Dear colleagues:

In an upcoming presentation we will be discussing Safe2Tell with students.

The lesson will cover the “Code of Silence” that prevents reporting, safety concerns, and how Safe2Tell works. Even though you may not directly teach those students, it’s important that we as a school are aware of this resource.

**What is Safe2Tell?**

Safe2Tell Colorado is based on the Colorado Prevention Initiative for School Safety. Safe2Tell Colorado gives students, parents, and community members a safe, anonymous way to report any threats to their safety or the safety of someone else.

Safe2Tell is *not* an emergency response unit nor mental health counseling service provider; it is a ***conduit of information*** for distributing anonymous tips to local law enforcement and school officials pursuant to state law.

**How does it work?**

Tips are received via 1-877-542-7233, the mobile app, or via safe2tell.org 24/7/365 via the Colorado Information Analytics Center. The dispatchers then send the tip to local level school and law enforcement teams for investigation. By law, every tip received must be closed out through a disposition report.

**What does this mean for our students?**

* ***Equipping students with this resource will help eliminate unnecessary hurt in our school*.** In instances of a planned school attack, 81% of the time someone other than the attacker knew it was going to happen. 93% of the time that was a peer (aka not an adult). Our students know long before we do of who is struggling.
* **Safe2Tell is a one stop shop for safety concerns.** The resource is not just for our students to report safety concerns at our school.Safe2Tell is a resource for all Colorado students and schools 24/7/365.
  + If students see inappropriate things online about schools/peers, or if they are concerned about someone in another city, state, or country, they can get the information to Safe2Tell and we will get it where it needs to go.
  + For example, a Colorado student got a suicidal friend in California help.
  + Or, a Colorado student reported someone planning a school shooting online and prevented a tragedy in Florida.
* **Students don’t have to know if something is real or not to report.** We’ll do the leg work so they don’t have to worry alone. That’s unwise and unhealthy.

**What do you want me to do with this information as a staff member?**

* **Quickly reinforce the lesson in class.**
  + It doesn’t need to be long, but just take 2-3 minutes this week to reiterate to students:
    - Briefly remind them that they can come to you for any concerns they have and you will listen. Remind them the appropriate time(s) they can come to you (aka unless it’s an emergency, it can wait until after direct instruction)
    - Safe2Tell is a resource we have for them to report anything unsafe. We made it because we know sometimes it’s hard to share ~~about~~ what you are worried about. That’s why it’s anonymous.
    - Show them that you too have the Safe2Tell app in your phone and encourage them to download it
* ***Follow up as needed with students that are struggling.*** *We’ll emphasize to students that schools’ safety topics can be scary to think about. We’ll encourage students to check in with a trusted adult if they have a specific situation in mind or are just worried about “what ifs.”*
* ***Download the Safe2Tell app.*** As a role model for youth, I would encourage each and every one of us to have this resource on our phones. In addition, phone and texting service are unreliable during an emergency. By having the Safe2Tell app, you have the capability to directly communicate with your local police.
* **Safe2Tell does not replace your role as a trusted adult.** The Safe2Tell model promotes healthy student/staff relationships. Safe2Tell is an additional tool for reporting if the issue is after hours or the student wishes to remain anonymous.

**FAQs from students and suggested responses**

* **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, try to 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. It may have been another peer, a teacher, a community member, or someone else that made the report.
* **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.
* 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.
* 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.