

How To Get Out Alive From A School Shooting

The recent school shooting in Colorado shows us that no matter how much we try to prevent such actions, these events will keep on happening.

As American citizens first, but also as serious preppers second, we have to understand that the human factor is the most unpredictable and dangerous threat to our daily lives.

No matter how much people will advocate for gun control or for other methods that would help folks find the right path, not everyone will get in line. In a free country, it's impossible to impose your own political, social and religious views without causing social upheaval. While some people and organizations are determined to push their agenda down our throats, I honestly believe that all of us have to prepare for the uncertain future in our own ways and do everything we can to protect our loved ones.

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A school shooting is a terrifying scenario for all parents, and the simple thought of an active shooter targeting their child's school or college campus is inconceivable for most of them. Probably this is why most people will choose to believe that there's no way "they" can experience something like this. They choose to continue living in their bubble rather than take preemptive action.

Some people will take my words literally and will take matters into their own hands, but that's not what I meant when encouraging people to do something about school shootings. By taking action, I did not mean that people should create a militia and patrol the school area and investigate everything

or everyone that seems out of place. No, far from that. People should be more aware, and they should prepare for such events following a specific planning.

There are few steps everyone should follow to be better prepared for such scenarios.

Preventing a school shooting

The first thing we have to do when discussing surviving a school shooting is to understand how active shooters think. What's in their mind that makes them do such horrible things?

Since every school shooting follows a somehow specific pattern, we should also understand that there is no "one size fits all" when we analyze such events. One of the main factors in understanding an active shooter is the age of the students in question.

To put it in the broad spectrum we can consider a school shooter as the ultimate bully. While some people think of them also as a coward, I think it's a combination of both. These main characteristics are derived from personal (physical and emotional) experiences that affected them profoundly.

They will choose their targets based on the number of unarmed persons held in confinement in a particular area. In their mind, it's an act of revenge and bravery or toughness over someone who can't retaliate and won't be able to escape to call for help.

The children and students may have nothing to do with the traumas or life experiences that triggered such behavior in the shooter. Of course, there are cases in which the shooter was bullied by his fellow classmates, but it seems that this is not a general trend anymore. As I said previously, it depends from case to case, and there's not a single recipe for disaster.



They seek a “god-like power” over others, they are often loners and have never accomplished anything of significance

in their lives until then. They have the power of life and death over their fellow peers and the lust for power will drive them forward, no matter the outcome.

Some of them will often cry for help and will announce their intentions to others either through personal confession (best friends in most cases) or publicize them for the entire world to see (online media, loud threats toward individuals and/or groups of people, online gaming, etc.). Unfortunately, most folks won't take this threat seriously and will just see them as “youngsters acting up.”

If help never arrives, they will move forward with their plan, and the inevitable will happen. Besides the thirst for power and revenge, there's also a self-destructive behavior in their actions. They know that nowadays police officers won't wait for SWAT teams to arrive and stop them and will act at any given moment to eliminate the threat. Their irrational behavior, topped with the tremendous fear that develops during the attack will make them take the coward's way out and kill

themselves.

The ability to survive a school shooting requires clear-headed thinking by those involved in the event. This is mandatory regardless of age, and it requires a lot of mental preparation. If panic sets in, the odds of survival are almost nonexistent. Preparing the youth mentally for such events is not an easy job and the parents, schools and law enforcement, all have a great responsibility to work together. These parties should develop realistic and effective methods to mitigate such events.

School boards and personnel need to realize that their “it can’t happen here” bubble can burst at any moment and learn to mitigate problems and identify possible “trouble makers” without putting them in the spotlight. The harder work, however, is done by the parents as they need to develop a course of action their kids can take in the event that the unimaginable happens.

Checklist for the parents

There is a “school security checklist,” how I like to call it, that parents should be aware of. Besides talking to your kids about what to do when their lives are in danger, parents should also be pro-active when it comes to their schools. Making a security evaluation of your school shouldn’t be a hard or uncomfortable decision, and you need to start with the following.

1. Is your school system working well and do they coordinate with local law enforcement?
2. Does your school board allow the police to use the building off-season for active shooter trainings?
3. Is there a school resource officer (SRO) on site at all times?
4. Is the perimeter of your school patrolled by school officers? This is the best location to identify and

neutralized active shooters and stop them from causing long-lasting harm.

5. What are the kids being told and taught at school? Some of the advice given may be misguided, and they will end up making kids feel safe, when in fact they aren't.
6. What's your school policy on gun control? Do they allow arming teachers or qualified staff?
7. Does your state require a law to allow armed teachers or qualified staff? Persuasion may be needed at a higher level even if your school is pro armed teachers.
8. How many points of entry does your school have? Do they have a single hardened point of entry?
9. How about a fully equipped campus police department? Does the college of your children have one?

These are information that should be available to you, to better understand the outcome of an active shooter scenario. It will also help you develop a school prepping plan that your kids could follow.

Survival tips for students

In an active shooter situation, all unarmed actors involved in such a scenario have only two options. They can flee or hide. You should talk with your kids and instruct them on which course of action to take, and most importantly when. In my network of people, this talk is following the "stranger danger" one it needs to come as early as possible. In some cases, you may need to contradict what kids are being told by school staff, and it requires a lot of patience and well-tailored arguments.



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In some occurrences, the advice given to your kids by untrained personnel may be ill-advised at best, and the kids may end up getting hurt for following such suggestions. Here are the main three rules your kid should follow to the letter.

1. Make a quick escape

This is the main course of action that should be taken when dealing with an active school shooting. They should flee the scene if they have the opportunity. Obviously, this should be done if the shooting is occurring at a reasonable distance and if there's no way for the shooter to spot the fleeing "targets."

For an active shooter, in his twisted mind, there is nothing better than finding a group of people huddled together, paralyzed by fear. They are an easy target, and your kids should escape if given a chance, no matter what the teacher is saying. Before advising your kids to escape you should visit their classroom and identify ways of exit or hiding places that might not be obvious at first.

Teach them to be aware of their surroundings and point out ways of escaping. Identify where the closest exit is. Check if they can escape through a classroom window although nowadays most schools have windows that can be opened or are so small that only a thin, small child could escape. If fleeing is not an option is time for plan B.

2. Shelter in place or hide properly

We must take into account that our kids may not be able to escape since they will cross paths with the shooter. Even worse, the shooter may be heading towards them. In these cases, they can hide or try to lock down their location. The hope here is that the shooter won't make it to their position before the police arrive. Although this may seem like a last-ditch option (and it actually is in some cases), it may be tackled from various points of view. Kids should find ways to get out of sight and hide in places out of reach (like air vents). Even school cupboards and cabinets may be used if nothing else is available.

Personally, I think that parents should insist that the locations in which their kids are studying should be better protected. Just turning the lights on and hiding behind a flimsy door blocked by desks and what not, won't stop a stubborn assailant. There are all sorts of safety systems for classroom doors that could help teachers and students barricade inside. The school board, persuaded by parents, should really consider investing in the safety of their kids.

3. The fighting back scenario

The community and the media are portraying scenarios that make parents and teachers feel their children will be much safer if they fight back an active shooter. I honestly believe that this should be a last resort and the victims should do this if they know what they are doing and only if they have the necessary means to do so. Throwing a trash can at the attacker won't make much difference when the shooting starts.

Ask yourself this, would you like your kid to die a hero or live as a coward?

This may seem harsh, but families shouldn't be destroyed because kids were ill-advised or influenced to "do what's

right.” Rather than sacrificing their lives, kids should be taught how to handle such scenarios and parents should nourish and encourage their self-preservation instinct. I would teach my kids how to protect themselves and buy them a Kevlar school backpack before telling them to jump an active shooter.

Last words

A school shooting scenario is a terrifying experience for both those directly involved and those witnessing it. To prevent and survive a school shooting the parents and school personnel need to work together, guided by the local law enforcement. You need to mentally prepare your kids for such a traumatic event because when panic sets in, the odds of survival are greatly reduced for the unprepared.

Develop realistic and effective ways to mitigate such events, teach your children to be more aware of their surroundings and encourage their self-preservation instinct. The ability to survive a school-shooting requires clear-headed thinking from both parents and children.



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