



# Planning for and Response to an Active Shooter

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# My Background

Lemont, IL  
Marist High School  
Illinois Wesleyan University  
Lake Zurich: 1995-Present  
Detective: 2001-2007  
NIPAS EST: 2002-2010  
Sergeant: 2008-2016  
Operations Commander: 2016-2017  
Operations Deputy Chief: 2017-Present





# Active Shooter

- ▶ “An individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined or populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearm(s) and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.”





# Research Findings

- ▶ 160 active-shooter incidents occurred between 2000 and 2013.
- ▶ These incidents resulted in 486 people killed and 557 wounded.
- ▶ Approximately 60% of the incidents occurred before police arrived.
- ▶ 40% of the incidents ended with the shooter committing suicide.
- ▶ 13.1% of the incidents ended after unarmed citizens safely and successfully restrained the shooter.
- ▶ 28.1% of the incidents ended after law enforcement personnel engaged the shooter.
- ▶ 69% of the incidents lasted less than five minutes.
- ▶ 3.8% of the incidents ended after armed individuals who were not law enforcement personnel engaged the shooter.
- ▶ Active-shooter incidents occurred most frequently in areas of commerce.



# Active Shooter Preparedness Plan

- ▶ Updated every two years
- ▶ The plan should include, at a minimum:
  - ▶ Security assessments
  - ▶ Preparedness
  - ▶ Communication
  - ▶ Incident plan
  - ▶ Training and exercises
  - ▶ Post-incident recovery





# Active Shooter Preparedness Plan Review

- ▶ Revise floor plans.
- ▶ Revise evacuation routes.
- ▶ Inspect fire extinguishers.
- ▶ Reassign emergency duties.
- ▶ Update contact lists.
- ▶ Update tenant lists.
- ▶ Restock emergency supplies.
- ▶ Train and drill to any changes.





# Prevention

- ▶ Identifying a person posing a potential threat of violence
- ▶ Notifying the appropriate authorities with this information
- ▶ Evaluating the threat credibility (Threat Assessment Team)
- ▶ Intervening to prevent the threat
- ▶ Documenting the intervention and disseminating the information





# Threat Assessment Team

- ▶ Address threats.
- ▶ Confront violent behavior.
- ▶ Assist in assessing the potential for violence.

A diverse representation is recommended.





# Behavioral Indicators

- ▶ Development of a personal grievance
- ▶ Contextually inappropriate and recent acquisitions of multiple weapons
- ▶ Contextually inappropriate and recent escalation in target practice and weapons training
- ▶ Contextually inappropriate and recent interest in explosives
- ▶ Contextually inappropriate and intense interest or fascination with previous shootings or mass attacks
- ▶ Experience of a significant loss

*\*These behavioral indicators are common, but not always known prior to an attack.*





# The Pathway to Violence

- ▶ "I am special."
- ▶ "I am not a loser."
- ▶ "I have power."
- ▶ "YOU are afraid of ME because of my power."
- ▶ Desperation
- ▶ Wanting to be known
- ▶ Journals
- ▶ Unsuccessful attempts to connect
- ▶ Desire for escape, not death

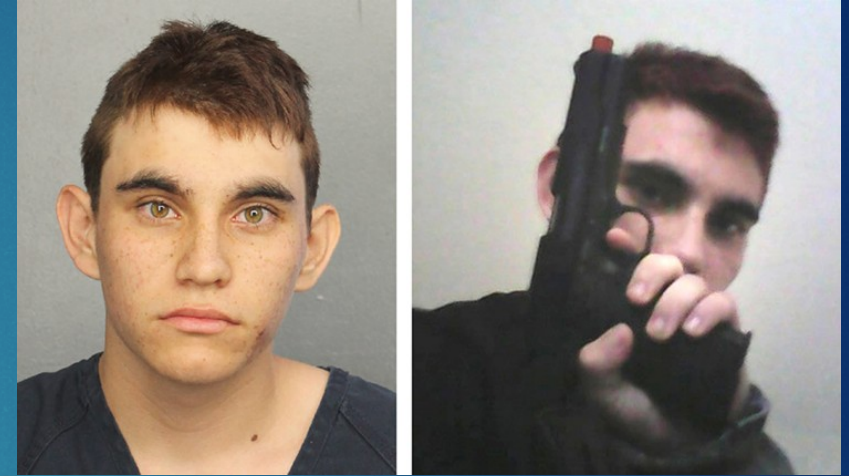


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# Can they be stopped?

- ▶ IF they can be identified
- ▶ IF they can be assessed
- ▶ IF they can be managed
- ▶ IF someone “sees” them ahead of time
- ▶ IF someone notices their behavior
- ▶ IF someone does something





# Employee Assistance Program

- ▶ Endorsements from top managers
- ▶ Reminders of services offered
- ▶ Reminder that services are confidential





# Training and Exercises

- ▶ Employees benefit from briefings and participation in active-shooter drills.
- ▶ Pre-designated assembly points
- ▶ Special-needs populations
- ▶ Verified points of accessible egress
- ▶ Alert and notification procedures
- ▶ Communication capabilities
- ▶ Table-top exercises
- ▶ Security tips and bulletins





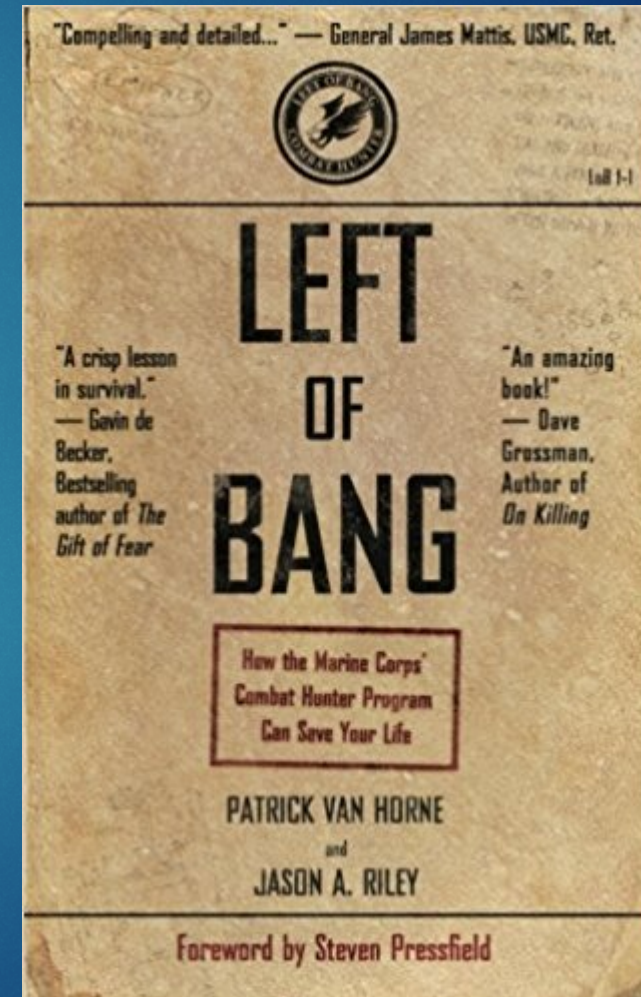
# Why train?





# Situational Awareness

- ▶ Being aware of one's surroundings
- ▶ A mindset, not a skill
- ▶ Recognize bad things can and do happen.
- ▶ We each need to take responsibility for our own safety and security.





# Response



**RUN/ESCAPE**

IF POSSIBLE



**HIDE**

IF ESCAPE IS  
NOT POSSIBLE



**FIGHT**

ONLY AS A  
LAST RESORT



# RUN

- ▶ Leave personal belongings behind.
- ▶ Put hands in the air.
- ▶ Visualize escape routes.
- ▶ Avoid escalators and elevators.
- ▶ Take others with, but do not stay behind with those who refuse to leave.





# Call 911 when safe to do so.

- ▶ Location of the active shooter(s)
- ▶ Location of the caller
- ▶ Number of shooters
- ▶ Law enforcement on-site?
- ▶ Physical description of the shooter(s)
- ▶ Type and number of weapons
- ▶ Use or threat of explosives
- ▶ Shooting still occurring?
- ▶ Number of potential victims





# HIDE

- ▶ Lock and barricade doors.
- ▶ Close and lock windows, close blinds.
- ▶ Turn off lights.
- ▶ Silence electronic devices.
- ▶ Remain silent.
- ▶ Look for other avenues of escape.
- ▶ Identify improvised weapons.
- ▶ Silently communicate with first responders when safe to do so.
- ▶ Remain in place until given the all clear from law enforcement.
- ▶ Consider identifying safe locations before an incident occurs.





# FIGHT

- ▶ Superiority in numbers
- ▶ Speed
- ▶ Surprise
- ▶ Violence of action
- ▶ Anything can be used as a weapon.
- ▶ Throw things at the shooter's head.
- ▶ Make as much noise as possible.
- ▶ Do not stop until the shooter is no longer a threat.
- ▶ "A gun can only be shot in one direction at a time."
- ▶ Courage is contagious.





# Fire Alarms

- ▶ Play absolutely no role in an active-shooter incident
- ▶ Expect the fire alarm to activate.
- ▶ Is there smoke or other sign of fire? Does the fire pose the greater risk, or the active shooter?





# Law Enforcement Response

- ▶ Purpose: Stop the shooter as soon as possible
- ▶ Officers will proceed directly to the area where the last shots were heard.
- ▶ Officers may respond in groups or alone.
- ▶ Officers may be wearing Kevlar helmets and/or other tactical gear.
- ▶ Officers may be armed with rifles.
- ▶ Officers may shout commands and/or push people to the ground for their safety.
- ▶ The first officers responding will not provide first aid.





# Interacting with Law Enforcement

- ▶ Remain calm.
- ▶ Follow commands.
- ▶ Immediately raise hands and spread fingers.
- ▶ Keep hands visible.
- ▶ Put down any items.
- ▶ Avoid quick movements.
- ▶ Do not point, scream, or yell.
- ▶ Do not ask for help when evacuating.





# Self-Help and First Aid

- ▶ Bandage improvisation
- ▶ Direct pressure to wounds
- ▶ Tourniquet improvisation





# Communications / Media

- ▶ Public Affairs Officer (PAO)
- ▶ Establish working relationships with local media.
- ▶ Have a public-affairs plan.
- ▶ Develop standard talking points.
- ▶ Disseminate accurate information early.
- ▶ Include the PAO in training.
- ▶ Create checklists of appropriate and necessary information.
- ▶ Have multiple communications options.
- ▶ Do not make assumptions.
- ▶ Work with law enforcement personnel.





# Recovery

- ▶ Accounting for personnel
- ▶ Coordinating with first responders
- ▶ Determine the best methods to notify families.
- ▶ Establish a continuity-of-operations plan.
- ▶ Determine a transition plan to return to normal operations.
- ▶ Provide assistance to victims and their families.
- ▶ Reunification plan
- ▶ Psychological First Aid (PFA)





ANY  
QUESTIONS  
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