

# April 2023 Newsletter



The Center is funded through an agreement with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and Western Connecticut State University.



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The Connecticut Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation formed in 2021 from an agreement between the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and Western Connecticut State University. The Center provides professional development related to all aspects of

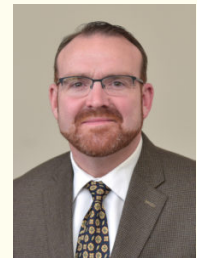
school safety planning, and it conducts research on prevention, crisis, safety, and trauma related to students and schools. The Center also establishes relationships among area school districts and community stakeholders to create both formal and informal networks. Moreover, the Center provides consultation and on-site support to school districts. This newsletter provides a venue for the Center to become a clearinghouse for school safety related trainings, meetings, research, and resources.

## The Director's Corner



Dear School Safety Partners,

First, I'd like to congratulate our colleague, **Bill Turley**, from DEMHS for his recent promotion to Manager for Training and Exercise. Our team wishes him the best in his new role, and we are grateful for all of his guidance and collaboration. Thankfully, he will continue to be involved in the school safety work.



Here are the items that I would like to highlight for this month:

- We have another graduate assistant joining our team. Please see the section on welcoming **Meghan Geraghty**.
- Please save the dates from **August 7th through August 11th** for our **Second Annual School Safety Summer Conference!** If you have training needs that we can address in the summer conference, please let me know *ASAP*. Please contact me at [Bernhardta@wcsu.edu](mailto:Bernhardta@wcsu.edu).
- The Parent Reunification 2-day workshop conducted by the **"I Love U Guys" Foundation** was a **huge success!** If you would like to schedule a "bite-sized" version of the exercise, please reach out to the **Regional School Safety Coordinator** for your region.

We will continue to work together to make schools safer and we are grateful for all of you who provide a safe learning environment for our children.

Your partner in school safety,  
**Amery**

**Amery Bernhardt, D.M.**

Director

CT Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation



## Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security



Dear School Safety Partners,

Thank you for signing up to get this important newsletter. As always, please feel free to contact me with any school plan questions.

### **From the DEMHS State School Safety Program Desk:**

**On Friday, March 24, 2023, I accepted a promotion to Manager of the DEMHS Training and Exercise Unit and State Training Officer.** My regional responsibilities for Emergency Management and Homeland Security are now covered on a rotational basis by the remaining four Coordinators. I requested to remain the State School Safety Program Lead and that request was honored so I'm still overseeing School Safety.

Training for our schools is extremely high on my list of projects and goals. Some examples:

- The DEMHS Training Unit will be working on tabletop exercises for schools. The All Hazards plans are ten years old now and schools should have been conducting table top exercises the past 5 years at least. We will help tailor the exercise to your school and facilitate the exercise so your emergency manager and other first responders can participate.
- The All-Hazards plan class was 1.5 days. I am revising the class and shortening it to one day. I realize there has been a great deal of turnover in the schools and this course is needed to prepare new staff for plan development and revision.
- We will be rolling out the 1-day School Assessment course soon. This will provide instruction on conducting your school safety and security assessments which are required every two years.
- I will continue to work closely with the Connecticut Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation in providing you with the best training and school safety information available.

Thank you for all your support and dedication to the safety of our children. I look forward to continuing the work we've started, and relationships developed. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or ideas.

Your partner in school safety,  
**Bill Turley**



Manager Training and Exercise  
School Safety Program Lead  
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## Parent Reunification Training

Sponsored by the Center for School Safety  
3/20 - 3/21

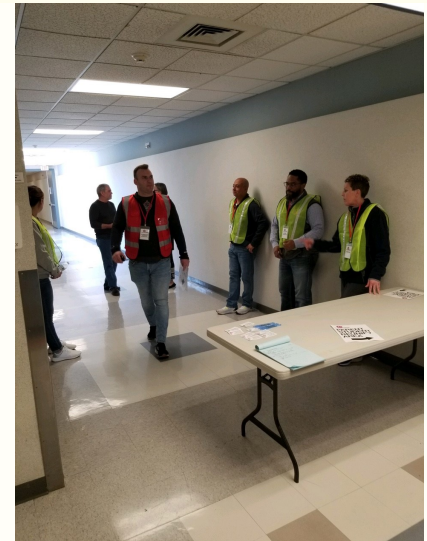
Reunifying students with parents or guardians is a critical component of emergency response, but one that is often overlooked. The Standard Reunification Method (SRM) provides school and district safety teams with proven methods to plan, practice, and achieve a successful reunification amid what can be chaotic and stressful circumstances.



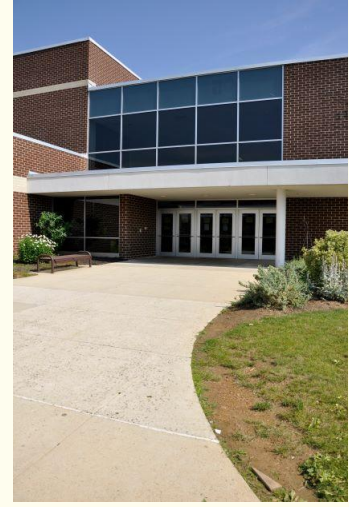
Simulation of escorting parents into the Reunification area.



Center Team and Trainers at the Parent Reunification Workshop in Milford, CT held on March 20-21, 2023



Re-enactment of a Reunification Procedure where parents are provided with directions to pick up their children.



Center Staff providing information to a parent during a simulated exercise.

## PREPaRE Workshop Training

PREPaRE training is ideal for schools committed to improving and strengthening their school safety and crisis management plans and emergency response



### **NASP PREPaRE Workshop Training held at Fairfield University on March 10, 2023**

(L-R) Paula Gill Lopez, Ph.D., Faculty Affiliate-Center for School Safety and Associate Professor & Program Director-Fairfield University, Executive Board-CT Association of CASP, Sadie Witherspoon, M.S., Regional School Safety Coordinator-Center for School Safety, Tanya Iacono, DSW, LCSW, Regional School Safety Coordinator-Center for School Safety, Kiley Young, LCSW, Regional School Safety Coordinator-Center for School Safety, Kimberly Myers, Ed.D., Regional School Safety Coordinator-Center for School Safety

**PreventionResourceFinder.gov Launches to**

# Provide Easier Access to Resources to Prevent Targeted Violence and Terrorism

## U.S. Department of Homeland Security Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships

### PreventionResourceFinder.gov Launches to Provide Easier Access to Resources to Prevent Targeted Violence and Terrorism

WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its federal partners launched [PreventionResourceFinder.gov](https://www.preventionresourcefinder.gov), a new website that will help prevent targeted violence and terrorism by giving the public easier access to available grants, research, training opportunities, and other resources across 17 federal agencies. PreventionResourceFinder.gov builds upon the Biden-Harris Administration’s National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism, released in June 2021, and last year’s United We Stand Summit. Nearly 100 federal resources are featured on PreventionResourceFinder.gov at initial launch. The site will be continuously updated with new and refined content to support communities nationwide. “Targeted violence and terrorism are grave threats to our homeland security and it will take all of us, working together, to keep our communities safe,” said **Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas**. “The website we are launching today equips our partners throughout the country with helpful resources to better prevent, prepare for, and respond to acts of violence. From first responders to non-profit organizations, a whole-of-society approach is needed to keep our communities safe and secure. We will continue to provide additional resources, including grant funds and critical information and intelligence, to strengthen community efforts to prevent terrorism and targeted violence.” PreventionResourceFinder.gov is organized into five searchable categories:

- Community Support Resources
- Information-Sharing Platforms
- Grant Funding Opportunities
- Evidence-Based Research
- Training Opportunities

Each category is further organized by the audience it is intended to reach including community partners, faith-based organizations, educators, behavioral health providers, and others. DHS recently released Notices of Funding Opportunity for the Fiscal Year 2023 [Preparedness Grants](#), including the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, and for the [Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant Program](#). These grant programs are focused on strengthening our national preparedness by focusing on terrorism prevention activities and on providing support to local projects that seek to prevent targeted violence and terrorism. The site offers a wide array of resources including educational materials, trainings, and information on grant funding. Visitors will be able to access multimedia content such as testimonials and videos. Visitors can filter content by federal agency, intended audience, keyword, department, or office. Some of the federal partners who contributed to the development of PreventionResourceFinder.gov include:

- Department of Education (ED)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
  - Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
  - Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC)
  - United States Secret Service (USSS)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Department of Labor (DOL)
- Department of State (DOS)



-Department of the Treasury (USDT)  
-Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
-National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)  
-U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)  
For more information, please visit [www.PreventionResourceFinder.gov](http://www.PreventionResourceFinder.gov) or email [preventionresourcefinder@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:preventionresourcefinder@hq.dhs.gov).

## New School Safety-Related Funding Grants

School safety-related funding opportunities have been added to the [Grants Finder Tool](#) on [SchoolSafety.gov](http://SchoolSafety.gov).

### **Mental Health Awareness Training Grants (Deadline: May 1)**

The purpose of this program is to: (1) train individuals (e.g., school personnel and emergency services personnel including fire department and law enforcement personnel, veterans, armed services members and their families, etc.) to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental disorders and how to safely de-escalate crisis situations involving individuals with a mental illness and (2) provide education on resources available in the community for individuals with a mental illness and other relevant resources, including how to establish linkages with school and/or community-based mental health agencies.

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be holding an informational [webinar](#) on **April 6 from 3:00 to 4:00 PM EDT**. Registration is not required.

### **Enhancing School Capacity to Address Youth Violence (Deadline: May 3)**

This solicitation seeks to support targeted efforts to address youth violence through implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention efforts in a school-based setting (K–12th grade only). The goals of the program are to (1) reduce the incidence of school violence through improved school safety and climate and (2) prevent youth violence, delinquency, and victimization in the targeted community.

- The U.S. Department of Justice will be holding a [webinar](#) on **April 6 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET** to provide a general overview of this grant program, the application process, and a Q&A opportunity for participants.

To access additional information on this grant as well as find a full list of funding opportunities with upcoming application deadlines, please [click here](#). You can also navigate the **Grants Finder Tool's various features** to search for additional grants related to school safety.

### **School & Community Safety Grants Available**

The COPS Office is pleased to announce that the following grant funding opportunities are now open and accepting applications:

- **School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP)** - The 2023 COPS Office School Violence Prevention Program is a competitive program that provides funding directly to States, units of local government, Indian tribes, and their public agencies to be used to improve security at schools and on school grounds in the jurisdiction of the grantee through evidence-based school safety programs. Up to \$73 million is available for this program.
- **Applications are due by May 17, 2023 at 4:59 PM ET**. Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2023 School Violence Prevention Program.

### **Community Policing Development (CPD) – Accreditation**

CPD is a competitive grant program designed to advance the practice of community policing by

providing guidance on promising practices through the development and testing of innovative strategies; building knowledge about effective practices and outcomes; and supporting new, creative approaches to preventing crime and promoting safe communities. The CPD – Accreditation program will encompass four separate solicitations for the following purposes:

- Support for law enforcement agencies seeking accreditation
- Support and enhancement of existing law enforcement accreditation bodies to facilitate the ability of agencies to become accredited
- Establishment of accreditation entities in states that do not have an accreditation body **(opens March 17, 2023)**
- Development of a national marketing program and provision of technical assistance to law enforcement agencies receiving COPS Office accreditation grant funding
- Approximately \$8.5 million is available for this program.
- **Applications are due by May 15, 2023 at 4:59 PM ET.** Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2023 CPD – Accreditation program.

## More Grants

### **COPS Hiring Program (CHP)**

The 2023 COPS Hiring Program is a competitive grant program designed to provide funds directly to law enforcement agencies to hire new or rehire existing career law enforcement officers to increase their community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. All local, state, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies that have primary law enforcement authority are eligible to apply. Up to \$224.5 million is available for this program.

- **Applications are due by May 11, 2023 at 4:59 PM ET.** Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2023 COPS Hiring Program.

### **Community Policing Development (CPD) – Implementing Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT)**

CPD is a competitive grant program designed to advance the practice of community policing by providing guidance on promising practices through the development and testing of innovative strategies; building knowledge about effective practices and outcomes; and supporting new, creative approaches to preventing crime and promoting safe communities. The CPD – Implementing Crisis Intervention Teams solicitation will provide grants directly to state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies for the creation or expansion of crisis intervention teams and to embed mental and behavioral health services with law enforcement agencies so they can better respond to individuals in crisis in the community. Approximately \$11.5 million is available for this program.

- **Applications are due by May 8, 2023 at 4:59 PM ET.** Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2023 CPD – Implementing Crisis Intervention Teams program.

### **Community Policing Development (CPD) – Microgrants**

CPD is a competitive grant program designed to advance the practice of community policing by providing guidance on promising practices through the development and testing of innovative strategies; building knowledge about effective practices and outcomes; and supporting new, creative approaches to preventing crime and promoting safe communities. Under the CPD – Microgrants solicitation, local, state, tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies may propose demonstration or pilot projects that offer creative ideas to advance crime fighting, community engagement, problem solving, or organizational changes to support community policing in one of the following areas: officer recruitment, retention, and workforce diversification; underserved populations; building trust and legitimacy with the community; hate crimes and domestic terrorism; and community violence intervention. Approximately \$5 million is available for this



program.

- **Applications are due by May 8, 2023 at 4:59 PM ET.** Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2023 CPD – Microgrants program.

For assistance with grant related training, school safety assessments, or purchasing please contact the School Safety Advocacy Council at [admin@schoolsafety911.org](mailto:admin@schoolsafety911.org)

### **Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Program (Deadline: May 8)**

This program provides funding to support and assist county, local, territorial, and tribal jurisdictions in improving efforts to reduce violent crime in and around schools. It is designed to improve K-12 school security by providing students and teachers with the tools they need to recognize, respond to, and help prevent acts of violence and ensure a positive school climate.

### **School Violence Prevention Program (Deadline: May 10)**

This grant program provides awards to improve security at schools and on school grounds through the implementation of evidence-based school safety programs and technology.

To access additional information on these grants as well as find a full list of funding opportunities with upcoming application deadlines, please click [here](#). You can also navigate the Grants Finder Tool's various features to search for additional grants related to school safety. Thank you for your continued engagement with [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov). If you have any questions, please contact our team at [SchoolSafety@hq.dhs.gov](mailto:SchoolSafety@hq.dhs.gov).

### **More Funding:**

**The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' [Project Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education \(AWARE\)](#)**, which provides funding to implement school-based mental health programs and services through collaborative partnerships, and the **[National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative – Category III, Community Treatment and Service Centers](#)**, which aims to increase access to effective trauma- and grief-focused treatment and service systems for children, adolescents, and their families who experience traumatic events.

The U.S. Department of Education's on-going **[School Emergency Response to Violence \(Project SERV\)](#)** program, which funds short-term education-related services for local educational agencies and institutions of higher education to help them recover from a violent or traumatic event in which the learning environment has been disrupted.

## **New CSTAB Resource**

**Allyson Nadeau, Amplify, Executive Director** and **Alyeska Tilly, DMHAS, Prevention and Health Promotion MSW Intern, Co-Chairs of the CTSAB Education and Advocacy Committee** are pleased to share this new **[CTSAB Resource](#)** developed by the Committee that may be used to assist with Suicide Prevention Education and Advocacy efforts

## **Additional Resources**

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying Resources**

#### **[Bullying Prevention Strategies and Resources for K-12 Schools](#)**

This infographic includes an overview of bullying, strategies for schools to consider to help identify, prevent, and address bullying, and resources available through [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) to learn more.

#### **[Tips for Teachers on Cyberbullying](#)**

This webpage provides information for teachers, school personnel, and staff to identify warning signs for when a child is being cyberbullied or is cyberbullying, as well as strategies to prevent and address it.

## **Child Exploitation Resources**

### **[Child Sex Trafficking in America: A Guide for Parents and Guardians](#)**

This guide offers information for parents and guardians on child sex trafficking, including an overview on the victims and perpetrators, tips for keeping children safe, and warning signs.

### **[Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\): Leveraging the Best Available Evidence](#)**

This resource was designed to help states and communities use the best available evidence to prevent ACEs and features six strategies from CDC's Technical Packages to Prevent Violence. It focuses on changing norms, environments, and behaviors in ways that can prevent ACEs from happening in the first place as well as lessen harm when they do occur.

## **Mental Health Resources**

### **[Coping with School Tragedies](#)**

This webpage outlines resources on addressing crises that occur in school communities and how to move forward in the aftermath of these tragedies.

### **[Psychological First Aid for Schools \(PFA-S\) Field Operations Guide](#)**

This resource provides guidance on responding to disaster, violence, or terrorism events using the Psychological First Aid intervention. It gives school administrators, educators, and staff practical assistance to meet immediate needs and concerns, reduce distress, and foster adaptive coping in the wake of a disaster.

**Visit [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) for additional resources to support school safety and security efforts.**

### **[CDC Releases Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report](#)**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released a report that administrators and educators can use to better understand the challenges and risks students are facing. The report, "[Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2011-2021](#)," provides surveillance data on behaviors and experiences among high school students related to health and well-being. It also includes data on social determinants of health and protective factors, such as school connectedness.

### **[Participate in the Quad Cyber Challenge this April](#)**

The Quad Cyber Challenge, occurring on **April 10-14**, is a call to action for every internet user to learn more about cybersecurity and protect themselves and their devices from the growing threats of online attacks. By being informed about cyber risks and how to reduce them, everyone – including parents, students, teachers, and school staff – can counter the efforts of bad actors and build stronger cyber defenses at home, at school, and across the K-12 community. [Sign up](#) to take the Cyber Challenge and learn the simple steps you and your school can take to commit to safe and secure online practices.

## **[Online Abuse Prevention Program](#)**

**[Pursuant to Public Act No. 22-82 Section 6](#)** \$500,000 was allocated to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) for the primary goal of awarding grants for the programming or service that prevents online abuse, through the Online Abuse Prevention Program.

The purpose of this grant program is to provide educational and training opportunities with the desired outcome of preventing on-line abuse and informing individuals about identifying, reporting, responding to, and avoiding online abuse. The population being served is an "eligible entity" as defined as a:

- school district;
- historical society;
- tax-exempt entity;
- higher education unit;
- public library; or,
- any other entity operating under another entity already mentioned.

The goals of the Online Abuse Prevention Grant Program, as defined by Public Act 22-82 Sec. 6 are "to provide educational and training opportunities with the goal of preventing online abuse and informing individuals about identifying, reporting, responding to, and avoiding online abuse." Additionally, this includes goals that particularity serve historically undeserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups within Connecticut. Efforts to spread awareness of this grant program will include outreach to historically undeserved, marginalized, or adversely affected residents and businesses. Grant requirements are accessible and scalable thus resulting in less disparities in ability to complete applications, meet eligibility and reporting requirements. Intended outcomes of this grant program are focused on closing gaps or reaching universal levels of service across Connecticut communities.

**Special Notes:**

- Eligible expenditures must be incurred during the Period of Performance. The Period of Performance is from the issuance of the grant funds to the sub-grantee until the submission of the close out report with backup documentation. Period of Performance will be one year from the date of grant execution.
- Special Consideration for eligible entity that is "replicating a program found to have a high likelihood of success as determined by a cost-benefit analysis appearing in a peer reviewed academic journal."

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEMHS/Grants/Online-Abuse-Prevention-Program>

To apply for this program, please visit the Grant Process page or inquire to the **DESPP.OnlineAbuseGrant@ct.gov** email.

## Governor Lamont Launches New Round of Security Grants



### Deadline Extended to April 28, 2023 at 3pm

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont today announced that his administration is now accepting applications for new rounds of funding under two competitive state grant programs that help with the costs associated with implementing needed security infrastructure improvements and upgrades to emergency communication systems at schools throughout Connecticut.

The programs include the **School Security Competitive Grant Program** and the **Multi-Media Interoperable Communications System Program**. They are jointly administered by the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and the Connecticut State Department of Education.



DEMHS is excited to announce that we are now accepting applications for the next rounds of the School Security Grant Program (SSGP) and the Multi-Media School Security Grant Program (MMSSGP). These programs are available to public and nonpublic K-12 schools, as well as eligible childcare centers and preschools, to help with costs associated with implementing security infrastructure improvements and upgrades to emergency communications systems that include the capability of transmitting real-time notifications directly to law enforcement.

Additional information and instructions on how to apply can be found on the [School Security Grant Program website](#).

## Meetings - Please look for meetings in your region.



### **Region 2/South Central Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization** **([Alliance for Prevention & Wellness / A Program of BHcare](#))** **[Regional Suicide Advisory Board Meeting](#)**

- *When:* 4/4 at 10:30am
- *Where:* Zoom
- *Towns:* Ansonia, Bethany, Branford, Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Derby, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Haven, Essex, Guilford, Haddam, Hamden, Killingworth, Madison, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Old Saybrook, Orange, Portland, Seymour, Shelton, Wallingford, Westbrook, West Haven, Woodbridge.
- *Who Should Attend:* If you would like to join, please contact **Taylor Gaaney** for the **Zoom Link** at [Tgaaney@bhcare.org](mailto:Tgaaney@bhcare.org).
- *For more information:* please contact **Pamela A. Mautte** MS, MCHES, CPS-R, Director at [Pmautte@bhcare.org](mailto:Pmautte@bhcare.org) or **Taylor Gaaney**, MHA at [Tgaaney@bhcare.org](mailto:Tgaaney@bhcare.org)

### **Catchment Area Council Meetings** **[The Hub: Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization \(RBHAO\)](#)**

- *When:* Bimonthly, third Thursdays; from 2:30-4pm (5/18/23)
- *Where:* Virtually
- *Who Should Attend:* (Open to anyone interested): The Catchment Area Council (CAC) is an open community group. Our group includes individuals with lived experience with mental illnesses or challenges and/or substance use. The group also consists of providers, consumers, family members, friends, medical professionals, first responders, advocates, and more! We are a group of community members and stakeholders. We are focused on sharing resources, raising awareness, identifying trends, gaps, and needs while advocating to improve the behavioral health system for all ages and across prevention, treatment and recovery. The CAC's ability to forge partnerships in the behavioral health system and throughout our communities is key in influencing systems and contributing to healthy communities.
- **CAC 1-4** (covering Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport,

Wilton, Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford, Trumbull)

- For more information: please contact [Kaitlin@ryasap.org](mailto:Kaitlin@ryasap.org).

### **TBA - DEMHS Region 1 School Safety and Security Meeting**

- For more information, please contact **Robert Kenny** at [Robert.kenny@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.kenny@ct.gov).

### **Region 1 Gambling Awareness Team Meetings**

- *When:* 2nd Tuesday of the month, Quarterly; from 2:30-4pm (4/11/23, 6/13/23)
- *Where:* Virtually
- *Who Should Attend:* (open to anyone interested): Open to anyone from Southwestern CT interested in raising awareness about problem gambling and gaming. Focus on raising awareness and developing prevention and treatment capacity in the region.
- *RSVP to* [Ingrid.gillespie@liberationprograms.org](mailto:Ingrid.gillespie@liberationprograms.org) for meeting link.

### **The DEMHS Region 2 School Safety & Security Group Meeting**

- *When:* 5/17 from 2:30-3:30pm
- *Where:* Virtually via Google Meets
- *Who Should Attend:* Those who are interested in being part of our group are encouraged to email their contact information to **Jeff Nielsen** at [Jnielsen@milforded.org](mailto:Jnielsen@milforded.org). Group membership includes receiving correspondence related to meeting announcements and information related to school safety/security.

### **The DEMHS Region 4 (Eastern CT) School Safety Subcommittee**

- *When:* 4/26 from 9:30-11:00am
- *Where:* Hybrid and In-Person at LEARN, 44 Hatchetts Hill Rd., Old Lyme, CT
- *Who Should Attend:* For those organizations within Region 4's territory (<https://portal.ct.gov/DEMHS/Emergency-Management/Resources-For-Officials/Regional-Offices/Region-4>), attendance/membership for this group could include, but not be limited to: Any school staff who are responsible for school safety planning in their districts; SROs; Emergency Managers; Public Safety Chiefs/Department Heads; Public Health Officials; Any others with vested interest.
- *If you are interested in attending:* please send an email with your interest to [Mike.caplet@ct.gov](mailto:Mike.caplet@ct.gov) in order to be added to the meeting email distribution list, and to receive the **Zoom Link**.
- *Please save the dates* for future School Safety Subcommittee meetings. All meetings will be held 9:30-11:00 and will be Hybrid on Zoom and In-Person. Location of physical meeting rotates; listed in parentheses: **5/24/23** (EASTCONN), **6/28/23** (LEARN), **7/26/23** (EASTCONN), **8/30/23** (LEARN), **9/27/23** (EASTCONN), **10/25/23** (LEARN), **11/29/23** (EASTCONN).

### **The DEMHS Region 5 School Safety and Security Working Group**

- *When:* Thursdays from 11am-12pm (4/27/23, 5/23/23, & 6/22/23)
- *Where:* Virtually
- The mission of this group is to provide a school safety and security network consisting of school resources who can share lessons learned and quality information pertaining to maintaining a safe and secure environment for our schools.
- *If you are interested in attending:* please email **John Field** at [John.field@ct.gov](mailto:John.field@ct.gov).

### **The Western Regional Crisis Team Meetings (covering RESC regions of EdAdvance & CES)**

- *When:* Tuesdays from 8:30-10:30am (4/25/23, 5/23/23, & 6/06/23)
- *Where:* In-person and Virtually
- *Who Should Attend:* These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals servicing our K-12 students.
- *For more information or to join the Team:* please email **Tanya Iacono** at [Iaconot@wcsu.edu](mailto:Iaconot@wcsu.edu).

### **CT School Safety and Crisis Response Committee/ACES Regional Crisis Team Meeting**

Creating a Student Mental Health Continuum of Care will be presented by **Amy Conklin** from Effective School Solutions. There will be a roundtable discussion.

- *When:* Thursday, April 20th from 9:00-11:00am
- *Who Should Attend:* These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals servicing our K-12 students.
- *Where:* Zoom
- *For more information or to join the Team:* please email **Sadie Witherspoon** at [Witherspoons@wcsu.edu](mailto:Witherspoons@wcsu.edu).

**The North Central Regional Crisis Team Meeting** (covering RESC Capitol Region Education Council)

- *When:* Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:00-11:00am
- *Where:* [Zoom Link](#), Meeting ID: 870 9664 2732, Passcode: 856200
- *Who Should Attend:* These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals servicing our K-12 students.
- *For more information or to join the Team:* please email **Kimberly Myers** at [Myersk@wcsu.edu](mailto:Myersk@wcsu.edu).

**Northeastern Regional Crisis Team Meetings (EASTCONN RESC region)**

- *This team will meet jointly with the Southeastern Regional Crisis team for the remainder of the 2022/2023 academic year.*
- *When:* 8:30-10:00 a.m. (4/19/23, 5/3/23, 6/1/23)
- *Where:* Virtually via Zoom
- *Towns:* Andover, Ashford, Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Eastford, Franklin, Griswold, Hampton, Hebron, Killingly, Lebanon, Lisbon, Mansfield, Marlborough, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Sprague, Stafford, Sterling, Thompson, Tolland, Union, Voluntown, Woodstock, Willington, Windham
- *Who Should Attend:* These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals supporting our K-12 students.
- *For more information or to join the Team:* please email **Kiley Young** at [Youngki@wcsu.edu](mailto:Youngki@wcsu.edu).

**Southeastern Regional Crisis Team Meetings (LEARN RESC region)**

- *This team will meet jointly with the Northeastern Regional Crisis team for the remainder of the 2022/2023 academic year.*
- *When:* 8:30-10:00 a.m. (4/19/23, 5/3/23, 6/1/23)
- *Where:* Virtually via Zoom
- *Towns:* Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Lyme, Essex, Groton, Guilford, Haddam, Killingworth, Ledyard, Lyme, Madison, Montville, New London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Preston, Salem, Stonington, Waterford, Westbrook
- *Who Should Attend:* These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals supporting our K-12 students.
- *For more information or to join the Team:* please email **Kiley Young** at [Youngki@wcsu.edu](mailto:Youngki@wcsu.edu).

## Research

### Research:

**The Association of School Climate With Student Willingness to Report Threats of Violence. Volume 8 No. 3.**

In 2021, the Journal of Threat Assessment and Management



published a study conducted by the following: **Caroline Crichlow-Ball and Dewey Cornell of the Department of Human Services, University of Virginia School of Education and Human Development.**

The full report can be accessed [here](#).



## **Purpose:**

This article focused on the impact of school climate, and student willingness to report threats of violence. Since most threat assessments rely on student reporting of threats and/or concerning behavior, it is important to understand how school climate, student factors, and other environmental forces influence comfortability and/or willingness to report threats of violence. In a review of 41 school attacks from 2008 to 2017, 31 (76%) of the attackers told others in person about their intentions (U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center, 2019). Students have helped prevent multiple acts of school violence by reporting information about a peer's planned attack.

The article identified in the literature review several barriers to reporting including fear of being seen as a "snitch," social consequences (being ostracized), fear of retaliation, fear their identity would not be kept confidential by school staff, and concern over not being believed by school staff. The literature review also captured prior research focused on identify demographic factors including gender, race, and age, and the relationship to reporting threats of violence. Based upon prior research, males were less likely to report than females, and the likelihood of Black students reporting was significantly less than all other students. It was also noted that willingness to report also decreased as students grow older. The literature review also defines school climate as "generally conceptualized as the quality of interpersonal relationships and interactions among students and school personnel (Cornell & Huang, 2016).

## **Participants:**

The present study consisted of "ninth through twelfth graders and school staff who participated in the 2018 Virginia Secondary School Climate Survey." There was a total of 75,457 student participants from a pool of 91,988. A total of 16,525 staff from 318 schools completed the survey, resulting in a participation rate of 45.5%. Additional information regarding sample size, and reliability/validity are detailed in the article methods section. The article outlines the focus of the school climate survey which included a focus on student academic engagement, student perceptions of supportive teacher-student relationships, suspensions, student perception of disciplinary structure, staff perceptions of supportive teacher-student relationships, and staff perceptions of school disciplinary structure.

## **Key Findings:**

The findings of this study align with prior research outlined in the literature review provided by the researchers. While most students indicated they would report a threat, many participants reported they would be unwilling to disclose a student's threatening behaviors. "Although most students in all racial groups were willing to report threats, students who were non-White were somewhat less willing than White students. The association between student race/ethnicity and willingness to report was largest for Black or African American students, and there were similar findings for other race groups that were slightly smaller in magnitude." The findings indicated that "talk of killing someone and 11% of boys said they would not report the presence of a gun, as compared to 11.7% and 5.6% of girls, respectively. Regarding student characteristics, non-reporters were less engaged in school and were less likely to feel like they belonged at their schools than reporters. Findings also suggest that non-reporters were also more likely to be suspended than reporters. Non-reporters also perceived their teachers as less supportive and were more likely to perceive the discipline practices at their schools as unfair. There were small but significant associations between staff perceptions of structure and students' willingness to report talk about killing someone and staff perceptions of support and students' willingness to report a peer bringing a gun to school. Although staff perceptions of

school climate contribute to the variance in student willingness to report threats, student perceptions are nonetheless the stronger predictor of student reporting attitudes. The article concludes with suggestions for increasing students willingness to report threats including anonymous reporting systems and overarching improvements to school climate and teacher-student relationships.

## CT Center for School Safety Training

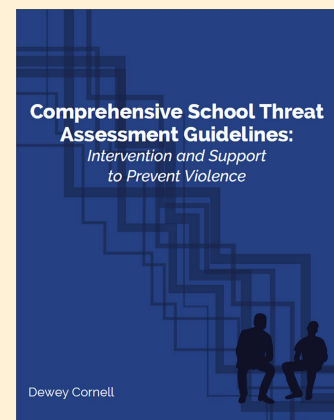
Our goal is to make trainings accessible to all Connecticut schools, so our trainings are low cost. However, because we do not want cost to be a barrier, we offer scholarships for individuals and districts who are unable to afford training costs.

- 5/3 - [Virtual Beyond Compliance Workshop Series - Safety Planning for After School Events](#) - The focus of this workshop will be on Safety Planning for After School Events with **Bill Turley, the Manager of the DEMHS Training and Exercise Unit and State Training Officer and the State School Safety Program Lead**. There will be a review of the state requirements, best practices, and a tabletop exercise. During the tabletop exercise, your school/district will be in a breakout room to discuss the scenario and test or build on your plan. This **Free** workshop is intended for members of your School Safety and Security Committee.



### [Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines \(CSTAG\) Training](#)

The CSTAG Model is an evidence-based behavioral threat assessment and intervention model for preventing school violence. The Center can bring this training directly to your school district. Our goal is to make trainings accessible to all Connecticut schools, so our trainings are low cost. However, because we do not want cost to be a barrier, we offer scholarships for individuals and districts who are unable to afford training costs. For more information or to schedule a session, please contact **Dr. Amery Bernhardt** at [Bernhardta@wcsu.edu](mailto:Bernhardta@wcsu.edu).



## Trainings

**\*Save the Dates - 8/7/23 thru 8/11/23\*** for the  
**for 2023 CT Center for School Safety Summer Conference**  
(Topics and Presenters to be announced)

- 4/3: **BHcare** will be presenting the **Signs of Suicide** to 7th Graders at Hamden Middle School. For more information, please email **Taylor Gainey**, at [Tgainey@bhcare.org](mailto:Tgainey@bhcare.org).
- 4/4: [Understanding and Planning for School Bombing Incidents](#) – This webinar, hosted by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's Region 9, is designed to enhance

skills and knowledge necessary to respond to school bomb threats and school bombing incidents. The event will provide information on the purpose and function of school emergency management plans, warning signs of aggressive student behavior, critical actions when responding to a school bombing threat, recognition of Improvised Explosive Devices and components, and preventive school bombing incident measures.

- 4/6: **BHcare** will be presenting the **Signs of Suicide** to 8th Graders at Old Saybrook Middle School. For more information, please contact **Taylor Gainey**, at [Tgainey@bhcare.org](mailto:Tgainey@bhcare.org).
- 4/11 & 5/9: **School Mental Health Virtual Learning Series** – This webinar series, hosted by the **Central East Mental Health Technology Transfer Center**, in collaboration with the **National Center for School Mental Health**, focuses on advancing high quality, sustainable school mental health from a multi-tiered system of support, trauma sensitive, and culturally responsive and equitable lens.
- 4/11: **Promoting Family and Community Empowerment to Strengthen Positive School Climate** - sponsored by the **National School Center for Mental Health (NSCMH)**. This webinar is a part of the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network School Mental Health Virtual Learning Series.
- 4/17: **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training** - sponsored by **Amplify**. This Training will be a Virtual Webinar. QPR Training gives you the skills and knowledge to intervene to possibly prevent suicide. Learn how to get help for yourself, learn more about preventing suicide, common causes of suicidal behavior, warning signs of suicide and how to get help for someone in crisis.
- 4/18: **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training** - sponsored by **The Hub**. We currently offer this training webinar from 9-10:30 a.m. on the first and third Tuesday morning each month. For more information, please visit **The Hub/Events** or email [Info@thehubct.org](mailto:Info@thehubct.org).
- 4/19: **Student Privacy and Data Security Spring Webinar Series: Data Security and Data Breach Response** – This webinar, hosted by the **U.S. Department of Education's Student Privacy Policy Office**, through its **Privacy Technical Assistance Center**, will provide information on data security best practices for education data systems, including user privacy and security awareness, privacy and security program development / implementation, threat modeling, and attacker methodology. It will also include a walkthrough of a simulated data breach and best practices for schools, districts, and universities looking to build or enhance their cyber incident response capabilities.
- 4/19-20 & 5/8-9: **MGT418: Readiness: Training Identification and Preparedness Planning (RTIPP)** Participants will learn how to create effective training plans for their agencies and jurisdictions. Additional information is available at the **TEEX** website and at [FirstResponderTraining.gov](http://FirstResponderTraining.gov). Time: 16 Hrs (2 Days): **FEMA Mission Area(s): Mitigation; Core Capability**; Community Resilience 4/19-20: **Branford, CT** & 5/8-9 : **Bridgeport, CT**
- 4/26: **Connection/De-escalation Workshop** - sponsored by **Alliance for Prevention and Wellness** a program of **BHcare**. This workshop led by **Lieutenant Ray Hassett** (ret.) is designed for everyone who works with the public. Learn "Situational & Emotional Awareness" & Why it is so Important. This workshop will be held at J.R. Payden Fieldhouse, 49 Chatfield Street, Derby, CT. Please [Register Here](#). Also, see [flyer](#). For more information, please contact **Nicole Mason** at [Nmason@bhcare.org](mailto:Nmason@bhcare.org).
- 4/27: **Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training** - sponsored by **BHcare**. This training workshop will be held at 9 a.m. for the High School Counselors that work at the Career High School in New Haven. **If you are a School Counselor and would**



like to join this workshop, please contact **Taylor Gainey** at [Tgainey@bhcare.org](mailto:Tgainey@bhcare.org).

- 4/28: **BHcare** will be hosting a table at the **Francis T. Maloney High School** in Meriden for the **High School's Mental Health Day**. For more information, please contact **Taylor Gainey** at [Tgainey@bhcare.org](mailto:Tgainey@bhcare.org).
- 5/5: **Behavioral Health Resource Fair** - sponsored by the **Southwest Network of Care**. This **Free** regional event is an opportunity for all community members to come together and gain information and network on mental and behavioral health resources available within Fairfield County. **More than 20 agencies and organizations** committed to serving the children and families of Southwestern CT will be there. This event will be held at **CES**, 25 Oakview Dr., Trumbull from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please [Register Here](#). Also, see [flyer](#).
- 5/9: **Collaboration Between School and Community Settings – Development of Meaningful and Sustainable Partnerships Between Schools and Community Partners** - sponsored by the National School Center for Mental Health (NSCMH). This webinar is a part of the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network School Mental Health Virtual Learning Series.
- 6/20-6/22: **Tobacco Treatment Specialist (TTS) Core Training - Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU)** is offering this \$1,300 training at no cost to participants, through a grant funded by the CT Dept. of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Please complete an [Application](#) to become a TTS. Email completed Applications to: **Victoria Adams, M.Ed., NCTTP**, Tobacco Program Coordinator, Health and Human Services, SCSU, email: [Adamsv2@southernct.edu](mailto:Adamsv2@southernct.edu).
- 7/24-28: **The 2023 National School Safety Conference** - Register now for the Largest School Safety Conference in the Nation! Sponsored by the **School Safety Advocacy Council**. Call for Presenters and Exhibitors! The School Safety Advocacy Council has become the recognized leader in school safety services and training and it is the host of the largest conference in the nation addressing all aspects of school safety. The conference will be held at the Tropicana Resort & Casino in Las Vegas.
- **Bridgeport Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)** is a program of the **RYASAP (Regional Youth Adult Social Action Partnership)**. This Training enables parents to become leading advocates for their children. This nationally recognized curriculum is offered at no cost to you. For more information and to request an application, please contact **Sandra Carmichael**, Community Training Coordinator at [Sandra@ryasap.org](mailto:Sandra@ryasap.org).
- **EdAdvance**, through its **SAMHSA-funded MHAT-WCT** initiative, offers no-cost Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Teen Mental Health First Aid, and Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention training classes to adults and teens throughout Western CT. Contact is **Abby Peklo** at [Peklo@edadvance.org](mailto:Peklo@edadvance.org) or 860.567.0863 ext. 1166.

## Welcome Meghan Geraghty

### Meghan Geraghty

Meghan joined the Center in February.  
She is a graduate assistant currently

working towards her Master's degree in Homeland Security at Western Connecticut State University. She is helping the Center with our research in social media and digital threats.



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If you have content such as meetings, trainings, resources, and/or research to include in the next issue of our newsletter, please email **Mary Pupazzoni** at [Pupazzonim@wcsu.edu](mailto:Pupazzonim@wcsu.edu) no later than the 15th of the month prior.

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