



Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services VIRGINIA CENTER FOR SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SAFETY

Virginia's "Stop the Prop" Campaign

WHAT IS "STOP THE PROP"?

The "Stop the Prop" campaign in Virginia is a school safety initiative aimed at preventing unauthorized access to school buildings. It encourages all exterior and classroom doors to remain closed and secured at all times. This initiative is part of a broader effort to reinforce school safety and security across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

HISTORY OF THE CAMPAIGN

In 2019, nationally recognized school safety expert [John McDonald](#) launched the "Stop the Prop" campaign, a straightforward yet powerful initiative aimed at enhancing school security by preventing a common and dangerous oversight: propping open doors. At the time, McDonald was serving as the Executive Director of School Safety for Jeffco Public Schools in Colorado—home to Columbine High School, the site of the tragic 1999 school shooting. Widely respected as the architect of Jeffco's post-Columbine safety, security, and emergency operations plan, McDonald is now the Chief Operating Officer of the Missouri School Boards' Association's Center for Education Safety and the Council for School Safety Leadership. Thanks to the efforts of McDonald and many others, "Stop the Prop" has grown into a national movement. This campaign continues to be an effective and accessible way to promote daily school safety practices, ensuring that one of the simplest security measures—keeping doors closed—remains a top priority in protecting our schools.

VIRGINIA'S ADOPTION OF "STOP THE PROP"

In early 2025, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) joined over 30 other states in adopting "Stop the Prop." To date, nearly 100 of the Commonwealth's 131 public school divisions and numerous Virginia institutions of higher education, police departments, and private schools have adopted "Stop the Prop."

TIME BARRIERS

The I Love U Guys Foundation® coined the phrase "time barriers" and utilizes it in their Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Virginia began a voluntary statewide adoption of the SRP in 2021. Time barriers are best described as physical barriers that slow down entry into or movement through a facility. This delay gives first responders more time to arrive and may allow trained persons to take further protective action. One of the most powerful time barriers in an active assailant event is a locked classroom door. The [Sandy Hook Advisory Commission Report](#), issued on March 6, 2015, states: "The testimony and other evidence presented to the Commission reveals that there has never been an event in which an active shooter breached a locked classroom door" (State of Connecticut, 2015, p. 32). Additional information about the SRP and time barriers can be found [on the DCJS website](#).

REQUEST "STOP THE PROP" LOGO AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Request the "Stop the Prop" logo at this [link](#). For more information on Virginia's Stop the Prop Campaign or crisis management and critical incident planning for schools, please contact Shellie Evers, DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety and Crisis Management Supervisor, at shellie.evers@dcjs.virginia.gov.