



Safe Havens International Presents . . .

The Safety Net

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Have a question that you'd like us to answer? [E-mail us](#) and we may include the response in our next issue.

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter, the Back to School 2006 issue. We will be working to constantly improve and update this resource to be as helpful as possible in your work, so please feel free to give us [suggestions](#) or tell us what you'd like to see covered in an upcoming issue. If you would like to recommend this newsletter to a friend please tell them to sign up using our [newsletter signup form](#).

With most K-12 schools and universities returning to a new school year this August, it is important to remember that while the beginning of the year may be hectic and exciting we must continue to work to ensure that every student feels safe and welcome. Providing a safe, warm and comfortable environment is a necessary step in achieving maximum performance from the students and staff of a school (or any other facility or business, for that matter). In each issue of *The Safety Net*, we will give you tips and tools to help you achieve this type of environment by working to prevent violence and other hazards, preparing for emergencies and crises, reducing bullying and fights and increasing camaraderie and ownership of the school by its occupants.

This newsletter works just like a web page - you can use the table of contents links to the left to jump to any part of this article, and there will be links to online resources throughout the newsletter. All newsletters will be archived on our [newsletter archives page](#), and you can also download a [.pdf version](#) of each issue here that you can save to your computer or send to someone that may find it helpful.

We here at Safe Havens have had a hectic summer, between getting this newsletter together, continuing to develop new courses and materials and Chris going back to school. Michael Dorn and Chris Dorn were also invited to speak at the College of Social Sciences and Humanities at Vietnam National University in Ho Chi Minh City on July 3rd. They presented on a variety of topics ranging from weapons in schools, drug abuse, all-hazards school crisis planning and terrorism in schools to a group of department heads, faculty and students in a well-received session. They have been invited to speak at the University again and have also been invited to present at Quang Trung

The Safety Net is a free e-newsletter published every other month designed to help you build a safety net to make your schools safer & more inviting for all students and staff members.

Each issue will feature articles, regular columns on safety hazards and drug abuse, helpful tips and free resources to aid you as an advocate for the children. For info on having your writing featured in *The Safety Net* please [contact us](#). For more information about Safe Havens International (publisher of *The Safety Net*) [click here](#).

University in Quy Nhon, Vietnam. In addition to an interest in translating some of Safe Havens' materials into Vietnamese, the Dorns were interviewed by several reporters and have received a warm response after being featured in [Tuoi Tre](#), a youth newspaper.

All Hazards & Four Phases: The New Best Practices Model for Emergency Planning for Schools and Communities

By [Chris Dorn](#), Safe Havens Analyst

In 2003 the [United States Department of Education](#) (USDOE) adopted the All Hazards Four Phase planning model as the standard for emergency planning. This [Four Phase All-Hazard model](#) is the same used by FEMA for emergency planning and response, as well as state and local emergency management agencies (who by the way are great sources for free assistance and training).

The best practices model deals with all types of hazards within one plan so that you don't have to flip back and forth between various plans or documents during a crisis. The Four Phase are each a distinct planning phase: 1) Prevention and Mitigation, 2) Preparedness, 3) Response and 4) Recovery.

Prevention and Mitigation

This is the first phase of the plan because it covers what you are already doing on a daily basis to keep schools safe by preventing bad things from happening and mitigating for those that will happen despite our best efforts (such as Hurricane Katrina).

Examples of prevention measures include having a school police officer, random weapon and drug searches, peer mediation and bullying abatement programs, keeping exterior doors locked during the day to prevent an intruder and background checks for all employees to prevent child molesters and terrorists from gaining access to children.

Examples of mitigation measures include anchoring bookshelves and other large objects in case of an earthquake, conducting drills (fire, hurricane, lockdown, shelter-in-place, tornado, bomb threat evacuations, etc), installing Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) throughout your buildings and ensuring that new facilities are not built within a flood plain. These measures are designed to minimize the impact of an event that will occur despite all planning: a gunman could wander into the front door and go on a shooting spree, a flood or other natural disaster could strike without much warning, or an employee could have a heart attack during any school day. All of these will obviously disrupt the school day, but we can reduce the effects by mitigation measures.

One good way to boost your prevention and mitigation measures is by performing an annual Tactical Site Survey. Information on how to perform these using your own staff can be found on our [Free Resources](#) page.

Preparedness

This is this part of the plan where you give instructions in detail for each employee during a crisis. Each type of employee (teachers, office staff, counselors, administration, custodians, bus drivers, nutritional staff, etc) should have a well defined role and understand that role well enough to perform it under stress.

Response

This is the 'cheat-sheet' section of the plan used during a crisis to summarize the Preparedness section in an easy to use form. Examples of this segment's components include checklists of actions for the crisis in question, time logs to record when an action was taken and by whom, and customized flip charts based on the employee-specific actions for each particular crisis. The time logs are for use in debriefing, court proceedings and improving the plan for next time. These are particularly important during testing of the plan to dissect your response and fix gaps that appear.

Recovery

The goal of this section is to prepare as much as possible to ease the transition to normalcy after an incident which may have been very disruptive and traumatic. To this end, you should address business continuity in addition to mental health recovery. Suicide is a major issue after violent and traumatic crises (in one case there were 20 suicides as a result of one school shooting, more than doubling the number of total deaths due to the shooting) and drop-in rooms, counseling and observation for signs of stress are critical elements in your planning.

This is an abbreviated version of the full article, which can be found [here](#). For information on our planning templates, which can assist you by providing an All Hazards Four Phase framework to guide you in designing your Crisis Plan, visit our [Template Information](#) page.

[Evacuation Tips for Schools and Childcare Facilities](#)

[By Sonayia Shepherd, Safe Havens CEO](#)

In a number of situations, it may be necessary to evacuate the building. An evacuation should be signaled by either a fire alarm or clear instructions using standardized language via the intercom system,

radio, or classroom telephone. The following are a list of tips that will help you evacuate a child care facility:

Maintain an Emergency Evacuation Kit (EEK).

This kit should contain items that you will need to occupy your class and maintain safety at the evacuation site. Examples of items to include are first aid/medical supplies, flashlights with extra batteries, backup communication or change for a payphone, student release cards (with custodial parent and alternate caretaker information) and anything else that you would want to have with you if you had to leave your building or bus immediately and not return for several hours or days. We recommend that an easy to carry bag, such as a rolling book bag that can be rolled or carried, and bright colors or ribbons for easy identification. In a large facility you should have a backup EEK and primary and backup designees to ensure that at least one EEK is recovered even if a designee is injured or absent.

Keep some extra long rope that the children can hold on to while evacuating.

Extend this rope and instruct the children to grab on to it and hold while walking to the evacuation site. This may help keep an orderly evacuation process and keep everyone together. If you feel a tug on the rope, you may need to slow the pace or check the children to ensure everything is okay. Some teachers have also found success in using this type of device on field trips or even during normal school days to improve orderliness and ensure that children do not wander or get lost while on a field trip. If used in this manner, children will be even more accustomed to using the rope during an emergency.

Keep coloring books, crayons and other activities to occupy the children at the evacuation site (consider placing these items in the emergency evacuation kit).

Alternatively, you can plan for designees to keep the children occupied with group activities or games. Ensure that all children are well supervised and do not wander off during a hectic crisis.

When planning evacuation routes, do not forget to plan for staff members and children with special needs and/or mobility issues.

Alternate routes may be needed to accommodate these individuals, and it is important to ensure that all students are evacuated and none are left behind because they are stuck inside the building alone.

Always practice evacuation and hold drills to rehearse with the children what is expected of them.

Practice makes perfect, especially in emergency planning. During a crisis people react

exactly as they have been trained and are more comfortable in doing so the more they have practiced it. The same holds true for evacuations, lock downs and shelter-in-place situations.

Crises and disasters can occur despite our best prevention efforts, but with proper [planning and mitigation](#) you can be prepared to respond quickly and effectively to any crisis and hopefully prevent unnecessary injury or death.

Columns

Hazards in Plain View: Developing Your Sixth Sense of School Safety

Each month we will feature a photo illustrating a hazard and how to fix it or a positive example of ways to improve your school's safety and environment.

What's wrong with this picture?



Answer: There is no safe way for a staff member to rapidly break the glass to access this fire extinguisher. In one case in Nebraska, a teacher was seriously injured after attempting to use his foot to break the glass on this type of case during a fire. As a result he was out on worker's compensation for nearly six months.

For examples and training on how to conduct a Site Survey of your facility, check out the Tactical Site Survey Power Point slide show in our [Free Resources](#) section. While most examples are taken from schools, it is not hard to find applications for this technique in any field.

Have a photo that you think should be featured in this column? [E-mail it to us](#) and if we feature it we'll send you a free book. Remember that both positive and negative examples are welcome.

420: Recognizing Signs of Student Drug Abuse



What's wrong with this picture?

This is an example of a common type of homemade pipe that can be used to smoke marijuana, methamphetamine or crack cocaine. It is made using an ordinary soda can and is easy to clean up any evidence by simply crushing the can and throwing it away. Of course the can may still contain some residue and will often give off a foul odor.

For more information on drug abuse, paraphernalia and detection check out our [free resources](#) page. If you have a photo that you'd like featured in this column [e-mail us](#).

Quick, What do we do? A Sample Tabletop Exercise Scenario

What is a Tabletop Exercise?

A focused exercise designed to test and determine gaps in your existing crisis plan.

Featured product of the Month:

[Secrets of the Drug Violator Exposed \(DVD\)](#)
(40 mins)

An encore to the resoundingly successfully [Secrets of the Weapons Violator Exposed](#), this 40 minute DVD shows viewers the most common concealment techniques and types of paraphernalia used by K-12 and university level drug users. If you were impressed by Chris Dorn's amazing weapons demonstration, you'll love this interesting and informative DVD.

Enter coupon code **newsletter01** for \$10 off of the regular price! (Valid until 12/31/06)

FEMA recommends that emergency response plans be tested using a graduated series of exercises (Orientation, Drills, Tabletop Exercise, Functional Exercise, Full Scale Exercise). To use this scenario, gather staff members from various roles (administration, teachers, office staff) in a room and give them the scenario (but not beforehand, so as to simulate the surprise of a real crisis). The team then talks through the various steps that would be taken in response to this incident. If any outside agencies would be called or involved, contact them and ensure that their response will be able to meet your expectations. During a Full Scale exercise (the last step in the testing process, which FEMA recommends 12-18 months of pre-preplanning) these outside agencies would preferably be directly involved in the exercise in real time.

Teacher having a heart attack in class (Elementary, middle or high school level)

At approximately 1:30 in the afternoon, on a Thursday, Mr. Smith, a math teacher clutches his chest and sits down at his desk while in the middle of a lesson. Two students run to the next classroom and summon another teacher, who finds Mr. Smith now lying on the floor in an unconscious state. The teacher summons help from the office and an ambulance is dispatched, but paramedics find that Mr. Smith has already died when they arrive, all efforts to revive him by school and emergency medical response officials being ineffective. Mr. Smith is transported to the emergency room and pronounced dead upon arrival from an apparent heart attack. Mr. Smith is a popular teacher and his death was witnessed by 22 students.

Each month we will feature a different exercise (tabletop or functional) to give you ideas for your own emergency plan testing program. For more information on testing your plans with drills and exercises, check out the free [FEMA Independent Study course IS-139](#) or our [training offerings](#).

News Briefs

Atlanta, Georgia - A federal judge dismissed the lawsuit of a high school student who was suspended for 10 days after bringing to school a story she had written about a dream in which a student shoots her 6th period math teacher. The student, who also happens to take math during 6th period, was initially expelled before her sentence was reduced to 10 days of suspension. The U.S. District Judge in the case determined that the writings were "sufficiently disturbing" and supported the school's actions.
Source: CNN, Associated Press 8/3/06

Beijing, China -More than 200 primary school students were hospitalized in the most recent of 185 food poisoning cases since June. The high frequency of incidents is due to lax food preparation supervision, which allows contractors to cut costs but has resulted in thousands of cases of food poisoning this year. The latest case, which filled three floors of a local hospital, was the result of a lunch served on Friday. Students began having symptoms over the weekend including headache, fever, diarrhea and vomiting, but none of the cases were fatal. Like similar cases in the United States that we see occur every year, this illustrates the need for increased food safety and supervision, a measure that not only protects against food poisoning and contamination but against malicious acts by disgruntled students or terrorists. *Source: CNN 9/03/06*

Free Resources

This month we are featuring the [FEMA Independent Study series](#) available from the Emergency Management Institute. These courses are all free and available on the web. After requesting your course materials you study them at your own pace and take an online exam, and upon passing you will receive a certificate of completion in the mail. These cover a wide range of topics, including an introduction to emergency response, emergency planning for schools, incident command, hazardous materials incidents, leadership during emergencies.

- [FEMA Independent Study Program](#)

Thank you for reading the first edition of *The Safety Net*. If you have any comments or suggestions [please let us know](#).

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