2018-2019

ANNUAL REPORT

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OVERVIEW

The SafeUT smartphone app is a free statewide service that provides real-time crisis intervention to Utah's students, parents, and educators. SafeUT was developed by the legislatively created SafeUT Commission (the Commission), chaired by the Utah Attorney General's Office. SafeUT allows students in crisis to open a two-way messaging service with licensed clinicians, call a crisis counselor directly, or submit confidential tips to school administrators on bullying, threats, violence, etc. The app is staffed by trained crisis counselors at the University Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI) 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Far More Than an App

SafeUT is far more than an app; it is a mental health system that acts to provide professional help for youth in crisis. Crisis help can be provided through texting, which factors into SafeUT's success with youth more comfortable texting than talking on a phone. Use is confidential, and crisis line counselors do not inquire about identifying information except in emergency situations. SafeUT has been recognized nationwide for its effectiveness in saving lives and de-escalating potential school incidents. The Commission is currently working with several states to implement similar programs.

ENROLLMENT & CHATS AND TIPS RECEIVED

Enrolled schools are listed within the SafeUT app and school administrators are trained to handle submitted tips received through the app. At the end of the 2018-2019 academic school year, 81.73% of all Utah K-12 schools and Universities (including public, private, and charter) have been enrolled in SafeUT. All tips submitted through the app are immediately reviewed by UNI staff. Non-urgent tips are sent daily to the appropriate school administrators, and tips of a more threatening nature (including violence or planned school attacks) are triaged by crisis counselors who may involve law enforcement and administrators to quickly resolve the crisis. During the 2018-2019 academic school year, the SafeUT app received tips about 245 unique potential school threats, which includes reports of explosives, guns, knives, and planned school attacks.

804
total Utah schools enrolled in the SafeUT app.

81.73%
of total Utah K-12 schools & Universities enrolled

"THE SAFEUT APP SEEMS TO BE WORKING QUITE WELL; EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF A MODERN SOLUTION FOR SOLVING A MODERN DILEMMA."

Comment on a 2019 KSL article regarding potential school shooting in Bountiful, UT

734,587
STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO THE APP

82.20%
of K-12 public schools enrolled

40.13%
of K-12 private schools enrolled

83.76%
of K-12 charter schools enrolled

82.53%
of universities enrolled*

*BYU, Westminster, & LDS Business College have yet to enroll

HISTORY

Exploring Solutions

After studying the issue, the Utah Attorney General's Office and Senator Thatcher proposed legislation in 2014 to form a commission to explore solutions. The legislation passed and the commission was led to the University Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI), already renowned for their excellence in crisis call support. In 2015, the School Safety and CrisisLine legislation (SB 175) sponsored by Sen. Daniel Thatcher and Rep. Steve Eliason passed the Utah State Legislature designating UNI as the crisis services provider and creating an active commission, chaired out of the Attorney General's office, for implementation. The SafeUT app began rolling out to Utah junior high, middle, and high schools in early 2016.

Development & Expansion

The SafeUT program was developed with funding from the Utah State Legislature in collaboration with the Utah Attorney General's Office, the University Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI) and UHealth, the Utah State Board of Education, and the Utah Anti-Bullying Coalition.

In 2018, SafeUT expanded to Utah higher ed institutions and Utah technical colleges. In 2019, SafeUT has plans to expand services to the Utah National Guard.

SafeUT enables a student to call or send a text message chat in a messaging platform inside the app to a SafeUT counselor, or submit a confidential tip to school administrators on concerns like bullying, threats, or violence.

NUMBER OF CHATS & TIPS RECEIVED FROM AUGUST 1, 2018 TO MAY 31, 2019

20,197
TOTAL CHATS

12,221
TOTAL TIPS

POTENTIAL SCHOOL THREAT TIPS

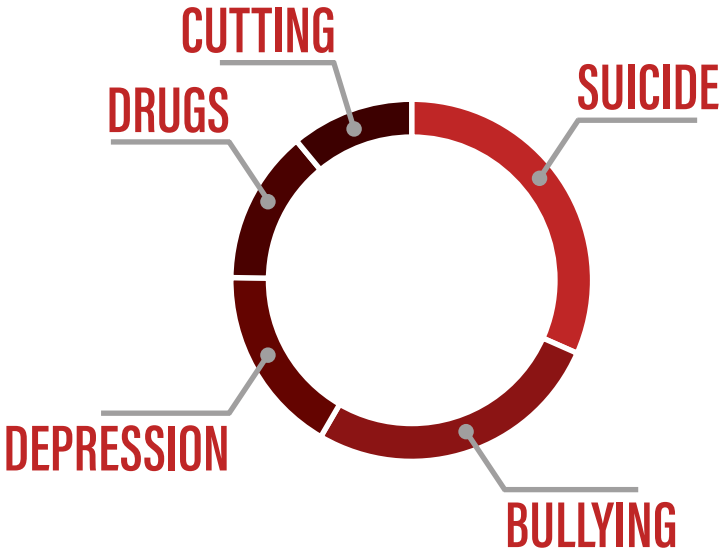
245
potential school threats received

318
verified tips

THREAT TIPS COVERED

EXPLOSIVES
GUNS
KNIVES
PLANNED SCHOOL ATTACKS
WEAPONS

TOP 5 TIP TOPICS



SUCCESS STORIES

A HUNDRED THANK YOU'S

"A young LGBTQ+ student came to our booth and whispered to me, 'Do you actually work with SafeUT or are you a volunteer?' I responded that I do work here and he continued to tear up and tell me, "Thank you, thank you, thank you, a hundred thank you's, you saved my life, I wouldn't be here without you," and proceeded to hug me and continue to thank me. He said he used the app when he was at his lowest and thanks to our advice and resources he has been able to get help and support."
A SafeUT worker

POTENTIAL SCHOOL THREAT

Multiple tips came in about a potential school threat. SafeUT, working in collaboration with local authorities and the school, verified the tips. Police were sent to the student's home where they found homemade pipe bombs in various stages of completion.
SafeUT Team

SAVING LIVES

"SafeUT is a wonderful resource, I personally credit SafeUT as the reason we haven't had a suicide in our district in a number of years. If you don't take anything else away from this meeting, please know that you all are saving lives."
Sam Rey, Superintendent of North Sanpete

GRATITUDE

A VP of Students expressed his gratitude for SafeUT. He showed SafeUT an email conversation between himself and a student where he introduced the SafeUT app as a resource. The student proceeded to tell the VP that he was using it, chatting, and really getting the support and grounding techniques he needed. The student's father thanked SafeUT profusely for saving his son's life.
SafeUT Team

AWARDS

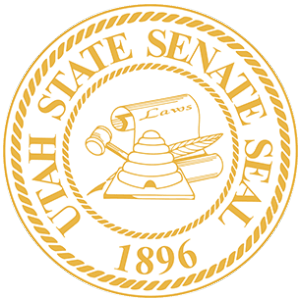
2019 Best of State Award
Best Web-based Community Resource

2019 UHIMSS Award
Innovative Project of the Year

2018 Best of State BOSS Award
Community Development

2018 Best of State Award
Best Web-based Community Service

HIMSS UTAH Chapter



utah department of
human services

UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Building a Stronger State of Minds℠

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Utah Attorney General's Office

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Utah Public Education System

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Representative of the Public

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Staff to the Commission

SAFE UT

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