

SPEAK UP **OUT**

WISCONSIN

LIFE CHANGING. LIFE SAVING. CONFIDENTIAL.



2023-2024

Annual Report

THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE OF SCHOOL SAFETY



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Our Purpose

The Office of School Safety (OSS) is focused on optimizing school safety and preventing violence in all Wisconsin schools. OSS provides programs, guidance, training and consultation on school safety best practices so that all children can learn in safe environments. Our nationally respected practices include our reporting tipline, SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT Wisconsin (SUSO); Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management protocols, training, consultation and support; Crisis Response and Recovery support for any school impacted by a crisis event; and school safety best practice guidance to schools as they meaningfully comply with their Wis. Stat. § 118.07 required school safety submissions. These OSS initiatives prioritize prevention, protection, early intervention, harm mitigation, and recovery strategies.

Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin (SUSO) is a free statewide threat reporting tipline available to all Wisconsin schools that launched in September 2020. 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.

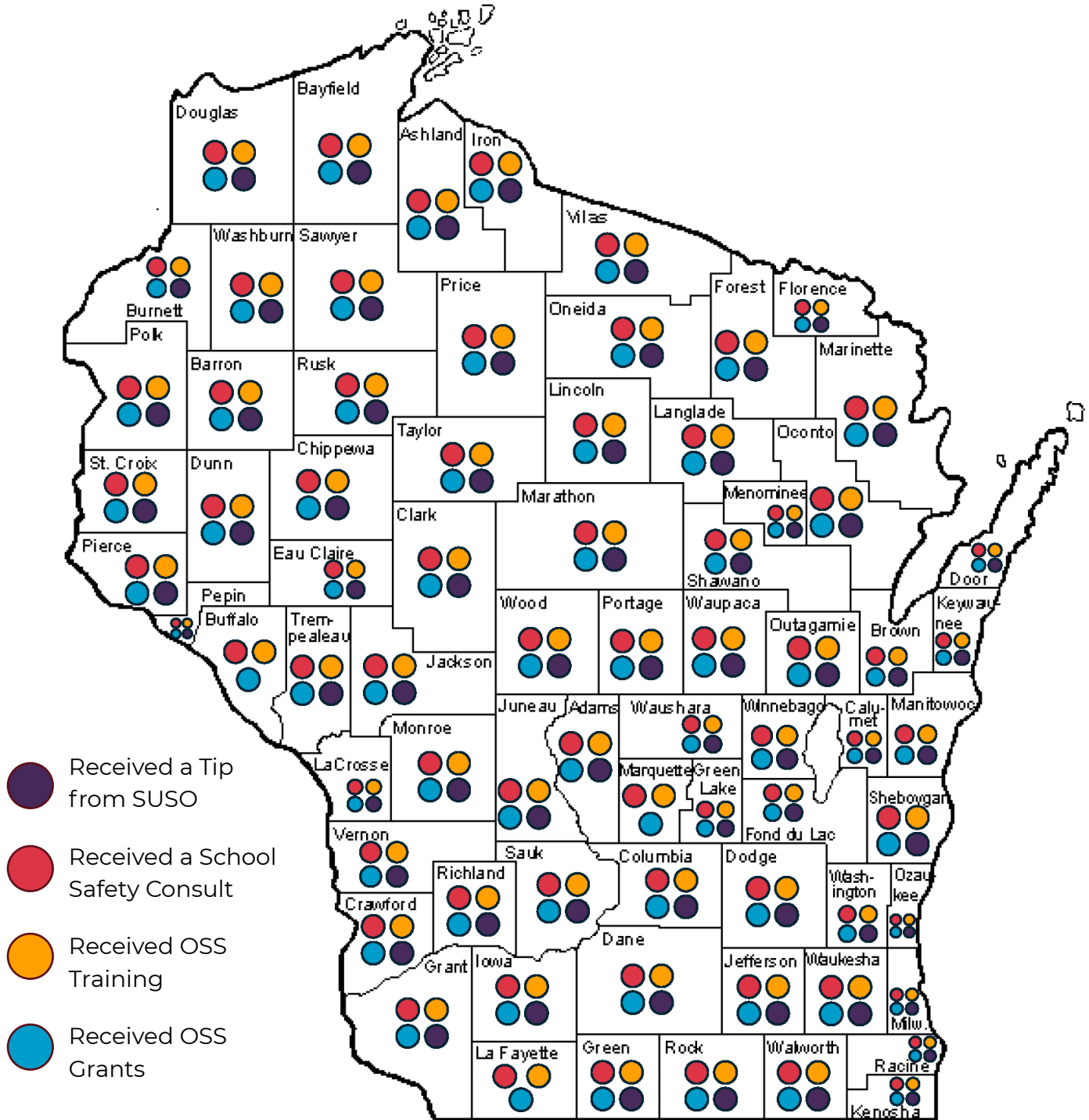
When schools are impacted by traumatic events, OSS responds with consultation and support to guide interventions, reduce the trauma impact of the event, and promote recovery. Support and guidance are offered to school districts at any point during the initial crisis and throughout the recovery process. Through **OSS's Critical Response and Recovery project, 12 regional CRR 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.

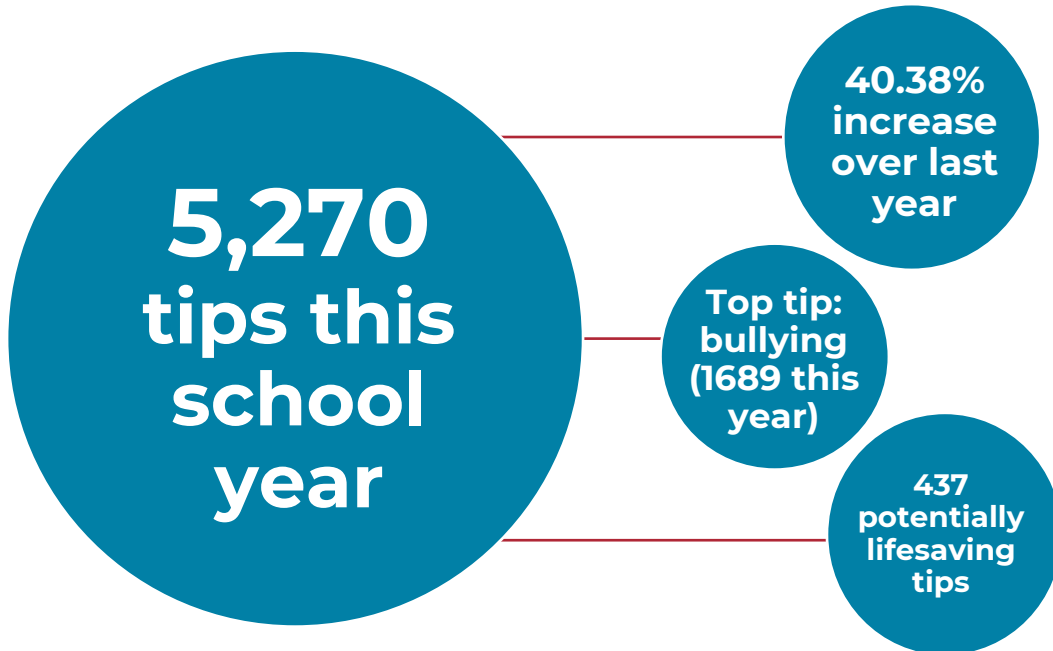


SUSO Reach

OSS and SUSO have impacted **every one of Wisconsin's 72 counties**, 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.



SUSO Fast Facts



Since the inception of SUSO in 2020, bullying has consistently been the number one tip. It is also common nationally for bullying to be the most reported tip. Awareness of these incidents helps schools intervene early, before grievances and upsets can lead children down a pathway to violence.

According to a 2020 report, *Tip Lines for School Safety: A National Portrait of Tip Line Use*,¹ two thirds of school administrators believed their tip lines allowed their schools to respond more effectively to bullying. Additionally, 77% believed that their schools' tip lines made them more aware of potential safety issues at their schools. Over half of survey respondents said that their schools' tip lines had prevented violent incidents and had allowed the school to respond more effectively to drug use. Around three-quarters reported that their tip lines had prevented incidents of self-harm or suicide among their schools' students.

¹ Planty, M., Banks, D., Lindquist, C., Cartwright, J., & Witwer, A. (2020). *Tip Lines for School Safety: A National Portrait of Tip Line Use*. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International.

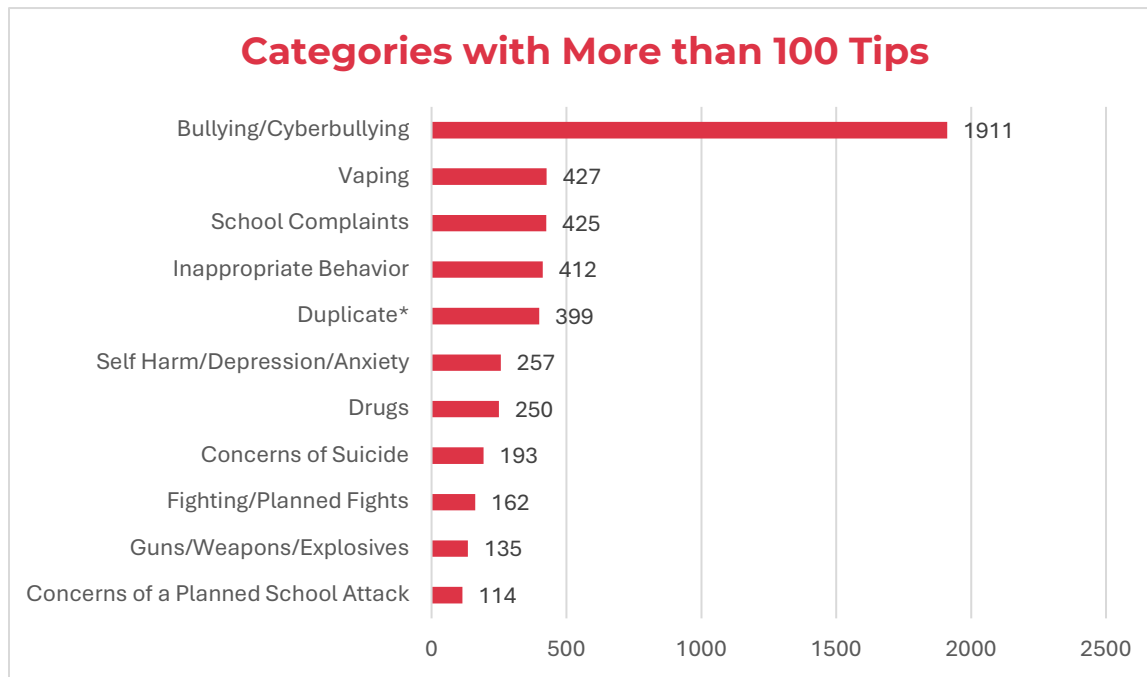


Benefits of SUSO

A statewide centralized reporting system benefits everyone.



This Year's Top SUSO Tips and Tip Outcomes



*Duplicate tips are reported by many tipsters for the same incident. Duplicate tips about the same incident indicate a healthy reporting culture within a community.

What happens when a tip is submitted to SUSO?



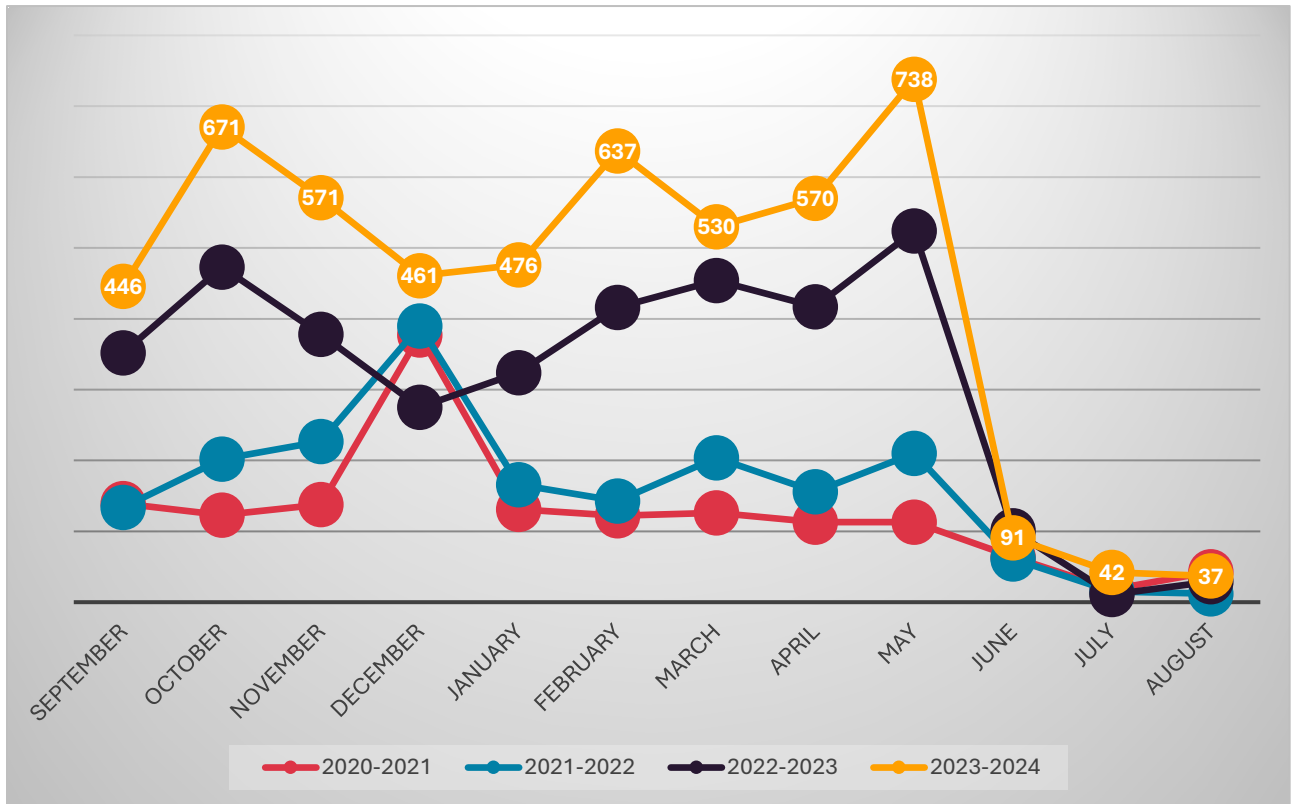
Top Outcomes

- School will monitor (2450)
- Discussion with students (2406)
- Parents notified (1400)

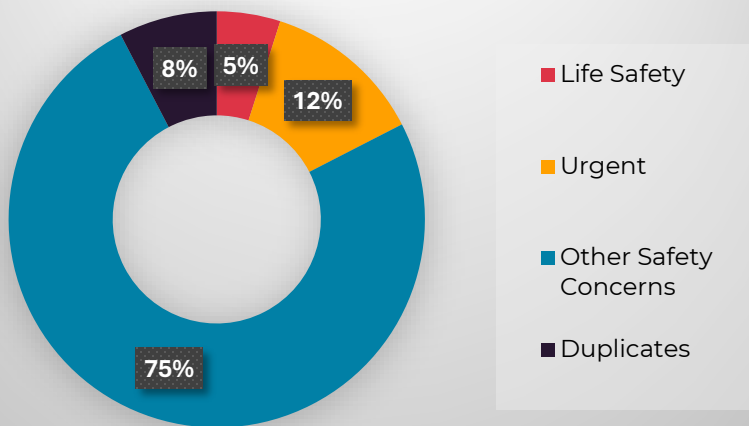
On average, tips are resolved in 40 hours. Both schools and law enforcement are asked to complete an outcome report after a tip has been investigated. More than one outcome may be appropriate for each tip.



Growth of SUSO Tips 2020-2024



SUSO Tip Urgency Levels This Year



Life Safety: tips flagged as potentially lifesaving (planned school attack, guns/weapons, concerns of suicide)

Urgent: tips that concern violence, criminal activity, or self-harm that has recently occurred or is highly likely to occur

Other Safety Concerns: rule violations, peer-to-peer interactions, individual well-being

Duplicate: tips reported by many tipsters for the same incident, indicating a healthy reporting culture within a community.



Example Tips

Cyberbullying: A tipster reported a private story on Snapchat of a peer suggesting to others to kill themselves. SUSO performed digital threat assessment and provided the name of the student suggesting suicide to the school. School staff addressed the posts made by the student. The student received family and community interventions.

Concerns of a Planned School Attack: A tipster reported their friend just received two detentions, could not participate in the football game, and was planning to shoot everyone at the football game. SUSO immediately notified the school and law enforcement. The student was taken into custody prior to the football game and provided community resources to address the threats of violence to the school.

Drugs: A tipster reported students were using drugs in the bathroom. SUSO staff built rapport with the tipster who provided the names of the students using drugs, and the specific location of the bathroom. SUSO immediately notified the school and law enforcement, who took immediate action. The students received family and community resources to address their substance abuse.

Bullying: A student reported to SUSO that a classmate was bullying them, pushing them into lockers and saying hateful things about their appearance. The student reported feeling sadness, anger and helplessness. SUSO staff provided immediate emotional support for the student, worked with the SRO and school mental health staff to facilitate the student meeting with their school counselor. The bullying concern was resolved and both students received mental health support.

Guns/Weapons: A tipster contacted SUSO to report they saw a person walking with a gun outside the school. SUSO immediately notified the school and law enforcement. The person with the gun was arrested. The school was able to stay open and maintain a normal school schedule.

Concerns of Suicide: A tipster reported to SUSO that their friend posted specific plans to die by suicide on TikTok. SUSO delivered the tip to the school and law enforcement immediately. The school provided the address of the child and law enforcement assisted the child and family with community mental health resources without delay.



Building a Healthy Reporting Culture

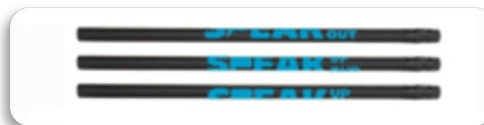
Thousands of students across Wisconsin contact SUSO each year, reporting concerns, resulting in safer school communities. Student bystanders often have knowledge that peers are struggling well before adults observe behaviors of concern. Schools can harness the power of bystanders and empower youth to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

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 dialogue 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.



SUSO Student Instructional Materials



OSS maintains grant funding for schools to purchase materials to build awareness of SUSO and create a culture of help seeking. **Each school building in Wisconsin is eligible for an annual \$1,000 in SUSO Student Instructional Materials from Ad Madison, found here:** <https://susocompanystore.mybrightsites.com>

More information can be found in this [FAQ](#).



Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management

School-based threat assessment teams provide valuable interventions to prevent violence. **Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) is a fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations (NASP, 2021).** *Threat assessment* is the process of evaluating behavior, and the circumstances surrounding the behavior, to uncover any facts or evidence that someone poses a threat to themselves or others. The process of assessing risks to a particular target, individual, or group of individuals, and designing and implementing intervention and management strategies to reduce the risk or threat is *threat management*. Dr. Dewey Cornell (School Administrator Magazine, School Safety and Cybersecurity, March 1, 2023) referred to BTAM in schools as a problem-solving approach to violence prevention that involves assessment of students who have demonstrated a concern for violence and focuses on helping the student solve the problem with interventions and supports.

Multi-disciplinary Teams and Training

OSS provides full day, no cost BTAM trainings to multidisciplinary teams of school administrators, school mental health professionals, security personnel, and law enforcement. The training empowers teams to determine if someone poses a threat to the school community and intervene effectively to prevent violence and provide interventions for struggling youth.

Between September 1, 2023, and Aug. 31, 2024, **OSS offered 17 BTAM trainings and presentations for 1,276 stakeholders.** (This includes 13 full-day BTAM trainings with nearly double the number of attendees as the previous year). OSS staff continue to expand the locations of trainings offered to ensure that all Wisconsin schools have access to a comprehensive toolkit to keep schools safe.

In this school year, OSS trained 1,276 school staff, law enforcement officers, first responders, and other school safety partners in BTAM. Attendees came from 214 public school districts, private schools, and tribal schools, 67 law enforcement agencies, and 27 other agencies such as fire, other emergency response, and higher education.



BTAM (continued)

Established Assessment Procedures

Effective BTAM teams proactively establish processes and procedures to guide their assessment and implement the process consistently. Team members gather data from multiple sources and analyze the information to gain an accurate understanding of the situation, context, student's thinking, behavior, and any developmental and disability factors. Ultimately, this assessment helps the team determine the level of concern the student poses and identify interventions to mitigate risk and support the student. Standardization of this process increases the consistent implementation and fidelity of the process, while also decreasing the potential harmful effects of bias.

OSS has authored forms to guide teams through this process, based on the scientific body of knowledge in the field of BTAM. **The Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Protocol (WSTAMP)** 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 [Wisconsin School Threat Assessment and Management Protocol \(WSTAMP\) Process Flowchart](#) specifies each step in the process. The BTAM process is case specific. Some cases may proceed to the full Assessment process, and others may result in the development of a management plan for a student of concern at the Triage or Inquiry phase. All cases must be monitored over time. New information or failure to comply with the case specific management plan may result in plan adjustments or the initiation of a new Triage, Inquiry, Assessment, or Case Management process.

“The Office of School Safety provides us with the latest research-based professional development and threat assessment training to help our staff learn and grow”.

-Director of Safety and Operations, 2024

“The office of school safety has been instrumental in providing BTAM training and consultation for our team members. They have accommodated our request to hold a training close to our district so that we could accommodate our area. Anytime we have had a question the OSS has always provided us with guidance in a timely and professional manner to ensure we felt supported”.

-Safety and Security Coordinator, 2024



BTAM (continued)

BTAM Case Consultation/Support

This OSS team of experts* in Threat Assessment provide case consultation for school district staff when requested. They also offer support through SUSO when the tip contains reports of concerning pathway to violence behavior, especially as related to Concerns of a Planned School Attack, or Guns/Weapons tips. In some cases, the need for additional input may lead to scaling up to include external partners (i.e., DOJ, Wisconsin Statewide Intelligence Center, FBI). Consultation with the OSS team results in rich discussion, collaborative problem solving, resource sharing, and leads to ongoing relationships with school teams.

** OSS employs several team members, including the Director, Deputy Director, and Threat Assessment Coordinator, who have completed the Master Trainer certification from the National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) program of the Department of Homeland Security. In addition, Director Trish Kilpin has completed the rigorous task of becoming a Certified Threat Manager (CTM) through the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals.*



"The Office of School Safety has been an incredible resource for our team as we have supported students through the Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management process. In addition to providing training, they have been extremely responsive to our questions and quick to respond with support and guidance."

-Director of Student Services, 2024



Crisis Response and Preparedness



Recovery from a crisis has many phases including the initial impact of the crisis, initial recovery within the first few days/weeks after a crisis and ongoing recovery, which takes time. Recovery is unique to the impact event and those experiencing the crisis. OSS supports leaders in impacted schools identify and implement interventions for the school community through all phases of recovery. OSS works with the school crisis team to identify the unique needs of the specific school community and implement evidence-informed best practice interventions that lead to the best recovery outcomes. OSS response and recovery efforts have grown significantly over the past year and have had an incredible impact on school communities throughout Wisconsin.

OSS has provided a variety of evidence-based recovery interventions and supports to impacted school communities.

Guidance and support after officer involved shooting

Guidance on reaffirming safety after a school threat, lockdown, evacuation or reunification

Assistance in carefully designing interventions after a suicide to decrease contagion

Support to schools and districts impacted by a student or staff death



Crisis Response and Preparedness (continued)

OSS-Provided Interventions and Supports

- Direct consultation with school leaders/crisis teams to plan recovery steps
- Initial and ongoing crisis team coaching
- Staff training and empowerment through caregiver training in Psychological First Aid and Vicarious Trauma
- Resources and information for parents and caregivers to support their children after trauma exposure
- Ongoing support and therapeutic interventions to administrative teams leading recovery efforts
- Aid in planning and implementing social support activities that promote recovery through the power of community cohesion
- Provision of social support toolkit materials to implement effective social support experiences
- Deployment of regional trained and vetted multidisciplinary team members
- Guidance for effective small group and individualized interventions that facilitate adaptive coping and do no harm
- Restorative discussion scripts and activities to build or reaffirm psychological safety and engage youth voice

From September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024, OSS has trained more than 500 school staff on PREPaRE 2, Psychological First Aid, Compassion Fatigue, and other Crisis Response and Recovery topics.

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

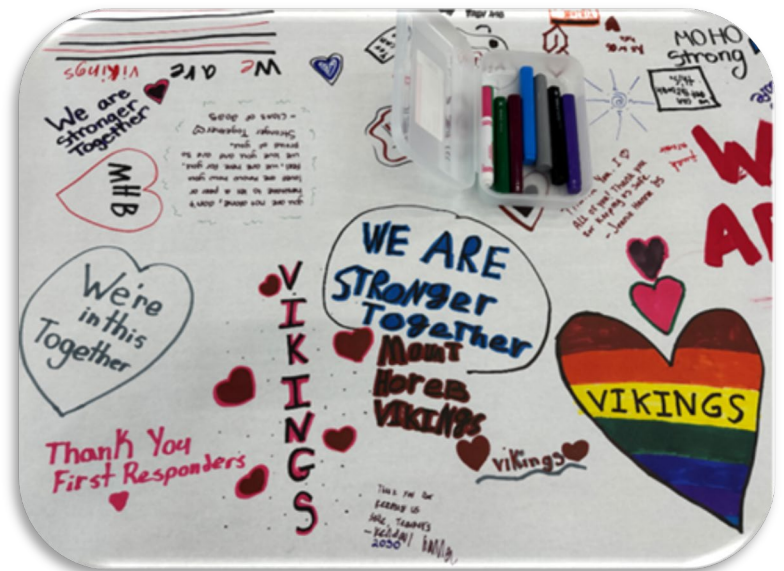


When a School District in Wisconsin experienced an unthinkable event, they called the Office of School Safety for support. The Office of School Safety assisted in building upon the existing strength of this community and supports their ongoing efforts in recovery.



"The Office of School Safety support has been nothing short of extraordinary in their response to our District's tragedy. Their dedication and expertise have been a beacon of hope and reassurance during this challenging time, helping us navigate recovery with resilience and strength. From the day of our event to four months after the event, they've been a tremendous resource."

- Dr. Steve Salerno, Superintendent of Mount Horeb Area School District



Crisis Response and Preparedness (continued)

Emergency Preparedness

OSS builds confidence and knowledge in crisis preparedness and assists school districts with planning in advance of a crisis.

OSS has provided training across Wisconsin in school crisis response and recovery including:

- Mitigating Trauma in School Safety Drills
- Standard Response Protocol (SRP): an all-hazards approach to emergencies within schools
- Standard Reunification Method (SRM): guidance for schools and first responders to develop and practice student/parent reunification after a crisis or evacuation
- PREPaRE 1 Crisis Prevention and Preparedness: Comprehensive School Safety Planning
- PREPaRE 2 Mental Health Crisis Interventions: Responding to Acute Traumatic Stressors in Schools

From September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024, OSS provided SRP and SRM training to 838 people from 98 public school districts, private schools and tribal schools, 55 law enforcement agencies, and 28 other agencies such as Emergency Management, EMS, Fire, City Admin, bus companies and other community agencies. OSS staff delivered SRP and SRM training to attendees from 34 Wisconsin counties.

“I was able to attend a session in Lodi this summer and found it extremely valuable, so I’ve been singing its praises at our area principal meetings.”

- School Principal, 2024

“I wanted to say thank you for the SRP and SRM training my school attended at Travers School Lake Geneva.... It was very informative, and the speakers were fantastic to work with.”

-School Staff, 2024



Grants for Schools

The OSS Grants Team administers several grant opportunities for Wisconsin schools: Act 109 - Digital Mapping of School Buildings, Critical Incident Stabilization, and SUSO Instructional Materials. **Visit the OSS [website](#) for more information on grant opportunities.**

Digital Mapping of School Buildings

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, **290 grantees** have been awarded more than **\$4.7 MM** in support of mapping initiatives.

Critical Incident Stabilization

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.

SUSO Student Instructional Materials

OSS continues to support implementation and improving awareness of Speak Up, Speak Out Wisconsin (SUSO) in schools across the state. Funding provides schools with access to instructional materials related to SUSO. Schools are annually eligible to receive up to \$1,000 per building for instructional materials to support the introduction and use of the tipline.

“This was amazing! Thank you for walking us through every section! I have never attended a more helpful webinar.”

-Grants Webinar Attendee, 2024

“This was an excellent presentation and very helpful. I appreciate this format and thank you!”

-Grants Webinar Attendee, 2024



School Submissions

Wisconsin Statute § 118.07 (2017 Wisconsin Act 143) requires public and private schools to submit five school safety documents to OSS on an annual basis. OSS acts as a statewide repository for the required documents (over 13,000 documents per year) and has developed a simplified process to submit the required information.

5 Required Documents:

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

School Safety Consultants provide technical assistance to **468 public school districts and 808 private schools** to complete annual submissions of safety documents. To date, OSS SSCs have reviewed all documents submitted through 2023, and have offered best practice guidance, recommendations, and resources to schools to improve their emergency operations planning. In the current year, the SSCs have begun offering virtual trainings to schools throughout Wisconsin to better assist schools with school safety submissions and general school safety guidance. Nearly 100 school staff have attended these seminars.

From September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024, the Office of School Safety reviewed school safety documents for **735 Wisconsin schools and districts**. OSS staff reviewed a total of **11,200 school safety documents**.

“You were an incredible resource to me as I planned the updates for the school district’s submissions.”

-School Staff, 2024

“Thank you for your work with our school and all the schools you work with on your security consultations.”

-School Staff, 2024



Kudos from Students and Stakeholders

"Thank you for listening and believing me."
(Tipster, 2024)

"Thank you for your active engagement in this situation as well! We appreciate it."
(School Staff, 2024)

"Students definitely have a positive mindset regarding SUSO, and we feel the benefits within our school community. To accompany the physical materials, we promote SUSO throughout the year using announcements, emails, and other communication with students and families. Thank you for SUSO.

(School Staff, 2024)

"I would like to thank you for helping me on reporting this and being understanding. This interaction was very positive for me."
(Tipster, 2024)

"The Office of School Safety has become a critical resource for students, teachers, school administrators, and education communities throughout Wisconsin. The office helps with trainings, taking tips, and providing guidance for districts to prevent threats in schools. I have heard from many of my district administrators and superintendents on how valuable this resource has been to them over the years."
(School Staff, 2024)

"Thanks for your patience [Redacted], your group has been so wonderful to work with!"

(School Staff, 2024)

"It's a great program. I'm glad it's here."
(Tipster, 2024)



Help Keep Your Community Safe

“Targeted school violence is preventable when communities facilitate bystander reporting and promote climates of safety and trust.”

-US Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)

The [Foundations of Targeted Violence Prevention eLearning](#) is a one-hour online training developed by the Department of Homeland Security, National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Program Office in partnership with the Wisconsin Office of School Safety and the Department of Public Instruction. The training empowers staff, parents, and community members to understand what behaviors may be displayed by a person who is on a pathway to violence.

Scan the QR code or follow the [Course Link](#) to view the course.



Gratitude for our Wisconsin School Safety Partners

Thank you to our school safety partners working to keep school communities safe. **We are especially grateful to our Law Enforcement and School partners who work closely with SUSO staff to respond to tips.**

Contact Us

Add SUSO to your phone contacts by scanning this QR code.

Resource

Center

