

SPEAK UP CUMBERLAND COUNTY



Why an anonymous hotline?

- In 81% of school shootings, the attacker tells someone about his/her plans before committing a violent act. (*US Secret Service Safe Schools Initiative, 2002*)
- 83% of middle school students would report a classmate with a weapon if they could do so anonymously. (*Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 2007*)

1-866-SPEAK-UP provides a mechanism for students to anonymously report what they know without the fear of their identities being revealed, 24/7/365.

What happens when someone calls 1-866-SPEAK-UP?

When a Cumberland County student calls 1-866-SPEAK-UP, he/she is connected with a professional counselor, who immediately reminds the caller that the call is anonymous.

The counselor then asks the caller a series of questions developed in partnership with law enforcement and education experts. The script is designed to encourage the caller to provide as much information as possible about the threat so a useful report can be conveyed to the authorities. In every call, the counselor confirms that the threat is not an emergency, reminding the caller to call 911 in that event.

How does the texting work?

A customized text keyword will be created for Cumberland County schools. As in a call to the Hotline, the texter is connected with a live counselor. The counselor then interactively texts with the student to collect more information about the threat.

Who are the counselors who handle the texts and calls?

77% of the counselors hold a Masters level degree and/or are licensed, credentialed counselors/social workers. 70% of the counselors work in a full-time professional capacity in the arena of social work/counseling outside of their Hotline position.

What happens after the conversation? How is the information conveyed to the authorities?

After the caller hangs up, the counselor generates a written report from the verbal or texted conversation. The counselor will then call Cumberland County Schools' Safety and Security Coordinator Bruce Morrison or the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office Watch Commander who will contact school personnel and the necessary authorities. Each call will relay the threat information and is immediately followed by an email of the written report.

Where can I get more information?

Please visit www.speakup.com or call 1-800-983-4275 ext. 4152.