

“Safety in Our Communities” Tuesday July 18th (Rm. 221A) 3:45-5pm

Physical and Emotional Safety in our worship and school communities.

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Introductions

Resources mentioned today can be found at: elcaschools.org & elcafaithformation.org

“According to [US Department of Education](https://www.ies.ed.gov) data, more than a third of schools reported an increase in physical attacks between students since the pandemic began.”³

Raffle/Sign In

Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency of the U.S.A. Government, [cisa.gov](https://www.cisa.gov)

Big Mama Document: [MITIGATING ATTACKS ON HOUSES OF WORSHIP: Security Guide](#)

- Establish a multi-layered plan for security, **identifying clear roles** and responsibilities for developing and implementing security measures.
- Create emergency **action plans**, business continuity plans, and incident response plans that are well communicated and exercised with the Safety Team for complete understanding.
- Conduct a **vulnerability assessment** to understand the risks to the house of worship from which you may prioritize implementing any subsequent safety measures.
- Build community readiness and resilience by establishing an **organizational culture of caring** where all members and visitors are properly supported, and credible threats are reported through previously identified channels.
- Apply **physical security measures** to monitor and protect the outer, middle, and inner perimeters, while respecting the purpose of each area of the house of worship.
- **Focus on the safety of children** by implementing safety measures around childcare, daycare, and schools.
- Implement **cybersecurity** best practices to safeguard important information and prevent a potential cyberattack.

Real Story Example: Threats or acts of violence
-insiders/outsideers

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³ <https://ies.ed.gov/schoolsurvey>



School Safety:

- Accountability and ultimate responsibility
 - incorporate or not
 - liability/risk
 - governance
 - Licensed Early Childhood Center- whoever signs license is responsible, usually church council president
 - handbook examples through ELEA membership including ZYWAVE
 - Policies for Parent Behavior
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SCENARIO #1

Season: late-fall Weather: Cold and clear

Day: Tuesday Time: 12:56 P.M.

As school director you are returning to your office following the post lunch loop of the hallways. As you approach the office you hear loud male voices. As you open the office door there is a strong smell of alcohol and you see three males in a heated discussion with your secretary. You recognize one of the men as the father of one of your students. What steps do you take?

SCENARIO #2

School Type: 9 thru 12 High School, 1327 students

Day: Tuesday Time: 7:09 A.M. (School starts at 8:05am)

You are notified by your school secretary that a message was left on the school phone message system that a specifically named student (a recent transfer to your school) was planning to bring a weapon to school with the intent to cause harm. The caller indicated that the information was found on a social media page of the named student. The call came into the system at 1:43 A.M. and was anonymous. You are unfamiliar with the student named. Your school has been open at multiple entry points for early morning activities (sports team practice, music, drama and three scheduled early morning or 0-hour classes) since approximately 6:00 A.M. with approximately 200 students in the building. What steps do you take?

Active Shooter Tool Kit from Homeland Security: The K-12 Exercise Starter Kits currently focus on an active shooter incident and are broken into three (3) K-12 school levels: Elementary School, Middle/Junior High School, and High School. To obtain one or more of the K-12 Exercise Starter Kits, please use this [link](#).

[Helping Children Cope with Traumatic Events:](#) It was developed in response to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. This booklet provides practical guidance for caregivers—including parents, family members, teachers, clergy, and volunteers—on how to help support children after a traumatic event, including a breakdown of common signs and symptoms by age.

[Joffe Emergency Services:](#) YOUR PARTNERS IN SAFETY
“We empower communities to confidently prevent and manage emergencies and protect lives.”

Available Grant \$: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/nonprofit-security>

Anti-Harassment, Right to Be: <https://righttobe.org>



Checklist for your space:

- What would you add?
- What has been helpful for your community?
- What do you wish you would have done earlier (rather than later)?
- **Narrow Down Priorities for first steps**

WORSHIP COMMUNITY SAFETY:

“15 Church Security Tips and Resources for Pastors and Church Boards”⁴

- 1) Create a church security plan.
- 2) Install church video surveillance (inside and outside).
- 3) Never allow an adult in the Children’s Area without proper identification.
- 4) Make sure to have a plan for Sunday services, in the event of a shooter, fire or other incident.
- 5) Ask a local police officer to do a walk-through of your facilities and offer feedback.
- 6) Ensure emergency lights are installed and tested around the entire campus.
- 7) Train all your leaders on how to respond to emergency situations.
- 8) Define an official spokesperson for the church.
- 9) Create public and private wireless networks that use different routers.
- 10) Designate someone “official” to patrol the parking lot regularly.
- 11) Don’t allow staff or volunteer leaders to work alone in the church building.
- 12) Test your security systems and routines at least annually.
- 13) Create a clear protocol for handling money.
- 14) Get to know your local police, fire department, and paramedics.
- 15) Never assume everything is fine and doing well.

SCENARIO #3

A relatively new member of the youth group, Karen, had approached the youth director after their last youth group meeting, asking to talk. She said that she was getting sexually harassed at school by an older boy, Nathan, whose family was a part of the congregation, though Nathan did not attend youth group. She said that he would not stop texting her with sexually explicit messages and it was becoming unbearable. Karen’s family did not attend church; she had come to youth group with friends. She was afraid to tell her parents about the texting, because if they found out that it was a boy from church they might not let her come. She begged the youth pastor not to tell anyone.

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[Protecting Places of Worship: Six Steps to Enhance Security Against Targeted Violence](#)

http://www.swmnelca.org/PDF/preventing_responding/The%20SAFE%20HAVEN%20GUIDELINES.pdf (Safe Haven policy example)

⁴ <https://malphursgroup.com/15-church-security-tips-and-resources-for-pastors-and-church-boards/>