



REPORTING CONCERNS w/ WARNING SIGNS

CONCERN: For purposes of this security and safety procedure a concern is defined as someone under the belief that a person or persons may be planning to harm themselves or others, or may already be being harmed by themselves or others.

ADMINISTRATOR and/or ADMINISTRATOR'S DESIGNEE EDUCATION:

- If a potential threat is reported to you that involves any mention of use of a weapon, and/or possession of a weapon, and/or anyone or any group wanting or planning to cause harm contact your local police department.
- Based on the situation consider putting the school in lockdown if the threat is imminent, and until the threat is contained.
- If the threat comes in with plenty of time to cancel school consider doing so based on the level of threat, and until the threat is contained

STAFF EDUCATION:

- Make sure staff understand that after students are educated on how, when, and where to report a concern that a student may be more likely to report a concern to them
- Make sure staff understand that it is not their job to determine if this student reporting the concern is telling the truth. Their responsibility is to immediately inform an administrator, and calling and leaving a voicemail and/or writing an email is not considered a successful reporting job. They must have face to face or an actual phone conversation to be considered a successful reporting job.
- If staff have an independent concern they should follow the above reporting procedures.
- Make sure staff understand that this does not pertain to abuse situations, and that if they suspect abuse then they still need to follow the mandatory reporting law.
- Make sure staff is provided a "phone tree" of administrators cell phones and home phones in rank order of how they are to be contacted if the staff member becomes aware of a potential crisis.

SCENARIOS FOR STAFF (COVER MORE IF YOU HAVE TIME)

CORRECT PROCEDURE: While communicating with a student via email about a missed homework assignment over the weekend, the student wrote that "So and So" mentioned today that they got a gun for their birthday, and they planned on bringing it to school to show other students. The teacher immediately called the school principal to report it and got a voicemail. The teacher asked the principal to call her back immediately due to a possible threatening situation. The teacher then tried the Vice Principal and got another voicemail. Finally the teacher kept calling until she reached the athletic director. The teacher reported the situation verbatim, and asked the athletic director to confirm they understood the possible threat and would follow up with law enforcement.

INCORRECT PROCEDURE: Student approaches teacher and explains he thinks he overheard "So and So" say to "So and So" that "So and So" may have brought a gun to school, or the student said, that he could have heard, "I am tired of not having fun at school". The teacher tells the reporting student to think hard, and try and remember, and while that is happening the teacher will call "So and So's" mother because she knows her. ***What should happen is that as soon as the student reported who was possibly in possession of the weapon the teacher should have notified administration.***



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STUDENT EDUCATION:

- If you hear, see, or witness anyone claiming that they are planning to harm themselves or another person, or persons, immediately report it to a school administrator if you are not in class. If in class report it immediately to your teacher.
- If at home, call 888.287.6157. You can remain confidential or give your name
- There is a difference between snitching and being a hero. “Snitches” let other people know information that harms another person or persons, and makes the “Snitch” look good. Hero’s help prevent tragedies from taking place in their school and in their community. Without student “hero’s” there would have potentially been 28 MORE school violence instances this year, where students, staff, and community members may have been seriously hurt or killed.

SCENARIOS FOR STUDENTS: (USE MORE SCENARIOS IF YOU HAVE TIME)

CORRECT ACTION: “STUDENT #1 was on Facebook and saw that her friend posted that a girl she knows that goes to Student #1’s school was writing that “She no longer wanted to be in this world, and she was sorry for the pain she caused.” STUDENT #1 immediately called 888.287.6157, and when the operator asked if she wanted to report an incident, she said she did, and waited to be transferred to the specialist who handles these calls for the school. When the specialist came on the line she told her the girl’s name who supposedly wrote the post, and exactly what it said. *It turns out that the girl was thinking of harming herself, and because of STUDENT #1’s phone call, this girl not only is alive, but got the help she needed.*

INCORRECT ACTION: STUDENT #1 was on Facebook and saw that her friend posted that a girl she knows that goes to Student #1’s school was writing that “She no longer wanted to be in this world, and she was sorry for the pain she caused.” STUDENT #1 immediately “friended” the girl who wrote the post so she could help her. While she waited for the girl to accept her “friend request” she posted on her own site that all her friends should try and contact this girl who wrote the post and tell her, “She had too much to live for and we all love her”.

INCORRECT ACTION: “STUDENT #1 was on Facebook and saw that her friend posted that a girl she knows that goes to Student #1’s school was writing that “She no longer wanted to be in this world, and she was sorry for the pain she caused.” STUDENT #1 immediately called 888.287.6157, and when the operator asked if she wanted to report an incident she said she did. She then told the specialist who takes these calls that she knew the girl’s name, and why STUDENT #1 thinks that this girl is “messed up”, she didn’t tell the specialist that the girl was thinking of harming herself or what her post specifically said.



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Some signs of potential for violence may be historical or static (unchangeable) factors like:

- A history of violent or aggressive behavior
- Young age at first violent incident (either witnessing or causing)
- Having been a victim of bullying
- History of discipline problems or frequent conflicts with authority
- Early childhood abuse or neglect
- Having witnessed violence at home
- Family or parent condones/exhibits use of violence
- A history of cruelty to animals
- Having a major mental illness
- Being callous or lacking empathy for others
- History of vandalism or property damage

Other signs of potential violence may be present over time and may escalate or contribute to the risk of violence given a certain event or activity. These might include:

- Serious drug or alcohol use
- 2 hours or more a day of exposure to violence in real or fantasy form
- Gang membership or strong desire to be in a gang
- Access to or fascination with weapons, especially guns or role playing with guns
- Trouble controlling feelings like anger
- Withdrawal from friends and usual activities
- Regularly feeling rejected or alone
- Feeling constantly disrespected

Some signs of potential violence may be new or active signs. They might look like:

- Increased loss of temper
- Frequent physical fighting
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Increased risk-taking behavior
- Declining school performance
- Acute episode of major mental illness
- Planning how to commit acts of violence
- Announcing threats or plans for hurting others
- Obtaining or carrying a weapon

There is research that indicates that new or active signs are more predictive of short-term risk of violence than historical factors, which may be more predictive of longer-term risk.