



Stand Up for School Safety Law Enforcement

South Dakota's Chiefs and Sheriffs Associations, SD Department of Public Safety, US Attorneys Office, Associated School Boards of South Dakota, School Administrators of South Dakota and the South Dakota Attorney General's Office join efforts to bring an anonymous tipping platform for school violence to our South Dakota citizens, both students and adults.

School violence, especially school shootings, continues to dominate our national news. We recognize there are successful programs and interventions that take place frequently to avoid these tragedies within our state. School shootings are unpredictable and can happen in any school. We are looking to leverage a great opportunity that is cost-free to our school districts and local law enforcement. Bringing new technology to increase the amount of time available to react to potential threatening behavior will help increase the level of security at our schools.

Project Stand Up to Illegal Drugs has been in place for anonymous drug tips since May of 2017. We have identified 479 different subjects of drug investigations in 87 different South Dakota communities so far. Project Stand Up relies upon an anonymous texting platform that brings the tipster through a series of easy questions to identify the subject, activity and additional information that helps law enforcement root out drugs within our communities. Once a tipster finishes the short string of questions, the system immediately sends the tip by email to the designated law enforcement in the jurisdiction that was identified so they may begin to work with the information. It all begins by texting the word "drugs" to 82257. Sanford Health has been a great partner to underwrite this program and technology.

In similar fashion, Project Stand Up for School Safety is now available to be utilized in the same way, bringing in tips on potential school threats. By texting the word "safe" to 82257 the texting interaction begins with eight simple questions that will result in an immediate email to designated school officials, School Resource Officers, and local law enforcement. These tips are

also sent to our State Fusion Center. From a public safety perspective, having this information in hand quickly rather than someone hesitating to call or a tipster entering the school office when the school day has already begun, will give everyone more time to address the potential school threat by a student or others. The test phase of Project Stand Up for School Safety is currently running and I encourage you to try it yourself by texting “safe” to 82257. There is no cost to use this program.

Here is a copy of the current list of questions within the School Safety texting program. We are open to further editing of these questions as we realize this is new and we want to be most effective in bringing in accurate and trustworthy information. This current question string was agreed upon thanks to the work of our Chiefs, Sheriffs, School Board and School Administrator associations:

1. Project Stand Up is a tip line for school safety threats. Your identity is 100% protected. Be aware that false reporting can result in your criminal conviction. If this is an emergency that needs immediate response, call 9-1-1 (local law enforcement)! If this is not an emergency, type “NEXT”.
2. In what state (use 2 letter abbreviation) is this violent crime/threat?
3. In what city or county is the threat?
4. What is the full name of the school where this is taking place? Be as specific as possible.
5. What is the full name of the person or persons you are concerned about committing violence?
6. Please describe in DETAIL the violent, unusual or threatening behavior that you wish to report.
7. If an address or a relevant picture is available (photo, license, text, screen shot), please provide it OR, type “NEXT”.
8. This is an anonymous platform; however, if you are willing to be contacted by law enforcement, reply “YES”. If not, reply “NO”.

9. Thank you for Standing Up for school safety. Spread the word, tell your friends about “82257/SAFE”. Your tip has been forwarded to the authorities.

Some school districts have solid, well-practiced communication systems in place and may not be interested in participating with this School Safety program. It may be seen as redundant or bringing confusion to their current system. In that event, since it is a statewide opportunity that will receive publicity, we believe it is still prudent to allow for this platform to identify the schools within each community and perhaps it would only send the tipping information to local law enforcement for their use and engagement with the school district. Each school district/law enforcement relationship will have their specific recipe for communication and utilization of this program based upon your contact with them.