# School Safety Usability Presentation

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SchoolSafety.gov

# We are JMAS

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# Purpose & Organization of presentation

- Highlight the findings from our usability test, and recommend the appropriate actions the School Safety team should take in order for the site to be at its fullest potential.


- Background and purpose of the SchoolSafety.gov site
- Methodology
- Findings
- Recommendations
- Conclusion

# SchoolSafety.gov is a resource to help parents, employees, and administrators

- Created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to provide action recommendations that help create a safe and supportive learning environment.

- The website was created in February 2020

- Provides information about how to protect students and faculty, prevent and mitigate disasters within school, and respond and recover from incidents that could potentially occur in school.

# SchoolSafety.gov functions well, but could use improvement

Currently, the website is very resourceful, and the current layout and structure appear to work well with the audience
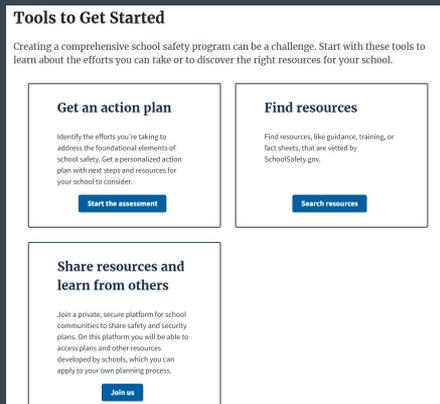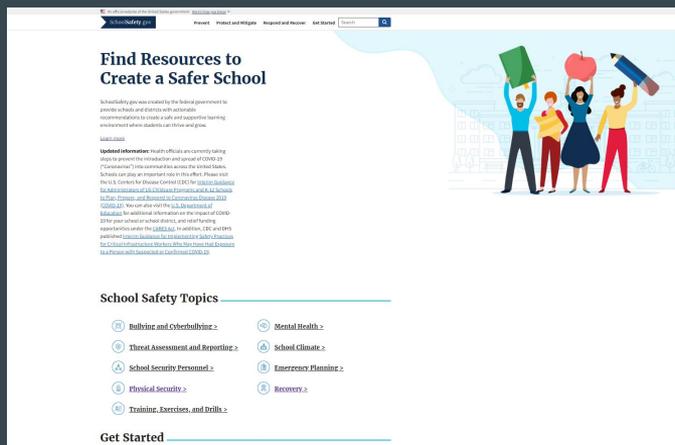


However, as it stands, the site has **poor search utility**, **inadequate search engine optimization**, **confusing terminology**, and a few other issues.

# We performed a remote usability test and utilized a few evaluation methods

## Materials

- Zoom video conferencing service
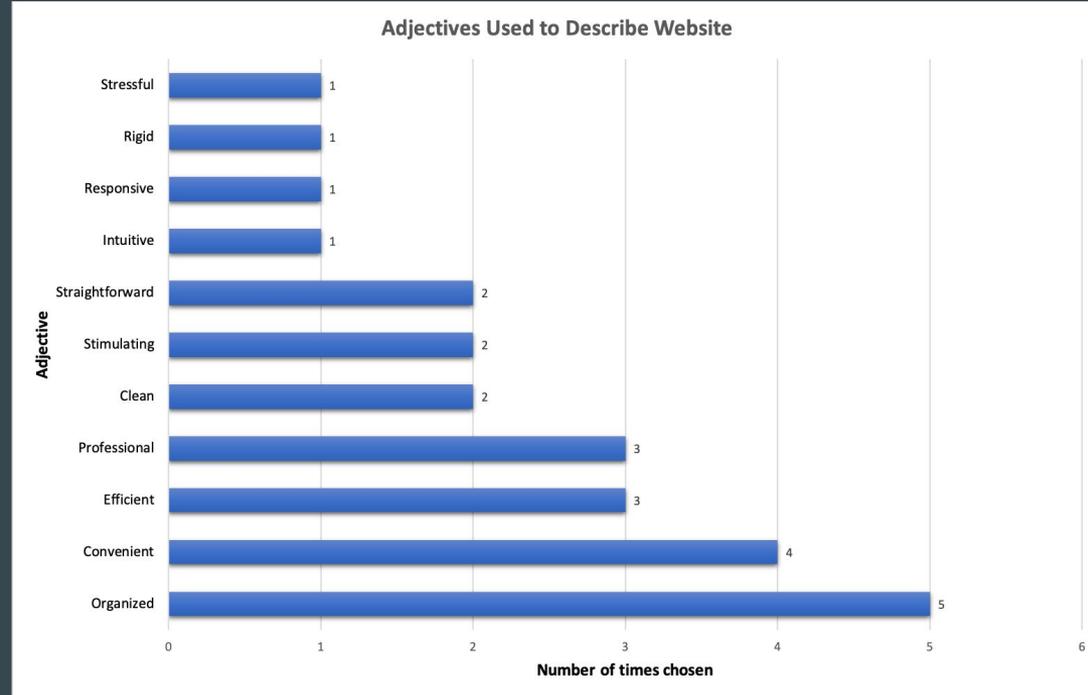- Computer
- Mic
- Camera
- Google Forms

## Methods

- Moderated usability test
  - Think aloud protocol
  - Tracked time to complete task
- Chose users between ages of 40-70
- Screeners
- Pre-test questionnaire
- Post-task questionnaire
- Post-test reaction cards

# There are several key positive findings

- A lot of useful information on the website
  - "Information was thought-provoking in a good way."
- "Upcoming Opportunities" section is in a great location
  - Took an average of 12 seconds to locate
- Enjoyed the idea of having search bar
- Visually appealing overall layout
- The top adjectives used to describe the website were all positive
- All of the participants think the website is organized

**Adjectives Used to Describe Website**

| Adjective | Number of times chosen |
|---|---|
| Stressful | 1 |
| Rigid | 1 |
| Responsive | 1 |
| Intuitive | 1 |
| Straightforward | 2 |
| Stimulating | 2 |
| Clean | 2 |
| Professional | 3 |
| Efficient | 3 |
| Convenient | 4 |
| Organized | 5 |

Our test also revealed some things that could use improvement. We organized these findings into four categories: Findability, Functionality, Navigation, and Content.

**Findability:** How easy Schoolsafety.gov is to find

**Functionality:** How well features on the site work

**Navigation:** How easy it is to navigate the site

**Content:** How easy it is for users to understand site content

# Users had an incredibly difficult time finding the website from a Google search.

- Poor search engine optimization (SEO) causes Schoolsafety.gov to not be in the top search results.
- Average user took 2:30 to find the website on Google.
- Users either failed to find the site at all, found pages other than the homepage, or found the site linked on another site.



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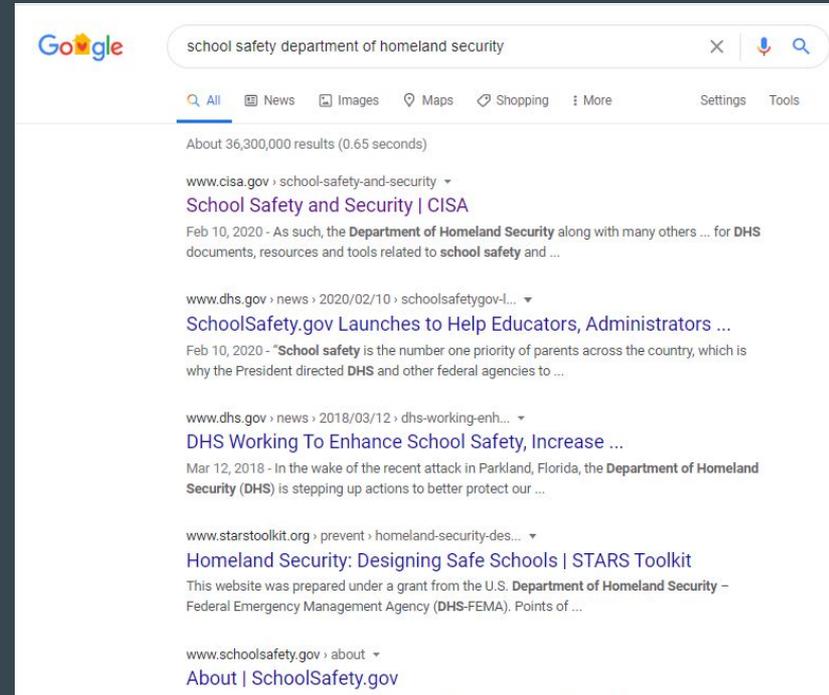
# Our users struggled a bit with the Functionality of the search bar, with some even going in circles when trying to complete a task.

- Users struggled to find certain pages on the site as the search algorithm looks for exact words rather than content matches.
  - Users took an average of 2:00 to find the Prevent Bullying page
  - Users often stated that they were confused and unsure of what they were looking for
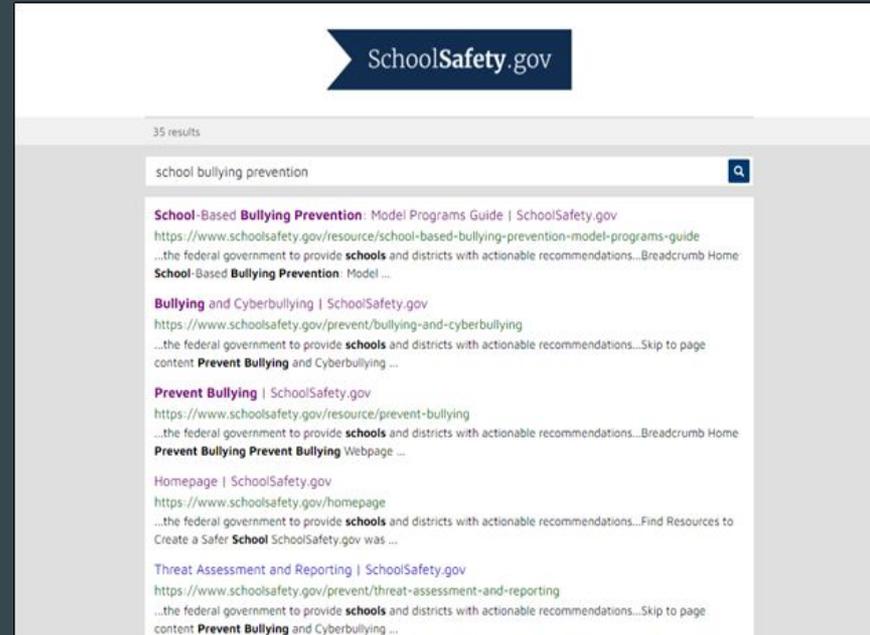
# Test subjects also struggled to find certain content due to a lack of experience with the navigation.

- Users struggled understanding what content would be under each menu heading.
  - Headings did not meet user expectations and as a result, users went in circles.
- Could not find the Safety Readiness Tool
  - Users did not expect the tool to be under Get Started
  - Average user took over three minutes to find the tool

# The final aspect of the site that our users struggled with was understanding some of the content.

- Users were confused by some of the terminology
  - Users did not understand terms such as School Climate
  - One user thought the "Stop the Bleeding" training referred to bullying
- Often led users down the wrong path or kept them from finding the content they were looking for

# We Recommend a Few Changes to Enhance the User-Experience

- Better Search Engine Optimization
  - Implement relevant keywords
    - Put yourself in the shoes of the audience
    - Minor changes matter
- Improve Search Bar Algorithm
  - Match the inquiry directly with the results

*A helpful link for SEO is provided in the notes*

# Recommendations Continued

- Restructure Navigation Menu
  - Match the category with the corresponding tool



*Current*



*Concept*

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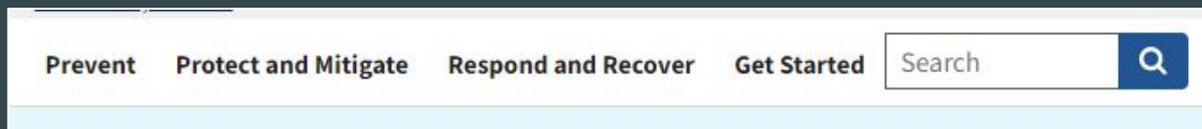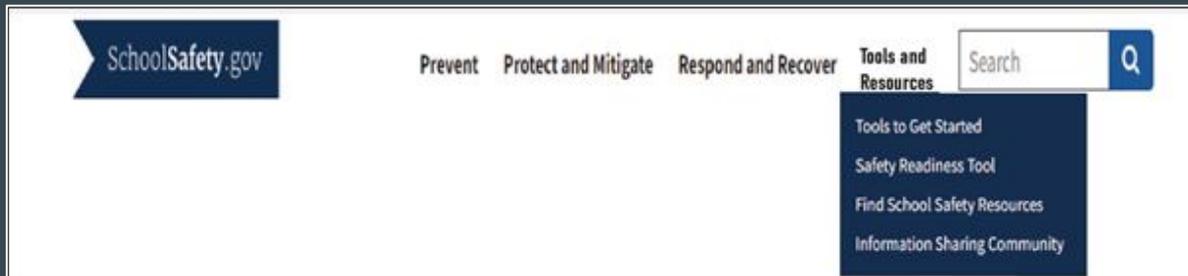
# Recommendations Continued

- Rephrase or Clarify Misleading Terms
  - A similar concept is already applied



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# Conclusion

- The School Safety website is well-designed and information-rich
- The website can improve in its functionality, findability, navigation, and content
- By implementing the recommended changes, we believe the website can become a featured tool of the DHS

We intend to email the project manager, Lindsay Burton, the finalized report by April 24th.

Questions?