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Assessment of National and State Tip Line Technology as a Strategy for Identifying Threats to School Safety

Final Technical Report

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Executive Summary

The Assessment of National and State Tip Line Technology as a Strategy for Identifying Threats to School Safety was conducted by RTI International and our partner, the Oregon State Police, from 2018 through 2021. The project was designed to describe the national prevalence and characteristics of school safety tip lines and to develop lessons learned on successful implementation approaches by conducting a case study with the SafeOregon tip line. The three main goals of the project were as follows:

> **Objective 1:** Describe the prevalence and variability of tip line technology in public middle and high schools across the United States through a national survey of school administrators (Component 1).

> **Objective 2:** Evaluate the relationship between tip line technology implementation and school safety by augmenting the national survey data with publicly available data on student disciplinary and school safety outcomes from the Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) (Component 2).

> **Objective 3:** Assess the SafeOregon tip line implementation experiences, outputs, and costs through an in-depth case study in Oregon (Component 3).

For Component 1, RTI conducted a national survey of public middle and high school administrators. We found that, in 2019, tip lines were prevalent among public middle and high schools (51%) and that tip lines were more common among larger schools, suburban schools, and low-poverty schools. Most tip lines had been implemented within the past 3 years, and they were substantially diverse in design and operation (e.g., the level at which they are operated, the procedures for reviewing and triaging tips). Many also varied in the number and type of internal and external partners involved in their operation. We examined state legislative efforts and identified 15 states that enacted or adopted codified state laws that require or authorize the creation of school safety tip lines (Gourdet et al., 2021). Since 2019, these state legislative efforts and mandates, coupled with federal funding to states and school districts to develop and operate anonymous reporting systems,[1] have resulted in wider adoption of tip line technology.

The national survey revealed that there are challenges to operating a tip line. Administrators operating tip lines stated that two key concerns were students lacking awareness about the program and tips often being submitted with insufficient information to act. Efforts are needed to involve more internal and external school stakeholders as active partners in tip line operation. These partnerships could help raise student awareness of

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[1] In 2020 and 2021, the Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded nearly $90 million in grants to approximately 120 jurisdictions under the Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Grant Program to develop and operate technology solutions such as anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence.

schools' tip lines and encourage the submission of actionable tips. Further, efforts should focus on educating students about the types of issues and situations that are appropriate for tip line reports and training students on how to submit tips with sufficient information.

Overall, most school administrators perceived tip lines to be an effective tool. They reported that tip lines made them more aware of school safety issues in their schools and improved their ability to respond to a diverse set of issues, including violent attacks, self-harm, drug use, and bullying.

For Component 2, RTI conducted a national evaluation of school tip lines and measures of school safety. We merged the national survey findings with 11 offense categories schools reported to CRDC. We found that school administrators' perceptions of tip line effectiveness were supported by the evaluation findings. Schools with tip lines reported the same number of offenses as schools without tip lines, but there was a distributional difference between the two groups. Schools with tip lines reported more threats of violence and fewer violent attacks. This distributional difference between attacks and threats was also found for several offense types, including physical attacks and threats with a weapon and physical attacks and threats without a weapon. This finding supports the mechanism by which tip lines should function: schools learn of more threats, leading to a reduction of actual attacks.

However, the relationship between tip line marketing strategies and CRDC offense categories was less clear. Among schools with tip lines, we examined associations among various marketing or awareness strategies, reported training, partnerships, and program operations to the CRDC offense categories: total offenses, threats of violence, and violent attacks. Several tip line characteristics were associated with these CRDC outcomes; however, the directionality of findings was mixed. The relationship between these CRDC outcomes and implementing awareness-raising activities, such as posting on social media, holding a tip line awareness day, hanging posters, and handing out trinkets to students, was statistically significant but was not consistently associated with higher or lower levels of offenses. Although these strategies varied in their direction across offense types, most strategies were consistent across each offense type (i.e., total offenses, attacks, and threats). For example, schools using social media posts, trinkets, billboards, flyers, and mailed messages to increase awareness had fewer total offenses, attacks, and threats. Conversely, schools using media announcements, preloading messages on school computers, hanging posters within the school, and using telephone calls to raise awareness had significantly higher levels of total offenses, attacks, and threats.

Student, teacher, and parent training offered another strategy to increase awareness and competency with using the tip line system to report potential threats. We found that student training was consistently associated with more total offenses, attacks, and threats reported by the school. However, outcomes related to teacher/parent trainings were mixed, as they were associated with fewer offenses and threats, but slightly more attacks.

The characteristics we explored regarding tip line partnerships were generally associated with fewer total offenses, attacks, and threats. Specifically, among schools with tip lines, having a greater number of active partner types, having law enforcement agencies as active partners, and having students as active partners in tip line operations were all associated with significantly lower reports of most offense outcomes. One exception was a slightly higher association with the number of active partners and the number of threats reported.

The findings for allowing tips to be submitted anonymously and for staffing the tip line 24/7 were also consistently associated with fewer offenses. Finally, having a formal, written policy regarding responding to tips was consistently associated with more offenses, attacks, and threats reported.

For Component 3, we set out to better understand how tip lines are implemented, the characteristics or features of these systems, challenges faced by school administrators during implementation and use, and perceived effectiveness. Using a mixed-methods design, we analyzed the efforts to implement and operate Oregon's SafeOregon statewide school tip line program and present data from a national tip line survey for context. Study objectives included identifying (1) the prevalence and school characteristics of tip line use; (2) basic operational characteristics of tip lines, including partnerships, staffing, tip submission and triage processes, and anonymity and confidentiality; (3) barriers and challenges involved in tip line implementation; and (4) the perceived impact of tip lines. This qualitative assessment, informed by key stakeholders, school administrators, and student focus groups, supported the national findings. Sustaining long-term success involves gaining clear understanding of how adolescents communicate, promoting awareness, developing active partners, and providing appropriate responses when tips are reported. The participation of law enforcement and school resource officers (SROs) in tip line management and response provides access to information systems that may be useful when critical incidents require time-sensitive responses. However, law enforcement's visible connection to the tip line system could discourage student reporting for fear of a criminal justice response.

As part of the final component 3, RTI analyzed tip line data from the SafeOregon statewide tip line program (2018–2020). Here we assessed reported threats and potential violent attacks against the school, students, or staff. Tip data provide a unique lens into a school's safety issues. Most tips described direct threats to shoot up the school by a known male student, usually expressed audibly at school or using social media. Threats prompting the tips usually occurred, and were also usually reported, Monday through Thursday (typically on the same day they occurred), outside of normal school hours and especially between 4 PM and 11:59 PM. However, a sizable number of tips were also reported on weekends, in early morning hours, or during the school day when they occurred Monday through Friday. These findings are especially important for school administrators and others responsible for school safety because tip lines are available 24 hours, 7 days a week, unlike traditional

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access through in-school reporting channels that are generally open only during school operating hours and days. Administrators using tip lines must be prepared to receive and respond to reports of threats and other tips on a 24-hour cycle.

Our analysis suggested that tips may increase and decrease throughout the calendar year, but some of these changes may be predictable. For instance, the fewest events came through in June, July, and August, when many students are out of school for summer break. During these months, schools and tip line operators may be able to adjust their staffing to accommodate lower tip line activity, but they may need to increase their capacity in the fall (especially October), winter (i.e., February), and early spring (i.e., March) when tips tend to increase. Administrators can expect a rise in tips during these months and can proactively look for signs of problem behaviors or conflicts.

Our analysis also showed a substantial spike in tips in Oregon during the 6-week period immediately following the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida, on February 14, 2018. This finding demonstrates that significant events in the local community or elsewhere in the country can introduce a "reporting shock" to the system that drives up the number of tips the community reports. Thus, schools and agencies that run tip lines may need to prepare for increased caseloads when critical events occur.

Recommendations from This Project

Schools, districts, and states should continue to invest in tip line technology as a promising solution to reduce offenses and increase knowledge of potential threats to school safety. School administrators who have adopted tip lines expressed overwhelming support that tip lines improve their awareness of school safety issues and improved their ability to respond to a diverse set of issues, including violent attacks, self-harm, drug use, and bullying. This conclusion by administrators through the national survey was supported by our national assessment finding that tip lines were associated with more threats and fewer violent attacks.

Although tip lines have evidence of effectiveness, there was wide variation in how they were implemented, and these strategies likely influenced the varied impact on school violence we observed in the national assessment. Schools should invest in awareness and training activities to ensure students are aware of the program and can submit actionable information.

Tip line programs should work with internal and external partners to actively operate and support the program. Specifically, schools should encourage active student participation. As for the role of law enforcement/SROs, the evidence suggests that they should play an active role working with school administrators to support and respond to incidents.

Finally, our analysis of tips submitted to Oregon's SafeOregon about potential threats to school attacks showed that these submissions followed reporting patterns during the week and year. We find that events that occur outside of the immediate school service area can have a shock to the tip line reporting system. School administrators can anticipate these peaks and allocate staff and resources appropriately.

1. Introduction: Project Purpose

School tip lines are structured systems (e.g., computer applications, websites, telephone hotlines) that allow students, parents, school staff, or community members to report information about potential threats to students or others. Tip lines offer a promising approach to enhance school safety by relying on student knowledge of potential threats, providing a safe reporting environment and establishing a response protocol to act on the tips and prevent incidents. They leverage knowledge, primarily from students, about potential threats to school safety and other problems schools face daily (e.g., bullying, substance use, self-harm). Students are on the front lines and are aware of many behaviors and threats, both in person and over social media, that occur out of the sight of teachers, administrators, and other school staff. Many students do not want to be responsible for getting others in trouble or do not know how to report. Tip lines provide a confidential or anonymous way to share this information with school administrators, law enforcement officers, service providers, and other partners. Tip lines work by identifying harms and threats before they happen rather than waiting to respond to an event. These features have brought more attention to tip lines as a potentially effective school safety strategy.

However, very little is known about how widely tip lines have been implemented and what their characteristics are. This report summarizes the results of the first national effort to document the use of tip lines in public middle and high schools in the United States. The findings described in this report are based on a Web-based survey completed by 1,226 school principals or school safety points of contact at a nationally representative sample of public middle and high schools in the United States.

2. Study Goals and Design

2.1 Goals and Objectives

The overarching goals of this study are to understand the prevalence, variability, and effectiveness of tip line technology in schools as a strategy for identifying and responding to threats of school violence. To achieve these goals, RTI's proposed study includes three objectives:

> **Objective 1:** Describe the prevalence and variability of tip line technology in public middle and high schools across the United States through a national survey of school administrators (Component 1).

> **Objective 2:** Evaluate the relationship between tip line technology implementation and school safety by augmenting the national survey data with publicly available data on student disciplinary and school safety outcomes from the Department of Education (Component 2).

> **Objective 3:** Assess the implementation experiences, outputs, and costs through an in-depth case study in Oregon (Component 3).

In Component 1, we designed and administered a national web-based survey to middle and high school administrators to collect information about tip line use. The survey provided national estimates about the prevalence, characteristics, and perceived effectiveness of tip lines. Component 2 entailed a national evaluation of tip line technology by linking survey data gathered in Component 1 with school-level data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) on school crime and safety. These data provide a comprehensive platform for a rigorous quasi-experimental approach to understanding tip line effectiveness. Component 3 entailed an in-depth implementation, output, and cost analysis of the Oregon School Safety Tip Line (OSST) program. This study combined detailed data already maintained by the OSST with primary data collection on implementation experiences. Although Components 1 and 2 provide national context and a rigorous assessment of the association between tip line implementation and school safety outcomes, Component 3 provides a more-detailed analysis with a focus on implementation. In addition, the three core components, the study offered a fourth objective: the opportunity to assess data collected through Oregon's *SafeOregon* statewide tip line system (Component 4). Here, we examined tips that reported threats of a violent attack against the school, student, or school staff to learn about the temporal patterns and characteristics.

2.2 Mechanism

2.2.1 Study Aims and Conceptual Framework

The current study fills critical gaps in the empirical literature on the effectiveness of tip lines. It examines whether implementing a tip line is associated with improvements in

school safety indicators among a nationally representative sample of public middle and high schools in the United States. The mechanism guiding the study is shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. **Hypothesized relationship between tip line implementation and school safety and student outcomes**
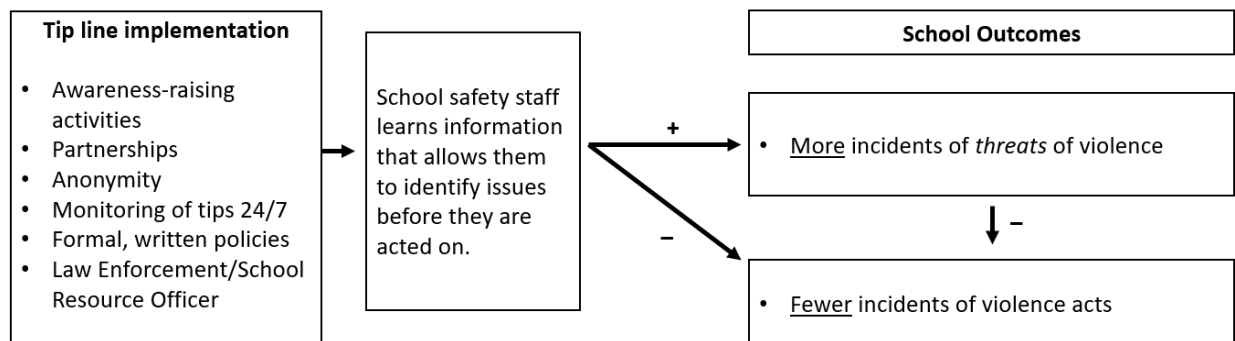
Generally, there are three mechanisms where tip lines can have an impact on the overall offense totals (threats and attacks). First, given the anonymous or confidential nature that tip line affords a reporter, these programs can create a deterrence effect on bad or threatening behavior. If students know that their behavior is more likely to be reported to school officials because of the assurances of confidentiality/anonymity, it can create a climate where violent behavior is reduced. Additionally, tip lines can have a preventive impact upstream, whereas individual behaviors or situations that could turn into more concrete threats or attacks are recognized well in advance and never make it to the reportable offense level. That is, student showing signs of distress or disorderly behavior may be reported and responded to, preventing escalation to more serious behaviors. A third mechanism is when the tip line leads to more reports of both threat and attack offenses that never surface through more traditional reporting pathways such as reporting directly to a teacher or administrator or through direct observation by a responsible adult. This "dark figure" of threats and attacks may occur outside of school, like in homes or other settings, and the school tip line brings them to the attention of school officials. Finally, the expected change in the overall number of offenses is not necessarily exclusive to one explanation, but could be a mix of these behaviors.

Whereas the overall levels of offenses may decline when a tip line is adopted, the distribution of offenses can also change. Because tip lines leverage information during the planning or threat stage, schools with a tip line should naturally have fewer actual attacks and completed acts of violence and more threats than schools without tip lines. Collectively, we expect that schools with tip lines will have fewer overall offenses and a different distribution, including more threats and fewer attacks, than schools without tip lines.

3. Goal 1: National Survey

For Component 1, we conducted a Web-based survey completed by 1,226 school principals or school safety points of contact at a nationally representative sample of public middle and high schools in the United States (Planty et al., 2020). The survey was designed to document the prevalence of tip lines, types of schools that are more likely to use tip lines, ways in which tip lines are designed and implemented, challenges of operating tip lines, and perceived effectiveness of tip lines.

3.1.1 Methods

To conduct the national survey, the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data (CCD), a comprehensive, national database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts, was used to identify the target sample. Survey respondents were based on a random sample of 4,120 public middle and high schools that was stratified by school size, region, and urbanicity. School administrators received a letter inviting them to participate in a brief (10-minute), Web-based survey on tip lines. Principals could complete the survey themselves, or they could delegate it to the person most knowledgeable about each school's safety practices. The survey was fielded February through July 2019, with extensive follow-up procedures undertaken by RTI (e.g., email and telephone follow-up; a short, hard-copy version mailed to selected schools) to increase participation. Surveys were completed by 1,226 schools (a 30% response rate). A nonresponse bias analysis was conducted using CCD data to compare characteristics (e.g., size, region) of the 1,226 schools that completed the survey with those of the original sample of 4,120. Low bias was detected, and the survey data were weighted to adjust for the small amount of nonresponse bias that was found. This process was designed to ensure that all findings produced from the data are nationally representative.

3.1.2 Findings

Just over half (51%) of public middle and high schools in the United States currently have a tip line in operation. Most tip lines are relatively new (**Figure 2**); 60% have been in operation for less than 3 years.

Over half of tip lines are staffed or monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, such that a staff member receives calls, texts, or other entries in real time. Most are described as anonymous rather than confidential.

Most schools involve school administrators (89%) and law enforcement officers (56%) in their tip line programs, but only about a quarter involve mental health professionals or students as active partners (**Figure 3**).

Figure 2.   Number of years school tip line has been in operation (2019)
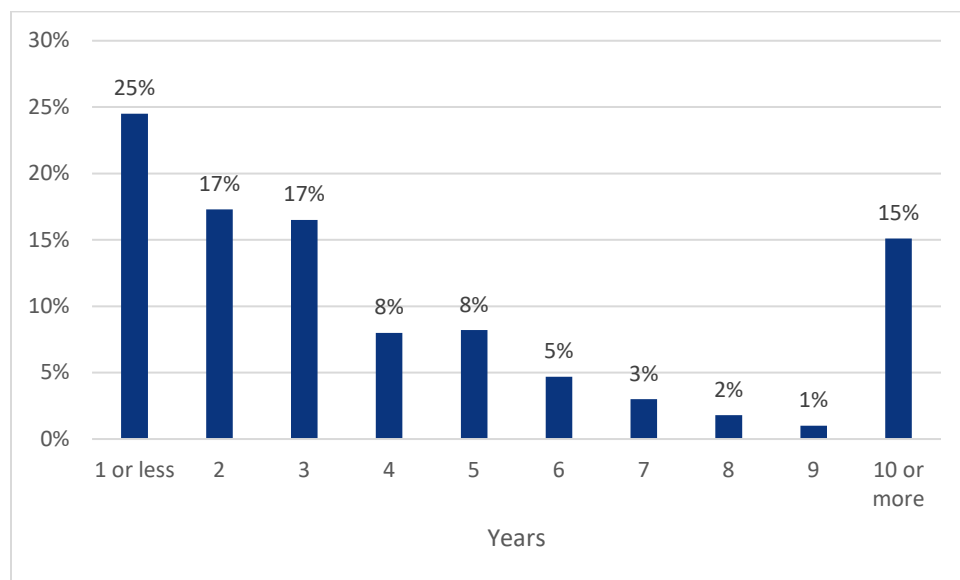
Figure 3.   Active partners involved with operating a school tip line (2019)
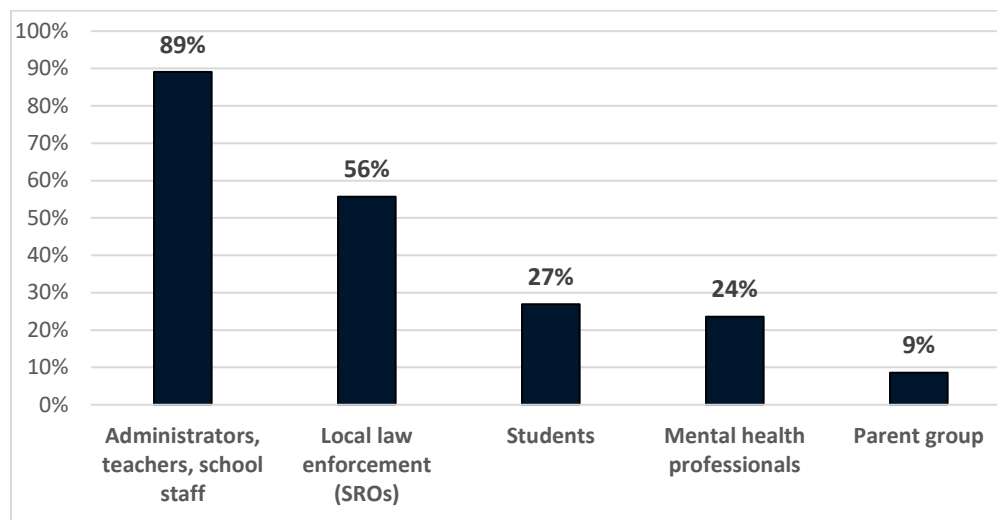
School administrators were asked about the main challenges to operating a tip line (**Figure 4**). The most common challenges including receiving tips with insufficient information to act on (41%), raising student awareness about the tip line (36%), and having false or bogus tips submitted. Interestingly, legal liability issues or concerns were stated as a main concern by just 6% of all school administrators.

Figure 4.   School administrators perceived challenges with operating a school tip line (2019)

Challenge	Value
Insufficient information submitted	41
Raising student awareness	36
False or bogus tips	36
Tips sent in for issues not intended for tip line	31
Legal liability	6

(Horizontal axis: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70)
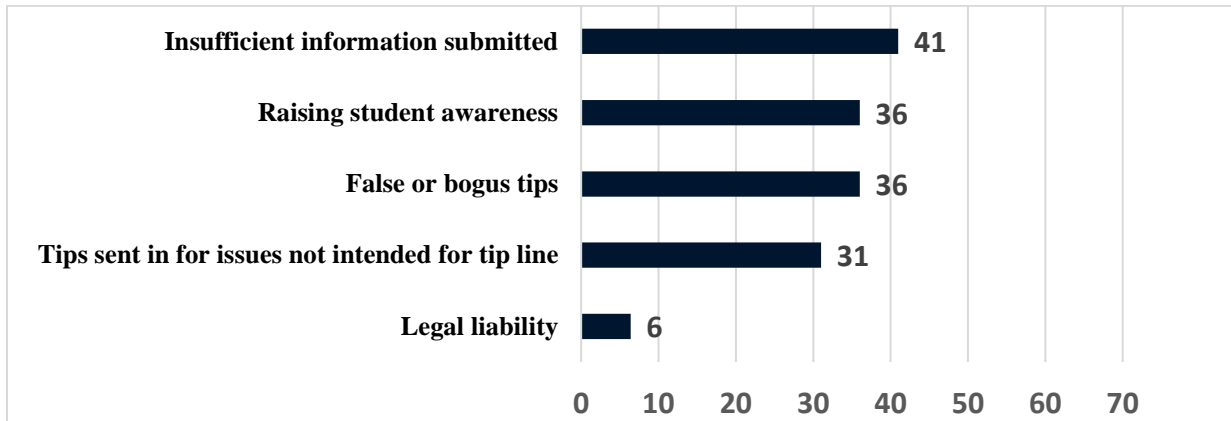
School administrators were asked about their perceptions of the tip line's effectiveness for a variety of school safety issues. Overall, 77% of school administrators believed that their tip lines made them more aware of safety issues at their school. Over 50% said that their schools' tip lines had prevented violent incidents. Two-thirds believed that their tip lines allowed their schools to respond more effectively to bullying, and 73% reported that their tip lines had prevented incidents of self-harm or suicide.

Findings from this study, the first nationally representative assessment of tip lines in the United States, found that just over half of public and middle high schools operate tip lines and that tip lines are more common among larger schools, suburban schools, and low-poverty schools. Most tip lines have been implemented within the past 3 years, and they are substantially diverse in design and operation (e.g., the level at which they are operated, the procedures for reviewing and triaging tips). Many also varied in the number and type of internal and external partners involved in their operation.

The findings show that there are challenges to operating a tip line. Students may not be aware of the tip line or may submit insufficient information for administrators to act on. Efforts are needed to involve more stakeholders as active partners in tip line operation, particularly engaging students as active tip line users, involving parents, and developing stronger partnerships with mental health providers. These partnerships could help raise students' awareness of their schools' tip lines and encourage the submission of actionable tips. Further, given the challenges to operating tip lines that respondents identified, more-intensive efforts are needed to raise student awareness about tip lines, educate students about the types of issues that tip lines are designed to deal with, and train students on how to submit tips with sufficient information. Such efforts may require in-person events and training with students (as well as parents and teachers), which are currently held infrequently. Overall, tip lines were largely perceived as effective by most school principals,

who reported that tip lines had improved their schools' ability to respond to a diverse set of issues, including violent attacks, self-harm, drug use, and bullying.

3.2   State Legislation to Explore or Establish School Safety Tip Lines

Many states across the country have supported the implementation of school safety tip lines by passing laws that authorize or require the establishment of reporting systems through which students, staff, and members of the wider community can report potentially harmful, violent, or criminal activities that threaten school safety and student well-being (Gourdet, Kolnik, Banks, & Planty, 2021). Although legislation is not required for schools to establish and implement school safety tip lines, such legislation can help launch, and in some cases streamline, tip lines in schools across the state. In the absence of a state law requiring it, some schools within a state may not establish and implement a school safety tip line.

We conducted a legal analysis to summarize state laws passed from 2010 through 2019 that established school safety tip lines (**Figure 5**). We identified 15 states that enacted or adopted codified state laws that require or authorize the creation of school safety tip lines. Under state laws that require the creation of a tip line, a designated state or local-level entity is tasked with developing or maintaining the tip line. By contrast, under state laws that simply authorize the creation of a tip line, a particular state or local-level entity is allowed or encouraged to create a tip line, but the development or implementation of the tip line is not mandated. An additional three states have passed codified laws that explicitly explore the feasibility of creating a statewide school safety tip line.

Figure 5.   State legislation to establish or explore school safety tip lines

3.3   Tip Line Toolkit

This School Safety Tip Line Toolkit (Planty, Cutbush, Banks, & D'Arcangelo, 2021) was designed to support the operationalization, implementation, and maintenance of school safety tip lines. It is a compendium of multi-faceted briefs designed to engage stakeholders in assessing key attributes of tip line implementation and sustainability; the nascent evidence base involving tip lines; current legislation establishing tip lines; suggested tip line metrics and data elements; and resource considerations. Because of limitations with available information about costs directly related to the tip line program, we were unable to conduct a detailed cost assessment. Instead, we provided a cost-benefit analysis framework for practitioners and researchers interested in demonstrating a monetary return on this investment. The resources in this document are intended to serve school stakeholders at the state, local, district, and school levels who are invested in school and student safety. This toolkit was informed by RTI's research and evaluation on school safety, including the National Institute of Justice funded study, Assessment of National and State Tip Line Technology as a Strategy for Identifying Threats to School Safety, and input from school safety experts and staff operating state school safety tip lines.

Planty, M., Cutbush, S., Banks, D., & D'Arcangelo, D. (2021). School Safety Tip Line Toolkit. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International, pages 1-74.
https://www.rti.org/publication/school-safety-tip-line-toolkit/fulltext.pdf
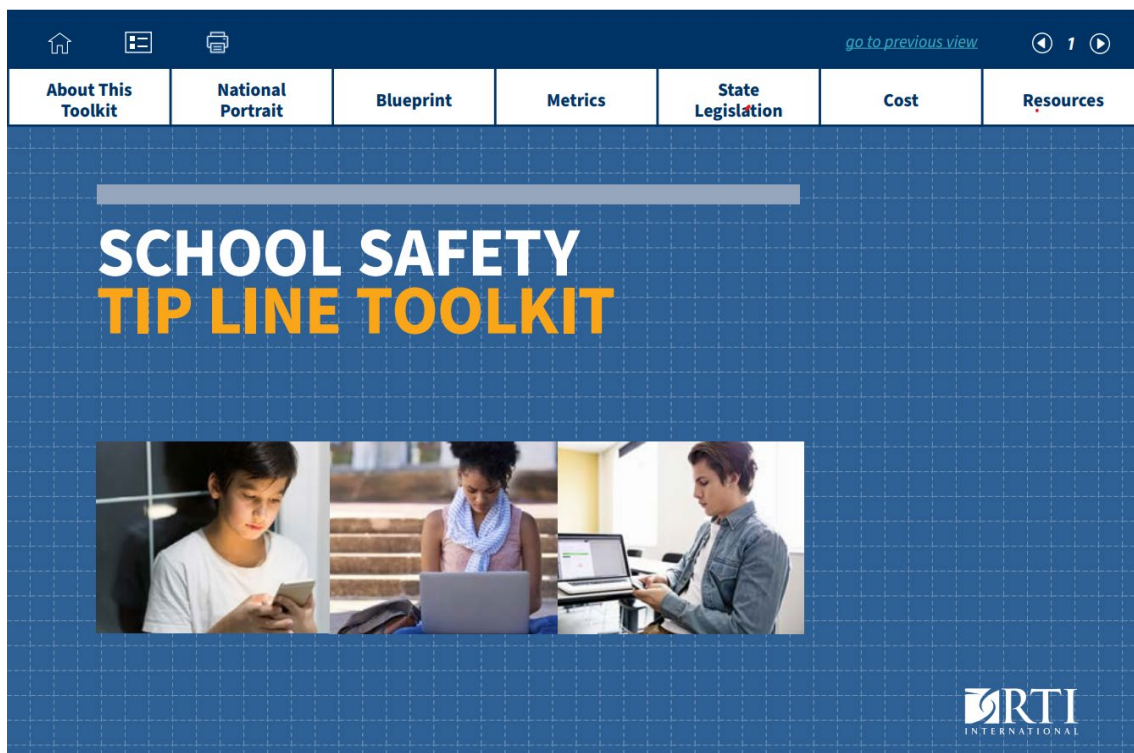
4. Goal 2: National Evaluation

Component 2 was designed to evaluate whether tip lines are an effective tool for addressing incidents of school violence and other school safety concerns (Planty et al., under review). To address this question, RTI evaluated the association between having a school tip line and reported school safety offense outcomes among a nationally representative sample of public middle and high schools in the United States. Specific research questions include the following:

Is school tip line implementation associated with fewer reported offenses?

Is school tip line implementation associated with more threats and fewer completed violent acts?

Among schools that have implemented tip lines, what tip line characteristics appear to be associated with fewer offenses reported, more threats, and fewer completed acts of violence?

4.1 Methods

4.1.1 Study Sample and Data Sources

Component 2 analyses were based on a nationally representative sample of 1,226 public middle and high schools in the United States for which (1) a Web-based survey on tip lines was completed and (2) CRDC data were available. To identify the study sample for the Web-based survey, the U.S. Department of Education's CCD, a comprehensive, national database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts, was used. A random sample of 4,120 public middle and high schools stratified by school size, region, and urbanicity was drawn. Following approval for the study from the school districts and the Institutional Review Board at RTI, principals at the sampled schools received a letter from RTI inviting them to participate in a brief (10-minute) Web-based survey on tip lines. Principals could complete the survey themselves or delegate it to the person most knowledgeable about each school's safety practices. Survey questions covered whether the school currently had a tip line in operation and, for schools operating tip lines, when the tip line was established, operational characteristics of the tip line, challenges of operating the tip line, and perceived effectiveness of the tip line. The survey was fielded February through July 2019, with extensive follow-up procedures undertaken by RTI to increase participation.

Surveys were completed by 1,226 schools (a 30% response rate). A nonresponse bias analysis was conducted using CCD data to compare characteristics (e.g., size, region) of the 1,226 schools that completed the survey to those of the original sample of 4,120. Low bias was detected, and the survey data were weighted to adjust for the small amount of nonresponse bias that was found. The SUDAAN® procedure WTADJUST (RTI, 2012), which uses a constrained logistic model to predict response, was used to compute nonresponse

weight adjustment factors for the weights. This process was designed to ensure that all findings produced from the data were nationally representative.

Next, school safety offense data from the CRDC were obtained for each school that completed the Web-based survey. The CRDC has been conducted every other year since 1968 and collects data on key education and civil rights issues in public schools. The CRDC data collection form is completed by school administrators and reflects aggregate information about documented violent offenses and student disciplinary outcomes (among many other data elements). For our Component 2 analyses, two waves of the CRDC violent offense data were obtained: 2015–2016 and 2017–2018. School coverage for the CRDC is comprehensive, as it has been a mandatory data collection for every public school most years of this study's follow-up period. The CRDC school safety offense data includes total violent attack offenses, total threat offenses, sexual assault, robbery without a weapon, physical attack or fight with a weapon, physical attack or fight without a weapon, threats of a physical attacks with a weapon, firearm, or explosive device, total threats of a physical attacks with a firearm, threats of physical attack without a weapon, and possession of a firearm or explosive device.

4.1.2 Analytic Approach

Using the linked Web-based survey data and CRDC data, the association between tip line implementation and outcomes was examined. The analytic approach leveraged the natural variation in tip line implementation across the country, with 51% of schools having an operational tip line, and the structure and operation of the tip lines.

Independent Variables. The Web survey data were used to develop key independent variables reflecting tip line use, including whether the school had an active tip line in place during 2015–2018, for which we have CRDC outcome data. A small number of schools implemented the tip line after 2018, so they were coded as not having a tip line. In addition, for tip line schools, additional independent variables reflecting key tip line operational characteristics were developed based on the survey data. These measures capture the level of marketing, training, and partners for the tip line program, as these practices could improve student awareness of and ability to use the tip line platform. Further, school commitment toward marketing and training could encourage use and improve response to tips when submitted.

Eleven items captured various awareness-raising activities schools use to market the tip line program to students. Dichotomous indicators were created for each strategy: social media posts, media announcements (radio, TV ads), preloading tip line website or app on school computers/tablets, tip line awareness day, promotional trinkets, posters, billboards, flyers, messages mailed or emailed, telephone calls, or morning or weekly reminders over the school PA system.

Trainings and formal meetings are used to educate students, teachers, and parents about the tip line. Student-focused assemblies, classroom time, and other in-person events were used to educate teachers, parents, or the community about the tip line. Two dichotomous variables were developed to indicate student training and teacher/parent training. Three variables reflecting partnerships were developed, including the total number of partnership types (a continuous measure reflecting the number of active partners; e.g., administrators, teachers, counselors, or other school staff; parent groups; students; school district or local education agency staff; local law enforcement/school resource officers (SROs); state-level education agency staff; state-level law enforcement agency staff; community leaders or local government; mental health professionals; other community service providers; a vendor setting up the tip line; a call center, contractor, or vendor receiving tips; local media); a dichotomous indicator of whether law enforcement (state or local level), including SROs, was involved as a partner; and a dichotomous indicator of whether students were considered to be active partners. Several operational variables were also created, including dichotomous indicators of whether tips can be submitted anonymously (i.e., a tip can be submitted without the reporter providing any personal information); whether the tip line is staffed or monitored 24/7 (i.e., a staff member receives calls, texts, or other entries in real time as opposed to only during certain portions of the day); and whether the school has a formal, written policy detailing the process for acting on tips when they are received. The distribution of the independent variables among the study schools is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1.   **Distribution of independent variables among study schools (n=1,226)**

Independent Variable	Percentage or Mean (standard deviation)
School has a tip line	52.2%
Total number of partnership types (0-14)	2.34 (SD=2.94)
Law enforcement as active partner	55.4%
Students as active partner	29.0%
Tips can be submitted anonymously	75.1%
Tip line staffed 24/7	61.1%
Formal, written policy for acting on tips	36.8%
Social media	64.40%
Posters	56.80%
Emails	34.80%
Website	32.30%
Flyers	27.30%
Media	20.30%
PA system	11.90%

(continued)

Table 1. **Distribution of independent variables among study schools (n=1,226) (continued)**

Independent Variable	Percentage or Mean (standard deviation)
Phone calls	10.40%
Trinkets	7.70%
Awareness day	4.80%
Billboards	3.10%
Student awareness activities (0-3)	1.90 (1.38)
Parent/Teacher/Community Training (0-2)	1.42 (1.07)
No. of promotions (0-9)	2.67 (2.52)

Note: Estimates are weighted with inverse propensity score weights.

Dependent Variables. From the CRDC data, several dependent variables were created. A set of dependent variables reflecting incidence rates for 11 separate offenses measured in the CRDC for 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 was created.[2] First, we created three main offense outcomes: (1) total violent offenses (attacks and threats), (2) total violent attack offenses, and (3) total threat offenses. Next, we created nine additional offense outcomes for subtypes across two sets of dependent variables. The first set measured violent <u>attacks</u> by offense type: (4) sexual assault, (5) robbery without a weapon, (6) physical attack or fight with a weapon, (7) physical attack or fight without a weapon; and the second set measured <u>threats</u> by offense types: (8) threats of a physical attacks with a weapon, firearm, or explosive device; (9) total threats of a physical attacks with a firearm; and (10) threats of physical attack without a weapon. Finally, we created an indicator for possession of a firearm or explosive device. These outcomes were expressed as a rate: the number of incidents per 1,000 students at the school.

The distribution of the dependent variables among the study schools is shown in **Table 2**. For most outcomes, the mean incidence or prevalence rates were low, with many schools reporting zero incidents in a given CRDC reporting year. Among the offense types measured, the most common was physical attacks or fights without a weapon, followed by *threats of* physical attacks without a weapon. These categories drive the overall total offense and total violent attacks categories, which showed similar percentages. Overall, there was very little change from 2015–2016 to 2017–2018, with exception of violent

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[2] Four other offenses were reported to the CRDC but were excluded from analysis due to the extremely small number of schools (fewer than 10) reporting any incidents of that type in 2015–2016 and 2017–2018: rape or attempted rape, robbery with a weapon, robbery with a firearm or explosive device, and physical attack or fight with a firearm or explosive device. In addition, we had to exclude an additional two CRDC outcomes measured in 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 for the same reason: whether any shooting took place at the school and whether any homicide took place at the school (each for which a nonzero value was provided for fewer than five schools).

threats. The percentage of schools reporting at least one violent threat increased from 31% to 39%, driven primarily by the increase in threats of physical attack without a weapon.

Table 2. Distribution of dependent variables among study schools (n=1,226)

Offense type (per 1,000 students)	2015–2016		2017–2018	
	Mean (SD)	% of schools reporting 0 incidents	Mean (SD)	% of schools reporting 0 incidents
Total violent offenses (attacks and threats)	22.9 (55.61)	40.6	22.7 (45.09)	37.4
Total violent attacks	18.9 (49.02)	44.4	18.2 (37.03)	42.7
Sexual assault	0.2 (1.27)	94.7	0.4 (2.64)	91.8
Robbery without a weapon	0.4 (2.49)	93.4	0.4 (2.51)	94.1
Physical attack or fight with a weapon	0.3 (3.62)	96.8	0.2 (1.58)	97.3
Physical attack or fight without a weapon	18.0 (48.49)	47.2	17.2 (36.23)	44.5
Total violent threats	4.1 (17.68)	69.0	4.5 (13.45)	61.2
Threats of physical attack with a weapon	0.3 (1.71)	93.8	0.4 (2.23)	90.2
Threats of physical attack with a firearm	0.1 (0.89)	97.9	0.2 (1.24)	95.3
Threats of physical attack without a weapon	3.7 (17.52)	73.1	3.9 (12.79)	67.1
Possession of a firearm or explosive device	0.1 (0.52)	95.7	0.2 (0.99)	93.4

Note: Mean estimates are weighted with inverse propensity score weights and combine 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 within each school.

Statistical Models. To address the first two research questions, whether tip lines were associated with fewer overall offenses, fewer attacks, and more threats identified, a series of multivariable regressions were conducted. The analytic approach leveraged the natural variation in tip line implementation across the country, as well as the specific tip line implementation characteristics for schools that had tip lines. A binomial response distribution was used with school population as a frequency weight to approximate the school-level pattern of binary offense prevalence.

Further, because schools with tip lines tend to be different from schools without tip lines, models were weighted using inverse propensity score weighting to balance covariate distributions and more closely approximate random assignment to treatment condition (i.e., tip line versus no tip line). Weights reflecting the results of propensity score models were

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applied to the data to account for selection bias. This approach was taken because the nonexperimental study design and the fact that school characteristics associated with the likelihood of having a tip line in operation, such as school size, poverty, and urbanicity, may also influence CRDC outcomes. The propensity models were estimated using logistic regression and modeled the likelihood of having a tip line based on independent variables from the CCD dataset (school level, type, size, locale [rural/urban/ suburban], census region, student race/ethnicity, and poverty). The logistic propensity models were weighted using nonresponse weights to account for the likelihood of the school's participation in the Web-based survey. Analyses were conducted in SAS version 9.4 using a multilevel model in which two periods of CRDC data (2015–2016 and 2017–2018) were nested within each of the 1,226 schools in the national survey sample.

Finally, to address the third research question, whether certain characteristics of the tip line were associated with reported offenses, we subset to the schools that had implemented a tip line and re-ran the binomial regression propensity models to examine the associations between independent and dependent variables.

4.2   Results

The results of the final binomial regression models to address Research Questions 1 and 2 are shown in **Table 3**. This table shows the estimates (along with standard error [SE] and significance level [sig]) that indicate the difference in the outcomes associated with having a tip line versus outcomes without a tip line present. Negative tip line effects indicate lower rate of the outcome associated with tip line implementation relative to no tip line implemented, meaning that tip line implementation was associated with lower rates/ prevalence (e.g., violent offenses decreased). A positive effect indicates the reverse, tip line adoption was associated with more offenses.

Table 3.   Binomial regression models using propensity weights, 2015–2016 and 2017–2018

Offense Type (rate per 1,000 students)	Estimate	SE	t Value	Probt	sig
Total violent offenses (attacks and threats)	−0.013	0.008	−1.57	0.1153	n.s.
Total violent attacks	−0.061	0.009	−6.69	<.0001	***
Sexual assault	−0.244	0.075	−3.26	0.0011	**
Robbery without a weapon	−0.007	0.067	−0.10	0.9202	n.s.
Physical attack or fight with a weapon	−0.180	0.082	−2.20	0.0275	*
Physical attack or fight without a weapon	−0.057	0.009	−6.16	<.0001	***

(continued)

Table 3.   Binomial regression models using propensity weights, 2015–2016 and 2017–2018 (continued)

Offense Type (rate per 1,000 students)	Estimate	Std Err	t Value	Probt	sig
Total violent threats	0.192	0.019	10.33	<.0001	***
Threats of physical attack with a weapon	0.392	0.067	5.88	<.0001	***
Threats of physical attack with a firearm	0.622	0.104	6.00	<.0001	***
Threats of physical attack without a weapon	0.195	0.020	9.87	<.0001	***
Possession of a firearm or explosive device	−0.340	0.104	−3.27	0.0011	**

NOTES. *** p < .001; ** p<.01; * p<.05; n.s.= not significant

The results show that, overall, schools with tip lines reported experiencing the same level of offenses as schools without a tip line, after controlling for nonresponse and selection bias. However, we did find evidence of a distributional difference in attacks versus threats. Schools with tip lines reported fewer attacks and more threats than schools without a tip line. This finding is consistent with the hypothesized mechanism where tip lines identify more threats than would otherwise be known to school officials and can therefore prevent more attacks from occurring.

In terms of sub offenses measured in the CRDC, we found similar associations across the board. Rates of violent attacks, including sexual assault, physical attack or fight with a weapon, and physical attack or fight without a weapon, were all lower in schools with a tip line than in schools without a tip line. And conversely, rates of threats of a physical attack with a weapon, threats of an attack with a firearm, and threats of physical attacks without a weapon were all significantly higher in schools with a tip line. The estimate for robbery without a weapon, although in the predicted direction, was not statistically significant.

The results of the models addressing Research Question 3 are shown in **Table 4**. Here, we examine only those schools with tip lines, specifically, the association of their tip line activity and operation with the three key outcomes (i.e., total offenses, total violent attacks, total violent threats), controlling for nonresponse and selection.[3] For each tip line characteristic listed, the estimate of the characteristic on each main outcome is shown. Negative values for the estimate indicate that schools operating tip lines with that particular characteristic (or, for continuous measures, higher values of the characteristic) had lower levels of the outcome measure than schools operating tip lines without the particular characteristic; positive values indicate the reverse.

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[3] As stated previously, we use weights to account for nonresponse and the inverse propensity score weighting to balance covariate distributions and more closely approximate random assignment to treatment condition (tip line versus no tip line).

Table 4. **Tip line characteristics associated with offense outcomes. 2015-2016, 2017-2018**

Predictor	Offense Type (Rate per 1,000 students)		
	Total offenses	Total violent attacks	Total violent threats
	Estimate (Std error) sig	Estimate (Std error) sig	Estimate (Std error) sig
Intercept	−3.14 (0.02) ***	−3.46 (0.02) ***	−4.56 (0.03) ***
Social media posts	−0.22 (0.01) ***	−0.15 (0.02) ***	−0.49 (0.03) ***
Media announcements	0.29 (0.01) ***	0.32 (0.02) ***	0.13 (0.03) ***
Preloading on school computers	0.39 (0.01) ***	0.45 (0.01) ***	0.1 (0.03) ***
Awareness day	0.34 (0.03) ***	0.5 (0.03) ***	−0.47 (0.08) ***
Trinkets	−0.46 (0.03) ***	−0.48 (0.03) ***	−0.3 (0.06) ***
Posters	0.15 (0.01) ***	0.02 (0.02) n.s.	0.64 (0.03) ***
Billboards	−0.81 (0.04) ***	−0.84 (0.05) ***	−0.64 (0.1) ***
Flyers	−0.26 (0.02) ***	−0.21 (0.02) ***	−0.47 (0.03) ***
Messages mailed	−0.16 (0.01) ***	−0.17 (0.02) ***	−0.12 (0.03) ***
Telephone calls	0.57 (0.02) ***	0.57 (0.02) ***	0.53 (0.04) ***
PA system reminders	−0.34 (0.02) ***	−0.5 (0.02) ***	0.19 (0.04) ***
Student training	0.12 (0.01) ***	0.11 (0.01) ***	0.16 (0.02) ***
Teacher/parent training	−0.03 (0.01) **	0.02 (0.01) *	−0.22 (0.02) ***
Number of active partners	−0.06 (0) ***	−0.07 (0.01) ***	0.02 (0.01) *
Law enforcement/school resource officer	−0.11 (0.02) ***	−0.03 (0.02) n.s.	−0.46 (0.04) ***
Students	−0.31 (0.02) ***	−0.33 (0.02) ***	−0.23 (0.04) ***
Anonymous	−0.63 (0.01) ***	−0.59 (0.01) ***	−0.71 (0.03) ***
24-hour staff	−0.46 (0.01) ***	−0.46 (0.01) ***	−0.44 (0.03) ***
Written policy	0.18 (0.01) ***	0.17 (0.02) ***	0.24 (0.03) ***

NOTES. *** $p < .001$; ** $p<.01$; * $p<.05$; n.s.= not significant

Among schools with tip lines, several outreach, training, and operation features were associated with total offenses, violent attacks, and threats. However, the direction of findings was mixed. Implementing awareness-raising activities, such as social media posts, holding a tip line awareness day, hanging posters, and handing out trinkets to students, was statistically significant, but the findings were not consistently associated with higher or

lower levels of offenses. Although these strategies varied in their direction across types, most strategies were consistent across each offense type (i.e., total offenses, attacks, and threats). For example, schools using social media posts, trinkets, billboards, flyers, and mailed messages to increase awareness were associated with fewer total offenses, attacks, and threats. Conversely, schools using media announcements, preloading messages on school computers, hanging posters within the school, and telephone calls to raise awareness were associated with higher levels of offense, attacks, and threats.

Student, teacher, and parent training offers another strategy to increase awareness and competency with using the tip line system to report potential threats. Here, we found that student training was consistently associated with more total offenses, attacks, and threats recorded by the school. However, findings related to teacher/parent trainings were mixed, as they were associated with fewer offenses and threats, but slightly more attacks.

Regarding tip line partnerships, the characteristics we explored were generally associated with fewer total offenses, attacks, and threats. Among schools with tip lines, having a greater number of active partner types, having law enforcement agencies as active partners, and having students as active partners in tip line operations were all associated with significantly fewer reports of most offense outcomes. One exception was a slightly higher association with the number of active partners and the number of threats reported.

The findings for allowing tips to be submitted anonymously and for staffing the tip line 24/7 were also consistently associated with lower number of offenses outcomes. Finally, the findings for having a formal, written policy regarding responding to tips were consistently positively associated with more offenses, attacks, and threats reported.

4.3   Discussion

The findings from this study suggest that schools with a tip line do not tend to experience fewer total offenses than schools without a tip line. However, schools with tip lines are associated with an important distributional difference: fewer attacks and more recorded threats of violent offenses. This finding suggests that starting a tip line is associated with general improvements in school violence, specifically by identifying more threats of violence and preventing actual attacks from occurring.

Empirically based guidance is important for schools that are considering starting up a tip line or modifying an existing tip line and want to structure their program to be as effective as possible. Among schools that had implemented tip lines, we attempted to identify tip line characteristics that were associated with better school safety outcomes, exploring several implementation characteristics suggested in the literature as being important. The results of our analyses were mixed. Several tip line characteristics were associated with offense outcomes, but the directions were not consistent. Social media posts, media announcements, handing out trinkets, and using physical announcements such as

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billboards, flyers, and messages were consistently associated with fewer total offenses, attacks, and threats. Further, having partners, specifically active involvement from both law enforcement and the student population, allowing tips to be submitted anonymously, and reviewing tips 24/7 were all associated with lower levels of totals offenses, attacks, and threats. On the other hand, a few factors were consistently associated with higher offenses rates including media announcements, preloading tip line program on school computers, posters, student training, and having a written policy.

4.3.1   Considerations and Limitations

Although the predicted distribution of attacks and threats for schools with a tip line compared with those schools without a tip line is generally supported with these findings, interpretations of these data are somewhat challenging, as several considerations and limitations should be kept in mind. First, the mixed and, in some cases positive, associations between implementing a tip line and subsequent school safety outcomes are not necessarily surprising when considering the manner in which tip lines work. On one hand, tip lines improve detection, making school administrators aware of incidents they would not otherwise know about. This factor would logically lead to a school reporting more adverse events after implementing a tip line (or compared to schools without tip lines). On the other hand, tip lines deter incidents from occurring, which would logically lead to a school's reporting fewer adverse incidents. As evident from the conceptual model guiding the analyses, a very likely (and nuanced) possibility is that the implementation of a tip line is doing both, students are deterred by the tip line *and* more incidents are being reported. Unfortunately, due to the cross-sectional design and data limitations (e.g., lack of unreported offenses), our study could not parse out these effects. To get a better purchase on this dynamic, future research could leverage the use of student self-report victimization surveys to capture a more complete picture of both reported and unreported incidents.

Additionally, this study was not an experimental test of tip lines, such that a given number of schools were randomly assigned to implement a tip line or not and then followed prospectively over a discrete period of time. Instead, we leveraged natural variation in tip line implementation among a large, nationally representative sample of schools and applied a post hoc propensity score modeling to adjust for differences in characteristics of schools that implemented tip lines compared to schools that did not. Although the selection bias weights balanced the tip line and non-tip line schools on observable school characteristics to simulate random assignment of the treatment, because of the nonexperimental design, we cannot attribute causality to study findings (i.e., conclude that tip lines caused the outcomes we found). Because experimental design was not possible, we strengthened study design through our nationally representative sample of schools and weights.

Further, due to data limitations with the CRDC data, we used cross-sectional comparisons that limit our ability to demonstrate change over time after implementing a tip line. A

stronger design could examine change in pre- and post-tip line implementation over time. With the limited period we had with the CRDC offense data coupled with a relatively short period of information on school tip line programs, we were not able to estimate these time series effects.

4.3.2 Future Research

Probably the most critical limitation with our study is the inability to document and connect tip line implementation, particularly indicators of tip line utilization (e.g., the number of tips submitted each year) and the appropriateness of the schools' responses to tips, to the offense data. Specifically, we do not know which offenses, if any, were reported through the tip line, as none of our tip line variables reflect actual student utilization of the tip line or the schools' response to tips. Instead, to ameliorate burden on schools, we relied solely on principal's reports about basic tip line characteristics that could be captured in a very brief cross-sectional survey as our indicators of tip line implementation. Our analytic approach assumes that these characteristics have been in place since the year in which the tip line was implemented, which may not always be the case. Further, schools and districts may modify their tip line design and strategies over time. Schools that have had tip lines in place for many years could have changed their strategies due to fluctuating budgets and staffing resources. Schools new to tip lines may experience a slow rollout of the full program and gradually implement various strategies over time. The findings related to the implementation strategies are further complicated by the lack of a qualitative assessment to the fidelity and dosage of each. For example, schools may use posters to raise awareness, but we do not know anything about how their use varied from school to school. Likely, some schools hung one poster, whereas others had a much wider distribution of posters and greater overall visibility of the tip line within their schools. Similarly, there was likely wide variation with student and teacher trainings, but we have no information about the curriculum, focus, length, or dosage of these trainings.

Finally, this study's reliance on CRDC data as the source of outcome data is certainly a limitation. Despite the benefits of providing comprehensive coverage for nearly all public schools in the United States, as with any administrative record, the data have some clear limitations. Schools may underreport and misclassify certain types of incidents; many offenses are relatively rare, especially school shootings; and there is inconsistency in how the form is completed across waves based on turnover in the primary reporter. Reliance on the CRDC data also limited the outcomes we could model. Although the CRDC data measure extremely rare events (e.g., shootings at school, rapes), we could not use these as outcomes in our models because of the extremely small number of schools reporting any incidents. In addition, the CRDC does not measure incidents of student self-harm or drug use, which are among the most frequent behaviors captured by tip lines.

Future research could attempt to overcome the design limitations of the current study by putting into place a rigorous evaluation involving an experimental design in a large enough number of schools to be able to detect differences in outcomes over time between schools assigned to implement a tip line and those not assigned to implement a tip line, while also collecting in-depth process evaluation data collection. Primary outcome data would need to be gathered through student self-report surveys to assess a holistic set of school violence and student well-being outcomes and to get a better purchase on the dynamics between reported and unreported incidents. School culture and climate data could help triangulate findings. Primary process evaluation data would need to comprehensively document the quality of tip line implementation and utilization by students (e.g., the number of tips submitted, student perceptions of the school's response).

5. Goal 3: Oregon State Case Study

For Component 3, we set out to better understand how tip lines are implemented, the characteristics or features of these systems, challenges school administrators face during implementation and use, and perceived effectiveness (Cutbush et al., under review). Using a mixed-methods design, we analyzed the efforts to implement and operate Oregon's SafeOregon statewide school tip line program and present data from a national tip line survey for context. Study objectives included identifying (1) the prevalence and school characteristics of tip line use; (2) basic operational characteristics of tip lines, including partnerships, staffing, tip submission and triage processes, and anonymity and confidentiality; (3) barriers and challenges involved in tip lines; and (4) the perceived impact of tip lines. In addition, we analyzed Oregon school tip data to examine temporal patterns and characteristics of submissions related to potential violent attacks.

5.1   Implementation of SafeOregon

Oregon's school safety tip line was launched in January 2017 and is free for Oregon public and private schools from prekindergarten through 12th grade. The Oregon School Safety Task Force, comprising legislatively appointed members, was responsible for the tip line's inception and development, and the Oregon State Police (OSP) oversees its operations and implementation. Enrollment is optional; as of January 2017, 11,690 schools have enrolled in SafeOregon, serving 552,230 students, and yielding a total of 2,001 tips (SafeOregon, no date).

The Oregon legislature stated in a House bill that the OSP was to create a statewide system that triages tips. OSP contracted with a vendor capable of receiving, reviewing, and triaging tips in real time. This legislative language also determined that the system would function as a tip line, rather than a helpline staffed with clinicians. SafeOregon was designed as an anonymous reporting system; however, it provides the tipster with optional self-disclosure, thereby rendering a confidential mechanism for reporting. Students, parents, school staff, and community members may report a tip by calling, texting, messaging, emailing, or using a web portal 24/7. When a tip is submitted, the OSP immediately reviews and classifies the tip as standard, urgent, or critical, activating an incident response protocol based on the assigned threat or risk classification. Tips are triaged to districts and schools for site-based resolution, with additional simultaneous dispatch to local law enforcement for incidents deemed critical.

5.1.1   Methods

The mixed-methods design used in this component employed a parallel convergent integration approach; qualitative and quantitative data collection occurred in parallel, and analysis for integration occurred after the data collection process had been completed. This component used multiple data sources, including SafeOregon school safety tip line

quantitative data and qualitative implementation data, and data from a nationally representative assessment of school safety tip lines. The quantitative data were used to frame and contextualize the qualitative data.

Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups. The case study of SafeOregon tip line implementation consisting of state-level stakeholder interviews, school-level stakeholder interviews, and student focus groups. State-level respondents were identified based on their participation in the development of the SafeOregon tip line. Interviewees included members of the Oregon School Safety Task Force, OSP personnel charged with operating the tip line, and representatives from the tip line vendor and call center. A total of 13 state-level respondents participated in qualitative interviews. Interviews with state-level respondents concerned the development, implementation, marketing, dissemination, and sustainability of the SafeOregon tip line. The sampling universe for all school-level respondents included all Oregon middle and high schools that were enrolled in SafeOregon by November 30, 2018 (*N* = 472). A random, stratified sample of 20 middle and high schools was selected; schools were stratified by school size, urbanicity, and tip volume. Twelve schools agreed to participate, yielding a 60% response rate.

Qualitative interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of school-level respondents. Sampling for these qualitative interviews was purposive. Interviews with school-level respondents inquired about school-specific experiences with the SafeOregon tip line. In each of the 11 participating Oregon schools, RTI identified a school coordinator to assist with coordinating data collection logistics; school coordinators received a $50 stipend. The school coordinator was asked to identify the three school staff members who were most knowledgeable about or involved in the administration of the SafeOregon tip line. If school coordinators were unable to identify knowledgeable staff at their school, they were instead asked to identify staff members who served in roles related to school safety. School-level interviewees included school administrators (one superintendent, five principals, 10 assistant or vice principals), mental or behavioral health specialists (seven guidance counselors), SROs (five), other safety personnel (two), and a social worker (one). A total of 31 qualitative interviews were conducted with school-level respondents across the 11 participating schools.

Each state- and school-level respondent participated in a 1-hour interview. Interviews were conducted in person or over the phone by a two-person team of RTI interviewers. Before the start of each interview, interviewers read interviewees a statement that provided an overview of the school safety tip line study and described participants' rights. Specifically, interviewees were advised that their participation was voluntary, that they could decide not to answer a question or to end the interview, that there were no negative consequences for choosing not to participate, and that no incentive for participation would be provided. The statement also explained how information gathered during the interview would be used and detailed confidentiality measures. With participants' permission, interviews were recorded to

ensure the accuracy of notes. Using recordings, we expanded notes captured during the interviews into transcriptions. Transcriptions were uploaded into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, for coding and analysis.

In addition to qualitative interviews with state- and school-level respondents, we conducted focus groups with students from participating Oregon schools. The goal of these focus groups was to learn about student awareness and use of the SafeOregon tip line and perceptions of school safety. In response to frequent lack of awareness of the tip line in low-tip schools, researchers developed an alternative interview guide that included questions about how students would hypothetically use the SafeOregon tip line, as well as what services and resources were made available by their school.

Students were selected to participate in focus groups using stratified random sampling across grade levels. School coordinators compiled grade-level student rosters in which each student was assigned a unique ordinal number. Using a random number generator, RTI staff randomly selected a sample of numbers corresponding to students. An equal number of students was sampled from each grade level. School coordinators contacted the selected students to invite them to participate. A team of two RTI researchers led an in-person student focus group in 10 of the 11 participating Oregon schools. Each focus group took 1 hour to conduct. Groups ranged in size from four to nine students. Written parent permission was a condition for student participation. Before the focus group, school coordinators collected parent permission forms. At the start of the focus group, researchers obtained student assent by verbally reviewing an informational form that described students' rights and listed study contact information. No stipend was provided to focus group participants. After obtaining student permission, RTI researchers recorded the focus groups with students to ensure the accuracy of notes. Using recordings, RTI researchers expanded the notes captured during the focus groups into transcriptions. Transcriptions were uploaded into NVivo for coding and analysis.

5.1.2 Results

School Characteristics of Tip Line Use Nationally and in Oregon

About half (51.3%) of public middle and high schools reported having a tip line; most tip lines have been implemented within the last 3 years. A greater percentage of Oregon schools had tip lines (82.2%), but most of these had been implemented more recently than those in the overall national sample (3.9 vs. 2.3 years). Oregon's higher implementation rates are attributable in part to Oregon's free statewide implementation approach. Although enrollment in SafeOregon is optional for districts and schools, OSP staff charged with tip line oversight went to great lengths to encourage widespread participation, often driving from one school district to the next across the state, engaging district- and school-level stakeholders with in-person presentations and conversations aimed at achieving buy-in.

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Tip lines were somewhat more likely to be found in middle schools, more so in Oregon compared with the national average. Oregon school-level stakeholders acknowledged that many students, particularly in middle schools, "often don't feel comfortable speaking to adults," but that by high school, "you've had more experience to be comfortable with yourself." Additionally, respondents suggested a heightened preoccupation with the social scene and fear of snitching among middle school students. As one respondent stated, "Middle school is all about the social connection. It is a full social suicide if you call out a friend. … It's all about the pack." Although this discomfort and fear may be salient for high school students as well, school-level stakeholders seemed to recognize tip lines as a critically important vehicle for middle school students to report tip-worthy information anonymously and confidentially.

Rural and smaller schools reported the fewest tip lines. The presence of tip lines consistently increased as school size increased. This pattern of results is consistent in the Oregon sample, albeit with an overall higher likelihood of a school having a tip line. State-level stakeholders in Oregon addressed the unique challenges that rural communities that "are not resource rich" may face in implementing a tip line. Such resource challenges may help explain rural schools reporting the fewest tip lines. In addition, Oregon school-level stakeholders in smaller schools, which often coincided with rural locales, suggested their small schools often benefit from a tight-knit school system, thereby diminishing the perceived need for a tip line. One school-level stakeholder in a rural district commented, "We are a really small [community] and we just communicate with each other one-on-one. I have the same phone numbers as the former SRO, and I get random text messages directly from parents and students with concerns. I give out a lot of business cards." Finally, one school-level stakeholder in "a very close-knit community" noted, "I think the first people think when they hear 'tip line' is a school shooter instead of just realizing that this [is also for] suicidal ideation, maybe serious drug issues, all kinds of different things." Smaller communities may dismiss tip line adoption because they feel less threatened by big city problems like weapons and violence. Resource challenges, an everybody-knows-everybody outlook, and a perceived sense of safety may deter tip line adoption and implementation among smaller, more-rural districts and schools.

Barriers to Having a Tip Line

Nationally, the most common reasons for not having a tip line were a perceived lack of necessity, not enough budget support, and lack of staff to support a tip line. These reasons were common to Oregon schools, as well. State-level Oregon stakeholders implementing SafeOregon schools echoed all three of these primary concerns. One school-level stakeholder spoke candidly about the perception of necessity and the challenges he faced getting constituents to recognize the need for and value in having a tip line: "It's very political to have [a tip line] here because everybody wants to believe that we're a safe school district." Some school-level stakeholders with tip lines in their schools even contested

the need for it in their own schools, citing alternative non-tip-line reporting methods available to students and staff and a desire to cloak and handle internal problems within the school. A lack of perceived need hinged on perceptions that the school is safe and has alternative reporting methods and the school not wanting to "air dirty laundry" with outside agencies or constituents.

Stakeholders repeatedly stressed resource strain and overburdened schools as challenges inherent in operating a tip line, particularly when it came to having a program champion for it. The overwhelming majority of stakeholders implementing tip lines in schools affirmed the need for them, but also acknowledged they needed to better ensure that their staff and students know the tip line exists and how to report actionable information. Recognizing this shortfall, stakeholders emphasized the need to identify a program champion who is invested in the effort and can dedicate time. However, only one of the schools participating in qualitative interviews had a designated program champion.

State-level Oregon stakeholders, although unified in acknowledging the need for a tip line, also discussed the challenges inherent in obtaining the requisite buy-in from multiple state agencies, either because of a budget shortfall or a lack of staff commitment to operationalize and implement the tip line. Once again, program champions emerged as a key theme precipitating implementation success. One state-level stakeholder commented, "I can't remember how many times I heard [Oregon School Safety Task Force member] say, 'We are going to fund this tip line regardless of whether it passes [in the state legislature] or not. I'll carve it out of my budget.'" State-level stakeholders collectively cited the need to overcome resource strain by identifying a program champion who has time, commitment, and passion and a willingness to carry the torch, advocate legislatively, and engage school staff and students by creating a culture of civic reporting and effectively marketing the program to schools.

Tip Line Staffing

At the national level, over half of all tip lines were staffed or monitored 24 hours a day, whereas in Oregon, about 90% were staffed or monitored 24 hours a day. Nationally, school staff were the first to receive tips. Oregon tips were predominantly routed to a call center, contractor, or vendor first. According to stakeholder interviews, the Oregon School Safety Task Force determined that constant oversight (i.e., by way of a call center, contractor, or vendor) was necessary to prevent and respond to time-sensitive safety concerns. SafeOregon was, therefore, conceived of and operationalized as a 24/7 monitoring system. The underlying motivation for this approach centered on the concern that an unanswered voicemail or unopened email could thwart timely and effective intervention.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Nationally, school tip lines were most often described to students as anonymous. However, in Oregon, confidential and anonymous is the most prevalent description. Overall, student preference was for anonymous reporting for two reasons. First, students doubted that school administrators would, in fact, maintain student confidentiality. Students in focus groups shared widespread concerns articulated by the following student, "I trusted teachers and adults before, and they didn't keep it secret." Another student echoed this sentiment, "There have been situations where it was supposed to be kept confidential and then it gets around school and then people come back for retribution … it's happened multiple times." They shared concerns that school staff would leak their identity, inadvertently or otherwise, thereby increasing the likelihood of student-on-student retribution for "snitching." One student commented, "I feel like there's a huge thing around middle school where 'snitches get stiches.' If someone finds out that you sent [the tip], it's not a good day for you."

Separately, students suggested that disclosing their identities may influence tip resolution. For example, if a student who had a history of discipline issues submitted a confidential tip, students did not think that school staff would take the tip seriously. Anonymity presented an unbiased parity that students found appealing. Students in focus groups acknowledged that those "who have a behavioral record and have only had negative interactions with administrators" may be worried that the administrator will not believe the student's report of an incident or, worse yet, blame the incident on the reporting student.

However, students were frustrated that anonymity would not allow for follow-up and closure. One participating student commented, "I'd want to know what happened, but if you report anonymously, you can't." Students were eager to know whether, when, and how tips were resolved, yet most were unwilling to compromise their anonymity to have access to that information.

School-level stakeholders, on the other hand, generally preferred a confidential reporting system. Although they recognized the value anonymity provides students, they reported that tips often contained insufficient information for appropriate intervention. One school-level stakeholder commented, "It's very useful for us [to have the reporter's name] because sometimes we need more detail than two sentences written by a 15-year-old; we might be like, 'Okay 15-year-old, we need more, like, this is threatening … give us some more info.'" Their subsequent concerns were twofold: they were not able to intervene in a situation needing intervention, and the failure to intervene may be misinterpreted or misunderstood by the tipster(s), thereby diminishing students' help-seeking behaviors.

That said, school-level stakeholders also recognized how a confidential reporting system would interfere with tip reporting: "I'm old school, and I like to have the information … [but] if we didn't have the tip line anonymous, we wouldn't receive as many tips." SafeOregon's approach is to provide an anonymous tip line with the option for the reporter to disclose

their identity or report confidentially if the reporter so chooses. Still others prefer confidentiality over anonymity because of the possibility of false reporting. Most state tip lines, including SafeOregon, allow for the possibility of tracing and disclosing the identity of the reporter should the tip be deemed a malicious act: "If it's a malicious act, then we should be able to see who reported it so that that person can face the repercussions of false reporting."

Partnerships

Both nationally and in Oregon, school staff were the most common active partner, followed by local law enforcement agencies and district staff; state law enforcement and mental health professionals were also common. Patterns of involvement were very similar across the national and Oregon samples. These similarities suggest the importance of engaging a diversity of partnerships early and often to ensure that appropriate tip line processes are in place for effective implementation, response, and sustainability.

Successful tip line development and implementation required a diverse array of partners. One state-level stakeholder described the robust set of partners constituting the Oregon School Safety Task Force, charged with developing and operationalizing the tip line, as follows: "The best example that I can give you is that the task force is the United Nations, and everybody has a flag from the country that they represent." Members from myriad sectors, including education, school boards, law enforcement, sheriffs, public safety, public health, and mental health, are represented on the task force. Having diverse representation increases buy-in among constituents. One state-level stakeholder underscored the important role of behavioral health in addition to education and law enforcement, suggesting anecdotally that "2 years before [the kid] was homicidal, the kid was suicidal, so we should have started earlier with this kid." Another state-level stakeholder focused more narrowly on a strong relationship between education and law enforcement: "I think the biggest reason [Oregon] has been so successful is the phenomenal working relationship that education has with law enforcement, and that isn't just at the task force level." Stakeholders at both the state and school levels indicated that cooperation among state, county, and local law enforcement and education have yielded stronger relationships, bidirectional communication, bidirectional information sharing, and effective interventions.

SROs often served as liaisons between these two agencies. The tip line has strengthened SROs' ability to both prevent and respond to safety concerns and to develop relationships within the school community. One SRO commented, "It wasn't possible for me to man my phone 24/7. I've lost two kids to suicide on my watch. Having the tip line enables [law enforcement and schools] to have 24 hours of coverage." The tip line ensures that critical incidents go to dispatch so that an on-call officer is always available.

Across interviews, stakeholders discussed strong relationships between law enforcement and education. Administrators and SROs repeatedly disclosed that they had each other's cell

phone numbers, illustrating the importance of strong relationships and close contact between education and law enforcement. One administrator commented, "I have a really good relationship with [law enforcement], so we're in constant contact. If something were to happen, they would always call me. If it was a school-level issue, they would call me." SROs expressed similar perspectives on their working relationships with schools; for example, one SRO noted, "If we receive a tip and I'm worried about a kid and I can't seem to connect with [the kid], I will let the counselor and administrators know so that someone is watching them." Yet another SRO similarly commented, "I have the [school] counselors on speed dial. We communicate very frequently."

Another SRO described the importance of building strong relationships with not only the school staff, but also with the parents and students. One disclosed, "I have parents that I've arrested at least five times on felony charges and their kids love me; I have a good rapport with that parent. He's appreciative that I'm there watching out for his kids." Further illustrating this point, a different SRO stated, "I'm visible, and a lot of parents have me on speed dial."

State- and school-level stakeholders, particularly law enforcement and education, highlight the need for strong relationships and clear communication involving the existence, purpose, and functioning of a tip line among constituents, as well as clearly delineated roles and processes involving triage and response teams.

Challenges to Operating a Tip Line

Both nationally and in Oregon, school administrators stated that the most challenging aspects of tip lines are having sufficient information submitted with tips for action to be taken (41% Oregon) and raising awareness of the tip line (36% Oregon). Getting students to submit tips and misusing tip lines (intentionally bogus tips, unintended uses) were also commonly reported concerns by Oregon and school administrators across the nation.

In Oregon, both school-level stakeholder groups corroborated these findings, converging on the need to educate students about the tip line, to encourage students' civic engagement and social responsibility through tip submission, to teach students how to submit actionable and appropriate information, and to ensure students understand penalties associated with malicious tips (intentionally bogus tips, unintended uses). One school-level stakeholder noted, "Not everything that comes to us is going to be actionable material." Another stated, "I definitely spend a few minutes thinking, 'who could this possibly be?' And [I'm] checking multiple spelling[s] of names. Like is this an [actual] person or not and from everything I have in front of me? No." The importance of raising student awareness about the tip line and educating students on using it emerged as prominent themes throughout all school-level stakeholder interviews.

Student Awareness

Social media and on-campus signage were the most-common means of marketing and raising awareness of the tip line in a school. Mail and email messages were also common. The means of raising awareness were similar for most methods across the two samples. Oregon schools were more likely to use on-campus signs or displays, fliers, and mailed or emailed messages. State-level stakeholders cited tip line funding caps as precluding their ability to fully market the tip line, conceding that as a barrier. One state-level stakeholder noted, "Promotion is challenging because it costs money." Although the Oregon School Safety Task Force was responsible for the tip line's inception and operation, the task force intended for schools to conduct the actual tip line marketing themselves. As this stakeholder continued, "Really, marketing is up to each individual school district on how they do it."

OSP provided electronic copies of posters and fliers to facilitate school tip line marketing. Some school-level stakeholders reported hanging those posters in their schools. However, some school-level stakeholders admitted they often did not get around to printing and posting or distributing the hard-copy materials that OSP provided. One stakeholder illustrated this fact by pointing to a stack of posters sitting on the floor that they had intended to hang up 6 months ago. They discussed the need for a true program champion in each school, a point person to ensure sustained messaging to the school community about the tip line's existence, purpose, and function through a variety of print and virtual media platforms.

In-person marketing techniques such as student assemblies, student and teacher training, and use of classroom time were often used to raise awareness. However, these efforts were often limited to a one- or two-time event. Very few school administrators reported holding multiple training or student awareness events during the school year. It is likely that a sustained effort with more regular cadence would result in increased student awareness and higher-quality tip submissions. Other innovative school-level ideas included locating a QR code above the light switch in every classroom; one school printed the tip line on the back of all student IDs, and another school placed the SafeOregon app on the desktop of all school computers and Chromebooks.

Despite acknowledging the need to increase SafeOregon marketing campaigns within their schools, many school-level stakeholders seemed confident that their students were aware of the tip line. However, the overwhelming majority of students in focus groups were unaware of the tip line's existence, or they conflated it with, for example, a suicide prevention hotline. Students provided sweeping commentary on the most effective form of marketing the tip line in schools, stating that even if school staff were to hang posters and distribute flyers, students would walk right by them without seeing them. Worse yet, as one student said, "Posters get ripped down." As an alternative, students provided a comprehensive list of recommendations, citing video, audio, and social media as the most effective ways to

engage student awareness. When asked the best way to market the tip line, one student replied, "Social media is everything: Instagram, Snapchat, 5-second YouTube ads for the state of Oregon that you can't skip at the beginning of the song." This reprise frequently surfaced within student focus groups. One state-level stakeholder echoed that suggestion, "Enlist high school students to do the marketing … I think it's important because they know which social media platforms are the hottest this year because it changes." In sum, the most well-conceived and developed tip line will fall short if underused. Student-driven awareness and marketing are critical components.

Perceived Impact

Overwhelmingly, tip lines made school staff aware of safety issues and helped them prevent self-harm/suicide and facilitate responses to bullying. Although Oregon school-level stakeholders hoped that students would feel comfortable approaching teachers and administrators with concerns, they overwhelmingly agreed that the tip line provided a safe, confidential, and expeditious way to communicate concerning information around the clock. One school-level stakeholder affirmed, "I think for us it brought things to light that we may never have known about: social media, pictures." As a result of the tip line, some stakeholders were able to intervene on in-process suicides and in-process cutting. They also alluded to intervening on planned threats of school attack (e.g., student Instagram photo of multiple weapons, coupled with statements of angst toward the school). As one state-level stakeholder noted, "Of all the things that the school safety task force accomplished, this is the one thing that they would all hold out as being the most important, meaningful, and impactful."

5.2 Tip Line Data Assessment: Threats and Acts of Violence Against Schools

For this part of the study, because part of the inspiration for tip line technology implementation in schools is to prevent extreme violence (e.g., school shootings), it is critical that researchers analyze tip line data to better understand how students and others are using them to report leakage warning behaviors (Hendrix, Planty, & Cutbush, in press). Recognizing that tip line data represent a unique window into threats to safety perceived by students, parents, school staff, and community members, we present the results of an analysis of tips collected over 43 months by Oregon's state-operated tip line. Our focus is on 228 tips reporting one or more persons for mass school violence leakage or for an individual's direct or indirect communication of an intent or desire to kill multiple individuals at school (O'Toole, 2000; Meloy & O'Toole, 2011).

Our study had three objectives. First, produce descriptive statistics regarding the type of leakage communicated in the tips, the person(s) being reported and what the reporter perceived to be red flags or aggravating factors (e.g., access to a firearm), how and when the tip was reported, and how the school responded. The second objective was to examine

an interrupted time-series analysis (ITSA) model to test whether key events introduce shocks into the tip line reporting system. Specifically, we examine the impact of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School [MSDHS] shooting in Parkland, FL, on the trend of monthly tips reported prior to the event. The third objective was to examine which factors increase the likelihood that students and others report leakage immediately and, in doing so, give the school and law enforcement the maximum amount of time possible to intervene when necessary. We used mixed-effects logistic regression models that predict the odds of same-day reporting (i.e., the tip was reported on the same day the leakage was observed) using numerous threat characteristics (e.g., whether a threat was directly communicated), aggravating factors (e.g., access to a firearm, date of attack indicated in the leakage), and school traits (number of students enrolled, urbanicity) as predictors.

5.2.1 Methods

Our data come from the SafeOregon tip line. Experienced qualitative analysts reviewed all tips reported to SafeOregon from February 1, 2017, through August 29, 2020, and identified 228 unique tips that involved mass school violence leakage. Based on the text of each tip, leakage was classified into one of six core categories to describe the specific nature of each tip: (1) *Directly Communicated Threat*, (2) *Veiled Threat*, (3) *Rumored Threat*, (4) *Publicly Written Threat*, (5) *Desire to Harm Threat*, and (6) *Symbolic Threat*. Other details about the threat were documented, which were considered aggravating factors that increase the perceived seriousness of the threat, including whether the person being reported indicated a date or time for when the attack would occur, described having a hitlist or a specific group or type of person who would be targeted during the attack (e.g., students with special needs), or provided any other details about a plan to attack the school (e.g., the type of gun that would be used, which buildings of the school will be attacked, how the school resource officer will be eluded). If the tip described a specific date for the attack, the number of days between the date the threat was made and the date of the threatened attack was calculated because this length of time could affect how soon an observer reports the threat as well as how much time law enforcement and the school has to respond.

Leakages were coded as being made or exhibited by multiple students (gender not specified); multiple male students; single male student; single female student; single student (gender not specified); or number of and gender of persons not specified. Tips were coded as involving a known or knowable person if the reporter knew or could find out the name of the person who leaked and unknown if the reporter explicitly stated they did not know who engaged in leaking. Additional characteristics for each report was coded. To understand the types of schools represented in our sample, we merged in school-level characteristics from the NCES and CRDC.

Finally, because it is impossible to know whether a student who has engaged in leaking is sincere about their intentions or desires to carry out violence, all leakage should be taken

seriously. Time is essential when it comes to intervening in these potentially dangerous situations—and to some extent, how quickly someone reports leakage to the tip line may represent a proxy for how serious they perceive it to be. Thus, an important area of interest is to explore whether there are certain characteristics of leakage or the person being reported that predict how quickly the reporter reported their tips. To address this, we present mixed-effects logistic regression models predicting the odds of leakage being reported on the same day it was observed (i.e., same-day reporting).

5.2.2 Findings

Figure 6 displays the percentage of leakage events that occurred and were reported during six timeslots throughout the day. Only 9% occurred in the early morning hours between 12 AM and 7:59 AM. About 42% occurred between 8 AM and 3:59 PM, which approximates the average school day, and about half occurred between 4 PM and 11:59 PM.

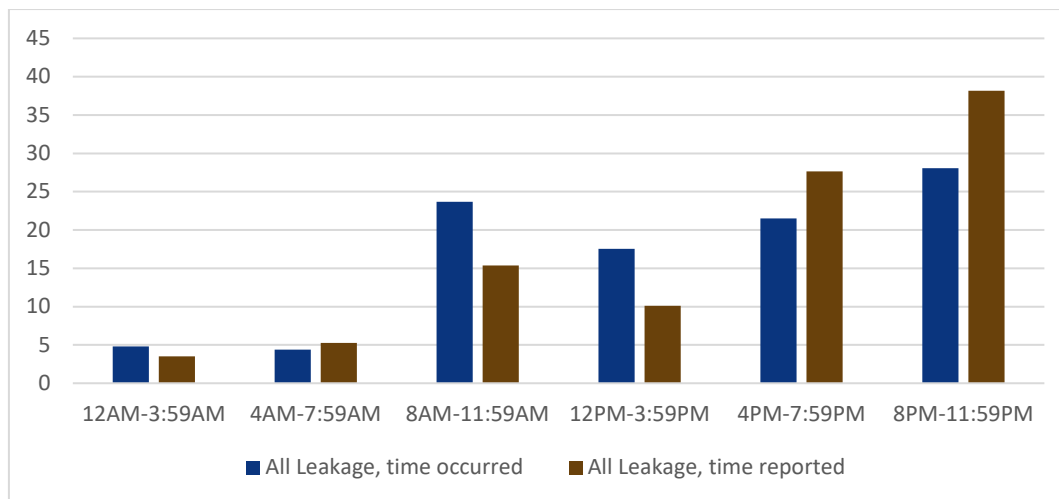**Figure 6.   Percentage of leakage events by timeslot**

Figure 7 displays events by day of the week. Events peaked on Thursdays but showed overall stability from Monday through Thursday before dropping off on Fridays and into the weekends.

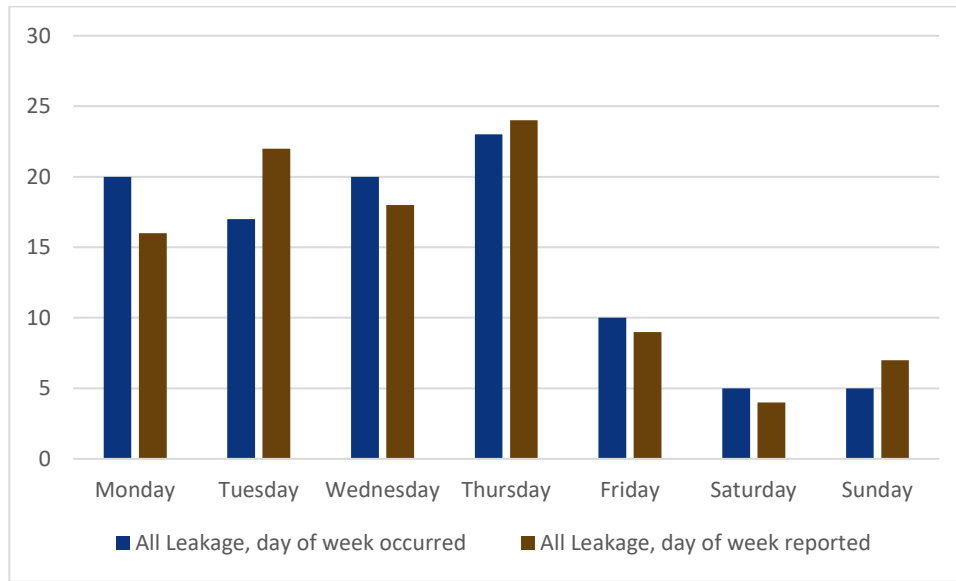**Figure 7.** **Percentage of leakage events by day of the week**

Figure 8 displays tips reported by month. Tips are at their lowest point in June, July, and August, when traditional schools release for summer break. Tips are highest in February, followed by October, and then March.

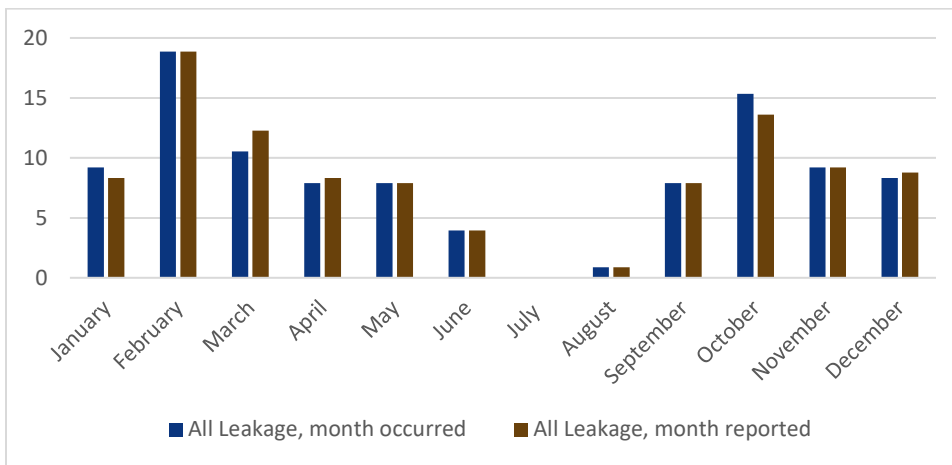**Figure 8.** **Number of threat reports by month throughout the study period**

Figure 9 shows that there were only nine tips in the first 12 months of the study period (February 2017–January 2018), followed by a substantial increase in February 2018, in which the number of reports (23) more than doubled the number from the entire first year. For the significant jump in reports starting in February 2018 and continuing into March, one important consideration is that February 2018 was the month of the MSDHS shooting. We use ITSA to examine whether MSDHS had a statistically significant effect on the trend of monthly tips. ITSA is a quasi-experimental research design for evaluating the impact of an intervention on an outcome before and after the intervention. Single-group ITSA models

have no comparison group; instead, the pre-intervention trend forecasted into the postintervention period is treated as the counterfactual (Linden, 2015). Although caution should be shown when assuming causality using single group ITSA, confidence is strengthened when the pre-intervention trend is flat, followed by a substantial change in the outcome variable immediately following the intervention. **Table 5** and **Figure 9** display the results. The starting level of tips was approximately zero, and the trend was relatively flat in the months leading up to the intervention ($t=.16$, $p>.05$). In month 13, there was a statistically significant increase of 9.72 tips relative to the pre-intervention period, followed by a statistically significant decrease in the monthly trend (relative to the pre-intervention trend) of .45 tips. The post-MSDHS linear trend does not indicate a statistically significant change in the monthly rate of tips following the shooting, likely because of high variation in the number of tips following the spike in February and March 2018. These findings are generally consistent with what might be expected from the notion that the shooting represented a critical but temporary shock to the tip line.

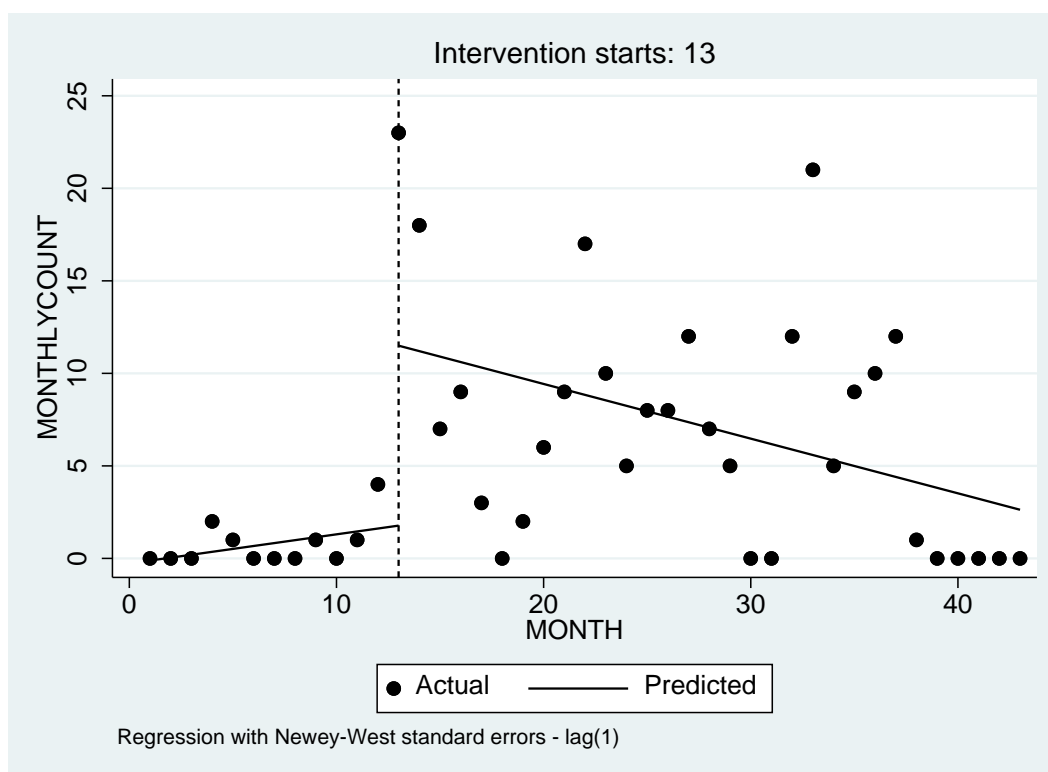**Figure 9   ITSA model predicting effects of the MSDHS shooting on tips**

Regression with Newey-West standard errors - lag(1)

Table 5. **ITSA of Monthly Event Counts before and after the MSDHS shooting (N=43)**

	Coefficient	Newey-West SE	t	P>|t|
_t (time since start of the study)	0.16	.10	1.50	.140
_x_month13	9.72***	2.88	3.37	.002
_x_t_month13	−0.45*	0.20	−2.21	.033
constant	−.11	0.47	−0.25	.808
Linear Trend	−0.30	0.15	−1.91	0.06

*p<.05 ***p<0.001

What predicts same day reporting of a leakage event?

Table 6 shows the results of four mixed-effects logistic regression models predicting the odds that leakages were reported the same day, by tip and school characteristics. Model 1 shows two noteworthy effects: the odds that tips were reported the same day were 82% lower when the person being reported was known to the reporter and nearly 2.5 times higher when the person indicated a date for the attack. Model 2 adds in school-level characteristics, each of which are statistically nonsignificant. Model 3 replaces the date of attack indicator with an alternative indicator for events in which the person being reported indicated the attack would be within 1 day from when the leakage occurred. The odds of an event being reported the same day are 4.1 times higher when the person being reported indicated the attack would happen within 1 day of the leakage event. The odds increase to 4.3 times higher in Model 4.

Table 6. **Mixed-effects logistic regression models predicting the odds that leakage events were reported the same day, by tip and school characteristics (N=228)**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Variable	Odds Ratio (SE)	Odds Ratio (SE)	Odds Ratio (SE)	Odds Ratio (SE)
Directly Communicated (versus other threat types)	0.88 (0.30)	0.91 (0.32)	0.85 (0.29)	0.88 (0.31)
Known Person (versus not known)	0.28* (0.15)	0.31* (0.17)	0.28* (0.14)	0.30* (0.16)
Alleged Access to Firearm (versus no access)	0.46 (0.21)	0.45 (0.21)	0.45 (0.21)	0.44 (0.21)

(continued)

Table 6. **Mixed-effects logistic regression models predicting the odds that leakage events were reported the same day, by tip and school characteristics (N=228) (continued)**

Variable	Model 1 Odds Ratio (SE)	Model 2 Odds Ratio (SE)	Model 3 Odds Ratio (SE)	Model 4 Odds Ratio (SE)
Date of Attack Indicated (versus no date indicated)	2.44* (1.02)	2.55* (1.08)	-	-
Date of Attack Indicated is that Day or Following Day (versus no date indicated or date more than 1 day away)	-	-	4.14** (2.06)	4.30** (2.18)
Target of Violence Indicated (versus no target indicated)	1.66 (0.84)	1.83 (0.94)	1.82 (0.92)	2.01 (1.04)
Reporter Heard, Saw, or Observed Event More than Once	0.85 (0.31)	0.84 (0.31)	0.83 (0.30)	0.81 (0.31)
Reporter is a Student (versus all other reporter types)	0.83 (0.30)	0.76 (0.29)	0.86 (0.31)	0.78 (0.30)
Threat Occurred in the AM (versus the PM)	0.94 (0.33)	0.90 (0.32)	0.94 (0.33)	0.89 (0.32)
Threat Occurred at School (versus all other settings)	1.18 (0.42)	1.23 (0.45)	1.20 (0.43)	1.27 (.47)
Number of Students Enrolled at the School	-	1.00 (0.00)	-	1.00 (0.00)
City School (versus all other urbanicity types)	-	1.50 (0.58)	-	1.42 (0.56)

*p<.05 **p<0.01

There are several limitations to note. Although tip line data are qualitatively rich and offer a distinctive way to study threats to school safety, the accuracy of the tips is not verifiable and the information is not always complete. Based on the data available to us, we cannot understand the full context around leakage warning behaviors and whether they are sincere. Moreover, all events analyzed represent accusations, and we have no evidence to suggest that any violence would or did occur following each leakage event. Another limitation is that our analysis, especially of aggravating factors, often relied on whether the reporter chose to include certain details about the leakage. It is likely that our descriptive statistics underestimate numerous qualities, such as the extent to which the persons being reported have access to a firearm or included a date for the attack. Finally, tip lines are just one source of reporting of threats. We are not able to capture how much other reporting occurs concurrently or separately from the tip line through other channels such as in-person

reporting to a teacher or school administrator or school staff directly observing problem behavior.

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Appendix A:
National School Tip Line Survey Instrument

Existence of Tip Line

1. Does your school currently have a tip line in place?

   For this survey, a "tip line" is any type of structured system (e.g., an app, online submission, telephone hotline, or written submission via drop box) that allows students, parents, staff, or community members to report information about potential threats to students or school safety.

   If your school has its own tip line or is part of a state-, district-, or national-level tip line, please answer "yes."
   - Yes [skip to Q6]
   - No
   - Don't know

   [display soft check if Q1=missing] This question is very important. Please provide a valid response before proceeding to the next question, if possible.

2. [ask if Q1=no or DK] To the best of your knowledge, has your school ever had a tip line?
   If your school had its own tip line or was part of a state-, district-, or national-level tip line, please answer "yes."
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don't know

3. [ask if Q1=no or DK] Is your school considering implementing or adopting a tip line?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don't know

4. [ask if Q1=no or DK] Which of the following are reasons why your school does not currently have a tip line in place?
   Please select all that apply.
   - ☐ My school is in the review, planning, and/or approval stages for adopting a tip line
   - ☐ A tip line is not necessary because my school has other ways to share information about potential threats to students or school safety
   - ☐ My school does not have the technical expertise to implement and operate a tip line
   - ☐ My school does not have the budget to implement and operate a tip line
   - ☐ My school does not have enough staff to implement and operate a tip line
   - ☐ Students, parents, or staff at my school would be unlikely to use a tip line

      ☐   My school is concerned about the legal liability risk of having a tip line

      ☐   Other concerns (please describe: _____)

5.   [ask if respondent selects response option #2 in Q4] What other ways does your school share information about potential threats to students or school safety?

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[if Q1=no or DK, skip to Q39]

Basic Tip Line Characteristics

6.   How long has your school had a tip line continuously in operation?
This means the amount of time that any tip line (not just your current tip line) has been continuously in use at your school.
- o   Less than 1 year
- o   1 year
- o   2 years
- o   3 years
- o   4 years
- o   5 years
- o   6 years
- o   7 years
- o   8 years
- o   9 years
- o   10 or more years

7.   Is your tip line primarily a national-, state-, district-, or school-level tip line?
This question is asking about who has primary responsibility for setting up and maintaining the tip line.
- o   National-level tip line
- o   State-level tip line
- o   District-level tip line
- o   School-level tip line
- o   Other (please describe: _____)

Roles and Responsibilities for Tip Line Functioning

[Oregon schools that answered "state-level" to item 7 should skip to Q11]

8a.   [Ask if Q7=district] Which of the following agencies administers the tip line used by your school?

    *Please select the agency that **primarily** administers the tip line.*

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o   Your school district or local education agency
o   A local law enforcement agency
o   Other (please describe: _____)
o   Don't know

8b.   [Ask if Q7=state and school is not an Oregon school] Which of the following agencies administers the tip line used by your school?

*Please select the agency that **primarily** administers the tip line.*

o   The state department of education
o   A state law enforcement or public safety agency
o   The state attorney general's office
o   Other (please describe: _____)
o   Don't know

9.   How is your tip line staffed?
o   Staffed or monitored 24/7, such that a staff member receives calls, texts, or other entries in "real time"
o   Staffed or monitored only during certain portions of the day
o   Tips are monitored at specific intervals (e.g., every 4 hours) or times of day
o   Other (please describe: _____)
o   Don't know

10.   When tips are initially submitted to the tip line, who first receives them (for triage or forwarding to others)?
*Please select the group that is **most** involved in this role.*
o   A call center, contractor, or vendor
o   School staff
o   School district or local education agency (LEA) staff
o   State education agency staff
o   Staff from other public agencies such as local or state law enforcement
o   Other (please describe: _____)

11.   Which of the following groups are active partners in your school's tip line?
*By active partners, we mean that they are involved in **any** of the following activities:*
- **marketing** the tip line to students, parents, or others to encourage use
- **reviewing and prioritizing tips** (e.g., triaging, forwarding)
- **investigating tips** or assisting with investigation
- **making referrals** to get students support from outside providers
- **providing services** (e.g., counseling, wraparound services)
Please select all that apply.

☐   Administrators, teachers, counselors, or other staff at your school
☐   A parent group associated with your school (e.g., PTA)
☐   Students

☐ Staff from your school district or local education agency (LEA)
☐ Local law enforcement, including school resource officers
☐ State-level education agency staff
☐ State-level law enforcement agency staff
☐ Community leaders or local government officials
☐ Mental health professionals
☐ Other community service providers
☐ A vendor involved in setting up your tip line
☐ A call center, contractor, or vendor involved in receiving tips
☐ Local media (e.g., radio stations, newspaper)
☐ Other partners (please describe: _____)
☐ Don't know

12. [groups selected in Q11 will display in this table] In what ways are the following groups directly involved in the tip line used by your school?
Please select all that apply.

	Marketing to students	Reviewing and prioritizing tips	Investigating tips	Making referrals	Providing services
School staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parent group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Students					
School district/LEA staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Local law enforcement staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
State education staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
State law enforcement staff					
Community leaders/gov't	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mental health professionals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other community service providers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vendor that set up tip line	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Call center, contractor, or vendor involved in receiving tips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Local media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other partners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Tip Line Outreach & Awareness

13. In your opinion, is your tip line's name or slogan "catchy," such that it is easy to remember and appeals to students?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Don't know

14. In a given **school year**, how often are each of the following in-person activities held to raise awareness of your school's tip line?
    *This includes in-person activities only. Social media activities are covered in the **next** question.*

	Not at all	1 time	2 times	3-8 times	9 or more times
Student assemblies to educate students about the tip line	○	○	○	○	○
Classroom time to educate students about the tip line	○	○	○	○	○
Other in-person events or activities to educate students about the tip line	○	○	○	○	○
In-person events or activities to educate **teachers** about the tip line	○	○	○	○	○
In-person events or activities to educate **parents** about the tip line	○	○	○	○	○
In-person **community events or activities** to share information about the tip line	○	○	○	○	○

15. How else is your school's tip line promoted to students, parents, and others to increase awareness of its existence?
    This includes information about how to use it and what types of threats to report, as well as materials that encourage tip line use.
    Please select all that apply.
    ☐ Social media posts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat)
    ☐ Media announcements (radio, TV, etc.)
    ☐ Preloading or displaying the tip line website or app on school computers or tablets
    ☐ A "tip line awareness day"
    ☐ Promotional trinkets (e.g., pencils, cups, t-shirts) or printing of website on student ID cards
    ☐ Posters, signs, or electronic informational displays placed on campus
    ☐ Billboards placed in your community
    ☐ Flyers

☐ Messages mailed (or e-mailed)
☐ Telephone calls
☐ Morning or weekly reminders over the PA system
☐ Other (please describe: _____)
☐ Don't know

Tip Line Submission Process

16. [skip for Oregon schools that answer "state-level" to item 7] If your tip line has a public website, please enter the URL here: _____

17. [skip for Oregon schools that answer "state-level" to item 7] Was your tip line program purchased from a vendor or developed in-house?
    o Purchased from a vendor or contractor
    o Developed in-house
    o Other (please describe: _____)
    o Don't know

18. [ask if Q17=vendor] What is the name of the vendor or organization from which your school, district, or state purchased its tip line? _____

19. How is your tip line described to students?
    Please select all that apply.
    ☐ Anonymous (persons can submit a tip without providing any information that could be used to identify them)
    ☐ Confidential (information about the person who submits a tip is collected but kept private)
    ☐ Neither anonymous nor confidential
    ☐ Don't know

20. In your school's tip line, can a tip be submitted without the reporter providing any personal information like a name, phone number, or e-mail address?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Don't know

21. Does your tip line allow the reporter to choose if he or she can be re-contacted if needed (even if your tip line allows for someone to submit the tip anonymously)?
    o Yes
    o No
    o Don't know

22. What are the ways that tips can be submitted to your tip line?
    Please select all that apply.
    ☐ Calling a phone number
    ☐ E-mail

☐ Texting
☐ Submitting an entry via a website
☐ Submitting an entry via an app
☐ Other (please describe: _____)
☐ Don't know

23. What types of media does your tip line accept when someone submits a tip?
Please select all that apply.
☐ Screen shots
☐ Photos
☐ Videos
☐ Chats
☐ Social media posts (forwarded or shared)
☐ Other (please describe: _____)
☐ Don't know

24. Do you have a formal, written policy detailing the process for triaging tips (i.e., prioritizing or categorizing them based on level of urgency) when they **first get submitted**?
   o Yes
   o No
   o Don't know

25. Do you have a formal, written policy detailing the process for acting on tips **when your school gets them**?
   o Yes
   o No
   o Don't know

26. Please describe the process for triaging tips (i.e., prioritizing or categorizing them based on level of urgency) when they **first get submitted** to the tip line.

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27. Please describe the process for acting on tips you receive. By this, we mean who acts on them and what the process is for responding to tips you receive.

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28. Does your tip line have any of the following processes built in to ensure that a tip is not missed?
    Please select all that apply.
    - ☐ Distributing tips to multiple staff trained to respond
    - ☐ A phone tree such that if the first individual is not reached, the second is contacted
    - ☐ A confirmation process to acknowledge that a tip has been received
    - ☐ Prompts automatically sent from the system if a response has not been entered
    - ☐ Other procedures (please describe: _____)
    - ☐ None

Storage of Submissions

29. [skip for Oregon schools that answer "state-level" to item 7] Does your tip line electronically store tips that are submitted?
    - o Yes
    - o No [skip to Q32]
    - o Don't know [skip to Q32]

30. [skip for Oregon schools that answer "state-level" to item 7] What type of information is stored?
    Please select all that apply.
    - ☐ The date and time of day the tip was submitted
    - ☐ How the tip was submitted (e.g., phone call, e-mail, text)
    - ☐ Type of tip (e.g., self-harm; drugs or alcohol)
    - ☐ Characteristics about the person who submitted the tip (e.g., whether student at the school or parent; demographic information)
    - ☐ Response to tip
    - ☐ Outcome of investigation
    - ☐ Other (please describe: _____)
    - ☐ Don't know

31. [skip for Oregon schools that answer "state-level" to item 7] How long is your tip line submission information stored?
    - o Less than a week
    - o A few weeks
    - o A few months
    - o One year
    - o Longer than 1 year
    - o Don't know

32. Is the final disposition or outcome of the tip line submission required to be documented?
    o   Yes
    o   No
    o   Don't know

Dissemination

33. [skip for Oregon schools that answer "state-level" to item 7]
     The next few questions ask about what information about tips received from your tip line is shared with the public.

     What type of information, if any, is publicly reported for <u>your school</u>?
     Please select all that apply.
     ☐   The number of tips submitted by students, parents, or teachers at your school or about potential threats to your school
     ☐   Information on the ways that tips were submitted (e.g., telephone, text, website)
     ☐   Information on the types of threats that were submitted (e.g., self-harm, bullying, potential shootings)
     ☐   Information on trends in tips received (e.g., changes compared to previous academic year, changes in the types of tips submitted)
     ☐   The disposition of tips submitted for your school (e.g., number of referrals made, number of cases closed)
     ☐   The outcomes of tips submitted for your school (e.g., number of crimes prevented, number of self-harm incidents prevented)
     ☐   None of this information is reported
     ☐   Don't know

34. [ask if any items other than "none" are selected in Q33] How often is this information updated and made available? *Please select all that apply.*
    ☐   On demand
    ☐   Weekly
    ☐   Monthly
    ☐   Quarterly
    ☐   Annually
    ☐   Don't know

35. Does your school produce written or online reports on the tips that have been submitted to your tip line?
    o   Yes
    o   No
    o   Don't know

36. [ask if yes to Question 35] How often do you produce these reports?
    Please select all that apply.
    ☐   On demand
    ☐   Weekly

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☐   Monthly
☐   Quarterly
☐   Annually
☐   Don't know

37. Does your school, district, or state compile information on the costs of operating your tip line?
   o   Yes
   o   No
   o   Don't know

38. What are the main challenges to operating your school's tip line?
   Please select all that apply.
   ☐   Insufficient staff to handle the initial receipt and triage of tips
   ☐   Insufficient staff to respond to tips
   ☐   Establishing points of contact for key staff and keeping this information up to date
   ☐   Insufficient staff training on their role in tip line operation
   ☐   Technological challenges or issues with the tip line (e.g., system failures, submission glitches)
   ☐   Raising community awareness about the tip line
   ☐   Raising student awareness about the tip line
   ☐   Getting students to submit tips
   ☐   Having tips submitted with insufficient information to take action
   ☐   Having false or bogus tips submitted
   ☐   Having tips submitted for issues other than what the tip line is intended for
   ☐   Legal liability issues and concerns
   ☐   Other (please describe: _____)

38b. Do you think your school's tip line has…

	Yes	No
Made school administrators more aware of potential safety issues?	○	○
Prevented violent incidents at your school?	○	○
Prevented incidents of self-harm/suicide among your students?	○	○
Allowed your school to respond more effectively to bullying?	○	○
Allowed your school to respond more effectively to student drug use?	○	○

39. [ask of all respondents]

What other school safety practices does your school currently have in place?
Please select all that apply.

☐ Require visitors to sign or check in
☐ Control access to school buildings during school hours (e.g., locked or monitored doors)
☐ Control access to school grounds during school hours (e.g., locked or monitored gates)
☐ Require metal detector checks on students every day
☐ Perform one of more random metal detector checks on students
☐ Equip classrooms with locks so that doors can be locked from the inside
☐ Close the campus for all students during lunch
☐ Use one or more random dog sniffs to check for drugs
☐ Perform one or more random sweeps for contraband (e.g., drugs or weapons), but not including dog sniffs
☐ Require students to wear uniforms
☐ Enforce a strict dress code
☐ Provide school lockers to students
☐ Require clear book bags or ban book bags on school grounds
☐ Have "panic button(s)" or silent alarm(s) that directly connect to law enforcement in the event of an incident
☐ Provide an electronic notification system that automatically notifies parents in case of a school-wide emergency
☐ Require students to wear badges or picture IDs
☐ Require faculty and staff to wear badges or picture IDs
☐ Use one or more security cameras to monitor the school
☐ Provide telephones in most classrooms
☐ Provide two-way radios to any staff
☐ Use school resource officers

Other practices (please describe:_____)

Appendix B:
Oregon Case Study: Student Focus Groups and Stakeholder Interviews

Student Focus Group Protocol

Safe Oregon **School Safety Tip Line Study**

Oregon Student Focus Group Script and Protocol

Date/Time: _____

School: _____

Interviewer Initials: _____   Note taker Initials: _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO INTERVIEWER: Confirm that you have a signed parent consent for each student who enters the room. Give each student a copy of the informational study form that 1) describes the purpose of the focus group, 2) informs them of their rights, and 3) provides study contact information. Briefly review the content of the informational form. Do not ask them to sign. Do not collect forms.

I. Introduction

Hello. My name is [NAME] from RTI International. Thank you for agreeing to talk with me today. We appreciate your interest and willingness to participate in the study. Before we begin, I have some information to read to you about the study.

Here are a few ground rules for today's discussion:

- It's ok if you don't want to answer a specific question
- There are no right or wrong answers
- Please respect your classmates' opinions, even if you don't agree
- Please protect your own and your classmates' privacy. We are requesting that you not speak directly about any people at your school, or any tips that you may have made in the past or plan to make in the future. We are also requesting that you not repeat to others what people in this room share today.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

SECTION A - BACKGROUND

Let's start by going around the room so you can tell me your first name, what grade you are in, and how long you've been at this school.

1a. First Name	1b. Grade	1c. How long attended this school (years/months)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

I. AWARENESS OF *SAFE OREGON*

First, I'd like to learn what you know about your school's tip line.

1) How many of you had heard about the school safety tip line before we asked you to participate in this discussion?

2) What do you know about the tip line?

    a. [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

        i. What is the name of your tip line? PROBE: Is there a catchy phrase for it? How do you remember it?

        ii. What is the purpose of the tip line?

        iii. What are some of the reasons a student at your school might use the tip line?

        iv. Do you know how do you access the tip line? How?

[IF 4 OR MORE OF STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT THE TIP LINE, PROCEED WITH ONLY SECTIONS II, III, IV, IX.

IF LESS THAN 4 OF STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT TIP LINE, SKIP TO AND COMPLETE SECTIONS V, VI, VII, VIII, IX.]

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II. *SAFE OREGON* MARKETING

Next, I'd like to learn how your school provides information about the tip line.

3) Who has talked to you about the Safe Oregon Tip Line?
    a. [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

        i.   Your teachers?
        ii.   Guidance Counselors?
        iii. Principal?
        iv.   Other school staff?
        v.   Police officers?
        vi.   School Resource Officers?
        vii. Parents?
        viii. Friends?

4) Is there a program champion for the Safe Oregon Tip Line at your school? [A program champion is somebody who, in this case, promotes the use of the tip line, makes sure all the students know about it, the "go-to" person, etc.]
    a. [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

        i.   A teacher?
        ii.   Guidance Counselor?
        iii. Principal?
        iv.   Other school staff?
        v.   Police officer?
        vi.   School Resource Officer?

5) How has information about the Safe Oregon Tip Line been shared with you?
    a. [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

        i.   In assemblies?
        ii.   Classrooms?
        iii. Online?
        iv.   Flyers or posters in hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, buses, or other common areas?
        v.   Key chains, water bottles, t-shirts or other items?
        vi.   Billboards?
        vii. Student handbook?
    b. Is there one way that is more important or memorable for you than others?]

6) What information about Safe Oregon Tip Line has the school shared with you?
    a. [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

      i.   The purpose of the tip line?

     ii.   Where to access the tip line?

          1.   Phone?

          2.   Text?

          3.   Email?

          4.   Online?

          5.   Mobile app?

    iii.   When the tip line can be accessed?

          1.   Between certain hours?

          2.   24/7?

    iv.   How to use the tip line?

          1.   Are there written instructions for using the tip line?

          2.   Has anyone at the school showed you how to use the tip line?

          3.   Is tip line user-friendly? Is it easy to use? Why or why not?

     v.   Who can use the tip line?

          1.   Students?

          2.   Parents?

          3.   Teachers?

          4.   Community members?

7) How often do you hear about the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

   a. Everyday?

   b. Once a week?

   c. Once a month?

   d. Once a year?

8) Do you think you hear about the Safe Oregon Tip Line a lot or a little? Why or why not?

9) Do you ever talk with your friends or hear other students at school talking about the Safe Oregon Tip Line? PROBE: What kinds of things do students say?

10) Do you have any suggestions for how to best give students information about using the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

III. USING *SAFE OREGON*

In this next part of our discussion, I'd like to learn about how students at your school use the tip line.

11) If you had something to report, how do you think you would report it? PROBE:

   a. Would you tell a teacher?

   b. Use the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

     c.   Some other way?

12) What types of information would you report to the Safe Oregon Tip Line? PROBES:

     a.   Problems that you're having?

     b.   Problems that another student is having?

     c.   Threats to yourself or another student?

     d.   Threats to the school?

13) Is there any difference between the types of things you would report to a teacher or other trusted adult …versus the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

14) Do students think the Safe Oregon Tip Line is useful?

15) If you had something to report, would you be comfortable using the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

     a.   If yes, why?

     b.   If no, why?

          i.   Is the tip line too difficult to use? In what ways?

          ii.   Do you know whether using the tip line is confidential? Here's what I mean by "confidential":

          iii.   Do you trust that your tips would be kept confidential?

          iv.   Do you trust that you would be believed?

              1.   If not, what would make you trust the tip line?

          v.   Do you trust that your report would be taken seriously?

          vi.   Do you trust that adults would do something about it?

          vii.   Do students take it seriously?

16) Are you aware of what happens after someone makes a tip to the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

     a.   Do adults at your school act on the tip? Please explain or provide an example.

     b.   Are parents involved?

          i.   IF YES: How so?

     c.   Does anyone notify students that a tip was received and what actions were taken to respond to the tip?

17) If you submitted a tip to the Safe Oregon Tip Line, what would you want to happen next?

a. Would you want to know if anyone received your tip and is doing something about it?

b. Would you want anyone to follow-up with you? If so, who?

    i. Parent?

    ii. Teacher?

    iii. Guidance counselor?

    iv. Principal?

c. Is there anything else you would like to happen after you submitted a tip?

18) Do you have any suggestions for ways to improve the Safe Oregon Tip Line? IF YES: What are your suggestions?

IV. PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL SAFETY

This last section asks about school climate and safety at your school this year.

19) Overall, how much would you say you like your school?

a. Is there an adult at the school you feel comfortable going to when something is bothering you? Please explain or provide an example.

b. How well do students get along with each other at your school? Please explain or provide an example.

c. How safe do you feel when you are at school? Please explain or provide an example.

    i. Probe: (a) Do you worry about crime or violence at your school (such as fighting, weapons, gangs, alcohol or drugs)? (c) Are there any particular places at school or times of the day you feel unsafe?

20) Is bullying a problem at your school? Please explain or provide an example.

d. Probe: (a) Are students made fun of in a hurtful way, left out, or threatened because they are "different"? (b) Do students spread false rumors about other students? (c) Do students physically bully or attack other students?

[SKIP TO SECTIONS V-VIII, BELOW, FOR FOCUS GROUPS CONTAINING LESS THAN 4 STUDENT WHO KNOW ABOUT SAFE OREGON.]

V. HOTLINE MARKETING

Okay, I understand you haven't learned about Safe Oregon in your school.

21) What would be the best way to share information about the Safe Oregon Tip Line with students?
   i. In assemblies?
   ii. Classrooms?
   iii. Online?
   iv. Flyers or posters in hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, buses, or other common areas?
   v. Key chains, water bottles, t-shirts or other items?
   vi. Billboards?
   vii. Student handbook?
   viii. Other?

22) What ways should students have access to the tip line?
   1. Phone?
   2. Text?
   3. Email?
   4. Online?
   5. Mobile app?
   6. Others?

23) Who should be able to use the tip line?
   1. Students?
   2. Parents?
   3. Teachers?
   4. Community members?

24) Are there any other hotlines available to students that you are aware of?

[IF NO, SKIP TO SECTION VI.]

25) Who has talked to you about the hotlines?
   e. [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

   i. Your teachers?
   ii. Guidance Counselors?
   iii. Principal?
   iv. Other school staff?

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      v.   Police officers?

     vi.   School Resource Officers?

    vii.   Parents?

   viii.   Friends?

26) Is there a program champion for the hotline at your school? [A program champion is somebody who, in this case, promotes the use of the tip line, makes sure all the students know about it, the "go-to" person, etc.]

    f.   [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

       i.   A teacher?

      ii.   Guidance Counselor?

     iii.   Principal?

     iv.   Other school staff?

      v.   Police officer?

     vi.   School Resource Officer?

27) How has information about the hotline been shared with you?

    g.   [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

       i.   In assemblies?

      ii.   Classrooms?

     iii.   Online?

     iv.   Flyers or posters in hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, buses, or other common areas?

      v.   Key chains, water bottles, t-shirts or other items?

     vi.   Billboards?

    vii.   Student handbook?

    h.   Is there one way that is more important or memorable for you than others?]

28) What information about the hotline has the school shared with you?

    i.   [If the students do not mention the following, ask:]

       i.   The purpose of the hotline?

      ii.   Where to access the hotline?

         1.   Phone?

         2.   Text?

         3.   Email?

         4.   Online?

         5.   Mobile app?

     iii.   When the hotline can be accessed?

         1.   Between certain hours?

         2.   24/7?

29) How often do you hear about the hotline?
  j. Everyday?
  k. Once a week?
  l. Once a month?
  m. Once a year?

30) Do you think you hear about the hotline a lot or a little? Why or why not?

31) Do you ever talk with your friends or hear other students at school talking about the hotline?
    PROBE: What kinds of things do students say?

32) Do you have any suggestions for how to best give students information about using the hotline?

VI. USING *SAFE OREGON*

[PROVIDE EXPLANATION OF SAFE OREGON TIP LINE. BE SURE TO STATE THE TIP LINE IS ANONYMOUS.]

Even though you just learned about *Safe Oregon* School Safety Tip Line, I'd like to learn about how you think students at your school might use the tip line. This includes you.

33) If you had something to report, how do you think you would report it? PROBE:
  n. Would you tell a teacher?

  o. Use the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

  p. Some other way?

34) What types of information would you report to the Safe Oregon Tip Line? PROBES:
  q. Problems that you're having?

  r. Problems that another student is having?

  s. Threats to yourself or another student?

  t. Threats to the school?

35) Is there any difference between the types of things you would report to a teacher or other trusted adult …versus the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

36) If you had something to report, would you be comfortable using the Safe Oregon Tip Line?

  u. If yes, why?

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  v. If no, why?

    i. Do you trust that your tips would be kept anonymous?

    ii. Do you trust that you would be believed?

      1. If not, what would make you trust the tip line?

    iii. Do you trust that your report would be taken seriously?

    iv. Do you trust that adults would do something about it?

    v. Do you think students would take it seriously?

37) If you submitted a tip to the Safe Oregon Tip Line, what would you want to happen next?

  w. Would you want to know if anyone received your tip and is doing something about it?

  x. Would you want anyone to follow-up with you? If so, who?

    i. Parent?

    ii. Teacher?

    iii. Guidance counselor?

    iv. Principal?

  y. Is there anything else you would like to happen after you submitted a tip?

VII. PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL SAFETY

This last section asks about school climate and safety at your school this year.

38) Overall, how much would you say you like your school?

  z. Is there an adult at the school you feel comfortable going to when something is bothering you? Please explain or provide an example.

  aa. How well do students get along with each other at your school? Please explain or provide an example.

  bb. How safe do you feel when you are at school? Please explain or provide an example.

    i. Probe: (a) Do you worry about crime or violence at your school (such as fighting, weapons, gangs, alcohol or drugs)? (c) Are there any particular places at school or times of the day you feel unsafe?

39) Is bullying a problem at your school? Please explain or provide an example.

cc. Probe: (a) Are students made fun of in a hurtful way, left out, or threatened because they are "different"? (b) Do students spread false rumors about other students? (c) Do students physically bully or attack other students?

VIII. SCHOOL SERVICES/RESOURCES

40) What types of support are available for students at your school who might need help with a personal problem? That student could include you.

 a. School counselor?

 b. Teacher?

 c. Nurse or school health clinic?

 d. School psychologist?

 e. Student support group?

 f. Something else? If yes, please explain.

 g. If you need help with a personal problem, do you feel it would be helpful to rely on the supports available at your school for assistance? PROBE: Which of these support would you use, if any? Please explain.

IX. CLOSING

41) Is there anything else we haven't asked about your school tip line that we need to know?

Thank you again for your time today! Your answers have really given us a better understanding of your school.

**Assessment of National and State Tip Line Technology
as a Strategy for Identifying Threats to School Safety**

Oregon School-level Stakeholder Interview Guide

Date/Time: _____

School: _____

Respondent Name(s): _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Notetaker Name: _____

Greeting and Consent

Hello, my name is [NAME] from RTI International. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Before we begin, I have some information to read to you about the study.

[INTERVIEWER: Give the respondent(s) a copy of the consent form, then read it aloud. Distribute two copies of the consent form: one for the respondent to keep and the other for the respondent to sign and date.]

Do you have any questions? If you do not have any questions, we can begin.

Introduction
We are very interested in learning about your perspectives and experiences with the Safe Oregon School Safety Tip Line. This first set of questions will help us understand your background.

1. How long have you worked at this [INSERT SCHOOL OR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY]?
2. Can you briefly tell me about your roles and responsibilities as [INSERT SCHOOL/LAW ENFORCEMENT POSITION]? PROBE:
    a. *[If the respondent does not mention school safety]* Do you have any roles or responsibilities specific to school safety?

Tip Line Adoption
The next few questions focus on the Safe Oregon School Safety Tip Line start-up.
3. Can you please describe your level of involvement in tip line adoption?
    a. If respondent is not aware of the Safe Oregon Safety Tip Line, skip to Partnership section.

Partnerships
The next few questions focus on the collaboration and coordination between local law enforcement and schools.

4. Can you please walk me through the process of what happens if local law enforcement receives a tip about a school safety concern?

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> If local law enforcement were to receive a tip involving the school and it does not suggest any criminal activity, how would law enforcement proceed?

5. How would you describe your level of collaboration and coordination with your [INSERT *SCHOOLS* OR *LAW* ENFORCEMENT]?
6. (How frequently) do you communicate?
7. What challenges exist working with [INSERT *SCHOOLS* OR *LAW* ENFORCEMENT] within your jurisdiction?

Tip Line Marketing
The next few questions focus on sharing information about the tip line—in other words, marketing, or publicizing the tip line so that people know about it.

8. Now that you are aware [YOUR SCHOOL] is enrolled and has access to *Safe Oregon*, and now that you have a basic overview of the tip line, do you have any idea why you were not made aware of *it previously*?
9. What methods or strategies do you think are best for making staff aware of a resource like this?
10. What methods or strategies do you think are best for making students aware of a resource like this?
11. What are some of the challenges associated with marketing resources available to students and staff such as a tip line?
12. On the other hand, can you describe anything that would make marketing a resource like the *Safe Oregon* tip line easier?

Wrap Up
I have just a few additional wrap-up questions for you.

13. Briefly, can you describe the school safety approach used at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]?
14. Is there anything that we did not ask you that you would like to share with us?
15. Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you so much for your time! Your insight is extremely valuable in helping us understand tip line adoption and implementation, partnerships, marketing, and sustainability. Please feel to reach out to us if you have any questions *[provide business cards]*. Thank you again!