

What is School Safety?

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.



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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?

[NC2S.org](#) | schoolsafety@umich.edu | 734-647-8295
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This project was supported by Cooperative Agreement No 2019 YS BX K 001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.