In this podcast episode, we ask our guests to share what school safety means to them, followed by a conversation with the directors of the National Center for School Safety.

Guests: Nicole Hockley, Danny Carlson, Katherine Schweit, Chris Melde, Justin Heinze, Marc Zimmerman

Learning Outcomes
» Recognize the variety of safety challenges that schools and communities face daily.
» Understand the importance of awareness, reporting and collaborative assessment of safety concerns.
» Think ecologically and consider outside factors that may influence the safety or even perceived safety of a student or school community member.

Key Takeaways
☑️ School Safety covers more areas than just physical safety. School safety plans must address social environment, relationships, and public perception.
☑️ Educators should try to create an environment that allows students to learn and go to school without fear of being bullied or victimized.
☑️ Anyone in a school environment (students, teachers, administrators, etc.) can be a perpetrator or a victim of violence, so it is important to consider situations from many angles.
☑️ School safety planning, threat assessment, and crisis management are more effective when taking a broad community approach and involving a variety of people and organizations.

☑️ It is important to be on the lookout for more moderate warning signs, or “yellow flags,” so they can be assessed and addressed before they become red flags or negative outcomes.

☑️ When looking at potential warning signs or concerning reports, it is important to be aware of conscious and unconscious bias that may impact the interpretation of a situation or the perception of an individual.

☑️ Students will not be able to learn effectively if their fundamental need to feel safe is not met on a daily basis.

Additional Resources

Foundational Elements of School Safety – A great place to begin developing a framework for your grant proposal by highlighting common facets of school safety for your consideration.

SchoolSafety.gov – A starting place for thinking about school safety plans and commonly implemented strategies across the country.

Questions for Discussion
» How can your school increase awareness of “yellow flags” or pre-warning signs?
» Is there a clear pathway for the school community to report concerns? Are there steps to combat bias?
» Who should be involved in your school safety plan?