



Campus Cops Corner

-Public Safety Tips for the PPCC Community-

Public Safety Newsletter

My first thought yesterday as I learned of the school shooting at Deer Creek Middle School in Littleton, CO, was "Oh no! Not again!" Coupled with the recent shooting at the University of Alabama - Huntsville, it adds to the long list of school shootings and public "spree shootings" with which we've all become too aware.

I know there's a desire for a simple checklist to deal with these types of incidents, but such a list just doesn't exist. Although experts agree that there is no one "profile" of a school shooter, we do agree that they are often emotionally unstable and, with 20-20 hindsight, we usually agree there were signs which we might have taken note of prior to the tragedy. As I've often said, "If you're concerned, we're concerned." I encourage you to let us know if something makes you feel uneasy.

My friends at Colorado State University advocate a program revolving around the operative word "out." Please read about it below.

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Surviving the Spree Shooter

I've repeatedly bragged about the effectiveness of our Student Urgent Response Force (SURF) Team. Although it's difficult to measure a negative, we have a number of successes of which I'm particularly proud. But what do you do, if the "unthinkable" happens? The operative word is "out."

1. **Figure it OUT:** We repeatedly hear surviving victims say things like, "I thought it was firecrackers," or "I thought it was a joke." Gunfire often sounds like simple "popping," and rarely sounds like it does on the movies or television shows. Likewise, in previous issues, I've encouraged you to be "situationally aware," and play "What if ...?" At this point in our history, I don't think any of us have the right to think "It can't be happening here."
2. **Get OUT:** Part of being "situationally aware" is being aware of your surroundings prior to the emergency. Is there a back door, window or alternate exit? Can you escape if the need arises? The hostage taker / attacker's plan is weakest at the very beginning, i.e., before he / she has the chance to put you at a disadvantage and under his / her control. Act quickly.
3. **Call OUT:** Sound the alarm. Call for help at your earliest opportunity. At PPCC, the best number is always 502-2911. These horrific incidents are usually over within minutes. With police officers on campus, you're assured of a quick response. The sooner you call, the sooner we'll get there.
4. **Hide OUT:** If you can't "get out," try to "hide" in order to avoid being seen or heard. This involves being quiet, avoiding detection, and quieting all noise making devices (cell phones!). I know it's distasteful, but we know that during some shooting rampages, some survivors had success by "playing dead."
5. **Spread OUT:** You're easier to control and / or attack when you're all standing together. Spread out. Make the attacker deal with you one at a time. This may buy you another precious moment necessary for you to act.
6. **Take OUT:** As was the case at Deer Creek Middle School yesterday, during many of these tragedies, it's the quick action of someone standing right there which puts an end to the threat. Other than just "fight or flight," many of us simply "freeze" in the face of immediate danger. You must have decided long beforehand that you refuse to be a victim, and if necessary, you will fight. Your chances are greatly improved if you reach a consensus amongst the others you're with that "If he / she comes in here, we're all attacking him / her simultaneously, and we'll use whatever tools and weapons we have at our disposal." Be ruthless. Remember, this isn't a fair fight. You're fighting for your life.

Important Numbers & websites:

- 24-7 Emergency Number: 502-2911
- Emergency Alert Sign Up: www.ppcc.edu/alert
- Crime Stoppers
634-STOP (7867)
- Anonymous Reporting
www.SAFE2TELL.org

1-877-542-7233

