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## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT Receives More Than 1,500 Contacts During First Year of Operation**

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today announced that the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of School Safety (OSS) received more than 1,500 contacts to the SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT (SUSO) threat reporting system during its first year of its operation.

“Speak Up, Speak Out is an effective, confidential resource for students, school staff, and other members of school communities to use to help keep students in Wisconsin safe,” said Attorney General Kaul. “Thank you to those who provided tips over the past year, as well as the many people in Wisconsin schools and law enforcement who have responded to help students.”

Since launching on September 1, 2020, 80 percent of Wisconsin schools have provided contact information for the SUSO platform. During that time, SUSO has received 1,588 contacts. Tips reported to SUSO get referred to schools and/or law enforcement depending on the context of the tip. Over the past year, 216 different schools have received at least one tip referred from SUSO, and 62 different law enforcement agencies have received at least one tip.

SUSO has helped students address problems that range from suicidal thoughts, to drug and alcohol abuse, to physical abuse. SUSO Resource Center staff work around-the-clock to respond to tips and to deploy a response locally by communicating directly with school administrators, law enforcement, and counselors.

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Examples of tips over the past year include:

- ❖ A tipster shared that a friend mentioned wanting to commit suicide. A welfare check was made, parents were notified of the situation, and the student was offered mental health counseling.
- ❖ A tipster shared that a student showed evidence of self-harm and had spoken about hurting themselves. A school resource officer spoke with the student and connected them to mental health resources and support.
- ❖ A tipster shared that a student had been posting revealing videos on social media and talked about having body image issues, depression and family problems with alcohol and drug abuse. A welfare check was conducted and the student received counseling.

Students, parents, school staff, or any community members can submit a school safety concern or threat via the SUSO website, mobile phone application, or toll-free number.

SUSO Reports can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- ❖ Online at [speakup.widj.gov](https://speakup.widj.gov)
- ❖ 1-800-MY-SUSO-1 (1-800-697-8761)
- ❖ Mobile app ([iOS/Android](#))

Learn more about the SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT Resource Center:

- ❖ Website: <https://speakup.widj.gov/>
- ❖ Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SpeakUpWI/>
- ❖ Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/speakupwi/>
- ❖ Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SpeakUpWI>

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