



Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff

2015



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PREFACE

The *Critical Incident Response for School and Faculty* video and the accompanying *Active Shooter: Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff Training Guide* is a training resource for public and private schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This training was developed in response to legislation enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 2013. The *Code of Virginia*, § 9.1-184.9 requires the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety to:

...Develop, in conjunction with the Department of State Police, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the Department of Education, a model critical incident response training program for public school personnel and those providing services to schools that shall also be made available to private schools in the Commonwealth...

This training is intended to augment the practices, materials and resources already available to school personnel in developing plans, practicing evacuation, lockdown, and shelter-in-place drills, and responding to school emergencies, including critical incidents. This material should be used as a component of a comprehensive school safety prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery program.

Publications and other resources for developing a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), facilitating and practicing response drills, completing critical incident response scenarios, and online training opportunities are listed in the appendix of *Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff Training Guide*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Risk and Strategic Management Consulting (RSM) of Herndon, Virginia, graciously donated the production of the video, *Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff*, which is an essential component of this training.

Please direct any questions about this manual to:

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- Shellie MacKenzie, School and Campus Safety Program and Training Coordinator, Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety at 804-225-1863 or shellie.mackenzie@dcjs.virginia.gov
- Jo Ann Burkholder, Coordinator, Student Assistance Systems, Virginia Department of Education, Office of Student Services at 804-371-7586 or joann.burkholder@doe.virginia.gov

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

Who should complete this training?

School division administrators, building administrators, crisis teams, threat assessment teams, teachers (individually or in grade level or content area teams), student support teams, support staff, new staff members, and others who may choose to use this training as a means of professional development.

Why use this training?

This training is intended to increase participant awareness and knowledge of responding specifically to an active shooter situation. It provides an overview of the three main response actions schools may employ in an emergency (lockdown, evacuate, and shelter-in-place) as well as the context of an active shooter event in which three survival responses may need to be engaged (run, hide, fight). This training also addresses (i) cooperation with law enforcement during an emergency situation; (ii) prevention; (iii) instruction; and (iv) post-incident efforts.

What is included in the training?

- ✓ The training materials provide an overview of the latest research and best practices for responding specifically to an active shooter situation. The *Critical Incident Response Training Guide* and the online video *Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff* are the only resources needed for this training. The online training video can be found at: www.vimeopro.com/rsanimation/va-schools-active-shooter and by entering the password: *rsmaccess*. The video is approximately 20 minutes in length. A transition cue is easily recognized as the video progresses from one topic to another.
- ✓ Following the sequence of video topics, each section of the *Guide* denotes the video count at which the corresponding topic may be viewed.
- ✓ The video (see Appendix A) includes a crosswalk noting the *video* count for each topic and the corresponding section in the *Guide*.

How to use the training session?

The purpose of the *Guide* is to provide participants with additional resources, support, and information that reinforce the content of the *Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff* online video. Suggestions for implementing the training session include (i) watching the video and then working through the *Guide*; (ii) reading the *Guide* and then viewing the video; or (iii) watching the topic sections in the video individually, pausing the video, and reviewing the corresponding section in the *Guide* (or vice versa). The *Guide* also contains review questions and activities.

Where can the training session be completed?

- ✓ School teams may access the training session where grade level teams, content area teams, or support staff teams meet.
- ✓ Individuals may access the video and the *Guide* from the comfort of their classrooms, offices, or homes.
- ✓ Individuals may independently watch the video, complete the *Guide*, and then meet with a group for discussion.
- ✓ Administrators may facilitate the training during a faculty professional development session.

When should the training be completed?

- ✓ All school personnel are encouraged to complete the training at the beginning of each school year.
- ✓ All new school personnel should complete the session during the orientation period.

Overview, Introduction, and Purpose (Video Count: 00-02:39)

Students across the Commonwealth of Virginia are being taught and nurtured, every school day, in safe and supportive school environments. The majority of Virginia schools seldom have cause to activate any portion of their school's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) during a school year. School divisions work closely with their community partners in developing a comprehensive EOP that addresses a multitude of emergencies. The plan includes procedures to follow during crises or critical incident situations. The most common causes for activating the EOP include naturally-occurring hazards, incidents related to violence in the community, and health-related emergencies that occur on school property.¹ The *Critical Incident Response for School and Faculty* online video and the accompanying *Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff Training Guide* are designed to assist school personnel in understanding the three main response actions and responding to a specific incident that involves the use of guns and/or other weapons in an act of violence.

The purpose of this training is to provide an accurate and accessible training module that will increase appropriate responses by school personnel when an active shooter threatens to harm others. This training will provide participants with the following information.

1. An overview of:
 - The three main response actions school staff and students may need to employ in an emergency situation: lockdown, evacuate, and shelter-in-place.
 - The term "active shooter" and its application.
 - What may occur during an active shooter or other life threatening situation, and when and how to initiate the "run, hide, fight" responses.
2. Detailed information related to:
 - The steps that can be taken to identify, prevent, or mitigate an active shooter threat.
 - Who to contact for additional information on this subject.
3. Additional resources, including:
 - The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) handout referenced in the video.
 - Sample documents/schedules that may be helpful in school emergency planning.
 - Definitions for terms used in this training, as well as other safety and emergency planning terms.
 - Contact and web-site information for state and federal partners.
 - Sample training agenda and verbal scenarios.
 - Review questions and answers.

¹ 2012 Virginia School Safety Audit Survey Report, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Center for School and Campus Safety www.dcjs.virginia.gov, March 2013

Active Shooter Defined (Video count: 00:00-04:44)

The United States Department of Homeland Security² and other law enforcement agencies offer the following description of the term “active shooter”:

An individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearm(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

Because active shooter situations are often over within ten to fifteen minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

There is no specific profile attached to an individual or group of individuals who commit such acts (See Appendix B: The School Shooter: A Quick Reference Guide). However, active shooter situations have been initiated by individuals (including students) known or unknown to the school community. Additionally, armed criminals or, in rare cases, domestic or international terrorists, may instigate an active shooter situation. Active shooters may target a school, university, or childcare center, and other social venues such as sporting events, museums, rail and bus stations, and recreational facilities where students may visit during field trips.

While active shooter situations are very rare, staff must be vigilant and aware of their surroundings and understand how to respond appropriately and effectively to protect students and themselves should a physical threat occur. Rarely do individuals simply “snap.” There are signs that staff can be aware of to potentially prevent an attack. This may include suspicious people watching a facility or taking photographs, or strange calls and unusual behavior by students, staff, parents, or visitors. You should never feel embarrassed to report this information to the school administration or to law enforcement.

Responding to the Critical Situation of an Active Shooter

Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) are updated annually by school divisions and individual schools. School personnel participate in professional development sessions on school safety, practices, and procedures. School personnel and students practice safety drills regularly throughout the school year. **Lockdown, evacuate, and shelter-in-place** are the three main safety responses or drills that are practiced annually. In any critical situation, one or all of these three safety responses may be employed. The use of multiple responses is particularly significant in an active shooter critical incident. **Run, hide, or fight** are three additional specific safety responses germane to active shooter situations.

² U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Active Shooter – How to Respond*, Washington, DC, www.dhs.gov October 2008.

Overview of Three Main Response Actions (Video count: 04:45-05:54)

Preparing and practicing the drills in an EOP before an emergency occurs can save lives, prevent injuries, and minimize property damage. Schools should annually update crisis and critical incident procedures, and review and practice the drills with all staff and students. School personnel should understand the EOP and procedures and their individual responsibilities for executing the EOP should an incident occur. Discussion and practice enable school personnel to implement the emergency response protocols with confidence and structure.

Although every school's needs and circumstances are different, based upon their layout, location, and population, there are three basic response actions in an emergency situation: **Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter-in-Place** – or a combination of these actions. A very effective way to prepare to use one or more of these actions is to fully participate in the fire, lockdown, tornado, and earthquake drills³. Also, it is important to practice the drills when staff and students are in varied locations throughout the school building and at different times of the school day. This will help to identify vulnerabilities before an emergency occurs.

Lockdown (Video count: 05:55-06:22)

The first of the three actions is to lockdown--to remain in a secured classroom, or to find one quickly and go into the lockdown protocol. In a school setting, there are countless scenarios that might warrant lockdown. One such scenario might include a visitor to the school who becomes irate and is a danger to the school's occupants. Another might be a non-custodial parent or former spouse of a staff member who attempts to obtain access to a facility and do harm to others. Yet another, but highly unlikely, situation might include an armed intruder or active shooter who may be a student, former student, parent, or someone who is not affiliated with the school at all.

Tips for Lockdown Drills: Ask division staff, school resource officers, or other first responders to observe lockdown drills and provide constructive feedback and recommendations for improvement. Conduct timing of drills to help ensure that responses are both fast and effective. Teachers might also practice locating room keys quickly.

Evacuate (Video Count 06:23-07:00)

The second main response action to an emergency is to evacuate. Schools have long practiced evacuating by way of fire drills. Evacuations occur when the school building is not safe, or can be conducted once a lockdown situation is resolved.

Tips for Evacuation Drills: Ask division staff or fire department officials to observe evacuation drills and provide constructive feedback and recommendations for improvement. As with lockdown, timing and working to improve response capabilities can increase staff and student confidence. Consider conducting drills at inopportune times such as during lunch or break periods, or during an assembly to identify any vulnerabilities or hindrances before an actual emergency. Practice drills for reverse evacuation--re-entering the building as quickly as possible after the completion of evacuation procedures and student head count--can be practiced right after a fire drill or while staff and students are outside on athletic fields or playgrounds.

³ *The Virginia Educator's Guide for Planning and Conducting School Emergency Drills*, DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety and Virginia Department of Education, www.dcls.virginia.gov/vcscs, January 2015.

Shelter-in-Place (Video Count 07:01-07:27)

The third option--to shelter-in-place--is necessary when external conditions make it unsafe to leave the building, but where locking down in a classroom is not necessary. A special shelter-in-place is conducted for tornadoes and severe weather conditions. It may be called *duck, cover, and hold*. A combination of shelter-in-place and evacuation may be necessary during situations such as earthquakes.

Tips for Shelter-in-Place (Tornado or Earthquake) Drills: Participating in the statewide tornado drill, conducted annually in March, provides an opportunity for schools to practice sheltering-in-place by simulating a tornado. To further practice this type of response action, a school administrator could announce and verbally simulate an earthquake drill. Staff and students should then shelter-in-place, pausing to ensure conditions (described over the intercom by the school administrator) are safe before evacuating. First responders and division staff can make recommendations about specific places to evacuate during an earthquake to avoid danger from overhead power lines, broken lights, fallen trees, or potential water pipe bursts.

For more detailed information on safety responses, planning, and conducting drills, please consult the *2015 Virginia Educator's Guide for Planning and Conducting School Emergency Drills*.

Overview of Run, Hide, Fight (Video Count 07:50-08:49)

Active shooter situations are seemingly unpredictable and often evolve quickly. Rarely do individuals simply “snap” and there are signs that staff can be aware of to potentially prevent an attack. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and others have compiled an information sheet that is available in the accompanying manual for this training.

Things to be aware of include suspicious people watching a facility or taking photographs, or strange calls and unusual behavior by students, staff, parents, or visitors. Staff, students, and citizens should never feel embarrassed when reporting suspicious activities to the police. Often this will help local law enforcement agencies to build up a picture, which on the surface may look harmless, but when reports from various people are put together, it could indicate a threat before it occurs. Always report any concerns immediately to the police.

Run, Hide, Fight: Specific Survival Responses for an Active Shooter Situation (Video Count: 08:50-09:52)

While the lockdown safety response is often used during an active shooter situation, if you are alone or have no other alternative, you should be aware of the other options of evacuating yourself and students to safety or, as the *very last resort*, fighting to protect them and yourself. Run, Hide, or Fight are three tactics that have been recognized nationally as effective survival responses to active shooter situations in schools, universities, movie theatres, shopping malls, and work places.

Run (Video Count: 09:53-11:20)

Typically, students and staff should only deviate from the practiced lockdown procedure when instructed by law enforcement officers or other first responders that it is safe to do so. However, in an extreme case when there is no other option and the threat is imminent and unavoidable, the situation may dictate that school personnel and students “run.”

If it is safe to do so, evacuate the premises (informing students which route to take and where they should go), and move well away from the school to a safe location. School personnel should take the following actions:

- Have an escape route and plan in mind before moving.
- Account for all students. Have a teacher's aide or another responsible individual lead the students out, while checking for the last student out of the room or area.
- Leave all belongings behind and instruct students to do the same.
- Break windows to escape if located on the ground floor. Clear away glass and lay mats or clothing over the windowsill to prevent injury. An adult should climb out first to help students exit the window safely.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where an active shooter may present a threat. Warn people to stay away without endangering self or others.
- Keep hands visible if police officers are outside.
- Follow the instructions of any police officer.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Call 911 when conditions are safe.
- Listen for special instructions over the intercom.

Hide (Video count: 11:21-13:12)

Hide is essentially an extreme version of a routine lockdown procedure and the recommended action to take in a "no warning" incident, versus a lockdown that is announced over an intercom. If evacuating is not possible, the school personnel and students should find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find the hiding location. Whether school personnel and students are in the school building or on the sports field or a field trip, the hiding places should:

- be out of the active shooter's view;
- provide protection if shots are fired in the direction of the hiding spot;
- be away from doors and windows as bullets can pass through these easily, and;
- not trap or restrict options for escape if that is possible.

Take the following precautions to prevent an active shooter from entering the hiding place:

- Lock the door.
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture.
- Hide behind solid objects such as file cabinets.

If the active shooter is nearby then complete the following actions:

- Lock the door.
- Silence cell phones or pagers.
- Turn off any source of noise such as radios and televisions.
- Hide behind large items such as cabinets and desks.
- Remain quiet and instruct others to do the same.

When reporting the threat to the police take the following steps:

- Remain calm.
- Dial 911, if possible in order to alert police to the active shooter's location. If speaking on the phone is not an option, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen to what is happening.

Based on the school's EOP, a *notification card system*⁴ may be used to alert the responding police regarding the conditions within the room during the active shooter situation. Placing a colored card under the door or in the window can convey predetermined alerts, such as:

- **RED Card** – there is a casualty and medical treatment is required, or there is an immediate threat from the active shooter.
- **GREEN Card** – the classroom is safe and no immediate help is required.
- **NO Card** – the police will have to check the classroom as no teacher is present.

Fight (Video count: 13:13-13:48)

As the very last resort, and only when your life or the lives of those around you are in imminent danger, you may decide to attempt to disrupt or incapacitate the active shooter by attacking or with a distraction.

Some options may include:

- Throwing items and improvising weapons such as a chair, a phone, laptop, tablet, stapler, file, book, or another easily accessible object.
- Yelling or shouting to distract or frighten the aggressor.
- Seeking control of the aggressor's hands in order to limit his/her ability to use a weapon.
- Briefing the students to escape while you are attacking or distracting the active shooter.

Run, Hide, Fight – In Summary

What Run, Hide, Fight is not:

- It is not a Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ) or U.S. Department of Education (ED) mandatory protocol for all schools and school divisions.
- It does not advocate teaching children to fight.
- It does not advocate teaching or requiring anyone to fight.
- It is not absolute; school divisions and schools must choose their own way.
- It is not an answer to all school gun incidents.
- It is not in conflict with lockdown policies.

What Run, Hide, Fight is:

- It is a starting point for discussions.
- It is designed to engage civilians in survival efforts.
- It is designed to help teach civilians the predictable and, sometimes new, response police protocols during *active shooter situations*.
- It acknowledges the reality of what is occurring.
- It is a way to practice for the unlikely but possible, just like a tornado or fire.

Credit: **Katherine Schweit**, Head, Active Shooter Team, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

⁴ *The Virginia Educator's Guide for Planning and Conducting School Emergency Drills*, DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety and Virginia Department of Education, www.dcls.virginia.gov/vcscs

When Law Enforcement or Other First Responders Arrive (Video count: 13:49-14:52)

When an emergency is such that law enforcement or other first responders arrive on scene, particularly in an active shooter situation, it is important to respond in a manner that does not present a risk to yourself or the students. Police officers will proceed directly to the area where the last shots were heard. Teachers or others with student responsibility should brief students, especially if they are older, on what to do when the police arrive.

In such incidents, it is important to do the following:

- Remain calm and follow the officers' instructions.
- Avoid startling the officers or taking actions that might be misinterpreted as being hostile.
- Put down any items in your hands and tell students to do the same.
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers, instructing students to do the same.
- Keep hands visible at all times, as the police will not know who the active shooter is and they are trained from the perspective that "hands kill."
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers and do not attempt to hold onto them for safety.
- Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling.
- Avoid stopping and asking for help or directions when evacuating.

Before, During, and After: Emergency Planning (Video count: 14:53-16:17)

There are things that can and should be done before, during, and after an emergency to lessen the impact.

The before actions include prevention and training. Preventing the potential for a violent situation from occurring is the first action in maintaining a safe school. Do not dismiss something that doesn't seem right. If something does not look right, tell school administration. Further, be very cognizant of the climate within the school and changes in student and staff behavior. Report to the administration if someone exhibits a behavior or series of behaviors that is concerning.

Training is vital to ensuring a safe school environment. This session on responding to an active shooter is an important element of critical incident training and should be part of a larger discussion with school administration and local first responder partners. For instance, an emergency planning inservice might include (1) an overview of the procedures, (2) an open discussion of an imaginary emergency occurring while staff and students are outside or in the cafeteria, and (3) a concluding exercise that assists in developing or enhancing a response EOP. Deepening discussions about each response action, including an active shooter situation, is an important next step in preparing for an emergency.

Important **during** actions are the **lockdown, evacuate, and shelter-in-place**, and, in an active shooter or other life-threatening situation, the **run, hide, and fight response actions** previously discussed in this training.

After the emergency, special considerations such as activating a reunification plan, setting up a Family Assistance Center, and facilitating physical and psychological recovery will be necessary. Getting families reunited and getting back to the business of work and school as quickly as possible is a key step in recovering from an emergency. Readers of this manual are encouraged to view the accompanying [Critical Incident Response](#) video training also.

NOTE: The school or division's emergency operations plan must include a provision that the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund shall be contacted immediately to deploy assistance in the event of an emergency as defined in the emergency response plan when there are victims as defined in § **19.2-11.01**. *The Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Criminal Injuries Compensation*

Fund shall be the lead coordinating agencies for those individuals determined to be victims, and the plan shall also contain current contact information for both agencies.

While every emergency situation will be different, knowing what the threat is and whether to lockdown or hide, evacuate, or shelter-in-place, and--in extreme emergency--to run, hide, or fight, is critical in keeping yourself and others safe.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Decision to Lockdown, Evacuate, or Shelter-in-Place, or Implement Run, Hide, Fight

This section is intended to prompt fundamental questions for deciding which emergency action, or actions, to execute when an incident occurs.

For each scenario below, identify roles and key issues and actions. Discuss whether there is a need to evacuate, lockdown, or shelter-in-place. Discuss communication that would need to occur, and with whom, and an overall action plan. These scenarios can be adjusted based on time constraints and roles of participating staff.

Scenario A

A non-custodial parent bypasses the school's check-in procedure and goes directly to the cafeteria. His child is there, eating lunch with his friends at a table. A call to the custodial parent reveals that escalating threats of violence by the non-custodial parent precipitated the issuance of a recent restraining order against the non-custodial parent to stay away from the child. Fear among the school personnel increases when the non-custodial parent exhibits intent to leave the building with the child.

Scenario B

The school is notified that a bank was robbed on a street adjacent to a wooded area that surrounds the back of the school's property. The suspects have not been captured. They are considered armed and dangerous. School personnel are concerned the suspects may attempt to enter the school or one of the buildings on the property.

Scenario C

A student recently suspended for threatening a teacher is spotted on school property. The student appears to be carrying a backpack. While in route to circumvent the student's arrival, the investigating administrator, and others, hear gun shots.

Review Questions (Video count: 17:32-19:23)

The following provides a useful review when considering the response to an emergency event:

1. An emergency or critical incident can occur at what types of locations?
2. The three main response actions in an emergency or critical incident include _____, _____, and _____.
3. In an extreme situation when an active shooter is present, additional actions may be necessary. These actions are _____, _____, and _____.
4. Whenever possible, staff and students are urged to follow practiced lockdown/hide procedures. However, as a last resort, or in life threatening circumstances, _____ or _____ may be necessary.
5. It is important to practice plans and take drills seriously. True or False?
6. It is important that schools have emergency plans that address all types of emergencies that can occur including man-made, weather related, and health related. This type of planning is called _____.
7. An active shooter event is likely. True or false?
8. Active shooter incidents are impossible to prevent because usually people just snap. True or False?
9. When law enforcement officers arrive on the scene, you should run to them. True or False?
10. If you are in lockdown and think it is safe to come out, you should do so. True or False?

Review Answers

1. An emergency or critical incident can occur: *inside the school, on an athletic field or playground, while students are on the bus, or on a field trip.*
2. The three main response actions in an emergency or critical incident are: *lockdown, evacuate, or shelter-in-place (or a combination of these).*
3. In an extreme situation when an active shooter is present, additional actions may be necessary. The actions are: *run, hide, fight.*
4. Whenever possible, staff and students are urged to follow practiced lockdown/hide procedures. However, as a last resort, or in life threatening circumstances, *running or fighting* may be necessary.
5. It is important to practice plans and take drills seriously. *True.*
6. It is important that schools have emergency plans that address all types of emergencies that can occur including man-made, weather related, and health related. This type of planning is called *all hazards planning*
7. An active shooter event is likely. *False.*
8. Active shooter incidents are impossible to prevent because usually people just snap. *False. Rarely do individuals simply “snap” and there are signs that staff can be aware of to potentially prevent an attack.*
9. When law enforcement officers arrive on scene you should run to them. *False.*
10. If you are in lockdown and think it is safe to come out, you should do so. *False. Unless there is an active shooter situation and there is no other choice, school personnel and students should remain in lockdown until released by a first responder.*

References

2013 Virginia School Safety Audit Survey Report, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Center for School and Campus Safety, www.dcls.virginia.gov/vcscs, March 2014

U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Active Shooter – How to Respond*, Washington, DC, www.dhs.gov, October 2008

GLOSSARY

EMERGENCY and CRISIS PLANNING DEFINITIONS

All Hazards Planning

To properly prepare for **all hazards** that might occur, consider the possibility of all types of threats. These threats include high probability (fights, injuries while at school) and low probability but high impact threats such as a school shooting or a terrorist event. An all-hazards approach enhances the ability to respond quickly and effectively to all manner of threats including:

- Health-related incidents and emergencies such as lice, influenza, pandemic, MRSA, food poisoning, exposures to hazardous substances;
- Man-made incidents and emergencies such as (i) bomb, gun, knife, or other weapon threat; (ii) presence of unauthorized persons or trespassers; (iii) loss, disappearance, or kidnapping of a student; (iv) hostage situations; (v) violence on school property or at school activities; (vi) incidents involving acts of terrorism; and (vii) suicide;
- Weather incidents and emergencies such as natural disasters, including earthquake, fire, flood, or severe weather; and
- Other serious incidents and emergencies such as (i) loss or disruption of power, water, communications, or shelter; (ii) bus or other accidents; (iii) student or staff member deaths; and (iv) explosions.

Command Center

The command center is the operations location of the crisis team during a crisis or drill. It houses representatives of school staff, law enforcement, Fire/EMS, medical personnel, and other appropriate service agencies with access to communication, keys, school maps, etc. Because the office may be compromised in an emergency, a secondary **command center** should also be established and adequately equipped.

Emergency

An emergency is any event or situation that forces school closure or schedule changes, or that directly threatens the safety or well-being of any students, faculty, staff, or members of the community and requires immediate action for resolution. Examples include severe weather, loss of utilities, bomb threats or terrorist acts, violent crime, release of hazardous materials, and others. An **emergency** need not occur on school property.

Emergency Manager

An emergency manager is a school division representative who serves as the key contact between the school division and first responders to ensure coordination and familiarity with each school's school crisis, emergency management, and medical response plan. Subsection D of § 22.1-279.8 of the *Code of Virginia* directs school divisions to designate an **Emergency Manager**. The **Emergency Manager** should also facilitate the sharing of such plans to the chief law enforcement officer, the fire chief, the chief emergency medical services official, and the emergency management official of the locality.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

An EOP is a comprehensive all-hazards emergency and crisis response plan.

Evacuate/Evacuation

Evacuate/Evacuation is to withdraw, relocate, or move students/people in an orderly manner from an insecure or unsafe area to a designated area/place to ensure safety.

Family Assistance Center (FAC)/Reunification Plan

An FAC is a facility staffed by trained personnel and established following a mass casualty/fatality incident in which a significant number of victims and/or family members may request information and assistance.

Previously, when students and staff have been evacuated to an alternate site after a non-catastrophic incident, school administrators or the crisis response team implemented the school's student-parent **reunification plan** for releasing students to their parents and guardians.

These two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. However, the term "reunification plan" is being phased out. For the purposes of this *Guide*, the term **FAC** is used.

A well thought out FAC plan will:

- Define mechanisms to personally contact and assist parents and family members of directly impacted students;
- Outline parental notification methods, such as the use of calling trees, local media channels, or an electronic notification system;
- Designate assistance sites and outline procedures for releasing students/providing information to parents and family members; and
- Maintain updated student emergency information that details students' special needs and any medical or custody issues, and incorporate guidelines for storing the information in a secure location accessible to authorized personnel.

Go-Kit/Emergency Kit

A go-kit/emergency kit is a container of items placed in the Office or Command Center and classrooms to be used for crisis/emergency situations. The Command Center **Go-Kit** should contain an AM/FM radio/weather monitor, school maps, master keys, communication devices, emergency Fire/EMS and law enforcement contact names and numbers, and the emergency response or crisis plan. A pair of binoculars in the Command Center **Go-Kit** could serve to identify potential problems at a distance and to quickly ascertain the level of an emergency on a playground or along the edge of the school property. At a minimum, classroom **Go-kits** should include (i) surgical gloves; (ii) band aids; and (iii) first aid supplies, and should include (a) names of students (i) in each class period; (ii) identified as needing special assistance in emergencies; (iii) needing periodic medication; and (b) points of contact persons designated to answer pertinent questions.

Lockdown

A lockdown is a response action to an emergency situation in which school administration directs school personnel and students to report to or remain in a classroom or another secured location. Teachers lock their doors and account for all students under their care while having students sit away from windows and against solid walls.

Mitigation/Prevention

Mitigation or prevention are actions taken to reduce or eliminate risk to life and property from a hazardous event, crisis, or emergency. Practice drills mitigate harm from events; making sure doors are locked prevents intrusion. Mitigation and prevention activities also include establishing safety procedures, training staff and students, examining discipline policies, and identifying security issues.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS)

NIMS/ICS is a consistent nationwide initiative to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents (www.fema.gov).⁵ Through **Incident Command System (ICS)** training, **NIMS** provides a unified approach to incident management; standard command and management structures; and emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid, and resource management. Utilization of **NIMS** and **ICS** in schools helps to ensure management of emergencies in the same manner as our local, state, and federal partner agencies.

Preparedness

Preparedness describes a prepared plan developed for managing the worst-case scenario in an emergency situation. Expect surprises. Establish the emergency and crisis management plan empowering all necessary resources and school personnel. Communication, training, and equipment are key elements of preparedness. Command center and classroom go-kits play an important role in school preparedness.

Recovery

Recovery is the process of restoring the learning and teaching environment after a crisis and returning to the business of school. Actions supporting recovery include debriefing, emotional needs assessment, clean up or repair of the building, and long- and short-term stress management for affected individuals. Recovery involves psychological and structural components.

Response

Response is the act of implementing the emergency and crisis management plan during a crisis.

Reverse Evacuation

Reverse evacuation procedures are used to promptly return students who are outside into the building in an organized fashion. While most school staff are already familiar with the basic concept of a reverse evacuation, very few understand it as a formal procedure and often delay action while considering what to do when they need to return to the building quickly.

Secure the Perimeter/Secure the Building

This safety response is implemented as an alternative to a lockdown when the threat is external--that is, one arising in the community rather than inside the school--that may still pose a threat to the school or campus. Staff and students should report to or remain inside the school but instruction may continue.

⁵ On February 28, 2003, President Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5. HSPD-5 directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-Place means seeking safe shelter or physical concealment from harm in an open area such as a cafeteria or gym; remaining inside the school for an extended period of time. To shelter-in-place in a classroom means having students sit against a solid wall, away from windows. Have employees familiar with the building's mechanical systems turn off all fans, heating, and air conditioning systems. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air. These systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed, or disabled.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Video Critical Incident Response for School Faculty and Staff Video Transcript and Crosswalk with the Guide

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p>Overview, Introduction, and Purpose</p> <p><i>As a result of the great work of many caring professionals, students across our state are being taught and nurtured in schools every day. However, in our communities, violence is playing just as prevalent a role. In growing numbers, incidents of violence are impacting our students. Therefore, public safety personnel and public school systems must work together to address these issues.</i></p> <p><i>Historically, Virginia schools and schools in general are very safe places, but an emergency can alter the sense of calm and community we enjoy in a matter of seconds.</i></p> <p><i>This training has been developed by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety of the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the Virginia Department of State Police to increase your awareness of Active Shooter and Armed Intruder situations and the three main response actions you can employ when responding to such threats, with the main focus on the lockdown action.</i></p> <p><i>The term “Active Shooter” is used by law enforcement officials to describe a situation where a person participates in a random or systematic shooting spree in a confined or populated area. In most cases, the Active Shooter uses firearms and there is no pattern or method to the selection of their victims. Active Shooters can include unstable persons, whether they are unknown to the school or are other students, armed criminals, or, in rare cases, domestic or international terrorists.</i></p> <p><i>Active Shooters can target a school, university, or childcare center. Active Shooters can also target social venues such as sporting events, museums, rail and bus stations, and recreational facilities where students may visit during field trips. As such, staff must be vigilant and aware of their surroundings and understand how to respond should a physical threat occur, whenever and wherever that may happen.</i></p> <p><i>While Active Shooter situations are very rare, staff should be prepared to respond appropriately and effectively if they ever find themselves in such a situation, knowing how to respond and protect students and themselves should a physical threat occur.</i></p> <p><i>This training will illustrate what you can do to identify a threat and respond to it effectively and confidently, protecting not only your students, but also</i></p>	<p>00-04:44</p>	<p>Page(s) <u>3-4</u></p>

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p><i>yourself and other members of staff.</i></p> <p>Responding to an emergency situation includes:</p> <p><i>The following principles are critical for successfully preparing for and responding to an emergency situation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>effectively activating the plan</i> • <i>effective decision making</i> • <i>flexible and adaptable management strategies</i> • <i>working collaboratively within the community</i> • <i>developing strong relationships with local police departments</i> • <i>making informed decisions</i> • <i>ensuring effective communications</i> • <i>deploying resources quickly and efficiently</i> • <i>accounting for students and staff</i> • <i>and assisting people with special needs.</i> <p><i>School administrators and staff, including teachers, teachers' aides, or support staff, all have an important role within our communities: they are responsible for the personal and educational development of our children. Within today's volatile world, our role now also extends beyond the scope many of us envisioned when we entered into the education profession.</i></p> <p><i>Increasingly, responsibilities also now lie with the physical safety and security of those children under our care, whether students are in a learning environment, at lunch, in gym or recess, or on a field trip.</i></p> <p><i>While this second responsibility is one we never hope to have to put into practice, emergencies do occur and so it is important that all staff understand the possible risks that students and staff may face, and that we know how to identify and respond to such risks effectively. By preparing for emergencies or a threat against our schools and students, we will be better able to identify, prevent, mitigate, respond, and recover from an emergency situation, protecting our students as well as our staff or visitors to our schools in a pre-planned, structured, and confident manner.</i></p>		

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p>Overview of Three Response Actions</p> <p><i>Taking action before the emergency occurs can save lives, prevent injuries, and minimize property damage in the first moments during a crisis situation. As such, schools should update and practice crisis plans each year to ensure that all staff understand and are familiar with how to plan for and effectively respond to an emergency. Teachers should understand these plans and their roles within them, allowing them to implement emergency response protocols with confidence and structure.</i></p> <p><i>Although every school's needs and circumstances are different based upon their layout, location, and population, there are three basic response actions available in an emergency situation- lockdown, evacuate, and shelter-in-place – or a combination of two or more of these actions.</i></p> <p><i>A very effective way to prepare to use one or more of these actions is to fully participate in the fire, lockdown, tornado and earthquake drills schools conduct, and to practice them in varied settings looking for what vulnerabilities exist before an emergency occurs.</i></p>	<p>04:45-05:54</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 5 </u></p>
<p>Lockdown</p> <p><i>The first of the three actions is lockdown. In a school setting, there are several reasons a school might need to lockdown. One might be a visitor to the school who becomes irate and a danger to the school occupants. Another might be a non-custodial parent or former spouse of a staff member who attempts to obtain access, and to intimidate or do harm.</i></p> <p><i>Yet another, but highly unlikely situation, is an armed intruder or active shooter who may be a student, former student, parent, or someone who is not affiliated with the school at all.</i></p>	<p>05:55-06:22</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 5 </u></p>
<p>Evacuate</p> <p><i>During certain emergency situations you may need to evacuate. Evacuation occurs when the school building is not safe, or can occur once a lockdown situation is resolved. The general procedure for evacuation is to exit the building in a pre-planned way, finding an alternative route, if exits are blocked, and accounting for staff, students, and visitors as soon as it is safe to do so. Whenever feasible and available, teachers should take class lists and go-kits when evacuating.</i></p>	<p>06:23-07:00</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 5 </u></p>
<p>Shelter-in-Place</p> <p><i>The option to shelter-in-place is necessary when external conditions make it unsafe to leave the building, but where locking down in a classroom is not necessary. A special shelter-in-place is conducted for tornados and severe weather conditions. This is called the duck, cover, and hold. A combination of shelter-in-place and then a subsequent evacuation may be necessary during an earthquake.</i></p>	<p>07:01-07:27</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 6 </u></p>
	<p>07:28-</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 6 </u></p>

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p>Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter-in-Place</p> <p><i>Again, in general there are three response actions: Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter-in-Place. However, in the case of an active shooter situation, or other life threatening situations, additional action may be necessary. The remainder of this training will focus on the lockdown procedure and the other actions that may be warranted in an active shooter setting.</i></p>	07:49	
<p>An Active Shooter</p> <p><i>Active shooter situations are seemingly unpredictable and often evolve quickly. Rarely do individuals simply “snap” and there are signs that staff can be aware of to potentially prevent an attack. The FBI and others have compiled an information sheet that is available in the accompanying manual for this training.</i></p> <p><i>Things to be aware of can include suspicious people watching a facility or taking photographs, or strange calls and unusual behavior by students, staff, parents, or visitors. You should never feel embarrassed when reporting suspicious activities to the police. Often this will help local law enforcement agencies to build up a picture, which on the surface may look harmless, but when reports from various people are put together it could indicate a threat before it occurs. Always report any concerns immediately to the police. Never take a chance.</i></p>	07:50-08:49	Page(s) __7__
<p>Active Shooter: Run, Hide, Fight</p> <p><i>You may have heard of the three steps to survival that have been provided nationally as a result of the active shooter events that have happened in movie theatres, malls, and work places. These steps are Run, Hide, or Fight.</i></p> <p><i>The standard lockdown procedure is to remain in a secure classroom, or to find one quickly and go into the lockdown protocol. However, if you are alone or have no other alternative, then you should be aware of the other options of either evacuating your students to safety, or as the very last resort, fighting to protect them and yourself.</i></p> <p><i>Typically, students and staff should only leave a secure place and deviate from a lockdown protocol when instructed to do so by law enforcement officers or another first responder that it is safe to do so. However, in an extreme case when there is no other option and the threat is imminent and unavoidable, the situation may dictate that you “run.”</i></p> <p><i>If it is safe to do so, you should seek to evacuate the premises, telling your students which route to take and where they should go, and moving them well away from the school and to a safe location. You must try and maintain a confident and reassuring demeanor so that students follow your instructions quietly and calmly. Be sure to:</i></p>	8:50-11:20	Page(s) __7__

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have an escape route and plan in your mind before you start to move.</i> • <i>Ensure you account for all of the students, having a teacher's aide lead the students out with you checking the last student out of the room or area if possible.</i> • <i>Leave your belongings behind. Tell students to do the same.</i> • <i>If necessary, break windows if you are on the ground floors to escape, clearing away glass and laying mats or clothing over the windowsill to prevent injury. If possible, you should have an adult climb out first to help students exit the window safely.</i> • <i>Prevent individuals from entering an area where an active shooter may present a threat.</i> • <i>Warn people to stay away without endangering yourself.</i> • <i>Keep your hands visible if police officers are outside.</i> • <i>Follow the instructions of any police officer.</i> • <i>Do not attempt to move wounded people.</i> • <i>Call 911 when you are safe.</i> • <i>And, most importantly – listen for special instructions over the intercom – this will increase your chances for survival.</i> 		
<p><i>The hide action is essentially the extreme version of the routine lockdown procedure. This measure is typically in response to when you have no warning of a threat versus a lockdown that is announced over an intercom. If evacuation is not possible then you and your students should find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. You may be at the school or sports field, or you may be on a field trip. Your hiding places should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>be out of the active shooter's view;</i> • <i>provide protection if shots are fired in your direction, staying away from doors and windows as bullets can pass through these easily;</i> • <i>not trap you or restrict your options for escape if that is possible.</i> <p><i>To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place you should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>lock the door;</i> • <i>blockade the door with heavy furniture;</i> • <i>hide behind solid objects such as filing cabinets.</i> <p><i>If the active shooter is nearby then:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>lock the door;</i> • <i>silence your cell phone or pager;</i> • <i>turn off any source of noise such as radios and televisions;</i> • <i>hide behind large items such as cabinets and desks;</i> • <i>remain quiet and ask those around you to also remain quiet.</i> <p><i>When reporting the threat to the police:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>remain calm;</i> • <i>dial 911, if possible, to alert police to active shooter's location. If you cannot speak, then leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to</i> 	<p>11:21-13:12</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 8 </u></p>

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p><i>listen to what is happening.</i></p> <p><i>Based on the plans in place in your locality, you can use the notification card system to alert the responding police to your situation, placing a colored card under the door or in the window, such as:</i></p> <p><i>RED Card – there is a casualty and medical treatment is required, or there is an immediate threat from the active shooter.</i></p> <p><i>GREEN Card – the classroom is safe and no immediate help is required.</i></p> <p><i>No Card – the police will have to check the classroom as no teacher is present.</i></p>		
<p><i>As the very last resort, and only when your life or the lives of those around you are in imminent danger, then you may decide to attempt to disrupt or incapacitate the active shooter by attacking or distracting them. Some options may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• throwing items and improvising weapons such as a chair, a phone, or another heavy object;</i> <i>• seeking control of the aggressor’s hands in order to limit their ability to use a weapon – hold onto these and do not let go;</i> <i>• briefing the students to escape while you are attacking or distracting the active shooter.</i> <p><i>Most importantly, if you choose this option – you must fight to survive!!</i></p>	<p>13:13-13:48</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 9 </u></p>
<p>When Law Enforcement Arrives</p> <p><i>When the police or other first responders arrive, it’s important to respond in a manner which does not present a risk to you or the students.</i></p> <p><i>Police officers will proceed directly to the area where the last shots were heard. You should brief your students, especially if they are older, on what to do if the police arrive to avoid accidental injuries during a rescue.</i></p> <p><i>You may ask yourself, what should I do?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Remain calm, and follow the officers’ instructions.</i> <i>• Avoid startling the officers or taking actions that they might misinterpret as being hostile.</i> <i>• Put down any items in your hands and tell students to do the same.</i> <i>• Immediately raise hands and spread fingers, instructing the students to do the same.</i> <i>• Keep hands visible at all times, as the police will not know who the threat is – they are trained from the perception that “hands kill.”</i> <i>• Avoid making quick movements toward officers or attempting to hold on to them for safety.</i> <i>• Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling.</i> <i>• Do not stop and ask them for help or directions when evacuating.</i> 	<p>13:49-14:52</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 10 </u></p>

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p>Before, During, and After</p> <p><i>There are things that can and should be done before, during, and after an emergency to lessen the impact. Some key BEFORE actions include PREVENTION:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As we encourage students with bullying prevention, it is important not to be a bystander!</i> • <i>The best way to prevent violence within the school setting is to be very cognizant of the climate within your school.</i> • <i>Be aware of changes in student and staff behavior.</i> • <i>Please report to a member of your threat assessment team if someone exhibits a behavior or series of behaviors that is concerning to you.</i> <p><i>BEFORE actions also include TRAINING. This video is an important element of training and should be part of a larger discussion with school administration and local first responder partners. For instance, imagining an emergency occurring while staff and students are outside or in the cafeteria, and then discussing what you would do is an important next step in preparing for an emergency. Additional training scenarios and resources are provided in the accompanying manual.</i></p> <p><i>Important DURING actions are the Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter-in-Place RESPONSE actions previously discussed in this training.</i></p> <p><i>AFTER the emergency there may be special considerations such as activating a reunification plan, setting up a Family Assistance Center, and facilitating physical and psychological recovery ... basically getting families reunited and getting back to the business of work and school as quickly as possible.</i></p>	<p>14:53-16:17</p>	<p>Page(s) <u> 10 </u></p>
<p>Summary</p> <p><i>In summary, The Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety seeks to provide a safe and positive environment for all students. While every emergency situation will be different, knowing what the threat is and whether to lock down or hide, evacuate or shelter-in-place – and, as a last resort in an extreme emergency situation, to fight, will help you respond more effectively and confidently, better protecting yourself, your students, and others.</i></p> <p><i>Although none of us like to think about anything bad happening, planning for emergencies, training, and partnering with others is the best way to ensure that the emergency is resolved as quickly and safely as possible. Some potential partners for schools include:</i></p> <p>Local: Fire, police, schools, and community resources</p>	<p>16:18-17:31</p>	<p>Page(s) _____</p>

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p>State:</p> <p>Office of the Attorney General Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Virginia Department of Emergency Management Virginia Department of Education Virginia Department of Health Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice Virginia Department of State Police</p> <p>Federal:</p> <p>Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives Federal Bureau of Investigation Department of Homeland Security Department of Justice Federal Emergency Management Agency Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools</p> <p>National:</p> <p>Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools</p> <p><i>More information about all hazards planning, the three response actions, run, hide, fight and how to partner with others can be found in the accompanying manual.</i></p>		
<p>Review Questions</p> <p>The following provides a useful review when considering the response to an emergency event:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An emergency or critical incident can occur at what types of locations? 2. The three main response actions in an emergency or critical incident include: _____, _____, _____. 3. In an extreme situation when an active shooter is present, additional actions may be necessary. These actions are _____, _____, and _____. 4. Whenever possible, staff and students are urged to follow practiced lockdown/hide procedures. However, as a last resort, or in life threatening circumstances, _____ or _____ may be necessary. 5. It is important to practice plans and take drills seriously. True or False? 6. It is important that schools have emergency plans that address all types of emergencies that can occur including man-made, weather 	<p>17:32-19:23</p>	<p>Page(s)_13_____</p>

Transcript	Video count	Corresponding Guide Section(s)
<p>related, and health related. This type of planning is called _____.</p> <p>7. An active shooter event is likely. True or False.</p> <p>8. Active shooter incidents are impossible to prevent because usually people just snap. True or False?</p> <p>9. When law enforcement officers arrive on the scene you should run to them. True or False?</p> <p>10. If you are in lockdown and think it is safe to come out, you should do so. True or False?</p> <p>Review Answers</p> <p>1. An emergency or critical incident can occur: <i>inside the school, on an athletic field or playground, while students are on the bus, or on a field trip.</i></p> <p>2. The three main response actions in an emergency or critical incident are: <i>lockdown, evacuate, or shelter- in- place or a combination of these.</i></p> <p>3. In an extreme situation when an active shooter is present, additional actions may be necessary. Those actions are: <i>run, hide, fight.</i></p> <p>4. Whenever possible, staff and students are urged to follow practiced lockdown/hide procedures. However, as a last resort, or in life threatening circumstances, <i>running or fighting</i> may be necessary.</p> <p>5. It is important to practice plans and take drills seriously. <i>True</i></p> <p>6. It is important that schools have emergency plans that address all types of emergencies that can occur including man-made, weather related, and health related. This type of planning is called <i>all hazards planning.</i></p> <p>7. An active shooter event is likely. <i>False</i></p> <p>8. Active shooter incidents are impossible to prevent because usually people just snap. <i>False. Rarely do individuals simply “snap” and there are signs that staff can be aware of to potentially prevent an attack.</i></p> <p>9. When law enforcement officers arrive on scene you should run to them. <i>False</i></p> <p>10. If you are in lockdown and think it is safe to come out, you should do so. <i>False. Unless there is an active shooter situation and there is no other choice, you should remain in lockdown until released by a first responder.</i></p>		
<p><i>We would like to thank Risk and Strategic Management Corporation for developing this training as a charitable contribution to protecting the children of Virginia.</i></p>		

Appendix B

The School Shooter: A Quick Reference Guide



The School Shooter: A Quick Reference Guide

BAU-2 (703) 632-4800



REMEMBER

- There is not a "profile" of a school shooter- instead the students who carried out the attacks differed from one another in numerous ways.
- School shootings are rarely impulsive acts.
- They are typically thought out and planned in advance.
- Prior to most school shootings other students knew the shooting was going to occur but failed to notify an adult.
- Very few of the attackers ever directed threats to their targets before the attack.
- The most common goal was retribution. The justifications and excuses offered indicated this stemmed not from an absence of values but from a well-developed value system in which violence was acceptable.
- In many cases, other students were involved in the attack in some capacity.
- Many offenders experienced a significant personal loss in the months leading up to the attack, such as a death, breakup, or divorce in the family.
- Many offenders engaged in repetitive viewing of violent media and were often fascinated with previous school shootings. Repeated viewing of movies depicting school shootings, such as "Zero Day" and "Elephant," may indicate a fascination with campus attacks.
- Be aware of the subject's online videos, blogs, and social networking activities.

Assessing Threatening Communications - Five Dimensions (Mohandie, 2000)

- Organized vs. disorganized thought processes
- Fixed vs. variable themes
- Focused vs. general target identification
- Violent action imperative vs. alternative coping means
- Short time imperative vs. lack of urgency

Threat assessment - 11 Key Questions (U.S. Secret Service, 2002)

- What are the student's motive(s) and goals?
- Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
- Has the student shown inappropriate interest in school attacks, weapons, and/or mass violence?
- Has the student engaged in any attack-related behaviors?
- Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
- Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?
- Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
- Does the student see violence as an acceptable/desirable way to solve problems?
- Is the student's version of events consistent with his/her actions?
- Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?
- What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?

Motives

- 24% motivated by desire for attention or recognition.
- 27% motivated by suicide or desperation.
- 34% motivated by attempt to solve a problem.
- 54% had multiple motives.
- 61% motivated by desire for revenge.
- 75% felt bullied/persecuted/threatened by others.

Statistics

- 27% of attackers exhibited interest in violent movies.
- 37% of attackers exhibited interest in violence in their own writings, poems, essays, and journal entries.
- 59% of attacks occurred during the school day.
- 63% of attackers had a known history of weapons use.
- 68% acquired the weapon used from their own home or that of a relative.
- 93% of attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the attack that caused others to be concerned.
- 93% of attackers planned out the attack in advance.
- 95% of attackers were current students.
- Odds are one in 1 million that a student will die at school as a result of a violent act.

Warning Signs

- Investigators should probe to discover if the subject has engaged in research, planning, or preparation (e.g., researched weapons or made attempts to obtain a weapon). Movement from thought to action represents a severe escalation of the risk of violence.
- In around 80% of school shootings at least one person had information that the attacker was thinking about or planning the school attack. In nearly 2/3, more than one person had information about the attack before it occurred. In nearly all of these cases, the person who knew was a peer, a friend, schoolmate, or sibling.
- Despite prompt law enforcement responses, most attacks were stopped by means other than law enforcement intervention.
- Be conscious of the "Werther Effect", defined as a duplication or copycat of another suicidal act. School shootings are typically well-publicized, sensationalized events that can trigger an increase in similar acts for roughly days or weeks after the attack.

Resources

- www.fbi.gov
- www.safetyzone.org (DOE and DOJ)
- www.ncjrs.org/school_safety
- www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS
- www.secretservice.gov/ntac.htm
- www.keepschoolssafe.org

Information compiled from the *Safe School Initiative Report*, United States Secret Service and Department of Education, (2002); *School Violence Threat Management*, Dr. Kris Mohandie, (2000); *The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective*, CIRG/NCAVC, (1999).

Appendix C

Suggested Partners and Additional Resources

The following are suggested partners and resources you should leverage for your emergency planning and risk management planning measures.

Partners

- Local:
 - Fire/Emergency Management Services/Rescue
 - Law Enforcement
 - Child Protective Services (CPS) and Emergency Family Services
 - Community resources (shelter/housing, food/clothing, counseling services)
 - Health Services/Clinics
 - Hotlines, Self Help, and Bilingual Resources
 - Mental Health
 - Other schools

- State:
 - Office of the Attorney General
 - Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund
 - Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety
 - Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
 - Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
 - Virginia Department of Emergency Management
 - Virginia Department of Education
 - Virginia Department of Health
 - Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice
 - Virginia Department of State Police

- Federal/National:
 - Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)
 - Centers for Disease Control - Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC)
 - Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
 - Department of Justice (DOJ)
 - Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
 - National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
 - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
 - Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS)
 - Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS)
 - Safe Schools, Health Students Initiative (SSHS)
 - U.S. Department of Education (USDOE)
 - U.S. Secret Service Safe School Initiative (Threat Assessment Final Report)

Additional Resources

- [Best Practices in Bullying Prevention and Intervention \(Stopbullying.gov\)](#)
- [Bomb Threat Response: An Interactive Planning Tool for Schools](#)
- [Bullying: The Relationship Between Bullying and Suicide: What We Know and What it Means for Schools](#)
- [Chemical Agents: Facts About Sheltering in Place](#)
- [Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators](#)
- [Critical Incident Response - Accompanying Manual](#)
- [Critical Incident Response Video \(password: rsmaccess\)](#)
- [Cyberbullying Tip Cards](#)
- [Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools](#)
- [Earthquake Guide](#)
- [Emergency Supplies for Schools – Red Cross Recommendations](#)
- [Executive Summary from the 2014 Secondary School Climate Survey](#)
- [Fillable Threat Assessment Form - LOCKED \(Word Document\)](#)
- [Fillable Threat Assessment Form \(pdf\)](#)
- [Fillable Threat Assessment Form \(Word Document\)](#)
- [Guidance for Divisionwide Safety Audit Committee Formation and Responsibilities](#)
- [Guidance for Emergency Manager Designee](#)
- [Guidance for School Safety Inspection Checklist](#)
- [Guidance for School Systems in the Event That Victims Arise from an Emergency](#)
- [Guidance for Threat Assessment Teams and Reporting](#)
- [Human Trafficking - Webinar Resource List: Integrating Human Trafficking With School Emergency Operations Plans \(EOPs\)](#)
- [Juvenile Law Handbook for School Administrators 2014 Update \(.pdf, 85 pages\)](#)
- [Model Policy to Address Bullying in Virginia Schools \(DOE\)](#)
- [REMS - Components of Comprehensive School and School District Emergency Management Plans](#)
- [REMS - Creating Emergency Management Plans](#)
- [REMS - Emergency Exercises: An Effective Way to Validate School Safety Plans](#)
- [REMS - Practical Information on Crisis Planning Guide](#)
- [REMS – School EOPs in Depth Series](#)
- [REMS - Steps for Developing a School Emergency Management Plan](#)
- [School Safety CD-ROM](#)
- [School Safety Inspection Checklist - PDF](#)
- [School Safety Inspection Checklist - Word](#)
- [Suicide and Bullying: Issue Brief \(SPRC\)](#)
- [Threat Assessment Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines - PDF](#)
- [Threat Assessment Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines - Word](#)

- [Threat Assessment Training Curriculum](#)
- [Understanding Bullying \(CDC\)](#)
- [Virginia Educator's Guide to Conducting Emergency Drills](#)
- [Virginia High School Safety Study](#)

Training Resources

- [Emergency Management for Schools](#) (Online training series offered free of charge by Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS)) <http://rems.ed.gov>
- [Safe Schools: Assessing School Safety](#) (International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Online Training Series offered free of charge) <http://elearning-courses.net/iacp>
- [Critical Incident Response Video](#) (Accompanying Video for this manual, password: rsmaccess) <http://vimeopro.com/rsanimation/va-schools-active-shooter>
- [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\) and Incident Command System \(ICS\)](#) <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMI/>
- [Training offered by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justices Services](#) <http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/>

Appendix D

Suggested Training for School Administrators, School Staff and Others as Appropriate

The following courses are recommended for school personnel and may be completed online at no charge through the following links:

- IS 700: National Incident Management, An Introduction
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS700a.asp>
- IS 800: National Response Framework, An Introduction
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS800b.asp>
- IS 100: Introduction to Incident Command—for Schools
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100SCA.asp>
- IS 200: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
<http://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-200.b>
- IS 907: Active Shooter: What Can You Do (Suggested course for Crisis Teams)
<http://emilms.fema.gov/IS907/AS0101000.htm>

