

# Resources for Schools and Districts



## Create a Safe Learning Environment for the New School Year.

With the start of a new school year underway, the safety and security of students, teachers, and staff remains top of mind for schools and districts across the country. For the kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) community, school safety encompasses measures and systems ranging from mental health support, threat assessment and reporting, and fostering a positive school climate. Integrating these various components and elements of school safety helps school communities better address the range of threats and hazards they may face, while maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for students to thrive and grow.

[SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) offers a variety of Federal resources, tools, and products schools and districts can use to enhance their school's safety across a range of topic areas, including those listed above. You can also follow [@SchoolSafetyGov](https://twitter.com/SchoolSafetyGov) on Twitter for additional school safety updates and resources.



## Key school safety elements and topics for schools to consider this year include:

- **Bullying and Cyberbullying:** Bullying and cyberbullying threatens students' physical and emotional safety and can impact their social and academic success at school. Adopting policies to help prevent bullying and cyberbullying and monitoring student behavior in school and online can help schools identify at-risk behaviors and provide interventions before they create safety issues.
- **Mental Health:** Students often come to school with complex physical and mental health concerns or social service needs. Access to mental health services helps to create a positive school climate, prevents worsening of mental health conditions, and leads to better outcomes for students.
- **Threat Assessment and Reporting:** The development and implementation of a threat assessment and reporting program remains a critical component of any school's violence prevention efforts. Establishing a reporting system that is continually monitored and allows for anonymous reporting, as well as having a threat assessment program, or a multidisciplinary group process, to evaluate these reports and respond to threats can significantly reduce acts of violence on school campuses.
- **School Climate:** School climate refers to the quality of school life. Developing students with strong character who are connected to their peers, educators, and communities in meaningful ways can improve school climate and prevent violence from occurring.
- **Emergency Planning:** Families and communities expect schools to keep their children safe from a range of threats and hazards, including targeted violence, natural disasters, and accidents. Emergencies can happen at any time, and schools should have a plan in place to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events.
- **Physical Security:** Physical security measures can mitigate external threats and reduce the amount of harm inflicted if incidents occur. Conducting a site assessment and developing building security plans can identify existing vulnerabilities and enhance overall school security.
- **COVID-19:** Schools play an important role in preventing the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Following the latest guidance from the Federal government offers school communities ways to protect students and staff while maintaining operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

