

Collaboration & Information Sharing



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This session was originally the fourth in a four-part series on Improving School Climate & Safety Through Inter-Professional Collaboration. As a stand-alone training, [this webinar](#) examines information sharing and its connection to school climate. Inherently inter-professional, effective information sharing allows us to ensure that everyone working toward the best interests of schools and students can be on the same page.

Learning Outcomes

- » Identify potential restrictions that can impact your colleague's ability to share information.
- » Discuss potential challenges to information sharing.
- » Discuss how to balance privacy with the need to share information.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ It is crucial that school officials share only what they know with certainty and to avoid speculation, assumptions, or overreaching.
- ✓ Information sharing, especially in emergency situations, allows for collaborative problem solving from multiple perspectives, increased awareness, and ultimately more positive outcomes than an individual addressing the situation alone.
- ✓ A comprehensive understanding of school policies, individual roles and permissions, ethical considerations, and legal limitations are necessary for appropriate information sharing. For example, HIPAA, FERPA, and other privacy policies are not as restrictive as often believed and have "good faith" clauses in times of emergency.
- ✓ When sharing information with someone, especially in emergencies, be very clear with the goal, the urgency, what is already known, and why their help is needed.
- ✓ Developing a decision tree or chain of contact among your school and community partners prior to an emergency can allow for quicker and more effective communication.
- ✓ Following a crisis, members of the school community may be highly reactive and sensitive so it is necessary to monitor threats while also avoiding an overreaction that may perpetuate challenges.

Additional Resources

[The National Center for Campus Public Safety](#) - A list of resources on threat assessment.

[Helpful Hints for School Emergency Management](#) - A document on how to engage students in the emergency management process.

[SchoolSafety.gov](#) - A collection of resources and a starting place for thinking about reporting systems in schools.

Questions for Discussion

- » Does your school or district have a reporting system in place? If not, what would be necessary to develop one?
- » What partners will you need to share information with?
- » How can staff become familiar with HIPAA, FERPA and other privacy policies that might come into play in an emergency?

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