



Stop the Silence. Help End the Violence.



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

OK2SAY is Michigan's most effective prevention-based reporting system established by the Student Safety Act of 2013. It is designed to **EMPOWER MICHIGAN STUDENTS TO HELP PREVENT VIOLENCE AND MAKE THEIR SCHOOLS SAFER** by confidentially reporting threatening behavior.

Anyone can report tips on criminal activities or potential harm directed at students, school employees, or schools. **TIPS ARE SUBMITTED 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.**

## NUMBER OF TIPS

- 6,255 tips in 2021
- 32,947 cumulative tips since 2014

## TOP 5 TIP CATEGORIES IN 2021

1. Planned school attacks
2. Threats
3. Other (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression, harassment)
4. Bullying
5. Suicide threats

## OK2SAY RECOGNIZED BY UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

The United States Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center released a report in March 2021 entitled "**Averting Targeted School Violence: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Plots Against Schools.**" The report recognized the efforts of OK2SAY to prevent attacks in schools.

## OK2SAY CONDUCTS TRAINING AND OUTREACH

OK2SAY has conducted 167 virtual and in-person seminars reaching 42,257 attendees. According to the feedback from school personnel, 95% would recommend an OK2SAY presentation to others.

## OUTCOME REPORTS FROM SCHOOL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PROFESSIONALS

- 88% believe the tip information was sufficient.
- 66% were unaware of the problem before the tip.
- 89% find OK2SAY to be a useful service.



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# MICHIGAN STUDENT SAFETY ACT

## HISTORY

The United States Secret Service and the United States Department of Education, in a joint study on school violence, reported that perpetrators exhibited concerning behavior before the attack in 93% of the incidents. And in 81% of violent school incidents, someone other than the attacker knew about the plan but did not report it. Based in part on this study, the Michigan Student Safety Act (Public Act 183 of 2013) was signed into law in December 2013.

Public Act 183 of 2013 required the Michigan Department of Attorney General to collaborate with the Michigan State Police (MSP), the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), and the Michigan Department of Education to establish, operate, and staff a hotline that:

- Provides for confidential reports of potential self-harm, harm to others, or criminal acts including but not limited to sexual abuse, assault, or rape, directed at students, school employees, or schools in this state;
- Protects the confidentiality of a reporter's identity;
- Operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; and,
- Promptly provides tip information to appropriate school officials, law enforcement, or other agencies.

Public Act 401 of 2020 amended Public Act 183 of 2013 and consolidated all OK2SAY functions into the MSP.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of OK2SAY is to stop harmful behavior before it occurs by encouraging anyone to report threatening behavior. OK2SAY empowers Michigan students, parents, school personnel, community health service providers, and law enforcement officials to share and respond to safety threats.

The MSP has primary responsibility for developing, implementing, and reporting on Michigan Student Safety Act initiatives.

## GOAL

The goal of OK2SAY is to eliminate barriers so a student who is struggling can get needed help before a situation turns into a tragedy.

## OK2SAY TIP STEPS

### SUBMIT & RECEIVE

Students, parents, teachers, or concerned individuals can confidentially report potential harm or criminal activities.

**1** Confidential tip submitted

**2** OK2SAY technicians receive, analyze, and forward tip

### RESPOND & REPORT

Schools, law enforcement, community mental health, or the MDHHS receive, and investigate the tips.

**3** Officials investigate, respond to, and resolve tip

**4** Outcome report completed





## 2021 OK2SAY TESTIMONIALS

“OK2SAY has been the single biggest improvement in my long career for encouraging confidential school safety concerns by students, parents, and community members. We promote it heavily in our district and regularly show the high-quality Public Service Announcements to our students throughout the year.”

» TODD OATLEY, Assistant Principal  
Greenville High School

“The OK2SAY program has been an instrumental part of safety for our schools. In my opinion, all schools should prioritize implementing this program.”

» BRIAN GARD, Director of Safety and Health  
National Heritage Academies

“OK2SAY has been SO helpful to Fenton Area Public Schools over the years. They are professional, brief in the report, yet provide enough information to help kids and keep the school safe. THANK YOU, once again OK2SAY!”

» LAURA LEMKE, Principal  
Fenton Senior High School

“As a classroom instructor, I am grateful for the OK2SAY program which helps my students learn about the serious nature of school violence and mental illness. OK2SAY provides appropriate confidential contact platforms which allow our students to counter school violence and Stop the Silence and Help End the Violence.”

» LISA FORREST, Marketing and Management  
Instructor, Bay-Arenac Intermediate School District  
Career Center

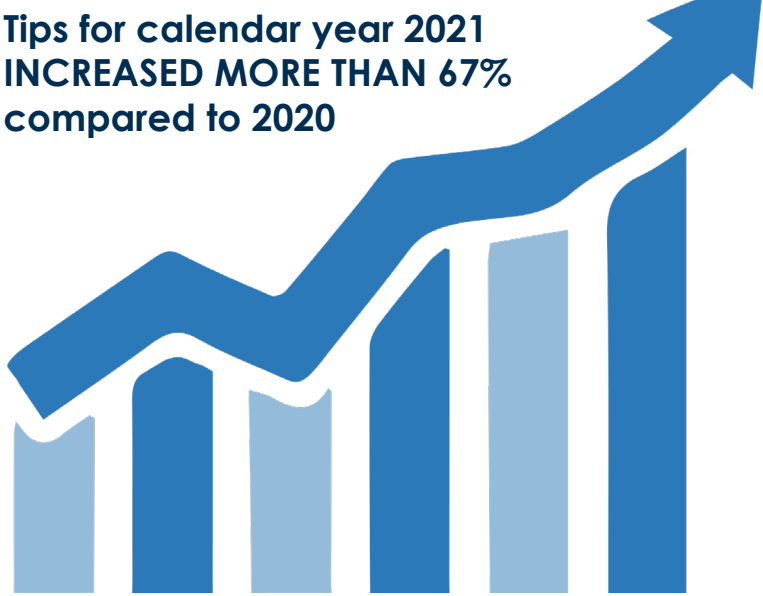


## WHEN YOU STOP THE SILENCE, YOU HELP END THE VIOLENCE.

Here are a few examples of OK2SAY's work in 2021:

- **Tip:** A student was showing classmates self-harm scars they had been hiding underneath their sleeves.  
**Result:** The school investigated the matter and stated the tip was “spot on.” The school provided counseling services to the student.
- **Tip:** A student was being abused by their parents.  
**Result:** The tip was referred to law enforcement and Children's Protective Services. The tip was investigated and substantiated. The parents admitted to putting their hands around their child's neck. Additional services were put in place to keep the student safe.
- **Tip:** A student was selling drugs at school.  
**Result:** School officials searched the student's locker and car. They found a fake identification card, nearly \$1,000 in cash, drug paraphernalia, and empty liquor bottles. The student was suspended according to the school's handbook. The information was turned over to local law enforcement for further investigation.
- **Tip:** A student was attacked and sexually assaulted in a locker room. A video of the assault was circulating on social media.  
**Result:** School officials investigated the tip. The school was able to identify the victim, perpetrator, witnesses, and the student recording the assault. The school administered consequences. Follow up was conducted by law enforcement.
- **Tip:** A student was making threats about killing another student.  
**Result:** The school administrator and the school resource officer interviewed the student. The student possessed a knife and two vaping devices. The student was suspended.





The increase in tips is likely attributed to several factors.

1. During 2020, most schools offered remote or hybrid learning rather than in-person learning for part of the year.
2. OK2SAY began presenting the student safety program to middle schools in September 2021. In terms of tip counts, there is empirical evidence that the presentations make a difference. When a school hosts a presentation, students from that school almost immediately begin to use OK2SAY tip line. We take note of this based on the feedback from school officials and outcome reports.
3. People were more inclined to report threats to OK2SAY after the Oxford tragedy.

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tip Totals in 2020	253	215	239	127
Tip Totals in 2021	351	423	498	3,567
% Difference	39%	97%	108%	2,709%

## TIPS VS. INCIDENTS

For metrics, analysis, and reporting purposes, OK2SAY records and tracks incoming contacts with the hotline as “tips” and as “incidents.”

An OK2SAY “tip” is information provided through communication with OK2SAY technicians. Generally, when a tip is submitted, it may involve multiple communications between the individual and the

technician to gather enough information to forward to the appropriate responding party. These communications are counted as a single tip.

An OK2SAY “incident” is a specific, singular event. Many tipsters report the same incident. Duplicate tips about the same incident are an indicator of a healthy reporting culture within a community.

In 2021, OK2SAY logged 6,255 tips but only 5,650 incidents.

## OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL IMPACT

In the aftermath of the tragic mass shooting at Oxford High School on November 30, 2021, killing four students and injuring seven others,



**OK2SAY noted a dramatic increase in tips for December 2021. The 3,567 tips was an increase of 2,709% compared to those reported in December 2020.** Tips typically escalate after a school shooting, even when the violence happens in another state.

Within days of the Oxford tragedy, vague school threats emerged throughout Michigan requiring schools and law enforcement agencies to work around the clock to address each incident. In addition, a “challenge” swept social media encouraging students to skip school but later evolved into threats of school shootings. The baseless threats resulted in more than 100 school cancellations statewide. Dozens of individuals, mostly juveniles, have been charged in connection with threats of violence towards schools.

## 2021 REFERRALS

When tip information comes in, OK2SAY technicians forward to the appropriate resources. In some cases, the information is sent to multiple agencies. In other cases, the tipster does not provide enough information to the technician for them to forward or refer the tip.

### In 2021, OK2SAY technicians forwarded or referred:

- 1,536 incidents to school officials;
- 526 incidents to law enforcement;
- 238 incidents to online resources, counseling, or crisis lines;
- 65 incidents to Children's Protective Services; and
- 1 incident resulted in a referral to mental health services.

### TIPSTER'S IDENTITY IS PROTECTED BY LAW

The Student Safety Act generally prohibits disclosure of tipster information.

Confidentiality of the tipster's identity is a hallmark of OK2SAY and without it, tipsters would not be as willing to come forward and share tips.

The identity of the tipster is statutorily protected and can only be released with permission of the tipster, the tipster's parents if they are a minor, or through a court order.

This information is also specifically exempt from the Michigan Freedom of Information Act.

### 2021 OUTCOME REPORTS

Schools and local law enforcement are asked to complete an outcome report to let us know how the process worked. The MSP adds outcome report information to its database to compile:

- Number of tips received;
- Number of tips forwarded;
- Nature of the tips received;
- Recipient of the forwarded tips;
- Details of the response; and,
- Effectiveness of the response.



Tip recipients submitted 885 outcome reports in 2021. The information collected in these reports plays an important part in assessing the overall effectiveness of the program and has resulted in changes to program categories.

Based upon the outcome report, school personnel and law enforcement would have investigated the situation and tip issue to resolve them. Most often the tip involved multiple interventions.

#### TOP TEN TIP CATEGORIES IN 2021

Category	Number of Tips
Planned school attack	1,786
Threats	722
Other (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression, harassment)	632
Bullying	533
Suicide threats	500
Drugs	413
Guns	351
Cyberbullying	347
Sexual assault / misconduct / exploitation	283
Self-harm	178

#### TOP TEN CUMULATIVE TIP CATEGORIES (9/1/2014 - 12/31/2021)

Category	Number of Tips
Suicide threats	6,439
Bullying	5,433
Other (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression, harassment)	3,187
Planned school attack	2,832
Drugs	2,831
Cyberbullying	2,218
Self-harm	2,050
Threats	1,752
Sexual assault / misconduct / exploitation	1,564
Child abuse	832

## METRICS/ANALYSIS

Types of Intervention	Action	Percent
Parents notified	500	56%
Continue to monitor the situation	386	44%
Law enforcement involved	275	31%
School counseling	246	28%
School disciplinary action	139	16%
Ongoing investigation	122	14%
Outside resources recommended	90	10%
Not enough information was provided	54	6%
Detained/taken into custody	12	1%



As a result of an OK2SAY tip, school operations were impacted 39 times. This included a school cancellation and an evacuation.

- **34 tips involved the confiscation of weapons.**
- **86 tips involved the seizure of drugs/alcohol.**

## WHAT'S NEW IN 2021

### OK2SAY STUDENT SAFETY PRESENTATION

In the fall of 2021, OK2SAY offered free student safety presentations for students in middle schools. Three independent contractors, trained and proficient in presenting the Student Safety Program, conducted 167 virtual and in-person seminars with 42,257 attendees.

### BACK TO SCHOOL KICK-OFF

In September 2021, every public and non-public school received a back-to-school packet with promotional items including four posters, OK2SAY brochures, a School Implementation Guide, and contact cards. Administrators were encouraged to remind students how to use the OK2SAY student safety tip line effectively and appropriately.



### OPERATION BACKPACK

The MSP Grants and Community Services Division helped support Volunteers of America



(VOA) Operation Backpack. Staff from Office of School Safety, OK2SAY, and the Prevention Services Section delivered three vans loaded with donated backpacks and school supplies to VOA for at-risk and homeless students across Michigan. Each of the backpacks had OK2SAY promotional items including a magnet, pen, silicone wallet, and contact card. More than 2,000 students benefited from the partnership.

### PATHWAYS TO POTENTIAL

OK2SAY worked with MDHHS Pathways to Potential to distribute



OK2SAY promotional items in 300 schools in 41 counties where success coaches work to address chronic absenteeism, education, health, safety, and self-sufficiency. The success coaches received posters, stickers, t-shirts, and other promotional items to promote OK2SAY to their students and their families.

### EXPOS

OK2SAY participated in the 2021 Safety Day at the MSP headquarters and an open house at the MSP Jackson Post. OK2SAY was able to distribute promotional materials to students and their families.





## MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (MHSAA)

OK2SAY partnered with the MHSAA to promote the student safety program at high school sports tournaments. OK2SAY was heavily promoted during cross-country, swimming, soccer, football, wrestling, and volleyball finals.

- Nearly 25,000 individuals viewed the OK2SAY ad on the MHSAA website.
- Approximately 452,000 people heard the OK2SAY message at the fall tournaments.
- Thousands of OK2SAY promotional materials were distributed to students and their parents during the various finals.
- An OK2SAY ad was included in all printed and digital game programs.

## BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN

More than 200 schools, serving 91,000 students, were awarded the Building Healthy Communities program to improve the health of Michigan's children. The public-private school-based initiative supports children's health by providing teachers, administrators, and students the resources, curriculum, equipment and professional development to create healthier school environments, prevent childhood obesity, reduce chronic disease, improve academic achievement, and address mental health and well-being. The initiative utilized OK2SAY resources and messaging as part of the program.



## FINANCIALS

The MSP incurred \$1,167,722.75 in costs during 2021 under the Michigan School Safety Act, including administering the hotline. Itemized costs included:



- \$1,006,088.79 in department salary, wages, and benefits;
- \$161,368.96 for department services, supplies, and maintenance; and
- \$265 in department travel.

## DONATION

Screenvision Media placed OK2SAY Public Service Announcements (PSAs) in 27 theaters across the state during the holiday season in December 2021 and January 2022. The PSAs were seen 558,678 times (impressions served) across 258 screens for a value of more than \$26,000. Screenvision Media ran this campaign at no charge to OK2SAY. We appreciate their willingness to partner with OK2SAY to help educate the community and assist in distributing the student safety message.



## TOTAL TIP NUMBERS

OK2SAY is shifting attitudes and perceptions about reporting unsafe behavior and situations. OK2SAY is empowering students to be the “heroes in the hallway” and help their struggling classmates get the support they need.

Tip category	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Alcohol	2	1	3	8	3	6	4	3	6	2	8	9	55
Assault	1	1	4	6	4	1	0	0	5	13	8	31	74
Bullying	17	27	29	28	36	13	4	10	66	78	99	126	533
Child abuse	19	8	6	7	6	3	8	5	8	8	16	16	110
Cyberbullying	15	20	24	22	11	16	75	15	12	16	42	79	347
Dating violence	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	9
Domestic violence	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	9
Drugs	15	33	38	21	25	11	6	10	47	56	63	88	413
Explosives (bomb)	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	10	14
Fighting	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	7	1	10	27
Fire starting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gangs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guns	6	3	2	1	3	1	1	4	7	4	15	304	351
Hate crime	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human trafficking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kidnapping/attempted kidnapping	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Knives	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planned fights	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	6	3	4	7	26
Planned school attack	1	3	3	6	3	3	0	1	10	38	32	1,686	1,786
Self-harm	7	12	10	7	8	4	7	4	20	29	26	44	178
Sexting	9	2	5	1	4	1	0	4	5	5	3	1	40
Sexual assault/ misconduct/ exploitation	20	22	18	20	27	12	8	19	26	23	33	55	283
Stalking	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	5	3	3	6	20
Stealing	0	5	4	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	2	5	21
Suicide threats	27	39	36	31	32	10	11	15	46	60	57	136	500
Threats	6	5	11	13	11	4	3	4	23	23	19	600	722
Unsafe driving	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vandalism	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	7	4	10	30
Weapons possession	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	65	71
Other (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression, harassment)	43	20	32	30	34	24	16	12	42	41	63	275	632
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>3,567</b>	<b>6,255</b>