

Vermont School Safety Center Newsletter

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Featured story

Vermont School Safety Center Inaugural Edition Newsletter

Threat Assessment

Enhancing safety & security

School Safety Planning

Guidance and best practices

Vermont 9-1-1 Board

Efforts in compliance

A Word from Secretary Holcombe

Vermont School Safety Center

The Vermont School Safety Center, in partnership with the Vermont School Crisis Team, is pleased to bring you our inaugural edition of the Vermont School Safety Newsletter.

Last year, Vermont's Agency of Education, in partnership with the Department of Public Safety, established the Vermont School Safety Center. This state agency partnership is designed to enhance the level of emergency preparedness in Vermont's Pre K-12 schools, utilizing state, regional and federal school safety partners to identify and share best practices and emerging trends. Check out our website for all your school safety planning, training and exercise needs:

<http://schoolsafety.vermont.gov>

A big "thank you" goes out to members of Vermont's School Crisis Planning Team. Many members of the team have dedicated countless hours of their time and resources to this important school safety work.

For breaking news on the Vermont school safety front, follow us on Twitter:



@VTED_SafeSchool

Threat Assessment

For the past two years, the Governor's School Safety Conference has focused its efforts on how to develop a school Behavioral Threat Assessment Team. This training, provided by SIGMA Threat Management Associates, was designed to teach participants how to identify and mitigate behaviors that may have a negative impact on our schools. Marisa Randazzo, Ph.D., Managing Partner at SIGMA Threat Management, said,

"The State of Vermont has done impressive work to enhance the safety and security of Vermont schools for students, employees, parents, and visitors alike. The Vermont School Safety Center in partnership with the Vermont School Crisis Planning Team has engaged in a multi-year effort to help Vermont schools engage in best practices to prevent school violence, bringing in international experts on school threat assessment and violence prevention to train Vermont school administrators, faculty, and staff and their school safety partners on what behaviors to look for and how to respond in a way that reduces risk and enhances safety. The State of Vermont is among only a handful of states across the U.S. engaging in such a comprehensive school safety initiative."

As a follow up to this training, the Vermont School Crisis Planning Team created a [Threat Assessment Guide](#) to walk schools through the steps of performing a threat assessment.

**Vermont Agency of
Education
in Partnership with
the Vermont
Department of Public
Safety**

School Safety Planning

Over the past 12 months, Emily Harris (Vermont Emergency Management) and Rob Evans (Vermont's School Safety Liaison Officer) have been visiting with a number of Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) to share school safety planning guidance and best practices with local Emergency Management Directors, emergency first responders, emergency partners, and school executive leaders. Members of the LEPCs are critical school emergency preparedness partners and school crisis planning team members should access these resources for information about local hazards and vulnerabilities that may pose a risk to your school community. For information on how to contact these resources, please send an email to Emily Harris at emily.harris@vermont.gov.

As the coming school year begins, we recommend that school crisis planning team members refer to [the 2017/2018 School Safety Training and Awareness Calendar](#) found on the Vermont School Safety Center's website for information about monthly school training initiatives. The training and exercise resources found on this calendar (What if Wednesday's, Facilitated Dialogues, etc.) have been developed to ensure that school leaders have school safety learning opportunities to share with school crisis planning team members. These resources are ready to use, easy to deliver and take just minutes to complete.

School Safety Training & Exercises

Over the summer, we prioritized our school emergency preparedness training offerings to three critical response areas.

- On July 12th, the Vermont School Safety Center hosted the "How to Develop a School Emergency Operations Plan," delivered by our friends at the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (<http://rems.ed.gov>). This training was offered to assist schools with developing or enhancing their school crisis planning documents.
- We continue to deliver Incident Command System training for school executives to every corner of the state. This training familiarized school officials with the language and organizational framework used by first responders when responding to critical incidents.
- We continue to provide public information training for School Administrators. This training provided school officials with the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to effectively manage the public information process when responding to a school based critical incident.

Rob Evans continues to conduct his school safety site visits across the state. During these visits, Rob met with the schools leadership team, discussed the current state of schools crisis planning efforts and after his assessment was complete, provided each school with a report that could be used to prioritize



future school crisis planning initiatives. If your school would like a school safety site visit, or would like to coordinate future incident command or public information training, please contact Rob Evans (School Safety Liaison Officer) at revans@margolishealy.com.

Vermont 9-1-1 Board

The Vermont 9-1-1 Board has been working with schools across the state to ensure that their multi-line phone systems are 9-1-1 compliant. Through the 9-1-1 Compliance Grant Program, the 9-1-1 Board has been assisting schools to enhance their ability to provide accurate and specific phone number and location information to 9-1-1. The work being done is critically important to improving the ability to quickly locate and assist 9-1-1 callers in times of emergency. Please contact Barb Neal (Executive Director, Vermont 9-1-1 Board) at barb.neal@vermont.gov for further information.

If you're in crisis, the Vermont Crisis Text Line provides FREE crisis support 24/7 by text. Text "VT" to 741741 to be connected to a trained crisis counselor.

**In Crisis?
Text VT to 741741**

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Free, 24/7, Confidential

A Word From Secretary Holcombe

"As our excitement grows with the coming of the 2017/2018 academic year, I want to encourage all of you to leverage the valuable school emergency preparedness resources that have been made available on the Vermont School Safety Center's website. While I am very pleased with our collective school safety work, I strongly encourage all of our partners to continually test and evaluate current school safety plans, policies and procedures and please contact our School Safety Liaison Officer (Rob Evans) for assistance with any of your future school crisis planning initiatives." – Rebecca Holcombe, Secretary of Education

