

Threat Assessment Steers Between 2 Errors



Overreaction
Excessive
punishment for a
threat that is not
serious

Underreaction
Failing to prevent
a serious threat.














October 12, 2022
“STOPPING GUNS FROM KILLING CHILDREN”

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
 Speaker of the House
 1534 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
 House Majority Leader
 2405 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515

Senator Chuck Schumer
 Majority Leader
 312 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

Senator Mitch McConnell
 Senate Majority Leader
 317 Russell Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

August 19, 2022
 The Honorable Jorge Brinc
 California State Capitol, Room 6220
 Sacramento, California 95834

Re: AB 99 (Brinc) – as amended 8/11/22
 OPPOSE

Congress of the United States
 Washington, DC 20545

August 13, 2022

Dear Chief Justice, Ranking Member Grassley, Chair Nadler, Rank
 and Member Ben Ray Lujan:

**Re: OPPOSED TO THE USE AND ENFORCEMENT OF MANDATORY
 DISCIPLINE UNDER SENATOR BRINC'S LEGISLATION AND
 SENATOR BRINC'S SIGN STATE CONSENT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE S.
 1259** – original letter sent to Congress January 16, 2022 with
 “#992E” – original letter sent to Congress January 16, 2022 with

Attorney General Merrick Garland
 U.S. Department of Justice
 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20530-0001

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
 Secretary Health and Human Services
 200 Independence Avenue, SE
 Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Miguel Cardona
 Secretary U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20202

Dear Attorney General Garland, Secretary Cardona, and Secretary Becerra,

We write in the aftermath of yet another horrific and tragic school shooting. On May 24, 2022
 we were shocked and horrified to learn that an 18-year-old gunman had opened fire at Robb
 Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas killing 11 people — including 10 children and 2 teachers —
 injuring more than a dozen others, and traumatizing an entire nation, school, and South Texas
 community. One violence in one a lasting cause of death for children and teens, and since
 Uvalde, there have been at least 19 mass shootings in the United States. Our most fundamental
 role as policymakers and leaders is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children. We
 therefore write to request that your agencies each conduct a review of gun violence prevention
 strategies that you are utilizing in schools and establish a comprehensive plan to meet the holistic
 emotional, health, and safety needs of our nation's students.

Schools are supposed to be safe havens for children, parents, educators, emotional and cafeteria
 staff, and communities. But for far too many people they are not. The massacre at Robb
 Elementary School marks the deadliest U.S. school shooting in nearly a decade and was at least
 the fourth school shooting in 2022. In the six days following the Uvalde massacre, there have
 been at least 18 mass shootings in communities across the country. Over the years, federal, state,
 and local government officials have justified the allocation of tens of billions of dollars in school
 and public safety resources, particularly for recruitment, hiring, and retention of community-
 and school-based law enforcement officials under the false premise that increased police presence
 will keep our children and communities safe.

In the *Report of Finding for School Choice on Student Discipline and
 The Justice Dept. No. 20-1506* (2020).

Division of the ACLU of Northern California, ACLU of Southern
 California, ACLU of San Diego & Imperial Counties.

Prevention can reduce risk factors.



We cannot predict who will get cancer, but we can identify risk and protective factors that reduce cancer rates dramatically.

Selected, secondary, or tier 2 prevention

Threat assessment is an essential process.



Does your school conduct threat assessments?

Threat assessment is an essential process.



When a student seems angry, *all* schools engage in some form of threat assessment

Threat assessment is an essential process.




The question is whether staff rely on their intuition or use a systematic process.

Threat assessment is an alternative to zero tolerance

Contrary to zero tolerance, threat assessment considers the context and content of the behavior. The student's intentions matter. All threats are not the same and do not receive the same consequences.

Research on Threat Assessment

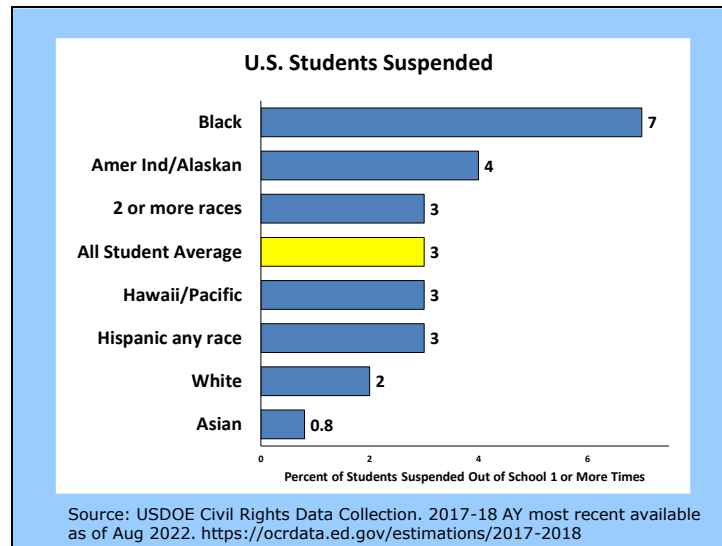
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Randomized Controlled Trial

Students in threat assessment schools...

- **4x more likely to receive counseling**
- **2.5x more parent involvement**
- **3x more likely not to get long-term suspension**
- **8x more likely not to be placed elsewhere**



Colorado study found that Black and Hispanic students were more likely to be suspended, expelled, referred to law enforcement than White students, **in general**.

However, there were no statistically significant differences in these outcomes for Black, Hispanic, and White students **receiving a threat assessment**.

Table 7. Percentage and Number of Students in Participating Districts Disciplined in 2014–2015 (Total Enrollment = 185,067)

	Percentage (n)		
	Suspended	Expelled	Referred to Law Enforcement
Black	16.7 (4,357)	0.28 (74)	1.92 (504)
Hispanic	06.3 (5,261)	0.06 (54)	0.55 (455)
White	04.1 (2,357)	0.10 (56)	0.76 (430)

Table 4. Percentage and Number of Threat Cases Receiving Outcomes by Various Demographics

	Percentage (n)				
	Black (n=38)	Hispanic (n=42)	White (n=118)	Disability (n=95)	No Disability (n=158)
Suspended	47.4 (18)	38.1 (16)	38.1 (45)	41.2 (41)	39.9 (63)
Expelled	5.3 (2)	7.1 (3)	3.4 (4)	9.5 (9)	3.2 (5)
Other disciplinary action	57.9 (22)	40.5 (17)	47.5 (56)	52.6 (50)	48.7 (77)
Mental health support	76.3 (29)	69.0 (29)	77.1 (91)	74.7 (71)	77.2 (122)
Behavior plan	42.1 (16)	33.3 (14)	29.4 (35)	28.3 (27)	33.9 (53)
Modified schedule	23.7 (9)	16.7 (7)	28.7 (35)	21.1 (20)	24.7 (39)
Referred for SPED evaluation	15.8 (6)	16.7 (7)	10.2 (12)	9.5 (9)	12.0 (19)
Other remedial/disciplinary action	78.9 (30)	78.6 (33)	76.3 (90)	75.8 (72)	77.2 (122)
No action/outcome	0	26.2 (11)	4.26 (5)	6.9% (6)	5.7% (9)

Note: Percentages total more than 100 because students had more than one outcome.

Fairness & Equity Rec 2
Review trends in student outcomes.

Maintain good records and monitor trends in student outcomes.

**Misconception 5.
Threat assessment is unfair to
students with disabilities**

- Critics note that students with disabilities are referred for threat assessments at a higher rate than other students.
- Critics allege that threat assessment leads to harsh disciplinary and legal consequences for students with disabilities.

**Role of Law Enforcement
in Threat Assessment**

Some critics have opposed threat assessment because it involves law enforcement. They fear that this will lead to higher suspension rates and criminalization of students. Their stated goal is to eliminate SRO programs.

Role of Law Enforcement in Threat Assessment

These concerns are based on correlational research with schools that started SRO programs and saw an increase in suspension and arrest, especially among students of color. This research did NOT examine threat assessment.

CRIMINOLOGY & Public Policy

Effects of school resource officers on school crime and responses to school crime

Denise C. Gottfredson, Scott Crosse, Zhiqun Tang, Erin L. Bauer, Michele A. Harmon, Carol A. Hagen, Angela D. Greene

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Are Effects of School Resource Officers Moderated by Student Race and Ethnicity?

Scott Crosse¹, Denise C. Gottfredson^{1,2}, Erin L. Bauer¹, Zhiqun Tang^{1,3}, Michele A. Harmon¹, Carol A. Hagen¹, and Angela D. Greene¹

Abstract
We examined whether effects of an increase in school resource officer (SRO) staffing on school crime and exclusionary disciplinary responses to school crime varied by student race and ethnicity. Using monthly school level administrative data, we compared change in outcomes for 33 schools that enhanced SRO staffing and a matched sample of 72 schools that did not increase SRO staffing at the same time. We found that increases in offenses and exclusionary reactions due to increased SRO presence were most evident for Black and Hispanic as opposed to White students. Educational decision-makers should carefully weigh the benefits of placing SROs in schools against the knowledge that this practice differentially increases recorded school crime and exclusion from school for students of color.

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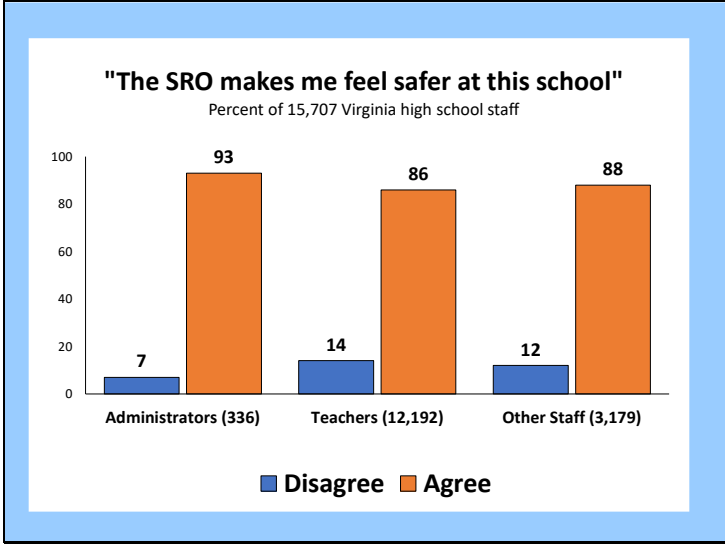
Conventional Paper | Published: 11 October 2021

Defunding School Resource Officers: A New Commitment to Student Safety

Denise C. Gottfredson^{1,2}, Scott Crosse¹
Journal of Policy Practice and Research, 2, 354-369 (2021) | [Cite this article](#)

Abstract
The purpose of this paper is to outline the history of school-based policing, namely, the deployment of School Resource Officers (SROs), and examine the evidence of this program's impacts on school safety and on students in the USA. We offer a review of the literature documenting the costs and effects of SROs in US schools. More than two decades of research have not yielded evidence that police enhance school safety, but it has repeatedly been documented that embedding police in schools results in serious harms to minoritized students, especially those who are Black, disabled, LGBTQ, or low income. This review of the research makes clear that SROs have not delivered school safety and have caused considerable harm to marginalized students. It must therefore be a priority of the new administration to end schools' reliance on law enforcement to manage the students in their care and reinvest in the proven support that school-based social work affords to our youth.





Why do students make threats?



**Think about the last time
you threatened someone...**



A threat is an effort to solve a problem.

- A student making a threat is waving a red flag indicating a problem they cannot solve.
- Threat assessment teams are problem solvers!



Fairness & Equity Rec 5
Take a problem-solving approach.

Help the student resolve the problem. Collaborate with parents. Use school removal only when necessary for safety reasons.

Topics for Today

- 1. Concepts of threat assessment**
- 2. Fairness and equity concerns**
- 3. Six misconceptions**
- 4. Five recommendations**