



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A.,
Associated Country Women of the World
and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service
SCFCL website: <http://www.scfcl.com>

Leader Training Guide What To Do If... Active Shooter

Objective:

Understanding "Active Shooter" and What Should You Do If confronted by an Active Shooter.

Lesson Overview/Introduction:

A key element to successfully responding to and recovering from a major disaster is the overall preparedness of individual citizens and their families. With that in mind, please participate in this lesson of "What Would You Do If?" scenario to assess your level of preparedness. Losing a loved one to a random act of violence is unthinkable. Unfortunately, recent events serve to remind us that we are not immune from these types of tragedies. As we know, an active shooting event can occur at any time or any place. During the past several years, there have been active shooter incidents where we shop, where we learn, and where we work. Disasters can be caused by one or more persons trying to hurt or kill innocent people. Do you and your family know **what to do if an active shooter** unfolds around you? This lesson provides guidance to individuals, so that they can be prepared to respond to an Active Shooter situation.

Lesson:

SCENARIO: "Active Shooter"

Imagine yourself at the local shopping center with your family picking up a few last-minute items for an upcoming party you are hosting. A sudden, loud sound draws your attention to the main entrance. At first you think it's only fireworks, but then you realize that can't be true – who would set off fireworks inside a store? Panic sets in when you see that someone with a handgun is randomly shooting at customers. What Should You Do?

Discussion Questions:

Do your friends and family know the phrase "Active Shooter"? Have they learned at work or school, or from TV or the Internet, what to do in this situation? What do you think your first actions should be? Let's talk about when to run, when to hide, and as the last resort, when to fight. If you have to hide from an active shooter, do you know to shut off or mute your cell phone? If you should become separated from your friend or family, do you have their phone numbers memorized in case your cell is lost? Do you have a family emergency communications plan?

You always hear the phrase, "If you see something, say something." What do you consider to be suspicious behavior that you should report to local security or law enforcement?

Please watch this video to learn more about Active Shooter preparedness and then discuss what you've learned to improve your safety in the event such a tragedy occurs.

<https://www.dhs.gov/video/options-consideration-active-shooter-preparedness-video>

Who is an Active Shooter?

An **active shooter** is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined space or other populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the

shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Active shooters usually will continue to move throughout building or area until stopped by law enforcement, suicide, or other intervention.

In an active shooter situation, you should quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. You should:

RUN. When an active shooter is in the vicinity, if there is an escape path, attempt to evacuate.

- ❖ Evacuate whether others agree to or not.
- ❖ Leave your belongings behind.
- ❖ Help others escape if possible.
- ❖ Prevent others from entering the area.
- ❖ Call **911** when it is safe.

HIDE. If an evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide.

- ❖ If you can't get out safely, you need to find a place to hide and barricade the door.
- ❖ Act quickly and quietly.
- ❖ Try to secure your hiding place the best you can.
 - Lock and/or blockade the door.
 - Silence your cell phone.
 - Turn out lights
 - Hide behind large objects.
 - Remain very quiet.
- ❖ Your hiding place should:
 - Be out of the shooter's view.
 - Provide protection from shots are fired in your direction.
 - Not trap or restrict your options for movement.
- ❖ If you can't find a safe room or closet, try to conceal yourself behind large objects that may protect you.

FIGHT: As a last resort, and only if your life is in danger, whether you're alone or working together as a group, fight!

- ❖ If you're with others, try to remain calm do not panic, and begin organizing yourselves and commit to taking the shooter **down**, no matter what.
- ❖ Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- ❖ Act with physical aggression.
- ❖ Improvise weapons. Arm yourselves with any available weapons i.e. a fire extinguisher, chair, coffee mug, etc.
- ❖ Commit to your actions.
- ❖ Try to be aware of your environment. Always have an exit plan.

When Running and Hiding Are Not Possible CALL 911

When possible, provide the following information to law enforcement officers or 911 operators:

- Location of the active shooter.
- Number of shooters, if more than one.
- Physical description of the shooter(s).
- Number and type of weapons held by the shooter(s).
- Number of potential victims at the location.

When law enforcement arrives:

Some maybe patrol officers, wearing blue uniforms, and some maybe deputy sheriff's wearing black uniforms. Others may be part of the SWAT team, wearing camouflage fatigues and helmets. All the officers are holding assault rifles. They are entering in a tactical formation, with some officers looking forward while others check to the sides and behind them. They stay as a tight group. The first responders (police) on the scene are not there to evacuate or tend to the injured. They are well-trained and are there to stop the shooter first. The police continue to do a room-by-room search as they pass by more casualties. Officers check each room before moving down another hallway.

- Remain calm and follow instructions.
- Keep your hands visible at all times.
- Avoid pointing or yelling.
- Know that help for the injured is on its way.

When instructed by the police to exit the building, run with your **hands in the air, palms facing forward** to demonstrate that you are not holding any weapons.

It is important for you to be knowledgeable so that you can react if you are ever confronted with an active shooter situation. As these situations evolve quickly, quick decisions could mean the difference between life and death. If you are in harm's way, you will need to decide rapidly what the safest course of action is based on the scenario that is unfolding before you.

Discuss with your family and friends a Communications Plan for emergencies. Develop a call system for family and friends to relay information to each other in emergency situations. Discuss a safe meeting place, designate one for events if you get separated.

Remember to always:

- ✓ Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit.
- ✓ Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.
- ✓ CALL 911 in an emergency!

Lesson Summary:

The lesson demonstrates possible actions that individuals can take if confronted with an active shooter scenario. It reviews the choices of running, hiding, or as an option of last resort, fighting the shooter. It also shows how to assist authorities once law enforcement arrives. And most importantly know how to communicate with family and friends if an Active Shooter situation occurs.

Suggested Activities:

Before starting the lesson, have members write down answers to the following questions: Where are the exits? How would I get out of the building **quickly**. Where are the handicapped exits? Will anyone need them? How do I contact friends and family in an emergency? How to turn cell phone on **silent**. What is my location?

Watch the video on iPad or cell phone. Hand out "Active Shooter Preparedness Program" flyer from Homeland Security. Practice an orderly evacuation.

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Sources/References:

Department of Homeland Security website: Active Shooter Preparedness,

<https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness> FEMA <http://training.fema.org/is/crslist.aspx>



Active shooter incidents, in many cases, have no pattern or method to the selection of victims, which results in an unpredictable and evolving situation. In the midst of the chaos, anyone can play an integral role in mitigating the impacts of an active shooter incident. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides a variety of no-cost resources to the public and private sector to enhance preparedness and response to an active shooter incident. The goal of the Department is to ensure awareness of actions that can be taken before, during, and after an incident.

Active Shooter Preparedness Program

DHS maintains a comprehensive set of resources and in-person and online trainings that focus on behavioral indicators, potential attack methods, how to develop emergency action plans, and the actions that may be taken during an incident.

Active Shooter Online Training

This one-hour online course (IS-907 Active Shooter: What You Can Do) provides an introductory lesson on the actions that may be taken when confronted by an active shooter, as well as indicators of workplace violence and how to manage the consequences of an incident. To access this course, please visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute online training website at <http://www.training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx> and type Active Shooter in the search bar.



Active Shooter Preparedness Workshop Series

These scenario-based workshops feature facilitated discussions to inform participants on the best practices associated with preparing for and responding to an active shooter incident. Through a dynamic exchange of information, these workshops provide participants an understanding of how to plan and aid in the development of an initial draft of an emergency action plan for their organizations. For more information on these workshops, please contact the Active Shooter Preparedness Program at ASworkshop@hq.dhs.gov.

Active Shooter Online Resources

There are additional resources available online to inform individuals on how to prepare for active shooter incidents. These resources range from booklets and pocket guides, to a 90-minute webinar that explains the importance of developing an emergency action plan and the need to train employees on how to respond to an incident. To access these resources, please visit <http://www.dhs.gov/activeshooter>.

Contact Information

For general information regarding the Active Shooter Preparedness Program, please email ASworkshop@hq.dhs.gov.