

...that students know a great deal about threats to school safety?

Students should be given a voice in helping make their schools safe places to learn and grow. Enlisting the aid of students as partners along with school staff in this effort gives students a stake or ownership in making their school safe. Student participation can provide an extremely valuable service in transferring critical information about school safety threats to school staff. Students can provide an early warning system that can prevent a school tragedy planned by an individual student or a group of students.



The Credibility of Student Information About Threats to School Safety. Students are certainly not infallible judges of potential school threats; however, post-assessments of numerous school tragedies show that students or others (friends, peers, siblings) had prior knowledge of the tragedy in approximately 80% of cases. The FBI regards verbal threats as the highest and most credible warning of all potential indicators of a planned school shooting. Students, more than anyone in the school, are most likely to come into contact with such information via the student grapevine. A threat warning reported by a student should be afforded the highest priority in investigation of its credibility.

Steps school staff can take to encouraging students to report safety concerns:

Establish a positive school culture.

Provide an easy, confidential way to report a threat of violence.

Review with students the reporting process.

Teach students the difference between reporting and snitching.



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