



PART 2 PREPARATION

NEA SCHOOL GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

GUIDE



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About the National Education Association and Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund

The [National Education Association \(NEA\)](#) is more than 3 million people—educators, students, activists, workers, parents, neighbors, and friends—who believe in the opportunity for all students and the power of public education to transform lives and create a more just and inclusive society. NEA has affiliate organizations in every state and more than 14,000 communities across the United States. The Association brings the expertise, drive, and dedication of our educators and allies to focus on providing the best public education to each and every student across race, place, background, and ability. Our members work at every level of education—from prekindergarten through graduate-level university programs—and in other types of public service.

The NEA Health and Safety Program, within the Association’s Education Policy and Implementation Center (EPIC), partnered with Everytown’s team to develop this guide. It draws on the expertise and work of several centers, departments, and initiatives across the organization, including EPIC, the Center for Advocacy and Political Action, the Center for Communications, the Center for Organizing and Affiliate Support, the Center for Professional Excellence and Student Learning, the Office of General Counsel, and the Center for Racial and Social Justice. Audrey Soglin—whose career in public education includes service as the executive director of the Illinois Education Association, a local association president, and a 25-year classroom teacher—worked with the Health and Safety Program staff as a consultant on this project.

The guidance and feedback of NEA state and local affiliate leaders, staff, and members have been crucial in conceptualizing, developing, and fine-tuning this guide, which incorporates, in part, material from the [NEA School Crisis Guide](#), published in 2018. You can contact the NEA Health and Safety Program at healthandsafetyprogram@nea.org and find [NEA Health and Safety Program content](#) on NEA’s website.

The staff of Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund—the education, research, and litigation arm of Everytown for Gun Safety (Everytown)—provided their expertise on gun violence prevention, research, and education to help create a comprehensive and data-driven resource. As the nation’s largest gun violence prevention organization, Everytown has more than 10 million supporters and more than 700,000 donors, including parents and guardians, students, survivors, veterans, mayors, and everyday people throughout the United States who are fighting for commonsense gun safety measures that can help save lives. The Everytown Support Fund seeks to improve our understanding of the causes of gun violence and help reduce it by conducting ground-breaking research, developing evidence-based policies, communicating this knowledge to the public, and advancing gun safety and gun violence prevention in communities and the courts.

The leadership and guidance from subject matter experts on gun violence prevention at Everytown were pivotal in the content creation and development of this guide. You can contact Everytown Support Fund’s team at info@everytown.org and find their Research and Policy content on [Everytown Support Fund’s website](#).

Letter from NEA President Becky Pringle

On April 20, 1999, I had been a middle-school science teacher in Pennsylvania for 23 years. None of my two decades of experience and training had prepared me to answer the questions my frightened students had about the shooting happening at Columbine High School that day. Along with my fellow educators, I shared the country's profound shock and grief that a school building—a place that should always be safe—had become the site of a massacre. The only thing that comforted us was the belief that this—then the deadliest mass shooting at a K-12 school in U.S. history—was a terrible anomaly. We believed our country would learn from the tragedy and take every measure to ensure it never happened again.

But the Columbine death toll was surpassed at Sandy Hook Elementary School...and Parkland High School...and Uvalde's Robb Elementary School. Each time, we thought, "They have to do something now." But close to 400 school shootings later, the biggest change seemed to be in 2020, when firearms finally surpassed car accidents and disease to become the No. 1 killer of children in America.

We must put a stop to the gun violence that continues to terrorize our students, our educators, families, and communities. As President Biden, who finally passed the most comprehensive gun safety legislation in 30 years, said, "We all want our kids to have the freedom to learn to read and to write instead of learning how to duck and cover in a classroom."

Gun violence in schools affects all students and educators, and its ripple effects spread out to the entire community. There is the constant fear that your school, your children, will be the next victims. According to the American Psychological Association's report, "Stress in America 2023: A Nation Recovering from Collective Trauma," 56 percent of U.S. adults report mass shootings as a significant source of stress. And we know that the long-term effects of toxic stress can change the brain and body's makeup, particularly for children, severely affecting both physical and mental health.

According to the Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, with whom NEA partnered to create this guide, 107 incidents of gun violence on school grounds have already caused 29 deaths and injured 61 people—and this is just during the first five months of 2024.

This is unacceptable. No matter how many school shootings we have seen happen, they are just as unacceptable today as they were in 1999. We cannot, we must not, accept the lie that there's nothing we can do to stop them.

While we are grateful for the strides President Biden has made, it is clear that more still needs to be done, which is why NEA set out to issue a call to action to end gun violence in our schools and communities. The result is this guide—a collection of hundreds of calls to action for educators; for school district, college, and university boards and administrators; for politicians; and for students, parents, and families. We look to the day when this guide will be unnecessary and obsolete, but for now, we—the members of this nation's largest labor union—must focus our attention on how to end gun violence in our schools and our communities.

And we must take a hard look at what that violence really looks like. While the picture most people have in their minds about schools and guns involves young White male shooters and White victims, the truth is that our students of color are disproportionately affected by gun violence. According to Everytown, “2 in 3 incidents of gunfire on school grounds from 2013 to 2021 occurred in schools where one or more racial and/or ethnic minorities constituted a majority of the student population.”

The good news is that gun violence is preventable. Not by absurd and impossible measures like arming teachers or putting armed security officers in every school, but through commonsense gun laws and trauma-informed schools that create safe environments and that have the staffing and mental health resources necessary to do it right.

The guide focuses on the roles of state and local education association leaders, staff, building representatives, faculty liaisons, and more. But it is meant to serve as a bridge between what NEA affiliates can do to facilitate gun violence prevention, preparation, response, and recovery and the crucial work of so many others in the broader school community. We know that each community varies with respect to their approach to guns and their experiences with gun violence. This guide is designed to help educators of all types and all levels of experience join with others to end gun violence in our schools.

NEA, we must find a way forward together. We must stop our children—our hope for the future—from continuing to fall prey to this country’s epidemic of gun violence. And we must help the survivors recover and succeed despite their trauma.

Thank you for picking up this guide and committing to being part of the solution!



Rebecca S. Pringle
President, National Education Association

Letter from Moms Demand Action Executive Director Angela Ferrell-Zabala

Gun violence is the No. 1 killer of children in America.

This is a statistic I say often, but it never becomes less jarring. And while this fact encompasses more than just school shootings, it is undeniable that our classrooms are not the safe havens that they should be.

Students deserve the freedom to live, learn, and play without the constant threat of gun violence. But this is our current reality, caused by a reckless gun industry, a corrupt gun lobby, and extremist lawmakers who refuse to take decisive action.

I know that with an issue this large and complex, a safer future can often feel out of reach. The truth is, there's no one-size-fits-all answer to preventing gun violence—but we do have the solutions to this crisis. We need to create powerful, informed networks in our communities that know how to keep our children safe. It will take all of us—educators, administrators, parents, students, law enforcement, mental health professionals, advocates, and policymakers—working together to create change.

To address this urgent need, we are proud to partner with the National Education Association to introduce a comprehensive guide that equips Pre-K-12 schools and higher education institutions with resources, recommendations, and evidence-based solutions for gun violence prevention. This new tool is intentionally organized into four parts: Prevention of, Preparation for, Response to, and Recovery from gun-related incidents on school grounds—because we've seen how important it is not only to prevent gun violence but also to heal from the trauma when it does occur.

As a mother of four children myself, I've seen up close how our gun violence crisis shapes the educational experiences and well-being of our students. But we cannot—and will not—normalize the fact that our children live in fear of being shot in their classrooms. This guide serves not just as a collection of strategies, but as a call to action for protecting young people in America.

I am hopeful that with dedication, collaboration, and the right tools, we will save lives. This is a necessary step in that direction, and our movement is here to support you every step of the way.

Thank you for your commitment. Together, I know that a safer future is possible.

In solidarity,



Angela Ferrell-Zabala
Executive Director of Moms Demand Action

Introduction

WHY THIS GUIDE

The United States suffers from an epidemic of gun violence. Every day, more than 120 people are killed by guns, and more than 200 are shot and wounded (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2024-j). Less than 1 percent of gun deaths per year occur on school grounds, but the impact extends far beyond these casualties: Gun violence shapes the lives of millions of people in this country who witness it, who know the victims, or who live in fear of the next shooting. Gun violence has a profoundly harmful impact on students, educators, families, and communities.

For most of this country's history, infectious diseases and car accidents constituted the greatest risks to childhood health, but today, gun violence is the No. 1 cause of death for children and teens. Each year, more than 4,000 children and teens are shot and killed, and more than 17,000 are shot and wounded (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2024-k). Homicides account for roughly 6 in 10 gun deaths among children (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2024-k), and gun suicides are on the rise—a public health crisis (American Public Health Association, 2023) that communities and elected officials can prevent. In the United States, an estimated 3 million children per year are exposed to shootings (Finkelhor et al., 2015), and the trauma of witnessing shootings—whether in their schools, communities, or homes—can have a devastating impact on their lives. The Stress in America survey provides ample evidence of the collective trauma our country faces, including from mass shootings (American Psychological Association, 2023).

The Everytown Support Fund's [Gunfire on School Grounds](#) database details the myriad ways in which gun violence manifests in U.S. schools. Over the past 11 years, the Everytown Support Fund has identified at least 1,200 incidents of a firearm discharging a live round inside or into a school building or on or onto school grounds. Of these incidents, 841 occurred on the grounds of a prekindergarten, elementary, middle, or high school, resulting in 270 people killed and 580 people wounded. In the 326 incidents that occurred on university or college campuses during that time period, 120 people were killed and another 251 were wounded (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2024-b).

Students exposed to the trauma of violence, crime, and abuse are more likely to suffer from substance use disorders, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); fail or have difficulties in school; and engage in criminal activity (Finkelhor et al., 2015); (Cronholm et al., 2015). Even for those who have not experienced gun violence at school, the trauma of lockdowns and active shooter drills—which are happening with notable frequency—leaves students, educators, and their families across the country experiencing firsthand the impact of fear from the anticipation of gun violence.

The National Education Association (NEA) remains committed to ending the scourge of gun violence. As NEA President Becky Pringle told the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Reform in testimony urging Congress to act to end gun violence, “Inaction means we are willing to accept what should be unacceptable to us all” (NEA, 2022-b).

With attention to the disproportionate impact of gun violence on communities of color, NEA advocates in Congress, develops resources and trainings, encourages media and academic coverage of the subject, mobilizes members and communities, and engages with partners across the country to end gun violence. However, more must be done. To further address gun violence in our schools at every level of education, in July 2022, the NEA Representative Assembly (RA)—the Association’s highest decision-making body—directed NEA to issue a national call to action to help ensure that all students, educators, schools, campuses, and communities are safe from the epidemic of gun violence.

Working with an NEA-wide team that meets regularly to assess, plan, and work toward the ambitious goal set by the RA, the Association has convened members, leaders, and staff across the country to help develop strategies and identify needed actions. As part of its call to action, NEA has partnered with the Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund (Everytown Support Fund) to produce the NEA School Gun Violence Prevention and Response Guide. The guide helps NEA’s state and local leaders, staff, and worksite leaders—like building representatives and faculty liaisons—prevent, prepare for, respond to, and facilitate recovery from gun violence in all education settings.

Ideally, this guide will be used for planning and advocacy that should already be taking place in Pre-K-12 schools and institutions of higher education. By focusing on the roles of association leaders, staff, and worksite leaders, like building representatives and faculty liaisons, it is meant to complement—not supplant—planning, preparation, and action by school administrators.



www.nea.org

www.everytownsupportfund.org

ORGANIZATION AND FOCUS OF THIS GUIDE

We published the guide’s four sections—on prevention, preparation, response, and recovery—separately to facilitate their use. Each part includes material for Pre-K–12 schools and institutions of higher education and for all categories of employees.

This guide uses the term “educators” broadly to refer to NEA’s rich and diverse membership, including aspiring educators; classroom teachers; education support professionals (ESPs), such as paraeducators and clerical service, custodial and maintenance, food service, health and student service, security, skilled trades, technical service, and transportation workers; the faculty, staff, and graduate workers in colleges and universities; and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP), like school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, speech-language pathologists, and school librarians.

The guide presents resources, tools, recommended practices, and checklists for incorporating gun violence-related strategies into the school crisis prevention and response plans of associations, Pre-K–12 schools, and institutions of higher education.

The Guide’s Checklists and Resources

The guide includes separate checklists for state leaders and staff and for local leaders, staff, and building representatives, department liaisons, department representatives, and other educators taking on worksite leadership roles.

The prevention, preparation, and recovery checklists start with steps for people newer to this work and advance to action items for those who are expanding their ongoing work. People who are broadening and deepening their engagement are likely to have already taken many of the early steps identified in the checklists. The response-related checklists outline actions based on the time elapsed since the gun incident: the first few hours, the first 12 hours, and the first week and beyond.

The end of the guide includes detail on all URLs of the resources hyperlinked throughout the body of the document.

The Guide's Four Main Sections

- 1 PREVENTION:** Prevention aims to reduce the risk and prevent the occurrence of gun violence incidents on school grounds, on campuses, and in communities. It includes taking actions to foster a positive and safe school climate and limit access to firearms that could be used in acts of school violence. This section presents strategies to help schools plan for trauma-informed crisis intervention practices, promote secure storage of guns, increase mental health and suicide prevention supports, integrate community violence intervention programs into schools, advocate for legislation that limits the presence of guns in schools, and take other steps to address gun violence.

- 2 PREPARATION:** Preparation involves planning for gun violence-related scenarios and continually planning, practicing, and evaluating the efficacy of responses. The goals are to minimize emotional, psychological, and physical harm when incidents occur and to have a system in place for immediate, effective response and recovery, which includes establishing crucial relationships with school administrators and community groups. The preparation and prevention phases often occur simultaneously and are ongoing. This section includes strategies to install evidence-based security upgrades to prevent shooters' access to education settings, examine the efficacy and potential harm of active shooter drills and school policing, and establish the processes and relationships that will facilitate effective responses.

- 3 RESPONSE:** The response phase includes action steps to minimize the harm of gun violence to students, educators of all types, and their families. The focus is short-term and requires coordination and rapid response during and immediately after a gun violence incident. The checklist for this section includes strategies and action steps based on how long ago the gun incident took place—the first few hours, the first 12 hours, and the first week and beyond. It also includes recommendations on how to speak with students about gun violence.

- 4 RECOVERY:** Recovery focuses on coping with trauma after a gun violence incident and restoring a safe and healthy school environment. It is imperative to focus on supporting the emotional, physical, and psychological health of students, educators, and their families. This section includes approaches to supporting recovery efforts, providing care and support to those impacted by gun violence incidents, and evaluating the planning and incident response to identify areas that need improvement or adjustment.

The NEA Gun Violence Prevention and Response Guide

FOUR PHASES OF WORK TO ADDRESS GUN VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

1

PREVENT

- Understand Guns in Schools
- Consider ACEs, Trauma, and Toxic Stress
- Apply Evidence-Based Prevention Strategies
- Foster Safe and Supportive Schools
- Implement Education and Advocacy Strategies
- Carry Out Plans to Prevent Gun Violence

2

PREPARE

- Adopt Evidence-Based Approaches to Security
- Examine School Policing and Active Shooter Drills
- Understand, Assess, Improve, and Work with Emergency Operations Plans
- Put the Pieces in Place to Facilitate Response and Recovery

3

RESPOND

- Know How to Talk with Students About Gun Violence
- Support College Students After Gun Violence
- Implement Successful Communications Strategies
- Respond in a Deliberate, Effective Manner

4

RECOVER

- Understand Gun Violence Trauma
- Communicate Supportively
- Provide Care and Support
- Foster and Rely on Community Partnerships
- Evaluate and Improve Your Incident Response



PART 2:

Gun Violence Preparation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND CHECKLISTS

The preparation section of the NEA School Gun Violence Prevention and Response Guide includes guidance on planning for gun-related scenarios and practicing, evaluating, and updating gun violence-related plans. It offers information on security upgrades to prevent shooters from accessing education settings like school buildings, classrooms, and campus facilities while also ensuring conditions remain welcoming and not prison-like. This section also examines the efficacy and potential harm of active shooter drills and policing. For broader context and related recommendations, consult the other sections of this guide: Part One—Prevention, Part Three—Response, and Part Four—Recovery.

For state affiliate leaders and staff and for local leaders, staff, and worksite leaders—like building representatives and faculty liaisons—the preparation section provides both association-focused and education- and community-related content, including advocacy opportunities and strategies. For example, an association should not be responsible for developing a school district, college, or university emergency operations plan, but association leaders, staff, and worksite leaders must know the details of those plans, where the association and its members fit in, how to improve plans, and ways to ensure appropriate association engagement when Pre-K-12 schools and institutions of higher education respond to incidents of gun violence. For state and local associations, this section also includes information on how to develop protocols and relationships to facilitate responses to gun-related incidents.

Evidence-Based Security Measures

The following evidence-supported strategies help protect the safety of students and educators in education settings.

- 1 Secure Entryways and Locks:** Controlling access is the most effective physical security measure to keep shooters out of buildings. Strategies for preventing unauthorized access to education settings include installing security fencing, establishing single access points, and ensuring all exit-point doors are self-closing and lock upon closing.

- 2 Examine School Policing:** Partnerships among law enforcement groups, security personnel, and Pre-K–12 schools and institutions of higher education can play vital roles in safety. The keys to these partnerships are training, clear roles, and accountability. If education settings do choose to have security personnel intervene in violent and dangerous situations, those personnel must be carefully selected and trained in trauma-informed practices and de-escalation techniques.
- 3 Rethink Active Shooter Drills:** Training for educators on how to respond to active shooter incidents is important; however, there is no compelling evidence that including students in such drills has any value in preventing shootings or protecting the school community. If a workplace insists on including students, they must adopt strategies to mitigate the harm of such drills.
- 4 Understand and Engage with Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs):** Developed by Pre-K–12 schools and institutions of higher education, EOPs provide clear and uniform guidance and procedures for emergency planning and response. EOPs are important to the association because they include information on lockdown procedures, active shooter drills, and other policies of concern. In addition, implementing and practicing the processes in the EOP can save lives. Understanding the EOP process helps leaders and staff communicate with members about what the district and/or the school is doing to prepare and get a clearer sense of where their influence can make a difference and what roles the association can play.

Components of an EOP include a planning team; concept of operations (an overall plan); assigned responsibilities; control and coordination efforts; training and exercises; development and maintenance; legal basis for operations; and functional annexes, including lockdowns; evacuation; accounting for all students, educators, and visitors; communications; family reunification; public, medical, and mental health; and recovery.

Long-Term Media and Communications Strategy

To prepare for a gun violence incident, it is crucial to develop emergency tools in advance for swift deployment. Responsible parties should be ready to issue media statements, press releases, and internal messages to members, families, and other members of the community. The association should also have contingency plans for alternate systems of communication in case of cell tower outages or power failures and for those students and families without regular access to computers.

It is important for local and state association leaders to understand how and with whom they will interact after a gun incident. Identifying the right association leaders and the correct administration officials before an incident saves valuable time and can impact the safety of students and educators. It is also an opportunity for leaders to build relationships with relevant community organizations, including crisis response and racial and social justice organizations. There are often parent groups and other organizations concerned about gun violence that would welcome partnerships with educators.

GUN VIOLENCE PREPARATION

SUMMARY ACTION CHECKLIST: PREPARATION: STATE

STATE PRESIDENTS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS					
Newer to the Work: For those beginning to work on gun violence preparation issues					
	To Do	Where to find it, contacts, etc.	Complete	Assigned to	Next steps, follow up, dates, not applicable, etc.
1	Determine, as appropriate, who will carry out to-do list items for the association.				
2	Ensure local association leaders, staff, and worksite leaders have this guide.				
3	Establish an opportunity for association leaders and staff to review and discuss this guide.				
4	Develop a plan for association leaders that identifies roles and responsibilities in case of a gun incident.				
5	Prepare a short description of the state's process for addressing gun violence incidents, including contacts, for local associations.				
6	Identify and build a relationship with relevant crisis-response agencies at the state level.				
7	If collective bargaining takes place, review or develop state bargaining guidance to include gun violence-related content; review NEA's collective bargaining language related to gun violence for applicable provisions . If bargaining does not take place, review the language for potential adoption of school/campus policy.				
8	Develop or deepen relationships with organizations championing civil rights; addressing gun violence; supporting parents, family members, higher education partners, and spouses; and promoting student health. Discuss approaches to and mutual opportunities for support on issues related to gun violence.				

STATE PRESIDENTS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Newer to the Work: For those beginning to work on gun violence preparation issues

	To Do	Where to find it, contacts, etc.	Complete	Assigned to	Next steps, follow up, dates, not applicable, etc.
9	Develop talking points and statements that can be updated and revised, as necessary, for local associations.				
10	Engage with state organizations representing administrators, principals, and other school employees to build cooperative approaches to addressing gun violence.				

SUMMARY ACTION CHECKLIST: PREPARATION: STATE

STATE PRESIDENTS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Expanding the Work: For those deepening or broadening ongoing work on gun violence preparation issues

	To Do	Where to find it, contacts, etc.	Complete	Assigned to	Next steps, follow up, dates, not applicable, etc.
1	Work with administration contacts to ensure creation of emergency operations plans with association participation or, if the plans already exist, association participation in their review and revision.				
2	Create opportunities to educate members about EOPs and how they can interact with them.				
3	Obtain school security planning documents and proposals, engaging members to understand and review them and advocate, where necessary, for evidence-based trauma-informed approaches.				
4	Develop partnerships with organizations championing civil rights; addressing gun violence; supporting parents, family members, higher education partners, and spouses; and promoting student health.				

SUMMARY ACTION CHECKLIST: PREPARATION: LOCAL

LOCAL PRESIDENTS, STAFF, AND WORKSITE LEADERS					
Newer to the Work: For those beginning to work on gun violence preparation issues					
	To Do	Where to find it, contacts, etc.	Complete	Assigned to	Next steps, follow up, dates, not applicable, etc.
1	Determine who will carry out to-do list items, as appropriate, for the association.				
2	Ensure that local association leaders, staff, and worksite leaders have this guide.				
3	Establish an opportunity for association leaders, staff, and worksite leaders to review and discuss this guide.				
4	Learn about gun violence-related protocols, staff assignments, points of contact, and resources from the state association; ensure that this information is kept up-to-date and distributed to the local association gun violence and/or school safety team.				
5	Develop an association plan that includes roles and responsibilities in case of a gun violence incident.				
6	Prepare a short summary of local association procedures in case of a gun violence incident.				
7	Identify and build relationships with relevant crisis response teams within school administrations; if no such teams exists, advocate for the creation of one.				
8	Ensure that the association has one established point of contact and a plan for communicating with school administration after a gun violence incident; establish or deepen the working relationship between contacts.				
9	Obtain and maintain up-to-date electronic and hard copies of members' class rosters and work assignments.				
10	Develop and distribute information to all members on how to communicate with the local association in case members are directly involved in gun violence incidents; include points of contact.				

LOCAL PRESIDENTS, STAFF, AND WORKSITE LEADERS

Newer to the Work: For those beginning to work on gun violence preparation issues

	To Do	Where to find it, contacts, etc.	Complete	Assigned to	Next steps, follow up, dates, not applicable, etc.
11	Advocate for the installation of evidence-based security and access-control measures consistent with maintaining welcoming environments.				
12	If collective bargaining takes place, review NEA's collective bargaining language related to gun violence for applicable provisions . If bargaining does not take place, review the language for potential school/campus policy adoption.				
13	Develop or deepen relationships with organizations championing civil rights; countering gun violence; supporting parents, family members, higher education partners, and spouses; and promoting student health. Discuss approaches to and mutual opportunities for support on issues related to gun violence.				

SUMMARY ACTION CHECKLIST: PREPARATION: LOCAL

LOCAL PRESIDENTS, STAFF, AND WORKSITE LEADERS

Expanding the Work: For those deepening or broadening ongoing work on gun violence preparation issues

	To Do	Where to find it, contacts, etc.	Complete	Assigned to	Next steps, follow up, dates, not applicable, etc.
1	Work with administration contacts to ensure creation of emergency operations plans with association participation or, if the plans exist, association participation in their review and revision.				
2	Create opportunities to educate members about school administration EOPs and how they can interact with them.				
3	Develop partnerships with organizations championing civil rights; countering gun violence; supporting parents, family members, higher education partners, and spouses; and promoting student health.				

PREPARING FOR INCIDENTS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Preparing for incidents of gun violence requires consideration of physical security, emergency operations plans, association protocols, development of media-related and other communications strategies, and the relationships and partnerships that facilitate effective work on gun violence. This component of the guide’s material on preparing for incidents of gun violence addresses each of these factors.

Employ Evidence-Based Approaches to Physical Security

Physical security is a critical intervention to keep guns out of education settings. Technology-based safety measures have evolved over the last decade and are increasingly common (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021); (Zhang, Musu-Gillette, & Oudekerk, 2016). Such measures include bulletproof windows, metal detectors, artificial intelligence for weapons detection, security cameras, and facial recognition technology. Security equipment can have a negative impact on students, and the effectiveness of some of these approaches has yet to be well-researched (Hankin, Hertz, & Simon, 2011); (Mayer & Leone, 1999).

NEA recognizes that school and college facilities and grounds should reflect [welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environments for all students, parents, families, and communities](#) and opposes the “[c]onstruction of prison-like school environments that employ metal detectors, random searches, and other building and design elements that diminish a thriving and nurturing school climate” (NEA, 2022). According to the American Psychological Association, implementing prison-like security measures in places like education settings and hospitals fosters a sense of threat, not safety. Additionally, these hardening measures, which are designed to prevent violence, often fail to address the most prevalent form of school-based violence and bullying (Hulac et al., 2024). NEA recognizes the significance of physical school facilities as a reflection of what educators want our schools to be—welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environments for our students, parents/guardians, and communities.

For these and other reasons, NEA opposes prison-like school environments that employ metal detectors, random searches, and other building and design elements that diminish a thriving and nurturing school climate.

Here are examples of common school security measures:

- **Entryways and Locks:** Controlling access is a highly effective physical security measure to keep shooters out of buildings. Most experts, including members of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission and the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, agree that the ability to control access must be a component of every school security plan (Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public

Safety Commission, 2019); (Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, 2015). Strategies for preventing unauthorized access to school buildings and campuses include installing security fencing, establishing single access points, and ensuring that all exit-point doors are self-closing and lock upon closing. State legislatures should provide funding for these basic access control measures. Internal door locks can serve as a secondary measure, allowing educators to lock doors from inside classrooms, buildings, and facilities. This protects students and provides law enforcement groups time to address threats. During mass shooting incidents at Sandy Hook Elementary School and Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, lack of dual-locking or inside-locking classroom doors exposed educators and students to danger.



- **Alarms/Alert Systems:** Alarm and alert systems warn students and educators when there is an active shooter on school grounds or on a college campus. Such systems must be checked and updated regularly and the alert should differ from everyday announcements. The mass school shooting at Robb Elementary School in Texas brought such issues to light: The system’s use for non-gun-violence-related announcements diluted its effectiveness, and poor internet connectivity hampered its reach (Texas House of Representatives Investigative Committee on the Robb Elementary Shooting, 2022).
- **Bulletproofing:** Bulletproof glass can be effective but is very costly. Strategically placed tempered glass or ballistic film, which is a thin layer of polyurethane that can be applied to existing windows, may be a more economical way to slow down an intruder. This could allow more time for educators to activate safety protocols and for response teams to arrive (3M, 2024).
- **Metal Detectors:** NEA opposes the use of metal detectors in education settings. A research review of metal detector efficacy found mixed results, showing metal detectors could potentially reduce weapon carrying in schools (though this assessment did not specifically report on firearm carrying) but could also create a less trusting school environment. Visible security measures, such as metal detectors, also raise the possibility of “attack location drift,” which means motivated student shooters who are aware of metal detectors may alter their locations of attack to places like school buses, parking lots, or athletic events (Hankin, Hertz, & Simon, 2011); (Price & Khubchandani, 2019).
- **Security Cameras and Facial Recognition:** The effects of security cameras on behavior in schools have yet to be extensively studied. While some research has found that conspicuous security cameras in other types of settings may reduce unruly public behavior and increase pro-social or helping behavior (Borum et al., 2010), it should be noted that perpetrators of school shootings may not care whether they are apprehended and thus may be undeterred by cameras (The Governor’s Columbine Review Commission, 2001). A major concern about facial recognition software, in particular, is that it can be inaccurate and may disproportionately affect students of color, a problem exacerbated by the overreliance on intense surveillance measures in education settings that serve primarily students of color (Nance, 2017). Because facial recognition technology can be inaccurate, it can lead to students being punished for offenses they did not commit (Coyle & Curr III, 2018).

Examine School Policing

School resource officers and school security personnel should be properly trained to work with mental health professionals and other educators to apply trauma-informed practices, de-escalation measures, and crisis intervention practices. They should also receive implicit bias training, with the broad goal of fostering a safe, welcoming, and inclusive school community.

Working with Security Personnel to Create Positive School Climates

Unarmed security personnel can play a crucial role in establishing positive school climates and effective, student-supported school policies. Security personnel trained in trauma-informed and de-escalation practices can resolve conflicts before they turn violent. These individuals often live in the same communities as students and can serve as community liaisons, role models, and mentors for students, building long-term trusting relationships with families and students.

“School security personnel are often the first adults [that] students see when they walk into the school building. Reinforcing the significant contribution of security professionals to positive school climates and integrating them into school security planning and response is one way we can move toward stopping the trend of school gun violence in this country—and make sure we never have to open the NEA School Gun Violence Prevention and Response Guide” (Frazier, 2024).

Policing in education settings must include continual reviews of discipline practices, data collection processes, and audits and transparency of budgetary allocation for school resource officers, private security, and other law enforcement in schools. Accountability measures for school resource officers and law enforcement engaging with children and students must be in place and reinforced.

NEA opposes the use of law enforcement personnel or private security in the discipline process and opposes hiring private security to perform the roles of school resource officers or sworn law enforcement officers. The Association believes that arming education employees as a preventative measure against armed intruders creates an unsafe environment, placing students and school personnel at greater risk. For additional information, see “Do Not Arm Teachers or Other Educators,” in Part 1 of this guide.

Relentless and frightening school gun violence and media coverage of the incidents have created an earnest desire from school communities for protection. However, the practice of policing in schools has not been shown to reduce school shooting deaths. One study examined 179 shootings on school grounds from 1999 to 2018 and found no evidence that school resource officers in schools reduced deaths or injuries from school shooting incidents (Livingston et al., 2019). Similarly, another study found that while school resource officers reduced some forms of violence in schools, they did not prevent gun violence-related incidents and concurrently intensified suspensions, expulsions, police referrals, and arrests (Sorensen et al., 2023). An analysis examining 133 school shootings from 1980 to 2019 found that having an armed officer at the school did not act as a deterrent for school shooters; instead, it suggested that an armed officer may serve as incentive, with their presence linked to increased casualties after a perpetrator’s use of assault rifles or submachine guns (Peterson et al., 2021).

A national report using U.S. Department of Education data (2015–2016) found that having police in schools was associated with 3.5 times as many arrests compared to those schools without police. The report, which identified a disproportionate impact on students of color, found that funding decisions prioritized policing over student mental health in schools; it also identified more severe consequences in student criminalization and lower academic outcomes for students of color. Black students were three times more likely than White students to be arrested, and Indigenous students were twice as likely as White students to be arrested. Latino/a/x

students were also more likely to be arrested than their White counterparts (Whitaker et al., 2019). Research has also found that LGBTQ+ and gender-nonconforming students have a higher likelihood of being stopped by police, suspended, expelled, or arrested, and they often report feeling hostility from law enforcement groups in schools (Lambda Legal, 2015); (Himmelstein & Bruckner, 2011).

If created thoughtfully and carefully, partnerships among law enforcement groups, security personnel, and schools can play vital roles in school safety. Providing appropriate training, establishing clear roles, and strengthening accountability practices are key to the success of these partnerships.

In districts that choose or are required to have a security presence, the security professionals should have an exclusively protective role and be integrated within the school community, be answerable directly to school leaders, and receive training as peace officers, with an extensive focus on trauma-informed, de-escalation, and minimum-use-of-force techniques.

Rethink Active Shooter Drills

Plans, such as emergency operations plans (EOPs), that include active shooter drills must minimize harms from such drills. Although less than 1 percent of gun deaths per year occur on school grounds (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2024-b), drills to prepare students and educators have become commonplace. However, there is no strong conclusive evidence affirming the value of these drills for protecting the school community when shootings do occur. There is good reason to think they are ineffective, in part, because the preparedness procedures are being shared with the very individuals most likely to perpetrate a school shooting: former and current students.

NEA supports training for educators on how to respond to active shooter incidents; however, the Association does not recommend these drills for students. Educators should carefully consider the impacts before conducting live drills that involve students. Everytown partnered with [Georgia Institute of Technology's Social Dynamics and Wellbeing Lab](#) to study the immediate and long-term impacts of active shooter drills on the health and well-being of students, educators, and parents. The research showed that students and educators experienced distress and, sometimes, lasting trauma as a result of active shooter drills (EISherief, 2021). Putting a person in a scenario with the perceived threat of gun violence may activate a post-traumatic stress response, such as negative and distressing changes in thoughts, emotions, and behaviors for those who have a lived experience of gun violence.

If students must participate in active shooter drills, here are some helpful tips and resources to mitigate the harm that such drills can cause.

Before facilitating an active shooter drill:

- Brief educators on how to identify common signs of trauma before the drill; students who have experienced previous traumas, such as domestic violence or prior exposure to gun violence, may be particularly vulnerable to intense feelings and reactions.
- Provide advanced notice of planned drills to parents and educators and allow parents to opt their children out of the drill; plan alternative programming to accommodate students who choose not to participate.
- Lead an age-appropriate, trauma-informed conversation with students prior to the drill in which a school psychologist, counselor, or social worker facilitates the conversation, detailing what will happen during the drill and providing coping skills to use if they become dysregulated.

During an active shooter drill:

- Avoid simulating actual violence or injuries because research shows that [drills mimicking real events are especially traumatic](#) for students, parents, and educators (Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, 2024-l).
- Remind students and educators through an announcement at the beginning of the drill that there is not an active shooter threat; surprise drills are distressing and may desensitize students to the threat of violence, which can prompt them to under-respond in the event of an actual active shooter situation.
- Supportively remove students who are showing symptoms of trauma during the drill and give them the opportunity to speak with on-site school mental health professionals or other trained educators to help manage traumatic memories or strong emotions.

After facilitating an active shooter drill:

- Allow all students and educators to connect with on-site school mental health professionals since it is common for students and educators to have heightened anxiety or other emotions after an active shooter drill.
- Evaluate results, successes, and learning opportunities to track data over time and create a plan to keep students safe.

For more information, see the National Child Traumatic Stress Network’s [comprehensive guide on how to create active shooter drills](#) (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, n.d.). The American Academy of Pediatrics also frames [concerns and considerations](#) related to such drills (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2020).

Review and Practice Emergency Operations Plans

Emergency operations plans (EOPs) provide clear and uniform guidance and procedures for emergency planning and response. In the 2021–2022 school year, 96 percent of public K–12 schools had an active shooter plan (Burr, Kemp, & Wang, 2024). Ideally, the school team developing and revising an EOP collaborates with school and community stakeholders, including association leadership and members, other unions, parents and guardians, and, when age-appropriate, students.

A variety of models can be used to create EOPs, and state departments of education or other agencies as well as local jurisdictions are likely to have requirements and guidance of their own. The purpose of this NEA guide is not to have state or local associations create EOPs but instead to help association leaders, staff, and worksite leaders understand, assess, improve, and engage with them. It is important to help all stakeholders understand how EOPs can fit into their own planning for gun violence incidents.

Given the variation in state and local EOP-related requirements and guidance, the NEA guide uses two models from the U.S. Department of Education: one for K–12 schools and one for institutions of higher education (U.S. Department of Education, et al., 2013-a); (U.S. Department of Education, et al., 2013-b).

A wide range of education stakeholders—and NEA members—have crucial insights, understanding, and perspective that will enhance the planning and assessment processes and outcomes. Districts and higher education institutions should provide language guidance and resources and communication-related support to integrate member input. For example, the U.S. Department of Education notes that continuity of services in the event of an emergency implicates essential functions like business services, communications, computer and systems support, facilities maintenance, safety and security, and continuity of teaching and learning (U.S. Department of Education, et al., 2013-a); (U.S. Department of Education, et al., 2013-b). These are positions

often held by NEA members, who are well-placed to draw on their daily work to identify and assess hazards and needed responses.

EOP language on gun violence must also explicitly address the needs of students and educators with disabilities. Sixty-seven percent of students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) spend more than 80 percent of their time in the general education classroom (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). As a result, general educators must be aware of necessary IEP supports for students with disabilities in case of emergencies, including incidents of gun violence. Educators who have worked with students with disabilities can assist with understanding the breadth of necessary EOP responses, including for people with post-traumatic stress; individuals with non-apparent disabilities; students and educators with autism; and students and educators who are hearing impaired, have low vision, or have developmental or mobility disabilities or other conditions that may warrant an individualized response.



The Importance of School Emergency Operations Plans to the Association

Implementing and practicing the processes detailed in an EOP can save lives. These plans provide guidance on:

- A range of possible hazards and emergencies;
- Lockdown procedures, active shooter drills, and other policies of concern; and
- The roles and responsibilities of school administrators during an emergency, which provides transparency and a clearer sense of how the association may fit in.

By understanding the content and processes included in EOPs, association leaders and staff can more effectively communicate with members about what the district and/or school is doing to prepare for a gun violence incident. Leaders and staff can also rely on that understanding to develop and implement plans for engaging with administrators on EOPs, including members in EOP processes and committees, and educating members about effective responses to gun violence incidents.

The EOP Process

In both K-12 and higher education contexts, the U.S. Department of Education approaches EOPs with a six-step process, recommending each step be carried out by the planning team. The department noted, “The common thread found in successful operations is that participating organizations have understood and accepted their roles” (U.S. Department of Education, et al., 2013-a); (U.S. Department of Education, et al., 2013-b).

In reviewing the key components of EOPs, consider how the following association-related questions may apply to each component:

- What association leadership and member expertise could be helpful on the team or committee?
- Who do you know on an existing team or committee who can help expand participation to include association leaders and members?
- What relationships and partnerships do you have that could bring community voices into the process?

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
FORM A COLLABORATIVE PLANNING TEAM	UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION	DETERMINE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	DEVELOP PLAN	PLAN, PREPARE, REVIEW, AND APPROVE	PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE
Identify Core Planning Team	Identify Threats and Hazards	Develop Goals	Identify Courses of Action	Format the Plan	Train Stakeholders
Form a Common Framework	Assess Risk	Develop Objectives		Write the Plan	Exercise the Plan
Define and Assign Roles and Responsibilities	Prioritize Threats and Hazards			Review the Plan	Review, Revise, and Maintain the Plan
Determine a Regular Schedule of Meetings				Approve and Share the Plan	

Figure 1. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans, Washington, DC, 2013, p. 5.

- How well do EOPs reflect the diverse and intersectional perspectives and experiences of Native People and People of Color, LGBTQ+, and from all economic backgrounds and abilities?
- How might association advocacy improve these EOP components?
- What formal role do association leaders and members play in this process?
- What other documents, including collective bargaining agreements and school board policies, exist with content relevant to EOPs?
- How might the association address EOP-related concerns through collective bargaining and administrative policy?
- What existing association and labor-management committees exist that do or can take on EOP-related issues that address gun violence, including health and safety committees, violence committees, and school health committees?

Components of an EOP

Planning Team: The team should consist of representatives from across the Pre-K-12 school or higher education institution.

Concept of Operations: This refers to the overall plan of how the school will protect students, faculty, and visitors in the event of a gun violence incident. Examples include who has the right to activate the plan. This section of an EOP may also address how association leaders are notified when the EOP is activated.

Assignments of Responsibility: Each plan should include an overview of broad roles and responsibilities of school administrators, association members, families and guardians, community organizations, and first responders. These responsibilities should be articulated clearly, and association leadership should ensure that members are notified and involved in defining their roles.

Control and Coordination Efforts: This is the relationship between the school or district EOP and the broader community's emergency management system, with consideration for who has control of the equipment, resources, and supplies needed to support the school.

Training and Exercises: The plan should include training objectives, frequency, and types of preparation drills related to a gun violence incident. The association should check relevant collective bargaining or policy language about when and how frequently such training and exercises will be held.

Development and Maintenance: The plan should include the process for developing and revising the plan.

Legal Basis for Operations: This refers to the legal basis for emergency operations and activities.

Functional Annexes: Functional annexes refer to several specific operational areas, including lockdowns; evacuations; shelter-in-place; accounting for all individuals; communications; family reunification; public, medical, and mental health; security; and recovery. The following components are essential to the emotional and physical well-being of members, students, and families:

- **Lockdown:** This refers to securing school buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of gun violence to ensure that all educators, students, and visitors are secured in rooms away from immediate danger.
- **Evacuation:** This refers to vacating school buildings and grounds following an incident of gun violence. This section of the EOP should include how to evacuate people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, such as language and medical needs. In addition, the planned location to reassemble students and educators should be addressed. In higher education institutions with multiple buildings, it is important to identify multiple areas of evacuation.
- **Sheltering in Place:** This takes place when students, employees, and visitors are required to remain indoors for an extended period due to a threat of gun violence.
- **Accounting for All Students, Educators, and Visitors:** This must take place to determine the whereabouts and well-being of students, staff, and visitors and to identify those who may be missing. This should include developing a plan to determine who is in attendance in the evacuation area and what to do when a student, educator, or visitor cannot be located.
- **Communications:** This guide includes recommendations for communicating with students, educators, families, and the broader community before, during, and after a gun violence incident.
- **Family Reunification:** It may be necessary for students, educators, and visitors to reconnect with families to ensure that every student is released to an authorized adult and that students in Pre-K-12 schools do not leave on their own. College-age students can be released on their own; however, emotional support for every individual who has experienced the trauma of a gun violence incident is important.
- **Public, Medical, and Mental Health:** This refers to the actions taken to address emergency medical and mental health issues in coordination with appropriate emergency medical health services and other relevant groups. An example of what is included in this section of the EOP is how the school will secure enough mental health counselors to support the needs of students and educators.
- **Security and Capacity:** This includes actions taken on a routine, ongoing basis to secure the school from threats originating both inside and outside the school, ensuring that the school is physically secure.
- **Recovery:** This refers to how to recover in the aftermath of a gun violence incident. The recovery section of this guide covers this topic in-depth.

Higher Education-Specific Emergency Procedures

In many cases, advice for higher education-related emergency response is similar to guidance for Pre-K–12 schools. However, here are key differences:

- ❑ **Evacuation:** This component of EOPs should include how to safely move students, educators, and visitors from unsafe areas to designated assembly areas, such as classrooms, student housing facilities, campus grounds, dining halls, and stadiums. Evacuating individuals from higher education institutions needs special attention because of the various locations across a greater area.
- ❑ **Lockdown:** Special consideration should be given to the variety of locations that could be affected at different points in the day. In higher education settings, there may be variations of a lockdown; for example, one variation may be when outside doors are locked, and visitors closely monitored, but other activities continue as normal.
- ❑ **Accounting for All Students, Educators, and Visitors:** This section of the EOP includes those individuals assigned to the various assembly areas. The association should ensure that all members are notified and trained if they are assigned to a gun violence incident assembly area. In addition, methods for determining the whereabouts of students, educators, and visitors need to be addressed in this section.
- ❑ **Communications:** This refers to the clear, step-by-step, written instructions for internal and external stakeholders. Special consideration should be given to ensure effective communications to the broader community, including student activities or events not sponsored by the higher education institution but occurring on campus grounds. Communications plans should include preparation for communication in the languages and formats appropriate for the student body and their families. Keep in mind that communicating with the family members of adult students is different from communicating with the families of students under the age of 18.
- ❑ **Continuity of Operations:** An important component for higher education institutions to address is how to ensure students receive related services (e.g., financial aid, food, housing, etc.) in the event of a prolonged closure.
- ❑ **Public, Medical, and Mental Health:** Special consideration should be given to identifying faculty who have relevant training or experience to address the needs of students and educators after a gun violence incident. The association should ensure that members are notified and trained if they have the qualifications to assist. In addition, there should be a plan for how to ensure that faculty’s mental health needs are being addressed.
- ❑ **Recovery:** Determining where counseling and psychological first aid will be provided should be incorporated into the plan. In addition, thinking about how to handle commemorations, memorial activities, or permanent markers, if allowed, should be included.

Develop Tools for Communicating Via Digital and Media Platforms

To prepare for a gun violence incident, it is helpful to develop emergency communication tools in advance to facilitate swift deployment. Actions include the following:

- ❑ Develop and be prepared to deploy an emergency association-related homepage, connecting it to the district homepage if possible or connecting the district page to the association's;
- ❑ Explore with administrators the potential to establish a joint information center that includes the association;
- ❑ Create templates for posts for X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and other social media platforms to provide regular updates, as appropriate;
- ❑ Prepare press release and statement templates;
- ❑ Maintain an email list of stakeholders, including educators, media, and elected officials;
- ❑ Establish alternate systems of communication in case cell towers are inoperable or electricity is out and for those students and families experiencing homelessness or without regular access to computers;
- ❑ Identify translation services, if appropriate;
- ❑ Develop electronic message templates to provide the latest information;
- ❑ Draft letters or emails to educators who work at the site of the incident, to those in neighboring institutions, and to parents;
- ❑ Develop frequently asked questions and answers that can be distributed to the media and posted on the crisis website;
- ❑ Ensure that communications contacts in the state affiliate and local associations are up-to-date and easily identifiable; and
- ❑ Identify state and local affiliates who can assist with communication and other resources and support.



Building Strong Partnerships

Addressing gun violence in education settings requires strong, meaningful relationships with partners to deepen association understanding, build relationships, strengthen the processes and policies of Pre-K–12 schools and institutions of higher education, and ensure that approaches developed to keep students, educators, and communities safe are culturally and racially appropriate.

From state to state and within states, potential partners may vary. An important place to start is with other unions representing workers in the Pre-K–12 schools and institutions of higher education where association members work, gun violence-focused organizations, racial and social justice organizations, after-school programs, mental and physical health providers and organizations, associations representing principals or other administrators, and local colleges and universities with programs that identify or address violence in communities or, more specifically, in education settings.

The following list includes several national-level organizations—with links to their websites—that may have state or local counterparts. Identifying local groups working on similar topics may also serve the same purpose.

AAPI Victory Alliance

<https://aapivictoryalliance.com/gunviolenceprevention>

AASA—The School Superintendents Association

<https://www.aasa.org/resources/all-resources?Keywords=safety&RowsPerPage=20>

Alliance to Reclaim our Schools

<https://reclaimourschools.org>

American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.aap.org/en/advocacy/gun-violence-prevention>

American Psychological Association

<https://www.apa.org/pubs/reports/gun-violence-prevention>

American School Counselor Association

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-Prevention-of-School-Rela>

Color of Change

<https://colorofchange.org>

Community Justice Action Fund

<https://www.cjactionfund.org>

Hope and Heal Fund

<https://hopeandhealfund.org/who-we-are>

League of United Latin American Citizens

https://lulac.org/advocacy/resolutions/2013/resolution_on_gun_violence_prevention/index.html

Life Camp

<https://www.peaceislifestyle.com>

Live Free

<https://livefreeusa.org>

March for Our Lives

<https://marchforourlives.org>

MomsRising

<https://www.momsrising.org/blog/topics/gun-safety>

NAACP

<https://naacp.org>

National Association of Elementary School Principals

<https://www.naesp.org>

National Association of School Nurses

<https://www.nasn.org/blogs/nasn-inc/2023/07/27/take-action-to-address-gun-violence>

National Association of School Psychologists

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis>

National Association of Secondary School Principals

<https://www.nassp.org/community/principal-recovery-network>

National Association of Social Workers

<https://www.socialworkers.org>

National PTA

<https://www.pta.org/home/advocacy/federal-legislation/Public-Policy-Priorities/gun-safety-and-violence-prevention>

National School Boards Association

<https://www.nsba4safeschools.org/home>

Parents Together

<https://parents-together.org/the-heart-of-gun-safety-and-a-new-approach-to-advocacy>

Sandy Hook Promise

<https://www.sandyhookpromise.org>

The Trevor Project

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org>

UnidosUS

<https://unidosus.org/publications/latinos-and-gun-violence-prevention>

GUN VIOLENCE PREPARATION RESOURCES

National Education Association Resources

National Education Association

<https://www.nea.org>

The National Education Association is the nation's largest union, representing more than 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, specialized instructional support personnel, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become educators.

NEA Health and Safety Program

<https://www.nea.org/healthy-schools>

The NEA Health and Safety Program provides information and solutions related to student and educator mental health, violence prevention and response, infection control, and environmental and occupational safety and health, among other topics.

NEA School Crisis Guide

<https://www.nea.org/resource-library/neas-school-crisis-guide>

Published in 2018, the crisis guide is a step-by-step outline of what to do before, during, and after any school or community crisis.

Responding to Gun Violence

<https://www.nea.org/gunviolence>

This portion of the NEA website provides health and safety content on taking action, helping students and educators cope, resources for school leaders, fostering mental health, and preventing hate and bias.

Helping Students Cope with Active Shooter Drills

<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/helping-students-cope-active-shooter-drills>

NEA Today spoke to Janet Shapiro, dean of the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, professor of social work, and director of the Center for Child and Family Wellbeing at Bryn Mawr College, about the impact on students.

We Can Change This: Educators Take On Gun Violence

<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/we-can-change-educators-take-gun-violence>

Educators across the country are working to end the era of school shootings that has defined students' lives.

Everytown Resources

Everytown for Gun Safety

<https://www.everytown.org>

Everytown for Gun Safety is the largest gun violence prevention organization in America. The organization is a movement of more than 10 million supporters working to end gun violence.

Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund

<https://everytownsupportfund.org>

The Everytown Support Fund is the education, research, and litigation arm of Everytown for Gun Safety. It seeks to improve our understanding of the causes of gun violence and help to reduce it by conducting ground-breaking original research, developing evidence-based policies, communicating this knowledge to the American public, and advancing gun safety and gun violence prevention in communities and the courts.

The Impact of Active Shooter Drills in Schools

<https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-impact-of-active-shooter-drills-in-schools>

Everytown provides current data on active shooter drills and their impact on students in K-12 education settings. Their research also focuses on the impact of active shooter drills on physical, mental, and community health outcomes.

Reconsider Active Shooter Drills

<https://www.everytown.org/solutions/active-shooter-drills>

Everytown argues that proactive school safety measures save lives and reduce the detriments associated with active shooter drills. They also provide data and recommendations for state legislation to provide funding and laws for schools to implement proactive safety programs.

Other Resources

SCHOOL SAFETY

Comprehensive School Safety Planning and Development

<https://safeandsoundschools.org/comprehensive-school-safety>

Safe and Sound Schools outlines a framework for comprehensive school safety planning and development, which includes input from representatives in each stakeholder group to consider all areas of safety relevant to their site and community.

National Center for School Safety

<https://www.nc2s.org>

The National Center for School Safety is focused on improving school safety and preventing school violence. The center provides expert-led training, technical assistance, and a database of additional resources to address school safety challenges.

Schoolsafety.gov

<https://www.schoolsafety.gov>

This interagency website created by the federal government provides a broad range of information, resources, and guidance to create safe and supportive learning environments for students and educators.

Security Planning Workbook

<https://www.cisa.gov/resources-tools/resources/security-planning-workbook>

Created by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, this comprehensive resource assists with the development of a foundational security plan.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS

EOP Assist

<https://rems.ed.gov/EOPASSIST/EOPASSIST.aspx>

EOP Assist is a software application provided by the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center for K–12 schools, school districts, regional education agencies, and state agencies. It includes support for school emergency planning and management.

Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans

https://rems.ed.gov/docs/rems_k-12_guide_508.pdf

This guide—developed by the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Federal Emergency Management Agency—provides schools with steps they can take to plan for potential emergencies through the creation, implementation, and maintenance of an emergency operations plan (EOP).

Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans for IHEs

https://rems.ed.gov/docs/IHE_Guide_508C.pdf

This guide—developed by the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Federal Emergency Management Agency—provides higher education institutions with steps they can take to plan for potential emergencies through the creation, implementation, and maintenance of an emergency operations plan (EOP).

SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Especially Safe

<https://safeandsoundschools.org/programs/especially-safe>

Especially Safe, a program designed by Safe and Sound Schools, helps safety planning teams address the safety and security needs of members of the school community with disabilities—including developmental disabilities, communication challenges, medical needs, mobility challenges, and more.

Protecting Students with Disabilities in an Emergency: 5 Key Strategies

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/protecting-students-with-disabilities-in-an-emergency-5-key-strategies/2022/07>

Published in *Education Week* in 2022, this article describes five recommendations for creating specific plans to protect the safety of students with disabilities in a school shooting from special educators and emergency management officials.

Safety Planning Guide for Individuals with Special Needs

https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/sites/dcjs.virginia.gov/files/virginia_safety_planning_guide_for_individuals_with_special_needs.pdf

This document, developed by the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, helps those tasked with school safety in Pre-K–12 schools and institutions of higher education to develop strategies that meet the diverse safety needs of all stakeholders within the education community.

School Safety Drills and Exercises for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Tips and Resources for Educators

[https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/school-violence-resources/school-safety-drills-and-exercises-for-students-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-\(asd\)-tips-and-resources-for-educators](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/school-violence-resources/school-safety-drills-and-exercises-for-students-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-(asd)-tips-and-resources-for-educators)

The National Association of School Psychologists provides advocacy pointers for the safety of students with ASD, along with recommendations for preparing, supporting, and debriefing students with ASD when safety drills and exercises are used.

ASSESSING PREPAREDNESS

Do You Know Your School Community Safety Plan?

<https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/blog/teacher-resources/know-your-school-community-safety-plan>

Sandy Hook Promise created this resource to encourage educators, administrators, parents, families, and other school community members to be aware of how their school receives and reacts to concerns of potential violence.

Is My District Prepared? 8 Questions for Superintendents and School Boards

<https://safeandsoundschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CES-8questions-Supts-2.0.pdf>

This resource from the Missouri School Boards' Association helps assess emergency preparedness in schools.

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PART 2 | PREPARATION



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