

# Communications Strategies

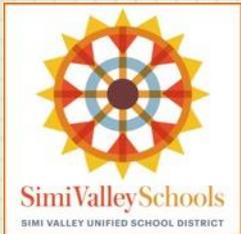
For Active Shooter Incidents at Ventura County Schools

# Presenters



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# Communicating in a Crisis

What is the most important question you can answer for parents and the community?

Are students safe?

# Communicating in a Crisis

## Ways to Communicate

1. Robocall/text/email alerts
2. Social Media
  - Post to official sites
  - Correct rumors on other sites and redirect to official info
3. Website
4. News Media



Active Shooter Communications



# Communicating in a Crisis

## Challenges You May Face

- Chaos of situation
- Prioritizing safety
- Verifying information
- Honoring law enforcement needs
- Responding to news media
- Information leaking
- Rumors spreading



# Communicating in a Crisis

## Best Practices

- Manage personal emotions
- Pre-designate who will be in charge of communications
- Have an off-site person ready to monitor social media and news reports and help with communications
- Acknowledge situation right away; delays fuel rumors and erode trust



# Communicating in a Crisis

## Best Practices

- Give continual updates as information is confirmed
- Be open and honest with the news media, but don't speculate
- Have a school representative ready to speak with parents who gather at the school



# Communicating in a Crisis

## Student Use of Cell Phones

- Can spread inaccurate information
- Can create a panic



Active Shooter Communications



# Communicating in a Crisis

*Actual Instagram video created and sent by a Simi Valley USD student DURING a lockdown.*



# Communicating in a Crisis



## Student Use of Cell Phones

- Consider asking students to completely turn off their cell phones
- When the teacher is confident that the situation is stable, students may be allowed to use their phones to text parents

# Communicating in a Crisis

## How Parents Can Help

- Don't call the school
- Don't come to the school
- Don't spread rumors
- Get info from official sources
- Realize info texted from students may be inaccurate



# Communicating in a Crisis

## How to Prepare

- FEMA training for administrators
- Local city/police trainings
- County trainings
- Active shooter training
- Lockdown drills
- School Site Plans



# Communicating in a Crisis

## Things to Do

- Create a Crisis Communications Plan
- Be sure student emergency contact info is up to date
- Train staff to update website and social media
- Connect with parent groups on Facebook



# Lessons Learned: Active Shooter Drill



Active Shooter Communications



# Lessons Learned: Active Shooter Drill

## Background

- Determine school readiness
- Scenario



# Lessons Learned: Active Shooter Drill

## Communications

Notification about the drill:

- District/school staff
- Mass communications system
- Local media
- Website and social media
- Elected officials, board members, administrators, key persons, etc.



# Lessons Learned: Active Shooter Drill

## Debrief

- Inform the community about the active shooter drill
- Post photos/story about drill



Active Shooter Communications



# Contact Us



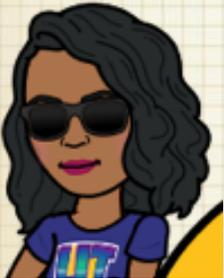
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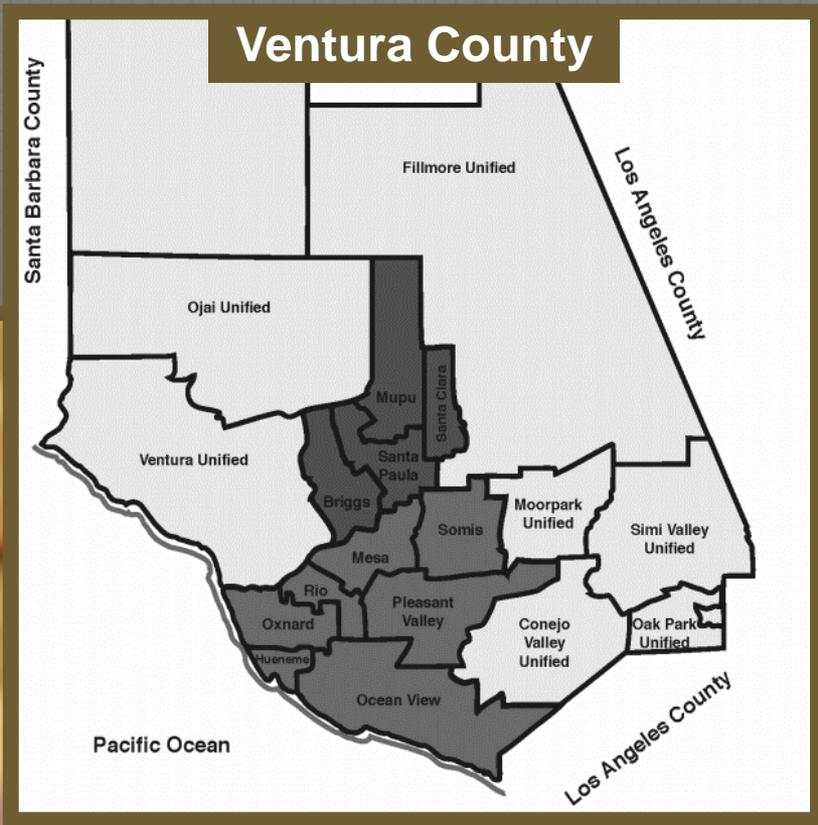
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# Questions?