



SHARING IDEAS & RESOURCES

*to Keep Our Nation's
Schools Safe!*

VOLUME VI





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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 sixth 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. Although the topics presented here – as in the first five volumes – span a wide range of projects and programs, they continue to have at least one similarity. As they have since this series began in 2013, their planners, administrators and coordinators continue to say they want other schools and communities to know about their projects, and they offer their help to those who want to create similar ones.



In 2018, the nation is dealing with the aftermath of the shootings in Marshall County, Ky.; Parkland, Fla.; and Santa Fe, N.M. Schools, law enforcement agencies and communities continue to develop innovative and groundbreaking ways to address dealing with threats, preparing for active shooters and coping with the nation's growing opioid addiction epidemic, 18 of which are profiled in this volume. As it has for the past six years, SchoolSafetyInfo.org continues its work of ensuring that schools and school administrators, local law enforcement agencies and school resource officers know about these innovations. In an effort to make the website easier to access, the behind-the-scenes team developed a new look and a more user-friendly dashboard that launched in October 2017. And behind the new look is the same goal: Making sure that SchoolSafetyInfo.org and the *Sharing Ideas and Resources* series keep spreading the word to schools, communities and law enforcement agencies that they're not in this alone. The whole country is working together to keep our nation's schools safe.

Below are just some of the projects you'll read about in this sixth volume:

- The development of a school police department in Atlanta city schools.
- An officer who created a free online comic book for classroom use.
- A volunteer program that uses parents to be "extra eyes" for school staff
- A new desktop version of JTIC's popular School Safe – JTIC's Security and Safety Assessment App for Schools.

Through the six 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 all versions of School Safe and obtain instructions on how to download it.

As schools and communities continue to work together with local public safety professionals to develop innovative ways to address the issues affecting our nation's schools, we hope that you will continue to use NIJ, JTIC and SchoolSafetyInfo.org as resources. Read the stories in this volume, then visit SchoolSafetyInfo.org and check out the resources there. You can then use them to help inform your decisions about what fits into your school setting.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lance Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Lance Miller
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CHAPTER 1

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS OFFER DIFFERENT TAKE ON SCHOOL POLICING

By Becky Lewis
November 2017

There's a new kind of police officer working in Atlanta public schools, with a different way of looking at things.

No, not a robot that uses artificial intelligence to solve problems: you still have to travel to Dubai to find one of those on routine patrol. Rather, these officers emphasize a very human outlook and approach to school policing.

And it seems to be working well.



For 12 years, Marquenta Hall, executive director of Safety and Security for Atlanta Public Schools, kept compiling data on rising crime trends and trying new approaches. All the while, she continued to pitch the idea that the district needed its own police force with officers who were equally adept at providing law enforcement and counseling as well as teaching. The idea was to better integrate them into the school setting, thus creating a community policing model that would allow officers to assist the rest of the staff in transforming the school climate. In 2016, the district finally received permission from the school board to stand up its own police department.

In seven months.

“It did take a bit of work,” Hall says. “We posted openings on a lot of different websites, and we held a couple of information sessions. We hired a chief and commanders and started interviewing, and when the school year (2016-2017) started, we were ready to go.”

The 70 officers who were “ready to go” represent, in Hall’s view, a new kind of officer: “You must be an officer who loves children. That’s No. 1. Then you truly must want to work in schools. You have to believe in the triad model, and because the district has adopted Restorative Practices and Social & Emotional Learning, you have to be trained in and buy into those concepts.”

Prior to starting the Atlanta Public Schools Police Department, the district had a contractual relationship with the Atlanta Police Department, but those officers worked in schools only part-time, and because different officers fulfilled the duties at different times, there were no opportunities for them to build relationships with students. This tended to result in a climate that was more confrontational than the school system wanted, Hall says.

“We wanted to start from scratch with officers who wanted to work with students in a respectful, meaningful way,” she says. “We knew in order to do that, we had to place an emphasis on hiring and selecting the right officers with the right mindset, and then we had to give them the training and ‘tools in their heads’ they needed to be successful.”

Rather than part-time officers whose focus is elsewhere, the new department assigns one officer to each high school and middle school, and there is a group that serves the elementary schools, with all officers having a specific school that they visit at least once a week. The Atlanta Public Schools officers serve as members of the leadership team, going to trainings along with counselors, social workers, administrators and teachers: “It’s a given that the officer is sworn law enforcement and they’re certified to carry out law enforcement duties. That’s





part of their makeup, but it's not their sole focus. We also want them to focus on becoming part of the school and building strong relationships with students and staff, to play a role in stopping problems before they start and escalate."

With the department now in its second year of operation, the program's success can be measured in the high officer retention rate and the number of complaints received about how officers have carried out their duties: one.

"Officers are not just assigned to a specific school, they're really assigned to that school's community. We had a student who had surgery and spent some time in the hospital, and because his mother couldn't stay with him at night as she had to care for her other children, our officer worked all day at school and then spent the night at the hospital so the child had someone with him. Our officers are showing our students and our communities that they're not just there to respond to calls, they're looking for ways to make a long-term difference," Hall says.

Standing up the Atlanta Public Schools Police Department is just one part of Atlanta Public Schools' efforts at changing and improving the school climate and culture. In 2015, the district, along with partners WestEd and the University of Georgia, received a \$7.5 million, five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's National Institute of Justice Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) to develop and implement a holistic approach to creating safe and supportive learning environments. And the efforts of the police department will make a significant contribution to the success of that project.

"This grant has allowed us to put ideas in place, and one of those ideas is a new kind of officer who wants to mentor, counsel and teach and inspire kids. We want sworn officers with an added educational component. Our officers are dedicated to a community. They become part of the community," Dr. Maria Carstarphen, Atlanta Public Schools Superintendent, said in a keynote address to the CSSI conference in May 2017.



"Everyone keeps saying, 'Why did it take so long to do this?' " Hall says. "It's the best move the district could have ever made. Our arrests are down, our truancy rates are down and our officers are out in the community making a great impact. They work traffic, they get buses in and out, they spend time in the neighborhood. They work with the students who don't always make the best decisions and the ones that get in trouble to make help them get back on the right track. The principals love them and the response has been overwhelming positive."

To learn more about the community policing approach that Atlanta Public Schools has used in standing up its own police department, contact Dr. Marquenta S. Hall at (404) 802-2007.



CHAPTER 2

SCHOOL SAFE GIVES WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS FRESH ANGLE ON SECURITY

By Becky Lewis
May 2018

When Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Superintendent Beverly Emory decided to encourage all of the system's 80-plus principals to perform a safety and security assessment of their buildings, the district didn't have to look hard to find a suitable tool.

Thanks to the efforts of Security Director Jonathan Wilson, the North Carolina school district already had used School Safe – JTIC's Security and Safety Assessment App for Schools.



In early 2017, Wilson selected School Safe, which is available free to criminal justice professionals and school administrators, for the system's school resource officers (SROs) to store on their smartphones and use to assess their buildings' security features. When Dr. Emory, in the aftermath of the Feb. 14, 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, asked the principals to complete and submit assessments, Wilson offered information on how to access School Safe. Brent Campbell, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County's Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, says the superintendent already had a mandate in place for schools to find ways to improve safety without spending more money, and using a free tool like School Safe fit well with that mandate. In addition to recording assessment information for their own use, principals also submitted copies of completed assessments to the administration's security team.

"We encouraged them to use the assessment, because it helped principals see things they might otherwise have missed, and we used the results as a discussion point during leadership meetings," Campbell says. "The principals who had used it shared how it helped them and encouraged those that hadn't yet used it to give it a try."

One of the principals who used School Safe, Colin Tribby of Easton Elementary School, says completing an assessment using the app gave him several new things to think about: "I was pleasantly surprised to find out that it wasn't all about how to deal with an active shooter, and it brought questions to my mind that I hadn't considered. I hadn't thought about our parking lot signage or the location and number of handicapped and visitor spaces. It made us more aware of the bus drop-off and pick-up areas, and the need to have entrances and exits clearly marked. Also, after completing the survey we realized that outsiders could access a door we were leaving open, so we started locking it. Asking for the key is a minor inconvenience but people just have to get used to it."

Easton, a pre-K through fifth grade school enrolling about 630 students, was built in 1957, and renovations are planned within the next several years. Tribby says that students and community members have worked on a number of beautification projects to try to keep things looking nice, and after completing the assessment, small tweaks will make the school safer as well. Grading for the addition of more parking spots is underway, for example, as are plans to change signage. Tribby does caution future users that a School Safe assessment isn't something that can be done in five minutes; he says plan on taking at least 45 minutes to do a good job.

"I think it's good that we now have data collected in an app. We can do it over again next year and make sure we're making improvements, or we could get rights to have another individual do it with fresh eyes. In fact, I know two other principals who walked each other's campus, and each of them saw safety tweaks that the other missed," he says.





In addition to the two principals that Tribby mentioned, Wilson says several other pairs of schools also used the “buddy system” to flip-flop campus surveys. That approach goes along with the idea driving the use of School Safe for the assessments: the district wanted principals to find a new way of looking at their campuses.

“Principals walk through their schools 100 times a day and they miss things because they see them all the time. We wanted to find a tool that would force them to look at things a little differently,” Wilson says. “We had paper documents before and this is much more in line with the times. They can use School Safe to make notes, and they can save it and come back to finish later if they run out of time.”

Principals won’t be able to address every issue they see after performing the assessment, but it might make them think about changing their car dropoff to a different point, or installing something like bollards or big flowerpots to block an open sidewalk that might allow an intruder to drive right up to the door.

“Sometimes it isn’t a physical change that a school needs, but rather a change in the way they do business, such as locking additional doors,” Wilson says. “The district issues them all smartphones and using the app just gave them a simple way to walk around the school and look at things. They could make notes, put the phones in their pockets and walk on to the next spot.”

For more information on Winston-Salem/Forsyth County’s use of School Safe, contact Brent Campbell at bcampbell@wsfcs.k12.nc.us. For information on how to obtain access to School Safe, visit <https://justnet.org/SchoolSafe/index.html>. The app is available in both iOS and Android versions, along with a new desktop-friendly version (see related article, “JTIC Releases Desktop Version of School Safe”).





CHAPTER 3

JTIC RELEASES DESKTOP VERSION OF SCHOOL SAFE

By Becky Lewis
May 2018

For all the school resource officers (SROs) and school administrators whose thumbs aren't as nimble as those of the average teenager, the Justice Technology Information Center (JTIC) has released a new desktop version of its popular free app, School Safe – JTIC's Security and Safety Assessment App for Schools.



Like the Android and iOS versions, the desktop version makes it easy to do a safety and security assessment of buildings and grounds by observing conditions and answering a series of simple questions. Desktop School Safe, available as a fillable PDF, also provides enhanced capability to write lengthy blocks of text – using all 10 fingers – and allows for easy file sharing among team members collaborating on an assessment. For security purposes, each download code issued by JTIC for mobile School Safe can be used on only one device, and although its final output can be exported as a shareable PDF, the actual survey can be conducted on only one device. With the desktop version, the fillable PDF can be passed from one team member to another to work on different sections. The desktop version also includes enhanced capability for adding photos.



“Earlier this year, in response to requests from the field we had received about our Safeguarding Houses of Worship (SHOW) app, we created a fillable PDF desktop version,” says JTIC Deputy Director Ron Pierce. “The desktop version of SHOW became so popular so quickly that we realized there was a similar unmet need for a PDF version of School Safe.”

Pierce notes that the mobile version allows SROs and administrators to walk around and look at facilities while answering the questions, and “it’s a little hard to do that carrying a laptop. Users might want to print out a blank copy and carry it on a clipboard, making quick notes they can expand on later.”

The ability to easily expand on those brief notes is the most significant advantage that desktop School Safe offers, he says: “This new version is so much easier to use if you have extensive notes or comments regarding what you saw while surveying the facility. The result is a thorough, professional-looking assessment that can be shared electronically or as printed hard copies.”

That final output can also easily be submitted to district or state offices that may require schools to submit a security assessment, a requirement implemented by a number of jurisdictions in the wake of the Feb. 14, 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. (Read about one district’s experience conducting such an assessment using mobile School Safe in a related article, “School Safe Gives Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Fresh Angle on Security.”)



Access to versions of School Safe is free, but is limited to qualified criminal justice professionals and school administrators. To request a copy of either mobile version or the new desktop version, send the following information to schoolsafe@justnet.org from your official agency email account:

- School Safe – JTIC’s Security and Safety Assessment App for Schools in the subject line.
- Your name.
- Your title.
- The name of your school system.
- The name of your law enforcement agency (for SROs).
- Your agency mailing and email address.
- Which version (iOS, Android or desktop and how many of each).

For more information, visit <https://www.justnet.org/SchoolSafe/index.html>.





CHAPTER 4

IMPROVING SCHOOL CLIMATE LEADS TO POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, SAFER SCHOOLS

By Becky Lewis
March 2018

*Increased attention to school safety over the past 20 years has included increased recognition of the importance of school climate for positive youth development. A recent publication from the National Institute of Justice's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative, *Creating and Sustaining a Positive and Communal School Climate*, considers how a school climate can influence both the safety and success of a school and the behavioral and academic outcomes of its students.*



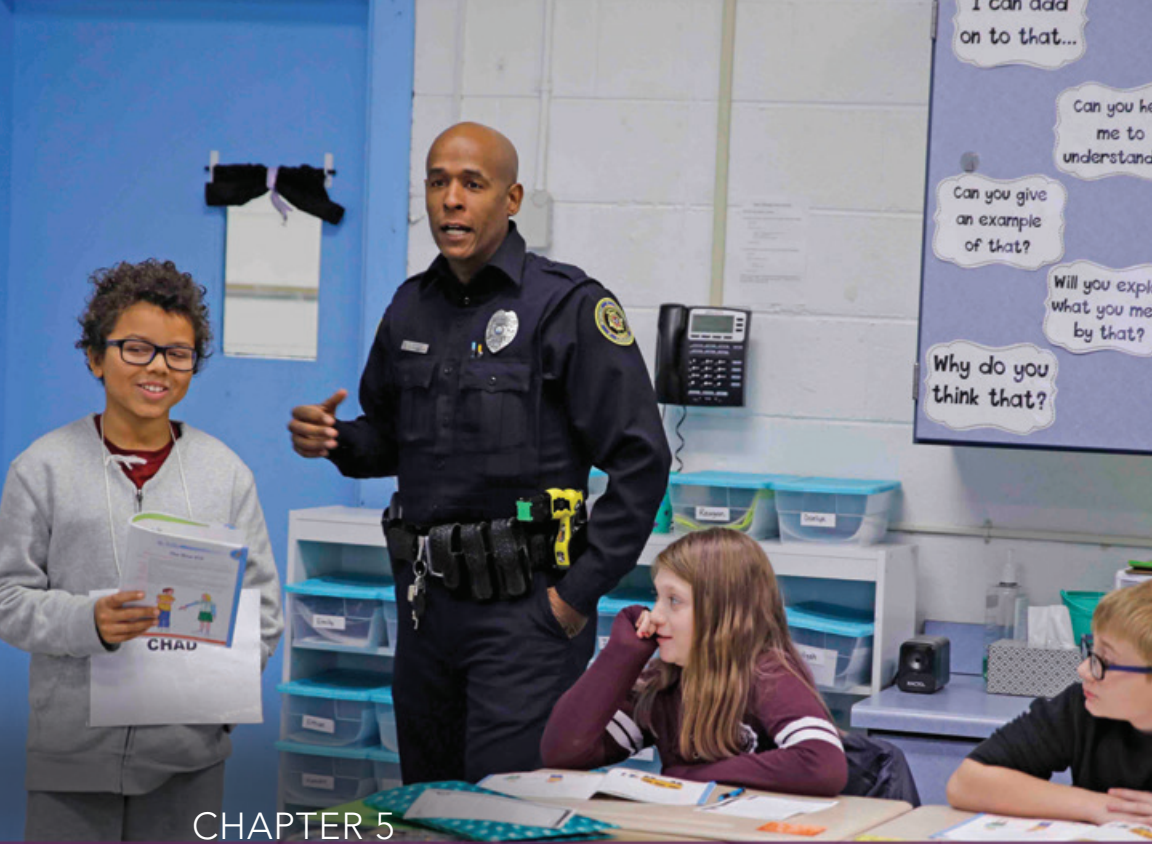
According to the report, students attending school in a positive climate demonstrate increased engagement, higher academic achievement and better socio-emotional health along with lower levels of absenteeism, truancy, dropping out, victimization and substance use. Teachers experience greater efficacy, morale and satisfaction in addition to lower levels of absenteeism, turnover and victimization (pp. 20-21). Available by download from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250209.pdf>), the 30-page report looks at the factors that make up school climate and how to assess them, associated outcomes and influences, and ways to improve school climate. It also makes four recommendations related to defining, accessing, exploring and improving school climate.



The research included in this report was conducted by an independent researcher using NIJ funding, and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. NIJ's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) is a research-focused initiative aimed at increasing the safety of schools nationwide, created in response to disturbing, high-profile incidents of school violence. CSSI develops knowledge about the root causes of school violence, develops strategies for increasing school safety and rigorously evaluates innovative school safety strategies through pilot programs (inside cover).

Through a different funding stream, NIJ also provided partial funding for another recently released school safety publication, *School Safety Policies and Programs Administered by the U.S. Federal Government: 1990–2016*. This 160-page PDF details federal school safety programs, policies, research and technical assistance resources for K–12 public schools administered by the Department of Education, the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services. It includes background history on federal school safety efforts prior to 1990. As with the report on school climate, research was conducted by independent researchers using funding from NIJ and other agencies located with the Office of Justice Programs, and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

This publication can be downloaded from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/251517.pdf>



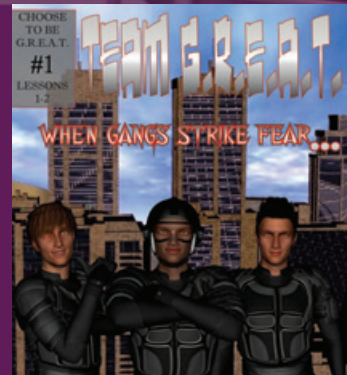
CHAPTER 5

OFFICER CREATES COMIC TO HELP STUDENTS MAKE GOOD CHOICES

By Becky Lewis
January 2018

Spider-Man. Wonder Woman. Thor. Batman. Superman. All comic book figures that have entertained millions worldwide, and also have had a positive impact on the lives of some young people.

A new team of superheroes joined them in the comics arena in fall 2017, a team that may never reach quite as large an audience, but may join them in having a positive influence on preteens across the country: the superheroes of Team G.R.E.A.T.



Created, written and drawn by Clarksville (Tenn.) Police Officer Greg Granderson, Vol. 1 of the comic “When Gangs Strike Fear...A City Needs Heroes,” can be found on the Gang Resistance and Education Training (G.R.E.A.T.) website as a free digital download (<https://www.great-online.org/Documents/Public/PDF/team-great-comic.pdf>) that officers and teachers can use to supplement the G.R.E.A.T. curriculum in elementary and middle schools. Volume 1 supplements the first two lessons in the curriculum, focusing on the consequences of making bad choices;

Granderson presently is working on finalizing Volume 2, which will accompany lessons 3 and 4, and scripting Volume 3, which goes with the final two lessons in the program.

“I’ve always been a fan of comics, and I often say Stan Lee [creator of Spider-Man] kind of raised me a little bit,” says Granderson. “Look at the impact it has: half the movies at the box office stem from comics.”

Granderson, a former military police officer, moved into coordinating the department’s G.R.E.A.T. program from patrol in 2012 and quickly realized comics represented a medium that could be entertaining and grab students’ attention: “Comics influenced a lot of the life decisions I made and helped me with the moral choices behind them. I knew what they did for me as a child and thought I could take advantage of that.”

Working on his own time, Granderson started out in 2015 to script the books and locate a local art student interested in doing the drawing. When none could be found, he began looking into ways to create the art himself, and found a user-friendly CGI program that allowed him to generate his own art even though his freehand drawing skills are, by his own admission, nearly non-existent.

“I had no background in art at all, just my love for comics. Having grown up reading them, I knew what they should look like. The art of comics is a very freestyle medium, it’s not like producing a novel,” Granderson says. In the course of researching software, he located a mentor who also produces his own online comic books that helped him get started and make his conception of Team G.R.E.A.T. become a reality.

And just as a mentor gave him a hand in getting his comic books started, another mentor taught him the skills that have made his G.R.E.A.T. presentations in such demand that schools outside the Clarksville city limits want him to come to their schools: vaudeville-type “feats of strength” such as tearing phone books in half, bending a 45-inch steel bar with his teeth and breaking bricks with his head. Using the motto “Unhealthy choices make us weak — healthy choices make us strong,” Granderson takes a one-hour presentation out into more than a dozen Montgomery County schools in addition to teaching the one-week





G.R.E.A.T. curriculum to fifth-graders in 15 Clarksville schools. Granderson says he learned the skills from Dennis Rogers, called “Pound for Pound the World’s Strongest Man,” (<http://www.dennisrogers.net/pound-for-pound/>) while working as part-time youth pastor prior to taking on the G.R.E.A.T. curriculum. That love of working with youth led him to apply for the department’s G.R.E.A.T. instructor position when it became available, and Police Chief Al Ansley approved of his pitch on offering the “feats of strength” program to the county schools, which don’t have their own G.R.E.A.T. program.

Three years later, Granderson again had to pitch and sell an idea, this time the comic books to the G.R.E.A.T. board, in order to get the series posted on the website for nationwide use. Granderson himself does not use the comic in his classroom presentations; rather, he makes sure all the teachers he works with are aware of its availability. Granderson says he would like to eventually see printed copies become available, with any proceeds going back into the G.R.E.A.T. program.

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/gregscgicomics> or contact Jim Knoll, Public Information Officer, Clarksville Police Department, at (931) 648-0656 ext. 5673, jim.knoll@cityofclarksville.com





CHAPTER 6

ANNE ARUNDEL "DARE(S)" TO EXPAND OPIOID PREVENTION EDUCATION

By Becky Lewis
February 2018

As the nation's opioid epidemic continues to grow, police departments and schools are looking for more ways to fight back. In Maryland's Anne Arundel County, they've found a new path to follow by returning to an older one: DARE.



Anne Arundel, a suburban county located between Baltimore and Annapolis, discontinued the DARE program after the 2002-2003 school year due to loss of funding and some concerns about whether it was the best method of delivering drug education. As the county's overdose numbers continued to climb (51 deaths in 2015, 119 in 2016, 155 in 2017), the department's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) adopted several new community-based prevention programs to supplement the drug education curriculum offered by the county's schools. And in February 2018, the county reinstated DARE with programs at Annapolis, Corkran and Lindale middle schools.

"Too often, we have to make death notifications to parents who have lost their children. If we can prevent one student from using opioids or other drugs, if we can prevent one death, it's a success," says Lt. Steve Thomas of the CIT. "We want to have a significant impact on a lot of children and this is one more tool to use in our prevention efforts." The department presently has nine officers trained to deliver the DARE curriculum, and plans to send others for training to expand the program to additional schools in fall 2018.



During the training, officers who may have been familiar with DARE in the past quickly learn the program has come a long way from the "Just Say No" days of the 1980s when DARE got its start in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Maryland State DARE Coordinator Claude Nelson explains that the original curriculum was based on the needs of that school district and didn't always adapt readily as a "one size fits all" approach. DARE has since adapted a research-based, peer-centered approach called "Keepin' it REAL," which stands for Refuse, Explain, Avoid and Leave. The organization launched this interactive curriculum in middle schools in 2008 and in elementary schools in 2013.

"The original curriculum was just a lecture and minimal discussion, and that doesn't work. This is student-centered with the officer as a facilitator. It's a great way for students to see police officers in a different light. It's all part of the community policing model in that it brings students and officers together in a non-adversarial situation where they can learn from each other," Nelson says. "The biggest key is the relationship building."

In recognition of the importance of relationships, all of Anne Arundel's current DARE officers volunteered for the job, as will all of the others who join them, Thomas says: "No one will be 'voluntold' to do this. It needs to be their passion, it needs to be in their heart. It's 10 days of intense training with a couple of hours of homework each night, and you have to want to be a DARE instructor to successfully complete the training."



“Getting the right instructors can be a big hurdle. If you’re only there because it’s a job, the kids will know it,” Nelson adds.

And for officers who have that heart, but whose agencies lack the funding to send them for training, DARE offers assistance through its website (www.dare.org), including a stand-alone web-based module on opioids added in early 2018.

Although Anne Arundel County brought back DARE to help combat the opioid epidemic, its efforts don’t stop there. The department has also offered more than 100 sessions of a community-based program called “Not My Child,” featuring a panel that includes recovering addicts, family members who have lost someone to the epidemic, health professionals and first responders, and its Safe Stations program, wherein addicts can come to any police or fire station in the county and ask for help with treatment and recovery. Also, to supplement the DARE instruction, the department recently rolled out its DARE car, featuring the contest-winning design of a group of children from Freetown Boys & Girls Club. A local design company turned their concept into reality at no charge. Anne Arundel will use the car to promote the program at schools and at community events, and the DARE website offers materials that can help with education at those community events as well. In addition, the state provides assistance with the cost of materials to Anne Arundel and all participating agencies through fundraised money.

In the end, Anne Arundel County ties all of these different educational strands together with one common purpose, as described by County Executive Steve Schuh: "DARE will be instrumental in helping explain the dangers of opioid substances like heroin and OxyContin, and help educate the next generation of Anne Arundel County citizens to stop before they start."

For more information on Anne Arundel County's reinstatement of DARE, contact Public Information Officer Marc Limansky at p93489@aacounty.org. For information on DARE in general, contact Claude Nelson at claudenelson@maryland.gov or visit the DARE website at www.dare.org.





CHAPTER 7

COLORADO CURRICULUM GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

By Becky Lewis
October 2017

Looking for free curriculum on digital citizenship, relationships, substance abuse and distracted driving? Just say Y.E.S.S.

Looking for materials that will educate parents? Just say Y.E.S.S.

Looking for instructor certification? Just say Y.E.S.S.



The Douglas County (Colo.) Sheriff's Office launched its Youth Education and Safety in Schools (Y.E.S.S.) program in 2009, using materials created by Deputy Jay Martin, a trained educator and curriculum developer. The program's positive results drew national attention that has resulted in the materials being adopted and provided free of charge through the website Digital Futures Initiative (DFI) (www.dfinow.org). On that website, school districts and law enforcement agencies can find links to lesson plans, tools and resources for both classroom instruction and for parent academy sessions that convey crucial information. A certification program for teachers and SROs who want to use the materials rounds out the DFI offerings. Through October 2017, some 160 instructors in 29 states had earned certification and begun implementing at least part of the program.

"We started Y.E.S.S. because we wanted to expand the instruction we were providing in schools to something more than drug education," Martin says. "We added what at that time we called Internet Safety, initially focusing on MySpace and instant messaging."

With smartphones leading youth into the social media explosion, Internet Safety became Digital Citizenship, and Martin went on to add lessons on Relationships and Distracted Driving. Y.E.S.S. incorporates three 45-minute lessons in fifth or sixth grade, six sessions each in seventh and eighth grades, and three more in ninth into Douglas County's health curriculum. Schools provide parent academies as part of orientation or back-to-school nights, or are offered as larger community-based events.

"We try to cover the gamut of what's going on in kids' lives today. The lessons include hands-on activities and center on emotional intelligence," Martin says. "Kids today learn differently from previous generations. They talk to devices, not to people, and they lack emotional intelligence. All of our lessons focus on learning to perceive, use, understand and manage emotions, and we try to help them recognize when they're among other people, they should put their devices in their pockets to help develop their emotional intelligence."

The emotional intelligence issue makes the parent academy a key piece of the program, Martin says, because "we have them for only 45 minutes, but the parents have them for their entire lives." Parents can help to teach emotional intelligence to their children. During the Academies he suggests parents read three books – *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood—and What That Means for the Rest of Us* (Jean M. Twenge),





UnSelfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World (Michele Borba) and *The Collapse of Parenting—How We Hurt Our Kids When We Treat Them Like Grown-ups* (Dr. Leonard Sax). Martin says these books and research show a focus on the prevalence of getting away from “every child gets a trophy” in the schools of parenting and how children need to learn to fail to be able to cope with adulthood. This perceived shift has grown more pronounced since 2012 as smartphones and social media have become pervasive, he says, and while “they’re less likely to have sex or to experiment with alcohol, they’re also not interested in learning to drive and explore the world. Many of them don’t get their first taste of getting out of the house until they’re somewhere between the ages of 18 and 25.”

Performing that kind of painstaking research stems from Martin’s background in education, and he uses those same skills to update the Y.E.S.S. materials every six months. Y.E.S.S. meets the standards of the Colorado state health curriculum, and when the program expanded nationally through DFi the curriculum was compared to Nebraska state standards and it met those as well.

“Whether we meet standards is always a big question with schools, so we’ve done a lot to ensure their minds are at ease on that score,” Martin says. “We want to reassure them that we’re not trying to replace their teaching with something else. Rather, we’re enhancing what they’re required to cover.”

Some of those efforts include working with a Denver research firm to evaluate the program and work toward having it be formally considered an evidence-based program. Douglas County has also applied for a grant to do a controlled evaluation that would place Y.E.S.S. on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration list of promising and effective programs.



“We want folks to have confidence that this isn’t just some homegrown program that somebody slapped together. We do everything we can to make sure we’re having a long-term positive effect,” says Program Coordinator Phyllis Harvey. While Martin and two other deputies take care of teaching Y.E.S.S. in the schools, Harvey leads a complementary community component, recruiting partners who can provide subject-matter expertise, volunteer their assistance in implementing parent academies and other community events, and help spread the word about what Y.E.S.S. has to offer. Harvey also arranges for a resource fair highlighting community mental health services that takes place prior to the parent academy sessions. Douglas County also offers two different types of community-based suicide prevention training that are either low-cost or no-cost, and use curricula that are listed on an international register of best practices.

“Suicide prevention is not what the deputies focus on directly in the classroom, but all topics, in a roundabout way, are suicide prevention. Bullying, substance abuse...they all connect,” Harvey says.

For more information on the Y.E.S.S. program and Douglas County’s suicide prevention efforts, visit <http://www.dcsheff.net/school-safety/youth-education-and-safety-in-schools-y-e-s-s/> or visit www.DFiNow.org to start the online training of the curriculum that can be adapted to your local community. You may also contact Phyllis Harvey at pharvey@dcsheff.net or Jay Martin at JMartin@dcsheff.net.



CHAPTER 8

NASRO OFFERS UPDATED AND EXPANDED TRAINING

By Becky Lewis
December 2017

Overuse of social media. The school-to-prison pipeline. Expansion of population diversity. Increased awareness of mental health issues, of victimization, of all types of violence.

All of these issues are in the forefront of the nation's concerns about school safety, and all of them are topics that play a key role in recently revised curriculum from the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO).



In January 2016, NASRO launched a rewrite of its 40-hour basic SRO curriculum, touching on topics such as violence and victimization, the adolescent brain, and how to be a more effective teacher and informal counselor. In 2017, the organization added a new module on building relationships with diverse populations. The organization is in the process of updating its school security officer course to implement some of the same topics, and a 1.5-day SRO training on adolescent mental health is another new addition planned for spring 2018.

“We try to keep it fresh. Think about the ways the technology and social media have changed in the past 15 years – we try to keep pace with that,” says Executive Director Mo Canady. “And when you’re talking about dealing with diverse populations, there’s no question that for most SROs, working with very diverse groups of students is one of most eye-opening pieces of the job.”



Major updates such as the one that took place in 2016 occur periodically, based on both that desire to keep the curriculum fresh and on input from NASRO’s group of approximately 40 instructors, all of whom are either active or retired SROS. NASRO provides that group with updated training every 18 months as well, to “give them the tools they need to be the best quality trainers, keeping them informed on current topics and giving them the tools they need to be top-quality trainers,” says Training Director Kerri Williamson.

In addition to the trainings provided by those instructors at various times and locations throughout the year, NASRO offers a training conference every summer and several national school safety leader summits throughout the year. And in the end, the basic tenets behind all of those trainings are the triad concept of what an SRO does: law enforcement, teaching and informal counseling.

“We believe in its effectiveness, and that on a routine basis, officers with NASRO training are making a difference,” Canady says. “We’ve been supporting officers in schools in that role for almost 28 years, and for the past seven years, we’ve been extremely active in advocating for SROs in this role, in trying to educate school systems and the general public on what an SRO does.”

He adds that the organization emphasizes the importance of finding the right officer for the right job in addition to the need for proper training, and that SROs and agencies need to work collaboratively with school administrators: “We stand on that foundation, and if an agency follows our guidelines, we will advocate for that program.”

That increased emphasis on advocacy started in 2010, when studies first began to surface about the school-to-prison pipeline, he says, generating a push in some areas to remove SROs from school. Because research in the area was



lacking, NASRO's board of directors backed a research project that resulted in the publication of a report called *To Protect and Educate* (<https://nasro.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NASRO-To-Protect-and-Educate-nosecurity.pdf>).

"We wanted to find out the truth as to whether we were really contributing, and the research indicated that as a whole, SROs are not a cause of the school-to-prison pipeline. Where the concept has been implemented well, there has been a reduction, rather than an increase, in the number of students who end up in prison," Canady says. "That's where the advocacy for SROs started, when we had the data to support it."

To view the calendar of upcoming NASRO trainings and to learn more about the services and resources the organization offers, visit www.nasro.org





CHAPTER 9

INDIANA SCHOOL SAFETY SPECIALIST ACADEMY KEEPS TRAINING FRESH, RELEVANT

By Becky Lewis
May 2018

Indiana is home to many unique things: The Indianapolis Motor Speedway, site of the world's first automobile race. The town of Santa Claus, where residents answer children's letters by the hundreds of thousands. Ft. Wayne, site of the country's first professional baseball game.

And the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy, where the state trains and certifies at least one individual from every school district in the state about how to plan for and respond to active shooters, cyberbullying, anonymous threats and more.



Although Indiana began requiring certification in 1999, the mandatory training program was already in development prior to that year's April 20 shooting at Colorado's Columbine High School. For the past 19 years, the state has required that every school district have at least one employee who has been certified through academy training and can help create safety plans that fit each district's individual needs.



Initially, the state certified 300 individuals, one from each district. Nineteen years later, that number has grown to nearly 3,000, as additional staff seek out the free training, yet despite the tenfold increase in the number of persons certified, the program still receives the same amount of state funding it did in 1999.

David Woodward, state director of School Building Physical Security and Safety, attributes the increased interest in training to word of mouth and the fact that “this fills a gap. Educators don’t learn about school safety when they study to get their licenses. The satisfaction rate is really strong, with about 90 percent of individuals rating it four or better out of five.”

To become certified, individuals must complete five days of basic training that covers the fundamentals of school safety, including how to develop a plan, legal issues, recovery from an event and dealing with the media. In acknowledgement of the demands on everyone’s time, the training includes three days of classroom instruction scattered throughout the year, plus two days of self-paced online training.

“It really covers the fundamentals of school safety, and they don’t just get certified and walk away. Threats and the response to them are always changing, and certified individuals must complete two days of advanced training annually to keep up to date,” Woodward says. “The focus of the advanced training changes in response to current events. A couple of years ago the focus was bullying. If we solved it, that would be the magic pill that solved everything. Then the focus became response to an active shooter, and now it seems to be moving toward coping with anonymous threats received via social media and online triggers.”

Adam Baker, press secretary for the state Department of Education, says that in order to keep the training relevant, the academy brings in experts relevant to the issue at hand: “We try to provide them with information they can use immediately. We want it to relate to what they’re seeing in their community at that time.”

“The basic training is pretty static. They come out with a foundation and a knowledge of the fundamentals of response to bullying, gangs, bomb threats



and fires,” Woodward says. “The advanced training is more dynamic, and we’ve brought in survivors and first responders from every major event in the country to tell us what worked, what didn’t work and what we can to improve as a result.”

The state develops the curriculum with input from nationally known subject-matter experts, and individuals who complete it then take it back to their local districts and train others. Suggestions from trainees’ post-training evaluations help inform the development of the next year’s training.

“We have really good partnerships with our state police, who worked with us to create the active shooter part of the training. The state Department of Homeland Security, which includes the fire marshal, worked with us on fire response. We also have a partnership with the Criminal Justice Institute here in Indiana,” Woodward says.

The state does provide lodging to trainees who must travel a long distance to take the training, but otherwise keep expenses down by offering a “no frills” approach that does not include meals or expense reimbursement. All that’s been required to keep expanding the training are larger meeting rooms, Baker says. The advanced training is offered on a regional basis to help districts keep their costs down. For example, in 2017, Indiana offered advanced training on 27 different days at different locations around the state: “We want to make it so you to step over the school safety training to miss it.”

In addition to making the training so accessible, the state keeps tabs on the results by randomly reviewing 60 district safety plans each year, and Woodward says when they find a gap or discover a district that is struggling, “we think that goes on us. We have an online forum that districts can join. We like to say that we’re not ‘the’ school safety experts here, because no one person or agency has the answer to everything. But we can put them in touch with a large network of ‘experts,’ and some of them will be able to help.”



The Indiana Department of Education has already provided assistance to other jurisdictions looking to develop a similar program, and will work with others in the future. To find out more, contact Adam Baker at ABaker@doe.in.gov.

Over the past 19 years, Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy training has generated a positive rating of approximately 90 percent in post-evaluation ratings. A sample of recent comments includes:

“This was a very informative conference! Very great speakers both days that kept me interested in every word they said. A lot of info[rmation] on things I would never of thought [about]. I would definitely recommend this conference to anyone looking to better themselves in school safety.”

“Outstanding Trainers- excellent overview of priority safety topics as well as providing a significant amount of resource material offerings that will support and expand the personal knowledge base of the Specialists, as well as provide tools to the SRO, Administrators and Managers to improve their program.”

“I came away from this training with much more knowledge than I was planning! Very knowledgeable and direct presenters that care solely about the safety of the students and delivered that urgency and passion. I am looking forward to the online portion of the training and attending the class in May!”



CHAPTER 10

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING ENTHUSED ABOUT FREE ACTIVE SHOOTER VIDEO

By Becky Lewis
January 2018

A consortium of Boston-area colleges and universities – institutions known for being innovative – recently completed a project aimed at keeping other campuses from “reinventing the wheel.”



In fall 2017, the 17 schools of the Boston Consortium for Higher Education (<http://www.boston-consortium.org>) announced the availability of an unbranded active shooter training video aimed specifically at institutions of higher learning. Available free on request, the video allows colleges and universities to add their own branding and message to the opening and closing frames, with the caveat that the Boston Consortium and Yale University, which developed the original script, receive acknowledgement in the credits. Since announcement of the video's release in mid-October, 76 additional schools have requested copies, a number that impresses Consortium Director of Program and Administration June Kevorkian.

"We thought that only small colleges would be interested, but we've received requests from institutions of all sizes and from all across the country," she says. "I'm pleased at the number of schools and how enthusiastic they are about it."

Those 76 schools are in addition to the Consortium members, all of whom are posting it on their websites, using it in classroom instruction, offering it in small-group training and more:

"When you think about the fact that 17 different schools with different needs and ideas and thoughts worked together on this video, I believe that they deserve a lot of credit for being able to collaborate and compromise so well, ending up with a product of which they are proud and that others around the country see as a really great asset," she adds.

The video runs less than eight minutes in length and uses many of the principles being taught around the country to address an active shooter situation as its basis. Activity takes place in campus settings including a library, classrooms, labs and residence halls; filming takes place from a first-person perspective; and the video includes a diverse student population, including a student with disabilities. Members of the team did watch a number of videos produced by other universities to get a feel for what they wanted to include.

"We looked at all the videos we could find that related to colleges and universities and tried to determine the common threads, and what we liked and didn't like. Then we tried to pull the best sequencing and messaging out of those," says Eileen O'Donnell, emergency management planner at Boston College. "Ohio State has an excellent one, as does Yale University."

Stephen Morash, emergency management director at Boston University, adds: "The first video we screened was "Run Hide Fight" from the city of Houston and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. A lot of us thought it was a good training tool, but we did get some feedback that it was a little too violent and then of course, it's in an office setting and we wanted an academic setting. We started screening other videos and we really liked the Yale video a lot."





In fact, the team liked the Yale video so much the Consortium asked for permission to base their script on it. Emerson Productions, the creative team from Emerson College, hired the actors and provided the production process needed to make the video a reality, and all of the Consortium members contributed funding in addition to using grant funding from the Davis Educational Foundation.

“Producing a commercial-quality video takes an enormous amount of resources. We all had the same need and we all wanted to educate our campuses on this issue,” says John Tommaney, director of emergency management at Boston College. “We realized that we are some of the bigger schools in the Boston area and that the smaller ones have the same needs. That’s why we set out to create a video that can be used by any institution.”

“We’d all seen that other schools had created custom videos and it was a project that each of us wanted to do. We realized that for any one of us to do a project like this independently was quite a challenge, and that we could work on it together and create one video that we all could use,” says Geoffrey Bartlett, director of emergency management at Tufts University.

David Barber, senior emergency management specialist at MIT, adds: “This particular group of emergency managers had been working together successfully on various projects for several years. Because of those ongoing relationships, we were able to talk this over and realize it was something we could do better as a group.”

And while members of the team gave partial credit for the video's success to their recognition of a common need and the strength of their cooperative relationships, they also credited Kevorkian and the Consortium for keeping the project on point, on track and on schedule and ensuring that "we delivered the product we wanted to deliver."

For more information, contact June Kevorkian at (339) 225-3824, email jkevorkian@boston-consortium.org. To see a version of the video branded to Boston College, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xa89laJ_CkE





CHAPTER 11

32 NCSI OFFERS PUBLIC SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

By Becky Lewis
February 2018

The tagline on the website says it all: Virginia Tech Victims Family Outreach Foundation is committed to making sure our story isn't yours.

And a recently launched foundation-led project, 32 National Campus Safety Initiative™ (32 NCSI™), will help campus administrators and public safety professionals use an online self-assessment to help them work toward the goal of “writing stories” that don't include mass shootings or any other kind of campus public safety crisis.



32 NCSI was developed using initial funding from the foundation that was also supplemented by other sources, including a Bureau of Justice Assistance grant made through its National Center for Campus Public Safety. It includes surveys that help multidisciplinary college and university officials, including public safety professionals, assess nine key areas to identify strengths and gaps:



- Alcohol and other drugs.
- Campus public safety.
- Emergency management.
- Hazing.
- Mental health.
- Missing students.
- Physical security.
- Sexual violence.
- Threat assessment.

After spending six years in various stages of development, 32 NCSI launched in January 2018 through a partnership with the NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. Director of Strategic Initiatives Joseph DeSanto Jones says of the partnership, “We regard this tool as a living legacy, and we respect the tremendous effort and heart that has gone into the creation of it. The survivors and the families have a genuine attachment to 32 NCSI, which is at the core of our work.”

“NASPA is providing hosting that is beyond VTV’s wherewithal,” says Daniel Carter, a consultant who served as program director during the development and launch phases. “We had the nation’s leading experts donate their time and expertise in addition to the funds provided toward development. It’s a tremendous way to access a very thorough program for a low cost.” Institutions of higher learning pay a low fee to use the nonprofit survey, which goes toward maintenance; this fee is further reduced for NASPA members. In addition, 32 NCSI also offers free community resources through a website that provide frequently asked questions and other assistance to parents and students in those same nine areas.

“The VTV families wanted the initiative to serve the entire campus community. The consumer resources are significantly abridged from the assessment process to give students and parents the basics. Many people equate blue light phones with campus safety, but it’s really about policies and resources, not whether there’s a blue light phone between every academic building,” Carter adds.



NASPA became formally involved in January 2017, and the two organizations spent a year preparing for the launch. However, 32 NCSI's development actually started in 2012, with focus groups, enlistment of subject-matter experts and a pilot project with George Mason University taking place over the next three years. After an initial launch in August 2015, the VTV foundation came to the realization that hosting an initiative of this scope would require additional resources.

"VTV wanted to find the best way to make this work and keep it sustainable, and recognized that NASPA could provide that depth and reach," Carter says.

"This self-assessment allows colleges and universities to take a deeper dive into critical areas of campus safety and related policies," DeSanto Jones says. "NASPA provides ongoing professional development on, and benefits from the expertise and knowledge of our members in, areas such as campus safety, and alcohol and drug abuse. NASPA members are heavily engaged in these topic areas and will help us continue to provide additional resources."

In addition to adding more resources and updating the existing modules, plans also called for expanding the initiative to include additional areas, such as study abroad.

"The families had ideas going in about what they wanted to include, and they didn't want to limit it to just emergency management. We selected the original nine areas based on the opinions of experts working in the field of campus public safety," Carter says. "These experts came together to create the actual

elements of the survey and I don't know of any other initiative in higher education that came about in a similar way. It is something that can and will save lives, which is what the victims' families wanted: to save future families from having to endure what they did."

To learn more about using the 32 NCSI assessment tool, named in honor of the 32 individuals who died in the mass shooting at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, visit <https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/groups/32-ncs>. or VTV's main page at <http://www.vtvfamilyfoundation.org>,

To access the free consumer resources, visit <http://www.32ncsi.org/consumers/questions-to-ask/>





CHAPTER 12

REBELSAFE MODELS NEW "BRAND" OF TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

By Becky Lewis
December 2017

A faculty member concerned about the well-being of a troubled student.

A parent anxious about the dark streets her daughter walks on after a night class.

A student trying to get up the nerve to report a sexual assault.

All of them looking for different services, yet all of them finding them under the umbrella of the new RebelSAFE brand from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and its police department.



Recognizing that the university and the department had an almost overwhelming number of technology options available to help keep the campus safe, UNLV has implemented a plan to collect all of the solutions offered under the umbrella of the RebelSAFE brand. The new model includes a multi-faceted app that serves as the gateway to a number of safety systems; text and email public safety alerts that reach out to registered users, classrooms and the university website; and new emergency phones that use video cameras to supplement callers' verbal reports.



"We wanted to look at all of our existing infrastructure and find a way to tie it together to maximize our resources," says Ryan Doyle, director of technology for UNLV Police Services. "We were providing several systems that served their own distinct purposes, and we undertook an initiative that ties all of them together and at the same time, implements new technology enhancements. We have only so many resources to invest, and we want to make the best choices that will maximize our return. We've been approached too many times by vendors that want us to adopt some "great technology" that does only one thing."

With the adoption of that approach came the idea to develop the RebelSAFE brand, with the police department calling on the university's marketing department and American Marketing Association student chapter to generate an awareness plan that would supplement the efforts of its Public Information Office.

"We had an existing emergency notification system, and when the marketing team took a poll, no one could tell them its name. With RebelSAFE we're pushing name recognition of not only the app, but of all the services we offer "to keep all of our Rebels safe," " Doyle says. Public Information Officer Hobreigh Fischer, the department's manager for the Office of the Chief, and Publications Writer Jamie Bichelman worked directly with Ryan Doyle on an extensive Public Information Office campaign, which included techniques ranging from website and social media promotion to radio public service announcements, from releases to local media to advertisements at athletic stadiums. Fischer says the campaign kicked off with a months-long intense promotion, and many aspects are set up on an ongoing basis to ensure the brand name continues to be recognized.

Thanks to that intense campaign, most of the campus should be aware of RebelSAFE and the new app. Available to the general public free of charge through both Google Play and iTunes, it offers a variety of ways to communicate with police services – text, email and phone – to provide tips, ask questions, report incidents, ask for an escort, access emergency services, use crisis services for stalking and sexual assault, and much more. A popular feature is the 'virtual



walk home,' where a user provides GPS coordinates and a walking route to another individual, who can then make a call for help if the walker deviates from the planned itinerary.

"We encourage parents to install it, so they can use the virtual walk feature and they also can be informed by receiving campus security alerts. Parents entrust these students to us, basically saying 'I am giving my son or daughter on loan to the university and I expect the university to take care of them,' " Doyle says.

Using the student-developed marketing plan, UNLV Police Services is also encouraging students, faculty and the community to install the app, sign up for alerts and be aware of the other services offered. The program transitioned from a "soft launch" to a "hard launch" on Sept. 18, 2017, and multiplied the number of registered users sixfold in the first month, increasing from an initial group of 500 to 3,000. On the day the app went into service, a female student reported a stalking incident, and police used that information to successfully resolve the situation. Since then, tips about drug activity and graffiti have led to more successes. And as more of the campus community signs on, the student marketing group plans to begin collecting feedback via focus groups, surveys and promotional materials that will help the department continue to refine and improve the program: "We're very fortunate in an institute of higher learning to have students, faculty and staff with a wide range of knowledge, and to be able to call on that knowledge for assistance. It's a win-win for the campus as a whole."

Even before that marketing survey gets underway, Doyle is receiving feedback about refinements to the app. He recently met with a staff member about adding a section for the food pantry that serves students in need, to include hours and locations, a call button to the pantry and a form to allow individuals to sign up. As the UNLV Police RebelSAFE brand gains more recognition and the marketing group collects more feedback, Doyle expects even more refinements to the department's safety campaign in the future.



For information on how the RebelSAFE program could serve as a model program on integration and branding of campus emergency technology, contact Ryan Doyle at ryan.doyle@unlv.edu.



CHAPTER 13

BYU EXPANDS CAMPUS SAFETY WITH VIRTUAL SAFEWALKS

By Becky Lewis
March 2018

Amid the rows and rows of icons that clutter the typical smartphone, it might be hard to find the one you want, especially if you're in a hurry. And if you can't find the right one fast, you might just move on to something else.

At Brigham Young University, students and staff won't have that problem if they're thinking about asking for a virtual Safewalk across campus, because the BYU police department and the Office of Information Technology has put that function right into the BYU Mobile App Suite.



BYU students already use the BYU Mobile App Suite to do everything from check class schedules to view the lunch menu to track down a restroom, says Steve Goodman, manager of technology and communications for the BYU police department. The agency considered “off the shelf” technology but instead decided that making Safewalk an additional feature on an app students already use would encourage them to take advantage of the service. And while that placement alone may not account for the success of the virtual version of Safewalk, its usage rate is four to five times higher than that for the university’s “live Safewalk” program, and that’s just in the first three months of use. As awareness of the feature increases, so do its usage rates. (The virtual version of Safewalk expands on an existing program where officers meet requesters at designated spots and walk them to their destination. The live walks are offered only during overnight hours, whereas virtual Safewalk is available 24/7.)

“In talking with students, we came to realize that some were reluctant to use physical Safewalks because they thought they were bothering officers, or they felt awkward about trying to carry on a conversation during the course of the walk,” Goodman says. “Sometimes a caller would ask about a physical Safewalk but seem hesitant to actually request one, and if it was late at night and dispatch wasn’t too busy, sometimes the dispatcher would say ‘just stay on the phone with me while you’re walking.’ They were just doing something impromptu to help the students, but it gave us the idea to create the virtual version.”



As it turned out, the idea was not unique to the police department. During a scheduled meeting with the student association advisory council, Goodman mentioned the idea and learned that the students had been talking about a similar concept during their brainstorming sessions. The council gives the university president three recommendations for campus improvement each year, and virtual Safewalk became one of those three for 2017. Council members then served as a focus group to help the BYU Office of Information Technology and police design the user interface so that it seemed intuitive to them.

That interface features the GPS map already in use by campus dispatchers to highlight breadcrumb trails of “Safewalkers.” Since dispatchers are constantly checking the map to locate incidents and keep tabs on the department’s officers, adding Safewalk trails hasn’t had a significant impact on their workload.

“We wouldn’t have the manpower to provide an officer to walk with every one of the virtual users, and making it virtual allows us to expand Safewalk’s boundaries



beyond the physical constraints of the campus into the rental housing areas that surround us,” Goodman says. To access a virtual walk, a requester sets a destination via a feature in the BYU Mobile App Suite, and on acknowledgement from dispatch, starts to walk. On arrival, the walker hits a button to tell dispatch of a safe arrival, which also immediately deactivates the GPS tracking. If a walker suddenly deviates from course or stops in one place, Safewalk sends an alert, which results in a text message. If dispatch doesn’t get a reply along the lines of “I stopped to talk to a friend,” there is a follow-up phone call, and if there is still no response, the dispatcher immediately sends officers. Loss of communication also results in an immediate response, as does the walker’s hitting the emergency button. The latter sets off a higher level alarm and the app automatically opens up live communication with the dispatcher, who can activate the feed from the nearest security camera and at the same time attempt to communicate verbally with the walker, in addition to immediately sending officers to the scene.

“The dispatchers are looking at the screen all the time, looking for incidents and patterns and keeping track of officers. They’re aware of everything that’s going on, including the Safewalkers. When it’s really late and not as much is going on elsewhere, they sometimes bring up the cameras along a Safewalk route and keep a closer eye on the walkers,” Goodman says. “We have some students who start custodial jobs at 4 a.m., and the dispatchers have picked up on those who are “frequent fliers” who use it pretty much every day. If one of them always follows a specific route, dispatch will pick up on any deviation right away.”

Although Goodman has considered, and implemented, many commercially available solutions for specific technology problems in the past, in this case the combination of manpower savings, student involvement in development and ease of access made developing the technology internally the way to go. He says a similar instance took place in the wake of the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007, when the police department realized a need for a campus-wide emergency alerting system and developed its own because nothing existed then that met the need. Now, a number of commercially available alert systems are available.



"It might be that we're ahead of the curve on this too, and we're happy to share our experience with other colleges and universities looking to meet the same need," Goodman says.

For more information on the virtual version of BYU Safewalk, contact Steve Goodman at Steve_goodman@byu.edu.



CHAPTER 14

FREE REPORTING SYSTEM LETS STUDENTS "SAY SOMETHING" ANONYMOUSLY

By Becky Lewis
April 2018

In fall 2017, Sandy Hook Promise quietly launched its new Say Something Anonymous Reporting System, starting with onboarding a small group of schools in the use of the free app/online/call-in tool. After the shooting in Parkland, Fla., in February, the organization decided that perhaps a few more schools might be interested in signing up if they publicized the system's availability.

It took only a short time for the total to jump to 800 and continue climbing.



Such a huge increase in workload might seem daunting to some people, but Sandy Hook Promise Executive Director Tim Makris takes it all in stride: "It's been pretty explosive. We have more than 50 districts that we're in the process of onboarding. We're talking with a group of 25 school districts in California and with eight states that want to do a full statewide rollout. Our staff is incredibly technically savvy and we're not anticipating any problems with handling the demand."

Available free for both Android and iOS devices, the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System accepts tips 24/7 through a website, via app and by phone call. The nonprofit organization provides a crisis center, where staff review the tips and send all submissions on to local law enforcement and/or school administrators for response. During the onboarding process, school administrators, school security and local law enforcement determine their community's definition of a "life safety tip" that requires an immediate, urgent response and also determine who will respond to various categories of tips. Makris says Sandy Hook Promise provides national standards regarding life safety and several models to help a district design a program that meets its specific needs, with everything ultimately spelled out in a memorandum of understanding. From there, the team establishes the onboarding process, sets up a comprehensive training program, runs "tip"-based testing and finally launches the program, with ongoing support following the launch.



"We make sure the whole system works the way it should and at the same time, we give them a chance to practice their protocols by sending out several practice tips over a period of time. We collect feedback from the school prior to going live and our training includes not only the staff who run the program, but also local law enforcement, students and staff, and even parents if the school requests it," Makris says. The system does require users to associate themselves with a particular school when submitting a tip, which means that although the app can be downloaded by anyone, it can only be used by participating school districts and their local communities. Requiring this association decreases the chances of hoax tips coming in from another part of the country, something that can happen with some other reporting systems. Another safeguard built into the program is establishing a dialog with school administrators as soon as an initial inquiry is received: "We don't want to send staff into an area only to find out that the inquiry came from a parent who never even spoke to administrators," he adds.

Those, and other safeguards and features, came about as the result of several years of research and development that took place before the fall 2017 launch. The reporting system grew out of Sandy Hook Promise's "Say Something" program (see "Danbury Students Learn How Important it Is to 'Say Something,'" <https://schoolsafetyinfo.org/stories/Success4Danbury-Say-Something.html>),



which encourages students to tell a trusted adult when they see something that seems “off.”

“We interviewed students about the program and their needs, and there was a subset who said ‘Yeah, like no, I can’t go to a trusted adult,’ ” Makris says. “We decided we needed to offer an anonymous reporting system, and while our organization doesn’t believe in reinventing the wheel, in this case we looked at a lot of existing platforms and couldn’t find anything to partner with that met all of the needs we defined. So we found a developer and created our own package.”

With that package developed and operational, Sandy Hook Promise continues to work on onboarding schools, implementing a train-the-trainer program for larger districts and developing an interactive training video with role play scenarios. And even with its relative newness, the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System has already recorded success stories, including a teacher who called because she felt administrators weren’t taking a threat by a student to shoot an ex-girlfriend seriously and a mother who called because her daughter and classmates had found threatening notes left in shared books. In both cases, interventions stopped the threat.

“That shows the system works,” Makris says. “Those are the kind of endings we want.”

For more information on the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System and the Say Something program, visit <https://www.saysomething.net/>. For more information on Sandy Hook Promise, visit www.sandyhookpromise.org.





CHAPTER 15

NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL CRISIS AND BEREAVEMENT PROVIDES NO-COST CRISIS RESPONSE AND TRAINING

By Becky Lewis
September 2017

In the aftermath of an active violence incident in a school, there are always outside groups and individuals that show up with offers of help. Sadly, sometimes they are only looking to profit off others' tragedy.

However, others truly do offer help, often at little or no charge. One of these is the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement, which has provided assistance in New York City after 9/11, at Chardon High School in Ohio and at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut after school shootings, and to many other schools that have suffered acts of violence or that may just be looking to prevent one.



Now in its permanent location at the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California, the Center's physical location previously followed the career path of its founder, Dr. David Schonfeld, starting in the late 1980s when Schonfeld was a fellowship trainee in Baltimore. Although the staff has never been large, and the Center relies on professional advisory board members who volunteer their time and funding from outside sources, it fields hundreds of requests for crisis response, advocacy, research, education and training every year.



The Center website divides its resources into two sections: I Need Help Now and Help Me Prepare. Schools that need immediate help can call a 24/7 toll-free number, (877) 536-2722 or email helpnow@schoolcrisiscenter.org to request both short-term and long-term technical assistance and consultation that is offered at no cost; the section also contains links to useful materials related to topics such as the death of a loved one, coping with a suicide, talking to students about terrorism and psychological first aid. Under Help Me Prepare, schools can find links to guidelines on subjects such as responding to the death of a member of the school community, whether from suicide or other causes, and supporting children whose family member died in a line of duty death in the police or military. The Center also sponsors the related website of the Coalition to Support Grieving Students (<https://grievingstudents.org/>). The Coalition is comprised of more than 30 national professional organizations representing teachers, administrators, mental health and support staff, and related professionals. The site offers a variety of video-based teaching modules that are freely available.

"We are contacted at least weekly by schools and communities, and we respond quickly," Schonfeld says. "Sometimes they're just looking for advice or a way to connect with resources, and we try to turn those around quickly within 24 hours, usually within a few hours. Most of them also want to talk to someone on the phone who will help them figure out what to do."

Although incidents on the scale of Sandy Hook are fortunately few, many schools need assistance with smaller-scale events such as a student suicide, a teacher battling cancer or a shooting in the nearby community. Schonfeld says the Center talks school administrators, school mental health professionals and other school professionals through what they might want to do, helps them connect with resources in their area and provides model language and materials for use with students, parents and the community tailored to the specific incident.

"For example, after Sandy Hook we were asked to write something that could be used by teachers in schools throughout the state to support conversations with students on Monday morning. We had developed similar materials for other school crisis situations that we could draw from quickly. We provided scripts



that teachers could paraphrase, as well as guidelines on what they might hope to address in these conversations to help them bring up the topic, address students' questions and concerns, and help them cope with their reactions to the event. Whenever we develop such materials, we work with the school to customize them even further, including information specific to their school or school system," he says.

Schonfeld and other Center professionals also have provided on-site consultation to schools that have suffered major active violence events, often making multiple visits over periods of five years or longer: "Thanks to the funding we receive from the New York Life Foundation, we've been able to offer on-site consultation in the aftermath of major crisis events at no charge, including covering our own travel expenses. Making site visits allows us to offer consultation and training and professional development for the entire school staff, including SROs and school security. Sometimes we include community health providers as well."

He often finds the Center's services hard to explain because they are so broad-based, adding "We do what we feel is needed and what the school is looking for rather than going in with something that is already designed. We stay with the school through the recovery process but we try to stay behind the scene. I don't think it's optimal for experts from outside to come in for a few days at a time and displace the experts who are there all the time. Instead, we aim to build the school and local community's capacity for a sustained response – and remain as partners as questions arise."

In addition to site visits in the aftermath of violence, Schonfeld has provided nearly 1,000 trainings and presentations on supporting children after crisis and loss. The Center has assisted schools with being proactive about policy development and event planning.

“Every school has a crisis at one level or another. The information we provide and the training we offer is really to help school professionals be better prepared to help students in distress. We need to be able to support kids in their emotional and psychological development, which is so important to their learning,” Schonfeld says. “Although the major events we respond to stand out for most people, we spend much more time doing preparedness and general training.”



For more information on the services available from the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement, visit <https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/> or email Dr. David Schonfeld at schonfel@usc.edu.



CHAPTER 16

STUDENTS GET INVOLVED IN MAKING SCHOOLS "SAFE AND SOUND"

By Becky Lewis
March 2018

Sparks. Marysville. Roseburg. Townville. Marshall County. Parkland. Dozens more towns and cities, urban and suburban and rural, where, in recent years, gun violence has caused fear and panic, injuries and deaths.

And while it's the shooting incidents that grab the national headlines, every day hundreds of school students face lesser threats of physical violence, deal with weather-related hazards or try to cope with bullying, both at school and in cyberspace.



“It’s very hard to watch community after community learn about this from experience,” says Michelle Gay, co-founder of Safe and Sound Schools. “We want people to be better educated and better prepared for safety, and to do that, they need to be engaged in the effort.”

Safe and Sound Schools was founded by Gay and Alissa Parker, both mothers who lost children in the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012, and has worked to promote that goal of community engagement ever since. Beginning in June 2017, that effort expanded to engage high school youth in working toward their own safety with the launch of the Safe and Sound Youth Council initiative.

“Almost from the get-go, we had youth reaching out to us and asking how they could be involved. The Youth Council initiative just formalizes that,” Gay says. Schools interested in becoming part of the initiative receive a free start-up kit and free assistance from Safe and Sound in developing their own individualized programs, programs that follow a collaborative approach to include students, parents, administrators, teachers, school resource officers, staff, and community health and public safety professionals. Interested



student groups must follow a formalized registration process, working with their administration to start a program and select a safety issue, make a plan to address it and submit a year-end report to Safe and Sound.

Emphasizing a comprehensive, all-hazards approach, the kit offers a number of project suggestions, including:

- Follow Community Planning Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to create a safety plan (Note: if the school has involvement from a school resource officer or local law enforcement, a sworn officer can download JTIC’s School Safe app for assistance.)
- Label exits to correspond to floor plans/blueprints.
- Create emergency backpacks.
- Develop tools that help students with special needs.
- Design posters to display in the school.
- Organize a Safety Day or Campus Safety Fair.



Not only is the Youth Council initiative designed to be led by youth, youth played a significant role in shaping it. Although the project only formally launched in 2017, Safe and Sound has worked with youth groups since its inception, including one at Moore High School in Moore, Okla., that developed and perfected the concept of the Campus Safety Day (see related article, ““Prep Rally” Promotes School Safety at Oklahoma School.”)

“Moore was involved from the very first and they experimented with several different projects. For the School Safety Fair, the students got the administration to give them an entire day to orchestrate and plan a big fair where students rotate through a number of different safety activities, lessons and seminars,” Gay says. “It’s really impressive and reflects their own community. Being in Oklahoma, it of course includes a presentation by a local meteorologist about weather safety and the signs of weather danger. It also includes active shooter awareness and CPR training.”

The initial launch of the Youth Council initiative targets high schools, but Safe and Sound Schools is already hearing from middle and elementary schools asking for a kit that targets their efforts. For the present, students in the lower grades are encouraged to team up with high schools on dual-use projects.

Safe and Sound Schools is comprised of Sandy Hook parents, educators and community members working together to improve school safety and security through crisis prevention, response and recovery, and to provide research-based education, tools and resources. To further its goals, the organization has built local and national partnerships, including partnerships with a number of professional law enforcement organizations. To learn more about Safe and Sound in general, visit <https://www.safeandsoundschools.org/>. For more information on Safe and Sound Youth Councils, visit <https://www.safeandsoundschools.org/programs-2/youth-council/>.





CHAPTER 17

"PREP RALLY" PROMOTES SCHOOL SAFETY AT OKLAHOMA SCHOOL

By Becky Lewis
March 2018

Every year at Oklahoma's Moore High School, students sponsor a daylong prep rally.

No, that's not a typo. That's how Hether Little, Senior Class Principal, describes the annual School Safety Fair, now held under the umbrella of the Safe and Sound Youth Council initiative.



During the 2014-2015 school year, Michele Gay, co-founder of Safe and Sound (<https://www.safeandsoundschools.org/>) spoke at Moore's technology center, and the group of principals, counselors and students who attended the presentation came away inspired by her story. Moore formed a Safe School Committee, the student members came up with the idea for the School Safety Fair, and the program's successful launch in turn helped inspire Safe and Sound to develop its Youth Council Initiative (see related article, "Students Get Involved in Making Schools "Safe and Sound"".)

"The students pretty much did it all," Little says of the annual event. "They are the ones that contacted the different agencies and got them set up to attend. They picked the date and the physical locations, made sure that projectors and laptops were available, set up the chairs. It's very much student-led."

The School Safety Fair starts off with a keynote speaker; speakers in the event's early years have included Gay, a local psychiatrist and an active shooter trainer. For the remainder of the school day, students break into smaller groups and rotate through presentations by the Oklahoma City and Moore police departments, Oklahoma Homeland Security, emergency management and public health, a local meteorologist and more.

"It's been inspiring for us to do this and see the positive reaction from students, faculty and staff. It really gets them thinking," Little says. "All of the speakers volunteer their time."

The original group of students not only looked at the different components of school safety and reached out to local agencies, they also started mentoring underclassmen so that as group leaders graduate, others are ready to step in and keep the School Safety Fair going.

"We talk about school safety being everybody's responsibility, and when it comes to the school's day-to-day population, administrators and teachers are in the minority. We can't see everything and we must rely on students to tell us about what's going on," Little says. "Our students are great about telling us what's happening on social media and other things that look 'off.' We now hear about more bullying incidents and students who are trying to self-harm.

"Changing the culture is everybody's responsibility, and awareness of that has really increased since we started the School Safety Fair. Students feel much more comfortable and have increased their understanding that they have ownership of the safety of the school and the safety of the students," she adds. "They're much more comfortable coming to the staff, which includes two Moore police officers assigned to work onsite. They're here every day working with the kids





and are very involved with the student populations, and we have students who give them tips all the time.”

Although none of the other schools in Moore’s area have created a similar full-blown School Safety Fair, several have reached out to learn more and have adapted the ideas into similar, smaller programs.

“It’s a great idea that the kids have jumped on and loved. We’re happy to share information on how we did it, because the more schools that do something like this, the more it will benefit school climate and culture overall,” Little says.

For more information about the Moore School Safety Fair, contact Hether Little at (405) 735-4775 or email hetherlittle@mooreschools.com.





CHAPTER 18

F.A.M.I.L.Y. VOLUNTEERS GIVE SCHOOL STAFF EXTRA EYES

By Becky Lewis
May 2018

There are times during a busy school day when administrators, teachers and school resource officers surely wish they had eyes in the back of their heads. At Newton-Conover Middle School in Newton, N.C., they do – only those eyes belong to the volunteers of the school's F.A.M.I.L.Y. program.



The parent volunteers of F.A.M.I.L.Y., which stands for Families Actively Making Improvements and Leading Youth, have been serving as extra eyes around the school for the past five years, since shortly after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., in December 2012. Easily identifiable in their neon green shirts, the volunteers start their day by meeting with School Resource Officer Danny Baker, who gives them a heads-up on any activities or visitors planned for the day. Then, throughout the day, they serve as extra eyes and ears around the school while they help out with car and bus duty, walk the halls between classes and patrol the grounds. F.A.M.I.L.Y. volunteers can watch classrooms if teachers need to step out for a few minutes and they spend time in the cafeteria during lunch. They escort visitors when requested, help out with seating and parking at sporting events, and always try to serve as positive role models for the school's approximately 650 students, says Mark Pennell, school board chair for Newton-Conover City Schools and one of the group's co-founders.

"We started F.A.M.I.L.Y. because we thought if more parents got involved, it would be less likely that an event like Sandy Hook would happen in a community," Pennell says. "We're there to be someone the kids can look up to and know that we care about them, and someone talk to if they need it. We're there to help the teachers and our SRO any way that we can. We look at ourselves as the foot soldiers on the ground who are providing more eyes on the campus."

Pennell says that all volunteers undergo a thorough background check, and although they have no formal training program, they have "on-the-job" experience and work closely with Baker when it comes to what to do during a lockdown or fire drill, and other ways in which they can provide support. For example, during the recent National Day of Action Against Violence in Schools, he mounted a nearby knoll and kept a watchful eye on the students during their 17 minutes outside. And although he's very glad there have been no incidents at Newton-Conover, Pennell says the volunteers have found unlocked doors, broken locks, and boxes and coolers on the grounds in places where they didn't belong.

While F.A.M.I.L.Y. started with a large wave of enthusiasm in the aftermath of Sandy Hook, membership has declined, and Pennell is looking for ways to recruit more volunteers, telling parents even if they can only help for 30 minutes in the cafeteria at lunchtime, they can still be a role model and make a difference. The district would also like to expand the volunteer pool so to cover its four elementary schools, and then the high schools down the road. Pennell says they also have plans to take the program nationally, as they are working with a grantwriter and have plans to develop a website and trademark the program name.





"We'd like to get the word about this out there so that the idea catches on at more schools. We'd like to provide information on what F.A.M.I.L.Y. should be and how they can get a program started in their area," he says. "The only thing it costs the volunteers is time."

He adds, "Everybody talks about what to do to keep students safe. This is so simple, you start with a basic t-shirt and individuals who will keep an eye out for anything that might be wrong. The main thing is, we care about the kids."

For more information about F.A.M.I.L.Y., visit the Newton-Conover Middle School website at https://nms.newton-conover.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=340135&type=d&pREC_ID=747064, or F.A.M.I.L.Y. information officer Kyle Culpepper at (828) 582-1552.

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