

# Frequently Asked Questions: Is the Safe Schools Framework Implementation Toolkit for Me?

## → IS THE FIT FOR ME?

### 1. What is the Safe Schools Framework Implementation Toolkit?

*The Safe Schools Framework Implementation Toolkit (Safe Schools FIT) is designed for use by school- and community-based teams to implement a comprehensive approach to school safety, mental health promotion, and youth violence prevention. Teams based at community mental health agencies and youth-serving organizations working in law enforcement, juvenile justice, and social services can also use it. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#). For more detailed information, read the [Planning a Safe Schools/Healthy Students \[SS/HS\] Initiative in Your School and Community](#).*

### 2. What is the SS/HS Framework?

*The SS/HS Framework was developed as part of the SS/HS Initiative, a federally funded program that ran from 1999 to 2018. The SS/HS Framework helps you and your partners plan, implement, and sustain a comprehensive approach to school safety, mental health promotion, and youth violence prevention. Discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

### 3. Why was the Safe Schools FIT created?

*The Safe Schools FIT was created to help school- and community-based teams plan, implement, and sustain a comprehensive approach to school safety, mental health promotion, and youth violence prevention based on the SS/HS Framework. The Safe Schools FIT has many tools—planning guides, online learning modules, handbooks, worksheets, and podcasts. But you do not need to use all these tools. Use the ones you need when you need them. Your students and your community will benefit. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

### 4. How much does it cost to use the Safe Schools FIT?

*Nothing. The Safe Schools FIT is free for anyone to use. The American Institutes for Research developed the Safe Schools FIT with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

### 5. Does it take a lot of money to implement the SS/HS Framework?

*No. The SS/HS Framework prevents youth violence by improving school safety and promoting mental health. Although funding always helps any prevention effort, having lots of it is not necessary to use the SS/HS Framework. The Framework outlines a systematic, evidence-informed approach to increasing school safety, promoting mental health, and preventing youth violence. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

### 6. Whom can I contact for help or more information about the Safe Schools FIT?

*Training and technical assistance are available from the American Institutes for Research, the team that developed the Safe Schools FIT with funding from SAMHSA. For more information, contact [healthysafechildren@air.org](mailto:healthysafechildren@air.org).*

## → I WORK FOR A STATE AGENCY ...

### 1. How can I use the Safe Schools FIT in my state?

*Use the Safe Schools FIT to plan, implement, and evaluate school safety, mental health, and violence prevention policies, programs, and practices. The Safe Schools FIT is organized into three phases: (1) plan, (2) implement, and (3) sustain and expand. But it is designed to help you regardless of where you are in the process. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

### 2. Can the Safe Schools FIT help us improve coordination and create efficiencies across the various federal grants that our state has to address student mental health and well-being?

*Yes, see the [Aligning and Integrating SS/HS Initiatives with Your Prevention Program Workbook](#).*

### 3. Can the Safe Schools FIT help our state sustain these programs, which often end when the funding stops?

*Yes, the SS/HS Framework emphasizes sustainability from the very beginning. To learn more about sustainability, see the [Sustaining and Expanding a SS/HS Initiative in Your School and Community with Support from the State](#) guide.*

### 4. In our state, knowledge about youth mental health varies widely in schools. Can the Safe Schools FIT help our school-based teams learn more about youth mental health?

*Yes, your teams would benefit from the Safe Schools FIT, especially these online learning modules: [Introduction to Comprehensive School Mental Health](#), [Preparing to Implement Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings](#), and [Preparing to Implement a Comprehensive School Mental Health Program](#).*

## → I WORK FOR A COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION/FOUNDATION ...

### 1. As family leaders and advocates, we are trying to educate policy makers about the need for more school safety and mental health programs to better meet the needs of our children and youth. Will the Safe Schools FIT help us do this?

*Yes, the Safe Schools FIT can help you inform and educate policy makers about the benefits of supporting school-based mental health promotion and youth violence prevention programs. To learn more, see the [Introduction to Strategic Communication Planning](#) online learning module or the [Strategic Communication Planning for Success and Sustainability](#) workbook.*

### 2. Our foundation would like to help our schools incorporate school-based mental health. Can the Safe Schools FIT help us do this?

*Yes, the Safe Schools FIT can help you work with your local schools to plan, implement, and evaluate school safety and mental health promotion policies, programs, and practices. To learn more, see [Sustaining and Expanding a SS/HS Initiative in Your School and Community with Support from the State](#) guide.*

For more information on how any state, community, or school district can create safer learning environments using the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Framework and the Framework Implementation Toolkit, visit:

[www.healthysafekids.org](http://www.healthysafekids.org)

## → I WORK FOR A LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION ...

### 1. Who should use the Safe Schools FIT at the local community level?

*The Safe Schools FIT was developed for school district superintendents; principals; school-based counselors, psychologists, and social workers; community mental health agency staff members; and local and county government staff members. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

### 2. As superintendents and administrators, we know that some of our students are dealing with emotional issues, are at risk of substance abuse and violence, and have untreated mental disorders. Will the Safe Schools FIT help us select effective programs to help them?

*Yes, the Safe Schools FIT can help you plan, implement, and evaluate a large number of evidence-based and evidence-informed mental health promotion and youth violence prevention programs. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or take the learning module, [Introduction to Comprehensive School Mental Health](#).*

### 3. As a principal, I have noticed that our staff do not have a clear understanding of the benefits of school-based mental health services for our students. Can the Safe Schools FIT help?

*Yes, the Safe Schools FIT can help you and your staff learn more about the benefits of school-based mental health programs. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or take the learning module, [Introduction to Comprehensive School Mental Health](#).*

### 4. At our local community mental health agency, we are having some challenges working with our local schools. Can the Safe Schools FIT help us improve these relationships?

*Yes, the Safe Schools FIT can help community agencies and schools partner more successfully on mental health promotion programs. See the [Resource Guide to Building Family-Driven Partnerships with Schools](#) or listen to the podcast, [Creating Meaningful Partnerships with Youth](#).*

### 5. On our local school board, some members think that our schools are always asking for more resources for mental health. Can the Safe Schools FIT help us better communicate to the community the importance and benefits of school mental health programs?

*Yes, the Safe Schools FIT can help you inform and engage policy makers and administrators about the benefits of a comprehensive approach to school safety, mental health promotion, and youth violence prevention. See the workbook, [Strategic Communication Planning for Success and Sustainability](#) or the online learning module, [Developing Your Communication Strategy](#).*

## → I AM A POLICY MAKER LOOKING FOR A BETTER WAY TO PREVENT VIOLENCE ...

### 1. My constituents want to do something more to prevent the violence in our schools and communities. Can the Safe Schools FIT help us?

*Yes. The SS/HS Framework and the Safe Schools FIT are designed to help any community get started on a comprehensive approach to improving school safety, promoting mental health, and preventing youth violence. The Safe Schools FIT is based on the experience of more than 380 communities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia that have implemented policies, programs, and practices to do just that. Watch the [video](#), read the [overview](#), or discover the [SS/HS Framework](#).*

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## → TOPICS IN THE Safe Schools FIT

### For States

State-Level Collaboration: Education, Mental Health, and Other Child-Serving Systems

Logic Model and Project Management Plan

Statewide Implementation of Safe Schools/Healthy Students Framework

State Behavioral Health Disparity Impact Statement and Strategy

Statewide School Mental Health Program and Policy

Program Evaluation

State Sustainability and Expansion

Strategic Communications

Statewide Technical Assistance on School Mental Health

Leadership

Comprehensive Planning

### For Communities

Effective School and Community Partnerships

Local Needs Assessment and Environmental Scan

Behavioral Health Disparity Analysis and Strategy

Project Logic Model and Action Plan

Early Childhood Mental Health

Trauma-Informed Care in Tribal Communities

Comprehensive School Mental Health

Selecting Evidence-Based Prevention Programs

Safe and Violence-Free Schools

Program Evaluation

Meaningful Family Engagement in Schools

Youth Partnerships

Strategic Communications

Local Training and Technical Assistance on School Mental Health

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