

Is My School Safe?

Data-Driven Planning for School Safety



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This manual has been developed for use with constituent populations affiliated with the school community – parents/guardians, school board members, community agencies, concerned citizens, as well as teachers, students, staff and school administrators. It was designed to demonstrate how data can be used by all constituents to help ensure safer school environments.

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1. _____

What Do We Want For Our Children?

Introduction

We want our children to be good citizens and good people. We want our children to be educated, productive, and involved members of our democracy. Perhaps most importantly, we want our children to become the types of parents that will allow their children to do the same. In order to reach this goal, however, we need our children to be educated in safe learning environments that teach them lessons not only in mathematics and grammar, but also in healthy interpersonal relationships and community service. In order to accomplish this goal, we need to create a rigorous, data-driven approach that will allow us to see where we are making progress and where we are falling behind. Therefore, it is imperative that we figure out what tangible objectives we want this approach to achieve and what deadlines we will set for the completion of these objectives.

What ultimate ends will benefit our children the most? By beginning with the end in mind, we can make sure that we have tangible, realistic, and worthwhile objectives that, once accomplished, will allow our children to have a better and safer learning experience. In line with previous NYSED programs and CDC initiatives, we have two excellent sources from which to draw our goals and our inspiration: the educational goals established by The Board of Regents and the Five Promises created by General Colin Powell's America's Promise Alliance. These goals will be a springboard from which we can take actionable steps towards creating a safer, more productive school environment.

Our Goals:

The goals established by The Board of Regents are as follows:

- Every child will get a good start.
- Every child will read by the second grade.
- Every student will complete middle level education ready for high school.
- Every student will graduate from high school ready for work, higher education and citizenship.

- People who begin higher education will complete their programs.
- People of all ages who seek more knowledge and skill will have the fullest opportunity to continue their education.

This big picture thinking is what we need in order to bring a better educational experience to all of New York State's students. However, while the completion of these goals is an excellent benchmark for which to aim, we need something more tangible that we can begin to work on immediately. While these goals are something that we want, they are not "actionable" – in other words, none of these goals are things that one can simply "do." One cannot simply ensure that every child will read by the second grade – there have to be actions that one completes in order to get to this stage. We need to figure out what those actions are, what resources they require, and then immediately start to perform them.

The Five Promises put forth by America's Promise Alliance are similarly as worthwhile and similarly as non-actionable. It is our job to translate the following promises into actionable initiatives that we can undertake with the resources that we have available or that we can bring into play. The Five Promises are the key supports that every child needs in order to succeed. They are:



1. **Caring Adults** such as parents, teachers, mentors, coaches, and neighbors.
2. **Safe Places** that offer constructive activities when young people are not in school.
3. **A Healthy Start** and a healthy development.
4. **An Effective Education** that prepares young people for college and work.
5. **Opportunities to Help Others** through service.

Now that we have a broad idea of our goals, we need to start achieving them. It is here that we introduce PSBA-GTO, or Promoting Science Based Approaches using Getting to Outcomes (Healthy Teen Network's PSBA-GTO: A Quick Reference). GTO is a data-based system that relies heavily on actionable approaches in order to achieve goals systematically. GTO is a ten-step process, and the first two steps need to be introduced here so that we have a clearer idea of the action we need to take.

Using GTO to Figure Out the Needs of Our Children

GTO is a system that translates ethereal and broad goals into actionable steps. When figuring out what we want for our children, the first two of GTO's ten steps are an essential part of the process. The first two steps of GTO are as follows:

- Needs and Resource Assessment
- Setting Goals with GTO

Following is a quick explanation of each of these two steps and how they will be used to provide a safer and more constructive learning environment for our children.

GTO Step One: Needs and Resource Assessment

The basic question to be asked when going through the first stage of the GTO process is: "What are the underlying needs and conditions that must be addressed?" (All "questions that need to be asked" and numerical steps are taken directly from Healthy Teen Network's PSBA-GTO: A Quick Reference) In our case, answering this question is relatively easy – our needs and conditions go hand in hand. We need to create safer school environments with better resources for the students within them. However, the very nature of GTO is to get as in-depth as possible, and this is where the steps for completing the needs and resource assessment come into play. In order to complete Step One, we must:

1. Establish a small work group of people knowledgeable about the current state of our school system.
2. Gather data about the population that we are trying to help (much more information will be given on data collection in the following sections of this manual) – data such as population, risk and protective factors specific to our community and youth, and existing programs (such as pregnancy prevention) that are already in place to help us achieve our goals.
3. Identify the program population. In other words, who are the exact recipients of your efforts going to be?

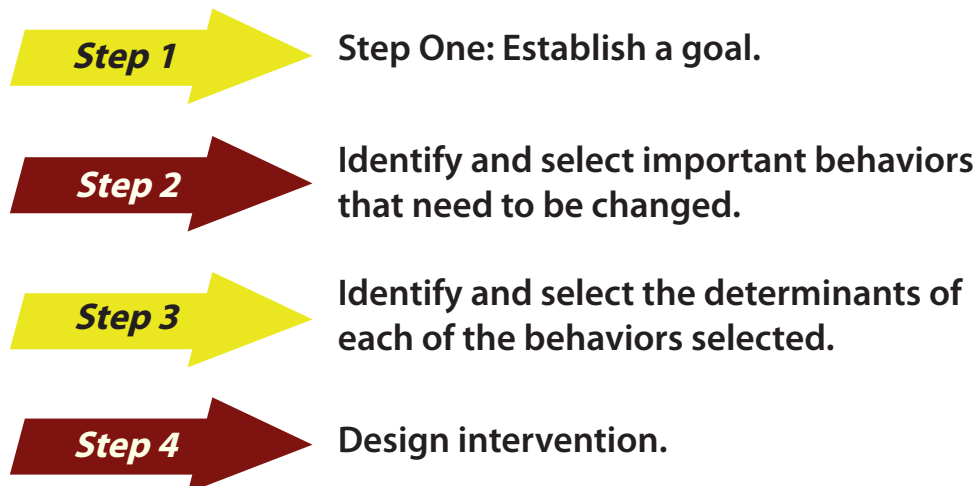
Once you have completed these three tasks, you are ready to move on to the second step of GTO: Setting Goals.

GTO Step Two: Setting Goals with GTO

When setting goals using the GTO method, you have to ask yourself the following question: “What are the goals, target population, and objectives of my program?” This is where we must spend our time focusing on smaller steps that, once finished, will pave the way to large-scale progress. For instance, if after looking through your data you realize that violent incidents and weapons possession are two of your high school building’s biggest problems, you already have a good idea of the direction your planning should take. The following steps should then be taken to solidify all three:

1. Identify a program goal that reflects your program population. In the hypothetical example mentioned above, the population is made up of high school-aged students within your building.
2. Begin to develop a Behavior-Determinant-Intervention (BDI) Logic Model. Figure out which behaviors are leading to your perceived problems, and what type of interventions can put a stop to these behaviors as quickly and effectively as possible. The four steps to creating a BDI are as follows:

4 STEPS TO COMPLETE A BDI LOGIC MODEL



More information on and full descriptions of BDIs can be found in .pdf format at www.healthyteennetwork.com.

3. Develop measurable outcomes and write SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely) objective statements. Your objective statement cannot simply be to “eradicate violence within our school building.” Instead, it should look more like this: “We want to reduce the number of incidents involving weapons within our school building by 30%

by January 1st of this coming year.” This objective statement follows all of the SMART criteria and is an excellent place to get started. *(SMART was originally used by business guru Peter Drucker – an in depth examination of SMART criteria can be found at www.topachievement.com/smart.html)*

The New York State Learning Standards outline what we want our children to know and be able to do. We want to be sure that we develop learning experiences that demonstrate they have learned and practiced the skills that can help them be successful in the world. The GTO framework can help work toward a safer learning environment to help support that success. The next section of this manual will introduce you to the resources and procedures you need in order to start making lasting changes to our school system.

TEAM ACTIVITY 1: Action Plan, GTO Steps 1 and 2

Activity 1 – Action Plan

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline & Person Responsible
1) Need and Resources Data Sources: Areas of Priority	Where/from whom can I get the data? What does the data say?		
2) Goals	What is our long term goal? What are the key behaviors? What are the desired outcomes?		
3) Best Practices	What science-based programs or strategies can we use to meet our goal?		
4) Program Fit	Does the selected program match our student/community needs?		
5) Capacities	Do we have the ability to implement this program with integrity? Who? Money? Administrative Support? Evaluation? Community Support?		

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline & Person Responsible
6) Program Plan	What is the detailed workplan for implementing this program/strategy?		
7) Process Evaluation	Is this being implemented according to our plan? Who will monitor the workplan? Who and how many participants are attending?		
8) Outcome Evaluation	Is the program working? How well is it working? How do we know? What is the evaluation plan? What does the data say?		
9) Continuous Quality Improvement	What is working and what is not working? Why? What do we need to improve? How do we improve it?		
10) Sustainability	How do we keep this going? Who will be responsible? What does the data say?		

2.

Is My School Safe?

Introduction

If your school does not provide a safe, healthy environment for its students, it will never be able to educate them effectively. Students worried about the simplest facets of their education, such as transporting themselves to school and surviving their walks through the hallways, will never be able to focus on their actual academic coursework. With this fact in mind, one of the most important tasks becomes that of evaluating the safety of your own school. What is the best method for doing so, and how will this method eventually guarantee your students a safer and more effective education? To answer those questions, we will introduce VADIR (Violent and Disruptive Incident Reporting) and the importance of data in evaluating the safety of your school building and district. For more information on VADIR, go to: www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/vadir/. For more information about school safety in New York, you can visit the New York State Center for School Safety website at <http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org>.

The Importance of Data in Evaluating Your School

Organizations that collect and analyze data to make decisions fare far better than those that do not (*Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement, Second Edition* by Victoria L. Bernhardt, Ph.D., chapter one). Anecdotal solutions based on untested hypotheses and “hunches” do not take organizations very far. Only those organizations that take extreme measures to collect and use their data effectively become world class. People know this instinctively, and any analysis of data-driven companies proves this point conclusively. Why, then, do most schools not collect and use the data that they have available in order to improve their safety? There are multiple reasons, or “data roadblocks,” that prevent schools and the people within them from taking on data-driven projects. Some of these reasons are:

- School personnel have limited time to collect and analyze data, and may not have these tasks as part of their jobs.
- In general, schools do not have databases where they can collect, store, access, and analyze their data later on – as one educator said, “we have lots of data; we just do not know what data to use, or how or when to use them.”

- Schools may view the collection of data as burdensome – why collect data when the school’s staff is right there on the floor seeing the problems of the school firsthand? It is important to show how data can be useful.
- The software and training systems currently in place are not meant to deal with data on any grand scale, so data collection and analysis therefore seems like a slow, inefficient, and unpleasant process.

All of these factors point to a central problem when it comes to school data usage: there is no agreed upon system or method for collecting, analyzing, and using data. Questions as simple as: “which data should be collected?” are currently difficult to answer, and so it is no wonder that schools have been slow to adopt a data-driven approach. Fortunately, a system is already in place that will allow school personnel and community members to identify and make use of important data. That system is called VADIR.

VADIR and Its Role in Simplifying the Data Collection Process

VADIR, or the Violent and Disruptive Incident Reporting system, was established in New York State in 2001 at the request of both state and federal lawmakers. The purpose of VADIR is to create a Uniform Violent Incident Reporting system (UVIR) for all schools within New York. VADIR was created because lawmakers recognized how useful data can be in solving the problems of school districts and other organizations, and also recognized how little data was being used in the NYS educational system’s safety measures.

The policies and procedures of VADIR are relatively simple. In NYS, each school building within a district is required to report all violent and disruptive incidents that take place on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event. These incidents are placed into one of twenty categories. Some of the categories, such as homicide and sexual assault, are always recorded – other, less serious incidents such as vandalism must meet one or more of the disciplinary or referral thresholds; they are then recorded on the NYSED’s Individual Violent and Disruptive Incident Report (VADIR) form. (See Appendix A for VADIR forms)

The school districts in New York electronically report annually to the NYSED all violent and disruptive incidents that occur in each school building on a Summary of Violent and Disruptive Incidents form. These statistics are gathered from the school building’s individual VADIR forms. There is also a District Summary of Violent and Disruptive Incidents for incidents that are not associated with any school building but would otherwise be reportable.

In short, VADIR is an efficient way for schools to collect their own data on violent and disruptive incidents and bring them to a centralized database, from which they

can then be effectively analyzed and turned into actionable programs. Rather than having to analyze one's own data, VADIR makes it possible to collect data in a way that creates almost no questions on behalf of its users and puts everything down in a very linear, organized fashion. Also, because VADIR creates so much data, it improves the quality of all the data collected as a whole. School personnel and community members alike can see trends within their schools and their districts and use this large collection of data to help them form objectives.

How Does VADIR Help Me Determine if My School is Safe?

Under the No Child Left Behind Act, parents have a right to transfer their students from any school that is labeled as “persistently dangerous.” Defining “persistently dangerous” is left up to every state. In New York, certain VADIR incidents are weighted in order to maintain the accuracy of the “persistently dangerous” label – this weighted incident reporting is used to calculate the school violence index, which ultimately determines whether or not a school will be placed on the persistently dangerous list. The only way to find these figures is to record incidents of violent or disruptive behavior with great accuracy, which is exactly what VADIR helps schools to do. VADIR will give school officials, community members, and decision makers the data they need to determine whether or not their school is safe and secure, what types of dangers seem to face the school most persistently, and where these dangers seem to be coming from. VADIR puts the power of accurate information into the hands of those who make decisions regarding school policy and objectives, which is absolutely essential if effective, lasting objectives are to be created.

How VADIR Relates to School-Based Planning and Other Sources of Data

VADIR data can be aligned with other data sources that are used for school planning. NYSED provides Basic Education Data (BEDS) on each school. BEDS information can be found at www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/beds. School report cards provide a wealth of data about assessments and school completion data. This data can be found at www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/reportcard.

All of this information is meant to link VADIR reporting to other sources of school data. Remember – our goal is to increase the safety of our schools so that they function on a higher level as educational institutions. This is a holistic process, and we must view it as such.

The Code of Conduct – How Your School Measures Good Behavior

Creating a clear Code of Conduct (COC) that your students, school visitors, and school officials must follow is essential to creating a safe school environment. Setting forth specific, unalterable ground rules will ensure that people know what behaviors are viewed as acceptable and unacceptable and act accordingly. Make sure that your school's Code of Conduct strictly aligns with VADIR requirements and that students are fully aware of everything contained within it. You can find a full explanation of the Code of Conduct and its assorted regulations by going to <http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org/conduct.doc>

Make sure that your Code of Conduct is distributed widely and that students and school officials are completely aware of all the regulations contained within it. A good first step towards creating a safer school environment is simply letting your students know what they can and cannot do. Since most reportable VADIR incidents are direct violations of the COC, distributing your COC effectively is a significant step that you can take toward lowering reportable incidents within your school building and district. Review your COC regularly and make sure that your administrators and student body has done the same.

A Note on the Benefits and Necessities of Data Collection

Consider this when thinking about data usage as it relates to education: New York prisons use the number of students reading below grade level in grades 2-4 to determine how many prison cells they should be building in the next ten years (*Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement, Second Edition* by Victoria L. Bernhardt, Ph.D., chapter one). This distressing fact leads to three conclusions:

1. Lack of a proper education can lead directly to criminal behavior.
2. Data on our schools and the problems they face are widely available.
3. Established organizations find this data extremely reliable in creating programs and predicting future outcomes.

Prisons have realized the efficacy of data long ago. We must do the same in order to maintain a safe and productive educational environment for our children.

Schools that use data provide a myriad of benefits for their students. They know what projects to work on, and they see better results once they put them into place. They know if what they are doing is working, and why or why not. They also stick with their initiatives longer because they have faith in their data and actually see real

Activity 2 – Tell The Data Story

	Assault With Serious Physical Injury	Minor Altercations	Criminal Mischief	Weapons Possession During Scanning	Weapons Possession (other)	Other Disruptive Incidents
School A	1	231	8	15	0	323
School B	0	36	1	19	3	187
School C	6	84	5	0	24	200
School D	0	60	26	0	0	579

1. Review the glossary for the definitions of the above categories
2. What do the data tell you, if anything, about each school?
3. What, if any, additional information does your team need for your violence prevention planning?
4. Which school do you want to go to? Why?

This is just a snapshot view of how to look at and think about data. For a more comprehensive examination, data related to enrollment, attendance, location, demographics, etc., would be considered.

3.

How Do I Know My School Is Safe?

Introduction

No one knows your own school system better than you do. At least, no one should know your school system better than you do. There are multiple options that you can pursue if you want to become more involved with your school community or learn more about it. This section is dedicated to the ways in which you can learn more about the issues that face your school and the programs that have already been enacted to handle them. We have listed free resources that you can access at any time and made suggestions on how to become more personally involved. Data-driven objectives based on GTO are only effective if there are good people available to put them into place. We hope that you will do your part to not only be aware of your school's safety issues, but also to improve upon them.

Accessing VADIR and Other Resources

If you want to learn more about the safety of your school, there is no better place to start than by accessing the VADIR information already on file for your building or district. You can access this information at any time by going to the New York State Education Department website at:
www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/vadir/vadir-reporting.html.

This site will allow you to access all of the VADIR data for your school and district. This information is valuable not only because it allows you to evaluate the level of potential violence that your school faces, but also the types of violence represented within your district. VADIR is an incredible resource that was put into place to ensure your safety – if you want to know whether or not your school is safe, this should be the first place that you look.

However, knowing about the issues that your school faces is one thing – knowing what is being done about them is another thing entirely. If you want to learn about the steps that your school is taking to ensure the safety of its students, the best place to look is the SAVE page on the New York State Center for School Safety website at <http://.nyscenterforschoolsafety.org/save.html>.

The NYSCSS website has multiple other resources available, and there's a good chance that if you need to know something about your school's safety concerns or procedures, this site has the information you need. However, for now, knowing about SAVE is a good way to get started learning about these measures and the ways in which you can become involved.

SAVE and its Role in Ensuring a Safe Education

Just as VADIR was created as part of SAVE to provide data on violent incidents within your school community, SAVE overall was designed to prevent those incidents from happening in the first place, and to handle them effectively in the event that they do. Knowing about the SAVE legislation and your school's level of adherence to this legislation is just as important as knowing your school's level of violent incidents – you should check to make sure that your school has a strictly enforced, thoroughly thought-out SAVE implementation plan in place. An in depth summary of all the measures that your school must take as part of SAVE can be found at: <http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org/savesummary.pdf>.

Contact your school to make sure that it follows this legislation and to learn more about your school's specific procedures in case of emergency. The more informed you are about these matters, the safer you and your children will be.

When it comes to efficient systems change, the importance of collaboration cannot be stressed too heavily. The more people that you have collaborating on a single initiative, the greater its chances of success will be. You should focus on building safety teams within your building and within your district. Make sure that you use as much data as possible when assembling such a team and designing systems change, and that you draw people with as many different specialties as possible to ensure your chances of success. Additionally, since your initiative(s) will directly affect community stakeholders, it is legally required that you include these stakeholders in the planning process – SAVE dictates that those who are affected by your initiative be part of it, which makes widespread community team building even more important. This is not the type of project that can be undertaken singlehandedly – good teams create lasting change, and collaborative group efforts have a much better track record in effecting systems change than do individuals or smaller groups.

GTO Step Three: Knowing Your SBPs

If you want to know how safe your school is and how safe it can be, knowing about the existing Science Based Programs (SBPs) and strategies meant to improve school safety is essential. These programs align well with our GTO model of improving school safety in general, and have already been approved and funded by the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, or OSDFS, a branch of the US Department of

Education. The third step of our GTO model for school safety improvement is “Best Practices,” which is centered almost entirely on existing SBPs. You can learn about all available SBPs and find details on their formation and implementation at:

www.emsc.nysed.gov/ssae/schoolsafety/sdfsca/ScienceBasedProgramslist.html.

Looking at the System as a Whole Using School Climate

While our approach will focus on SBPs and other systematic, data-based approaches, it is important to take a step back and gain a broader perspective on what can be done to effect change in a positive direction. An SBP is only one strategy that can be used to make positive changes in the educational realm, since generally an SBP can only make one, very specific and targeted change at a time – to change the entire system, you must also make other considerations. Many assessment tools exist that can help you assess your school’s environment. One such example for engaging in this type of system-wide thinking can be found at the Center for Social and Emotional Education’s website here: www.schoolclimate.org/climate/index.php

The CSEE provides this list of considerations that must be made when evaluating the school climate and the overall safety of your community’s educational experience:

“A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributing and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes:

- Norms, values and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe.
- People are engaged and respected. Students, families and educators work together to develop, live and contribute to a shared school vision.
- Educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning.
- Each person contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.”

Make sure that you take your entire school climate into account when deciding what you can do to change it – there are many different ways that you can effect change, and SBPs and other data-based initiatives are only a small fraction of the effective methods available to you. CSEE is just one example. Review several assessment tools to determine which resource may work best for your team.

Continuing Your GTO Using SBPs

Once you have familiarized yourself with all of the available SBPs, you can continue with the GTO process. The “Best Practices” stage of GTO has you ask yourself the following question: “What science-based or evidence-based models and best practice programs can be used in reaching our goals?” The goals that you already outlined in steps one and two of your GTO should relate nicely with some of the available SBPs approved by the OSDFS. To complete stage three, simply complete the following tasks:

- Review all available SBPs or strategies that might fit your goal and population. Make sure that these SBPs are legitimate and that they most accurately address the needs that you have noticed in earlier stages.
- Select two to four SBPs or strategies for further exploration. There are many SBPs available, but for that very reason the purposes of these SBPs are extremely specific and well defined — you want to be sure that you are selecting the best approach for your target population.

Once you have selected your potential approach, the next step is to figure out whether they will fare well within your community. You must test these SBPs for the proper “fit” before narrowing down your choices.

GTO Step Four: Assessing the “Fit” of Your Chosen SBPs

The fourth step of the GTO process is “fit.” The main question to ask yourself when beginning this step is: “What actions need to be taken so that the selected program “fits” the community context?” In order to complete this step effectively, you need to have a thorough knowledge of the community, its organizations, its resources available, and how they interact. Learning about all of these different issues is essential if you want to effectively evaluate the fit of your potential SBPs in your own community. The steps that need to be followed in order to complete the fourth stage of your GTO are:

1. You must assess your program’s fit with its potential participants, organizations, and stakeholder community. You must have a thorough knowledge of all three and be sure that they will all contribute to the program’s success or, at the very least, allow it to take place at all.
2. Consider whether you can implement the SBP with fidelity. There is no point in starting a program within your community unless you plan on seeing it through. Be sure that, once enacted, your program will be able to survive and flourish given its surroundings.

3. Consider any adaptations necessary to make the program fit. Certain programs will be nearly perfect for your community, but will need some necessary alterations. Identify the extent of the potential changes necessary, whether or not they are realistic, and what it would take to make them.

Of course, the implications of “fit” go far beyond picking a proper SBP or strategy for your school building or district – you must also consider the entire strategy necessary to implement any sort of beneficial change. For instance: if your program requires 100% student participation to be effective, it will not “fit” in a district in which attendance is a major issue to begin with. You have to look at the underlying issues that face your target population if you want to help it. Make sure that you take your thinking process to the next level – an idea that looks good on paper might be disastrous when applied to reality. Though speculations and projections about the efficacy of a project will never match its exact empirical outcomes, they will help avoid potential pitfalls.

Team Activity 3: Action Plan, GTO Steps 3 and 4

Activity 3 - Action Plan

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline & Person Responsible
1) Need and Resources Data Sources: Areas of Priority	Where/from whom can I get the data? What does the data say?		
2) Goals	What is our long term goal? What are the key behaviors? What are the desired outcomes?		
3) Best Practices	What science-based programs or strategies can we use to meet our goal?		
4) Program Fit	Does the selected program match our student/community needs?		
5) Capacities	Do we have the ability to implement this program with integrity? Who? Money? Administrative Support? Evaluation? Community Support?		

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline & Person Responsible
6) Program Plan	What is the detailed workplan for implementing this program/strategy?		
7) Process Evaluation	Is this being implemented according to our plan? Who will monitor the workplan? Who and how many participants are attending?		
8) Outcome Evaluation	Is the program working? How well is it working? How do we know? What is the evaluation plan? What does the data say?		
9) Continuous Quality Improvement	What is working and what is not working? Why? What do we need to improve? How do we improve it?		
10) Sustainability	How do we keep this going? Who will be responsible? What does the data say?		

4.

What Can I Do To Ensure We Have A Safer School Environment?

Introduction

From organizing and planning Science-Based Programs to simply attending PTA meetings, there are countless ways in which you can improve the safety of your school environment. The following section will give you step-by-step instructions on how to create and nurture programs that will allow students to study in safer surroundings.

The Basics: How to Get Started

Before you can begin to work on effective plans within your school community, you have to know who you'll work on them with and where these planning sessions will take place. Following are three great ways to meet others within your school's community and to find ways to get involved:

- Attending board of education meetings to hear and understand how safety fits with educational planning for your district. This is also an opportunity for you to provide input to those elected to represent you in making decisions about your district.
- Getting directly involved in your school. Volunteer to serve on your district safety team and building level emergency response team, and/or shared decision making team to have an input in the planning process.
- Talking with all members of the school community – teachers, students, parents/guardians, administrators, other staff and members of the community – to gain a broad prospective on your community's safety.

If you are concerned about the safety of your school and want to make a difference, the above steps will help to get you started. Once you have met other people, familiarized yourself with your school and its resources and capabilities, you are ready to continue to step five in the GTO process: Capacities.

GTO Step 5: Evaluating Capacities

Any worthwhile objective requires resources. These resources can come in the form of personnel, finances, space, expertise, etc. – the important thing is to figure out which resources you need and how many in order to complete and maintain your SBP. When you are narrowing down your choices for the SBP that you think would work best within your community, ask yourself the following: “what organizational capacities are needed to implement the program?” The steps needed to evaluate the capacity that your community has for particular SBPs are as follows:

1. Consider the various capacities needed to conduct the SBP – staff, fiscal, leadership, evaluation, and community partners. Be as thorough as possible – optimism in this field will not be rewarded, and by failing to foresee or ignoring resources that your project will need, you will be hamstringing its success down the line.
2. Identify ways to increase or develop capacity. Once you realize what your project needs, you’ll often find that you don’t have enough of it. Therefore, it is essential that you start to figure out ways of finding more money, personnel, and expertise in order to start your project effectively.
3. Narrow down your SBPs. Often, the resources that some SBPs require will singlehandedly eliminate them from your list.

Now that you know what your project needs in order to be successful and what your community can provide, you should have a good idea of which projects are realistic and which ones should be left for another time. Once you have picked an appropriate SBP according to the SMART framework, it is finally time to put your project into action. However, there is one more step that you still have to take before you can officially launch your project.

GTO Step Six: Creating a Plan: The Final Step before You Launch Your SBP

Now that you have evaluated your community, its needs, its resources, and the population which you intend to help, you should have a very good idea of which SBP is most appropriate to implement. This does not mean, however, that you can simply launch into your project without some formal planning. The sixth step of GTO, “Plan,” makes sure that the SBP you have chosen is carried out in the easiest, most effective way possible. When figuring out what your plan for your selected program is, you must complete the following tasks:

1. Complete the logic model. A logic model is a basic element of planning that communicates the rationale behind a program. It is here that you want to lay out the underlying theory behind your program – what are the assumptions that you are making? Why will your program work? Why is it a proper solution to the problems that you have identified? Your logic model should seek to answer all of these questions.
2. Develop a detailed work plan, including a budget. This is relatively self explanatory: exactly how are you going to implement your SBP? How much will it cost? Who will have to do what? The more specific your work plan is the better – once your program gets started, you will be surprised by how easily the smallest unforeseen task or expense can turn into an enormous problem.
3. Confirm that your program is culturally appropriate. Part of this was covered in the “fit” step, but it needs to be reiterated here due to its importance. If the population targeted by your program does not accept it or, worse, is taken aback by it, the program will not be very successful.
4. Finalize your program selection and identify needed adaptations.

Once all of these steps are finished, you’re ready to begin your project. Whether you’ve selected an already existing SBP or come up with an entirely new initiative, proper planning is of the utmost importance. If you’ve taken the time to come up with multiple ways to help your community and narrowed them down through systematic thought, you’ll have a vastly greater chance of success than if you simply come up with an idea and start to work on it. By looking at all of your choices and comparing them to one another, you’ll be doing an enormous service to yourself and to your community.

Team Activity 4: Action Plan, GTO Steps 5 and 6

Activity 4 - Action Plan

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline
1) Need and Resources Data Sources: Areas of Priority	Where/from whom can I get the data? What does the data say?		
2) Goals	What is our long term goal? What are the key behaviors? What are the desired outcomes?		
3) Best Practices	What science-based programs or strategies can we use to meet our goal?		
4) Program Fit	Does the selected program match our student/community needs?		
5) Capacities	Do we have the ability to implement this program with integrity? Who? Money? Administrative Support? Evaluation? Community Support?		

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline
6) Program Plan	What is the detailed workplan for implementing this program/strategy?		
7) Process Evaluation	Is this being implemented according to our plan? Who will monitor the workplan? Who and how many participants are attending?		
8) Outcome Evaluation	Is the program working? How well is it working? How do we know? What is the evaluation plan? What does the data say?		
9) Continuous Quality Improvement	What is working and what is not working? Why? What do we need to improve? How do we improve it?		
10) Sustainability	How do we keep this going? Who will be responsible? What does the data say?		

5.

How Do I Know What We Did Worked?

Introduction

Just as important as planning your projects carefully is following up on them once they've already started. Once you have begun to work on your SBP, you need to make sure that you track your progress, make any necessary improvements, and keep your initiative alive by feeding it more resources and personnel. This section will show you how to do all three using data and GTO methods. Fortunately, since you started your project based on data, seeing the changes that you are bringing about should be easy – they will be reflected in the very numbers that you used to formulate your project to begin with.

GTO Step Seven: Process Evaluation

When you are creating programs to help our children, you need to constantly evaluate their performance and make changes to them when necessary. Step seven of the GTO process, Implementation Process Evaluation, diagnoses any potential problems with your project by examining how the project itself is being carried out. You should ask yourself, “is the program being implemented with quality?” You should take the following tasks to complete this step:

1. Develop a clear process evaluation plan before launching the program. You should have already planned out a way of evaluating your project before it was ever in motion. You know what needs to be happening for your project to achieve any level of success, so make sure that you have a way of evaluating how well these steps are being carried out.
2. Examine whether the activities identified in the Logic Model are being implemented as planned and with fidelity.
3. Monitor the work plan that you developed during the “Capacities” stage of your planning.
4. Track the number of participants and their attendance. The more participants

you have in your intervention and the more often they attend, the more effective the project will be. Make sure to keep careful attendance records to figure out the scope of your efforts. The link between attendance and performance is well known, but it might surprise you to find out just how linked the two are – in fact, in one study it was found that students who attend class 95% of the time are *twice* as likely to pass state language arts tests as those who attend 85% of the time (<http://edweek.com/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=07truant.h20>). Whether students attend regularly may be directly related to how safe they feel in school, and traveling to and from school. This makes attendance data an important source of information to consider by the safety team when doing their planning for a safer school environment.

GTO Step Eight: Outcome Evaluation

Once you are sure that the program is being carried out as planned, the next step is seeing whether or not it is having the planned effects. Step eight of the GTO process has you ask the simple question: “how well is the intervention working?” Completing the following tasks will allow you to answer that question:

1. Develop and implement an outcome evaluation plan. Just as you created a plan to track the implementation of the project, you should also create a plan for evaluating your project’s outcomes. Since you know what data you’re trying to change, you should have goals for what you want to change and indicators to measure how quickly they are changing.
2. Choose an evaluation design and data collection methodology. In essence, you must figure out a framework in which to evaluate your intervention. Just as you needed a plan to launch your initiative, you will need a plan to figure out whether or not the intended results are coming about. An excellent guide to formulating an evaluation design can be found at Western Michigan University’s website here: www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/evaldesign.pdf.

If you’re still having trouble with this step, talk to a supervisor or someone trained in evaluation to seek assistance. You cannot effectively evaluate your initiative’s success unless you know to do so in the first place.

3. Implement the evaluation instrument. In other words: once you have come up with your evaluation design, start to use it! Make sure that you stay faithful to your evaluation design once you have created it.
4. Analyze, interpret, and report the results. Remember, data is only valuable if it is used effectively. Once you have collected any data that your intervention has produced and examined your school and community’s data, you need

to be able to figure out what the data is telling you. Have a careful plan for doing this and report your findings immediately.

If you can faithfully complete steps seven and eight of the GTO process, you should have a good idea of how well your project is working. You should be taking careful note of what efforts seem to be succeeding and which ones are ineffective. Once you have made these observations, you must put them to use through step nine of GTO, Continuous Quality Improvement.

GTO Step Nine: Implementing Continuous Quality Improvement

When working on any SBP or research-based strategy and enacting it within your school and/or community, you need to make sure that quality improvement is built into the project itself. Step nine of GTO asks you to include continuous quality improvement strategies within your program and to act on them whenever possible. To complete step nine of GTO, simply complete the following steps:

1. Document successful program activities. Documenting the parts of your intervention that work best is immensely valuable for others who might someday want to put in place a similar SBP or strategy. It also gives you a better idea of which parts of your project you should try to replicate and put more focus on.
2. Assess program activities which did not work well overall or for specific groups. More important than documenting your program's successes is rooting out its failures. Since your project will require resources in terms of personnel, finances, and expertise, you should make sure to use your resources as wisely as possible. By assessing and then removing activities which are not working, you can direct your resources towards the activities which are.
3. Identify areas for improvement and create strategies for improvement. Once you have figured out which parts of your program need help, try to figure out whether they should be eliminated or improved.

Following these steps should give you a good idea of which parts of your program are working and not working, and what you should do about it. When deciding whether to improve upon or eliminate a facet of your project, ask yourself whether that particular aspect of your project is necessary. If so, immediately come up with a plan for improving it. If, however, you find that you do not need that particular portion of your project to obtain results, you should consider eliminating it to conserve resources.

GTO Step Ten: Sustaining Your Successful Project

If you have already implemented steps 1-9 of the GTO process, congratulations. Now that you have put your project in motion, evaluated its strengths and weaknesses, and made the necessary alterations, you have one final step to take. If you have found that your project is making positive changes within your school and/or community, you want it to keep going for as long as possible. However, as we discussed in the “Capacities” step, we know that good SBPs require a significant amount of resources in order to be effective. Two of these resources in particular, personnel and finances, will run out quickly unless they are consistently replenished. The final step in the GTO process has you ask: “if our program is successful, how will it be sustained?” In order to answer that question, you must complete the following steps:

1. Identify and implement ways to sustain practices that are effective in your community. Where there’s a will there’s a way – if you know that your project is working and can demonstrate this fact, there will be people and groups willing to help you continue your program. Figure out what your program needs to keep going and then immediately try to figure out ways to get your program its necessary resources.
2. Develop a sustainability plan with a clear strategy for financial self-sufficiency. You need to create as detailed a plan as possible to figure out *exactly* what your program needs and how it will go about getting these things. The more detailed your plan for future funding and staffing is, the more you improve your program’s chances to continue making positive changes within your community.
3. Identify a “program champion” and begin discussions with community members about sustaining the programs. Your program needs a leader who can take personal responsibility for the program and make sure that it gets the resources it needs on an ongoing basis. This is a job that requires a significant amount of hard work and influence, so make sure that you choose someone who is up to the task and who is on good terms with other influential members of the community.

By following this process, you will be giving a gift to your entire community. Increasing the safety of your school buildings and district will lead to a better education for each student within them. If you plan your intervention carefully using as much available data as possible, you will be ensuring that your initiative will have as high a chance of success as possible. If your intervention has a greater chance of success, the students you are attempting to help will as well. However, one more point must be emphasized before you start your planning: the importance of continual needs assessment.

Data are always changing, and the needs of your community will be changing along with them. The problems that you faced when you started your planning might be solved, or worsened, but it is your job to continually evaluate the educational environment that you are trying to better. To do this, you need to commit yourself to two processes:

1. Always making sure that data is being collected and accurately processed within your community.
2. Frequently analyzing that data to figure out the needs of your target population.

This process is cyclical – your projects and initiatives cannot remain static because your community never will. Take a step back from time to time and figure out where your community is, where it was, and where it seems to be heading. If you can ensure that you always have access to good data, and that the data is being used as effectively as possible, you will ensure that the interventions you are working on are as relevant and beneficial as possible.

Team Activity 5: Action Plan, GTO Steps 7, 8, 9, and 10

Activity 5 - Action Plan

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline & Person Responsible
1) Need and Resources Data Sources: Areas of Priority	Where/from whom can I get the data? What does the data say?		
2) Goals	What is our long term goal? What are the key behaviors? What are the desired outcomes?		
3) Best Practices	What science-based programs or strategies can we use to meet our goal?		
4) Program Fit	Does the selected program match our student/community needs?		
5) Capacities	Do we have the ability to implement this program with integrity? Who? Money? Administrative Support? Evaluation? Community Support?		

Step/Action	Questions to Ask	Evaluation Measures	Timeline & Person Responsible
6) Program Plan	What is the detailed workplan for implementing this program/strategy?		
7) Process Evaluation	Is this being implemented according to our plan? Who will monitor the workplan? Who and how many participants are attending?		
8) Outcome Evaluation	Is the program working? How well is it working? How do we know? What is the evaluation plan? What does the data say?		
9) Continuous Quality Improvement	What is working and what is not working? Why? What do we need to improve? How do we improve it?		
10) Sustainability	How do we keep this going? Who will be responsible? What does the data say?		

Resources

1. America's Promise Alliance Website: www.americaspromise.org/Our-Work.aspx
2. Center for Disease Control's *Understanding School Violence* (2008). Available from URL www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention
3. Center for Social and Emotional Education, *School Climate*, available at www.schoolclimate.org/climate/index.php
4. *Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement, Second Edition*, Chapter 1 – written by Victoria L. Bernhardt, Ph.D.
5. Healthy Teen Network's *Promoting Science-Based Approaches Using Getting to Outcomes (PSBA-GTO): A Quick Reference*.
6. National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center website: www.safeyouth.org/scripts/topics/school.asp
7. New York State Center for School Safety Website: <http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org>
8. New York State Center for School Safety's SAVE Summary form: <http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org/savesummary.pdf>
9. New York State Education Department's list of approved SBPs, with links to background information on SBPs in general: www.emsc.nysed.gov/ssae/schoolsafety/sdfsc/ScienceBasedProgramslist.html
10. New York State Education Department's School Report Card Website: www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/reportcard
11. New York State PTA Website: www.nyspta.org
12. New York State Regents site and stated goals: www.regents.nysed.gov/about/
12. *Safe Spaces: Creating Safe and Drug-Free Learning Environments* (2000) – published by the Upstate Center for School Safety
13. VADIR information, background, and forms: www.emsc.nysed.gov/ssae/schoolsafety/vadir/VADIRQA1008final.html

Appendix A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN REPORTING VIOLENT AND DISRUPTIVE INCIDENTS

POSTED AUGUST 5, 2008

Incident Categories

(1) **Homicide:** Any conduct which results in the death of another person, with or without a weapon.

(2) **Sexual Offenses:**

2.1 **Forcible Sex Offenses:** Involving forcible compulsion and completed or attempted sexual intercourse, oral sexual conduct, anal sexual conduct or aggravated sexual contact, with or without a weapon, including but not limited to, rape and sodomy. Pursuant to Penal Law §130.00(8), "**forcible compulsion**" means "to compel by either: (a) use of force; or (b) a threat, express or implied, which places a person in fear of immediate death or physical injury to himself, herself or another person, or in fear that he, she or another person will immediately be kidnapped." Pursuant to Penal Law §130.00(11), "**aggravated sexual contact**" means "inserting, other than for a valid medical purpose, a foreign object in the vagina, urethra, penis or rectum of a child, thereby causing physical injury to such child." "**Oral sexual conduct**" and "**anal sexual conduct**" mean oral or anal sex.

2.2 **Other Sex Offenses:** involving inappropriate sexual contact but no forcible compulsion, with or without a weapon. Other sex offenses, includes, but is not limited to, conduct that may be consensual or involve a child who is incapable of consent by reason of disability or because he or she is under 17 years of age. However, it does not include consensual conduct involving students and/or non-students 18 years of age or under, unless at least one of the individuals participating in the conduct is at least 4 years older than the youngest participant.

Inappropriate **sexual contact** requires physical contact with another person but no forcible compulsion. It includes, but is not limited to, the following conduct:

- a. touching or grabbing another student on a part of the body that is generally regarded as private, such as buttocks, breast, genitalia, etc.
- b. removing another student's clothing to reveal underwear or private body parts
- c. brushing or rubbing against another person in a sexual or provocative manner
- d. a student first rubbing his/her own genitalia and then touching another person's body

Note: Verbal sexual harassment is reported in category 10 (Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing or Bullying). Self-exposure or "mooning," depending on the circumstances, are reported in either category 10 (Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing or Bullying) or category 20 (Other Disruptive Incident).

- (3) **Robbery:** Forcible stealing of property from a person by using or threatening the immediate use of physical force upon that person, with or without a weapon.
- (4) **Assault with Serious Physical Injury:** Intentionally or recklessly causing serious physical injury to another person, with or without a weapon, in violation of the school district's code of conduct. Pursuant to Penal Law §10.00(10), "**serious physical injury**" means physical injury creating a substantial risk of death or serious and protracted disfigurement or protracted impairment of health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ. Serious physical injury requires hospitalization or treatment in an emergency room and includes but is not limited to, a bullet wound, a serious stab or puncture wound, fractured or broken bones or teeth, concussions, cuts requiring stitches and any other injury involving risk of death or disfigurement.
- (5) **Arson:** Deliberately starting a fire with intent to damage or destroy property, with or without a weapon. The fire may be started by using matches, lighters or other devices capable of producing sufficient heat (i.e. magnifying glass) to ignite other combustible items, including, but not limited to, paper, linens, clothing, and aerosol cans, with or without a weapon. Property includes any object belonging to the school, students, school staff or visitors to the school, including personal items of the arsonist.
- (6) **Kidnapping:** To abduct, as defined in Penal Law §135.00, a person, so as to restrain such person with intent to prevent his or her liberation, by either: (a) secreting or holding him or her in a place where he or she is not likely to be found, or (b) using or threatening to use deadly physical force, with or without a weapon.
- (7) **Assault with Physical Injury:** Intentionally or recklessly causing physical injury (not serious) to another person, with or without a weapon, in violation of the school district's code of conduct. Physical injury means impairment of physical condition or substantial pain. Physical injury includes, but is not limited to, black eyes, welts, abrasions, bruises, black and blue marks, cuts not requiring stitches, and swelling. Substantial pain includes, but is not limited to, severe headaches, joint, or muscle pain.
- (8) **Reckless Endangerment:** Subjecting individuals to danger by recklessly engaging in conduct that creates a grave risk of death or serious physical injury, but no actual physical injury, with or without a weapon. The following are examples of incidents that did not result in physical injury but should be reported as reckless endangerment:
 - a. Throwing an object at another student. The object thrown must be capable of causing a grave risk of death or serious physical injury. A serious physical injury requires hospitalization or treatment in an emergency room and includes, but is not limited to, a bullet wound, a serious stab or puncture wound, fractured or broken bones or teeth, concussions, cuts requiring stitches and any other injury involving risk of death or disfigurement.
 - b. Incidents involving a person choking another individual, including, but not limited to incidents where a student offender refuses to obey staff directives or interventions to stop choking his or her victim.
 - c. Brandishing a weapon on a school bus threatening other students, bus driver and/or bus monitor with harm or injury.

- d. Driving a car erratically and recklessly in a school parking lot while other student(s), staff, or individuals are present.

- (9) **Minor Altercations:** involving physical contact and no physical injury, with or without a weapon. Striking, shoving, or kicking another person or subjecting another person to unwanted physical contact with intent to harass, alarm or seriously annoy another person, but no physical injury results. Fights that do not result in serious physical injury or physical injury are reported in this category.
- (10) **Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing, or Bullying Behavior and No Physical Contact:**
Threatening, stalking, or seeking to coerce or compel a person to do something; intentionally placing or attempting to place another person in fear of imminent physical injury; or engaging in verbal or physical conduct that threatens another with harm, including intimidation through the use of epithets or slurs involving race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, religious practices, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability that substantially disrupts the educational process, with or without a weapon. Incidents **not** resulting in a disciplinary or referral action are reported in Item 2 of the *Summary of Violent and Disruptive Incidents Form*. Incidents of harassment involving physical contact are reported in the Category 9 (Minor Altercations).
Verbal sexual harassment is also reported in category 10. Self-exposure or “mooning,” depending on the circumstances, are reported in either category 10 (Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing or Bullying) or category 20 (Other Disruptive Incident).
- (11) **Burglary:** Entering or remaining unlawfully on school property with intent to commit a crime, with or without a weapon.
- (12) **Criminal Mischief:** Intentional or reckless damaging of the property of the school or of another person, including, but not limited to vandalism and the defacing of property with graffiti, with or without a weapon.
- (13) **Larceny or Other Theft Offenses:** Unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property with intent to deprive the rightful owner of property permanently or unlawfully withholding property from another, with or without a weapon.
- (14) **Bomb Threat:** A telephoned, written, verbal or electronic message that a bomb, explosive, chemical, or biological weapon has been or will be placed on school property, with or without a weapon.
- (15) **False Alarm:** Causing a fire alarm or other disaster alarm to be activated by either falsely reporting or activating a fire alarm or other type of disaster alarm, with or without a weapon.
- (16) **Riot:** Four or more persons simultaneously engaging in tumultuous and violent conduct and thereby intentionally or recklessly causing or creating a grave risk of physical injury or substantial property damage or causing public alarm, with or without a weapon.
- (17) **Weapons Possession:** Possession of one or more of the weapons listed below, except possession in a classroom or laboratory as part of an instructional program or in a school-related activity under the supervision of a teacher or other school personnel as authorized

by school officials. Possession includes bringing a weapon to or possessing a weapon at school.

Weapons:

- a. a firearm, including, but not limited to, a rifle, shotgun, pistol, handgun, silencer, electronic dart gun, stun gun, machine gun, air gun, spring gun, BB gun, or paint ball gun;
- b. a switchblade knife, gravity knife, pilum ballistic knife, cane sword, dagger, stiletto, dirk, razor, box cutter, metal knuckle knife, utility knife, or any other dangerous knife;
- c. a billy club, blackjack, bludgeon, chukka stick, or metal knuckles;
- d. a sandbag or sandclub;
- e. a sling shot or slungshot;
- f. a martial arts instrument, including, but not limited to, a kung fu star, ninja star, nin-chuck, or shirken;
- g. an explosive, including but not limited to, a firecracker or other fireworks;
- h. a deadly or dangerous chemical, including, but not limited to, a strong acid or base, mace, or pepper spray;
- i. an imitation gun;
- j. loaded or blank cartridges or other ammunition; or
- k. any other deadly or dangerous instrument.

(17.1) Weapons Confiscated through Routine Security Checks at Building Entrances:

As of July 1, 2006, weapons that are detected and confiscated as a result of a security screening process (scanners, metal detectors, and other devices) upon entry into the school building should be recorded in this category. The phrase "upon entry" into the school building means that the weapon(s) is detected as a result of students, staff or visitors passing through these devices in order to get into the school building proper. This category is to be used only for weapons possession incidents that are discovered as a result of scanning devices at entrances, not within the school building or as a result of random searches of individuals or lockers, etc...

(17.2) Weapons Found Under Other Circumstances: Incidents where weapons were found other than through a routine security check at a building.

(18) Drug Use, Possession, or Sale: Illegally using, possessing or being under the influence of a controlled substance or marijuana, on school property, with or without a weapon, including having such substance on a person or in a locker, vehicle, or other personal space; selling or distributing a controlled substance or marijuana on school property; finding a controlled substance or marijuana, on school property that is not in the possession of any person; provided that nothing herein shall be construed to apply to the lawful administration of a prescription drug on school property. Tobacco and tobacco

products are not to be considered as drugs for the purposes of incident reporting.

- (19) ***Alcohol Use, Possession, or Sale.*** Illegally using or possessing alcohol on school property, including having such substance on a person or in a locker, vehicle, or other personal space, with or without a weapon; illegally selling or distributing alcohol on school property; finding alcohol on school property that is not in the possession of any person.
- (20) ***Other Disruptive Incidents:*** Other incidents involving disruption of the educational process and that rise to the level of a consequence listed in the *Summary of Violent and Disruptive Incidents Form* (columns j-o). Reportable incidents are limited to those resulting in disciplinary action or referral.

Self-exposure or “mooning,” depending on the circumstances, are reported in either category 10 (Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing or Bullying) or category 20 (Other Disruptive Incident).

Other Definitions

Disciplinary or Referral Action: For purposes of reporting, a disciplinary or referral action includes a referral to: Counseling or Treatment Programs, Teacher Removal, Suspension from Class or Activities, Out-of-School Suspension, Involuntary Transfer to Alternative Education Program or Law Enforcement/Juvenile Justice (refer to definitions below).

Counseling or Treatment Programs: For purposes of reporting, referrals to counseling or treatment programs are formal multi-session interventions, provided by certified or licensed professionals, aimed at reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors linked to the identified problem area(s) (i.e., drug/alcohol rehabilitation programs, anger management programs, etc.). Note: Routine referrals of a student to a principal or assistant principal for possible disciplinary action should not be counted as a referral to counseling or treatment program.

Teacher Removal: For purposes of reporting, a "teacher removal" means the removal of a disruptive pupil from the teacher's classroom pursuant to the provisions of Education Law §3214(3-a). Routine referrals of a student to a principal or assistant principal for possible disciplinary action should not be counted as a teacher removal.

Suspension from Class or Activities: For purposes of reporting, suspension from class or activities includes in-school suspension and/or suspensions from school transportation or school/extracurricular activities, such as band, choir, or athletics. All incidents resulting in an in-school suspension that lasts for the equivalent of one school day or more must be reported. Suspensions from activities or transportation for five or more consecutive school days must also be reported.

Out-of-School Suspension: The student is suspended from attending school for at least one day.

Transfer to Alternative Education Program: For purposes of reporting, a "transfer to an alternative education program" means any transfer to an educational program in a setting outside of the student's home school to which the student is referred as part of or in lieu of disciplinary action, i.e., as a consequence of the child's misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to,

involuntary transfers pursuant to Education Law §3214(5) and placement of students with disabilities in interim alternative educational settings.

Transfer to Law Enforcement/Juvenile Justice: For purposes of reporting, referrals to law enforcement or juvenile justice include each incident whereby the perpetrator is referred to the police, law enforcement officers, or criminal justice services.

Gang Related: An incident is gang related if it is gang motivated or if gang membership caused the incident or contributed to actions that occurred during the incident. For example, an incident of vandalism or robbery might be part of an initiation into a gang, or a fight might be caused by gang rivalry. Report an incident as gang-related only if certain that gang membership contributed to the incident. A gang is an organized group characterized by turf concerns, symbols, special dress, and/or colors that engages in delinquent or illegal activity. This definition is from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Bias Related: An incident is bias related if it is motivated by hate due to some characteristics or perceived characteristics of the victim including race, gender, religion, color, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, social and family background, linguistic preference or disability. Any act or attempted act is bias-related if it is designed to cause physical injury, emotional suffering, or property damage through intimidation, harassment, racial/ethnic slurs and bigoted epithets; vandalism; force, or the threat of force, motivated all or in part by hostility to some real or perceived characteristic of the victim. This definition is from the National Center for Education Statistics.

SUMMARY OF VIOLENT AND DISRUPTIVE INCIDENTS

July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009

**Do Not Send This Paper
Form to SED**

School Name: _____

BEDS Code (12 digits): _____

This paper form must be used only for the local gathering of data. Data represented in this form are required to be submitted to SED via the online BEDS IMF application. Your district's BEDS coordinator or superintendent will have details and protocol for entering data.

Each incident must be reported in *only* one category. If the incident involves more than one category, report it in the category with the lowest category number. For example, if an incident involves a robbery (category 3) and an assault with physical injury (category 7), report the incident in category 3. Category definitions are summarized in this document and detailed in the *Glossary of Terms*. **Incidents in categories 1 through 8, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 19 must be reported regardless of whether or not the offender was disciplined or referred to law enforcement. Incidents in categories 9-13, 16, and 20 must be reported if a weapon was involved or if the consequences result in a disciplinary or referral action listed in columns (j) through (o).** When the offender is not known, such as in a bomb threat or false alarm, the incident still must be reported. Reports of alleged incidents of intimidation, harassment, menacing, or bullying that did not result in a disciplinary action must be reported in Item 2. For additional information refer to the instructions, Q&A document, and *Glossary* at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/vadir/>. Schools reporting no incidents must report zero (0) in categories 1-20 column (a), Item 2, and Item 6. Questions must be answered in Item 7 and Item 8, and the superintendent certifications must be completed.

- 1. Violent and Disruptive Incidents:** Report duplicated counts of offenders and victims. That is to say, offenders and victims must be counted each time they were involved in an incident.

Incident Category	Number of Incidents (a)	Number of Offenders (Duplicated count. Offenders must be counted more than once if they commit more than one offense.)			Number of Victims (Duplicated count. Victims must be counted more than once if they are victims of more than one offense.)			Number of Incidents		How many enrolled student offenders were assigned or referred to: (Report all consequences)						
		Students (b)	Staff (c)	Other (d)	Students (e)	Staff (f)	Other (g)	Involving Alcohol or Drugs (h)	On School Transportation (i)	Counseling or Treatment Programs (j)	Teacher Removal (Section 3214) (k)	Suspension From Class or Activities (l)	Out-of-School Suspension (m)	Transfer to Alternative Ed Program (n)	Law Enforcement or Juvenile Justice (o)	
Incidents Involving Physical Injury or the Threat of Injury.																
1. Homicide: conduct resulting in the death of another person.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
2.1 Forcible Sex Offenses: involving forcible compulsion.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
2.2 Other Sex Offenses: involving inappropriate sexual contact (no forcible compulsion.)																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
3. Robbery: forcible stealing of property from a person by using or threatening the immediate use of physical force.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
4. Assault with Serious Physical Injury: intentionally or recklessly causing physical injury that creates substantial risk of death or serious disfigurement, impairment of health, or loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ.																

Incident Category	Number of Incidents (a)	Number of Offenders (Duplicated count. Offenders must be counted more than once if they commit more than one offense.)			Number of Victims (Duplicated count. Victims must be counted more than once if they are victims of more than one offense.)			Number of Incidents		How many enrolled student offenders were assigned or referred to: (Report all consequences)						
		Students (b)	Staff (c)	Other (d)	Students (e)	Staff (f)	Other (g)	Involving Alcohol or Drugs (h)	On School Transportation (i)	Counseling or Treatment Programs (j)	Teacher Removal (Section 3214) (k)	Suspension From Class or Activities (l)	Out-of-School Suspension (m)	Transfer to Alternative Ed Program (n)	Law Enforcement or Juvenile Justice (o)	
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
5. Arson: deliberately starting a fire with intent to damage or destroy property.																
					NA	NA	NA									
6. Kidnapping: to abduct a person or restrain a person with intent to prevent his or her liberation.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
7. Assault with Physical Injury: intentional or reckless act causing impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
8. Reckless Endangerment: subjecting individuals to danger by recklessly engaging in conduct that creates a grave risk of death or serious injury but no actual physical injury.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
Other Incidents: Report incidents that 1) involve weapons or 2) disrupt the educational process. (See instructions.)																
9. Minor Altercations: involving physical contact and no physical injury.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
10. Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing, or Bullying: no physical contact - intentionally placing another person in fear of imminent physical injury. Incidents that do not result in a consequence (j-o) should be reported in Item 2 page 3.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
11. Burglary: entering or remaining unlawfully on school property with intent to commit a crime.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
12. Criminal Mischief: intentional or reckless damaging of school property or the property of another person, including but not limited to, vandalism and the defacing of property with graffiti.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
13. Larceny and other Theft Offenses: unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property with intent to deprive the rightful owner of property. Permanently or unlawfully withholding property from another.																
With weapon(s)																
Without weapon(s)																
14. Bomb Threat: a telephoned, written, or electronic message that a bomb, explosive, or chemical or biological weapon has been or will be placed on school property.																

Incident Category	Number of Incidents (a)	Number of Offenders (Duplicated count. Offenders must be counted more than once if they commit more than one offense.)			Number of Victims (Duplicated count. Victims must be counted more than once if they are victims of more than one offense.)			Number of Incidents		How many enrolled student offenders were assigned or referred to: (Report all consequences)						
		Students (b)	Staff (c)	Other (d)	Students (e)	Staff (f)	Other (g)	Involving Alcohol or Drugs (h)	On School Transportation (i)	Counseling or Treatment Programs (j)	Teacher Removal (Section 3214) (k)	Suspension From Class or Activities (l)	Out-of-School Suspension (m)	Transfer to Alternative Ed Program (n)	Law Enforcement or Juvenile Justice (o)	
15. False Alarm: falsely activating a fire alarm or other disaster alarm.																

16. Riot: four or more persons simultaneously engaging in tumultuous and violent conduct and thereby intentionally or recklessly causing or creating a grave risk of physical injury or substantial property damage or causing public alarm.																
With weapon(s)					NA	NA	NA									
Without weapon(s)					NA	NA	NA									
Incidents Involving the Possession of Weapons, Drugs, or Alcohol (not reported in Categories 1–16).																
17. Weapons Possession Only: Report incidents where weapons were found through screening at the building entrance separately from other weapons possession incidents.																
17.1. Weapon(s) confiscated through entry screening					NA	NA	NA									
17.2 Weapon(s) found under other circumstances					NA	NA	NA									
18. Use, Possession, or Sale of Drugs					NA	NA	NA	NA								
19. Use, Possession, or Sale of Alcohol					NA	NA	NA	NA								
20. Other Disruptive Incidents: incidents involving disruption to the educational process serious enough to lead to consequence listed in (j-o). These incidents are in violation of the district code of conduct.																

2. Other Information Regarding Intimidation, Harassment, Menacing, or Bullying (not reported in category 10)

Enter number of reports of alleged incidents of intimidation, harassment, menacing, or bullying of students or staff reported to the school principal or other school administrator responsible for student discipline by any source, such as a staff member, student, parent, or other concerned citizen, that did <u>not</u> result in a disciplinary action listed in columns j-o of Item 1 of this form. Do not include incidents reported in category 10	Number of Reports:
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3. Incidents where the Offender is *Not* an Enrolled Student.

Of the total number of incidents reported in categories 1–20, how many referrals involved:	The School of Enrollment	Law Enforcement or Criminal Justice	Other Disciplinary Action
a. Staff (any paid employee of this school or district).....	NA		

b. Other Offenders (not enrolled in or employed by this district)			
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4. Location, Time, and Nature of Incidents

Of the total number of incidents reported in categories 1–20, how many incidents occurred/were:			
a. on school property	<input type="text"/>	c. during regular school hours	<input type="text"/>
b. at school-sponsored function off school grounds	<input type="text"/>	d. before or after regular school hours	<input type="text"/>
		e. gang related	<input type="text"/>
		f. bias related.....	<input type="text"/>
<i>Note: The sum of a.+ b. must equal the sum of c.+ d. Do <u>not</u> report Item 2 counts here.</i>			

5. Weapon Type and Firearms-Related Suspensions

	1. Handguns	2. Rifles/ Shotguns	3. Other Firearms	4. Knives	5. Chemical/ Biological Agents	6. Other Weapons
a. Enter the duplicated number of student offenders reported in categories 1-4, 6-13, 16, and 17 involving each of the following weapons:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parts b) through e) refer only to students who brought a firearm to or possessed a firearm at school.						
b. Of the number of students entered in part a) categories 1-3 above, how many were suspended for one year (180 school days) for bringing a firearm to or for possessing a firearm at school?					General- Education Students	Students with Disabilities
c. Of the students suspended for a firearms incident in part b) above, how many had their suspensions shortened to less than one year?					<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
d. How many students reported in b) were transferred to an alternative education program?					<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
e. How many students reported in c) were transferred to an alternative education program?					<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

6. Victims of Violent Criminal Offenses and Unsafe School Transfers

a. During the 2008-09 school year, how many students were determined by the Superintendent of Schools (or Chief Executive Officer of a charter school) to have been a victim of a violent criminal offense pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act (regardless of when the offense took place)?	<input type="text"/>
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b. Of the students in part a), how many were given the opportunity to transfer to another school in the district, including a charter school?		
c. Of the students in part b), how many accepted the transfer offer and enrolled in another school?		
	Yes	No
d. Was the school on the list of persistently dangerous schools during the 2008-09 school year? If yes, answer parts e) and f).....		
e. If the school has been identified by the State Education Department as a persistently dangerous school, how many students were given the opportunity to transfer to a safe school—including a charter school—within the district or LEA during the 2008-09 school year?		
f. Of the students in part d), how many accepted the transfer offer and enrolled in another school?		

7. Police or Safety Officer in the School

	Yes	No
Is there a police officer or other safety officer present in your school on a regularly scheduled basis?		
If Yes, did that officer provide information used to determine which incidents should be reported and in which categories they should be reported?		

8. Unduplicated Offender Count for Serious Incidents

How many different individuals were offenders in all of the serious incidents (any incident in categories 1-8 plus incidents in categories 9-17 that involved a weapon)? Count each individual only once even if he or she committed numerous offenses in one or more categories. Count unknown offenders as separate individuals.	
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9. Superintendent Certification

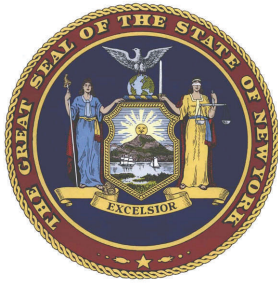
I certify that the data reported here are complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.			
Superintendent Name: _____			
E-mail Address: _____			
Phone: _____	Area Code	Number	Fax: _____
			Area Code
			Number
Date: _____			

Unsafe School Choice Certification:

Is the following statement true?: “This school is in compliance with the unsafe school choice provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.” (See instructions for a description of unsafe school choice provisions.)

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B



September 2009

FACT SHEET

School Safety

“IS MY SCHOOL SAFE?”

When parents send their children to school, they want to be assured that they are in a safe place to learn. The Board of Regents at the New York State Education Department recognizes this concern and Chancellor Tisch has stated: "There is no issue more important to the Regents than ensuring the safety of the children in our schools" (Tisch, 2009). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have also acknowledged this, stating “parents, teachers and administrators expect schools to be safe havens of learning” (CDC, 2008).

As institutions within a larger environmental context, schools are affected by what happens outside their walls. Schools can be safe learning environments by taking actions within the building, such as:

- Promoting supportive relationships between adults and youth,
- Encouraging a positive school climate,
- Enhancing connections between the school and community, and
- Strengthening relationships with parents and guardians.

Key questions arise for all who are part of the school community:

1. How do I know my school is safe?

When trying to determine if your school is safe, it is important to look at sources of data to help define the nature of the problem. Specifically, analyze **school-related** data on Violent and Disruptive Incidents (VADIR) and other student conduct data to provide information on pockets of concern that require attention and program strengths that could be replicated. Consider **community-related** data, such as those on injury, violent death and criminal activity to get a full picture of levels of violence in your school community. Consider supporting this effort by:

- Attending board of education meetings to hear and understand how safety fits with educational planning for your district. This is also an opportunity for you to provide input to those elected to represent you in making decisions about your district.
- Getting involved in your school. Volunteer to serve on your district safety team and building level emergency response team, and/or shared decision making team to have input in the planning process.

- Talking with all members of the school community – teachers, students, parents/guardians, administrators, other staff and members of the community – to gain a broad perspective on your community’s safety.

2. What can I do to ensure we have a safer school environment?

The New York State Education Department recommends steps that can be taken to help in this area. For example:

- Collaboratively develop, review annually and equitably enforce a Code of Conduct
- Collaboratively develop, and review annually, district safety plans and building emergency response plans, and practice with drills, tabletops and functional exercises
- Personalize the school environment
- Implement programs and activities that have a proven record of achieving positive results
- Actively engage and involve students, parents/guardians, and community members in addressing issues; provide easily available contact information
- Ensure that students, teachers, parents/guardians, administrators and other school staff are aware of the warning signs of violence and the need to communicate to others
- Use data to drive your decision-making process

3. How do I find the information I need to do this?

As stated recently by the Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, parents want to know first if their children are safe when they go to school, and then if they are learning (OSDFS 2009 National Conference, Washington, DC). Here are some resources in New York to help you in your work to create safer school environments, and to ensure that optimal learning can happen:

New York State Center for School Safety

<http://nyscenterforschoolsafety.org>

New York State Education Department

www.emsc.nysed.gov/ssae/

New York State School Boards Association

www.nyssba.org

New York State United Teachers

www.nysut.org

New York State Office of Domestic Violence

www.opdv.state.ny.us

New York State PTA

www.nyspta.org

New York State Student Support Services Center

www.nyssscenter.org

School Administrators Association of New York State

www.saanys.org

United States Department of Education

www.ed.gov

Regional Student Support Services Centers

www.emsc.nysed.gov/sss/NetworkCoordinators.html

New York State Council of School Superintendents

www.nyscoss.org

Your District's website

Let's join together to ensure that New York provides safe learning environments for our children and for those who work with them. It is only in safe and secure learning places that children can meet the goals established by the Board of Regents:

1. Every child will get a good start.
2. Every child will read by the second grade.
3. Every student will complete middle level education ready for high school.
4. Every student will graduate from high school ready for work, higher education and citizenship.
5. People who begin higher education will complete their programs.
6. People of all ages who seek more knowledge and skill will have the fullest opportunity to continue their education.

Tisch, Merryl, New York State Board of Regents, New York State Education Department, Press Release August 2009

Center for Disease Control, *Understanding School Violence*, [cited 2008]. Available from URL: www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/.../SchoolViolence_FactSheet-a.pdf

New York State Board of Regents, New York State Education Department, Regents 2008 Board Report.

Appendix C

Trainer Notes and Materials

Introductory Activities

Ground Rules: The trainer may choose to facilitate a group-driven discussion about ground rules to guide the training. The Training Materials section includes a suggested list to begin the discussion.

Safety Self Assessment: The Safety Self Assessment may be used as an ice breaker. The trainer should ask the large group to spend three to five minutes completing the self assessment. The group members should then mingle to find other people who have held each of the roles on the assessment. After eight to ten minutes, the facilitator should ask group members to introduce someone who has served in one of the roles on the assessment.

Chapter 1: Trainer Presentation Points

- Review of the Board of Regent Goals
- Overview of the Five Promises
- Overview of the 10-step GTO Model
- Overview of GTO Step One: Needs and Resource Assessment and GTO Step Two: Setting Goals (Also Team Activity Questions 1 and 2 on Action Plan)
- Brief introductory review of the BDI Logic Model

Team Activity 1: GTO Step One: Needs and Resource Assessment and GTO Step Two: Setting Goals

Each team member will be given a copy of the Action Plan as well as the copy that is included in the manual. At the end of the chapter, the teams should be given 20-30 minutes to discuss the questions that are highlighted in the Action Plan that are specifically related to that chapter's content. (Question 1 and 2 for Chapter 1) The trainer should facilitate a discussion about the teams' answers, and the team members should fill out the specific section of the Action Plan at the end of each discussion. The teams should be given time to discuss and answer the questions highlighted, and fill out the each column identifying the Evaluation Measures and the Timeline/Person Responsible sections.

The objective of having the teams fill out the specific segments of the Action Plan at the end of each chapter is that by the end of the training each team will have developed a completed action plan.

Chapter 2: Trainer Presentation Points

- Importance of using data
- Overview of VADIR
 - Materials: Glossary, Individual Incident Report Form, Summary Report Form
- Overview of Code of Conduct
- Benefits of Data Collection

Team Activity 2: Tell the Data Story

After facilitating the material in Chapter Two, the team will review Activity 2. The trainer should do a brief overview of the VADIR Glossary so that the team is familiar with the descriptions of the categories used in the activity. Ask the team to take 15-20 minutes to review and discuss the data that is presented for each school and to answer the questions that are listed below the chart. Guide the teams in a large group discussion of the questions.

Chapter 3: Trainer Presentation Points

- Brief review of SAVE
- Address importance of school climate and selecting tools best able to assess it.
- Review Knowing Your Science Based Programs; GTO Step Three: Best Practices; and GTO Step Four: Program Fit (Also Team Activity Questions 3 and 4)

Team Activity 3 through 5: GTO Step Three, Four and Five.

The trainer should facilitate teams through the same process as identified in Chapter One. (At the end of the chapter, the teams should be given 20-30 minutes to discuss the questions that are highlighted in the Action Plan that are specifically related to that chapter's content. (Specific highlighted questions on the Action Plan are related to each chapter.) The trainer should facilitate a discussion about the teams' answers, and the team members should fill out the specific section of the Action Plan at the end of each discussion. The teams should be given time

to discuss and answer the questions highlighted, and fill out the each column identifying the Evaluation Measures and the Timeline/Person Responsible sections. By the end of Activity 5, teams should have a completed action plan.

Chapter 4: Trainer Presentation Points

- What are some ways that team members/participants can become involved in making a safer school environment? The Basics: How to get started.
- Discussion of GTO Step Five: Capacity and GTO Step Six: Program Plan.
- Team Activity 4 (Questions 5 and 6 on Action Plan)

Chapter 5: Trainer Presentation Points

- Evaluation: The difference between GTO Step Seven: Process Evaluation (Page 19) and GTO Step Eight: Outcome Evaluation (Page 20)
- Overview of GTO Step Nine: Continuous Process Improvement
- Overview of GTO Step Ten: Program Sustainability
- Team Activity 5 (Questions 7, 8, 9 and 10)

Next Steps: As a closing activity, the trainer should ask each team to identify three “Next Steps” they will take to implement the action plan that they have developed during the course of this training.

Ground Rules

- Be prompt.
- Value others' contributions.
- Be a team player.
- Listen and contribute.
- Relax and be flexible.
- Have a good time!

Safety Self-Assessment

- ☐ I am/have been on my building-level emergency response.
- ☐ I am/have been on my district-wide safety planning team.
- ☐ I know who is on my building/district team.
- ☐ I helped to develop the district-wide Code of Conduct.
- ☐ I am familiar with using data for violence prevention planning.
- ☐ I have played a decision-making role in selecting programs in school.
- ☐ I am familiar with the violence prevention/school safety programs in my school.
- ☐ I have collected data to evaluate programs that have been implemented in my school.

Find a partner and introduce him/her to the group. Tell the group one element of the self-assessment that your partner has checked off.