



Fact Sheet

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Secure Our Schools

“We believe we can do a better job in educating our children in an environment that is as safe as possible.”

Superintendent Buster Evans
Bleckley County (Georgia) School District

The COPS Office offers a variety of publications and products to advance community policing and support its grant programs. COPS Office publications and products offer insights into the experiences of others in the field in addressing specific problems, including the following:

- *School Safety Toolkit*, which includes documents and guides to help address issues often associated with school safety and youth violence
- *School Safety CD-ROM*
- *Because Things Happen Every Day: Responding to Teenage Victims of Crime*
- *Bullying in Schools*
- *Disorderly Youth in Public Places*
- *SRO Performance Evaluation: A Guide to Getting Results*
- *Teen Action Toolkit*
- *Vital Partners: Mayors and Police Chiefs Working Together for America's Children and Youth*
- *Traffic Congestion Around Schools POP Guide*

COPS Office publications are posted at COPS Online, www.cops.usdoj.gov.

Background

America's children spend more time in school than almost any other place outside the home. That places a huge responsibility on American schools and those charged with keeping them safe. In a time when a variety of weapons traffic illegally among America's youth, maintaining school safety becomes an increasingly difficult task. Classrooms no longer depend solely on teachers, but on teams of administrators, health care workers, security staff, and law enforcement professionals. Keeping America's children safe has become one of this nation's most successful collaborations, and it is a shining example of effective community policing.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office) has long demonstrated a commitment to school safety. The COPS Office has invested over \$913 million in America's schools through programs like Secure Our Schools (SOS), COPS in Schools, School-Based Partnerships, and the Safe Schools Initiative. In fiscal year FY2011, more than \$13 million in SOS grant funding was awarded to law enforcement agencies to help schools respond to growing school safety and security concerns.

Grant Program Funding Provisions

The COPS Office Secure Our Schools grant program provides funding to state, local, or tribal governments to assist with the purchase and development of school safety resources based upon a comprehensive approach to preventing school violence and individualized to the needs of the schools. This funding provides grantee agencies the opportunity to establish and enhance a variety of school safety equipment and/or programs to encourage the continuation and enhancement of school safety efforts meant to prevent school violence within their communities. The COPS Office is optimistic that this grant program has placed agencies at the forefront of innovative school safety developments. In FY2011, funding under this program paid for such things as:

- Placement and use of metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures;
- Security assessments;
- Security training of personnel and students;
- Coordination with local law enforcement; and
- Other measures that will provide a significant improvement in security.

The COPS Office works with law enforcement agencies to ensure that these funds address the most pressing security needs of young people while they are in school. SOS funding continues to address a variety of existing and emerging problems relating to school security through solutions that range from traditional to innovative, and rely on both new technology and the experience of school administrators and law enforcement professionals.

Contact the COPS Office

For more information about COPS Office school safety programs and resources, call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770, or visit COPS Online at www.cops.usdoj.gov.