

What can I teach my student to better prepare them should an active shooter incident take place in their school?

Teaching self-awareness habits to your student is one of the most important proactive steps in keeping them safe during a critical incident. Self-awareness means being aware of your surroundings and thinking through what you might do in a crisis before one occurs.

Talking with your student about self-awareness does not have to be scary and should happen regularly. For example, if your student runs down another aisle at a store and comes back to find you are not there, use the opportunity to ask: "What would you do next?" or "Who would you go to for help?"

Let your student come up with their own answers and then guide them with "what ifs" to other acceptable options to help expand the possibilities of acceptable solutions.

As your student gets older and matures, make the scenarios and "what ifs" more challenging and detailed. Ask about situations that might occur when you are not present, such as seeing a handgun at a friend's house or hearing a friend talk about harming others. Do not assume your student knows what to do. Instead of telling them, ask what they would do and guide them as needed.

There are daily opportunities to practice self-awareness, and the topics are endless. Lessons may include being approached by a stranger, witnessing bullying, standing up to peer pressure, inappropriate touching, and other situations.



If you feel unsafe or know someone who feels unsafe, please report it [here at Sprigeo](#).

**For further questions or concerns,
please contact:**

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TALKING TO YOUR STUDENT ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY



***Grades 3-5
Guide***

What should I share with my student when discussing active shooter incidents and their safety while at school?

- You may tell your student that, on rare occasions, a person may make a harmful choice to hurt others at school or other places. This is one reason we practice safety drills, so everyone knows what to do in the unlikely event of an emergency.
- You should tell your student that schools are one of the safest places they can be. School shootings are on the news so much because they occur very rarely compared to the number of schools that are open and safe every day, so it may seem that the chances of a school shooting are really high, but this is not the case.
- You should share with your student that there are many people who work for the district that have a great deal of experience in keeping people safe and these people are working to make sure everyone is safe in our schools each and every day.

What do I tell my student when they ask me what they should do if there is an active shooter in their school?

- The best option in most situations for any elementary student is to hide. That said, talk with your student about where they might hide. Guide them toward choices that would totally hide them from view of the person causing harm and remind them to stay there until somebody they know and trust tells them it is ok to come out.
- Explain that there may be times when an unsafe situation happens while they are not in the classroom or their teacher is not nearby. If this happens, they should think quickly and either find a safe hiding place or run away from the danger. If possible, avoid hiding in a restroom. If they run, they should leave the building, go to a nearby house or business, and stay there until emergency responders arrive.

- Tell your student help is on the way. Encourage them to be brave by trying not to yell or cry, listening to the teacher, and following directions.

What can I tell my student that would empower them to feel better about their safety at school?

- Students can be taught that security is everybody's responsibility, including their own. Though they are younger, they should understand that if they see something that doesn't seem right, they should say something to an adult. For example, if they see a school door propped open or a student making threats about harming themselves or others, they need to tell someone.
- Reinforce the importance of not propping doors open or opening doors for adults trying to enter the building.
- Tell students that people who have made bad choices sometimes tell friends in advance. They may say it was a joke or they didn't really mean it, but these types of statements should be reported and not ignored.