safe2tell®
Make a Call. Make a Difference.

IMPACT REPORT

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Impacting Culture and Safety

The goal of Safe2Tell is to intervene at the earliest possible point in the life a young person who is struggling, helping them when they need it before the situation turns into a tragedy. Safe2Tell serves as the statewide bystander reporting tool for concerns in Colorado. The Safe2Tell solution was developed specifically to encourage those with information about a possible event to report it.

Kids often know about tragedies before they occur

We know that targeted school shootings rarely happen without some sort of warning sign. The U.S. Secret Service conducted the *Safe School Initiative,* a study of school shootings and other school-based attacks finding that usually "at least one other person had some type of knowledge of the attacker's plan." Most of those individuals who had prior knowledge were peers of the perpetrators. This suggests that peers often know about potential threats to their safety and risky behaviors of their friends and classmates, and often fail to alert authorities about their suspicions.

Preventing violence before it occurs

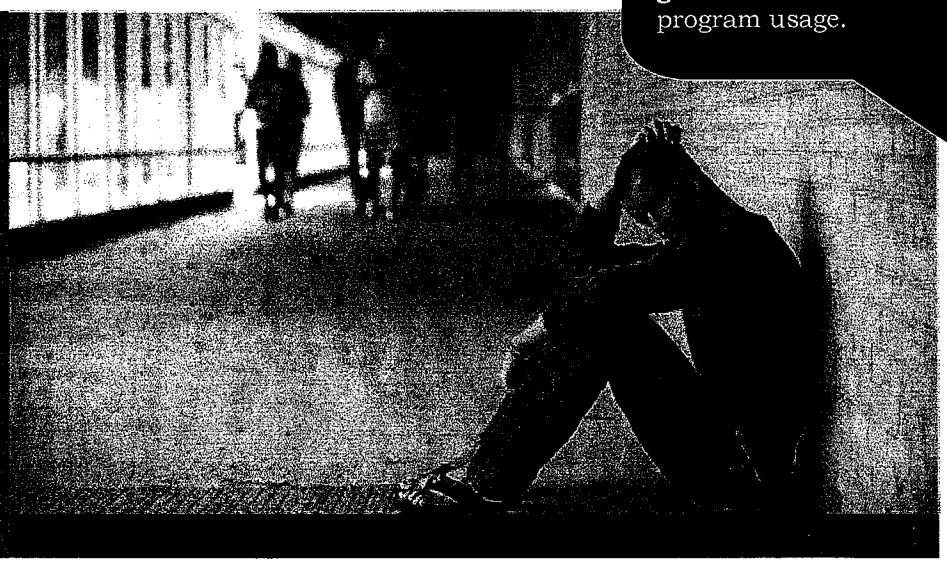
Since 2004, Safe2Tell has received reports and aided in the prevention of 266 separate school attacks. In December 2012 alone, 24 tips of planned attacks on Colorado schools were received. The numbers alone show the impact the Safe2Tell solution is having on breaking down the code of silence. Sheer increases in the number of tips received each year demonstrates the change in culture and attitudes about reporting unsafe behaviors and situations. This report will provide an outline of the work of Safe2Tell and the impact it has on creating safer schools and safer communities.

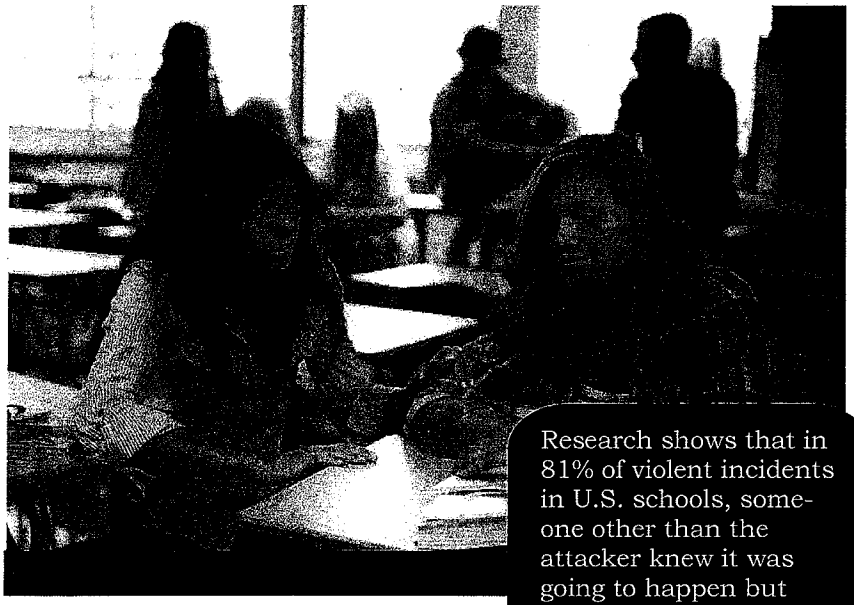
"Early intervention is critical in the life of a child who is exhibiting behaviors identified as precursors to violence. Safe2Tell provides a tool for adults to intervene in a proactive way."

- Dr. Del Elliott, Founding Director of the Center for Study and Prevention of Violence, CU Boulder

The Safe2Tell solution has proved to be immensely successful in saving lives and preventing tragedy with a **1,050% rate of growth since 2004** in program usage.

In four out of five instances, other people knew about attacks in schools before they took place.





Research shows that in 81% of violent incidents in U.S. schools, someone other than the attacker knew it was going to happen but failed to report it.

Results

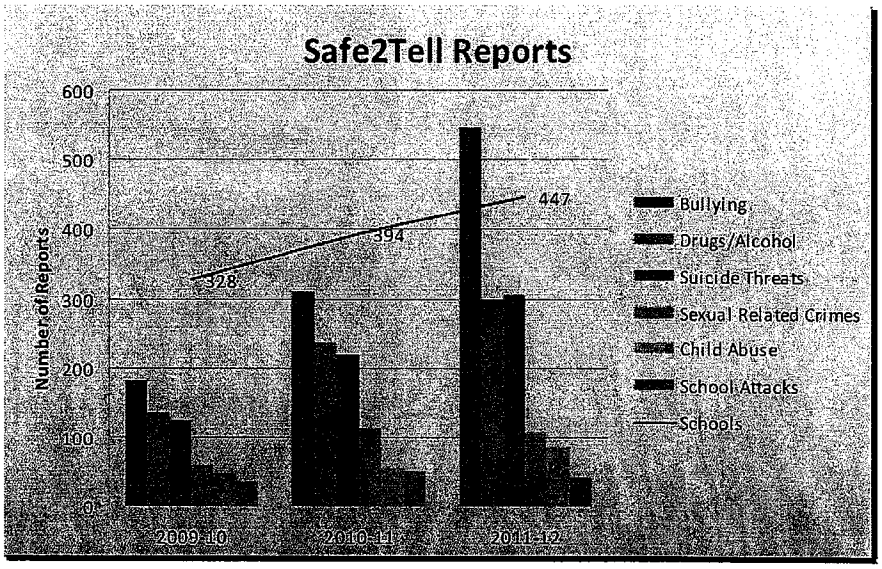
Between the period of September 2004 to July 31, 2013, numerous calls/web reports/texts were received resulting in 8,491 Tip Reports from 183 Colorado cities and 59 counties. They include (but are not limited to) the following categories:

Bullying	2,122
Drugs/Alcohol	1,302
Suicide Interventions	1,237
Threats of Violence	787
Sexually Related Crimes	460
Harassment	442
Child Abuse	404
Cutting	330
Guns/Weapons	311
Planned School Attacks	282
Assaults	271
Fighting	257
Depression	99
Thefts	84
Sexting	80
Vandalism	68
Domestic Violence	67
Gangs	60
Animal Cruelty	18

Courage2Tell

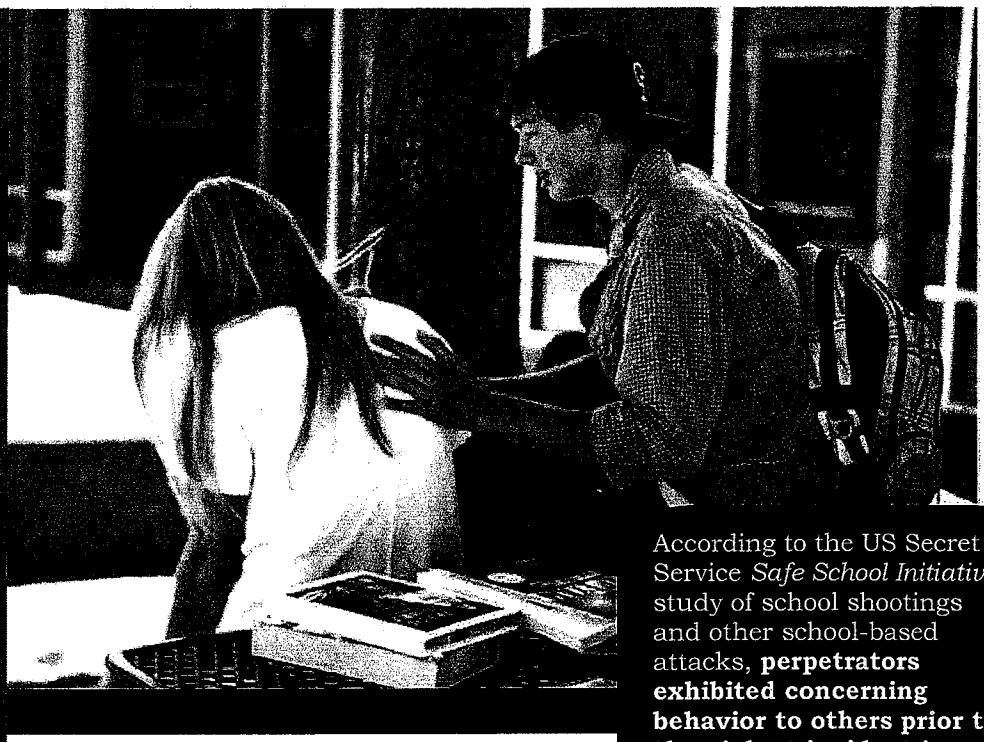
These are only a few of the courageous stories received everyday on the Safe2Tell tip line:

- A tip received reveals a gun on an elementary school bus, leading to it being confiscated.
- Police refer mother of aggressive kindergartner to area mental health program for assistance
- Student takes responsibility for harassment allegations after Safe2Tell tip submitted and investigated.
- Local law enforcement following up to alleged sexual abuse by step-father.
- An 11-year old girl receives help after a caller reports that she's been cutting herself and contemplating suicide.
- A report of substance abuse leads to referral to recovery program.



Mission

The mission of Safe2Tell is "to *ensure that every Colorado student, parent, teacher and community member has access to a safe and anonymous way to report any concerns to their safety or the safety of others, with a focus on early intervention and prevention through awareness and education.*"



According to the US Secret Service *Safe School Initiative* study of school shootings and other school-based attacks, **perpetrators exhibited concerning behavior to others prior to the violent incident in 93% of the cases.**

Meeting the Need

Youth violence, according to the seminal Surgeon Generals Report on Youth Violence, is a highly visible problem that affects all segments of our society. Because of its impact on victims, their friends and family, and society at large, youth violence has been designated a public health concern, thereby emphasizing the need for effective prevention. Communities now focus on collaborative prevention efforts with support from multiple systems: justice, education, health, mental health, and human services. Safe2Tell provides a unique bridge between these agencies and the youth who may need help to avert an act of violence or injury.

Youth violence incorporates many different behaviors, including bullying, cyber bullying, sexting, animal cruelty, weapons, fire starting, dating violence, assault, homicide and suicide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Injury Center, youth who are victims of violence or who witness violence in their communities fall prey to not only injury or death in the worst instances, but other serious consequences like posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and substance abuse. Research conducted by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at CU-Boulder (CSPV) indicates that the two most effective prevention strategies to prevent school violence are (1) creating and sustaining a safe school climate; and (2) developing an effective intelligence-gathering system. Moreover, safe schools take a strong, caring stance against the code of silence.

In order to break the code of silence, the Safe2Tell solution works to improve the culture and climate of schools. Working with communities, Safe2Tell is working to change the philosophy that anyone can do what they want without others speaking up. A vital component is intentional conversations empowering children and teens to speak up, without fear of retaliation, embarrassment or labeling. Safe2Tell provides the promise of hope and help, with caring adults ready to intervene and advocate for their support.

Core Components of the Safe2Tell Strategy

The focus of Safe2Tell is to ensure that every Colorado student, parent, teacher and community member has access to a safe and anonymous way to report any concerns about their safety or the safety of others. Safe2Tell accomplishes this by early intervention and prevention through awareness, education and accountable follow-up.

The Safe2Tell Strategy is about:

- Engagement,
- Education,
- Empowerment,
- Encouragement,
- and Equipping with tangible tools.

Education and Awareness

Train the Trainer Certifications and Staff Trainings: In order to spread the message of the Safe2Tell program among Colorado schools, Safe2Tell developed a training program that certifies individuals and leaders to present Safe2Tell information, materials, and classroom discussion materials to their own communities.

Conversation Jumpstarts: Safe2Tell provides training modules to provide counselors and school resource officers that offers a tangible tool lead them in guided classroom discussions. Available *Conversation Jumpstart* topics include bullying, cyber bullying, dating, sexting, weapons, dating, depression, and substance abuse. While discussing issues trainers talk about the code of silence, when it is appropriate to make a report, and what happens when a report is made.

Videos: The best way to reach students is often with a visual story. Safe2Tell has provided the framework for many schools to best reach their students using customized videos that promote the messages of Safe2Tell and show caring, committed adults at their schools.

Student cards, bracelets, pencils, banners: Promoting Safe2Tell goes beyond a poster on the wall. By combining direct messaging along with relevant promotional materials, Safe2Tell is able to effectively spread the Safe2Tell message and tip line number to thousands of students each year. Data shows that more Safe2Tell tip reports come from schools that incorporate the Safe2Tell solution in all practices.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Intervening at the school level at the earliest opportunity by caring, committed adults: The Safe2Tell program provides students with the opportunity to seek help, guidance and counseling from a trusted source before a situation grows out of control. Safe2Tell offers education and training to adults on identifying at-risk behaviors in students and creating safe learning environments.

Sharing information: Through collaborative relationships, Safe2Tell has key roles in developing blueprint models of safety policies and providing wraparound services to students. Safe2Tell key leadership work closely with government agencies, non-profit partners, schools and law enforcement to provide awareness and education that encourage changes in attitudes and cultures that perpetrate incidences of violence.

Interagency Social Support Teams: When a school receives a Safe2Tell report, they have pre-identified a team of professionals who can assist with intervention and connecting to appropriate resources. This multidisciplinary team shares the responsibility of ensuring the Safe2Tell report was handle appropriately and required actions and steps were taken to protect the safety of all involved.

"It is no less courageous for a child or an adult to speak in a way that keeps them anonymous and safe. We have the power to make communities and schools safer by simply making a call."

- Susan Payne
Founding Executive Director of Safe2Tell

Accountability and Follow-up

Disposition Reports: With each report received, Safe2Tell goes the extra step and follows up with the school that received the tip to ensure that it was investigated and that action was taken.

Reducing liability: Working with teams, following-up on each report, and ensuring appropriate steps have been taken are the crucial pieces that make the Safe2Tell solution successful.

Looking Forward

Every child in America has the right to learn free from harm or harassment. The Safe2Tell solution needs to be available to all; expanding the program beyond Colorado remains a top priority for the organization. When ever tragic events occur, we are reminded of this need. Safe2Tell is positioning itself for the future and prepared to take the necessary steps needed to ensure safety and security of all children. Your commitment and support of Safe2Tell help ensure the future and vitality of this proven solution in school and community safety.

How you can help?

Safe2Tell is a 501c3 non-profit charity that relies on private contributions to fund mission critical programs. Your financial gift to Safe2Tell ensures that safety in Colorado school remains a top priority with $.89 cents of every dollar received designated to direct program costs. Investing financially in the organization, demonstrates your personal commitment to safer schools and safer communities.

To contribute to Safe2Tell, please visit our website at http://safe2tell.org/what-can-you-do/donate-now/ or www.coloradogives.org/safe2tell. For more information on giving to Safe2Tell, please contact Suzi Karrer, Director of Development and Partnerships, at suzi@safe2tell.org

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