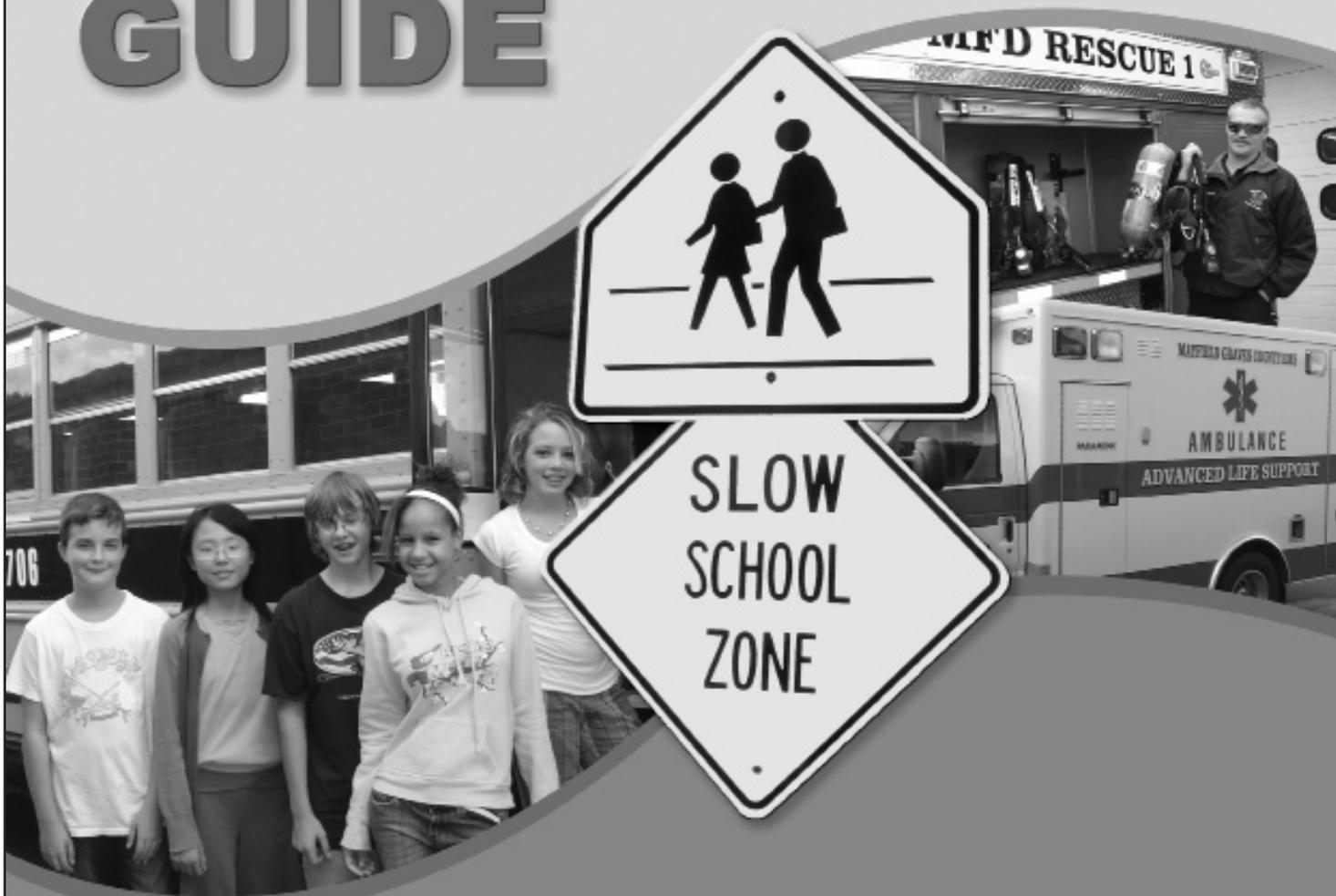


# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESOURCE GUIDE



KENTUCKY CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY



Revision 2008

**Kentucky Center for School Safety**

*[www.kysafeschools.org](http://www.kysafeschools.org)*

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# Forward

In 2001 the Kentucky Center for School Safety along with the Kentucky Department of Education, local school district personnel, state and local law enforcement and various response agencies developed an emergency management planning guide or template in an effort to assist school districts (along with their schools) to consistently develop their emergency operations plans. Since 2001 there have been many changes to the school safety and community landscape necessitating us to review and subsequently update this document. We have again enlisted the expertise of many partnering agencies, local school district personnel and community organizations to guide us in this effort. The result is a planning document for school districts, schools and school communities that provides a focus on an “all hazards approach” and building the plan upon four distinct principles. These principles (described in detail later in the document) are Mitigation/Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery. Each phase of this planning process plays a unique role and is designed to provide specific information and skills that are intended to support each of the other phases. We are calling this document the Emergency Management Resource Guide. This document is not intended to be a school’s plan, rather it is designed to be a template by which a school (and/or district) can pick and choose the areas that are specific to them and customize a plan that is consistent with best practice, while being unique to their particular location.

The possibility of massive health concerns (such as a pandemic), terrorist attacks, requirements under the National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Response Plan (NRP), National Infrastructure Preparedness Program (NIPP), continuity of operations planning and business continuity plans, are all areas that were little known, discussed or incorporated into local school district emergency operations plans in 2001. Schools must take a much broader view of their role in terms of an emergency and be prepared to act accordingly. Effective school safety planning is intended to be “pro-active,” developed in collaboration with community partners, school staff and students. These school specific plans should be reviewed regularly and tested in order to ensure that all affected persons are aware of their role in an emergency.

## **What are some of the more common weaknesses that are seen in local school emergency response protocols?**

- Emergency response planning has not engaged all stakeholders
- Lack of consistent format or protocols between schools
- Little attention given to developing a viable Incident Command Structure (ICS)
- Little attention given to training staff, students and community
- Little attention given to testing (exercising) the efficacy of the plan
- Little attention given to parent notification and reunification
- Assistance with emotional recovery after an incident
- Little attention given to a “continuity of operations plan”

## DEDICATION



*This Emergency Management Guide is dedicated to our dear friend and co-worker, Steve Kimberling. Sadly, Steve died on February 14, 2008 after fighting a courageous battle with brain cancer. And, though the devastating disease ravished his body, it did not break his spirit. Indeed, up until only several weeks before his death, his passion for school safety directly manifested itself in his thoughtful work and contribution to this guide to assist schools in creating or updating their plans to use for school emergencies and crisis response. As all who were privileged to know Steve knew well, most of his professional life was one that was spent continuously striving to maximize the safety of school environments. As one of his close friends and co-workers of many years said recently, "Steve Kimberling was about school safety." He held several positions that afforded him the opportunity to pursue this laudable interest, including that of Branch Manager for School Safety and Drop-Out Prevention and the Coordinator of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at the Kentucky Department of Education, the Coordinator of Safe School Assessments for the Kentucky Center for School Safety, as well as an education consultant with Environmental Safety Strategies, just to name a few.*

*There are so, so many people who will never forget Steve; not because they knew him, but because they sincerely liked, respected and admired him. He was a joy to be around because he was humorous, thoughtful, unassuming, compassionate, selfless, empathetic and bright. He was a real gift to us all, and will be remembered by those of us who loved him for different things that he meant to each of us in different arenas and at different times. However, one of the many things he left with us at the Kentucky Center for School Safety was a strong legacy to continue our efforts to work with others to make our schools as safe as they can possibly be. Therefore, with the full knowledge that this updated version of the Emergency Management Guide began with Steve in its infancy, we believe it only fitting that we dedicate this completed edition to his memory. Lastly, on a lighter note, given the hours that have been spent by many folks to complete this guide, somehow we can just hear Steve utter a phrase that he often used to compliment someone for undertaking and/or completing an arduous task, "I have never been prouder of you than I am right now."*

*Thank you, Steve Kimberling, because you never failed to make us proud either. We miss you and we'll always love you.*

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# Using this Guide

This Emergency Management Resource Guide template is designed to assist schools and districts in the creation and use of custom-made Emergency Response Plans. This template addresses the four phases of emergency management and is organized around these four distinct planning venues, they are:

- 1. Mitigation/Prevention**
- 2. Preparedness**
- 3. Response**
- 4. Recovery**

This planning protocol allows the school district and individual schools to customize their plans to address the unique needs of their specific location. This template, however, allows this planning to be done in a consistent manner district wide.

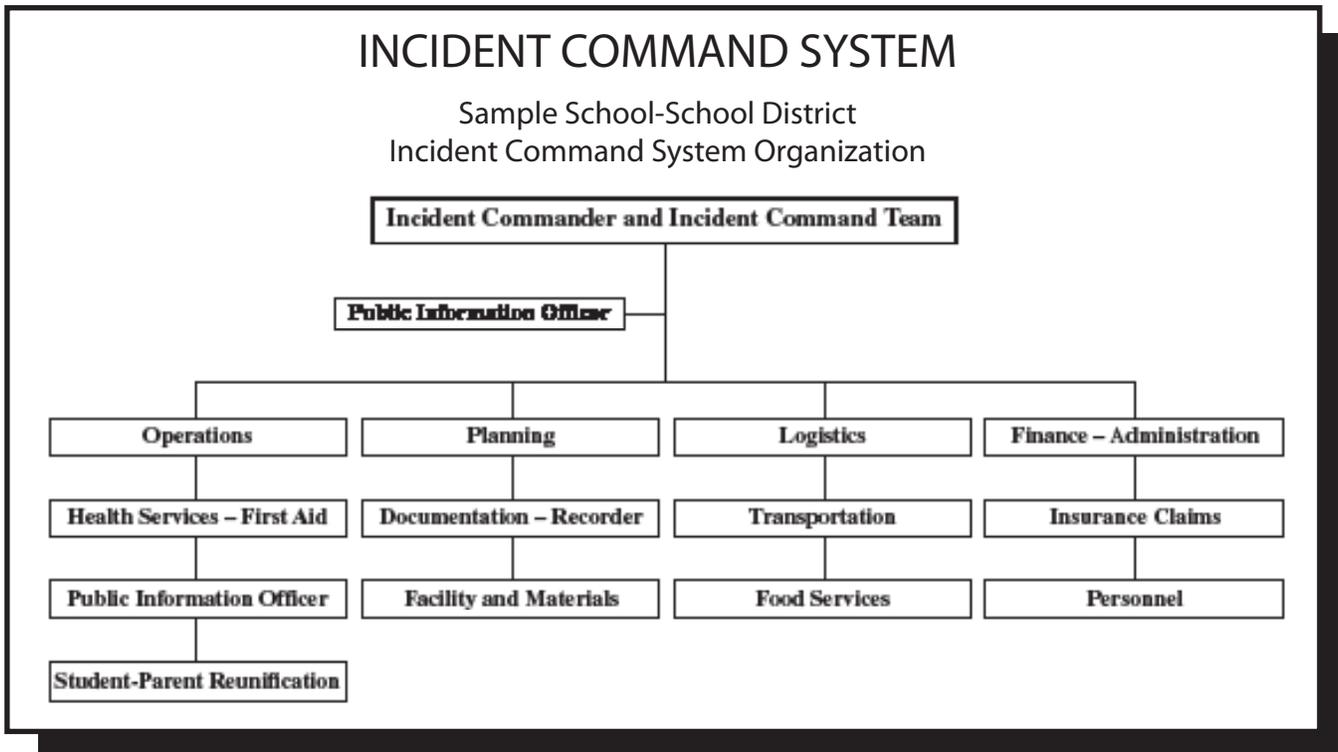
New “best practices” for handling emergency situations become available on an ongoing basis, and new emergency situations emerge over time. Therefore, this guide should always be a “working document,” and after initial completion, should be updated on a regular basis. This should become a real “Living/ Working Document”.

## **District Preparedness – District Support Team**

Consistency of the school and district plans is of utmost importance. District preparedness should begin with the Superintendent and School Board making a firm decision to update the district’s Emergency Response Plan, and communicating that decision to staff. The next step is forming a District Support Team to begin the planning process (superintendent, building and grounds, security, transportation, student support, mental health, social work, maintenance, administrators located in the school setting, etc.).

Next, the district should identify local community agencies that can be invited to the planning process (police department, fire department, emergency medical, hospitals, mental health, public health, local/ regional emergency management agency, etc.). The superintendent should delegate one person (a district employee with at least one back up) to have primary responsibility for overseeing the process of adapting this guide to local needs. Using this guide in its present state is not the intent. There is no “cookie cutter” approach that will fit all districts or schools. Schools and districts should use this document as a basis from which a local plan can be derived. This individual (and his/her back-up) will serve as a liaison between district employees, community representatives and will have responsibility to convene and lead meetings, to set a timeline for plan development and to direct changes to be made in the district’s Emergency Response Plan.

The District Support Team should review the contents of this Emergency Management Resource Guide and conduct a review of area hazards (i.e., areas of potential flooding, factories with dangerous chemicals, mines, areas prone to severe weather conditions, etc.). It would be helpful to check with the local Office of Emergency Management, Office of Homeland Security and other local response partners to see what type of hazard assessment they have already conducted in and around your schools. The



Team should then review and modify each emergency protocol to reflect local needs and circumstances in order to prevent and/or mitigate the impact of an emergency should one arise.

Since job titles in different districts may have very different meanings, throughout the guide the district team will need to update local school district job titles using appropriate local terms (some schools and districts have found it constructive to follow the titles utilized within the Incident Command System (ICS) National Incident Management System (NIMS). Each of these titles has a specific role during an emergency and is directed by the Incident Commander (typically the building principal until he/she transfers this responsibility to someone else depending upon the nature of the emergency).

It is important to note that at the present time the only school districts that are required to fully comply with the NIMS requirements are those districts that are receiving funding under the Emergency Response and Crisis Management Grant program (Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools) through the U.S. Department of Education. Regardless of the grant funding status, serious consideration should be given to using this structure in as much that it will provide consistency and will be aligned with local responders who are required to use this planning and response configuration. For more specific information on NIMS you may wish go to <http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/NIMS.pdf>

Upon completing the revision of this guide, the District Support Team's role changes to that of support and leadership. The District Support Team functions to assist schools in the coordination and allocation of needed resources when the need imposed by the current situation exceeds the school's normal resources.

## School-Centered Planning

After the District Support Team has completed its revision of the guide, each school and support building should create a site-specific Emergency Management Response Plan. To do this, the school will need to establish an Emergency Management Response Team to review their site's existing emergency plan, or to develop a new plan using this guide as a model. Using the outline, sample forms, and protocols provided in the district's updated guide, schools can create an emergency plan which includes a designated chain of command, specific roles for team members, and school specific procedures to implement in the event of an emergency.

Each school district will need to determine how best to conduct the training and implementation process in individual schools. For smaller districts, the district team may be able to assist on a school-by-school basis. Larger districts will need a more coordinated and systematic way to conduct training for school-centered teams to better prepare them to adapt the district plan to their individual school needs.

## Communication and Practice

The final step in the emergency response planning process is to communicate and practice the plan. The District Support Team holds the responsibility to assist each school in conducting awareness trainings and in practicing various elements of emergency protocols. While most schools are adept at practicing techniques such as fire drills and severe weather, most are not well rehearsed in planning for such events as a chemical release, threats to self or others, intruders and other possible emergencies.

This Guide represents an effort to bring together elements of an all-hazards approach to emergency management for natural, technological, climate and culture, infrastructure, non-structural, biological, physical well being and man made incidents.

## Summary

A **District Support Team**, in collaboration with community partners creates a district model emergency response plan. It is important to base the plan(s) upon this **template**, but tailored to local needs. The District coordinates training for **School-Centered Emergency Response Teams** to adapt the district guide for school-specific needs.

District and school-centered teams **communicate** and **practice** the plan with staff and community partners in an effort to better prepare for a response and recovery in the event of an emergency.

# Phases of Emergency Management

For purposes of this guide, “emergency” is defined as:

**A sudden, generally unanticipated event that has the potential to profoundly and negatively impact a significant segment of the school population.**

In order to create and maintain a viable Emergency Response Plan there must be a high level of understanding and consistency of thought among all of the partners. Typically school districts will create a district support team that provides assistance to schools and other entities within the school district. This consistency of thought (and the individual plan) is built around the four phases of emergency management; they are **(1) mitigation/prevention (2) preparedness, (3) response and (4) recovery**. Each school’s plan should incorporate these basic planning building blocks. By doing so, consistency among all stakeholders is enhanced and a higher level of understanding is created.

What are some of the characteristics of a weak school or district plan?

- No standardized format
- Lack of consistency between schools
- Lack of consistency and coordination between school plan and district plans
- Lack of interaction among state, regional and local partners
- Lack of training for school personnel
- Plans are not critiqued and/or tested on a regular basis
- Lack of after action reporting and documentation

## Partners in the Planning Process

School districts and individual schools should not attempt to create their plans in isolation. This will only lead to misunderstanding, lack of trust and less than a desirable response should one be needed. It is for this reason that at a minimum the following entities be involved in the preparation, planning and testing of the response plans:

- Law enforcement (local, regional and/or state)
- Public Health
- Mental Health
- Local government (representative from the Mayor’s office)
- Fire Safety Officials
- Emergency Medical Services

These partners will be able to provide excellent guidance, training and assistance in complying with federal mandates such as the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Schools and school districts are under extreme pressure to produce significant and sustained academic growth; we believe that this can best be accomplished in a safe and nurturing environment. This environment not only has a viable emergency response protocol, but has encouraged and promoted

caring relationships between students and adults. It is through these types of relationships that a truly safe and healthy environment can exist.

While schools remain the safest place for school-aged children, there are new issues that challenge our thinking, protocols, planning, response and recovery processes. We now must think about and plan for the following:

## New Challenges

- Pandemic/Infectious Diseases
- Terrorist Attacks
- Chemical/Biological/Nuclear/Explosive Venues
- Business Continuity Planning (how do we continue to meet our business demands-payroll, insurance, building maintenance, etc.)
- Continuity of Operations Planning (how do we continue to carry out our educational mission)
- Workplace Violence
- Parent Reunification Policies
- Media Relations (the role of the Public Information Officer)
- After Action Review Reports
- Documentation of Effort
- Bullying
- School Related Cyber Crimes (bullying, theft, etc...)
- Even Ordinary School Visitation
- Field-Trip Safety and Child Protection
- Non-Custodial Parent Procedures

# Mitigation and Prevention



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## Mitigation and Prevention Checklist

- Connect with local and regional emergency responders to specifically identify local hazards (within the past year)
- Review the last safety assessment to examine behavior and fiscal plant concerns
- Encourage staff to provide input and feedback into the crisis planning process
- Review the school incident data
- Determine the major problems in your school with regard to crime and violence
- Review the last safety assessment to examine behavior and fiscal plant concerns
- Share concerns with the school/school district safety teams
- Review insurance claims against the school to determine types, locations and severity

# Mitigation and Prevention

Mitigation and Prevention activities are the corner stone of creating effective “Emergency Response” plans for the school district, individual schools and the community. While schools and communities will have little control over some hazards that could impact them, (plane crash, industrial accident, weather related events, etc.) there are actions that can be taken to reduce the impact of such events. Other events such as bomb threats, fights, intruders, and vandalism are more likely to occur and actions can be taken to minimize the likelihood of their occurrence. The first rule of thumb in this process is to not work alone. In order to effectively develop a viable plan of action you will need the input from a variety of individuals (local emergency response agencies, local/regional emergency management personnel, hospital/medical staff, mental health and local government representatives).

Let’s take a closer look at each of these elements:

**Mitigation is the action schools and districts take to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage related to an event that cannot be prevented.**

Mitigation refers to actions taken to reduce the adverse effect of an emergency. Mitigation measures can be implemented before, during or recovering from an emergency. Following a school safety assessment conducted in the “mitigation and prevention” phase, measures can be taken to eliminate or minimize the hazards that have been identified. The main thing to remember is that mitigation activities refer to any sustained action implemented to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property related to events that cannot be prevented. Mitigating emergencies is also important from a legal standpoint. If a school, district, or state does not take all necessary actions in good faith to create safe schools, it could be vulnerable to a negligence law suit.

**Prevention is the action schools and districts take to decrease the likelihood that an event or crisis will occur.**

Prevention can best be described as a set of pro-active strategies that will enhance the safe and orderly learning environment at the district and school building levels.

Some examples of these pro-active steps for mitigation/prevention would be:

- Conduct a Safe School Assessment
- Review discipline referral data for trends
- Conduct regular safety checks (building and grounds walk through)
- Communication protocols for staff, students, caregivers and the community at large
- Food preparation protocols
- Pandemic Flu preparations
- Limited access policies
- Anti-bullying, anti-violence programs
- Pro-social skills curriculum
- Wellness activities
- Bolting bookshelves to the wall

- Fencing hazardous areas
- Applying Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to school grounds and structures
- Student supervision protocols (consistency by all staff)
- Discipline protocols (understanding and consistency by all staff)
- Mail handling
- Building access control measures
- Student accounting
- Wellness activities (such as drug/alcohol prevention, mental health services, etc.)

When an agreed upon list of issues has been established, strategies and corresponding activities can be implemented. Anti-bullying programs, drug and alcohol prevention programming, school wide discipline programming, and required staff supervision schedules are strategies that can be implemented to assist in the Prevention phase of the plan. Only those strategies that have been validated or proven to be effective should be utilized.

# Preparedness



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## Preparedness Checklist

To review the comprehensiveness of the crisis plan, consider the items on the checklist below:

- Determine what crisis plans exist in the district, school and community.
- Identify all stakeholders involved in crisis planning.
- Develop procedures for communicating with staff, students, families, and the media.
- Establish procedures to account for students during a crisis.
- Gather information that exists about the school facility, such as maps and the location of shutoffs.
- Identify and assemble the necessary equipment that will assist staff in a crisis.

Adapted from US Government publication: [Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities](#)

# Preparedness

**Preparedness is the process of deciding what you will do in the event of an emergency, before the emergency actually occurs. The activities under this heading ready schools and school districts to rapidly respond in a coordinated manner. Preparedness involves the coordination of efforts between the local school district, individual schools and the community at large.**

Some examples of “Preparedness” activities are:\*

- Identify and incorporate procedures for individuals with special needs
- Identify and acquire emergency supplies – “go kits” (administration and classroom)
- Identifying weaknesses in the current emergency management plan
- Interpreting the data collected from the vulnerability assessments conducted during the Mitigation-Prevention phase
- Creating and strengthening relationships with community partners, including members of law enforcement, fire safety, local government, public health and mental health agencies and the media
- Establishing an Incident Command System (ICS)
- Implementing functional training exercises for faculty and staff with first responders
- Implementing evacuation, lockdown and shelter-in-place drills
- Coordinating Emergency Management Response Plans with those of state and local agencies to avoid unnecessary duplication

\*These examples were taken from the Emergency Response Technical Assistance Center, ERCM Express, Volume 2, Issue 8.

## School Plans

Individual school safety plans should be preventative in nature. This would include addressing proactive solutions to eliminate or mitigate identified safety concerns found as a result of a School Safety Assessment and/or a Vulnerability Assessment Process. Emergency Management Response Plans should include: Incident Command Structure, roles and responsibilities of Emergency Management Team Members, and emergency protocols to follow for emergency situations. Each school’s plan should reflect the school’s unique characteristics and needs and should take those local areas of concern surrounding the school into consideration.



# Response



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## Response Checklist

- Determine if a crisis is occurring.
- Identify the type of crisis that is occurring and determine the appropriate response.
- Activate the Incident Management System.
- Ascertain whether an evacuation; reverse evacuation; lockdown; or shelter-in-place needs to be implemented.
- Maintain communication among all relevant staff at officially designated locations.
- Establish what information needs to be communicated to staff, students, families, and the community.
- Monitor how emergency first aid is being administered to the injured.
- Decide if more equipment and supplies are needed.

# Response

**Response is the process of implementing appropriate actions while an emergency situation is unfolding. In short, responding means “doing what you planned to do.” In this phase, schools/districts mobilize resources needed to handle the emergency at hand.**

## Emergency Management Response Protocols

A broad range of emergency situations are identified in the Emergency Management Response Protocols section of this guide. For each event listed there are specific actions to be taken to appropriately handle the given situation. Depending on the type of emergency, protocols may remain under the domain of the school, may require assistance from the District Support Team, or may necessitate a coordinated community-wide response. Schools and districts should strive to maintain an agreed upon simple language protocol that all school personnel, students, visitors and responders would easily understand.

This process would avoid the use of elaborate codes or code words that may not be known or understood by the majority of people involved in the crisis or visitors in the school at the time of the incident.

## Universal Emergency Procedures

Universal Emergency Procedures refers to a set of clear directives that may be implemented across a number of situations. For example, **1) Evacuation** is a procedure that would apply to a situation when it is safer outside the building than inside (such emergencies could be a fire, bomb threat or interior gas leak). Personnel throughout the building would not necessarily need to know which emergency is occurring; they simply need to know to *evacuate* once a decision has been made and announced. The intent is always to move students, staff and visitors away from harm.

Other Universal Emergency Procedures include **2) Shelter-in-Place, 3) Drop, Cover and Hold, 4) Severe Weather Safe Area, 5) Lockdown and 6) “Reverse” Evacuation.** The advantage of having a small set of universal procedures is its simplicity. With Universal Emergency Procedures in place, staff can learn to follow specific directions without having to learn extensive protocols for dozens of different emergency responses.

## Emergency Response Protocols

- Accidents at School
- AIDS / HIV Infection
- Aircraft Emergency
- Allergic Reaction
- Assault
- Bomb Threat
- Bus Accident
- Chemical Material Spill
- Death or Serious Illness
- Earthquake
- Fire
- Gas Leak
- Hostage Situation
- Kidnapping
- Poisoning
- Rape/Sexual Abuse
- Suicide
- Threat of Harm
- Trespasser/Intruder
- Weapons
- Weather Related Emergency



# Recovery



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## Recovery Checklist

- Strive to return to learning as quickly as possible.
- Restore the physical plant, as well as the school community.
- Monitor how staff is assessing students for the emotional impact of the crisis.
- Identify what follow up interventions are available to students, staff, and first responders.
- Conduct debriefings with staff and first responders.
- Assess curricular activities that address the crisis.
- Allocate appropriate time for recovery.
- Plan how anniversaries of events will be commemorated.
- Capture “lessons learned” and incorporate them into revisions and trainings.

Adapted from US Government publication: [Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities](#)

# Recovery

**Recovery is the process of assisting people with the physical, psychological and emotional trauma associated with experiencing tragic events. Recovery is also utilizing a “Business Continuity Plan” or a “Continuity of Operations Plan” to return to normal operations as soon as possible.**

## **Understanding “Critical Incidents”**

The term “critical incident” is used to describe events that overwhelm an individual’s capacity to cope. Traumatic events can cause psychological and emotional turmoil, cognitive problems and behavioral changes.

## **Immediate vs. Ongoing Recovery**

It is essential to understand recovery at two distinct levels, immediate and ongoing. Immediate support is needed from the first moments of a traumatic event through the first few days following it. Frequently, recent victims of major trauma are in a state of shock, and at this time basic human needs of food, shelter and clothing are often a primary focus. Long-term recovery needs may not be readily apparent, and for many, ongoing support will be needed. Ongoing recovery refers to support provided to some individuals for weeks, months or years following a tragic event.

## **Assessment, Crisis Intervention and Support**

Children and their parents, faculty, staff and administrators, public safety personnel and the larger community are all impacted by tragic events and will benefit from immediate and ongoing support. For some traumatic events the District Support Team may be adequate to provide immediate and ongoing recovery services. Emergencies that affect a small number of people, or certain district-level emergencies may be well served by crisis counseling and recovery from other district employees, local community mental health providers, employee assistance programs and similar services. Often, this is an appropriate time to include members of faith-based organizations who have the appropriate training in this area.

For large-scale emergencies, however, services such as triage, assessment, outreach and crisis intervention are best delivered on a regional basis through a trained rapid response network. For large-scale disasters, site-based personnel normally assigned these functions are now victims/survivors themselves. The regional network of trained professionals provides a structured immediate first response system to support the district in need. Site-based personnel will be called on to provide the ongoing support services once the immediate crisis has passed. Their effectiveness will be strengthened if needed support is afforded to them during the early days of recovery. Recognizing the impact of incident related stress on all school and district staff members while supporting outreach efforts will help insure “quality care”.



# *Incident Command*



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## Levels of Emergencies

It is essential to understand and be prepared for a range of situations from school-based events. The chart below illustrates different levels of emergencies, and the following page describes in greater detail the possible impact of community-level disasters on individual schools.

### School Level Emergencies

Situations in which the scope is limited to school settings and school-based personnel, and no assistance is needed (such as an allergic reaction and use of “epi-pen”)

### District Level Emergencies

These are events where support and involvement is required from school district personnel or members of the District Support Team. Events may include an unexpected death, suicide threats, water or power failure, trespasser, etc. While these events may require help from non-school employees, they do not reach the scope and gravity of community-level disasters needing community-wide support.

### Community Level Emergencies

These include large-scale events during which coordination of services from school, district and local community response agencies is warranted. Such events include tornado damage to buildings, flooding, fires or explosions, chemical spills requiring evacuation, death of multiple staff or students (as in a bus accident) and/or a hostage situation. In many of these situations the school’s role is to implement protocols until appropriate community agencies respond and assume responsibility (such as police, fire and rescue). However, schools must be prepared to rely on their own resources until help arrives.

# Understanding the Impact of Large-Scale Disasters

Schools must be prepared to rely on their own resources because assistance from others may be delayed, depending on the scope of an emergency. Remember, for a large-scale event such as an earthquake or tornado, the same disaster that affects your school will also affect the surrounding community. The list below offers insights into possible effects of a large disaster (adapted from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's [FEMA's] "Multi-Hazard Program for Schools").

<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=11907> (2004)

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is362.asp> (online course)

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/schdizr.htm> (site for kids)

- Experts advise that schools may be on their own for 3 or more days following a catastrophic disaster. All staff should be alerted in the planning phase that, in the event of such an emergency, they will be required to staff the school during this time.
- A large disaster may result in:
  - Widespread telephone outage
  - Road blockages and damage to roads and bridges
  - Gridlock or congestion of roadways
  - Loss or damage to utility systems
  - Damage to local dams, especially earthfill dams
  - Chemical or electrical fires
  - Release of fuels and hazardous materials
  - Flash flooding
- Injuries and death may be caused by falling objects, fires/smoke inhalation, release of hazardous materials, flying debris, roof collapse, flooding and landslides.
- The disaster that affects you also affects the community.
- Fires, spills, damaged buildings, and search and rescue operations will overwhelm normal emergency response forces including police departments, fire departments and emergency medical services.
- It is important for school staff to develop personal and family emergency response plans because school personnel may have moral and legal responsibilities at school should a disaster occur. The family should anticipate that a staff member may be required to remain at school following a catastrophic event.

# Professional and Legal Responsibilities For Emergency Preparedness

Adapted from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) "Multi-Hazard Program for Schools".

## Responsibility

1. Schools are a vital community resource.
  - School personnel have a moral and legal responsibility to all students in their care.
  - Your school is responsible for students during day-to-day operations.
  - After a disaster, your school may serve as the gathering place for hundreds of people who live or work nearby.
2. In most cases, teachers and staff members will be required to remain at school until they are released by the principal, superintendent, or incident commander.
  - This responsibility to students in a disaster should be covered in each individual's employment contract.
  - The school cafeteria should maintain a three day food supply to feed those sheltered at the school.
  - This policy recognizes the school's obligation to keep students safe.
  - Just as school staff members will rely on other members of the community to open blocked roads, repair utilities, perform rescue work, etc., those members of the community will rely on schools to provide for the children in their care.
3. Staff members should have a family emergency plan; that plan should anticipate that the school staff member must stay at school.
  - Knowing your family is prepared and can handle the situation will enable you to do your job professionally.
  - Remind your family that if the telephones are not working, you will be unable to call them.
  - If the telephones work, tell them you will wait an hour or two to keep the lines open.
4. Ideally, the school plan should include a prioritization of which teachers and staff members might be released first (such as those with small children at home).
5. Staff members who live alone or a long distance from school should be encouraged to make special preparations for remaining at school a longer time, such as arranging with a neighbor to check on their home and keeping extra supplies at school.

## Legal Aspects

- If you are a school official with decision-making authority and you neglect or avoid taking disaster safety precautions, you may be found personally and financially liable for damages, injuries and deaths at your school.
- Many states now require specific disaster preparedness activities. In Kentucky, several statutes related to emergency planning and safe schools reporting:
  - K.R.S. 158.150 – Suspension or expulsion of students
  - K.R.S. 158.154 – Principal’s duty to report certain acts to local law enforcement
  - K.R.S. 158.163 – Earthquake and tornado emergency procedures system
  - K.R.S. 158.164 – Building lockdown procedure -- Practice
  - K.R.S. 158.165 – Possession and use of personal telecommunications device
  - K.R.S. 610.345 – Principal’s duty to share “Disclosure Notices” received from courts
- Have your legal counsel check to see that your school or district is in compliance with current laws and standards regarding school safety.

# Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)

Every complex job needs to be organized, and managing crises in schools is no exception. The **Incident Command System (ICS)** has become the nationwide standard for emergency management, preparedness and response. The model is an expandable system of management which has proven to be workable for many emergencies, from small events to large disasters and is currently required for use by a wide range of agencies across the country.

A basic premise to ICS is that in an emergency situation staff will transition from their day-to-day job to a similar function in addressing that emergency. For example, in an emergency the principal and/or his/her designee will become the “Incident Commander.”

## Division of Labor

The major concept behind ICS is that every emergency, no matter how large or small, requires that certain tasks, or functions, be performed. The organization can expand or contract according to the size of the emergency and the staff available. The primary functions of the ICS are: **Management, Operations, Logistics, Planning/Intelligence, and Administration/Finance.**

In simple terms:

- **Management:** Is in charge
- **Operations:** Makes it happen (by “doing”)
- **Logistics:** Makes it possible (by “getting”)
- **Planning/Intelligence:** Makes it rational (by “thinking”)
- **Administration/Finance:** Makes it fiscally accountable (by “recording”)

## Span of Control

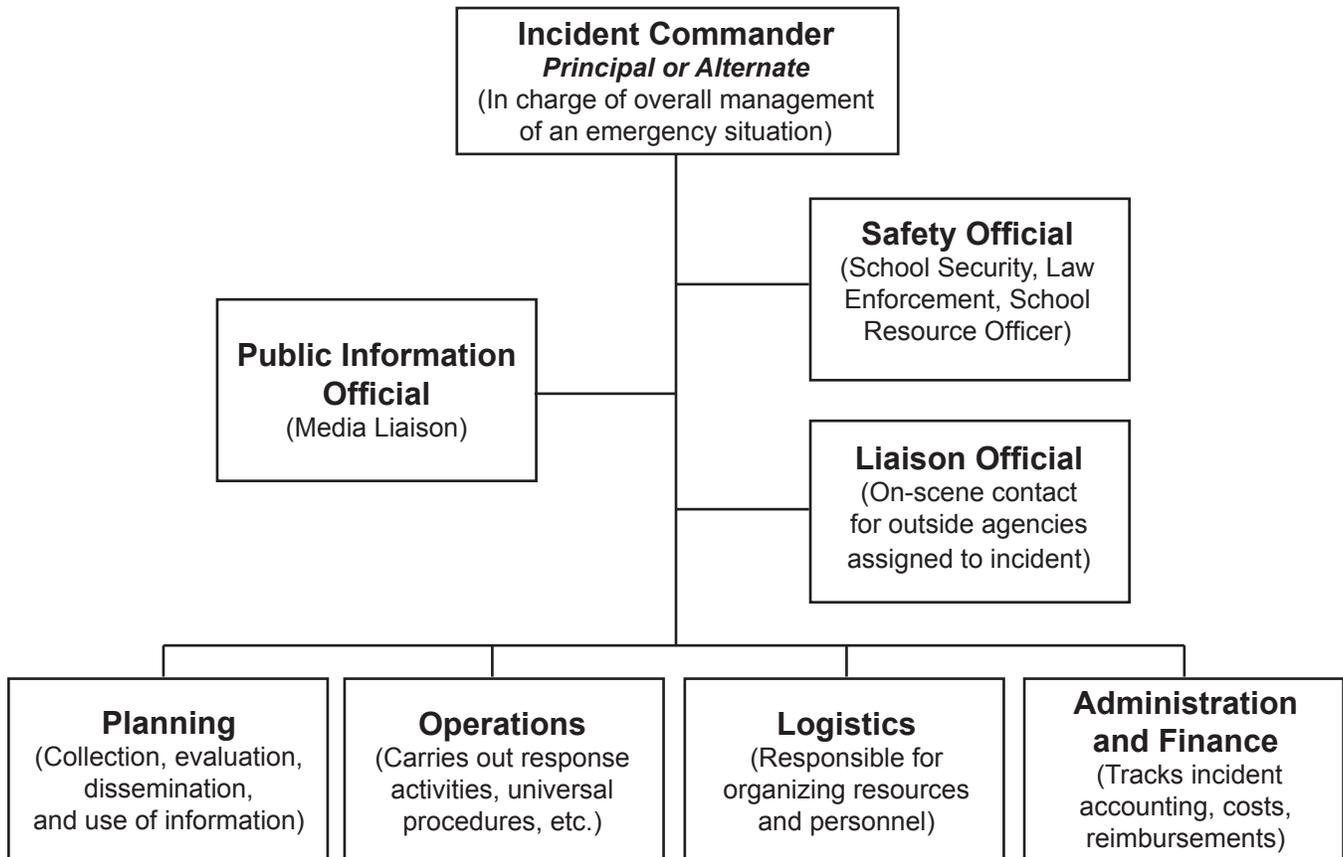
Another concept of ICS is Span of Control. The structure dictates that no one person should be in charge of more than 7 other people. The optimum number is 5, unless a large number of people are all performing the same function; for example, 1 person might be in charge of 10 teachers, who are all caring for students.

## Common Terminology

One of the most important reasons for schools to use an ICS is common terminology. Response agencies, as well as school staff will communicate and function more effectively if similar roles are described with similar wording and common definitions.

# Incident Command in Schools

In many ways, Incident Command has been in place since the formation of the first modern schools. In an emergency, the principal assumes control or management responsibility, as required under the laws of most states and activates others as needed. It should be understood that an activation of the school's ICS team/protocols is not necessary or indicated for every day to day incident. **Each designated responsibility area under the ICS should have a primary designee with a minimum of two back up personnel.** For relatively small incidents, the principal may perform *all* the roles of the ICS structure. If an incident grows, he/she may activate other personnel as needed. In turn, once activated, each individual below may activate others needed to complete necessary functions.



**Incident Commander:** Establishes command, works to protect life and property, directs overall management of emergency response activities. At the school level the Incident Commander is typically the Principal or his/her designee. The Incident Command role can be transferred to another individual (example -- police officer or fire fighter) depending upon the emergency as they arrive on the scene.

**Planning:** In small emergencies, the Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for planning, but in a larger emergency, the IC establishes a Planning Section. Planning collects and evaluates information as related to the development of an incident and status of resources.

**Operations:** On a school campus, most staff will be assigned roles under Operations. Operations are responsible for the care of students and carrying out response activities according to established Universal Emergency Procedures and Emergency Protocols.

**Logistics:** Is responsible for communications, as well as securing and providing needed materials, resources, services and personnel. This section may take on a major role in extended emergency situations.

**Administration/Finance:** Sometimes overlooked, the Administration/Finance is critical for tracking incident costs and for reimbursement accounting. This is especially important in tracking costs where a state or federal “disaster area” may be declared.

School level emergency management team shall be formed to facilitate “Incident Command” procedures.

# The Emergency Management Response Team

A school's Emergency Management Response Team (EMRT) should reflect the diversity of the school community and should capitalize on the unique training and expertise offered by staff in various positions in the school. During the planning phase of this procedure, it is wise for the Incident Commander to conduct a staff audit/survey to see if any staff members have specialized training in these areas.

## Members may include:

- Principal
- Counselor
- Nurse
- Head custodian or campus foreman
- Office secretary
- Vocational education teacher
- Chemistry teacher
- School security or law enforcement personnel
- School psychologist
- Social worker
- Special education teacher
- Transportation coordinator
- Cafeteria Manager Personnel with areas of expertise
- Staff located in strategic positions in the building (i.e., near exits or fire extinguishers)
- School Teams may also consider community representatives such as:
  - Police, Fire, Emergency Medical
  - Social Service Agencies (Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice)
  - Mental Health
  - Clergy
  - Parents

## The purpose of the EMRT includes the following:

- Develop the school's Emergency Management Response Plan based upon documented school-specific risks, assets and needs. This plan should use an all-hazards approach and be aligned with the District Plan.
- Conduct or coordinate orientation training for staff and recommend additional training.
- Conduct or coordinate awareness programs for students.
- Evaluate the school's preparedness for implementing specific emergency response protocols based upon the given situation.
- Report progress to the school's site based council, parents and superintendent.
- Assist with the completion of "After Action Review Report" (debriefs) following exercises and/or an event.

# Practicing the Plan

## Levels of Practice and Exercises

### Training

Once an Emergency Management Response Plan is completed, all personnel need to be trained. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends that this training be:

- Informal
- Not a simulation
- Includes a discussion of Roles and Responsibilities
- Introduces related Policies, Procedures, Plans and Responsibilities

### Conducting Drills

It is essential to practice the Plan periodically to make sure that it works, and that all personnel understand their roles. There are typically four ways to accomplish this goal:

#### 1. DRILL

- An informal discussion of simulated emergencies
- May test a single component or function of the Emergency Management Response Plan (for example, a “lock-down” drill)
- May only involve one or more supporting agency

#### 2. TABLETOP EXERCISE

- An informal discussion of simulated emergencies
- No time pressures
- Low stress
- Useful for evaluating plans and procedures
- Helpful to resolve questions of coordination and responsibility

#### 3. FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE

- An informal discussion of simulated emergencies
- Policy and coordination personnel will practice all or part of the Emergency Management Response Plan
- More stressful and realistic simulation of real life situations
- Usually takes place in “real time”
- Emphasizes the emergency functions of the Emergency Response Plan. Examples might include perimeter security (securing all doors of the school), utility shut-downs, and accounting for all the people who should be in the school at the time (to include students and staff)
- School’s Emergency Response Team is activated

#### 4. FULL SCALE EXERCISE

- Takes place in “real time”
- Employs real people and equipment, some from the district and some from community resources that would be anticipated to support the school in crisis
- Coordinates many agencies and functions, both internal and external to the district
- Intended to test several emergency functions, either concurrently or in sequence
- Could involve activating an emergency operation center (EOC)
- Produces *High Stress*

# Emergency Responsibilities

The following is an outline of roles and responsibilities for staff during an emergency. This does not include your specific team responsibility which will be outlined in the individual school plan. The Emergency Management Response Team has specifically assigned roles during an emergency and will access the District Support Team in accordance with your school plan.

## Personnel Guide

### Principal/Facility Director

The principal shall serve as Incident Commander (in the vast majority of cases) and will be responsible for the overall direction of the emergency procedures at the school or support building site. Responsibilities include:

1. Take steps deemed necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other individuals in the implementation of Emergency Management Response Protocols.
2. Determine whether to implement Universal Emergency Procedures (evacuation; reverse evacuation; shelter in place; severe weather/safe area; drop, cover and hold; lockdown).
3. Activate the Emergency Management Response Team.
4. Arrange for transfer of students, staff, and other individuals when safety is threatened by a disaster.
5. Work with emergency service personnel (depending on the incident, community agencies such as police or fire department may have jurisdiction for investigations, rescue procedures, etc.).
6. Maintain a line of communication with the Superintendent's Office and/or District Support Team.

### District Support Team

The District Support Team's role shall be to support the school when the need exceeds the resources of the school to handle a situation:

1. Provide guidance regarding questions which may arise.
2. Direct additional support personnel, including District Support Team members as needed.
3. Monitor the emergency situation and facilitate major decisions which need to be made.
4. Provide a district contact (Public Information Officer) for release of information to the media. This should include planning of a prepared statement that will be released.

**TEACHERS**

Teachers shall be responsible for the supervision of students and shall remain with students until directed otherwise. They shall:

1. Take steps deemed necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other individuals in the implementation of Emergency Management Response Protocols.
2. Direct students in their charge according to established Universal Emergency Procedures.
3. Render first aid if necessary. Selected school staff should be trained and certified in first aid, Automated Electronic Device (AED) use and CPR.
4. Teachers must have their roll book with them.
5. Take roll when the class relocates in the designated assembly area.
6. Report missing students and staff to Student Accounting and Release (you may want to consider utilizing a colored card system to expedite this process).
7. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

**COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, PSYCHOLOGISTS**

Counselors, social workers, psychologists shall be responsible for assisting the overall direction of the emergency procedures at the site. Responsibilities include:

1. Take steps deemed necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other individuals in the implementation of Emergency Management Protocols.
2. Direct students in their charge according to established Universal Emergency Procedures.
3. Render first aid if necessary.
4. Assist in the transfer of students, staff and other individuals when their safety is threatened by a disaster.
5. Maintain a line of communication with the Emergency Management Response Team leader. This would be the principal in the school and the superintendent for the school system.
6. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

**SCHOOL NURSES**

1. Provide first aid or emergency treatment as needed.
2. Communicate first aid and emergency treatment needs to emergency service personnel.
3. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

**CUSTODIANS**

1. Survey and report damage to principal/incident commander
2. Assist with implementing the Universal Emergency Procedures and Emergency Management Response Protocols as directed.
3. Control main shut-off valves for gas, water, and electricity and assure that no hazard results from broken or downed lines.
4. Assist in the conservation, use, and disbursement of supplies and equipment.
5. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

### **SCHOOL SECRETARY**

1. Answer phones and assist in receiving and providing consistent information to callers.
2. Provide for the safety of essential school records and documents.
3. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

### **FOOD SERVICE/CAFETERIA WORKERS**

1. Use, prepare, and serve food and water on a rationed basis whenever the feeding of students and staff becomes necessary during an emergency.
2. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

### **BUS DRIVERS**

1. Supervise the care of students, if an emergency occurs while children are on the bus.
2. Transfer students to new location when directed by the dispatcher or authorized regulatory agency.
3. Follow procedures as directed by your transportation policy for emergency situations.
4. Assist as directed by the principal/incident commander.

# Communication



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# Communication During an Emergency

Communication is a critical part of emergency management. School staff and students must be told what is happening and what to do. Parents of students and families of staff members must be informed about the situation, including the status of their child or family member. Timely contact with law enforcement and other emergency services is necessary for effective response. School Board members must be kept informed and updated. Information must be transmitted to the Central Office and to other affected schools. And finally, the media must be informed and kept updated.

## After an Emergency

The principal will need to notify staff of an event or emergency and keep them informed as additional information becomes available and as plans for management of the situation evolve.

## The Telephone Tree

A telephone tree is a simple, widely used system for notifying staff of an emergency event when they are not at school. Set up a telephone tree by listing the first in Building Chain of Command (Principal or Incident Commander). Then link him/her to several on the Emergency Management Response Team; then link to different staff groupings (teachers, support staff, etc.). In practice, the first person on the list calls several people who in turn call others, etc., until everyone on the list has been notified of the situation. A carefully crafted statement, specifying what is and is not yet known, and what steps may need to be taken, should be drafted before the telephone tree is activated.

## The Morning Faculty Meeting

An early, brief faculty meeting provides the opportunity to give accurate, updated information about an emergency event/situation itself and to review with staff procedures for the day, including the availability of intervention resources.

## The End-of-Day-One Faculty/Staff Meeting

A brief end-of-day-one meeting provides the opportunity to review day one of an emergency, to update information, and plan for day two. Misinformation or rumors can be addressed **before** staff members go home or into the community where they are likely to be asked about the situation.

# Dealing with Rumors

Establishing reliable communication networks is critical for dealing effectively with a potentially detrimental phenomenon often present in emergencies: Rumors. People are going to talk about an emergency. When accurate information is not available, rumors begin and without facts people will speculate. Rumors create a negative perception of the school's ability to manage an emergency. The most effective strategy for combating rumors is to provide facts as soon as possible.

- Identify and notify internal groups including administrators, teachers, students, custodians, secretaries, teaching assistants, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, etc. These are primary sources of information and are likely to be contacted in their neighborhoods, at grocery stores, etc. It is critical that they have accurate information because what they know (or are speculating about) will be passed on. A faculty/staff meeting should be held before staff members go home so that what is (and is not) known can be clearly communicated.
- Clerical staff who answer the telephone at the school and at the Central Office must know which information can be shared and which information cannot be shared. They must be kept informed of inaccurate information which is circulating so they can help correct misinformation. Designating a few persons to answer calls helps control the circulating of misinformation. Have a scripted preapproved statement for faxing, e-mailing and telephone communication.
- Use of **key communicators**, adults and students who are trusted in the community, will help to combat rumors about the incident. These individuals may or may not be in positions of authority or officially recognized leaders. They are frequently dentists, police officers, firefighters, news agency owners, post office clerks, contacts from radio and television, etc. Within the school it might include a school secretary, custodian and others that have a interest in the schools and the community. Of course it should also include various segments of the school district staff. These key communicators distinguishing characteristics are that they are respected by their peers and other people trust their opinions. These key communicators agree to disseminate accurate information about the school system and correct misinformation. They keep in touch with school officials and immediately report misperceptions in the case of emergencies. A telephone tree or a briefing held especially for identified community representatives directly associated with the school will help convey accurate information.
- The media can also help control rumors; ask them to provide frequent updates to the public, particularly providing accurate information where rumors need to be dispelled.
- After an immediate emergency has passed, public meetings may be helpful. It provides an opportunity for people to ask questions and to receive accurate information. A follow-up public meeting may also be helpful in restoring the community's confidence in the school's ability to manage emergencies and to provide a safe environment.

# Technology

Technology can be a very effective tool for communication during an emergency. Common tools include the following:

1. **Telephones** - It is recommended that schools should have at least one unpublished number. Check with the phone company to see if there are unused lines in the school's control panel which could be activated if needed. Use standard jacks and mark them clearly so emergency personnel can find them. There are automated phone systems for contacting "sub-populations" within your school instantly. They can be very effective in getting a quick standardized message to staff and/or parents.
2. **Intercom systems** - Ideally, systems should include teacher-initiated communications with the office and use a handset rather than a wall-mounted speaker. Instructions for use of the intercom system should be posted near the controls in the office area.
3. **Bullhorns and megaphones** - Battery-powered megaphones can be effective for communication in an emergency and should be part of the school's emergency toolbox. Procedures governing storage and use will help ensure availability.
4. **Two-way radio** - Two-way radios provide a reliable method of communication between rooms and buildings at a single site. All staff should be trained to operate the two-way radio. It is suggested that one be available for the principal, assistant principal, school resource officer, custodians, guidance counselors, secretary and for a representative from each grade level. A designated teacher from each grade level should be given one during a crisis. It is recommended that the school have an extra one available in the office to be used as needed during a crisis situation. Remember that some electronic devices can trigger bombs. A designated frequency on two-way radios should be shared with Emergency Responders to act as a redundant communication mode.
5. **Computers** - Existing computers may be used for communication both within the school and to other sites. E-mail may be a useful tool for updating information for staff, Central Office, other schools in an affected area, and possibly for other agencies. School websites can inform the public of the current situation at school and other pertinent information.
6. **Fax machines** - Possible uses include an off-campus accident where lists of students and staff members are involved, their locations, and needed telephone numbers can be quickly and accurately communicated. Medical information, release forms, and authorizations can be faxed and returned in emergencies.
7. **Cellular telephones** - These phones may be the only tool working when electric service is out; they are useful to staff who may be en route to or from a site. Be aware however, that cell phones are often the first form of communication to fail in a large scale emergency (this is due to overloading networks). They can also trigger bombs.
8. **"Panic buttons"** - "Panic buttons" may be connected directly to the police or other emergency services. In some communities, there is an immediate response; in others, the police or fire departments call the school to confirm the emergency.
9. **Alarm systems** - Bells or buzzers which may be sounded in different ways to signal different types of emergencies - for example, fire, severe weather, or special alert (with instructions to follow). When possible verbal commands should be given in plain language (do not rely upon code words or phrases). This process simply decreases the chance for error or misunderstanding.

# Strategies with Parents and Community

An important aspect of managing emergencies is dealing effectively with parent reactions and community agencies. Communication with parents and the community is best begun before an emergency occurs. Some useful strategies include the following:

1. Inform parents about the school's emergency plan, its objectives, and the need for it; such information can be included in a school newsletter, local public access media, websites or other informational materials prepared for parents.
  - a. Lists of personnel on emergency teams and their specific roles in a crisis should not be detailed and released to parent or listed on community information. Many of these lists include private information such as cell phone numbers.
  - b. The details of the emergency plan should remain confidential, care should be given not to publish evacuation routes, floor plans or other information that could be used by individuals seeking targets for predatory actions.
2. Develop a school climate that nurtures relationships with parents so that they trust and feel comfortable calling school personnel in the event of emergency.
3. Develop materials that may be needed, including:
  - a. Drafts of letters to parents informing them of what happened.
  - b. Information regarding possible reactions to a variety of safety situations for use by parents as they talk with their children..
  - c. Steps the school and school district are taking to handle the situation.
4. Develop a list of community resources which may be helpful to parents or helpful to the school in the event of an emergency.
5. Identify parents who are willing to volunteer in case of an emergency and include them in preparation efforts and training.

# Sharing Information with Parents

In the event of an emergency, parents have very specific information needs. First, parents want to know their children are safe; then, parents want to know the details of the emergency situation, to know how it is being handled, and to know that the children will be safe in the future. The first reactions are likely to involve *fear*. Upon learning of an incident at the school, parents are likely to descend upon the school in search of their child or to telephone, frantically seeking information. Establishing a system for responding quickly to parent needs for information is an important part of pre-planning. *Anger* is another common reaction of parents, particularly in the case of senseless acts of violence. In the event of an emergency or disaster:

1. Tell parents exactly what is known to have happened. Do not embellish or speculate.
2. Implement the plan to manage phone calls, traffic control and meet with parents who arrive at school.
3. If deemed necessary, schedule and attend an open question-and-answer meeting for parents as soon after the incident as possible. The meeting will provide an opportunity for school officials to listen and respond to parent concerns (which are helpful in combating rumors and other misinformation) and to work on restoring parental trust in the school.
4. In the event of an incident which involved damage or destruction, an open house for parents and other members of the community to see the school restored to its “normal” state helps everyone get beyond the emergency.
5. During a school-level emergency event the school may utilize (if available) an automated telecommunication device that can be programmed to deliver critical messages in a short period of time. Such messages can be directed to the residences of the students and their parents or guardians attending this particular school.
6. During a school-level emergency, it may be necessary to move students to an alternative site. Parents will need to be notified as to where they need to meet their children (reunification plan). **This area should be designated as part of the overall plan.**

# Communicating with the Media

Most news people are sensitive in reporting emergencies that occur in school settings and are interested in doing a reputable job. The following suggestions will promote clear communications with the media:

1. Identify a single information source (typically this will be your designated Public Information Officer).
2. Direct media representatives to one area (on or off campus) where briefings can take place (this should be done in advance so there is a known media staging area). This should not necessarily take place at the site of the event unless the school is showing how normalcy has been restored.
3. Instruct all employees to refer all information and questions to the Media Liaison or Information Official.
4. If the emergency is a death, consult with the deceased student/staff member's family before making a statement.
5. Insist that reporters respect the privacy rights of students and staff.
6. Advise students of the school's student media policy.
7. The school should decide what to say, issue a statement, and answer questions within the limits of confidentiality.
8. Remind employees that only designated personnel are authorized to talk with news media.
9. Take initiative with news media and let them know what is or is not known about the situation.
10. Emphasize school's/district's good record.
11. Speak to reporters in plain English - not in "educationese."
12. If there is involvement with a criminal case, work in conjunction with law enforcement spokesperson and the local board attorney.
13. Don't try to "kill" a story; don't say, "no comment;" don't speculate; don't try to blame anyone for anything.
14. When communicating, maintain a unified position and message; keep messages concise, clear, and consistent.
15. Contact District Support Team to regularly update.
16. Delay releasing information until facts are verified and the school's position is clear; prepare statements about the situation in advance to read (avoid ad-libbing).
17. Assign sufficient staff to handle phones and keep a log of calls and personal contacts.
18. Express appreciation to all persons who helped handle the emergency.

## Sample Statements to the Media

### Example 1: Bus Accident

Our third grade students were on a field trip when their school bus was involved in an accident on Interstate-75 (I-75). Emergency medical teams have arrived and are transporting students to (NAME) community hospital. Our assistant principal is at the scene and our superintendent is at the hospital. We have established a hotline for parents (or, staff members are calling parents of students involved in the accident.) The hotline number is (NUMBER). Our Emergency Management Response Team is implementing our emergency protocol for bus accidents, including providing support to students and staff.

*Note: Important points made are: preparedness of the school; coordination of efforts with community agencies, access to information for parents; responsible, immediate action taken by school representatives (including those in positions of authority); and support provided for students at the school.*

### Example 2: Fight/Death of Student (off campus, after hours)

A fight involving two eleventh-grade students occurred a block from campus at 7:00 PM last night. The incident resulted in the fatal shooting of one of our students. An ongoing investigation is being conducted, but no more is know at this time.”

Our school’s Emergency Management Response Team went into action immediately following the incident and the following actions have been taken: 1) Our Emergency Team met last night and planned a staff meeting before the school day. 2) We notified staff of the meeting using our Telephone Tree. 3) Crisis counseling for students is being provided by Central Office and community resources; 4) A review of our school weapons policy is underway and school security is on alert for potential related violence.

*Note: Important points are: Even though the incident occurred off campus, after hours, the school still has a responsibility to act; the incident is coupled with a re-statement of the district weapons policy; the school demonstrates it is able to handle emergencies by convening an Emergency Management Response Team meeting, by drawing on community resources, and by providing (or accessing) crisis counseling to the students.*

## Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

As you may or may not be aware, our school (or district) has recently experienced (specify event, whether death, fire, etc.) which has deeply affected us. Let me briefly review the facts (give brief description of incident and known facts).

We have implemented our school's Emergency Management Response Plan in an effort to provide an appropriate response to the situation. This plan is also designed to provide assistance to our students and their families when deemed necessary. Students and staff will react in different ways to emergencies of this nature, so it will be important to have support available to assist both staff and students in need. Counselors are available in the school setting to assist students as they express their feelings related to (the specific event). We have included a reference sheet to help you recognize possible reactions you may observe in your child. If you feel your child is in need of special assistance or is having a great deal of difficulty coping with (the loss, disaster, etc.), please do not hesitate to call.

While it is important to deal with grief, loss, anger and fear reactions, we believe it is essential to resume as normal a routine as possible regarding school activities. The following modifications in our school's regular schedule will be in effect during (specify dates, times and places), and after that time all regular schedules and routines will resume. (Specify needed information such as memorial services, possible changes in classroom locations, alterations school operating hours, etc.).

Thank you for your support of our school system as we work together to cope with (specify event). Please observe your child closely over the next several days and weeks to watch for signs of distress which may indicate a need for additional support and guidance. Please feel free to call if you have any concerns or questions regarding your child, or the steps being taken by the school to address this (loss, tragedy, etc.).

Sincerely,

(Principal Name)  
(Phone)



# *District Plan*



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## Checklist for District Planning

Under the direction of the superintendent or designee, each district is to complete the following according to its unique needs and circumstances. Each District Support Team should comprise a variety of school employees, as well as community representatives and stakeholders.

- Designate a single “lead contact” for orchestrating district level planning
- Have each team member read or become familiar with this Emergency Management Resource Guide
- Complete the following:
  - District Support Team Emergency Numbers**
  - Local / Regional Emergency Response Numbers**
  - Hazards of the Area (part 1)**
  - Hazards of the Area (part 2)**
  - Visitor Screening Policy (District Guidelines)**
  - General Dismissal Procedures (District Guidelines)**
- Review entire chapter entitled “**Creating the Emergency Management Response Plan,**” modify for local needs, titles, circumstances
- Review **Universal Emergency Procedures**, modify for local needs
- Review **Emergency Response Management Protocols**, modify for local needs
- Coordinate district planning with local police, fire, emergency medical, and other emergency responders (review lines of communication between agencies, procedures for interagency collaboration, etc.)
- Prepare a district model **Emergency Quick Reference Guide**. Each school will adapt the district’s model for individual use
- Establish a timeline and procedures for how the district will support training for administrators and school-based teams (to prepare them to conduct school-based planning)
- Establish a mechanism for individual schools to request assistance in creating school-based plans, and to help mitigate identified hazards
- Designate a district level contact or liaison to monitor individual school’s progress; create a mechanism for schools to submit updated plans on a yearly basis
- Establish a regular meeting or planning schedule for the District Support Team; determine who will attend these meetings (all stakeholders vs. smaller task force approach)

# District Level Plan

The superintendent or designee is ultimately responsible for overseeing ongoing activities in emergency mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Under his/her direction, the school district should form a district-level team to review the contents of this guide, and to modify it for local use.

Upon completing the revision of this guide, the District Support Team's role changes to that of support. The District Support Team functions to assist schools in the coordination and allocation of needed resources when the need imposed by the current situation exceeds the affected school's normal resources.

## Forming the District Level Support Team

### Suggested Steps for Team Formation

1. Superintendent or designee communicates with selected staff in key district roles to recruit them to serve on the district team. As in the local school, a staff inventory should be conducted to determine if any individual has experience or specialized training in any of these areas.
2. Superintendent or designee creates list of staff, making sure all major areas of need are addressed, including:
  - Director of security or law enforcement
  - Director of building and grounds
  - Director of maintenance
  - Director of transportation
  - Director of supply services
  - District level secretary or receptionist
  - Director of community or public relations
  - Director of risk management and safety
  - School psychologists and social workers
  - Personnel with areas of expertise (i.e., CPR, first aid, etc.)
3. An initial meeting is held with potential team members to discuss what will be expected for team membership and to outline steps for planning and implementation.
4. District-level team identifies possible community agencies and individuals to assist in district planning, such as:
  - Police Department, Fire Department
  - Emergency Medical Services
  - Social Service Agencies (Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice)
  - City/County government
  - Local hospitals, medical & mental health professionals
  - Local/regional emergency management agency
  - Business representatives
  - Clergy, Parents
  - Local American Red Cross
5. As much as possible, formalize interagency agreements with Memoranda of Agreements

(MOA), letters of support, etc. (samples available at the Kentucky Center for School Safety web site: [www.kysafeschools.org](http://www.kysafeschools.org)).

6. Initially, meet as often as needed to review portions of this guide to modify for local use. Have each team member review specific areas which pertain to their area of expertise (for example, local police and school security review protocols and actions which may involve a security response).
7. When the adaptation of this guide is completed, schedule a “kick-off” presentation or training for school administrators to begin the process of school-level planning.
8. Ongoing, hold regular team meetings throughout the school year to assist schools in school-level planning, to review school-specific plans, and to address ongoing issues as they arise (which may include local, state or national issues that may affect the district). Small communities may wish to have all participants in the same meetings; larger districts may need to form smaller task forces to accomplish specific tasks.
9. Schedule drills, practice and annual reviews (district and school levels).

# District Support Team Emergency Numbers

Complete the form below to reflect your district’s offices, adding and deleting as necessary. Include district office phone numbers, with appropriate local terminology for job titles, positions, departments, etc.

Title	Name – Location	Numbers/Cell
Superintendent		
Assistant Superintendent		
Director of Security/ Law Enforcement		
Director of Maintenance		
Director of Transportation		
Director of Nutritional Services		
Director of Supply Services		
Director of Safety		
Director of Buildings and Grounds		
Director of Special Education		
Director of Student Support (counseling, soc. work, etc.)		
Director for Safe and Drug Free Schools		
Director of Health or Medical Services		
Director of Public Relations		
Legal Counsel		
Other		
Other		



# Potential Hazards (Part 1)

It is vital to record the potential hazards for your geographic area and risks to your district so you know what to expect and what to do to protect students and staff. It is essential to understand that disasters have a cascading effect:

- Forest fires lead to debris flows, mud slides, grassfires and smoke/pollution
- Earthquakes cause fires, loss of water supply, structural damage, chemical leaks and disruption of communications
- Flooding blocks roads, damages property, and ruins food supply
- Tornadoes destroy buildings, cause fallen power lines
- A medical epidemic/pandemic creates significant disruptions to the educational and related business routines

In an effort to prioritize these events the District Support Team needs to consider what is most likely to occur in this area and when/if these events have occurred in the past.

Natural Hazards	Predictability and Approx. Frequency	Warning Time	Comments or Actions to Take
Earthquakes			
Severe weather, tornados, lightning			
Excessive rains, flash floods, flooding			
Dam failure			
Mud slides			
Windstorms			
Snowstorms			
Sinkholes			
Grass or forest fires			
Other			
Other			

## Potential Hazards (part 2)

The District Support Team needs to consider what other human/technological factors, could occur or have occurred in your region:

Human or Technological Hazards	Predictability and Approx. Frequency	Warning Time	Comments or Actions to Take
Bomb threat, or other terrorism			
Arson, fire			
Riots			
Air pollution, smog alert			
Water or food pollution			
Hazardous material spills			
Nuclear or radiological accident			
Asbestos			
Communication systems failures			
Water system disruptions			
Gas or electric disruption			
Transportation systems disruptions			
Airplane, airport hazard			
Railroad track, station hazard			
Other			

# Visitor Screening Policy/Access Control

*(In this section create, update or insert your district policy regarding Visitor Screening. Ideally, the individual who is updating this Guide could type, or “cut and paste” the district’s policy here, then delete the text below).*

## Visitor Screening Suggestions

- Outdoor and exit door signs to direct all visitors to the entrance they should enter
- Building entrances/exits should be numbered and the visitor entrance should be labeled #1.
- Utilize positive welcoming signs that clearly indicate where you want visitors to go (i.e. Office, Reception Area, etc.)
- All exterior doors should be locked only allowing entrance through one designated entrance.
- All visitors should pass through an office area that offers verbal and visual contact with staff.
- All visitors sign-in and receive a sticker or other badge.
- Designate staff to provide verbal face-to-face contact to inquire about the persons name, area or room to be visited, and nature of the visit.
- If person is new to the school or unsure of the room location, a staff member may meet him/her or accompany him/her.
- Visitors should return to sign out when leaving the school.
- There should be no exceptions to the policy.
- Involve and acquaint parents, parent-teacher organizations, etc. with the policy and the need to know who is in the building.
- All teachers and staff should know the policy.
- All staff should be expected to question people without a badge and ask them to check in with the office before proceeding to the intended room.



# *School Plan*



KENTUCKY CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY



# Checklist for School Planning

Under the direction of the principal, each school is to complete the following according to its unique needs and circumstances.

- Have each team member become familiar with this Emergency Management Resource Guide
- Complete the following:
  - **Cover Page**
  - **Staff Skills Inventory**
  - **Emergency Response Team Assignments**
  - **Teacher Survey: Students Needing Special Assistance**
  - **Classroom and Building “Hazard Hunt”**
  - **Students Special Assistance: Master List**
  - **Classroom and Building “Hazard Hunt” Master List**
  - **Assembly Area (outdoors)**
  - **Alternate Building Location (walking distance)**
  - **Alternate Building Location (requiring transport)**
  - **Student Accounting and Release**
  - **Orientation and Training Schedule**
  - **Drill Schedule and Log**
- Create an **Emergency Team “Toolbox”**
- Adopt **Visitor Screening and Access Control Policies** consistent with local board policy
- Adopt “age appropriate” **Daily Dismissal Procedures** consistent with board policy
- Review the **Emergency Response Protocols** (“Response” section); make necessary modifications for school-specific needs (using feedback from Staff Surveys and Emergency Team input, local or district phone numbers and titles, etc.)
- Review and update **Severe Weather Safe Area** for each room of building
- Review and update **Shelter in Place** plan for each room of building
- Prepare your school’s **Emergency Quick Reference Guide**
- Provide **Emergency Quick Reference** forms to all staff members
- Establish a schedule and procedures for orientation, training, and practicing the plan
- Submit the school’s plan to the superintendent or designee
- Practice the plan as scheduled, update the plan at least yearly

# Creating the School Emergency Management Response Plan

This section is designed to provide a practical step-by-step approach to forming an Emergency Management Response Plan. It addresses issues from team formation through submission of the plan to the Superintendent's Office. The first step in creating the Emergency Management Response Plan is forming the Emergency Response Team. As introduced earlier, the team should represent the diverse training and expertise of the school community.

After the team is formed, the next step is for each team member to review this manual in its entirety. Then using the forms provided in this chapter, create the Emergency Management Response Plan. Next, the Emergency Response Team should conduct a presentation at a faculty/staff meeting to update the entire staff regarding Universal Emergency Procedures, Emergency Management Protocols, Emergency Response Team assignments specific roles, etc. Finally, the team will submit a copy of the plan to the Superintendent's Office.

Using this guide (as adapted by your District Support Team) as a starting point, each school and school support building is to establish an Emergency Response Team and is to develop (or update) an Emergency Management Response Plan to include:

- Clearly defined staff roles/responsibilities (Emergency Response Team, Incident Command System, etc.)
- Procedures for emergency evacuation, administering first aid, etc.
- Setting up a "Command Post"
- Establishing potential staging areas
- Student accounting and release procedures
- Assembly Areas
- Guidelines for communication with the media
- Establishing primary and back-up methods for communication (within school, with Central Office, and with parents and community)

Each Emergency Management Response Plan shall be **updated yearly and submitted to the Superintendent's Office**, and shall reflect the actions required by all involved parties to minimize loss of life and injury to persons and property.

The **school principal** is responsible for supervising, monitoring and organizing the development of the school emergency plan. Further, the principal is responsible for arranging a faculty/staff meeting within one month of the beginning of the school year to review the school's plan and update staff regarding new procedures. **Best practice would indicate that this training take place prior to students beginning classes.**

# Forming the Emergency Response Team

The **school principal** is responsible for overseeing the formation of the Emergency Response Team and is the designated leader.

A school's Emergency Response Team should reflect the diversity of the school community and should capitalize on the unique training and expertise offered by staff in various positions in the school.

The purpose of the Emergency Response Team includes the following:

- Develop the school's Emergency Response Plan based upon documented school-specific risks, assets, and needs. This plan should use an all-hazards approach and be aligned with the District Plan. Conduct or coordinate orientation training for staff and recommend additional training.
- Conduct or coordinate awareness programs for students.
- Evaluate the school's preparedness for implementing specific emergency response protocols based upon the given situation.
- Report progress to the school's site based council, parents, and superintendent.
- Assist with the completion of "After Action Review Report" (debriefs) following exercises and/or an event.

## Suggested Team Members

- Principal
- Counselor
- Nurse
- Head custodian or campus foreman
- Office secretary
- Vocational education teacher
- Chemistry teacher
- School security or law enforcement personnel
- School psychologist
- Social worker
- Special education teacher
- Transportation coordinator
- Cafeteria Manager Personnel with areas of expertise (i.e., CPR, first aid, etc.)
- Staff located in strategic positions in the building (i.e., near exits or fire extinguishers, on different floors, etc.)
- School Teams may also consider community representatives such as:
  - Police, Fire, Emergency Medical
  - Social Service Agencies
  - Mental Health
  - Clergy
  - Parents

# Suggested Steps for Team Formation

1. Principal communicates with all staff identifying specific needs, skills and training for assignment on the Emergency Response Team (see Staff Skills Inventory). Principal or designee creates list of interested staff, making sure all major areas of need are addressed, including:
  - Physical/medical needs
  - Emotional/mental health needs
  - Students with special needs
  - Staff from all areas of the building (different floors, wings, out-buildings, etc.)
  - Staff with knowledge of transportation needs
  - Staff with knowledge of the building floor plan, locks, etc.
  - Staff with knowledge of community resources
2. A meeting is held with potential team members to discuss what will be expected for team membership.
3. Principal/facility director or designee follows-up with all staff to update on Team formation, and to fill in areas where deficits exist (NOTE: Although an individual may seem “perfect” for a role, no one should be required to have a primary position on an emergency team if he/she does not feel capable of fulfilling his/her duties in time of need).
4. An initial meeting is held to formally establish the Emergency Response Team, and to begin the process of developing the school’s Emergency Management Response Plan.
5. Conduct a formal presentation during a staff/faculty meeting at the beginning of each school year.
6. Hold regular team meetings throughout the school year to review protocols and ongoing issues as they arise (may include local, state or national issues that may affect the school).
7. Set dates to conduct orientation, review and updates of the plan.

# ICS / Emergency Management Response Team Roles and Responsibilities

The principal, as Incident Commander (IC) is in charge. As appropriate, the IC activates those in the Incident Command System (ICS), who in turn, activate others needed to fulfill emergency response tasks.

Title	Role, Responsibility
<b>Incident Command: Principal</b>	Responsible for development of school’s plan and overall management of emergency situations; establish/manage Command Post; activate ICS; determine strategies to implement protocols and adapt as needed
<b>Safety Official: Security, Law Enforcement</b>	Monitor safety conditions of an emergency situation and develop measures for ensuring the safety of building occupants (students, staff, volunteers, responders); document activities
<b>Public Information Official: Media Liaison</b>	Develop relationship with local media reps.; prepare media releases; establish “media center” near Command Post; coordinate information with Incident Commander and District Support Team; document activities
<b>Liaison Official: Liaison to Outside Agencies</b>	Develop working knowledge of local/regional agencies; serve as the primary on-scene contact for outside agencies assigned to an incident; assist in accessing services when the need arises; document activities
<b>Planning/Intelligence: Situation Analysis</b>	Assist Incident Commander in the collection and evaluation of information about an incident as it develops (including site map and area map of related events); assist with ongoing planning efforts; maintain incident time log; document activities
<b>Operations: Student Accounting and Release</b>	Analyze school staffing to develop a Student Accounting and Release Plan (accounting from individual teachers to Student Accounting and Release to Command Post); implement plan in an emergency; document activities
<b>Operations: Facility and Environmental</b>	Monitor site utilities (electric, gas, water, HVAC) shut off only if danger exists or directed by Incident Commander; assist in securing facility); document activities
<b>Operations: First Aid, CPR, Medical</b>	Establish medical triage with staff trained in first aid, CPR; provide/oversee care given to the injured; distribute supplies (latex gloves, bandages, etc.); request additional supplies from Logistics; document activities
<b>Operations: Crisis Intervention and Response</b>	Provide and access psychological first aid services for those in need (working with “Operations: Medical”); access local/regional providers for ongoing crisis counseling for students, staff, parents; document activities
<b>Operations: Food, water, sanitation</b>	Coordinate the rationed distribution of food and water (prolonged emergencies); establish secondary toilet facilities in the event of water or plumbing failure; request needed supplies from Logistics; document activities
<b>Logistics: Communications</b>	Establish/oversee communications center and activities during an emergency (two-way radio, battery-powered radio, written updates, etc.); develop telephone tree for after-hours communication; document activities
<b>Logistics: Supplies</b>	Responsible to establish and maintain “Emergency Team Toolbox” (fresh batteries, etc.); coordinate access to and distribution of supplies during an emergency; monitor inventory of supplies and equipment; document activities
<b>Administration and Finance: Documentation</b>	Responsible for overall documentation and record keeping activities; when possible, photograph or videotape damage to property; develop a system to monitor and track expenses and financial losses; secure all records

# Cover Page for School-Centered Plan

Each school is responsible for creating and updating its Emergency Management Response Plan on a yearly basis. This cover page should accompany the school's completed plan according to the guidelines established by the District Support Team. The school principal needs to sign this cover prior to submitting the plan to the central office.

## Emergency Management Response Plan *Model Middle School*



Dr. Ed Leadership  
Principal Signature



Current Year  
Date

# Staff Skills Inventory (for Emergency Management Planning)

Staff: As part of the development of our Emergency Management Response Plan, and in accordance with district policy, please complete the following survey and return to the administration office. The information provided will be used to help design and update our Emergency Management Response Plan in order to be fully prepared for an emergency situation should one arise.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ROOM \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Emergency Response:

Please check any of the following areas in which you have training or expertise:

- First aid
- Search & rescue
- Counseling/mental health
- CPR
- Hazardous materials
- Firefighting
- Emergency medical
- Media relations
- Incident debriefing

Explain or clarify items checked, if needed \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## II. Special Considerations:

Please check and list special skills or resources you feel would be an asset in an emergency situation.

Explain items checked:

- Multilingual, list language(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- Experience with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_
- Ham radio or CB radio experience \_\_\_\_\_
- Knowledge of community resources \_\_\_\_\_
- Other knowledge or skills \_\_\_\_\_
- Other knowledge or skills \_\_\_\_\_

# Emergency Response Team Assignments

In general, Incident Command System (ICS) or Emergency Response Team roles should be a logical, reasonable parallel to day-to-day work assignments. Complete the form below to reflect your school Emergency Response Team assignments.

Title	Name Location and Numbers	Alternate Name Location and Numbers
Incident Command: Principal		
Safety Official: Security, Law Enforcement		
Public Information Official: Media Liaison		
Liaison Official: Liaison to Outside Agencies		
Planning/Intelligence: Situation Analysis		
Operations: Student Accounting and Release		
Operations: Facility and Environmental		
Operations: First Aid, CPR, Medical		
Operations: Crisis Intervention and Response		
Operations: Food, water, sanitation		
Logistics: Communications		
Logistics: Supplies		
Administration and Finance: Documentation		









# Assembly Area

## Outdoors, for Standard Evacuation

Use the following worksheet to plan for evacuation from the building to an on-site or near-site Assembly Area (e.g., on-site football field). The Assembly Area should minimize exposure of students to dangers or hazards around the school.

1. Examine floor plans, site plans and maps for your school grounds and surrounding neighborhood. Determine primary and secondary exits for each room in the building. Consider factors such as: gas, sewer, power lines, chain link fences (electrical hazard), facilities containing toxic or radioactive material, water towers, multiple story buildings (vulnerable to collapse), transformers, balconies (which may fall from buildings), etc.

2. Designate each of the following in the Assembly Area:

Command Post \_\_\_\_\_

Access for emergency vehicles \_\_\_\_\_

Student assembly areas (by grade level or team, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

First aid area \_\_\_\_\_

Heliport landing area for air medical (if traffic gridlock prevents vehicular access) \_\_\_\_\_

Heliport GPS coordinates:

Psychological first aid area \_\_\_\_\_

Student release \_\_\_\_\_

Media area \_\_\_\_\_

Potential morgue \_\_\_\_\_

3. Communicate Student Accounting and Release procedures to parents.

# Alternate Building Location: Walking Distance

In inclement weather, it may be necessary to move students to an Alternate Building Location rather than using the typical Outdoor Assembly Area. Use the following worksheet to plan for evacuation from the building to an off-site building location within **walking distance** from the school. Coordinate your planning with Central Office, other schools, etc.

1. Examine maps and site plans for possible Alternate Building Location in the immediate vicinity of the school property.
2. Consider factors such as roadways, waterways, power lines, metal fences, utilities, etc., and select routes that minimize exposure to area hazards.
3. Coordinate planning with nearby schools, community centers, businesses, churches, etc. to establish relationships for Alternate Building Location.
4. Designate each of the following:

### Alternate Building Location

### Lead Contact / Phone

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(Address)

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### Secondary Location

### Lead Contact / Phone

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(Address)

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**USE SPACE BELOW** for any special planning needs, routes, alternate routes, or for coordinating your school's plan with other schools or buildings on the same campus.

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# Alternate Building Location: Requiring Transport

Use the following worksheet to plan for evacuation from the building to an off-site building location **requiring transport** from the school. Coordinate your planning with Central Office, other schools, etc.

1. Contact Director of Transportation in Central Office to coordinate and plan for transporting students and staff to an Alternate Building Location. Examine local area maps for primary and secondary roadways to transport students and staff to an Alternate Building Location.
2. Consider factors such as roadways (for potential traffic “gridlock”), waterways, power lines, metal fences, utilities, etc., and select routes that minimize exposure to area hazards.
3. Coordinate planning with other schools, community centers, businesses, churches, etc. to establish reciprocal relationships for Alternate Building Location (schools across town may serve as alternate site for each other).
4. Designate each of the following:

### Alternate Building Location

### Lead Contact / Phone

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(Address)

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### Secondary Location

### Lead Contact / Phone

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(Address)

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**USE SPACE BELOW** for any special planning needs or for coordinating your school’s plan with other schools or buildings on the same campus.

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# Orientation and Training Schedule

Each school should prepare a schedule of orientation and training events annually. You may use the worksheet below to outline a schedule for training events, drills, etc.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Training Event and Who is to be Trained</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>July</b>			
<b>August</b>			
<b>September</b>			
<b>October</b>			
<b>November</b>			
<b>December</b>			
<b>January</b>			
<b>February</b>			
<b>March</b>			
<b>April</b>			
<b>May</b>			
<b>June</b>			

# Drill Schedule and Log

Special note: As of 2013, all four emergency response drills (fire, lockdown, severe weather and earthquake) must be conducted by the first 30 days of the new school year and must be conducted again in January. Use the following worksheet to plan drills for your school. Submit a copy of the schedule with your school's plan, and use the original to document drills when they actually occur.

**Fire Drills:** Two fire drills in the first month of school, and one per month each following month.

Monthly Schedule	Date Conducted	Weather Conditions	Number of Occupants	Evacuation Time	Comments, Notes
1st:					
2nd:					
3rd:					
4th:					
5th:					
6th:					
7th:					
8th:					
9th:					
10th:					
11th:					
12th:					

**Earthquake Drills:**

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Number of Occupants	Response Time	Comments, Notes
1st:				
2nd:				

**Severe Weather Safe Area:**

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Number of Occupants	Response Time	Comments, Notes
1st:				
2nd:				

**Lockdown:**

Date Scheduled	Date Conducted	Number of Occupants	Response Time	Comments, Notes
1st:				
2nd:				

# Emergency Team “Toolbox”

Each school’s Emergency Response Team should consider developing a “toolbox” to have available for use during an emergency situation. Items in the toolbox should not be used for anything other than emergency preparedness training activities. A member of the Emergency Response Team should be assigned to keep the toolbox updated (change batteries, update phone numbers, etc.). The toolbox should be portable and readily accessible for use in an emergency.

- Copies of the all forms completed in the development of the school or facility Emergency Response Plan (Chain of Command, Students Needing Assistance, etc.)
- Map of building(s) with location of Exits, Phones, First Aid Kits, Assembly Areas
- Blueprints of school building(s), including utilities
- Videotape/DVD of inside and outside of the building and grounds
- Map of local streets with evacuation route (Alternate Building Location requiring Transport)
- Flash lights (recommend the type that does not require batteries)
- First aid kit and latex gloves (and other types for latex-sensitive persons)
- Faculty/staff roster (including emergency contacts)
- Student roster (including emergency contacts for parents)
- Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)
- Two-way radios and/or cellular phones available
- Battery powered AM/FM radio and spare batteries (wind-up radios)
- Several legal pads and ink pens
- Grease boards and markers (or dry erase boards)
- White peel-off stickers and markers (for name tags use permanent markers)
- Local telephone directory
- Lists of the district personnel’s phone, fax, and beeper numbers
- Lists of other emergency phone numbers
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

# *Emergency Management*



KENTUCKY CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY



# Emergency Management Checklist

Although each situation is different, the following is intended as a general listing of actions to consider when faced with an emergency or critical incident.

- Take a deep breath, don't panic, verify information
- Activate school's Emergency Response Team, Incident Command System (ICS); activate and assign duties as needed:
  - Safety Official (overall safety conditions of campus)
  - Public Information Official (media relations, contact)
  - Liaison Official (coordinate with outside agencies)
  - Planning/Intelligence (incident time log, evaluate information)
  - Operations (student accounting and release, facilities, medical, crisis intervention & response, food and water)
  - Logistics (communications and supplies)
  - Administration/Finance (documentation, record keeping)
- Determine whether to call 911, whether to implement Universal Emergency Procedures or school specific Emergency Response Protocols
- Notify and request assistance from the District Support Team to:
  - Assist with planning for a response and implementing protocols
  - Provide recovery support to students
- Set up a Command Post for communication and emergency management
- Bring "emergency toolbox" to Command Post (inside or outside)
- Hold emergency all-staff meeting (before and/or after school day) to:
  - Advise staff of the known facts and provide written statement
  - Support their concerns and emotions
  - Provide classroom assistance if needed
  - Outline schedule for the day; modify day's schedule if needed
  - Identify resources available to teachers and students
- Establish contact with parents/family members of affected students to offer support, to determine assistance needed, and (in the event of a death) for information regarding visitation/funeral arrangements
- Inform closest friends of the affected student and provide support
- Prepare formal statement or announcement to students, parents, and media; provide statement to secretaries, staff, etc.
- Notify board of education members as appropriate
- Expand span of Incident Command System as needed, deactivate ICS when activities are completed
- Review and implement "Recovery" activities
- Document actions taken, secure records as legal documents

# Universal Emergency Procedures

Universal Emergency Procedures are a set of standard, clear directives that may be implemented across a variety of emergency situations. When an emergency begins, the principal, as Incident Commander, will decide which Universal Emergency Procedures to implement, based on the situation.

There are six basic procedures which can be utilized in responding to various emergencies:

- 1 – Evacuation**                      **3 – Severe Weather Safe Area**    **5 – Lockdown**  
**2 – Reverse Evacuation**    **4 – Shelter in Place**                      **6 – Drop, Cover and Hold**

<p><b>1 EVACUATION</b> (For use when conditions outside are safer than inside)</p> <p><b>When announcement is made or alarm sounded:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Take the closest and safest way out as posted (use secondary route if primary route is blocked or hazardous)</li> <li>➤ Take roll book for student accounting</li> <li>➤ Assist those needing special assistance</li> <li>➤ Do not stop for student/staff belongings</li> <li>➤ Go to designated Assembly Area</li> <li>➤ Check for injuries</li> <li>➤ Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures</li> <li>➤ Wait for further instructions</li> </ul>	<p><b>4 SHELTER IN PLACE</b> (For use in external gas or chemical release scenarios)</p> <p><b>When the announcement is made:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students are to be cleared from the halls immediately and to report to nearest available classroom or other designated location</li> <li>➤ Assist those needing special assistance</li> <li>➤ Close and tape all windows and doors and seal the gap between bottom of the door and the floor (external gas/chemical release)</li> <li>➤ Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures</li> <li>➤ Do not allow anyone to leave the classroom</li> <li>➤ Stay away from all doors and windows</li> <li>➤ Wait for further instructions</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 REVERSE EVACUATION</b> (For use when conditions inside are safer than outside)</p> <p><b>When the announcement is made:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Move students and staff inside as quickly as possible</li> <li>➤ Assist those needing special assistance</li> <li>➤ Report to classroom</li> <li>➤ Check for injuries</li> <li>➤ Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures</li> <li>➤ Wait for further instructions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5 LOCKDOWN</b> (For use to protect building occupants from potential dangers in the building)</p> <p><b>Note: school-specific lockdown procedures should be developed by school officials and local law enforcement officials. Please see “Considerations When Developing a School Lockdown Policy” for additional information. See <a href="http://www.kycss.org/lockdown.php">www.kycss.org/lockdown.php</a></b></p> <p><b>When the announcement is made:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students are to be cleared from the halls immediately and to report to nearest available classroom</li> <li>➤ Assist those needing special assistance</li> <li>➤ Close and lock all windows and doors and do not leave for any reason</li> <li>➤ Stay away from all doors and windows and move students to interior walls and drop</li> <li>➤ BE QUIET!</li> <li>➤ Wait for an official to open the door</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 SEVERE WEATHER SAFE AREA</b> (For use in severe weather emergencies)</p> <p><b>When announcement is made or alarm sounded:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Take the closest, safest route to shelter in designated safe areas (use secondary route if primary route is blocked or dangerous)</li> <li>➤ Occupants of portable classrooms shall move to the main building to designated safe areas</li> <li>➤ Take roll book for student accounting</li> <li>➤ Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures</li> <li>➤ Assist those needing special assistance</li> <li>➤ Do not stop for student/staff belongings</li> <li>➤ Close all doors</li> <li>➤ Remain in safe area until the “all clear” is given</li> <li>➤ Wait for further instructions</li> </ul>	<p><b>6 DROP, COVER AND HOLD</b> (For use in earthquake or other imminent danger to building or immediate surroundings)</p> <p><b>When the command “Drop” is made:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ DROP – to the floor, take cover under a nearby desk or table and face away from the windows</li> <li>➤ COVER - your eyes by leaning your face against your arms</li> <li>➤ HOLD - on to the table or desk legs, and maintain present location/position</li> <li>➤ Assist those needing special assistance</li> <li>➤ Wait for further instructions</li> </ul>

# After Action Review Report

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Event: (check one)       Drill  
    Fire  
    Tornado  
    Earthquake  
    Lockdown  
  
 Tabletop  
 Mock –Drill (Full Scale)

Incident: (check one)       Fire  
    Tornado  
    Earthquake  
    Lockdown  
    Intruder  
    Other: specify \_\_\_\_\_

Start time : \_\_\_\_\_

Time at which there was 100% accountability for students, staff, and visitors \_\_\_\_\_

After Action Review Record:

Time conducted \_\_\_\_\_

Individuals included: \_\_\_\_\_ (continue on back)

Commendations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Emergency Response Protocols (Alphabetical Index)

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# Accidents at School

**❑ Staff actions:**

- Report accident to principal, office; call 911 if warranted
- Provide for immediate medical attention including performing necessary life-sustaining measures (CPR, AED, etc.), until trained Emergency Medical Services arrives
- For relatively minor events, have students taken to office or school clinic for assistance

**❑ Principal or Team actions:**

- Provide appropriate medical attention, call 911 if needed
- Complete appropriate documentation
- Contact parents, guardians as appropriate to seek appropriate follow-up services if needed

**❑ Other suggested preventive/supportive actions:**

- Post in the office or school clinic the names of building staff who have completed first aid or CPR training
- Post general procedures in the clinic explaining when parents are to be notified of minor mishaps
- Provide staff with a one-page list of emergency procedures in case of an accident or injury on the playground or in the building (e.g., District First Aid Manual, Bloodborne Pathogen Program)
- Provide in-service training in basic first aid for staff (utilizing the school nurse or other trained health professional)
- Provide a standard location for placement of classroom emergency procedures
- Provide each teacher with information about students in his/her classroom having special medical or physical needs; such conditions might include allergies, fainting, seizures, or diabetes; include procedures that the teacher may follow in these specific emergencies

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# AIDS / HIV Infection

## Principal, Team, Staff:

- Exercise appropriate caution when informing others about an individual with AIDS or HIV infection (i.e., don't panic and spread word indiscriminately to everyone that an individual has AIDS or HIV infection.)
- Make certain that those individuals who contact the child on a regular basis know, and insist they maintain confidentiality. Those individuals would include:
  1. Principal
  2. School nurse
  3. Teachers
  4. School secretary
- Unless directed by a physician otherwise, allow the individual unrestricted school attendance and activities. If a child does not have control of their bodily functions and body fluids, or may bite others, their environment should be more restricted.

## ❑ Tips for Teachers:

- AIDS is not spread through casual contact. It is only spread through sexual contact or through blood or other body fluids
- Daily activities (including sports and classroom functions) should not be altered unless contact resulting in cuts or injury is common or expected
- If a child cuts themselves and is bleeding take the following actions:
  1. Put on clean (latex –free) gloves
  2. Clean the wound with antiseptic cleaner
  3. Bandage the wound securely
  4. Dispose of any blood contaminated items by placing them securely in two plastic bags and disposing of them in nurse's station in appropriate container
  5. Clean any blood spills up with appropriate cleaning solution

## ❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Aircraft Crash Emergency

## Crash Into School Building

### ❑ Staff Actions:

- Notify Principal
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of crash

### ❑ Principal, Team:

- Call 911
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Determine whether to implement evacuation procedures
- Students and staff should be assembled in an area as far from the crash scene as possible and should be up-hill and up-wind from the crash
- Provide for first aid, treatment and removal of injured occupants from school buildings
- Account for all building occupants and determine extent of injuries
- Wait for instructions; you will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building

## Crash Near School Building (but no damage to building)

### ❑ Staff Actions:

- Notify Principal
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of crash

### ❑ Principal, Team:

- Call 911
- Initiate **Shelter in Place** plan if warranted
- All students and staff should remain in the buildings; any students or staff outside should initiate Reverse Evacuation or go to designated area until further instructions are received
- No evacuations should occur unless subsequent explosions or fire endanger the building

### ❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Allergic Reaction

**❑ Possible Symptoms:**

- Skin irritation or itching, rash, hives, nasal itching or sneezing, localized swelling, swollen tongue
- Restlessness, sweating, fright, shock
- Shortness of breath, vomiting, cough, hoarseness

**❑ Staff First Actions:**

- If imminent risk, call 911
- Notify principal
- Send for immediate help (Operations: First aid, CPR, medical) and medication kit (for known allergies)
- Assist in getting “Epi pen” (Epinephrine) for individuals who carry them (usually in backpack), and prescription medications (kept in office)
- Keep student/employee comfortable
- Move only for safety reasons

**❑ Principal, Team:**

- Call 911, depending on circumstances
- Notify parent or guardian
- Administer medication, by order of a doctor, if appropriate; apply ice pack to affected area, keep victim warm or take other actions as indicated
- Observe for respiratory difficulty
- Record time & site of insect sting or food ingested, name of medicine, dosage & time administered

**❑ Preventive/Supportive Actions:**

- Emergency health card should be completed by parents for each child, and should be easily accessible by school personnel
- Bus drivers should have emergency sheets for all known acute reactors
- Encourage employees with special health considerations to alert principal and staff

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Assault

**When student(s) or staff has been assaulted use the following guidelines:**

**❑ Staff observing the incident:**

- Report to school principal the type and number of injuries and if assailant is still in area
- Give a good description of the assailant (clothing, height, etc.)
- Give location of the assault
- If assailant has left the building on foot give direction of travel
- If assailant leaves in a vehicle, give description of vehicle, license number and direction of travel
- Administer first aid, and get medical attention if needed

**❑ Principal, Team:**

- Call 911 if warranted, or notify school law enforcement
- Give type and number of injuries
- Advise if assailant is still in building or on the property
- Give description of assailant
- Give direction of travel and type of vehicle
- If threat still persists determine whether to initiate Lockdown
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office as appropriate
- Document actions and complete incident reports

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Bomb Threat

## (Bomb Threat Report on Next Page)

### In the event of a Bomb Threat to the school or facility:

#### ❑ Staff Actions:

The person receiving the call should make every attempt to:

- Prolong the conversation as much as possible
- Identify background noises & voice characteristics
- Engage the caller to give description of bomb, where it is, and when it is due to explode
- Determine the caller's knowledge of the facility
- AVOID HANGING UP THE PHONE (Use another phone to call authorities)
- Complete the Bomb Threat - School Report (next page)
- Alert the principal or person in charge (without hanging up)

#### ❑ Principal, Team:

- Call 911 and District Support Team
- Using standard procedures the Incident Commander needs to make a decision on whether to evacuate the building or to stay inside. **NOTE:** If a evacuation response is initiated, modify evacuation routes if necessary based on possible location of bomb
- If what appears to be a bomb is found: DO NOT TOUCH IT; the police department will take charge
- Turn off cell phones and DO NOT transmit with radios
- Leave the immediate environment as it is
- Avoid altering any electrical items or systems (DO NOT turn on or off lights, DO NOT change thermostat, etc.)
- Avoid opening and closing doors
- Evacuate personnel at least 300 feet from the building; during inclement weather and a possible prolonged search, move students to an Alternate Building Location
- Check absentee list for possible clues to who might have phoned in the bomb scare
- Follow standard student accounting and reporting procedures
- After an "all clear" is given return to class

#### ❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Bomb Threat -School Report

(Completed by person receiving the call)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time of call \_\_\_\_\_

Bomb threat was received on telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Exact language/wording used by the caller \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Record the following information as provided:**

What time is it set for? \_\_\_\_\_ Where is it? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like? \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you doing this? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information (check/fill in):**

Gender:  Male  Female Describe \_\_\_\_\_

Age:  Adult  Child Describe/estimate age \_\_\_\_\_

Speech:  Normal  Excited Describe \_\_\_\_\_

Speech:  Slow  Fast Describe \_\_\_\_\_

Did the caller have an accent? Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you recognize the caller's voice? Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Background noises:  music  traffic  machine  voices/talking  
 airplanes  typing  children  TV/radio  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

Other Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Person receiving call:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Notification:**

School Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Police \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Management

# Bus Accident

Each school should maintain a bus folder for each bus serving the school. This folder should contain rosters, including an emergency telephone number for each student assigned to ride the bus. The teacher in charge of a special activity trip should prepare trip bus folders, one copy of the student manifest should be placed in the trip folder and a second copy should accompany the teacher on the trip.

Bus drivers should have designated procedures for handling emergency situations. The following protocol is intended to outline steps to be taken by school personnel should an accident occur.

## In the event of a Bus Accident:

### ❑ Staff at the Scene:

- Call 911, if warranted
- Call principal
- School staff at the scene of a bus accident will help to implement basic first aid until emergency medical services and/or law enforcement arrives and takes charge of the emergency
- School staff at the scene of a school bus accident will move all uninjured students to a location that is a safe distance from the accident
- The names of all injured students and the location to which they may be taken for medical treatment will be provided to the school

### ❑ Principal, Team:

- Notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Ascertain the names of any injured students and the nearest location of any medical treatment facility
- Parents/guardians of all students on the bus will be notified as quickly as accurate information is available
- Designated school staff representative will proceed to any medical treatment facility to which an injured student has been taken to assist parents and to provide support to students, as appropriate
- Complete appropriate documentation

### ❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Chemical/Hazardous Material Spill

Chemical accidents may originate inside or outside building. Examples include: toxic leaks or spills caused by tank, truck, or railroad accident; water treatment/waste treatment plants; industry or laboratory spills, etc.

## Accidents originating outside the building:

### ☐ Staff Actions:

- Notify principal, team
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of danger (if outside, reverse evacuation)
- Observe wind direction by observing flags or leaves and move students appropriately

### ☐ Principal, Team:

- Initiate Shelter in Place, shut off HVAC units
- Call 911, notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Do not leave the building unless instructed to do so; if you must evacuate building or grounds, take care to avoid fumes

## Accidents originating inside the building:

### ☐ Staff Actions:

- Notify principal
- Move students away from immediate vicinity of danger

### ☐ Principal, Team:

- Check the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) to determine the urgency of situation
- Call 911 if warranted, notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Initiate evacuation plan; avoid the area where the chemical accident occurred and any fumes which are present
- Follow standard student assembly, accounting and reporting procedures; modify assembly area if needed to be up wind, up hill, and up stream from the location of the spill
- Wait for instructions from the emergency responders
- Do not take unsafe actions such as returning to the building before it has been declared safe.
- Refrain from lighting matches, candles, or other fires which could cause an explosion or ignite volatile fumes

### ☐ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Death or Serious Illness

## (off campus)

### In the event of a reported death or serious illness outside the school setting:

**❑ Staff Actions:**

- Notify principal

**❑ Principal, Team:**

- Call 911, when death/illness is verified
- Protect the privacy of the family; the school neither gives nor confirms information to the media or others without consent
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Notify teachers prior to school by using a phone tree or during school prior to notification of students
- Schedule a faculty meeting as soon as possible to: share the details that are known, review procedure for the day, and discuss the notification of students, availability of support services and the referral process for students needing assistance
- Contact the family or visit the home to offer help, condolence and support
- Allow students to meet in guidance office or other appropriate place; students should be encouraged to report any other students who might need assistance
- It may be necessary to designate multiple areas for crisis team/grief counselors to meet with affected students
- Notify the bus driver of the students who will not ride home on their bus
- Students who are extremely upset should have parents contacted to determine appropriate support needed after leaving school
- Offer assistance to parents of impacted students
- If deemed necessary by building principal, at the end of the day a faculty meeting may be called to disseminate additional information

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Earthquake

Because earthquakes can strike without warning, the immediate need is to protect lives by taking the best available cover. All other actions must wait until the tremor subsides. If persons are protected from falling objects, the rolling motion of the earth may be frightening but may not be dangerous.

**❑ If inside:**

- Initiate Drop, Cover and Hold
- If no cover is available, get against inside doorway or crouch against inside wall and cover head; stay away from outside walls, windows or other expanses of glass, potential falling objects
- Leave doors open to minimize jamming if the building shifts
- Do not attempt to run through building or outside due to risk of falling objects
- If in a room with no desks or furniture, get against inside wall or inside doorway and crouch
- After initial shock, initiate evacuation and standard student accounting

**❑ If outside:**

- Move quickly away from building and overhead electrical wires
- Lie flat, face down, and wait for shocks to subside
- Use “green card” to indicate when class is all accounted for
- Use ”red card” to indicate if a child is missing or assistance is needed with your group
- Do not attempt to enter building until authorized to do so
- Do not light fires or touch fallen wires
- Be alert for instructions from principal

**❑ Assembly Areas:**

- Earthquake safe areas will be away from the building and overhead power lines
- Keep everyone away from underground gas and sewer lines
- Call 911, District Support Team, Central Office
- In the event of after shocks, students shall be encouraged to remain calm and stay sitting close to the ground
- Administer emergency first aid as needed
- Do not re-enter building until given “all clear” from person in charge

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Fire

**☐ In the event of a fire:**

- Sound alarm
- Call 911, Superintendent, District Support Team (at Central Office)
- Implement evacuation procedures to outside Assembly Area
- Implement plan for any students needing special assistance
- Follow standard student accounting procedures
- Some schools use a **card notification system**. The universal colors of green and red are used. Green denoted all students are present and all is well and red signifies a problem.
- Do not re-enter building until being given the “all clear” to do so
- Determine if arrangements need to be made for transportation to Alternate Building Location or if school is to be dismissed

**☐ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Gas Leak

All school personnel, including cafeteria managers and custodians, shall immediately report any suspected gas leak to the principal.

**❑ Staff Actions**

- Notify principal
- Move students from immediate vicinity of danger

**❑ Principal, Team:**

- If the gas leak is internal, implement evacuation procedures
- Call 911, District Support Team, Central Office
- Notify gas company
- Determine whether to move to Alternate Building Location
- If extended stay outdoors in inclement weather, contact transportation to provide bus to transport students to partner school or shelter students on buses
- Do not re-enter building until being given the “all clear” to do so

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Hostage Situation

**☐ Staff Actions:**

- Notify school principal
- Keep all students in their classrooms until further notice

**☐ Principal, Team:**

- Initiate Lockdown
- Call 911, Superintendent, District Support Team
- Notify all students outside their classrooms (including those outside the building) to report to the nearest safe area
- Under no circumstances shall the students be evacuated from the building without approval and/or assistance
- If the hostage taker or armed person can be contained in one section of the building, students should be moved from exposed areas or classrooms to a safer part of the building
- As soon as possible, and only if it can be accomplished safely, a staff member should be directed outside the building to warn approaching visitors of the danger

**☐ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Kidnapping

Kidnapping or lost child, actions to take:

**☐ Staff Actions:**

- Notify the principal with description of suspect and the missing student(s)
- Move other children (if present) away from area of abduction

**☐ Principal, Team:**

- Call 911
- Notify District Support Team, Central Office
- Contact the parents of the child involved; establish a communication plan with them
- Assemble the appropriate Emergency Response Team members to manage the crisis
- If the incident occurs during the school day, classroom routine should be maintained
- Conduct immediate search of school building and grounds
- Provide a school picture and obtain a full description of the child (including clothing) to assist the police
- In cases of kidnapping, obtain a description of the suspect from witnesses
- When a child is found, contact the appropriate parties as needed
- Prepare an outline of the situation for staff; give factual information, as appropriate, to allow them to respond to students' questions
- Prepare an appropriate notice (preferably in writing) for parents
- If appropriate, arrange for counseling assistance for students
- Call emergency staff meeting if necessary

**☐ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Poisoning

In the event of the poisoning or suspected poisoning of a student or an employee:

**☐ Immediate Actions:**

- Call 911
- Call the Poison Center Hotline 1-800-222-1222
- Administer first aid directed by poison information center
- Notify principal
- Utilize building personnel with knowledge of poisonous materials, first aid training, etc. (Material Safety Data Sheets)
- School official to notify parents
- In the event of a staff member who has been poisoned, school official should notify spouse or next of kin
- Seek additional medical attention as indicated (this should precede notification of next of kin)

**☐ Preventive Measures:**

- Keep poisonous materials in a locked and secure location
- Post the Poison Control Center emergency number in the front office, school clinic, etc.
- Post the names of building personnel who have special paramedic, first aid training, or other special lifesaving or life-sustaining training
- Provide staff with information on possible poisonous materials in the building
- Make sure that Material Safety Data Sheets are present

**☐ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Rape / Sexual Abuse

When a school is notified that a rape or other sexual abuse may have occurred, the Emergency Response Team, the District’s Support Team and school personnel must protect the identity and right to privacy of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator. News of the incident should be contained as much as possible. The services provided to the victim and her/his family must be kept confidential and should be coordinated with outside providers, such as a rape crisis center, children’s advocacy center, or hospital emergency room.

**❑ Rape / Sexual Abuse becomes a crisis to be managed by school staff only when one or more of the following conditions exist:**

- A rape or other sexual abuse occurs on campus
- A member of the alleged victim’s family requests intervention
- The alleged victim’s friends request intervention
- Rumors and myths of the alleged incident are widespread and damaging
- Students witness police action or emergency services response

**❑ When one or more of the above conditions exists, the following should be implemented:**

- Confidentiality should be maintained during the investigation (by all staff members)
- Ensure the short-term physical safety of the student
- The school nurse, counselor or other staff shall administer first aid and secure immediate medical treatment
- Notify appropriate law enforcement, and/or rape crisis center
- Designate the school counselor or staff member closest to the alleged victim to review the types of support she or he may need
- Determine which peers close to the victim may need support
- Take action to control rumors
- Store all records related to rape or other sexual abuse incident and services provided in a confidential file not available to any and/or all staff

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Suicide

## (5 page section)

### INTRODUCTION

Hinting, writing, or talking about suicide is a call for help and must be taken seriously. When confronted with a situation in which life-threatening behavior is present, immediate mobilization of all appropriate resources is paramount. Under such conditions, commitment to student confidentiality is superseded by the need to initiate life saving intervention(s).

The following classifications offer three (3) levels of suicide risk with students:

- 1) **Suicidal Threat or Ideation**
- 2) **Suicide Attempt**
- 3) **Suicide Completed**

### Do's and Don'ts Regarding Suicidal Ideation

- **DO LISTEN** to what the student is saying and take the suicidal threat seriously.
- **DO GET HELP** by contacting a school counselor, psychologist, principal or other appropriate resource. Never attempt to handle a potential suicide by yourself.
- **DO OBSERVE** the student's nonverbal behavior. Facial expressions, body language, and other overt signs often are often telling than what the student says.
- **DO ASK** whether the student is thinking about suicide. If the indication is "yes," ask how she/he plans to do it and what steps have already been taken.
- **DO ASSURE** the person that you care and you will find help that will keep her/him safe.
- **DO STAY** with the student, and if possible, assist with transfer to appropriate mental health professional. The student has placed trust in you, so you must help transfer that trust to another person.

- 
- **DON'T LEAVE** the student alone for even a minute.
  - **DON'T ACT** shocked, don't allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy, or don't ignore the threat.
  - **DON'T LET** the student convince you that the crisis is over. Often the most dangerous time is precisely when the person seems to be feeling better. Sometimes the student may appear happy and relaxed simply because they have come to a decision (even if that decision is suicide).
  - **DON'T TAKE** too much upon yourself. Your responsibility to the student in this situation is limited to listening, being supportive and getting her/him to a trained mental health professional/therapist (immediately.)

# Suicidal Threat or Ideation

**In the event a staff member has reason to believe that a student is a suicide risk or has made a suicidal threat they should:**

**❑ Staff Actions:**

- Keep the student under continuous adult supervision
- Notify the principal, counselor, social worker or school psychologist, but do not leave the student alone

**❑ Principal, Counselor or Team:**

After meeting with the student, as advised by the principal, the counselor or other mental health professional shall:

- Immediately contact the student’s parents/guardians and make appropriate recommendations for treatment
- Recommend that parents make an immediate contact with a mental health professional. If requested, provide the parents/guardians the names and phone numbers of mental health resources (agencies, therapists, hospitals, etc.) If the parent/guardian is unavailable or uncooperative regarding emergency services, contact the Community-Based Services to intervene on behalf of the student (potentially a medical neglect referral)
- It is recommended that a follow-up call to the family be made expressing the school’s concern and willingness to cooperate with the appropriate medical agencies as requested
- In collaboration with a specific treatment plan formulated for the student by the treating agency, meet with the student’s teachers to alert them of the identified risk(s) and to request that they assist in monitoring the student’s behavior
- Document all actions taken on behalf of the student (i.e., referrals, phone contacts, follow-up activities, etc.)

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Suicide Attempt

## In the event of an actual suicide attempt:

### ❑ Staff Actions:

- Notify principal
- Ensure the short-term physical safety of the student

### ❑ Principal, Counselor or Team:

- Call 911, District Support Team, Central Office
- School nurse, counselor or other staff shall administer first aid until emergency responders arrive
- The student will be kept under constant observation at all times
- The school principal, (or other designated professional) will communicate with the appropriate school personnel, parents/guardians and counselors to establish an immediate plan of action
- The school counselor, social worker or school psychologist will refer the parents/guardian to seek immediate health care intervention
- Follow-up should be made by counselor with parent/guardian to determine that treatment services were obtained
- Document all actions taken on behalf of the student (i.e., referrals, phone contacts, follow-up activities, etc.)

### ❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Suicide Completed

## (off campus)

School staff should exercise caution when discussing an “apparent suicide” with students. Often there will be ongoing investigations by the police department, and parents or other relatives may be reluctant to accept the terrible nature of the death. When the cause of death is clear, it is best to request permission from the parents to talk about the suicide with other students.

If news of death by suicide is received, the principal or designee shall initiate efforts to address emotional reactions within the school community.

### ❑ Staff Actions:

- Notify principal
- Avoid spreading rumors
- Watch for warning signs in other students (such as “copycat” actions)

### ❑ Principal, Counselor and Team:

- Once the death has been confirmed notify District Support Team
- Identify any family member(s) that may be at school and provide crisis counseling
- Do not release the names of other family members who attend the school
- If the media requests information, refrain from discussing any details relating to the deceased student; school staff may wish to describe assistance being offered on behalf of students
- Consider calling a faculty meeting to disclose all relevant facts
- Have school counselor or other appropriate professional describe how students may react to the news and suggest how teachers can address questions and reactions
- Allow time for school staff to ask questions and express their feelings; some staff may be particularly upset and may request and/or require support
- Outline procedures for the remainder of the school day
- Provide support meetings for school personnel if the need exists; refer employees to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as indicated
- Compile a list of other students deemed to be at risk; consider immediate counseling opportunities as part of the school and district’s commitment to responsible follow-up and recovery
- Allow students to leave class during the day to receive support offered from school personnel, the District Support Team or other designated volunteer resources or community faith-based persons who have received this specific training
- If the school based Emergency Response Team (ERT) and the District Support Team (DST) deem it appropriate, consider avoiding any large group meetings or assembly of students (in an effort to maintain order and control)

- Consider an after school faculty meeting; the following points may be covered:
  1. Debrief the events of the day
  2. Provide emotional support for all staff
  3. Review the characteristics of high-risk students and compile an additional list based on staff observations of student reactions during the day
  4. Announce the plans made by the family for services
  5. To the extent possible, make efforts to ensure that regular routine is followed
  6. In general, recognize a tragic loss of life, without emphasizing the means of death

**Activities to be avoided include:**

- Special memorial services within the school building
- Flying the school flag at half staff
- Special yearbook notices
- Large student assemblies

Suicide should not be ignored nor should it be romanticized or sensationalized; it should be dealt with thoughtfully, carefully and compassionately

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Threat of Harm

(8 page section)

## Introduction

These materials offer a starting point when addressing possible school-violence, but are not intended to be a script or to be implemented in rote fashion. At all times it is expected that school personnel will use professional judgment in assessing and addressing potential threats to safety. It is essential to use “warning signs” and other materials responsibly. The processes described herein offer an opportunity to help maintain school safety by identifying and referring individuals who need help. They **are not** intended to encourage school-wide student profiling, labeling or stigmatizing of individuals.

**❑ In the event of an IMMEDIATE danger:**

- Call Law Enforcement or 911
- Take immediate action to secure or isolate the individual posing a threat, and prevent access to potential weapons (if known)
- Take immediate action to move others from harm’s way (in immediate vicinity of event)
- Initiate Lockdown procedures (determine who initiates the lockdown, keep this consistent across the school district)

**❑ If Warning Signs are observed, but there is not an imminent risk:**

- Have individual or team observing Warning Signs complete a Threat Assessment Referral Form (if not completed already)
- Activate appropriate members of (School Based) Emergency Response Team
- Interview the individual of concern (consider using a trained counselor)
- Notify 911, if necessary
- Notify Superintendent, District Support Team and District Pupil Personnel
- Notify the Board Attorney
- Contact parents or legal guardian and obtain a release of information to exchange information between agencies
- Review Warning Signs, Risk Factors, Precipitating Events, Stabilizing Factors by completing Threat Assessment Worksheet
- Make an immediate referral to a trained “Mental Health Care” professional
- Determine level of risk using Risk for Harm Categories (page 112)
- Develop an action plan according to the determined level of risk
- Document referrals, actions taken, follow-up plans, etc.
- Develop a plan to monitor student’s response to actions taken, a “return to school plan” and to review new information as it becomes available

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Threat Assessment Referral Form

If you become concerned that an individual may pose a risk for harming himself or others complete this form by stating your concern, checking the Warning Signs of which you are aware, and explaining items checked. Turn it in directly to the school's principal or designee. In an *Imminent* safety threat, notify principal immediately and take immediate action to secure or isolate the individual, and move other students from harm's way.

Individual under concern \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Person(s) completing this form \_\_\_\_\_ Room/phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 School \_\_\_\_\_ Date of referral \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Reason for referral** (explain your concerns) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Imminent Warning Signs** (when an individual displays Imminent Warning Signs; take immediate action to maintain safety, mobilize law enforcement & appropriate school personnel)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Possession and/or use of firearm or other weapon<br><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Suicide threats or statements<br><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Detailed threats of lethal violence (time, place, method, hitlist) | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Severe rage for seemingly minor reasons<br><input type="checkbox"/> 5. Severe destruction of property<br><input type="checkbox"/> 6. Serious physical fighting with peers, family, others |
|---|---|

**III. Early Warning Signs** (mark items, then elaborate below)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Social withdrawal or lacking interpersonal skills<br><input type="checkbox"/> 8. Excessive feelings of isolation & being alone<br><input type="checkbox"/> 9. Excessive feelings of rejection<br><input type="checkbox"/> 10. Being a victim of violence, teasing, bullying<br><input type="checkbox"/> 11. Feelings of being picked on<br><input type="checkbox"/> 12. Low school interest, poor academic performance<br><input type="checkbox"/> 13. Expressions of violence in writings & drawings<br><input type="checkbox"/> 14. Uncontrolled anger<br><input type="checkbox"/> 15. Patterns of impulsive & chronic, hitting & bullying<br><input type="checkbox"/> 16. History of discipline problems<br><input type="checkbox"/> 17. History of violent, aggressive & antisocial behavior across settings (i.e., fighting, fire setting, cruelty to animals, vandalism, etc., especially begun before age 12) | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Intolerance for differences, prejudicial attitudes<br><input type="checkbox"/> 19. Drug & alcohol use<br><input type="checkbox"/> 20. Affiliation with gangs<br><input type="checkbox"/> 21. Inappropriate access, possession, use of firearms<br><input type="checkbox"/> 22. Threats of violence (direct or indirect)<br><input type="checkbox"/> 23. Talking about weapons or bombs<br><input type="checkbox"/> 24. Ruminating over perceived injustices<br><input type="checkbox"/> 25. Seeing self as victim of a particular individual<br><input type="checkbox"/> 26. General statements of distorted, bizarre thoughts<br><input type="checkbox"/> 27. Feelings of being persecuted<br><input type="checkbox"/> 28. Obsession with particular person<br><input type="checkbox"/> 29. Depression<br><input type="checkbox"/> 30. Marked change in appearance<br><input type="checkbox"/> 31. Other _____ |
|--|--|

**IV. Explain checked items; describe known Precipitating Events (use back if needed)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**V. Turn in this form** and any materials you may have which may be necessary to conduct a preliminary risk assessment (i.e., writings, notes, printed e-mail or internet materials, books, drawings, confiscated items, etc.). This information should be routed to the Principal or his/her designee.

**FOR OFFICE & EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM USE:**

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ School Case Manager assigned to follow referral: \_\_\_\_\_

# Threat Assessment Worksheet (2 pages)

*(To be completed by the School Based Case Worker and staff members who have daily contact with the student of concern)*

Coupled with the Referral Form (which addresses Warning Signs), this outline addresses Risk Factors, Precipitating Events, and Stabilizing Factors. The worksheet is designed to provide a concise way to organize known concerns when conducting a preliminary risk assessment and to list relevant school and agency involvement.

Individual under concern \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Person(s) completing this form \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/legal guardian name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 School \_\_\_\_\_ Date of referral \_\_\_\_\_

**I. School & Agency Involvement (past or present)** *To determine if safety concerns have been noted by others. List name, contact information & date of involvement if known:*

School Law Enforcement or Discipline Referrals \_\_\_\_\_  
 Special Education, 504, or Under Consideration \_\_\_\_\_  
 School-based Mental Health or Social Services \_\_\_\_\_  
 Family Resource and Youth Services Center \_\_\_\_\_  
 Community Social Services \_\_\_\_\_  
 Police, Juvenile Court, Probation Services \_\_\_\_\_  
 Community Mental Health Services \_\_\_\_\_  
 Current or prior institutionalization or foster care placement \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comments/concerns expressed by any of the above \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Risk Factors** *(indicate if Observed, Documented, or Suspected; circle O, D, S, respectively)*

In possession or has access to weapons (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 History of impulsive violent or other antisocial behavior (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Child abuse/neglect (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Isolation or social withdrawal (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Domestic violence or other family conflict (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Depression, mental illness, medical ailment (O, D, S) (list current medications) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Substance abuse or drug trafficking (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fire setting (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_

## Threat Assessment Worksheet — Page 2

### II. Risk Factors *(continued) (indicate Observed, Documented, or Suspected, O, D, S, respectively)*

Bed Wetting (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_

Cruelty to animals (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_

Preoccupation with real or fictional violence (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_

Repeated exposure to violence (desensitization) (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_

Gang involvement or affiliation (O, D, S) \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Precipitating Events *(recent triggers which may influence violence)*

Recent public humiliation/embarrassment (whether instigated by adult or peer) \_\_\_\_\_

Boyfriend/girlfriend relationship difficulties \_\_\_\_\_

Death, loss or other traumatic event \_\_\_\_\_

Highly publicized violent act (such as a school shooting) \_\_\_\_\_

Family fight or conflict \_\_\_\_\_

Recent victim of teasing, bullying or abuse \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### IV. Stabilizing Factors *(factors which may minimize or mitigate likelihood or level of violence)*

Effective parental involvement \_\_\_\_\_

Involved with mental health; list provider or agency (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Social support networks (church, school, social organizations) \_\_\_\_\_

Close alliance with a supportive adult (counselor, mentor, teacher, minister, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Positive, constructive peer group \_\_\_\_\_

Appropriate outlets for anger or other strong feelings \_\_\_\_\_

Positive focus on the future or appropriate future events \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### V. Category of Risk *(Determine a Risk for Harm (RFH) Category based on available information)*

**Imminent - High - Moderate - Minor - Low/No** (date & time of determination \_\_\_\_\_)

**NOTE:** RFH Categories represent a distinct moment in time and may change from hour to hour, and day to day. Following an initial assessment, it is essential to monitor on-going status, to reassess level of risk according to new information, and to document significant changes.

# Risk (or Threat) Assessment Concepts

- I. **Warning Signs:** A sign or indicator that causes concern for safety.
  - A. **Imminent Warning Sign:** A sign which indicates that an individual is very close to behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self or others. Imminent Warning Signs call for *immediate* action by school authorities and law enforcement.
  - B. **Early Warning Signs:** Certain behavioral and emotional signs that, when viewed in a context, may signal a troubled individual. Early Warning Signs call for a referral to a school's Threat Assessment Team for assessment.
- II. **Risk Factors:** Historical or background conditions which may influence the potential for violence. These factors may include family history of violence, prior antisocial behavior, mental health background, and various social factors.
- III. **Precipitating Events:** Recent events or “triggers” which may increase potential for violence. These factors may include recent family conflict, rejection from a significant peer, serious conflict with a teacher, etc.
- IV. **Stabilizing Factors:** Support systems or networks in place for an individual which may *decrease* the likelihood for violence. These factors may include effective parental relationships, positive peer groups, strong relationship with a teacher, counselor or therapist, etc.
- V. **Threat Assessment:** The process of reviewing Warning Signs, Risk Factors, Precipitating Events, and Stabilizing Factors when referring a student of concern to a mental health professional for further assessment. This information is forwarded to the mental health professional in an effort to assist in identifying the threat.

# Risk For Harm Categories

Risk For Harm Categories provide a way for schools to determine and assign a level of risk based on a review of Warning Signs, Risk Factors, Precipitating Events, and Stabilizing Factors. **Based on level of risk**, the Emergency Response Team develops action plans to maintain safety and to help an individual gain access to needed services or interventions. The descriptors following each Category **are not an exhaustive list**, but are provided as a frame of reference.

## Category 1: Imminent Risk for Harm

An individual is, or is very close to, behaving in a way that is potentially dangerous to self or others.

### Examples include:

- detailed threats of lethal violence
- suicide threats
- possession and/or use of firearms or other weapons
- hit list
- serious physical fighting, etc.

*Most individuals identified under this category will qualify for immediate hospitalization or arrest.*

### Responses may include:

- immediate action to secure individual
- facility lock down
- security response
- immediate referral to professional mental health provider
- parent notification
- background or records check
- “return to school plans,” and/or ongoing case management

## Category 2: High Risk for Harm

An individual has displayed significant Early Warning Signs, has significant existing Risk Factors and/or Precipitating Events, and has few Stabilizing Factors. May not qualify for hospitalization or arrest at present, but requires referrals for needed services and active case management.

### Responses may include:

- immediate action to secure individual
- security response
- parent notification
- psychological consult/evaluation
- background check

### Category 3: Moderate Risk for Harm

An individual has displayed some Early Warning Signs and may have existing Risk Factors or recent Precipitating Events, but also may have some Stabilizing Factors. There may be evidence of internal emotional distress (depression, social withdrawal, etc.) or of intentional infliction of distress on others (bullying, intimidation, seeking to cause fear, etc.).

**Responses may include:**

- security response
- parent notification
- psychological consult/evaluation
- background or records check
- ongoing case management

### Category 4: Minor Risk for Harm

An individual has displayed minor Early Warning Signs, but assessment reveals little history of serious Risk Factors or dangerous behavior. Stabilizing Factors appear to be reasonably well established. There may be evidence of the unintentional infliction of distress on others (insensitive remarks, “teasing” taken too far, etc.).

**Responses may include:**

- review of school records
- parent notification
- psychological consult
- security response

### Category 5: Low/No Risk for Harm

Upon assessment it appears there is insufficient evidence for any risk for harm. Situations under this category can include misunderstandings, poor decision making, false accusations from peers (seeking to get other peers in trouble), etc.

**Responses may include:**

- investigation of the situation
- notification and involvement of others as needed

# Brief Interview Outline for Individual Under Concern

When interviewing an individual about safety concerns, one method is to ask questions which move from general introduction, to fact finding, to recognition of concerns, to assessing support networks, to developing an outline for next steps. **The following questions are not** intended to be a scripted interview, but provide a sample structure for the kinds of questions which may need to be asked. Individuals using this outline are encouraged to use their professional judgment and experience, to expand these questions as needed. Note, in general it is good to avoid “yes or no” questions.

1. “Seems like you’ve been having a hard time lately, what’s going on?” (*to establish rapport and trust and to open dialog in a non-threatening way*)
2. “What is your understanding of why you have been asked to come to the office?” (*to review factual events*)
3. “What is your understanding of why school staff are concerned?” (*to determine if student is aware of effect behavior has on others*)
4. “What has been going on recently with you at school?” (*to look into possible precipitating events such as peer conflict, student/teacher interactions, failing grades, etc.; follow appropriate leads*)
5. “How are things going with your family?” (*to look into events such as recent moves, divorce, deaths or losses, conflict*)
6. “What else is going on with you?” (*to look into events outside of school such as community unrest, threats, police involvement, medical issues, etc.*)
7. “Who do you have to talk to or assist you with this situation?” (*to determine what supports or stabilizing factors may be available or in place such as mental health professionals, peer groups, family supports, church groups, etc.*)
8. “Given (whatever is going on), what are you planning to do?” or, “What are you thinking about doing?” (*follow-up on appropriate leads, including the level of detail in stated plans, ability to carry out plans, etc.*) **(NOTE: If there is an IMMINENT RISK take immediate action to maintain safety by contacting school security and/or 911).**
9. Close with a statement that describes short term next steps (i.e., “I’ll need to contact your parents to talk about...”, I will also need to speak with the Principal and the Assistant Principals for possible further action(s) and we will need to devise a plan for next steps). Try to determine student’s affect or mood prior to his/her departure, and alert others if necessary.

# Trespasser/Intruder

**❑ Staff action:**

- Notify the principal and give description and location of the subject
- If possible keep students away from subject

**❑ Principal, Team:**

- Call 911, Superintendent, District Support Team
- Give description and location of subject
- Determine whether to initiate lockdown procedures
- Attempt to keep subject in full view until police or law enforcement arrives while maintaining a safe distance
- If possible take measures to keep subject away from students and building
- Advise subject that they are trespassing and need to leave the school property

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Weapons

**❑ Staff actions:**

- If danger exists staff and students should seek immediate shelter
- Notify principal
- Be certain that at least one other administrator is aware of the situation, but limit information to staff and students on a need to know basis

**❑ Principal, Team:**

- Call 911, Superintendent, District Support Team
- Give location, identity and description of the individual
- Give description and location of weapons
- If weapon is on an individual (but not displayed), isolate the individual
- If weapon is in a locker or in a backpack, prevent access to that area
- If the individual is displaying the weapon:
  1. Remain calm; avoid sudden moves or gestures
  2. Do not attempt to take the weapon from the individual
  3. Using a calm and clear voice instruct the individual that they need to place the weapon down
  4. Use the individuals name while talking to them
  5. Try not to raise your voice—but, if this becomes necessary, do so decisively and with clarity
  6. Determine whether to implement lockdown, evacuation or other procedure

**❑ Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Weather Emergencies

**Watches:** Indicate that conditions are right for development of a weather hazard. *Watches* cover a larger area than *Warnings*. Watches usually have lead times of approximately 1-2 hours (tornado or thunderstorm), 3-12 hours (flash flood), and 12-36 hours (river flood or winter storm).

**Warnings:** Indicate that a hazard is imminent and the probability of occurrence is extremely high. Warnings are issued based on eyewitness reports or clear signatures from remote sensing devices (radar, satellite). Warnings usually have lead times of approximately 30 minutes or less (for thunderstorm type events), and 6-18 hours (for river floods and winter storms). The Weather Channel should be programmed on hand held radios. If electricity were lost weather information would still be available.

**Advisories:** Issued when weather is expected to disrupt normal routines, but is not expected to be life threatening (e.g., 2-3 inches of snow, dense fog, etc.). Advisory lead times are the same as Warnings.

## Upon Issuance of a Watch or Advisory

### Principal, Team:

- Activate appropriate members of Emergency Response Team to be alert for possible change in weather status
- Monitor weather reports for change in conditions

## Upon Issuance of a Warning

### Principal, Team:

- Implement Severe Weather Safe Area procedure
- All students and staff shall proceed to designated safe areas
- Remain quiet to hear further instructions
- Occupants of portable classrooms shall move quickly to the main building to designated shelter areas
- Follow standard student accounting and reporting procedures
- Occupants of shelter areas shall remain in that area until the “all clear” is given
- In the event of building damage, students shall be evacuated to safer areas of the building or from the building
- If evacuation occurs, do not reenter the building until given the “all clear”

## Additional steps for our school/facility (if any):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# Recovery



KENTUCKY CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY



# Key Components of Recovery

Schools and their larger community are confronted with putting the pieces back together following sudden, tragic events such as death or serious injury to students and staff, bus accidents, fires, natural or man-made disasters and violence. The aftermath of tragedies on individual children and adults is not simple to predict. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, research indicates that both adults and children demonstrate a wide range of reactions following a catastrophic event.

The goal after an emergency is to return to the business of learning and restore the infrastructure of the school as quickly as possible. There are four key components of recovery that need to be addressed so that a smooth transition can be achieved back to a relative state of normalcy and the healing process can begin. They are:

1. **Emotional Recovery**
2. **Academic Recovery**
3. **Physical/Structural Recovery**
4. **Business/Fiscal Recovery**

## Emotional Recovery

The purpose of emotional recovery is to promote coping and resiliency for students, staff, and their families following an emergency or crisis. An assessment of their emotional needs is important to determine those who will need intervention by a school counselor, school psychologist, or other mental health professional. Community-based resources need to be identified prior to an emergency and available for families, who may seek treatment. Planning for emotional recovery involves establishing key community partnerships, developing policies, providing training, and developing a memoranda of agreement (MOA).

For some trauma victims, adverse effects fade with emotional support and the passage of time. Others are more deeply affected and experience long-term consequences. These reactions are normal responses to an abnormal event. Although no one can predict who will experience the most severe reaction to trauma, the more direct the exposure to the event, the higher the risk for emotional harm.

According to the **National Institute of Mental Health**, research indicates that both adults and children demonstrate a wide range of reactions following a catastrophic event. The range of human responses can include physical, cognitive and emotional symptoms including:

- Nausea
- Sleep Disturbance
- Slowed thinking
- Bad memories
- Regressed behavior
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Depression
- Anger
- Various other responses

## Suggestions for Schools

- Restoring a learning environment as quickly as possible
- Modeling how to recover from the event
- Maintaining basic educational goals

## Suggestions for administrative staff, counselors and teachers

- Reducing conflict among groups
- Creating working partnerships among groups inside and outside of the school
- Following familiar school routines
- Acknowledging the trauma through shared activities and observances
- Representing safety and security
- Supporting children and their families
- Creating opportunities to support caregivers
- Having trained crisis intervention personnel be highly visible in the schools following a crisis
- Remembering that children and their communities are resilient when supported adequately

## Academic Recovery

The following collection of recovery measures is designed to assist teachers and other professionals as they help students as well as adults begin the recovery and healing process. It is essential for school administrators to recognize that recovery is a long-term process of supporting normal people who have experienced abnormal stressors. Initially, individuals may be in shock and may require support to meet basic physical and social support needs. Restoring structure and routine is the key purpose of Academic Recovery and a quick return to “a normal school day” will enhance the healing process.

### Short Term Academic Considerations:

- Quick decision making regarding school/academic routines
- Brief administrators and staff
- Communicate with parents/guardians on events and the plan
- In general, maintaining the school routine is helpful
- Can the school remain open?
- Can the school routine be maintained? Modified?
- Are academic materials needed?

In the months and years that follow a critical incident, individuals may require additional assistance and continued academic support.

### Long Term Academic Considerations:

- Arrange for Homebound/tutoring services for students unable to attend school
- Encourage and support students in the hospital
- Rearrange tests or assignments
- Determine curriculum “triggers”
- Allow for periodic visits to school counselors (around anniversaries, similar events, etc.)

## **Physical / Structural Recovery**

In the aftermath of a crisis, buildings and grounds may need repairing, repainting and/or relandscaping. Restoring facilities to enable the educational operations is an essential part of the planning process. Relocation of educational services and administrative operations may be necessary. Communication will be key with all stakeholders; students, staff, parents and community.

### **Considerations for Physical Recovery:**

- Assess building/structural component (e.g., Damage Assessment Team)
- Ensure human safety at educational sites and staff availability to teach
- Resume transportation and food services
- Determine availability of equipment and supplies (books)

## **Business/Fiscal Recovery**

Critical business functions within the school/district have to be restored as soon as possible after the occurrence of an emergency or crisis. It is imperative that the staff are supported. Administrative functions such as payroll systems, accounting departments and personnel records will be necessary for full operation of the school district. Unexpected expenses can tax the budget or large dedicated donations and gifts can require time and resources to manage.

### **Considerations for Business Recovery:**

- Functional responsibilities
- Identify, in advance, who has responsibility for closing schools, or sending students/staff to alternate locations
- Identify who is responsible for restoring which business functions for schools/districts
- Identify succession plans
- Ensure systems are in place for rapid contract execution in the event of an emergency
- Institute a system for registering out of district students, and for registering students into other schools

# General Strategies for Follow-up to Emergencies / Critical Incidents

The following information may be useful in the days and weeks following an emergency. Long-term follow-up procedures are also listed.

## The Day After: Workday Two of Emergency Management

Convene Emergency Response Team and faculty/staff members to update them on any additional information/procedures.

1. In case of death, provide funeral/visitation information.
2. Identify students and staff in need of follow-up support and assign staff members to monitor vulnerable students:
  - Coordinate counseling opportunities for students
  - Announce ongoing support for students with place, time, and staff facilitator
  - Provide parents with a list of community resources available to students and their families
3. Convene District Support Team to assist with debriefing.
  - Assess system-wide support needs, and develop planned intervention strategies
  - Discuss successes and problems
  - Discuss things to do differently next time (After Action Reporting)
4. Allow staff the opportunity to discuss their feelings and reactions to the incident. The Emergency Response Team should provide a list of suggested readings to teachers, parents and students. (i.e., handouts later in this chapter).
5. Develop a process for screening and registering volunteers.
6. Develop a process for inventorying district and donated supplies.

## Long-Term Follow-up and Evaluation

1. Amend Emergency Response Protocols if needed. The After Action Reporting process is very helpful in this area. This strategy is designed to identify and record perceived strengths and weaknesses in the overall activities that were offered.
2. Write thank-you notes to people who provided support during the emergency.
3. Be alert to anniversaries and holidays. Often students and staff will experience an “anniversary” trigger reaction the following month(s) or year(s) on the date of the emergency, or when similar crises occur.

# Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Critical Incident Stress Management is a comprehensive, integrated multi-component crisis intervention system. CISM services provide a framework for the application of education and crisis intervention during the acute stage following a critical incident. These services enhance and compliment the delivery of traditional mental health services and include:

- 1. Pre-crisis preparation:** Working with schools to help set expectations for what to do when a critical incident occurs.
- 2. Individual consultation:** A structured one-to-one technique used by a trained peer counselor or professional after a critical incident.
- 3. Briefing:** A presentation to groups following a crisis or critical incident to share information, reduce and dispel rumors, and provide details of action plans.
- 4. Defusing:** A group crisis intervention technique conducted by a trained facilitator, usually occurring in the first 12-24 hours after a critical incident.
- 5. Debriefing** (a.k.a., Critical Incident Stress Debriefing or CISD). A structured small-group process targeted toward mitigating or resolving the psychological distress associated with a critical incident or traumatic event, usually occurring in the first 10 days following an event.
- 6. Parent/family/organization consultation:** A group process conducted to provide on going education and support to families, parent groups or organizations following a critical incident.
- 7. Referral/follow-up:** A process to assure that individuals experiencing intense symptoms and who need ongoing support will be referred for appropriate mental health services.

*One common way to organize the above interventions is to set up a “Drop in Room.” A Drop in Room is a safe, welcoming place for students or staff to gather during the school day for group or individual support from trained team members.*

# Teachers Helping Children after a Critical Incident

This resource was designed to help teachers assist children and is useful for general disasters as well as emergencies that occur in the lives of individual children.

Emergencies are very traumatic events for children. It's difficult for them to understand and accept that there are events in their lives that can't be controlled or predicted. Worst of all, we adults can't "fix" a disaster, can't solve it, and can't keep it from happening again.

## Ways Teachers Can Assist Students

- Cope with your own natural feelings of helplessness, fear, anger; until you do this, you won't be able to effectively help the children
- Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of distress and post traumatic stress reactions ([http://www.medicinenet.com/posttraumatic\\_stress\\_disorder/page3.htm](http://www.medicinenet.com/posttraumatic_stress_disorder/page3.htm))
- Put the emergency or critical incident in context; provide a perspective
- Communicate a positive "I'm not helpless" attitude
- Start the healing process; help children to feel relieved and soothed
- Identify children who may need intervention -- refer to the appropriate mental health care professionals.

# Information Sheet to Share with Parents

## Helping Your Child After A Crisis:

Children may be especially upset and express feelings about the disaster. These reactions are normal and usually will not last long. Listed below are some behaviors you may see in your child:

- Excessive fear of darkness, separation, or being alone
- Clinging to parents, fear of strangers
- Worry
- Increase in immature behaviors
- Not wanting to go to school
- Changes in eating/sleeping behaviors
- Increase in either aggressive behavior or shyness
- Bedwetting or thumb sucking
- Persistent nightmares
- Headaches or other physical complaints

## The following will help your child:

- Talk with your child about his/her feelings about the disaster; share your feelings too
- Talk about what happened; give your child information he/she can understand
- Reassure your child that they are safe; you may need to repeat this reassurance often
- Hold and comfort your child often
- Spend extra time with your child at bedtime
- Allow your child to mourn or grieve. If you feel your child is having problems at school, talk to his/her teacher, counselor or principal so you can work together to help him/her

## Ongoing Recovery

Please reread this sheet from time to time in the coming months. Usually a child's emotional response to a crisis will not last long, but some problems may be present or recur for many months afterward. In such cases consideration should be given to making a referral to the community mental health center.

# Disasters and Their Effects

## What is a disaster?

A disaster is a devastating, catastrophic event that can be life threatening and injury producing, which may create the following distressful experiences:

### Potential experiences or feelings:

- Sense of fear, worry
- Disruption of home, routine, etc.
- Feeling that one's life was threatened
- Witnessing injuries, death, pain
- Feeling trapped and isolated
- Being out of control of something threatening to life's basics: food, shelter, clothing, people, comfort...even life itself
- Having flashbacks of other catastrophes
- Feeling cut-off from services
- Being separated from loved ones
- Having a sense of mortality
- Feeling "survivor guilt"
- Children who are forced to become "parents" to adults who are scared or worried

## Symptoms of Distress in Children

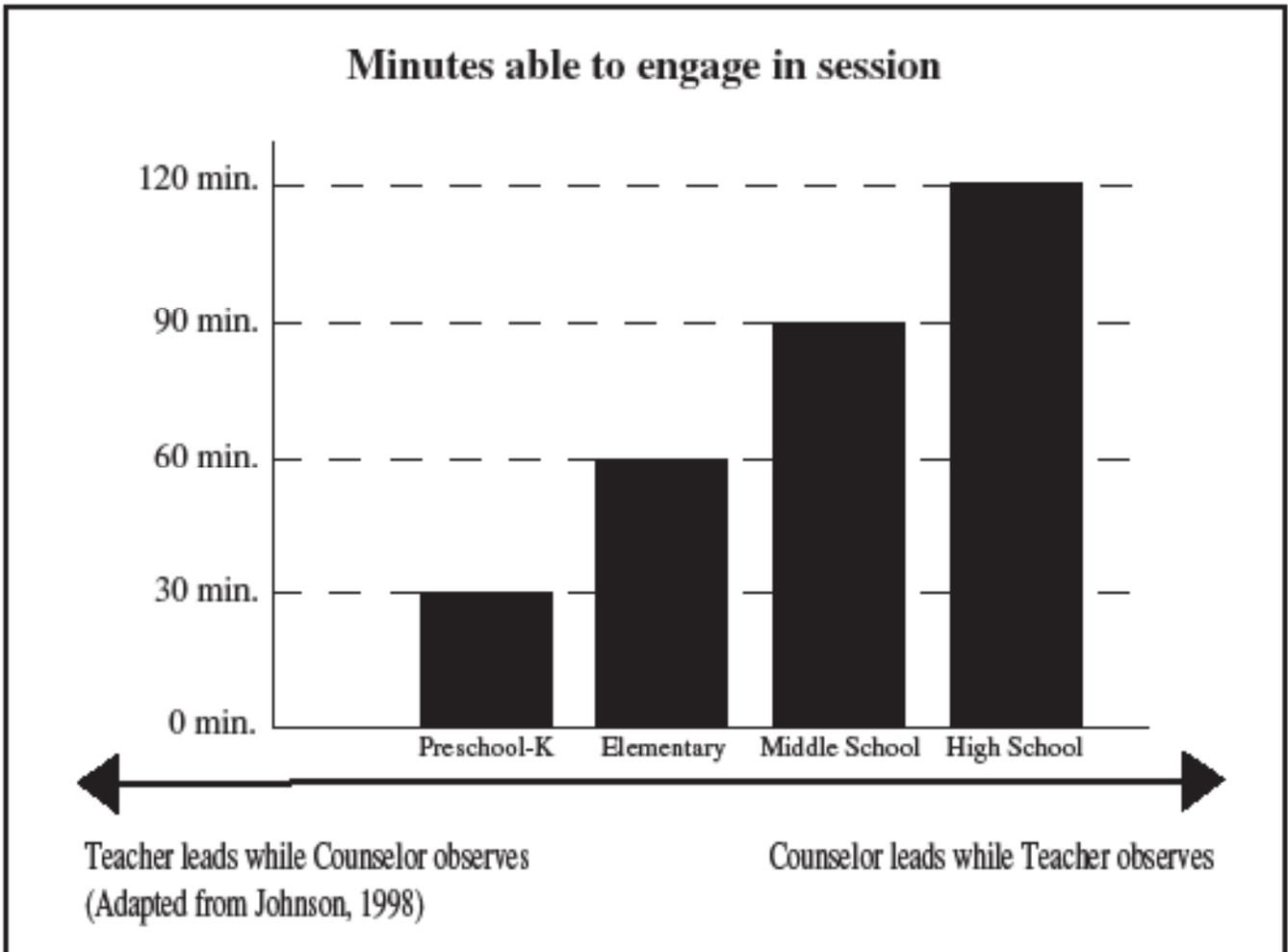
As a result of traumatic experiences some children will show a variety of symptoms of distress. The teacher must first know a child's baseline ("usual") behavior and cultural/ethnic responses before he/she can identify "unusual" or problem behavior in a child.

### Symptoms:

- Any unusual complaints of illness
- Keeping isolated from the rest of the group
- Child seems so pressured, anxious that he/she somehow dominates, has to distract others, or is otherwise in need of attention
- Changed behavior/appearance
- Resistant to opening up (however, child might just be shy, may have language or cultural barrier)
- No eye contact
- Difficulty concentrating, can't focus
- "Feisty" or hyperactive/silly, giddy
- Any emotional display; crying, "regressed" behavior (less than age-appropriate)
- Lack of emotional expression
- Poor performance
- Can't tolerate change; can't move to next task
- Lethargic, apathetic
- Easily startled, jumpy

# Understanding Age-Appropriate CISM Interventions

When providing Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM, Everly & Mitchell) interventions, it is essential to tailor your approach to the developmental level of the students involved. The following chart illustrates a range of minutes suitable for discussion for different age levels, and from “teacher led” to “counselor led” interventions. In general, younger students need more teacher led interventions using activities (as opposed to “discussion”), while older students benefit from counselor led, verbal discussions.



# The Talking Method and the Drawing Method

## (4 Page section)

In using the General to Specific approach, many methods or activities may be effective. Two suggested methods/techniques to use in your class after a critical incident are: The Talking Method and The Drawing Method. The following pages provide suggested questions or themes, and specific techniques.

### Suggested questions to ask/themes to represent:

- Where were you when it (the disaster/event) happened?
- What were you doing?
- Where were your friends? Where was your family?
- What was your first thought when it happened?
- What did you see? What did you hear?
- What sound did it make? What did you smell?
- Was anyone you know killed or injured?
- What can you do now to help others to feel better?
- How did you feel?
- What did other people around you do (during, after)?
- What was the silliest thing you did?
- Were you or anyone else you know injured?
- What happened to pets or other animals around you?
- What dreams did you have after it?
- What reminds you of it? When do you think about it?
- What do you do differently since the event?
- How do you feel now? What makes you feel better?
- How have you gotten through rough times before?
- What would you do differently if it happened again?
- How did you help others? How would you help next time?
- What can you do now to help others?

### Special Considerations:

- Allow for silence for those children with low language skills, shyness, discomfort, etc.
- Encourage peer support for these children
- The teacher should accommodate the child
- If a child has low English skills, consider asking for a translator or a peer to help the child express in words
- Create a chance for verbal expression in any language

**NOTE:** As the teacher, you might think of more questions to ask the children. Be sure your questions are “open-ended,” which means they cannot be answered by simply a “Yes” or “No”. Open-ended questions serve to facilitate verbal discussion.

# Talking Method Activities

- Child tells a story (allow metaphors)
- Puppets “tell” or “live” a story
- Have an open discussion - using previous questions, ask for volunteers to begin with, talk general to specific
- Use photos, drawings, etc. to facilitate discussions
- Create a skit, play or do role-playing, related to the critical incident (provide “dress-up” clothes if available, including uniforms if possible to represent emergency workers seen during the disaster, etc.)
- Do “show and tell” related to the event
- Inform/educate the children about the event to make it less threatening to talk/act about
- When people understand their feelings and experiences are normal and can be predicted (even if they are scary feelings) they begin to regain control

Note: Remember to keep yourself in a facilitative/guiding role, not in a role of “control” of the discussions/stories etc. This will be most helpful to the children. Reassure the children by verbally acknowledging and “normalizing” their experiences.

## **For some children, the talking method is not helpful:**

- In some cultures, talking openly is not comfortable, appropriate (or even “polite”)
- Some children have been raised in families where “talking-out one’s feelings” was not possible or supported
- Some children have been raised in situations where talking openly was not practiced or encouraged
- Some children simply prefer not to discuss their feelings openly due to personality type, privacy concerns or lack of trust in the process
- All these reasons should be respected as valid

# Drawing Method

The drawing method is a playful experience to express feelings.

First introduce drawing as:

- Another way of “talking,” but with pictures instead of words
- A means of expression used by many (point out that some people express themselves by talking, some by singing, some by dancing, some by drawing)
- Remember when introducing drawing of any sort to clearly say that the goal is not to draw a “pretty picture” but rather, a picture of expression
- Drawing should be presented to the child as an option for expression, not as a required activity
- **REMEMBER:** Use previous questions to help lead these activities: A question can become a theme for a drawing

Drawing Method Activities:

- Draw/write a book together or make journals with pictures
- Do a collective drawing such as a mural (murals tell a “collective story,” develop/support teamwork, and feel “safer” for some children as opposed to individual art)
- Give the mural a “place of honor” in the classroom
- Make the mural accessible for everyday viewing
- Celebrate the mural: use it to demonstrate getting through something tough, or to facilitate discussions
- Take photos/slides of the mural when completed
- Draw aspects of the event (people, places, activities, etc.)
- Suggest lots of options, not specifics (e.g., rather than saying “draw a fireman, helping someone,” say “draw a person you saw doing something helpful...”)
- Create a collage (a variety of materials) using a leading question such as “Where were you when the disaster happened?”
- The teacher may draw/paste on the central image, then the children add photos, magazine pictures, articles, fabric pieces, etc. around theme, or may draw directly onto it
- Collages are the “safest” form of “drawing” because the child is using others’ symbols. The child may feel he/she is “losing less of himself/herself”
- Collages provide “boundaries” for the child; this can act as a safety net (emotionally) for some
- You may also want to look at other pictures (drawings, paintings) and talk about what they communicate
- Avoid the use of paint in this method as it is too “loose” of a medium for a traumatized child; the child might use it to bring up things not easily handled in a classroom
- Allow a full range of expression: some children draw recognizable “things”, others draw “abstracts”; respect all varieties
- Allow children to discard their artwork
- Emphasize to the children that their work will not be judged, graded or necessarily shown to others

- Only exhibit the artwork if a child desires to share with others
- Reassure them that there is no “right way” to draw
- Allow the use of various mediums (pastels, crayons, pencils, markers, etc.)
- It’s preferable to do the drawing method with more than one adult present
- Exercise as little control as possible over the artwork

**Concluding Drawing Activities:**

- A key element of the Drawing Method is the follow-up discussion. This discussion can help to bring closure to the experience, an important step in the process of expressing feelings
- Allow those who want to discuss their drawings to do so
- Others will “close” by listening to others
- Use open-ended questions in this process
- Sometimes a child’s artwork may be especially expressive of his/her feelings; a drawing can give “clues” to some deeper problems or feelings within the child
- Try to “read” the picture in the same way you might read words; what might it be telling you?
- Look at it as a piece of communication, not just fantasy

**Keep in mind:**

- Colors, forms, etc. have different meanings to children of various cultural backgrounds and possibly to different children within each culture
- Regard the artwork as just a part of what’s going on with a child; look at the child with a holistic view
- The best source for what’s going on behind the drawing is the child...ask him/her

## If You Have Concerns:

In both methods (Talking and Drawing), you might notice a child exhibiting more serious problems. If you have concerns, refer those children to your school counselor.

**NOTE:** One sign of successful defusing of your students is that they feel better. Another sign of success might be that the defusing process surfaced other problems that will come to your attention. These problems might take on a variety of forms.

- Symptoms might be the same as those for anxiety or depression (physical symptoms, persistent avoidance of being alone, unrealistic worries about harm)
- Child is not able to “let go” of a memory
- The degree of emotionality and the degree of silence are both clues (be sure to talk with the child and simply ask them quietly, confidentiality, how they are feeling and coping)
- Make note of other physical manifestations of stress (as a result of the impact of the event)
- Be aware of different forms of adjustment in each child
- The teacher is not meant to be in the role of “diagnostician”; refer those children you are concerned about to a school counselor, social worker or school psychologist
- Some children may be predisposed to adverse reactions following a critical incident (generally, these are children who have experienced other loss, relocation, death, abuse, crime, etc.)
- An anniversary date of a disaster or death is a predictable time when memories and associated problems may resurface

### Refer the student if you are unsure:

- Alert parent/guardians of your concerns
- Contact your school counselor/social worker/school psychologist
- Refer the student to the Student Assistance Team (if applicable)
- Consider a referral to mental health professionals in the community

Through using the methods and techniques in this guide and adding your own unique perspective, expertise and energy, you will help children and perhaps, yourself recover from a traumatic experience.

# Classmate Tragedy

The following section is designed to assist the teacher or counselor in preparing the class to help a student who has experienced a tragedy prior to their return to the class.

## Example: Death of a friend or family member

- Explain what is known of the loss
- Ask if other students have experienced the death of a friend or family member?
- Are there things people said or did that made you feel better?
- How do you think our classmate might be feeling?
- What could you say that might help him/her know you care? Guide students responses towards helpful comments and away from less helpful comments.
- What would you want someone to say to you if you experienced the death of someone close?
- Are there things you could do that may help them feel better?
- We can take our cues from the person that will guide our actions. What might some of those cues be?

## When A Grieving Classmate Returns:

### First Words

- The classmate probably feels like he/she is from a different planet when returning to school
- At least say, “hello,” “welcome back,” “I’m glad to see you,” or something similar
- The brave might even say: “I missed you,” “I’m so sorry to hear about your \_\_’s death.”
- Even braver friends might make statements like, “It must be incredibly tough to have your \_\_\_\_ die.”
- Other options include: write a brief note or card, call, etc.
- If your classmate cries, that is okay; you did not cause the grief; offer comfort and a tissue

## Helping the Classmate Adjust to the Class:

- Offer to provide past notes from missed classes
- Offer to provide notes for comparison for the next week or so (your classmate’s attention span will probably vary for several weeks)
- Give the classmate your phone number to call if having problems with homework
- Ask your classmate if you can call to check on how homework is going
- Offer to study together in person or over the phone; this might help with both motivation and with concentration; grieving students frequently do not feel like doing school work

## Some Don’ts:

- Don’t shun the student, speak to them
- No cliché statements (e.g., “I know how you feel” when nobody knows the unique relationship the classmate had with the deceased)
- Don’t expect the person to snap back into the “old self”
- Don’t be surprised if classmate seems unaffected by the loss, everybody has his/her own way of grieving
- Don’t be afraid to ask appropriate questions about the deceased, like “what did you and your \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy together?” (people often like to talk about the people they grieve)
- Just because the classmate may seem to be adjusting to school again, don’t assume the grieving has stopped, nor the need for comfort and friendship

# Caring for the Care Provider

## General Reactions to Emergencies or Critical Incidents in Adults:

### First Reactions May Include:

- Numbness, shock, difficulty believing what has occurred or is in the process of occurring
- Physical and mental reactions may be very slow or confused
- Difficulty in decision making; uncertainty about things; it may be difficult to choose a course of action or to make even small judgment calls

### Ongoing Reactions May Include:

- Loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping, loss of interest or pleasure in everyday activities
- Desire to get away from everyone - even family/friends
- Emotional lability; becoming irritable or upset more quickly than usual
- Feelings of fatigue, hopelessness, helplessness
- Digestive problems; headaches or backaches
- Difficulty accepting that the emergency has had an impact or difficulty accepting support from friends and the community

### Some Things That Can Be Helpful:

- Take time to relax and do things you find pleasant; getting away for a few hours with close friends can be helpful
- Stick with your regular routine for a while; avoid making changes, even if it appears to be a positive change
- Get regular exercise or participate in a regular sport; activity soothes anxiety and helps you relax
- Keep your days as simple as possible; avoid taking on any additional responsibilities or new projects
- Tap sources of assistance with your workload - have students, instructional assistants, or volunteers help grade papers, take care of copying, or help with other time-consuming tasks
- If symptoms of stress persist beyond a few weeks or are severe, seek professional help

# Suggestions for Students

## Attending a Visitation or a Funeral

### Keep in mind:

- Expect to feel nervous when going to a funeral home or a funeral
- Go with a friend or ask a parent to accompany you
- If this is the first time you've seen the parents, simply offer your condolences; just say, "I am so sorry about \_\_\_\_\_'s death" (this may open a conversation)
- Point out something special to you about the deceased
- If the visitation or funeral is open casket, view the body if you want; you do not have to

### Later Involvement:

- After the funeral you may choose to continue to visit the parents; they may continue to want to see the friends of their deceased child
- Continue to talk about their deceased child from time to time

## When Visiting Grieving Parents

This information should be helpful to students when interacting with the parents of a deceased friend. **Always respect the wishes of grieving parents.** These suggestions must fit the parents' needs and requests, as well as the student's own comfort level.

### First Steps:

- In the vast majority of cases the parents find it comforting to see friends of their deceased child
- If you were a close friend of the deceased and you know the parents, then go visit them at their home
- If you were a friend but had not met the parents (yet they know who you are), you might still visit the home
- Other friends might wait until the visitation or funeral
- Send the parents a note or card

### Communication:

- When you visit, do not worry about what to say; your presence is all that is needed; if you wish to take a flower or anything meaningful, that's all right too
- Don't be afraid you will upset the parents by asking or talking about the deceased; they are already upset
- Just sitting with the parents will most likely fill the silence
- Listen, no matter what the topic
- If you were a really close friend, the parents might be pleased for you to visit the deceased friend's room (if you are comfortable doing so)
- You might ask what you can do for them; ask other relatives what you might do to help
- Do not try to take away the grieving parent's pain
- Talk about the deceased person (grieving people often like telling stories about the deceased, "do you remember the time...")
- Offer suggestions only when advice is asked

# Memorials

When a member of the school dies often people will want to find ways to memorialize the student or staff member. A word of caution, carefully think through the type of tribute you pay to a person who has died.

## Consider these points and examples:

- In general, memorials should focus on the life lived, rather than on the method of death
- Yearbook memorials should be a regular sized picture with a simple statement such as “We’ll miss you”
- If a school were to create a permanent or lasting memorial for one person, it would be difficult to refuse a similar memorial for another person. For example, a school that planted a tree for a student who died, realized this was needed also for a second death and then a third. The resulting group of trees came to be referred to as “the graveyard” by students. Another school had a “memorial tree” die during one dry summer and had to address the hard feelings of the family who thought the tree had not been given proper care
- There are many wonderful ways to support student’s as loved one’s do need to be remember, examples include: cards, food, kind words, work parties for relatives, scholarship funds, contributions to a favorite charity, flowers, or being remembered after the urgent time of the tragedy
- Parents and loved ones especially want to know people miss the person and there was great sadness at the loss; they also want to know people assisted the grieving friends
- Permanent or lasting memorials are not encouraged as a way for schools to remember someone who died as a result of suicide

# Suicide

A school's general response to a suicide does not differ markedly from a response to any death. However, some issues exclusive to suicide require specific attention.

School administrators must allow students to grieve the loss of a peer without glorifying the method of death. Over emphasis on a suicide may be interpreted by vulnerable students as a glamorization of the suicidal act. In rare cases this can trigger other individuals with similar tendencies to consider suicide as a viable option.

The following “**DO’s**” and “**DON’Ts**” will help school staff limit glamorization of suicide:

- **Do** acknowledge the suicide as a tragic loss of life
- **Do** provide support for students profoundly affected by the death
- **Don’t** organize school assemblies to honor the deceased student
- **Don’t** dedicate the yearbook or yearbook pages, newspaper articles, proms, athletic events, or advertisements to the deceased individual
- **Don’t** pay tribute to a suicidal act by planting trees, hanging engraved plaques or holding other memorial activities

A suicide in the school community can heighten the likelihood, in the subsequent weeks, of “copycat” suicide attempts and threats among those especially vulnerable to the effects of a suicide. To prevent further tragedies, students considered to be especially susceptible to depression/suicide must be carefully monitored and appropriate action taken if they are identified as high risk. These efforts require an intensive one on one intervention rather than a school wide response.

# *References and Resources*



KENTUCKY CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY



# Glossary of Terms and Concepts

## **Assembly Area**

A pre-designated area where personnel and students are trained to gather following directives to evacuate buildings. Sites chosen should minimize exposure to hazards, provide quick and accessible shelter for all and consider the needs of persons with disabilities. Monitoring the safety and well-being of students and staff begins here. Most experienced trained crisis interveners should be assigned here and begin the provision of on scene support.

## **Briefing**

An educational and informational presentation to groups following a crisis or critical incident. Objectives would include; sharing the official nature and scope of the event to reduce and dispel rumors, provide details concerning the plan of action the school is taking to manage the crisis and mitigate its effects and group education in stress management within naturally occurring support systems.

## **Communication**

Plans should have established lines of internal communication (i.e., within the school), external communication (i.e., with the district office & community). Plans should include provisions for after-hours communication (telephone tree), and alternate means if telephone lines are disabled.

## **Community**

A group of persons who are closely affiliated. Affiliation may be natural, such as a neighborhood, school, fire service, or other existing organizations or groups or they may be artificial such as passengers on a plane who are affiliated by the mutual experience of a crisis or critical incident.

## **Coping skills**

A range of thoughts, feelings and behaviors utilized to decrease the negative effects of an experience or to master a threatening situation. Individuals who have successfully worked through past traumatic events often develop strengths and coping skills that help them and others facing current traumatic events.

## **Crisis**

A state in which coping skills are overwhelmed, leaving the individual feeling out of control, helpless and anxious.

## **Crisis Intervention**

The application of short term repeated interventions designed to support problem solving, reduce feelings of isolation, helplessness and anxiety and promote return to normal functioning. Crisis intervention practice over the past 20 years has been multidisciplinary. Paraprofessionals and volunteers have been primary caregivers (Caplan, 1964).

## **Critical Incidents**

Events that overwhelm an individual's capacity to cope. They are psychologically traumatic, cause emotional turmoil and cognitive problems and often result in behavioral changes. These effects can be lasting, depending upon the quality of the experiences during and shortly after the incident.

**Defusing**

A group crisis intervention technique conducted by a trained facilitator. It provides a supportive, safe interactive process among individuals in small groups, providing clarity and complete expression of the event and experiences.

**District Support Team**

Initially, the Team directs the process of adapting this guide to reflect local conditions. Ongoing, the District Support Team serves to assist the schools when an emergency occurs and the need exceeds the school's resources.

**Drop-in-room**

A safe welcoming place for students to gather during the school day with their peers for group and one-on-one support from trained crisis intervention team members after a traumatic event, such as the death of a fellow student or teacher.

**Emergency Management Response Plan**

A written document as a consolidated plan to prevent and/or mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. It is the modified version of this guide, tailored and fine-tuned to meet the unique needs and resources of a given school. The plan includes Emergency Response Team assignments, emergency numbers, protocols, etc.

**Emergency Response Team**

School-based teams of individuals with specific duties to perform in order to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies. The Team develops the plan to meet individual school needs, and implements the plan should the need arise.

**Emergency Response Protocols**

Emergency Response Protocols are the step-by-step procedures for schools to implement in the event of an emergency.

**Grief**

The normal, healthy, appropriate response to death or loss. Each person grieves in his or her own way, learned by experience with loss over the years. It is described as a journey through an intense range of emotions; including denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

**Incident Command System**

Is a nationally recognized organizational structure designed to handle: Management, Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Administration & Finance. The ICS allows for appropriate utilization of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications. The **Incident Commander** is the highest-ranking official in charge of the emergency response operations accomplish stated objectives pertaining to an incident.

**Incident Commander**

Highest ranking official in charge and responsible for the emergency/disaster operations. The Incident Commander (in a school setting the IC is typically the Principal or his/her designee) directs from a command post set up in close proximity to the incident.

**Individual Consultation**

A crisis intervention technique utilized by a trained peer counselor or mental health professional in a one-on-one confidential contact utilizing a structured model.

**Leadership**

The importance of strong leadership cannot be overstated. Leadership ensures that emergency preparedness will be a priority and that adequate resources will be allocated to create and implement district and school-based plans. At the district level leadership should come directly from the superintendent, at the school level, from the principal.

**Mitigation**

Mitigation refers to any action taken to reduce the adverse effects of an emergency. These actions can be to eliminate existing hazards, to respond effectively when an emergency arises, or to assist in recovery in the aftermath of an emergency. Mitigation is also any action taken to reduce the likelihood of loss of life or property. Applies to pre-crisis steps, as well as crisis intervention techniques designed to reduce the psychological and emotional effects following a traumatic event.

**Peers**

Emergency services and school personal trained as peer counselors who provide crisis intervention services following crises and disasters.

**Practice**

Practicing the plan consists of drills, tabletop exercises, orientation for staff, etc. It is generally recommended that schools start with basic orientation and tabletop exercises prior to engaging in full-scale simulations or drills.

**Preparedness**

Preparedness is the process designed to prepare the school community for potential emergencies. This is accomplished by coordinating with community partners through the development of policies and protocols, Incident Command Systems, training and exercises

**Public Information Officer (PIO)**

The official spokesperson designated by an organization to coordinate internal and external communications. This person handles all requests for information and proactively provides consistent, accurate and timely information. This person is responsible for establishing a staging area for the media. This person or their assistant/designee is to maintain a log of all actions and communications given. This person will also prepare press releases, will keep the Incident Commander apprised and keeps all documentation to support history of the event.

**Recovery**

Recovery is the process of assisting with physical, psychological and emotional trauma associated with experiencing tragic events. Recovery *during* an emergency can address immediate short-term needs, while *ongoing* recovery can last for months or years.

**Referral**

During individual and group crisis intervention sessions, trained peers and mental health professionals are actively assessing and monitoring the overall status of survivors. Any indication of the need for medical supervision or the threat of harm to self or to others requires immediate transfer to appropriate level/provider of care.

**Response**

Response is the implementation of Universal Emergency Procedures and/or Emergency Response Protocols to maximize the health, safety and well being of individuals in the school community.

**Shock**

Psychological and emotional defense shield characterized by numbness, confusion and disorientation during which time the full impact of what has happened is not totally absorbed by the survivor.

**Shelter in Place**

Procedure designed to protect individuals from an outside influence such as release of chemicals. Usual procedures include: closing doors and windows; placing tape or wet towels around doors, windows and vents; and turning off pilot lights, air conditioning and exhaust fans. No one leaves the room until further instructions are given.

**Social Support**

A term utilized by social scientists to describe positive interactions among people. These exchanges may involve passing along information, offering material help or providing emotional support. The health implications of these exchanges are especially important during times of stress, life transitions and crises. One's relationship with spouse, friends, family, co-workers and neighbors can buffer stress and have a positive effect on physical and mental health. Research with disaster survivors demonstrates the importance of social support to their recovery. Supportive relationships are equally important to emergency service workers in coping with stress and maintaining health.

**Student Release**

This is a pre-planned process to assure the reunification of students with their families and significant others. May involve setting up separate request and release stations to insure accountability and crowd control.

**Training**

Training is important on at least three levels: 1) Team Training for general emergency preparedness; 2) Training to address specific emergency response or recovery activities and 3) Awareness training for all staff (i.e., Universal Emergency Procedures).

**Unified Command**

A unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility or accountability.

**Universal Emergency Procedures**

Universal Emergency Procedures are a set of clear directives that may be implemented across a number of emergency situations. These procedures include Evacuation, Shelter in Place, Drop, Cover, and Hold, Reverse Evacuation, and Lockdown.

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# Web-Sites

## Kentucky Sites:

Kentucky Center for School Safety:  
[www.kysafeschools.org](http://www.kysafeschools.org)

Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board:  
[www.state.ky.us/agencies/military/kccrb](http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/military/kccrb)

Kentucky Department of Education:  
[www.kde.state.ky.us](http://www.kde.state.ky.us)

Kentucky Division of Emergency Management:  
<http://kyem.dma.state.ky.us>

Kentucky School Boards Association:  
[www.ksba.org](http://www.ksba.org)

Kentucky State Police:  
[www.state.ky.us/agencies/ksp/ksphome.htm](http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/ksp/ksphome.htm)

## Additional Sites:

American Red Cross:  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

Federal Emergency Management Agency:  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

Hamilton Fish Institute for School and Community Violence:  
[www.hamfish.org](http://www.hamfish.org)

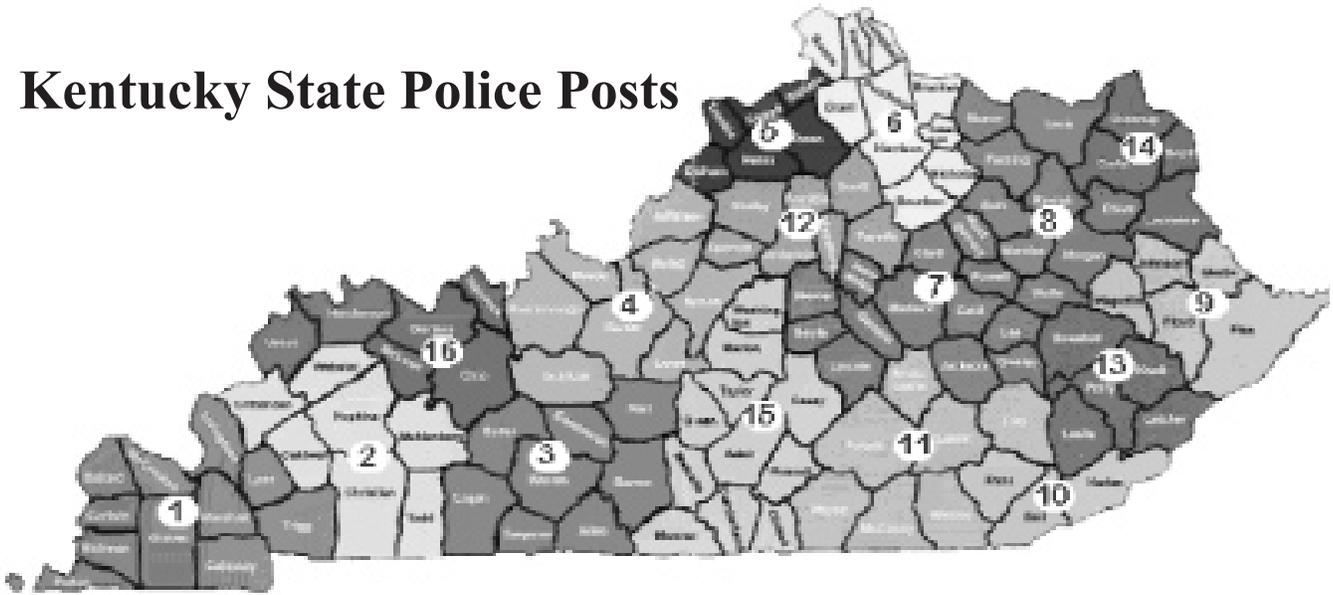
International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP):  
[www.iacp.org](http://www.iacp.org)

International Critical Incident Stress Foundation:  
[www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org)

U.S. Department of Education:  
[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center:  
[www.treas.gov/usss/ntac](http://www.treas.gov/usss/ntac)

# Kentucky State Police Posts



## Kentucky State Police Headquarters

**919 Versailles Road • Frankfort, KY 40601 • (800) 222-5555**

Post 1, Mayfield  
8366 State Rte. 45 North  
Hickory, KY 42051  
(270) 856-3721

Post 7, Richmond  
699 Eastern By-Pass  
Richmond, KY 40475  
(859) 623-2404

Post 13, Hazard  
1655 North Main  
Hazard, KY 41701  
(606) 435-6069

Post 2, Madisonville  
P.O. Box 1025  
Nortonville, KY 42442  
(270) 676-3313

Post 8, Morehead  
1595 Flemingsburg Rd.  
Morehead, KY 40351  
(606) 784-4127

Post 14, Ashland  
5975 US Rt. 60  
Ashland, KY 41101  
(606) 928-6421

Post 3, Bowling Green  
P.O. Box 68  
Bowling Green, KY 42101  
(270) 782-2010

Post 9, Pikeville  
P.O. Box 2528  
Pikeville, KY 41501  
(606) 433-7711

Post 15, Columbia  
P.O. Box 160  
Columbia, KY 42728  
(270) 384-4796

Post 4, Elizabethtown  
P.O. Box 1297  
Elizabethtown, KY 42702-1297  
(270) 766-5078

Post 10, Harlan  
3319 US 421 South  
Harlan, KY 40831  
(606) 573-3131

Post 16, Henderson  
P.O. Box 693  
Henderson, KY 42419  
(270) 826-3312

Post 5, Campbellsburg  
160 Citation Lane  
Campbellsburg, KY 40011  
(502) 532-6363

Post 11, London  
11 State Police Rd.  
London, KY 40741  
(606) 878-6622

Post 6, Dry Ridge  
4265 US 25 North  
Dry Ridge, KY 41035  
(859) 428-1212

Post 12, Frankfort  
1250 Louisville Rd.  
Frankfort, KY 40601  
(502) 227-2221