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See Something, Say Something

Rules of Thumb

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See Something, Say Something

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano traveled to Dallas earlier this month to personally inspect the massive security operation surrounding the 45th Super Bowl game and to announce the “If You See Something, Say Something” campaign.

“We are partnering this year with the NFL on our ‘If You See Something, Say Something’ campaign and launching that NFL partnership right here at the Super Bowl,” Napolitano said during a press conference at Cowboy Stadium in Arlington, Texas where the game was played. “The idea is simple,” Napolitano said. “We are simply asking the American people to be vigilant, recognizing that our security is a shared responsibility that all of us must participate in.”

“If a fan at the Super Bowl or any other American at any other place sees something that is potentially dangerous, then say something about it to local law enforcement or someone in authority,” Napolitano said. (Excerpted from CNS News, February 5, 2011)

This isn't an original idea; "see something, say something" has become a mantra in many organizations. When we consider the facts that come to light in the aftermath of any widely-publicized act of violence, there are usually signs that something was amiss. Often we think, "If only the teacher/principal/social worker/doctor had warned someone..." Well, that's the idea exactly behind **See Something, Say Something**. If something doesn't seem right, tell someone -- your supervisor, an administrator, Security.

Please share this idea with students and others who have an interest in keeping our campus safe.

Rules of Thumb for Reporting

Great! See Something, Say Something. I can do that! Wait a minute...exactly what kinds of things should prompt me to say something? Good question.

Few of us would have trouble identifying certain things that should be reported: a fight in the parking lot, a suspicious package, a fire in Dennis DuBuc's office (well, maybe). What is a little more difficult to spot are those less tangible symptoms that something is wrong with the people around us – those mental and emotional issues that can derail the individual and, potentially, bring harm to others.

So how should you apply "See Something, Say Something" to those situations? Here are some simple guidelines:

- Severe social withdrawal/feelings of isolation
- Being a victim of crime or cruelty
- Threats of violence toward self or others (including animals)
- Angry outbursts
- Deteriorating performance and/or appearance
- Bullying behavior
- Known substance abuse
- Brandishing a weapon

Not every person who exhibits one or more of these traits is dangerous. Consequently, a report of such behavior does not necessarily mean that individual will be suspended, arrested, or otherwise disciplined. In fact, more often than not, such a report could be just the trigger for getting the right kind of help for someone who truly needs it.

