SPEAK UP OUT
WISCONSIN

2022 – 2023 Annual Report

THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF SCHOOL SAFETY

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https://speakup.widoj.gov/   Text "SUSO" to 738477   1-800-MY-SUSO-1

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Introduction

Our Purpose

The Office of School Safety (OSS) is focused on optimizing school safety and preventing violence in all Wisconsin schools. OSS provides school safety best practices, programs, and guidance to schools so that all children can learn in safe environments. Our nationally respected practices include our reporting tipline, Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin; Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management process, support, training and consultation; Critical Incident Response support for any school impacted by a crisis event; and school safety best practice guidance. These OSS initiatives prioritize prevention, early intervention, and recovery strategies.

Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin (SUSO) is a free statewide threat reporting tipline available to all Wisconsin schools. Since it was launched in September 2020, over 7,500 tips have been reported to SUSO. The Resource Center Analysts (RCAs) staffing the tipline provide students with immediate, accessible confidential adult support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The willingness of bystanders to come forward with concerns for the wellness and safety of themselves or others is a key component of student health and violence prevention efforts in schools. SUSO harnesses the power of bystanders, addresses concerns early, and provides opportunities for early intervention and harm prevention.

The Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) process is designed to identify, assess, manage, and monitor threats to schools and students. The threat management process identifies students exhibiting threatening or other concerning behavior, gathers information to assess the risk of harm to themselves or others, and determines appropriate interventions to prevent violence and promote successful outcomes. The goal of the threat management process is to intervene at the earliest stage, provide assistance to students, and prevent violence. OSS provides BTAM training, support, consultation, tools and resources to schools and law enforcement.

When schools are impacted by traumatic events, OSS responds with consultation and support to guide interventions, reduce the trauma impact of the event, and promote recovery. **Through OSS's Critical Incident Response (CIR) project, 12 regional CIR teams have been created and trained across Wisconsin**. The teams are accessible to any school to support their crisis recovery efforts.

Preventing violence in our schools requires a community commitment. OSS works with education, law enforcement, and internal DOJ partners, to implement effective school safety practices in our schools.

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Note: Data in this report was collected from September 1st, 2022 through August 31st, 2023.

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Uniquely SUSO: A Tipline and More

> **SUSO is more than a tipline. It is the hub that connects all OSS initiatives and the entry point where schools can access comprehensive services offered by OSS as well as local, state, and national partners.**

From the onset of each tip, OSS provides a multifaceted, integrated response to safety concerns. As soon as RCAs become aware of the particulars of concern, they are equipped to quickly coordinate with school staff and law enforcement partners at the local level, as well as offer in-house OSS resources such as threat assessment consultation, critical incident response, and general school safety guidance.

Life safety and crime-related concerns are handled immediately by OSS staff and local law enforcement, ensuring no delay in emergency response. OSS staff are trained to provide threat management consultation, support, and guidance when a tip reflects violence warning behaviors or includes weapons. Additionally, OSS offers critical incident response when a tip indicates that students, parents, or staff are feeling unsafe, including resources and consultation with the school crisis team. OSS has trained 12 critical response teams who are available to deploy to every corner of Wisconsin.

As a comprehensive approach to school safety, OSS coordinates responses to tips with internal DOJ partners as well as external partners. Internally, the OSS collaborates with the Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center, the Office of Crime Victim Services, the Division of Criminal Investigation, and the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force to share information, assess threats and supply resources. Externally, the OSS works alongside the FBI, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, and more to collaborate on multidisciplinary teams when a threat is posed to schools in Wisconsin. When a tip includes significant or concerning social media activity, RCAs conduct Digital Threat Assessment by utilizing open-source intelligence techniques.
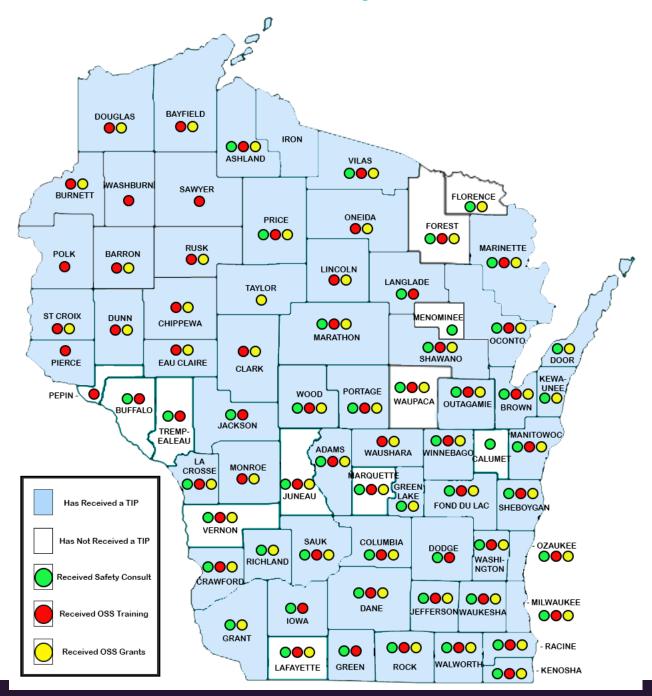
OSS services are free to all Wisconsin schools, ensuring that schools engage in best practices regardless of funding limitations.

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SUSO Reach

OSS and SUSO have impacted every one of Wisconsin's 72 counties this year, in most cases providing multiple services. The map below indicates each county that has used the SUSO tipline, received general school safety guidance, has had participants in OSS training events and presentations, or has received an OSS grant.

Legend:
- Blue: Has Received a TIP
- White: Has Not Received a TIP
- Green: Received Safety Consult
- Red: Received OSS Training
- Yellow: Received OSS Grants

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SUSO Data: At A Glance

Tips Since 2020 Launch:

7,535

Tips Received This School Year:

3,754

SUSO has handled 95% more tips than last year.

REPORTING METHODS

49.8% PC Web (1,871)

24% Mobile Web (902)

21.2% Mobile App (794)

5.0 % Other (187)

Top Report Categories:

Bullying: 29.9% (1,124)

Vaping: 9.7% (366)

Duplicate: 8.8% (329)

Inappropriate Conduct: 6.9% (258)

School Complaint: 5.5% (206)

Drugs: 5.1% (191)

A recent Cyber Bullying tip: A student reported videos posted to TikTok that expressed degrading behavior toward specific classmates. SUSO staff gathered detailed information and delivered it to the school. School staff interviewed the student's victims and ultimately the offensive TikTok account was removed.

SUSO is available via telephone, website, mobile application, or by texting "SUSO" to 738477. You can download the app at https://speakup.widoj.gov, the Apple Store or Google Play, or by calling 1-800-MY-SUSO-1 to speak to a live, trained analyst.

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SUSO Data: Tip Outcomes

What happens when tip is submitted to SUSO?

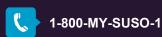|		
RCAs receive tip, validate tipster, and attempt dialogue to obtain more information about the concern.	Tip is sent to school staff and law enforcement if appropriate. These officials respond to, investigate, and resolve tip.	Disposition report completed detailing the outcome of the tip. Tip is closed.

SUSO RCAs track tips, evaluate the progress of tip interventions, and monitor for resolution. Every tip sent to school or law enforcement partners requires a disposition report detailing the outcome of the tip.

On average, tips are resolved in 48 hours.

The outcomes of reported tips are varied and individualized. A single tip can result in multiple outcomes, such as parent notification, school involvement (support plan/disciplinary action), legal consequences (citation/arrest), and referral to an outside agency (mental health, child protection service, welfare check). In some cases, tips are classified as "unfounded" with no resulting outcome. Some tips do not provide enough information for follow up, despite efforts by our RCAs to engage with the tipster.

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SUSO Data: Tip Summaries

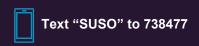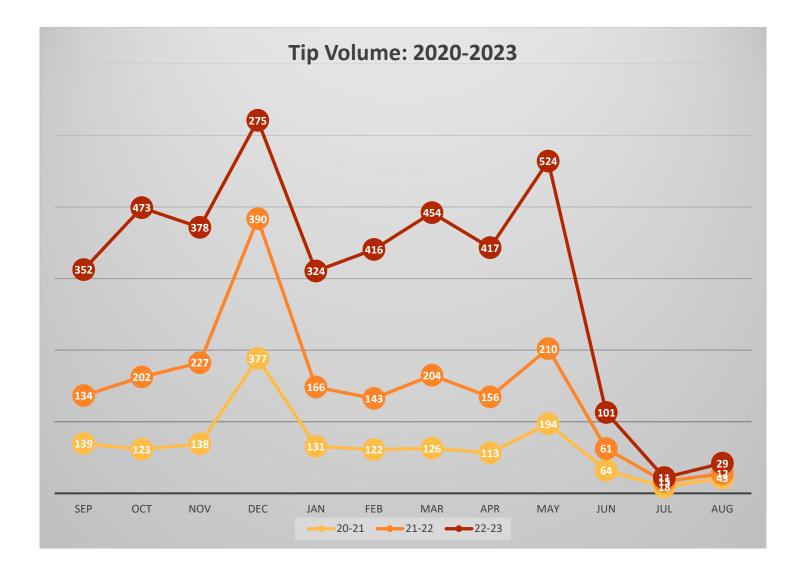**Event Types and Number of Tips**

Event Type	Number of Tips
Graffiti	1
Human Trafficking	1
Reckless Driving	1
Stealing	2
Truancy	2
Fire Starting	4
Assault	5
Domestic Violence	5
Tobacco	5
Gangs	6
Theft	6
Explosives	7
Dating Violence	8
Runaway	10
Sexual Misconduct	13
Harassment	14
Safety	22
Planned fights	24
Eating Disorder	27
OSS Threat Assessment Consultation	29
Knife	30
OSS General School Safety Guidance	32
Alcohol	36
Concerning Online/Social Media Activity	40
Child Abuse	49
Sexting	50
Sexual Assault	55
OSS Critical Incident Response	62
Fighting	66
Guns/Weapons	75
Concerns of a Planned School Attack	84
Depression/Anxiety	107
Self Harm	118
Cyber Bullying	129
Suicide Threats	155
Drugs	191
School complaint	206
Inappropriate Conduct	258
Duplicate	329
Vaping	366
Bullying	1124

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SUSO Data: Tip Growth

Tip Volume: 2020-2023

	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
20-21	139	123	138	377	131	122	126	113	194	64	18	43
21-22	134	202	227	390	166	143	204	156	210	61	11	12
22-23	352	473	378	275	324	416	454	417	524	101	11	29

From September 1st, 2022 to August 31st, 2023, SUSO received 3,754 tips—**a 95.5% increase** from the same date range the previous year (1,920 tips). **SUSO's tip volume has grown 136% in the three years since its launch.**

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Example Tips

Bullying: A Student reported that a classmate was bullying them, saying hateful things about their appearance to the point they wanted to harm themselves. SUSO staff gathered detailed information while building trust with the student, resulting in the student consenting to share their contact information to the school for follow up. The school resolved the bullying concern and the tipster received mental health support.

Cyber Concern: A tipster overheard a middle school peer talking about their plans to meet a stranger from the internet. SUSO assisted law enforcement with an intervention and the middle school student did not meet with the adult. The child received support from family and school staff. Additionally, Wisconsin DOJ provided the school with resources for online safety.

Guns/Weapons: Both a parent and a student reported a concern that a student had a gun on the school bus. SUSO immediately notified law enforcement and school officials. The gun was found and secured. The student was arrested and will receive community resources to address the possession of a firearm in a school.

Self-Harm: A tipster contacted SUSO and revealed feelings of depression, anxiety, and thoughts of harming themselves. The RCA engaged in psychological first aid, validated the tipster's feelings, and developed a rapport with the tipster. The school provided mental health support. The student has contacted SUSO several times since this encounter, reporting concerns about peers.

Concern of Planned School Attack: A social media post was sent by an out-of-state person threatening a Wisconsin middle school. The tipster reported this social media post to SUSO. Law enforcement, with the assistance of Wisconsin DOJ's Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center were able to identify the author of the threatening post, search the house for weapons, and an arrest was made. The school was able to stay open and maintain a normal school schedule.

Sexual Assault: A tipster contacted SUSO and disclosed that they were sexually assaulted by a known peer. SUSO validated the tipster and assisted this tipster with providing the details of the traumatic rape to the school and local law enforcement. SUSO ensured the tipster was supported by their parents, school team and law enforcement through school and community resources.

Drugs: The tipster reported that their friend had taken drugs, had an immediate reaction and became ill. The school, law enforcement and parents were notified by SUSO, a welfare check was completed, and the child received needed medical care, preventing tragedy.

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SUSO Data: Tip Timing and Partners

When Do Tips Come In?

RCAs staff the SUSO tip line and receive tips 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. RCAs respond to tips and deploy a local response by communicating directly with specified school staff on every tip, and with local law enforcement, and/or mental health professionals when appropriate.

Top Tip Days of the Week:

Tuesday (798)

Wednesday (747)

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Top Hours per Day:

12pm

2pm

Our Partners

Law Enforcement Agencies

Law Enforcement plays a vital role in school safety as active participants on multidisciplinary threat assessment teams, and as partners in the development of safety evaluations and safety plans for schools. SUSO policy dictates when a tip will be forwarded to law enforcement and each agency responds to those tips based on their own policy and procedures.

Schools

Schools all over Wisconsin have provided SUSO with contact information for the staff who should be notified about tips. We have built a comprehensive database of contacts statewide that allows us to communicate to school staff with immediacy and efficiency on any matter relating to school safety.

Between September 1st, 2022 and August 31st, 2023, **Speak Up, Speak Out received at least one tip from 449 Wisconsin schools** (compared to 326 schools the previous year)**.**

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Healthy Reporting Culture

Building a Healthy Reporting Culture

Thousands of students across Wisconsin contact SUSO each year, reporting concerns, resulting in safer school communities. Student bystanders often have knowledge that peers are struggling well before adults observe behaviors of concern. Schools can harness the power of bystanders and empower youth to report concerns by building a healthy school culture.

A healthy school climate promotes a sense of belonging and connectedness among students, prioritizes emotional skill building and coping during difficult times, and ensures that help is available to those in need. Tips to SUSO create intervention opportunities for struggling students. The promotion of SUSO as a safe place to report concerns is part of building a healthy reporting culture of **help seeking over secrecy.**

While we encourage students to report concerns to trusted adults such as parents, mentors, and school staff, research confirms that students are more likely to report warning signs of potentially threatening behavior if a confidential reporting system, like SUSO, is available to them.

OSS strives to remove common barriers to the reporting of concerns, educating youth on what, and how, to report. Through targeted all school lessons, and visible SUSO promotional materials in schools, students learn the warning signs for violence, and how to access intervention, breaking through the "code of silence". We encourage schools to provide regular, timely reminders that help is available to students by routinely promoting SUSO, encouraging norms of help-seeking among youth.

Students are more likely to report concerns when they trust they will be treated respectfully, that their concern will be taken seriously, and handled effectively. The significant increase in tips to SUSO since its inception and the rich dialog that many students have with SUSO staff indicate that SUSO has earned a reputation amongst youth as a safe, accessible, and credible place to report concerns.

Schools interested in launching SUSO can contact schoolsafety@doj.state.wi.us to access materials and best practice guidance in the process of introducing SUSO to the school community. SUSO is free to all schools in Wisconsin. To encourage the promotion and visibility of SUSO, schools can receive annual reimbursement of up to $1,000 per school building for SUSO promotional items from the SUSO store.

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Marketing & Promotional Materials

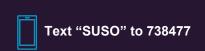| How Did You Hear About SUSO?	
My School	2,139
Classmate	112
Family Member	46
Flyer	12
Flyer/Poster	19
Friend	56
Instagram	7
Internet	57
Kiosk	6
Law enforcement	28
Movie Theater Advertisement	1
Newspaper	4
Public Bus Advert.	3
Public Service Announcement	9
Radio	4
Sign/Billboard	2
The Office of School Safety	83
TV	4
Twitter	2
Word of Mouth	25
Facebook	4
Parent	13
Unknown (tipster did not report)	1116

SUSO Promotional Items

The OSS maintains grant funding for schools to purchase items that build awareness of SUSO and promote a culture of help seeking.

Each school building in Wisconsin is eligible for an annual $1,000 to purchase SUSO promotional items from Ad Madison, found here: Home | SUSO Company Store (mybrightsites.com).

As of July 31st, 2023, Wisconsin schools have ordered **$907,029.10** worth of materials through the SUSO Promotional Grant.

More information can be found in this FAQ.

Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Process

The Office of School Safety offers training in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) to equip school and law enforcement staff with the knowledge, protocol and model practices needed to determine if someone poses a threat to their school and how to intervene effectively based on the level of concern posed. The School Threat Assessment and Management Protocol is an early intervention tool to assist BTAM trained staff in determining appropriate intervention steps when students exhibit concerning behaviors.

The BTAM process continuum includes *Triage, Inquiry, Assessment, and Case Management.* The **BTAM Process Flowchart** represents each phase of the BTAM process.

This **BTAM Guide** provides additional information about each step.

The primary purpose of the **BTAM Triage** process is to help the BTAM team determine the need for additional investigative steps, and to mitigate the grievance or problem behavior.

The **BTAM Inquiry** process guides trained BTAM team members through the investigative steps of gathering information, determining the level of concern for a specific individual, and determining next steps. The guiding questions embedded in the inquiry are supported by existing research and BTAM best practices.

Between September of 2022 and September of 2023, OSS staff provided trainings and presentationsto stakeholders in 60 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

Between September of 2022 and September of 2023, OSS staff reached 925 people around the state through trainings and presentations related to the topic of threat assessment and management.

Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Process

The BTAM process is dynamic and case specific. Some cases may proceed to the full Assessment process. Other cases may result in the development of a management plan for the student of concern following the Triage or Inquiry process. All cases must be monitored over time.

Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Protocol (WSTAMP) forms can be found **here**.

The OSS staff continue to update the content and expand the locations of trainings offered to ensure that Wisconsin schools have a comprehensive toolkit to help keep kids and school staff safe. For upcoming BTAM training courses, see our **Training Opportunities page** on the OSS website.

School Threat Assessment Team – Sample Report

Tip Type: Concerns of a Planned School Attack

A parent reported concerns that their child's friend had access to numerous weapons and had expressed thoughts about killing classmates and themselves. The tip was delivered to the school and law enforcement. After taking initial action to mitigate an imminent threat, the school's OSS trained BTAM team initiated the threat assessment process. The school team worked with outside agencies to connect the student and their family with medical treatment and counseling services. The school BTAM team requested consultation from the OSS staff for ideas and feedback related to the development of an intervention plan of support that included restrictions, additional supervision, direct instruction, and an alternate learning plan. Following the consultation, the school team felt more confident about the direction of the resulting plan and potential for a positive outcome of supporting the individual student and their family, while keeping the school community safe.

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Critical Incident Response and Emergency Preparedness

CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE

The mission of the Critical Incident Response project is to minimize the psychological impact of a school crisis, provide resources to help stabilize the school community, work to identify individuals that may require long-term mental health services after a critical incident occurs, and offer support to school administrators and educators.

> OSS has provided evidence-based crisis response and intervention training to **359** participants at regional CIR training academies in 2022 and 2023, ensuring access to best practices across the state.

> OSS provided **62** instances of CIR consultation and resources this year to schools impacted by traumatic events, helping them to recover and return to learning more quickly.

The 12 regionally based Critical Incident Response Teams are comprised of multidisciplinary volunteers trained in crisis response and intervention. They are designed to supplement the resources and support networks that are already in place in Wisconsin schools. Understanding and responding in trauma-sensitive ways has been shown to be highly effective in reducing violence and unsafe behaviors.

OSS is providing Social Support Toolkits to each of the 12 CIR team regions in Wisconsin. The Social Support Toolkit will enable schools that are impacted by traumatic incidents to provide structured, supervised opportunities for social support. The kits include instructions and supplies for activities centered around people gathering to support each other after a crisis. When provided in the immediate aftermath of a crisis event, these social support activities lessen the need for more intensive interventions, allow students and staff to access natural support, and promote recovery.

Any school community experiencing a critical incident can access support by emailing schoolsafety@doj.state.wi.us.

Standard Response Protocol (SRP) & Standard Reunification Method (SRM)

> OSS staff were trained by the I Love You Guys Foundation to instruct the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) and Standard Reunification Method (SRM) to Wisconsin schools. SRP is an all-hazards approach to emergencies within schools, with a shared language between students, school staff, first responders and parents or guardians. SRM provides guidance for schools and first responders to develop and practice student/parent reunification after a crisis or evacuation. **The OSS has trained 1,656 school staff and law enforcement on SRP and SRM from 9/1/2022-8/31/2023.**

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Grants to Schools

The OSS Grants Program

The OSS Grants Team successfully administered **four** grant opportunities throughout the 2022-2023 year: *Act 109 - Digital Mapping of School Buildings, Critical Incident Stabilization, Wisconsin School Threat Assessment Protocol Validation Study,* and the SUSO Promotional Grant.

Act 109: Digital Mapping of School Buildings - $2,903,292.23

Recipients of Digital Mapping funds worked on production of digital maps of school facilities and buildings. Maps created as part of this opportunity are distributed to local law enforcement and first responders to expedite response in the event of an incident on school grounds. To date, over 150 grantees have been awarded and initiated digital mapping projects.

Critical Incident Stabilization - $327,779.22

Funding awarded under this grant is used to support schools, students, and staff that experience an unusually traumatic school-related event. Events may vary but include acts of violence or criminal conduct that cause significant trauma to a school community. If a situation occurs, financial assistance is provided to support emergency response, mental health counseling, post-crisis consulting, and other support services.

Wisconsin School Threat Assessment Protocol Validation Study - $2,469,672

With (23) grant recipients, the OSS, selected participants, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison are working collaboratively to evaluate the state's Threat Assessment Protocol. Funds administered under this opportunity support efforts to prevent school violence through access to internal and external behavioral health resources.

SUSO Promotional Grant - $907,029.1

The OSS continues to support promotion and implementation of Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin (SUSO) in schools across the state. Promotional funding provides schools with access to marketing materials related to SUSO. Schools are annually eligible to receive up to $1,000 per building for promotional items to support use of the tipline.

Visit the OSS **website** for more information on grant opportunities.

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School Safety Document Submissions

Wisconsin Statute 118.07 (2017 Wisconsin Act 143) requires public and private schools to submit five school safety documents to the OSS on an annual basis. The OSS acts as a statewide repository for the required documents and has developed a SharePoint folder to provide one location to submit the required information.

Fast Facts:

In Wisconsin, there are 421 school districts and 976 private schools. In total, the **OSS is a repository for over 13,000** school submission documents per year.

5 Required Documents:

Blueprints/Maps
Safety Assessments
Safety Plans
Violence Drills
School Safety Training

School Safety Consultants (SSCs)

SSCs are Wisconsin's subject matter experts in reviewing required school submissions. They provide up-to-date material and references to schools regarding school safety.

Each SSC is assigned a region and tasked with contacting both public school districts and private schools to review, assist and guide them in the submissions process. The OSS/SSC outreach is unique in that it builds an individual OSS connection to a district/school. SSCs can help schools plan, prepare, and respond to school safety incidents of all types. The SSC also helps schools build a valuable connection with local law enforcement agencies.

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Kudos from Students and Stakeholders

"Thanks for your help and understanding that I would like to be anonymous." (2022)

"This is a true testament to the WI DOJ's Speak Up, Speak Out campaign. The students observed something and said something about it. These courageous students are the ones who helped safeguard the community today." (2023)

"Thanks for notifying them. Thanks for this amazing resource, too!" (2022)

"Thank you so much for your help. I appreciate your support. I now feel like I can let go that [Redacted] will get the support she needs." (2023)

"He seems to be doing better. Thank you for intervening when you did!" (2022)

"We used to use (a different reporting platform) and paid $17,000 as a district per year. You all are WAY better! THANK YOU!" (2023)

"The email for continued funding was the best start to my day! We just made an announcement at a meeting we're in with the school district. Thanks for all your work on keeping it going! Also, love the text tip option." (2023)

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