



# School Safety Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 2

September 2017

## **Breaking Bad - Obsessed 15-year old 'School Gunman' Simulated Shootings on YouTube: Teen Posted Videos 'Before Killing Hero Best Friend Who Tried to Stop Him and Wounding Three Girls in Rampage'**

The Daily Mail, September 14, 2017

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4881568/1-dead-3-injured-Washington-state-high-school-shooting.html>

- Caleb Sharpe allegedly walked into Freeman High School in Rockford, Washington, and opened fire
- Police say the teenager shot one boy in the head, then hit three girls while firing down the corridor
- A classmate said the suspect brought notes at the start of the year, saying he would do 'something stupid'
- Michael Harper, a sophomore at the school, also said Sharpe had many friends and wasn't bullied
- He described him as 'nice and funny and weird' and a huge fan of the TV show 'Breaking Bad'
- Around a month before the attack, Sharpe posted a bizarre video of himself shooting a toy gun
- Sam Strahan, 15, was shot in the head as he tried to stop the gunman from killing their classmates
- On Wednesday, he was stopped by hero custodian Joe Bowen who got him to stop shooting before police arrived

A 15-year-old boy who allegedly opened fire on his high school classmates, and killed his best friend, simulated shootings in bizarre YouTube videos and was known to post violent messages on social media.

Caleb Sharpe walked into Freeman High School in Rockford, Washington, on September 13, 2017 morning, armed with a rifle and a handgun, and started shooting, police say. A boy, identified by witnesses as Sam Strahan, was shot in the head and killed when he confronted Sharpe in the hallway to try to stop the attack before it began. Sharpe then gunned down and wounded three girls as students frantically ran down the corridors screaming.

A member of staff then heroically stepped in and put an end to the rampage, authorities have said. Students said the second floor, next to the school's biology labs, was left covered in blood.



**Victim: Sam Strahan (left) was killed as he tried to stop the shooter. The 15-year-old's father Scott (with him left) died earlier this year in a car accident. High school custodian Joe Bowen (right with his wife) convinced the gunman to stop shooting**

*Protecting our  
future through  
information  
sharing*

### In This Issue

- Breaking Bad - Obsessed 15-year old 'School Gunman' Simulated Shootings on YouTube: Teen Posted Videos 'Before Killing Hero Best Friend Who Tried to Stop Him and Wounding Three Girls in Rampage'
- Next Monthly Webinar - October 4, 2017
- What Parents [And Schools] Need to Know About Sarahah, The Anonymous Messaging App Sweeping the Globe
- States' Roles in Keeping Schools Safe: Opportunities and Challenges for State School Safety Centers and Other Actors
- Summary of School Safety Statistics
- A Tweet Worth A Thousand Words...

## **Breaking Bad - Obsessed 15-year old 'School Gunman' Simulated Shootings on YouTube: Teen Posted Videos 'Before Killing Hero Best Friend Who Tried to Stop Him and Wounding Three Girls in Rampage' (Continued)**

Terrified students were seen in photos hiding under desks in classrooms as the school was placed on lockdown. Sharpe was then apprehended and taken to a juvenile detention facility.

Michael Harper, a 15-year-old sophomore, said the suspect had brought notes in the beginning of the school year, saying he was going to do 'something stupid' and might get killed or jailed.

Harper said the shooter had many friends and was not bullied, calling him 'nice and funny and weird' and a huge fan of the TV show 'Breaking Bad.' He also said the suspect was obsessed with other school shootings.

Around a month before the attack, Sharpe posted a strange footage of himself shooting a toy gun. He added sound effects and graphics simulating gun blasts to the clip to make it appear more realistic.

The three wounded students were rushed to hospital and are expected to survive.

The shooter brought two weapons to Freeman High School in Rockford, south of Spokane, but the first one he tried to fire jammed, Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich told reporters. 'He went to his next weapon,' Knezovich said. 'A student walked up to him, engaged him, and that student was shot. That student did not survive.'

The sheriff said the shooter fired more rounds down the hallway, striking the other students, before a school custodian approached the shooter and ordered him to surrender, Knezovich said. Knezovich called it a courageous act that prevented further bloodshed. The sheriff said a deputy who works as a school resource officer arrived shortly thereafter and took the shooter into custody.

Elisa Vigil, a 14-year-old freshman, said she saw one male student shot in the head who janitors covered with a cloth and another female student wounded in the back.

Harper said Sharpe had been watching documentaries about other school shootings before Wednesday's incident.

'One of my best friends brought a gun in a duffel bag to school and I guess three people were shot and one was killed and we all hid in the corner of our home room,' Harper said. 'We were all crying and texting. We heard the gunshot and heard everyone running and screaming.'

One student said Sharpe sent him photographs of a school shooting documentary he'd been watching recently but that he never imagined he would ever commit such violence.

'I was thinking that maybe it wasn't my friend but then I had an idea it was all the documentaries he's been watching and thinking he sent me a picture on Snapchat when we were talking and it was a documentary and I was like: 'There's no way he could do this!' Now I'm thinking he might actually have gone through with it.'

The shooting sent worried parents to the school in a frenzied rush, authorities said.

Brian Schaeffer of the Spokane Fire Department said the shooting was especially hard for first responders, many of whom have children at the school.

A two-lane road into the community of about 500 people near the Idaho border was clogged with vehicles. Some people abandoned their cars on the street to make it to their children.

Cheryl Moser said her son, a freshman at Freeman High School, called her from a classroom after hearing shots fired. 'He called me and said, 'Mom, there are gunshots.' He sounded so scared. I've never heard him like that,' Moser told The Spokesman-Review newspaper. 'You never think about something happening like this at a small school.'

Authorities didn't immediately release the ages of the victims.

Stephanie Lutje told The Associated Press that she was relieved to hear her son was safe after his high school near Freeman was put on lock down. She commended the school district for its communication. 'It's been amazing, within probably 15-20 minutes of hearing about it, I'd already received a phone call, I'd already received a text message saying that their school is OK,' she said.

She still worried for others she knew, including a co-worker who had yet to hear from her son, a sophomore at Freeman. 'My stomach's in knots right now,' she said.

Gov. Jay Inslee said in a statement that 'all Washingtonians are thinking of the victims and their families, and are grateful for the service of school staff and first responders working to keep our students safe.'

## **Monthly Webinars!**

**First Wednesday of Every Month**

**at 10 am**

**(Except January, July, and August).**

## **Next Webinars**

**Wednesday, October 4, 2017**

Each webinar has a round table discussion at the end. Questions are always welcome!

To participate, you must be a vetted member. For more information please email [schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us](mailto:schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us)

# What Parents [And Schools] Need to Know About Sarahah, The Anonymous Messaging App

## Sweeping the Globe

Huffington Post, August 22, 2017

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/everything-you-need-to-know-about-sarahah-the-anonymous\\_us\\_599b51eee4b0ac90f2cba943?ncid=engmodushpimg00000004](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/everything-you-need-to-know-about-sarahah-the-anonymous_us_599b51eee4b0ac90f2cba943?ncid=engmodushpimg00000004)

With so many social networks to keep track of, it's not surprising if you haven't heard of an app called Sarahah, which has millions of users and a teen fanbase. So what is Sarahah exactly?

Sarahah is a free social media app that lets you receive comments from friends and strangers anonymously. You can also comment on friends' and strangers' profiles without them knowing it's you. The app's name means "honesty," roughly, in Arabic, and was supposedly designed to allow employees to share feedback with each other anonymously. With a way to connect the app to Snapchat, teens have taken to the platform, and it now has millions of users and has risen to the top of the App Store in several countries.

Read Common Sense Media's full review of Sarahah, and help your kids use it safely — if at all — with answers to parents' most frequently asked questions below.

What is Sarahah?

Sarahah is an anonymous feedback app that teens are using to pass anonymous digital notes to each other. The app lets you create a profile and works as an add-on to the popular social networking app Snapchat. Drawing upon the contact list on your phone, it lets you connect with friends and send anonymous comments to them. It also lets you search for users and send anonymous messages to them as well, even if you don't know them.

How safe is Sarahah?

Users can choose not to have their name or profile picture appear in the app's search or receive messages from unregistered users, but they must opt out to make this happen. If they don't, the name and photo they use to register will appear if other users search for them.

How does Sarahah work?

Sarahah is a very simple app. Once you register with a username and password, you can share your profile link on any social platforms and ask that people use the link to give you feedback. People can type anything anonymously and it will be delivered to you through the app or site. You can also give feedback on others. You can find people to comment on by using the search function or a direct link.

Is Sarahah appropriate for kids?

Sarahah is easy to use, so kids won't have any trouble figuring out how to operate the app. But because all comments are anonymous, it's very easy for people to say mean and hurtful things without any repercussions. Reviews on the App Store indicate that Sarahah is being used as a cyberbullying tool. For these reasons, Sarahah is not appropriate for kids.

What age is Sarahah recommended for?

Sarahah is not recommended for kids. Both Common Sense and the App Store rate it for age 17 and up.

How are Sarahah and Snapchat related?

Snapchat users can link Sarahah to their accounts so that they can share screenshots of comments they receive through Sarahah with their Snapchat friends. Users might want to share particularly nice, mean, or funny messages.

How can I protect my privacy on Sarahah?

If kids decide to use Sarahah, they should use the settings to opt out of their name or profile photo appearing in search. They should also opt out of allowing unregistered Sarahah users comment on their accounts as a further line of defense. They should also consider only sharing their profile link with specific people, though they can't be sure that those people won't share the link with others.

What if my kid wants to use Sarahah?

If your kid wants to use Sarahah, talk with them about why. Discuss the downsides of anonymous apps, including how some people feel like they can be meaner behind a screen, especially when they won't face any repercussions. Talk about how they can participate in activities with their friends — including using certain apps and games — while still avoiding unnecessary drama. Also, come up with some strategies together for how to handle online insults or abuse.

*Common Sense Media, an independent nonprofit, offers advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. They have a short YouTube video titled '5 Tips for Dealing with Haters and Trolls.' What is a Hater? What is a Troll? Haters and Trolls are people who go online, often anonymously, and write mean comments, sometimes with the goal of getting a response. Chances are if your kids are online, they will encounter both. Discover 5 ways to deal with Haters and Trolls. To view this video, visit: <https://youtu.be/jOMc8Hlc2eY>*



**Mia Ray Langheim**  
School Intelligence  
Officer

## States' Roles in Keeping Schools Safe: Opportunities and Challenges for State School Safety Centers and Other Actors

National Institute of Justice, Published 2017

"In almost every state, a state agency or organization is charged with playing a little known but important role in keeping schools safe. In some states, there are organizations whose entire responsibility is related to school safety. These are typically referred to as state school safety centers (SSSC). In other states, staff within state agencies (including departments of education, public safety, state police, and others) are responsible for state school safety efforts. Their work reflects the highest safety priorities faced by schools across the nation and parallels some of the weightiest issues facing the criminal justice system today, including the relationship between law enforcement and the community, concerns about firearms violence, procedural justice, and appropriate responses to misbehavior that may be related to trauma or behavioral health. These organizations have the potential to transform how we approach our responsibilities to keep schools and students safe. In February 2016, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) assembled representatives from 20 states for a meeting on state school safety issues in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The purpose of the meeting was to better understand the role of state school safety representatives and learn about their priorities and the challenges they face in doing this work. NIJ is using this information to help shape the activities of the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative (CSSI) -- a research-focused initiative with the goal of producing practical knowledge on a wide range of school safety topics in K-12 public and charter schools."

To view the full report, visit: [https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=803505&utm\\_source=hsdl\\_alert&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=hsdl\\_alert\\_2017-08-25](https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=803505&utm_source=hsdl_alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=hsdl_alert_2017-08-25)

## Summary of School Safety Statistics

National Institute of Justice, Published 2017

"Several high-profile incidents of violence at U.S. schools have, understandably, raised concerns about the safety of students while at school. Just one incident of violence causes significant harm. In light of this, it is important to examine commonly held beliefs about school safety and violence because they sometimes reflect a misperception or misunderstanding of what is actually happening. The following questions examine several common beliefs pertaining to school safety statistics and provide evidence to support or dispel each of them. Though improved understanding alone will not allay fears about school violence, hopefully this examination will facilitate informed discussions about school safety. Data collected by federal agencies, including the Department of Education and Department of Justice, as well as research by school safety experts, can be used to address common school safety beliefs and explore several myths."

To view the full report, visit: [https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=803506&utm\\_source=hsdl\\_alert&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=hsdl\\_alert\\_2017-08-25](https://www.hsdl.org/?abstract&did=803506&utm_source=hsdl_alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=hsdl_alert_2017-08-25)

## A Tweet Worth A Thousand Words...



**Trooper J. Sevigny @wspd4pio** · 15h  
Worst day in my LE career.

To respond to your own kids school for active shooter.

Prayers for everyone involved. #FreemanHS

425 1.9K 6.2K