

ASIS SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTIVE SHOOTER

WHITE PAPER

Presented by:

School Safety & Security Council (SSSC)



Copyright © 2016 by ASIS International

ASIS International (ASIS) disclaims liability for any personal injury, property or other damages of any nature whatsoever, whether special, indirect, consequential or compensatory, directly or indirectly resulting from the publication, use of, or reliance on this document. In issuing and making this document available, ASIS is not undertaking to render professional or other services for or on behalf of any person or entity. Nor is ASIS undertaking to perform any duty owed by any person or entity to someone else. Anyone using this document should rely on his or her own independent judgment or, as appropriate, seek the advice of a competent professional in determining the exercise of reasonable care in any given circumstance.

All rights reserved. Permission is hereby granted to individual users to download this document for their own personal use, with acknowledgement of ASIS International as the source. However, this document may not be downloaded for further copying or reproduction nor may it be sold, offered for sale, or otherwise used commercially.

The information presented in this White Paper is the work of the author(s), and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of ASIS or any ASIS member other than the author(s). The views and opinions expressed therein, or the positions advocated in the published information, do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or positions of ASIS or of any person other than the author(s)

ACTIVE SHOOTER

Contents

Acknowledgments	ii
Introduction to Active Shooter Programs, by Jason Thomas Destein	1
The Six Phases of the Attack, by Linda Watson, CPP	8
Using Situational Awareness to Observe Pre-Attack INDicators, by Brad Spicer	11
Proactively Preventing Active Shooter—Post-Incident Data, by Rick Shaw	16
Lessons Learned, by Lawrence J. Fennelly	20
Public Safety and School-Sponsored Onsite Training Programs for Emergency Responders, by Jim McLain, CPP, FMP	22
Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams, An Ounce of Prevention, by Jason Stone.....	25
Preventing an Active Shooter Incident, by Paul Timm, PSP	28
Buying Time—Realistic Hardening of the Target at the Classroom Door, by Jim McLain, CPP, FMP.....	30
K-12 as Soft Targets, by Dr. Jennifer L. Hesterman, EdD	35
When EMS Arrives on the Scene, by Michael J. Fagel, PhD, CEM	41
Behaviorial Cues, by Inge Sebyan-Black, CPP	46
To Arm or Not to Arm...Teachers, by Jason Thomas Destein	48
Appendix A: Tabletop Exercise, by Victor Cooper CPP.....	50
Appendix B: Shootings on the Rise, by Mark Tarallo	51
Appendix C: The Best Defense, by Laura Spadanuta	53
Appendix D: Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools, U.S. Department of Education.	57
Appendix E: Conclusion from ASIS Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Guideline, ASIS International Standards and Guidelines	59

According to the FBI, the frequency and lethality of active shooter incidents in America is increasing. More than one in four (29%) of these tragedies has occurred at educational institutions. Schools and universities must be prepared to not only respond to these incidents, but to also prevent them.

Fortunately, when campuses properly prepare in advance to these emergencies, those prevention efforts also address many other vulnerabilities, such as workplace violence, bullying, individuals with mental health and addiction challenges, harrasment, emergency management (natural disaster as well as man-made), and even public health crises.

Robin Hattersley,

Executive Editor,
Campus Safety

A good friend of ours is a retired school teacher who has dedicated thirty-seven hardworking years to the profession. Proud of what he had achieved, he took us over to his school for a tour and see the flower garden he had planted. Before we got to his garden, we observed four doors propped open. Embarrassed, “It wasn’t called for. They would have been secured if I was still here,” he said.

This white paper is a part of a series prepared by the members of the School Safety & Security Council. We are an active council. Our members are from colleges and universities, K to 12, and consultants. This group has a deep passion for the safety of children.

This paper address different approaches to Active Shooter situations, but ultimately we must think proactively and take some action to protect individuals if the unthinkable does happen. Do not be complacent and take the approach of, “it can’t happen here.” We are all vulnerable. The frequency as well as the effect of Active Shooter appears to be increasing in this country. Being prepared is the key to survival and saving lives.

In this paper, Jennifer Hesterman will make a great point when she ask what the cost is of not securing your school. We ask you to carefully think about these words. Take some action. Get prepared. Research your industry and determine what works best in your particular situation. The response will not be the same for everyone. Different environments require different responses. For example, the response for an elementary school during an Active Shooter situation will not be the same as that for a university campus or a high-rise office building. Develop emergency procedures and conduct active drills with local emergency responders. Above all, train everyone—employees, security personnel, students, faculty and staff. You will need them to know the appropriate response and what actions they should take.

My sincere thanks goes out to all the members of the School Safety & Security Council for their hard work in putting this paper together and to our CVP, J. Kelly Stewart, CPP for his kind words of support.

Lawrence J. Fennelly,

School Safety & Security Council (Past Chair and Current Member)
Loss Prevention & Crime Prevention Council (Past Chair and Current Member)

Introduction to Active Shooter Programs

by Jason Thomas Destein

How many Active Shooter programs are out there today? Reportedly “Run-Hide-Fight” has been lowering the number of workplace violence fatalities over the years and would be a good model to follow except K-12 children cannot comply with the “Fight” component of the program. There is ALICE, which is available at a national level. “Lock out, Get out, and Take out” and ONE are yet others. These are all great programs in their own way, and ultimately there is really no wrong program since their true intent is using them to save lives. But let’s face it, each person has their own style and way they react to situations during stressful events, and an active shooter event is certainly very stressful. To be clear, there is no perfect program out there. You find a program that fits your needs, your style, so when you have to use it, you know instinctively what to do. This section lists these programs to discuss the pros and cons of each to help you reach your decision or to explore further options.

Run, Hide, Fight

Run, Hide, Fight is based on the premise that during an active shooter situation there are steps that you follow when you hear gunshots fired.

Run

- Find a path and attempt to evacuate
- Evacuate whether others agree or not
- Leave your belongings
- Help others Evacuate
- Prevent others from entering
- Call 911

If you are not able to run, then you are encouraged to:

Hide

- Lock or block door
- Silence cell phone
- Hide behind large objects
- Remain quiet
- Stay out of shooters view
- Provide protection if shots fired in your direction
- Not to trap or restrict your options or movement

If you do not have the ability to hide, then the last option is to:

Fight

- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter
- Act with physical aggression
- Improvise weapons
- Commit to your actions

It should be noted that “Run. Hide. Fight: Surviving an Active Shooter Event” is a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Grant Funded Project of the Regional Catastrophic Planning Initiative. It was produced by the City of Houston Mayor’s Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security.¹

Lock Out, Get Out, Take Out

Lock Out

- By adding locks to all classroom doors and keeping them locked while in class. Also adding a lock and video entry system to the main entrance for all visitors to use.
- Barricade all doors during a situation.

Get Out

- Anything goes when you are in harm’s way, like breaking windows to use as the nearest exit.

Take Out

- Anything goes, once again. When confronted and no other option is available, you do what you have to do.

Whether teaching how to respond to workplace violence in an office, factory/retail setting or college campus, our consulting firm uses the “Run, Hide, Fight” video as part of our curriculum. The only additional information we add is a reminder that “Run, Hide, Fight” is not linear. You may be in a situation when confronted by an active shooter, and the only logical choice is to fight before you can run or hide. After a discussion about the video, people often ask if “Run, Hide, Fight” should be taught in the K-12 setting. The short answer to this question is “no.” The long answer is much more complicated.

¹ Ready Houston, www.readyhouston.tx.gov.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0>

Schools Must Keep ‘In Loco Parentis’ in Mind

It is important to remember, “Run, Hide, Fight” is shown in an office setting and not a school. Everyone depicted in the video is an adult responsible for themselves and their own decisions. At 1:45 p.m. in the video, viewers are instructed to: *“First and foremost, if you can get out, do. Always attempt to escape and evacuate, even when others insist on staying. Encourage others to leave with you, but don’t let them slow you down with indecision.”*

K-12 schools operate under a different set of rules than business. Businesses must provide training for their employees to meet OSHA regulations for safety, but the adults are expected to use that training and act as, well, adults. Courts have ruled that schools and school personnel are *in loco parentis*, or in the place of a parent. This gives the schools both responsibilities and, consequently, liability in regards to their actions for keeping students safe.

Not only are schools responsible for training students for an emergency, but also for leading the students in an emergency. Therefore, in the event of an active shooter, a teacher cannot instruct their students to run for the nearest exit, yet not make sure the students are actually trying to exit. Nor should a teacher leave behind a student who is too frightened to leave an area, especially when the child is very young.

Barricades Compensate for Weak Locks, Doors and Windows

Hide is currently taught in schools under the term “lockdown.” When an active shooter is inside a school, staff members are generally instructed to lock their classroom door, cover the window if possible, turn out the lights and move the students to an area in the room where they are less likely to be hit with gun fire if the shooter fires through the door. Although this has been shown to be an effective method for keeping students out of harm’s way, many feel simply locking the door is not enough. Teachers are now being taught to barricade the room using existing furniture, extension cords or commercial products designed specifically to keep a room secure during an active shooter event. This enhanced technique of barricading overcomes weaknesses in doors such as large windows to the side of the doorframe or large windows in the door itself.

Don’t Teach Children the ‘Fight’ Component

Fight is viewed as a last option when in direct contact with the shooter or if you do not have the option to run or hide. Should we be teaching children to fight a person with a gun? NO! There are several good reasons why this shouldn’t be taught to them. First, the active shooter event in school is rare. Depending on the age of the child, we could be causing them unnecessary fear by preparing them for something that is unlikely to affect them.

Although we could have age appropriate conversations with older students about what their choices could be, parents may not agree with the message we give their child. It is better to give the parents talking points so they can have the discussion with their children.

When my children were still in school, I gave them specific training on what to do in an emergency at school, church, the mall, etc. As a police officer, I have a different perspective and skill set than most parents. I could see some parents being extremely angry if I told their children what I told mine. However, I was exercising my responsibility as a parent, not a school employee.

What About Teachers and Administrators?

Q: Should we teach staff members to fight?

A: Maybe. First, we must let them know it is their choice whether or not to attack the shooter. For example, post 9-11, if anyone gets the least bit out of order on a plane, they are usually beaten by fellow passengers and duct taped to a chair.

Q: Do all the passengers attack?

A: No. Some choose to attack, and others choose not to attack. This is what we need to teach our staff; they have a choice. If they want to learn techniques for fighting, we should use our relationship with our local law enforcement to provide the training to attack a shooter.

How 'Lock Out, Get Out, Take Out' Works

Q: So what do we teach in schools?

A: There are many programs and many "experts" willing to sell their sure-fire strategy for keeping students and staff safe. Almost all are time consuming, and many are expensive. Two things schools are short of are time and money. There is little time for training and almost no budget. Strategies must be easy to learn, easy to remember, and easy to use. These strategies must give staff choices and allow them to make choices based on their training and the situation.

Lock Out

Since Sandy Hook, many schools are securing the perimeter of the buildings and using a camera and buzzer system to control entry to the building after the start of the school day. This is not a foolproof method of keeping bad people out of the building, as we saw in the fall of 2013 at the McNair Discovery Learning Center when the gunman entered the building behind a parent who had been buzzed in. However, this does add one more layer to a school's plan to keep their building secure. It is recommended that all classroom doors be locked at all times, even when class is in session and even if the door is kept open. In the event of a threat inside the building, the door is already secured and just needs to be pulled shut. The teacher does not need to find their keys, step outside of their room into the hallway, and attempt to engage fine motor skills while potentially facing a shooter. Steps can now be taken to barricade the door.

Should the teacher attempt to lead their students out of the building at the onset of the event? Are they in direct contact with the shooter? Do they know the exact location of the shooter and where the shooter is heading? Do they know they have safe passage to get outside? Can they move all of their students quickly and at once? Do they have enough information to make a good decision to leave a place where they are safe and move to an area where they may not be safe? With so many questions, it reinforces the need to train our staff and allow them to decide a course of action based on their training and the circumstances.

Get Out

When in direct contact with an active shooter, you should do everything possible to get your students and yourself out of harm's way as quickly as possible. This means everything from heading to the nearest exit to using a chair to break a classroom window and tossing students out the window. Or, you may be in a barricaded room and no longer feel the room is safe. Get out anyway possible.

Take Out

A teacher is with their class on the third floor of an old school. They have successfully barricaded their classroom and did not attempt to leave because they had limited information on the location of the shooter. But, this is not an active shooter event. A noncustodial parent has already killed his ex-wife and is at the school to murder his child and commit suicide. He knows the police are on the way and has not wasted any time getting to his child's classroom. He has brought the tools necessary to breach the door.

It is unlikely that you or your students can survive unharmed by jumping from the third story. If that teacher chooses to take out the shooter, there are no rules. They may use anything in their room as a weapon and do whatever it takes to keep their students safe. However, if they choose to remain passive, that is also their choice. Just as "Run, Hide, Fight" is not linear, neither is "Lock Out, Get Out, Take Out." Staff members are trained in their choices and allowed to make their choice based on that training and the current situation. However, it should be stressed that when in contact with the active shooter, lockout is not a choice. Staff and students should put as much distance between them and the gunman, or the staff member should do whatever is necessary to take out the shooter. "Run, Hide, Fight" is an excellent training tool when working in colleges, office settings, and factories. However, with the responsibility schools have for their students and range of ages of the students in schools, "Run, Hide, Fight" should not be the model used for school safety.²

² Gary L. Sigrist Jr. is the CEO and President of Safeguard Risk Solutions. He previously served as the Readiness and Emergency Management in Schools (REMS) Project Director for the South-Western City School District in Grove City, Ohio.

ALICE

ALICE training is a strategy designed to increase survival during an armed intruder event.

- ALERT:** Inform as many people as possible within the danger zone of life threaten situation. Use plain and specific language.
- LOCKDOWN:** Barricade the room. Silence phones. Prepare to evacuate or counter if needed.
- INFORM:** Communicate shooters location in real time if possible. 98% of the time the shooter works alone.
- COUNTER:** Create noise, movement, distance & distraction with intent of reducing shooters ability to shoot accurately. The focus here really is to disrupt the shooter by distractions. COUNTER is about survival.
- EVACUATE:** When safe do so, remove yourself from the danger zone.

Observe, Navigate, Escape (ONE)

The O.N.E concept was created mostly for the K-12 environment, as there are some schools that have not embraced the Run, Hide, Fight concept or other programs for evacuation. The O.N.E concept is based on using your senses to help you survive an Active Shooter situation. This concept does not encourage students to Run or Fight their way out of a situation. There may be a point in which one of those action may be necessary, but O.N.E does not encourage you to do either of those. Instead, O.N.E uses your natural instincts and senses that you have been using all of your life. For children, especially in elementary school, learning using their senses is the most common way they learn and understand. It only makes sense that we would teach them to evacuate using their senses so that they understand what they are doing and remain calm. O.N.E was created by Securable Consulting, LLC and inspired by the children of a local school district. Below is an overview of the O.N.E concept.

OBSERVE. This is the most important step in plan, as you will continue to OBSERVE at every step of the plan. Simply stated, OBSERVE is meant for you to know what is around you. What is the environment you are in (classroom, office, retail, coffee shop, etc.)

- OBSERVE with your senses (eyes, ears, nose, and touch.) You can gain valuable insight of your surroundings just by trusting your natural instincts that we all have.
- LOOK to see if the shooter is near. Look to see if there are any signs of victims in your possible path. Look to see if there are any possible items that you could use as a weapon if needed.
- LISTEN for any screams, further gunshots, footsteps, voices, sirens or any other sound that could indicate some type of action. Try to ascertain distance and direction of the sound.
- SMELL the air. Is there anything different? Do you smell smoke, gun smoke or powder? Is the smell strong or weak? This could tell you if you are close or far from the situation.
- TOUCH the walls, doors, windows and the floor. Feel for any vibrations or temperature changes. Again, the intensity of the vibration of temperature changes can tell you how close or how far you are from potential harm.

Your surroundings can save your life if you are able to observe what is around you. We are in these environments everyday and we should know them better than anybody else. Don't get complacent with your surroundings and take for granted what is around you. Escaping from harm is not as simple as running out. It can be an obstacle course, and knowing your surroundings can be all the difference. **USE YOUR SENSES AND OBSERVE YOUR SURROUNDINGS!** If your observations indicate that harm is not far, then certainly shelter and hide as best you can.

Remember this: You have been developing your senses since you were born! Children are learning every day using their senses, and they are understanding more than anything else at this point in their lives. Most people trust their senses more than anything else, and rightfully so. It is basic human instinct to rely on our senses when danger is present. It is only when we see others in panic mode do we lose sight of using our senses to our advantage. We must remain calm in the presence of danger. From there:

NAVIGATE. As you continue to **OBSERVE** your surroundings and feel that it is now the right time for you to **NAVIGATE** out of your initial location to that of a location of safety, keep the following in mind:

- Always **OBSERVE** your surroundings and adapt to any changes.
- **NAVIGATE** a path based on:
 - What your senses indicate to you.
 - Who you are navigating with (students, co-workers, small children, strangers)
- Your ability to move, quickly, quietly, effectively and as calmly as you can is going to be of the utmost importance. You do not need all of your belongings; technology to communicate with is the most important item to have.
- Assign children a “buddy friend” to navigate with, and also assign each of them a role in the process. Whether it is one child is listening and one child is looking for other signs of possible danger. Give them something to do to keep them focused.

ESCAPE. As soon as you feel you have the opportunity to do so safely, escape. The average duration of an active shooter event is just short of 10 minutes. It takes on average 12-15 minutes for law enforcement to arrive on scene, according to Jim Schwartz, Chief Arlington County Fire Department.

- Follow your teacher who should be leading the way.
- Listen for sirens and try to move in that direction if safe to do so.
- Always account for the children you are leading, talk to them to keep them calm and quiet. If you are leading out 15 children, keep counting them on the way out. This is also a good way to keep you as the teacher focused and calm as well.

The Six Phases of the Attack

by Linda Watson, CPP

We hear the words “active shooter” on a more frequent basis every time we turn on the radio or television. It seems like the more it is happening, the more our society becomes de-sensitized to this type of violence. When an active shooter is in the “implementation phase”, a series of events has already happened for the “actor” to arrive at this tragic point. Experts agree there is no accurate or useful “profile” of an active shooter.

According to Dr. Joshua Sinai, Ph.D., there are six phases to any active shooter incident.³

Phase	I	Cognitive Opening: The “Mindset”
Phase	II	Planning
Phase	III	Preparation
Phase	IV	Approach
Phase	V	Implementation
Phase	VI	Post-Incident Mitigation

Given these six phases of the attack, we can look at incidents where the attacker went from thinking about an attack to directly the attack phase with little or no planning steps in between. Contrary to much media “hype,” most attacks are methodically planned and executed by the attacker. Much consideration is given as to whom to target, where the incident will take place, and by what means the attack is carried out. In most incidents a firearm is used as the weapon of choice.

Active shooters have evolved over the years. They are doing research to find how past attacks have been carried out. They are seeing the police response and the tactics used to respond to those attacks. As a result, the active shooters have changed some of the ways in which they plan and attack their victims. Two recent attacks that illustrate this come to mind: the Virginia Tech attack—where the doors were chained on the inside to prevent victims from escaping; and the Sandy Hook Elementary School attack—where the windows adjacent to the main door were shot out by the “actor” to gain access into the school.

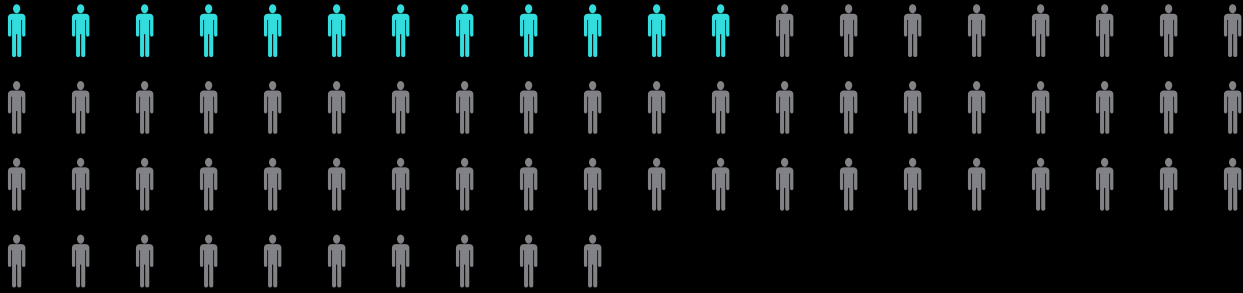
The Federal Bureau of Investigation published a study of recent U.S. active shooter incidents.⁴ A snapshot of its findings summarizes:

- 160 incidents occurred between 2000 to 2013
- An average of 11.4 incidents occurred annually, with an increasing trend from 2000 to 2013
- 1,043 casualties, including killed and wounded (shooters were not included in this total)
- 486 were killed in 160 incidents
- 557 were wounded in 160 incidents

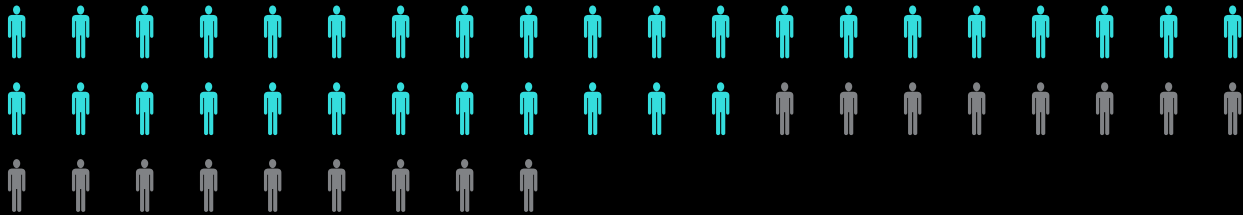
³ *Active Shooter, A Handbook on Prevention*. Joshua Sinai, Ph.D. Published by ASIS International. (2013.)

⁴ “A Study of Active Shooter Incidents, 2000-2013.” Texas State University and Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. (2014.)

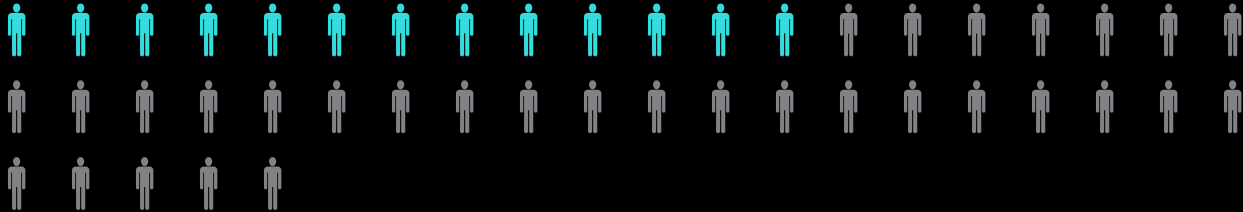
Cinemark Century 16 Theater in **Aurora**, Colorado: 70 (12 killed, 58 wounded), July 20, 2012.



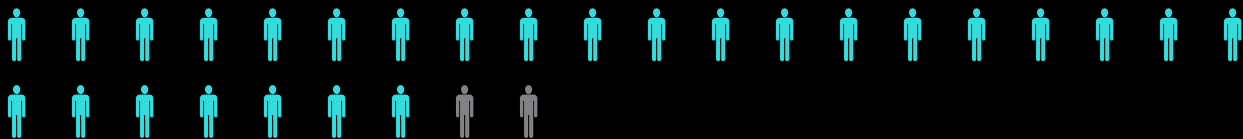
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia: 49 (32 killed, 17 wounded), April 16, 2007.



Ft. Hood Soldier Readiness Processing Center in Ft. Hood, Texas: 45 (13 killed, 32 wounded), November 5, 2009.



Sandy Hook Elementary School and residence in Newtown, Connecticut: 29 (27 killed, 2 wounded), December 14, 2012.





 killed wounded

Active Shooter Incidents with Highest Casualty Counts (2000-2013)

193 (84 killed, 109 wounded)

The findings reflect the damage that can occur in a matter of minutes. In 64 incidents where the duration of the incident could be ascertained, 44 of the 64 incidents ended in 5 minutes or less, with 23 ending in 2 minutes or less.

After seeing the FBI's statistics, the yet unanswered question has become how to interrupt the "phases of the attack" to stop the carnage.

In the first phase, the "actor" is thinking about the attack but has not yet shared those thoughts with anyone. When those thoughts combine with an action plan, the attack becomes real. Next, the acquiring of weapons and materials begins with logistical planning. Information about the attack is usually shared in some way during the planning phase with someone who knows the attacker. This is the period where the most opportunity to stop the attack can take place. The first three phases of the attack can take days, months, and years. When the actor is in the approach phase, he or she has acquired all their weapons and is deploying to the site. The final phase, which is the implementation and execution of the attack, ends within 5 minutes usually. The conclusion to the active shooter incident is either by a self-inflicted gunshot or by the responding law enforcement.

Frequently information that has been shared by the attacker with people before the incident does not make sense to the person(s) it is shared with. After the tragedy has occurred, people who knew the actor will come forward with remembering odd things or behavior from that person. This echoes Secret Service statements that, "Prior to most incidents, other people knew about the attacker's idea and/or plan to attack."⁵

In conclusion, active shooter incidents are increasing across the United States. If someone is sharing information that is bothering you or making you nervous, find a way to tell someone who can analyze it and determine if it is relevant or not. Lessons learned since Columbine have changed the way law enforcement agencies respond to active shooters across the nation. Law enforcement personnel must constantly adapt and readjust to the everchanging active shooter. More recently, incidents have occurred where the active shooter involved more than one location. Situational awareness is key to staying alive during an active shooter event.

⁵ "The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States." Washington, D.C. (May 2002.)

Using Situational Awareness to Observe Pre-Attack INDicators

by Brad Spicer

If a killer was on your campus, when would you want to know about him (or her)? Do you want to know that he is at the parking lot? At the main entrance? Or if he has already entered the lobby, hallway, and classrooms?

Situational awareness is what allows us to recognize the early signs of danger in order to prevent violence. If prevention fails, situational awareness can still mitigate the attack. More of an attitude than a hard skill, situational awareness is the ability to identify and process information about what is happening around us. We all have it some of the time, but it is also something none of us can have at all times.

As is the case with most abilities, there are varying levels of situational awareness. Jeff Cooper, a Marine and innovator of tactical training, pioneered the concept of levels of awareness. His system, “Cooper’s Color Codes” illustrated below, has been used to train military and law enforcement for decades. Cooper’s Color Codes have nothing to do with warning code phrases or an outdated Homeland Security alert system. They simply assign a color to describe a level of awareness.

Cooper’s Color Codes	
WHITE	Unprepared and unready to take action.
YELLOW	Prepared, alert, and relaxed. Good situational awareness.
ORANGE	Alert to probable danger. Ready to take action.
RED	Action Mode. Focused on the emergency at hand.
BLACK	Panic. Breakdown of physical and mental performance.

Yellow is the goal for optimum situational awareness. You are best able to observe your environment and notice changes that may pose a risk by being prepared, alert, and relaxed. Sometimes these observations are subtle and identified by intuition. Intuition is not magical; it is an educated hunch based on your knowledge and experience. Nothing interests us more than our own survival, and intuition can help us perceive threats.

Prevention

Prediction can seem daunting when a mass killing is framed only within the context of the shooting. Returning to the hypothetical killer we began with, and instead of him roaming a parking lot, imagine you are observing his intention in the form of posts on social media days to months before the first shot was fired. Despite how they are portrayed by the media, these shootings do not start with the first shot. The shooting did not begin when "...all of the sudden, he took out a gun and started shooting everyone." Generally, intentions were hardened long ago.

The length and observability of these precursor incidents increase the possibility of prevention. The challenge is having the situational awareness to observe a potential threat and then direct the appropriate resources towards the person in question before it becomes too late.

On April 20, 1999, 13 people were murdered at Columbine High School. While not the first mass killing in a school (there were five in 1997 alone), Columbine was the event that coined the term "Active Shooter," which certainly described the situation as the murders occurred. But the Columbine attack did not start on April 20.



- The attack did not start at 11:19 a.m. when, according to a witness, one of the two killers yelled, "Go! Go!" as they pulled guns from beneath their trench coats and began shooting.
- It did not start at 11:18 a.m. when the two assailants left their vehicles in the Juniors' parking lot after their explosive devices failed to detonate.
- It did not start earlier that morning when they were carrying into the school explosive devices set to detonate at 11:15 a.m. during a busy lunch shift.

It did not start April 20 with the two loading their weapons in the morning hours. It didn't even start that year when they rehearsed their attack.

While we will never know the exact date, we think the attack probably was motivated in 1996 when a blog associated with an online gaming site took a violent turn. From that point forward, warning signs were exhibited. Those warning were missed chances at intervention and thus preventing the attack from occurring.

Pre-Attack INdicators

Few mass killings are preceded by a direct threat. While threats should never be ignored, they should be viewed more as a promise than a guarantee. Some threats can actually be viewed as psychological motivators used to de-escalate, not escalate, confrontations. Threats are typically issued to obtain a desired response (such as fear) rather than to forecast imminent danger. Preventing an attack requires the observation of subtle Pre-Attack INdicators (PAINs); not just waiting for the direct threat.

Listed below are actions that may be associated with PAINs and warrant closer attention.

- Threat of suicide or self-harm
- Threat of violence (directly or implied)
- Fascination with/asserting ownership of firearms
- History of violence; behavior obviously insensitive to others
- Preoccupation with themes of violence
- Intimidating others; frequently confrontational
- Crossing boundaries (e.g., excessive calls, emails, etc.)
- Marked academic performance decline
- Notable changes in personality, mood, or behavior
- Give away personal possessions
- Shows noticeable decline in personal hygiene
- Substance abuse

When PAINs are observed, caution must be taken to consider the context of the warning signs to determine if a threat assessment is needed. The focus of a threat assessment is not if a person makes a threat, but if they *pose* a threat. Simply put, threat assessment is the process to determine dangerousness.

In his book, *The Gift of Fear*, Gavin de Becker outlines a powerful way to efficiently define dangerousness. JACA is an acronym for Justification, Alternatives, Consequences, and Ability. Apply JACA from the viewpoint of the person you are assessing, not your own, and answer the following questions.

- Does the person feel *Justified* in taking violent action?
- Does the person feel there are *Alternatives* to violence?
- Is the person concerned about the *Consequences* of a violent action?
- Does the person have the *Ability* to carry out an attack?

If one or more elements of JACA are present, a formal threat assessment is likely needed. JACA is simply a snapshot and does not replace the need for a formal and comprehensive threat assessment and case management program.

Threat assessment programs take advantage of early warning signs. When these are missed and the situation escalates to imminent violence, PAINs are still present though more often associated with attack-related behavior. Recognizing PAINs immediately prior to an attack may not enable prevention, but it can mitigate the casualties.

First Timer's Syndrome

Mass killers rarely have an exit strategy. They expect to die (by suicide or suicide by cop) or be captured. Because the attack will be their first and last act of extreme violence, they will exhibit behavior and physical PAINs immediately before the attack. An apt description of these PAINs is First Timer's Syndrome. Working in code yellow (prepared, alert, and relaxed) of Cooper's Color Codes allows you to observe PAINs that slightly deviate from baseline operations and pose danger.

Physical PAINs include appearance and dress. Behavioral PAINs include overt actions and more subtle gestures. Obviously these PAINs are almost always consistent with perfectly innocent explanations and do not automatically indicate danger. When the behavior is carefully and prudently explored (and the person is determined not to be a danger to himself or to others), our intuition learns how to better distinguish future threats.

It is your intuition, training, and experience that help you determine if the situation poses no threat, if further investigation is needed, or if immediate action response is required. In the very rare instances when immediate action is required, your mindset (Cooper's Color Code Red) can improve your response.

Situational Awareness and Response

Try to avoid code white (unaware) when you are at work or in public places. Make condition code yellow a habit. When you observe potential PAINs, quickly analyze the situation. A valuable system to make rapid decisions under pressure is the Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) Loop, which is sometimes referred to as Boyd's Cycle after its creator, retired U.S. Air Force Col. John Boyd.

The process begins by observing the situation. Orientation, next, is critical because most emergencies happen too quickly to process information as it is observed. Think of orientation as gaining perspective. Once orientation is gained, it is time to decide. The decision considers factors in information from orientation and your training and experience. The last step is to act on the decision. The "loop" occurs when situation changes. This cycle continues throughout an incident.

Throughout the day, strive to have good situational awareness. If you identify potential dangers, switch to code orange and apply the OODA Loop. In the very rare instances that require immediate response, move to code red; however, you switch back to code yellow if no threat exists. Repeat this exercise and situational awareness will become habit.

Be Aware—But Stop Looking for Mass Killers

In “Just 2 Seconds”, a resource guide for those charged with protecting public and high profile people, authors de Becker, Marquart, and Taylor point out it is futile to “look for assassins.” Trying to look for someone who could be an attacker in a crowd is like looking for a needle in a stack of needles. What student does not have a backpack? Are any shirts actually tucked in?

Rather than trying to imagine how each and every person *could* be a threat, maintain good situational awareness and allow yourself to recognize physical and behavioral activities that differ from the baseline. Whenever possible, observe persons as they exit vehicles or move to enter buildings or buses. Watch for physical and behavioral indicators from people who approach new areas such as a school or bus.

About PAINs

If you wait for a guarantee of danger, then you are eliminating the opportunity to prevent the violence or seriously limiting your ability to mitigate casualties. PAINs are warning signs that almost deserve some attention though rarely warrant immediate action. When you observe PAINs, you should either:

1. Eliminate the person as a threat and move back to Cooper’s Code Yellow;
2. Continue to investigate and remain in Cooper’s Code Orange; or
3. Act and implement emergency response plans. (Cooper’s Code Red)

The decision is based on your observations, circumstances, and experience. If you cannot eliminate the situation as a threat and are unsure if the situation is dangerous, remain focused (Cooper’s Code Orange) and investigate. How you investigate is situational. While interacting with a potential threat may seem counterintuitive, it may be necessary if it is your responsibility to guard the safety of others around.

Protecting schools can be incredibly difficult and tragically imperfect. However, situational awareness and PAINs are strategies that can help make campuses a little safer from a personnel standpoint. When contemplating the implementations of preparedness programs, leaders should consider the following decision-making possibilities:

- Do nothing and hope nothing happens
- Do nothing and it does happen
- Do something and nothing happens?
- Do something and it happens

Proactively Preventing Active Shooters—Post-Incident Data

by Rick Shaw

Given the choice, would you rather prevent an active shooting or react to an active shooter? Given the choice, would you rather prevent the lawsuits, damaging headlines, and invasive media grilling related to an active shooter tragedy, or would you react to all of the above? Of course prevention is the better option, but is prevention possible?

The short answer is YES! Prevention is possible. The steps in the Pathway to Prevention are well documented by hundreds of post-incident reports revealing that most, if not all, were preventable. Post-incident reports reveal that pre-incident indicators, concerning behaviors, suspicious activities, and warning signs were almost always, if not always, observed and even reported BEFORE the shooting tragedies occurred.

So if pre-incident indicators are almost always observed and/or reported before incidents and tragedies occur, why are so many preventable incidents and tragedies not being prevented?

Reacting versus Preventing

In response to school tragedies at Columbine, Sandy Hook, and numerous others, most school administrators reacted by scheduling security assessments with a security expert who would visit the school to assess the school's security preparedness. Security assessment reports usually deliver numerous recommendations for schools to add more security cameras, more security alarms, more physical security access products (locks, security windows, access management, etc.), more mass notification and communications systems, more active shooter trainings, more emergency and crisis response planning, more emergency and crisis policies/procedures, more crisis communications and social media guidelines, and more of the same.

Security assessments can absolutely be helpful to ensure reactive and response efforts are in place. Security cameras record forensic evidence of what happened, security alarms go off when the threat is at your door, security access products will hopefully keep the threat out of your school, active shooter responses kick in when a shooter is at your school, and crisis responses take place during and after a crisis has taken place. Most of the security assessment "recommendations and solutions" are designed to improve reaction and response time to a threat that is on your campus or an emergency/crisis that has already happened.

Prevention and Prevention Assessments Offer Numerous Benefits

The benefits of proactive prevention are impressive and even life-saving, and successful prevention begins with a Prevention Assessment, which is much different than a Security Assessment. Prevention Assessments focus on a school or district's capabilities to proactively prevent threats and proactively prevent at-risk individuals from escalating on a "path to violence" that can lead to incidents, lawsuits, tragedies and soaring liabilities and other challenges.

The "Path to Prevention" Involves 6 Essential Steps:

- Awareness at the individual level
- Collecting the Dots
- Assessing the Dots
- Connecting the Dots
- Intervention and Monitoring
- Prevention (Pro-Active and Pre-Active)

Each of the six essential steps in the Path to Prevention are critical and necessary for schools/colleges to proactively intervene with at-risk individuals and incidents on campus, off campus and on Social Media BEFORE they escalate towards something more serious, more dangerous, more expensive or more tragic.

A Prevention Assessment will review:

How schools are ensuring situational and ongoing awareness at the individual level—including but not limited to what concerning behaviors look like, how to make incident reports (confidential and/or truly anonymous), situational awareness, updates on new and viral social media risks, policies, procedures, plans (including individual roles and responsibilities) related to preventing as well as ensuring all individuals are aware of emergency and crisis response plans from security assessments.

How schools are collecting the dots—including but not limited to how schools are collecting incident reports, investigations, interventions, social media behaviors and comments, etc. from individuals in their school and "community-wide" who almost always see pre-incident indicators. And making sure all of the "dots" are collected in a central, secure records management platform that is separate from Student Record Systems to eliminate potential liabilities due to disclosures (unauthorized and authorized) outlined in multiple guidelines including FERPA, state laws and national standards guidelines. Too many schools are using outdated approaches (paper-based, spreadsheet-based and other silo-based approaches) that lead to gaps and information falling through the cracks.

How schools are assessing the dots—including but not limited to the school/college threat assessment team and "community-based" threat assessment and safety teams. How threat assessment team members are assessing and measuring an at-risk individual's potential of aggression and violence, how teams (school and community-wide) are securely sharing information to meet privacy and security obligations, how teams ensure real-time collaboration rather than weekly meetings, how teams include third-party and community resources such as mental health services, law enforcement and numerous other assessing the dots efforts.

How schools are connecting the dots — including but not limited to how teams are connecting all related incident reports, investigations, witnesses, updates, legal obligations, internal resources, community-wide resources and numerous other connecting the dots efforts. Post-incident data and comments almost always refer to “the failure to prevent was due to not connecting the dots” and the Prevention Assessment will help your school, college and community to identify gaps, silos and disconnects BEFORE they lead to a failure to prevent.

How intervention efforts are working with at-risk individuals, how intervention efforts are communicated and documented across the school or district, how intervention related monitoring is working, what intervention programs are being utilized, are intervention efforts consistent and how numerous other intervention efforts are being utilized.

How prevention efforts are working in the school and across the district to prevent and eliminate liabilities and incidents associated with violence, sexual assaults, bullying, cyber bullying, gangs, drugs, weapons, sexting, social media drama, diversity/inclusion, suicides, cutting, depression, isolation, truancy, and numerous other threats, incidents, tragedies, and soaring liabilities.

Prevention Gaps Exposed In Student Surveys

To better understand what students are experiencing, Awareness conducted Student Safety Surveys in 2013 (nearly 4500 students across 16 states) and 2014 (nearly 6500 students across 14 states) and the students’ responses exposed several serious gaps and prevention disconnects in their schools. For example:

- 79 percent of students have been impacted by bullying in their school
- 46 percent of students have been impacted by cyberbullying
- 49 percent of students are witnessing another student being bullied at least once a week
- Only 17 percent of students said things got better when they reported a bullying incident
- 39 percent reported bullying incidents to teachers
- 36 percent reported bullying incidents to parents
- 17 percent reported bullying incidents to school office personnel

Many Students are still not reporting incidents because:

- 28 percent are scared to make the situation worse
- 26 percent don’t want to be involved
- 23 percent don’t want to be a snitch
- 20 percent don’t believe it will help

If schools are not receiving incident reports, it is not because incidents are not occurring, it could be because students have lost trust in adults and their school’s prevention capabilities. Lost trust and lack of taking action is a dangerous problem, because when human beings ask for help and nothing happens, human beings tend to take matters into their own hands.

Why is survey data about bullying important? Many previous active shooters have left messages and manifestos that cited their grievances with being a victim of bullying. When you combine the survey data about bullying with the survey data that when students report bullying and things get better ONLY 17 percent of the time, human beings (students) may decide to take matters into their own hands — some will become violent, some will bully others, some will become depressed, some will resort to suicidal ideations, some will turn to self-harm and cutting and some will turn to drugs and alcohol to get away from the pain...and some have and could become SHOOTERS.

The student survey also provides insight on what students hear other students talking about:

- 34 percent are aware of someone who may pose a risk to students and their school.
- 34 percent are aware of a fellow student who has talked about or contemplated suicide.
- 34 percent are aware of students who have brought drugs or alcohol to school.
- 90 percent said they would report weapons, online threats, and suicidal students if they had an anonymous incident reporting option.
- 98 percent said they are willing to be a *hero* for somebody, BUT school administrators need to equip students (faculty, staff, and community members) with the web-based and anonymous incident reporting tools so they can share their observations of concerning behaviors and pre-incident indicators.

The evidence from post-incident data, from lessons learned, and from student surveys is overwhelming and the data exposes numerous liabilities and dangerous gaps with current and community-wide prevention capabilities in schools and communities.

School Administrators should take immediate action to learn more about their school-wide and their community-wide prevention capabilities before the next incident or tragedy occur. All schools should conduct a Prevention Assessment to learn how they compare to leading schools who are proactively preventing active shooters, violence, and numerous other incidents and liabilities while also improving their school climate for all students, all school personnel, and their entire community.

Rick Shaw is President and founder of Awareity. For more information, please visit www.awareity.com

Lessons Learned

by Lawrence J. Fennelly

After every active shooter incident, there are questions from victims and their families, as well as mental health professionals. They want to know why the shooting happened. They want to know what could have been done to prevent the attack and what caused this particular person to kill or injure innocent people. People start looking for missed warning signs. Most importantly, everyone wants to know what can be done to prevent the next incident from happening.

In addition to those questions, law enforcement and other first responders evaluate their response and seek answers to their own set of questions after each and every new active shooter incident:

- What strategies worked well and what did we do “right” during the response?
- What could we have done better?
- What systems and procedures worked well and what needs to be re-evaluated or changed?
- What additional equipment or training would have made the response better?

Evaluating first responder actions are an important part of improving how active shooter incidents are handled. We learn from mistakes that have been made in the past. For instance, when two students conducted their attack at Columbine High School in Littleton, CO, law enforcement officers as well as first responders outside the building were hearing shots as innocent victims were killed or injured. In the past, first responders gathered outside the building or area, waited for additional responders, planned their strategy, and then entered the building to neutralize the threat. Research has shown that in almost every case, once shooters are confronted by an armed response, no other innocent victims will be killed or injured.⁶ Because of this the initial or sole first responder on the scene now enters that building as quickly as possible to gain control of the situation.

Traditional law enforcement response to an active shooter event was to secure the perimeter, gather information, and wait for additional officers to arrive. Unfortunately, the shooting at Columbine High School proved this approach failed. Since that time, law enforcement officers now use rapid deployment to an active shooter event by entering the building or the area as fast as possible with the goal of neutralizing the hostile threat with the least amount of force.⁷ What we have learned is that even a sole first responder on the scene must communicate with other responders who are en route and then enter the building or area to prevent further injuries or loss of life. A law enforcement officer on the scene of an active shooter incident, who enters a building or area alone before other first responders arrive, does so because of their sworn duty to protect. This strategy is an effort to prevent the death toll from rising.

Past incidents have shown that an incident command post must be established as soon as possible to coordinate the response of multiple agencies. Also, a perimeter has to be identified quickly so responding agencies will know where to gather and what to do.

⁶ <http://www.policemag.com/channel/careers-training/articles/2013/02/rethinking-active-shooter-response.aspx>

⁷ <https://info.publicintelligence.net/LAactiveshootertactics.pdf>

Ideally, the resources of many agencies should be utilized to effectively respond to an active shooter situation. Responders must have the needed equipment so they can prepare and effectively respond. Agencies should work together to provide and support each other's training so they are all aware of how they will respond and work together as a team. The shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School made first responders aware of how important it is to have a plan in place to allow multi-jurisdictional agencies to communicate, and that there must be adequate communication operators (dispatchers) available to handle the influx of calls.⁸ It is vital that that communication is maintained with the community, as well as the first responders, throughout the entire incident.

The shooting at Virginia Tech caused the university to re-evaluate their emergency communication and warning systems. Even though there were multiple layers in their communication process, not all of them worked well. One lesson learned was redundant modes of internal emergency communications and notifications with overlapping layers of communication were needed. Numerous modes of communication are available such as text alerts, audible sirens, social networks, e-mail, web pages, local university cable television stations, computer pop-up alerts, and constant updates to local and national media. The messages provided information on what was happening with the police response and instructions on what individuals on campus should do.

Virginia Tech also learned that some words (such as "shelter-in-place" and "lockdown") were confusing and many people did not understand exactly what they meant. The term "clear" caused confusion to some of the responding agencies. They were unsure whether "clear" meant evacuate the building or "clear" the building of any potential suspects. Even when we speak the same language, we find these words that have different meanings.

The shooting at Northern Illinois University in 2008 demonstrated the need for National Incident Management System (NIMS) for all campus law enforcement as well as training and drills for students, faculty, and staff so they know their roles and responsibilities during an active shooter incident. All-hazards planning and response with comprehensive training, drills, and exercises are a critical part of emergency preparedness.

The response to the 2012 shooting at the Century 16 Theater in Aurora, Colorado, emphasized the need to have access to an area crowded with vehicles and people. Before even arriving at the theater, first responders were inundated by moviegoers covered in blood and carrying victims.

Although local and state first responders are almost always the first ones on the scene of an active shooter incident, the FBI plays a large role in supporting the response to every major incident in recent years. The FBI has training and resources which can be utilized before and after an incident occurs.⁹ Shooters plan their actions, so it is reasonable that first responders also have a plan for how to best handle the situation. The lessons learned from previous active shooter incidents are invaluable to first responders and this knowledge will help save the lives of innocent victims who are simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

⁸ www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness

⁹ <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-incidents>



Public Safety and School-Sponsored Onsite Training Programs for Emergency Responders

by Jim McLain, CPP, FMP

Many public K-12 school systems in America have emergency plans that include measures for active shooter situations. This is typically in accordance with their state laws or regulations. But without proper and periodic training, these emergency plans are merely a list of instructions that may or may not be carried out in actual emergency situations.

In addition to mandatory training drills (e.g., fire, lockdown, and bus evacuation), school administrators should regularly engage with their crisis management teams in practical or tabletop exercises to train on how to execute their plans in the event a critical incident arises. As with plans that require update, the exercises should be modified to address different incidents. The training should be placed in a mandatory cycle to ensure the most effective response when needed. Public safety officials must be involved in each of these tabletop exercises. Having key stakeholders together is needed in order to educate school staff on expectations during a response, and to evaluate and provide input on the actions taken by crisis teams.

At my school district, the crisis and security plans require updating each year. All schools within the school division are required to conduct tabletop exercises in a mandatory cycle. Secondary, high, and middle schools are provided tabletops every other year. Elementary schools receive these exercises every three years. Schools may request out-of-cycle tabletop exercises, and typically do this when staff changes occur or when shortcomings are identified.

This continual and cyclical timeline was planned with consideration for other drills, instructional time, the number of schools, and the resources available to provide the training. A two-member security planning team assigned to the central safety and security office reviews and approves plans every year. The team also conduct tabletop exercises. The exercises are formulated and routinely modified under the supervision of a dedicated security specialist. Approximately 85 tabletops that take about 90 minutes each are conducted each year. Supervisors from the local police and fire departments attend every exercise.

From the school district's perspective, this is an effective method in preparing school teams to respond to emergencies when coupled with the multitude of other drills the teams conduct with students and staff. What can school systems then do to facilitate public safety agencies' abilities to respond to their school emergencies? Coming from a law enforcement background that include years assigned to a tactical unit, it is understood there are three basic needs in any strategy to address and resolve active shooter and other violent incidents: Communications. Intelligence. And training.

Once schools understand and embrace this, it becomes highly effective in enhancing school safety to assist public safety with their training needs relative to school emergencies. By providing school facilities as training venues, administrators inherently allow emergency response groups to address each need.

Interactive training inside the school buildings provides public safety operators the opportunity to assess communications capabilities or limitations inside particular sites, valuable real-life intelligence on the structure itself, and an excellent training environment. Although it improves the ability of emergency responders to respond in active shooter and mass casualty scenarios, training opportunities for the utilization of schools should not be limited. Practically speaking, the more responders become familiar with school layouts *by actually being in them* as opposed to just viewing the floor and site plans, the better off school communities are.

Since actively engaging public safety in utilization of our facilities within reasonable expectations, needed improvements by the schools are regularly identified and addressed, response on day-to-day calls for service are enhanced as well as emergency response.

Public safety concerns regarding their difficulty to communicate in some of our schools during training created a need by our central office to assess each school for in building penetration of the public safety radio frequencies. Working in conjunction with two way communications specialists in our county a number of facilities were tested and bi-directional public safety antenna systems were installed. This program is ongoing and has the side benefit of helping schools improve school based portable radio communications through the addition of radio repeaters in their facilities subsequent to the onsite assessments.

For pre-incident intelligence and to enhance emergency response all schools have an exterior and interior numbering system at all primary entrances. Public safety departments are provided electronic site, floor plans and aerials accessible from their computer aided dispatch terminals in their cruisers or apparatus. Large scale paper versions of this for all schools are carried by school security supervisors for command post deployment when emergency responders are on scene. The onsite training opportunities we have afforded to public safety educated us the items we provide are useful but by comparison physical knowledge gained through training use has been exceptionally beneficial.

Our local police SWAT group oversees active shooter training. Every summer all sworn members of the police department, sheriff's department, and the area state troopers go through onsite active shooter training at two of our high schools. Recently due to the large presence of federal law enforcement agencies in our area, many agents as well as military police have been included in training efforts as they may be in the area should an incident occur. The base and military police are provided training at our large elementary school located on the installation. The fire department also conducts mass casualty and multiple unit response functional exercises during the summer months at our high schools.

Additionally, a variety of our schools are regularly used for squad-level training for our district level police and fire stations. The training ranges from K-9 searches, building searches and room clearing, officer safety to hazmat response.

Important consideration must be given to the use availability of the individual school itself. Like many school divisions, our facilities are often in use after hours and on weekends for community activities that generate needed income for the school system. Since public safety training does not occur during regular school hours, community usage or extracurricular school activity can limit training availability. Coordination is the key.

Our school division requires all requests for training come through the office of safety and security. Once the request is made, an office staff member coordinates with the office of community use and the school administration of the affected location. If a particular site is not available for the requested date, a proximate school is offered as an alternative.

Once the training is scheduled, uniformed school security responds to grant access on the date of the training. While many of the police entities have emergency key access for schools, security is necessary to disarm the security system and make sure no unscheduled activities are taking place that might interfere with the planned training session. 30 minutes prior to the end of training, school security responds back to secure the site at the conclusion. Large scale exercises or training resulting in a number of emergency vehicles onsite necessitates the coordination with public information offices for the school division, the police, and fire departments.

There is an old police or sports adage that is very fitting. "You play how you train." It aptly describes the many advantages for school systems facilitating use of their buildings for public safety.

Behavioral Threat Assessment Teams, An Ounce of Prevention

by Jason Stone

Columbine High School. Virginia Tech. Sandy Hook Elementary. What were once names of safe educational institutions are now synonymous with fear, pain, death, and tragic loss of innocent lives. The horrific gunning down of men and women, boys and girls, that took place on these campuses have helped coin new phrases like “active shooter,” “lock & hide” and “run, hide, fight”. These catchphrases describe response procedures that do just that—respond. But in order to respond to an event, it must be situation that is *in progress*.

When it comes time for the responding team to arrive, unfortunately there will be people that are already injured, some possibly killed. Wouldn't it be great if there was a tool available that can stop active shootings from happening? What if schools could have a well-trained team that gather at a moment's notice, evaluate the potential for threat, and set a plan to action? This is not a dream. These teams do exist and they prevent disasters nationwide almost daily. They are called Threat Assessment Teams (TATs), and have become an effective tool to help prevent (that's right, I said *prevent*) horrific events similar to the ones we have seen occur all too often in recent years.

Did Not See It Coming

Immediately after an attack, the news is filled with reports of shock and disbelief. We sometimes hear, “He just snapped” or “She was such a good kid. I would never have thought she would do something like that.” Then once the dust settles, a different truth emerges—how the person who just committed inexplicable murder wasn't himself lately, or how she joked about shooting up the school. More time passes and the media uncovers how the assailant turned in dark writing assignments with shocking focus on killing, torture, or suicide that was just “not like his normal work.” Or maybe we are told that she posted online about how hopeless it all was and want everything to end. Thus countless investigators think about how helpful it would be to have this information prior to resulting tragedy rather than after. We imagine how many lives could have been saved, how many families would be spared these tragedies, if we had ‘the big picture’ before the first shot was fired.

The Secret Service conducted an in-depth study of 37 incidents that took place between January 1974 and May 2000. This report, called the *Safe School Initiative*, showed 93% of assailants in the study displayed troublesome behavior prior to their attack. The study showed that at least one other person knew there was a very high potential the subject would attack in 81% of the incidents studied; more than one person knew the likelihood for violence in 59% of the cases. This information is alarming especially since 93% of those individuals with knowledge that an attack would occur were other students or friends of the assailant.

This information tells us unabashedly that people knew there was potential for violence ... and said nothing. Or if had they said something, perhaps the reporting system was fragmented, and the potential life saving information did not reach the proper person who could have done something about it. The bottom line is nobody had the opportunity to see the big picture. *A properly functioning TAT not only gets to see the big picture, it has an opportunity to intervene, and that makes a world of difference.*

Purpose of the Team

A TAT's main purpose is to provide a thorough and unbiased investigation into all reported potential threats. Investigations are handled tactfully and confidentially. The team acts with the safety of all parties involved as a primary concern at all times. Since many TAT investigations involve suicidal behavior, it is important that TAT members do not lose focus on the fact they must consider the protection of the individuals under investigation as well as potential targets. The team must be prepared to calmly RESPOND to the facts of a concern, and not REACT out of fear. How the team handles the investigation does not only affect the outcome of the current investigation, but it will also affect future ones. Teams that rely solely on punishing the subject of the investigation rather than a course of action that helps keep the community as safe as possible will wind up alienating themselves. If the TAT can show it performs its functions with the best interest of all involved, at all times, it will earn the trust of the community it serves. When the trust of the community is earned, concerned peers will be more likely to seek the team's help. If a team is heavy handed and becomes known for acting out of fear, it will not only lose the trust of the community, and therefore risk future operations, but it could open itself and its organization up to lawsuits.

The Team (experienced counselors, instructors, administrators, security & safety, law enforcement)

The team should select a leader; a chairperson if you will. The chairperson should have a level head, an excellent working knowledge of the threat assessment process, and should be very familiar with the school culture. It is important to point out that the person selected to head the team does not have to be in a leadership position at the school—the selected chairperson could very well be a counselor or faculty member. What is important is that they meet the above criteria. In a group such as this, all members must be allowed to speak their mind and not be influenced by the position any team member holds. It may take you a few tries to form a team in which everyone works well together, but you should start with the following individuals:

- experienced counselors
- teachers
- school administration
- campus security representative
- law enforcement representative

**** It is very important to mention parents and students should not be a member of the TAT due to the confidentiality of the discussion the teams will be having**

Training the Team

Training is one of the major keys to a TAT's success. Proper training matched with proper staffing will make a TAT a very effective tool to help those that may need it in your school system. It may save a life or prevent injuries on or off campus.

All team members should be trained in basic threat assessment at minimum. It is preferred that all members receive advanced threat assessment training at the educational level of your institution (higher education vs. K-12).

Opportunities for the team to train together under the processes put in place by your organization should be made available whenever possible. The more the team works together, the more proficient they will become. In some school systems, the team meets on a weekly or monthly basis to discuss legitimate cases. In other school systems, the demand might not be as high and so the team may only be called upon once or twice a year. In the latter cases it is very important that the team still meets regularly to discuss procedure and do tabletop exercises to keep everyone's skills up to date.

This section was intended to give the reader a brief summary of how a Threat Assessment Team works, a basic outline on how to form one, and how it is trained. It is by no means an all-inclusive training document. But hopefully this document has provided enough material for the reader consider and realize that Threat Assessment Teams are another deployable, and in fact effective, tool in targeted violence and suicide prevention.

Preventing an Active Shooter Incident

Paul Timm, PSP

Active shooter events, despite their relative rarity, are an important security concern for entities such as educational institutions, businesses, and government buildings. The frequency of these deadly incidents is on the rise in America, and the intense media spotlight is frequently focused on them. As a result, today, more than ever, is the best time to implement measures and practices that are focused on training, preparing for and, perhaps most importantly, preventing these difficult situations.

Between 2000 and 2013, 486 people were killed in active shooter events. An additional 557 were wounded.¹⁰ During the first half of this time period, there were approximately six active shooter situations per year. The average of the second half of the 13-year study rose significantly to 16 per year. This rise in active shooter events is an alarming trend that has caused society to take note. Regardless of the number of shootings that actually occur each year, just the possibility of an active shooter incident must cause us to take precautions to reduce the risk.

There are several ways educational institutions, from K-12 to universities, can assist in the prevention of the event from starting. First and possibly most importantly, provide training to your stakeholders. Training can take many different forms, but experts should always conduct it. Vital instructional topics include:

- **Heightened Awareness.** Make stakeholders aware of their surroundings, potential threats, and the security measures that are in place. Encourage them to report all legitimate issues.
- **Diffusing Potentially Volatile Situations.** From handling disgruntled persons to appropriately addressing escalating or destructive behaviors, provide people with effective direction and methods.
- **Personal Crime Prevention.** Equip your stakeholders with good safety practices, such as utilizing a “two person rule” for accountability purposes, intentionally moving about the campus in well-lit areas, and avoiding the display of money and valuable devices.

Another important way to discourage shooters from targeting educational institutions involves “hardening the target.” The concept of target hardening centers on the idea people who contemplate executing malevolent acts are more interested in choosing the easy target than an intimidating one. How can you make your campus and individual facilities appear to be difficult to victimize? Security measures that aid in these efforts include strategic placement of video surveillance cameras, noticeable presence of security personnel, and implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles such as “natural surveillance” and “natural access control.” These measures serve to discourage, if not warn, would-be bad guys that criminal actions will be more difficult to carry out than not. Building design from new construction to renovations can also significantly impact prevention. Effective design features include secured vestibules, classroom security locks,

¹⁰ *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States.* Federal Bureau of Investigations, U.S. Department of Justice.

vehicle barriers, bullet resistant glass, and other delay measures. These features can help not only in limiting the damage of an in-progress active shooter but also in stopping shooters before they start by making it difficult to enter a building or gain access to classrooms or gathering areas.

Other prevention techniques focus on policies and procedures that deal with everything from visitor management practices to social media risks. For example, policies that involve suspension, expulsion, and termination should be drafted to address the possibility that the person being reprimanded or fired might grow upset or angry and react violently. These policies assist administrators and those in authority in making safe decisions regarding termination, suspension, and expulsion. Effective policies should include mandatory cool-off periods for terminated workers. In other words, these individuals are not permitted back on campus for a certain period of time after the termination. Monitored exit interviews and notice of termination practices allow administrators to foster an environment where the terminated employees grievances or issues with the institution are aired and potentially resolved before they develop into something more threatening down the line.

Today is the day to place importance on prevention efforts. Be proactive. Stopping the active shooter before he or she has a chance to carry out their mission is obviously invaluable. According to an FBI study, most active shooter events begin and end within five minutes. This means that if prevention failed, we may not be able to immediately rely on the response of law enforcement officials to neutralize the threat. Instead, make a commitment to instruct your stakeholders, discourage criminal behaviors, implement design features, and craft relevant policies that will significantly reduce your risk.

Buying Time—Realistic Hardening of the Target at the Classroom Door

by Jim McLain, CPP, FMP

The rare but devastatingly tragic incidents of targeted violence involving school shootings from external actors call to attention the need to review and improve, where possible, the physical security of our academic institutions nationwide. After the incident at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, once again a need was identified to provide better physical security if the outer perimeter was breached. Taking a corporate approach of layering security in order to buy time for the arrival of emergency responders to resolve the threat, there was a renewed focus on the construction of the classroom door.

How do you buy time at a door that is closed and already has a lock? To answer the question, school and physical security officials evaluated standard classroom doors, their construction, and configuration to ask:

- Is the door solid or hollow core?
- Is the door wood or metal?
- Does the door have a vision kit or panel?
- Is there a sidelight next to the door?
- Does the door have a lock that can be easily engaged in an emergency with a strike and frame sturdy enough to mitigate rapid breach?

Hollow core doors provide a privacy barrier, but they are ineffective for physical security and allow for easy noise detection. Wood or metal solid core doors are adequate for security so long as the hinges, strikes frame, and locking mechanism are strong enough.

The major vulnerabilities inherent in classroom doors are: 1) glass within or adjacent to the door that, when broken, would allow access to the handle; and 2) a locking configuration that prevents easy engagement in an emergency.

The fire codes in most states require classroom interior door latches to open in case of fire, even when locked from the outside. Unfortunately this creates a situation whereby an assailant can break the vision panel or sidelight, and reach in to open the locked door from the inside. While it would seem obvious to simply eliminate the glass, it is not practicable in today's school building design. Natural light penetration is considered desirable and even advantageous in creating optimum learning environments. This tends to make security professionals' physical security goals more challenging in educational facilities when it comes to the layered approach.

In locking configurations on classroom doors, there has been a longstanding philosophy in many school communities that the door should only be lockable from the outside to prevent kids from locking the teacher out. With that we have many schools with cylinders on the outside and no means to lock the door from the inside.



In routine day to day activity, this is of course fine. In the chaos of an emergency, however, teachers opening the door to lock it from the outside not only exposes them to the gunman, but in some cases, the teacher inadvertently unlocks it by pushing down on the interior handle as they close the door under duress. The worst case scenario that plays out being the teacher cannot find her/his keys in an emergency, or a substitute teacher has no key to begin with.

To address this, all that many schools can do is to try locking the door at the beginning of the day while it stands open. Should an emergency arise where lockdown procedures are appropriate, the teacher or substitute simply closes the door. Naturally the issue with this procedure is under certain situations a student can close the door and the teacher would effectively be locked out. The double cylinder locks are effective but the dilemma of no readily accessible keys may exist.

Post Sandy Hook, the one cost-effective and seemingly ready fix that overcame the door issues aforementioned is the portable and rapidly deployable barricade or barring device that prevents unlocked doors from being easily breached. The market was flooded with a plethora of different concepts of the same tool. The school division I manage security for even put our design engineers to work. A prototype of a spring-loaded floor device was created. Our design, along with some door devices we purchased from legitimate vendors, was presented for approval.

All devices were ruled as being against fire code in our state. They were therefore rejected by the fire marshal. Research into codes and regulations revealed that there are a great many states where the fire code prohibits the use of any type of door barricade implement as it may impede fire evacuation.

A two pronged approach to resolve this buying time strategy was taken. Finding the optimum type classroom lock and taking steps to prevent access by breaking the glass. Primary considerations have to be considered for a cost-effective solution that works and does not over institutionalize the facility.

Aesthetics also plays an important role in the public education culture and must be considered by security professionals. This presents

challenges in trying to address physical security needs. Both educators and school community members shun the idea of their schools looking like prisons or defense facilities.

The preferred type of door hardware is equipment that can be locked from the inside with a single lever handle that, when pulled down, will unlock the door from the inside. The door, frame, and hinges must be sturdy to begin with. Consideration has to be given to the type of lock: single bore cylinder or mortise lock.¹¹

Thumb turn (or a button on the inside lever or on the back plate) can work to lock the door from the inside; however in a panic, the button lock can be disengaged by a teacher who pushes the button to lock the door but then as he/she endeavors to close the door unintentionally pushes down on the lever.

We had a manufacturer fabricate a heavy duty mortise lock with an incorporated secondary locking device. A thumb turn lock mounted on the escutcheon (or back plate) with an indicator window was used. The indicator displays for the interior user when the door is locked in white lettering on a red background and unlocked with black lettering on a white background. The front of the lock set has a keyed cylinder with a vandal-proof lever. If the lever is forced down in an effort to force it open, an interior ratcheting simply breaks the lever free and it goes back into functioning battery. Staff is currently testing the lock to ascertain if it meets our need for buying time at the door.

Because of the desire for natural lighting and the need for administrators and teachers to monitor what's on the other side of the door without disrupting instructional sessions, all of my school division's classroom doors have vision kits/panels installed. Many school divisions throughout the nation face this same challenge. A violent intruder need only break out the glass to reach in and defeat the lock.

There are several options in approaching this. The old established method of reinforcing the glass with wire mesh on the inside (like the way they were when we were in school many years ago) is no longer an option in our organization. Approximately a decade ago, it was decided to do away with utilization of this type of glass due to a potential for a child to injure themselves if they accidentally broke the glass. (Although I suspect that costs also may have played a factor in the decision.)

There are some highly effective screens available with ballistic capabilities that are cost-effective. Bars and heavy-duty meshes were also reviewed. These were not acceptable in the school environment here because of the institutionalized perception. Plexiglas-type material was considered as well but the mounting and yellowing over time concerns were raised.

The second prong of the approach came down to clear and not tinted security films. The film manufacturers provide excellent demonstration videos, but staff and I decided to conduct field and performance testing on our own due to concerns of door framing, mounting, and the small size of the vision panels. With over twenty thousand classroom doors in our organization, finding a solid solution in a cost effective manner is paramount.

¹¹ The single bore cylinder is commonly used because of its ease of installation and costs. Commercially, mortise type locks are popular because of its durability and built in deadbolt type secondary lock, depending on the model you procure.

Does security film applications work? To answer the question, our first round of testing consisted of security film mounted to the inside and outside of existing window glass. The optional security adhesion kit to strengthen the frame area where it meets the glass was also used.

The film and kit were installed on a four by four feet library entrance and two classroom vision kits. The optimum cure time of ninety days was allowed. The testing was conducted in the wing of a school under renovation after school hours so there would be no disruption to the primary mission of educating the children. The area was cordoned off with safety personnel posted to prevent unwanted access and unintentional injury.

The local police department special weapons and tactics team performed the field testing on the glass. Three methods of breach that might be readily available to a school shooter were deployed: the butt of a rifle, a fire extinguisher, and finally a breaching round fired from a shotgun.

On the larger library window the film performed remarkably. Repeated and numerous strikes with the rifle butt and fire extinguisher failed to even crack the window. The breaching round put a slug sized hole in the window but it held together and subsequent strikes failed to breach the window even after being shot. While ballistic capabilities are not inherent in the security films they still maintained considerable strength after being penetrated by the round fired from a gun.

The small classroom window glass panels were tested on doors mounted in their standard frames with standard wooden window frames. In both cases the windows remained intact but the frame surrounding the vision kit gave way causing the entire panel to fall out thus defeating the purpose.

A second round of testing was needed so installations were done on three doors in the same building with metal framing being installed with each vision kit. One door window installed with a single side film and adhesion kit inside a metal frame withstood all breach attempts. The door itself was locked. The swat team member did not shoot this door window.

The second application was identical to the first but the door was unlocked with play in it. The application failed after several attempts. We did not shoot this panel either.

The third and final door had film installed on both sides with an adhesion kit install on the metal frame and window seam. This door withstood all attempts, including breach by shooting.

While double-sided application with a metal frame appears to provide the solution, our team of staff elected to perform one more round of testing so we can incorporate variables that might be considered by other school districts and could present cost savings. For example, how do single-side installation and double-side installation without the optional adhesion kit perform?

For the second round and forthcoming third round, we invited the assistance of Underwriters Laboratories to observe and provide their expertise in reaching a successful solution with the versatility to work on a variety of door vision panels. The one definite reached at this junction is the necessity for an attachable metal frame around the treated window.

The third round of testing also includes the aforementioned lockset developed for our purposes. A similar configuration with the indicator window and thumb turn was developed for the larger doors with interior panic hardware as well.

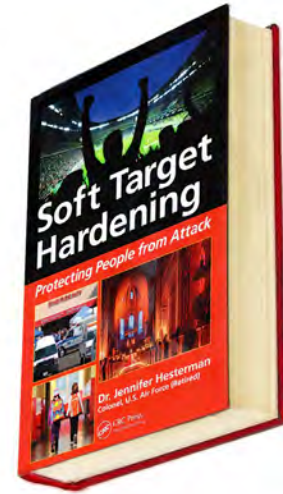
One final point, any testing and evaluation team should be multi-disciplinary so that all variables are considered. The staff team mentioned in this document was comprised of school security, school design engineers, and facilities management personnel, along with police and fire representation. Present also in prior and any subsequent testing is a life safety development manager with Underwriters Laboratories.

We are confident the simple strategy of buying time at the classroom entrance door will be an effective layered security solution. As to what else school divisions security officials decide to include as part of their physical security program to mitigate the school shooter, proper consideration for what is acceptable to the organization, costs, and how the material(s) will perform in the actual environment should be considered.

K-12 as Soft Targets*

by Dr. Jennifer L. Hesterman, EdD

Every day, somewhere in the world, another school wakes up from the aftermath of another violent attack possibly caused by a terrorist or an insurgent group that threatens the United States or its citizens abroad. In some cases, they were bombed by their own government as a consequence of civil war or as part of a warfighting strategy that is impossible for us to comprehend. Who could have predicted, even ten years ago, that schools, as well as churches and hospitals, would be considered routine and legitimate targets for terrorist groups? The actors have redrawn the battlefield lines around sanctuaries that civilians once held confidence in of shelter and safety. Schools for children are legitimate and penetrable targets scoped by those who wish to do harm, from international terrorist organizations to lone wolves to those merely disgruntled or mentally incapacitated and have the urge to “act out.”



* Based on concepts covered in
*Soft Target Hardening:
Protecting People from Attack*
CRC Press, 2014

A school is a soft target, meaning it is:

- A civilian-centric place
- Not typically “fortified,” meaning vulnerable, unprotected, and undefended
- Security not a primary mission
- Possibly co-located with or near a hard target

If lacking a specific agenda, terrorist criminals may choose to target a school for the ability to inflict the most damage in terms of casualty count. Also, soft target attacks generate a long press cycle, serving any “fame,” recruiting, or legitimacy goals of the actor. Another consideration for the tactic, soft target attacks generate more fear and psychological “pain” than hitting a government building or installation.

Perhaps nothing more deeply affects the American public than an attack on a school. We never expect that innocent children would be targeted by anyone, be it their fellow student, a member of the community with a mental illness, a criminal, or a terrorist. Therefore we are wholly unprepared, shocked, and deeply saddened when we learn of its occurrence. The ripple effect of school attacks is also immense—traumatizing students, teachers, and first responders who view the scene; inducing post-traumatic stress and panic disorder in many. So, a school attack persists in people’s minds and on society’s conscious long after the shooting stops, long after the walls are repaired and the students’ return, which makes it the perfect target in the eyes of a motivated killer.

Psychology of Soft Targeting

We can easily slip into a false sense of security and become complacent about safety inside our schools' halls and classrooms. Security, however, is not the primary mission of schools, which typically are constrained of the resources needed to fund recommended security measures or hire additional guards. Also, schools are typically "gun free" zones so the only resistance a violent actor will meet is a typically unarmed security guard or two.

In addition to physical security factors, we need to look inward and fight our psychological "blind spot" regarding the issue of school security. I often speak with college presidents and high school principals about the possibility of a terrorist attack or an active shooter event on their property, and I've met certain mindsets that prove problematic. They may convey a feeling of hopelessness (there is not much we can do to prevent or mitigate the threat); infallibility (it will never happen here); or inescapability (its destiny or unavoidable, so why even try). Some block out the thought at a personal level by thinking "it can't happen to me," indicating a sense of invulnerability. Even worse, others may believe that "if it's going to happen, there is nothing I can do about anyway," expressing inevitability.

Persons with these types of mindsets are a detriment to your organization in a crisis as they exhibit a lack of awareness to the threat, mental preparation, or lack the sense of determination to engage and command the situation. In an emergency, those without a plan or resolve may wait for first responders and law enforcement to arrive and rescue them before taking steps to save their lives or the lives of others. The Sandy Hook shooting lasted 6 minutes and ended with 26 people dead. There is no time to wait for help when the attacker is determined and brings heavy firepower to the fight. In an active shooter event, everyone is a first responder.

Escalation of School Attacks Worldwide

On April 7, 2011, a 24-year-old man named Wellington Oliveira traveled to the Tasso da Silveira Municipal School in Rio de Janeiro where he was a former student and subject of classmate bullying. He methodically killed 12 students. A firefighter who responded to the scene told newspapers, "There is blood on the walls, blood on the chairs. I've never seen anything like this. It's like something in the United States."¹² His statement illustrates the prevailing worldview towards the escalation of school violence in our country, especially with the recent epidemic of shootings and stabbings. As part of a larger society which is increasingly violent, there is an inevitable ripple effect on the safety and security of our schools.

At any given time, there are at least 75 million Americans attending some type of school from Kindergarten through doctorate level courses. Overseeing them are 5 million teachers, administrative, and support staff on campuses.¹³ Many schools also serve community needs, used as places for meeting, polling, or shelters in times of emergency—introducing other potential bad actors to the installation. Even if schools are not the intended

¹² Bryan Johnson, "Top 10 Chilling Quotes During School Shootings." <http://listverse.com/2012/05/09/top-10-chilling-quotes-during-school-shootings/>

¹³ Department of Homeland Security, "FEMA 428, Primer to Design Safe School Projects in Case of Terrorist Attacks." (2012.)

target, children must be protected from the physical and emotional side effects of being in the proximity to horrific violence. For example, there were four elementary schools and three high schools located within six blocks of the World Trade Center on 9/11. Children in at least three states had parents working in or around the World Trade Center that day. Thousands of children were exposed to the toxic dust clouds from the collapsing buildings. In the Washington DC area, schoolchildren faced similar stress when the Pentagon was attacked.¹⁴ Schools have also been pulled into active shooter events where a gunman is on the loose and part of a manhunt on the school property but they weren't the primary target.

The top two deadliest mass shootings by a single person in U.S. history both occurred on school campuses. On April 16, 2007, 23-year-old Seung-Hui Cho killed two students in his Virginia Tech dormitory. Cho then went to a classroom building, barricaded himself inside, and shot 53 students and teachers, killing 30 in just nine minutes. On December 14, 2012, Adam Lanza killed his mother in their home. Lanza then went to the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. There, he bypassed the security door and shot through a plate glass window to gain entrance to the building. He killed 20 first graders and 6 staff members in only six minutes. Since the 1999 Columbine attack, there have been at least 30 other major school shootings in our country. Certainly, terrorists and others with nefarious intention watch and see the relative ease with which school attacks are accomplished.

K-12: Vulnerable in the Crosshairs

Kindergarten through 12th grade vulnerabilities differ from those on college campuses. First of all, physically not matured the younger populace cannot defend themselves as readily and are more likely to slip into suspended disbelief as the situation unfolds than engage a “flight or fight” response. Examining the unique vulnerabilities found from shooting attacks associated with K-12 helps to better understand trends, the risk of attack, and mitigation challenges.

The first K-12 school attack in the United States was the Enoch Brown School Massacre, which occurred July 26, 1764. On this date, four American Indian warriors entered a white settler's log cabin school in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, and used a tomahawk to kill and scalp the teacher and ten students. Throughout the years, primary and secondary schools have been the site of revenge murders, racial attacks, gang violence, suicides, workplace violence, and lovers' quarrels. They have been used by domestic terrorists as a way to express rage and garner attention to their cause. For example, on May 18, 1927, the Bath Consolidated School was the scene of the deadliest act of mass murder in a school in U.S. history in a lone wolf, anti-government attack. Andrew Kehoe, upset with policies and tax law he believed led to his farm's foreclosure, murdered his wife at home, and then detonated three dynamite bombs at the Maine school where he worked as the accountant. Kehoe spent months planting explosive material throughout the building in a premeditated act that stunned the country. When confronted at the scene by law enforcement, he detonated a vehicle bomb, killing himself and the school superintendent. In all, the attack killed 38 school children and five adults.

¹⁴ Centers for Disease Control, “Schools and Terrorism: A Supplement to the National Advisory Committee on Children and Terrorism Recommendations to the Secretary.” Atlanta, GA. (2003.)

International terrorist groups and embattled governments use modern day schools as political targets. Students have been the victims of bombings, shootings, kidnappings, and hostage situations. In the past 40 years, there have been massacres at the Ma'a lot school in Israel, the Bahr el-Baqar school in Egypt, the Beslan school in Russia, the Nagerkovil school in Sri Lanka, and more recently, the Army School in Peshawar. Schools in the Gaza strip, Iraq, and Afghanistan are routinely attacked. Mass student kidnappings became a new fear when terrorists from the al Qaeda-linked group Boko Haram, who posed as soldiers to gain trust, kidnapped more than 500 girls from their boarding school in Nigeria on April 16th, 2014. The girls literally disappeared into thin air, with Boko Haram leaders threatening to sell them into marriage and the sex trade for \$12 a person to raise money for the group. They next attacked the village where the girls were from, killing 150 family members and search and rescue team personnel.

Why are K-12 schools more vulnerable to attack? First of all, the student populace is made up of children and young adults. Having not reached mental or physical maturation, obviously they are easier to overpower. Second, security measures are typically in place but done inconsistently. For example, as violence in our country began to rise in the 1980s, many schools began installing metal detectors at entryways. Although metal detectors work extremely well to catch weapons, school administrators found this type of screening time-consuming; especially when considering the rushed movement of hundreds of students to their classrooms each and every morning. Operating detectors or individual wands is extremely manpower intensive, and so many schools abandoned the idea.

The concept of school resource officers (SROs) took hold in the 1970s when protests and unrest related to the Vietnam War spilled over into school systems. SROs are sworn law enforcement officers who are detailed to the school system and work to enhance security at their institution. They may be armed and can make arrests. However, SROs can also be of limited help when facing a determined gunman/gunmen with a practiced, solid plan and heavy firepower, as the following cases illustrate.

In the Columbine High School attack, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold managed to kill 15 people and injure 24 despite the presence of an onsite SRO. Jefferson County Sheriff's Deputy Neil Gardner, a 15-year veteran of the Sheriff's Office, usually ate his lunch with the students in the cafeteria. His car parked in front of the cafeteria doors between the Junior and Senior parking lots. On the day of the attacks, Deputy Gardner was eating elsewhere on campus, watching an area frequented by smokers. When shots were fired inside of the school, he pulled up to the indoor/outdoor cafeteria area where Harris and Klebold had tried to set off two bombs and had already started killing students. Gardner engaged them in a gun battle; however, he was unable to hit the perpetrators. One injured teacher and a student were able to escape during the chaos, and Gardner was responsible for later saving other students as he protected them when they were fleeing. He exchanged gunfire with the shooters when they were killing students in the library before they committed suicide. He likely saved lives in the end, but Gardner's daily presence on the school grounds obviously didn't deter the shooters from their operation. In fact, investigators believe the shooters purposely chose the area where Gardner typically had lunch to start the operation with the likely intention to kill him first and remove their only obstacle to success.

The Red Lake School Massacre occurred on March 21, 2005. That morning, 16-year-old Jeffrey Weise killed his grandfather, a tribal police officer, and his girlfriend at their home. Weise then took his grandfather's police weapons, vest, and vehicle, and drove to Red Lake Senior High School, where he had been a student some months before. Weise first shot and killed the unarmed security guard at the entrance of the school, then targeted a teacher and five students. After the police arrived, Weise was undaunted and exchanged gunfire with them; he was wounded and then committed suicide in a vacant classroom.

In May of 2014, police in Waseca, Minnesota arrested seventeen-year-old John David LaDue on charges related to an elaborate plan to carry out a massacre at a nearby school. According to his 180-page diary that police found in his bedroom, LaDue plotted to kill his family members, start a diversionary fire to distract first responders, and then go to a nearby school. He was first going to kill the SRO, set off bombs, and shoot students and staff. A resident living next to a storage facility worker tipped off police to the suspicious teen. Contents of his locker revealed a pressure cooker, pyrotechnic chemicals, steel ball bearings, and gunpowder. He had also been able to stockpile three completed bombs, an SKS assault rifle, a Beretta 9 mm handgun, hundreds of rounds of ammo, and several other guns inside a safe at his home. LaDue had been testing his devices at a local elementary school playground and intended to attack the school on the anniversary of Columbine. However, the date of the anniversary fell on Easter Sunday and school was not in session. Locals described LaDue as a polite boy who did well in school and had plenty of friends.¹⁵

Religious elementary schools in the U.S. have also been the target of terrorists. In August of 2011, Federal law enforcement officers arrested Emerson Winfield Begolly in New Bethlehem, Pa. Begolly was a moderator and supporter for the internationally known Islamic extremist Web forum Ansar al-Mujahideen English Forum (AMEF). Begolly produced and distributed a 101-page document with instructions for constructing chemical-based explosives and a target list that included Jewish schools.¹⁶ Secular schools must be especially vigilant since religious terrorism is the most dangerous, with actors believing their violent actions are sanctioned and just.

Often, the perpetrators of K-12 violence are known—either current or former students, staff, or teachers. They know the school layout, class schedule, and become familiarized with the SRO's habits. They know when and where to strike with least resistance for the most effect. Detering school violence under these circumstances is very difficult.

Emergent Threat: Stabbing Attacks

Gun attacks are obviously the most feared weapons assault since mass casualties are inflicted in a shorter period of time and the mortality fears it conjures. However, we confiscate more knives in schools across the country than guns annually, and knifing incidents are on the rise as well. Between April 2013 and April 2015, there were at least 15 reported stabbings at schools across the country. Knife attacks are fast, unexpected, and devastating in terms of injuries. For example, on April 9, 2014, 16-year-old Alex Hribal used two kitchen knives to stab 22

¹⁵ Dana Ford and Ben Brumfeld. "Police: Minnesota Teen Planned School Massacre." May 2, 2014.

¹⁶ The Investigative Project on Terrorism. "USA vs. Begolly, Emerson." 2011.

victims in their stomachs and lower backs at Franklin Regional High School outside of Pittsburgh, Pa. The devastating attack lasted over 4 minutes until the assailant was subdued by brave students.

In stabbings, victims often do not feel pain from the initial wounding. Rather, it is a cold, icy feeling at the stabbing site since the body goes into shock. Victims often do not realize what has happened until they start bleeding, which delays the “fight or flight” response and allows the attacker more time to further engage and inflict wounds.

Reviewing stabbing case studies, it appears people may be more willing to engage and subdue an attacker wielding a knife than choosing to run and/or hide from a gunman. However, engaging an enraged assailant wielding large knives is very difficult, and those who approach will be likely injured. The U.S. is not the only country faced with this emergent issue. Mass stabbing attacks have also occurred in K-12 schools around the world, with mass casualty attacks in Ireland, China, and Germany.

Response to the Threat

In conclusion, protecting our schools and their occupants from any type of attack—whether by terrorist, lone wolf, student, or faculty member with a vendetta—is extraordinarily difficult. We naturally don’t want to turn our schools into fortresses, although as I illustrate in my book, *Soft Target Hardening*, the goal is to present your facility as impenetrable so the bad guys move on. There are best practices for hardening your school and there may be some inconvenience to faculty, students, and parents, but once inside, the feeling of safety and security leads to a richer learning environment.

There are other steps we must immediately take such as identifying and eliminating our psychological blind spot that prevents us from understanding that our school *is* vulnerable. A quick look at active shooting events in K-12 schools in the U.S. proves geographic location, the type of school, and economic class of its student are absolutely not factors. We should therefore focus on vulnerability, not probability. We also need to get out of the business of prediction and into that of preparedness. Finally, we have to come to terms with the fact the threat may be an insider—a disgruntled teacher or a bullied student. The identification of actors who have the propensity to carry out a school attack, or who could bring outside danger to our doorstep, is another area ripe for exploration.

Although it is more comfortable to bury our heads in the sand on this topic and spend our precious resources on gym climbing walls or more smart boards, in the end only you can answer—what is the cost of not securing your school?



When EMS Arrives on the Scene

by Michael J. Fagel, PhD, CEM

Law enforcement, as well as fire/EMS rescue, oftentimes converge at the scene of an emergent situation from several departments at different times and from different locations. In Active Shooter situations, there is no time to wait for standardized SWAT protocols. Rather, convergent initial contact teams that form up to neutralize the threat may be approaching the area from varying locations to address the situation. Additionally, other emergency medical, fire, and rescue personnel will be arriving but (based on predetermined protocols that should be practiced well in advance) they may stage offsite, away from the scene or out of the hot zone awaiting entry permissions. A strong command presence and discipline from all responding agencies is needed to manage various responding resources and to coordinate the treatment and transfer of victims.

Individuals involved in the incident may be required to provide immediate lifesaving care to treat life-threatening injuries of injured casualties. Normal EMS protocols may be suspended and the normal standard of care we enjoy throughout the U.S. is generally diminished since MS treatment will be focused primarily at triage and care of life-threatening injuries. Initial EMS activities may occur in warm zones with further treatment and transport in a cold zone. Law enforcement security in both warm and cold zones will be critical to supporting effective triage, treatment, and transport of victims.

As television coverage has often shown, injuries sustained during an Active Shooter situation may be catastrophic. EMS does not operate in a routine environment or provide normal response during this kind of operation. To assist, all persons involved must be able to adapt and overcome the events as they unfold. This cannot be accomplished without adequate preparations, preplanning, response drills, and similar activities. Failure to do so may well likely lead to repeated tragic results. Fire/EMS, law enforcement, and dispatch agencies' active participation in planning and exercises will help to successfully adapt in a chaotic situation.

Planning Practice and Preparedness are the Keys to Survival

An emergency response plan is a continuous process; meaning it should never be viewed as a final, finished product. Also important to note, all affected parties, agencies, and members of the various entities associated with the plan must be part of the planning process and team. An effective emergency response plan needs the involvement from all stakeholders across all walks of life. Every departments internally to your organization must have an active role, as well as all outside stakeholders. This must include Police, EMS, Fire, Dispatch Agencies, Public Health, Public Works, Legal, Human Resources, and administration at all levels.

An effective emergency response plan MUST include:

- an effective method for reporting threats and other emergencies
- an evacuation plan that is practiced with posted policies and procedures
- appropriately signed, marked emergency escape procedures, and route assignments (i.e. floor plans, safe areas)
- up-to-date contact information for, and responsibilities of, individuals to be contacted under the ERP
- contact information concerning local area hospitals (i.e., name, telephone number, and distance from your location)
- an emergency notification system to alert various parties of an emergency, including:
 - individuals at remote locations within premises
 - local law enforcement
 - local area hospitals

In addition, the emergency response plan specifies responsibilities and key contact information within your organization. The ERP should also include an emergency notification as well.

In the event that evacuation is necessary, your facilities should have at least two evacuation routes that are conspicuous and well marked.

With an effective emergency response plan and training in place, you and your staff will be better able to react, respond, and recover from a situation that will tax all elements of the team.

The Facility Managers' Responsibilities

The facility manager's responsibilities begin before any response is required. As part of the Emergency Response Plan, your facility managers:

- Implement and understand site security procedures. Institute security access controls (e.g. keys, security system pass codes).
 - Key fobs, door codes
- Distribute critical items to appropriate managers/employees, including:
 - Pocket-sized floor plans in break-glass cabinets
 - Keys and other access-control measures
 - Facility personnel lists with mobile telephone numbers
 - Daily schedule
- Assemble crisis kits containing:
 - Radios, tested and rotated batteries, chemical light sticks
 - Floor plans
 - Employee roster with emergency contact numbers
 - Triage supplies to be used in emergent situations
 - Catastrophic event medical supplies (tourniquets, chest wound sealers, combat gauze)
 - Appropriate First-Aid kits
 - Flashlights
- Activate the emergency notification system when an emergency situation occurs; as well as a backup plan.
- Ensure that the facility has at least two evacuation routes.
- Coordinate with the facility's security department to ensure the physical security of the location, as well as an alternate route.
- Advise according to plans and protocols and if in higher education, timely and clear notification.
- Secure doors.
- Order area supervisors to immediately direct all personnel (employees, customers, visitors, vendors, etc.) in their area to evacuate the facility if it can be done safely and with caution.
- If an evacuation is not possible, go to PRE-IDENTIFIED secure location. Lock the door and turn off the lights. Follow the protocol for the shades and other devices if appropriate.
- Keep personnel as calm as possible and try to notify 911 (using cell phones or telephones) of your location, number of occupants and status. Turn all cell phones silent!
- Remain in the room until an appropriate all-clear signal is given or law enforcement arrives.
- Prepare an incident report documenting personal observations.
- Post evacuation routes in conspicuous location throughout the facility.
- Place up-to-date and secure removable floor plans near entrances and exits for emergency responders.
- Include local law enforcement and first responders during training exercises. The training must be as realistic as possible.
- Encourage law enforcement, emergency responders, SWAT Teams, canine teams and bomb squads to practice for an active shooter scenario at their locations.
- Foster a respectful workplace.
- Beware of early indications of potential workplace violence and follow appropriate protocols as trained for the specific situation.

Human Resources Responsibilities

As part of your Emergency Response plan, your human resources (HR) department must also engage in planning for emergency situations involving an active shooter scenario.

Planning for situations may help to mitigate the likelihood of an incident by establishing processes such as:

- Conducting effective employees screening and background checks.
- Creating an effective system for reporting signs of potentially violent behavior by your employees.
- Making appropriate EAP counseling services available to employees.

Training

Once the emergency response process is ready for testing, you and your staff should be trained in preparing to respond to active shooter situations, including the use of exercises that involve local law enforcement and fire/EMS responders.

It is important for you and your personnel to establish an effective education and training program and is effectively and appropriately trained in its protocols and procedures so that you and your team can act effectively if you are ever confronted with an active shooter situation.

One commonly used effective training practices in responding to an active shooter situation for you and your team to conduct well planned out and implemented active shooter training exercises.

Security Consultants train in active shooter situations; along with local response agencies will be valuable resources as you prepare an effective training scenario appropriate to your situation.

In addition to your immediate security staff, your employees should also be trained in:

- Recognize the sound of gunshots.
- Reacting quickly when gunshots are heard and/or when a shooting is witnessed.
- Training should cover:
 - knowing how to evacuate the area
 - knowing how to hide out
 - knowing how to action against the shooter as a last resort
 - know when to call 911 immediately
 - knowing how to respond when law enforcement arrives
 - keep your hands visible at all times
 - keep your fingers spread; drop any objects in your hand
 - how to respond to official commands
 - do not reach for or grab responders
 - knowing how to adopt a survival mindset during times of crisis

Meeting the Needs of Those with Disabilities

In addition to developing the Emergency Response Plan, conducting regularly held evacuation instructions, and performing any other retraining exercises, you should ensure that your plans, evacuation instructions, and any other relevant information include provisions for managing the requirements of individuals with special needs and/or disabilities. It is important to ensure that your building is accessible for individuals with disabilities, in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Adopting these proactive measures to anticipate security concerns before they materialize can be achieved by creating an effective security strategy, based on a robust Emergency Response Plan that is exercised.

All of the above may enhance the resiliency for your organization. This is essential to deterring potential threats.

Adversaries, including active shooters, generally focus on the MOST vulnerable target and may choose to strike those targets (i.e., targets of opportunity or “soft” targets). Therefore mitigating the risk to your facility by minimizing external threats outside your secure perimeter is of paramount importance. Having an effective security program in place will reduce the likelihood of being perceived by your adversary as vulnerable and could help dissuade such potential threats from selecting your facility as a target. Such as when an individual engages in suspicious weapons and ammunition purchased and stockpiling.

Private sector security and law enforcement agencies may use a variety of protective measures to help disrupt or mitigate a potential active shooter attack.

Target Selection, Planning, Rehearsal, Attack, Escape and Exploitation

Awareness is key. Observation of precursors such as behavior, elicitation, and unusual purchases are some of the factors that can be looked at as we try to mitigate the effects of such an attack.

Planning, preparedness, practice, and options for consideration must be explored for the betterment of the people we serve. Involving all relevant stakeholders in this process will provide the best potential for a managed outcome at the time of an event’s occurrence.

Further Reading

Active Shooter: A Handbook on Prevention by Joshua Sinai, Ph.D. Published by ASIS International. (2013)

Behaviorial Cues

by Inge Sebyan Black, CPP, CFE, CPOI

Introduction

While we cannot always predict human behavior and there is no definitive psychological profile of an active shooter, many of these individuals do share similar behavioral characteristics. No singular behavior is absolute, but a pattern of behavior would be worth identifying. For example, those who commit these acts often choose places with little police presence and where citizens are unarmed. There are behavioral cues at the early stages that are signs law enforcement and security personnel might recognize to prompt intervention.¹⁷ One might recognize the suspect preparing for his event through the gathering and concealing of weapons; or notice the suspect possibly warning certain individuals not to attend school or work. Being aware and observant of suspicious activity and behaviors can help prevent an active shooting incident from happening.

When making assumptions about whether someone you encounter might be a shooter, there are some cautions. We need to remain open about borderline dysfunctional personalities that might be missed because they blend in. Although firearms are typically used, we should not discount the use of vehicles or improvised explosive devices as weapons. And although women were identified as the shooter in only 6 of the 160 incidents the FBI studied, we should not discount the possibility of women as shooters. Having studies of past active shooter events helps the ongoing conversation of best practices and helps us develop/improve emergency practices. But these events do change as time passes by, and we will have to be ready and prepared for other and new scenarios. In the 2014 FBI report on the “Study on Active Shooter,” out of 160 incidents, in all but two, the shooter acted alone.¹⁸

Active Shooter Training in the University Climate

The term “active shooter” describes an armed person (handgun, rifle, or other ballistic weapon) who is using deadly force on other persons, and the engagement is in progress. Because the event is ‘live,’ everyone and anyone from law enforcement to the teachers and students have the potential to affect the outcome based on their response or actions. Therefore training becomes the single most valuable way to affect positive responses, and thus mitigating loss of lives.

¹⁷ School Resources & Training Institute. Active Shooter. <http://www.school-training.com/newsletter/articles/submitted/active-shooter.shtml>

¹⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigations, U.S. Department of Justice. “A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States between 2000 and 2013.” <http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2014/september/fbi-releases-study-on-active-shooter-incidents/pdfs/a-study-of-active-shooter-incidents-in-the-u.s.-between-2000-and-2013>

Training raises awareness to the real possibility that such an event will occur. Training facilitates dialogue which creates ideas and protocols for when an active shooter occurs. Studying the active shooter events of the past tells us these types of event can be over before the police arrive. Findings establish the largest impact of fatalities occurs within a matter of minutes. In 64 incidents where the time duration was ascertained, 44 ended in under 5 minutes; 23 ended in 2 minutes or less. In some instances, law enforcement was present or able to respond, but the individuals themselves made life and death decisions.

As with other emergency management protocols, the objectives of training are both discussing best practices and conducting drills. Although lockdown drills were commonplace at one time and serve a particular purpose, in active shooter drills, drills for all aspects of 'run, hide and fight' should be practiced and discussed. There should be several different phases of training: one for management, one for new hires, and another ongoing, annual training for all employees.

This training should include

- clear instructions on the announcement/communication of an active shooter scenario (i.e., "Active Shooter on Campus")
- overview of the company/faculty handbook
- overview of the emergency preparedness plan
- discuss active shooter scenarios (best and worst case)
- making life and death decisions
- individual options and recognizing the best one for survival
- safe meeting place following an active shooter
- behavioral signs/early warning signs to report, and who to report them to
- run, hide, and fight drills
- the role of management

Because of the unpredictable nature of active shooter situations, each person is required to make an individual choice on how they would respond. School administrations implement various ways (email, computer pop-up messaging, verbal or other notification through speaker systems) to notify students, teachers, and visitors about impending crisis situations. It is clear that participating in training to establish what to do in emergency situations will save lives. In those 2 to 5 minutes, students and teachers can make a life-changing difference. The secret is Drill, Drill, Drill.

To Arm or Not to Arm ... Teachers

by Jason Thomas Destein

There is a growing debate in academic and school safety communities. A debate that could in fact become a hot-button political issue in the next presidential election. This debate is centered around whether or not teachers should be allowed to carry concealed handguns on school grounds and in the classroom. The debate itself has been around for a number of years, but as violence from external intrusion in our schools increase, this conversation is gaining more participants and a growing audience.

Support for arming teachers is growing around the country (and the world for that matter). As we see the increase in attacks involving schools, there is no question that some people will lean towards responding with a more forceful tactic. One group based in Kentucky called POST (Protecting Our Students and Teachers) advocate arming teachers in schools.¹⁹ You can visit their website and see firsthand the positions and strategies they are pushing for. Essentially, there are three points that POST outlines as reasons their program will work:

1. Deterrence – believing that a sign posted on a door stating that this school participates in the POST program will prevent a shooter from entering, based on recent shooting events in schools, the shooters were not looking for a fight but rather victims.
2. Immediate Armed Response – In the event of a shooting, there would be people already onsite to respond quickly.
3. Thoroughness of training – POST requires extensive training and regular certification.

The other side of this debate is centered on those who support keeping guns out of teachers' and administrators' hands while in school. While there are many reasons offered by those on this side of the debate, there are a few reasons that seem to be most prevalent. Kenneth S. Trump, a 25-year school safety expert and industry leader, has articulately outlined some of the big reasons on his website.²⁰

1. Training – No matter how many hours of firearms training are administered to a teacher, to think that they would be able to respond and act in the same manner as our public safety officials is false.
2. Are there policies and procedures in place and approved by school boards, insurance companies and their legal representatives.
3. What happens in an accidental shooting from one of these weapons or if a student takes the gun from a teacher.

¹⁹ <http://postky.org>

²⁰ Kenneth Trump. "Arming Teachers and School Staff."

Both sides of this debate add their points and counterpoints and argue their sides with equal passion. What is interesting is both sides have the same goal, that is to keep our schools, the students, and teachers safe. Hopefully reading this has presented you with thoughts of going out and conducting your own research, and be able to support or challenge the school districts and local elected leaders on their position.

Should you decide to arm, consider what has to be done assuming you are staffed with tens to hundreds of teachers. You might seek an assistance program from your local police department, which has Glock pistols and a firing range with several certified range masters. Each teacher would need to be trained for two weeks on the use of the same firearm, which equate to expending 1,000 to 1,500 rounds of ammunition. So with eight teachers at the range at any one time, you will need to do the math to see how long it would take for them to complete the training. Plus, you will need to take into consideration if someone doesn't pass certification or staff that need to be recertified. The process isn't easy, and you will need local police help and assistance.

APPENDIX A

Active Shooter Tabletop Exercise

by Victor Cooper, CPP

Please click the following button to launch this file. Adobe Acrobat is recommended to view the presentation. The initial view is set to open in full screen mode. Press “ESC” on your keyboard to exit full screen mode.



APPENDIX B

Shootings on the Rise

by Mark Tarallo

More than 1,000 Americans were casualties of active shooter incidents that took place between 2000 and 2013. The actual figures—486 individuals killed and 557 wounded—come from a recent FBI report, *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 and 2013*.

The goal of the study, which the FBI initiated in early 2014, is to provide federal, state, and local law enforcement with information and a better understanding of active shooter incidents so that they will be more prepared to prevent and respond to future incidents.

Of the report's many findings, one clear message stands out: the frequency of active shooter incidents is increasing. From 2000 to 2007, an average of 6.4 active shooter incidents occurred annually. In the next seven years of the study, the average increased by 166 percent, to 16.4 incidents annually. The peak years were 2010, with 26 incidents, and 2012, with 21 incidents.

"This trend reinforces the need to remain vigilant regarding prevention efforts and for law enforcement to aggressively train to better respond to—and help communities recover from—active shooter incidents," the report says.

On the ground, there is more and more receptivity for active shooter training, says Timothy Dimoff, CPP, an active shooter training expert and president of SACS Consulting & Investigative Services, Inc. In the past, when conducting training sessions, Dimoff says he would often encounter an attitude of, "Do we really need this?"

"Now, the shift is we're seeing people saying, 'We're very glad you're here. This thing can happen anywhere,'" Dimoff says. He has also noticed an increased demand for training among churches and nonprofit organizations, with administrators of those facilities seeking tools to be prepared for a possible incident, reflecting a mindset of, "Let's have a game plan, just in case," he says.

In the FBI report, the upward trend in the number of incidents is even more dramatic when examined in terms of casualties. Before 2007, the number of casualties in any given year peaked at 51. In 2007, the number of casualties rose to 126 and eventually peaked in 2012 at 208.

In the study, the incidents with the highest casualties were the shootings at Cinemark Century 16 Theater in Aurora, Colorado, in July 2012, with 12 killed and 58 wounded; Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, in April 2007, with 32 killed and 17 wounded; Fort Hood Soldier Readiness Processing Center in Fort Hood, Texas, in November 2009, with 13 killed and 32 wounded; and Sandy Hook Elementary School and a residence in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012, with 27 killed and 2 wounded.

The findings also reflect how much damage can occur in a short period of time. Of the 64 incidents whose duration could be measured, 44 (69 percent) ended in 5 minutes or less, and 23 ended in 2 minutes or less. According to the FBI, this finding illustrates the im-

portance of training—for police and civilians—that focuses on making quick decisions under pressure.

"Even when law enforcement was present or able to respond within minutes, civilians often had to make life and death decisions, and, therefore, should be engaged in training and discussions on decisions they may face," the report says.

According to Dimoff, this finding reflects a key change in the way active shooter incidents are perceived—namely, that the police are no longer the first responders. "The first responders are now the general public [on site], and the potential victims," he says. "Everyone in that building is a first responder."

Dimoff says that, under this concept of first responder, those on site are trained to delay the shooter in reaching targets—by erecting barricades, fleeing, or fighting back in some way. Law enforcement has focused on getting response times down, and officers are now trained to go in right away, instead of waiting to set up at the perimeter.

Besides an increasing frequency rate, the report also found that active shooter incidents are not confined to a specific environment or geographical area, but are wide-ranging and nationally ubiquitous. The 160 active shooter incidents examined in the report took place in 40 of 50 states (and Washington, D.C.), in small towns and big cities, and in urban and rural areas.

The settings also varied. Though 70 percent of the 160 active shooter incidents occurred in either commercial

facilities or schools, incidents also occurred in churches and other houses of worship, as well as on military and other government properties, in health-care facilities, on city streets, and in private residences.

The report also revealed some patterns regarding the shooters. They tend to act alone; all but two incidents involved a single shooter. They often kill themselves after killing others—in 64 incidents (40 percent), the shooters committed suicide. Of those, 54 shooters did so at the scene of the crime. In at least 9 incidents, the shooter first shot and killed a family member in a residence before moving to a more public location to continue shooting. And not all the shooters have been caught: at least five remain at large.

The report does not offer any theories on why the frequency of incidents rose dramatically starting in 2007. However, Dimoff's firm has researched more than 300 active shooter incidents, and he says that one constant revealed by the research is that the shooter suf-

fers serious psychological difficulties and relishes the possibility of becoming famous for a killing spree. Killing themselves becomes the "perfect ending" to their struggles.

"They basically want to go out in a blaze of glory, and they envision their face and name being paraded over the news media," Dimoff says.

If anything, media coverage of mass killings has become more intense, and in recent years the intensity has been compounded by social media networks, which provide more channels to get the shooter's story out, Dimoff explains. "That's a dangerous formula to have out there," he says. Thus, while he was not sure why 2007 in particular was the first year of the increase in frequency, the fact that incidents are on the rise is not surprising, he adds.

As for the victims, they also ranged widely—young and old, male and female, of all races, cultures, and religions. Some were strangers to the shooter; others were family members, fellow students, coworkers, and law en-

forcement officers, notes the report.

The findings have led to some clarification in the way incidents are described and classified by the government. Ten of the officers who were wounded in incidents were shot in gunfights that occurred in open spaces. "Based on these study results, therefore, the FBI will no longer use the term 'confined' as part of the 'active shooter' definition," the report says.

Overall, 64 of the incidents (40 percent) fall under the recently adopted federal definition of "mass killing," which is defined as incidents when at least three victims are killed.

Although the report's findings are grim, Dimoff says that he has noticed the beginnings of a positive development. While the frequency of active shooter incidents has risen, there are early anecdotal signs that the increased amount of training under the delay-the-shooter paradigm is reducing the number of casualties per incident. "We're just starting to see that," he says.

APPENDIX C

The Best Defense

by Laura Spadanuta

When a person faces a life-threatening situation, like an active shooter, higher analytic functions shut down. But training can ensure that the proper response to the threat occurs almost instinctively. That's the basis of boot-camp training for soldiers. Police and private security professionals have long understood the need for strong training programs. In the wake of deadly shootings at Columbine and elsewhere, K-12 schools have come to realize that one or more attackers with modern large-capacity weaponry can cause massive loss of life before the police are able to arrive on the scene and intervene. Thus, students and staff will have to confront the threat on their own. Given that reality, schools are starting to put more emphasis on the importance of training students and staff in various response scenarios

The approaches to active-shooter training are evolving, especially in light of the recent Newtown and Aurora shootings. Not everyone can agree on the best approach, but they all agree that any training program must be tailored to the school, taking into consideration the facility's layout, the makeup of the classes, and other characteristics.

Evolution. When a school orders a traditional lockdown, it includes shutting and locking doors, turning off lights, and having students hide as best they can. In some situations, this is still the safest approach. However, in other cases, students end up being defenseless targets for the shooter or shooters to easily and cruelly pick off. This was

the case at Columbine when students were shot while hiding under tables in the library. (Though if the students had evacuated at the point that they knew there was a shooter, they may have met the gunmen in the hallway as well.)

Although many schools still teach traditional lockdowns, there has been a movement toward newer approaches that enhance the traditional techniques, says Amy Klinger, educational administration professor at Ohio's Ashland University, who spoke on the topic at the GovSec conference earlier this year in Washington, D.C. Klinger is also director of programs for the Educator School Safety Network, a nonprofit school training organization.

Not everyone applauds the newer approaches, however. Kenneth Trump, president of consulting company National School Safety and Security Services, is concerned that people are too quick to discard proven best practices, like lockdowns. While the lockdown and other security measures implemented during the active-shooter situation at Sandy Hook Elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut failed to save the lives of 26 people, those measures did save many other lives in that incident, he says. "There were people who reportedly were in lockdown when the gunman went past the room. So it did not work for all, but it did work for some. So you just don't summarily throw out decades-plus of best practices," asserts Trump.

Proponents of the newer options counter that they are trying to marry the best of the old with something new.

"Oftentimes, people think that it's replacement of lockdown. It's really not. It's adding additional components to lockdown that are much more situation-specific rather than just sort of a general response to any particular event," Klinger tells Security Management.

New Tactics. Two popular active-shooter response-training approaches that go beyond traditional lockdown in active-shooter training are Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-supported "Run Hide Fight," and ALICE (Alert-Lockdown-Inform-Counter-Evacuate).

The City of Houston used federal DHS funds to produce "Run Hide Fight" as an active-shooter-response video. It instructs viewers that when they are confronted with an active-shooter threat, they should first run out of the building or kill zone if possible; if that's not possible, they should hide. If hiding securely isn't an option, they should fight with anything available to end the threat, rather than simply waiting to become the next victim. This approach has won many supporters, and it is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's online active-shooter training program. But it was for the workplace, not schools.

ALICE, a training course developed by former SWAT-team leader Greg Crane, of training company Response Options, is specifically geared toward school shooters. However, the "Run Hide Fight" tools are now used in

schools as well. Though both programs include the traditional tactics of evacuating (running) when possible and locking down in a room (hiding) when evacuation isn't a reasonable option, they also include instruction on how to fight back, which has generated controversy (more on that later).

Evacuation. The evacuation aspect can be difficult. That's true in a multi-level hotel or a high-rise office building, and it's no less true in a school. There are often classrooms on several floors, and those rooms may not be near an exit. Additionally, there may not be communication about where the shooter is. But having a plan can help. That's why Klinger tells Security Management that schools should have certain protocols for when to flee. Klinger said during her presentation that kids who leave tend to survive these attacks.

It's important to remember that schools have a wide range of communication capabilities. "We work in schools where they don't even have a PA system," Klinger says. Others have advanced systems that can send messages throughout the school. But even where communications are good, it's possible that the person responsible for operating the system will be incapacitated at the start of an attack—or that person may simply not have good information to relay—so there is no telling what sort of information will be passed back to teachers and classrooms. Faculty must be prepared to work with what they've got in the moment and use that for quick action.

"When I have information about what's happening, if I'm at the north end of a building and the active-shooter event is occurring at the south end of a building in the gym, why would I lock the door and sit there, and wait for him to find me? Why would we not remove ourselves from this situation?" asks Klinger.

But running has its risks, because one never knows if the shooter will be along the escape route, and young

children might be hard to keep quiet or control in an evacuation, increasing the risk of evacuation, while sheltering in place has fewer risks if the room is secure. "We're talking about in K-12, with maybe the exception of the lunchroom or the gymnasium, those rooms lock. Even in many of those cases, those rooms lock. And if they don't, we're usually putting the kids in the kitchen or in locker rooms," says Paul Timm, PSP, president of RETA Security.

Bob Lang, assistant vice president for strategic safety and security at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, sees evacuations as one viable option, depending on the circumstances. His school trains teachers to plan out possible evacuations. "So we are training them in what to do when they first walk into their new facility and new classroom and what to look for relative to escape routes...what to look for in figuring out how to get people out."

In training and conducting drills with the students to prepare them for evacuations during an active-shooter situation, it's important to stress that those evacuation routes might differ from the ones used daily or during a fire drill, Klinger says. They'll also need to be taught that doors and windows that they normally wouldn't think of using might be something they'd need in this unique type of threat situation.

The key is "to make sure kids understand there [are] multiple ways out of a room or out of an area. Especially areas like gyms or cafeterias, where you have large numbers of kids. They're going to try to go out whatever door they came in as opposed to the four or five other doors that might also lead them to safety," Klinger says.

Barricading. If there is a closet or a safe room for children to hide in so that it appears there is no one in the classroom, that's a desirable option and one that has been employed successfully by schools in mass shooting events. But

when there is nowhere to hide, a barricade against the door may help deter the shooter or at least stall him while law enforcement arrives. In training, teachers are taught to be aware of the way the door opens. They are taught "to determine whether the door opens in or opens out, [because] ... If it opens out, then you're not able to barricade the door," says Lang.

Barricades are going to be make-shift, says Klinger. "You're not trying to keep this individual out for two hours. You're trying to keep him out for a very brief amount of time, until he moves on to the next room or until law enforcement arrives or to delay, deter, and defend from that individual. So we use whatever you have—desks, chairs, tables. Whatever you can flip over and put up against a door," she explains.

Klinger adds that there can be internal barricades also, so children can be barricading within the room, such as behind overturned desks. That way, if the shooter does get through the door, at least it will be more difficult to actually get at anyone, which might buy time to disarm the shooter.

Situational specifics. An important aspect of training is to get teachers to recognize that they will have to make some snap judgments based on the specifics at the time. In Klinger's training program, faculty are taken into a classroom environment where they can role-play how they would respond in certain scenarios. That way, she explains, they can get the hang of thinking through the scenario and quickly deciding what the best route to take is. This "really helps people to start to understand that there is no right or wrong answer, that there [are] a lot of different options that people could undertake depending on the situation and what they know is happening and so on," says Klinger.

Teachers are also taught what factors to consider in evaluating the via-

bility of evacuations. For example, if the teacher has a first-floor classroom where there's a door that leads directly outside the building rather than into a hallway, or if there are windows that the students can climb out of, then evacuation may be feasible and safe—and thus desirable—even if the teacher or students can't tell where the shooter is.

If the shooter comes at lunchtime, evacuation may also be the best option for those teachers and students in the cafeteria, because there are typically multiple exits in that area, and it's an open space where it might be harder to find cover from the shooter, says Klinger.

If the teachers are in upper-floor classrooms, however, the only exits will be into hallways, which could be a more dangerous choice if they don't know where the shooter is; so instead, their best option might be to barricade the room until they get a better sense of the situation.

Fight/Counter. Most people agree that evacuating when possible and barricading when stuck in a room are the right approaches, but there are many dissenters from the idea of fighting back in an environment that involves K-12 students. Trump thinks the ALICE approach, particularly the “counter” portion, is preying on the heightened post-Newtown emotions and isn't the best way to prepare for a potential active shooter. “You're asking a kid to take a 20-minute or 40-minute workshop or assembly, and then implement something that people in the public-safety community armchair quarterback every time they have an encounter with someone,” Trump says. Trump notes that the approach doesn't take various age levels, development stages, and special needs into consideration. He adds that it could open students up to further injury, such as if the shooter has explosives or was only going to commit suicide rather than hurt others.

Moreover, schools that encourage students to attack may be opening themselves to additional legal liability. “One kid stands up and runs to attack the armed gunman and gets shot and killed, somebody's going to be held accountable. There's going to be tough questions. What were your policies and procedures? Was this run by your school attorney and approved? Did your school insurance carrier consider this and review this and give you the go-ahead?” Trump states.

Timm agrees that teaching students to fight back might not be the best approach, particularly if the students are in schools where the doors can be locked and the students might be safe in traditional lockdown. “From a liability standpoint, I probably don't want the kids fighting anybody,” he says. And while he wouldn't want kids to just be sitting ducks if the shooter gets into the safe room, he worries that if kids are told fighting is an option, they won't understand that it should only be a last resort. “I just get nervous that whether the kid is 8 or 12 or...even 15, he might have a little cowboy in him and think, ‘I'm going to get that guy. I'm going to sprout a cape and get that guy.’ And maybe even leave the confines of the safe room to do it. I just think it's not a good idea,” Timm says.

Supporters stress that fighting back is a last resort. “If you're in a dire situation, you need to go into survival mode and do whatever you have to do to have a chance to live,” Linda Watson, CPP, security consultant with Whirlaway Group LLC says. She adds, “We know these kids aren't cops. They're not trained in martial arts. They're just little kids going to school.... But do you sit there paralyzed, or do you say, ok, if we have to fight, we fight?”

“Ninety percent of our time training is on evacuation and barricading. We also spend time talking about violence-prevention measures. We talk about how teachers and school people can think more like an emergency re-

sponder, and even with things like communication and calling 911 and how to assist a law enforcement response, all those kind of things,” Klinger says.

“We spend hardly any time...on the counter or fight aspect of it, for a lot of reasons,” she explains. “Number one because there is that pushback. But the primary reason is that when you focus on the fight aspect, everything else gets lost.” Klinger adds that what little training she does do on fighting back includes throwing things and creating diversions to get away. The “Run Hide Fight” video advises people to incapacitate the shooter if possible, by using whatever is available, such as chairs. The video also shows people hiding beside the door so they can catch the shooter off-guard when he enters the safe room.

Emergency Communications. Ensuring that critical information can be communicated during an active-shooter situation is important. Klinger notes that the whole staff should know how to carry out these tasks in case the people who would normally fill those roles are hurt or not available during an attack.

Teachers and other staff throughout the school should be trained not only in how to use the school's emergency communications equipment but also in how to provide effective information to 911. For example, they should learn to be as specific as possible when giving information to 911 operators or when communicating with the rest of the school; in describing a shooter's suspected location, for instance, that would mean providing room numbers if possible rather than just providing a wing or a floor.

Drills. Experts all agree that it's not enough just to tell people what they should do. You have to give them a chance to act out those lessons through exercises, both to test their training and to test the protocols themselves. “We

have to do drills because there's only a few times we know if our emergency procedures work and one of those is during the emergency. So that would be an inconvenient time to find out they don't work," says Timm. He advocates including local law enforcement agencies in such drills when possible so that there is collaboration and consensus between the school and potential first responders to any incident.

Watson says that going through the motions during drills can make the actions that will be required feel more like second nature to the students should they ever have to respond in a real incident. "We pop up, and we hide under a desk, and we all pull into this room... or we all shelter in place so that it becomes a very natural, not a scary thing, just something that we do maybe once a month or whatever the frequency they feel they need," says Watson.

Klinger says that for the lockdown enhancement drills, her group conducts "what-if" scenarios, where teachers might find out from the principal whether there is a certain level of lockdown or if there is a shooter in a certain area, and then they have to figure out what the appropriate reaction would be to that particular threat situation. It's not as crucial for the students to actually practice barricading as it is for them to understand all of the potential evacuation routes, she says.

It is important to drill for a variety of possible situations that could arise with an active shooter. Trump is concerned that some schools do drills that are convenient for them, rather than ones that will be helpful in demonstrating the different problems that might come up during a true emergency. For example, some schools will only do drills in the morning but not when there are lunch

periods. "That doesn't make sense. That's not good practice," he states.

The age of the children involved will affect how they are trained in these procedures, says Klinger. "When you're looking at high-school kids, when you're looking at secondary kids, I think you can be very open and very forthcoming, [explaining] 'this is what we're doing and why,'" Klinger says.

However, for elementary students, Klinger says her organization encourages teachers to build on important skills that are already being taught. Among those skills are moving together quickly without pushing or trampling, and obeying certain commands quickly without asking questions. For younger kids, especially, it's "not necessarily saying 'this is what we would do if there was a guy with a gun,' but instead you're saying 'this is what we would do if in an emergency we all needed to move quickly away, or if we all needed to get away very quickly, or we all needed to be together.'" She adds that these are skills that are transferable to other extreme situations, such as a weather emergency.

John Bruner, founder of In-Crisis Consulting, compares drills to game-day training in professional sports; for example, football players will practice with loud crowd noise being pumped in so they get used to playing in hostile stadiums. He says he has at times used simulated gunfire during drills with teachers and faculty to simulate the noise and smell of gunpowder that might send the individuals into fight or flight responses. He adds, however, that they would only do this when students are not at the school and with advance notice to participants and cooperation from local police and public safety.

"Even though [they] know what's

going on ... I've seen teachers at the end get a little emotional and start crying because they've gotten a true feel for what this feels like," says Bruner.

Some schools go even farther and use the sounds of live gunshots on drills with student participants. Those sorts of drills may do more harm than good, however, according to Stephen Brock, school psychology professor at California State University in Sacramento and a member of the emergency assistance team for the National Association of School Psychologists. Brock worries that many children are going to be upset and potentially traumatized by being exposed to that type of training.

Brock also says that training for an active shooter could have the effect of making young children, in particular, view schools as violent, scary places, even when their schools are safe. It can help to avoid referring to the events as active-shooter drills and to reassure younger children that the school and the teachers are there to protect them, he says. However, he questions whether active-shooter training is an effective use of school resources. He says limited dollars and time might be better spent preparing for other incidents, including natural disasters like earthquakes and tornadoes.

Other experts agree that schools must not forget about the natural disasters that Brock mentions and other emergencies that need to be prepared for. Watson says that emergency managers should consider using an all-hazards approach because tornadoes and hurricanes occur more frequently than active shooters. Considering the high consequences of this type of low-probability event, however, it is understandable why some schools find it worth a portion of their limited resources.

APPENDIX D

Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools

U.S. Department of Education

Although most schools are safe, the violence that occurs in our neighborhoods and communities has found its way inside the schoolhouse door. However, if we understand what leads to violence and the types of support that research has shown are effective in preventing violence, we can make our schools safer. Research--based practices can help school community's administrators, teachers, families, students, support staff, and community members recognize the warning signs early, so children can get the help they need before it is too late.

This guide presents a brief summary of the research on violence prevention and intervention and crisis response in schools. It tells school communities:

- What to look, for the early warning signs that relate to violence and other troubling behaviors.
- What to do, the action steps that school communities can take to prevent violence and other troubling behaviors, to intervene and get help for troubled children, and to respond to school violence when it occurs.

Early Warning Response

Section 1: Introduction.

All staff, students, parents, and members of the community must be part of creating a safe school environment. Schools must have in place approaches for addressing the needs of all children who have troubling behaviors. This section describes the rationale for the guide and suggests how it can be used by school communities to develop a plan of action.

Section 2: Characteristics of a School That Is Safe and Responsive to All Children.

Well functioning schools foster learning, safety, and socially appropriate behaviors. They have a strong academic focus and support students in achieving high standards, foster positive relationships between school staff and students, and promote meaningful parental and community involvement. This section describes characteristics of schools that support prevention, appropriate intervention, and effective crisis response.

Section 3: Early Warning Signs.

There are early warning signs that, when viewed in context, can signal a troubled child. Educators and parents and in some cases, students can use several significant principles to ensure that the early warning signs are not misinterpreted.

This section presents early warning signs, imminent warning signs, and the principles that ensure these signs will not be misinterpreted. It concludes with a brief description of using the early warning signs to shape intervention practices.

Section 4: Getting Help for Troubled Children.

Effective interventions for improving the behavior of troubled children are well documented in the research literature. This section presents research and expert based principles that should provide the foundation for all intervention development. It describes what to do when intervening early with students who are at risk for behavioral problems, when responding with intensive interventions for individual children, and when providing a foundation to prevent and reduce violent behavior.

Section 5: Developing a Prevention and Response Plan.

Effective schools create a violence prevention and response plan and form a team that can ensure it is implemented. They use approaches and strategies based on research about what works. This section offers suggestions for developing such plans.

Section 6: Responding to Crisis.

Effective and safe schools are well prepared for any potential crisis or violent act. This section describes what to do when intervening during a crisis to ensure safety and when responding in the aftermath of crisis. The principles that underlie effective crisis response are included.

Section 7: Methodology, Contributors and Research Support.

This guide synthesizes an extensive knowledge base on violence and violence prevention. This section describes the rigorous development and review process that was used. It also provides information about the projects Web site.

A final section lists resources that can be contacted for more information.

The information in this guide is not intended as a comprehensive prevention, intervention, and response plan school communities could do everything recommended and still experience violence. Rather, the intent is to provide school communities with reliable and practical information about what they can do to be prepared and to reduce the likelihood of violence.

APPENDIX E

Excerpt from ASIS Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Guideline

ASIS International Standards and Guidelines

17.0. CONCLUSION

As this guideline shows, the issue of workplace violence is far broader than the highly publicized but rare instances of disturbed employees engaging in shooting sprees that kill and wound multiple victims. Only a very few organizations will ever experience episodes of that kind, but a far greater number will face other forms of workplace violence: threatening acts and violent events that are less spectacular and less deadly but still significantly damage the well-being of an organization and place employees in harm's way. No organization, large or small, public or private, for-profit or in the nonprofit sector, can assume that it will be immune to the wide range of disturbing, threatening, and violent conduct that falls within the rubric of workplace violence. All ultimately carry a responsibility, both for humanitarian and legal reasons, to protect employees and others who interact with the workplace to the fullest practical extent by taking measures to help detect threats at the earliest possible moment, prevent violence, and mitigate the onsequences when violence occurs.

Education and awareness about workplace violence—its nature and scope, an employer's obligation to address this complex problem, and the practical steps that can be taken to ensure adequate prevention and management—lie at the heart of successful workplace violence prevention and response efforts. An integrated, multidisciplinary approach also forms a key to a successful workplace violence program. No one sector of an organization can successfully act alone to prevent violence, and no one profession or discipline possesses the skills or capabilities needed to design, implement, and administer a successful workplace violence program. A successful workplace violence program begins at the top, with a firm commitment from executive management to a safe and respectful workplace. Responsibility for a workplace violence prevention and response program then falls on an interdisciplinary array of professionals within an organization who can bring skills to bear on this complex problem. Together, different constituents within an organization, assisted by outside experts as necessary, can work to develop and implement a prevention and response program that brings structure, predictability, and consistency to the handling of the wide range of behaviors and circumstances that can jeopardize workplace safety.

The benefits to adopting a proactive and reasoned approach to workplace violence are many. Disturbing, threatening, and violent behavior affects more than just the person or persons directly threatened or harmed. Beyond questions of legal liability and other tangible financial costs, which can be staggering, organizations that lack effective means of detecting, managing, and preventing workplace violence will meet up with more fundamental costs in the form of disrupted productivity, low employee morale, and a public image that communicates a disregard for employee safety. Alternatively, an organization that handles the broad range of workplace violence well not only can avoid costly incidents, but will also benefit from feelings of confidence, security, and safety that characterize a successful organization.

Ultimately, workplace violence, in its many forms, presents one of the most challenging problems that an organization can face. It has been the intent of this guideline to provide information and practical steps that will enable any organization to develop an effective and informed approach to this important workplace issue.



1625 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2818
USA
Phone: +1.703.519.6200
Fax: +1.703.519.6299
www.asisonline.org