

Youth use anonymous reporting system for firearm-related threats, says report

January 18 2024, by Elana Gotkine



Anonymous reporting systems are used by youth to submit firearm-related tips on threats, which most often involve a potential school shooting, according to a report [published](#) online Jan. 17 in *Pediatrics*.

Elyse J. Thulin, Ph.D., from Michigan Medicine in Ann Arbor, and colleagues examined data from the "Say Something Anonymous Report System" (SS-ARS), which seeks to increase citizen awareness and empowerment to [report](#) potentially dangerous items, events, and behaviors, from a Southeastern state implementing SS-ARS in all 103 [school districts](#) across four academic years (2019 to 2023).

The researchers found that 18,024 unique tips were reported across the four academic years; 9.8 percent of these tips referenced one or more firearm-related terms.

Firearm-related tips included potential school shootings and seeing or knowing of a weapon (38.2 and 22.5 percent, respectively), intent for [interpersonal violence](#) and bullying or cyberbullying (8.9 and 3.2 percent, respectively), suicide, a planned fight or assault, [gang violence](#), and harassment or intimidation (3.2, 3.1, 3.0, and 2.4 percent, respectively).

Non-firearm-related tips mainly concerned bullying/harassment (19.7 percent) or mental health. More than half (51.1 percent) of firearm-related tips were classified as life-threatening, which was five times higher than the proportion of non-firearm-related tips.

Notification of parents (39.0 percent), school disciplinary or nondisciplinary actions (22.2 and 19.5 percent, respectively), police welfare checks (15.6 percent), and continued monitoring by school personnel (15.1 percent) were the most common outcomes.

"The urgency of firearm-related tips highlights the need to educate families on firearm violence prevention and ensure support and response protocols for [school systems](#)," the authors write.

More information: Elyse J. Thulin et al, Firearm-Related Tips in a

Statewide School Anonymous Reporting System, *Pediatrics* (2024). DOI: [10.1542/peds.2023-063861](https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2023-063861)

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