

safe ²tell Colorado

Annual Report

2018



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Attorney General

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I. Safe2Tell Background

Safe2Tell Colorado serves as the statewide bystander-reporting tool for concerning behaviors, especially when students are concerned about their safety and that of others.

Since 2004, Safe2Tell Colorado has received reports and aided in preventing hundreds of separate school attacks, helped prevent thousands of youth suicides, and intervened in countless threatening and dangerous situations.

Safe2Tell has been part of the Colorado Office of the Attorney General since 2014 and works in partnership with Colorado State Patrol Command Centers in receiving tips by phone, text, e-mail and the Safe2Tell app.

Safe2Tell Colorado provides:

- An anonymous way for students, parents, school staff and community members to report concerns regarding their safety or the safety of others.
- Resources and materials for schools and communities to educate and promote the Safe2Tell Colorado initiative.
- Technical assistance to schools and communities before and after tragic events.
- Expertise in creating safer schools and communities through prevention and early intervention.
- Education, awareness and outreach to encourage reporting and breaking the code of silence.

II. Reporting Requirement

In accordance with C.R.S. § 24-31-611, the Safe2Tell Annual Report is respectfully submitted to the Education and Judiciary Committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Colorado General Assembly.

Per statute, the data included in this report covers the previous school year August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018, related to the following:

1. Summary of outcomes and actions taken on reports made to the program
2. The number of Safe2tell reports by category, broken down by month.
3. The total number of incidents of misuse of the program, broken down into categories.
4. The number of reports received involving a single incident.
5. The number of times Safe2tell was used by a reporting party to make a threat against or otherwise harm another person.

6. The number of times a reporting party was in crisis and was reporting to the program to obtain assistance and the time it took to identify the reporting party and respond.
7. The effectiveness of the Safe2tell dispatch center in the department of public safety.
8. Recommendations regarding how to improve the program based on the available data.

III. Findings for 2017-2018 School Year

1. Summary of outcomes and actions taken on reports made to the program

Since 2004 when Safe2Tell was a unit of the Colorado State Patrol and Colorado Department of Public Safety, the Colorado State Patrol Communications Branch has answered calls and replied to web reports and mobile application tips twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The answering point is live and provides an opportunity for a two-way dialogue with trained experts who document as much information as possible with an opportunity for additional information to be called in as necessary. When action is warranted, information is immediately forwarded to local school officials, mental health professionals, and law enforcement agencies, as appropriate.

Safe2Tell follows up with the school and responding agencies to ensure that the tip was investigated and that action was taken. The assurance that calls and reports are anonymous and that appropriate action will be taken is helping persuade young people to move away from a code of silence and to take a stand in favor of their safety and the safety of others. The high numbers of reports to Safe2Tell are the precursor to early intervention opportunities and show the cultural change of bystander reporting becoming more of an accepted practice.

From August 1, 2017 to July 31, 2018, Safe2Tell received a total of 16,000 tips, the majority of tips were sent through the Safe2Tell mobile application. In comparison to the 2016-2017 school year, there was a 74% increase in the overall number of tips received.

A more current statistic is receiving 1,842 tips in September 2018 compared to receiving 1,260 tips in September 2017, representing a 46% increase in tips received.

2. The number of Safe2Tell Reports by category and broken down by month

Since 2012-2013, Safe2Tell consistently receives suicide threats as the highest concern reported, followed by drugs and bullying each month. See Appendix A for a breakdown of monthly totals by category from August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018.

3. The number of incidents of misuse of the program, broken into categories

Safe2Tell counts three separate categories of inappropriate use of the program:

- Prank Tips: These tips are identified as use of Safe2Tell as a practical joke.
- Misuse of Safe2Tell: These are tips received that have nothing to do with Safe2Tell's mission or with student or school safety.
- False Tips: These are reports that are deliberately providing false information to harm, injure, or bully another person.

Of the 16,000 tips received from August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018, Safe2Tell received 395 prank tips (2.46%), 161 misuse of Safe2Tell tips (1.0%), and recorded 528 false tips (3.30%).

4. The number of reports involving a single incident

Of the 16,000 tips received from August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018 by Safe2Tell, 14,992 tips were unique single incidents while 1,008 were multiple safety concerns, meaning Safe2Tell received multiple tips regarding a single incident. This fact is encouraging, since various students, parents, and administrators are witnessing the same incidents and are reporting their concerns at the same time.

5. The number of times Safe2Tell was used by a reporting party to make a threat against or otherwise harm another person

Of the 16,000 tips received from August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018, Safe2Tell was able to locate one tip of a reporting party threatening to harm another person.

6. The number of times a reporting party was in crisis and was reporting to the program to obtain assistance and the time it took to identify the reporting party and respond

From August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2018, Safe2Tell received seventeen reports of a reporting party in crisis who needed personal assistance. The time it took to identify the reporting party was immediate, while the average recorded time it took to respond to the reporting party was 51 minutes.

7. The effectiveness of the Safe2tell dispatch center in the Department of Public Safety

The Colorado State Patrol (CSP), located within the Colorado Department of Public Safety, has operated Safe2Tell's Communication Center Dispatch since 2004. CSP continued in this role after the integration of Safe2Tell into the Colorado Office of the Attorney General under SB 14-002.

The Colorado State Patrol answers tips and distributes tips to local school multidisciplinary teams and local law enforcement agencies in a timely fashion. When a tip is potentially life threatening (suicide threat, guns, threats, or planned school attack) the communication center prioritizes these tips and uses all available resources to contact school administration and local law enforcement to investigate the tip immediately.

CSP Communication Supervisors provide quality control in verifying that all staff who answer the Safe2Tell calls or mobile tips are certified technicians trained to do so and that these technicians adhere to CSP policy and procedures when handling Safe2Tell reports. CSP Communication Supervisors and Technicians also follow up with school staff and local law enforcement to verify all tips have been received and viewed in a timely manner.

In interacting with tipsters, CSP Dispatchers have been professional and empathetic in their initial response and when engaging in two-way dialogue with the tipster. This may include asking a tipster for more information, reassuring the tipster that they are anonymous, and in some cases, referring the tipster to Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners for additional assistance.

Safe2Tell and the Colorado Office of the Attorney General are proud of the collaboration with the Colorado Department of Public Safety to operate the dispatch center and view the partnership as highly effective.

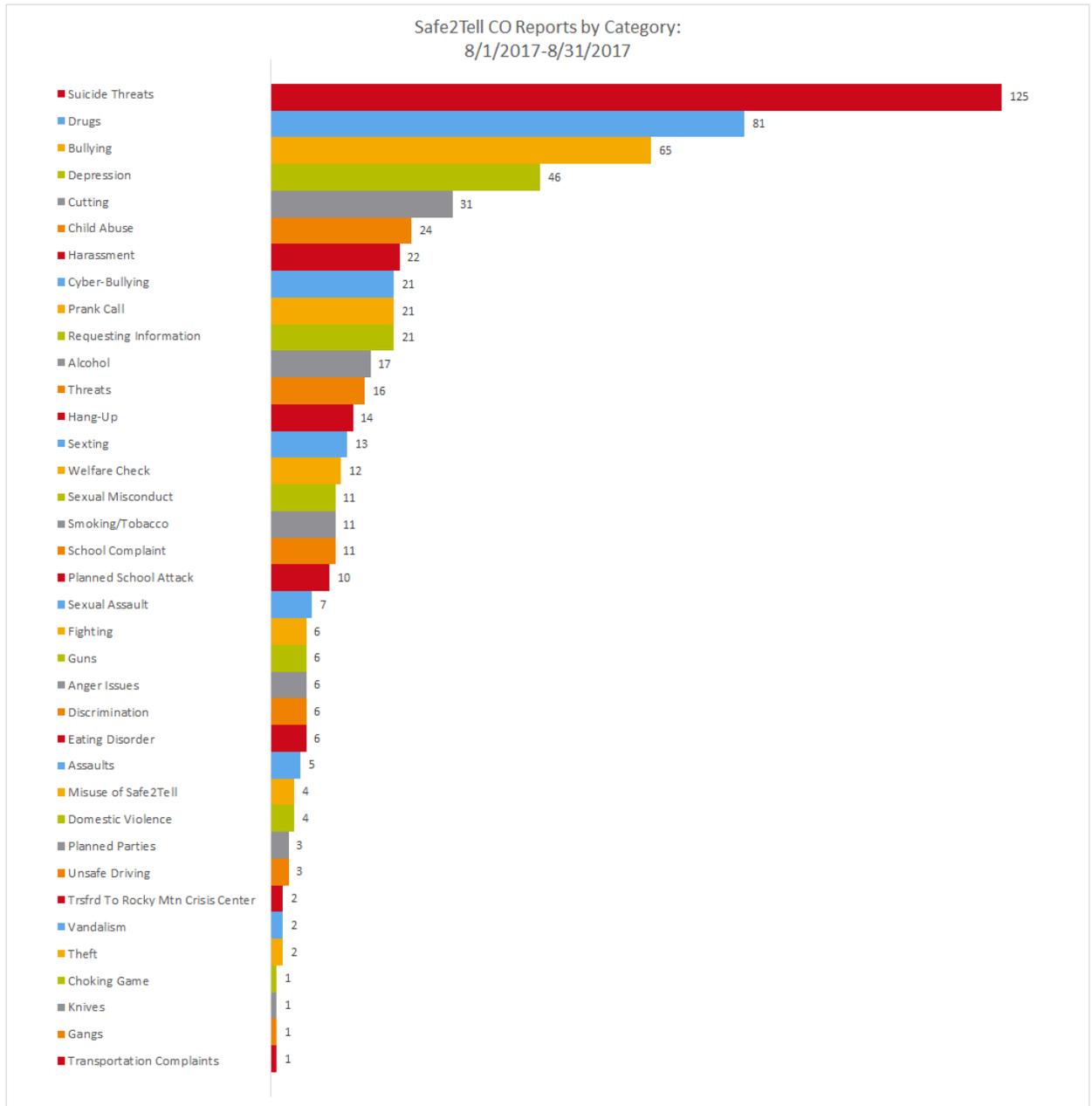
8. Recommendations regarding how to improve the program based on the available data

Based on a review of the available data, the Colorado Office of the Attorney General identified the following recommendations for improving the Safe2Tell program:

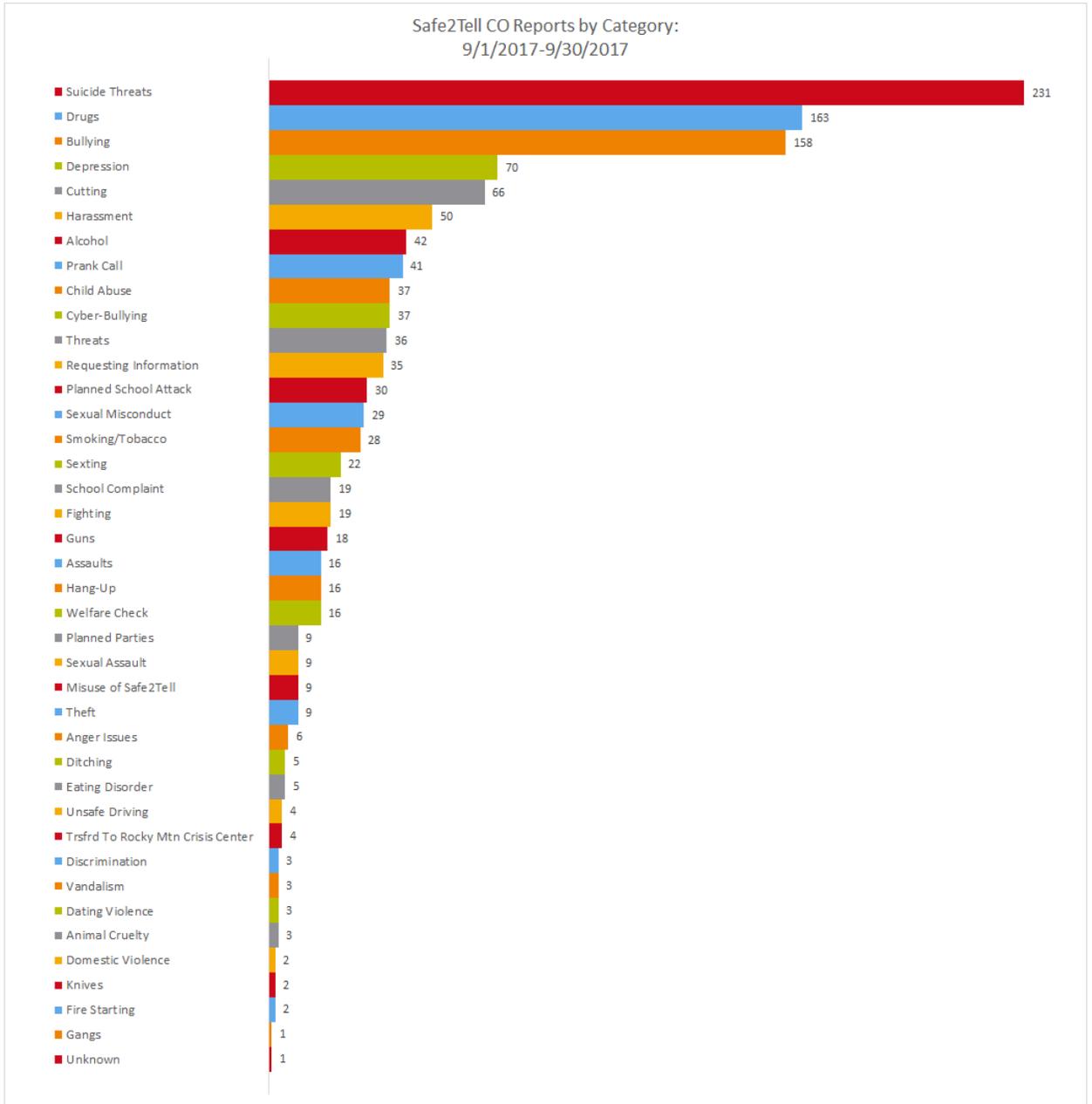
- a. Utilize Safe2Tell data to inform topic areas for training of school personnel, local law enforcement, including School Resource Officers.
- b. Provide Safe2Tell teams with more concise directives on the difference between unfounded, false reports, and misuse of Safe2Tell.
- c. Continue supporting schools, districts, and law enforcement in effectively messaging and promoting the Safe2Tell program.
- d. Consult with school, law enforcement, and school district multidisciplinary teams on interpreting local and state trends based on Safe2Tell data.
- e. Continue to follow up with schools, law enforcement, and school districts when a tipster uses Safe2Tell in an attempt to bully, harass, or injure another student. This can include, but is not limited to, providing training, placing alerts in the Safe2Tell database, documenting actions taken by the school, and looking at the possible role of overall school culture and climate in the misuse of Safe2Tell.
- f. Continue to support schools in integrating Safe2Tell messaging into their core values, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, and other best practice positive school culture and climate initiatives. We believe this support will help reduce misuse of Safe2Tell by educating students about the importance of Safe2Tell and reinforce the usefulness of Safe2Tell to school administration and parents.
- g. Recommend each school district and Board of Cooperation Educational Services (BOCES) provide the Safe2Tell Program with designated school contact(s) to oversee quality control on tip investigations, assist in coordinating trainings, and serve as a liaison between Safe2Tell Colorado, the local district, and law enforcement.
- h. Recommend school multidisciplinary teams use as a resource the recently updated publication titled, *[Colorado School Violence Prevention: A Legal Manual from the Colorado Attorney General's Office](https://coag.gov/sites/default/files/filefield_paths/final_as_of_october_11_2018.pdf)* as a resource when investigating Safe2Tell Tips, available at: https://coag.gov/sites/default/files/filefield_paths/final_as_of_october_11_2018.pdf.

APPENDIX A: Number of Safe2Tell Reports by category and broken down by month

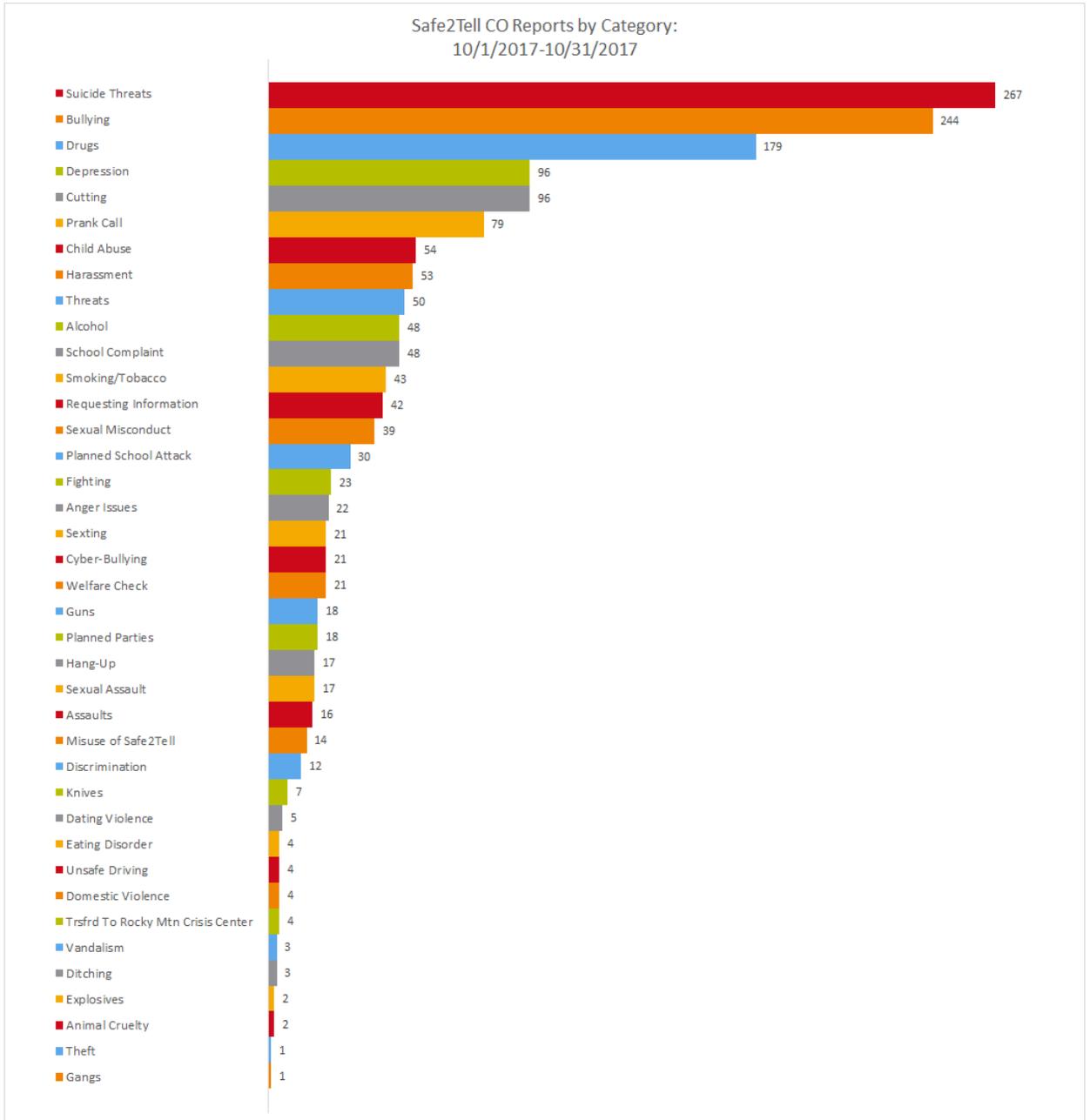
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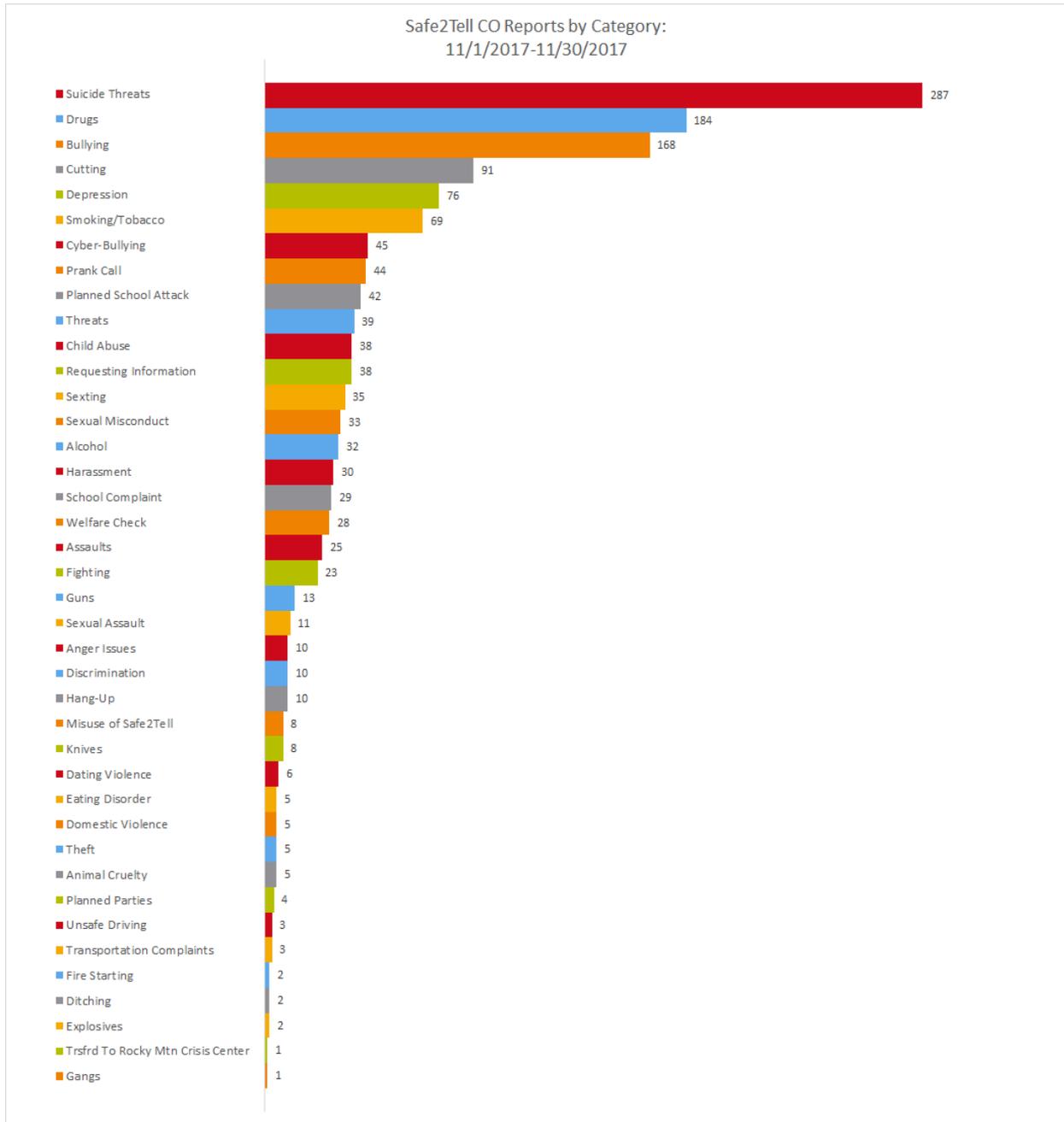
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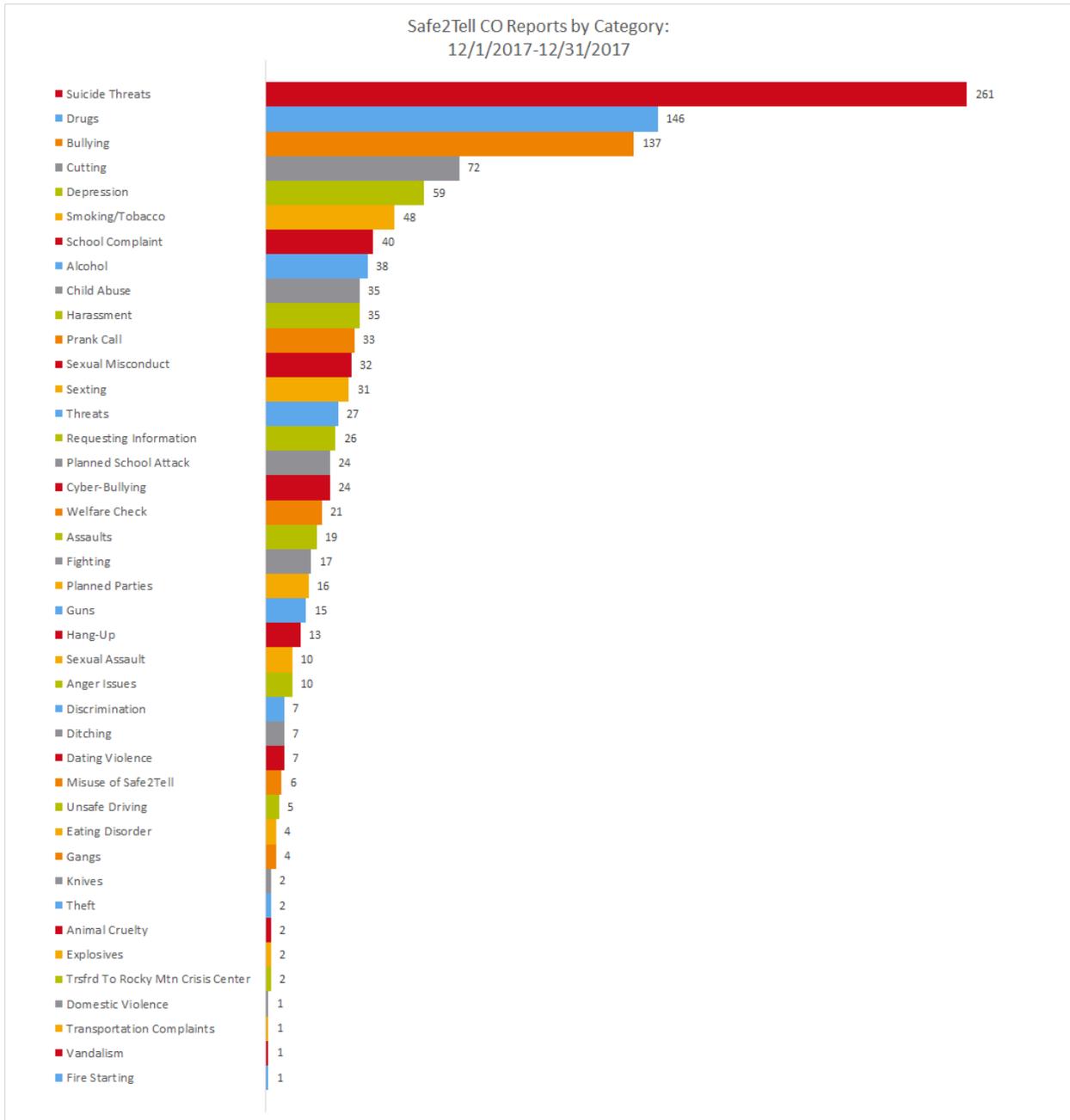
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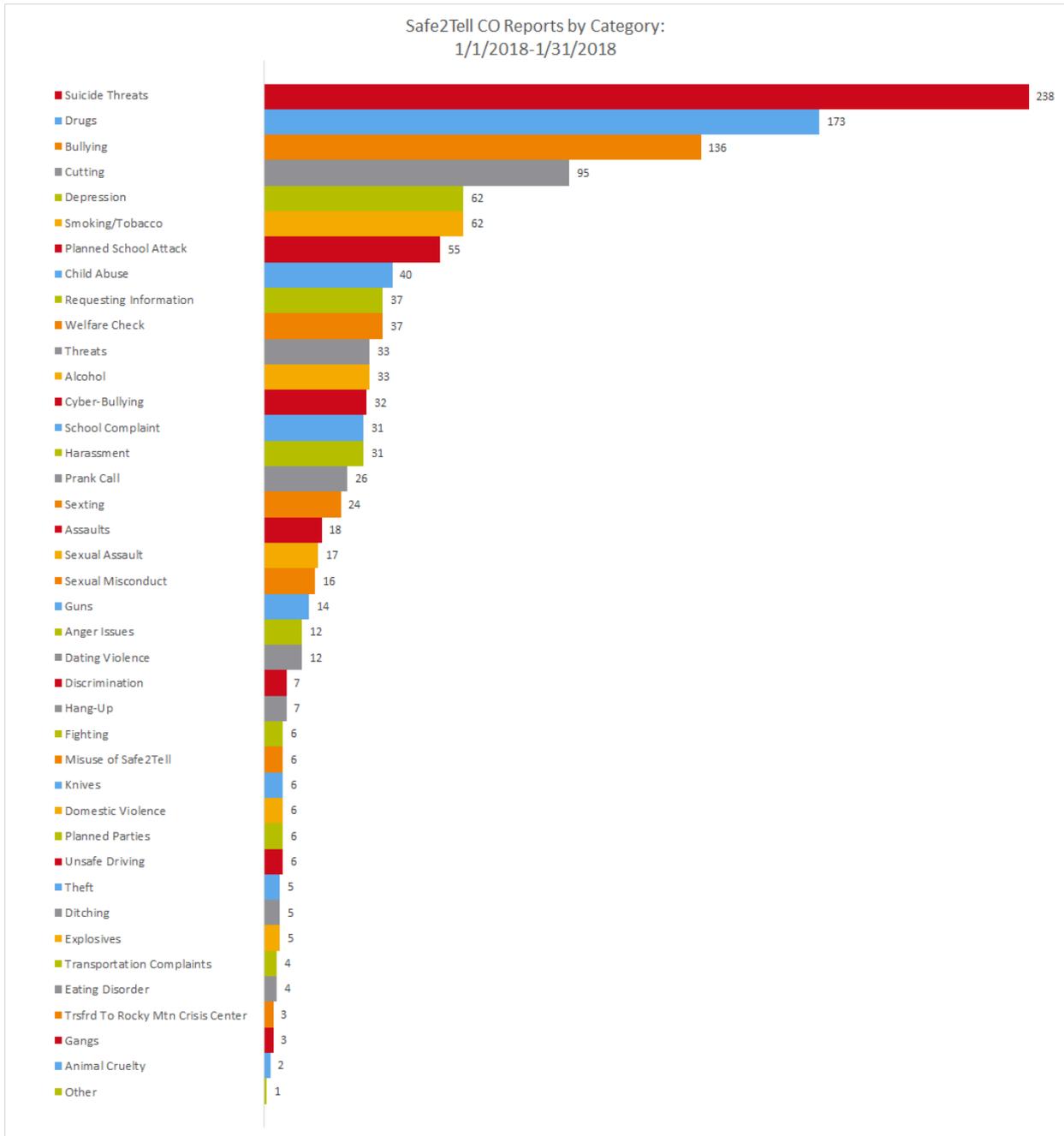
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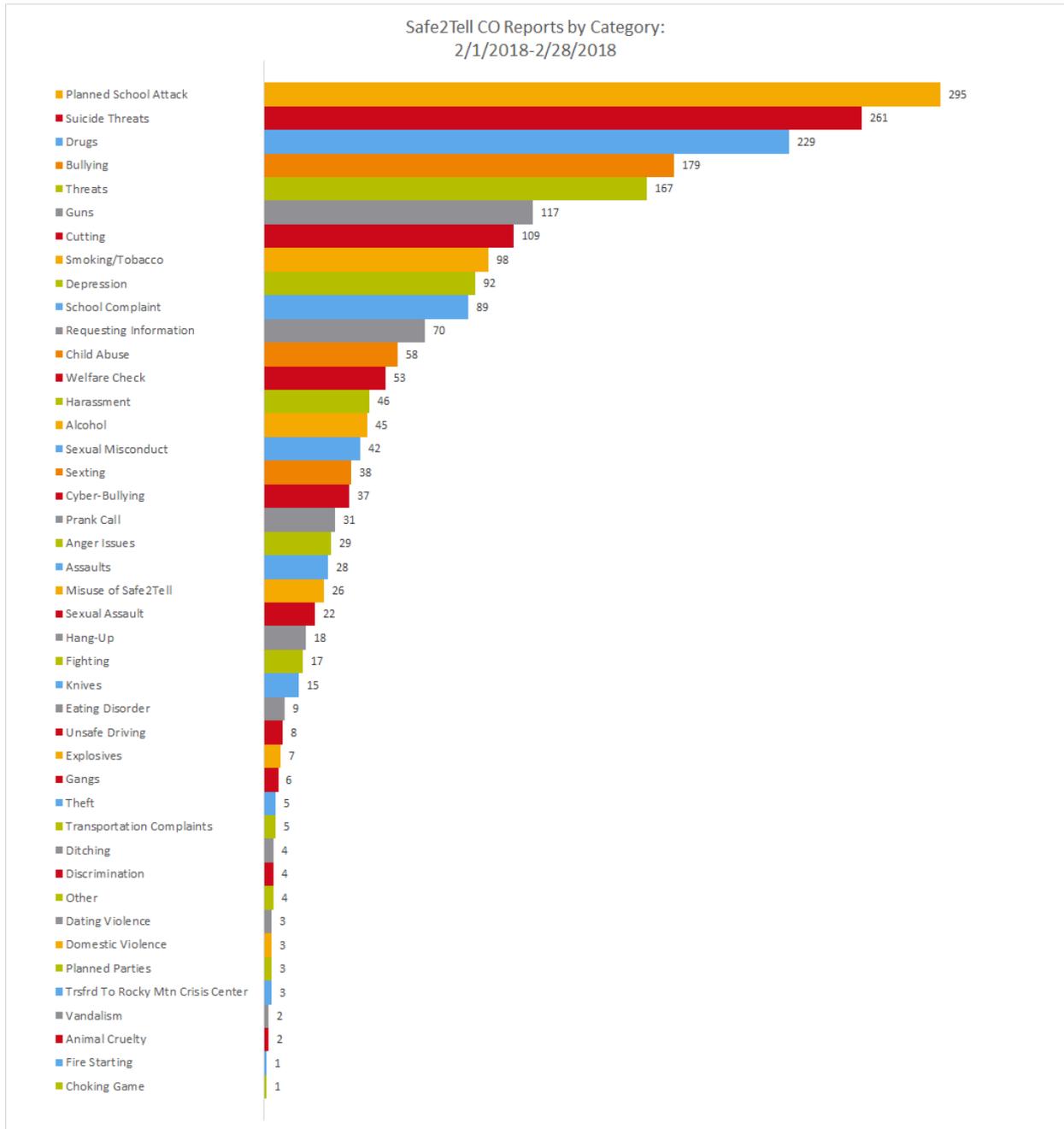
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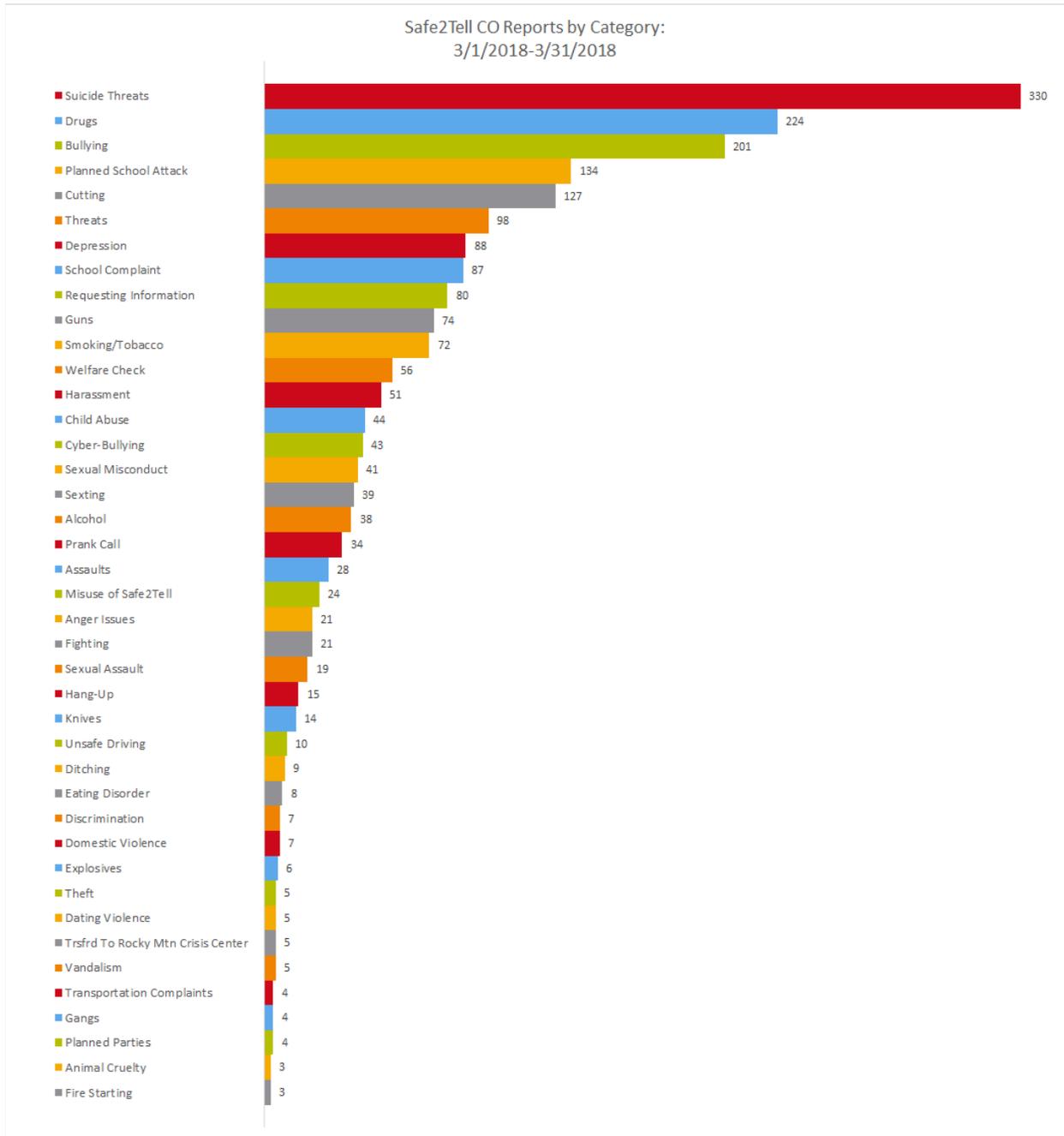
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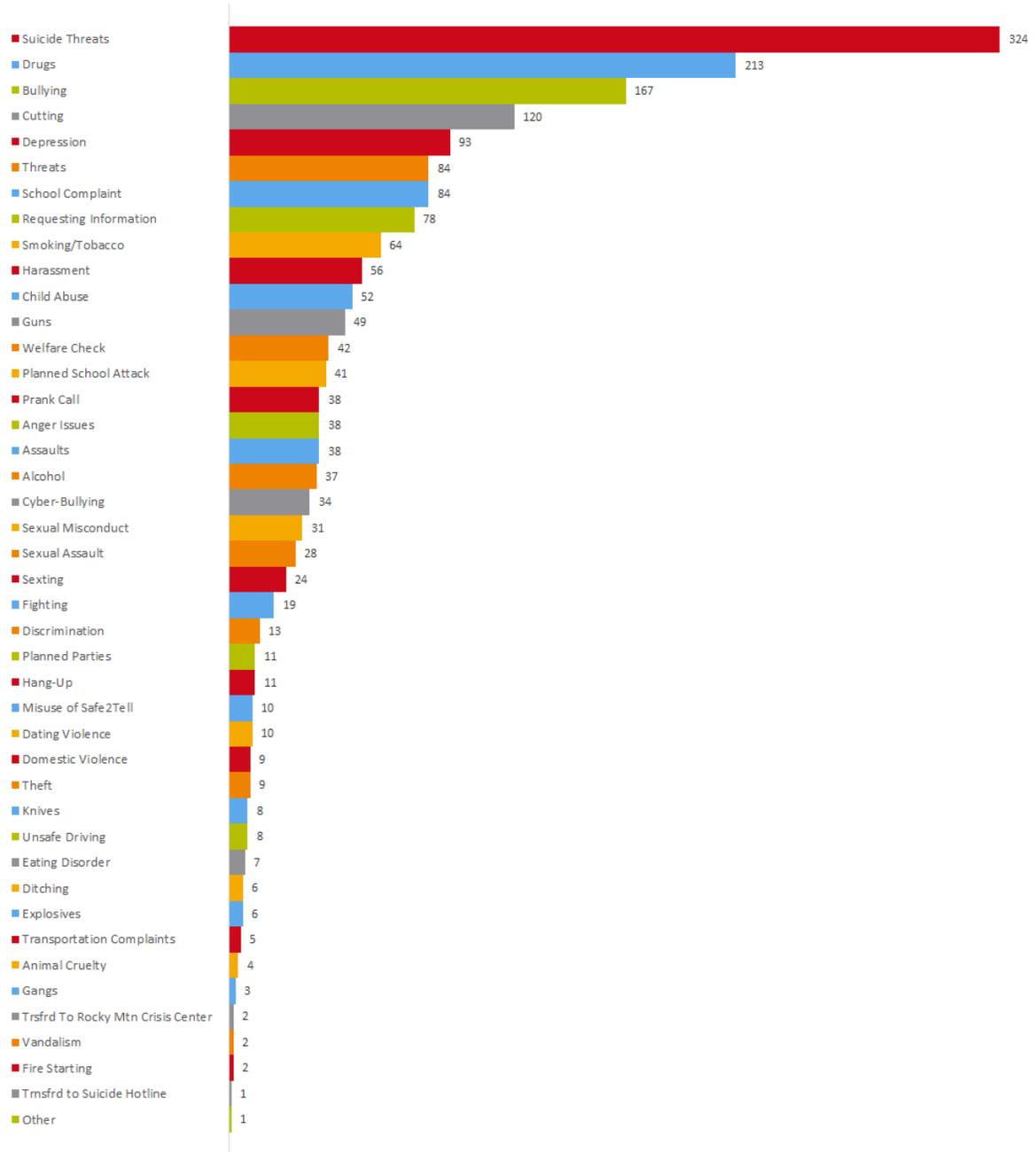
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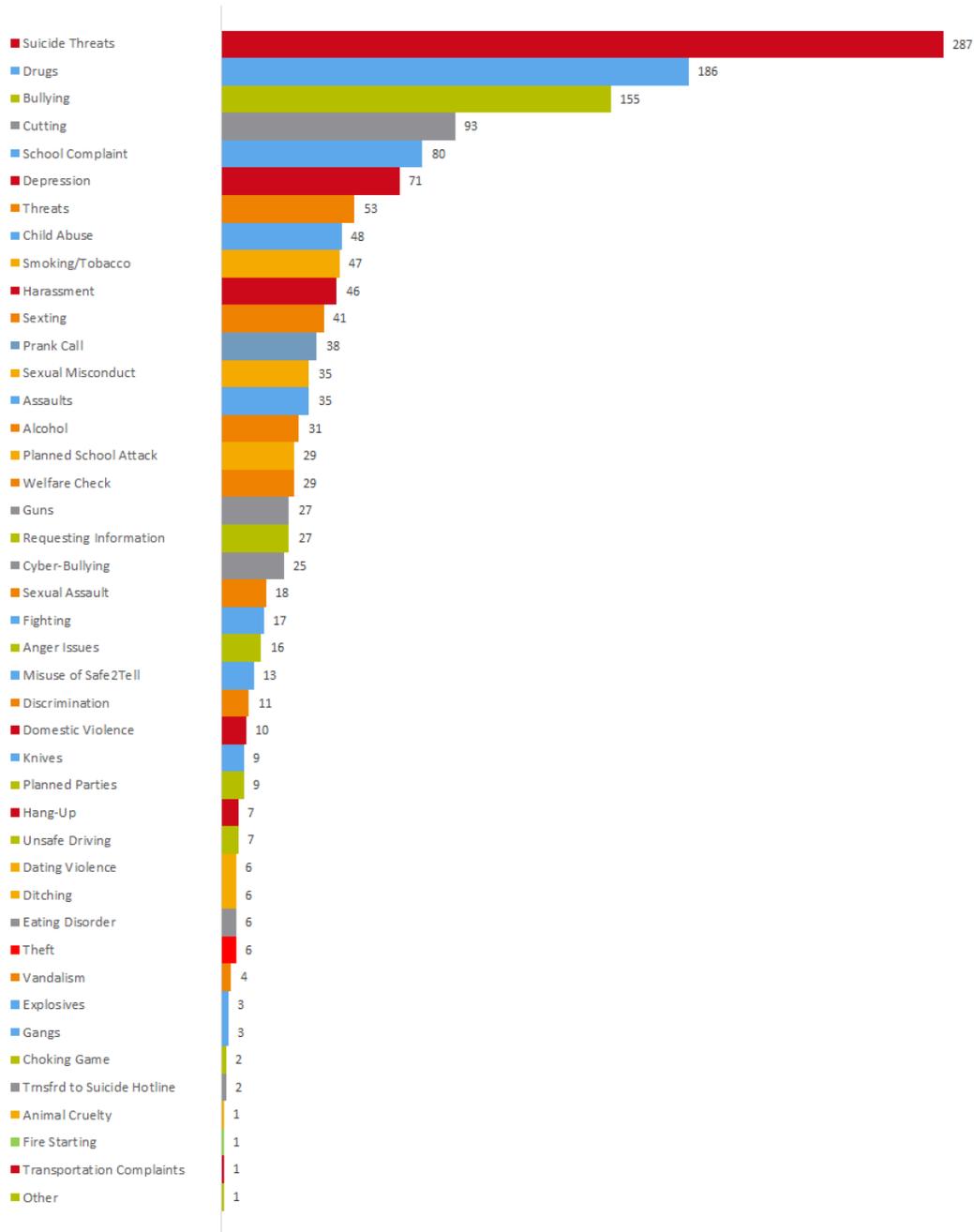
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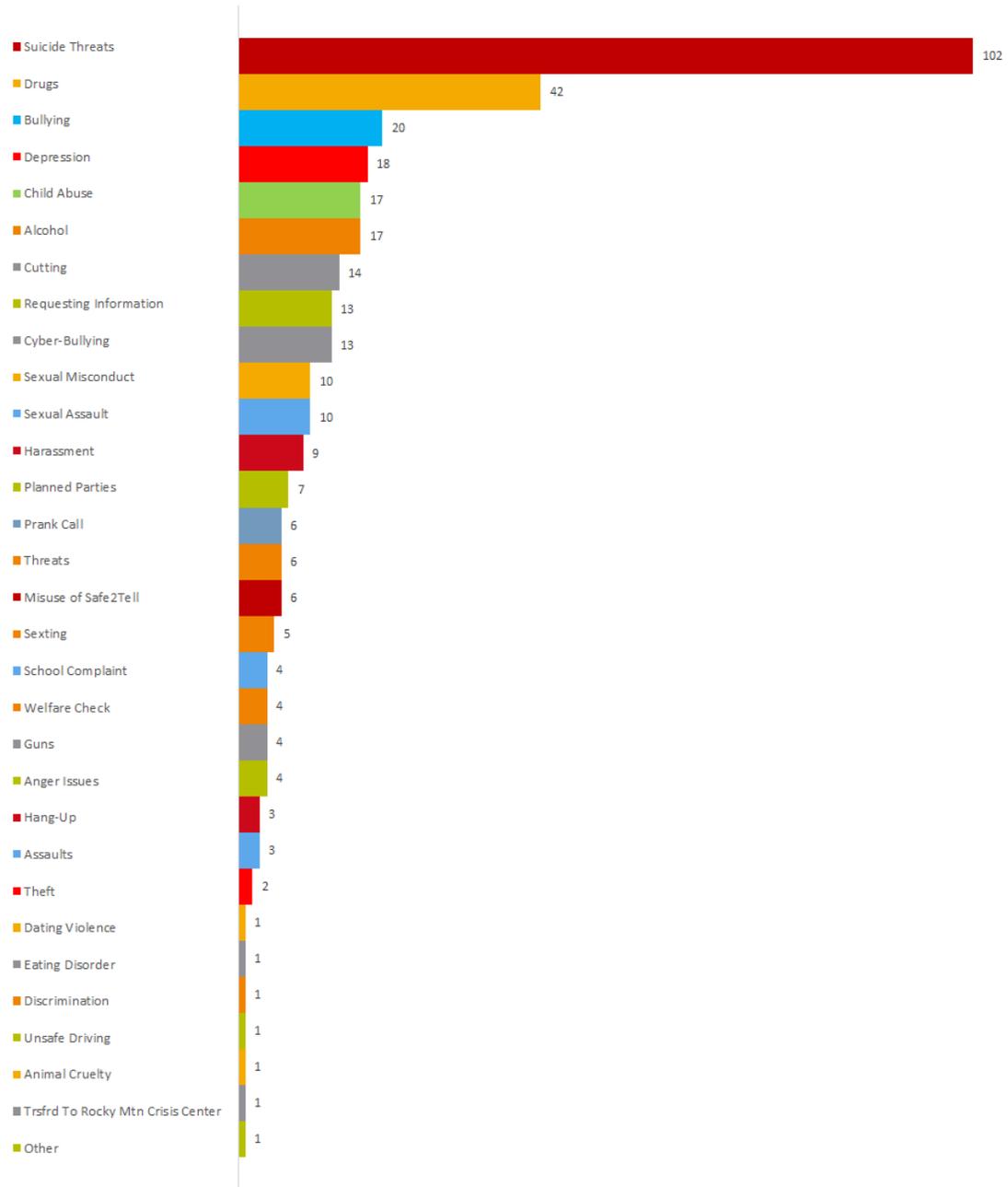
April 2018



May 2018



June 2018



July 2018

