

**Active
Shooter
Incidents -
EMS
Response
Considerations**

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NREMT-P



Purpose

- To make you aware of the problem so you can be better prepared and safer for an event should it occur.
- You cannot stop these events from happening.

Objectives

- Define what an active shooter is.
- Familiarize first responders and command staff about trends in active shooter/mass shooting events.
- Help understand the nature of current and emerging threats.
- Suggest resources, plans and training that will minimize the loss of life in these events.

Notice

Please remember that this information is only an educational guide and you should **ALWAYS** refer to your local training, guidelines, policies and procedures!

Active Shooter

Defined: Someone who's intent is to engage multiple targets (people), killing as many as possible in the shortest time possible. Escape is not a priority.

- has pre-planned the area;
- will attempt to have a “captive audience”;
- heavily armed/armored;
- will kill innocents at random until confronted by armed responders, then abruptly commit suicide ending the carnage.

The Active Shooter

- Keyword ACTIVE.
- No negotiation & cannot be reasoned with, in a delirium.
- When a shooter decides to go active, there is little time to save the lives of innocents positioned in the immediate "killing zone."
- They have and will target EMS personnel.



"you caused me to do this" [

Types of Incidents

Active Shooter incidents involve one of the following types of attackers:

- Rampage Killer
- “Going Postal” (workplace related)
- School Shooter

Rampage Killer

- AKA “Spree Killer” is someone who has shown no previous sign inclination to violence and acquires a weapon, (in a sudden frenzy), will attempt to kill or seriously injure anyone he encounters.
- They often have a group of individuals that they have targeted.

Rampage Killer

- **July 18, 1984, San Ysidro, CA.** James Huberty 41 yo welder walked into a McDonalds in daylight and started shooting – 21 dead, 19 wounded – he was killed by PD sniper.
- **October 6, 1991, Killeen TX.** George Hennard drives his pickup into a Luby's Restaurant and kills 23, wounds 20 before committing suicide.
- **March 12, 2005, Brookfield, WI.** Shooter opens fire at a church service, killing 4 before killing himself.

Rampage Killer

- **December 5, 2007, Omaha, NE.**
Robert Hawkins 19 yo walked into a mall and started shooting, killing 8 and wounding 4. Robert shot himself when PD closed in.
- **March 10, 2009, Alabama.**
John McClendon 26 yo killed his mother and set their house on fire. He then went on to kill 9 others before taking his own life.



“I’m going to become famous”

Rampage Killer

- August 4, 2009
- George Sadini 48 yo walks into a LA Fitness Center in Pittsburg, PA and opens fire on a women's aerobics class.
- 3 dead, 9 critically injured.

“There was just no way to stop him”

World Record

April 28, 1982, South Korea

Woo Bum-kon has a fight with his girlfriend and starts drinking. He winds up killing 58, wounding 35 before killing himself.

“Going Postal”

- A series of incidents from 1986 onward in which USPS workers shot and killed managers & fellow workers.
- The term now covers all sudden and extreme acts of violence in the workplace.
- Researchers have found that the homicide rates at postal facilities are lower than at other workplaces.

“Going Postal”

January 30, 2005
Goleta, CA. A
FEMALE shooter
kills 6 postal
employees and then
commits suicide.
This is the nation’s
deadliest workplace
shooting by a
woman.



“Workplace Shootings”

- Federal Bureau of Labor reports over 413 people were shot in workplace related shootings in 2008.
- In major industries, the highest rate of homicides is in retail. The next highest rate is in public administration.

Workplace Shootings

- November 5, 2009, 39 yo Maj. Nidal Hasan opens fire at a military base killing 13 and wounding 29.
- He was attempting to attack a room with 600 people.
- He was quickly (3 min) shot by civilian PD who had received active shooter training.



“Allahu Akbar!”

School Shooting

- Gun violence at educational institutions, (usually in suburbs and small towns), shooter targets students and teachers randomly.
- A school shooting can be perpetrated by one or more students, alumni, or outsiders.
- Why not urban schools? The shooter is attacking the idea that countryside schools are havens of peace and safety.

First School Shooting

- August 1st, 1966 Charles Whitman, 25, points a rifle from the observation deck (27th floor) of the University of Texas tower and begins shooting in a homicidal rampage that goes on for 96 minutes.
- 17 people are killed, 31 wounded.
- Whitman is finally killed by police who storm the building.

History of School Shootings 1966-2007

1966 – Austin, TX	University of Texas	15 dead, 31 inj	25 yo
1976 – Fullerton, CA	Call State Fullerton	7 dead, 2 inj	37 yo
1979 – San Diego, CA	Elementary School	2 dead, 9 inj	16 yo
1983 – Saint Louis, MO	Parkway Junior High School	3 dead	14 yo
1985 – Goddard, KS	Goddard Junior High School	1 dead, 2 inj	14 yo
1988 – Winnetka, IL	Hubbard Woods School	2 dead, 6 inj	30 yo
1988 – Greenwood, SC	Greenwood Elementary	2 dead, 7 inj	19 yo
1989 – Stockton, CA	Cleveland Elementary	5 dead, 29 inj	30 yo
1991 – Iowa City, IO	University of Iowa	6 dead, 2 inj	28 yo
1992 – Barrington, MA	Simon's Rock College	2 dead, 4 inj	18 yo
1995 – Lynnville, TN	Richland High School	2 dead, 1 inj	17 yo
1996 – San Diego, CA	San Diego State	3 dead	36 yo
1996 – Moses Lake, WA	Frontier Junior High School	3 dead, 1 inj	14 yo
1997 – Bethel, AK	Bethel High School	2 dead, 2 inj	16 yo
1997 – Pearl, MI	Pearl High School	3 dead, 7 inj	16 yo
1997 – West Paducah, KY	Heath High School	3 dead, 5 inj	14 yo
1998 – Fayetteville, TN	Fayetteville High School	1 dead	18 yo
1998 – Jonesboro, AK	Westside Middle School	5 dead, 10 inj	13/11
1998 – Springfield, OR	Thurston High School	4 dead, 25 inj	17 yo
1999 – Littleton, CO	Columbine High School	12 dead, 24 inj	18/17
1999 – Conyers, GA	Heritage High School	6 inj	
1999 – Deming, NM	Deming Junior High School	1 dead	12 yo
2000 – Mount Morris, MI	Buell Elementary School	1 dead	6 yo
2000 – Savannah, GA	Beach High School	2 dead	19 yo
2000 – Lake Worth, FL	Lake Worth Junior High	1 dead	13 yo
2001 – Santee, CA	Santana High School	2 dead, 13 inj	15 yo
2001 – Gary, ID	Lew Wallace High School	1 dead	17 yo
2001 – Ennis, TX	Ennis High School	2 dead	16 yo
2002 – Grundy, VA	Appalachian School of Law	3 dead, 3 inj	42 yo
2002 – Tucson, AZ	University of Arizona	4 dead	40 yo
2003 – Cold Spring, MN	Rocori High School	2 dead	15 yo
2003 – Red Lion, PA	Red Lion Middle School	2 dead	14 yo
2004 – Washington, DC	Balou High School	1 dead	
2005 – Red Lake, MN	Red Lake High School	10 dead, 14 inj	16 yo
2005 – Jacksboro, TN	Campbell County High School	1 dead, 2 inj	15 yo
2006 – Essex, VT	Essex Elementary School	1 dead, 2 inj	27 yo
2006 – Lancaster, PA	Wolf Rock School	6 dead, 6 inj	32 yo
2006 – Cazenovia, WI	Weston High School	1 dead	15 yo
2006 – Shepardstown, WV	Shepherd University	3 dead	49 yo
2006 – Pittsburgh, PA	Duquesne University	5 inj	21/23
2006 – Bailey, CO	Platte Canyon High School	2 dead	53 yo
2007 – Los Angeles, CA	Drew Middle School	1 dead	
2007 – Tacoma, WA	Henry Foss High School	6 dead, 11 inj	18 yo
2007 – Midland MI	H.H. Dow High School	1 dead, 1 inj	
2007 – Blacksburg, VA	Virginia Tech	33 dead, 30 inj	23 yo
2007 – Cleveland, OH	Success Tech Academy	1 dead, 4 inj	14 yo

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History of School Shootings

2008

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|---------|--------|
| • Portsmouth, OH | Notre Dame Elem School | 1 dead | |
| • Memphis, TN | Mitchell High School | | 1 inj |
| • Dekalb, IL | Northern Illinois University | 6 dead, | 18 inj |
| • Baton Rouge, LO | Louisiana Technical College* | 3 dead | |
| • Oxnard, CA | E.O. Green Junior High School | 1 dead | |

* = female shooter

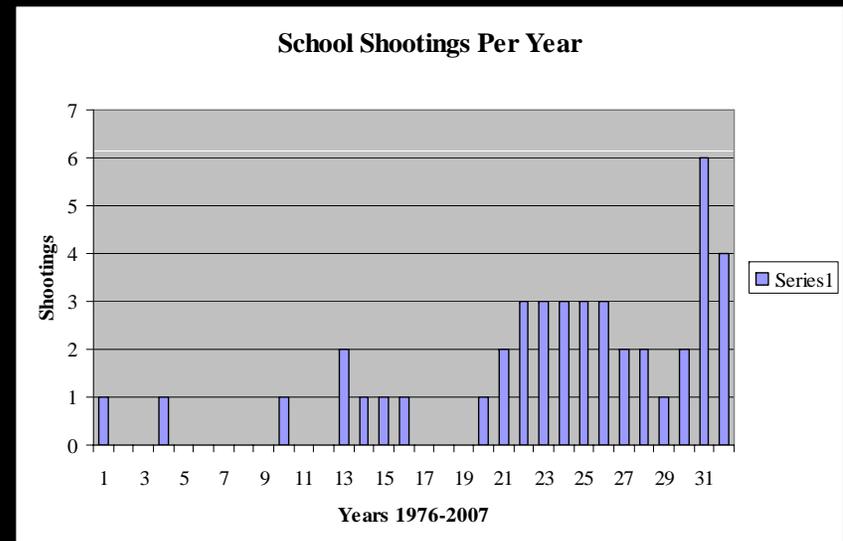
Overall Incidents

- Elementary school = 7
- Middle/junior high school = 9
- High school = 22
- Private school = 2
- College = 12

*Keep in mind this
only covers schools
in the U.S.*

An Epidemic?

- 52 school incidents
1976-2008
- 182 total fatalities,
284 woundings
- Shooter age range
from 6 – 53 yo,
mostly were <22 yo
students
- 10 incidents > 10 inj



Columbine HS Massacre



A Suicide Mission...

- CHS 2,000 students/140 faculty, 25 exterior doors & 75 classrooms – 250,000 sq/ft.
- **4-20-99** students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold launch the attack they had been planning for over a year.
- Initial plan had two 20-lb. propane cylinder bombs explode in the cafeteria. They fizzled, otherwise all 488 students in the room would have died.

The Attack

- Dozens of IED's were pre-positioned, designed for students and EMS.
- Started w/ diversionary explosion to draw off FD/EMS & PD to opposite side of town.
- When the bombs failed, they shot indiscriminately, firing into open crowds and under tables without bothering to see who their victims were.

The Attack

- The gunmen easily could have shot the locks on the doors to gain access the classrooms, but they did not.
- They only shot at victims who were moving.
- Once paramedics arrived and started treating victims on lawn, the shooters started starting firing outside the windows at them.
- They fully expected to die at the HS. They referred to their death routinely & explicitly in their writings and in their videos.

Chaos Rules

Arriving police officers and firefighters were faced with many critical decisions based on reports of 6–8 shooters, rooftop sniper(s), bombs, hostages, escaping suspects, fleeing students, critically injured victims needing EMS, fire and smoke, alarms, mass evacuation, the odor of natural gas, arriving parents and media helicopters.

CHS – The Response

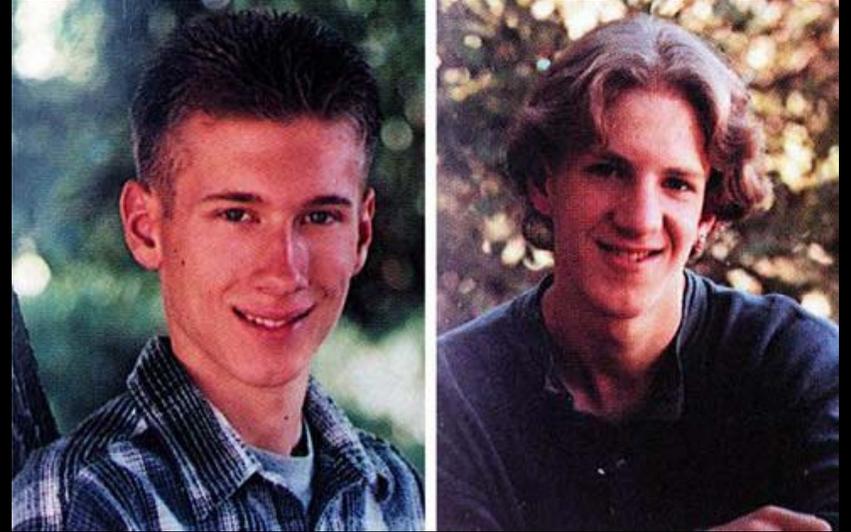
- “Blue on Blue” – PD sniper was given the green light to shoot a FF wearing dark turnout gear.
- FF’s removed blue shirts because info was shooters were wearing dark clothes and they were worried about being shot by PD.
- All students were suspects until cleared.
- Last patient removed 4 hours later. It took that long to clear the area and declare it safe from IED’s (teacher bled to death as result).

CHS - The Aftermath

- 13 people were killed, 24 wounded;
- 170 patients were triaged through four casualty collection points (CCPs) established near the school;
- 10 critically injured students were transported in the "golden hour" with significant gunshot wounds and penetrating trauma injuries.
- The Sherriff's Dept was heavily criticized for waiting (47 minutes) for SWAT team.

CHS - Aftermath

It's a myth that Harris and Klebold were rejected outcasts. They were far more accepted than many of their schoolmates. They hung out with a tight circle of close friends and partied regularly on the weekend with a wider crowd.



CHS - Lessons Learned

- Within 2 hours after the initial call for help, 10 fire apparatus, 48 EMS units, 2 air ambulances, 166 fire and EMS personnel and > 900 law enforcement personnel were on scene.
- Apparatus and vehicles will restrict egress; your IAP should include ingress and egress strategies (use of tow trucks).

CHS - Lessons Learned

- Up to this time, law enforcement tactics dictated a “wait until big guns arrive” approach to dealing w/ shooters.
- This event was a wake up call to law enforcement. Because of the negative publicity received, LE realized new tactics and training were needed.
- This was 10 years ago.

Virginia Tech Massacre

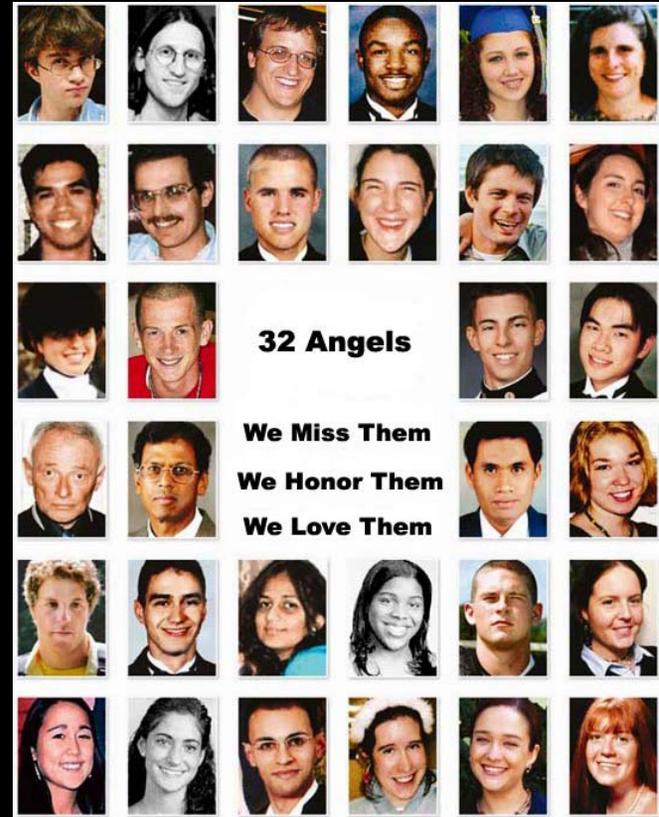




- VT Rescue Squad is volunteer, has 2 transport units, 40 members and is the oldest all-student run rescue squad in the nation.
- 800 calls per year, provide ALS service.
- Constantly practiced the active shooter scenario long before it became fashion.
- Has an IAP for active shooters and practices it at every home football game.

VT Massacre

- **April 16**, 2007. The deadliest school shooting in US history.
- 32 fatalities, 23 wounded
- Seung-Hui Cho (23 yo student) used 9mm hollow point bullets, which were devastating. Most hit were head trauma.
- Entire incident was over in 11 minutes; Cho fired over 174 rounds (every four seconds).



**Cho referenced Columbine
in his writings.**

VT Rescue Squad

- First call was for student who had fallen out of bunk bed, this was the first two murders.
- VTRS initiated their AS IAP immediately and staged at their building.
- VTRS tried to put together a unified CP, but PD was too busy and not interested.
- Called for mutual aid immediately, had 27 ALS ambulances in 30 minutes.
- Continually noted as superb response. No one died in their care.

VTRS - Lessons Learned

- You will have 2 types of self-dispatched units
 - far away with no information;
 - close in with bad information
- Lots of bad initial information – “*fog of battle.*”
- Cell phones become useless.
- Large, bulky (Israeli) bandages are the way to go for the rapid Rx of gunshot wounds.
- Need to check around buildings for people who have jumped.

VT - Lessons Learned

VTRS was
scared of
SWAT so
first teams
went in with
PD escorts



VTRS - Lessons Learned

- Must have a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP); Incident completely wiped out VTRS soft supplies – eventually replaced over next 3 days.
- MCI tags worked well, need a large supply.
- Patient-to-facility tracking sheet a must.
- CISM teams made huge difference, just don't force folks to participate. Just talking around the station was a form of CISM.
- Call IAP early and know your resources.

VT – Lessons Learned

- There will be mass chaos, don't believe much of what you hear.
- Regional approach is best answer, get everyone on the way ASAP.
- There will be much 2nd guessing later so be prepared. Have someone in charge talk to the press and give no details. Watch what you say, statements will be scrutinized.

VTRS–IAP Recommendations

- Create a usable plan, forget the 1,000 page document.
- Educate your folks on the IAP.
- Important to train with law enforcement.
- Have a predetermined location for outside EMS units to report.
- It was a bad idea to have refrigerated trucks take bodies away.

More Info on Shooters



Who would have thought that a one-room schoolhouse in Amish country would be the site of a mass shooting?

April Anniversaries

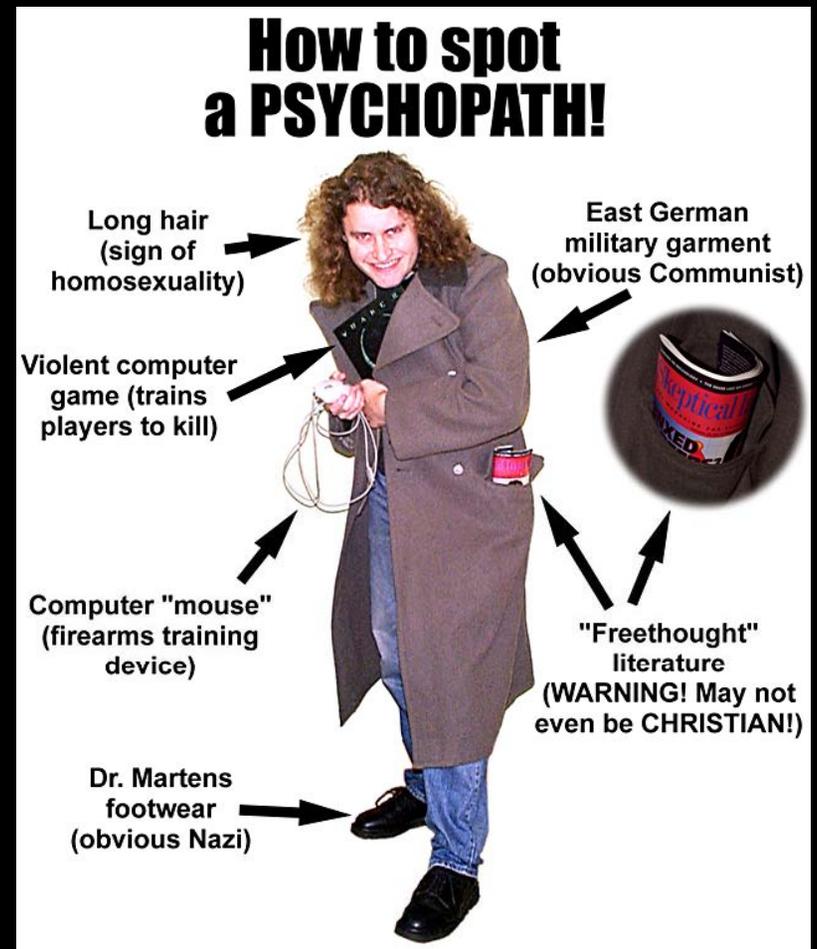
- Waco, Texas (1993) - Branch Davidian Firefight with ATF
- Oklahoma City (1995) - Murrah Federal Building Bombing
- Columbine HS Massacre (1999)
- Virginia Tech Massacre (2007)
- Hitler's Birthday

Legacy

- There have been at least 10 CHS related AS attacks since 1999.
- CHS attack yielded 7 movies, >30 books and over 191,000 web site hits on Google.
- April 7, 2009 – A 17 yo senior at a Virginia Beach high school was arrested for fabricating bombs and having a hit list of targets.
- His plan was to initiate an attack on the 10th anniversary of the Columbine HS attack.

Myth – Profile of Shooter

In fact, there is no profile. *“There is no accurate or useful ‘profile’ of students who engaged in school violence”* researchers found.



Myth – “*They Won’t Shoot Us*”

- At Columbine, both shooters anticipated EMS response and set IED’s.
- Four firefighters came under direct gunfire as they carried the critically injured to their ambulances during the siege.



Myth - “*He Just Snapped*”

Rarely are active shooter incidents sudden, impulsive acts. Attackers do not “just snap,” but progress from forming an idea, to planning an attack, scouting the site and gathering weapons.



2002 Secret Service Report

- Prior to most incidents, other people knew about the attacker's idea and/or plan to attack.
- Most attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the incident that caused others concern or indicated a need for help.
- “The largest group of (school shooters) exhibited an interest in violence in their own writings, such as poems, essays or journal entries”

2002 Secret Service Report

- Most attackers had access to and had practiced with weapons prior to the attack.
- Despite prompt law enforcement responses, most shooting incidents were stopped by means other than law enforcement intervention.
- Once started, incidents are over quickly (the average is 10 minutes).

Law Enforcement



PD's are training for it, we are not.

Law Enforcement

- An active shooter incident requires an immediate, effective and efficient act of courage (QAD = quick aggressive deployment).
- LE's first job is to disrupt the plan by announcing their arrival. They will then pursue and establish contact with the shooter(s) at the earliest opportunity.
- The sooner the shooter can be neutralized, the fewer the casualties incurred.

Law Enforcement

- This means they will shoot first, then ask questions later.
- During the pursuit, LE will move through unsecured areas, and bypass dead, wounded and panicked citizens while approaching the active shooter(s).
- The highest-ranking law enforcement official is in charge. They will not want to talk to you during the incident.

Latest Technology

School cameras can transmit within 100 yard radius of school so law enforcement can pinpoint active shooter w/ mobile data computer.



Media Response

- *“The report of a lifetime.”*
- Prepare to be inundated with requests to be interviewed by dozens of agencies.
- Make up a press statement and allow only one person to do the talking.
- Stay out of the limelight as much as possible.



Media Response

- The purpose of the media is to....?
- Do not pay attention to initial reports coming from the media.
- Fort Hood massacre first reports:
 - Active shooter was killed
 - PD officer who shot him was also killed
 - 2 other active shooters in custody
 - None of this was true
- Think OPSEC when it comes to live video!

Preparation & Response



Getting Started

- Preparation is the key to responding to a mass shooting incident, including a clear idea of your actions if/when an incident occurs.
- The first step in your preparation is a review of your agencies procedures when responding to an MCI & threats of violence.
- Practice, it won't go well unless you do.

Research

- Contact other regional EMS agencies and see what they can send when you call.
- Put together an IAP and practice it yearly.
- Obtain and train on combat treatment equipment. Talk to your local Armed Forces seasoned medics.



Practice Suggestions

- For exercises, secure the area to prevent a citizen thinking the scenario is for real and attacking the actor shooter.
- NJ had an exercise where the player walked into a classroom and tried to take a hostage. Everyone thought it was real.
- If LE involved, make sure they use paintball guns and provide PPE to victims.



**PPE includes thick clothing
and full face ballistic protection.**

**LE failed to tell us they
were using Simunitions!**



Preparing for Active Shooter

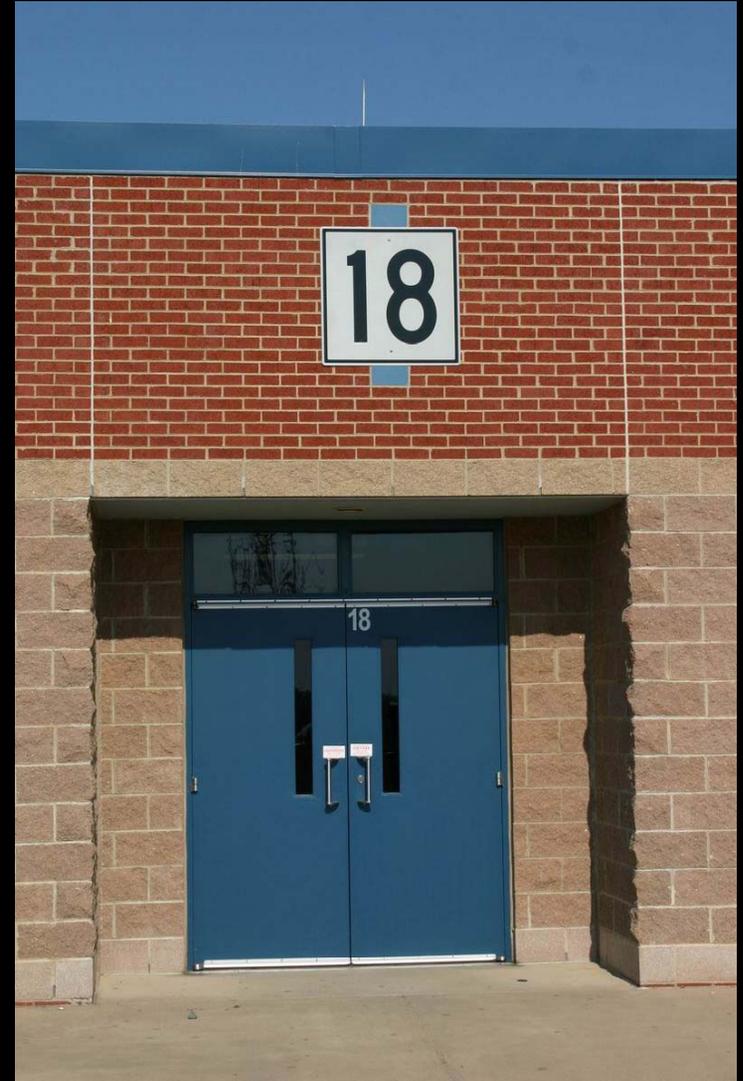
- It's very important that police, fire, and EMS train together.
- You will find resistance from LE. They don't want to advertise tactics.
- Propose a tabletop to start.



**Fire/Rescue loves to be
in the news when
they train, LE does not.**

Preparing for School Shooter

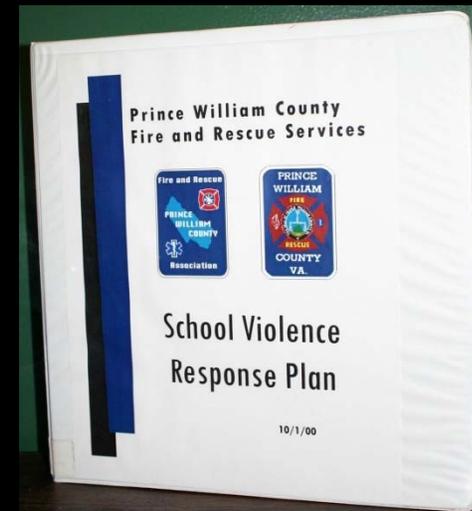
- Obtain the diagram of all local schools for reference.
- Work w/ school division to number doors and color hallways.
- Have a book with all related school info (staging areas, egress doors/routes, contact numbers, etc.) and have it in your command car.



School Response Plan

These are the items you should include in a School Violence Response Plan (SVRP):

- Command Post Location
- Primary Staging Location
- Secondary Staging Location
- Tertiary Staging Location
- PIO Staging Location
- Where to Relocate Students Location
- Known Hazards (added modular classrooms, wood lines separating bldgs, fenced areas, etc.)
- Make book simple and carry in all vehicles



Incident Response

- The call may come in as something simple.
- Stage first (blocks away), then go in when AS is neutralized.
- Don't go in w/o LE escort!
- Put on traffic safety vest & carry a light.
- Stay out of hallways.



It's easy to become quickly overwhelmed, remember to take your pulse first and then go to work.



Safety!

- Do NOT attempt to approach or handle a suspected IED. Notify command immediately and vacate the area.
- Hot Zone – any area that exposes your people to gunfire or explosives.
- NO ONE goes into designated hot zones.





- Find a safe area to collect the casualties, and do some quick treatment, also removes you from line of fire.
- Everyone needs cover and concealment reviewed during training.

Typical Life Threat Injuries

- Airway insult
- Tension Pneumothorax
- Massive blood loss

Treatment

- Keep your LE escort w/ you at all times.
- Newer active shooters are going for head shots. These are devastating and often fatal.
- Move fast and treat only those that can survive. Stop life-taking bleeding, open airway and move out.

Treatment

- The purpose behind direct pressure is to make the hole smaller, slow blood flow which allows for platelet adhesion, aggregation and activation.
- Groin injuries are the worse – no way to put a TK on it. Major cause of battlefield deaths is uncontrolled bleeding.
- Key: Military tourniquets!



Treatment of Victims

- Review & practice your triage system including use of triage tags.
- Have your OMD develop a combat treatment protocol.
- Practice an AS scenario yearly using mock victims.
- Consider using roll-up stretchers to remove viable victims outside & then have ambo pull up & rapid Tx away.



Army Medic Rx Protocol

- Forget IV's & ETT's, waste of time. EZ-IO is OK as long as it is performed in transit.
- King Airways, Israeli bandages, Asherman Chest Seals, tourniquets.
- Rapid transport to bright lights and cold steel. MOVES triage works for them.

MOVES Triage

- Developed by the military for field use.
- Very simple and easy to remember.
- Yell “If you can hear my voice, come to me”
- If victim can move an extremity.
- If victim chest moves.
- If nothing moves, they are deceased.

End of the Day

- How you feel will depend upon your preparation for this type of incident.
- The response of a lifetime, don't let your folks go home to an empty house.
- Document everything, your actions will be closely scrutinized later.
- Be prepared for VIP visits.
- Stay away from media.



What to Do if Caught

- Block doors if rapid escape not possible. The safest place to be is a secure room.
- Get behind anything you can, keep head down.
- Jump out window – broken leg vs. GSW
- Make no noise, turn off alerting devices.
- Call 911 and give as much info as you can.
- If shooter approaches, pretend you are dead.
- Shooter's mindset is not escape, his goal is to kill.
DO NOT TRY TO REASON W/ THEM!



Review

- Size-up situation, chances are call will come in as something other than active shooter situation.
- Know that in first hour, chaos and confusion will reign – you will be taxed to your limits.
- Have a predetermined location for outside EMS responders to report to. Have a plan, map books and/or FF's to drive them.

Review

- Consider secondary devices waiting for you. Have LE with you at all times.
- Document everything, you will be closely scrutinized. Have a plan for media.
- CISM – only if folks want it.
- Watch your folks, don't send anyone home alone. The emotional effects will be far reaching.

Final Words of Wisdom

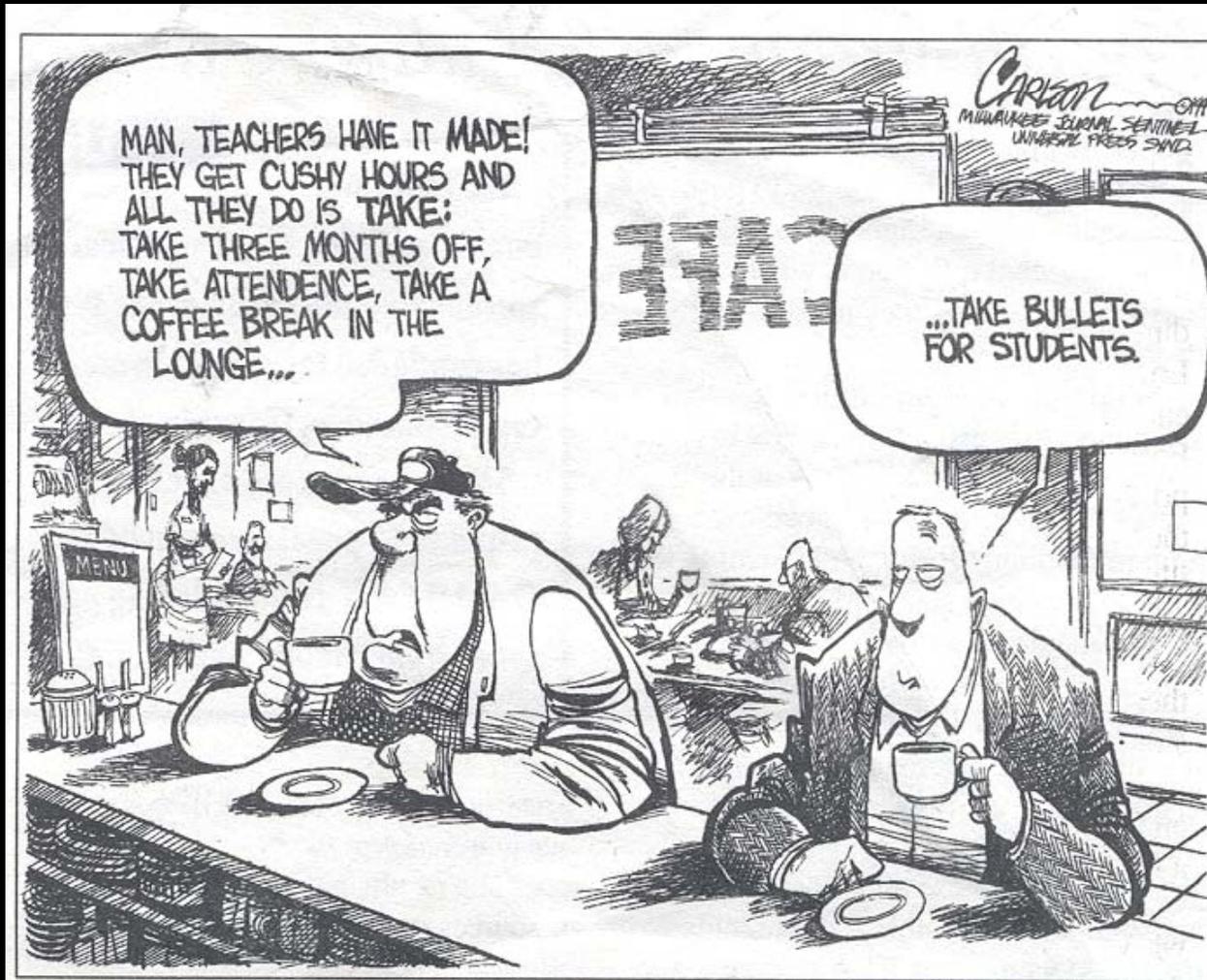


Regina Rohde – Virginia Tech Student,
Columbine HS Survivor

Resources

- *When Violence Erupts: A Survival Guide for Emergency Responders*, by Dennis Krebs, www.medicsurvival.com
- *Understanding Terrorism and Managing The Consequences*, by Paul M. Maniscalco and Hank T Christen, www.bradybooks.com/
- *Wanton Violence at Columbine High School Technical Report*, available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at www.fema.gov.
- *Mass Shootings: Planning & Response*, by August Vernon, www.ffsupport.org/training.html

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