



TRAIN FOR IMPROVED SAFETY

Virginia K-12 Threat Assessment Training

Stillwater Community Education will be hosting a training on the Virginia K-12 Threat Assessment model. This training will be held Feb. 21 or 22. There is a \$69 registration fee. Contact Annette Sallman at 651-351-8322 for more information.

EDGE Virtual Training Platform Releases School Emergency Scenario

The virtual training platform, [Enhanced Dynamic Geo-Social Environment \(EDGE\)](#), is now available with a school-based scenario. The EDGE school environment can be any type of critical incident on campus including:

- Parental custody disputes.
- Potential bomb threats.
- Active shooter incidents.
- Other scenarios.

EDGE is a video game-style simulation in which people control avatars. Avatars include teachers, school administrators and school resource officers—who all have roles and capabilities similar to what they have in a real school environment. Additional avatars include students and suspects, as well as law enforcement, for a coordinated response. Each person determines their avatar's actions, meaning the simulation plays out differently each time. This format allows people to participate from different locations, supporting single and multi-agency use. Agencies can practice various strategies together, and the technology analyzes how different security measures might change the outcome of an event and response. Communications functions allow role-players to actively converse or exchange commands while running live EDGE training exercises. There is also an after-action capability, so trainers can replay the exercises for further discussion and instruction.

EDGE is meant to complement existing training tools. School personnel or law enforcement agencies can train separately or collaboratively so all are prepared. The goal is to improve communication, coordination and response skills prior to an event. Because EDGE is accessible online, training can be conducted without disrupting the school environment. It was created by the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate and the US Army Research Laboratory. EDGE creators worked with several first responder and education stakeholders, including the [Educator's School Safety Network](#), to gather feedback and requirements.

How to obtain EDGE access and training resources:

EDGE is free to all U.S. public safety and education institutions. All EDGE account requests are fully vetted and, once approved, Cole Engineering provides online access. They also provide a help desk function for schools or first responder agencies just getting started. Visit the [EDGE training page](#) or contact 877-EDGE-011 (877-334-3011) for additional information.

K-12 Active Shooter Exercise Starter Kits

[The Department of Homeland Security's Office of Academic Engagement \(OAE\)](#) released exercise starter kits for the K-12 community focused on an active shooter incident as part of the Campus Resilience (CR) Program. The exercise starter kits (ESKs) were developed in support of the Department's school safety efforts, including its work with the Federal Commission on School Safety.



The CR Program's ESKs are self-conducted tabletop exercises (TTX) that provide school districts and schools with a set of scalable tools to develop a TTX that can be tailored to validate or update their existing emergency operations plans, policies and procedures. The ESKs also help identify issues, gaps and areas for improvement in response to an active shooter incident.

The K-12 ESKs are currently available at the elementary, middle/junior high and high school levels. Each kit includes a set of planning documents that contain pre-populated exercise content that aligns with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program's (HSEEP) methodology and principles.

Stakeholders can request a new K-12 ESK [at this website](#).
(Source: DHS)

MN Community Conducts Table Top Exercise for Family Assistance Center



In November 2018, several agencies including schools, public health, emergency managers, and other community partners convened in Marshall to conduct a TTX and put their emergency operation plans to work. The goal of a TTX is to practice emergency operation plans in a safe environment, recognize the role of community partners, and identify gaps in the plan before a real world event.

The scenario for the TTX was a school gym roof collapse during a large sporting event. Participants were tasked with post-incident functions and capabilities, focusing on family assistance centers. Family assistance centers provide services and information to family members of those injured, killed or otherwise affected by an event. Participants discussed the logistics of family assistance center and the operational coordination and communications associated with an incident of this type.

Participants recognized the strengths and gaps in their plans as well as identified resources available both locally and through statewide partnerships. The HSEM training division can assist schools in setting up an exercise of this type.

For more information, contact [Jennifer Lindberg](#) or 651-201-7095.

Grant Available

AAA Minnesota/Iowa is currently accepting traffic safety grant requests up to \$500 for 2019. Activities that would qualify include mock car crashes, seat belt challenges, anti-texting and driving events, bike rodeos, etc. Monies cannot be used to fund staff. Schools located in Hennepin County are not eligible to receive this grant. The grant must go to a tax-exempt organization.

Grant requests must be received no later than February 18, 2019. Access the grant form is available [using this link](#).



MN Fusion Center: Recent School Threats Identified in Minnesota

[The Minnesota Fusion Center](#) (MNFC) is a section of the [Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension \(BCA\)](#). The mission of the MNFC is to collect, evaluate, analyze and disseminate information regarding organized criminal, terrorist and all-hazards activity in Minnesota, while complying with state and federal law to ensure the rights and privacy of all.

Nationwide, school threats go vastly underreported to state and federal law enforcement agencies; Minnesota is no exception. From January through December 21, 2018, the MNFC received reports on three threats to Minnesota schools. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) in Minneapolis

received 13 reports. The more reporting both the MNFC and FBI receive, the more accurate understanding and trend analysis law enforcement agencies will receive. The MNFC can then facilitate situational awareness pertaining to identifying potential threat actors prior to an attack, recognizing suspicious activity, and highlighting circumstances unique to individual threats.

It is important for local entities such as schools, law enforcement and businesses to share threat information with the MNFC. The MNFC works closely with state, local, tribal and territorial government agencies (as well as private sector partners) to gather, analyze and share threat and vulnerability information that could potentially affect the nation. To report a threat made in your school district, [email the MNFC](#).

(Sources: MNFC, FBI)



Report Averted School Violence

After every incident of violence on a school campus, after action reviews and case studies are created. Yet what about the incidents that did not happen? What can we learn from them to prevent further incidents?

The Averted School Violence Near Miss Reporting System is a platform for law enforcement officers, school officials and mental health professionals to share their stories and lessons learned from averted school violence incidents in order to prevent future injuries and fatalities in educational institutions. Incidents are collected in an anonymous, secure, non-punitive and confidential process. The lessons learned can be used to inform future school policy and safety procedures.

Individuals are encouraged to submit averted school violence cases in which loss of life and or injury were completely prevented. This data is compared with incidents of school violence that were carried out: to identify similarities and differences between potential and actual shooters, situations, and effective/less effective preventative measures. Data collected includes school violence incidents at all grade levels, from elementary schools to college and graduate programs. Incidents in the database include shootings, stabbings and bombings that the attacker planned to carry out on school property. For the purposes of the database, collected cases are those that occurred in the United States after the Columbine tragedy.

The Averted School Violence Near Miss Reporting System was initiated by the Police Foundation in 2012. It is modeled on the International Association of Fire Chief's (IAFC) near miss reporting system, and is funded by the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office at the Department of Justice. [Click here](#) to share incidents of averted school violence to improve school safety and for more information about the program.



Marjory Stoneman Douglas Report

[A report released in January](#) by an investigative panel looking into the 2018 Valentine's Day massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida has been released. The 439-page analysis examines "what happened leading up to the shooting and the law enforcement response." That includes a moment-by-moment recounting of the shooting as well as a comprehensive scrutiny of the shooter's life.

Several chapters of the report chronicle a myriad security breakdowns, systemic school security failures and the absence of a cohesive protocol that allowed the shooter to easily enter the campus and embark on the shooting rampage: Gates and doors were left unlocked while others were inaccessible just when students needed additional hiding spaces; there were no public address system speakers in the hallways that might have improved communication throughout the bloody chaos.

Analysis of the incidents such as Marjory Stoneman Douglas can help identify areas of intervention and prevention as well as whether failures in the policies and procedures, or execution of them contributed to an inability to prevent injury and death.

(Source: NPR News)

Discord



The more law enforcement, school faculty and parents understand about different available technologies, the better they can educate the youth in their lives about the possible dangers associated with that technology.

Discord is a free, secure chat app that allows users to chat with friends while playing games. It also creates places where people can meet up to find other players and socialize. Discord is intended for ages 13 and up. It was created to replace other voice over internet protocol (VOIP) apps used to talk to each other in real time while playing games, especially massively multiplayer online games (MMOs). Users can join a chat they have been invited to, or they can create public or private servers and invite their friends to play and discuss games by voice, text or video. Users can message each other individually or in group chats with up to ten friends.

Unlike other social platforms, people use Discord specifically to build private, invite-only groups. A user's personal information (email, IP address, etc.) is not displayed to other users. Like other social networking sites, younger users run the risk of being exposed to things such as sex, violence, and profanity. For example, because Discord does not screen or vet users, individuals can be contacted by people they do not know, especially on public or large servers. Ensuring kids know how to block someone, where the reporting functions are within the app, and knowing what information is okay to share are all great ways to keep young users safe when using Discord.

Discord also provides a Parent's Guide to Discord, and how to set up parental controls. (Source: MNFC and multiple open sources)

[The Minnesota School Safety Center \(MnSSC\)](#) provides training and resources to help schools prepare for, respond to, mitigate and recover from all hazard emergencies.

Contact the MnSSC team for more information:

- [Randy Johnson](#), Director, 651-201-7094
- [Jennifer Larrive](#), School Resource Officer Coordinator, 651-201-7092
- [Connie Forster](#), Safe School Assessment Coordinator, 651-201-7093

If you have ideas or topics for the Minnesota School Safety Center Newsletter [contact Connie Forster](#).