Glossary

Sworn versus unsworn campus safety: Sworn officers have full arrest powers granted by a state or local government. Unsworn officers do not have the ability to arrest and serve in the capacity of a security officer.

The Clery Act: Signed into law in 1990, requires institutions of higher education that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near campus.

Threat Assessment: A fact-based method of assessment/investigation that focuses on an individual’s patterns of thinking and behavior to determine whether, and to what extent, he or she is moving toward an attack on an identifiable target (Borum et al., 1999).

FERPA: Acronym for Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. This federal law governs the gathering, maintenance, and accessibility of educational records. Schools need written permission from the student to release records. Schools may disclose records, without consent, to certain parties under specific conditions, including complying with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, to appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies, and to state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

Stalking: A cluster of behaviors, including unwanted communication, approach, or other contact, usually intended to threaten, coerce, or intimidate the target into meeting the demands of the perpetrator (Kopp, Hart & Lyon, 2002). It is important to review stalking laws in your jurisdiction to ensure you know the legal definition and specific behaviors listed in the law.

Bureau of Justice Statistics; Bulling, Denise and Scalora, Mario, “Threat Assessment Glossary” (2013).

Suggested Resources

JED Foundation: Non-profit focused on mental health and campus suicide prevention. www.jedfoundation.org

The Clery Center: Provides education and training in relation to the Clery Act. www.clerycenter.org

Chronicle of Higher Education: Maintains updated tracker of universities under government investigation for possible mishandling of reports of sexual violence.

Association of Threat Assessment Professionals: Researchers, law enforcement, mental health experts in violence prevention. ATAPworldwide.org

IACLEA: Professional association and training opportunities for campus law enforcement. iaclea.org

The Gift of Fear: And Other Survival Signs that Protect Us from Violence, Gavin de Becker, 1998.

Building a Culture of Campus Safety

Strategies and key questions for parents, prospective and current university students, as a tool to be informed about campus safety climate, and how to be partners in prevention.

The Koshka Foundation for Safe Schools is a 501 c3 non-profit, with a mission to increase individual and community preparedness for violence prevention, response and recovery following trauma. We welcome your feedback, questions and comments regarding this brochure.

Please email hello@koshkafoundation.org or visit www.koshkafoundation.org.
A shared responsibility

College campuses are unique environments - balancing academic and research pursuits with social and community events over large areas. Due to the sheer size and the fact that colleges do not exist within a concrete “bubble”, it is important to understand that at times, personal conflict, threats, or targeted pursuits permeate. Universities accept the challenge and role to keep their students, staff, educators and visitors safe through the roles and policies of various departments that are both directly and indirectly in leadership (Campus Safety; Student Affairs, Housing & Residence Life; Emergency Management) For students and their families, this abbreviated guide hopes to share opening questions and suggestions for how to build a better framework of understanding how their college campuses answers to the call of maintaining safety and promoting resiliency.

Questions for Public Safety

- What is the strength of the department’s relationship and training with local city police, fire and hospital agencies?

- What are the most common safety issues and concerns that you see on campus? Off-campus? Can you share recent examples?

- In the most recent academic year, how did the university use its mass notification system? Are parents allowed to subscribe to it?

- How many people are employed by the department? Is the police department a sworn or accredited law enforcement agency?

Tips & Tricks

- Read the school website to understand the offerings of public safety resources and available trainings. Read the most recent Annual Security Report (PDF) available through Public Safety website.

- Follow on social media: university student newspaper, official Public Safety Department, local news agencies. Conduct a web search for past news stories relating to student wellness, security and local crime incidents.

- Interview individuals with roles that contribute to safety, such as: The Dean of Students; Chief of Police; Campus Law Enforcement Officer, Title IX Coordinator, Emergency Manager, Counseling Director. This may be done during a campus visit, or scheduled for a telephone call.

- Encourage your student to subscribe to mass notification systems.

Where does crime occur?


- Dorm room or apartment
- Instructional Area (classroom, office, laboratories)
- Common Area (hallway, stairwell, restroom)