



BE **SAFE & SOUND** *in School*

A GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES





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This document describes how the Be Safe and Sound in School (B3S) model has been used in schools throughout the nation. The program descriptions highlight the best practices used by B3S action teams to improve school safety and security and engage students and parents in their efforts.

Be Safe and Sound in School Model and Toolkit

Be Safe and Sound in School (B3S) is a seven-step program model that is used to provide school administrators, teachers, and staff with the tools they need to address their unique school safety concerns. This comprehensive model supports the accomplishment of three primary goals: (1) raising awareness amongst all stakeholders about the various elements of school safety, (2) engaging parents and students in efforts to make their schools safer, and (3) facilitating the development of strategic plans to reduce crime in schools.

School Safety and Security Toolkit

One of the primary and most valuable resources used when implementing the B3S model is the School Safety and Security Toolkit. This toolkit is an easy-to-use guide that will assist educators, school resource officers, and administrators in implementing the B3S model by enabling them to work together to engage parents and students in creating a safe and secure learning environment in which children can thrive. It includes step-by-step procedures for assessing school safety and security, forming an action team, identifying the problems, holding a forum or focus group to brainstorm solutions, developing an action plan, and evaluating the results.

Stepping Up to School Safety

Step 1: Form and Action Team

Step 2: Identify Safety and Security Problems

Step 3: Hold a School Safety and Security Forum/Focus Group

Step 4: Develop an Action Plan

Step 5: Publicize Your Initiative

Step 6: Promote Your Cause

Step 7: Evaluate Success and Revise the Plan



The appendices provide all of the materials that schools need to make their B3S initiative successful, including complete surveys for parents, students, and staff that help identify social climate concerns, school safety and security assessments based on the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and sample press release and media advisories to publicize their efforts.

The B3S action team is a key component to program success. Action team members will steer the planning process and be involved every step of the way. Throughout program implementation, the team will dedicate itself to the development of strategies for action, the promotion of change, and the facilitation of improvements. In order to accomplish set goals, a successful action team must include enthusiastic and dedicated members with diverse talents and expertise. Moreover, a B3S action team should encourage active participation by all members of the population that are affected by school safety problems.

What is CPTED?

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) ensures that the physical layout/organization of your school encourages positive behavior by students, staff, and visitors by focusing on four principles: access control, surveillance, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance. To learn more about CPTED visit www.ncpc.org.

Two Sides of the Story: Social Climate and Security

Many of the issues that plague schools today can be a result of a number of cooperating forces. Bullying, for example, can in one part be an indication of student insensitivity and a lack of firm disciplinary procedures. However, if that bullying commonly occurs in a stairwell, it may also indicate a problem with lighting or physical surveillance measures. Fundamentally, in order to effectively address all levels of school safety, the B3S program model does not only consider the physical security needs of a school (e.g., locks, alarms, and lights) but also looks at a school's social climate and how it is reflected in the attitudes and values of the staff and students.

During the 2008-2009 school year, NCPC selected 12 schools to participate in the B3S program and receive funding, training, and technical assistance. In the examples that follow, you'll see how these schools used the B3S model to address a number of issues, including bullying and youth accountability. As you begin to implement your B3S program, the stories and strategies that you read here may give you ideas to use as you continue moving your school toward a safer and secure environment.

Taking Pride in Moving Forward

Bullitt Lick Middle School

Shepherdsville, KY

GOAL(S): To address concerns of bullying and increase surveillance in high traffic areas in order to deter inappropriate behavior and/or illegal activity.

Since opening its doors in the early 1980s, Bullitt Lick Middle School (BLMS) has strived to keep pace with the growing need for technological advancement and the perpetual cultural development of its students. Prior to undertaking the Be Safe and Sound in School (B3S) program and with support from the Kentucky Center for Instructional Discipline BLMS began laying the foundation for change, change that began with a simple promise: “Today I will keep a POSITIVE ATTITUDE, show RESPECT for myself, others, and my environment, act with INTEGRITY, DEDICATE myself to EXCELLENCE, and accept responsibility for my own behaviors.” The Positive Behavior Interventions Support (PBIS) program and the P.R.I.D.E. pledge, began to change the culture of the building, provided training for staff in improving classroom management, and furthered the development of consistency when coping with problematic situations. Coupled with the implementation of the PBIS program, was an investment in a School-Wide Information System (SWIS) computer that was used to identify problem areas and aide in the development of strategies to reduce the occurrence of incidents.

Despite the success of the PBIS program, the teachers and staff at BLMS didn’t stop there. Fueled by their commitment to their students, they adopted a new mission statement to “provide students with an opportunity to engage in an instrumental, educational experience in a positive and safe learning environment.” Jaime Goldsmith, Safe and Drug Free Schools coordinator for Bullitt County Public Schools believed that this was a priority for BLMS that could not be compromised and needed to be proactively addressed. “As middle school students, they have a right to feel safe in their own educational environment. Furthermore, elementary students transitioning to grades six through eight should feel that they are entering a facility dedicated to learning instead of dealing with discipline problems.” It was this rejuvenated commitment that spurred the implementation of the B3S program.

After analyzing school safety assessments of parents, staff, and students, and holding a school safety and security forum, the B3S action team at BLMS identified bullying as a primary concern. To address this issue, it decided to build upon the training that the staff had recently received around the issue. The action team felt that bullying was a commu-

nity issue and needed to involve educating all stakeholders, particularly parents and students. To accomplish this, BLMS held a bullying assembly for all students and hosted the first of what became many Parent Nights. Although parent involvement at BLMS was traditionally low, the Parent Night on bullying turned out to be the best attended program of the year, with the exception of the school orientation! To this, the B3S action team credits its advertising efforts. The event was advertised so thoroughly via newsletters, the local newspaper, and the school One Call message system that most attendees heard about the program from more than one source.

Due to the outstanding attendance at its first Parent Night, BLMS will continue to hold regular Parent Nights on a number of issues including one on bullying each year. Undoubtedly, this B3S site will continue to move forward and build awareness and recognition of school safety by engaging in admirable efforts that reach well beyond the classroom.

B3S Restores Relationships and Accountability

Salisbury Middle School

Allentown, PA

GOAL(S): To increase surveillance, move the criminal justice-based restorative practice program into a school setting, and decrease the reoccurrence of discipline related problems while teaching students accountability for their actions.

The remarkable partnership between the Salisbury Township Police Department (STPD) and the Salisbury Township School District has genuinely been the driving force that allowed the B3S program at Salisbury Middle School (SMS) to achieve such great success. The STPD began its work in the school district several years ago through an expansion of its existing programs and driven by the belief that school-based policing programs are indeed effective. STPD had used restorative practice techniques for a number of years and achieved compelling success rates of non-reoccurrence for juvenile offenders. Using the B3S program, SMS was able to incorporate restorative practice techniques in the school system in order to address some of the primary behavioral concerns identified by its school safety and security surveys: repeated misconduct by students and a general lack of students' sense of responsibility for their own actions.

Restorative practice is an emerging field that is rooted in the development of relationships and focuses on repairing harm that is done, rather than simply administering punishment. At the start of the B3S program implementation, representatives from the International Institute of Restorative Practices (www.iirp.org) visited SMS and provided an overview of the field and techniques. Following that visit, the entire school staff received a full day of training and began implementing the techniques school-wide. Less than a year after the training, the school began to see a change in discipline practiced by staff as well as a positive reaction from students being held accountable for their actions.

Both the school district and STPD actively and continuously promoted the successes of the B3S program as well as SMS's school safety improvements. Through press releases and speeches, the entire community heard about the outstanding efforts and good work being done at SMS. As a result of such positive results and public support, the school district was motivated to expand the restorative practices techniques and staff training to all high school staff members as well.

The B3S action team as well as all staff involved in the program, approached new demands with open arms and made a sincere commitment to adapt to new concepts. Their efforts are applauded by many and will undoubtedly impact school safety at Salisbury Middle School for many years to come.

Mix it Up: School Safety is FUN!

Talking with parents doesn't always have to come as a result of a serious incidence/event, nor does it have to be linked to a lecture or classroom. Take a lesson from SMS and incorporate your school safety messages into a family fun night or activity day. Create a trivia game or have your students write poems, perform songs, or put on performances about the lessons they've learned!

Making a Good Thing Better

Henry County Middle School

New Castle, KY

GOAL(s): To increase surveillance in specific areas of the building, address lack of respect among students, and reduce the incidence of bullying and intimidation through education.

In 2008, 78 percent of Henry County Middle School's (HCMS) 496 students felt very or generally safe to be there. Some may ask, why then implement a new school safety program if they're already doing a good job? To this, HCMS's response is that when it comes to school safety, its work is never done. Denise Perry, director of Student Support Services would say, "We are always concerned about the safety of our students and will continue to make intensive efforts to address all aspects of safety. In spite of what has already been achieved, work remains to be done to meet our high expectations of implementing all that is possible to keep our students safe and sound in school."

After identifying concerns of all constituent groups, the B3S action team developed a three-pronged approach to completely address bullying and respect in its school. First, the action team considered the areas where students felt less safe and identified the bathroom, parking lot, and gym/locker rooms as areas in need of increased surveillance. Video surveillance was then installed to provide monitoring capabilities and allow HCMS to intervene in bullying situations and facilitate disciplinary actions. Of course, that wasn't enough. Digging a bit deeper, HCMS decided to address bullying concerns head on by educating not only its staff, but administrators and students as well. This knowledge was obtained through three specific sessions aligned with the B3S goals. HCMS's counselor and assistant principal attended a Mean Girls training and gained valuable insight into coping with issues related to cliques and bullying behaviors. Next, the Kentucky Attorney General's office conducted a school-wide training for all students in an effort to increase their awareness of conduct that threatens and intimidates others. Not only were students provided with information on how to prevent becoming a target for bullies, but also how to address their own behaviors if in fact they were the aggressor. Lastly, HCMS sought the help of NCPC staff to conduct a training session for HCMS teachers and staff, district-wide administrators, and other affiliated staff within the district. Providing trainings at all levels has allowed HCMS to foster consistency in messaging with regard to behavioral practices.

B3S Action Team: When Time is Not on Your Side

Though B3S action teams should meet at least once a month, many found it difficult to have face-to-face meetings with all of their conflicting schedules. So what did they do? They improvised! Making use of conference calls, email chats, and information trees, communication lines stayed open and the job got done!

Finally, it was up to HCMS to address the underlying cause of all of its safety concerns, the culture of disrespect that had developed among students, which was also identified as the greatest issue of concern for parents. To start, HCMS utilized the CPTED strate-

gies outlined in the *School Safety and Security Toolkit* and displayed large posters throughout the building that outlined the rights and responsibilities of all students. Coupled with the poster display, HCMS invited Dr. Bill Webb and his staff at the Center for Educational Options to hold a Discovery class for students that discussed and exhibited the negative and disrespectful behaviors that were being displayed at HCMS.

Although the students, staff, and parents felt that HCMS was safe before the B3S program, they welcomed the opportunity to enhance their current practices and incorporate new ones. This willing attitude surely resulted in the success of the program and continued growth and maintenance of a safe learning environment for HCMS students.

Imagination That Westview Hills Middle School

Willowbrook, IL

GOAL(S): To continue to promote a safe school and community environment for students, staff, and visitors, whereby self-respect and respect toward others are key components.

Transitioning into adolescence certainly hasn't gotten any easier over the years. Though the issues of old, acne and boy-girl relationships, haven't gone away, they have been supplemented by worries of fitting in to the "right" clique, or coping with rumors spread in the classroom and the chat room. Such issues can often make middle schools like Westview Hills (WHMS) seem like a social battleground in which budding teens are often ill-prepared to deal. That is until the assistant principal and school social worker, Denise Nero and Debbie Collins, decided to undertake the B3S program. "Mrs. Collins and I were excited about the possibilities involved in making our school a socially safer place. We are constantly concerned with the emotional safety of our students. Adolescence is a challenging time for students and we were encouraged by the prospect of making our school the best place it could be for kids."

So what did they do? With the help of the B3S action team members, they called upon a few characters to help their students *build* character. The action team was able to secure funding to pay for a performance by a group called Imagination Theater (www.imaginationtheater.org). Imagination Theatre is an award-winning touring theatre

company that provides interactive assemblies and classroom workshops that address social issues. All middle school students attended these workshops with their grade level and got a chance to act out a variety of learning situations from rumor spreading to various lunchroom embarrassment scenes. Practicing different strategies on how to respond in these various situations gave the students confidence to face daily challenges that they might experience in the halls and classrooms of WHMS. Moreover, the B3S action team recognized that sustaining the lessons that the youth learned were important in order to see continued growth and strength in character. Future plans are to integrate social issues such as conflict resolution, responsible behavior, and bullying into literature, writing, social studies, and even science courses.

Challenge Leadership Program

WHMS also trained 50 students in the Challenge Leadership program. This program enhances the skills and improves the teamwork of student leaders. The program involves students in interactive activities that will increase self-esteem and educate students on how to manage conflicts. To learn more visit www.challengeleadership.com.

As a result of the B3S implementation, WHMS hopes to see a long-term impact of the program measured by a decrease in risky and anti-social behaviors. Most importantly, WHMS hopes to continue to expand its goals and reach out to parents in an effort to increase their understanding of the issues and challenges that adolescents' face.

Students Lead B3S to New Heights

Fort Payne Middle School

Fort Payne, AL

GOAL(S): To increase school security by controlling building access and facilitate the development of student-led school safety programs that raise awareness about the dangers of bullying, cyberbullying, and other school safety issues.

One of the most important groups to engage in our school safety efforts is the group that is often most affected by it; the students themselves. The B3S program doesn't want students to sit around and wait for others to simply make decisions that affect their

lives. On the contrary, the program asks that students be involved in the development of new safety programs and activities every step of the way. Throughout its utilization of the B3S model, Fort Payne Middle School (FPMS) demonstrated a phenomenal ability to energize and empower its students to address some of their top safety concerns such as property theft, bullying, and the occurrence of disrespectful actions and attitudes toward their fellow students and teachers.

FPMS gained a great deal of publicity after being awarded a B3S grant such that many students and local community members became excited about the possibilities that the program could offer and volunteered to help in any way that they could. Local high school students helped the action team develop and conduct bullying and internet predator presentations at the middle school. Students also helped create and promote a PSA geared toward school safety that was shown to all students and was aired on the webcast as well as local television channels.

B3S: Making The Program Work for You

Get local media and businesses involved in publicizing your school safety efforts early on. By working with local newspapers FPMS was able to receive additional funding from the DeKalb County Court Referral System to purchase additional V-soft visitor tracking and check-in systems. The director became interested in helping the school after reading an article about the B3S grant and the action teams plan.

As a result of such successful student involvement, FPMS has future plans to start an award program in middle schools for students that play a role in preventing acts of violence and bullying. The action team hopes to offer a certificate and a challenge coin to students who assist in furthering the goals of the B3S program and playing an active role in keeping their school safe.

Get Physical

The Be Safe and Sound in School (B3S) program model was designed to encourage the development of innovative and effective ideas and solutions to any school's safety problems. Though many successful B3S sites have chosen to focus on addressing school safety as it relates to behavior and character development, other B3S sites have also achieved comparable success by concentrating on improving the physical security and surveillance of their schools.

East Jessamine Middle School (EJMS)

Nicholasville, KY

After reviewing its school safety surveys and assessments, EJMS identified that its cafeteria was a place where supervision was a serious concern. Approximately 280 students from each grade level had their own lunch period and many behavioral incidents occurred in lunch lines while teachers and staff had their backs turned or when they were dealing with other issues. To address this issue, the B3S action team facilitated the purchase of cameras for the cafeteria and surrounding dining areas.

Mariner Middle School (MMS)

Cape Coral, FL

MMS is a unique campus that comprises eight buildings: five are used for classrooms, a cafeteria, gymnasium, and an administration building. The action team identified that the front entrance to the main (administration) building was a vulnerable point of entry and that staff experienced difficulty communicating issues during class changes. In response, the action team purchased an automatic locking system for the main door as well as two-way radio devices that enable hallway monitor staff to communicate effectively when issues arise.

John L. Ramsey Middle School (RMS)

Louisville, KY

At the time of B3S implementation, RMS was a new school that was just preparing to open its doors to approximately 500 students (with a capacity of 900). In an effort to prevent any issues before they arose, the B3S action team identified areas in need of increased surveillance and purchased a monitoring system with multiple cameras.

Rockcastle County Middle School (RCMS)

Mt. Vernon, KY

After performing the CPTED walkthrough, the action team members at RCMS observed the need to update security cameras. This was also supported by survey results; students

revealed that they felt less safe in various areas throughout the school such as empty classrooms, the parking lot, and on campus grounds. RCMS used the B3S grant to facilitate the purchase of 16 cameras that had the ability to zoom in on various locations; a feature that the older cameras did not have.

Thomas Jefferson Middle School (TJMS)

Louisville, KY

TJMS has a student body of over 1,000 students from over 22 different countries. The school also accommodates both resident students, as well as those that come from various parts of the county to participate in the Communications Magnet Program. In an effort to continue serving and providing a safe environment for this large population, TJMS implemented the B3S program. TJMS student and staff surveys revealed that both groups would feel safer in and around the school building if cameras were present. To that end, the B3S action team purchased a nine-camera system and DVR. The cameras have thus far appeared to be effective in deterring incidents as well as assessing responsibility when issues do arise. After the installation of the cameras students could often be heard saying: “Check the camera, I didn’t do it.”

Though no one would argue its importance, implementing any school safety program can seem like quite an intimidating task. Often, schools find themselves with an abundance of enthusiasm and ideas but perhaps a limited amount of time and resources. The schools that you have just read about were certainly no different. However, through the use of the B3S model, schools are flexible in what they can do and can create solutions that maximize their current resources and use the skills of staff and students. By following the seven steps, engaging students, and forming partnerships with law enforcement and community members, a great deal of success was enjoyed by

Funding Resources

Local

- Community businesses/organizations
- Local security/hardware industries

National

- *U.S. Department of Education*
www.ed.gov
- *Federal Grants*
www.grants.gov
- *School Safety Grants*
www.schoolsafetygrants.info
- *School Safety Partners*
www.schoolsafetypartners.org

many of the B3S sites. In addition to the large-scale success of programs and activities such as Imagination Theatre (Westview Hills Middle School), schools experienced many other enduring accomplishments. For instance, parents in all of the schools provided helpful feedback and input when they returned their School Safety and Security Parent Surveys, this alone is an accomplishment! When parents are able to see that their concerns are valued and being considered, they are often more inclined to continue communicating with school staff and team members and become involved in supporting the school's safety efforts.

Getting Started

If you are interested in starting a Be Safe and Sound in School program at your school, follow these steps to help you get started.

- Talk to other staff, administrators, and teachers about what school safety programs and procedures already exist at your school. You'll need to understand what resources are already available to you and how this program can supplement or fill any existing gaps.
- Visit www.ncpc.org to obtain a copy of the School Safety and Security Toolkit. This kit will guide you through every step of the B3S process.
- Contact NCPC staff for additional information. Consistent communication is invaluable in the formation of a relationship. The staff at NCPC is always available to offer technical assistance and guidance as you move through the B3S process.
- Register your B3S site! Registering your school allows NCPC to stay in touch with you and provide you with important information, updates, and ideas. This will also allow you to connect with other B3S schools, build relationships, and share your success.

Through its comprehensive design, the Be Safe and Sound in School model can provide school administrators, counselors, educators, and staff with the tools and resources required to improve school safety in any setting. Built into the program are core pieces of research, engagement, promotion, and evaluation that are essential to the success of all school safety endeavors. Contact the National Crime Prevention Council program staff for additional information on implementing a Be Safe and Sound in School program in your school today.



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