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Risk Assessment and School Violence: A Public Safety Paradigm

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<http://acolumbiaweb.com/sounds/911.wav>

Overview

- High Profile School Shootings
- Scope of Impact
- School Resource Officers
- Safety Plan: How to Prepare
- Psychological Implications
- SRO Training and Effects
- Anti-Bullying

High Profile School Shootings

- May 18, 1927-Andrew Kehoe: Bath, Michigan
- April 20, 1999- Eric Harris & Dylan Klebold: Columbine High School
- April 16, 2007-Seung-Hui Cho: Virginia Tech University
- December 14, 2012-Adam Lanza: Sandy Hook Elementary

Scope of Impact

- Gun control laws: Who should be able to carry weapons in schools?
 - Arkansas teachers
 - For every school to have a SRO, taxpayers would be charged 13 billion a year, & half the federal budget for elementary/secondary education would be spent on this alone
- Safety Plans
- The value of School Police
- Prevention

School Resource Officers (SROs)

- Police specifically trained for working as law enforcement agents and educators in schools
- Roles include:
 - Problem-solving partnerships
 - Situational crime prevention
 - Decrease violence
 - Safety plans
 - Crisis response planning
 - Threat assessment
 - Security and safety audits
 - Sponsorship of youth activities
 - Periodic in-school trainings and presentations

(Raymond, 2010, p. 4).

School Resource Officers (SROs)

- Seen as “trivial” job by fellow officers
 - Often marginalized, isolated and disrespected by rest of police force
- Many school budgets cannot afford permanent employment of an SRO
- Sandy Hook impact
 - Had two SROs, Flynn and Penna
 - After Sandy Hook, Newtown’s goal is to expand its School Resource Officers to have one officer in every school
 - Newtown currently lacks enough men to provide that need

NASRO

- Organizations such as National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) exist with the primary goal of preventing school violence:

“NASRO is an organization for school-based law enforcement officers, school administrators, and school security/safety professionals working as partners to protect students, school faculty and staff, and the schools they attend” (NASRO.org)

Safety Plan: How to Prepare

- Prevent, prepare, respond
 - Schools and organizations must come together to determine the plans of action.
- Schools and law enforcement must work together to develop realistic safety plans
- School Resource Officer (SRO)
 - Must collaborate with the first response team
- Utilize available tools and technology

Training

- Joint effort of school staff and corresponding Law Enforcement
- Rapid Response System: Creates a web-based tool with photos and video of the school
- Immediate lockdown
 - *Color Card System*
 - *Crisis Response Box*

“(Will result in) less targets for the shooter(s), reduce confusion for arriving officers, help contain the situation, and minimize the chance of an accidental shooting by responding officers,” (Williams).

- Pre-determined safety sites off campus
- *Memorandum of Understanding*
 - Between the school and local law enforcement for procedural purposes
 - Assures both parties understand the exact plan and tactics
 - Increases chances that plan will be carried out
- Do not try to “be a hero”

National Incident Management System (NICS)

“ Nationally recognized emergency operations plan that is adapted for large critical incidents where multi-agency response is required”

- Goal: Allow law enforcement and school staff to respond together with quality communication and organization
- Promotes priority-setting, efficient communication, and interagency cooperation
- Systematic approach

Impact on School Environment

- Change in environment and mourned losses
- Community outreach
- External vs. internal threat

Psychological Implications

Potential Manifestations:

- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fear factor

How do we detect the signs?

- Alienation
- Dramatic change in behavior
- Repeating the trauma through play and action
- Untrusting
- Changes in school performance
- Problems with friends
 - Monitor social media and gaming

Support and Services

- Mental health services
 - Group counseling with peers
 - Individual counsel
 - Provide other resources
- Accommodations on campus
- Family and Community
- Staff sensitivity training
 - How can we support these students during this difficult time?
 - What can we do to ensure they feel safe in this environment again?

Why do SRO's Require Specialized Training?

- Referred to as a multifaceted “hybrid breed”
 - Synthesizing responsibilities of law enforcement officer, counselor, teacher and mentor
 - Parent teacher meetings
 - Emergency response system protocol
 - Crowd control and violence de-escalation tactics
- Liaison between law enforcement and the community
- Crisis prevention/intervention and post trauma crisis management/intervention

School Resource Officer Training

- No uniform duties or training currently exist
 - State law and school district regulations vary, therefore compliance with such would vary as well
- Prominent and widely recognized organizations national organizations provide specialized training
 - NASRO (National Association of School Resource Officers)
 - COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services)

NASRO SRO Training

- 40 Hour basic instruction course
 - Gang activity, drug abuse, self-destructive behavior etc.
 - Crisis plan, emergency plan, threat assessment etc.
 - “Triad Concept”
 - Individual and classroom teaching skills
 - School law enforcement practices
 - Counseling and problem solving skills
- NASRO encourages enrollment in follow up classes
 - 24 hour advanced classes
 - 12 hour specialized classes (i.e. verbal de-escalation skills)
- Annual conferences

COPS SRO Training

- Pre-service training regiment
 - Teaching, mentoring, counseling
 - Working collaboratively with school administrators
 - Application of juvenile law/case law
- Formal classroom training
- Shadowing experienced SRO's
- Offers follow up specialized training
 - Special needs population training
 - Establishment of anonymous tip lines
 - Drug awareness campaigns
 - Gang affiliation implications

SRO Relationships with Parents, Students and Community

- Parents & Students
 - Greater respect and positive regard for officers
 - Increased perception of safety in schools
 - Greater comfort reporting crimes
 - Value immediate response
- Community
 - Enhances police reputation
 - Greater comfort with and trust in officers
- Police Personnel
 - Improve school safety
 - Stronger relationship with community/school personnel
 - Reduce workload of patrol officers

SRO Relationship Effects Cont.

- Potential pitfalls and future areas of caution for SRO's:
 - Overly aggressive/authoritative officers
 - Feelings of harassment/being treated like criminals
 - Presence implies an inherent lack of safety at school
 - Children feel they are under constant surveillance

Anti- Bullying Movement: A step Towards Reducing Violence

- Victimization
- Peer influence
- Healthy vs. foul play
- Safe2Tell
- SRO's influence
- Anti-bullying community campaigns
- Family involvement
- Profiling a shooter

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Q & A

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