Go Guardian - Beacon Alerts

The HEB ISD Crisis Intervention and Prevention Team wants to make parents aware that some of our students' online activity is monitored to ensure the safety of your children and others. Our software, Go Guardian Beacon, sends alerts to our team when students are researching and/or having conversations about things of concern such as suicidal ideation, harm to others, bullying, fighting, threats and the like. The Crisis Team (of three mental health professionals) monitors those alerts during work hours and brings concerning activities to the attention of campus counselors, parents, or administration, depending on the level of concern. At this time, grade levels included in this program are: 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th and all of secondary.

We recommend that you continue to be diligent in monitoring what your children search for, and engage in, online. We will continue to notify you, on an as needed basis, of posts that we deem to be concerning.

Threat Assessment Process

In school year 2019-2020 Hurst Euless Bedford ISD launched a multidisciplinary threat assessment team in conjunction with the Crisis Intervention and Prevention Team. The main goal of the threat assessment team is to promote a safe school environment by identifying at-risk students who may present a public safety concern, assess their risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and identify intervention strategies to assist them in being productive students. The Team reviews incidents of threatening behavior by students, both current and former. This team will also review information regarding at risk students or individuals and determine when a student requires help before it escalates to potential violence.

Senate Bill 11 (SB11) (June 2019) enacted Texas Education Code, §37.115 (b), which requires the TEA to adopt rules to establish a Safe and Supportive School Program in coordination with the Texas State School Safety Center (TxSSC).

SB 11 requires public schools to conduct behavioral threat assessments, provide support, collect specific data on their respective SSSP implementation and outcomes, and report this data each year to the TEA.
9 Critical Warning Signs of Violence

Here is a list of nine potential warning signs* that can signal an individual may be in crisis or need help:

1. Suddenly withdrawing from friends, family and activities (including online or via social media)
2. Bullying, especially if targeted towards differences in race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
3. Excessive irritability, lack of patience, or becoming angry quickly
4. Experiencing chronic loneliness or social isolation
5. Expressing persistent thoughts of harming themselves or someone else
6. Making direct threats toward a place, another person, or themselves
7. Bragging about access to guns or weapons
8. Recruiting accomplices or audiences for an attack
9. Directly expressing a threat as a plan

*Notably, in 4 out of 5 school shootings, at least one other person had knowledge of the attacker’s plan but failed to report it.

Talking To Kids About School Safety

School violence and the resulting intense media coverage bring school safety issues to the forefront for all of us. However, children, in particular, may experience anxiety, fear, and a sense of personal risk. Knowing how to talk with your child about school safety issues could be critical in recognizing and preventing acts of violence, and will play an important role in easing fear and anxieties about their personal safety.

To guide parents through discussions about school violence, Mental Health America offers the following suggestions:

- **Encourage children to talk about their concerns and to express their feelings.** For example, they may not understand the term “violence” but can talk to you about being afraid or a classmate who is mean to them.
- **Talk honestly about your own feelings regarding school violence.**
- **Validate the child’s feelings. Do not minimize a child’s concerns.** Let him/her know that serious school violence is not as common as the media portrays.
- **Empower children to take action regarding school safety.** Encourage them to report specific incidents (such as bullying, threats or talk of suicide) and to develop problem solving and conflict resolution skills.
- **Discuss the safety procedures that are in place at your child’s school.** Explain why visitors sign in at the principal’s office or certain doors remain locked during the school day.
- **Create safety plans with your child.** Help identify which adults (a friendly secretary, trusted teacher or approachable administrator) your child can talk to if they feel threatened at school.
- **Recognize behavior that may indicate your child is concerned about returning to school.** Younger children may not want to attend school or participate in activities. Adolescents may minimize their concerns outwardly, but may become argumentative, withdrawn, or allow their school performance to decline.
- **Keep the dialogue going and make school safety a common topic in family discussions rather than just a response to an immediate crisis.**
- **Seek help when necessary.** If you are worried about a child’s reaction or have ongoing concerns about his/her behavior or emotions, contact a mental health professional at school or at a community mental health practice.