MSSI Technical Assistance Video

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Casey Kotrba: Creating a safe school environment takes more than planning. It takes the right support. The Michigan School Safety Initiative, or MSSI, helps Michigan schools build safer, stronger communities through free resources, training, and personalized technical assistance. Part of the National Center for School Safety and housed within the University of Michigan's Institute for Firearm Injury Prevention, MSSI is a multidisciplinary collaborative team that works with Pre-K through 12th grade school communities across Michigan to enhance safety and prevent violence. All of our services, including technical assistance, are free to any Michigan Pre-K through 12th grade school district, agency, or organization working towards building safe school environments.

Heather Murphy: The Michigan School Safety Initiative Technical Assistance, or TA, provides expert, customized support to help school communities implement, evaluate, and sustain school safety activities. Because there is no one-size-fits-all approach to school safety, strategies and programming must be tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the school community. We provide one-on-one support to help you identify and implement best-fit, evidence-based practices tailored to your unique needs and environment. Our team can assist with a wide range of safety topics, from notification technology and school climate to school-based law enforcement, behavioral threat assessment and management, and social media monitoring or general student wellness and positive youth development.

Casey Kotrba: What does technical assistance look like in practice? Let's hear from some of the school communities that we've supported.

Dan Karrick: Another aspect of working with MSSI is a thought partner. So working with Casey on a monthly basis, we just talk through various issues that I'm facing in my task for the Saline Area Schools. And as we talk through these, her experience and her knowledge are very helpful, and it confirms what I'm trying to do and trying to put forward, as well as gives me other ideas to help tackle problems as they come across.

Jamie Eathorne: At Wayne RESA, our mission is to support every student's success, and that starts with ensuring their safety. Our Safe and Healthy Schools team is proud to further this work in partnership with the Michigan School Safety Initiative.

Danielle Tagai: That partnership has been vital. Over the past few years, MSSI has supported the development of the Wayne County Comprehensive School Safety Community of Practice. It's truly a diverse group, bringing together school administrators, health professionals, and educators.

Joe Kehoe: And it's not just school staff. We're working side by side with law enforcement, emergency management, and community leaders from districts and municipalities all across our county.

Danielle Tagai: Having MSSI at the table is a game changer. They bring the latest updates on new resources, upcoming trainings, and a level of school safety expertise that helps us stay ahead of the curve.

Jamie Eathorne: Together, we're making our schools safer. We look forward to many more years of this essential partnership.

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Casey Kotrba: We appreciate Dan and Wayne RESA for sharing their experiences with MSSI's technical assistance. To request assistance or ask a question, complete the TA request form on our website, scan the QR code, or email us at schoolsafety@umich.edu. Thank you for your commitment to safe, supportive schools. Together, we can build a safer future for every Michigan student.