



# PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMS FOR SECURE SCHOOLS

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The safety and security of our students and our schools are paramount to the well-being of our communities and the future of our nation. Gerard Group International offers to schools - from kindergarten through university - a strong program of risk assessment, program development, and training to help protect students, teachers, and personnel from the impact of crime, violence, and terror.



The threat of violence and terrorism in today's world has caused decision-makers in America's schools to face a grim, new reality: our schools are increasingly vulnerable to the threat of violence and terrorist attack. The events at Columbine High School in Colorado, in Beslan's Middle School Number 1 in North Osetia, Russia; in the West Nickel Mines School in Pennsylvania; in Kerala, India; and in schools throughout Israel; have shown that no school is immune.

Pro-active, all-hazards safety and emergency response planning should now be an essential part of operational continuity programs. From student and personnel safety to facility damage and liability issues, schools face new and difficult challenges that need to be addressed today.

Every school has its own unique characteristics, including such diverse features as its campus design, its demographics, and its operational processes. Gerard Group's Secure School Program is modeled to address each school's specific needs, and employs the best use of resources to achieve maximum results. We help the administration identify areas of vulnerability and work together to close security gaps.

Our program is designed to meet the unique requirements of each school system and to close vulnerabilities that put the school population at risk. Our goal is to protect the students, the faculty and staff, the facility, and the community in which it is situated.

# ASSESSING VULNERABILITY

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The threat of violence can appear suddenly, from inside the school or from outside, from people who are known to the community or from strangers. Schools have proven to be effective targets because they symbolize the emotional heart of the nation and the promise for our collective future. The high media value of children under attack makes schools particularly vulnerable in this media-absorbed age.

Gerard Group's comprehensive, all-hazards approach to school safety and security addresses the threats imposed by a rapidly changing world. It includes unauthorized intrusion, hostage taking, and kidnapping.

All aspects of buildings, grounds, vehicle and pedestrian access, on-campus and off-campus activities, and human processes that drive the educational program, are likely to contain their own areas of vulnerability. They are therefore all included in our assessment.

We provide a thorough, customized assessment that includes:

- ◆ risk and threat analysis, based on current intelligence and emerging trends, to identify potential areas of danger
- ◆ analysis of the physical campus and its vulnerabilities
- ◆ review of the school culture and the operational processes that may put it at greater risk
- ◆ full report identifying the areas of threat and risk, with prioritized recommendations for closing existing gaps
- ◆ full follow-up support for the implementation of our recommendations



# TRAINING FOR SAFETY

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Gerard Group's training program supports the findings of the threat and vulnerability assessment, and fosters a positive approach that gives students and staff alike a sense of purpose and accomplishment. It is designed to empower both students and adults in the school environment, helping them deal effectively with emergency situations, while feeling secure in the school environment.

The program promotes a community approach to school safety and includes activities that educate students to respond to emergency situations in a safe, disciplined manner. They are helped to develop the skills and resilience that will keep them secure and confident in stressful and potentially dangerous situations. This includes interactive emergency response training and exercises (similar to fire drills), team building, and leadership training.

Gerard Group's professional team is knowledgeable and bring years of experience working in the school environment. We provide practical and meaningful solutions that reduce fearfulness and encourage individual resourcefulness in students, teachers, administrators, and support personnel, to create a functional team that can work together to keep their school safe.