



# SHARING IDEAS & RESOURCES



*to Keep Our Nation's  
Schools Safe!*



# INTRODUCTION

Tragic events lead to new prevention and response strategies. We recognize that there are dangers in our communities and in our schools. These realities call for an enhanced focus on safety. The decades-old school fire drill has evolved to active shooter/threat drills as threats have escalated and materialized, often with tragic outcomes.

Our nation is seeking new and innovative ways to keep children and adults safe in school settings. Far from simply developing techniques to respond efficiently to an active incident, public safety officials are also exploring technologies to gauge and prevent potential crises. And they are sharing their ideas and results.

Across the country, entire communities are rallying and dedicating themselves to being proactive in preventing school violence. There is much talk about how existing programs can be reinvigorated, what new technologies can be created and how training tools can be distributed to school resource officers (SROs), administrators and local law enforcement agencies. Modern threats are being addressed with modern technology, strategy and resolve.

The U.S. Department of Justice's National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is a leader in identifying and sharing new training and technology with law enforcement and other first responders. Since Congress passed the Safe Schools Initiative 15 years ago, NIJ has worked collaboratively with other federal agencies on behalf of our nation's law enforcement to answer the call to develop tools and strategies to boost security in our schools. Front-line professionals are working more closely with teachers and administrators, students, parents and community leaders to create alliances that will transform our nation's schools. NIJ, through the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC), is helping communities gather and share their success stories in this publication and at [SchoolSafetyInfo.org](http://SchoolSafetyInfo.org).

In this guide, you will read about new uses for familiar, standard-bearing technologies such as:

- Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT).
- NIJ's School Critical Incident Planning-Generator (SCIP-G) tool.



- NLECTC System video "It Can Happen Here."
- Free online training from International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- School Safety Audits.

In addition, you will read about new products and apps such as:

- Anne Arundel County (Md.) Police Department's Speak Out app.
- Tucson's Mass Casualty Trauma Kits.
- SmartPhone app for students to communicate with police.
- See-Hear-Report text a tip program.
- Real Time Location Systems (RTLs).

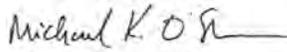
This guide also reports on unique collaborative community efforts that are succeeding in cities and rural areas alike.

It's a new day in the effort to keep schools safe. Law enforcement and public safety officials now team with and count on students, school officials, parents and all concerned citizens to share the responsibility to keep schools safe.

Please use us as a resource and let us know what you are doing to keep your communities safe so we can 'pay it forward' to other communities across our nation.



Keep Safe,

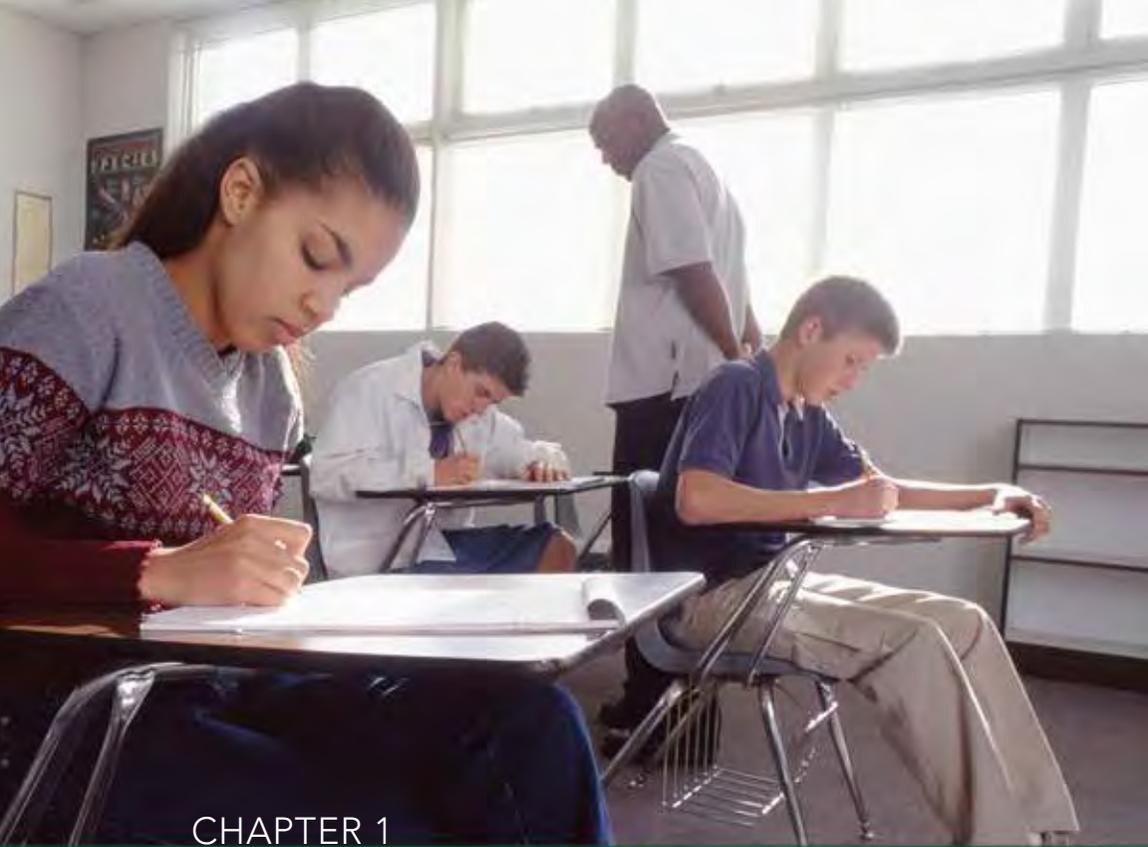


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## CHAPTER 1

# MEETING AN ACTIVE THREAT HEAD-ON

By Becky Lewis  
May 2013

### Texas State University-San Marcos

*The next Adam Lanza may not shoot his way through the door of an elementary school. He might get past a school's "buzz for admittance" policy because he's a known visitor, only this time he's carrying a knife and looking for his partner for a deadly reason. Or he might be a student in a small rural school with a gun in his backpack. Or he may find some other way to get past a school's well-thought-out, well-executed safety plan.*



Photo by NYPD

*However he gets in, if local law enforcement has taken advantage of the free Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Program offered through the Texas State University-San Marcos and funded at a national level by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), officers will know how to deal with this active threat.*

Since 2002, more than 40,000 law enforcement officers from across the nation have participated in scenario-based training through the university's ALERRT Program, starting with Level I training focused on dealing with active threats. The university's partners, the San Marcos Police Department and the Hays County Sheriff's Office, helped develop the original training program, which has expanded to a national level through the use of state and federal grant funding.

Assistant Director Terry Nichols has been involved in the program since the beginning, when, as a sergeant with the San Marcos Police Department, he worked with Sgt. David Burns, a counterpart at the sheriff's office, to train every officer from the two agencies on dealing with the active shooter threat. Nichols and Burns had received their initial active shooter instructor training from the Texas Tactical Police Officers Association, and after teaching the local officers in Hays County, they appealed to the university for assistance in developing a statewide program. The university then took ALERRT to the national level with the acquisition of BJA funding.

"We've slowly built the program, but Level I remains centered on the active threat," says Nichols. ALERRT offers training sessions at San Marcos, takes them out to other jurisdictions on request and as funding allows, and offers train-the-trainer sessions that spread ALERRT's reach even farther.

"We receive a limited amount of funding from state and federal sources each year to deliver training to law enforcement personnel outside of Texas, and in addition, some states and regions use us to provide training in their areas," Nichols says. To host Level I ALERRT training, the agency must provide a facility such as an unoccupied office or school building with wide hallways and multiple rooms off those hallways. On facility approval, ALERRT allows agencies to enroll between 25 and 30 students, and in return, provides four certified instructors and all the needed materials and equipment.



Photo by Diana Hendricks

## It Can Happen in a Small Town

Galax, Va., an independent city near the North Carolina border, has a population of just slightly more than 7,000 residents. Approximately 400 of them were shopping in a local Wal-Mart late one evening in May 2010 when a call came in about an active shooter in the store. Chief Rick Clark says that his ALERRT-trained officers correctly formed two contact teams, with one moving directly to the threat and the other, to the victim. The shooter, as it turned out, shot himself after shooting his wife, a store employee. He died, and she survived.

“There was no hesitation on the part of my officers. They knew their roles. I’ve been around a while and I learned the old school way of methodically clearing an area. ALERRT says you go straight to the heart of threat and they did that,” Galax Chief Rick Clark says. “We believe in the program. The acronym is ALERRT and I think it gives them more confidence and makes them more alert when they respond.”

The leader of the Galax tactical team took ALERRT train-the-trainer training in Lynchburg in 2008, and brought its concepts back to the rest of the agency. Officers can also take ALERRT training at the New River Valley Criminal Justice Academy, which offers in-service training throughout the year and includes ALERRT in its basic recruit training. Galax also hosted a statewide rural-specific training in 2012 that teaches officers how to operate in more wide-open spaces and in wooded areas.

“I believe in training. I believe my folks should have every tool and function necessary to perform their jobs. Even though we’re a small agency (24 sworn officers), we face the same issues as they do in Roanoke and Richmond,” Clark says.

## It Can Happen Without a Gun

Given the proximity of the Lone Star College System in the Houston area to the ALERRT Training Center in San Marcos, it’s no surprise that Lone Star College System Police Department officers have been taking ALERRT training on an ongoing basis for a number of years. Officers at two different campuses put that training to use in 2013, the first a shooting incident on January 22 on the LSC-North Harris campus, the second a multiple stabbing incident on April 9 at the LSC-CyFair campus. (Each campus has an enrollment that approaches 20,000 students, with numerous faculty and support staff present at any given time.)

“The time from when the stabbing call came in until the suspect was in custody was under five minutes. He had run through the hallways of two buildings and assaulted a total of 14 people,” says Chief Richard Gregory. “In addition to the ALERRT training our officers received, we had been doing a lot of training for faculty, staff and students on how to respond to an active threat. In fact, some of them had watched a training video earlier that same day, and officers had talked to them about what to do in an active threat situation. In this case, several students actually dragged him to the ground before the officers caught up with



Photo by NYPD

him. When I looked at video of the incident, I saw the officers using the movements that I expected from individuals who had taken ALERRT training.”

During the shooting incident, Chief Gregory didn’t have to look at video: he was present on the LSC-North Harris campus and witnessed his officers putting their training to use: “The call came out that three people, two students and a facilities employee, were injured. The shooter ran into one of our buildings and the first officer on the scene, adhering to the ALERRT training, went into the building after him before any backup arrived. Two other officers arrived within minutes, and I followed them through the building and observed they were using the ALERRT formation. Officers from two other agencies who also had received ALERRT training arrived and joined right in the formation with no discussion needed. The training allowed officers from three different jurisdictions to search together as a team,” Gregory says. (The shooter fled to a wooded area, escaped and was ultimately apprehended a few days later near Dallas, Texas.)

“We initially trained our two firearms instructors to be trainers, because they said it was good active threat training, but also just good officer safety and survival training,” Gregory says. “It’s just good solid training that we were able to put to good use.”

*Read about a Level II ALERRT training class in “After the Shooting Stops” on p.17. For more information on the program as a whole, visit <http://alerrt.org>*



## CHAPTER 2

# STUDENTS SET THE PACE IN LEARNING ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY

By Becky Lewis  
April 2013

### International Association of Chiefs of Police

*That officer parked over there in his patrol car isn't playing games on his smart phone. This school administrator sitting in her study after dinner isn't updating her Facebook status. And the firefighter waiting for a call isn't using his tablet computer to read the latest bestseller.*



*They're all taking free online School Safety training offered by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, progressing through their selected modules at their own pace.*

IACP and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), a program of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, recently launched a series of four introductory-level online school safety trainings. The modules – “Assessing School Safety,” “Forming Your Safe School Planning Team,” “Preparing for a School Crisis” and “Responding to a School Crisis” – provide guidance on creating or enhancing school safety and crisis response plans. The self-paced courses target law enforcement, school officials and allied stakeholders, and students can take one, all four or any other combination, in any order.



Kelly Burke, IACP's Program Manager for Juvenile Justice and Child Protection, says the IACP began developing the program in early 2012 and did not create it as a specific response to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary on Dec. 14, 2012. Based on a two-day classroom training program called Partnerships for Safe Schools, IACP developed the online version in response to the ongoing financial struggle faced by many departments, particularly small and rural ones. Many law enforcement agencies are doing more with less and are not able to release staff to attend classroom trainings – even IACP/OJJDP's no-cost training.

“We wanted to present the training in a way that really engaged the user, so we partnered with a specialist in developing training and online curricula for law enforcement. It's not a static PowerPoint webinar, it uses an interactive self-paced design,” Burke says. “It's designed so it can be used at work, in the car, on smartphones and tablets as well as computers. We've been hearing about e-learning for a while, now we're moving into 'm[mobile]-learning.' Instead of having to take eight hours of training in one sitting, this lets them break it down into what's feasible with their schedules. However, they do have to complete all activities before they can advance to the next step and then finally get their certificate.”

One of those activities focuses on dealing with an active threat in a school, but the training also addresses other situations that might require establishment of an incident command post, such as an explosion in the chemistry lab, a student threatening to commit suicide, an abduction on school grounds or a vehicular accident on a nearby street.

“It covers all different types of school crises. Both the classroom and online trainings are based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency crisis model,” Burke notes.



Partnerships for Safe Schools has been delivered 39 times in the past 13 years to more than 1,700 law enforcement and school personnel from 32 states, the District of Columbia and the Bahamas. Based on the initial positive reaction, Burke feels the online component has been, and will continue to be, as worthwhile in terms of bringing school safety to many more practitioners.

The training also targets school administrators, other public safety professionals and community leaders who are involved in school emergency response, with one module specifically focusing on developing a safe school planning team: "We need to recognize who the stakeholders are. It takes more than law enforcement and emergency responders such as fire and EMS. It's administrators, it's teachers, it's mental and behavioral health professionals, it's faith-based leaders in the community, it's neighbors who live near the school and more. They're all stakeholders and the training can benefit all of them."

*For more information and to register, visit:  
<http://elearning-courses.net/iacp>.*





## CHAPTER 3

# COURSE TEACHES OFFICERS HOW TO ADMINISTER AID, IMPROVE SURVIVAL

By Becky Lewis  
August 2013

### **National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians**

*Evaluation forms filled with column after column of circled "5s" for "Excellent." Those are the marks being earned by the Law Enforcement and First Response (LEFR) Tactical Casualty Care course, a new training program that teaches law enforcement officers and other first responders about basic interventions that could help save someone's life in the precious minutes before emergency medical services practitioners can safely enter a trauma scene.*

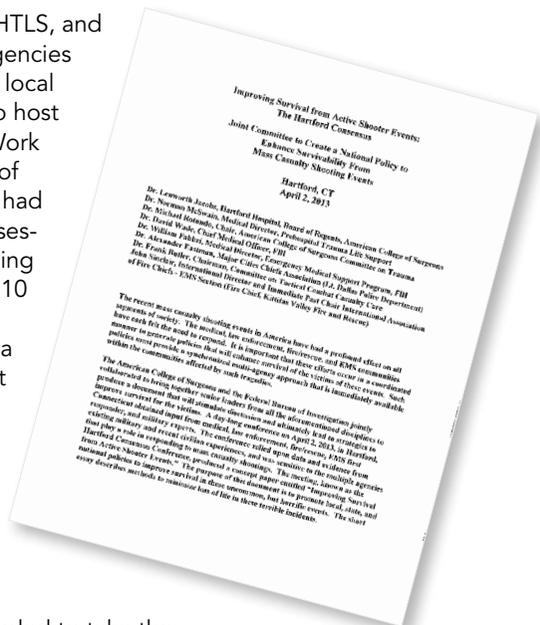


Developed with the Denver Health Department of Emergency Medical Services Education and the Denver Police Department Metro SWAT unit, and offered through the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) (<http://www.naemt.org/education/CourseDirectory.aspx>), LEFR uses elements of training provided to U.S. military medics combined with other principles developed by NAEMT's Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) Committee. It meets the recommendations of "Improving Survival from Active Shooter Events: The Hartford Consensus Joint Committee to Create a National Policy to Enhance Survivability From Mass Casualty Shooting Events," released by NAEMT on April 2, 2013 (<http://www.naemt.org/Libraries/Trauma%20Resources/Hartford%20Consensus%20Document%20Final%204-8-13.sflb>)

"We've seen so many incidents nationally – and internationally – in which a large number of casualties have occurred. If you look at many of these incidents, police reach the scene rapidly but EMS entry is delayed until the scene is secure. What we wanted to do is give the police officers who are first on the scene of an active shooter or other mass trauma incident the necessary medical training to perform the very basics of lifesaving care," says Dr. Peter Pons, associate medical director for Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support at Denver Health Medical Center and an emergency physician. "The military has a two-day advanced level training course and we thought a lot of the principles they teach also made sense for police officers. However, we've adapted it into a one-day civilian course."

Pons already an existing relationship with PHTLS, and worked out an agreement for the Denver agencies to develop the training and field test it on a local level, at which point NAEMT would begin to host and offer the program on a national level. Work started on the project in early 2013, and as of mid-August, the pilot portion of the project had ended successfully and more than 50 LEFR sessions had been scheduled nationwide. Training at the medical center in Denver costs only \$10 per participant to cover certificate printing costs, thanks to a combination of Urban Area Security Initiative and local funding. Costs at other locations around the country will vary; find out more by visiting the NAEMT website listed above, by emailing [education@naemt.org](mailto:education@naemt.org) or by calling (800) 346-2368. For more information on training specific to Colorado, visit <https://www.co.train.org/DesktopShell.aspx>.

Pons says there are no pre-qualifications needed to take the course, which is "really designed for the lay provider. We recognize that police officers frankly have had very little medical training. And the evaluations on the part of the officers who have taken it have been phenomenal."





In addition to those columns filled with the number 5, those phenomenal evaluations have included the following comments:

“Amazing training, especially the way it was taught for non-medical [trainees]. I feel comfortable at this time to be able to get involved with an injury...and at least do what is possible to save someone’s life.”

“Very informative and helpful scenarios force you to think on your feet.”

“Great class. Excellent practicals. Thanks for caring for your brothers in blue!”

“Material was presented in such a fashion that a person with no EMS background such as myself was able to understand.”

“Glad to see us being taught to administer aid instead of waiting for rescue.”

The aid that participants learn to administer includes the following:

- Immediate steps for hemorrhage control, including external hemorrhage control, direct pressure and wound packing, early use of tourniquets for severe hemorrhage, internal hemorrhage control by rapid evacuation, and transportation to major hospital/trauma center.
- Appropriate application of a tourniquet to an arm or leg.
- Airway control techniques and devices.
- Application of a topical hemostatic dressing (combat gauze).
- Tactically relevant indicators of shock.

Pons says the morning session consists of a combination of classroom lecture and practice at skill stations, while in the afternoon, participants get a chance to apply the skills they’ve learned in several scenarios: “Some of them use actors, some use mannequins that bleed. They all replicate scenarios officers could possibly face in the field. We focus on medical care issues, not on tactics. Every police department has its own approach to tactics, and we’re not trying to teach them tactics to use in an active shooter or hostage situation. We’re teaching them what to do medically if that situation ends with a casualty.”





## CHAPTER 4

# FINDING WAYS TO MAXIMIZE LIMITED RESOURCES

By Becky Lewis  
May 2013

### Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium

*In a school safety training session in a metropolitan area, the police chief, the tactical team leader and the bomb squad commander all would likely participate in the class and learn valuable lessons about working together. In a rural area, those three jobs may very well belong to the same person.*



“Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents: Partnering Rural Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Local School Systems,” a free training offered by the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC) and funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, focuses on how to handle school crisis events, including an active shooter situation in a rural K-12 school environment where resources are limited and interagency assistance is many miles away. Instructor Scott Lowry says the most important goal of the training is to teach participants – including school personnel, law enforcement and other first responders such as EMS and fire – to recognize the limits they have as a community and to find ways to mitigate the lack of resources: “People have to take on multiple responsibilities in a moment of crisis and it’s important for the community to identify the gaps ahead of time.”

One community that recently hosted such a training is the small western Montana town of Libby (population approximately 2,700), located in the Kootenai National Forest between the Cabinet Mountains to the south and the Purcell Mountains to the north. Lisa Oedewaldt, who wears three hats herself (deputy director of emergency management, public health emergency preparedness coordinator and flood plain manager), heard about the training through a local school administrator and first participated in a session in the reservation community of Browning. Oedewaldt was so impressed she then worked with the Montana Department of Disaster and Emergency Services and RDPC to bring a session to Libby on April 1, 2013.



“Scott took our high school (560 students, grades 7-12) and developed a scenario focusing on dealing with an active shooter there. I told him what our area was like, who coordinated with whom and how the agencies worked together. Scott incorporated all of it into our scenario, including how remote we are and how if we had to close the one major highway, we’d be completely cut off,” Oedewaldt says. “He made the principal decide to change the way the school does lockdown drills and the local police decide to go from waiting for backup to the first person on the scene goes in. They really changed the way they plan to handle things because of the training.”

She adds, “We went through pictures of each school and looked at things like placement of bushes, and he encouraged them to think about ways to improve safety. It was just so interactive and everybody got involved.”

“Everybody” included officers from the six-person Libby Police Department, the Lincoln County Sheriff’s office, the Montana Highway Patrol and the U.S. Forest



Service police. The latter three agencies have a total of 32 officers for the entire county, which includes two other school districts that have not yet participated in the training.

“In dealing with extreme rural areas like Libby, a lot of the conversation during the day focuses on what they need to do and how to do it with limited resources. In metropolitan areas, where they can pull from the adjoining jurisdictions, the demand on the community is not as great,” Lowry says.

In the eight hours of instruction time, Lowry works with rural areas on developing emergency plans that they maintain as living documents, performing a school vulnerability assessment, looking at available assets and developing a strategy for threat assessment management.

“Our philosophy is if we prepare for the worst case scenario, everyone will still respond appropriately to any lesser incidents. We talk about making appropriate decisions, such as when to stay in the classroom and when to go out the window,” Lowry says. “We want to educate our teachers to make rational decisions during irrational times so they can further ensure the safety of the children in the classroom.”

For law enforcement participants, the objective is to teach them to train in the way they expect to respond, because in an emergency, they will instinctively respond the way they were trained. One of the main objectives of this training is to get law enforcement and school personnel on the same page to ensure collaborative strategies are in place for effective crisis prevention, response and recovery in the K-12 environment.

The training also emphasizes the recovery phase, because, Lowry says, many jurisdictions do a good job with emergency operation plans and lockdown drills, but “what escapes a lot of people is post-incident recovery. When children have experienced a traumatic event, the mental health aspect needs to be engaged immediately thereafter. The ultimate goal is to get back to normalcy as a community, and the mental health portion is critical to that. Chardon High School in Ohio immediately implemented a mental health and recovery phase that should become a model of how to recover from a school shooting.”

## About the Course

RDPC offered AWR 148 “Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents: Partnering Rural Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Local School Systems” 316 times and trained 8,925 individuals from May 2009 through May 2013. Requesting agencies must be vetted and, if approved, need only provide a classroom equipped with audio/visual equipment large enough to accommodate between 20 and 40 participants. Interested persons who cannot attend a training session may take a web-based version. More than 900 individuals have taken advantage of the web-based option as of May 2013.

*To request this or any other RDPC course, visit <http://www.ruraltraining.org>, select the link for “Request a Course” and complete the online form. You will be contacted to complete the verification process, and receive a date and an instructor. Requests can also be made by calling toll free to (877) 855-RDPC.*





## CHAPTER 5

# AFTER THE SHOOTING STOPS

By Becky Lewis  
May 2013

### University of Texas-San Marcos

*The gunshots that filled the halls a few minutes earlier have ended, but the all-clear to bring in the EMS personnel won't come until after the shooter has been taken from the scene and after a final check to make sure he acted alone. While minutes tick away – some times just a few, sometimes a couple of hours – blood continues to flow. Blood from wounds that could be life-threatening if not treated right now, by someone already on the scene. Treated by a law enforcement officer who has completed Level II ALERRT training.*



“Terrorism Response Tactics,” the second level of the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Program offered by the ALERRT Training Center at Texas State University - San Marcos, takes officers to the next step to take after an active threat has been neutralized. “About two years ago, we realized that officers are getting really good at learning how to deal with an active threat and stop the killing, but they didn’t know how to stop the dying after they put the bad guy down. We want to give them the tools to save as many lives as we can,” says ALERRT Assistant Director Terry Nichols.

The techniques taught in the course derive from tactical combat casualty care methods developed by the U.S. Army over the past 10 years, and the Army’s Dr. Robert Mabry serves as medical adviser to the training: “The chief preventable reason why people die in combat is external hemorrhage from injuries to limbs. We’ve trained soldiers to deal with life-threatening loss of blood, and ALERRT is now teaching police officers how to pack wounds with hemostatic gauze, how to apply tourniquets, how to position people so they can breathe and not drown in their own blood. ALERRT teaches these techniques at an appropriate level for law enforcement use. We don’t need to make law enforcement officers into trauma surgeons, but we can give them effective tools so they can do what a trauma surgeon would do in the same circumstances. If you kill the bad guy, but three kids bleed to death before EMS gets there, the mission has still failed.”



Photo by Diana Hendricks

Nichols says the training – which can take place in either a scheduled class at San Marcos or “on the road” at the request of a local jurisdiction – works best if firefighters and EMS personnel from the same jurisdiction all participate. The first day of the class provides instruction for students on basic medical skills including the use of tourniquets, improvising tourniquets, wound packing, bandaging and lifts/drags/carries. On the second day, students learn triage and link-up procedures, and review tactical considerations for responding to an active shooter. The class includes multiple force-on-force scenarios where officers must first stop an ongoing threat and then experience several ways of dealing with numerous injured victims, including taking the wounded out to fire and EMS as well as providing security for fire and EMS to enter a crisis site.

“The primary concept we want to enforce is what we can do immediately on the scene to save lives, which is mainly hemorrhage control. Officers also have to learn there are some injuries they can’t work on, such as a penetrating gunshot wound to the abdomen. That requires an operating room and a trauma team.



They learn how to prioritize which injuries need immediate attention and which ones can wait," Nichols says. "Active threat training is great, but this class is what happens after the shooting stops. It focuses on saving lives and integrating those efforts with fire and EMS."

Nichols says that integration requires philosophical and policy changes, because traditionally, fire and EMS won't enter a scene until it has been secured: "They will have to learn to let law enforcement define what is secure, to trust law enforcement to provide cover and keep them safe. It starts with having a discussion about working together and talking together. If they've trained together, it's going to help build that needed trust."

## Applying Training in Real Life

Law enforcement officers in the state of Texas who complete "Terrorism Response Tactics-Active Shooter Level II" receive a medical kit to carry in their patrol cars that includes a tourniquet, shears, hemostatic gauze, field dressings and sterile gloves. (Students from outside the state receive instructions on how to set up their own kits). One student who has already put his kit to good use is Officer John Mahoney of the New Braunfels Police Department, who found himself called to the scene of major vehicle accident in summer 2012.

Mahoney said he arrived on the scene ahead of the paramedics and found a woman who had her right leg caught between her motorcycle and the pickup truck that struck her. The victim lay on the ground bleeding from a severed major artery, and a bystander exclaimed "she's bleeding out."

Mahoney retrieved his medical kit and applied a tourniquet to what paramedics later termed a life-threatening injury. He received a departmental award for his efforts.

"My department has encouraged everybody to take Level I Active Shooter training. After going, I learned about other classes and started taking them on my own," Mahoney says.

"Normally at that type of accident we would just provide traffic control, but it had been only a couple of months since I took the training, and after thinking about it for just a moment, I realized that I had the training, I had the equipment and I could help her," he adds.

*To read about active threat training, see "Meeting an Active Threat Head-On" on p. IV. To learn more about all of the ALERRT training programs at Texas University-San Marcos, visit <http://alerrt.org/>.*



Photo by Diana Hendricks



## CHAPTER 6

# SCHOOL SAFETY ADVOCACY COUNCIL EXPANDS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

By Becky Lewis  
February 2013

### School Safety Advocacy Council

*The officer parks her squad car in front of the local high school and enters the front door. The students walking the halls between classes aren't alarmed to see her: She drops by often to do some administrative work at her desk in the school office, and students expect to see her mingling with them almost every day.*



In addition to its ongoing training programs, the School Safety Advocacy Council (SSAC) has introduced Law Enforcement Educational Presence (LEEP), a two-day School Safety Certification Course for Patrol and Reserve Officers.

“As a result of the recent tragedy at Sandy Hook, we worked with law enforcement and school administrators from around the country who are subject-matter experts to create this program,” says SSAC President Sean Burke. “If law enforcement agencies nationwide stationed an officer in every school, it would take one-third of the sworn officers in the country.

“The basic idea behind LEEP is to get local law enforcement more involved with the schools in their jurisdiction. LEEP promotes the idea that schools can have a satellite office in their buildings where officers on patrol, officers from specialized units, can set up a schedule to work out of that office part time. That way, they get to know the administrators, they get to know the students, they get to know the layout of the building. If an emergency response is needed, there is an officer who knows the school and has a relationship with the students and staff. The majority of the potential school shootings in this country that have been averted were stopped because students provided information to an officer with whom they had developed a relationship.”

To learn more about the available training on how to establish a LEEP program in your area, visit <http://www.schoolsafety911.org/index.html>, the SSAC website. The site also offers information on other specialized services and trainings offered by SSAC, which has trained more than 100,000 law enforcement officers and education professionals in the United States and abroad. SSAC also offers the following on a regular basis:

- Basic School Resource Officer Certification Course.
- Advanced School Resource Officer Certification Course.
- Emergency Management Response in the Educational Setting.
- Gangs 101: What Every Educator and SRO Should Know.
- School Law & Liability.
- School Safety Leadership & Supervision.
- When Terror Goes to School – Understanding the Threat of Terrorism in Today’s Schools.

In addition to several specialized trainings on bullying, SSAC holds two national conferences each year, one of them the largest conference on bullying in the United States. The agenda for the other 2013 event focuses on emergency response and school shootings. Details on upcoming conferences can also be found on the SSAC website.

“The unique thing about SSAC is that all of the instructors we employ are subject-matter experts who remain active in the field. That’s what sets us apart,” Burke says. “There are training programs out there that just focus on school staff, and trainings that just focus on law enforcement, but we bring together the community, the schools and local law enforcement to address school safety and bullying. We see school safety as a community-wide responsibility.”



## CHAPTER 7

# THE IMMEDIATE FIRST RESPONDER

By Becky Lewis  
February 2013

### **National Association of School Resource Officers**

*School resource officers (SROs) are more than just police officers assigned full time to a school: They are the immediate first responders to any incident that happen on campus.*



"The SRO is always the immediate first responder to any and all incidents that happen on campus," says Kevin Quinn, president of the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO). "That's a very critical aspect of the job. There's no response time, because we're already here. In the time it would take somebody in the office to pick up a phone, call 911 and tell a dispatcher, who would then relay that information to an officer who isn't familiar with the campus, I would have already walked down the hall and been on the scene."

SROs play two other key roles in addition to covering their beats at the school. They visit classrooms and make presentations on school safety, traffic laws, general law and crime prevention; and they confer with students, parents and family members on legal problems and crime prevention.

NASRO, founded in 1989, provides training and other resources to help SROs perform all of those roles better. The organization offers basic and advanced training for SROs and managers, as well as specialized training in legal issues affecting school safety. Quinn says that requests for training have "exploded" in the wake of the Dec. 14, 2012, shootings in Newtown, Conn., with NASRO scheduling approximately 50 training classes in the first eight months of 2013. For more information on NASRO, its trainings and its annual conference, visit the NASRO website at <http://www.nasro.org> or call (888) 316-2776.

"I wish the Sandy Hook shooting never happened and very few people knew that we existed," says Quinn, whose organization saw both its membership and attendance at its annual conference decline sharply during the economic downturn that started in 2008.

"Since it did happen, we want SROs and law enforcement agencies everywhere to know what we are all about and that we're here to help."

*Kevin Quinn wrote an opinion piece for CNN as part of a special series on school safety that ran in mid-January 2013. You can read it at [http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/17/my-view-more-school-resource-officers-more-safe-school-communities/?hpt=hp\\_bn1](http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2013/01/17/my-view-more-school-resource-officers-more-safe-school-communities/?hpt=hp_bn1).*





## CHAPTER 8

# PREPARING TODAY FOR SAFETY TOMORROW

By Becky Lewis  
September 2013

### New Jersey

*The school's schedule looks like one for a pretty run-of-the-mill Wednesday: No assemblies or pep rallies, soccer games after classes (boys at home, girls away), stuffed shells for lunch.*

*The visitors walking toward the office are about to change all that. They've come from the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning, and in a very short time, students and staff will be called on to run an unscheduled active shooter drill.*



One of several components of a 2012 state initiative titled “Safe Schools for a Better Tomorrow (SSBT),” New Jersey’s requirement for schools to participate in unannounced security drills began in January 2013. Anthony Bland, the State Coordinator and head of the Office, says that whereas many states don’t require school safety drills at all, New Jersey mandates active shooter, bomb threat, non-fire evacuation and lockdown school security drills, and provides checklists and guidance on how to set up and execute them.

“Via the M.O.S.S. process, my staff also schedules visits to designated M.O.S.S. school districts to observe drills from an outsider’s perspective, one drill each at elementary, middle school and secondary school levels,” Bland says. “We meet with stakeholders and provide written feedback, diagnosing and prescribing just like a doctor.”

Bland and his staff also provide much more to schools than just oversight to drills. The New Jersey SSBT Initiative provides direct technical assistance to

schools, coordinates with local law enforcement and facilitates increased communication between school administrators and the public safety community:

“We want people to know that in New Jersey we are progressive and we are doing good things.”

The “good things” that make up the SSBT Initiative include, in addition to the Statewide School Security Drill Audit, Making Our Schools Safe (M.O.S.S.) Districts (which provide technical assistance), Securing Our Schools (law enforcement training), half-day school security conferences in each county, Surf’s Up (Internet Safety training), symposia for nonpublic schools, ways to improve communication and surveillance infrastructure, and a upcoming model template for the state’s required district-wide safety and security plan.

Bland says his office supports the initiative by providing statewide, regional and local training, and offering checklists and other supporting materials. The strength of New Jersey’s efforts has impressed many, including several state representatives from Pennsylvania who have looked at possibly modeling programs on their neighbor’s.

“Our state has been very aggressive in making sure that our school districts have strong guidance, and we have the potential to provide training and technical assistance to other states across the nation related to school security drills, best practices and planning,” Bland says, adding it has taken New Jersey a number of years to develop and fine-tune its programs. Although the SSBT Initiative launched in early 2012, New Jersey intensified its focus on school security following the West Nickel Mines/Amish Schoolhouse shooting in 2006.





That incident, Bland says, became the impetus for convening a K-12 School Security Task Force that includes county and state officials, school administrators, school resource officers and police chiefs, and community stakeholders in developing a safe culture, all-hazards approach to address events varying from earthquakes and hurricanes to active shooter threats.

Bland says that New Jersey schools and communities have responded in a very positive way to the state's initiatives and requirements, taking pride in the knowledge they have practiced and they are prepared, but he adds: "There's no magic that will eliminate

all senseless acts of violence. People don't like to hear that, but it's true. We have great plans and great guidance, but there's no way to stop everything.

"If another state needs help with similar initiatives, we are here to help. We travel along this road together and we are a nation of one."

*You can visit the following links to learn more:*

- *Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning:*  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/>
- *Safer Schools for a Better Tomorrow:*  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/task/>
- *Checklists:*  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/task/audits/>
- *Safety Plan requirements:*  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/schools/security/req/req.pdf>

Or contact Anthony Bland at (609) 584-4297 or (609) 633-6681 or email [anthony.bland@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:anthony.bland@doe.state.nj.us).





## CHAPTER 9

# VOLUNTEERS COME TOGETHER TO PRODUCE FREE TRAINING VIDEO

By Becky Lewis  
April 2013

### **Woodland District No. 50 Gurnee, Ill.**

*Brothers ask each other for opinions on their work all the time, starting with homework and continuing into adult life. Little did Tom Agos, Crime Prevention Technician with the Gurnee (Ill.) Police Department, know that a request to his brother for an opinion would begin the process of turning a small project for one school district into a free school safety video with a national audience.*



"Attention Students and Staff," a 15-minute training video, can be obtained via secure download by schools and law enforcement agencies nationwide, and Agos says the Gurnee Police Department and Woodland District No. 50 are very excited about sharing the product with other agencies – although that possibility was far from their minds when the project started. Three days after the Dec. 14, 2013, tragedy in Newtown, Conn., Agos and Gurnee School Resource Officer Jim McDermott met with Woodland's school safety team, which included district superintendent Dr. Joy Swoboda; Lori Casey, associate superintendent of education; and principals from each school building about the district's safety plan. Out of that meeting came the goal of creating a training video for substitute teachers and other support staff brought into the school system after the annual August lockdown training. Agos drafted a script and asked his brother, Chicago-area professional actor Chris Agos, for input. Chris Agos not only provided feedback on the script, he offered his services as narrator and creative consultant. Free of charge.

Another piece of the project fell into place when Agos asked Matt Till, a fellow church member and instructor for the Television Department at Columbia College Chicago (one of the largest art colleges in the United States) about the possibility of borrowing a camera to shoot the video. Through Till's efforts, Columbia College responded with donated equipment, a camera and lighting crew, student volunteers to edit video footage and compose music, and assistance, along with Chris Agos, with a casting call for officer/actors.

Tom Agos said once word got around about the project, a local salon donated hair and makeup services, a nearby restaurant provided food for the day of the shooting and "it turned from a little idea into a gigantic project with more than 60 volunteers involved. It really took off and all of the donations were a huge blessing. The result was a very professionally constructed piece that cost zero dollars to produce."



And with that came that realization that "this is just too good not to share. It's too well done and involved too much of a huge community effort to keep it to ourselves. I wrote the script so that any school district could use it if they felt it fit into their program. Other schools may have the same problem we have with hires brought in after the annual training, or for a small school district just beginning to look at school safety, it might be something they could use to build a program."

The video is not appropriate for a student or general audience, and Agos will vet all requests to ensure they come from school districts or law enforcement agencies. Qualifying entities will receive a secure link to download the video; just one week after its release, he had fielded more than 100 qualified requests.

*A trailer for Attention Students and Staff can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lluudUhr1DA&feature=youtu.be>. To request a copy of the video, contact Tom Agos at [safetyvideo@police.gurnee.il.us](mailto:safetyvideo@police.gurnee.il.us) or call (847) 599-7080.*



## CHAPTER 10

# IT TAKES A VILLAGE...

By Becky Lewis  
February 2013

### New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers

*The 1996 publication of It Takes a Village by then-first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton brought the African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" into public consciousness. Lt. Patrick Kissane of the Ft. Lee (N.J.) Police Department says it also takes a village to keep a child safe. Law enforcement needs to partner with other stakeholders such as school administrators, teachers and parents on school safety efforts. Kissane*



uses *"It Can Happen Here,"* a 2010 video produced by the Weapons and Protective Systems Technology Center of Excellence (WPSTC), as one tool to help promote that message.

"If you look at the SRO [school resource officer] program, it's just one piece of the pie. There are other stakeholders who need to be involved in changing the culture of a school, in preparing practice drills, in encouraging reporting," Kissane says. "The video helps bring the message to everyone that they need to be prepared."

He uses *"It Can Happen Here"* in presentations to principals and community leaders, and all newly hired SROs in New Jersey receive a copy to take back to their schools. (Kissane also serves as the president of the New Jersey Association of School Resource Officers and as a member of the New Jersey Governor's School Safety Task Force.)

According to Drs. Timothy Brungart and John Leathers, co-producers of *"It Can Happen Here,"* the documentary is designed to put a face on school safety by informing and encouraging school safety stake-



holders to prepare for emergencies. Released in 2009, the video focuses on the Columbine and Platte Canyon school shootings in Colorado and the valuable lessons that communities can learn from these tragedies.

Produced by the WPSTC for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the 60-minute video includes interviews with victims' parents, school administrators and local law enforcement. It also examines shootings at the West Nickel Mines Amish School, other U.S. schools and schools in other countries, and discusses technology solutions that can help law enforcement, including less-lethal technologies, metal detectors and enhanced use of surveillance cameras. In addition, the video offers a list of resources such as websites, reference materials and contacts for help with writing and implementing school safety plans.

Since its release, *"It Can Happen Here"* has been used as supplemental material in New Jersey's mandatory 40-hour training for SROs and their chiefs, says Kissane, who served as a member of the NIJ School Safety Technology Working Group that provided subject-matter expertise during video development.

"The beauty of this tape is that the message is just as powerful and strong now, perhaps even more so, than it was when it was initially produced," Kissane says. "Around the country, everyone is consumed with school safety and they're talking about the need for more police or more armed guards, but it takes a lot more than that. It really does take a village."

For information on how to obtain copies of *"It Can Happen Here,"* go to [https://www.justnet.org/school\\_safety.html](https://www.justnet.org/school_safety.html)



CHAPTER 11

## CARROLL COUNTY INVOLVES OFFICERS IN SCHOOL PATROLS...AND IN CLASSROOMS

By Becky Lewis  
September 2013

### **Carroll County, Md.**

*The deputy leads the jury back to their seats. The judge calls on the foreman to stand and read the verdict: Not guilty. The judge then asks the jury members to tell why they voted not guilty, and whether they thought the defendant was not guilty when they left to begin deliberations.*



*Say what? A judge questioning jurors about how they arrived at their verdict, asking them to tell what influenced them in an open courtroom?*

*No, not a courtroom. A classroom. A classroom at Winters Mill High School in Maryland's Carroll County, where students just participated in a mock trial of a classmate charged with possession of marijuana. A mock trial orchestrated and led by two Carroll County sheriff's master deputies, co-teaching this Health I class as part of the county's new "Adopt a School Program."*

Launched with the start of the school year in August 2013, the classroom component adds another dimension to the Adopt A School program, which started with a patrol presence in the county's 44 schools following the events of December 2012 in Newtown, Conn. Officers from the county's five municipal police departments and the Maryland State Police joined sheriff's deputies in doing patrol checks and unscheduled daily visits to every school, getting to know students and teachers and offering an increased level of security.



Larry Faries, the school system's coordinator of security, explains that despite its nearness to the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area, Carroll County remains relatively rural, with just more than 100 patrol officers (out of 214 sworn officers).

"We didn't have the resources to hire school resource officers, and we think we came up with something unique that gives us a lot of 'bang for our buck,' " Faries says. "Every patrol officer is involved in security instead of just a few. They stop in and eat their lunches, they take in their laptops and file reports, they walk through the school and get to know everyone there."

Although the patrol component started almost immediately after the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary, working out the teaching component took some brainstorming and planning over the course of several months. Dawn Rathgeber, assistant supervisor of Curriculum and Instructional Resources, and Chief Deputy Phil Kasten led the team that developed the teaching component.

"We agreed that DARE had been a good thing for the county, and we didn't want to lose that instructional component but we wanted to build on the DARE experience. We came up with this idea to include foot patrols and being visible around the campus, yet still getting to know the kids and develop relationships with them in the classrooms," Rathgeber says. "I'm so pleased the classroom interaction will continue. Police officers are people too and we didn't want to lose the foundation we already laid."

Whereas DARE presents a structured 10-day, in-and-out of the classroom component, the Adopt a School curriculum features officers co-teaching several dif-



ferent units with a certified health teacher, including the dynamics of emergency, bike safety, “stranger danger,” the legal consequences of underage alcohol use and drug use, strategies for dealing with peer pressure, cyber-bullying and on-line safety. Collaborative instruction takes place throughout the school system, as students in the second, fifth, seventh and eighth grades participate along with students enrolled in secondary school Health I. Carroll County has trained 20 officers from the various law enforcement agencies, with those from municipal agencies teaching in their towns, and sheriff’s deputies and state troopers teaching at the other schools.

“We did an interview process and selected people based on their ability to give a presentation as well as their written and oral communication skills. They went through a one-day training before the school year, working with instructional staff from the schools,” says Kasten. “We think that adding the officer to the teaching team gives them the chance to enhance the lessons based on their experience.”

Two of the officers selected, Master Deputy Worthington Washington and Master Deputy Jeremy Holland, worked with health teacher Salvatore Picataggi to create the mock trial that drew avid participation from Winters Mill students. Washington, a veteran of the DARE program, calls Adopt a School a good partnership that gets students used to seeing officers in class and “lets them get to know us as people and not just officers. By interacting with them, they can feel comfortable coming to us if they need our help as officers. The teachers like us coming in too.”

And Holland, who became interested in working in a school system due to a positive relationship as a student with the SRO at Franklin High in suburban Baltimore (Reisterstown), says he feels very optimistic about what's going on in Carroll County: "I feel very optimistic about the program. I hope that each of these kids, from my being here, will make the right choices when they're faced with them."

Sheriff Ken Tregoning shares Holland's optimism, and in addition, calls the Adopt a School program a very innovative one: "We're applying more resources into the schools and we're improving physical security inside and outside the schools. We're using more deputies and police officers to make sure our schools are secure. There's a visibility and a presence, and they also interact with the students on a personal basis. It brings law enforcement, school administrators and students closer together."

Carroll County Superintendent of Schools Stephen H. Guthrie echoes his sentiments about providing visibility along with the educational components, "and the administrators know a familiar face, and they know they have a person to call who knows the history of the school and knows the students. I also don't want another school district that might want to do the same thing to think this all came together out of the blue. It was fostered in more than a decade of good relationships between Larry [Faries] and local law enforcement, that's why it came together so easily and quickly. To replicate it would require a lot of groundwork."

*For more information on Carroll County's Adopt A School program, contact Larry Faries at (410) 751-3171 or email [lefaries@carrollk12.org](mailto:lefaries@carrollk12.org), or Dawn Rathgeber at (410) 386-1687 or email [gdrathg@carrollk12.org](mailto:gdrathg@carrollk12.org).*

*Also, a more detailed article and accompanying video can be found on JUSTNET, the website of the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center system.*





## CHAPTER 12

# POLICE SCHOOL SUBSTATIONS ENHANCE SAFETY AND COMMUNICATION

By Michele Coppola  
March 2013

### **Elementary Schools Goodyear, Ariz.**

*Young students were thrilled to have lunch with a police officer the other day. But then, that's become an almost routine occurrence at several elementary schools in Goodyear, Ariz.*



Police and school officials in Goodyear, Ariz., have set up police substations in three elementary schools, increasing police visibility and fostering communication between law enforcement and the school community.

Under the program, officers stop by the schools during the day and use office space provided by the schools to do paperwork or make phone calls during their shifts. Officers are not assigned to a school or required to go to a school. Their schedules and duties on any given day determine when they can drop in and use the office.

"It's a great opportunity to have police visibility on campus," says Lisa Kutis, police public information officer. "Having police officers on campus acts as a deterrent to crime. It also paints officers as positive role models, and some officers enjoy stopping in during lunch time and interacting with students. The program is also fiscally responsible because there are no out-of-pocket costs to the school district or the police department."

Gina DeCoste, principal of Mabel Padgett Elementary School (825 students), proposed that police set up a substation at her school following the school shootings in Newtown, Conn., in December 2012. The program began in early January at Mabel Padgett, and expanded to two more elementary schools, Westar Elementary and Centerra Mirage School, later in winter 2013.

"The kids love it, they think it's really cool having a police officer on campus," DeCoste says. "Usually the officers take a walk around and see the kids because the kids get so excited, and the parent feedback has been extremely positive."

"Having officers on campus provides a positive role model for students and peace of mind for parents and staff. In addition, the police car parked outside adds a visual deterrent to someone wanting to commit a crime."

The school already had a working relationship with the police department, and the substation has furthered that bond. Police participate on the school's safety committee.

"We are building relationships, and when issues come up where we want law enforcement advice, it's nice that I can walk down the hall and say 'can I run this by you real quick?' " DeCoste says. "We had the foundation for a good working relationship with Goodyear PD, and I believe that has helped make the substation successful."

The Goodyear Police Department, with 94 sworn officers, serves a population of about 66,000 residents and is a suburb of Phoenix. The substations are located in three separate geographic areas of the city — the north, south and central areas of Goodyear — and encompass three separate school districts, all located in Goodyear. Full-time school resource officers serve the city's high schools and are available to respond to other schools if needed.

"The substations foster better communication with school staff and the student body, and a fully marked police car outside increases visibility and awareness of police in the community," says Lt. Scott Benson of the Goodyear Police Department. "The students are great and we get very positive feedback. They find us approachable and it gives them a better understanding of police. It gives them an opportunity to see us in a different light."

*For more information, contact Lisa Kutis at (623) 882-7663 or [lkutis@goodyearaz.gov](mailto:lkutis@goodyearaz.gov).*



## CHAPTER 13

# POLICE OUTFITTED WITH MASS CASUALTY TRAUMA KITS

By Michele Coppola  
February 2013

### **Tucson Police Department Tucson, Ariz.**

*Kneeling at the side of the gunshot victim, his co-worker calls out to the responding police officer that “he needs help right away, where’s EMS?” The officer knows just what to do: get the emergency kit from his vehicle and do what he can to stabilize the victim until emergency medical services can safely enter the scene.*



The Tucson Police Department can use its advanced emergency medical kits to provide first aid to victims of a mass casualty incident before emergency medical personnel arrive. The kits are designed to effectively allow police officers to render first aid and life support on the scene of a mass casualty incident similar to what occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School or the attack on Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, her staff and community members. They compress the time it takes to stabilize injuries before paramedics arrive, according to Capt. David Azuelo, Commander, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division, Tucson Police Department.

An interim solution for patient care is necessary because paramedics will not typically enter a scene until police have located and stopped the threat(s), actions that often can take a considerable amount of time given the complexity of these incidents as well as the varying and contrasting information that is often prevalent at the onset of an active shooter type of situation.

"Many times fire agencies will not come into a 'hot zone' so it is up to law enforcement to not only deal with the threat, but also provide stabilizing first aid to survivors until they can be transitioned to paramedics," Azuelo says.

"The mass casualty trauma kits allow officers to bridge the gap by providing immediate first aid during what is often referred to as 'the golden hour,' the timeframe that is most critical to patients suffering from traumatic penetrating injuries. It gives a police officer without a tremendous amount of training in advanced medicine the ability to save lives."

"We recognize that a mass casualty shooting event is likely going to be one of the most difficult calls a police officer ever responds to, not just in terms of dealing with the threat, as that is something most officers are well prepared for," he adds. "Rendering aid in a timely manner to numerous severely injured victims is not something most officers deal with on a regular basis, therefore we recognized from a management perspective that we needed to ensure these kits were useful, relevant and not overly complicated for police officers to use. We wanted a patrol-ready, easy-to-use, mass casualty trauma kit that would meet the needs of all of the primary injuries you would find in a mass casualty situation."

Recognizing the need to bridge the gap of time it takes for police officers to transition patients to advanced life support care during an active shooter event, Paramedic Capt. Kristopher Blume, also a tactical medic and the manager of the Metropolitan Medical Response System in Tucson, collaborated with the TSSi company to develop the mass casualty trauma kits for the police department.





The packs, which fit in the trunk of a police sedan, consist of a large nylon case that contains six individual advanced first aid kits, along with additional splints, bandages and trauma blankets. Tucson has eight packs, which cost approximately \$3,000 each and were purchased with funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Metropolitan Medical Response System grant program (now defunded). The packs have been distributed to each of the department's five patrol divisions and to members of the full-time Special Weapons and Tactics Team. Every officer is certified in basic first aid but the police department is working with the fire department to further refine training specific to the mass casualty trauma kits.



"The packs are the result of awareness of the totality of what was occurring around the nation," Azuelo says. "Mass casualty incidents are nothing new. These types of situations have occurred for decades. Law enforcement has a different mission than fire and paramedics, but we have recognized that we have to come together better because in certain situations, unless we can provide aid to those victims, the likelihood of their surviving long enough to get them to paramedics is slim. We need to respond as quickly as we can to get them to paramedics and ultimately to the hospitals."

*For more information, contact Capt. David Azuelo at (520) 837-7378 or [david.azuelo@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:david.azuelo@tucsonaz.gov).*



## CHAPTER 14

# IN-DEPTH SAFETY AUDITS EXPAND SCHOOL SECURITY

By Michele Coppola  
July 2013

### **Albemarle County Virginia**

*Landscaping. Check. Lighting. Check. Points of entry.  
Check. Parking areas. Check.*

*All those areas and more come under review during a Crime Prevention Through  
Environmental Design (CPTED) audit.*



Police in Virginia's Albemarle County are performing extensive safety audits on all public schools as part of an effort to expand school security. Officer Steve Watson, a crime prevention specialist with the police department, explains that the county's school resource officers periodically performed safety audits in the past, but the county wanted a more in-depth process.

Three officers from the Albemarle County Police Department attended a course in spring 2013 based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. On completion of the three-day course, which is offered through the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), participants are certified as NASRO school CPTED practitioners.

"The schools worked with us to try and get the schools a little safer. It was an evolved, concerted effort," Watson says.

The class the Albemarle officers attended in Kansas was the first NASRO school CPTED certification class held. According to the course description, CPTED "uses design, management and activity strategies to reduce opportunities for crime to occur, to reduce fear and to improve overall safety of schools. The CPTED concept emphasizes the relationship of the physical environment, the productive use of space and the behavior of people." The course includes a hands-on evaluation of a school and provides attendees with tools to use on their school campus.



As part of their school inspections, Albemarle officers use a lengthy survey form provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to review the interior and exterior of the building and examine numerous aspects of school security. The audit looks at organizational structure, mechanical aspects and crime prevention techniques such as locks and surveillance cameras.

"We use the CDC form every time we do a school audit. Basically we are looking at the interior and exterior of the school," Watson says. "CPTED is about how to use the natural environment to create a safer school — proper landscaping, proper lighting, how to bring people into the entrance without problems and creating areas that discourage potential criminal activity. We are looking at how to manipulate the environment to make it safer."

Officers consider numerous security issues when evaluating a school.

"My main thing is to look at access, who has access and who is it controlled by," Watson says. "When people are inside are they identified with visitor badges? Can people get in without going through the main entrance?"



"Basically we take an initial impression when we arrive," he adds. "We look at the perimeter and how boundaries are defined, is the school easily seen, points of entry, main entrances, exterior of the building, and drop-off and pick-up areas. We look at parking areas, whether visitor parking and staff parking areas are separate and are they monitored by cameras. We look at pedestrian flow through the school property, whether it is monitored and can it be monitored better. We consider all learning buildings, including trailers and whether they are safe,

locked, and well-lit, and whether the building doors get propped open during the day."

Police also look at the cafeteria and the interior office and whether there is good surveillance of the lobby area. They look at restrooms and the overall picture of how students can stay safe with other students.

"The review is pretty extensive. It's a little bit of everything," Watson says.

The county has 26 public schools. Police began their school audits in June 2013 and planned to complete most elementary school audits in 2013 and begin reviewing middle and high schools in 2014. The following year they would like to begin doing reviews of the schools they have already completed.

"My goal is to have a yearly process and meet with administrators and see if there are additional safety concerns. Our main goal is to make it a continual process," Watson says.

Each audit takes between 30 and 60 hours to complete. Officers present their findings and security recommendations to school administrators, including guidance on how to understand the 30-page CDC form ratings and photographs of the schools to understand safety redesign recommendations.

"The goal of the training is to have officers get those tools to take them back to schools and communities and evaluate their campuses through the CPTED principles to try to make the schools a safer place," says NASRO president Kevin Quinn, who is a school resource officer in Arizona. For more information on NASRO, see "The Immediate First Responder" on p. 22.

*For more information, contact Officer Steve Watson of the Albemarle County Police at [watsons@albemarle.org](mailto:watson@albemarle.org). To learn more about the NASRO school CPTED course, go to <http://www.nasro.org/content/school-cpted-practitioner-certification>.*





## CHAPTER 15

# SCHOOL CRITICAL INCIDENT PLANNING – GENERATOR (SCIP-G) HELPS CREATE COORDINATED RESPONSE

By Becky Lewis  
February 2013

### Sumter County Police Department South Carolina

*Although the administrators at the Sumter (S.C.) Police Department fervently hope they never have to deal with an active shooter situation, they want to have Incident Command System (ICS) plans in place for every one of the county's 30-plus schools in case such an event does occur. Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Fowler has*



found that the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) School Critical Incident Planning – Generator (SCIP-G) is the right tool to help with that process.

“We wanted to establish an ICS plan that will work so that we don’t have to come up with one on the fly in the event of an emergency,” Fowler says. “We know which specific people need to be in specific positions. We know exactly what we need to do. I’ve been working a lot with SCIP-G so that we don’t have to reinvent the wheel. I’m able to use it to look at each school at the incident command level and determine what we need to do to coordinate our response with school administrators.”

SCIP-G provides step-by-step guidance for creating a plan, using the most widely accepted law enforcement practices and procedures as the foundation. It can be found on NIJ’s Triple Play School Safety Combo CD, which also includes “A Critical Incident: What to Do in the First 20 Minutes” and “School Crime Operations Package (School COP).”

“My chief asked me to work up our intended response protocol in dealing with an active shooter,” Fowler says. “We’re looking at the immediate armed response, and we train on different aspects of that, such as whether it’s a hostage situation or whether there is an active shooter inside a school. And we could extrapolate from this training as needed to apply to a workplace violence incident at a business.”



Sumter PD plans to involve the other law enforcement agencies in the county — the Sumter County Sheriff’s Office, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and Department of Natural Resources Police — in the planning and training. In addition to using SCIP-G, Sumter PD is in the process of conducting site surveys and taking pictures of every school. Computerized floor plans will designate command posts and which officers will be stationed where.

Fowler says he is also sending letters to every school, asking administrators to designate a point of contact who will work with law enforcement on developing the plan and then be accessible in the event of an emergency. The agency is reaching out to the county’s public and private schools, which range from small rural schools to larger ones in the more urban Sumter city area (population 42,000 of the county’s 108,000 residents), and include a University of South Carolina branch campus.

“We’ve been working on this for several years. We’ve had training in the past, and every year we go through refresher courses,” Fowler says. “However, this is the first time we are undertaking an effort to put everything on record so that the appropriate people know exactly what their specific duties are.”

You can download the Triple Play combo from <http://srtbrc.org/downloads/> or order it by mail at <http://srtbrc.org/form/view.php?id=9>.



CHAPTER 16

## SMARTPHONE APP PROVIDES ALTERNATIVE WAY FOR STUDENTS TO COMMUNICATE WITH POLICE

By Michele Coppola  
February 2013

**Anne Arundel County  
Police Department  
Maryland**

*Students in Anne Arundel County, Md., schools can now use a familiar, comfortable way of reporting bullying or other problems to police: an app.*



The Anne Arundel County Police Department released the free AACo PD Speak Out app in fall 2012. The School Resource Unit designed the app to provide students with a way to communicate in a secure, private fashion. Students can walk into the office of a school resource officer (SRO) or use a phone tip line to report a problem, but police wanted to ensure students had another option to encourage communication.

"We are trying to put more tools in kids' hands in an environment they are used to working with," explains Lt. Doyle Batten, school safety section commander for the department. "We wanted to give kids as much anonymity as possible to let us know what is going on."

The county's 125 schools serve approximately 78,000 students. SROs are present in all 12 of the county's high schools and are authorized for 11 of the county's 19 middle schools.

The app is available through the Internet at <http://aacopdspeakout.myapp.name> or through the Google Playstore for Android products or via iTunes for iPhone users. Although the app is designed for public school students in the county, a parent or a private school student can use it as well. Police forward the email message content to where it needs to go, such as a specific school or SRO.

"Through all of our research, we can't find any other police SRO agency that has tried this," Batten says. "We are interested in seeing what direction this takes. We don't know how it might morph over time. We definitely see it as an avenue for identifying bullying and gang activity."

There have been several successful uses of the app thus far, according to Batten, involving students in emotional distress and bullying.

"None of these were major incidents, which is exactly how we hoped it would go — intervention at an early level," Batten says. "Information is the key to prevention."

*For more information, contact Lt. Doyle Batten at [dbatten@aacounty.org](mailto:dbatten@aacounty.org), (410) 222-0040.*





## CHAPTER 17

# ANONYMOUS REPORTING AND PREVENTION PLATFORM HELPS STOP TROUBLE BEFORE IT STARTS

By Becky Lewis  
August 2013

### **Thomas Nelson Community College, Va. Tulsa (Okla.) Public Schools**

*The accounts show a disturbing similarity: three separate reports over a period of 24 hours have come through the anonymous “hot button” on the school’s website, all expressing concern about suicidal tendencies by the same student. Reports that will lead to a successful intervention and possibly, a life saved.*



The Safe School Initiative, a project of the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Department of Education ([http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac\\_ssi.shtml](http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac_ssi.shtml)), encourages schools to emphasize focusing on possible warning signs in student behavior, and to encourage students and faculty to pass along concerns instead of dismissing them as “it’s probably nothing.” However, particularly among students, there is fear that reporting their concerns may make them a target, or they may get into trouble themselves if their suspicions prove unfounded. One answer may be an anonymous reporting system, one that allows students – and also faculty, staff and others – to confidentially express those concerns.

As part of an existing Virginia state contract, Thomas Nelson Community College (TNCC) recently took the lead among 20 schools in the Virginia Community College System and began using an anonymous reporting and prevention platform, joining secondary schools and institutions of higher learning across 13 U.S. states and Canada as innovators looking to improve student safety. And halfway across the country in Tulsa, the public school system has used the same prevention tool for nearly two full school years.



Both campuses have already achieved positive results and used the innovative web-based platform to prevent potential incidents.

Garth MacDonald, Emergency Management/Campus Safety Manager at TNCC, says when he took that job in March 2011, it was with the understanding that looking at how the college of 16,000-plus students captured reports of potential issues and problems was a top priority. He determined that the existing in-house reporting system seemed cumbersome and difficult to access from devices such as tablets and smartphones; also, only the individual who first looked at a report had access to the information.

“I did some research and realized the company that did our online training for computer security also offered a software program for reporting activity and threats. We decided that was the right route to follow, and it has proven itself a very versatile tool. When a report comes in, all team members receive a simultaneous notification, and any comments made are shared with all team members,” he says. “The system allows the person making the report to upload pictures, so individuals can use their phones to back up their statements with photos.”

Tenna Whitsel, student services coordinator with Tulsa Public Schools, described a similar research process, this one driven by a steering committee looking at how to address ongoing issues with bullying: “We learned that best practices recommended anonymous reporting, and we knew that students already have a problem with trust and don’t want to tell anyway. We knew we needed something more than a shoebox with the words “Anonymous Reporting Here.”



Her research led her to a webinar promoting a software package that she instantly knew was the right product for Tulsa, and the “hot button” to the reporting form went up on the district’s website in January 2011. Gary Rudick, campus police chief, says that although Tulsa initially focused on bullying, reports to the system cover a number of other issues, including students bringing firearms to school, threatened assault and dealing drugs. Those reports can prove a great asset to a 23-member police department charged with oversight of more than 40,000 students and 7,000 employees at more than 100 different sites. Rudick says the campus police review every report to determine if a criminal act has been committed rather than waiting for someone to come forward to file a formal complaint.

Whitsel adds that the system also provides oversight response to handling of allegations, holding administrators, employees and law enforcement accountable for followup: “One thing students really like is they get to enter a complaint through our website just like an adult, instead of having to come in and tell someone ‘They’re picking on me.’ It empowers them and makes them feel like they did something about it, which is a benefit that I didn’t anticipate.”

Just like in Tulsa, the nine-member TNCC team has also received a wide range of report types, covering everything from assault to suicidal gestures. If the emergency management team perceives an immediate danger, the information is passed on to campus police. Otherwise, team members do some legwork to ensure the allegation is valid and determine the best course of mitigating action:

“That’s the basic goal, to prevent someone from becoming a casualty at their own hands, or, God forbid, coming onto the campus as an active shooter.”

Rudick says that “basic goal” has already been reached in Tulsa, where a tip led police to prevent a potential active shooter incident. Other tips have helped officers stop fights before they happen and intervene in drug deals. And the system has cross-checking capability that links reports about the same individual, even if they take place weeks or months apart, which allows schools to reopen cases if needed. Those cross checks, along with reporting features, help lead to the accountability that Whitsel emphasized as important, and is important to MacDonald as well.

“There are skeptics when it comes to anonymous reporting and anonymous complaints. With this system, just because someone files a report, it doesn’t trigger immediate action. It must go through a validation process and we must determine there is a valid need for an intervention. We don’t just take everything at face value,” he says.



*For more information on how these schools use their anonymous reporting software, contact Chief Gary Rudick, Tulsa Public Schools by email at [RudicGa@tulsaschools.org](mailto:RudicGa@tulsaschools.org) or by phone at (918) 746-6450; Garth MacDonald at Thomas Nelson Community College, email [macdonaldg@tncc.edu](mailto:macdonaldg@tncc.edu) or phone (757) 825-3450. A video on Tulsa’s use of the software can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48kMkOZNa7o>*



CHAPTER 18

## TIP LINE OFFERS STUDENTS A WAY TO SHARE INFORMATION

By Becky Lewis  
September 2013

### Various schools Amherst, Ohio

*Should he tell someone what he's seen?*

*Can he make himself tell what he's seen?*

*Those thoughts chase themselves around in his head while he walks from class to class. Then he spots the gold and red and blue and black of a poster on the wall: Amherst Police Tip Line.*

*He can tell. Without getting up the nerve to speak to someone he knows.*



Launched on Aug. 19, 2013, the day before classes began at Marion L. Steele High School, Amherst Junior High School and Walter G. Nord Middle School, the Amherst Police Tip Line accepts text messages from students and community residents, then converts them into written messages appearing on dispatch center computers. Dispatchers may be busy with emergency calls, but will read and respond to non-emergency tips and questions as soon as workload permits, usually within a few minutes.

Although not exclusively for use by the nearly 3,000 students enrolled at the three schools, the Amherst (Ohio) Police Department has promoted the Tip Line extensively in the town's three secondary schools, with a poster campaign and messages on the schools' Facebook pages. The posters encourage students to text the Tip Line if they have information on drug activity, alcohol activity, known underage drinking parties, planned fights, recent crimes, bullying, concealed weapons or concerns about others.



Police Chief Joseph Kucirek, a veteran of the detective bureau where he often reviewed cell phones as evidence, says "it just seems like kids and society in general text a lot of things they would never say. To give a juvenile, a student, the ability to text someone who can do something about a problem while the student remains in the background, can be a powerful thing. We want students to feel comfortable with telling us "Johnny's selling drugs, Bobby brought a knife to school."

And in the first few weeks of Tip Line use, Kucirek says his department already received one tip related to drug dealing that led to an arrest by a neighboring jurisdiction.

"We were looking at this way before Sandy Hook, and we worked on it through trial and error over the course of about two years," Kucirek says. "We knew we wanted a system where the dispatcher did not have to answer the phone to reply, because that could take them away from handling an emergency call. We looked at a lot of different options before we found one that let us do what we wanted."

What Amherst wanted to do was use a cellular phone line to receive the text messages, which the dispatchers could then answer using their terminal and keyboard rather than needing to answer the cellular phone and use it to respond to the text. If emergency calls prohibit an immediate response to pending text messages, the dispatchers get reminders every sixty seconds until text messages are answered.



"There are a lot of anonymous pay-for-services out there where you have to text a five-digit number, which seemed very confusing. We also didn't want to have to deal with prank calls made by students who know they're anonymous. With this, just like when texting another cell phone, the numbers do show up. We can go back and find out who sent in the tip if we need to, but we would refrain from disclosing that information to other students," Kucirek says. "We did want to make it clear to the school, to the students, that pranksters or practical jokers could easily lose their cell phones as

evidence. But even with the number showing up, I still think the students will tell us things that they normally wouldn't."

Kucirek says some of the 41 Amherst staff members helped with internal testing on the software for several months before the public launch, which included press releases on the department's website and Facebook page, Facebook publicity from the schools and elected officials, and extensive local media coverage.

"We launched it the day before school started to give students and their parents advance knowledge," Kucirek says. "Then, in addition to putting up the posters in the high school and junior high, we also spread the word to the elementary school staff, because they have cell phones even though most of the children don't."

Although the Amherst Police Tip Line generally should not be used in emergency situations, it could be used by hearing/speech impaired persons or by someone who is in a situation where talking could present a danger. Adults as well as students can use it provide tips, and the Tip Line can also be used to ask non-emergency questions such as "What night is trick or treat night?" Also, in this town of about 13,000 residents located some 30 miles from Cleveland, dispatch handles after-hours calls about problems with utilities, which can tie up phone lines. Residents sending a text message about an outage instead of calling could help alleviate that problem, Kucirek says.

*For more information on the Amherst Tip Line project, visit <https://www.facebook.com/AmherstPoliceDepartment>, <http://www.amherstpolice.net/> or email [amherstpolice@amherstpolice.net](mailto:amherstpolice@amherstpolice.net).*





CHAPTER 19

## "SEE-HEAR-REPORT" REACHES OUT TO SOMERSET STUDENTS

By Becky Lewis  
February 2013

### Various schools Somerset, Ky.

*Like many other law enforcement agencies around the country, the one in Somerset, Ky., periodically holds training for active shooter scenarios, with administrators hoping at the same time the training never needs to be put to use.*



In late January 2013, the department took a step aimed at preventing that type of situation with the introduction of "See-Hear-Report," an anonymous text-a-tip program aimed at students in the county's 20-plus rural and small town schools.

"Our department has been very progressive over the years in a number of different programs. Our acting chief, Doug Nelson, saw a Colorado program that targeted bullying via an anonymous text-a-tip program, and he wanted to start the same type of program here because students and young adults are so very comfortable with sending text messages," says Lt. Shannon Smith.

After exploring several possible options, the Somerset Police Department settled on a service used by a number of agencies across the nation, and targeted efforts toward students in the county's three high schools.

Smith says the service provides students with an assurance of anonymity and confidentiality, but at the same time allows the department to track the information through its system to ensure that all tips receive appropriate followup.

"Reports indicate that in a number of the situations involving active shooters in schools in this country, other students knew about it beforehand and didn't tell anyone, maybe because they were fearful, or embarrassed, or didn't think it was their place to tell," Smith says. "With See-Hear-Report, they will be guaranteed confidentiality without fear of retaliation. We do a lot of things in our department geared toward response and handling these types of situations, such as for a number of years we've sent our officers to active shooter training and conducted in-house training on active shooter response. We want to market this toward the prevention end of things and give the students an opportunity to stop an event before it takes place."

The 40-officer department also plans to keep up with the active shooter training, including a refresher course that took place over the December 2012 holiday break at one of the local high schools in Somerset itself (population 11,300; the county's population is 60,000).

"It was pretty well set up when news of Sandy Hook came down," Smith says. "It hit us hard like anything does that has to do with kids being injured or killed, but there was a sense of satisfaction that we were not in the same situation as many other departments watching this on the news, because most of them were not just days away from sending the entire department through a refresher course in a actual school building. We always try to be progressive and we've trained and prepared in the event anything ever takes place, but we also want to do whatever we can to prevent something from happening."

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/SomersetPolice>.





## CHAPTER 20

# REAL-TIME LOCATION SYSTEM PROVIDES ENHANCED SECURITY IN IDAHO SCHOOL

By Becky Lewis  
August 2013

### **Skyview High School Nampa, Idaho**

*The student races from the back patio of the school to the office, running through the door at top speed on a mission to have the school secretary call a lockdown. Time elapsed from the teacher's sending him on his mission: 40 seconds, with the secretary still needing to*



*call the lockdown on the PA system, make sure the school resource officer receives the alert and call 911. Actions that would have taken even more precious seconds had this not been a drill.*

*A teacher pulls down on the emergency tab on her alert tag, automatically putting the school on lockdown, bringing the SRO on the run and alerting 911 dispatch to send more officers to the SRO's location. Time elapsed until the SRO arrives in her classroom: 3.9 seconds.*

Skyview High School in Nampa, Idaho, became the first school in the United States to implement use of a real-time location system (RTLS) that uses radio frequency identification (RFID) technology and the school's existing Wi-Fi network in April 2013. Installation of the system came as the result of concerns felt by Officer Brad Ford, Skyview's SRO, after the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting in December 2012.



"We protect our banks and our houses better than we do our children, and our children are the most valuable resource we have. It's my job to ensure that when parents drop their kids off, I'm providing the best security I can, and I believe with this system, that's what we're doing," Ford says.

Ford says in the course of his research into automated ways to call a lockdown, he considered pull-station alarms, "panic buttons" on walls and various types of computer software, but ultimately recommended this system to the administration at Skyview High and his superiors at the Nampa Police Department because the wearable device travels with the school's 100 teachers and staff wherever they go: classrooms, the gym, the cafeteria, the outside patio. The vendor had previously marketed this system to medical facilities such as hospitals, nursing homes and mental health centers, but proved readily receptive to adapting it for use in a school. A pull on the emergency tab activates lockdown procedures and sends device location information to the school's computer network, the SRO and the 911 dispatch center. The device also includes two programmable buttons that summon lesser tiers of help in the event of a medical situation or a student who is disruptive, but not perceived as a threat to the entire school. Although the school has not needed to use the system to call a lockdown – and both Ford and Nampa Police Chief Craig Kingsbury hope a lockdown never happens – several calls using the two buttons have already proved the system's worth.



"We all have to deal with medical issues and unruly students too, and that's how the device has already proven beneficial to us," Ford says. "We didn't want a device that just does one thing, we wanted one that can do multiple things. We selected this system, the vendor brought in two people to map out the school and the next day all the staff had tags."

An anonymous funding donation from the community also contributed to the speed with which Skyview implemented the system. Kingsbury said the

quick installation would not have happened without that donation: "It's not an inexpensive system, but it works very well. The school staff is very receptive. The other schools in the area want to know when they can get it. It is something that gives our school staff, our parents and our community a sense of security."

The other schools in Nampa (population 80,000-plus) include 12 public elementary schools, three middle schools and three high schools, plus a number of private schools, all falling under the jurisdiction of a police department with 112 full-time sworn officers and more than 100 other staff and volunteers. It will take more than donations to fund expansion of the system, but Kingsbury says there have been discussions with the Governor's Task Force on School Safety and with state legislators about funding sources, and the system has been demonstrated for the Idaho Chiefs of Police, the Idaho Sheriffs Association and other school districts.

"Top-level administrators across the state have seen demonstrations and everyone who has seen it is excited about it. Cost is always a concern, of course, as is making adjustments to meet the needs of schools in rural areas," Kingsbury says. "I want to emphasize this is not a catch-all. It's a way to deal with quick lockdown/rapid response situations. Schools and law enforcement still need to be cognizant about the physical structure and know which doors are locked, the procedures for entry and so on. This is just a component of a school safety plan, one to use if there is a catastrophic event. You can't forget the need to maintain and prevent."

*For more information on Skyview High School's use of real-time location system technology, contact Officer Brad Ford at (208) 340-0603 or by email at [fordb@cityofnampa.us](mailto:fordb@cityofnampa.us).*





## CHAPTER 21

# PROVIDING A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

By Becky Lewis  
June 2013

### Sweetwater Independent School District Sweetwater, Texas

*When the boy wouldn't return to his seat, when he began walking toward the front of the classroom, aggression showing in every nuance of his body language, the teacher knew she needed help. She also knew that verbalizing that call for help might provoke the enraged teen even further, so, while still trying to talk to him in a calm voice, she casually walked behind her computer and past it again, reaching out to flick the mouse over an icon on the desktop. Seconds later, help was on the way.*



A new emergency alert software released in spring 2013 allows teachers and other school staff to instantaneously, silently send emergency alerts directly to local law enforcement officers in their patrol cars, the local dispatch office and to the registered cell phones of other teachers and administrators in the same school building and to the computers in all the other classrooms. The town of Sweetwater, Texas (population approximately 12,000), and the local sheriff's office became the first municipality and county in the nation to go live with the service on May 1, following a month of setup and training.

"I hope and I pray every day that we won't ever need it, but we're ready if we do," says Sweetwater Police Chief Brian Frieda. "Once the school district heard about it, they pounced on it. There's no sense in hesitating to use some good technology that helps with security of our kids."

The emergency alert creates a chat room among the computer sending the alert, the responding officers and the local dispatch center, which permits them to communicate information about the emergency in real-time. Responding officers can also click a link and view a diagram of the school and a map showing the school's location.

Frieda and the Sweetwater Police Department heard about the software from Nolan County Sheriff David Warren, who played an instrumental role in helping introduce the concept to the Sweetwater Independent School District. The district serves approximately 2,300 students from pre-kindergarten through 12 on six campuses: one high school, one middle school, three schools each housing two elementary grades and a pre-K center. The police department and the school system have already held several drills with the software, and Frieda says his department will incorporate it into its active shooter training this summer, when his 22 sworn officers and two reserve officers will use one of the school buildings for scenario training.

"Once the school year starts, we will have a series of scenario drills where teachers launch the system and get comfortable with it. We've already heard from other nearby school districts that they're interested in implementing it as well," Frieda says. Drills will involve both the use of the silent alarm and the chat room function, wherein the teacher, or a student designated by the teacher, uses the computer to send instant messages with additional information to school personnel, responding patrol vehicles and dispatch.

Frieda explains that if the initial activation isn't aborted within seconds, officers immediately respond in a manner similar to the way they would to a 911 hang-up call. Receiving an alert, even with no further information, provides the agency with the exact location of the alarm and gives officers access to a diagram of the campus and GPS directions to the location: "This gives us more of a tactical advantage. As officers arrive on the scene, they can take a quick look and increase their situational awareness."

"I have it set up to come across my desktop at work, the laptop in my car and on my smartphone. That lets me keep up with everything that's going to the officers," he adds.

*For more information, contact Sweetwater Police Chief Brian Frieda at [bfrieda@cityofsweetwatertx.com](mailto:bfrieda@cityofsweetwatertx.com).*



## CHAPTER 22

# REAL-TIME COMMUNICATIONS COMES TO OREGON SCHOOL

By Becky Lewis  
July 2013

### **Shady Cove Middle School Jackson County, Ore.**

*The alert comes into the sheriff's office command center: Someone pushed the alarm button in Classroom 10. All over the school, doors automatically close and the building goes into immediate lockdown. Live video feed comes into the command center, and an officer starts two-way communication with the teacher who hit the button. The teacher who heard gunshots echoing from down the hall.*



Thanks to the efforts of the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Shady Cove Middle School in Jackson County, Ore., became the first school in the nation to use a new technology that provides a real-time direct link between law enforcement, first responders and the school in the event of an emergency – be it medical, fire or criminal in nature. The sheriff's office used drug seizure money to purchase the system, and local businesses Precision Electric and Adroit Construction donated installation labor over the Memorial Day Weekend.

When a teacher (or a student in the event the teacher is incapacitated) pushes the alarm button, cameras located in the classroom and elsewhere in the building begin providing live-time video feed to the sheriff's office command center and to school administrative offices. According to Sheriff Mike Winters, the ability to see what is going on inside the building in real-time could prove invaluable in the amount of time – and potentially lives – saved in the event of an emergency. That's why when he was offered the opportunity to pilot the system, he was quick to move on the project, selecting Shady Cove because "I wanted a school that had great teachers with an absolutely 'can do' attitude. The administrators of School District 9 are the same way. They really care about their students' safety. They were really amazed at what the technology could do and they wanted to be part of it."



With the system in place, the sheriff's office and the school district worked together to run drills and come up with policies and procedures before Jackson County (population 206,000, some 75,000-plus in the county seat, Medford) formalizes plans to implement the system in additional schools.

"I've never seen a better system for implementing real-time communication. It really gets the job done," Winters says. "The beauty of this system is when the alarm is pushed and the cameras come up, we're looking at real-time info and we can brief officers. From the sheriff's office in Medford, we can open doors and change the status lights. We can visually search the school while the first responders are in route and if there is a shooter in a classroom, we can put that light to red and the others on green to direct the first arriving officers to the crisis spot. With the pending addition of an app for officers' smartphones, they will be able to look at the same information as well as receiving direction from headquarters. "

And if the doors go into lockdown with the shooter outside the classrooms, he might spend time going from door to door, looking for entry, while officers get closer: "Time saved equals lives saved. Activating this system might not save everyone in a shooting incident, but it might substantially reduce the number of



fatalities. We might even be able to use the two-way communication channel to engage the shooter and distract him with the information that police are nearly there.”

And while Winters, like every other law enforcement officer in the country, hopes that Jackson County never needs to use the system during a school shooting, he’s glad it’s in place, and he notes it could also be used to call for medical help or report a fire and improve outcomes in those types of situations: “If fire services could see immediately that one wing of a school is fully involved, they’d know to go to more alarms immediately. EMS could go into situations better prepared. This is asset management at its best.”



*To learn more about the system and its implementation at Shady Cove Middle School, contact Public Information Officer Andrea Carlson at (541) 864-8801, email [carlsoak@jacksoncounty.org](mailto:carlsoak@jacksoncounty.org). To watch a video about the implementation of the technology, visit [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=XapKQsbX5u8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=XapKQsbX5u8).*



## CHAPTER 23

# MUNICIPAL WORKERS WATCH OVER NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

By Becky Lewis  
May 2013

### **My Community on Patrol New Jersey**

*There's a lockdown situation at the local high school. Police, firefighters and EMS personnel know where to go, what to do. As do the sanitation workers in the vicinity of the campus.*

*Most communities are well aware of the roles that public safety professionals can play in such an event, but sanitation workers? Well, if they participate in a New*



*Jersey project called My Community on Patrol (M.C.O.P.), those workers know their trucks can make excellent roadblocks that can help keep the public away from the danger and free up law enforcement officers from routine traffic control duties.*

Freeholder\* James Polos, chair of the Middlesex County Department of Public Safety and Health, introduced the Middlesex Community on Patrol program in 2003 as a way of using county employees as “extra eyes and ears” in the community to help local law enforcement. The successful program expanded statewide in 2007 and changed its name to one that reflected that expansion, but retained the M.C.O.P. acronym and branding.

“The idea behind it is simple: in many communities, particularly small ones, there’s a limit to the number of police personnel patrolling the streets. At any given time during the day or even during the evening, there can be significantly more municipal employees on the streets that there are police officers,” Polos says. “I’m talking about sanitation workers, housing inspectors, fire inspectors, bus drivers, senior citizens transport drivers.



They’re all out on the street, day in and day out. They have a keen knowledge of what the community is about. If they travel the same route regularly, they may have a keen awareness of what looks out of place, such as a suspicious vehicle in driveway or a garage door that’s open when it shouldn’t be.”

Participation in M.C.O.P is voluntary; employees who choose to become involved take a two-hour training program about what to watch for and how to report it, using the two-way radio and frequencies already in use in their vehicles. The Middlesex County Prosecutors Office and the Middlesex County Chiefs of Police Association helped develop the training, which has reached approximately 2,000 employees in Middlesex County alone in the past 10 years.

“We’ve really instructed them to become more keenly aware of their surroundings. If they think something doesn’t seem right or look right, they should report it,” Polos says.

And implementing M.C.O.P. has given rise to a more holistic response to a potential incident in a school: “Across the country, there’s been an enormous amount of focus on the public safety response to situations in schools, but not much emphasis on the community response. As an example, we looked at other resources we could use in establishing inner and outer perimeters that don’t tax the limited emergency personnel available and decided there’s no better barrier than a trash truck!”



Polos says M.C.O.P. has created a “small army of volunteers” in communities throughout New Jersey. Middlesex County participants who call in reports receive recognition, which helps maintain worker interest in continuing with the program.

“The resources they can provide are limitless. If we’re looking for someone involved in a school violence incident, for a missing child, for a hit-and-run driver, it puts more eyes on the street. We’ve recently expanded the program so that in certain instances, they may receive a communication through

their radios to be on the lookout, for example, for a particular individual or car,” he says.

“We do stress that they are not to pursue anyone or try to apprehend anyone. They’re simply acting as eyes and ears,” Polos adds.

*If you’re interested in establishing a program in your community based on M.C.O.P., please contact James Polos at [freeholder@mpm-nj.com](mailto:freeholder@mpm-nj.com).*

\*The Board of Chosen Freeholders is the county legislature for New Jersey counties.





## CHAPTER 24

# VIDEO ENHANCES SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING

By Michele Coppola  
May 2013

### Anne Arundel County Public Schools Maryland

*Glancing in her rearview mirror, the bus driver doesn't see any kids who are acting up. What she does see is an older student standing right behind her with a gun in his hand.*

Victoria Williams, safety and training manager for the Transportation Division of the Anne Arundel County (Md.) Public Schools, says the division uses a 25-minute video simulating the hijacking of a school bus to augment its preparedness, safety and awareness training for bus drivers, bus attendants and cab



drivers. Cab drivers sometimes transport students with special needs to schools inside and outside Anne Arundel County. Bus attendants ride on buses transporting special needs students.

To date, the division has trained approximately 1,059 drivers and attendants using the School Transportation Security Awareness DVD, produced several years ago through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Transportation Security Administration. The division holds refresher training sessions periodically.

The Anne Arundel training program incorporates discussion on safety and security awareness, including the purpose behind pre-trip bus inspections and the importance of driver awareness of any activity that may be suspicious.

The video depicts the hijacking of a school bus that ends with the safe release of the students. It emphasizes preparedness, teamwork, actions by the bus mechanic and the bus driver, and good communication throughout the event based on a security plan.

Williams says drivers appreciate the video as part of their training and she would recommend it to other school districts.

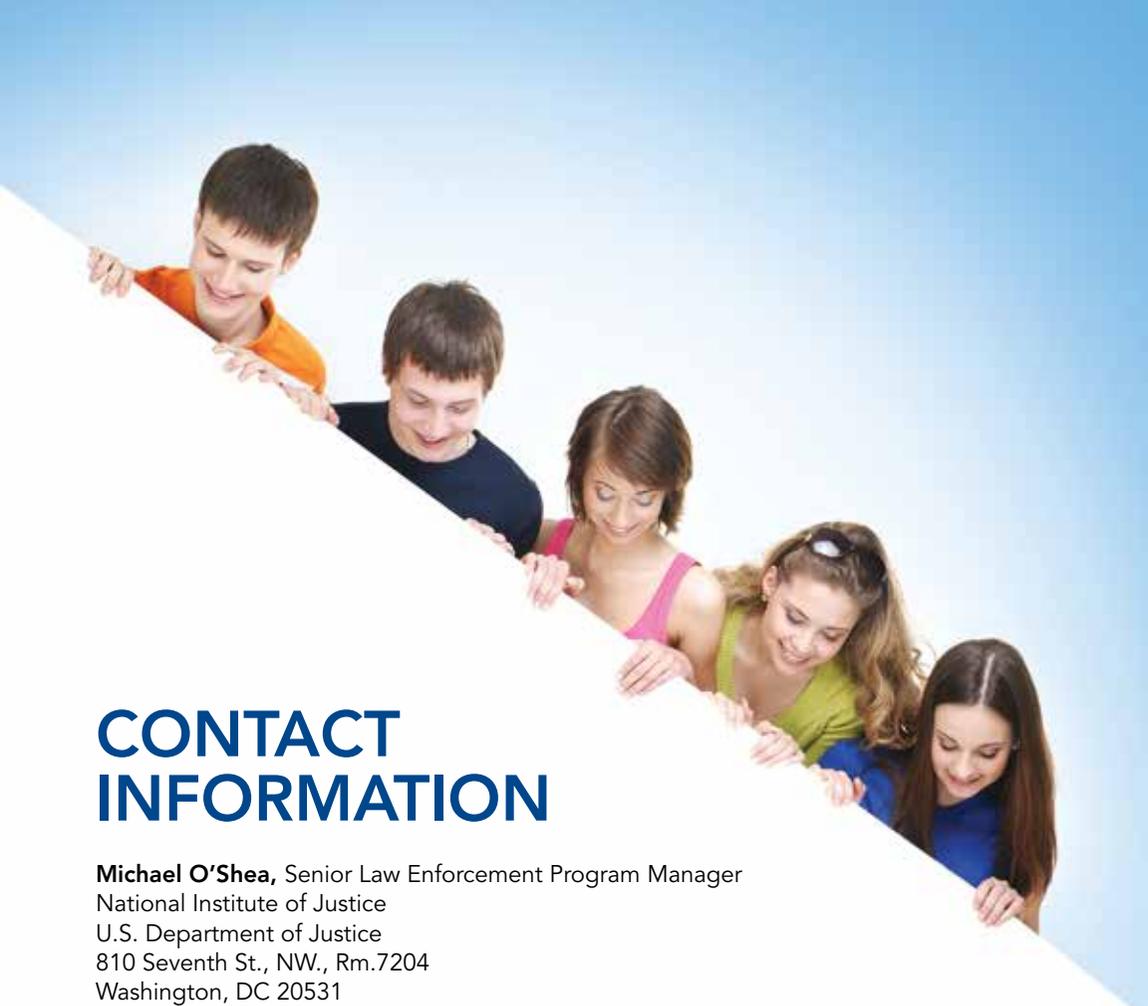
“Their eyes are really opened up by it, and there are always a lot of follow-up questions,”

Williams says. “It’s a teamwork situation between the mechanics, the schools and the bus drivers. Communication is extremely important. When we showed it the very first time, the drivers were sitting on the edge of their seats. You could hear a pin drop. It totally had their attention 100 percent.”

“The drivers are our eyes and ears,” she adds. “When they see something of a suspicious nature, suspicious activity of any kind, they should call it in. We are out there every day and we know our neighborhoods, we know our roads. We even had a bus driver call in because a car was following the bus. It turned out to be one of our area specialists, but it was a good thing to do. Drivers need to use common sense and good judgment.”

*For more information on the Anne Arundel County program, contact Victoria Williams at [vlwilliams@aacps.org](mailto:vlwilliams@aacps.org). To view the TSA video, visit <http://www.tsa.gov/stakeholders/school-transportation-security-awareness>.*





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Visit <http://www.schoolsafetyinfo.org> for access to up-to-date publication and website resources. New success stories similar to the ones in this publication are added on an ongoing basis. To suggest a success story topic, contact Senior Writer Becky Lewis at [rebecca.l.lewis@lmco.com](mailto:rebecca.l.lewis@lmco.com)

Free school safety resources can be downloaded from <http://srtbrc.org/2012/12/free-school-safety-resources/>, the website of the NLECTC System's Small, Rural, Tribal and Border Regional Center.





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