

CBI logs hundreds of calls on its tip line

By Marilyn Robinson
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Mar. 7, 2001 - A tip line for Colorado youngsters, parents and others to alert authorities of potential school attacks has logged hundreds of calls - including three since Monday's rampage at a California high school.

Tips about at least 97 actual threats and 175 calls about other possible criminal activity have been phoned in to the schoolsafety hotline since it was set up 18 months ago in the wake of the Columbine High School killings, said Bob Armstrong of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

"Since the incident in California, we have had three reports of bullies and that kind of stuff," Armstrong said.

CBI staffers answer the phone and alert the school and the local sheriff's office of threats. Calls about other possible criminal activities also are forwarded to local authorities.

"We do not as an agency follow up. We're the central answering point for the state," Armstrong said. "We notify the school and the sheriff's office. They run with the ball from there."

Most of the tips are anonymous, Armstrong said.

Some calls are made by people curious about the tip line. Others are simply wrong numbers. Of the 972 calls logged through February, there were 298 hang-up calls and 244 wrong-number calls, Armstrong said.

U.S. Rep. Tom Tancredo, R-Colo., was instrumental in setting up the hotline.

"It cannot guarantee that events will not occur," Tancredo said. "It can, however, minimize that possibility."