



Lockdown Protects Students in Challenging Situation

Protective actions help keep students safe in a variety of unexpected situations. Typically, lockdown addresses a threat such as a violent person attempting to enter the school or already in the school. Some principals, however, have learned that a lockdown can also help protect students from emotional trauma during other situations.

Karen Rose, a teacher at Schweinfurt Middle School, recently described how her principal used a lockdown to shield students when a popular teacher passed away suddenly due to natural causes. Students were finishing lunch, and about to file out to their afternoon classes. Calling for a lockdown allowed staff to close the hallway where the teacher was located, thereby protecting his dignity and preventing students from witnessing a scene that would undoubtedly cause them distress. It also allowed time for medical and law enforcement authorities to arrive on the scene and conduct the investigation, which is required under German law.



Calling a lockdown under this unusual circumstance was particularly effective because the students at Schweinfurt were well-rehearsed in how to implement protective actions. “We had talked to them about all the possible situations,” noted Ms. Rose. “For example, we had practiced and talked to students about what to do if something happens when they are passing between classes, on the playground, or at lunch. They knew what to do.”

The hour that students spent in lockdown in their classrooms also allowed administrators time to prepare to discuss with them what had happened. “It was a very sad time for our school,” recalled Ms. Rose. Counselors from Schweinfurt and Bamberg schools, along with the local District Schools Office, converged on the school to provide emotional support to students and staff. In addition, the school held a memorial ceremony the following week.

School staff agreed that being able to implement an action that was so familiar had a calming effect on the school population. Because students and staff members had practiced the protective actions, calling for lockdown gave the school a means of dealing with the difficult situation. “It made a huge difference that the students knew how to go into lockdown almost instinctively,” Ms. Rose recalled. “That allowed us to adapt quickly.” For copies of DoDEA’s Emergency Protective Action flip charts contact safeschools@csc.com. ■

Inside This Issue

News & Updates

Lockdown Protects Students in Challenging Situation	1
DoDEA and DeCA Team Up for Wellness.....	2
Suicide Prevention Kits Coming in November.....	2

Safe Schools Planning

Security Exercises Improve Response Times	3
---	---

Education Issues

Childhood Anxiety Resources.....	4
----------------------------------	---

Cybersecurity

Actions to Take Against Cyberbullying: Stop, Block, Talk, and Save.....	5
---	---

Prevention Programs

TRICARE Starts Smoking “Quitline”.....	6
--	---

DoDEA and DeCA Team Up for Wellness

As DoDEA students look ahead to Thanksgiving Dinner, it is important to remember the value of balancing nutritious input with physical activity output. At Kaiserslautern Middle School, sixth grade teachers designed Food for Thought: a nutrition and wellness program intended to help students understand the importance of smart food choices.



Teachers incorporated wellness lessons into the academic curriculum so that the message of healthy choices was reinforced throughout the day. Principal Susan Hargis invited the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) to help teach students how to make healthy food choices.

Highlights of the program included a visit from DeCA home economist Kay Blakely who taught students about how to eat smart. Students also participated in a study trip to the commissary as well as a healthy choices lunch. Principal Hargis recently summarized the practical benefits: “Students make connections between exercise and wellness, determine good snacking habits, and take a look at serving sizes.” Hargis noted that parents also benefit from the information.

Now in its third year, the program has expanded to include physical exercise. Volunteers from the military community lead students in fitness activities, while service personnel challenge students to record the cumulative total of the miles they walk.

The entire school staff supported the initiative. Principal Hargis changed the school day from a traditional block schedule to a seven period day to allow time for all students to participate, and ensured that the program aligns with the DoDEA Health Education Content Standards. For example, sixth grade students apply goal setting and decision making skills and learn how to access health facts online.

The Food for Thought program was designed to be used in any DoDEA school. It can easily be adapted for other schools. For additional information, see the video at www.dodea.edu/wellness/dodea.cfm?cld=BP. ■

Suicide Prevention Kits Coming in November

During November, each DoDEA middle school and high school will receive an updated version of the Jason Foundation suicide prevention kit titled: A Promise for Tomorrow. Since 2005, DoDEA has used the Jason Foundation Program to raise awareness of the warning signs of suicide and explain how to encourage troubled friends to seek help.

The materials complement the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program. The new materials include an updated video, handout materials, and a special module that shows teachers how to implement the curriculum. For additional information visit www.jasonfoundation.org or contact safeschools@csc.com. ■

DoDEA Headquarters Personnel

Rose Chunik, Chief, Office of Safety and Security
 Adam Bergstrom, Program Manager, Antiterrorism
 Jennifer Jones, Program Manager, Physical Security
 Kim Perino, Program Manager, Emergency Preparedness

CSC Safe Schools Newsletter Editorial Staff

Sarah Markel, Brian McKeon, Bert Garcia

The material herein is presented for information purposes only and does not constitute official policy of the Department of Defense (DoD), or the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), nor does it constitute endorsement by DoD or DoDEA of any non-federal entity or its programs. All comments and questions should be directed to safeschools@csc.com.

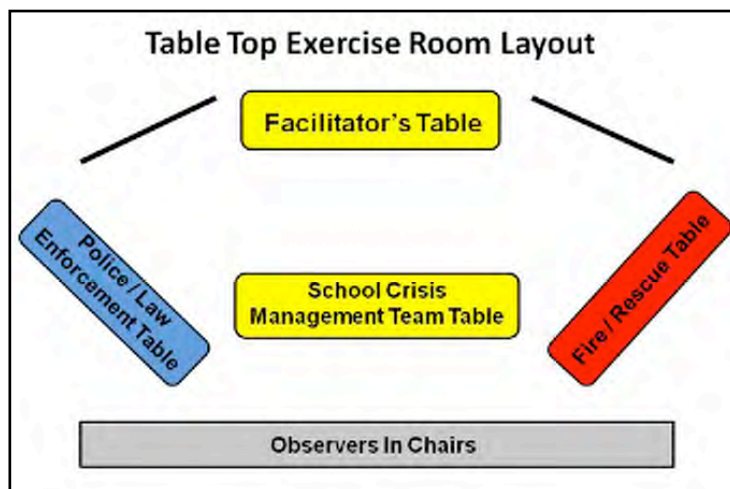
Security Exercises Improve Response Times

Practicing fire drills helps school staff and students remember what to do during a critical incident. But how do administrators gain the experience to make the right crisis management decisions? Table top exercises let school officials practice making decisions under pressure so they can adjust the established procedures to meet unique circumstances.

Begin planning for the exercise by establishing objectives based on input from the key stakeholders. Properly executed table top exercises bring together school officials, emergency responders, and installation command representatives to enhance coordination and strengthen emergency management plans.

Consider designating two individuals to develop the scenario. Solicit input from the Provost Marshall, Fire Chief, installation command representatives, and school district officials to learn which aspects of preparedness they would like to emphasize.

By visualizing the room with the table top exercise about to begin, it is easier to see the actions needed for a successful training experience. At a table in the center, one school is represented by a principal and members of the Crisis Management Team. At an adjacent table, the police, military police, or security forces will represent officers on patrol in the area, as well as those at the Provost Marshall's Office. At another table, fire and rescue personnel are poised to respond as the action involves them.



Consider incorporating other response agencies. Medical personnel from the hospital might be included to describe how they would handle a surge in patient intake. Transportation officials could participate to describe how they would move students to an alternate location on limited notice. To maximize learning, observers may include other principals, members of other crisis management teams, and area and district officials.

And. . . Action! Describe an opening scenario. Then present role players with exercise inserts that force them to make a decision, such as two girls running into the office frantically warning that they heard gun shots. One by one, the principal, other Crisis Management Team members, and emergency responders are drawn into the action as more facts become known and the incident escalates.

Keep the action focused on the teaching points and let each player respond by describing the specific action they would take in response to the new development. At the conclusion of the exercise, allow time for the designated evaluators to offer a verbal debriefing. Finally, give the participants and observers an opportunity to share their perspective. By limiting the exercise to 12 to 15 exercise inserts, a productive training experience can unfold in under two hours. Ideally, participants and observers would then disperse to separate rooms to concentrate on how they would like to strengthen response plans within their school, agency, or organization.

While the ideas for improving plans are being discussed, preserve them using designated note takers. Collect participant work sheets to determine how their confidence improved in handling an emergency situation. Confidence gained through participation in these exercises allows administrators to quickly adapt their planned response to the specific situation. For assistance planning table top exercises, consult your district and area safety and security personnel, or contact safeschools@csc.com. ■

Childhood Anxiety Resources

Research indicates that 20 percent of combat-exposed veterans endure symptoms consistent with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, or other mental health problems. Left untreated, PTSD, like any psychiatric illness, can disrupt healthy parenting and family functioning and impair a child's development. New webinars presented by Military Pathways, a mental health screening program for military personnel and their families, explain how PTSD can impact children and why the disorder often results in anxiety.

Administrators seeking information about how PTSD in parents can impact children, can access “**PTSD and Anxiety: Impact on Military Members and Families**” led by David Riggs, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Center for Deployment Psychology at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. According to Dr. Riggs, PTSD can cause families to limit community contact to avoid seeking help. Over time, these problems multiply. Recognizing the ways that a family member may be affected by PTSD, enables educators to be more sensitive to the impact on children.



There are two significant ways that PTSD can impact children. It affects them *directly* if they are living with a parent who is anxious, upset, or depressed when their parent's behavior changes. It can also affect them *indirectly* because a parent suffering from PTSD may lose confidence in their parenting abilities. The parent might become less engaged or, alternatively, more protective of the child. The four most common behavioral changes that parents, or anyone suffering from PTSD exhibit, include:

- ▶ Anger and aggression toward situations and individuals;
- ▶ Avoidance of stressful situations and withdrawal from relationships;
- ▶ A tendency to become self-absorbed and therefore appear less interested in others; and
- ▶ An inclination to be overly protective, thereby conveying a message of danger to the child.

Together, these changes can disrupt the parent-child relationship. Dr. Riggs acknowledged that sometimes PTSD can result in child abuse, but he urges professionals working with children to be aware of the far more common response: anxiety among children. In Dr. Riggs' words, living with someone with PTSD is “like walking on eggshells.” Family members learn to avoid anything that might trigger stress for their loved one with PTSD. This can be something as simple as avoiding a particular sound or behavior. Family members become watchful for these triggers, which in turn increases their own anxiety. Dr. Riggs refers to this phenomenon as “PTSD contagion,” although he notes that the family members do not actually “catch” PTSD. Rather, they exhibit similar behaviors.



Military Pathways is funded by the office of Force Health Protection and Readiness in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. The program offers military families Mental Health and Alcohol Use screening and education, anonymous online and telephone screening, *Family Resiliency Kits*, and other materials. To access the webinar, which is available at no-cost to DoDEA, go to www.MentalHealthScreening.org/military. ■

Actions to Take Against Cyberbullying: Stop, Block, Talk, and Save

According to a study commissioned by the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), 43 percent of teenagers with Internet access report that they have been a victim of cyberbullying at some time. However, only 10 percent of students who were bullied online, told their parents about the incident. Some students expressed concern that their parents would overreact; others feared they would lose access to the computer. By teaching children the following tactics, adults can provide students an appropriate response to online bullying and keep the channels of parent-child communication open.

NCPC defines cyberbullying as the act of using technology, such as computers or cell phones, to harass another individual. The report confirmed the increasing prevalence of cyberbullying in chat rooms, social networking sites, e-mail, and instant messaging programs.

Be Web Aware, a public education program on Internet safety, aims to empower parents with information to help teach their children how to benefit from the opportunities of the Internet while minimizing the potential risks. The program offers four steps students should take if they experience or witness cyberbullying:

STOP. Students should leave the Web site or stop the activity where they are being harassed, whether they are in a chat room, playing online games, sending instant messages, or surfing a social networking site. Remind children they can always turn off the computer if it is difficult to exit a site.

BLOCK. Victims of online harassment should use the security settings on the social networking service to block the sender's messages or prevent access to their personal information. *Be Web Aware* advises that children should never reply to harassing messages.

TALK. Students who are the victims of cyberbullying should report the harassment to a trusted adult such as a parent, teacher, or counselor. If the bullying includes physical threats, it should also be reported to the proper local authorities.

SAVE. Students should save any harassing messages. In addition to serving as forensic evidence in an investigation, the messages can sometimes be reported or forwarded to the online social networking service for removal. Most Web sites have user agreement policies that prohibit users from harassing others.

Additional information about how students and parents can address cyberbullying is available from the NCPC Web site at www.ncpc.org/topics/cyberbullying. *Be Web Aware*, developed and supported by Media Awareness Network (MNet), is a non-profit center for media and digital literacy. The *Be Web Aware* Web site is continuously updated at www.bewebaware.ca. ■

Authority to Regulate Cyberbullying

Administrators can incorporate cyberbullying and online harassment into their anti-bullying policies and prevention programs. As of 2008, DoDEA Regulation 2051.1, "Disciplinary Rules and Regulations," specifies both bullying and cyberbullying as misconduct (paragraph E3.5.15). Similarly, since many social networking Web sites can be accessed through portable electronics such as smart-phones, the regulation includes "using portable communications devices contrary to school policy" as a cause for disciplinary action (paragraph E3.5.16).



TRICARE Starts Smoking “Quitline”

The rate of smoking is significantly higher among service members than the general population, according to a June 2009 Institute of Medicine report commissioned by the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs. The report, *Combating Tobacco in Military and Veteran Populations*, states that 32 percent of active duty military and 22 percent of all veterans smoke, compared with about 20 percent of the civilian adult population. Among the U.S. civilian population, more than 23 percent of men and 18 percent of women are smokers.

In early 2007, DoD launched an interactive tobacco cessation Web site that developers hope will help curb military tobacco use. The site, Quit Tobacco – Make Everyone Proud, promotes quitting tobacco as a matter of duty and pride. Campaign materials encourage service members to curb tobacco addictions to present themselves as role models for their children and to send a message about increased military readiness.



Quit Tobacco is an educational campaign for the U.S. military, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense, to help U.S. service members quit tobacco “for themselves and for the people they love.” The site provides a self-assessment quiz, facts highlighting the harm of various tobacco products, steps to create a quitting plan, and information about how to find local support groups to assist in fighting the urge to resume smoking. Online games are also available. Quit Tobacco urges its users to play a game the next time they feel the urge to smoke.

The site also allows visitors to search topics such as tobacco, smokeless tobacco, or related ideas such as quitting, staying smoke-free, or cravings. Numerous materials have been developed to encourage living tobacco free and to inform users about the positive effects of quitting. In addition to the information, posters, flyers, DVDs, podcasts, post cards, and wallet cards are available at no cost.

For service members or their families looking for help to quit smoking, TRICARE has recently implemented a new “Smoking Quitline.” Through Quit Tobacco, TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries can chat online with a tobacco cessation coach one on one and in real time to learn about quitting smoking and chewing tobacco and ways to stay quit.



All non-Medicare eligible TRICARE beneficiaries within the U.S. can get assistance in going smoke-free 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Service members and families stationed in the United States can also contact the Quitline via regional phone numbers. For more information on the TRICARE Quitline, visit www.ucanquit2.org/tricarequitline.aspx.

The Quit Tobacco Web site, www.ucanquit2.org, also provides information on alternative smoking cessation resources. For more information on the 2009 Institute of Medicine report, *Combating Tobacco in Military and Veteran Populations*, visit www.iom.edu/Reports/2009/MilitarySmokingCessation.aspx. ■