

What can I teach my student to better prepare them should an active shooter incident take place in their school?

- Teaching self-awareness habits to your student is probably the most important proactive step in keeping them safe during any critical incident. Self-awareness means being aware of your surroundings and having thought through what you might do in a crisis before a crisis occurs.
- Learning self-awareness takes practice and you can help by asking your student “what if” questions on a frequent basis. For example, the next time you are seated in a restaurant, ask your student what would you do if you were sitting here by yourself and a large disturbance broke out at a nearby table? What if someone in the disturbance produced a gun? What if the disturbance was taking place near the front door so you were not able to exit? Listen to your student and then guide them to the best choices and have them come up with multiple options.

- High schoolers frequently spend more and more time away from your direct supervision. Spend time discussing their activities when they are not with you and then uses the “what ifs” to better develop their self-awareness skill.
- For example, your student comes home and tells you that they were with a friend talking through some issues a friend is having with their parents. You learn it nothing to worry about but you can use this incident to ask your student some “what ifs.” What if the friend had expressed thoughts of self-harm, or expressed extreme anger and desire to hurt someone? What would you do and who would you tell?



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Talking to Your Student About School Safety



*High School
Guide*

What should I share with my student when discussing active shooter incidents and their safety while at school?

- You may want to share with your student that unfortunately, there are a few people in our world that choose to harm others. On rare occasions, these people are similar in appearance to your student. It can be someone young, in school and maybe even someone they know.
- You should tell your student that, statically, schools are one of the safest places they can be, and listening to and actively participating in the various safety drills throughout the year only makes them safer.
- Your student should be able share with you many of the things in their school that are there to make them safe. Ask them if they follow the security guidelines in their schools ,and if not, why?

What do I tell my student when they ask me what they should do if there is an active shooter in their school?

- Share with your student that all staff members working inside their school have been trained on how best to respond to an active shooter situation. They should look to a staff member for guidance and follow directions given.
- Tell your student that if there is not a staff member nearby to look to, then they will need to think for themselves. The three options during an active shooter situation are to run, hide or fight – and fight should be the very last option.
- Tell your student that if they hide, the best choice is to hide in a room where the door can be locked. They should attempt to barricade the door, shut off the lights and be silent.
- Share with your student that if they choose to run, they may leave the building by whatever means possible and run until they are off school property.
- Advise your student that should an active shooter incident take place, that typical rules do not apply. Ex: breaking out windows or doors, or arming yourself with whatever you can find.

What can I tell my student that would empower them to feel better about their safety while at school?

- Students should be taught that security is everybody's responsibility, including themselves.
- Share with your student that most active shooters will conduct surveillance and make detail plans on best to get into a school. They will notice if doors are being propped open or left unlocked. Tell them to never prop open a door or let someone in from the outside.
- Instruct your student to report if they find a door left/propped open and not be afraid to challenge someone, student or staff, if they observe them putting everyone's safety at risk by unlocking or propping open a door.
- Most school shooters that are students make comments, give clues or give warnings to their friends prior to committing the act. Tell your student that if they hear or see something, they should report it immediately. They can tell an adult or use the SPRIGEO website to report their concerns.