



# The Complete Crisis Communication Management Manual for Schools

4th edition

**NSRA**

National School Public Relations Association ■ 15948 Derwood Road, Rockville, Maryland 20855



# What's inside

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Acknowledgements.....	9
Get the Most from This Manual.....	10

## **Crisis Preparation..... 11**

<b>Preparing for a Crisis .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Be Prepared to Act.....	13
Essential Elements of Crisis Management .....	14
Adopt a Crisis Management Policy .....	15
Review and Revise School Safety Policies.....	16
Engage the Community in Dialogue About School Safety and Security .....	17
School Safety Task Force.....	19
Tips for Parents to Help Create Safe Schools .....	20
Tips for Students to Help Create Safe Schools.....	21
Collaborate with Emergency Response and Community Agencies.....	22
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.....	24
Establish Incident Management Teams (IMT) .....	25
Incident Command System (ICS) .....	28
Crisis Staging Areas.....	32
Parent Reunification Site and Process .....	34

## **Crisis Management.....39**

### **Developing the Crisis Communication Management Plan.....41**

School Emergency Management.....	41
Principles of School Emergency Management .....	43
Effective Crisis Management: Action and Communication .....	49
Emergency Operations Planning Sections .....	50
Review the Crisis Plan and Train Regularly.....	52
Practice Makes Perfect.....	52
Additional Crisis Plan Elements.....	54

## **Crisis Communication.....59**

### **Crisis Communication.....61**

Crisis Communication .....	61
The Communication Lifecycle .....	63
Crisis Communication Plan.....	65
Crisis Communication Center.....	67
Crisis Communication Focus.....	71
Crisis Communication Tips .....	73

Communicating During a Crisis .....	75	Accidents.....	161
Using Social Media in an Emergency.....	77	Accidents During Out-of-School Time .....	162
Communicating with Parents and Community .....	82	Active Shooter.....	163
Communicating with Multiple Audiences.....	84	Angry Parents.....	165
Working with the Media in a Crisis.....	86	Assault (Including Physical and Sexual Assault or Rape).....	166
<b>Crisis Recovery.....</b>	<b>103</b>	Bomb Threat — Suspicious Envelope or Package .....	168
<b>Crisis Recovery.....</b>	<b>105</b>	Bullying and Harassment.....	172
Crisis Recovery.....	105	Bus Accident.....	173
The Aftermath of a Crisis .....	106	Child Abuse and Neglect.....	176
Counseling and Intervention After a Crisis.....	108	Civil Disturbance, Including Student Walkout and Demonstration.....	177
Guidelines for Critical Incident Follow-up.....	111	Perceived Threat — Potential for Civil Disobedience or Disturbance .....	179
The Morning After.....	113	Criminal or Copycat Threats .....	180
Communication and Media Strategies in the Aftermath .....	115	Cyber Attack .....	181
The Crisis Is Over ... Now What? .....	116	Fight, Including Gang Violence.....	182
<b>Threats and Hazards.....</b>	<b>119</b>	Hostage Situation.....	183
<b>Threats and Hazards.....</b>	<b>121</b>	Intruder.....	184
Overview.....	121	Missing Student, Including Abducted or Kidnapped Students .....	186
<b>Natural Disasters .....</b>	<b>125</b>	Missing Student Who Has Cognitive Disabilities or Autism .....	188
Earthquakes.....	126	Overdose, Including Alcohol, Medication, and Substance Abuse .....	189
Floods, Including Dam and Levee Failure .....	128	Strikes, Including Labor Negotiations and Work Stoppages.....	190
Landslides.....	130	Suicide .....	196
Storm Prediction Center Severe Weather Outlook System.....	131	Suicide “Copycats” and Clusters .....	200
Severe Weather: Hailstorms .....	132	Terrorism .....	201
Severe Weather: Heat Advisories.....	133	Threat of Violence .....	203
Severe Weather: Heat Exhaustion and Heatstroke.....	135	<b>Biological Threats and Hazards.....</b>	<b>207</b>
Severe Weather: Hurricanes and Typhoons .....	136	Allergic Reaction.....	208
Severe Weather: Lightning Strikes .....	139	Blood-borne Diseases.....	212
Severe Weather: Tornadoes .....	141	Infectious Diseases .....	213
Severe Weather: Tsunami .....	148	Influenza (Flu) Epidemic and Pandemic Threats.....	223
Severe Weather: Winter Storms.....	150	Medical Emergency, Including Life- threatening Incidents.....	232
Severe Weather: Wind Chill .....	151	<b>Technological Threats and Hazards.....</b>	<b>235</b>
Severe Weather: Winds, Including Severe and Straight-line.....	155	Airplane Crash.....	236
Volcanic Eruptions.....	156	Building Collapse .....	237
Wildfires .....	157	Business Interruption .....	238
<b>Adversarial, Incidental, and Human- caused Threats or Hazards .....</b>	<b>159</b>	Fire, Arson, and Explosion .....	240
		Gas Leak and Noxious Odor.....	241

Hazardous Materials from Inside the School, Including Science Lab or Custodial Spill .....	242
Hazardous Materials from Outside the School, Including Chemical Emergencies .....	244
Power Failure, Including Utility and Water Outage .....	246
Radiological Release from Nuclear Power Plant or Terrorist Attack .....	247
Train Derailment, Including Tanker Truck Accidents .....	248
<b>Death in the School Community .....</b>	<b>249</b>
Overview .....	249
Dealing with a Death in the School Family .....	250
Crisis Intervention Team .....	257
<b>Crisis Training .....</b>	<b>263</b>
<b>Drills, Exercises, and Crisis Scenarios .....</b>	<b>265</b>
Overview .....	265
Human Behavior in a Crisis .....	266
Debriefing After a Crisis .....	266
Incident Management and Response Team Training .....	277
Crisis Planning Case Studies .....	279
<b>Letters and Additional Resources.....</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>Sample Letters to Prepare for and Respond to a Crisis.....</b>	<b>295</b>
Overview .....	295
Death of a Student.....	297
Death by Suicide.....	300
Death of an Employee (or Family Member).....	303
Accidents Involving Students and Staff.....	306
Announcements of Deaths (to Students, Staff and Families).....	308
General Announcements (for Other Incidents).....	309
References .....	323
<b>Additional Resources .....</b>	<b>325</b>
Resources .....	325
Sources of Information.....	328
<b>Appendix: Forms and Checklists .....</b>	<b>330</b>