Safety Check

Safety Check: Does Your School Have the Right Security Measures?

The topic of school violence is never easy to discuss, let alone to plan for on your own school campus. However, not planning for it isn't a viable option, and having a risk mitigation strategy and security hardware in place may help school leaders, teachers, and parents feel empowered and safer, while also reducing the likelihood of a tragic event.

While most Americans will never experience it firsthand, each instance of violence on a school campus staggers our nation. From 2013 to 2016, Everytown, a gun safety organization, tracked school shooting statistics and noted that 53% of school shootings happened at K-12 schools. Though actual shootings are - thankfully - very rare, these statistics do point to the need to be proactive about school security. It's paramount that we use those terrible incidences to incite action to better equip campuses for safety, especially our K-12 schools. Below are overviews of security products available to today's schools to help keep their students and staff safe from a variety of threats.

Lockdown Hardware
A lockdown only works when all of the classrooms and teachers follow through on the protocols. Lockdown hardware is designed to lock a room, preferably from the inside, to keep an intruder out. These systems can be fairly simple, as is the case with a lock and key system the teacher manages, or complex, such as remote or centralized lockdown technology that locks doors remotely, either through a fob near the door itself or from a centralized computer system.

Door Defense Systems
In addition to simply locking the door, schools now have access to products designed to make the door harder to kick open when locked. Intruder defense systems are designed for specific types of doors and may be placed on the floor or on the hinge to prevent doors from opening. Teachers can keep these in the classroom, then put them on the door in an active intruder scenario to protect the students.
Alarms

Alarms alert the entire school to a problem. Door stop alarms, window alarms and door alarms can all be helpful in school security. Schools can assess their vulnerable points and add alarms to these areas to prevent unauthorized entry or exit from the building. Fire and tornado alarms are also an important part of school safety.

Wearable Alerts

Wearable alerts provide teachers with fast alert systems they can use to alert parents and administration to problems. Teachers wear these devices and can use them to alert authorities at the touch of a button if they see an intruder or have a safety issue developing in their classroom. One such product, Help Alert, supplies teachers with a unique two-level alert system accessible at the click of a button. Teachers wear the small Help Alert fob while on campus, so they always have a way to contact the front office quickly and easily.

Key Card or Fob Access

Access to the building needs to be controlled in a safe school. According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) (NCES), almost 95% of public schools limited access to school buildings during school hours in the 2013-14 school year. Some schools invest in wearable key cards or fobs to make it easier for staff and teachers to have access without constantly buzzing the office for entry to the school. These hang around the neck to ensure the teachers can come and go as needed.

Security Cameras

Security cameras are the basic part of a school security system, though up to 30% of primary schools and up to 16% of middle and high schools do not have security cameras, according to the NCES report. They give administration the ability to see into critical parts of the school, as well as provide a visual image of people trying to enter the school campus. Security camera systems should include both indoor and outdoor views.

Metal Detectors

Metal detectors help prevent students or staff from entering the school with weapons, and also make it easier to screen visitors. Adding metal detectors at the entrance to a building ensures that all people who enter must walk through this security check. Schools can also invest in handheld metal detector wands to use in scenarios where a walk-through option isn't ideal or possible.

Security for Devices

While shooters are the highest profile risk a school faces, schools also must protect against security risks that occur when technology is stolen. Sensitive student information stored on computers needs to be protected. Security cables lock computers and laptops into place, ensuring only those authorized to do so can move them.

Each school must determine where its security weaknesses are, then invest in those [device management systems and products](#) that strengthen those weaknesses. With the number of products now available to schools, students can enjoy safety and security while they focus on learning.

Troxell CTA

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