

SUSAN PAYNE – FULL BIO



Susan Payne is the Founder of Safe2Tell™ prevention initiative developed as a response to the Columbine tragedy in Colorado. Susan served in this role as a Detective from Colorado Springs Police Department; a Special Agent with the Colorado Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security and she currently serves as the Director of Safe Schools at the Colorado Attorney General's Office and directs the Safe2Tell prevention initiative.

The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education have recognized Susan as a subject matter expert in school safety and prevention strategies, and she is often sought out by media, schools, and law enforcement for her expertise. In 2006, Susan's expertise was requested at the President's White House Conference on School Violence Prevention. Susan again was invited to the White House in 2013, where they convened experts from around the nation regarding school safety, security, and the tragic events at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Additionally, in 2015 the National Institute of Justice conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Education selected Susan to serve on a panel of 20 experts regarding the innovations in technology for school safety in Washington D. C. Susan has participated as a key presenter in school safety summits around the country.

Susan has been requested to attend law enforcement debriefings following many incidents around the nation including tragedies at Youth with a Mission, New Life Church, the Pennsylvania Amish School, Platte Canyon, Deer Creek, Virginia Tech and Arapahoe. In addition, Susan has been requested to participate in the development of National School Safety standards, providing input into the training and revision of the four phase model of crisis management; Preparedness, Prevention, Response and Recovery and the five phase model including Protection. Susan was asked to review and provide input on the guidelines language in FERPA with the U.S. Department of Education to encourage information sharing when a threat to safety exists along with managing intelligence.

Susan has focused her career on continuing the development and expansion of school safety efforts along with the expansion of the Safe2Tell™ program with a focus of preventing violence in schools and communities. Susan has been innovative in developing strategies of prevention in the aftermath of trauma where a deliberate and strategic effort of prevention can save lives.

She is recognized as a national expert on prevention, intervention, awareness, education, and training for school safety. Susan also consults extensively with Legislative Committees, Emergency Management planning teams, crisis response teams, schools and law enforcement throughout the U.S.

Just prior to the tragedy at Columbine High School, Susan was asked to speak to state leaders about the successful prevention and reporting model she had developed for the Pikes Peak Region using Crime Stoppers, classroom education, and a prevention focused effort on precipitators to violence and suicide prevention. After the Columbine tragedy, Susan was appointed to the Colorado Attorney General's Office to develop a statewide program to facilitate intelligence gathering and information sharing based off of the recommendations by the Columbine Commission Review.

Susan developed Safe2Tell™, a model prevention initiative that opens lines of communication providing methods of anonymous reporting answered by law enforcement. Susan developed Safe2Tell™, a prevention initiative that opens lines of communication providing methods of anonymous reporting answered by a live, trained answering point that distributes intel immediately to law enforcement and schools. Safe2Tell™ works in collaboration with youth, parents, law enforcement, government agencies, and community groups to educate students on the how's and why's to report threats to their own safety or the safety of others. The outcome results have proven the Safe2Tell™ prevention initiative is a simple, yet profound solution to breaking the code of silence and promoting school and community safety. Susan was a contributing author with Dr. Del Elliott, Founding Director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, "Columbine a Decade Later: The Prevention of Homicidal Violence in Schools: New Directions in Youth Development, Number 129. Wiley Publishing; Issue Editors' Notes (*Dewey G. Cornell, Herbert Scheithauer*).

Susan, a 25-year law enforcement veteran, began her career with the Colorado Springs Police Department. She was the first Special Agent in charge of School Safety at the Colorado Department of Public Safety. Susan has served as a Terrorism Liaison Officer for Colorado. Her experience includes team leader for Hostage Crisis Negotiations, serving on the FBI Safe Streets task force, and training at Quantico at the FBI Academy, and was cross designated as a U.S. Customs agent. Susan is a graduate of the National School Safety Center and also has been certified as an Advanced Public Information Officer. Susan has worked in media coordination as a spokesperson and as an advisor behind the scenes in major events. She has worked on threat assessment to prevent work place violence and school violence.

Susan has conducted thousands of training sessions, seminars, and presentations – including the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Colorado District Attorney's Council, the Colorado Association of School Board Executives, and Terrorism Liaison Officers. She developed a Train-the-Trainer program for School Resource Officers and Counselors that includes classroom-guided discussions about issues young people face today. Susan has worked with many agencies in the aftermath of major incidents with high profile repercussions to restore public trust including establishing anonymous reporting

mechanisms for the Air Force Academy, Colorado University, and the Colorado Department of Corrections to assist in providing additional intelligence for specific investigations.

Susan was asked to consult with the United States Olympic Committee's legal team in the aftermath of the USA Swimming Sexual Abuse Scandal. Susan was instrumental in the development of focused effort of education, training and reporting focused on prevention; The Safe Sport program.

Susan currently serves on the Colorado Prevention Leadership Council, Behavioral Health Planning Advisory Council, Colorado School Safety Resource Center's Board of Directors, Colorado 9 to 25, Colorado Department of Education Project Aware State Management Advisory Board, FBI Averted Plan School Attack Task Force, and the Not One More Child Task Force. She has served on the Drug Endangered Children Task Force, the Kidpower Board of Directors, Crime Stoppers International Board of Directors, Rocky Mountain Hostage Negotiation Network, and the Positive Behavioral Intervention Support Advisory Council, and as the President of the multi-state federal task force, White Collar Investigative Network.