



# Information Alert

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September 16, 2021

## (U//FOUO) Social Media Trend Gaining Popularity Among High School Students Involves Theft and Vandalism of School Property

(U//FOUO) Two social media challenges which originated on the TikTok platform are gaining popularity among high school students and resulting in the vandalism and theft of school property across the United States, including Pennsylvania. Some schools have discussed the trend at school board meetings and have begun issuing warnings to students not to engage in the trend. These trends further compound already strained school environments at a time when Pennsylvania students are frustrated with statewide COVID-19 mitigation masking mandates and school administrators are facing enforcement challenges.

(U//FOUO) The “Bathroom Challenge” calls for the destruction of property; the student who causes the most damage in one school day is declared the “winner.”

(U//FOUO) The “Devious Licks” challenge calls for the theft of property in an attempt to have the biggest, most expensive, and/or most impressive “lick.” A “lick” is a successful type of theft which results in an acceptable, impressive, and rewarding payday for the protagonist. The TikTok challenges began in September when a TikTok user revealed a bottle of hand sanitizer in his backpack and wrote in the caption the theft had been a "devious lick."



(U//FOUO) The trend of stolen items has continued with users posting videos of stolen items set to the same music and captions referencing “licks.” The size, value, and obscurity of items stolen has continued to expand as the trend gains popularity. Not only do these incidents involve criminal acts of vandalism and theft, some of the stolen items appearing in videos present health and safety concerns, including the theft of soap dispensers from bathrooms during a pandemic, fire alarms, placards from handicap access points, school zone traffic signs, traffic signals, and fire extinguishers.

### (U) RECOMMENDATIONS

(U//FOUO) School administrators and staff should be aware of the trend, maintain situational awareness to student activities and facility conditions, and promptly report incidents to their local law enforcement agency. Ensure any security surveillance systems are functional, and the date and time are accurate to aid in investigations.

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(U//FOUO) School administrators and facilities staff should consider increased inspection and testing of facility infrastructure which, if compromised, may present a threat to health and safety. Vulnerable areas may include safety and emergency systems and equipment, e.g. fire alarms and fire suppression systems, emergency exits, locks, storage rooms containing hazardous substances, and information technology equipment rooms. Increased inspection of these areas may identify compromises not otherwise easily detected.

*The information used in this bulletin is drawn from open sources, DHS open source reporting, FBI and other law enforcement intelligence reports and court filings. The Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) has high confidence in the information obtained from court documents and those of government agencies. The PSP has medium confidence in the information obtained from open sources, which includes media reports and Internet websites whose information is credibly sourced and plausible but may contain biases or unintentional inaccuracies. When possible, open source information has been corroborated through other law enforcement and government sources.*

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