



Young New Zealanders  
Foundation

# **REDUCING THE RISKS OF VIOLENCE**

**A STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDE**

**FOR SCHOOL**

**OR CHILD CARE CENTRE**

**SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

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## FOREWORD

Sergeant Nigel Roe commenced his career with the British Police in 1968, and has been in the New Zealand Police for thirty years, serving in Auckland.

He has worked at a number of Police Stations in the Auckland City and Counties Manukau Districts. For the past few years he has been attached to the Community Service Section as a Community Safety and Partnerships Co-ordinator, with a focus on crime reduction education. In this role he has been involved in the production of various crime prevention publications.

During a brief period of service with the Police Youth Education Section he became aware that available crime prevention advice to schools concentrated on asset protection. With the emphasis on property safety, taking precedence over personal safety, a strategic planning guide for safety at schools and child care centres was developed.

Having identified the need for a resource to rectify this situation, Sergeant Roe, with the assistance of his Community Services Section, developed this strategic planning guide for safety in or at schools or child care centres.

After wide consultation with school staff in various parts of New Zealand and the Christchurch College of Education, the recommendations were incorporated into the text as it now stands.

The Young New Zealanders' Foundation sincerely thanks everyone who has contributed in any way to this project.

**NOTES:**

**THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN AS A STRATEGY  
FOR SCHOOL OR CHILD CARE CENTRE SAFETY**

The development of an emergency management plan for crisis response contingencies is a desirable policy for creating a safer school or child care centre environment. A key factor in achieving this outcome is the close co-operation of the Board of Trustees, all staff, students, parents and caregivers. This recognises security, as a strategic safety initiative extending beyond a range of measures that solely protect property.

These guidelines have been produced by Nigel Roe to raise awareness on some of the safety issues involving threats and acts of violence that may occur at schools or child care centres. The information contained is for use as a basic source of reference to assist managers in developing individual security and emergency management plans that reflect the requirements of Occupational Health and Safety legislation in respect of a safe working environment.

Whilst issues such as burglary reduction, asset protection, vandalism, chemical hazards, drugs, alcohol and sexual abuse have not been included, these and other school or child care centre related risks should be integrated within a general strategic management plan.

The advice provided here is general in nature and should not be regarded as a comprehensive guide to any specific safety response management plan. Larger schools or centres requiring complex planning processes, may consider employing the services of a professional security consultant, for organising staff training and the development of the emergency management plan structure.

**NOTES:**

## **DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK OF AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Wide internal, and external consultation may be required, to formulate effective safety response plans for various emergencies that could occur.

Best organisational practice will be achieved by appointing a Crisis Co-ordinator to oversee the planning process, or forming a crisis management team and organising appropriate training for those involved. Initial enquiries regarding training could be directed to local Police.

Plans developed should be linked to existing school policies on security and safety related issues.

Emergency and security planning requirements will vary between schools or child care centres owing to geographic location, surrounding socio-economic environment, age of students, physical configuration of the site, structural design and condition of buildings, and other factors affecting the individual school security profile.

Planning processes will need to observe the Ministry of Education Health and Safety Code of Practice for Schools, and relevant provisions of legislation such as Fire Safety Evacuation of Buildings Regulations, Education Act, Building Act and Regulations, Child, Youth and Family Act and local Council ordinances.

## **Potential Incidents for Planned Response**

- A telephone caller threatening to kill a student or member of staff
- A violent student
- A person with a weapon (in school or centre grounds or internal buildings)
- An armed robber
- A hostage situation
- An abduction of student or staff member
- A bomb threat or suspicious package found
- A school fight with weapons
- A fire / arson during working hours
- An out of control or drunken driver on site, within the grounds
- A sexual predator on site, within the grounds or loitering near the boundary
- An assault resulting in a severely injured student or staff member
- Any other serious incident

## **General Principles of Crisis Response Planning**

Identifying and defining incidents to be designated as crisis incidents, and conducting a security and safety assessment.

Obtaining, in addition to this resource, any existing crisis response information to assist the planning process that may be available from Ministry of Education, Fire Service, Police, or other agencies or sources.

Enhancing safety response plans by:–

- Evaluating physical layout of the site, centre or school grounds, external and internal configuration of building;
- Assessing planning requirements for evacuations, safe areas, observation and security;
- Assessing physical alterations necessary

Identifying any equipment, resources or physical construction necessary for safety purposes, and budgetary allocation.

Assessing traffic flows and movements and parking areas at the site or within the school or child care centre grounds, to identify potential safety risks.

Establishing a comprehensive and effective communication system, for use in emergency situations.

Formulating action and response plans to crisis incidents that may occur.

Maintaining regular meetings of the crisis management team for review and update of any plans as required, and identifying any potential situations not previously recognised that could be a safety issue.

Defining a media response policy for comments on crisis situations and general safety issues, recognising there will be legal and privacy implications. A particular staff member may be appropriate for the role.

## **The Elements of an Emergency Management Plan**

- The production of a manual containing an organisation chart and action plans, that staff are aware of, have access to, or have been issued with a personal copy.
- Staff have defined responsibilities in performing a specified role during a particular crisis incident.
- Plans that clearly designate a staff member in charge for a specific emergency, with provision for a nominated substitute in case of leave or sickness.
- Plans that define reporting procedures for crisis incidents that may cover which member of staff to be notified at first, by whom, from where, by what method.
- Designating the procedure for alerting emergency services in a crisis situation, with a checking system in place to confirm this action taken.
- The creation of a standard reporting form and policy, requiring documentation of all incidents and issues involving safety.
- The provision of training (staff and / or students as appropriate), and regular practice drills for crisis incident response.
- The monitoring and evaluation of training and practice procedures, for determining effectiveness and any modifications required.

## **GENERAL MEASURES FOR SECURING A SAFER SCHOOL OR CHILD CARE CENTRE ENVIRONMENT**

Many schools and child care centres consist of multiple buildings with several entrance and exit points, unprotected by any security features. These conditions permit any unauthorised person accessing grounds or internal areas of buildings, without being observed or screened.

A school or child care centre incorporating appropriate security design principles will be able to minimise vulnerabilities, by implementing features such as access control procedures, for preventing potentially violent persons from entering classrooms or other internal areas.

The security based philosophy of "crime prevention through environmental design", controls the physical setting and restricts opportunities for criminal offending. The design elements incorporated into buildings and spaces, act as a deterrent and influence behaviour. Key features are visibility, surveillance, access and target hardening. A person contemplating the commission of a criminal act is dissuaded from committing it on the basis that it is either too difficult, or entails a high risk of being intercepted or apprehended.

The concept of crime prevention through environmental design features, whilst usually associated with property and protection of assets, can equally be applied to safety issues. Though primarily best suited for new constructions, existing buildings can also benefit from applications of the concept. Schools that may be planning new developments can access useful information outlined in a consultancy report produced by Critical Insight for the Ministry of Education. The document titled "Report of the New Secondary Schools Consultation Project", appears on the Ministry of Education website,

[www.edu.govt.nz](http://www.edu.govt.nz)

## **Practical Application of Basic Environmental Design Concepts**

- Establishing clear lines of sight between buildings and grounds to maximise surveillance opportunities.
- Siting any new buildings a good distance from the street to restrict ease of access by unauthorised persons.
- Identifying any black spot areas affording concealment for a trespasser and removing the risk.
- Installing of perimeter fencing as required, to inhibit unauthorised entry.
- Changing landscaping features as necessary to enhance safety features.
- Increasing internal or external lighting as required, for safety of staff, students and community groups that may work late (e.g. dance practices).
- Installing closed circuit television cameras in appropriately identified positions, for detection of any persons posing a safety risk.
- Installing of reliable intruder / detection alarm systems designed for specific safety functions.

## **ADMINISTRATION OFFICE SECURITY**

An administration office that functions as a co-ordinating point for school or child care centre activities and as a visitor reception area, could be designated an important role in an emergency, operating as a communication and command centre.

The physical features of an administration office should be of a construction that prevents any person in the public reception area from gaining entry into the office, unless permitted access by staff.

The administration office should be physically configured so that its structure provides an adequate level of barrier protection for staff, in case of incidents such as an armed robber, aggressive parent, or threatening member of the public.

The administration office should ideally be strategically situated within the principal entrance area, occupying a controlling position where all persons entering are observed and screened, before gaining access to internal areas.

## **Security Features That Enhance Safety**

- Altering any open plan administration office area by erecting walls, doors or partitions, to prevent immediate physical access to staff, by any person in the public area.
- Maintaining a public communication interface at an administration office, with the provision of a sufficiently high and wide counter or wall with a sliding window, functioning as a barrier to prevent any person from reaching over and grasping a member of staff.
- Keeping any external door to the administration office secured on the inside, to prevent any member of the public from entering unless authorised.
- Having an administration office fitted with an internal door which can be utilised for immediate exit to a safe area, in the event of any person attempting to force entry into the office. The internal door should be able to be secured from the other side once exit has been effected.
- Equipping the administration office with a duress / alarm / communications system, for alerting other staff in an emergency.
- Displaying a sign in the public reception area advising that no cash is kept in the administration office.
- Displaying a sign in the public reception area that the school is under video surveillance.
- Having a clearly visible camera or cameras mounted in the public reception area, as a deterrent to any person contemplating an act threatening safety.
- Using the administration office as a visitor regulating centre, by screening, registering and operating access control measures, such as granting access to internal corridors from the administration office, by use of push button door release systems.

## VISITORS AND ACCESS CONTROL

A school or child care centre affording undetected entry to grounds and buildings, whereby a visitor can access corridors or classrooms unchallenged, may pose a potential safety risk to students and staff.

A safer school or centre is one where visitors are identified, their movements monitored and controlled, with access control procedures and systems that restrict the entry of unwanted visitors.

Schools and child care centres can consider practices for regulating visitor access:

- Displaying visible signs at entry points instructing all visitors to report to the administration office, which should be clearly sign posted.
- Signs could contain information imposing restrictions on visitor conditions, such as "all visitors must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times", or a warning that any person failing to report to the administration office will be treated as a trespasser.
- At the administration office all visitors should be required to identify themselves and the reason for visiting.
- It can be good practice to record personal details of visitors, even if the matter is a simple query and the person leaves the premises and grounds directly afterwards.

- Visitors granted access to internal areas beyond the administration office, should have their details recorded and reason for visiting. An identifying pass should be issued, for wearing in a visible position on clothing. A process should be in place to retrieve the pass at the conclusion of the visit.
- Administration office staff should be alert to any visitor attempting to use a subterfuge to gain access to internal areas, and should not grant access where bona fides are in doubt, unless authenticity can be provided by established checking procedures.
- The practice of recording visitor details and issuing temporary passes, should equally apply to visiting contractors and maintenance personnel, as well as casual visitors.

## **Deterring and Managing Unwanted Visitors**

- Apart from screening by staff to restrict unauthorised entry, general building access should be controlled by physical security measures.
- External doors providing access to classrooms or other internal areas, should have a knob or handle that is locked on the outside, if the door is not monitored, or in use. The locking mechanism should be capable of opening instantly from the inside, in case emergency evacuation is required.
- Maintaining a regular staff presence within the school or child care centre grounds during breaks, will provide a visible adult deterrent to potential unwanted visitors, and facilitate a means of observation to detect any suspicious persons.
- Larger schools or centres may consider employing a resident caretaker with an additional role of patrolling grounds during working hours for deterring and detecting any persons who may pose a potential threat to safety.
- Encouraging students to report any unidentified visitor to a member of staff or the administration office, for action to be taken.
- Where any person has been seen in a motor vehicle, and is acting in a suspicious manner in or near school or child care centre grounds, staff and students should be encouraged to record the vehicle details and registration number if known. This will assist any subsequent investigation in the event of an offence committed against a student or member of staff.
- Consideration should be given to the safety issues involved for staff or students approaching unidentified visitors, in a manner that does not place them at risk. Any practice for the interception of unidentified visitors should avoid direct or challenging questions such as: "Who are you? What are you doing here?" A non-confrontational question such as, "May I help you?" is advisable.

- Approaching visitors in obscure areas of the school or child care centre grounds that are out of view from buildings or other people, or out of range of hearing, can place safety at risk. It can be safer to observe the person from a distance and only approach when the person enters an area where others are within view and hearing.
- It is advisable for management staff to be aware of the provisions of the Trespass Act, and local Community Constables can be contacted for advice.

## VEHICLE MANAGEMENT AS A SAFETY ISSUE

Traffic flow patterns, vehicle access and school or child care centre parking areas, are issues that should be considered when undertaking a general safety audit and security review, and incorporated into the emergency management plan.

### **Potential Vehicle Related Risks**

- Youths driving into school or centre grounds, occupying parking spaces, and abusing students. The abuse could be physical, verbal or emotional, etc.
- A person entering a school or centre parking area and interfering with a motor vehicle, rendering it unsafe to drive.
- A person concealed in a school or centre parking area waiting to assault or rob a staff member or student.
- A paedophile driving into school or centre grounds seeking to entice a child into the vehicle.
- A road, driveway, or parking area within school or centre grounds, that by its design would make it possible for speeding or reckless and dangerous driving to occur; rendering an accident or injury to staff or students very possible.

## **Vehicle Safety Initiatives That Can Be Considered**

- Limit the number of driveway entrances to school or child care centre grounds, and secure infrequently used entrances by installing gates, which can be locked as required.
- Install access controlled barrier arms at driveway entrances to the grounds.
- Display prominent warning signs at driveway entrances and car parks, advising conditions of parking and notice of towing.
- Construct speed bumps or other physical impediments to control vehicle movements on site that will restrict reckless or dangerous driving.
- Have separate car parking areas for staff and visitors with an access controlled barrier arm to the staff car park.
- Have staff vehicles clearly identified by authorised parking stickers.
- Relocate car parks that may be in a remote area, close to, and within view of the school or child care centre buildings.
- Trim or remove any trees, shrubs or hedges that may prevent a clear line of sight from car parks to school or centre buildings.
- Mount closed circuit television cameras at car park location and display warning signs as a deterrent to criminal behaviour.
- Install sufficient lighting to illuminate car parks at night, for safety of any staff, students, or community groups working late.

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

An integral part in the development of crisis response plans is ensuring that effective communication equipment and procedures are in place. During emergency situations there should be a reliable communication network, able to facilitate contact between staff, the nominated centre, and emergency service agencies.

The following recommendations are offered as worthy of your consideration. However, it will be obvious that the items or systems referred to may be beyond the cost means of the school or centre. Obvious substitutions such as ready access to loud hailers and other communication aids should not be overlooked. Local security advisers will also assist with other practical ideas to help your school or centre cope.

### **Alarm Systems**

There are various types of alarm systems available ranging from an audible siren or bell, to a silent signal on a monitor. Some organisations rely on a duress alarm for activation in threatening situations. Schools may wish to consider the use of this type of device, which sends a distress signal to a designated location.

The most common type of duress alarm is the silent panic button device, which can be worn either as a wristwatch or pendant, or mounted in a fixed position in the classroom. A fixed duress alarm should be strategically placed so that it is accessible and concealed from the view of any threatening person.

An activated duress alarm transmits a signal via wiring or radio wave to a console, or may be programmed to send a pre-recorded message on a dedicated telephone line. Some duress alarm systems provide for live speech transmission.

Whilst a duress alarm may prove a useful tool for notification of emergency situations, there should be an awareness of risks associated with its use, and potential liabilities in placing sole reliance on its effectiveness during an emergency.

### **Implications for Duress Alarm Operation**

- The activation of a fixed panic button will identify the room, but not the person who activated the alarm.
- The receiving console needs constant visual or audible monitoring, to ensure that someone is aware the alarm has been activated.
- A panic button could be activated unintentionally, or as a prank by a student.
- In a threatening situation the position of people or objects in the room at the time, may prevent staff from being able to reach the button.
- In a threatening situation where staff or students may be confronted by a person with a weapon, there can be considerable safety risks in activating a duress alarm. Any such actions observed or discovered by the person presenting the threat, could provoke a violent response.
- Any school or child care centre choosing to operate duress alarms as a security practice, should formulate a careful policy on conditions of use, and appoint a professional security company for installation.

## **COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT**

Apart from an incident involving a direct confrontation inhibiting communication to other staff or emergency services, the use of standard communication devices is likely to be the most effective method for maintaining contact during emergency situations.

Whilst telephones can be a good idea for classrooms, limitations can be imposed by the fixed position, the possibility of an engaged tone if a number of telephones share the same line, and the risks of a cable being deliberately severed.

Portable radios are an option, but batteries require regular charging, static and black spot problems may occur, and communication difficulties could arise if several people are using one channel at the same time.

Alternatives may be a room intercom system, public address system, or cellular telephones, which can be carried conveniently and are not restricted to one location.

An assessment should be made on the merits of different communication systems as applicable to the school or child care centre environment, and a decision made as to the type best suited for use within the emergency management plan.

### **Emergency Communication and the Application of CCTV**

In a crisis situation occurring in a classroom, voice transmission devices may be hampered, or the veracity of any communications received may be in question. A person with a weapon could coerce a staff member or student to convey false or inaccurate information, inhibiting a proper response to the emergency.

The installation of strategically positioned closed circuit television cameras in classrooms and other designated areas, will provide a visual image and enable the crisis management team or emergency service personnel to observe the incident fully, and initiate an appropriate response. Apart from observation capabilities, CCTV systems can be programmed to record for evidential purposes.

The installation of a CCTV network would require a secure location from which monitoring of the situation could be conducted.

Installation of CCTV should only be undertaken by a reputable company specialising in the field of camera technology, and associated security applications. A school or centre installation may require complex specifications and only a company offering a wide range of brands and products as well as the experience to design a professional system should be accepted.

Staff may regard the presence of CCTV in classrooms as intrusive, even though the system may be inactive unless an emergency occurs. Any consideration on CCTV installation should involve wide consultation with staff as to appropriateness of classrooms, corridors and other school or centre areas, and liaison with the Ministry of Education in respect of policy and privacy issues.

## EVACUATION PLANNING AND PROCEDURES

The specifics of an evacuation plan will depend on the physical layout of buildings and grounds, and procedures may vary according to the scene location and type of incident. Where possible, if a school or child care centre has an effective evacuation plan in place, this should be used as a starting point to avoid "re-inventing the wheel". What follows may help to point out additional matters to be considered if not already covered.

The nature of the emergency will determine whether evacuation should be to another part of the building, a different building, an open area of the grounds, or a location away from the school or centre. In some circumstances, evacuation may not be an option, and containment in a securable safe area is required.

The development of effective evacuation procedures requires a careful planning process; mentally visualising the potential range of incidents that may occur, can assist in defining appropriate practices. There are basic elements to be considered when devising an evacuation plan.

### **Fundamental Elements of an Evacuation Plan**

- A co-ordinated and efficient communication system for providing notification of emergency, evacuation instruction, and staff contact.
- Designated assembly points that are in safe areas.
- Safe egress points from buildings.
- Safe routes to assembly points.
- Vehicle transport logistics as applicable.
- A process for verifying that all staff and students have been evacuated.
- The appointment of a crisis co-ordinator or designated person in charge to assume control for evacuation procedures in an emergency.

## **GOOD PRACTICE EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

- In an emergency, staff should give brief but clear instructions to students on how the evacuation will be achieved.
- Students should be closely supervised so that exit is achieved in a brisk and orderly manner.
- Where a room is vacated, staff should ensure that no students are left behind.
- Evacuating staff should take class attendance registers with them to designated assembly points.
- At assembly points, staff should conduct a head count and check the attendance register to confirm if all students are present.
- Staff should remain with and maintain their individual classes as a group at the assembly point, until directed otherwise by the Crisis Co-ordinator or emergency services personnel.

## **EVACUATION RISKS**

Circumstances may arise where evacuation may pose a risk to safety. An example could be the presence of an armed offender moving through a building or past external classroom windows. Any group in the process of evacuation could be in danger if the egress route passes in proximity to the offender and provides a line of sight. In the absence of an alternative route, the group would need to seek shelter in a room that can be secured.

Consideration should be given to the concept of safety zones, in case staff and students require a secure room for situations where evacuation may not be feasible.

An ideal room will have a window of a height level allowing for safe descent to the ground, but be of sufficient height to make any external attempt at climbing in, difficult. The window configuration should restrict the ability of any person standing outside from obtaining a clear view of the interior and persons inside.

Any room selected as a safety zone should have a sturdy door and frame, with the facility to lock the door internally for restricting entry by any person posing a threat to safety. The Fire Service should be consulted before installation of any locking mechanisms, to ensure that fittings comply with Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations.

### **Safety Zone Practices**

- As soon as all students and staff are inside the room, the door should be locked and windows secured.
- Students should be instructed to keep away from the door and windows, and remain silent to convey the impression that the room is vacant.
- Any blinds or curtains should be partially drawn without obscuring the external vision of staff, but to restrict the ability of any person outside to see clearly into the room.

- Any intercom system, radio, telephone or cell phone as available should be used, to contact other staff or the emergency services for reporting the situation.
- The room should be scrutinised to identify any objects or equipment that could be used for barricading the door, if it became necessary.
- A mental evaluation of the room should take into account desks or other items that can be used for cover and concealment, and planning for urgent evacuation by windows, if required.
- Staff should be prepared to issue instructions to students, such as lying down on the floor, taking cover, or directing fast but orderly evacuation by windows.
- Any knocking or a voice at the door should not be responded to. This could even apply to another staff member outside the door advising that the situation is safe. Whilst the risk is probably low, consideration should be given to the possibility that a staff member on the other side of the door may be under direct threat by a person with a weapon. In such circumstances the use of a previously agreed code word would indicate whether the situation is safe or otherwise.

## **THE THREAT OF WEAPONS AND CRISIS RESPONSE**

A young person could carry a weapon into a school just as a threat could be presented by any armed person entering the site, playing fields, playgrounds, car parks, corridors, halls or offices. Whilst crime statistics would indicate a low risk for this type of offence occurring, complacency should be avoided, with appropriate response practices being incorporated into the emergency management plan. Provision for counselling of those subjected to traumatic incidents should be included.

There may be no advance warning of a person with a weapon entering a classroom, and in this situation staff should endeavour to respond in a manner that encourages the person to leave without harming anyone.

A person armed with a weapon may be agitated, nervous, aggressive, unpredictable, and possibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol. An inappropriate comment or action by a member of staff could provoke the person into committing a violent act.

A crisis incident of this nature will be a traumatic experience with the potential for shouting, offensive language, threats of violence and physical assault. It is important for staff to try and avoid any panic or reaction, that could increase the risk of violence.

The value of staff training in critical incident response should not be overlooked, with consideration for the provision of specialised training from external service providers.

## **Responding To a Person Presenting a Firearm**

- There are responses, which can be adopted to minimise the risk of violence.
- Exercising self control and displaying a calm manner may lead to an armed person becoming less agitated, and lower the potential for violence.
- Staff should endeavour to keep students as calm as possible.
- Arguing with, or threatening the person should be avoided.
- The person should not be stared at, a defiant glare can be perceived as a challenge and provoke a violent response.
- The avoidance of any sudden moves that could panic the person.
- If the person initiates a conversation, response should be in a calm manner avoiding any provocative comment.
- Try to focus the person's attention away from the students.
- Obey any commands.
- Answer any questions truthfully unless it is vital to withhold the truth for immediate safety reasons. In these circumstances a preferable response is that the information is not known. A deliberate lie which, if the person became aware of, – could provoke an assault.
- If the person is carrying a firearm, it should be regarded as loaded.
- Without making it obvious, observe as many details as possible that will assist in identifying the person, if identity is unknown.
- If the identity of the person is unknown, note any items touched by the person for later fingerprint examination by Police, and instruct students not to handle them once the person has left.

- As soon as the person has left, the priority should be to maintain safety should the person return. A decision will depend on the direction the person was seen moving in. Options may be: evacuation by a route away from the person, remaining in the room and securing it, or proceeding to another room, which can be secured.
- The room should be secured and preserved for evidential purposes as soon as practical, and any articles left behind by the person should not be touched.
- As soon as it is practical and safe to do so, Police and other school or centre staff need to be advised that the person has left and the direction taken.

## **Responding to a Person Using a Weapon**

Where a weapon is used there is not necessarily a set way to respond, as every situation is different and variable factors may influence reactions.

The manner of response might be dictated by the type of weapon used, the physical size and mental state of the offender, the proximity of offender to others at the location, the availability of objects that might be used in defence, and other factors.

Potential ideas on how to respond in such circumstances should be thoroughly discussed by staff during the emergency planning process, with consideration for professional self-defence training as a safety measure.

Response options could be:

- Urging the person to stop.
- Instructing the students to lie prone on the floor.
- Instructing the students to conceal themselves or shelter behind equipment.
- Instructing the students to evacuate through windows or doors if it is possible.
- If evacuation is not possible owing to the position of the offender, throwing an object to dislodge the weapon or disable the person, so escape can be accomplished.
- Physically tackling the person if evacuation is not possible, and there is no other alternative to prevent further injury.
- If it is necessary to use physical force, the objective should be to facilitate immediate safe evacuation as opposed to any attempt at overpowering the person. Physical force should be directed at those parts of the body likely to be most effective at incapacitation.

## **IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING STUDENTS WITH POTENTIAL FOR HARMING THEMSELVES OR OTHERS**

The incidence of extreme acts of violence committed by students in other countries can probably be regarded as a low risk for New Zealand, owing to cultural differences and restricted access to firearms. It is advisable not to be complacent and ignore any potential risk, however slight. Emergency planning should take into account the possibility of a student carrying a firearm or other weapon into a school, with the intention of using it.

Overseas research postulates that behavioural patterns evident in some students may indicate early warning signs that predict a propensity for violence, manifesting at some time in the future. The research emphasises that any display of such signs is not conclusive as to a predictor of violence, and may simply reflect specific emotional or development problems.

Raising staff awareness and identifying and responding to any students exhibiting troubling behaviours, may act as a preventive measure.

## **Possible Early Warning Signs**

- Social withdrawal
- Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone
- Excessive feelings of rejection
- Being a victim of violence
- Feelings of being picked on and persecuted
- Poor academic performance
- Expressions of violence in writings or drawings
- Frequent outbursts of uncontrolled anger
- Displaying a pattern of intimidating, hitting and bullying behaviours
- History of discipline problems
- Intolerance to others of different race, beliefs and culture
- Drug misuse
- Gang association
- Making threats of violence
- Bringing knives or other weapons to school
- Persistent truancy
- Previously been suspended
- Has threatened or attempted suicide

## **Early Intervention**

Measures that address the needs of students who are perceived to be, or are considered at risk, could include:

- Early contact and consultation with the family of the student to assess background circumstances and information, and discussion of options.
- Intervention by a school counsellor or referral to psychologist.
- Liaison with organisations involved in emotional needs of young people, and linking to welfare agencies, social services, Child, Youth and Family Service.
- Liaison with local Police Youth Aid or Youth Education Officers, particularly where behavioural problems escalate to acts of vandalism and assaulting others.
- Introduction of a social skills programme to the curriculum, for reducing anti-social behaviour by teaching conflict resolution and anger management.
- Individual mentoring for emotional and academic development, where feasible.
- Deterrence of unacceptable behaviour by developing a disciplinary policy through a consultative process that includes a code of conduct.
- Establishment of appropriate referral procedures for children who are suspected of being neglected or abused at home.

**NOTES:**

## **CHARACTERISTICS THAT INFLUENCE PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY**

The presence of certain factors in a school or child care centre environment may convey the perception that the site or premises are unsafe. Risk indicators can be:

- Poorly designed buildings that are dilapidated, covered in graffiti, dirty and in need of repair.
- Inadequate lighting.
- Broken windows
- Overgrown or neglected landscaping
- The prevalence of litter
- Unsanitary conditions
- Overcrowding
- Multicultural insensitivity
- Absence of any maintenance programme
- Lack of disciplinary procedures and appearance of no authority or control
- An absence of contingency plans for emergencies

The existence of a number of risk indicators may have an affect on the attitude and behaviour of students. The negative influence of these conditions could lower motivation and result in anti-social behaviour by students. The appearance of neglect and loss of control, may lead to an absence of community confidence. A perception of a vulnerable environment can be conveyed and this may attract undesirable elements to a school or centre, posing a safety risk to staff and students. Alternatively, a school or child care centre embodying certain characteristics will promote a positive image conducive to a higher level of safety.

## **Characteristics Generally Associated With a Safer School or Child Care Centre**

There are measures that schools or child care centres can adopt to promote the conditions for a safe environment and reduce the risks of violence occurring:

- Presenting a visible image of tidy grounds and buildings in good repair.
- Implementing appropriate security systems and practices for effective safety protocols as defined in the emergency management plan.
- Inspiring strong student and family bonding to the school or centre by encouraging students in academic achievement and involving parents in their education and welfare.
- Encouraging student involvement in sport, extra-curricular activities and student groups' (e.g. council).
- Establishing links with other agencies, services, and community networks, to encourage local interest in the school that might assist in developing a School or Neighbourhood Watch Group.
- Establishing an inclusive environment where diversity is celebrated and respected.
- Providing access to any staff and students wishing to convey information on safety issues (e.g. reporting violence).
- Developing a consistent policy on uniform, to promote an image of good order.
- Including a personal safety component into the curriculum, and assessing the potential for a student committee to be formed, for promoting safety amongst peers, and involvement in maintaining the education environment free from graffiti and vandalism.

A school or child care centre choosing to adopt some of the suggestions outlined within these guidelines, will be more prepared and properly resourced for responding to any threatening incidents, with the advantage of having measures in place that reduce the risks of any such incidents occurring.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING REFERENCES

### **Additional information resources for emergency management planning:**

**Safety in the workplace and armed robbery guidelines**      [www.police.govt.nz](http://www.police.govt.nz)

**"NZ Security" security industry service providers' magazine**      [www.bedrock.co.nz](http://www.bedrock.co.nz)

**Security industry regulatory authority:**      **New Zealand Security Association (Inc)**  
**Phone: 09 486 0441**  
[NZSA@security.co.nz](mailto:NZSA@security.co.nz)

**NOTES;**

**ADDITIONAL LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**OTHER LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS AS SPECIFIED**

**BY:**

**THE ACCIDENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION**

[www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz)

**and**

**THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH SERVICE**

[www.osh.dol.govt.nz](http://www.osh.dol.govt.nz) and [www.nzips.govt.nz](http://www.nzips.govt.nz)

**and**

**MINISTRY OF CIVIL DEFENCE**

[www.getthru.govt.nz](http://www.getthru.govt.nz)

## ACCIDENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION

[www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz)

**"Occupations most at risk include nurses and teachers,  
while providing care and training."**

### **ACC Work Safe resources for schools**

ACC and the NZ School Trustees Association have developed a series of health and safety resources for schools.

[www.ppta.org.nz](http://www.ppta.org.nz)

The series covers:

- Improving workplace safety and health
- How to manage hazards
- Training and supervision
- Emergencies and incident investigation

# OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

[www.osh.dol.govt.nz](http://www.osh.dol.govt.nz)

Guidelines relating to education provide the following information:

## **Injury and Incident Reporting in Schools**

- Introduction
- Initial Response
- Reporting To OSH
- Reporting Within The School
- Injury/Incident Register
- Injury/Incident Investigation
- Corrective Actions

**Additional information may also be accessed at:**

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7086&indexid=1072&indexparentid=1000>

## **Staff Participation in Health and Safety Management**

- Introduction
- First Steps
- Establishing Formal Mechanisms For Staff Involvement

Refer to [Action Guide 6, Toolkit 9A](#)

- Liaison – Health and Safety Forums
- Health And Safety Representatives

Refer to [Action Guide 6, Toolkit 9B](#)

- Health And Safety Committee

## **Worksafe at Schools – Emergency Management**

**Additional information may be accessed at:**

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7086&indexid=1072&indexparentid=1000>

or

[www.worksite.govt.nz](http://www.worksite.govt.nz)

and covers issues such as:

- Introduction
- Roles And Responsibilities
- Board of Trustees
- Principal
- Staff
- Caretaker / Property Manager

## 4 "R" Approach to Emergency Management

The 4 "R" approach is a widely used model for Emergency Management. It features 4 key components:

- **Reduction:** reduce the risk of emergency events occurring and their potential impact
- **Readiness:** plan the response to an emergency event
- **Response:** what to do when an emergency event occurs
- **Recovery:** review emergency response after the event

### **Emergency Response Plans and First Aid are also detailed.**

While the Emergency Response Plan needs to consider its own unique situation and needs, it should include the following information:

- List of emergency contacts –  
*See Action Guide 2, [Toolkit 5A](#)*
- Site maps –  
*See Action Guide 2, [Toolkit 5C](#)*
- Plan for providing assistance to staff, students and visitors with disabilities –  
*See Action Guide 2, [Toolkit 5D](#)*
- First aid checklist –  
*See Action Guide 2, [Toolkit 5E](#)*
- Emergency information for visitors –  
*See Action Guide 2, [Toolkit 5F](#)*
- Evacuation procedures including emergency wardens –  
*See Action Guide 2, [Toolkit 5G](#)*

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7086&indexid=1072&indexparentid=1000>

## CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY BACKGROUND NOTES

[www.getthru.govt.nz](http://www.getthru.govt.nz)

### **The Civil Defence Act 1983 requires that schools:**

1. Prepare plans to continue core functions (i.e. educating students) during and after a Civil Defence Emergency (Section 43)
2. Undertake Civil Defence functions and duties for pupils and staff (Section 44)
3. Provide rescue and relief in their premises (Section 45)

### **The following categories are detailed:**

- Civil Defence Response
- Safety of the School community during a civil defence emergency.
- Wider Community role
- Emergency evaluation drills
- Emergency wardens
- Information and training
- Response

Please refer to *Action Guide 2*, Toolkits [5H](#) to [5W](#) for more detail.

- Recovery

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=7086&indexid=1072&indexparentid=1000>

## APPENDIX

### Youth Health Resources and Community Services

#### Introduction

Our age is one of layered networking. Networks present many opportunities and advantages:

- Each member is an important link to others;
- Members of a network support others linked to it;
- Networks help prevent people "slipping through the cracks".

*Our Foundation* contributes towards three significant forms of networking. These are:

- A network of information technology
- A network of community education and co-operation
- A network of links between specialists and young people together with their caregivers, who need their help.

#### Three Areas of Networking

##### A. Information Technology

The Internet is undoubtedly the new frontier for young people to explore and even use to their advantage. *Our Foundation's* aims in using information technology include:

- Establishing safe places to explore the ever-expanding web of the Internet;
- Promoting connectedness among and between young people and major sources of information, skills and quality resources;
- Providing parents and caregivers access to information and advice relating to parenting as well as general health and safety matters.

Three examples of web sites regularly "patrolled" to keep them clean and safe are:

[www.4KidzToday.com](http://www.4KidzToday.com) – [www.4Tweeniestoday.com](http://www.4Tweeniestoday.com) – [www.4YouthToday.com](http://www.4YouthToday.com)

##### B. Community Education

*Our Foundation* collaborates with other organisations to help individuals as well as groups receive the help they need. It does this in various ways, eg:

- Sponsoring research which will benefit youth health;
- Funding health and safety projects in association with other organizations;
- Developing educational resources for young people and their families;

The following are some of our popular resources:

## **Tools For Life**

### **Resources for Parents and Teachers**

<b>Amazing Me</b> 2000	Early childhood – Abuse prevention resource for home and Early Childhood Centres. Additional information is available on our web site: <a href="http://www.Amazing-Me.com">www.Amazing-Me.com</a>
<b>No Excuse For Abuse</b> 2001	Parental guide to abuse prevention. Activities for parents and children to do together. Additional information is available on our web site: <a href="http://www.NoExcuseForAbuse.com">www.NoExcuseForAbuse.com</a>
<b>Journey to Wellbeing</b> (Hikoi ki te Hauora) 2002	Developed with Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand. A life skills resiliency programme. Developed as our contribution to the New Zealand Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy. Additional information is available on our web site: <a href="http://www.youngnz.org.nz">www.youngnz.org.nz</a>
<b>Keeping Kids Safer</b> 2003	To help parents understand and prevent the abuse of children. Developed jointly with Police. Additional information is available on our web site: <a href="http://www.NoExcuseForAbuse.com">www.NoExcuseForAbuse.com</a>
<b>Reducing the Risks of Violence in Schools</b> 2004	A resource for schools to guide them in reducing risks from violence and terrorism. Additional information is available on our web site: <a href="http://www.4SafetyToday.com">www.4SafetyToday.com</a>
<b>All About Me</b> 2005	A programme developed by the Foundation for pre-school children to help keep them safe and well. Passed to the New Zealand Police for implementation.
<b>Gemstones</b> 2006	Assists young people (11 – 13 years) to understand aspects of their development and meet the challenges of emerging adolescence and to build a concept of who they are and how to make the most of their lives.
<b>Travel Log</b> 2007	Helps young people (13 – 15 years) to meet challenges in adolescence.
<b>Family Focus</b> 2008	For parents and primary school children to complete together. Supports the Police "Keeping Ourselves Safe" programme.

## C. Specialist Support

*Our Foundation* supports a number of strategies and systems to try and prevent any young person "slipping through the net" without the specialised help they need. It therefore has three key targets:

- **Professional Training**  
Offering professional training for teachers, guidance counsellors, R.T.L.B's, and psychologists in 'Therapeutic Storytelling Intervention' (TSI).
  - TSI is a teaching methodology using the age-old art of storytelling as a very effective means of bringing about positive behavioural change in the lives of children and also adults.
  - Courses, seminars and training for school counsellors, teachers, family therapists and various community organisations are held regularly.
  - Additional information is available on the website: [www.tsi.co.nz](http://www.tsi.co.nz)
  
- **Educational Resources**  
Developing, publishing and distributing specialised educational resources used in various forms of risk-focussed intervention.
  
- **[www.Help4Youth.com](http://www.Help4Youth.com)**  
Maintaining the empowering information of pre-recorded messages to encourage young people during difficult times and give them confidence to contact health professionals.

**Please visit the following web site for other help or further information:–**

[www.youngnz.org.nz](http://www.youngnz.org.nz)

This site will link you to excellent  
sources of help throughout New Zealand