses of naloxone to reverse the overdose. Hebner emphasizes the need to call 911 immediately and to assume that one kit may not be enough to help.

"The beautiful thing about naloxone is if it is something else, the drug has no effect and causes no adverse reaction," Hebner says. Training will also provide staff with information on problem behaviors to watch for that might indicate a need for an intervention that could potentially prevent an overdose, Pearson says.

"Brian is very proactive instead of reactive. He's looking at the whole picture and we need to see more of that," Gall says. "If other schools also take that approach, it becomes one more layer of prevention for the whole community."

Up North Prevention works with various aspects of drug prevention in the community and in the schools in 14 counties, and has assisted with training at 55 local law enforcement agencies in the past two years, resulting in at least 39 lives saved due to naloxone use. Getting the program started in Gaylord, which is the largest school district in the area (approximately 3,200 students in grades K-12), may encourage other schools in the area to apply for the kits as well, Pearson says.

In a small town like Gaylord (pop. less than 4,000), school events like football games and plays draw in hundreds of spectators, and the buildings themselves are also heavily used for local craft fairs, worship services and the like. While Pearson likened the naloxone kits to epi-pens and Hebner drew the parallel with AEDs, they join Gall in agreeing that naloxone is a way of rendering aid in a medical emergency whose time has come.

"Even if there's only a 1 in 100 chance that we might ever use this to save a life, it would be ridiculous not to do this," Pearson says.

For more information on how Gaylord Community Schools will administer its naloxone program, contact Brian Pearson at pearsonb@gaylord.k12.mi.us. For more information on Up North Prevention and its programs, contact Linda Gall or Laurie Ames at (989) 732-6761.

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