

Lake Country Families,

Lake Country has a trained and resourceful student services team with supportive administrators. As always we hope parents feel comfortable reaching out to us with any concerns or questions about their children; however Speak Out, Speak Up is a credible resource that is available to everyone.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of School Safety (OSS) is thrilled to announce the launch of the SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT Resource Center (SUSO). SUSO is a comprehensive, one-stop place to turn to with your concerns regarding school safety. A facet of the Resource Center that we are particularly pleased to share with Wisconsin students and parents is the threat reporting system. The SUSO threat reporting system is available 24/7 and is free to all.

Students, parents, school staff and community members can submit a school safety concern, beginning in early September, by downloading the SUSO app (Android and iOS), visiting speakup.widoj.gov or by calling 1-800-MY-SUSO-1. Resource Center staff work around-the-clock to respond to reports and to deploy a response locally by communicating directly with school administrators, law enforcement and counselors.

Nationwide, more than half of public middle and high schools now operate a tip line.

Threat reporting systems - or tip lines - are recommended for use by the United States Secret Service when developing comprehensive school violence prevention plans. Tip lines are used to identify threats to schools, and other daily safety concerns students encounter, such as bullying, drug use, suicidal thoughts and more.

Of school administrators who participated in a recent survey surrounding the use of school tip lines, 77% believed that their tip line made them more aware of safety issues at their school, 73% reported that their tip line had prevented incidents of self-harm or suicide, and more than half believed their tip line had prevented violent incidents. It's time to break the code of silence.

Who knows more about what's going on, in or out of school, than students themselves? Individually and collectively, they play an essential role in keeping Wisconsin schools safe. It's crucial for students to understand that there's a clear difference between tattling or "snitching" and disclosing concerning information to a trusted adult to keep themselves and their classmates safe. The SUSO threat reporting system aims to empower students to share their concerns safely and confidentially without fear of retaliation. We encourage you to talk to your students about the importance of letting a trusted adult know about their safety concerns.

To learn more about the SUSO Resource Center and how to report safety concerns, visit speakup.widoj.gov or find us on social media @speakupwi.

Sincerely,

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of School Safety (OSS)
Mark Lichte, LCS Administrator