

Reunification Practice



Test to learn and optimize.

No plan is flawless, and practicing provides the best opportunity to identify pain points and make modifications. While practice may seem daunting, it is scalable. We've created a tiered approach to reunification drill practice that can help you more easily introduce it into your overall emergency preparation.



WHO

As your confidence in the plan grows and roles become clearer, bring more players to the table.



WHERE

Knowing a full-scale drill requires a lot of manpower, scale your practicing footprint as the plan becomes more refined.



HOW OFTEN

Practice frequently to understand different drill scenarios and accommodate changes in staff, school operations, and facilities.

TIER 1

STAFF ONLY



Gather a small team of staff representing the following roles: Incident Command, Parent Checker, Student Checker, Facilitator/Runner/Reunifier. Present the team with a drill scenario that would warrant displaced students (such as a fire). Provide specifics around time of day and location within the building.

TABLETOP



Have a roundtable discussion, verbally walking through your existing plan and taking extra effort to poke holes. Encourage team members to ask, "What if?" Debrief, discuss where improvement is needed, and update the plan accordingly.



ANNUALLY



TIER 2



STAFF & PROPS

Evolve from talking about who will be present where and when to physically moving them from point A to point B. Use props like stuffed animals to represent the roles that aren't present in the room during your tabletop drill—like students, parents, transportation, first responders, and the media.



TABLETOP

While this phase can take place in a single room, strive to make the simulation more real. In addition to introducing props, considering laying out floorplans for the current site and relocation site, as well as street maps. Test and optimize.



EVERY 1-2 YEARS

TIER 3



STAFF & PROPS

Continue to use props, but consider expanding the number of Incident Command, Parent Checker, Student Checker, and Facilitator/ Runner/Reunifier representatives present for the simulation.

ON LOCATION

Select a day when classes are not in session to run through the drill from start to finish. Begin with a realistic drill scenario at the school and move through your reunification plan all the way to the reunification of all students and parents at the relocation site. Be sure to think about potential barriers transporting students during the location transition. Again, debrief and iterate.



EVERY 2-3 YEARS

TIER 4



STAFF & COMMUNITY

With obvious kinks worked out of the reunification plan, it's time to engage all possible parties. In addition to a more expanded staff team, invite a group of parents and students to participate in the simulation. Additionally, engage bus drivers and first responders, and invite members of the local media out to develop a case study to share with the community.



ON LOCATION

Simulations should once again involve the current site and the relocation site, but transportation of students is more actively implemented during this phase. Another location may also be designated for debriefing and engaging with the media.



EVERY 3-4 YEARS

