

Frequently Asked Questions for Families



Is active shooter training too scary for my child?

No. ALICE Training is age-and-ability appropriate to meet your child's cognitive and emotional development and taught with a trauma-informed approach. Also, NASP and NASRO published a "Best Practices Considerations for Schools in Active Shooter or Other Armed Assailant Drills" that makes several recommendations for conducting drills as well. It is also recommended to have meetings with the school psychologist, one-on-one aides, etc. before any identified child is subjected to drills.

Consider this: We begin training children at 5-6 years old about fire safety. In the early stages of kindergarten, our children are trained to survive a fire in a building. We teach our children stranger danger and what to do in that situation, which is scary, but the proper training is not frightening for your child. In addition, our training teaches your child how to survive a Violent Critical Incident. Again, properly instructed safety training should not be scary.

We've always had lockdown drills and have been fine. So why do we need to change?

We are not suggesting getting rid of lockdown. However, history and research have proven lockdown as a stand-alone strategy is not enough. ALICE promotes and teaches enhanced lockdown, which includes barricading doors and has been proven to work in many ALICE in Action stories. If lockdown is your stand-alone strategy and you or your student is in an open area, they cannot lockdown and are left with no training to rely on. Instinctually human action and participating in your own survival have been proven to work.

I'm worried about my child using counter. If they throw something or run, will they make the aggressor mad, draw attention to him or herself, and get hurt?

Throwing an item and creating a distraction creates opportunities to increase your survivability. The distraction you create is an action and creates a reaction by the aggressor. This provides the opportunity to put time and distance between you and the aggressor. Putting distance between you and a firearm diminishes the accuracy of the gunman. It has been reported that an individual is 90% less likely to be hit by a gunman if you are moving. By moving, you also create another distraction the gunman must react to. It takes time for the eyes and brain to process new information. Therefore, reaction never beats action. Different parts of the strategy are only taught with student's grades 6th-12th

An active shooter event won't happen here, so why do we need training?

There has been a steady increase in Violent Critical Incidents since 2000 across all industries (FBI). Schools no longer have the luxury of thinking, 'it won't happen here- it is happening in unthinkable places. The US Department of Education has recommended proactive training since June of 2013. If districts are not meeting or exceeding recommendations, they will be held liable.

These events are happening every day in many locations. Would you rather be prepared or be reactive? You have insurance on your home; how many times have you had to use it? Probably not much, if ever. However, you still have it, just in case. It's the same with this training. We hope you never need to deploy these tactics, but wouldn't you rather have yourself and your family prepared?

Can ALICE training only be used when my child is at school?

The training your student receives can be used anywhere they may find themselves in harm's way. We experience VCIs in all areas you frequent, such as airports, houses of worship, shopping malls, concerts, movie theaters, etc. There are many scenarios we can run through. However, no one can predict human action. The strategies we teach empower individuals to participate in their survival no matter the location and can be used anywhere, by anyone, and at any time.

How can I become more involved?

Taking this course is a great first step! Your next step is to have a conversation with your child, so they are prepared and will know what to do in a Violent Critical Incident. You can also visit alicetraining.com/resources to learn more about why we need options-based strategies and how to respond to a Violent Critical Incident.

Also, support your school district on their options-based strategies program. They are providing the safest learning environment for your child but need support.

How do I talk to my child about Violent Critical Incidents?

Some parents may feel "awkward" having this discussion at this age as it's a terrible event. However, at this point, you have probably already discussed with your children about stranger/danger, fire, good touch/bad touch, and where to go if they become separated from their parents.

These are all examples of terrible events that can occur; however, you train and prepare your children to increase survivability. For example, when teaching a child about stranger/danger, it is never discussed what would happen if they get in a stranger's vehicle. Instead, it's discussed what to do to prevent getting in a stranger's car. Likewise, it's never discussed what happens if caught in a fire. Instead, the discussion is how to get out of a structure and where to go to meet others (rally point).

Teaching ALICE to a child is very similar. It follows the same pattern of training parents provide children for other man-made and natural disasters – by discussing the options available in different situations and how to utilize them. Focus on survivability. Ensure you talk to your child about all the options they have to survive and practice evacuation or even a rally point just like you would a fire drill.

How do I talk to my pre-teen about Violent Critical Incidents?

Pre-teens are very aware and conscious about Violent Critical Incidents, although they may not be knowledgeable about them. Tell them it is okay to do what they need to survive. Empower them...you know what your child can handle. They need to know that they are empowered to survive based on their situation and be proactive.

How do I talk to my teen about Violent Critical Incidents?

Teenagers can know what is right but may not have been empowered to do what "feels" right; rather than follow orders. Many teens are afraid of getting in trouble if they don't do what their teachers tell them. Make sure your teen feels empowered to make their own survival decisions.