

Lockdown Drills Panel Discussion



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[This webinar](#) features researchers and practitioners sharing lessons they've learned from lockdown drills. They also share best practices, reasons for conducting lockdown drills, how to conduct lockdown drills in a trauma-informed way, and how lockdown drills fit into a comprehensive school safety approach.

Learning Outcomes

- » Debate the merit of lockdown drills.
- » Discuss the need for a standardized set of guidelines for lockdown drills.
- » Discuss how lockdown drills fit in with other school violence prevention strategies (threat assessment, tabletop exercises, building centralized reporting systems, coordinating with first responders, etc.
- » Explain methods for making drills trauma-informed.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Lockdown drills serve as a way for students and staff to practice appropriate responses to situations including but not limited to: active shooters, dangerous animals, or natural disasters. Lockdown drills can also provide first responders a chance to become aware of school protocol and responses along with building layouts.
- ✓ The ultimate goal of a lockdown, that should be prioritized during a drill, is to ensure safety for those in a classroom by making sure there are barriers to entrance and that visibility into the classroom is limited.
- ✓ A school lockdown drill should **not** simulate an active shooter or other crisis situation, but rather allow students and staff to practice steps and protocols in a controlled environment.
- ✓ Ensure proper planning takes place to support students and staff with disabilities or other special needs during the drill and therefore during an actual lockdown.
- ✓ Lockdown drills should take place at a variety of days and times, including those considered more inconvenient such as during passing periods, recess or lunch.
- ✓ Studies show that lockdown drills actually reduce anxiety in students; however, students with prior trauma may find lockdown drills triggering. Conduct lockdown drills with a trauma-informed lens, and ensure students and staff have time and resources to debrief afterwards. Be sure to provide support for students who may have adverse reactions.
- ✓ Understand and be willing to admit that it will not go perfectly the first time. Follow-up with staff and administration to assess what was successful and what gaps may exist that need to be addressed.

Additional Resources

[Best Practice Considerations for Schools in Active Shooter and Other Armed Assailant Drills](#) - Guidance on factors schools must take into account when conducting armed assailant drills.

[Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools](#) - Information about developing, implementing, and maintaining a school emergency operations plan.

Questions for Discussion

- » Does your school have a lockdown procedure? Is it clearly communicated to all school staff and students? How often is it practiced?
- » Is there a debrief protocol following lockdown drills? Who is involved in sharing feedback? How is success measured?

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