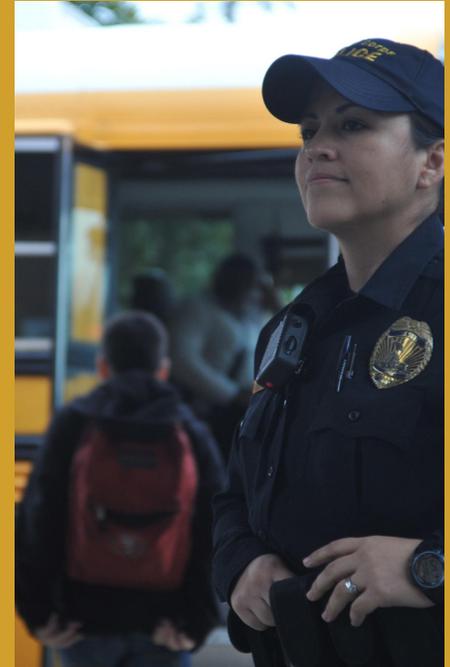




NATIONAL POLICE
FOUNDATION
Advancing Policing Through Innovation and Science



Averted School Violence Guide

September 2018



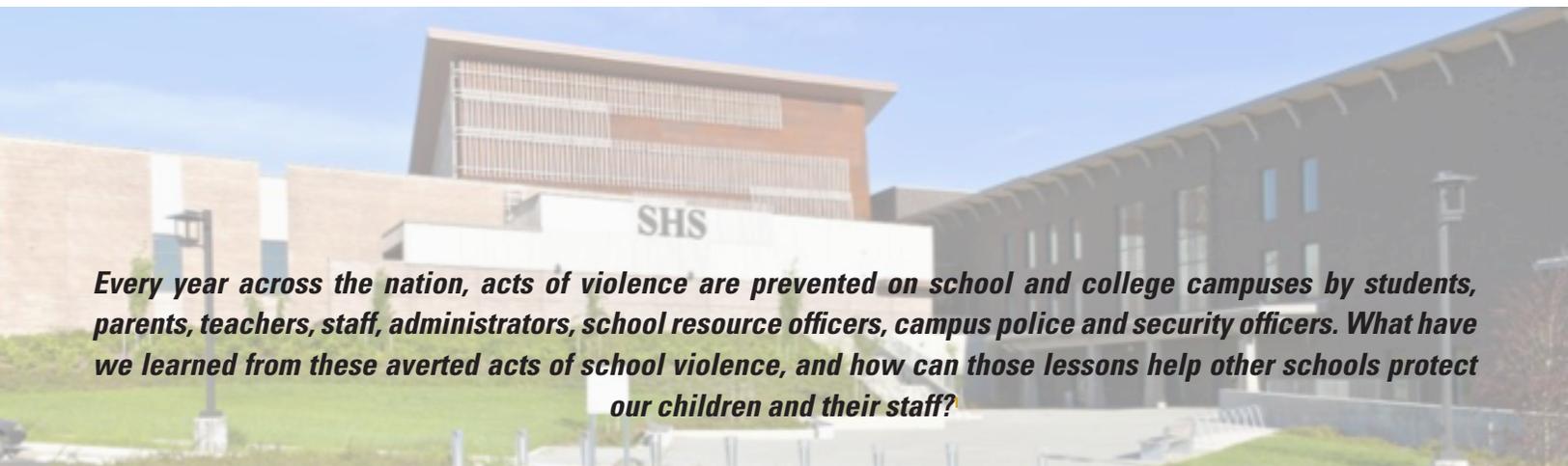
AVERTED SCHOOL VIOLENCE
LESSONS LEARNED BECOME LESSONS APPLIED





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Every year across the nation, acts of violence are prevented on school and college campuses by students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators, school resource officers, campus police and security officers. What have we learned from these averted acts of school violence, and how can those lessons help other schools protect our children and their staff?

Introduction

In an effort to help prevent acts of school violence, the National Police Foundation has created the Averted School Violence (ASV) database to increase our understanding of the extent and nature of the problem. The ASV project was funded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services in 2015. Subsequent to funding, the National Police Foundation assembled a team of subject matter experts (SME) to provide guidance and direction to the project, including development and implementation of the database. Today, SMEs continue to contribute by advising the ASV team and reviewing submissions from the field.

The ASV database can be accessed at:
avertedschoolviolence.org

The ASV database is a tool designed for school, law enforcement, mental health, risk mitigation, and other professionals involved in school safety and violence prevention nationwide. As we strive to expand the database in order to provide empirically based research to inform policy makers and practitioners as they work to prevent acts of school violence, we created the guidebook to take users through key ASV processes and answer users' frequently asked questions. Implementing ASV on a national level requires information to be identified by a wide range of stakeholders, who then share stories of averted school violence at the district and/or individual school level.

Redesigned in 2017, the ASV database is a user-friendly reporting platform that also provides incident-level data in an access-controlled environment for authorized users – typically school officials and law enforcement personnel. This guide explains how to enter incident information into the database and answers some of our users' more commonly asked questions concerning privacy, the report review process, and other topic areas.

¹ Solano, S., Straub, F., and Rosiak, J. (July 2, 2018). "Lessons Learned from Averted Acts of School Violence." Campus Safety Magazine. <https://www.campussafetymagazine.com/safety/averted-school-violence/>



Goal of the Guide

To educate school personnel, law enforcement officers, and other ASV database users on key ASV goals, processes for use and implementation; and answer frequently asked questions in a consolidated and practical guidebook.

Who Should Use This Guide?

This guide is intended for those operational personnel who are actively involved in school safety at any educational institution (K-12 and higher education) in the United States:

- Law enforcement officers
 - School resource officers (SROs)
 - Campus police
 - Public safety officials
- School personnel
 - Staff
 - Faculty
 - Administrators
- Mental health professionals
- Risk mitigation and threat assessment professionals

Throughout the guide, this group of individuals will be referred to as “school safety practitioners.” The guide can serve leaders in these fields who are interested in implementing ASV in their jurisdiction, as well as individuals at any level within these organizations who are interested in sharing their personal experiences through the ASV database and learning more about school violence prevention.



Why Should You Use It?

This guide describes the background of the ASV initiative and explains how and why to use the database. If you or your school, department, or agency is interested in sharing individual stories of violence prevention that occurred in your jurisdiction, this guide will help you understand and make the best use of the database.

Purpose of the ASV Database



The ASV database provides a formal mechanism to collect, study, and ultimately share practitioner-generated information on incidents of averted and completed school violence nationwide, and to increase the body of knowledge regarding effective prevention measures used to prevent actual attacks. School safety practitioners play an important role in ensuring school safety, and as a result have unique insights into the effectiveness – or lack thereof – of school safety practices, programs, and procedures in their school, school district, community, and/or jurisdiction. These insights result from direct interactions with students

and other practitioners, and are therefore timely, legitimate, and practical. These individuals are the true experts in school safety and will play a critical role as school safety processes are implemented. As such, their stories of violence prevention are invaluable to the ASV database and ultimately to other school safety practitioners across the country.

Those sharing stories are also able to view entries in the ASV database related to violence prevention submitted by peer practitioners from other schools and agencies across the country. The database can expand their knowledge about what works and expose them to emerging strategies and promising practices. Because these practitioners do not always have the time, means, or ability to learn from other practitioners in similar positions on a national level, the ASV database can serve as a national repository of information that allows the stories to be shared and viewed by otherwise unconnected individuals and breaks down geographic and other silos.



Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to thank the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) for funding the ASV database and commencing this important journey to comprehensively collect information about averted school violence to help lead to the prevention of future attacks. We would also like to thank ICF and the Office for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for their funding of the guide.

We are extremely grateful to our project subject matter experts: Dr. Brett Meade, Deputy Chief of the University of Central Florida Police Department; Jeff Allison, Director of Government and External Relations at the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators; Dr. Peter Langman, researcher and expert on the psychology of school shooters; Dr. Jeffrey Daniels, West Virginia University Professor and expert on averted school attacks; Michael Johnson, CEO of Clearpath Alerts LLC and an expert on school safety, security, and emergency preparedness; and Gene Deisinger, Principal and Co-founder of SIGMA Threat Management Associates.

We are also grateful for the participation of our project partner organizations – the National Association of School Resource Officers, the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, Safe and Sound Schools, and Clearpath Alerts LLC – and for our collaboration with the Texas School District Police Chiefs' Association, Texas School Safety Center, Sandy Hook Promise, Safe2Tell, and the Secure Schools Alliance.

Finally, we thank all of the National Police Foundation project staff members who, over the lifetime of this initiative, played a role in the development of the ASV database, and especially current project staff members Chief Frank Straub (ret.), Director of the Center for Mass Violence Response Studies; Sarah Solano, Project Assistant; and Chief Dean Esserman (ret.), Senior Counselor.



COPS

Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice



clearpath
alerts



Background

National Police Foundation

The National Police Foundation's mission is to advance policing through innovation and science. It is the oldest nationally known, nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonmembership organization dedicated to improving America's most noble profession: policing. The National Police Foundation has been on the cutting edge of police innovation for nearly 50 years, since it was established by the Ford Foundation following the conclusion of the President's Commission on the Challenge of Crime in a Free Society.



The National Police Foundation has successfully conducted many short- and long-term social and behavioral science studies on behalf of, or with support from, federal, state, and local agencies and private organizations and philanthropies. Using both traditional and nontraditional methods, the National Police Foundation has also conducted numerous experimental studies, including several randomized controlled trials. Our team of scientists and researchers coupled with our executive, policing, research, and international fellows provide the Foundation with the capacity to design and oversee basic research and evaluation as well as complex experiments. The National Police Foundation recently launched the Center for Mass Violence Response Studies to further its involvement in youth development and school safety. In addition to administering the ASV database, the National Police Foundation is conducting a review of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting, is an active member of and research partner for the Secure Schools Alliance school safety legislation project, and is leading the Boston Countering Violent Extremism with Somali youth.

The Police Foundation's work includes:

- *Critical incident reviews of major incidents and mass violence*
- *Randomized controlled trials relating to crime control and reduction and police administration*
- *Case studies of innovative agency strategies*
- *Evaluations of policy and legislative changes*
- *Data collection and statistical analysis*
- *Training and technical assistance*
- *Program development and testing*

For more information, visit policefoundation.org

ASV Database

With funding support from the COPS Office, the National Police Foundation, in collaboration with school safety SMEs and numerous national and state-level organizations, developed the **ASV database** as a free resource to



AVERTED SCHOOL VIOLENCE

LESSONS LEARNED BECOME LESSONS APPLIED

serve practitioners involved in school safety nationwide. This includes school staff, faculty, and administrators; school resource officers (SROs), campus police and public safety officials, and other law enforcement officers; mental health professionals; threat assessment and risk mitigation professionals; and others such as federal and local prosecutors. The purpose of the ASV system is to systematically collect and analyze incidents of averted and completed school violence from school safety practitioners to identify promising practices in order to grow the body of knowledge related to successful attack prevention.

The ASV database is an online library of averted school violence narratives² from across the country, containing incident-level reports and summaries of lessons learned that can inform school safety strategies. The rationale behind developing the ASV database is that while there is significant and institutionalized study of completed school attacks, less systematic study has been done on averted attacks, leaving a gap in knowledge. Furthermore, anecdotal and open-source research suggests that averted attacks happen with greater frequency than completed attacks, and that they contain invaluable insight into both the strengths and the potential weaknesses of school safety systems and practices, which, if recognized and addressed early, can prevent or mitigate future attacks.

The ASV database is a free resource to serve practitioners involved in school safety nationwide. This includes school staff, faculty, and administrators; school resource officers (SROs), campus police and public safety officials, and other law enforcement officers; mental health professionals; threat assessment and risk mitigation professionals; and others such as federal and local prosecutors.

Lessons Learned

"Our school instituted a 'See Something, Say Something' policy two years prior to this incident. We continually reinforce this policy with students. We highlight the difference between "Snitching" and keeping each other safe. We make connections to our families outside of school to "Humanize" staff members. This policy worked well and students immediately informed staff of the violent statements. They did not feel it was "Snitching" because the act was targeted at the school and student would be victims. After this event, we strengthened this program and worked harder with teachers to ensure that they were reinforcing this in class."

"I personally spoke with every classroom on campus and made sure to reference my family and my desire to go home safely at the end of each school day. I asked students if they wanted the same and overwhelmingly they responded affirmingly. The students who turned in the information were students that I have a strong rapport with."

PF SME: Utilize social media and school media to reinforce the necessity of providing a safe environment.

Recommendations for Avoiding Future Attacks

"Leakage is extremely important. We regularly discuss this at site meetings with staff. We have all teachers forward any questionable work to the office for immediate evaluation. Although it may appear that we are at times hypervigilant, it keeps the issue at the forefront of the staff's attention. Assessing student work and monitoring for Leakage has become a regular part of our school's routines."

Recommended Changes to School Procedure

"We are limited in what we can do financially, but we constantly review issues related to school violence at site meetings and site leadership collaborations. This topic cannot be addressed once at the beginning of the year and then forgotten."

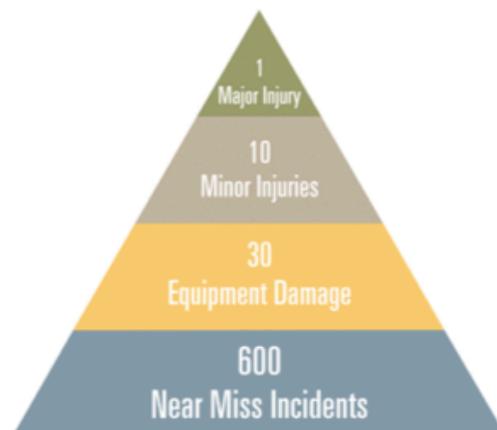
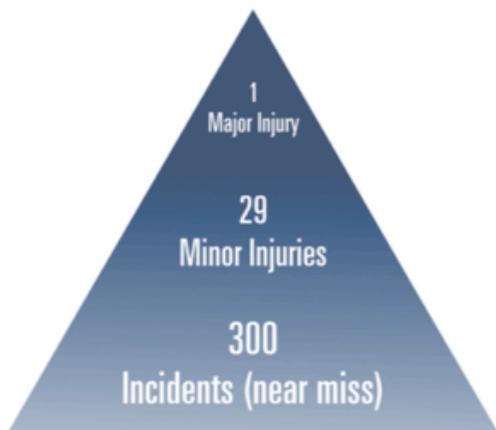
PF SME: It is key to have all stakeholders involved.

² ASV also collects reports of completed incidents of violence, as we recognize valuable lessons can be learned from these events. However, the primary focus of the database is to collect incidents of averted violence, and to date the ASV report library only publicly displays averted attack narratives.

The near-miss concept, which is used in industries such as aviation, fire, and medicine, is the foundation for the ASV project. For example, the airline industry uses a near-miss program to document plane crashes that have been averted. They complete reports on each incident and submit them to a central location where they are analyzed for patterns and trends. The lessons that can be learned from the incident are then applied to future training and policies to reduce a similar near-failure from occurring again.³

In an analysis of 75,000 industrial accidents, Heinrich found that for every 300 accidents, only 30 resulted in injuries (29 of which were minor).*

An analysis of 1,753,498 accidents reported by 297 companies in 21 industries demonstrated the following ratio of near misses to injuries.**



ASV Database Criteria

Incidents must meet the following criteria for entry into the database:

- It must have occurred post-Columbine through present day.
- It must have occurred within a K-12 (including charter, faith-based, alternative, and private schools) or higher education institution (including traditional 4-year universities, community colleges, vocational and technical schools and other 2-year programs, as well as graduate school or higher-level education).
- It must have involved a perpetrator with a plan for violence or access to weapons, above and beyond a threat alone (the violent plot can be in various stages of planning and severity).

We define an averted school violence incident as a planned school attack, with or without use of a firearm, that was prevented either before or after the perpetrator's arrival on school grounds, and before any injury or loss of life occurred at the educational institution.

³ See <https://asrs.arc.nasa.gov> for more information on the aviation near-miss program.

* Heinrich, Herbert William. 1931. *Industrial accident prevention: A scientific approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

** Bird, F.E. Jr., & Germain, G.R. (1992). *Practical loss control leadership. The conservation of people, property, process and profits*. Institute Publishing, Loganville, Georgia.

If you are unsure about whether the event qualifies as an averted incident, we strongly encourage you to submit a report, as all information helps to strengthen the database.

The ASV database currently contains both open-source averted school violence reports developed by the National Police Foundation and a growing number of reports shared by school personnel and law enforcement officers who were directly involved in the attack prevention. The ultimate objective is to have practitioners share their stories of the prevention of an attack directly into the ASV database. It is important to mention that the National Police Foundation views these reports as individual opinions, not the collective opinion of your school, agency, or organization, unless expressly noted. Further details about the report submission process and creation of the report library are described below.

Submit a Report

Averted School Violence / Submit a Report

Basic Info

School Info

Event Info

Suspect Info

Documentation

Assessment

Basic Information

Title this case:

Information Sources

- News
- School
- Dr. Langman's School Shooters Site
- Law Enforcement
- Other

Who is inputting this information?

- Law Enforcement
- School Administration
- Mental Health Professional
- Police Foundation Staff
- Other

School Info »

Report Questionnaire and Development

Information on averted or completed school attacks is entered into the ASV database via an online questionnaire within the database (see <https://www.avertedschoolviolence.org/reports/> to view the entire questionnaire). The questionnaire has six main sections: basic information, school information, event information, suspect information, documentation, and assessment.

These categories and their corresponding questions were developed based on the results of a focus group,⁴ previous research,⁵ ongoing consultations with experts in multiple fields, and discussions among National Police Foundation researchers and staff. The first five categories (basic information, school information, event information, suspect information, and documentation) focus on the incident-level data associated with the averted attack. The sixth category (assessment) allows the individual submitting a report to reflect on their takeaways from the incident. The type of information to be gathered in each of the six categories is summarized below.

Basic Information

Reporting individuals are asked to specify the field in which they work (such as at a school or in law enforcement) and describe where they obtained their information about the incident. This data allows the National Police Foundation to better understand who is submitting the reports.

School Information

Reporting individuals are asked to describe the basic demographics about their school such as size, students' ages and grade levels, whether the school has a counselor, and so forth; as well as their school's safety procedures such as the frequency of lockdown drills and whether the school has a crisis management team.

Event Information

This section focuses on the planned attack – if the attack was planned for a particular date, date of the law enforcement intervention, how the plot was discovered, who discovered the plot, the suspect's proposed plan of entry into the school, and related details about the attack. Of note in this section is the "timeline" feature, which allows the reporting individual to chronicle the attack plan and its prevention in narrative format.

Suspect Information

This section asks for background information on the primary suspect(s) – as many as four – in an averted attack, including demographic information; whether they had previous behavioral, academic, or other problems in school; if they engaged with violent materials or actions; if they used drugs or alcohol; the reasons given for the planned attack; and any other details that might further illuminate underlying motivations.

⁴ The focus group was convened on June 12, 2015, by the National Police Foundation to ask subject matter experts in the fields of law enforcement, government, and education (see appendix 1) to provide input into development of the ASV database. The session focused on database construction and on the engagement process for uploading incident data to the school shootings database.

⁵ Meloy, J. R., Hoffmann, J., Guldemann, A., and James, D. (2011). "The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment: An Exploration and Suggested Typology." *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*. 10.1002/bsl.999

Meloy, J. R., Hoffmann, J., Roshdi, K., and Guldemann, A. (2014). "Some Warning Behaviors Discriminate Between School Shooters and Other Students of Concern." *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, Vol 1 No. 3 203-211. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tam0000020>

Documentation

Links to news articles about the incident can be shared here, if they are available from open sources. These links will not be published in the final version of the incident report that is displayed in the report library.

Assessment

Reporting persons can share if they learned anything new about attack prevention as a result of the incident and if they would make any changes to school or other procedures that would allow incidents to be handled more effectively. If a strategy or procedure worked particularly well for them, they can share that information as well.

It is important to note that the resulting data and lessons learned from the database can only be as good as the information shared by the person submitting an incident-level report. The more detailed the information about an event, the stronger and more useful the database will become.

While the questionnaire is intended to be a static document, for consistency in data collection and analysis over time, we nevertheless welcome practitioner feedback at this juncture. See the [Resources](#) section at the end of this guide for instructions on how to make suggestions on the questionnaire.

Site Guide

Site Access

Access Control

The ASV database has two distinct goals: to create a place where stories of averted violence can be collected and shared, and to create a library where vetted users can view all of the incident-level reports.

Sharing a story: We invite anyone who has been involved in an attack or averted attack to share information about both the incident and the response through our online questionnaire. The purpose of the openness of this approach is to broaden reporting so that all information does not come from one single source or perspective in a school, department, or agency. This method is also efficient, allowing reporting individuals to share their stories without having to route everything through a single point of contact. The solutions or key insights needed to prevent future attacks can come from anyone involved in school safety. Someone who may not be formally trained in safety tactics or security can prevent an attack, and how they do so may be invaluable to learning more about prevention overall. It is up to the community as a whole – not just law enforcement or the schools – to identify and prevent acts of violence. Therefore, we do not limit access to the submission questionnaire.

Viewing the report library: Access to the incident-level reports is limited to a select group of vetted users. This change in access was put into place in 2018 as a result of feedback from key partners and practitioners in an effort to add another layer of security to the incident-level reports, which are already de-identified.

Criteria for Vetted Users

Vetted users include:

- Federal, state, and local law enforcement officers (including SROs and campus police and public safety officials).
- School personnel (faculty, staff, and administrators).
- Operational threat assessment and risk mitigation personnel.
- Federal and local prosecutors' offices.
- Mental health professionals.
- Others deemed relevant on a case-by-case basis.

The process for obtaining access to the report library is as follows:



Persons requesting access to the site are required to submit their full name, organizational email, job title, phone number, location, and area of occupation to the National Police Foundation via a user access questionnaire (different from the questionnaire for sharing an incident report). National Police Foundation staff review all requests and make a final determination based on the information submitted or special approval by the ASV project manager.

How To Use the Database

General Guidelines

Submitting a Report

ASV is NOT an anonymous tip line or a real-time threat-reporting mechanism. It is an after-the-fact study of attack prevention.

After an act of violence has been averted in a school, someone directly involved in its prevention has had time to reflect upon the incident, and enough information emerges to paint a clear picture of the event, reporting individuals are encouraged to share their story in the ASV database. We encourage report submitters to fill out the questionnaire as thoroughly as possible, recognizing that all of the information might not be readily available. At this time, reports cannot be saved and returned to later. The questionnaire must be completed in one sitting, within a two-hour time block. If you exit the browser window while reporting, your changes will not be saved.

No question in the report is mandatory, and reports can be submitted anonymously. However, we encourage individuals to share either their email address or phone number, if they are comfortable doing so, as it will allow our project SMEs or staff to follow up on the initial report and could potentially result in the sharing of more details and thus more insightful lessons learned as a result of the experience.

To share your story into the ASV database:

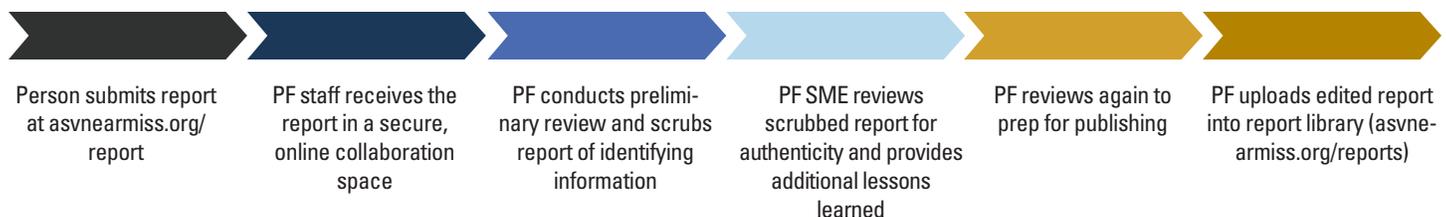
1. Navigate to the “Submit a Report” section of the ASV database

<https://www.avertedschoolviolence.org/report>

2. Fill out the online questionnaire

3. Select the Submit button

The National Police Foundation’s report review process is explained in detail below:



When an individual submits a report to the ASV database, National Police Foundation staff and our SMEs retrieve and edit the report in a private online folder. The National Police Foundation first conducts a preliminary review of the report and removes the name of the school and the names of any individuals that may be in the report, and then forwards the report to a SME for substantive review.

The SME checks the report for authenticity, notes any followup questions for the report submitter (if contact information was given), and concludes with any additional lessons learned or takeaways based on their area of expertise. If the report submitter left contact information, the SME or National Police Foundation staff contacts the submitter via email and/or phone to obtain additional information about the incident and discuss the lessons learned in order to enhance the content of the report.

The report is then reviewed once more by the National Police Foundation for spelling, grammar, formatting, and consistency in the way questions are answered and information is presented. The National Police Foundation then re-uploads the report back into asvnearmiss.org, overriding the originally submitted report to ensure that the submitter’s identifying information has been deleted. As a disclaimer, if a submitter specifies the city and state of their school, the National Police Foundation keeps that information internally within the ASV system and does not publish it in the incident-level report. The National Police Foundation then publishes the report into the access-controlled avertedschoolviolence.org report library.

Viewing Report Library

Vetted users can navigate to the ASV report library at <https://www.avertedschoolviolence.org/reports/> to view incident-level reports. Reports are categorized based on the type of institution in which they occurred, as well as the year, to allow for easy searching and filtering. The National Police Foundation uses keywords, known as “tags,” to further describe the reports, based on unique identifiers such as gender of perpetrator, type of weapon used, and other characteristics.

Report Library

Averted School Violence / Reports

Middle School – Threat of Violence – 8th Grade Student

This student was generally disruptive in class, but not known to be violent. We worked with the student on a regular basis to improve classroom behavior. This student displayed odd behavior for several years prior to this event...

READ FULL REPORT

Search Here... 🔍

Categories

- Elementary School (2)
- Middle School (10)
- High School (37)
- College/University (8)

Tags

ARSON/FIRE SETTING

AVERTED

BOMB/EXPLOSIVE

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FIREARM

HANDGUN/PISTOL

HIGH SCHOOL

JOURNAL

KNIVES

MIDDLE SCHOOL

REDDIT

RIFLE

SRO

SHOTGUN

Former Student Plans Attack on High School, Parents Intervene

A former student plans an attack on his high school, targeting specific individuals who he claimed to hate...

READ FULL REPORT

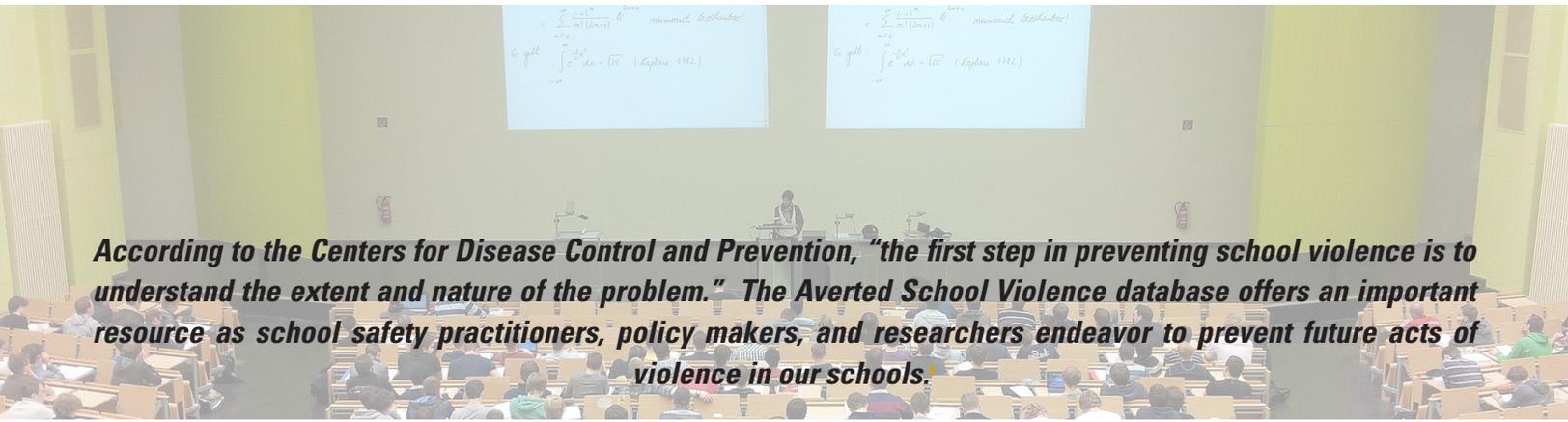
Reporting Concerns

Anonymity and Privacy

Throughout the project design process, questions about anonymity and privacy have been an integral part of the discussion, particularly for incidents that involve underage students at the K-12 level or that are currently pending litigation. The National Police Foundation has taken a number of steps to ensure anonymity and mitigate privacy concerns, which have implications for both the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Clery Act:

- As a precautionary measure, in the section of the ASV questionnaire that asks about the suspect's – or potential suspect's – history, we neither require nor request the person's name.
- We do not ask for the date of birth, school ID number, or any other information that is directly linked to the suspect.
- If a report submitter does share the name of the suspect, we will remove the name, even if that information is publicly available, as well as the names of victims, school officials, and any other personnel involved from the published incident-level reports.
- We remove the name and location of the school from the published incident-level reports, if provided by the report submitter.
- The person submitting the form is not required to provide their name or contact information. If they do elect to provide this information, we remove it from the final published version shared on our website.

Therefore, neither FERPA nor Clery are implicated by using our system. The goal is to study data on averted and completed attacks, as well as to learn more about the takeaways and any best or promising practices that practitioners in school safety around the country have identified. Names of schools, report submitters, victims, perpetrators, witnesses, and other identifying material are not germane to this goal.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “the first step in preventing school violence is to understand the extent and nature of the problem.” The Averted School Violence database offers an important resource as school safety practitioners, policy makers, and researchers endeavor to prevent future acts of violence in our schools.

Conclusion

The *Averted School Violence Guide* serves as a valuable tool for those looking to learn from near-miss events through the ASV database, and contribute to the development of strategies and methods to prevent acts of violence in our schools. We hope that by clearly describing the ASV database process and formally addressing privacy concerns individuals and schools will continue to share their stories and do so on an increased level. The more robust the data is from these stories, the better we can conduct empirically based research that can inform school policy and practice for school safety practitioners.

As more stories are shared in the ASV database, school safety practitioners will be able to draw on the insights contained there to provide policy and procurement officials with quantifiable data about what works to avert school attacks, and thereby help strengthen a school’s efforts to implement additional safety measures. An additional benefit of the ASV database includes the ability to learn what strategies other schools across the country employ to prevent violence. These strategies can contribute to violence prevention efforts and identify important training or policy changes that can be made in your school to increase safety.

A number of common themes and lessons learned have already emerged in the stories shared in the ASV database. The lessons outlined below reflect some of the incident-level reports found in the ASV database.

6 “School Violence: Data and Statistics.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cdc.gov.

Lessons Learned

Schools

- Educate Students and Teachers About Warning Signs
 - Several school shooters have handed in assignments in which they mentioned homicidal intentions. Additionally, in many cases, students were the first to hear perpetrators talking about their plans for violence.
- Develop Well-Trained Threat Assessment Teams
 - Over 80% of averted and completed attacks were planned/executed by current or former students/school employees
- Proactively Seek to Identify Student Safety Concerns
 - One school, in the wake of a shooting, asked students to report any safety concerns they had, resulting in three additional and actionable plots being foiled.

Law Enforcement

- Keep Door-Breaching Equipment Readily Accessible
 - Officers should carry door-breaching equipment in their cars to facilitate their entry when necessary.
- Develop Relationships With Local Schools
 - Police should have school floor plans and should familiarize themselves with the buildings by doing walk-throughs. They should also work with local schools so that administrators know when it is appropriate to call them with safety concerns.

Mental Health

- Ask Suicidal Students About Homicidal Thoughts
 - Though most people who are suicidal are not homicidal, many homicidal people are also suicidal. This is true of school attackers, approximately half of whom intend to die in their attacks.⁷ Keeping this in mind, mental health professionals should routinely ask about homicidal thoughts when dealing with suicidal students.

Parents and General

- Pay Attention to Social Media
 - Social media posts may indicate risk of violence. Such posts need to be reported. They may be the earliest warning signs that an individual is considering committing violence. For an individual who has come to the attention of authorities as a potential violence risk, searching through their social media activity may provide further evidence of their violent intentions.
- Educate Parents About Warning Signs
 - In some cases, parents were aware that their children had significant mental health issues, and also knew of their obsession with school attackers, but did not intervene.
- Maintain Proper Firearm Security
 - Older family members (whether parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, or uncles) need to properly secure their firearms. The vast majority of juvenile attackers obtained their guns from their own homes.

⁷ Langman, P. (2015b). *School Shooters: Understanding High School, College, and Adult Perpetrators*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Langman, P. (2016a). "Multi-Victim School Shootings in the United States: A 50-Year Review," *Journal of Campus Behavioral Intervention*, 5, pp. 5-17.

Frequently Asked Questions

For a full list of FAQs, please refer to the FAQ section of the ASV website:

<https://www.avertedschoolviolence.org/about/>

Are there privacy concerns related to FERPA or Clery?

There are no foreseeable privacy concerns. See the section **Reporting Concerns** for a discussion of the measures we have taken to address privacy and anonymity.

What if an individual from the same organization has already submitted information about this incident?

The [avertedschoolviolence.org](https://www.avertedschoolviolence.org) reporting system seeks individual interpretations of averted school violence incidents, as well as the lessons that each submitter may have learned as a result. We recommend that submitters submit any incident in which a lesson learned could benefit school personnel, law enforcement officers, and mental health professionals, even if someone else may have already submitted the same incident. The ASV data collection system will flag incidents that occurred on the same date, and a reviewer will determine if the two incidents are the same. If they are the same, we will either merge the case descriptions and lessons learned into one document or publish each report under a single incident name.

Can students submit or view reports?

At this time, students cannot access the report library to view the incident-level reports. Although a student could potentially share their story in the database, ASV has not been marketed to students, and no students have submitted reports to date.

How long does it take for a report to be reviewed and republished?

This depends on a number of factors. For example, if the report submitter leaves contact information and our SME requests additional information, the timeliness of the submitter's response will affect the turnaround time. That can range from a couple of weeks to several months in our experience thus far. The goal for any given report to move from submission to publication in the report library is 2 weeks.

Is it required that one representative input all reports from a school? Do multiple reports have to be reviewed by a supervisor?

No – unless you have a threat assessment team that already meets and brings together different parties, and as a group you want to share your story in one sitting with various leaders or supervisors present.

The ASV database process does not have to be implemented through one single point of contact, and in fact, unless your resources allow for it, we prefer to receive submissions from those individuals who were directly involved in the incident. This individual reporting system also reduces the burden on each person by not having to share every report. Additionally, we want reports to be completed with as much honesty and comfort as possible, so a firsthand account allows both of these criteria to be met.

Can I save a draft of the report and return to finish it later?

At this time, our system does not allow a submitter to save a report and submit it later. The report must be completed in one sitting, within a two-hour window. We will explore this functionality in the future.

How are lessons learned tailored to particular school safety practitioners?

Lessons learned and other recommendations will be influenced by the position of the individual submitting the report, be they a school official, law enforcement, or a mental health professional, and some of their takeaways may focus primarily on their specific role. We employ a variety of subject matter reviewers with backgrounds in law enforcement, mental health, and risk mitigation who can add their perspective to the submitted report.

Resources and Point of Contact

- To share any suggested changes to the questions in the ASV report questionnaire, or to learn more about participating in ASV, contact bcowell@policefoundation.org
- For further guidance on FERPA, please see “Sharing Information: A Guide to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Participation in Juvenile Justice Programs”
- To view the ASV database, visit avertedschoolviolence.org
 - To share your story of an averted school violence incident, visit asvnearmiss.org and navigate to the “Submit a Report” tab
 - To view the ASV report library and see the stories shared by other practitioners, navigate to the “Browse Reports” tab



National Police Foundation

1201 Connecticut Avenue N.W.
Suite #200 Washington, DC 20036

(202) 833 -1460

www.policefoundation.org

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Call OJJDP's NTTAC Help Desk at **1-833-647-0513** or email your request to ojjdpтта@usdoj.gov