

Plan, Evaluate, Respond Training

Thank you to the emergency managers of the Boston Consortium for higher education and Yale University who originally created the script and inspiration for the video.

Any questions, please reach out to Thomas College Safety and Security at 207-859-1399 or security@thomas.edu

[Music]

All right. This will only take a couple of minutes, but it's something you need to hear, so I'm going to show you a few things and give you something to think about.

So, let's say you're sitting with a few people. You're texting, you're working, whatever you do. In this case you're in the library. It's a normal day.

[Scenario]

Emily said there's a weird guy at the center of campus.

Weird how you're in your own world here.

He's wearing all black and carrying a big bag. He's headed through the library.

Me, I'm not staying here.

[Stranger enters and shoots gun]

What should you do in that situation? Now, of course I'm not saying this will happen. An active shooter situation or any act of violence like this is incredibly rare. But if it did happen there are things you can do that will increase your chance of surviving.

Something you can do right now is plan. It's always good to be aware of your surroundings. There's an entire building around you. You're in this space all the time. So, have a plan.

You probably know where the power outlets are to charge things, but do you know where all the exits are? Know where you can run. Know where you can hide. There are exits all over the place and you wouldn't believe how many people get hurt or killed in a fire because everyone runs toward the door they came in.

The adrenaline's going and they run right by an emergency exit. So, in this situation there's a lot you could have done differently. If you took a few seconds to plan.

Take a look. There's the door you came in but look around. There's a closer exit right behind you. If I were you, I'd take the headphones off or at least turn the music down.

[Scenario Replayed]

Emily said there was a weird guy out in the street. Weird. Like muttering and carrying a big bag. He's headed this way. Let's go. Come on. This way.

[Music]

That was too close for comfort. But in this situation, you had a plan, and you evaluated your options and decided to run away. That's what we like to say: plan, evaluate, respond.

If you can run away, you do. But what if it isn't that clear. Let's say you're in a small room or office. You have a plan already in the sense that you know there's an exit down at the end of this hallway.

[Continuing Scenario – Gun shots...scared voices]

I saw a man with a gun...

Running away might not be your best option. You can also hide. Barricade yourself as best you can. Stay put until you get the all-clear on your phone, which should be made completely silent. It's not likely that a shooter will spend time trying to get into locked rooms. Try to be as invisible, quiet, and calm as possible. Take long, deep breaths and try to relax.

Now. What if you're here and the guy with the gun is right here. Well, there's no trick. The only thing you can do is make yourself a difficult target. Fight back and swing hard. Distract him. Throw things. Be loud. Try to get away. Even in that situation you have options.

Let's go back outside. Get as far away from the affected area as possible. When you've found safe cover call Campus Police or 911. Give your location first, then your name, a description of the shooter, where he is, and is headed. If you're not in immediate danger, you'll hear about what's going on pretty quickly. The campus emergency alert will go out.

[Professor teaching]

He immigrated to the United...

[Student reading phone alert]

Confirmed report of gunshots in or near the library. Shelter in place. This is not a test.

[Professor responding]

Hey! No no no no no, get away from that window. Lock the door. We need to just sit and wait.

Shelter in place means just that. Stay calm. Lock the doors. Stay away from windows. Find a safer room if you need to.

[School Professor Talking]

I mean we're safe here, but the library is closed. This is freaky.

The campus emergency site is updated regularly, and as new information is confirmed.

[Another Professor Enters the Room]

You folks get the alert?

Yeah.

Well, let's not panic. The library is on the other side of the courtyard and the alert said to shelter in place. So, let's just stay put here.

You might be outside when you get the shelter and place message. If you're outside get away from the affected area. Find shelter indoors. Go to your car or get behind safe cover. Follow directions from law enforcement. Trust your judgment. Until they can give the all-clear, police will sweep every room.

So, let's go back there.

[Police Sweeping the Area]

Police! Anyone in there? This is Officer Barnett with the police. We're performing a room-to-room search. If you want to confirm the search you can call dispatch.

Yeah, there are two of us in here.

Do me a favor and put your hands up where I can see them. We're coming in. Hands up. One clear. Two clear. Anyone injured? All right, we're going to continue our search. Please stay here and lock the door behind me until the all-clear. It shouldn't take too long, all right?

Yeah.

[Police] 121 room clear. Moving on.

If you're sheltering in place lock and barricade all doors. When the police arrive to sweep the room, verify their identity and remember to stay where you are until the all-clear.

I'm not going to take up any more of your time. When these things happen it's pure chaos. The best advice I have is: have a plan, then figure out your best option, and do it. But you've got to be quick. Plan, evaluate, respond.

That's it.

Thank you. Stay safe.

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