



Supporting Psychological Safety Through School Mental Health

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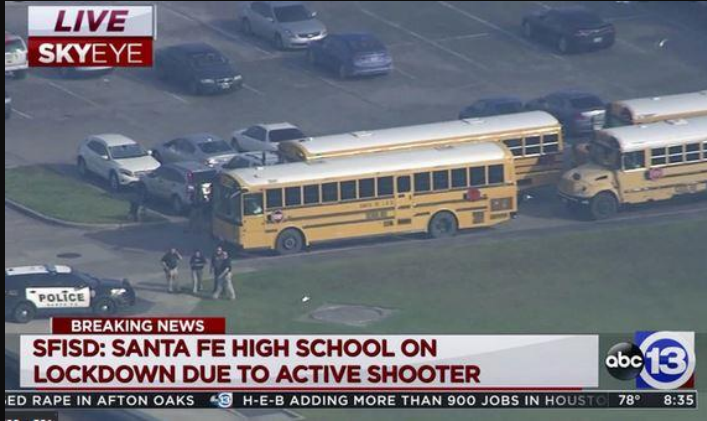
Texas School Safety Center

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TEXAS SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER

The Texas School Safety Center is tasked in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code and the Governor's Security Strategic Plan with key school safety initiatives and mandates





What is Psychological Safety?

Psychological safety refers to a climate, culture, and overall sense of security within the district community and throughout district property that includes preventive interventions, as well as day-to-day interactions.

(Texas School Safety Center EOP Psychological Resilience Annex)



Mental Health and Psychological Safety



- **Feeling safe is a fundamental part of our mental health**
 - › **Nervous system**
 - › **Job performance**
 - › **Ability to learn**
 - › **Relationships**

Why Is This Important?

- Our mental health affects how we experience and live our lives
- Stress and trauma impacts a student's academic performance, behavior in class, physical health, interpersonal relationships, and mental health
- In addition to academics, schools provide mental health supports, safety nets, coping mechanisms, stability, and routine

Examples of Physical and Psychological Safety

Physical Safety

- Locked doors
- Law enforcement presence
- School Behavioral Threat Assessment Procedures
- Video surveillance
- Visitor management systems
- Stop the Bleed kits, AED's, fire alarms
- Well-maintained buildings
- Drills

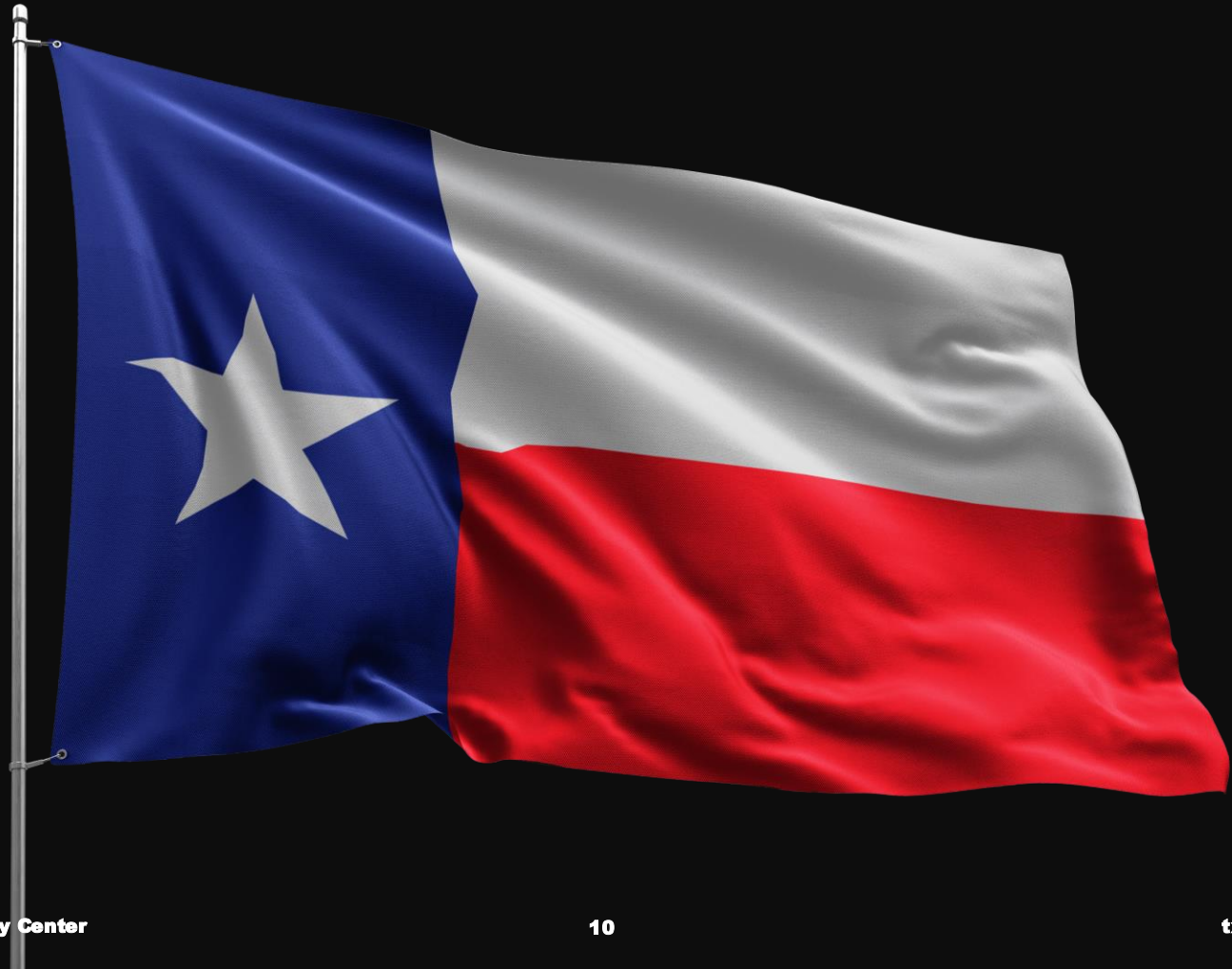
Psychological Safety

- Trained and knowledgeable staff
- Law enforcement presence
- School Behavioral Threat Assessment Procedures
- Anti-bullying policies and procedures
- Accessible mental health care
- Multi-tiered systems of support
- Social-emotional skills
- Drills

School Safety Collaboration



School Safety Is A Shared Responsibility



Multi-Hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)



Psychological Safety and Legal Requirements

Does your district's multi-hazard emergency operations plan include provisions for supporting the psychological safety of students, district personnel, and the community during the response and recovery phase following a disaster or emergency situation? *[TEC 37.108(f)(6)]*

Are these provisions **aligned with recommended best practice-based programs and research-based practices?**

[TEC 37.108(f)(6)(A)]; [TEC 38.351(a)]

Psychological Safety and Legal Requirements, cont.

Do the provisions for supporting the psychological safety of students, district personnel, and the community **include strategies for ensuring any required professional development training** for suicide prevention and grief-informed care and trauma-informed care is provided to appropriate school personnel? *[TEC 37.108(f)(6)(B)]*

Psychological Safety and Legal Requirements, cont.

Do these provisions include **training** on integrating psychological safety and suicide prevention strategies into the district's plan, such as psychological first aid for schools from an approved list of recommended training established by the commissioner and Texas School Safety Center for the following?

- *Members of the district's school safety and security committee*
- *District school counselors and mental health professionals*
- *Educators and other district personnel as determined by the district*

[TEC 37.108(f)(6)(C)]

Supporting Psychological Safety

- Staff training
- Multitiered Systems of Support
- Utilize TxSSC bullying checklist
- Messaging to schoolwide community
 - › Consistent, positive, and proactive

BULLYING CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS

PLEASE READ BEFORE USING CHECKLIST

To determine whether an act is bullying or cyberbullying by law, proceed down the checklist and provide a checkmark for each true statement. If any identified section does not receive at least one checkmark, then the act is not considered bullying by state law.

SB 175, "David's Law" expanded authority to school districts, allowing public and charter schools to address cyberbullying off-campus and outside of school-related or school-sponsored activities based on specific criteria. In order to address this legislative change, this checklist may help parents, educators, and administrators determine if a student at their school has been bullied according to the legislative definition. Please follow the conditional "yes/no" logic for the questions regarding the use of electronic communication devices in possible bullying scenarios.

Did the act occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity?

(This is an important distinction, as David's Law expands a school district's authority to include cyberbullying incidents that occur off-campus and outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, as long as it meets one of the below criteria.)

Yes No

Did the act interfere with a student's educational opportunities; or substantially disrupt the orderly operation of a classroom, school, or school-sponsored/related activity?

Yes No

According to law, if the act **DID NOT** meet the criteria above, it is not under the school district's authority.

IS IT BULLYING?

Was it a single significant act?

Was it a pattern of acts?

By one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power

Through physical conduct

Using verbal expression

Using written expression

Using electronic means

Physically harms a student or damages their property

Creates reasonable fear of harm to student or damage to their property

Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates:

Intimidating educational environment

Threatening educational environment

Abusive educational environment

Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or operation of school

Infringes on rights of victim at school

Was the act committed by using any type of electronic communication device?
(i.e. Cellular or other phone, computer, camera, e-mail, text or instant messaging, social media app, internet website, internet communication tool)

Yes No

On school property

At a school-sponsored or school-related activity (on or off campus)

On school bus or vehicle used to transport students

YES, IT'S BULLYING (Cyberbullying is bullying)

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Supporting Psychological Safety: Planning and Training

- School Behavioral Threat Assessment
 - » Who, What, How?
- Psychological First Aid for Schools
- Trauma-informed training
- Staying Safe curriculum
- Especially Safe curriculum
- Standard Response Protocol



Micro Scale



- It's about relationships
 - › Be the one
 - › Identify people and resources
- Mental Health First Aid training
- Pay attention to words and tone
- Have situational awareness
- Trust your instincts. If something doesn't look or feel right, seek assistance: See Something-Say Something

TxSSC Resources



Contact Info

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