

# First Steps for Engaging Your School Safety Network



[VIEW SELF-PACED TRAINING](#)

It can be challenging to identify and engage your network, but partnering and getting buy-in from a wide variety of people within your school community is key to successfully implementing safety initiatives.

[In this self-paced training](#), you will be provided tools to identify and strategically prioritize how to engage with everyone in your school safety network. You will also learn key terms related to influencing your network and how to create a network map and influence grid to improve how you strategically engage others.

## Learning Outcomes

- » Explain the purpose of identifying and influencing your network.
- » Create a network map and influence grid.
- » Recommend actions to take based on prioritization.

## Key Takeaways

- ✓ Using terms such as collaborators, contributors, funders, and constituents are preferable to using the term “stakeholders,” which is not as specific and has negative historical implications for various populations.
- ✓ Two tools you can use as you begin to engage your network are a Network Map and an Influence Grid. A **Network Map** displays relationships between people and groups and how they affect one another. An **Influence Grid** illustrates others’ abilities to affect your school safety project, as well as their interest (or how much they are affected by it).
- ✓ Some first steps for engaging your school safety network are to:
  1. Brainstorm the people, groups, and organizations that may affect or be affected by your school safety project.
  2. Categorize those you identified into natural groups that have similar views or requirements.
  3. Create a Network Map to better understand who influences whom.
  4. Place all of the group names onto an Influence Grid.
  5. Consider how you might manage communications with the groups you placed on the Influence Grid. How frequently should you communicate with each group? What methods can you use? How much information should you share?

## Additional Resources

[How Schools Work and How to Work with Schools](#) - This guide is intended to help anyone who would like to work with schools to improve the health, safety, and wellbeing of students.

[5 Steps to Better School/Community Collaboration](#) - This article features some ideas for creating a stronger network between schools and community organizations.

## Questions for Discussion

- » Who can or will affect your project? Who is or will be affected by your project?
- » What are the intended results of your school safety project? Which collaborators will help you achieve these results?
- » What communication methods have been effective in the past? What new methods might be worth trying?

[NC2S.org](https://www.nc2s.org) | [schoolsafety@umich.edu](mailto:schoolsafety@umich.edu) | 734-647-8295  
[Twitter.com/NC2S\\_Tweets](https://twitter.com/NC2S_Tweets) | [Facebook.com/SafeSchoolsUS](https://www.facebook.com/SafeSchoolsUS)

Copyright © 2021 Regents of the University of Michigan

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.