

safe²tell Colorado

Safe2Tell Winter Newsletter

February 2020

Visit the Safe2Tell CO Website

Welcome to Safe2Tell's (S2T) winter newsletter. We've come to the middle of this school year ([see mid-year data report here](#)) and thought it was time to touch base with our awesome stakeholders!

But first, let us send out a big THANK YOU to all of the school teachers, paras, assistants, counselors, administrators, lunch room and janitorial attendants, coaches and resource officers who work tirelessly to educate and protect Colorado students on a daily basis! We salute you!

In this edition, we will introduce you to S2T's director, Essi Ellis. In addition, we will answer frequent questions that we receive from schools about the S2T program, share with you initiatives we have been working on, and provide you with links to helpful articles and resources.

Thank you for reading! Safe2Tell appreciates and welcomes your questions, comments, and ideas pertaining to this and future newsletter editions. Please submit feedback [here](#).



Meet Safe2Tell Director Essi Ellis

This month celebrates the one year anniversary of Essi Ellis serving as S2T's Program Director.

When asked why she was initially interested in the position, Ellis responded,

"I was excited to join S2T to help promote school safety, prevention, and intervention initiatives and to work with the many people around the state doing the same."

Last school year S2T saw a 28% increase in annual tips. According to Ellis,

"One of the reasons for the increase is that students are becoming more comfortable speaking up, which helps to break the code of silence."

Under Essi's leadership, S2T continues to strengthen and expand relationships with stakeholders.

"We are grateful for the many partners we have in this important work, including law enforcement, schools, teachers, parents and mental health partners and most of all to the students who speak up to keep themselves, their friends, and their communities safe," added Essi.

Thank you Essi for your continued leadership. We are half way through this school year and on target to surpass last year's record breaking tip numbers.

To connect with Essi or any of the Safe2Tell staff, click [here](#).

S2T Refresher for Schools

S2T school team components

- Every Colorado school is part of the S2T program.
- Each school predetermines the members of their S2T team (those who are listed as contacts in the P3 system and receive the S2T tips).
- S2T school teams are typically comprised of school administrators, counselors, resource officers, and personnel from the district security and mental health units.
- School teams view every S2T tip and determine a course of action.
- Changes or updates to school team membership can be requested [here](#).

S2T school team disclosure

- Schools can disclose to involved parties that they received anonymous information about a safety concern.
- Schools can disclose to involved parties the nature of the safety concern.
- Schools are not required to disclose that the information came from a S2T tip.

S2T school tip handling

- Schools cannot print or make a copy of the S2T report.
- Schools cannot email a copy of the S2T report to anyone, including to other members of the authorized S2T school team.
- Schools cannot put a copy of a S2T report into a student's academic file.
- Schools cannot show the report to anyone outside of the authorized S2T school team, including students and parents/guardians.
- Schools can initiate a student threat assessment based on information received via a S2T report, but the actual S2T tip and its content cannot be included in the student's threat assessment, IEP or academic records.
- Schools can share any new and revealing information that surfaces during the S2T tip investigation process, as that information is not protected by anonymity.

For additional information and guidance, S2T school teams can access the **P3 Recipient User Guide**, found [here](#).

S2T program administration role

- S2T is the conduit of information between the reporting party to a school's predetermined S2T team and/or law enforcement.
- S2T does not investigate the tips or regulate how schools and/or law enforcement conduct their investigations.
- S2T does not categorize tips but instead relies on S2T teams and/or law enforcement to categorize each tip based on its nature and the outcome of the subsequent investigation.
- S2T collects data for each school year, which begins August 1 and ends on July 31 the following year.
- S2T does not publicly share data pertaining to school districts or individual schools.
- S2T does publish aggregate data that encompasses the entire state. Monthly and annual data reports can be found [here](#).

**Special thank you
to Aurora Public
Schools and their
Department of
Safety & Security
as well as to the
City of Yuma,
Colorado! They
show support for
the Safe2Tell**



**program by
putting our name
and logo on their
vehicles!
Sweet rides!**



A social media campaign launched to raise awareness about teen mental health

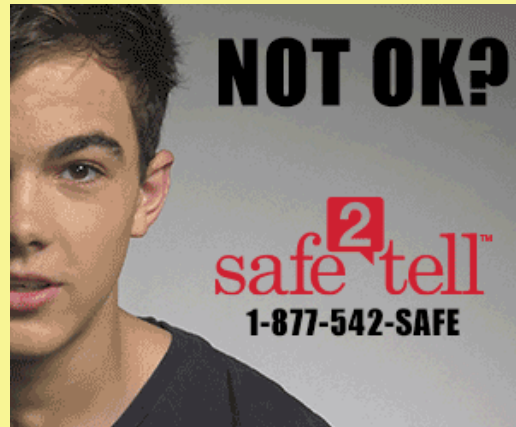
Since 2009, Colorado has seen a steady increase in the number of suicide deaths in the state. In addition, Colorado consistently ranks in the top five states with the highest youth suicide rate.

According to [a recent study](#) funded by the Colorado Attorney General's office, between 2015 and 2017, 222 suicide deaths of young people between the ages of 10 and 18 occurred in Colorado.

In an ongoing commitment to take action and address mental health struggles among Colorado youth, Safe2Tell joined multiple statewide partners to create a series of public service announcements (PSA's). The PSA's were designed to empower youth to seek help and to know where to turn for support.

40 students from across the state, each impacted by mental health challenges and suicide in their own lives, participated in the production of the PSA's.

According to Safe2Tell director Essi Ellis, *"Suicide is our number one tip, month after month. This is a very real concern for our youth and these PSA's are hopefully helping to end the stigma surrounding talking about mental health concerns."*



In addition to words of encouragement, these students shared personal stories along with a plea for youth to talk about their feelings. The overwhelming message was that *"It's ok to not be ok"* and that *"You are not alone!"*

"As Attorney General, I am committed to protecting the safety of all Coloradans. Tragically, suicide is a leading cause of death for our youth. Indeed, it is consistently the leading topic of anonymous tips we receive at the Safe2Tell program," said Attorney General Phil Weiser. *"I give thanks to the brave young individuals, and for our partners, that are doing this work to break the silence and let teens and parents know they are not alone."*

A link to the PSA's can be found [here](#).

Did You Know?

- You can have the Safe2Tell logo or QR code printed on the back of your student ID's. Click [here](#) to request more information.
- You can order Safe2Tell marketing materials [here](#).
- You can request a staff or student Safe2Tell training [here](#).



Resources

Crimes against children have been on the media forefront recently. Sheltering kids from what they hear and see on TV can be challenging. The National Association of School

Psychologists published some useful tips about how to talk with them about violence.
A link to the article can be found [here](#).

A critical factor for student success these days is their level of connectedness with others.
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a helpful article on this topic.
A link to the article can be found [here](#).

Vaping is rapidly increasing among our youth. Scholastic along with the National Institute
on Drug Abuse developed a timely lesson plan about E-cigarettes found [here](#).

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Safe2Tell Colorado

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Safe2Tell Colorado is a state-funded program of the Colorado Office of the Attorney General, with support from the Colorado Department of Public Safety, Colorado Information Analysis Center.

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STAY CONNECTED



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