



TIDEWATER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

A MINISTRY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
EST.1966

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Potomac Conference Office of Education

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Crises occur regardless of whether schools and the Conference have prepared for them. They take the form of natural (hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and chemical spills.) and human-made disasters (shootings, stabbings, sexual, battery, hostage, gang fights, arson, bomb threats, drug overdoses, and accidental natural death). In the event that a crisis occurs, a prompt and effective response from school personnel can reduce trauma, bring order to chaos, and can even be the determining factor between life and death.

For any Crisis Management Plan to be successful, it must be thorough and comprehensive, and staff and students must undergo initial training and regular practice. Although recent shootings at schools across the nation have received national attention, smaller scale crises are more than the norm. Schools that are prepared to deal with crises at a variety of levels have a better chance of keeping their campuses safe and reduce the level of trauma experienced by students and staff.

A crisis management plan requires schools to have:

- ✓ A Crisis Management Plan: a written document that contains a clear, consistent, policy as well as instructions for handling various kinds of crisis situations.
- ✓ Crisis Response Teams (**CRP**): an organized group of individuals responsible for dealing with a diversity of crises.
- ✓ Comprehensive communication: a system of equipment, policies, and procedures for contacting emergency services, staff, parents, and students in emergency situations, and responding to media inquiries.
- ✓ Training and routine drilling in emergency procedures.

I. INITIAL RESPONSE

a. Determine the type of Emergency

The first step is to determine the type of emergency. Listed below are 12 different types of emergency situations:

- Acts of Violence
- Biological or Chemical Threat
- Bomb Threat
- Earthquake
- Explosion/Threat of Explosion
- Airplane Crash
- Fire On-Site
- Fire in Surrounding Area
- Flooding
- Loss of Utilities
- Animal Disturbance

b. Determining Level of Emergency

School emergencies can be categorized in terms of magnitude ranging from a minor injury to a major earthquake. Identifying the magnitude of an emergency will determine the allocation of resources. Three levels of emergency are described below.

Level 1 Emergency: An emergency handled by school personnel without assistance from outside agencies. Examples include: temporary power outages, minor earthquake and /or minor first aid cases.

Level 2 Emergency: A moderate to severe emergency in most cases is handled by school personnel with the assistance from outside agencies (e.g., fire department, police, and other emergency services). Examples include: a fire, or a moderate earthquake with services). Examples include: a fire, or a moderate earthquake with injuries and /or structural damage.

Level 3 Emergency: A major disaster that school personnel cannot handle without the assistance of outside agencies. For level 3 emergencies the response time of outside agencies may be seriously delayed. Examples include major earthquakes and regional civil disturbances.

c. Determine Immediate Response Actions

Most emergencies will require one or more Immediate Response Actions listed below.

Stand by Alert
Secure Building
Evacuate Building
Lock Down
Off-Site Evacuation

II. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE ACTION

A. Stand by Alert

This action is used to alert the staff and students and place them on Stand By until further instructions.

Sample of Announcement

If time permits, the Principal can make the following announcement on the PA system. If the PA system is not available, use another means of communication, i.e., send messengers to deliver written instructions.

“YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE. STAND BY. STAND BY. STAND BY. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO FOLLOW.”

Sample Description of Action

1. If inside, teachers will hold students in classrooms until further instructions.
2. If outside, teachers will assemble students into a single location.

For all situations, remain on Stand By until further instructions or an **ALL CLEAR** signal is given.

B. Stop, Wrap and Clutch

This action is used to protect students and staff from flying or falling debris.

Announcement

The Principal will make the following announcement on the PA system. For smaller schools that do not have a PA system, use other means of communication, i.e., send messengers to deliver instructions.

“YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE. STOP, WRAP AND CLUTCH. STOP, WRAP AND CLUTCH. STOP, WRAP AND CLUTCH.”

Sample Description of Action

1. If inside:
 - DROP to the floor,
 - GET under the desk and remain facing away from windows.
2. If outside:
 - MOVE away from buildings and other collapsible objects,
 - DROP to your knees and the ground,
 - BEND over at the waist bringing you head between your knees,
 - COVER your head with arms and hands.

Sample Sheet of Staff Assignments

Principal	Other Designees
Security Team Leader	Student/Staff Accounting Team Member
Fire/Rescue Team Leader	Maintenance/Utility Team Leader
Plant Manager	Immediate Superintendent
	Phone Number

Sample letter to Families

Dear School Family,

Purpose: The Tidewater Christian Academy Board continues to take proactive measures to protect the safety of all our students and staff members. Our ultimate goal is to enhance established policies and procedures in an effort to protect all students while they are in our care.

Tidewater Christian Academy is taking a proactive approach in establishing communication with the Chesapeake Local Emergency Planning Committee and Chesapeake Fire Station 4 in Chesapeake VA. With the assistance of these and other Community servants, Tidewater Christian Academy staff will be better prepared to develop and maintain plans and students will be better prepared to handle a variety of emergency situations.

This plan is designed with the help of the Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Department of Education. This plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. These procedures respond to critical incidents, such as fire, tornado, and threat emergencies.

Actions taken during any type of emergency situation depends greatly on the specifics of the incident. For example, Tidewater Christian Academy may have to evacuate, lock down, or initiate a shelter-in place response, according to the nature of the threat or emergency. The main objective is the protection of the students and staff members. Tidewater Christian Academy administrators have a variety of "tools" to use and have received training on how to work with each of these. The ability to remain calm and flexible is the key component of this school's plan.

If you have questions about your child or about Tidewater Christian Academy's safety and support responses, please contact the Principal (principal@tidewateracademy.com). The Tidewater Christian Academy Board continues to work to make our school safe and secure for all of our students and staff.

Once again, your child's safety is our main priority.

In His Service,

Board Chairperson

Date

Principal/Head Teacher

Date

Introduction

Tidewater Christian Academy has established a crisis management plan and procedures for various types of emergencies, and how they are to be handled. Crisis management is part of the school's approach to maintain school safety. We are trying to anticipate any potential problems that could occur at our school and remediate the threat.

Tidewater Christian Academy will establish a Crisis Response Team (CRT) that is an integral part of the school's emergency management plan. This team will be made up of the Principal, Board Chair and the Potomac Conference Office of Education's Assistant Superintendent.

If a crisis were to occur, Tidewater Christian Academy will utilize our AEConnect Parent Alert System. **PLEASE DO NOT** call the school when local emergencies occur. It is imperative that we keep the school's phone line(s) open. This will allow the school to use the phone line to effectively call parents in times of emergency.

School Security

Keeping Tidewater Christian Academy, a safe domain during school hours is our utmost priority. Tidewater Christian Academy's procedure is to keep the building doors locked after the students arrive at school and will continue to be locked until the students are released at the end of the school day. Visitors are asked to ring the doorbell for entrance to the building during school hours.

Response to Homeland Threat Conditions

Tidewater Christian Academy is persistent in conducting an ongoing review of the school's ability to respond to different crisis situations. Activating the CRT is an integral part of our school's emergency preparedness plan.

Responses to crisis may differ depending on the circumstances; however, the protective measures described below are applicable and may be implemented under the nation's security code system:

Low Condition (Green)

Low risk of terrorist attacks:

Actions during low risk:

1. Review school crisis plans
2. Update emergency contact information
3. Continue inter-agency collaboration on County's emergency preparedness plan.
4. Maintain Employee and visitor identification system

Guarded Condition (Blue)

General risk of terrorist attacks:

Actions during guarded condition:

In addition to implementation of the above protective measures, the following action will be considered:

1. Test communications with designed emergency response or command locations
2. Review and practice emergency response procedures

3. Provide resource information to employees, parents and community
4. Ensure compliance with employee and visitor identification procedure

**Elevated Condition
(Yellow)**

Significant risk of terrorist attacks:

In addition to protective measures listed above, the following actions will be taken:

1. Assess increased risk with public safety officials.
2. Increase surveillance of critical locations
3. Review Crisis Management Plan with school board.
4. Ensure coordination of TCA's emergency plan with Potomac Conference Office of Education
5. Refine protective measures at school facilities.

**High Condition
(Orange)**

High risk of terrorist attacks:

In addition to protective measures listed above, the following actions will be taken:

1. Assess increased risk with public safety officials and enhance security efforts as necessary.
2. Take additional precautions at public events and consider alternative venues or cancellations. (example: sports events, Academy Days, etc.)
3. Review and modify field trip request as appropriate.
4. Review employee contact list and call back procedure with employees.
5. Increase facility surveillance by staff.
6. Increase communications with parents and the community.

**Severe Condition
(Red)**

Imminent risk of terrorist attacks:

In addition to protective measure listed above, the following actions will be taken:

1. Provide staff member's access to Chesapeake's Emergency Operations Center.
2. Assess threat level to determine status of school openings and closings.
3. Address critical emergency needs in cooperation with public safety officials and in accordance with the Tidewater Christian Academy Emergency Preparedness Plan.
4. Coordinate parent-student reunification process, if necessary.
5. Enhance staff, parent, and community communication.
6. Increase or redirect personnel to address critical emergency needs.

Keeping Informed Through Crisis/Emergency Messages

Currently the Tidewater Christian Academy only has 3 ways to communicate with parents/guardians

1. E-mail – Parents/guardians will get an e-mail notifying them of the school crisis/emergency, and if any emergency procedures will be imposed on the parent/guardian.
2. Seesaw Message – A message will be posted on the Tidewater Christian Academy Seesaw message board, listing the condition and any special instruction for drop off or pick up of their child/children.
3. Parent Alert Texts - School Administrators will send out a message to all parents utilizing AEConnect describing what emergency procedures are being enacted. Families must enable this feature within their account in order to receive emergency alerts.

Keeping Children Safe

Tidewater Christian Academy's first priority is keeping its students safe. Parents should be aware that outdoor activities, sports events, and field trips might be canceled to reduce the risk of danger for students. If the Federal authorities announce that the threat condition is red, indicating a severe threat of a terrorist attack, Tidewater Christian Academy will follow directions provided by Potomac Conference Office of Education. Under severe conditions, Tidewater Adventist Academy will “**shelter-in place**” the students.

Shelter-in-place

Shelter-in-place is defined as the school taking appropriate steps to implement those actions that will ensure the safety and health of children as the first and highest priority. Depending upon the specific event, this action may require that students remain in school for an extended period of time: for example, in the event of a biological threat. It will be the school's goal to return all students to their parent/guardian as soon as it is determined to be safe to do so. The school will follow the directions by Potomac Conference Office of Education and Chesapeake County Health and Safety Officials.

1. Shelter-in-place is a temporary measure (i.e. minutes or hours, not days) designed to utilize a school/facility and its indoor atmosphere to separate students and staff from hazardous outdoor environment.
2. Neutral pressure will be created in the school/facility by closing all windows and doors, and shutting down the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system so that contaminated air will not be drawn into the building.

Environmental Hazards

Designated Staff members will respond to various health emergencies and work closely with **Potomac Conference Office of Education** and Chesapeake Health and Safety Officials.

1. In situations involving environmental hazards, staff will assist students who show symptoms of exposure to biological or chemical contaminations.
2. Basic decontamination involves separating the exposed student from other students and directing the child to wash thoroughly with soap and water.
3. If possible, staff will allow the student to take a shower and provide alternate clothing. Exposed clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag.

Bloodborne Pathogens

All body fluids (blood, vomit, urine, feces, saliva, and semen) have the potential to infect people with diseases such as Hepatitis B, HIV or other serious illnesses. As such, if a student notices or comes in contact with such fluids they **MUST** notify their teacher or principal immediately.

Field Trips and Overseas Trips

Field trips and overseas trips will be cancelled during crisis/emergency situations. Cancellation information will be announced via school newsletter and student phone trees.

Emergency Food Supplies

Tidewater Christian Academy maintains limited supplies of food and beverages should the need arise for additional food services.

Students Requiring Medication

Parents and Guardians of Students who require medication are asked to make sure that Tidewater Christian Academy has an appropriate amount of medication on hand. The appropriate amount should be based upon the advice of the student's physician. While the parent and guardians are discussing emergency supplies for at school with the physician, they should also consider rotating the supplies between school and home so the medication will maintain its effectiveness.

Student Access to News Media

The Tidewater Christian Academy principal will monitor news broadcasts and use her discretion in determining the appropriateness of the use of media and the information broadcast to the students during emergency conditions.

Evacuation of Tidewater Christian Academy

If a crisis/emergency occurs during school hours or school sponsored activities Tidewater Christian Academy does not intend to keep students from their parents. School will not automatically be cancelled in a crisis/emergency situation. School may well be the safest place for students. Tidewater Christian Academy will ensure that students are safe inside the school building until such time that the threat has been reduced. Parents will be informed of the alternate shelter location via the school crisis/emergency messaging system.

Release of students to parents/guardians

1. In times of county wide emergencies, parents are asked to call and make arrangements if they cannot pick up their children at the end of the school day. Likewise, if your child needs to be picked up before the end of the school day please call ahead of time to make arrangements for pick-up.
2. Students will only be released to those individuals authorized on the school emergency card or who have written permission from apparent or guardian.
3. Should public safety officials enforce the evacuation of Tidewater Adventist Academy students, staff members will be safely transported to a designated parent-alternate shelter location.
4. Parents will be permitted to pick up their children unless safety officials have declared a shelter-in-place response or there is some other reason why access to the school has been restricted.

NOTE: The Virginia Freedom of Information Act permits the exclusion of the release of parent-student alternate shelter location in advance of a crisis/emergency situation. This helps to avoid any confusion should circumstance require that a change be made to a previously designated shelter location.

SAFETY DRILLS

Monthly Drills

Currently Tidewater Christian Academy conducts monthly fire evacuation drills. These drills are conducted to teach the students the proper evacuation procedures and how to conduct themselves in a fire emergency.

Annual Drills

Currently Tidewater Christian Academy conducts an annual tornado drill. This drill is conducted to teach the students the proper protection to take during a tornado and the evacuation procedures if required during a severe weather emergency.

When crisis occurs: A quick reference for parents

Parents may want to pay particular attention to their child's emotional needs in the weeks after a crisis/emergency. A few suggestions for helping your children are as follows:

- Allow for dialogue. Ask your children what they are thinking or feeling about the situation and why. Do more listening than talking.
- Limit the amount of exposure your child has to the media. Repetitive viewing of certain activities traumatizes a child.
- Be honest with your children about what is occurring and provide facts about what has happened. Use age-appropriate terms for better understanding.
- Encourage your children to talk to you about their feelings and concerns. Share your feelings with them.
- Reassure your child that he/she is safe and that he/she is loved.
- Spend extra time with your child, especially doing something fun or relaxing for both of you.
- Remember the importance of touch. A hug can reassure your child that he/she is loved.
- Watch for ongoing signs of difficulty, which could indicate that your child may need additional help. Some warning signs are: withdrawal from social contact, change in eating or sleeping habits, nightmares, unusual clinging, and refusal to attend school.

Crisis/Emergency Resources

- National Association of School Psychologist (www.nasponline.org)
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (www.aacap.org)
- U.S. Department of Education (www.ed.gov/emergencyplan and www.ready.gov)