

Active shooter training provides life-saving tools



Robert Inglis/The Daily Item

Teachers try to run past an active shooter during training on Tuesday at CSIU.

Teachers, school administrators take part in program



Robert Inglis/The Daily Item

Teachers barricade a door during active shooter training on Tuesday at the CSIU.

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MILTON — The question of “why” and “what can be done to stop it” always runs through the mind of an armed security guard from Shamokin Area School District when he sees reports of mass shootings in schools and other public places.

James Yost, who has worked at the school district in eastern Northumberland County for the last five years, was one of 45 people from 30 school districts and community agencies who participated in a two-day active shooter safety course on Tuesday and today at the Central Susquehanna



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Intermediate Unit Conference and Learning Center in Milton.

The course is designed to teach proactive survival strategies for violent intruder or active shooter incidents. The goal of the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) program is to provide individuals with survival-enhancing options for those critical moments in the gap between when a violent situation begins and when law enforcement arrives on scene.

“This may be able to help,”

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Teachers listen to Aaron Vanatta, right, a national trainer with ALICE, during an active shooter training session on Tuesday at CSIU.

Active shooter training gives life-saving tools to teachers, staff

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Yost said.

Danielle Zeigler, an early intervention program supervisor for CSIU, and Christina Moser, the Pre-K Counts program coordinator, said Tuesday's program was "very eye-opening."

"My biggest priority is to protect the most fragile students," Zeigler said, "and be prepared."

Those students could be deaf, so they don't hear alarms, or autistic, so loud noises disturb them, or in wheelchairs so they

might not be able to escape.

"My program is spread out in various districts, so due to the lack of funding, I didn't get to participate in ALICE training until now," Moser said. "I'm looking forward to taking this back so I can educate my staff and protect the little bodies."

George Drozin, the middle school principal for Lewisburg Area, said he found it helpful to take back what he learned to the rest of the staff. Drozin came with three other principals and four other staff members.

"Knowing how to respond in

that situation is critical," Drozin said. "It's a matter of life and death how you react."

Aaron Vanatta, the national trainer with ALICE Training Institute, said these trainees can take the information and training back to their parent organizations. Tuesday's training featured history and data, strategies, safety protocols and physical drills. Today will feature a review, implementation and presentations.

The practical exercises allowed the trainees to put to use what they learned.