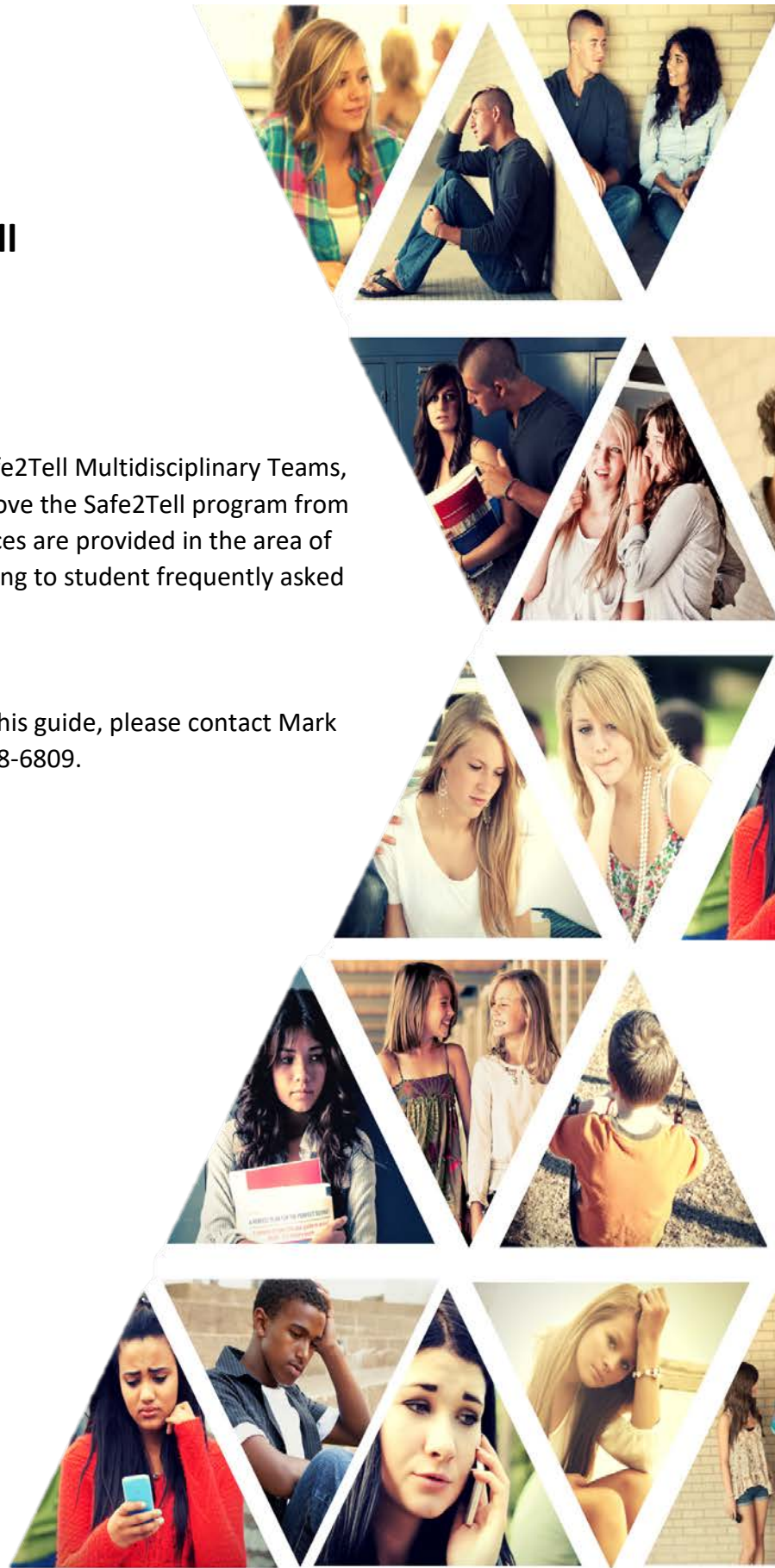


High Functioning Safe2Tell Teams

Moving beyond the basic requirements for Safe2Tell Multidisciplinary Teams, this guide provides recommendations to improve the Safe2Tell program from High Functioning Safe2Tell Teams. Best practices are provided in the area of technical operations, paradigms, and responding to student frequently asked questions.

If you have suggestions or improvements for this guide, please contact Mark Lanning at Mark.Lanning@coag.gov or 720-508-6809.

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I. Technical Operations

Technical Operations are how Safe2Tell multidisciplinary teams maximize and streamline coordinated efforts in the P3 system.

Utilizing In Progress Notes/Disposition Tab. More than just checking the boxes, teams share notes relevant to the investigation. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Law Enforcement entering the Call For Service (CFS) Number for the school team to cross reference if needed
- Law Enforcement copying/pasting information from internal reports about the result of a welfare check or law enforcement contact as a result of a Safe2Tell tip, in P3
- Asking Safe2Tell Dispatch to engage in Two Way Dialogue with the tipster

The screenshot shows the 'Tip Manager' interface for a 'Safe2Tell' tip. The top header includes fields for Tip ID (789-M32769), P3 ID (3675-468), Other ID, Case ID, and Status (Closed). Below the header are tabs for Main, Dialog, Attachments, Deliver To, Disposition (selected), and Notes. The 'Disposition / In-Progress Notes' section displays a list of notes with timestamps. The notes are as follows:

| Stat Date | 2018/07/19 |
|--|---------------------|
| Mark Lanning, Training & Outreach Coord | 2018/07/19 10:14 AM |
| Tip received. Working to locate the correct Andy. | |
| Marc Morelli, Principal | 2018/07/19 10:23 AM |
| Mark Lanning located the correct Andy and uploaded the student sheet. Working to locate Andy now. | |
| Marc Morelli, Principal | 2018/07/19 10:27 AM |
| Andy not in school today. Calling school security dispatch to notify local PD of needed welfare check on Andy. Home address on uploaded student sheet. | |
| Marc Morelli, Principal | 2018/07/19 10:28 AM |
| Will also contact Andy's parents. | |
| Mark Lanning, Training & Outreach Coord | 2018/07/19 10:28 AM |
| CFS 0000-000000 PD in route for welfare check at address provided. | |
| Mark Lanning, Training & Outreach Coord | 2018/07/19 10:48 AM |
| Student was found at home gathering pills and alcohol. Placed on M1 hold. Parents notified. | |

Below the list is a text input field labeled 'Enter in-Progress Notes' and a 'Submit Notes' button.

Mock up of in-progress notes to coordinate responses

Tips are quickly and consistently closed out. Safe2Tell does not consider an event resolved until it is closed out. Effective Safe2Tell Teams close out tips in a timely fashion.

One contact point to close out tips. Information sharing is central to the Safe2Tell infrastructure. However, to eliminate group think, one designated individual should be the one to close out tips (or monitor that tips are closed out). This individual can be at the school, district, or law enforcement level.

Intentionally teach team expectations. When should individuals take the lead on investigations? When they are delegated or should the mental staff always assume they are in charge of suicide tips? Is the SRO on a FYI basis or does the team expect the SRO to respond?

Narrate dispositions. High functioning Safe2Tell teams continually work to eliminate silos of information. Narratives include, but are not limited to, rationale for decisions, context of the student, and other pertinent information. Teams recognize that if all adults were to leave their positions or the student were to move, the information would be useful, if needed, for future investigations into the student.

Ask for assistance when needed. From resetting P3 passwords to the Colorado Information Analytics Center (CIAC), assisting multidisciplinary teams in investigations, Safe2Tell is happy to provide local multidisciplinary teams with any assistance needed.

II. Paradigms

Prior to a challenging situation occurring, high functioning Safe2tell multidisciplinary teams take active steps towards maintaining positive attitudes around students and tipsters.

Rather than sharing Safe2Tell as the source of information, use more generic phrases like “It was brought to our attention”

Don't disclose Safe2Tell as the source of the information

- **Limits of the law.** The Safe2Tell Law prevents disclosure or distribution of information from tips. (CRS Sec 24-31-601). Sharing Safe2Tell as the source of the tip always escalates to parties wanting to see the tip contents.
- **Focus on solutions.** By not sharing the source of the information, the conversation is driven towards resolving the issue of concern and away from a focus on the source of information.

Believe all good faith tips are good tips

- **Duplicate tips on an incident are a reflection of a healthy community** who is well trained with what to look out for and what to report. Although it can be burdensome, high functioning Safe2Tell teams celebrate the fact that multiple people noticed something and spoke up.
- **Unfounded tips are OK.** Our executive functioning doesn't fully develop until age 25. As such, we need to rely on students reporting anything that makes them feel unsafe. High functioning Safe2Tell Teams recognize they are the experts and can sift through the difference between credible and non-credible threats. They don't place the burden on students to figure it out and encourage students to report if there is doubt.
 - *For example, after the school shooting in Parkland in February 2018, fear was running high of a similar attack happening in our schools. A S2T Team received a tip of fear of a classmate being a school shooter because they were cross-eyed and “weird”.*
 - *This tip and information does not call for a full threat assessment. However, the S2T Team recognized the value of the tip. The tipster, an elementary student, was afraid and feeling unsafe and knew where to report. This is a success.*
- **Reporting relieves stress in the tipster.** Worrying about a classmate can be burdensome and effect the social, emotional, and academic performance of a student. Regardless of the quality of the tip, tipsters are able to release the burden of worrying alone about a situation.

Treat subpar tips as learning opportunities

- When misuse occurs, high functioning teams:
 - Assume it is only a very small percentage of students and not the entire student body
 - Examine the training students have received about Safe2Tell and ways to remind students of the program
 - Continue to emphasize the positive messaging of Safe2Tell and do not overreact to disproportionately emphasize misuse. Best practice states educators should spend more time focusing on what to do than what not to do.

- **Explore the role school culture and climate plays into Safe2Tell.** Sometimes, there is a larger culture and climate issue that is manifesting itself through Safe2Tell reports
- Reinforce that Safe2Tell reports are designed to protect (keep people out of hurt or harm) and not to hurt (get someone in trouble, get revenge, get a laugh, etc.)
- If possible, tipsters submitting false tips may face school and/or law enforcement consequences
- When tips with little to not investigative value regularly come in, high functioning teams:
 - Examine the training students have received about Safe2Tell and ways to remind students of the program
 - Reinforce that Safe2Tell reports are designed to protect (keep people out of hurt or harm) and not to hurt (get someone in trouble, get revenge, get a laugh, etc.)
 - Continue to emphasize the positive messaging of Safe2Tell
 - **Explore the role school culture and climate plays into Safe2Tell.** Sometimes, there is a larger culture and climate issue that is manifesting itself through Safe2Tell reports

When lackluster tips regularly come in, rather than blaming students, high functioning teams examine the **school culture** and **Safe2Tell training efforts**

Own their tips

- **Treat Safe2Tell Tips like any other tip.** For example, if the information received calls for a suicide assessment based upon district policy, it should be implemented regardless of if the information came in via Safe2Tell, in person, or in another method.
- **All tips are taken seriously and investigated.**
 - *A tip was received from an elementary student who claimed he hadn't gotten his PBJ at home. The S2T multidisciplinary team decided to be safe and dispatched a welfare check. The team found the student was a victim of neglect, a child abuse case was opened, and the student received additional services at school.*
- **Creativity in investigating tips**
 - *In the case of a planned school attack tip received about a student who was looking at others cross-eyed and was acting "weird", the school principal conducted a routine spot assessment of the teacher the following day. In that spot assessment, the principal monitored the student's behavior. While the description in the tip did not warrant a full threat assessment, the school investigated the tip appropriately.*
- **Apply additional background information to investigation.** Often, the Safe2Tell multidisciplinary team has more contextual information than is contained in the tip itself. The team applies this background to respond accordingly.

III. Consistent and empathetic responses to student FAQs

High functioning Safe2Tell multidisciplinary teams develop and reinforce positive messaging around the Safe2Tell program. This messaging is used not only by the team, but is relayed to the larger community of trusted adults that support students and schools.

"Safe2Tell is like the mall.

The mall is your one stop shop for anything you need. Safe2Tell is your one stop shop for student or school safety."

9th grade student

- **Can I report _____ to Safe2Tell?**

- Don't answer the question directly. Safe2Tell is designed to be a "catch all" for safety. If we limit what students report, we are placing doubt on what can be reported. Instead, stay on point of:

If this is something that makes you feel unsafe, first talk to a trusted adult. If you don't feel comfortable talking and want to be anonymous, or if it's after hours, report it to Safe2Tell.

- **What happens when I make a Safe2Tell report? Or, what happens if I report _____ to Safe2Tell?**

- The tips go to the same folks as if you were to report this in person. As such, they are handled the same. (For example, if your school does Restorative Practices as an intervention for bullying, RP may be used for a S2T report just as it may be used for an in person report).

- **Is it really anonymous? What if I'm the only one my friend told?**

- Yes it's really anonymous. However, this may not protect you from the rumor mill of your peers.
- We don't disclose the source of the information when investigating. It may have been another peer, a teacher, or a community member who told in person, it could have been via Safe2Tell, it could be an observation by a counselor, etc.

- **If it's anonymous, can't students use it to make things up?**

- Yes. This is important. It's not OK to make something up.

We at this school take your safety seriously. We are willing to be vulnerable and put ourselves out there to have you let us know anonymously if that's what it takes to keep bad things from happening to you when we could have prevented it. In fact, there's a whole community rallying around the school that receive the tips: law enforcement, the school district, mental health agencies, etc.

Safe2Tell tips should always be used to protect and not to hurt. Protect means we want to prevent bad or harmful things from happening. Hurt means our desire in reporting is to try to get someone in trouble, get revenge, get a laugh, etc.

- If you wish, you can tell the parable of "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"
- Even if the tipster is anonymous, there may be other ways to investigate who made the report.
- However, it's OK if a tip comes back and is just a rumor, a misunderstanding, or unfounded. If you don't know, report it.

- **You over hear students joking “I’m going to Safe2Tell you...”**

- This happens sometimes after students learn about S2T and typically are joking about it.
- We’d recommend, in a compassionate tone (not an angry one), a whisper in the student’s ear of:

It seems like you are, or someone could be, confused by that statement about what unsafe behaviors are that could be reported to Safe2Tell. Let’s set a good example for our classmates and be respectful of those that actually are struggling with serious things like suicide and need help”

- Briefly say the statement and then walk away/move on without waiting for a response. (And ignore a response from a student unless it is egregious) Students are very good at trying to get “the last word” in and rope you into an argument. It’s important to address the issue but not escalate it into something more than it needs to be.