

From Awareness to Recovery: A Whole-Child Safety Approach

Bark supports a practical framework for building resilient school communities using prevention, intervention, and postvention.



“We rely on student voices, strong partnerships, and evolving protocols to keep our community safe mentally and physically.”

Jon Widmier, prevention coordinator, Littleton Public School Districts

A Comprehensive Student Safety Approach: The Littleton School District Case Study

Here are the key takeaways for building safer, more connected school communities.

PREVENTION: Proactive connection and education

“Prevention is creating a sense of belonging.”

- **Cross-team collaboration** between IT, safety, special education, and administrators is essential.
- **Student input matters:** A mental health advisory board gives feedback on programming.
- **Teach brain-based coping skills** for navigating tough emotions and trauma.
- **Model well-being:** Staff are trained to show digital and emotional resilience.
- **Encourage anonymous reporting** to uplift student voice safely.
- **Watch digital behavior trends.** Keep an eye on issues like switching platforms when phones are banned.
- **Stay curious:** Regularly review what’s working and share wins with staff.

INTERVENTION: Structured, strategic response

- **Use clear protocols:** Threat assessments, suicide prevention, and behavior plans.
- **Engage families** with transparency and ongoing communication.
- **Weekly behavior reviews** across departments improve real-time awareness.
- **Combine technology and teamwork** between administrators, IT, counselors, and security.
- **Offer multiple ways to report concerns.**
- Use **community resources** like therapy referrals and parent programs.
- **Document thoroughly** and escalate based on set procedures.

POSTVENTION: Recovery and healing

- **Support staff** with check-ins — often overlooked but vital.
- **Empower students** to seek help in ways that work for them.
- Provide **mental health resources** and training for staff and students.
- Keep **families in the loop** with clear, proactive updates.
- **Debrief after incidents** and evolve protocols.
- **Collaborate with peer districts** to strengthen collective learning.

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Key **success factors** from Littleton:

Collective resourcing:

No single department can handle student safety alone

Student voice:

Authentic student input drives effective programming

Adaptive systems:

Flexibility to adjust as technology and threats evolve

Technology awareness:

Understanding how students actually communicate

Environment pulse:

Constant awareness of school climate and culture

Adult modeling:

Staff as exemplars of healthy behavior and reliable support

Implementation tips:

- Use student voices throughout.
- Emphasize brain-based instruction and keep a pulse on mental wellness.
- Use human intelligence to continue to iterate.
- Train staff to be consistent, calm responders.
- Celebrate wins — positive reinforcement sustains culture.

**Build a smarter safety ecosystem today,
contact sales@bark.us to get started.**