

# **Strengthening the Safe School Community**

**Exploring the Work and Objectives of  
School Safety and Security Specialists**

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## Introduction

After more than a half-century of experience, the city of Minneapolis – one of the first two recipients of a Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965 grant – has determined to end the daily presence of police in city high schools. This is a decision to improve school safety and the general quality of the school environment through means other than an armed security presence. This transition is a quality of life and education environment commitment.

Nationally, as school police have been increasingly called upon or left to dealing with student infractions, the harshness of suspensions, expulsions, and criminal referrals has led to increased early school leaving, delinquency and jail time, increasing flow in the school to prison pipeline. It has, marginally, made some schools safer by too often exiling problem cases – or [young people dealing with problems](#) – rather than helping them transition to good citizenship.

Minneapolis’ decision to change its school community security model means school security will be realized in implementing or continuing an array of school community practices that *improve* the community as well as enhancing early warning and alternative security measures. It reallocates resources and reinforces or in some cases returns schools to using a broader array of responses to inappropriate, disturbing, disruptive and potentially injurious behavior. This aims to make the school environment better for the school community as a whole. Particularly for students of color, police in the schools have been a source of [insecurity](#). Alternatives treated in this Brief point to more inclusive and responsive learning environments for all a school’s students, as part of a school-centered community.

## School Culture, School Climate and Safety

Educators describe [“School Culture”](#) and [“School Climate”](#) as two distinctly different elements of a school but have varying explanations of these two elements.

School culture is shared beliefs and values, influenced by past experience, “how we do things”. Some sources note this as based in the School District’s beliefs and values, and the leadership of the Superintendent.

School climate is how a particular school feels: how students, teachers, staff *feel* about the school – how caring, safe, how valued students (and staff) feel. Is the school building well-cared for and inviting, orderly, well-supplied? Are one’s teachers and classmates supportive and caring? Is there *at least* one adult who is watching out for every student? Are decisions made inclusively? Are parents, teachers and students partners? Are interactions respectful? Do parents feel welcome and included? Is diversity welcome and respected? Are diverse intelligences respected and supported? Are there high expectations for all students and support to realize them?

School culture and school climate affect every aspect of life in the school community. Meta-level studies demonstrate that a caring school climate results in higher grades, better attendance,

better standardized test results, fewer suspensions, higher self-esteem, less depression, and multiple other positive indicators. [School Climate](#) evaluation tools enable schools to critically look at their own school climate.

School culture and school climate directly affect school safety. School administrators at all levels prioritize strategies for improving school safety. Schools, of course, cannot afford every school climate impacting program or activity nor teachers find 48 hours in a day to implement all of them. Investment in “hardening” the school environment has limited impact. A [comprehensive study of 18 years of gun violence](#) in US schools found no actual success from hardening measures, other than alleviating parent and student fears. Creating a positive, caring, high expectation school climate optimizes the investment in school safety but does not exclude some hard school security measures.

School security may easily become focused on one or two factors, and quite often it has been focused on the last two factors in the following list. To meet Minneapolis’ transformative goals this Brief looks at the first five factors in this list.

- Programs and activities that further social and emotional learning, restorative justice, nonviolent communication, conflict de-escalation, upstanding;
- Programs and activities that help students overcome learning obstacles, learn from and remediate harmful behaviors, improve academically;
- School principal, staff and teachers communicate clearly expectations including high expectations, provide support and guidance, ensure students feel appreciated, protected, valued, cared for, motivated to learn, understand what is expected of them, and respect diversity;
- Students and staff feel safe in the building and with the school schedule, and can control and modify these variables to improve security;
- Families, neighborhood and community, community activists and elders are involved;
- Hardening the school environment with the presence of School Resource Officers (police), security guards, metal detectors, cameras, etc.;
- Removal of offenders through suspension, expulsion or referral to police and courts.

## The School Safety and Security Specialist

The transition is framed around the position of a new school staff person, the School Safety and Security Specialist (SSSS), a lead person for school community safety.

The School Safety and Security Specialist’s role may be narrowly or broadly defined. A basic mandate, for the Safe Community, could include:

- **Emergency procedures:** training, contacts, lockdowns, [threat assessment](#), drills, having an [emergency/crisis plan](#) according to State procedures, etc.;
- **Safe School Self-Assessment:** using the Minnesota School Safety Center’s [self-assessment tool](#) to analyze and remedy school dangers;
- **Early warning:** developing the relationships that enable students and adults to let responsible people know if there is a potential threat or problem;

- **Mapping:** using school plans or maps to identify trouble spots and implement remedial action;
- **Community:** enlisting, training, counseling staff and students for prevention of and response to threats.

This Brief recommends leaning toward a broad mandate if possible and success is realizable.

Factors affecting whether the School Safety and Security Specialist’s scope of work is narrow (basic) or broad include: support from the school’s leadership; the School Department’s vision; the School Safety and Security Specialist’s capacity and comfort with community development with students, staff and the broader community; and budgets and access to grants. The difference between a basic and a broad mandate may be because of seeing security as better served by a focus on enforcement and punishment (narrow mandate), or better served by school climate development (broad mandate).

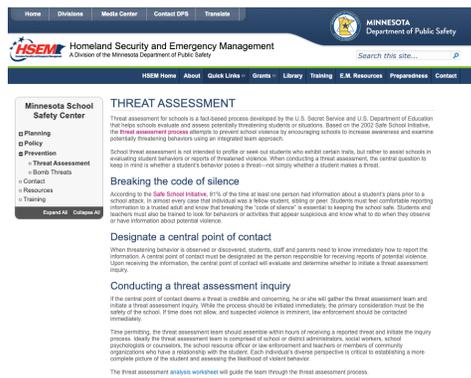
## Basic Practices

### Emergency Procedures, Training, Contacts, Lockdowns, Threat Assessment

The School Safety and Security Specialists will become familiar with [security in place for Minneapolis Public Schools](#)<sup>1</sup>, and the school where they will serve, in the course of their training. This Brief focuses on some practices that hopefully add to the School Safety and Security Specialist’s training experience.

After arriving at their new schools, new School Safety and Security Specialist’s should immediately begin to know the school environment. The newly completed training is the foundation. Possible activities for the first few days of work include:

- Introduction to the teachers and student body by a school administrator, preferably the principal, class by class;
- Tour and become familiar with the school, the grounds, and the local area;
- Verify that there is a functional [Threat Assessment Team or School Safety and Crisis Team](#) at the school, or if not, work with the Principal to start one. According to [the Minnesota Department of Public Safety](#) (DPS) the team should include the School Administrator (Principal); school social worker, psychologist or counselor; the School Safety and Security Specialist; a teacher and/or another community member who knows the student well.
- Meet members of the Threat Assessment Team to ensure there is a group able to function if there is a need;



<sup>1</sup> [List of trainings](#) currently offered for School Resource Officers in Minnesota Public Schools.

- Talk with administrators and teachers. Build a picture of the school environment as these veteran professionals know it;
- Assess your “toolkit”. The toolkit might be electronics, useful reading, contacts... Michael Beer, Director of Nonviolence International, recommends that the School Safety and Security Specialist, and perhaps other administrators, have a bullhorn. If, for example, a student fight is happening or imminent in a school hallway, getting attention can be difficult or even contribute to the mayhem. A bullhorn controls the sound of the space. The person in authority can speak normally, defuse the situation, and exercise control without increasing the tension.

## Violence Prevention: Early or Imminent Warning/Early Response

The school’s absolute responsibility to protect the well-being of students in its care includes receiving **early warning** and **imminent warning** of potential harm. [Early warning signs](#) include indicators that a young person may be depressed, in trouble, need help, including perhaps professional help, or learning of a student’s intention to fight another student. The early warning is that this reaches a person in the school with the competence and motivation to act on the information. [Imminent warning signs](#) raise alarms about a serious threat. In 81% of school attacks, at least [one other person had prior knowledge](#) of an intended attack. Most told no one.

A [Threat Assessment](#) Team becomes involved if there is possibility of a higher level of harm. The process risks being wielded harshly, for example profiling students, using unusual student choices as indicative of dangerous intent, or being more punitive to special needs students. In practice, a more nuanced approach is generally used, and better conforms to Minnesota’s approach. When there is heightened level of concern, then the team should act quickly.

The school environment and culture will determine: if a student or parent or another community member delivers a warning, if someone in the school receives it, if it makes it to the right person in the school, and if an appropriate response is made. Making these steps dependable is essential.

An Oakland school Restorative Justice Coordinator<sup>2</sup> described a process of building trust that eventually led to hearing early the warnings that could enable safely resolving school problems. The cultural landscape often does not favor trusting an adult, a teacher, someone not from the neighborhood. Being respected or disrespected may be keenly felt. Building trust is not a short-term project. Between hearing of a potential problem from a young person and getting their permission (establishing trust or that the trust already built applies to the current concern) to approach the person of concern might involve meeting several times over a few days. Working with one problem involving three or four young people might take 10-20 hours. Eventually, this trust building culture can result in hearing about potential problems early.

Like Restorative Justice, other practices that support developing a school culture that respectfully and safely makes early warning possible and more likely include: Peer Mediation, Mindfulness, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Upstander Training, De-escalation Training, and a Student Peacemakers program.

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<sup>2</sup> Interview July 22, 2020.

## Be an Upstander

Organizing Upstander training in schools creates a great platform for educating the student population on how to deal with potential harms and countering fear-driven silence. Being a bystander is standing by and watching a school yard fight or hearing a threat of harmful action and not reporting it to a responsible person. Saying nothing can seem reasonable: the bystander may fear getting dragged in, being ridiculed by peers, misunderstanding a situation, retribution. Being an *Upstander* is stepping in to stop bullying, counter sexual harassment, help defuse a situation. Upstander Training teaches and practices skills that enable successful intervention with minimal risk. A school Upstander program could include:

- Training a team of interested students as Upstanders;
- Trained Upstanders making presentations in classrooms about: reporting things that could be dangerous, acting if someone needs help, and understanding why this contributes to a safer school culture and is a *more* reasonable response than silence.

Peers presenting to peers the rationale, practice and courage of Upstanding may influence young people more readily than a lecture or even the same training led by adults.

The Upstander Alliance invites Middle and High Schools to join more than 5000 other schools with an Upstander Alliance program.

Being an Upstander is not only important in schools. The word is also used to describe more widely, doing the right thing. Starbucks' series Upstanders "shares stories about ordinary people doing extraordinary things to create positive change." There are 21 episodes, each 5-8 minutes long.

## Trauma-Informed Practice

A large urban school district that had previously offered, but not required, teachers training on trauma-informed teaching – a lens through which teachers, counselors, or guardians may view their students – made training mandatory in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In recent decades trauma has come to be understood as a pervasive reality for children. More than 43% of American children have experienced at least one traumatic life experience, referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as abuse, neglect, natural disasters, bearing witness to violence, family drug and alcohol abuse, or poverty. 10% of children have experienced three or more traumatic influences. Children in lower socio-economic conditions *on average* experience far more such events, for example: Children living in poverty were five times more likely to have four or more ACEs than children whose family income is four times the Federal Poverty Line.

Children who have experienced traumatic events, *may* have long-term emotional dysregulation: “[abnormality or impairment](#) in the regulation of a metabolic, physiological, or psychological process”, potentially causing an inappropriate and harmful response to anything that triggers reexperiencing the trauma. This presents a difficulty however, as the trigger may be completely unconscious and seemingly unrelated to the original trauma. The person experiencing these traumatic triggers may withdraw, display inappropriate anger, become violent, suffer suicidal ideation or become suicidal, develop eating disorders or substance abuse disorders, become vulnerable to involvement in violent extremism, or otherwise engage in unhealthy coping mechanisms. Exact connections are subject to debate, but it is widely agreed by the psychological community that trauma is ‘baked’ into our bodies, and reactivity is largely involuntary. Many children *can’t help it – yet*: acting out, anger, fear, compulsive behavior can be an involuntary expression of past or current trauma being triggered. Traumatized children – like traumatized adults – are likely not to realize they are traumatized or what triggers them.

Teachers, counselors, and School Safety and Security Specialists can use a variety of tools to control a situation – and more satisfyingly – support the child or youth’s healing process. [Understanding the role of trauma](#) does not mean looking away, or letting unhealthy behavior continue. It does not mean that there are no consequences. Rather, by employing some fairly simple practices, responsible adults can help the child relax, address the anger and fear, and encourage cooperation.” Many practices included in this document can support “re-wiring,” or a change in the chain of thought processes and accompanying behavior and reactions to aid the child in developing healthier coping mechanisms and a more stable emotional condition. There are practices that trauma therapists and trainers help teachers, counselors, care-givers, companions learn and use in the moment or in an immediate risk situation. Just as there can be subtle triggers that lead to acting out, there can be subtle messages that help a person regain control of themselves.

Here is some advice from the experts:

- Stay calm;
- Understand that the young person needs to feel safe;
- Speak softly, even a little sing-songy, like the rhythms of poetry;
- Make your physical presence reassuring but never threatening;
- Increase space between you and the other if they feel threatened – or if you feel threatened;
- Prevent a physical confrontation;
- Look in their eyes not in confrontation or domination, but rather making and inviting contact and connection;
- Smile widely, a ‘crow’s feet around the eyes’ kind of smile and aim to be genuine;
- Shut off low frequency sounds, humming lights, engine sounds, deep gruff voices;
- Be respectful;
- Approach the interaction from a place of understanding, free of judgement;
- Don’t interrupt, let them finish speaking; listen to what they are saying.

Our reactions to traumatic events are not an exact science or formulaic in nature. Our different psychological profiles, our individual capacities for resilience, [our experience of nurturing while growing up](#), our particular circumstances when we experience traumatic events are all factors in how we may cope with our unique Adverse Childhood Experiences.

## Violence Prevention: Mapping

Mapping is using school floor and site plans for specific objectives. For school safety, it is to see where and when unacceptable behavior occurs and to use that information to reduce and eliminate that behavior. Mapping can also be used for human resources: where should people be and when.

Highlighting places and times where bullying, gender violence, or fights happen enables targeted change. Class schedules and lunch times can be altered to prevent these acts. Teacher-teacher or teacher-community member teams could monitor problem areas. A beautification project could be implemented, etc. As such behavior is reduced, the school can report to the students on progress made in creating a better environment. This recognizes and names unwanted behavior, indicates the school is committed to and acting to stop it, and credits and appreciates the students for making a better school.

### Colorado Schools Map “Hot Spots”

Eagle County Charter Academy was one of the first 12 Colorado schools that participated in mapping “hot spots” in their schools. Students identified places they felt safe and places where they felt unsafe, and why. Administrators made changes in response to students’ suggestions eliminating risk points for bullying or gender violence. Students experienced being empowered by the schools acting on their observations, making the school safer, and having closer relations with teachers.

Emerging from the data, a primary strategy for a safer school is reclaiming the places that the school community has left without clear “ownership” when not in use, places that no one feels responsible for, “unowned places and times:” the showers when maintenance is not there, the auditorium when no public activity is happening, hallways and stairways between classes, the cafeteria, areas around or on the way to or from school. These spaces may be occupied or used by bullies, gangs, etc. Mapping identifies the areas and contributes to planning to reclaim them and make them safe for the school community.

Considering the benefits of student voice initiatives raises the question of why such initiatives are not more common. As evidence for the value of such efforts increases, researchers are considering how to make student voice projects occur more often and last longer. [Dana L. Mitra](#)

Every problematic event during a set time period is recorded in a database and marked on a map of the school and relevant outside space. Changes are implemented to make problematic behavior harder. Later, a new mapping project can be implemented and the year to year data can be compared. Is school violence reduced? Are there new areas of concern? Do staff and students see school climate and security improve, year to year?

Focus groups of students and adults are another venue for this investigation: What happened? Who was involved? Who intervened? What did the administration do about it? What was the follow-up with the victim, with the perpetrator, with parents? Multiple studies link the quality of the school environment to students perception of school discipline. Fair discipline is linked

to safer schools. Unfair discipline breeds more problems. This is fertile ground for student-adult Participatory Action Research including focus groups.

## Student Voices / Student Agency

Students can be actively involved in designing the research to map the incidence of school violence, and design solutions. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is research by and for a community. It is problem solving while recognizing and including those affected – in this case, students, faculty, staff. Student voices can help school climate and schools generally improve if seriously called upon.<sup>3</sup> As the Center for the Study of Boys' and Girls' Lives writes "...students are viewed as 'insiders,' experts on the daily workings of their schools and are therefore best situated to suggest how school practices might be improved to create a more equitable educational environment." One model or plan will not fit every school. Data can aim targeted action.

### Raising Student Voices

Only 57% of entering freshmen graduated. A third of teachers left every year. A San Francisco area high school was failing. The school's change path was to actively engage student voices. When teachers and students practiced Action Research together on improving pedagogy, a lot changed. When teachers realized why they were not heard, they actively changed. Students were activated and became partners with each other and teachers in making the school succeed.

School mapping is a good fit for Participatory Action Research. So are, for example: Dealing with Bullying; Why Do Students Not Hear Teachers; Creating a Learning Classroom; How Classrooms Could Accommodate and Teachers Manage Varying Learning Styles.

Student participation and indeed leadership in activities, in safety, in community connections, in evaluating and visioning the school can contribute to a school climate which is received by students as welcoming and respectful. Truly including students in leadership may need outside consulting and training. It should be welcoming to diverse voices, as traditional student leader roles could favor a limited subgroup of students. Diverse student involvement can be as well a powerful contributor to civics

education. Recognizing student voice and including participation and leadership in the school community empowers both "learning" and "doing" aspects of civics education.

## Extending the Positive School Community

Professor Ron Astor and colleagues have explored the "theoretically atypical school": schools that perform either much better or much worse than expected for their neighborhoods and community. Performance includes: academic results, student and teacher safety, student and teacher happiness, and the condition of the building and grounds. What made the difference in these schools' performance? A three-year study found the overwhelming reason schools performed much better than the average in their socio-economic environments was school leadership, the

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<sup>3</sup> Minneapolis Public Schools' data portal provides year to year statistics on student, teacher and parent evaluation of school climate; on student disciplinary referrals, and on Social Emotional Learning. Involving student voice and perspective in other forms of research is no less important.

principal. Leaders that walked the halls, knew students by name, demonstrated they cared for them and protected them, expected a lot of students, and helped the students meet those expectations, made sure the building and grounds were clean and beautified, and demonstrated a conscientious and moral atmosphere – led schools to significant qualitative difference.

Though not the principal, the School Safety and Security Specialist is an important person in shaping school climate. What can the School Safety and Security Specialist do to make the school a better place? Though this will vary school to school, depending on the administration’s priorities and decisions, and legal realities, the School Safety and Security Specialist can:

- Stay positive, learn names, greet students and staff;
- Enroll teachers and other staff to commit time to walk through potential problem areas, not so much as law enforcement but as guides and good shepherds;
- Recruit community volunteers. Grandparents are powerful volunteers (though perhaps an easier fit with [elementary schools](#)). Grandparents volunteer with such organizations as [Experience Corps](#), [Foster Grandparents Program](#), [Volunteer Grandparents](#). If there are not institutional barriers (legal, insurance) local volunteers, recruited from the neighborhood, may bring hands and hearts to the school. Some, perhaps, could be part of Unarmed Civilian Protection.
- Partner with students and listen to student voices.
- Practice compassion, empathy, steadiness, de-escalation, nonviolent communication.

Michael Dorn, the executive director of Safe Havens International, a security consulting firm said, “There is still no replacement for the human touch: better training for teachers and deeper relationships between students and staff.”  
*The Washington Post*

## The Broader Mandate

For a broader mandate, the School Safety and Security Specialist would seek and support broader student and community involvement: teachers, staff, local businesses and clubs, houses of worship, etc. The School Safety and Security Specialist becomes community organizer: finding interests, resources needed and available, volunteers (students, teachers, grandmothers...) and enlarging the mandate to create a truly safe school based on respect, inclusion, decency, non-harm.

Nationally, [93% of high schools and middle schools](#) use violence prevention best practices, including restricted building access and conflict resolution programs. Schools on average use ten violence prevention practices – while failing schools might use only two practices.

## Creating A+ School Climate

Many school programs and activities contribute to improving school climate. The following activities, some of which may already be at your school, are highlighted for making a safer school and helping students to further develop their “super powers” of resilience, self-worth,

discipline, centeredness, courage, leadership, and understanding and responsibility for self, their fellow students and their school. Some are not now available in your city though they may be in the future – or stimulate something new in your area. No school can or needs to implement them all! But, young people, their families and their teachers will benefit from there being a healthy selection of opportunities. Following this list, a few options are explored in more detail.

- [Advocates for students](#) is ensuring that each student knows there is someone in the school who is on their side – teachers, licensed advocates or counselors, perhaps more senior students, dependent on the defined role, legal guidelines if any, and whether or not [each young person has an advocate](#) or only a more limited group of students.
- [Aikido](#) is a peaceful martial art that focuses a student’s energy, diffuses tension, supports healthy life style development, emphasizes solving problems without harm to the other, encourages discipline, and has a multicultural aspect.

## Don’t Fight. Don’t Flee... De-Escalate!

In talking about conflict becoming worse or rising tensions we might say, “It’s escalating.” More soldiers or weapons being used means warfare is escalating. “De-Escalation” is stopping or reversing the trend, from more to less conflict. It’s making room to find resolution, peace, ending or avoiding some form of violence. In everyday use, we may de-escalate by care in our words and acts.

[Antoinette Tuff](#), a school bookkeeper, had some training for emergencies which was tested in a terrifying situation. In August 2013, a young man with an AR-15 and a bag of ammunition entered the Ronald E. McNair Discovery Learning Academy outside Atlanta, the elementary school where Antoinette worked. Less than a year earlier another young man with guns had entered another elementary school, Sandy Hook Elementary, and murdered 26 children and teachers. That was in Antoinette’s mind, alone and unarmed, as she began talking with the gunman she faced. Antoinette talked with the gunman about pain and loneliness, and the traumas she had experienced, about the possibility of redemption. She told him she loved him and was proud of him when he was willing to put his gun down. She walked out with him to be sure he was not shot.



De-escalation is usually needed in less frightening cases. Whatever the threat, de-escalation training, [resources](#), and practice improve outcomes. In school confrontations, for example, an angry student and a teacher trying to maintain control, can become a power struggle. De-escalation moves away from power struggle, to problem solving and resolution. Here is a [Minnesota police officer’s](#) discussion of de-escalation training.

- [Community Intervention Workers and Teams](#). The Community Intervention Worker – staff or volunteers – work in or around schools, and in the community. They may prevent

bullying, provide safe passage from or through difficult neighborhoods to schools, mediate problems, hear of and organize response to potential conflict, mentor and connect students to needed services. They are helping empower the school's connection to its community.

## Love Them First

**Love Them First: Lessons from Lucy Laney Elementary** follows a year at a north Minneapolis school: Lucy Craft Laney at Cleveland Park Community School. North Minneapolis is a vibrant area: culturally diverse, active music and art scenes, active neighborhood associations. It is also afflicted by poverty, unemployment, gangs, drugs. In the neighborhood – or even in one's own home – most children will be frequent witnesses to, or direct victims of traumatic events. The documentary explores the hearts and minds of a dedicated staff and children in their creation of a school environment that is safe and



supports children in believing in themselves and meeting challenges in education and life.

“Some people think, ‘Oh, you have mostly black children in your school – they must live in poverty, they must have a sad home life,’” she said. “Some of them do, some of them don’t. What’s sad is the way they are treated the minute they walk outside of their front door. Yes, the school needs to be their second home, but it’s not always because they don’t have a home. In the country and the culture they live in, anywhere outside of home can be an unsafe place. At any point in time, they live in an environment or an atmosphere where there is violence. When I think about some of my Laney families, I need to know that when they step into our building they feel that level of safety and they feel that level of comfort.”

The School Principal in the documentary Mauri Melander Friestleben is, since 2019, principal of North High School in Minneapolis.

- **Community Service.** Every student attending Washington DC’s Thurgood Marshall Academy Public High School is required to perform a minimum number of community service hours each year.
- **De-escalation training,** for contentious or volatile situations grows, “out of the basic principles of humanity and decency. Respect each other. Be a servant to each other. Keep each other safe.” Training builds capacity to defuse anger, reach the humanity of the potential adversary, and reduce the possibility of harmful outcomes.
- **Discipline Classes.** If the school gives students “infraction points” for misbehaviors, students can attend after school Discipline Classes for support in avoiding more infractions with “conflict resolution, stress management, defense mechanisms, and self-esteem,” and may erase infraction points and clear their record for attendance and other positive acts.

## Gage Park High School – Mindfulness is Studied

[Chicago's Gage Park High School](#) students grow up in a stressful environment. 98.3% are low income. Chicago Public Schools chose schools to try out meditation in areas with the highest homicide rates in the city. Quiet Time, a program based on Transcendental Meditation, was selected for use in Gage Park. The Gage Park program, with some major donor support, has promising results. "[Gage Park Principal](#) Brian Metcalf said the Quiet Time program has yielded immediate results for students and staff. Suspensions are down, Metcalf said, and a recent round of SAT prep scores showed improvement. Teachers, he said, see improvement in students' behavior and ability to concentrate in class." Not just students. Biology teacher Shameka Jones reported, "The first time I did it, I felt so relaxed. I felt ready to work more than I ever had. ... It was like a vortex in my brain opened up and allowed positive energy in."

A wide range of benefits from mindfulness is reported in the academic literature, including: reducing stress, increasing well-being, strengthening immune response, reducing symptoms of depression, reduction in anxiety, increase in social skills, decrease in hostility, and improvement in academic performance, interpersonal relations and health. One [meta-study of school mindfulness](#) programs analyzed results in 24 schools involving 1348 students and 876 controls. There was a wide diversity of students in the studies, though they were primarily from low income families. Improvements were found across the schools in cognitive performance, managing emotional issues, resilience factors, stress and coping, and third person ratings. Students also rated the mindfulness programs: 89% would recommend it to others, 81% as extremely useful, 83% as satisfying. 75% would have liked the program to go on longer, and only 5% thought it was too long.

- [Nonviolent communication](#) teaches skills "to hear our own deeper needs and those of others," to use language based in those deeper needs, increasing mutual respect;
- **Peer Counseling** training prepares students to listen, be present for, ask questions of other students who are struggling with difficult situations or emotions, or otherwise seek support. The Broward County School District in Florida, the sixth largest school district in the United States, offers an elective two-semester [Peer Counseling](#) course in all middle schools and an elective six-semester course in high schools for students who apply and are accepted for these programs. Here are two sample course descriptions: [Pompano Beach High School](#), [Glades Middle School](#). In the Broward programs, peer counselors also facilitate various activities, special events, and guest speakers. [Peer Resources San Francisco](#), in the San Francisco United School District (SFUSD), active since 1979, and training 700 youth leaders per year(?), works in fourteen middle and high schools offering a year-long class. Trained students offer mentoring, tutoring, and conflict mediation. Peer Resources celebrates creating a High School Educator Pathway – "building a [community leadership pipeline](#) for our high-school age youth leading to careers in SFUSD," meeting critical teacher shortages, employing more teachers who share the same life experience as many of the students, improving students' employment opportunities, and enhancing student leadership. "[Peer Helping](#)" can include many different activities: connection, counseling, presenting programs, mediation, activities assistance, tutoring, violence prevention, etc.



## The Peace Warriors

In 2009 the [NLCP Peace Warriors](#) program began at North Lawndale College Prep High School (NLCP), with training from the [Addie Wyatt Center](#) for Nonviolence Training of Chicago (AWC). Reporting 70% reduction in youth violence at the school, a culture of peace is established. Recognizing the benefits, Evanston Township and Wendell Phillips High Schools students participated in two summer training programs.

The Addie Wyatt Center regularly trains and supports Peer trainers who train other students in their own high schools. Trainings ideally are co-led by an adult and a youth working on an equal basis.

The NLCP Peace Warriors strive to implement the Six Principles of Kingian Nonviolence in daily life:

- Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.
- The Beloved Community is the framework for the future.
- Attack forces of evil not persons doing evil.
- Accept suffering without retaliation for the sake of the cause to achieve a goal.
- Avoid internal violence of the spirit as well as external physical violence.
- The Universe is on the side of justice.

- [Peer mediation](#) is “a form of conflict resolution in which trained student leaders help their peers work together to resolve everyday disputes.” Studies have overwhelmingly found peer mediation effective, including up to [68% reduction](#) in school violence.
- [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#). “[PBIS is a system-wide approach](#) to preventing and improving problem behaviors in classrooms and schools. PBIS does not single out ‘problem students’ for punishment, but rather involves the entire school population in promoting and rewarding positive behaviors, while preventing negative or risky behaviors, in order to create a safe, supportive learning environment for all.” [PBIS is used](#) by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).
- Student Rapid Response Team (SRRT) as either an academic program like the Peer Counseling programs noted above, or an after-school activity, would promote members as they pass from grade to grade. Learning and using practices such as Nonviolent Communication, Upstanding, Unarmed Accompaniment, Peer Mediation, and De-escalation. SRRT students with growing competences, responsibility, and capacity can intervene in difficult situations. Training and certification could enable continuing education and employment.

Fifth graders at Jackson Elementary School in Salt Lake City advocated for a new school library for their school – and succeeded. They researched, brainstormed, gave speeches, raised money, lobbied, wrote proposals – and got a library. *Students can be education advocates.*

- [Students as Education Advocates](#) is another model, as with Participatory Action Research, to see student influence in the course of education as directly relevant to safer, smarter schools.

- [Student peacemakers](#). [Teaching Students to be Peacemakers](#), delivered in 2019 at [Thomas Edison](#) High School in Minneapolis, sees conflict as normal and healthy and managing conflict as teachable. [Multiple studies](#) have validated the program’s effectiveness.
- [Student Peace Awards](#). Doing something valuable for the community should be recognized. Recognition creates a positive model. Positive models encourage more positive models. This Virginia program could be a positive model for one – or even 13 – Minneapolis high schools.
- [Student-Police Dialogues](#). Miami students organized a series of police-student dialogues to increase understanding. Creating peace happens in varying venues.
- [Unarmed Civilian Protection \(UCP\)](#) “refers to the use of unarmed civilians protecting civilians. Protection is about preventing, reducing, and stopping violence.”
- [Upstander training](#). An upstander is someone “who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied.”
- **Yoga** like mindfulness, can enable students and staff in calming and centering themselves, while improving their physical well-being. Yoga is most possible if there are experienced practitioners on the school staff who would take on the program. While some yoga can be done by one’s school desk, both practices benefit from space and some equipment.



Fairfax County, Virginia Student Peace Award Winners

## Existing Minneapolis Public School Programs

- [Homework Help](#), after school tutoring, is organized with [Hennepin County libraries](#), which offers tutoring in a public library or online. Schools can assist students to use this support. A plus: students connect with another city resource and institution working for their welfare.
- [Credit Recovery](#), available in all Minneapolis High Schools, enables students who failed or missed a course to earn the credits during a weekly after school class.
- [AVID](#), Advancement Via Individual Determination, helps students prepare for application to and success in a four-year college or university.
- [Everyday Leaders](#) is an after-school, student-led, teacher-advised program. Students design and implement community service programs while developing leadership skills.

- Secondary school students who are parents can get support until graduation from the **Family Learning Child Care (FLCC)** program.

**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**. “PBIS is a system-wide approach to preventing and improving problem behaviors in classrooms and schools. PBIS does not single out ‘problem students’ for punishment, but rather involves the entire school population in promoting and rewarding positive behaviors, while preventing negative or risky behaviors, in order to create a safe, supportive learning environment for all.” Schools may achieve behavior modification with a comprehensive system of merits and infractions. For example, when teachers record that a student is on-time, prepared, etc., the school office records merits for the student. When the student does not fulfill a requirement, demerits are recorded.

Approximately 27,000 (2018) of the United States’ 130,000 K-12 public and private schools use PBIS. Minnesota studies reported that the 25% of school districts using PBIS accounted for 62.1% of decreases in suspensions over 4 years.

PBIS is used by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

School staff and students may already be involved in some of these activities. School safety and security is more than security staff, locked doors and cameras. It’s also the programs, activities, practice, guidance, caring, boundaries, learning, skills, services that make a school a community. The School Safety and Security Specialist may support and work with others in the school community, both within the school, and the wider community that is home to the school’s students, to make more activities part of the school’s program.

## Districts Ending SROs in Schools

Major American cities have decided to terminate School Resource Officer (SRO) presence in some or all of their schools. This section will note those cities and briefly describe, if available, their process and their approach to Safe Schools post-SRO presence.

**Bloomington, Minnesota.** The School Board approved a [Safe and Supportive Schools plan](#) that addresses “racial inequities and foster school environments that promote respect for and curiosity about all cultures.” We do not know, at this time, if School Resource Officers are affected.

**California.** As will be seen below, many California school districts are ending SRO relationships with police departments, eliminating their school police department, or studying that possibility. A California budget agreement (June 23, 2020) “allocated \$200,000 for the creation of a [Young People’s Task Force](#) to advise the governor and state education leaders on school police matters.”

**Charlottesville, Virginia.** Charlottesville city schools voted June 11 to sever its \$300,000 annual contract for 4 SROs. Charlottesville is seeking community input on how to use the savings, so far considering more black counselors, social workers and support staff. Albemarle County, surrounding Charlottesville is reevaluating its contract with the police. Charlottesville City Schools have many [positive school climate](#) programs including [Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports \(VTSS\)](#) and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and [wellness](#) programs. [Police Chief RaShall Brackney](#), in an interview, said, “Just as police are reconsidering what our roles are in mental health, in drug addiction, in working with homeless persons, we need to consider whether we were actually doing the job that we originally thought we were going to be able to do in schools. Or have we just been relegated to serving as school security officers?” The [state legislature](#) has been looking at the role of SROs in Virginia where 90% of Middle and High Schools have some SRO presence. A number of bills were passed in the 2020 session to cut out some sections of the school-to-prison pipeline, such as not allowing students to be charged with disorderly conduct on school grounds, and not requiring principals to report student incidents that could be charged as misdemeanors. Perhaps there is some threat in comments made by the executive director of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Dana Schrad, “Let localities decide whether or not they want to keep (school resource officers). If the locality decides to discontinue their [school resource officer] programs, then it will be up to school officials to be ready to respond when a crisis occurs.”

**Denver, Colorado.** The Denver Public Schools board voted on June 12 to discontinue 17 police positions in the schools. [Police Chief Paul Pazen](#) believes that the [school-to-prison pipeline is a Denver issue](#) but they had made progress against that pipeline and hopes to work toward solutions with the Board. As Denver has 200+ schools and only 17 SROs, a case could not be made that they were essential, though it is contended that most Principals

The Tennyson Center for Children for traumatized children 5-18 in Denver, both residential and living at home, reported going from 45-50 police contacts per month in 2016 to under three per month before COVID19 hit in 2020, saving Colorado taxpayers almost \$90,000 annually. They attribute

with SROs wanted them. The school budget of \$700,000 annually will be reallocated toward counselors, nurses, mental health professionals and other resources.

this to “two key changes” with police: Thursday night basketball with police, and a compassionate School Resource Officer.

**Los Angeles, California.** The Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has a 535-member school police department (LASPD) with an annual budget over \$70 million. The district, second largest in the US, had 734,641 students in 2016. In 2014 school discipline was decriminalized in response to findings that African American students were six times more likely to be arrested or given a ticket than white students. Defunding the school police was considered June 23, 2020, and on July 1 the [LAUSD Board cut the police budget](#) by \$25 million, eliminating 65 officers, overtime and vacant positions. The \$25 million will be reallocated to hiring more counselors, social workers and other support staff. The chief of the school police resigned, saying the vote would result in “bare minimum service.” The department argued against the budget cuts that the school police that there were no in-custody deaths since the department was created in 1948 and that the school police department had saved 52 lives since 2005. From another perspective, [2014-2017 LASPD arrested](#) 3,389 students and issued 2,724 citations of which ¼ were kids in middle and elementary school. The LAUSD website does not yet indicate more directly how reallocated funds will be used.

**Louisville, Kentucky.** The Jefferson County Board of Education did not fund [SROs in August 2019](#) on a 3-3 vote. Some board members strongly believed schools better without SROs citing the school to prison pipeline, inappropriate punishment, etc. The [Kentucky legislature](#), however, is requiring SROs.

**Madison, Wisconsin.** The Madison School District Board voted June 29, 2020 to end SRO presence in Madison schools. Local activist group Freedom, Inc. that has long lobbied for removal, says this is just a beginning. [Madison Police Chief VIC Wahl](#) argued that, “For years, MPD’s school resource officers have played an instrumental role in maintaining a safe learning environment at MMSD’s four high schools. They’ve developed relationships with faculty, students, and staff; these connections have allowed them greater insight and background when working with MMSD to solve problems (both long-term and short-term) in the schools.”

**Minnesota Intermediate School District 287** replaced SROs with [Student Safety Coaches \(SSCs\)](#) in 2016. The [District set out](#) to be one of Minnesota’s first trauma-sensitive and healing-centered Districts in Minnesota. The SSCs “specialize in mental health, de-escalation, restorative justice and safe physical interventions.” Wilder Research, a Minnesota-based leader in non-profit research and evaluation, has closely studied District 287. Their report, [ISD 287’s Student Safety Coaches](#), is an invaluable 3-year study. Arrests plummeted from 65 to 12 in the first year, and now averages five per year. The District has a high percentage of students on the autism spectrum, and near half identifying as students of color, and a higher incidence of difficult situations than most other schools. The District opted to go from law enforcement response to mental health and trauma-healing type response. The SSC program director Theon Jarrett said, “We do our best to support, listen to them, validate them, give them a voice, then get them back to class. That’s the ultimate thing we want to do — get them back to class.” SSCs are involved in all aspects of the school day: the school bus, at the school entry, helping in classrooms and the

lunch room. SSCs had to prove themselves to teachers who feared losing the SROs. Trust was built as SSCs proved able to de-escalate, get kids back into class, and maintain a safer atmosphere built on increased trust. [SSCs strive to not embarrass the student](#), to preserve their dignity as they work through a crisis. [District 287 approaches trauma-healing](#) as fundamental to success.

**Oakland, California.** In June the School Board unanimously agreed to end working with School Resource Officers. There are currently [10 armed police and 50 unarmed](#) campus security officers. School Superintendent Kyla Johnson-Trammell’s goal is to end the school’s police program by December 2020 and redirect the funding to social workers and restorative justice coordinators. Opponents argued that the city police could not respond as well as school police who knew their schools nor to the new calls that formerly went to the school police, between June 2019 and January 2020 over 1,000 calls, including a couple hundred priority calls. The [Black Organizing Project](#) which has been actively seeking to end police presence in the schools for years advocates for peacekeepers or school climate specialists trained in de-escalation and trauma-informed approaches.

**Portland, Oregon.** The [Portland SRO program](#), which provided 11 armed police in high schools, was ended in early June by Portland Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero. Mayor Ted Wheeler said he’d independently reached a decision to pull police out of Portland schools. \$1 million will be transferred to a community-driven program. Since at least December 2018 community activists have pushed for ending the SRO program in Portland schools. [Online the District says](#), “All schools are concurrently engaged in a process of creating school specific School Climate Handbooks in collaboration with staff, students, families and community partners to meet the unique needs of each school community. “

**Sacramento, California.** [Voted to terminate](#) municipal police contracts. [SROs were in Sacramento schools](#) only since November 2016; in 2019 the school district planned for four officers to cover 70 school sites but did not budget or hire SROs till November. \$600,000 will be reallocated to alternative safety plans.

**San Francisco, California.** The [San Francisco School Board cut ties](#) with San Francisco police on June 24, 2020. The [SFSB resolution](#) calls for community-based violence prevention rather than the 12 armed SROs. The School Department’s financial contribution will be redirected to school health and wellness programs. Some Black parents spoke in support of the SROs, saying they worked well. School Board Alison Collins said, “There are great school resource officers, but that’s not the system. We need to fix the system.”

**Seattle, Washington.** The Seattle School Board voted in June to indefinitely suspend employing police in the schools, which was seen as part of a [larger resolution](#) “affirming Seattle Public Schools’ commitment to Black students.” This included [School Emphasis Officers](#) (SEOs), also armed police, though with a different mandate than SROs, who focus on gang resistance, violence prevention education and training, truancy and suspension reduction. The [Superintendent of Schools Denise Juneau](#) was quite explicit in her notice to the police department that the police violence against Black people and particularly young Black males, the police militarization in Seattle and response to demonstrations, the unauthorized use of school property for staging their

response to protests were unacceptable and central to indefinite suspension of relations with the Seattle police.

**St. Paul, Minnesota.** The [St. Paul Board of Education voted](#) June 23, 2020 to end its School Resource Officer contract, allowing \$700,000/year to be reallocated. This action removes seven SROs from the city's high schools. The Board decided to develop an interim safety plan, create a district-wide implementation committee and school climate and safety groups. [Opponents of defunding](#) argued that efforts to change the work, perception and outcomes of SROs had been successful. Aiming to keep young people out of the criminal justice system arrest totals dropped from 56 in 2015-16 to 5 in 2016-2017.

**Toronto, Ontario, Canada.** The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) voted 18-3, November 22, 2017, to end that city's School Resource Officer program. SROs were in 45 Toronto high schools. Toronto hired community members as safety monitors. [Expulsions are down](#) by half and suspensions by 25%. [Other Canadian cities](#), such as Edmonton, are looking anew at Toronto as they consider ending SRO programs. The [Peel, Ontario police](#) put their SRO program on pause for reevaluation, a move supported by the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. Toronto is a model for American cities ending or considering ending SRO presence in their schools. The decision was made after a diligent [review process](#). The [Toronto Schools Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) outlines goals, measurable targets, and means of assessment that address the issues that led to ending SRO involvement and how safe schools are created. The [District's annual reports](#) appear to demonstrate their commitment to equity. Suspensions and expulsions are down. Broad data collection enables analysis for discrimination or bias that can be addressed.

**West Contra Costa United School District,** California. WCCUSD is eliminating SROs. The teachers' union, United Teachers of Richmond, advocates using the 2020-2021 \$1.5 million budgeted for SROs to fund programs specifically for African American students. The WCCUSD website has a Positive School Climate section with PBIS staff and information, and links for Restorative Practices, Data, Tier 1, Teams, Behavior Expectations without content. The District currently has 44 unarmed campus security guards and may increase that number. The District seeks rely less on law enforcement and focus more on students' socio-emotional health, restorative justice, and conflict de-escalation.

**Winona, Minnesota.** The [Winona Area Public Schools board voted](#) that its single SRO would no longer work in the schools after 90 days. Resources instead will be focused on counseling, mental health and trauma-informed program guidance. The school has two unarmed Safety Specialists. The student representative on the Winona school board said she believes that is enough. The [temporary safety plan](#) includes having a Student Safety Coach at every school, and shifting Safety Specialists to the Student Safety Coach position

## Resources

### Safe Schools Guides

- [Safe Schools: A Best Practices Guide](#)
  - Council of Educational Facilities Planners International, 2013
- [Creating Schoolwide Prevention and Intervention Strategies](#)
  - The Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence & Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- [A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools](#)
  - This document is a collaboration of six national associations: American School Counselor Association (ASCA): [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org); National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP): [www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org); National Association of School Psychologists (NASP): [www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org); National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO): [www.nasro.org](http://www.nasro.org); National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP): [www.nassp.org](http://www.nassp.org); School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA): [www.sswaa.org](http://www.sswaa.org)
- [Preventing and Reducing Youth Crime and Violence: Using Evidence-based Practices](#)
- [School Climate and Learning – Best Practice Briefs](#)
- [Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates](#)
  - United States Secret Service and United States Department of Education
- [Center for Safe Schools](#)
  - Various publications on sub-themes of safety issues
- [Tool Box](#)
  - Approximately 400 sample documents, plans, protocols, exercises for emergency managers, assembled and organized by the US Department of Education.

### Restorative Justice Resources

- [Restorative Justice: Resources for Schools](#)
  - Extensive list of resources explaining how to implement restorative justice that also includes success stories of schools that have already transitioned over (the links below can be found on this webpage)
- [Tutorial: Introduction to Restorative Justice](#)
  - 6-part tutorial introducing restorative justice and how to implement it
- [Restorative Practices Whole School Implementation Guide](#)
  - Information from the San Francisco School District informing schools on how to implement Restorative Justice
- [Curriculum and Supporting documents](#)
  - How to integrate Restorative Justice practices into school curriculums

## Mindfulness Resources

### Article Summaries:

- [Enhancing Cognitive and Social–Emotional Development Through a Simple-to-Administer Mindfulness-Based School Program for Elementary School Children](#)
  - Authors conducted a test involving two SEL programs, one of them with a mindfulness component. The SEL with mindfulness resulted in students “show[ing] greater decreases in self-reported symptoms of depression and peer-rated aggression.”
- [Bringing Mindfulness into Schools](#) - **mindful.org**
  - “Chatsworth is one of thousands of schools across the country that is bringing mindfulness into the classroom. Growing numbers of teachers, parents, and children are reaping the benefits that learning mindfulness...can bring, including reduced levels of stress and anxiety, increased focus and self-regulation, and improved academic performance and sleep....”
- [Is mindfulness meditation good for kids? Here’s what the science says.](#) - **vox.com**
  - “There are regional-based nonprofits like Minds Incorporated in the DC area that offer mindfulness instruction (sometimes free of charge) to local schools. There are national organizations such as Mindful Schools, which has trained around 14,000 educators and professionals who work with youth in mindfulness instruction (the starter course costs \$125). And it’s being written into textbooks from publishers like Scholastic.”
- [31+ Ways of Teaching Mindfulness in Schools](#) - **positivepsychology.com**
  - Discusses what mindfulness is, how to teach it and apply it in schools, and provides a list of 31+ different activities that can be brought into the classroom or school.
- [Schools are Embracing Mindfulness but Practice Doesn’t Always Make Perfect](#) - **npr.org**
  - Mindfulness program implemented at Warner Arts Magnet Elementary School in Nashville, TN, to help students with trauma and challenges that affect their behavior in school. 90% of the student body lives in poverty.

### Additional Resources:

- <https://www.davidlynchfoundation.org/schools.html>
  - David Lynch Foundation’s Quiet Time program in schools
- [https://cwae.org/violence\\_reduction.php#slide\\_top](https://cwae.org/violence_reduction.php#slide_top)
  - Center for Wellness and Achievement in Education chart on reduction in school violence at John O’Connell High School, San Francisco.
- <https://www.mindfulschools.org/about-mindfulness/research-on-mindfulness/>
  - Links to synopses on research articles on mindfulness meditation and activities in schools
- <https://www.mindfulschools.org/about-mindfulness/why-is-mindfulness-needed-in-education/>
- <https://www.mindfulschools.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/starter-lesson.pdf>

### Media:

- <https://www.njtvonline.org/news/video/how-schools-can-ward-off-anxiety-misbehavior-and-even-violence-through-mindfulness/>
  - “Naomi Persaud is an outpatient program coordinator at Richard Hall Community Center. She goes into school districts after there’s been a traumatic loss and educates educators and schools about mindfulness.”
- <https://www.cnn.com/2016/11/04/health/meditation-in-schools-baltimore/index.html>
  - Daily meditation practices at Robert W. Coleman Elementary in West Baltimore.

## SEL Article Summaries and Additional Resources

### Article Summaries:

- [Why SEL is Essential for Students](#)
  - Discusses what SEL is, what the long- and short-term benefits of it are, how it can be applied in the classroom, and how schools can support it, with a bibliography.
- [Meta-Analysis of School-Based SEL](#)
  - “Compared to controls, SEL participants demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance that reflected an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement.”
- [Social and Emotional Learning and Equity in School Discipline](#)
  - Academic article on the racial disparities in school disciplinary actions and how federal and state initiatives and SEL programs have worked to try and reduce the disparities. Presents case studies on Syracuse, Denver, and Cleveland school districts.
- [Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Classroom Management Strategies and Classroom Management Programs on Students’ Academic, Behavioral, Emotional, and Motivational Outcomes](#)
  - “A meta-analysis of the effects of classroom management strategies and classroom management programs on students’ academic, behavioral, emotional, and motivational outcomes.”
  - “Focusing on the students’ social-emotional development appeared to have the largest contribution to the interventions’ effectiveness....”
- [Can SEL Reduce School Violence?](#)
  - Discusses the effectiveness of SEL in reducing violence in schools and provides a number of resources for implementing lesson plans and programs based on SEL.
- [Better Than Zero Report](#)
  - In-depth report documenting how zero tolerance policies in schools fuel the school-to-prison pipeline and how alternatives, such as SEL, can help break the pipeline and improve the lives of students.
- [Funding Passed in Ohio to Support SEL in Place of Exclusionary Discipline](#)
  - Provides an overview of how Ohio has developed and integrated SEL into its policy landscape and how funding is being distributed. Gives a timeline of the development of SEL policy in Ohio since 2012.

### Additional Resources:

- <https://www.guilford.com/books/Handbook-of-Social-and-Emotional-Learning/Durlak-Domitrovich-Weissberg-Gullotta/9781462527915>
  - Handbook of SEL that covers research, practice, and policy. Available for purchase.
- <https://casel.org/resources-learn/>
  - Resources by topic (schools, family, community, policy, research) and type (article, video, etc.).
- <https://casel.org/resources-support/>
  - SEL implementation tools and resources.
- <https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources>
  - Tools and resources for effectively introducing SEL practices into the classroom.
- <https://education.byu.edu/buildingsocialskills>

## Miscellaneous Resources

- [Upstander and Bystander Intervention Skills Training](#)
  - More than 50 excellent resources are linked in this document from the Upper BuxMont Upstanders.
- [Resource Guide on Counselors not Cops](#)
  - Dignity in Schools has many resources including analysis of legislation, model codes, creating school climate, PBIS, etc.

## Videos

- [A Different Approach to School Safety](#)
  - North Lawndale College Prep High School
- [March for Our Lives](#)
  - Peace Warriors speak at March for Our Lives, March 24, 2018, in Washington, DC, after the Parkland High School massacre.
- [Childhood Trauma: A Public Health Crisis](#)
  - Understanding children’s trauma, from Intermediate District 287, Minneapolis.
- [Self-Regulation and Learning](#)
  - Dr. Stuart Shanker focuses on early childhood learning and self-regulation – but it relates to all ages. This is a good short introduction to Shanker’s influential work.
- [Embedding Social and Emotional Learning in High School Classrooms](#)
  - A webinar from the National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- [Every Kid Needs a Champion](#)
  - Rita Pierson says, “I have spent my entire life either at the school house, on the way to the school house, or talking about what happened at the school house.” Pierson, in 7.5 unforgettable minutes, talks about the value of relationships in education.
- [5 Keys to Social and Emotional Learning Success](#)
  - Introduces key components of Social and Emotional Learning. This looks at making SEL part of the whole program rather than a separate activity.
- [How to fix a broken school? Lead fearlessly, love hard](#)
  - Linda Cliatt-Wayman became principal of “failing and persistently dangerous” Strawberry Mansion High School in Philadelphia.
- [Urban Dove Team](#)
  - Introduction to a unique Brooklyn high school, giving a second chance to many students who were on a failure track. Urban Dove students’ first three hours of the school day is spent with their coach, playing a team sport, doing exercise, and yoga.
- [Upstanders: The Empathetic Police Academy](#)
  - Sheriff Susan Rahr saw an opportunity, when she applied to be director of Washington state’s Criminal Justice Training Center, to refocus policing.
- [Students Tackle Life’s Challenges Together](#)
  - Edutopia looks at the Peer Counseling program at Clovis East High School in Clovis, CA.
- [We’ve Got Your Back](#)
  - Inviting students to peer counseling at Wilson High School,

- [What is Mindfulness? Awakening Kindness and Curiosity at School](#)
  - A mindful minute starts the class period.
- [What happens when you bring meditation to public schools](#)
  - Considers mindfulness as a survival tool.
- [Why Minnesota Needs Therapeutic Teaching](#)
  - Intermediate District 287 (Minneapolis) says we know what works, so let's fully fund mental health in schools.

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