

Tips for Students to Help Create Safe Schools

Students can do a lot to help create safe schools. Here are ideas from students in other school districts:

- Listen to friends if they share troubling feelings or thoughts. Encourage them to get help from a trusted adult, such as a school psychologist, counselor, social worker, leader from the faith community, or other professional. If you are very concerned, seek help for them. Share your concerns with your parents.
- Create, join, or support student organizations that combat violence, such as Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD).
- Work with local businesses and community groups to organize youth-oriented activities that help young people think of ways to prevent school and community violence *before it starts*. Share ideas for how these community groups and businesses can support students' efforts.
- Organize an assembly and invite the school psychologist, school social worker, and counselor – along with student panelists – to share ideas about how to deal with violence, intimidation, and bullying.
- Get involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating your school's violence prevention and response plan.
- Participate in violence prevention programs such as peer mediation and conflict resolution. Employ these new skills in other settings such as the home, neighborhood, and community.
- Work with teachers and administrators to create a safe process for reporting threats, bullying, intimidation, weapon possession, drug selling, gang activity, graffiti, and vandalism.
- Ask for permission to invite a law enforcement officer to your school to conduct a safety audit and share safety tips such as traveling in groups and avoiding areas known to be unsafe.
- Help develop and participate in activities that promote students' understanding of differences and that respect the rights of all.
- Volunteer to be a mentor for younger students and tutor peers.
- Know your school's code of conduct and model responsible behavior. Avoid being part of a crowd when fights break out. Refrain from teasing, bullying, and intimidating peers.
- Be a role model – take personal responsibility by reacting to anger without physically or verbally harming others.
- Seek help from your parents or a trusted adult, such as a school psychologist, social worker, counselor, or teacher if you are experiencing intense feelings of anger, fear, anxiety, or depression.