



# SCHOOL SAFETY

## Shining the Light on School Safety

—Recent Events Sharpen Focus

By Kate Poindexter

*"... And we know that the good guys came. The first responders who raced to the scene, helping to guide those in harm's way to safety, and comfort those in need, holding at bay their own shock and trauma because they had a job to do, and others needed them more." — President Barack Obama, Dec. 16, 2012, at Sandy Hook Interfaith Prayer Vigil, Newtown High School, Newtown, Conn.*

The quiet morning in the tranquil community of Newtown was shattered with gunfire at a local school. On December 14, a gunman shot and killed his mother in their home, then trained his guns on the nearby elementary school, killing 20 children, six adults and himself. Police and other first responders arrived on the scene in a matter of minutes and assisted the rest of the students and school employees, leading them out of the building. The scene was secured and the investigation began. How could this happen? What motivated the killer? How can we, as a nation, prevent this from happening again? These and other questions were raised and answers are still being sought.

*"What we do know is that school administrators, police and emergency workers have been given many safety tools and tactics in the 15 years since Congress passed the Safe Schools Initiative in 1998," says Michael O'Shea, School Safety Program Manager for the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. "In the years since, NIJ has joined with the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Secret Service, and other government departments and agencies to answer the call to develop strategies, technologies and tools to boost school security."*

In 2013, a new light is being focused on the issue as the President, Congress and other elected officials seek new and innovative ways to keep children and adults safe in school settings. Communities have also come together in the wake of Newtown to seek new solutions. There is much talk about how existing programs can be reinvigorated, what new technologies can be created and how training tools can be distributed to school resource officers (SROs), administrators and local police agencies. While the policy decisions are left to the elected officials, NIJ's National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) will report on new tools and technologies. NLECTC offers this *TechBeat* Special Issue on School Safety to officers on the front lines in the hopes of helping to restore order, prevent future calamities and revive a sense of safe community.

## Resources for the Good Guys

First responders require tools, training and technology to do their jobs effectively. Fortunately, they have a good storehouse from which to choose the appropriate resource for a particular situation. The Resources section lists professional associations, including the School Safety Advocacy Council and the National Association of School Resource Officers, along with federal government agencies, nonprofit organizations, publications and interactive products for the good guys to keep up the good work. This list will be edited and enhanced in the coming weeks and



### SUCCESS STORIES:

- The Immediate First Responder
- It Takes a Village...
- Police Outfitted With Mass Casualty Trauma Kits
- Police School Substations Enhance Safety and Communication
- School Critical Incident Planning – Generator (SCIP-G) Helps Create Coordinated Response in Sumter County
- School Safety Advocacy Council Expands Training Opportunities
- "See-Hear-Report" Reaches Out to Somerset Students
- Smartphone App Provides Alternative Way for Students to Communicate With Police

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months.

## Reporting Good News

This Special *TechBeat* issue on School Safety also includes stories about professionals who are using new tools and technology to keep schools and communities safe. Read about the Somerset, Ky., See-Hear-Report program, the Anne Arundel County (Md.) Police Department Speak Out app, NIJ's School Critical Incident Planning-Generator (SCIP-G) tool, the NLECTC System video "It Can Happen Here" and Tucson's Mass Casualty Trauma Kits.

There are daily news reports of school violence, bullying, weapons and other threats to children and adults. NLECTC doesn't have all the answers, but we are willing to keep looking for them and posting what we find. Please ask your colleagues to read this Special Issue here on JUSTNET and come back to it often for updates and news bulletins. We invite you to contact us with new information that you may come across in the field. Send an email to [asknlectc@justnet.org](mailto:asknlectc@justnet.org) if you have a success story that you would like our writers to tell. We want school personnel, children and communities to know that the good guys are on the job and real progress is being made. Armed with this information, they may begin to feel a measure of safety again.



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# SCHOOL SAFETY

## The Immediate First Responder

By Becky Lewis

*School resource officers (SROs) are more than just police officers assigned full time to a school: They are the immediate first responders to any incidents that happen on campus.*

"The SRO is always the immediate first responder to any and all incidents that happen on campus," says Kevin Quinn, president of the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO). "That's a very critical aspect of the job. There's no response time, because we're already here. In the time it would take somebody in the office to pick up a phone, call 911 and tell a dispatcher, who would then relay that information to an officer who isn't familiar with the campus, I would have already walked down the hall and been on the scene."

SROs play two other key roles in addition to covering their beats at the school. They visit classrooms and make presentations on school safety, traffic laws, general law and crime prevention; and they confer with students, parents and family members on legal problems and crime prevention.

NASRO, founded in 1989, provides training and other resources to help SROs perform all of those roles better. The organization offers basic and advanced training for SROs and managers, as well as specialized training in legal issues affecting school safety. Quinn says that requests for training have "exploded" in the wake of the Dec. 14, 2012, shootings in Newtown, Conn., with NASRO scheduling approximately 50 training classes through August 2013. For more information on NASRO, its trainings and its annual conference, visit the NASRO website at <http://www.nasro.org> or call (888) 316-2776.

"I wish the Sandy Hook shooting never happened and very few people knew that we existed," says Quinn, whose organization saw both its membership and attendance at its annual conference decline sharply during the economic downturn that started in 2008.

"Since it did happen, we want SROs and law enforcement agencies everywhere to know what we are all about and that we're here to help."

*Kevin Quinn wrote an opinion piece for CNN as part of a special series on school safety that ran in mid-January 2013. You can read it at [http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/17/my-view-more-school-resource-officers-more-safe-school-communities/?hpt=hp\\_bn1](http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/17/my-view-more-school-resource-officers-more-safe-school-communities/?hpt=hp_bn1).*

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## It Takes a Village...

By Becky Lewis

The 1996 publication of *It Takes a Village* by then-first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton brought the African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" into public consciousness. Lt. Patrick Kissane, of the Ft. Lee (N.J.) Police Department, says it also takes a village to keep a child safe. Law enforcement needs to partner with other stakeholders such as school administrators, teachers and parents on school safety efforts. Kissane uses "It Can Happen Here," a 2010 video produced by the Weapons and Protective Systems Technology Center of Excellence (WPSTC), as one tool to help promote that message.

"If you look at the SRO [school resource officer] program, it's just one piece of the pie. There are other stakeholders who need to be involved in changing the culture of a school, in preparing with practice drills, in encouraging reporting," Kissane says. "The video helps bring the message to everyone that they need to be prepared."

He uses "It Can Happen Here" in presentations to principals and community leaders, and all newly hired SROs in New Jersey receive a copy to take back to their schools. Kissane also serves as the president of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers and as a member of the New Jersey Governor's School Safety Task Force.

According to Drs. Timothy Brungart and John Leathers, co-producers of "It Can Happen Here," the documentary is designed to put a face on school safety by informing and encouraging school safety stakeholders to prepare for emergencies. Released in 2009, the video focuses on the Columbine and Platte Canyon school shootings in Colorado and the valuable lessons that communities can learn from these tragedies.

Produced by the WPSTC for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the 60-minute video includes interviews with victims' parents, school administrators and local law enforcement. It also examines shootings at the West Nickel Mines Amish School, other U.S. schools and schools in other countries, and discusses technology solutions that can help law enforcement, including less-lethal technologies, metal detectors and enhanced use of surveillance cameras. In addition, the video offers a list of resources such as websites, reference materials and contacts for help with writing and implementing school safety plans.

Since its release, "It Can Happen Here" has been used as supplemental material in New Jersey's mandatory 40-hour training for SROs and their chiefs, says Kissane, who served as a member of the NIJ School Safety Technology Working Group that provided subject-matter expertise during video development.

"The beauty of this tape is that the message is just as powerful and strong now, perhaps even more so, than it was when it was initially produced," Kissane says. "Around the country, everyone is consumed with school safety and they're talking about the need for more police or more armed guards, but it takes a lot more than that. It really does take a village."

For information on how to obtain copies of "It Can Happen Here," go to [https://www.justnet.org/school\\_safety.html](https://www.justnet.org/school_safety.html)

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# SCHOOL SAFETY

## Police Outfitted With Mass Casualty Trauma Kits

By Michele Coppola

*The Tucson Police Department now has advanced emergency medical kits to provide first aid to victims of a mass casualty incident before emergency medical personnel arrive.*

The kits are designed to effectively allow police officers to render first aid and life support on the scene of a mass casualty incident similar to what occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School or the attack on Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, her staff and community members. They compress the time it takes to stabilize injuries before paramedics arrive, according to Capt. David Azuelo, Commander, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division, Tucson Police Department.

An interim solution for patient care is necessary because paramedics will not typically enter a scene until police have located and stopped the threat(s), actions which often can take a considerable amount of time given the complexity of these incidents as well as the varying and contrasting information that is often prevalent at the onset of an active shooter type of situation.

"Many times fire agencies will not come into a 'hot zone' so it is up to law enforcement to not only deal with the threat, but also provide stabilizing first aid to survivors until they can be transitioned to paramedics," Azuelo says. "The mass casualty trauma kits allow officers to bridge the gap by providing immediate first aid during what is often referred to as 'the golden hour,' the timeframe that is most critical to patients suffering from traumatic penetrating injuries. It allows a police officer without a tremendous amount of training in advanced medicine the ability to save lives."

"We recognize that a mass casualty shooting event is likely going to be one of the most difficult calls a police officer ever responds to, not just in terms of dealing with the threat, as that is something most officers are well prepared for," he adds. "Rendering aid in a timely manner to numerous severely injured victims is not something most officers deal with on a regular basis, therefore we recognized from a management perspective that we needed to ensure these kits were useful, relevant and not overly complicated for police officers to use. We wanted a patrol-ready, easy-to-use, mass casualty trauma kit that would meet the needs of all of the primary injuries you would find in a mass casualty situation."

Recognizing the need to bridge the gap of time it takes for police officers to transition patients to advanced life support care during an active shooter event, Paramedic Capt. Kristopher Blume, also a tactical medic and the manager of the Metropolitan Medical Response System in Tucson, collaborated with the TSSI company to develop the mass casualty trauma kits for the police department.

The packs, which fit in the trunk of a police sedan, consist of a large nylon case that contains six individual advanced first aid kits, along with additional splints, bandages and trauma blankets. Tucson has eight packs, which cost approximately \$3,000 each and were purchased with funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Metropolitan Medical Response System grant program (now defunded). The packs have been distributed to each of the department's five patrol divisions and to members of the full-time Special Weapons and Tactics Team.

Every officer is certified in basic first aid but the police department is working with the fire department to further refine training specific to the mass casualty trauma kits.

"The packs are the result of awareness of the totality of what was occurring around the nation," Azuelo says. "Mass casualty incidents are nothing new. These types of situations have occurred for decades. Law enforcement has a different mission than fire and paramedics, but we have recognized that we have to come together better because in certain situations unless we can provide aid to those victims, the likelihood of their surviving long enough to get them to paramedics is slim. We need to respond as quickly as we can to get them to paramedics and ultimately to the hospitals."

For more information, contact Capt. David Azuelo at (520) 837-7378 or [david.azuelo@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:david.azuelo@tucsonaz.gov).

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# SCHOOL SAFETY

## School Critical Incident Planning – Generator (SCIP-G) Helps Create Coordinated Response in Sumter County

By Becky Lewis

*Although the administrators at the Sumter (S.C.) Police Department fervently hope they never have to deal with an active shooter situation, they want to have Incident Command System (ICS) plans in place for every one of the county's 30-plus schools in case such an event does occur. Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Fowler has found that the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) School Critical Incident Planning – Generator (SCIP-G) is the right tool to help with that process.*

"We wanted to establish an ICS plan that will work so that we don't have to come up with one on the fly in the event of an emergency," Fowler says. "We know what specific people need to be in specific positions. We know exactly what we need to do. I've been working a lot with SCIP-G so that we don't have to reinvent the wheel. I'm able to use it to look at each school at the incident command level and determine what we need to do to coordinate our response with school administrators."

SCIP-G provides step-by-step guidance for creating a plan, using the most widely accepted law enforcement practices and procedures as the foundation. It can be found on NIJ's Triple Play School Safety Combo CD, which also includes "A Critical Incident: What to Do in the First 20 Minutes" and "School Crime Operations Package (School COP)." You can download the Triple Play combo from <http://srtbrc.org/downloads/> or order it by mail at <http://srtbrc.org/form/view.php?id=9>.

"My chief asked me to work up our intended response protocol in dealing with an active shooter," Fowler says. "We're looking at the immediate armed response, and we train on different aspects of that, such as whether it's a hostage situation or whether there is an active shooter inside a school. And we could extrapolate from this training as needed to apply to a workplace violence incident at a business."

Sumter PD plans to involve the other law enforcement agencies in the county—the Sumter County Sheriff's Office, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and Department of Natural Resources Police—in the planning and training. In addition to using SCIP-G, Sumter PD is in the process of conducting site surveys and taking pictures of every school. Computerized floor plans will designate command posts and which officers will be stationed where.

Fowler says he is also sending letters to every school, asking administrators to designate a point of contact who will work with law enforcement on developing the plan and then be accessible in the event of an emergency. The agency is reaching out to the county's public and private schools, which range from small rural schools to larger ones in the more urban Sumter city area (population 42,000 of the county's 108,000 residents), and include a University of South Carolina branch campus.

"We've been working on this for several years. We've had training in the past, and every year we go through refresher courses," Fowler says. "However, this is the first time we are undertaking an effort to put everything on record so that the appropriate people know exactly what their specific duties are."

In addition to using SCIP-G, Fowlers says he is applying information from courses taken at the National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center (NERRTC) at Texas A&M University in College Station.

"Their unified command course is one of the best. As a resource, I highly recommend it."

NERRTC is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (<http://cdp.dhs.gov/consortium.html>).

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## School Safety Advocacy Council Expands Training Opportunities

By Becky Lewis

*In addition to its ongoing training programs, the School Safety Advocacy Council (SSAC) has introduced Law Enforcement Educational Presence (LEEP), a two-day School Safety Certification Course for Patrol and Reserve Officers.*

"As a result of the recent tragedy at Sandy Hook, we worked with law enforcement and school administrators from around the country who are subject-matter experts to create this program," says SSAC President Sean Burke. "If law enforcement agencies nationwide stationed an officer in every school, it would take one-third of the sworn officers in the country."

"The basic idea behind LEEP is to get local law enforcement more involved with the schools in their jurisdiction. LEEP promotes the idea that schools can have a satellite office in their buildings where officers on patrol, officers from specialized units, can set up a schedule to work out of that office part time. That way, they get to know the administrators, they get to know the students, they get to know the layout of the building. If an emergency response is needed, there is an officer who knows the school and has a relationship with the students and staff. The majority of the potential school shootings in this country that have been averted were stopped because students provided information to an officer with whom they had developed a relationship."

To learn more about the available training on how to establish a LEEP program in your area, visit <http://www.schoolsafety911.org/index.html>, the SSAC website. The site also offers information on other specialized services and trainings offered by SSAC, which has trained more than 100,000 law enforcement officers and education professionals in the United States and abroad. SSAC also offers the following on a regular basis:

- Basic School Resource Officer Certification Course.
- Advanced School Resource Officer Certification Course.
- Emergency Management Response in the Educational Setting.
- Gangs 101: What Every Educator and SRO Should Know.
- School Law & Liability.
- School Safety Leadership & Supervision.
- When Terror Goes to School – Understanding the Threat of Terrorism in Today's Schools.

In addition to several specialized trainings on bullying, SSAC holds two national conferences each year, one of them the largest conference on bullying in the United States. The agenda for the other 2013 event focuses on emergency response and school shootings. Details on these conferences can also be found on the SSAC website.

"The unique thing about SSAC is that all of the instructors we employ are subject-matter experts who remain active in the field. That's what sets us apart," Burke says. "There are training programs out there that just focus on school staff, and trainings that just focus on law enforcement, but we bring together the community, the schools and local law enforcement to address school safety and bullying. We see school safety as a community-wide responsibility."

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## "See-Hear-Report" Reaches Out to Somerset Students

By Becky Lewis

*Like many other law enforcement agencies around the country, the one in Somerset, Ky., periodically holds training for active shooter scenarios, with administrators hoping at the same time the training never needs to be put to use. In late January 2013, the department took a step aimed at preventing that type of situation with the introduction of "See-Hear-Report," an anonymous text-a-tip program aimed at students in the county's 20-plus rural and small town schools.*

"Our department has been very progressive over the years in a number of different programs. Our acting chief, Doug Nelson, saw a Colorado program that targeted bullying via an anonymous text-a-tip program, and he wanted to start the same type of program here because students and young adults are so very comfortable with sending text messages," says Lt. Shannon Smith.

After exploring several possible options, the Somerset Police Department settled on using TipSoft, a service used by a number of agencies across the nation, and targeting efforts toward students in the county's three high schools.

Smith says the service provides students with an assurance of anonymity and confidentiality, but at the same time allows the department to track the information through its system to ensure that all tips receive appropriate followup.

"Reports indicate that in an a number of the situations involving active shooters in schools in this country, other students knew about it beforehand and didn't tell anyone, maybe because they were fearful, or embarrassed, or didn't think it was their place to tell," Smith says. "With See-Hear-Report, they will be guaranteed confidentiality without fear of retaliation. We do a lot of things in our department geared toward response and handling these types of situations, such as for a number of years we've sent our officers to active shooter training and conducted in-house training on active shooter response. We want to market this toward the prevention end of things and give the students an opportunity to stop an event before it takes place."

The 40-officer department also plans to keep up with the active shooter training, including a refresher course that took place over the December holiday break at one of the local high schools in Somerset itself (population 11,300; the county's population is 60,000.).

"It was pretty well set up when news of Sandy Hook came down," Smith says. "It hit us hard like anything does that to has to do with kids being injured or killed, but there was a sense of satisfaction that we were not in the same situation as many other departments watching this on the news, because most of them were not just days away from sending the entire department through a refresher course in an actual building. We always try to be progressive and we've trained and prepared in the event anything ever takes place, but we also want to do whatever we can to prevent something from happening."

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/SomersetPolice>.

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## Smartphone App Provides Alternative Way for Students to Communicate With Police

By Michele Coppola

*Students in Anne Arundel County, Md., schools can now use a unique smartphone app to report bullying or other problems to police.*

The Anne Arundel County Police Department released the free AACo PD Speak Out app in fall 2012. The School Resource Unit designed the app to provide students with a way to communicate in a secure, private fashion. Students can walk into the office of a school resource officer (SRO) or use a phone tip line to report a problem, but police wanted to ensure students had another option to encourage communication.

"We are trying to put more tools in kids' hands in an environment they are used to working with," explains Lt. Doyle Batten, school safety section commander for the department. "We wanted to give kids as much anonymity as possible to let us know what is going on."

The county's 125 schools serve approximately 78,000 students. SROs are present in all 12 of the county's high schools and are authorized for 11 of the county's 19 middle schools.

The app is available through the Internet at <http://aacopdspeakout.myapp.name> or through the Google Playstore for Android products or via iTunes for iPhone users. Although the app is designed for public school students in the county, a parent or a private school student can use it as well. Police forward the email message content to where it needs to go, such as a specific school or SRO.

"Through all of our research, we can't find any other police SRO agency that has tried this," Batten says. "We are interested in seeing what direction this takes. We don't know how it might morph over time. We definitely see it as an avenue for identifying bullying and gang activity."

There have been several successful uses of the app thus far, according to Batten, involving students in emotional distress and bullying.

"None of these were major incidents, which is exactly how we hoped it would go—intervention at an early level," Batten says. "Information is the key to prevention."

For more information, contact Lt. Doyle Batten at [dbatten@aacounty.org](mailto:dbatten@aacounty.org), (410) 222-0040.

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