



Preparing for Safe Schools





Key Training Points

- ✓ Discuss common school safety challenges
- ✓ Examine the safe school planning process as a viable response to school safety challenges
- ✓ Explore the four phases of crisis response

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The Mission Statement

(Academic Goals) + (Safety Goals) =
Effective, safe and welcoming schools

“It is the goal of the school to provide a quality education in a safe and secure environment free of intimidation and fear.”

--US Department of Education

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4 Key Safe School Planning Questions

Where are we today?

Where do we want to be?

How do we plan for the difference?

How will we know we have succeeded?

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A safe school plan addresses:

- ✓ Physical environment
- ✓ Social/Cultural environment
- ✓ Economic environment
- ✓ Local political environment
- ✓ Community will



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Safe School: A Definition

A secure and peaceful environment that allows students and staff to achieve at optimum levels...

Easier said than done:

- ✓ Adequate funding & resources
- ✓ Comprehensive plans
- ✓ Committed partners
- ✓ Facility constraints
- ✓ Responsive policies
- ✓ Community will
- ✓ Additional implications?

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Safe School Planning Team

Identify Members

- ✓ Who is on your team? Why?
- ✓ If you were creating the optimal safe school team, who else would you add to the team? Why?

Where are we today?

Gather & Analyze Data

Assessment activities:

1. Review laws and mandates
2. Assess school safety
3. Explore best practices

Assess School Safety

Gather & Analyze Data

Assessment Checklist:

- Review data & statistics
- Review policies & procedures
- Survey people
- Inspect the physical plant

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Explore Best Practices

Gather & Analyze Data

- ✓ **What works?**
- ✓ **Will it work for us?**

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Where do we want to be?

Identify Areas of Change

- ✓ Identify gaps, needs & wants
- ✓ Assign priorities
- ✓ Match priorities to resources

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Set Goals → **How do we plan for the difference?**

Do we expect:

- ✓ To prevent or eliminate the problem
- ✓ To reduce the number of incidents caused by the problem
- ✓ To refer the problem to an appropriate authority or agency
- ✓ To improve the management of the problem
- ✓ To mitigate the harm caused by the problem

How will we know we have succeeded?

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Select & Implement Strategies → **Implementing a responsive plan**

- ✓ The selection of viable strategies
- ✓ Commitment to apply the plan consistently
- ✓ An intention to monitor its effectiveness

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Evaluate & Assess Progress → **How will we know we have succeeded?**

Program effectiveness can be evaluated in a variety of ways:

- ✓ **Inputs (What did it take?)**
- ✓ **Outputs (What did we get in return?)**
- ✓ **Impacts (Did we make a difference?)**

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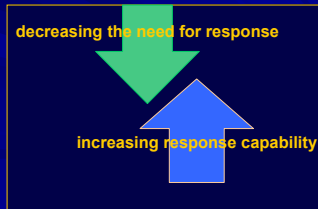
The Nature of Crisis

- Uncertainty and unpredictability
- Rapid onset
- Imminent and possibly severe loss
- A lack of the ability to control



Crisis Management: Four Key Phases

- ✓ Mitigation & Prevention
- ✓ Preparedness
- ✓ Response
- ✓ Recovery



Mitigation & Prevention

- ✓ Safety and/or risk assessments
- ✓ Site assessments
- ✓ Taking stock of talents and assets
- ✓ Policy review and update
- ✓ Evaluation of plans and procedures for response, communication & reunification

Preparedness

- ✓ Establish a Crisis Response Team
- ✓ Develop community partnerships
- ✓ Assign roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Train, drill and practice the plan
- ✓ Plan for contingencies
- ✓ Organize emergency supplies and resources
- ✓ Develop plans for communication, reunification, media relations

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Roles and Responsibilities

What needs to be done in a crisis?
Who can do it best?



Task
(Responsibility)

1. Notify 911
2. Activate a response
3. Shut off utilities
4. Provide CPR
5. ...

Talent
(Individual suited for the task)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. ...

What additional training, information & resources
do they need?

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Using the Incident Command System

- ✓ **Command:** What are we going to do?
- ✓ **Operations:** How will we do it?
- ✓ **Planning:** What do we need to know?
- ✓ **Logistics:** What will it take to do it?
- ✓ **Finance:** What will it cost (resources, time)

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Response Options

"Column A"	"Column B"
Lockdown	Restricted access
Evacuation or Reverse Evacuation	Relocation
Duck and Cover	Cancellation of the school day
Early Dismissal	Shelter in Place



From planning for every type of crisis to ... taking the All-Hazards Approach

- ✓ Conduct assessment
- ✓ Identify & categorize threats
- ✓ Develop limited set of response options
- ✓ Match threats to response options
- ✓ Create an alert system to signal action
- ✓ Develop the written plan

Once a HAZMAT situation is suspected:

- ✓ Isolate the area
- ✓ Notify emergency response agencies
- ✓ Activate a response option to protect people from harm
- ✓ Wait for the arrival of specialized team
- ✓ Gather information for the specialized team

Recovery

- ✓ Return quickly to the “business of learning”
- ✓ Keep the crisis teams working providing psychological triage and first aid
- ✓ Focus on the people as well as the buildings
- ✓ Conduct daily debriefings with staff
- ✓ Take as much time as necessary
- ✓ Remember anniversaries

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What about the media?

- ✓ Designate a spokesperson
- ✓ Keep statements brief
- ✓ Respect privacy rights
- ✓ Focus on facts
- ✓ Avoid personal opinions
- ✓ Avoid sensationalism
- ✓ Understand the needs of the media



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The Enduring Message

Planning requires:

- ✓ Purpose & commitment
- ✓ Time & effort
- ✓ Practice
- ✓ Collaboration & shared expertise



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