

Introduction to the School Assessment Checklist

Purpose of the Checklist

The Checklist on pages 14 and 15 is a tool to gather information about your school across a variety of safe school areas such as the presence of safe school intervention strategies and the knowledge of safe school policies by staff and students. It has been designed to guide discussion and thinking at your school about the quality and nature of the strategies in place that contribute to a safe school. The Checklist contains 41 items that show the many components that contribute to a safe and well-functioning school. Using it will enable school staff, students, parents and others to assess school needs, identify the stage that characterizes the school, and also identify next steps.

Completing the Checklist

Each school should decide the best way to complete the School Assessment Checklist. How you approach this important activity at your school depends on a number of factors including:

- what you hope to accomplish with the exercise
- the level of expertise and interest at the school
- current level of staff, student, and community involvement
- the time available, and
- how urgent the problems are.

The research project identified two common approaches:

1. Based on extensive knowledge of the school and several years' experience there, some principals chose to complete the checklist on their own as the starting point for discussion at the school.
2. Other schools chose to provide a copy of the checklist to all members of the school team. Team members assessed each item either individually or as part of a group. The results were analyzed to come up with an overall assessment.

No matter how you complete the Checklist, it will provide important information and direction as school staff, safe school committees and partners work towards identifying needs and sustaining improvement.