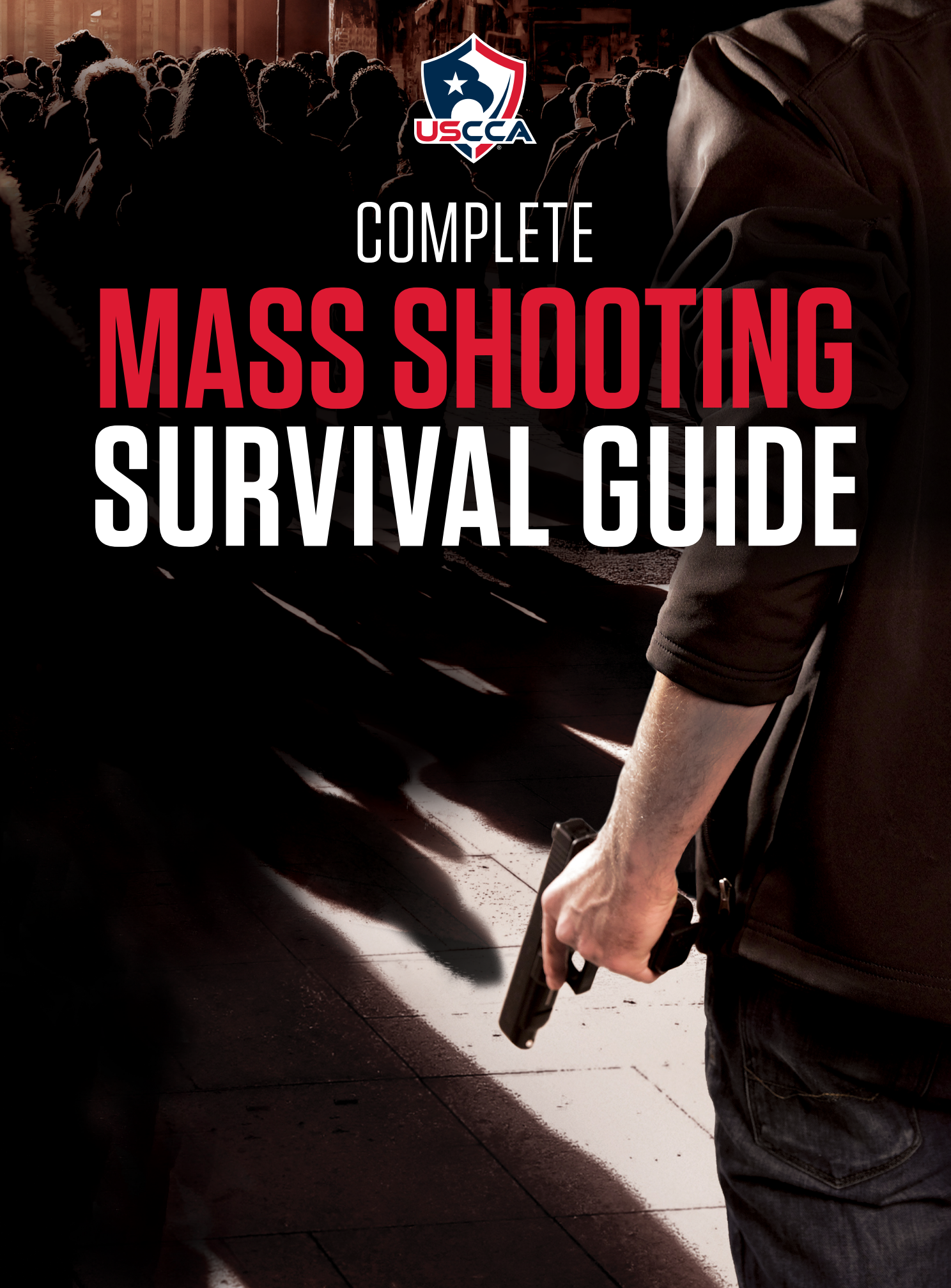

COMPLETE MASS SHOOTING SURVIVAL GUIDE

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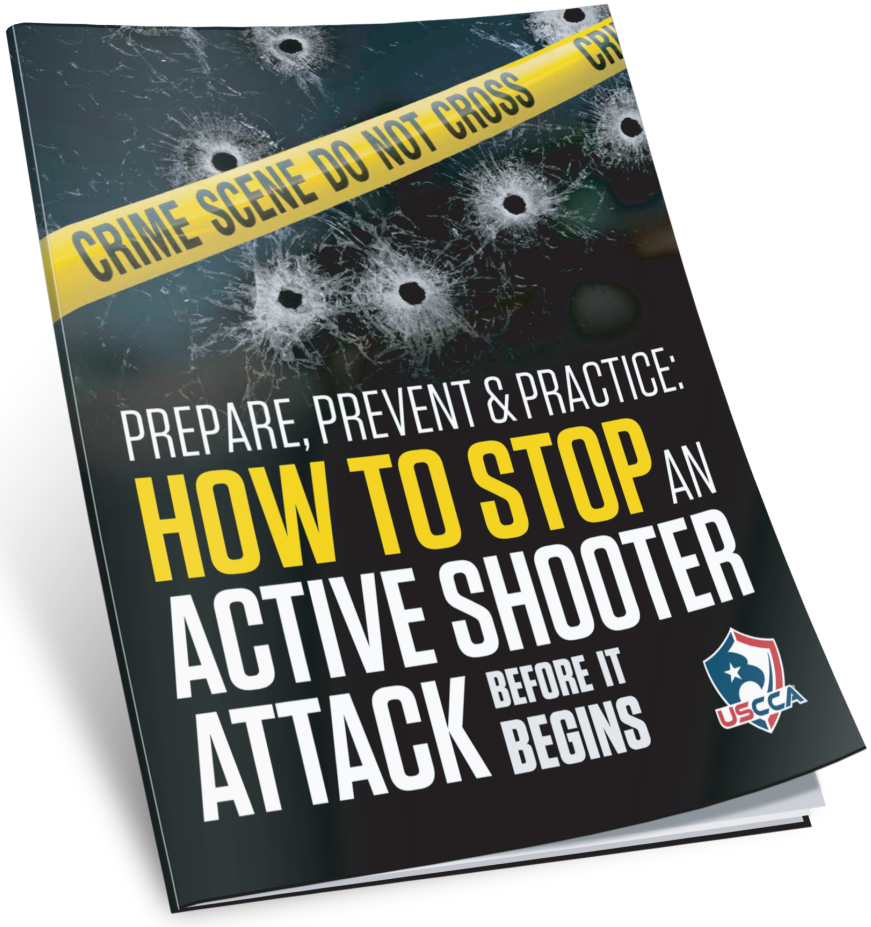
2019

The Complete Mass Shooting Survival Guide



Chapter 1

Prepare, Prevent & Practice: How To Stop An Active Shooter Attack Before It Begins



PREPARE, PREVENT & PRACTICE: HOW TO STOP AN ACTIVE SHOOTER ATTACK

USCCA



When seconds count and decisions can mean the difference between life and death, it's not the time to be questioning whether you're doing the right thing.

My name is Dave Young, and I am the director and founder of ARMA Training, a police training and certification company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, that provides professional training to law enforcement, corrections, military and security companies worldwide. I have recently expanded my training offerings to private citizens and am also the co-founder of Vistelar, a global consulting and training institute that addresses the entire spectrum of human conflict. I have more than 30 years of experience as a corrections and law enforcement officer and I am a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. I've served around the world, and I've survived my fair share of life-threatening encounters. Over those 30-plus years, I've trained tens of thousands of professionals to identify, prepare for and respond to life-threatening attacks.

Several agencies and organizations have developed differing programs for responding to an Active Shooter Attack (ASA). While they all have the same goal of increasing survivability, they each go about it in a different way.

I believe it's most helpful to examine the true beginning of an attack — to talk about what will likely happen and tell you exactly what to do (and how to do it) to increase your chances of survival.

FROM THE TOP

Identifying an active shooter starts with understanding the dynamics of how such an attack occurs. What identifies an at-risk person? What common traits does a particular individual share with all of the other active shooter perpetrators currently on file with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as listed in their Uniform Crime Report? Learning exactly how active shooter attacks occur is the first step in preparing to stop one.

We've found that almost all active shooter attacks start with a level of unresolved conflict. Even though spontaneous, unplanned rapid mass murders could happen at any time, if you have a plan in place to address and respond to a pre-planned ASA, you can use that same plan — making adjustments depending on the specific circumstances you observe or experience — to respond to a spontaneous ASA.

We have also identified a significant amount of misleading information on reported response times and actual on-scene times that were documented. Most statistics, for example, support the fact that



IDENTIFY, MANAGE AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS BEFORE THEY ESCALATE

attacks like these are over before law enforcement arrives, yet some programs instruct innocents to wait at their locations. This is problematic because hiding and waiting for help is contradictory to what every instinct and every available fact tell us to do. Still, some academics choose theory over reality; they feel more comfortable telling others to wait for help rather than step up and take action that is designed and field-proven to save lives.

DO SOMETHING!

Facts show that more ASAs have been stopped by the perpetrators taking their own lives or the physical intervention of non-law-enforcement individuals than by law enforcement showing up in time to end the attacks.

Five years ago, my wife — who is a teacher of K- through-12-aged children — shared a story with me. That story, along with a few things my youngest son relayed to me while he was in middle school, forced me to look at what victims of these attacks are being told. All American cops, deputies, troopers and officers will drop everything in their hands to respond to an active shooter attack — even though they know it will more than likely be over before they arrive. As a lawman, I cannot tell you how terrifying that feeling is, knowing you are the help your citizens are waiting for but that the murderer will more than likely run his course before you arrive.

Taking immediate action when these attacks occur is the only way to increase your survivability and save the lives of those around you. There are so many unknown factors when you hear the first shot. You don't know what the attacker's plan is, how many attackers there are or what their locations are. You don't know whether there are any explosives planted in the immediate area, and you don't know whether fires or other booby traps are set. That's just a few of the unknowns you're going to have to mitigate, and you'll have to do so quickly.

We want to assume there is only one shooter, and we certainly hope he's a bad shot. Regardless of how skilled a shooter he is, a moving target is harder to hit than one who's hiding under a desk or in a closet. An even harder target is one who hunts back. Keep in mind the following three "Ps" for dealing with an ASA:

STAGE 1: PREVENTION

The best way to prevent active shooter attacks is by teaching staff and co-workers to identify, manage and resolve conflicts before they escalate. They should institute protocols to assist in working through situations that — on the surface — might seem



CONDUCT A PHYSICAL, ON-SITE RISK AND THREAT ASSESSMENT

unimportant but, if not managed properly, could have life-altering results.

STAGE 2: PREPARATION

A Risk and Threat Assessment, conducted by qualified professionals, is essential for any school or business. This means a physical, on-site assessment from professionals who have survived, responded to and trained others to survive attacks like the kind you're working to prevent.

I spoke to one organization whose members were told to hide in various locations in their facility in hopes any attack would be over quickly. If that's the plan, you must consider what qualifies one place as better than another — and you must consider it before you're looking for a place to hide. If you cannot escape, any place you select to hide should allow you to see danger approaching, defend yourself and then escape. If a spot doesn't allow you to do all three of these things, then the only thing you'll accomplish by hiding there is to select where you'll be killed. This is one of the main reasons why Risk and Threat Assessments are vital before you start initiating a plan.

STAGE 3: PRACTICE

With what you learn from your assessment, develop a field-proven, tactically sound plan. This means reality-based, not concept-based. If your plan is only a theory, the only reality you will experience is death.

After you have your plan, you need to practice your plan — "Fire Drills Over Fire Talks," as my close friend and mentor Gary Klugwiecz says. You need to break through the myth that preparing for danger will scare your employees and customers; it's quite the opposite actually. It will encourage them to choose you over others.

Picture this: There have been break-ins and a few home invasions in your neighborhood during social gatherings, and there are two simultaneous dinner parties on your block to which you've been invited. Short of staying at home, and if you absolutely, positively must attend one of the functions, which is the smarter choice?

HOUSE NO. 1

The first house has a pool and a large yard and is serving steak of choice and sides of which you could only dream. However, the residents of this particular home do not prepare or practice a family action plan.

HOUSE NO. 2

The second house has a pool and the same-sized yard as House No. 1 and is serving the same food as House No. 1. The residents of this particular home, though, have prepared and practiced their family action plan and are ready to respond to an attack.

The logical choice is obviously



DEVELOP AND PRACTICE A FIELD-PROVEN, TACTICALLY SOUND PLAN

House No. 2. So why do so many people still pick House No. 1? This is because they are hopeful and praying … but that is for people who are unprepared.

ACT NOW

There are plenty of other subsequent stages we could add later, but if you fail to properly implement the first three, there won't be any need to worry about more. The time to prepare is before disaster strikes.

If you find your location under attack, escape should be your primary concern. You must always know how to get out of wherever you are, and you must know exactly where to go after you've escaped. If you cannot escape the immediate area, you will need to barricade and defend — not barricade *or* defend. You have to train yourself to be your own first responder. You owe it to yourself to learn more about what we do and how we do it. There are no guarantees in life, but one thing we know for sure is that if you hide during an active shooter attack, you are guaranteed to lower your survivability.

Remember, being safe means you're ready for action!
Dave Young

Dave Young is the founder and director of ARMA Training and is responsible for training thousands of police, corrections and military instructors around the world every year on surviving force-on-force attacks. Young is also the co-founder of Vistelar, having graduated from his first law enforcement academy in 1985, and has more than 30 years of combined civilian and military law enforcement experience and training. Young has served as a loss-prevention specialist, a shoplifting agent in the state of California, a sworn corrections and law enforcement officer in the state of Florida, a gate sentry, a patrol officer, a watch commander, a special investigator, a Special Reaction Team (SRT) member and a Leader and Commander in the United States Marine Corps with multiple deployments. Young has participated in and trained military and law enforcement personnel in crowd management, active shooter response and the deployment of non-lethal and lethal weapons and is recognized as one of the nation's leading defensive tactics instructors, specializing in how to manage conflict throughout the entire spectrum of human interaction. Young is able to use this experience in real-world events to bring a level of training unmatched by others and prepares his students for real-world threats.

Young is a weapons designer, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, Chairman of the Policeone.com Advisory Board, a member of the Police Magazine *advisory board and a Technical Advisory Board member for the Force Science Research Center. Young has been featured in national publications and magazines for his innovation and dedication to officer survival and personal safety and awareness and has been a spokesperson and consultant with* CNN *and* Fox World News *on officer survival and equipment safety. Young is also the founder and director of US Fighting Systems, responsible for the training and certifications of Grandmasters, Masters and instructors for martial arts schools around the country. Young is an active member of several professional organizations, not limited to International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association (ILEETA) and the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor (IALEFI).*

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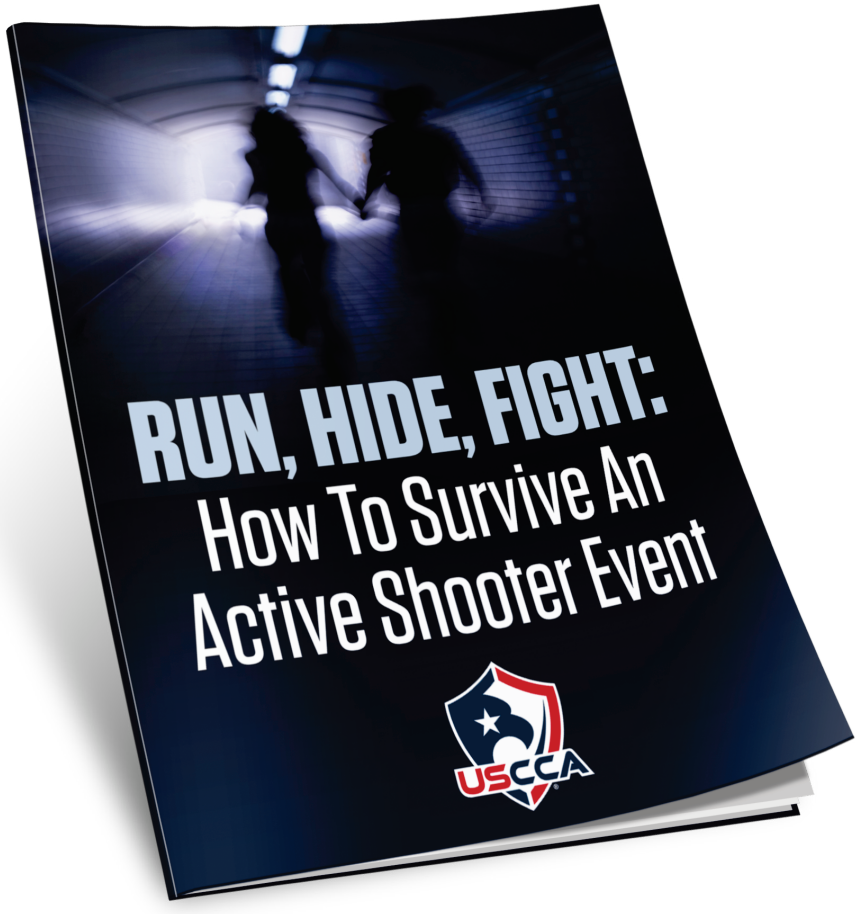


Chapter 2

Run, Hide, Fight: How To Survive An Active Shooter Event



RUN, HIDE, FIGHT:
How To Survive An Active Shooter Event



Run, Hide, Fight: How To Survive An Active Shooter Event

By Michael Martin

AFTER THE MASS SHOOTING IN COLUMBINE, COLORADO, law enforcement agencies from the FBI down to local counties, cities, towns and villages got to work on redeveloping agency and interagency operating plans and tactics to address the mass shooter threat from a law enforcement perspective. If we can rewrite the way that law enforcement responds to the threat, we can also rewrite the way that potential victims respond to the threat.

The changes in operating procedures for law enforcement agencies evolved from the understanding that the mass shooter threat was a very different threat from an armed gunman taking hostages and sharing a list of demands with a negotiator, and that a different strategy was required to counter the new threat.

One lesson learned from Columbine was that waiting on a SWAT team to arrive before making entry would only ensure that more victims would be killed in the intervening minutes. So new tactics evolved which included having the first arriving officer or officers make entry the moment they arrived on the scene of the shooting, even if that meant making entry with just one or two officers. The change in tactic seemed to be a good one — while the Columbine shooting lasted 47 minutes, subsequent mass shootings have averaged a duration of about nine minutes. So tactics for law enforcement evolved, but it wasn't until the federal government's Department of Homeland Security quietly released a program titled, Active Shooter: How to Respond, that anyone began to address how victim tactics should change. The DHS program, which is better known by its other name, Run, Hide, Fight, teaches potential victims of mass shootings that they aren't required to simply wait out mass shootings without a plan; instead, they must take an active part in their own self-preservation by either

running, hiding, or fighting back. While the program doesn't specifically call out this fact, it's important to understand that the Run, Hide, Fight methodology doesn't look at those three options linearly, or as a series of steps that you must progress through. In other words, if you are in public, at a school, at your house of worship, or at your place of business and a mass shooter enters the area, you're not required to first try to run, and then try to hide, before you elect to fight back; instead, if the situation calls for it, you can choose to immediately fight back, and fight back aggressively. In this section, we'll review the Run, Hide, Fight methodology in detail where once again, I'll supplement the information provided by the Department of Homeland Security with my own recommendations.

DENIAL ISN'T A REQUIRED STEP

Even before we look at specific actions you'll need to take if you elect to run, hide or fight, let's first talk about what your immediate reaction must be to the sound of gunfire or other signs that a mass shooter has entered the area. As with many things in life that are out of the ordinary, our first response to a mass shooter threat may be denial, with thoughts of, "This can't be what I think it is." Even momentary denial can lead to the loss of valuable seconds which could have been used to escape or to prepare an active counterattack. Whether the first sign of an active shooter is gunfire, the alarm being sounded by another individual, the sound of a lockdown being called, or a text or tweet, you must skip the denial step and instead, immediately accept the fact that it is real. You should then try to determine the direction and the proximity of the threat and if the alert has not yet been sounded, you must alert others around you by shouting, "Gun, gun, leave the area!" At that point, you'll make a decision as to whether you will run, hide or fight.



»» At 9:56am on November 28, 2016, an alert was sent out to all Ohio State students and staff by text and social media, warning them of a possible active shooter on campus, and warning them to run, hide, fight. The problem was, no one knew what "run, hide, fight" meant, since no training had been provided to students or staff.

RUN »»

If you have the ability and the opportunity, your first choice of action should be to run out of the kill zone as fast as humanly possible, and keep running until you've reached what you believe is a safe location. Regardless of whether you're in a wide open room or a narrow hallway, your number one goal should be to put as much distance between yourself and the shooter as possible. As you exit the area, you must remember that your top priority is for your own personal safety — that means leaving all personal belongings behind and even leaving others behind if they are too afraid, or unable or unwilling to leave. Head in a direction opposite the sound of gunfire and make a direct route for the closest exit.

Even if the shooter has entered your immediate area (such as a conference room or classroom), escaping may still be an option, but you must immediately kick your escape plan into action (in other words, you'll need to skip the denial stage) by running in the opposite direction, moving laterally or diagonally from the shooter which moves you off of his line of attack. Anyone who has taken a trip to the range and then tried to translate that to hunting wild (and moving) game can attest to the fact that accurately shooting at a stationary target can be difficult enough, but shooting at a target that is moving laterally or diagonally away from you, increases the difficulty exponentially. I actually make that last statement based on mathematical fact, not just as a figure of speech. Back in high school or college math, you might have heard of the "inverse-square law" which states that the intensity of an effect (such as illumination) changes in inverse proportion to the square of the distance from the source. While that description might sound a bit complicated, what it means is that if you double the distance between an object and a source of light, the intensity of the light on that object isn't one-half of the original intensity, it's one-fourth of the original intensity.

The exact same formula applies to how easy or how difficult it is to hit a target with a firearm. For example, if you are ten feet from a shooter, simply doubling the distance between you and the shooter makes you four times more difficult to hit. If you triple the distance, you will be nine times more difficult to hit. Increase the distance to 100 feet (which the average person can cover in about 10 seconds), and you've just become 100 times harder to hit (10 times the original distance squared, or $10^2 = 100$). We know that mass shooters will not waste their time chasing after victims, especially if those victims are about to leave the immediate area, and especially if other potential victims chose not to run and remain in the area.

HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN

As simple as running away sounds, having an escape plan first requires you to have a plan, which is as simple as always knowing where the exits are in any room that you enter, and knowing where the building exits are. As part of your institution's *Emergency Operations Plan* (or as part of your individual or family plan if no EOP exists), it's important to identify appropriate escape routes in the event of a mass shooting. Similar to knowing escape routes in the event of a fire, there should be at least two identified escape routes from each room. The selection of *which* escape route will be used will be based upon the location and disposition of the shooter. In some cases, exterior doors may be used, while in other cases, exterior windows must be opened or broken to enable a rapid escape. Once clear from the building, you should run as quickly as possible until you've reached law enforcement. Keep your hands in the air, and follow the direction of law enforcement personnel to the *letter*.

Be a Good Witness

If your institution is like most, law enforcement will not have an internal video feed to determine the disposition of the attacker, so they must either operate in the blind, or they can depend upon eye witness accounts from those who were able to escape from the area. Even if you had just seconds to look at the attacker, try to remember these key items, which will be critical in helping law enforcement end the attack quickly:

- A general description of the attacker including what he or she is wearing, size, general race characteristics, hair color, approximate age, etc.
- A general description of the firearm or firearms that the shooter is carrying, for example, is it a handgun, or a long gun like a rifle or shotgun?
- Whether the shooter is carrying extra magazines, and if so, approximately how many.
- Whether the shooter is carrying a bag or backpack.
- Whether the shooter is wearing body armor, which might be indicated by a bulky vest or bulky clothing.
- The direction of travel of the shooter.
- Anything that the shooter said, such as whether he has a specific target or any specific demands.

HIDE

If the shooter has not yet seen you but there is no practical escape from the building, you may choose to hide in as safe a place as possible, if one is available and it meets the definition of good concealment and cover. Concealment is anything that hides you from the threat (a closed door, a wall, or anything you can duck behind) while cover (things like concrete pillars, a concrete wall, or the front of vehicles where the engine block is) also protects you from incoming bullets. Concealment may keep you safe, but if the shooter approaches your area, you may be very easy to detect, especially if you are breathing heavily or are with others who are making noise. Cover is a far superior choice since it can not only protect you from incoming bullets, it can also help to keep the noise of you and others down, so that you go undetected by the shooter.

If you have chosen to hide, here are key points to remember:

- As part of the Emergency Operations Plan your institution developed, you should be aware of which rooms have locks and which rooms do not. Even if you need to travel a greater distance to reach a room with a lock, this will be a far superior choice.
- If you have the choice of hiding in a room on the interior of the building or the exterior of the building, choose the room on the exterior. You may have an opportunity to break a window and escape from the building, or rescuers arriving on the scene may do it for you.
- Once you and others have entered the room, immediately lock the door and move out of the line of sight of any windows in or alongside the door. As part of your institution's EOP, the room may have a marked line on the floor indicating the areas inside and outside the line of sight.
- If the room you entered does not have a lock, quickly barricade the door with heavy furniture. Don't be shy about this — if there are tables, chairs and desks in the room, quickly move as much as possible to block the door.
- Turn off the lights and silence all electronic devices.
- Remain silent. Remember that on average, you will only have five to nine minutes to wait until the shooting has ended.

- If possible, use strategies to silently communicate with first responders. For example, in rooms with exterior windows, make signs to silently signal law enforcement and emergency responders to indicate the status of the room's occupants.

- Hide along the wall closest to the exit but out of the view from the hallway (allowing for an ambush of the shooter and for possible escape if the shooter enters the room).

- Find an improvised weapon, and have it at the ready in case the shooter forces his way into the room. Silently indicate to others in the room that they should do so as well.

- Remain in place until given an all clear by identifiable law enforcement.

As part of your institution's Emergency Operation Plan (or as part of your individual or family plan if no EOP exists), it's important to understand which rooms in your school, house of worship or place of business can effectively act as "safe rooms" in the event of an attack, and to identify those on building schematics placed in each room, no differently than how a fire escape plan is documented. Key criteria for a safe room includes: (1) a lockable, solid core door that does not require a key to lock; (2) no windows to the interior of the building (other than a viewport on the door); (3) an ability to move all occupants of the room out of the line of sight from the viewport; (4) objects within the room that can serve as barricades and improvised weapons.

Exterior rooms are superior to interior rooms but as long as the interior room meets all other criteria, it is highly likely that occupants can survive the eight to nine minutes it will take for the average mass shooting to end. As part of an effective EOP, each safe room should also be pre-staged with an emergency first-aid kit and an intercom or other means of communicating with responders to update them with the status of the room's occupants (all safe, under attack, or emergency medical care needed).

Staging Your Safe Room

As part of your institutional EOP, not only should rooms be identified as "safe" or "not safe," you should also include in the plan the specific items that will be staged in your safe rooms. These items can include:

- An additional ability to block the door, such as a Door Jammer™ or other commercial device.

- Any required tool to open or break exterior windows if they are an avenue of escape.

- Any required item to block or cover the viewport in the door (if one exists).

- An emergency first-aid kit.

- An ability to communicate with law enforcement. The most sophisticated way to do this would be electronically. A simpler method would be for each safe room to have three pre-printed posters which can be stuck to the exterior windows indicating whether the occupants of the room are "All Safe," "Under Attack," or "Need Medical Assistance."

- A weapon which can be used against the attacker if he makes entry. This can be as well thought out as an expandable baton, as simple as a baseball bat, or as specific as a taser or firearm in a lockbox.

FIGHT »»

If it's too late to run, or if the shooter finds your hiding spot and escape is not possible, you have just a single choice remaining — you *must* commit to aggressive action to stop the shooter, using whatever means necessary. That may mean using improvised weapons that you find on the scene, or, it may mean using a firearm if you had the foresight to include one in your personal or institutional plan.

While the *Run, Hide, Fight* program doesn't specifically take a stance one way or another on whether a firearm in the hands of potential victims would change the outcome, it is significant that the Department of Homeland Security recommends fighting back at all. I'll add that the European version of this program is Run, Hide, *Report*. Leave it to the Europeans to avoid fighting back at all costs.

Had the *Run, Hide, Fight* methodology been taught to the students at Virginia Tech, it's likely that even if shooter Seung-Hui Cho hadn't been incapacitated by his potential victims, any aggressive action on the part of the students would have disrupted Cho's momentum and his confidence, forcing him to move from offensive mode, to defensive mode. Remember that mass shoot-

ers count on being entirely in control of the situation, and a coordinated response by the students to fight back would have threatened that control. Students who barricaded themselves in classrooms didn't necessarily need to incapacitate or kill Cho. All they needed to do was to buy themselves several minutes of time to allow law enforcement to make their entry (as did the students in classroom 205). Remember that the average length of time that mass shooting events last is only nine minutes, or in Cho's case, 11 minutes since he had chained and padlocked several doors. What could the students have done to hold out for 11 minutes? As soon as it was apparent that a shooter was in the building, the students could have immediately piled tables, chairs, bookshelves, or any other barrier objects in front of the door. Each student could have then picked up a chair, a book, a coffee mug, their shoes, or any of the hundreds of other objects that would have been in the classroom. If Cho was able to breach the barriers and enter their classroom, the students could have thrown those objects at his head and torso, screaming at the top of their lungs, committing to their actions. If Cho went down still in possession of his firearms, the students could then have beaten him into unconsciousness with chairs or their fists or their feet. If that sounds pretty brutal, the alternative wasn't just brutal, it was the death of 30 innocent people in Norris hall.



››› The Houston Police Department has produced an absolutely outstanding video explaining the Run, Hide, Fight methodology using a real-world scenario. This video should be played in every house of worship, business, and school in the nation, and should serve as the basis for discussion and training to implement the methodology. The video is available on YouTube in multiple languages.

IMPROVISED WEAPONS

We'll talk about how firearms may fit into your personal or institutional plan in a moment, but let's first talk about improvised weapons. As would have been the case in the classrooms in Norris Hall at Virginia Tech, we're typically surrounded by dozens of objects, large and small, which could be used as improvised weapons to disable or deflect an attacker. While any object thrown at an attacker's head will cause him to temporarily break off his attack as he turns to dodge the object, your first choice should be any hardened object that can be used as an impact weapon, such as a chair, the leg from a table, a lamppost or a laptop; or any object which can serve as an improvised edged weapon, such as a scissors or a box cutter. Other objects including shoes, coffee mugs, books, or even papers thrown at the attacker's head will cause at least an involuntary reaction to turn away from the improvised missiles, which can allow other defenders to reach the attacker and overwhelm him.

To improve the likelihood of success, I'll echo what the Department of Homeland Security has to say about fighting back, and that's that you must commit to your actions until the shooter is overwhelmed and either disabled, or dead. If you're unsure of how easy it will be to find an improvised weapon, the next time you're at your child's school, at your house of worship, at your place of business, or even out in public shopping, take a critical look around at the objects in whatever room you find yourself in. You can even make a game of it, which should drive some creative thinking on how you can take an everyday object, and turn it into a weapon.

Counterattacking as a Team

While the chances of a single defender overwhelming an attacker with an improvised weapon might seem low, if multiple defenders counterattack as a team (attacking the shooter simultaneously from multiple directions), the likelihood of success will be dramatically increased. Logic might state that the best time for a counterattack is when the shooter is reloading (remember that the Virginia Tech shooter reloaded a total of 15 times), but the truth is, waiting for a reload may simply mean delaying the counterattack while more victims are shot. Since action always beats reaction, defenders rushing in from multiple directions will have on average, about 1.5 seconds before the shooter can react to their actions. During that 1.5 seconds, the defenders can close the gap by about 20 — 25 feet. Considering that no mass shooter has ever exceeded firing two rounds per second, the mathematics work in favor of the defenders, not the mass shooter.

I'll end this topic by adding that these types of improvised weapons are clearly weapons of last resort. If your opportunity to escape or to hide has disappeared, and your options are to either plead with the shooter to spare your life, or to fight back to your last breath, you must fight back with whatever means necessary. You must be willing to get as brutal and as bloody as is required to stop the shooter, even if that means clubbing him to death with the metal leg of an office table. Remember that in 23 of the 165 active shooting events tracked by the FBI, bystanders were successfully able to subdue the shooter and end the attack, with nothing more than their fists or with improvised weapons that they found on scene. These shooters can be beat. But if you'd like to dramatically improve your odds of success, you'll need to include an armed response in your personal or institutional plan.

AN ARMED RESPONSE

For 12 million Americans, carrying a firearm on a daily basis under a state issued concealed carry permit is as everyday as carrying their wallet or purse. But for most school boards, most church committees, and most corporate lawyers, the thought of including firearms in an *Emergency Operations Plan* may be a difficult idea to swallow. If you fall into that camp, my suggestion is that you play this scenario through in your mind: 30 seconds from now, a mass shooter will walk into the front door of your school, house of worship or business, and he will shoot and kill the first three people he sees, just feet away from you. You and a dozen others have no chance to run or hide. In this scenario, you get to pick three extra people to join you. Those people can be friends who will call the police (of course, you know that the shooting will last about nine more minutes before the shooter kills himself or the police apprehend him); you can choose three psychologists or spiritual leaders who will plead with the shooter not to kill anyone else and to give himself up (but you know that only four percent of active shooters surrender); you can choose three friends who have taken karate classes; or, you can choose to have three friends join you who are legally armed. While you may consider this scenario overly dramatic, I use it to illustrate the fact that just because these killers are using firearms as an offensive tool, does not mean that you should be dissuaded from considering a firearm as a defensive tool. The truth of the matter is, nothing else in the world can level the playing field between a demented individual who will kill everyone and anyone in his path, with a senior citizen, or an expectant mother, or a disabled veteran. Nothing. If you ever do find yourself face to face with a mass shooter, having a gun in your possession won't guarantee that you'll survive, but not having one increases the odds that you'll be dead, and that everyone standing behind you will be dead too.

Does an Armed Response Belong in your EOP?

If the idea of creating an *armed educator*, or an *armed employee*, or an *armed volunteer* program made up of non-law enforcement officers sounds revolutionary, it isn't. Since Sandy Hook, hundreds of houses of worship and school districts, and thousands of businesses both public and private, have done exactly that. While these institutions can choose to require nothing more than a state issued concealed carry permit for participants in their programs (collectively, I'll refer to them as *armed staff* programs), many are requiring additional training and/or qualifications as part of their formal Emergency Operations Plans. Those additional requirements often include:

- In addition to requiring a state issued concealed carry permit, many institutions are also requiring participants in their program to attend weapons retention and advanced handgun training. This training is often modeled after the armed pilot program started after 9/11, but typically does not require more than two weeks of training. This training usually includes advanced weapons handling; weapons retention; legal topics such as the use of deadly force; and multiple shoot / no-shoot scenarios in a variety of settings using both live fire and Simunition firearms and ammunition.
- Many institutions also require participants to pass a physical agility test and/or a psychological test to enter their program, similar to the type of tests required during the application process for a police, EMS or firefighter position.
- Many institutions are also requiring that firearms be secured in what are referred to as *Level III retention holsters*. Level III holsters have three active retention methods which keep the firearm locked into the holster, until the retention methods are properly released, all in the correct order. When the firearm operator has also been trained in weapons retention, an unauthorized person has virtually no chance of gaining access to the firearm.



How Many Improvised Weapons Can You Spot In This Image?

Roller Chair
The roller chair can be picked up and swung at or thrown at an attacker, or the bottom can be unscrewed and used as an impact weapon.

Computer Monitor or Laptop
The computer monitor (or the typical laptop found in most offices) can also be used as an impact weapon.

Desktop Speaker
The desktop speaker can be thrown, or swung at the end of its cord as an improvised mace.

Scissors
The scissors can be used as an improvised edged weapon. Since scissors will have more difficulty penetrating the chest or abdominal wall when compared to a knife, a counterattack should focus on stabbing the attacker in and around the face and neck.

Pens and Pencils
While not as effective as other improvised edged weapons, stabbing an attacker in and around the face and neck with a pen or pencil can allow other defenders to subdue him.

Table Legs
Perhaps the best improvised weapons in the room are the legs of the table, which can be quickly broken off if enough force is applied. If multiple defenders simultaneously attacked a shooter from multiple directions with these improvised striking weapons, the shooter could be quickly disabled or killed.

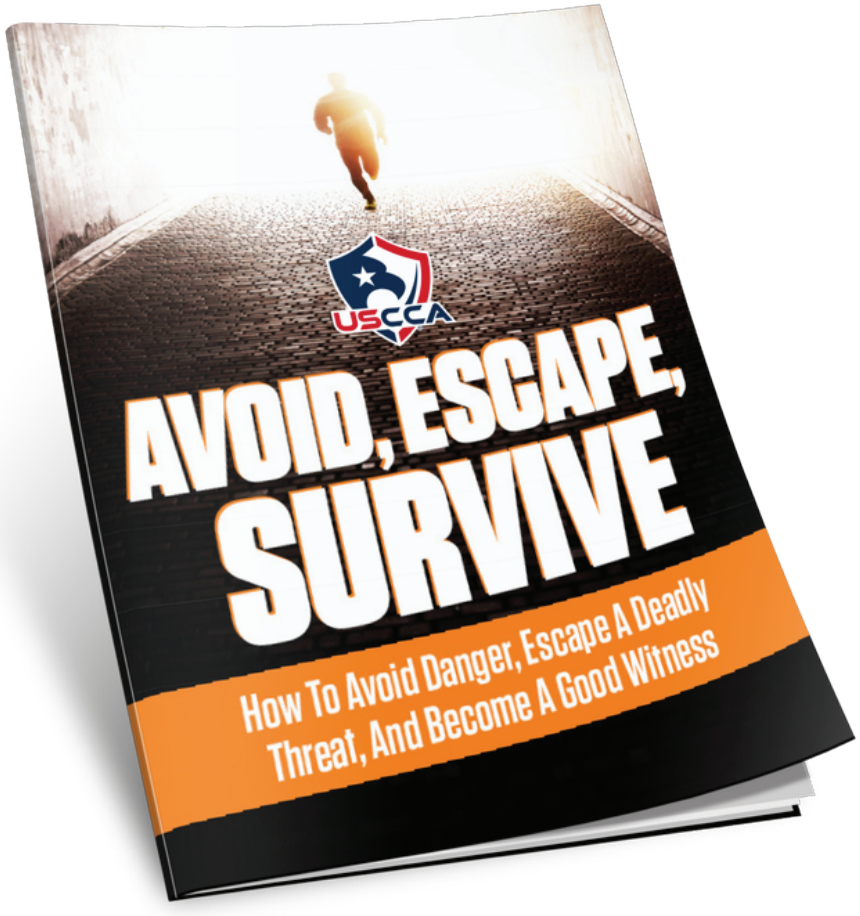
Computer Cords
While one or more defenders counterattacked a shooter with other improvised weapons, another defender could use a computer cord as a make-shift garrote to kill him, or at least cause him to lose consciousness.

Folding Chairs
Five folding chairs in this room equal five improvised weapons for defenders. If just one defender attacked a shooter with a folding chair, he or she would most likely be shot. But if five defenders attacked a shooter simultaneously from multiple directions, the shooter would most likely be stopped in place.

Distracting Weapons
In addition to the improvised disabling weapons in this room, the room is literally filled with other objects that can be thrown at an attacker's head to distract him or cause a momentary flinch, allowing other defenders to close on him. Papers, books and boxes on the shelves, the paperweight on the desk, even the potted plants on the upper right shelf could serve as ad-hoc missiles. Don't forget about shoes, coffee mugs, belts, and your fists, elbows and feet.

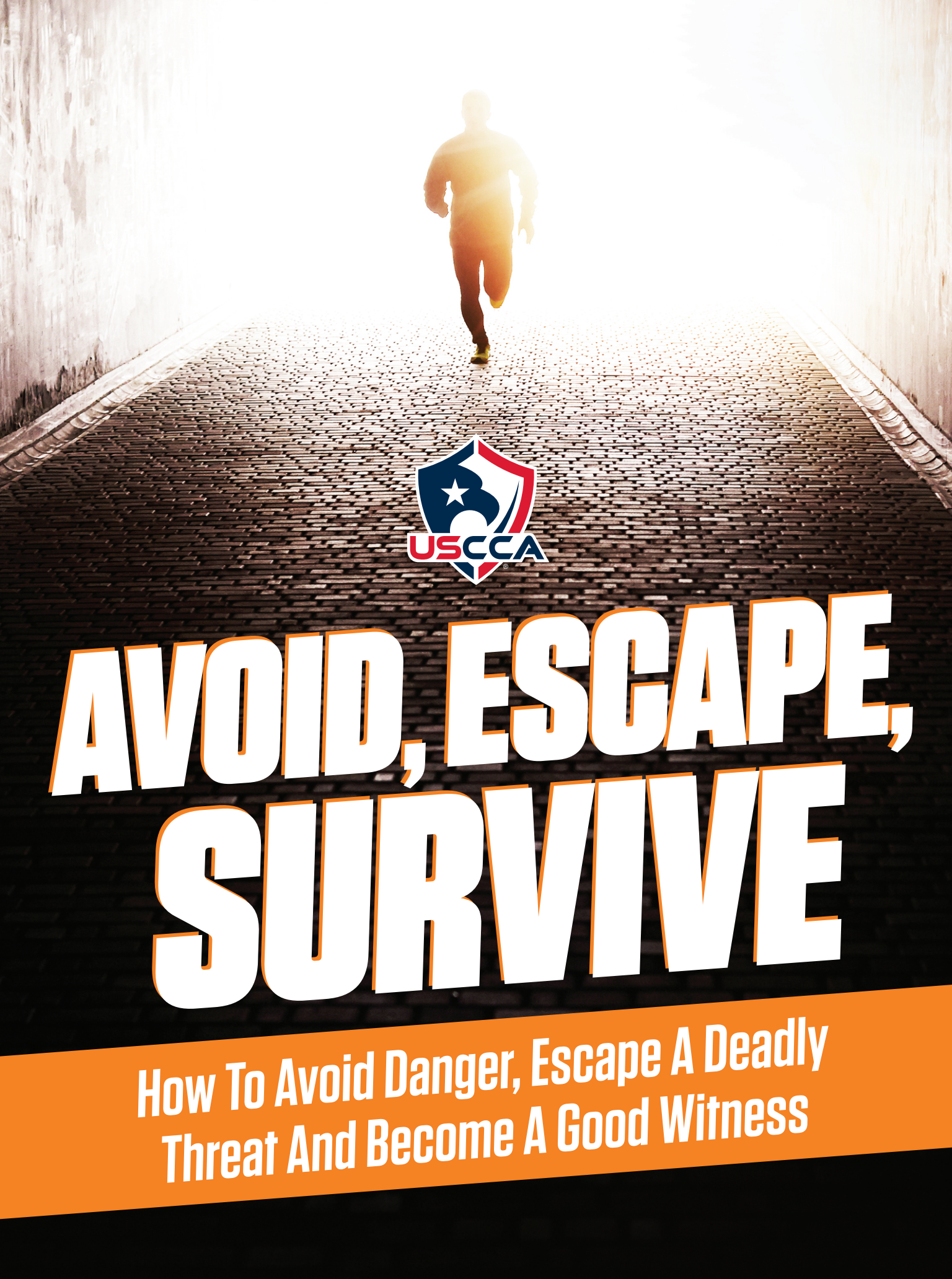
2019

The Complete Mass Shooting Survival Guide



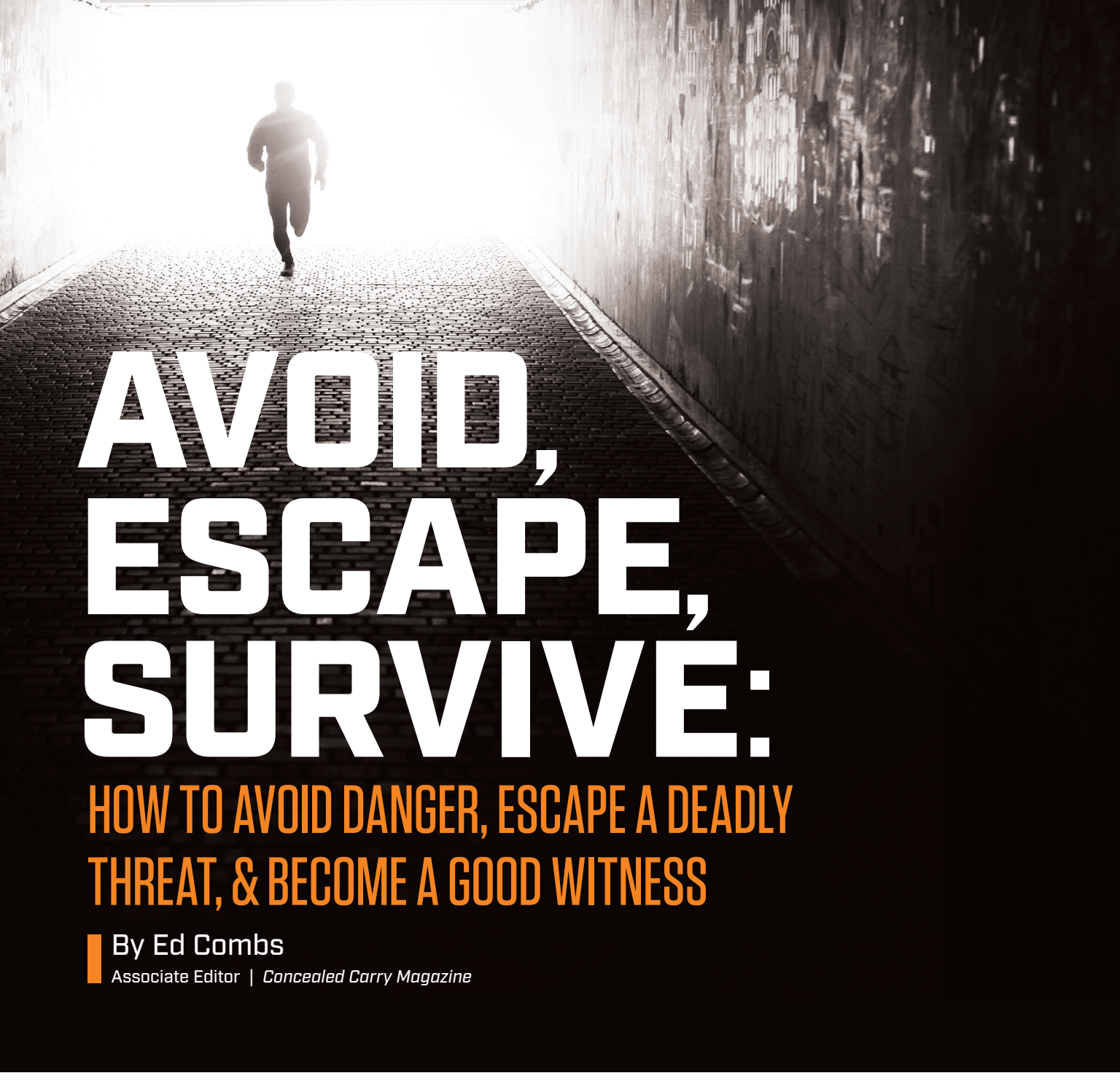
Chapter 3

Avoid, Escape, Survive: How To Avoid Danger, Escape A Deadly Threat, And Become A Good Witness



AVOID, ESCAPE, SURVIVE

How To Avoid Danger, Escape A Deadly Threat And Become A Good Witness



AVOID, ESCAPE, SURVIVE:

HOW TO AVOID DANGER, ESCAPE A DEADLY THREAT, & BECOME A GOOD WITNESS

By Ed Combs
Associate Editor | *Concealed Carry Magazine*

Concealed carry is about security before it's about shooting. In fact, in a best-case scenario, there isn't any shooting at all, and these are a few of the best ways to avoid the kind of nightmare that shootings bring into your life. You're going to keep your loved ones and yourself safe by making the right decisions, and the time to start thinking about making those right decisions is right now.

Situational awareness, though an excellent concept and practice, is just part of an effective personal protection plan. Anyone who would smugly assert that "situational awareness will always keep you out of trouble" is either very lucky, very inexperienced or a liar (and possibly all three). Without the necessary tools and skills to act on it, situational awareness will only alert you to when you are about to be attacked and allow you to think about how badly you wish you'd decided to carry a gun for a few more seconds.

Sometimes situational awareness helps you avoid a disaster altogether. Sometimes it alerts you to when and how you'll have to act to prevent a disaster, and sometimes it takes a backseat to moving, watching or shooting. The following are a few pointers on how to keep out of harm's way and, if you wind up in harm's way, how to sidestep or stop it as effectively as possible.

AVOID, ESCAPE, SURVIVE

Concealed carry is all about crisis mitigation and emergency lifesaving. However, the main goal of any responsibly armed American should be to avoid violence whenever possible. Violent encounters make for losers all around; even if you emerge alive and victorious, your life is irreparably changed and you may be physically or mentally injured after having no choice but to employ deadly force against an attacker. This is why violence is best dealt with in the following fashion: Avoid, Escape, Survive.

AVOID

If possible, don't be where violence is happening. This means trusting the hair on the back of your neck and that all-too-uncommon quality we like to call "common sense." If it seems like there's about to be violence, get out. If it seems like the kind of place where violence is more likely to happen than in other places, don't go there.

You will almost always have control over where you have to go and how long you have to stay there. If you follow the old cardinal rule, "Don't go stupid places with stupid people and do stupid things," your chances of ever facing a deadly threat will be very low. "Very low" isn't "zero" though, and this is why we plan ahead.

ESCAPE

If violence is taking place, you need to escape as quickly and effectively as possible. Part of this is proactive; when you enter a room or building, immediately scan for exits and cover, meaning anything that will actually stop a bullet. Understand that you may have to make a hasty exit, and game out the best way to do so. Understand and internalize that escaping — what the more cynical folks might call running away — is a far better option than shooting it out.

Unless doing so would result in death or great bodily harm, it is always better (as a private citizen) to escape violence than to fight it. Escape — removing yourself from the scene of an attack that's about to perpetrated upon you — should always be "Plan A." That said, the first-line plan sometimes falls through, which is why we carry firearms.

SURVIVE

Whether you can escape the violence or not, your goal is to survive and to wake up the next day as healthy as possible. Your survival may depend on your ability to quickly run to a flight of stairs, or it may depend on your ability to spot trouble brewing before it boils over. Your survival may rely on your ability to put bullets exactly where you need them to go while under duress, or it may rely on your ability to keep a cool head and get your gun out and up as quickly as you can. All of these skills and abilities require attention, training and alertness, all of which are factors that are mostly under your control.

You carry that firearm so you will not be subject to attack by violent predators. Between your training on how to move, how to think and how to handle that firearm, you can and will survive.



SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Ask any cop and he'll tell you that successful career criminals follow patterns. Ask any big-city cop and he'll tell you that street criminals follow patterns to an even greater extent than other criminals, especially when it comes to victim selection.

In the February/March 2015 issue of *Concealed Carry Magazine*, our own Kevin Jamison, Esq. compared a criminal sizing up his victim to a shark giving something a "bump bite" — lightly nudging and maybe nibbling at something he comes across to see if it's worth taking larger bites of. Sharks do this simply because everything they see in the ocean is potential food; the only question they really have is whether the number of bites necessary to move the item from swimming to digesting will be worth the effort.

As you've probably come to expect, Jamison is absolutely correct. Violent criminals aren't like you or me; I hate to use blanket terms like "you or me," but since you're likely the kind of person who takes concealed carry classes and applies for permits, you've pretty well distinguished yourself from our criminal class. The outlaws of this country have literally zero empathy for you or others; if they did, they wouldn't make their livings threatening strangers with death for cash and cell phones. They consider armed and strong-arm robbery honest trades, and they will think nothing of murdering you if it is to their advantage. Oh, they'll sometimes say they don't want to *have* to … but that disinclination from murder is related to the longer prison sentence if apprehended, not because they think murdering people is wrong.

One of the anti-gun media's most successful weapons in their arsenal is their ability to portray self-defense-oriented gun owners as heartless psychopaths. They will literally exploit the corpses of children to do so. They will compare me, a private citizen who elects to carry a defensive weapon every day, to rapid mass murderers. This type of misrepresentation of defensive gun owners is compounded by the fact that one of the most common manners in which violent criminals execute muggings in this country is through faux panhandling. This leaves the armed citizen in an extremely dangerous bind — physically and socially.

In the previous issue, I ran down the most common ruses used by home invaders, and in this issue, I'll list the most common techniques used by muggers and street criminals to approach, assess and decide whether to move on potential victims. Now, as we so often say, situational awareness is the cornerstone of a Personal Protection Plan. If you're aware of your surroundings, that means you'll be scanning for potential threats, which means watching all of the people in your general area. While this might sound daunting, it comes easily after conscious effort is applied. Not to compare life in the United States to wartime, but I once heard a Vietnam combat veteran sum up the human's natural abilities for survival quite well:

"One does not have to learn how to survive in the jungle; those things are already there. And when you're in combat and you're in the jungle, then those instincts come back. *They've always been there*."

This is not to say that you need to look at every person as if he or she is about to try to kill you. This is to say that it is mentally possible for you to remove the blinders that a lifetime of personal electronics and a general lack of danger have given you. After you begin to consciously watch and keep tabs on everyone in your immediate area, you'll find that less and less effort is needed as time goes on. Eventually, it's something that you'll do unconsciously. Attaining this level is easier for those who have lived in a large city for most of their lives and for those who are accomplished hunters. And I don't suppose I have to say that combat veterans and law enforcement officers usually possess the skills at higher levels than others.

IMMEDIATELY REACHING OUT FOR A HANDSHAKE

This technique is extremely dangerous and is most common when the street person in question intends to physically feel out his possible victim in an attempt to discern whether it's worth the risk of him and his associates initiating the attack. This is an especially common tactic in high-stakes muggings during which a group of men target adult males who, though typically more difficult to overpower than the elderly or females, usually have a larger quantity of cash on their persons.

There are several reasons why these high-stakes muggers will try their hardest to shake hands with you. For one, as soon as the handshake begins they've immediately tied up your dominant hand and, even worse, have a hold of your dominant hand with *their* dominant hand. (They usually run on the assumption that everyone is right-handed, as the vast majority of the population is.) The next step in the process is to squeeze and see what kind of pressure they get back. If the hands of the target feel strong and rough, they are much less likely to engage or, if they do, the violence will be significantly swifter and more intense.

The last time I experienced this old chestnut was in Las Vegas. A group of four men simultaneously stepped out from a bus shelter of sorts and asked if I knew how to get to a hotel. The first man to make contact immediately stuck his hand out to shake mine as the other three fanned out to my two sides and rear. Under most circumstances, this is what doctors refer to as "being royally screwed." Unarmed, I got my hands up, pulled my elbows in toward my sides and quickly moved to my southwest, breaking the plane formed by the rear and left-side men and turning in to face the group I could sense I was likely about to get to know a lot better. They began to reposition for the same plan of attack: One man at each compass point.

Fortunately, I'd continued walking ahead of a group of three friends who then walked around the corner and immediately closed on the group of strangers. This resulted in said strangers' vociferous denial of intentions no one had accused them of having and their quick dispersal. I played it off to my friends as nothing, but the fact is I knew just as well as the four criminals did that I was about a second away from one of the longer minutes of my life.

THE PRESENT

Since the vast majority of times when someone hands us something it's something we want, we average Americans will readily accept anything offered to us. (The next step is that we look down at it, studying it in an attempt to understand why we want it.)

Tricking you into physically taking and holding something draws your attention to whatever you've just been given and gets your eyes down, off of your attacker. Depending on the size of the object, it might also occupy both of your hands, thus leaving you exposed to an attack.

The first time I experienced this ploy was in Puerto Vallarta. I was sitting at an outdoor bar on the beach when a disheveled, shirtless man approached the couple at the table next to me. The shirtless man was holding a small bouquet of flowers with a note attached to the bound stems. He handed the flowers to the seated man — who had the table between himself and the beach — and speaking very quickly in broken English, he asked the guy for a cigarette. As the man at the table simultaneously tried to get hold of his cigarettes with his left hand, accept the bouquet with his right and read what was on the attached note with his eyes, the shirtless thief simply scooped up the man's phone, sunglasses and what appeared to be a small stack of peso notes and fled about as quickly as I've ever seen a barefoot human run. (Ironically, the victim's smokes were unharmed.) Now, in this case, the attack was nonviolent, but stop and think for a moment: As completely occupied as he was, how vulnerable to assault was the tourist who was lucky enough to only lose his phone and shades that day?

I'll tell you how lucky. Handing someone a note or other attention-grabbing device is as old as premeditated violent crime. I've even seen cops fall for this trick. They approach an individual who they suspect is breaking the law (usually alcohol- or drug-related), and the individual tells them, "Ah yes, I have something I need to show you. Thank God you're here, officer." Then he hands the cop a note, and in the split second the LEO is no longer focused on the suspect, he's off like a shot. (I will refrain from naming the two different agencies

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I've seen this one work on, as I am certain there were rather intense shift meetings the next morning.)

BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE IT ALL?

Some, or all, of the aforementioned techniques will be used in conjunction to execute the robbery, but until the first order is issued or blow is landed, it will look to the untrained eye as though nothing more nefarious than panhandling is happening. Americans are a generous sort, and since we as a people have been forcibly socialized to never turn a blind eye to a beggar, violent criminals have done what they always do: exploit the good nature of honest citizens to their own ends, maiming or murdering in the process if they deem it necessary.

Faux panhandling is the preferred method of affecting a robbery because it begins with a "defensible honest question," meaning if violent criminals decide to abort the attack at the least second, they can tell police that they were simply panhandling or asking for a short-term loan to get back to community college. If they decide to continue, the "panhandling" might manifest itself in a request for money, a cigarette, a light or a ride. More importantly, it will likely be a combination of all of the techniques mentioned above.

The biggest factor in the panhandling ploy is that if the exchange turns violent and you are able to effectively defend yourself, attackers will tell responding police that they were just minding their own business asking strangers for money, and some crazed, gun-wielding madman drew on them. (This is why we here at *CCM* are so adamant that if you ever, under any circumstances, have to draw your weapon, you need to call 911 and report the incident as soon as possible; the first to initiate police contact will almost certainly be viewed by the legal system as the victim.)

Since it is extremely important that you establish what's happening for what it is — a violent crime in progress being perpetrated on you — vocalization is very important. Tell panhandlers that you are not interested in anything they have to offer and will not be giving them any money. If they continue to press you, keep moving away from them and state in no uncertain terms that you feel threatened and that they need to get away from you immediately. As with any other potentially violent encounter, it's far better to avoid it than to win it, and with luck, your assertive refusal to be involved in the goings-on will be enough to get them to try their luck with a different victim.

Despite the rolled eyes and disapproving stares from oh-so-compassionate individuals in the area, never feel bad about backing away from panhandlers and clarifying your situation. If they're friendly, you can make up for it later. If they're not, you might have just saved your own life. Whenever strangers who aren't uniformed law enforcement officers approach you in public, there's a series of actions that you must take in order to be able to avoid a violent confrontation and, failing that, stay alive:

1. Get off the X – don't be a stationary target
2. Turn to see everyone else in the area - watch for someone watching YOU
3. Say you don't have any money – keep saying this as many times as you have to
4. Tell them you're in a hurry – keep moving
5. Be ready to defend yourself – mentally prepare for possible violence

Whether or not to give money to destitute beggars is entirely up to you. More often than not, religious beliefs and obligations dictate an individual's behavior when panhandlers ask for a handout. Regardless of how you feel about alms for the beggars, remember this: If the individual initiating contact with you is healthy and energetic enough to approach you quickly for a handshake and dexterous enough to move so swiftly as to never really seem to be in the same place for more than a second or so, what's kept him or her from getting work? More importantly, what seems more likely: He or she is in an honest-to-God tough spot, like the man or woman sitting nearly motionless next to a cardboard sign that reads "STARVING," or that this



person is bump-biting you … and seeing if you're worth the effort?

BEING A GOOD WITNESS

There are times when the greatest service you can offer is to be a good witness. This means you should take in as much of what's going on as possible without actually getting involved. A prime example of this could be when you've contacted law enforcement — and they are en route — but there isn't a clear and unavoidable threat of death or great bodily harm. This is also extremely important when you are rendering aid to a victim of a violent attack; not to be melodramatic, but you may be the last one who speaks to this individual for a while, and many victims don't remember as much after waking up in a hospital bed as they do before they lose consciousness. If you're in a position to collect information to relay to law enforcement, you're going to want to keep the following in mind:



PROTECT YOURSELF

Just because you're trying to be a good witness doesn't mean that the situation won't turn dangerous. As you observe a situation, never lose sight of the fact that you and your loved ones are your highest priority in the area; if the threats in the area escalate to the point that you are no longer in complete safety, get out.

LOOK FOR SPECIFICS

You're going to be looking for information that will be useful to law enforcement. Vehicle descriptions are extremely helpful in apprehending violent criminals; you'll be looking for type and color, number of doors, license plate state and characters, and roof racks, bumper stickers or other identifying marks. When observing a person, do what you can to get down approximate height and weight, ethnicity, hair color and length, presence or absence of facial hair, clothing and jewelry. Remember that height and weight can be extremely difficult to gauge, so look for reference points in rooms and on buildings to help you gauge an individual's height. Banks, convenience stores and other businesses often have white tapes marked in feet and inches on their door jambs specifically for measuring fleeing attackers; make it a habit to start noticing them now before you might need to.

LISTEN

Voice and dialect can be extremely important in identifying attackers, as can remembering specific statements they make. There's a good reason everyone from law enforcement officers to attorneys to Special Forces soldiers all carry notepads and pens: They understand that even with all of their specialized training, no one is capable of remembering everything he or she hears and sees.

KEEP PERSPECTIVE

Bear in mind that you're not a law enforcement officer; you always have the option of fleeing a dangerous situation. A concealed carry permit does not give you any more responsibility to help others than you had before it was issued, and attempting to insert yourself into violent encounters can (and often will) do far more harm than good. Your concealed firearm is for defending your loved ones and yourself against impending, unavoidable death or great bodily harm.

EFFECTIVE USE OF COVER

By Kevin Michalowski
Executive Editor | *Concealed Carry Magazine*



The first rule of winning a gunfight is to ensure that you don't get shot. Getting shot greatly reduces your chances of emerging victorious. Yes, you can and should — to the best of your ability — fight through any injury and continue attempting to defeat your attacker no matter what. But doing that with a bullet hole in you is all the more difficult. The best way to avoid incoming rounds is to place some sort of barrier between you and your attacker. You have two choices: cover or concealment.

Cover is anything that will stop incoming rounds. Cover is dense, solid and impenetrable. Cover offers you the best chance to avoid the impact of bullets coming your way. But you need to use cover correctly in order to maximize its protective effects; more on that later.

Concealment simply hides you from your attacker. Concealment is better than nothing because it, at the very least, obscures your outline and does not give your attacker the opportunity to acquire a perfect sight picture. Concealment will not stop bullets, and in a perfect world, concealment is simply a brief stop on the way to cover.

A car door is concealment; an engine block is cover. An interior wall made of sheetrock and paint is concealment; a brick wall is cover. Bushes and shrubbery are concealment; a 12-inch tree trunk is cover.

Any cover is better than concealment, and there are some items and locations you might not think of as cover. A fire hydrant is cover. A curb can be cover if you are able to get down on the ground. In both of these cases, you will need to get as much of your body as possible behind the cover. Again, any cover is better than nothing. You must use what you have available. A simple steel file cabinet likely won't stop a bullet, but if that cabinet is filled with paper — depending on the angle of the bullet — you have something that will adequately protect you.

There is a saying I heard often while serving in the U.S. Navy: Do all you can with what you've got where you are. That's how I feel about the use of cover and concealment, except that we must understand we need to be looking for and moving to cover. You can't just stay in one spot. You need to move, and that movement needs to be getting you to cover.

A big part of proper situational awareness is to regularly make note of escape routes and areas of cover or concealment. Now that you are carrying a gun you should be looking at the world differently.



› *Moving — specifically, moving properly — during a lethal force encounter is a skill that is best practiced before it's needed.*

You should be paying attention to the elements of the world around you and thinking about what you might do should you suddenly find yourself in a very bad situation.

For instance, as you are walking down the street, you see a big, blue, metal mailbox and a smaller concrete planter filled with dirt and sporting a nice arrangement of colorful flowers. The mailbox is closer to you. If you hear a shot or suddenly find yourself in what we will call "a bad situation," your first immediate move might be directly toward that big, blue mailbox to assess the situation. You should immediately be thinking, "I'm out of sight, but this box is really only two pieces of sheet metal. I need better cover."

As you assess your ability to use the planter for cover, you'll also have to be thinking about the size of the planter, how long it will take you to get there and whether or not you can get behind it effectively. Remember too that the flowers sprouting out the top of that thing are only concealment. The real cover is the concrete and the dirt. The planter is clearly the better choice for cover, but you need to consider all the elements of that piece of cover before you make your move.

There are a million combinations of situational factors and all are unique to the situation and your physical abilities. We could play "what if?" for hours and never answer every question. If you have bad knees and can't kneel down behind that planter without pain, you might be hesitant to head in that direction. But consider this: If the bullets are coming your way, the pain of a gunshot wound will be far worse than knee pain as you try to crouch. I can't answer every question about every scenario … I'm just asking you to think about what you might do.

EFFECTIVELY USING COVER

There is no doubt about it: When bullets start flying, you will very likely be terrified. Don't let that fear keep you from thinking clearly. That's why we address these topics before we are terrified. You need to think about what you will do; you need to train for several alternatives before you are in a deadly situation. This is especially true when it comes to effectively using cover. When



› *Train to limit how much of your body is exposed when "rolling" out from behind your cover.*

the adrenaline kicks in and you realize bullets are flying, you are very likely going to want to get as close to your piece of cover as possible. Don't do it. Good cover is good cover, and getting closer to it doesn't make it any better.

If you press your body tightly up against your cover, you limit your vision and your ability to move. You also run the risk of being injured by fragments of the cover that will be flying around when the cover stops the bullets.

The first rule of using cover effectively is to not crowd the cover. If you are using something like a vehicle, a wall, a tree or a pillar, you should be back from the cover about 3 to 6 feet. This allows you a good field of view and keeps you from being struck by flying debris. The goal is, of course, to keep as much of your body shielded as possible. To the extent that you can, conform to your cover. Any part of you that is sticking out could be struck by gunfire; refer to the first rule of winning a gunfight at the top of this piece. Conforming to cover is a perfect segue to the rules for shooting around your cover. Clearly, you must emerge from cover to get a shot at your attacker. The goal is to limit your exposure to incoming fire while maximizing your ability to see and engage your target. We do this by "rolling" out.

Rolling out is likely not the most accurate descriptor for emerging from cover to take a shot, but it is the term commonly used in law enforcement training and I will explain that training here. Assuming you are a right-handed shooter and you are shooting around the right side of a tall vertical barricade, like the corner of a wall, you should be back 3 to 6 feet from the cover. Your feet should be a bit less than shoulder-width apart. Your right foot should be forward of your left foot and you should acquire your preferred two–handed grip on your firearm. Now "roll" forward with a slight lean to your right. Keep your feet, legs and hips behind the cover. All that should appear around the cover is your firearm and only as much of your head as is required for you to establish a good sight picture. Take the shot (or shots) and return to cover.

You can also do this from a kneeling position. Simply drop down on your left knee and roll forward to emerge from the cover and take the shot. This can be difficult for those with bad knees, so practice before you are forced to try it in battle. This system allows for you to maintain a stable shooting platform but still keep the majority of your body behind cover. Of course, you might have to reposition and change your angle to get a good shot. To make it work for the other side of the barrier, you will need to reverse your foot position. If you can shoot with your non-dominant hand, you should try that. If you can't, you might end up being forced to expose a little more of your body in order to get a good sight picture. If you have to … well, you have to. But remember: You should only expose the minimum. Anything you stick out there could be shot off.

Standard law enforcement training demands that you never, ever, emerge from cover in the same place twice in a row. That is, if you are standing and you roll out to take a shot, you should kneel for your next shot. And maybe go prone for your third shot. Then return to standing. The goal is to ensure that your attacker can't predict where you will pop out next. Now, this works effectively on a static range with perfect training barriers, but the real world might throw some other problems your way. Adapt. Try to come out in different locations if you can, but if you physically can't, you'll have do the best you can with what you have where you are.



› *Remember to never shoot from the same place twice in a row. If you just shot from a high position, take your next shot from down close to the ground.*

WHAT IF ... ?

The description above is a fine example of using cover if the cover is perfect, the footing is perfect and you are working on a training range that allows you to shoot around all sides of a barricade. Will everything be perfect in a gunfight? Almost never. You'll need to adapt to your surroundings. Apply the basic rules of staying back from the cover, using the angles to your advantage and only exposing the smallest amount of your body to your attacker as possible.

Aside from that, you need to adapt to your cover. You also need to be constantly looking to see if better cover is available. If you are caught on the street and all you have for cover is a fire hydrant, I suggest you get small and use that hydrant as best you can while you look for something better. If all you have is a curb, prone out, return fire if you can and look for better cover.

If you are physically unable to go prone or squat down behind a hydrant, you need to immediately abandon those ideas and get moving. You need to understand your physical limitations and know that any training or any suggestions you get must be contextualized to your physical abilities. If you can bend, squat or lay down, well then, get out of the way. Movement is not as good as cover, but it is better than nothing. Don't wait to move; rather, move while you are assessing your options. A gunfight is a dynamic event; do all you can to make yourself a difficult target.

ONE LAST THING: KEEP THINKING!

Self-defense is a thinking person's game. Yes, a deadly event will be terrifying, but you have a better chance of getting through it alive if you keep your head.

During a training seminar, I watched a video I wish I could find now. It was a gunfight caught on the dashboard camera of a police car. The officer and the criminal were on opposite sides of a 4-foot-tall chain link fence equipped with those plastic privacy slats. The criminal ducked behind the fence and quickly popped up, firing two shots. The officer moved to the rear of the vehicle, then tried to time his shots to catch the shooter as he popped up to fire. After about three attempts, the officer realized his target was hiding behind plastic slats. He then fired through the fence, hitting the assailant and ending the fight.

Did the officer violate one of the cardinal safety rules because he could not clearly see his target? Technically, yes, but the over-riding safety concern allowed for his actions. More importantly, that officer knew the difference between cover and concealment and used that knowledge to his advantage.

There is no way to define all of the options you might face when it comes to employing cover and concealment. Learn the basics and adapt them to your situations. Play the "what if?" game. It could save your life.

2019

The Complete Mass Shooting Survival Guide



Chapter 4

Active Shooter:
Uncovering What Drives Your Attacker



ACTIVE SHOOTER:
Uncovering What Drives Your Attacker

USCCA



ACTIVE SHOOTER

Uncovering What Drives Your Attacker

By Michael Martin

THERE IS NO SINGLE PROFILE THAT DEFINES THE MASS SHOOTER. Some could be categorized as psychotic, such as Virginia Tech Shooter Seung-Hui Cho. Others, including the San Bernardino and Orlando shooters are motivated or inspired by ISIS or other terrorist organizations. Most are seeking fame.

While no common profile exists, common indicators do exist, if you know the signs. In addition, most shooters have left a trail of physical or electronic evidence that was missed by friends or family, and in 80 percent of the mass shootings since Columbine, the shooter told someone in advance about their plans, yet they weren't taken seriously.

Picking the potential mass shooter out of a crowded field of students or employees or parishioners won't be as simple as looking at what the individual is wearing, or what music they are listening to, or other overt signs. Dr. Peter Langman would agree. In his article, School Shooters: The Warning Signs, he notes, "The warning signs of school shootings do not relate to students' clothing, the video games they play, their musical preferences, or other aspects of their lifestyles." In many cases however, Langman says these shooters are "very disempowered, not succeeding in life in multiple domains, and we see that with college and adult shooters. They're typically failing in academics, failing in the world of work, failing in the world of friendship, in romance, or sexuality. Nothing really is going right in any major domain for them." While an outsider may believe that they are doing "okay," the potential shooter may believe that they are failing at

everything, or worse, that everyone is failing them. But not all young men (or women) who are suffering one or more failures become mass shooters. So what are the warning signs that an individual may be at risk, or may have already reached the planning stage? Warning signs can be found in three different areas: Risk factors, direct indicators, and indirect indicators.

> ***"These shooters are very disempowered, not succeeding in life in multiple domains, and we see that with college and adult shooters. They're typically failing in academics, failing in the world of work, failing in the world of friendship, in romance, or sexuality. Nothing really is going right in any major domain for them."***
>
> — Dr. Peter Langman

RISK FACTORS

While the vast majority of individuals who come from broken homes or who have disengaged parents will never become a mass shooter, when multiple risk factors exist, the individual should appropriately be considered at risk for violence or suicide. Risk factors can include:

- Multiple failures academically, socially, or romantically.
- Troubled, broken, or abusive home.
- Disengaged parents, no responsible adult providing oversight in their lives.
- Psychotic symptoms including hallucinations and delusions.

DIRECT INDICATORS

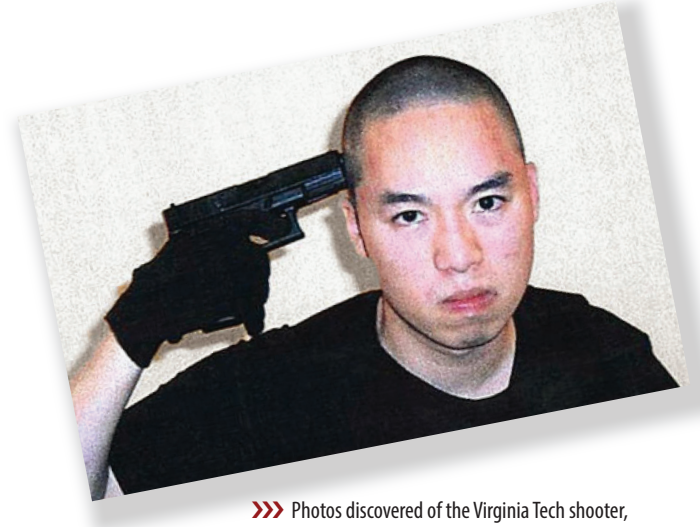
Risk factors simply indicate that an individual may be at risk, but direct indicators show that actual planning may have begun. In case after case, mass shooters have left direct indicators of their plans, either in physical or electronic form or in what they said or did. But in far too many cases, friends or family members didn't take the indicators seriously. Direct indicators can include physical evidence, such as:

- The individual actively seeking out a friend or family member for an illegal firearm purchase when the potential shooter is underage. Not only is this a direct indicator, it's also illegal, and must be reported.
- An unexplained and uncharacteristic stockpiling of firearms, ammunition, or components that could be used to manufacturer an explosive.
- Written documentation such as specific plans for an attack, or violent "fictional" stories written with real-world settings or actors.
- Direct warnings for friends or family members to stay away from an area on a specific date.
- Direct warnings for friends or family members to stay away from an area on a specific date.
- Direct threats, specifically stating their grievances and/or plans verbally, or in writing such as in a journal or as part of a writing assignment.

DIRECT INDICATORS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Direct indicators can also include information left on social media such as:

- Posts expressing an admiration for past mass shooters; an admiration for ISIS, Al-Qaeda, or other terrorist organizations; positive references to Hitler or Nazi Germany; or comments which could be taken as thoughts of suicide.
- Photos showing the individual pointing a firearm directly at the camera, or at their own head. If such a manual existed, both of these photos would be straight out of the Mass Shooter's Instruction Manual.



››› Photos discovered of the Virginia Tech shooter, Seung-Hui Cho, pointing his guns at the camera and at his own head have been repeated countless times by other mass shooters. If you see a similar photo on a friend's or family member's social media accounts, it should be taken seriously, and reported to a trusted party.

While the direct indicators listed might seem laughably obvious, in every one of the 48 mass shootings since Columbine, those direct indicators existed and were either missed or were ignored by family and friends of the shooter.

INDIRECT INDICATORS

While most mass shooters wouldn't be categorized as loners, many will be disengaged from normal social and family relationships, or they may express antisocial behavior. Other indirect indicators include:

- Socially dysfunctional.
- Difficulty relating emotionally with others.
- May show bullying tendencies (contrary to popular belief, most mass shooters have not been bullied and instead, tend to be the bully).
- Other indirect indicators can appear on social media or in the student's writing which may not show a specific desire for violence, but which can indicate feelings of despair, or feeling disenfranchised, or feeling that the world is conspiring against them.

To monitor students with risk factors, direct indicators, or indirect indicators, Dr. Langman suggests that every student in every school have at least one direct connection with a teacher or coach. That doesn't mean that the adult simply asks the student, "How are you doing?" during the occasional hallway conversation. Instead, it means that the adult take an actual interest in helping the student to remain engaged, and, it means taking the responsibility for monitoring that student's social media usage. While other students or friends of the potential mass shooter might miss the signs (or might not take them seriously), having at least one responsible adult who takes an actual interest in the student (and their social media), can not only help to identify potential violence before it starts, it can also reduce or eliminate the possibility that violence (or suicide) is contemplated in the first place.

REVERSING THE TREND

While society as a whole is shifting to elevate fame over sacrifice, service, and hard work, parents have an opportunity to counteract that pull, with the following advice:

- If your child is lacking success academically, set aside time for homework every single evening and check their work. Success gives rise to success, which may reawaken the idea that hard work academically may be all the success and fame that the child needs.
- If your son is lacking success socially or on the playing field, encourage them to sign up for Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts or a similar organization such as your local Police or Fire Explorer post. Keep this one in mind — Eagle Scouts are not out shooting up schools, malls, or churches.
- Monitor your child's social media accounts. Act like the grown-up in your relationship with simple rules. If you're not allowed to monitor their social media accounts, then the social media accounts go away.
- Monitor your child's computer use. While it's possible to hide or delete web searches or create hidden files or folders, investigations post-shooting have almost always found an obvious electronic trail. Monitoring your child's computer use doesn't mean that you'll find a document labeled, My Mass Shooting To-Do List, but it will alert you if your child is spending time on neo-Nazi forums or forums dedicated to the glorification of past shootings, or which advocate racist, xenophobic, or homophobic views.
- It's your house. No place should be off limits to a search, whether it's searching your child's bedroom, their bank statement, their phone, their computer, and every nook and cranny where something could be hidden.
- Be a model for your children in your behavior and actions. See the best in people, not the worst. If your dinner conversation consists of complaining about what's wrong with the world and who's to blame, you'll pass that losing attitude on to your child. While you may not turn them into a mass shooter, you will create an adult with built-in excuses on why their life is failing, rather than giving them the tools and attitude to achieve real success.

SANDY HOOK PROMISE, "SAY SOMETHING" CAMPAIGN

To help prevent future mass shootings and even suicide, Sandy Hook Promise — a movement designed to educate and empower communities through gun violence prevention programs — has launched a *Say Something* campaign which teaches students, educators and family members not only how to spot the signs, but also what to do about it, by bringing the concern to a trusted adult.

The *Say Something* campaign teaches:

1. Look for warning signs, signals and threats.
2. Act immediately, take it seriously.
3. Say something to a trusted adult.

As part of the campaign, Sandy Hook Promise has created handouts for parents, students and educators, as well as a PowerPoint presentation, and a number of student activities in an educator guide.

In addition to the *Say Something* campaign, Sandy Hook Promise has also recently launched an outstanding new video, which shows how easy it is to miss the signs unless you're watching closely and actively. The two and a half minute video titled *Evan*, follows the budding love interest of a high school student, who trades notes with an anonymous girl by scratching them onto a desk in the library. The video does an outstanding job showing how the noise and activities of everyday life can cause us to miss the signs until it's too late. While the viewer is focused on Evan (and hoping that he meets the girl), it's easy to miss the signs of an angry, disengaged student in the background, who ultimately walks through the gym door with a bag of guns. I'll add that you can disagree with the video's supposition that one of the indirect indicators that we should watch for are students who read gun magazines or watch shooting videos on YouTube, but taken in its entirety, the video does a good job painting a picture of a troubled teenager who is in need of help, before it's too late for him, or for any other student.

The steps to the Sandy Hook Promise, "Say Something" campaign are simple:

1. Look for warning signs, signals and threats.

2. Act immediately, take it seriously.

3. Say something to a trusted adult.



›››› In addition to the handout shown here, Sandy Hook Promise also offers a free PowerPoint presentation and downloadable guides for parents, students and educators, including a number of valuable practical exercises.



Brad was forced to defend himself with pepper spray during a road-rage attack. But when the police arrived, HE was the one charged with assault! That's when the USCCA stepped in to help...

USCCA Membership provides you with the education, training and legal protection you'll need in the aftermath of your use of ANY legal weapon in self-defense. Arm yourself with a USCCA Membership today to unlock lifesaving information, top-notch training and complete peace of mind. Because, after all, ***doing the right thing shouldn't cost you everything...***

Join USCCA Today to Get Complete ***Peace of Mind...***

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Self-Defense SHIELD Protection Plan Benefits are subject to certain terms, conditions, limitations and exclusions. See Membership Agreement for details.

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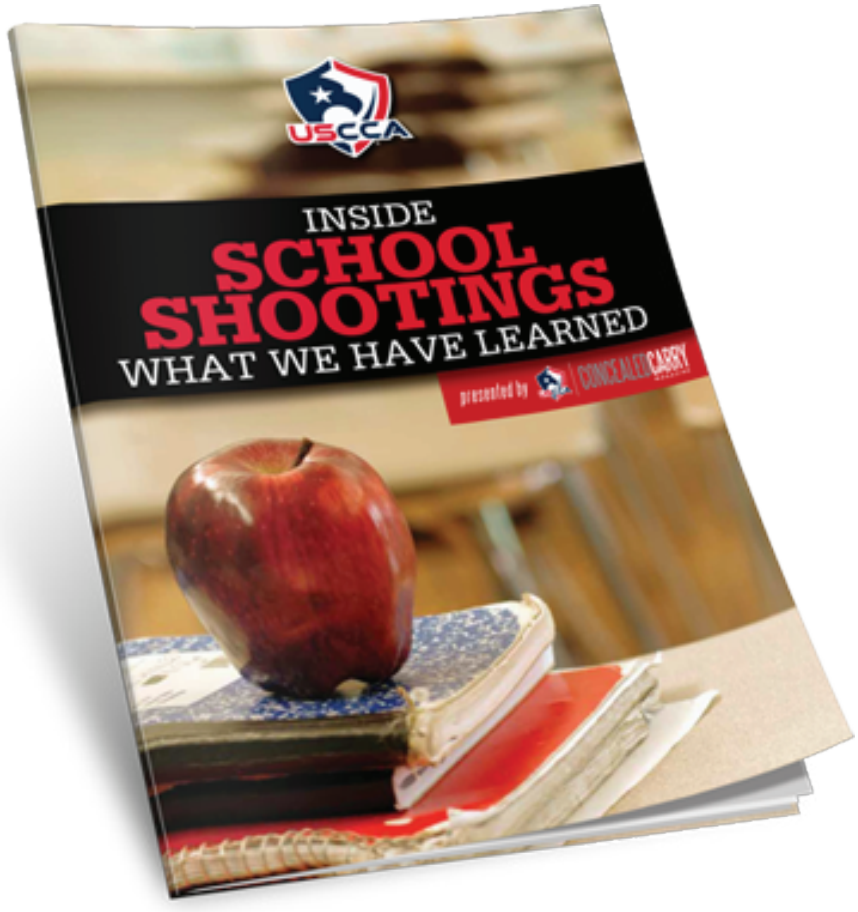
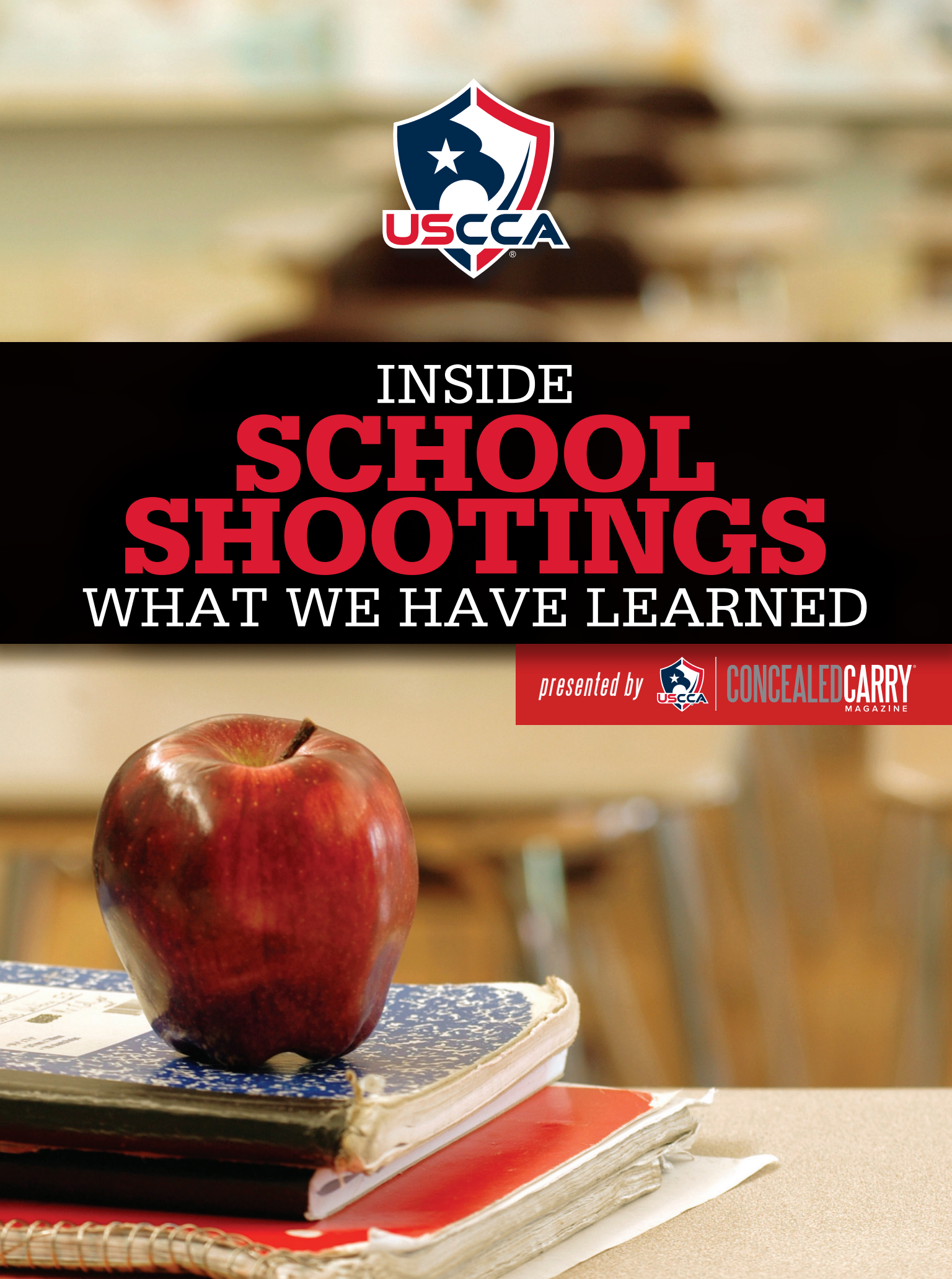


Chapter 5

Inside School Shootings:
What We've Learned



INSIDE SCHOOL SHOOTINGS
WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

presented by USCCA | CONCEALED CARRY MAGAZINE



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT THE SHOOTERS?

BY MICHAEL MARTIN, AUTHOR OF *COUNTERING THE MASS SHOOTER THREAT*

Several months after the massacre in Newtown, Connecticut, my 7-year-old son asked me if I thought something like that could happen at his school, which happens to be a private Catholic school in my home city. I assured him that nothing like that would ever happen here, and that even if a bad guy did get into his school, our police department was so good and so fast that they would stop the bad guy be-

fore he hurt anyone. Of course, I was lying to him. I feel a bit more confident in my answers when I assure my son that terrorists will never again take over airplanes and fly them into buildings, but for that answer, I have a bit more to fall back on considering the response the nation took after 9/11 compared to its response after Newtown. After 9/11, the U.S. met the threat by installing sophisticated body scanners at airports, hardening cockpit doors with impenetrable steel, creating an Armed Pilot program and expanding the armed Air Marshal program. The terrorists of 9/11 were fairly confident that if they couldn't bluff their way into the cockpit, they'd be able to breach the door, where they'd find a defenseless crew tucked into their very own "gun-free zone." Today, Al-Qaeda and ISIS know that even if a cockpit door could be breached (however unlikely), the terrorist's last memory might well be a muzzle flash as an armed pilot shoots him in the face. A 9/11 response was needed after Newtown, but today, most of our schools remain as unprotected as they were the day before the Newtown tragedy, as was demonstrated in February 2018 as 17 students and faculty members were gunned down at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Proposed solutions range from banning AR-15s and limiting magazine capacity to no more than 10 rounds to creating an armed teacher program and eliminating gun-free zones. In this article, I'll be looking at each of those proposed solutions in great detail, and I'll also look at whether victim response has affected the outcome at any shooting, positively or negatively. I'll summarize this article with a four-point plan designed to eliminate the scourge of these murderers once and for all.

To start, let's take a look at the magazine capacity argument.

IS MAGAZINE CAPACITY THE REAL KILLER?

It seems that before the blood is dry after mass shootings, the anti-gun movement renews their rallying cry that the reason these monsters are able to murder so many victims in a short period of time is because of the rate of fire enabled by magazine capacities larger than five or 10 rounds and by the nature of semi-automatic firearms. So that begs the question: Exactly how many rounds *can* be fired per minute when using magazine capacities of five rounds, 10 rounds or 30 rounds, and would a smaller magazine size have affected the outcome at any mass shooting? To answer the first half of that question, let's look at the theoretical maximum rate of fire attainable with three different-sized magazines. The table on this page shows how many rounds can be fired per minute using a moderate rate of fire of two rounds per second, and a moderate magazine change rate of three seconds. I'll add that someone with practice would be able to fire at about twice this rate. As you can see, the table shows that reducing a magazine capacity by two-thirds doesn't reduce the rate of fire by two-thirds; of course, it simply means that more magazine changes are required per minute. The *actual* reduction in rate of fire when going from a 30-round magazine to a 10-round magazine is about 25 percent.

Having those baseline numbers, the "it's the magazine" crowd would have a strong argument if it could be demonstrated that mass shooters were firing at a rate of fire of 100 rounds per minute or more, but, unfortunately for them, the facts don't support that argument. The table on the next page shows the *actual* rate of fire in the five most notorious school shootings, including the most recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida. That table clearly shows that, in every single case, the shooters were using a rate of fire far below the theoretical limit of even five-round magazines. That same rate of fire is reflected in other mass shootings outside of schools, including those in San Bernardino, Fort Hood, Aurora and Charleston. In fact, only one single mass shooter in history has even approached the theoretical limit of 30-round magazines. In October 2017, 64-year-old Stephen Paddock fired 1,100 rounds in 10 minutes from an elevated position overlooking the Las Vegas strip with the aid of a "bump stock" designed to mimic the speed of automatic fire. Due to the use of that device and the fact that Paddock was firing from an elevated position at a crowd of more than 13,000 people, this shooting tends to fit into its own category. In fact, it might remain a category of one; at the time of publication, the Trump administration had directed

Magazine Capacity	Reloads Required per Minute	Rounds per Minute at a Moderate Rate of Fire
5 rounds	11	55
10 rounds	7.5	75
30 rounds	3.3	100

■ The table above shows how many rounds can be fired per minute with a moderate rate of fire of two rounds per second and a moderate reload rate of three seconds per magazine change. An experienced shooter would be able to fire at approximately twice this rate.

Shooter	Location	Dead	Rounds Fired	Time	Rounds per Minute
Nikolas Cruz	Parkland, Florida	17	100	6 minutes	17
Seung-Hui Cho	Blacksburg, Virginia	30	174	11 minutes	15
Adam Lanza	Newtown, Connecticut	26	154	5-9 minutes	17-31
Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold	Columbine, Colorado	13	188	47 minutes	4
Christopher Harper-Mercer	Roseburg, Oregon	9	95	9 minutes	9

the Justice Department to ban bump stocks and other devices that allow semi-automatic firearms to mimic automatic fire.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Let's state these facts with a little perspective. Adam Lanza (the Newtown shooter) fired at a rate of fire no faster than a 150-year-old lever-action Henry rifle, popular among Union soldiers during the Civil War, even though Lanza had 10 30-round magazines and an AR-15. Nidal Malik Hasan (the Fort Hood shooter) was a third slower than that, while Seung-Hui Cho (the Virginia Tech shooter) and Nikolas Cruz (the Parkland, Florida, shooter) were 50 percent slower. Even the San Bernardino shooters, who carried AR-15s and 30-round magazines, fired at a rate no faster than one round every 3.3 seconds, which is 40 percent slower than the lever-action Henry. James Holmes (the Aurora, Colorado, theater shooter) fired at a rate no faster than a 170-year-old, single-shot Sharps rifle, developed 13 years before the Civil War began, even though Holmes had a 100-round magazine. Keep in mind, the Sharps rifle has a capacity of one round, or 99 rounds fewer than Holmes had in his magazine. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold (the Columbine shooters) fired at a rate no faster than the 240-year-old muzzle-loading flintlock Kentucky rifle favored by the American patriots in the Revolutionary War, while Christopher Mercer (the Umqua Community College shooter) was even slower than that.

So here's the problem with the magazine capacity argument: These killers are not using a high rate of fire; they're not even using a moderate rate of fire. Their rate of fire could be described as sluggish, no faster than a lever-action or bolt-action rifle. But that begs the question, why is their rate of fire so slow? The answer is a simple one: When you're alone with your victims in an enclosed area and you're the only one with a gun, a rate of fire any faster would only mean misses.

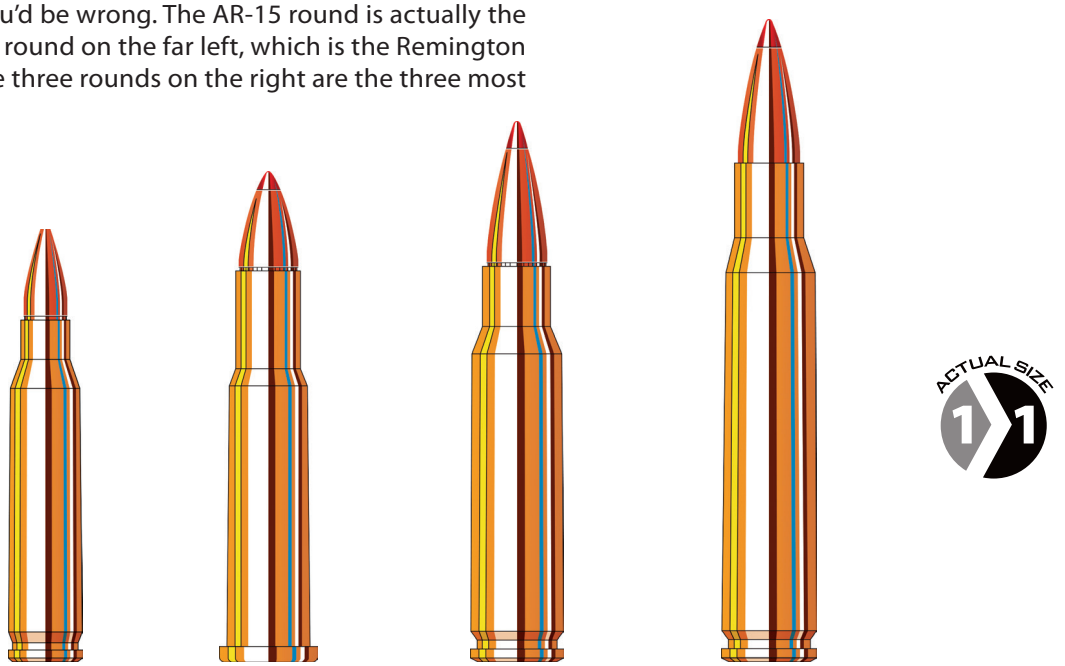
ARE AR-15s TO BLAME?

When a mass shooter chooses an AR-15 as his firearm of choice, it's usually referred to as a "high-powered" or "military-style" rifle by the media, implying that it's more powerful (and more deadly) than more commonly available rifles, such as those used for hunting deer. Let's find out if that's correct or whether it's another red herring. The answer might just redefine

Shooter	Location	Dead	Rounds Fired	Time	Rounds per Minute
Farook and Malik	San Bernardino, California	14	65-75	5 minutes	13-15
Nidal Hasan	Killeen, Texas	13	214	10 minutes	21
James Holmes	Aurora, Colorado	12	70	5-9 minutes	8-14
Dylann Roof	Columbia, South Carolina	9	24	7 minutes	11

what the media considers a "high-powered" rifle to be.

Below, I've shown the round fired by the AR-15 in its actual size, alongside the three most popular deer hunting rounds, also shown in their actual sizes. Which of the four rounds do you think is fired by the AR-15? If you guessed one of the three larger rounds on the right, you'd be wrong. The AR-15 round is actually the smallest round on the far left, which is the Remington .223. The three rounds on the right are the three most popular deer hunting rounds, including the .30-30 Winchester, the .308 Winchester and the .30-06 Springfield, respectively. The fact is, the AR-15 round isn't just *physically* smaller, it also falls dramatically below those popular deer hunting rounds in kinetic energy, and well below the kinetic energy of a 12-gauge 000 buck-



One of the rounds above is the Remington .223 fired by the AR-15. The other three are the most popular deer hunting rounds on the market. Do you know which is which? The answer might just redefine what the media considers to be a "high-powered" rifle.

shot shell too. I'll add that a 12-gauge 000 (pronounced "triple-ought") buckshot fires six to eight projectiles, all 45 percent larger in diameter than a single Remington .223 bullet. Now, I haven't put this illustration together to make an argument that all ammunition of all types should be banned. Instead, I'm using it as a way of explaining that simply banning one ammunition type or the firearm that shoots that ammunition in the hopes that it will result in less devastation during mass shootings is hopelessly naive. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but *any* ammunition type or caliber size fired into a human body at close range will have devastating effects. When more than one round is fired into a victim, the devastation is magnified exponentially. As an example, the Virginia Tech shooter killed many of his victims using what would normally be considered a "plinking" round, or a round normally used for shooting squirrels and other small game. The .22 Long Rifle round is so tiny that most people wouldn't give it serious consideration as a defensive or offensive round with just 100 foot-pounds of energy (less than $^{1}/_{12}$ the energy of the Remington .223). Yet when fired into a human body at close range, the results will be as fatal as any of the rounds shown on the previous page or handgun ammunition of any type. At Virginia Tech, each of the victims was shot at least three times. Of the 30 victims killed in Norris Hall, 28 were shot in the head, including one victim with nine bullets fired to the head. The politicians and gun-control advocates who are telling you that you'll be safer during a mass shooting if the shooter has 10-round rather than 30-round magazines are the same ones who are implying that you'll be safer if the AR-15 and its so-called "high-powered" ammunition was removed from the marketplace. My suggestion is that you not buy into that flawed logic and that the solution to ending these mass shootings does not lie in simply getting rid of any firearm type, any ammunition type or any particular magazine size.

DO 'GUN-FREE ZONES' HELP OR HURT?

After every mass shooting, gun-rights organizations point the finger at the existence of "gun-free zones," while gun-control advocates call for even more locations to be declared "gun-free" in an attempt to end mass shootings. So who is correct? For their part, gun-control advocates have done much to try to dispel the notion that these killers seek out schools or other locations that ban guns. One anti-gun group even tried to dismiss the argument that Fort Hood was a "gun-free zone" by claiming that the base police who flooded the area and exchanged fire with shooter Nidal Malik Hasan proved that Fort Hood was not a "gun-free zone" after all. But claiming that arriving police means an area isn't a "gun-free zone" (even though soldiers on base were barred from carrying personal firearms by base policy) is not a valid argument. Instead, let's look at the data.

The data tells us that since Columbine, and up to and including the terrorist attacks in San Bernardino and Orlando and the shooting in Parkland, Florida, 50 mass shootings have occurred, with 74 percent of them falling in "gun-free zones," where civilians were disarmed by state law, school policy, federal law or policy, or by private policy. It's worth noting nearly 48 percent of the locations where mass shootings occurred were self-declared "gun-free zones," where no law barred civilians from protecting themselves with firearms but institutional policy did declare such a ban. In most cases, it's a university or corporate lawyer who suggests the ban as a way of avoiding liability if a shooting or an accident were to occur. But, after looking at the data, those lawyers might want to reevaluate their idea of what liability means.

As mentioned, 74 percent of the mass shootings since Columbine have occurred in "gun-free zones," but those shootings were responsible for 85 percent of the deaths. That trend in the data clearly indicates that mass shooters actively seek out soft targets while avoiding hardened targets. Signs, school policies, corporate policies, state statutes, glass doors, unlocked doors and unarmed victims do not create hardened targets. What those things create instead is the perfect environment for these deranged individuals to successfully carry out their plans. In the "gun-free zones" of our nation's schools, these shooters don't just believe, they *know* that a counter-attack will only come from the outside, and they'll get a loud and dramatic warning of the upcoming counter-attack as they hear sirens approaching from all directions. Those sirens tell them that they have at least another four minutes or more to kill any remaining victims before police will enter the building. Again, they know that no counter-attack will be launched from within the school walls. It isn't just what they believe; it's what they

know to be true. And so do we. If we change the environment, we stand a chance at changing their plans.

DOES VICTIM RESPONSE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The next item that we'll be looking at is how victim response affects the outcome. To do that, let's begin by looking at one of the most infamous school shootings: Virginia Tech.

As seen in the table shown earlier, Cho wasn't depending upon a high rate of fire to complete his mission. In fact, his rate of fire was *half* of what Union soldiers achieved with the lever-action Henry rifle. But Cho knew that no armed response would come from within the walls of the university building where he chose to take his stand; he knew that an armed response would only come from outside the school walls, so a high rate of fire wasn't important to him. Skill with his two handguns was also unimportant. Cho legally purchased the handguns he used during his attack — one in February and the second in March. His attack occurred in April. No evidence exists that Cho had taken any firearms training or had any significant practice with his firearms before the attack.

So, if Cho wasn't depending upon a high rate of fire or shooting skill, what was he depending upon? During his 11-minute siege, Cho entered or attempted to enter five separate classrooms, as shown in the diagram on the next page. You'll note that the classrooms are grouped by how the students responded to Cho's attack. Group 1 shows classrooms where the students and professors proactively defended their classrooms from the outset by barricading the doors. Group 2 shows classrooms that did not proactively mount a defense during any moment of the attack. Group 3 shows classrooms where students failed to initially form a defense but who regrouped and then actively worked to barricade their classroom doors. This diagram clearly shows that the outcome was not consistent among the five classrooms and that, when students and their professors actively mounted a defense, their chances of survival dramatically improved — and not by just a small margin. This is a classic example of how mass shooters will switch from one set of targets to another set of targets. The students in Classroom 205 didn't need to disable or kill Cho; all they needed to do was delay his entry long enough for him to become frustrated and move on to a new set of targets. Cho knew the clock was ticking, and he wasn't about to waste more than a few seconds trying to gain access to any one classroom. The result was that everyone in Classroom 205 lived.

DEFENSIVE VERSUS OFFENSIVE RESPONSE

Although the students and professors in classrooms 204, 205 and 207 took (or eventually took) defensive action by barricading their classroom doors, no evidence exists showing that any student in any classroom took offensive measures, such as throwing objects at Cho, striking him with objects or attempting to tackle him.

One student from Classroom 211 was even quoted as saying that he was "waiting for it to be his turn" to be shot.

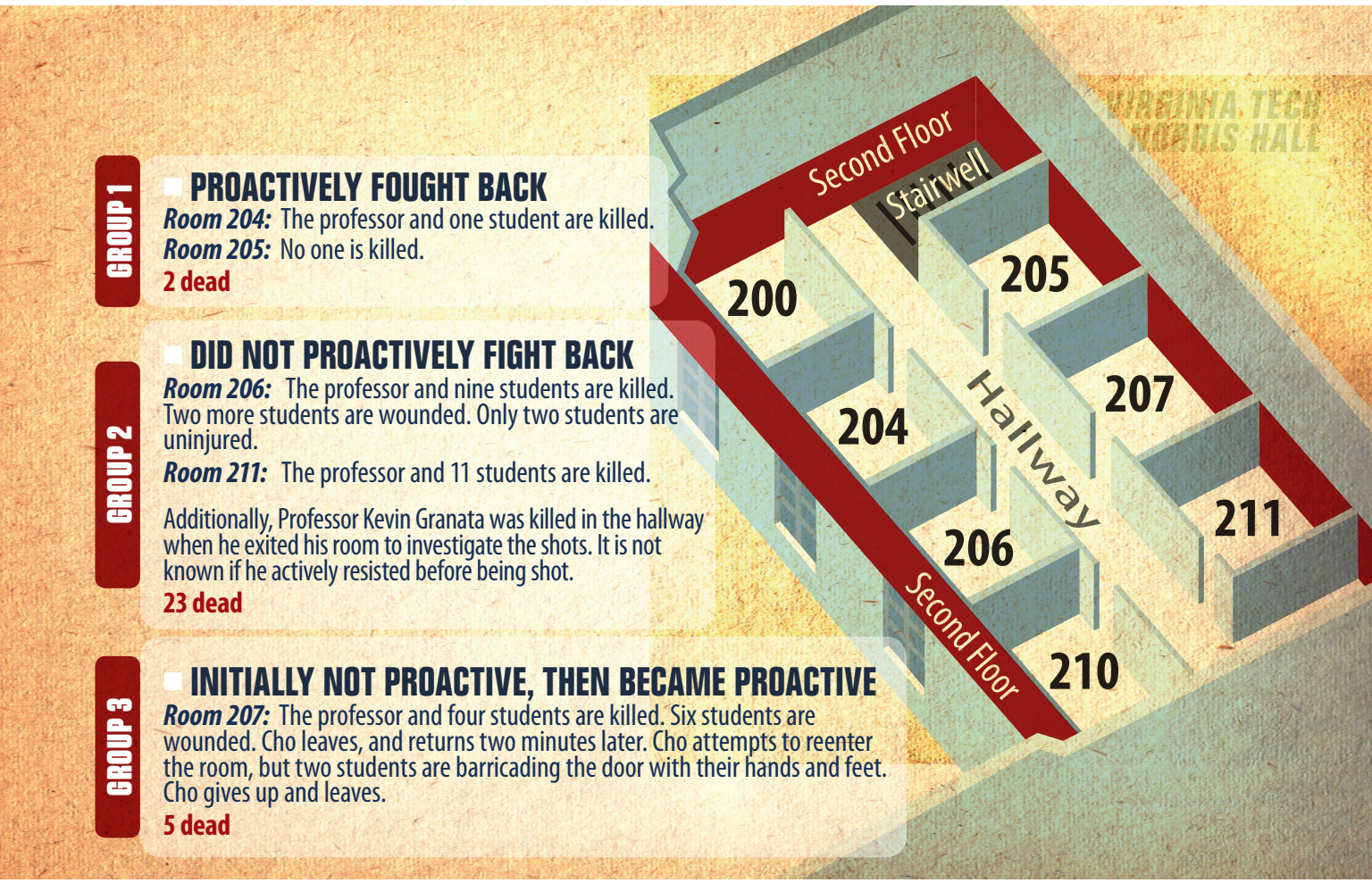
Although that student heard Cho reload three times (in fact, Cho reloaded 15 times total), the student failed to use the opportunity to flee the classroom or to make a counterattack on Cho, and instead decided to continue to wait for it to be "his turn" to die.

Please understand that I am not trying to blame the victims by this analysis. Instead, I'm simply attempting to understand what we might take away from the volumes of data that were recorded about this incident. The fact is, with no training at home or at school about what to do in the event of a mass shooting, it's unrealistic to expect the average student to come up with a plan at the moment the gunfire erupts. That lack of training is one of four major points of failure at Virginia Tech, and it continues to be a failure point at other school shootings, including the most recent shooting in Parkland, Florida.

WHEN VICTIMS FIGHT BACK AND WIN

So how about mass shootings where the victims did fight back offensively? In case after case, it can be shown that an active response by bystanders can end these mass shootings early, effectively saving countless lives. Examples include:

• **May 21, 1998, Thurston High School, Springfield, Oregon** — Recently suspended student Kip Kinkel enters the school with two pistols and a .22-caliber rifle. Kinkel fires a total of 50 rounds from his rifle, strik-



ing 37 people and killing two. When Kinkel attempts to reload, student Jacob Ryker, who has already been wounded, tackles Kinkel, and six other students join in to assist. The seven students restrain Kinkel until police arrive on the scene. Although Kinkel was carrying a total of 1,127 rounds of ammunition, the proactive and aggressive counter-attack by students ended the attack after Kinkel had fired less than 5 percent of his total ammunition supply.

• **Jan. 16, 2002, Appalachian School of Law, Grundy, Virginia** — Shooter Peter Odighizuwa shoots and kills a student and two faculty members but is then stopped by students Tracy Bridges and Mikael Gross, who had retrieved their personal firearms from their vehicles.

• **Dec. 9, 2007, New Life Church, Colorado Springs** — Shooter Matthew Murray opens fire in the church parking lot, injuring three people and killing two. After entering the church, Murray is shot multiple times by Jeanne Assam, a concealed carry permit holder and security volunteer. Police reports indicate that, after being seriously wounded by Assam, Murray killed himself with a shotgun. Police reports also indicate that Murray had more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition in his possession and that approximately 7,000 people were on the church campus at the time of the shooting. The actions of Jeanne Assam undoubtedly saved countless lives.

• **Jan. 8, 2011, Tucson, Arizona** — Shooter Jared Loughner fires 31 rounds into a crowd attending a constituent meeting hosted by Rep. Gabrielle Giffords at the La Toscana Village mall just outside of Tucson, Arizona. When attempting to reload, Loughner drops the magazine. While one bystander fights Loughner for the dropped magazine, three other bystanders tackle Loughner to the ground, including 74-year-old retired Army Colonel Bill Badger (who is wounded), Joseph Zamudio and Roger Sulzgeber. Although six innocent people lost their lives during this shooting, far more would have been injured or killed if it weren't

for the proactive and aggressive actions of Loughner's potential victims.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

An active response by potential victims affects the outcome. That active response might be barricading a door, fighting back or running away, but, in all cases, survival jumps exponentially. Fighting back as a team significantly affects the shooter's ability to continue his attack. Those facts are reflected in the Department of Homeland Security's new program on "Surviving an Active Shooter." Never heard of the program? That's not a surprise, because the program openly advocates fighting back, which isn't something that the national media is likely to help promote. The program teaches that there are three things you can do that will make a difference during an attack: run, hide or fight. The Run-Hide-Fight Program teaches that, if evacuation or hiding out are not possible, then action should be taken against the shooter. The program states:

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the shooter by:

- *Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.*
- *Throwing items and improvising weapons.*
- *Yelling.*
- *Committing to your actions.*

While the program doesn't specifically take a stance one way or another on whether firearms in the hands of potential victims would change the outcome, it is significant that the Department recommends fighting back at all. Had this approach been taught to the students at Virginia Tech, it's likely that, even if Cho hadn't been incapacitated by his potential victims, any aggressive action on the part of the students would have disrupted Cho's plans long enough for law enforcement to make entry. Remember that the typical length of time that mass-shooting events last is only five to nine minutes, or, in Cho's case, 11 minutes, since he had chained and padlocked several doors. The students in classrooms 204, 206, 207 and 211 didn't necessarily need to incapacitate Cho; all they needed to do was buy themselves several minutes of time to allow law enforcement to make their entry (as the students in Classroom 205 did).

What could they have done? As soon as it was apparent that a shooter was in the building, the students could have immediately piled tables, chairs, bookshelves or any other barrier objects in front of the door. Each student could have then picked up a chair, a book, a coffee mug, their shoes or any of the hundreds of other objects that would have been in the classroom. If Cho was able to breach the barriers and enter their classroom, the students could have thrown these objects at his head and torso, screaming at the top of their lungs, committing to their actions until the threat was over. If Cho went down still in possession of his firearms, the students could have beaten him into unconsciousness with chairs or their fists. Sound pretty brutal? The alternative wasn't just brutal; it was the deaths of 30 innocent people in Norris Hall.

WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

Now that we've dispelled the myths that magazine capacity or firearm type have anything to do with the outcome and demonstrated that victim response can directly affect the outcome, let's look at a four-point plan designed to eliminate the scourge of school shooters once and for all.

POINT NO. 1: HARDEN SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM DOORS

Let's face it: The security at most of our nation's schools is not just poor … it's abysmal. Years after the tragedies at Sandy Hook and Virginia Tech, if you were to ask your local school administrators the types of questions on my school security checklist on the next page, you'd most likely receive an answer of "no" for every question (or a look of embarrassment). While we don't necessarily have the money to institute airport-level security at school entrances, we do have the money to plug these major gaps in security. If you are a parent or a teacher, take a copy of this checklist to your school and ask your school administrators to answer these questions. Unless every answer is a resounding "yes," you'll need to make the argument that these items can no longer be delayed or ignored. Lives literally depend on it.

Although all of the items on the checklist are important, simply hardening up the main entrances of schools will have an effect. FEMA reported that 74 percent of mass shooters enter their target zone through the front door, as was done at most of the school shootings I profiled earlier. Although Sandy

SCHOOL SECURITY CHECKLIST



Front Doors:

- Is there a secured door that visitors must be cleared through before entering the school? Can the door withstand gunshots? Can the door be bypassed or are all visitors funneled through this entrance?

Lockdown Procedures:

- Who can initiate a lockdown? Can it only be initiated from the front office or are multiple methods of initiating a lockdown available? Can teachers initiate their own lockdown if they hear what they believe is gunfire or if they see an intruder?

Classroom Doors:

- Do the doors have a deadbolt that can be secured quickly with no key?
- Do the doors have a backup lock, such as a hotel-style throw-over lock, a Door Jammer or a similar security doorstop?
- Are the classroom's windows security windows with embedded laminate?
- Can the windows be quickly and completely blocked with a shade or curtain?

Barricades:

- Do classrooms have barricades, such as movable cabinets or bookcases, which can be quickly pushed or dropped in front of the door?

Hook Elementary did have a "security door" blocking entry from the lobby to the interior of the school, that security door was made of glass. While it was good for appearances, it had no effect on actually stopping shooter Adam Lanza as he shot his way through it.

Other good intentions that ultimately failed at Sandy Hook included the fact that a lockdown was never called from the front office, predominantly due to the fact that the shooting began just outside the office doors. That indicates that schools must have multiple methods of ordering a lockdown, which might include launching a prerecorded message initiated by pressing a necklace fob worn by multiple staff throughout the school.

The final failure at Sandy Hook was the most devastating. Although all of the classrooms did have lockable doors, the locks required that a key be used, even when locking the door from the inside. In the aftermath, it was discovered that all of the classroom doors were locked, except for Classrooms 8 and 10, the two classrooms where Lanza murdered the majority of his victims, and that keys were found on the floor next to one of the murdered teachers. Any delay in locking the classroom doors could be fatal, and looking for a key creates just such a delay.

Lockdown drills must not only be procedurally correct, they must also be fast. How fast? A good test for every teacher in every school would be to see how quickly a healthy runner could sprint from the closest school entrance to your classroom. If that can be done in five seconds, then you have four seconds to get your students into the classroom and secure the door.

While the defensive measures listed in the checklist might sound ineffective (a determined attacker should be able to eventually breach a locked door, right?), remember that school shooters know that they'll have just five to nine minutes to complete their attack before the police will make entry. Delaying a shooter for even one to two minutes is enough to force the shooter to move on to try a different target or to end his or her own life.

The students in Classroom 205 at Virginia Tech didn't need to delay shooter Seung-Hui Cho for hours (or even minutes for that matter). When Cho was unable to breach the door that students had barricaded with tables, he gave up in seconds and moved back to the classrooms where no such barricades had been erected. If Virginia Tech had installed deadbolts and backup locks on their classroom doors, it's very likely that every student in classrooms 204, 207 and 211 would have survived, and — if the school had instituted Point No. 2 — it's very likely that many of the students in Classroom 206 (the first room attacked) would have survived as well.

POINT NO. 2: TEACH STUDENTS TO FIGHT BACK

During lockdown drills, students must be taught to do more than simply huddle on one side of the classroom. Instead, they must be taught to fight back — and fight back *aggressively* — if a shooter enters their classroom. During lockdown drills, schools must implement (or teachers can improvise) counter-attack plans by instructing students to spread out and to pick up objects and hold them back in a "thrower's stance" in preparation for an attacker making entry. For younger kids, the objects might be books, staplers, their shoes or glue sticks. Older students should be taught to pick up chairs or other heavier objects. Any object thrown at an attacker will break his momentum, which might cause him to back out of the classroom. Schools should go as far as acting through simulated counter-attacks by providing students with soft rubber objects that can be thrown at mock attackers making entry through the door. Not only would that exercise make lockdown drills less frightening, it would also begin to build the proper neural pathways that not only is fighting back OK, it is necessary and expected. For junior high through college kids, students should be taught to defend and attack as a team, by immediately locking the door and barricading it with the designated cabinet or bookshelf, and striking the shooter with hardened objects to the head and torso if he makes entry. If you're a teacher, you'll also need to include a baseball bat or other incapacitating tool in your classroom. If a shooter enters your classroom, you not only have the legal right, you have the moral obligation to use deadly force to stop him. Huddling with your kids on one side of the classroom whispering, "Everything is going to be OK" is not living up to that obligation.



POINT NO. 3: ARMING EDUCATORS

If we really want to stop school shooters in their tracks, we must institute an Armed Educator program, similar to the Armed Pilot program. Allowing school staff to carry concealed firearms as official security is a sensitive topic, so I'm ready to propose a number of compromises on the issue, including:

- Requiring weapons retention and advanced handgun training in addition to state-mandated concealed carry training for participants in the program. This could be modeled after the Armed Pilot program but should not require more than two weeks of training.
- Passing a physical agility test to enter the program.
- Securing firearms in Level III holsters to minimize the fear that unruly students might attempt to grab the firearms.
- In addition to including traditional firearms and ammunition in the program, I'd propose that Simunition firearms and ammunition be included as well. This option would certainly attract more educators into the program, and mass shooters are unlikely to know the difference between the sound of or pain inflicted by Simunition rounds versus live rounds. (If you've ever been hit by a Simunition round, you know what I mean.) We need to keep in mind what the end game of each of these shooters is: The moment he believes a counter-attack is occurring, he'll break off the attack or end his own life.

Interestingly, there might be another significant benefit of allowing educators to choose Simunition firearms over traditional firearms: Knowing that they will only inflict pain rather than death (on the shooter or innocent bystanders), they might be much more likely to immediately commit to a response rather than hesitating as they might with traditional firearms and ammunition. Picture what might have changed at Sandy Hook if Principal Dawn Hochsprung and School Psychologist Mary Sherlach had closed in on Lanza, firing Simunition rounds at his head and torso as fast as their fingers could pull the triggers instead of simply shouting, "Stay put!" as Principal Hochsprung was reported to have done. Lanza would have ended his life immediately or he would have collapsed into the fetal position as his body was wracked with impact after painful impact. Even if Lanza had recovered his senses long enough to continue his attack, the disrup-

Simunition ammunition utilizes a low propellant charge and plastic bullets along with modified firearms that allow law enforcement officers and military personnel to train in realistic force-on-force scenarios in which defenders are able to fire upon mock attackers. Although the plastic bullets are non-lethal, they do pack a significant punch, requiring that trainees wear protective gear to avoid ending training covered in bruises. Although designed for training, Simunition firearms and ammunition shouldn't be discounted as defensive tools capable of being used against potential mass shooters.

tion of his momentum would certainly have bought the teachers in Classrooms 8 and 10 enough time to lock their doors, and it could have bought the police the few minutes they needed to make entry.

So why haven't we implemented a program like this already? It's because the anti-gun crowd and liberal politicians (is there a difference?) want you to believe that a physically fit teacher wearing a Level III holster who's been trained in weapons retention and use of force is more dangerous to your children than a school shooter who walks through the front door loaded down with multiple firearms and hundreds of rounds of ammunition. We need to disagree.

POINT NO. 4: END 'GUN-FREE ZONE' POLICIES AT SCHOOLS

Finally, we need to reverse public policies and public statements of schools as "gun-free zones" once and for all. While the Armed Educator program takes a massive step in this direction, our ultimate goal (which, admittedly, will require more time) needs to be the elimination of schools from the "banned location" lists on state concealed carry laws and the repeal of the "Gun-Free School Zones Act" of 1990. The "No Guns Allowed" sign is what drew Aurora theater shooter James Holmes to that particular theater, when other theaters were closer to his home, and our nation's schools all carry that same virtual blinking neon light stating, "No one in here will be able to stop you." Which sign do you think would cause these mass shooters to reconsider their plans: a "No Guns Allowed" sign taped to a glass door or a sign declaring, "Multiple armed personnel on the property will use deadly force to protect our children and our staff" taped to a reinforced steel door?

Now the reality check: Nothing will convince school boards to institute any of my four points, so here is my plan to stack the argument in our favor. I'd like to challenge every concealed carry instructor in the country to do three things. First, offer a free class at least once per year to any teacher, school administrator, school staff member or school board member who is willing to learn. Second, if you have school-aged children, let it be known that you're a concealed carry instructor and provide an open invitation for any parent at your children's school to take a class from you for free.



What's more likely to stop a shooter: a "No Guns Allowed" signed taped to a glass door or a sign declaring, "Armed personnel on the premises will use deadly force to protect our students and staff" taped to a steel-reinforced door?

You might give up a few dollars, but you'll be doing your school an incredible service. Third, include the data points from this article in every class you teach. I've captured everything in this series in a PowerPoint presentation — email me at michael@uscca.com and it's yours. I'm a huge believer that education is key to winning this argument, and if we educate from within, the blanket statements of "guns in schools are bad" or "we need to balance security with access" are going to begin sounding more and more ridiculous. The more teachers and parents who are educated with these facts, the more likely it is that one or more of them will stand up and hit the B.S. buzzer the next time they hear, "It's the magazines" at their next PTA or teacher development workshop. At those types of meetings, the typical argument from school administrators against securing schools and allowing armed personnel on the premises is two-fold: **1.** Schools need to balance security versus access, and **2.** Armed personnel will scare children. Those arguments are bunk. No one makes the "access versus security" argument about airplane cockpits or the secure area of airports. Children also know the difference between a gun in the hands of a bad guy and a gun in the hands of a good guy (and teachers are included in kids' versions of a "good guy" list). A gun in the hands of a bad guy equals danger, while a gun in the hands of a good guy equals safety. Similarly, children aren't afraid of lockable doors or other active security measures. Those things say, "This place is secure. You'll be safe here." A trip through security and the sight of armed police at the airport doesn't frighten children; if anything, it brings on a sense of comfort, especially if your children are aware of 9/11. How secure would your children (or you) feel if the extent of airport security was a "No Guns Allowed" sign posted at each entrance and a glass cockpit door?

Finally, think about how this argument would change if it were Al-Qaeda or ISIS committing these crimes instead of unbalanced domestic terrorists. The argument of magazine capacity would dry up overnight, and any politician voting against an Armed Educator program wouldn't have to wait until the next election to be booted from office — he or she would be thrown from office in a mass recall election supported by Republicans *and* Democrats.

If we implemented my four-point plan across the nation, we'd very likely find that mass shootings at



schools would simply end, and here's why: School shooters want to commit their horrible crimes and then end their lives painlessly by their own hands. That's not just a theory of mine; the FBI agrees. Forty-two percent of all mass shooters and 70 percent of school shooters commit suicide on-site. Their planning goes something like this:

1. Record and upload a vile video to YouTube or write a rambling manifesto, explaining why they hate the world. **2.** Enter a "gun-free zone" and shoot as many innocent children as they can in five to nine minutes. Continue shooting until they hear sirens. **3.** Die painlessly by their own hands.

Implementing these four points will get these shooters to give up their plan entirely or just skip Part 2 and go directly to Part 3. I don't care which route they take; I just want them to skip Part 2. When these potential murderers understand that they have no hope of breaking through secured school or classroom doors, know that their missions will end in utter failure and realize that their deaths will be agonizing as they're shot by multiple armed school personnel, then — and only then — will this national nightmare end.

2019
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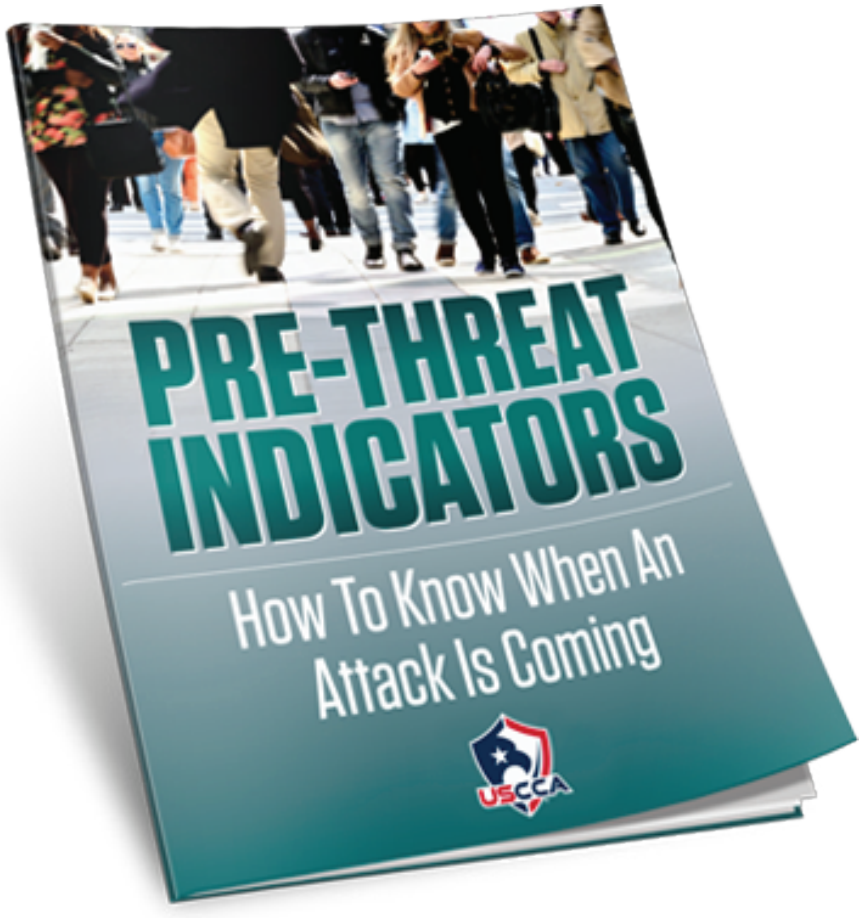


Chapter 6

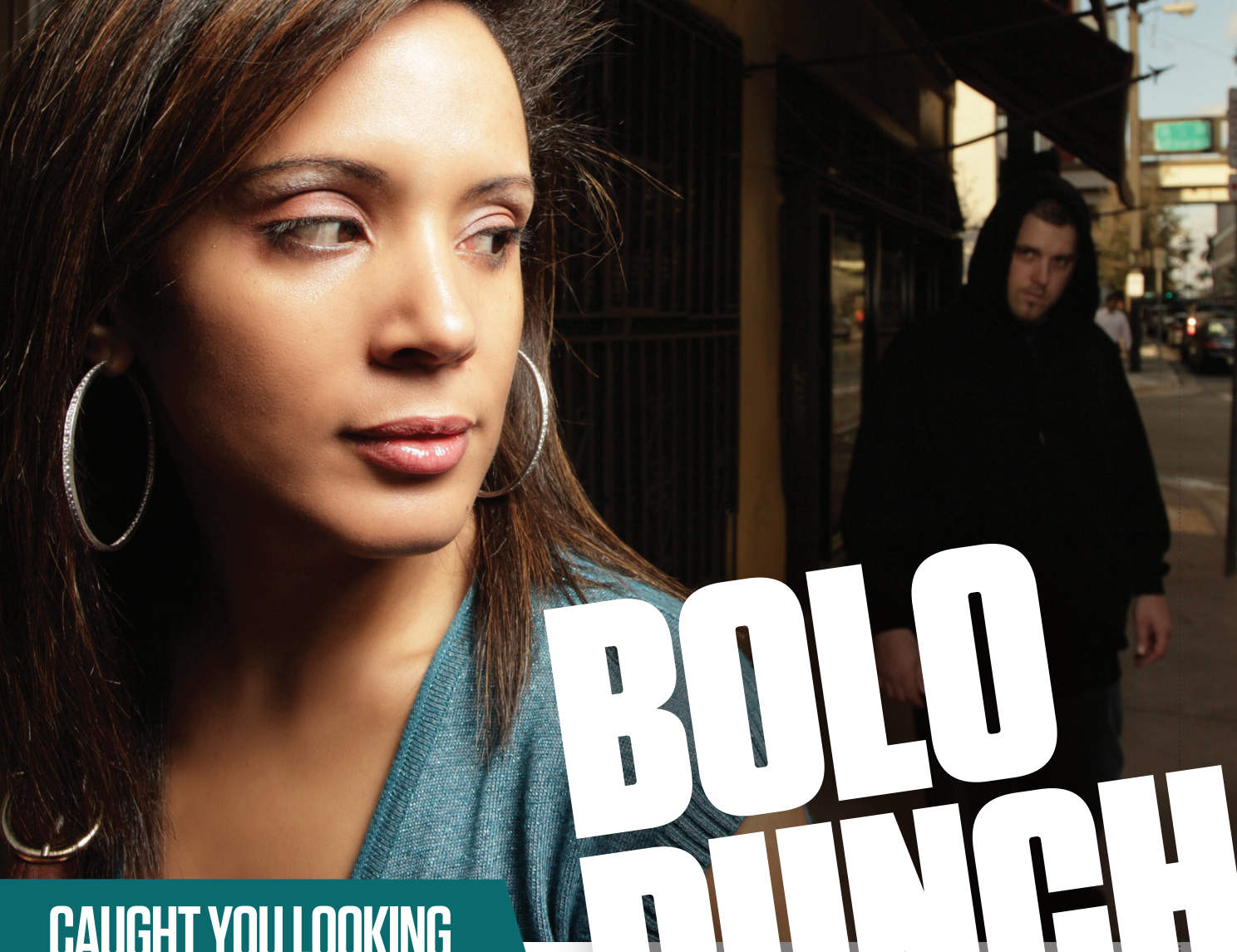
Pre-Threat Indicators:
How To Know An Attack Is Coming



PRE-THREAT INDICATORS

How To Know When An Attack Is Coming

USCCA



BOLO PUNCH

CAUGHT YOU LOOKING

BY ED COMBS

ASK ANY COP and he'll tell you that successful career criminals follow patterns. Ask any big-city cop and he'll tell you that street criminals follow patterns to an even greater extent than other criminals, especially when it comes to victim selection.

In the February/March 2015 issue of *Concealed Carry Magazine*, our own Kevin Jamison, Esq. compared a criminal sizing up his victim to a shark giving something a "bump bite" — lightly nudging and maybe nibbling at something he comes across to see if it's worth taking larger bites of. Sharks do this simply because everything they see in the ocean is potential food; the only question they really have is whether the number of bites necessary to move the item from swimming to digesting will be worth the effort.

As you've probably come to expect, Jamison is absolutely correct. Violent criminals aren't like you or me; I hate to use blanket terms like "you or me," but since you're likely the kind of person who takes concealed carry classes and applies for permits, you've pretty well distinguished yourself from our criminal class. The outlaws of this country have literally zero empathy for you or others; if they did, they wouldn't make their livings threatening



> "THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT YOU NEED TO LOOK AT EVERY PERSON AS IF HE OR SHE IS ABOUT TO KILL YOU. THIS IS TO SAY THAT IT IS MENTALLY POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO REMOVE THE BLINDERS THAT A LIFETIME OF PERSONAL ELECTRONICS AND A GENERAL LACK OF DANGER HAVE GIVEN YOU."

strangers with death for cash and cell phones. They consider armed and strong-arm robbery honest trades, and they will think nothing of murdering you if it is to their advantage. Oh, they'll sometimes say they don't want to *have* to … but that disinclination from murder is related to the longer prison sentence if apprehended, not because they think murdering people is wrong.

One of the anti-gun media's most successful weapons in their arsenal is their ability to portray self-defense-oriented gun owners as heartless psychopaths. They will literally exploit the corpses of children to do so. They will compare me, a private citizen who elects to carry a defensive weapon every day, to rapid mass murderers.This type of misrepresentation of defensive gun owners is compounded by the fact that one of the most common manners in which violent criminals execute muggings in this country is through faux panhandling. This leaves the armed citizen in an extremely dangerous bind — physically and socially.

In the previous issue, I ran down the most common ruses used by home invaders, and in this issue, I'll list the most common techniques used by muggers and street criminals to approach, assess and decide whether to move on potential victims. Now, as we so often say, situational awareness is the cornerstone of a Personal Protection Plan. If you're aware of your surroundings, that means you'll be scanning for potential threats,

which means watching all of the people in your general area. While this might sound daunting, it comes easily after conscious effort is applied.
Not to compare life in the United States to wartime, but I once heard a Vietnam combat veteran sum up the human's natural abilities for survival quite well:
"One does not have to learn how to survive in the jungle; those things are already there. And when you're in combat and you're in the jungle, then those instincts come back. *They've always been there*."
This is not to say that you need to look at every person as if he or she is about to try to kill you. This is to say that it is mentally possible for you to remove the blinders that a lifetime of personal electronics and a general lack of danger have given you. After you begin to consciously watch and keep tabs on everyone in your immediate area, you'll find that less and less effort is needed as time goes on. Eventually, it's something that you'll do unconsciously. Attaining this level is easier for those who have lived in a large city for most of their lives and for those who are accomplished hunters. And I don't suppose I have to say that combat veterans and law enforcement officers usually possess the skills at higher levels than others.

TESTING, TESTING

Some muggings are simple jumpings: You walk by a doorway, out jump your attackers and the fight is on. However, many attacks are first staged with an approach, verified through a test phase and then actuated after the predators decide you are an easy meal. Here are the most common of those test phases.

IMMEDIATELY REACHING OUT FOR A HANDSHAKE

This technique is extremely dangerous and is most common when the street person in question intends to physically feel out his possible victim in an attempt to discern whether it's worth the risk of him and his associates initiating the attack. This is an especially common tactic in high-stakes muggings during which a group of men target adult males who, though typically more difficult to overpower than the elderly or females, usually have a larger quantity of cash on their persons.
There are several reasons why these high-stakes muggers will try their hardest to shake hands with you. For one, as soon as the handshake begins they've immediately tied up your dominant hand and, even worse, have a hold of your dominant hand with *their* dominant hand. (They usually run on the assumption that everyone is right-handed, as the vast majority of the population is.) The next step in the process is to squeeze and see what kind of pressure they get back. If the hands of the target feel strong and rough, they are much less likely to engage or, if they do, the violence will be significantly swifter and more intense.
The last time I experienced this old chestnut was in Las Vegas. A group of four men simultaneously stepped out from a bus shelter of sorts and asked if I knew how to get to a hotel. The first man to make contact immediately stuck his hand out to shake mine as the other three fanned out to my two sides and rear. Under most circumstances, this is what doctors refer to as "being royally screwed." Unarmed, I got my hands up, pulled my elbows in toward my sides and quickly moved to my southwest, breaking the plane formed by the rear and left-side men and turning in to face the group I could sense I was likely about to get to know a lot better. They began to reposition for the same plan of attack: One man at each compass point.
Fortunately, I'd continued walking ahead of a group of three friends who then walked around the corner and immediately closed on the group of strangers. This resulted in said strangers' vociferous denial of intentions no one had accused them of having and their quick dispersal. I played it off to my friends as nothing, but the fact is I knew just as well as the four criminals

"DESPITE THE ROLLED EYES AND DISAPPROVING STARES FROM OH-SO-COMPASSIONATE INDIVIDUALS IN THE AREA, NEVER FEEL BAD ABOUT BACKING AWAY FROM PANHANDLERS AND CLARIFYING YOUR SITUATION."



did that I was about a second away from one of the longer minutes of my life.

THE PRESENT

Since the vast majority of times when someone hands us something it's something we want, we average Americans will readily accept anything offered to us. (The next step is that we look down at it, studying it in an attempt to understand why we want it.) Tricking you into physically taking and holding something draws your attention to whatever you've just been given and gets your eyes down, off of your attacker. Depending on the size of the object, it might also occupy both of your hands, thus leaving you exposed to an attack.

The first time I experienced this ploy was in Puerto Vallarta. I was sitting at an outdoor bar on the beach when a disheveled, shirtless man approached the couple at the table next to me. The shirtless man was holding a small bouquet of flowers with a note attached to the bound stems. He handed the flowers to the seated man — who had the table between himself and the beach — and speaking very quickly in broken English, he asked the guy for a cigarette. As the man at the table simultaneously tried to get hold of his cigarettes with his left hand, accept the bouquet with his right and read what was on the attached note with his eyes, the shirtless thief simply scooped up the man's phone, sunglasses and what appeared to be a small stack of peso notes and fled about as quickly as I've ever seen a barefoot human run. (Ironically, the victim's smokes were unharmed.) Now, in this case, the attack was nonviolent, but stop and think for a moment: As completely occupied as he was, how vulnerable to assault was the tourist who was lucky enough to only lose his phone and shades that day?

I'll tell you how lucky. Handing someone a note or other attention-grabbing device is as old as premeditated violent crime. I've even seen cops fall for this trick. They approach an individual who they suspect is breaking the law (usually alcohol- or drug-related), and the individual tells them, "Ah yes, I have something I need to show you. Thank God you're here, officer." Then he hands the cop a note, and in the split second the LEO is no longer focused on the suspect, he's off like a shot. (I will refrain from naming the two different agencies I've seen this one work on, as I am certain there were rather intense shift meetings the next morning.)

BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE IT ALL?

Some, or all, of the aforementioned techniques will be used in conjunction to execute the robbery, but until the first order is issued or blow is landed, it will look to the untrained eye as though nothing more nefarious than

panhandling is happening. Americans are a generous sort, and since we as a people have been forcibly socialized to never turn a blind eye to a beggar, violent criminals have done what they always do: exploit the good nature of honest citizens to their own ends, maiming or murdering in the process if they deem it necessary.

Faux panhandling is the preferred method of affecting a robbery because it begins with a "defensible honest question," meaning if violent criminals decide to abort the attack at the least second, they can tell police that they were simply panhandling or asking for a short-term loan to get back to community college. If they decide to continue, the "panhandling" might manifest itself in a request for money, a cigarette, a light or a ride. More importantly, it will likely be a combination of all of the abovementioned techniques.

The biggest factor in the panhandling ploy is that if the exchange turns violent and you are able to effectively defend yourself, attackers will tell responding police that they were just minding their own business asking strangers for money, and some crazed, gun-wielding madman drew on them. (This is why we here at *CCM* are so adamant that if you ever, under any circumstances, have to draw your weapon, you need to call 911 and report the incident as soon as possible; the first to initiate police contact will almost certainly be viewed by the legal system as the victim.)

Since it is extremely important that you establish what's happening for what it is — a violent crime in progress being perpetrated on you — vocalization is very important. Tell panhandlers that you are not interested in anything they have to offer and will not be giving them any money. If they continue to press you, keep moving away from them and state in no uncertain terms that you feel threatened and that they need to get away from you immediately. As with any other potentially violent encounter, it's far better to avoid it than to win it, and with luck, your assertive refusal to be involved in the goings-on will be enough to get them to try their luck with a different victim.

Despite the rolled eyes and disapproving stares from oh-so-compassionate individuals in the area, never feel bad about backing away from panhandlers and clarifying your situation. If they're friendly, you can make up for it later. If they're not, you might have just saved your own life. Whenever strangers who aren't uniformed law enforcement officers approach you in public, there's a series of actions that you must take in order to be able to avoid a violent confrontation and, failing that, stay alive:

1. Get off the X. Don't be a stationary target.
2. Turn to see everyone else in the area. Watch for someone watching *you*.
3. Say you don't have any money. Keep saying this as many times as you have to.
4. Tell them you're in a hurry. Keep moving.
5. Be ready to defend yourself. Mentally prepare for the possibility for violence.

Whether or not to give money to destitute beggars is entirely up to you. More often than not, religious beliefs and obligations dictate an individual's behavior when panhandlers ask for a handout. Regardless of how you feel about alms for the beggars, remember this: If the individual initiating contact with you is healthy and energetic enough to approach you quickly for a handshake and dexterous enough to move so swiftly as to never really seem to be in the same place for more than a second or so, what's kept him or her from getting work? More importantly, what seems more likely: He or she is in an honest-to-God tough spot, like the man or woman sitting nearly motionless next to a cardboard sign that reads "STARVING," or that this person is bump-biting you … and seeing if you're worth the effort?

Stay alert, stay focused and stay safe.

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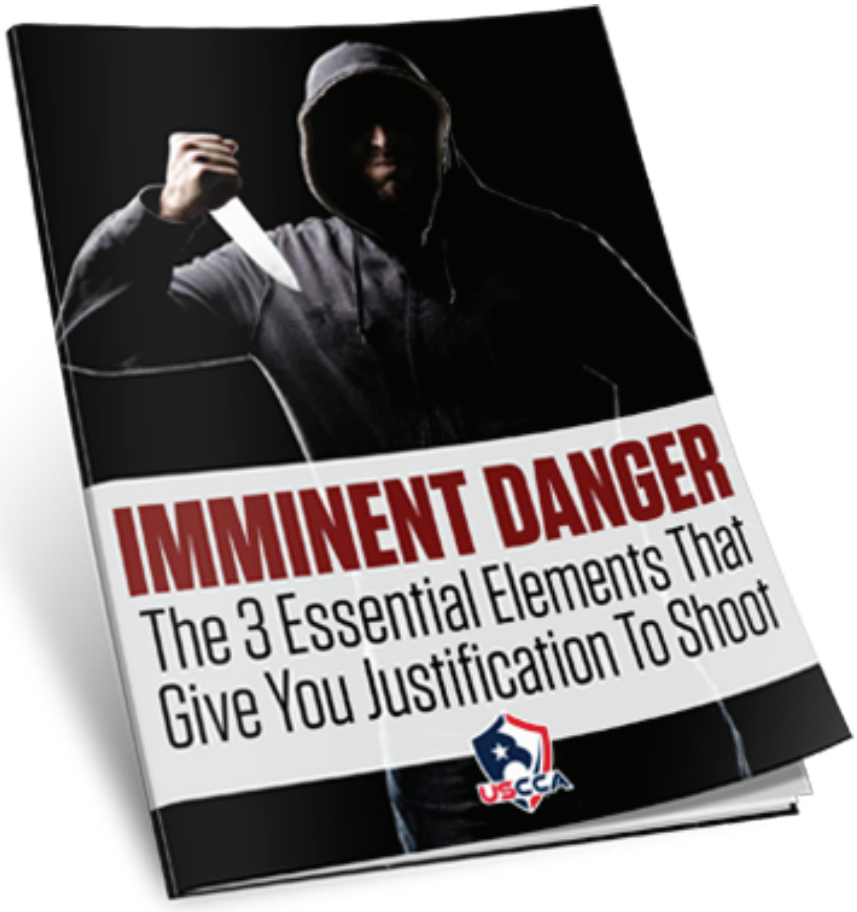

Chapter 7

Imminent Danger: The 3 Essential Elements That Give You Justification To Shoot



IMMINENT DANGER

The 3 Essential Elements That Give You Justification To Shoot



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THE 3 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS THAT GIVE YOU JUSTIFICATION TO SHOOT

Each state offers a slightly different interpretation of the law of self-defense, and we encourage you to learn the laws in your state. For the purposes of this discussion, we will use Wisconsin (home state of the USCCA) State Statute 939.48, which states, in part, "The actor may not intentionally use force which is intended or likely to cause death or great bodily harm unless the actor reasonably believes that such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm to himself or herself."

The key words here are "intentional" and "imminent." While an intentional act can be fairly easy to define, it is the word "imminent" that plays the biggest role in determining whether or not a person can use deadly force in self-defense. The Wisconsin Department of Justice Bureau of Training and Standards, which sets the curriculum for the state's Law Enforcement Academies, trains recruits that, for a threat to be considered "imminent," three factors must be present: Weapon. Intent. Delivery System. Let's look at them individually.

Weapon

A weapon does not have to be a gun. It can be any instrument that, when used in an attack, is likely to cause death or great bodily harm. Knives and impact weapons can certainly become weapons when used in an assault, but so can fists and feet. Contrary to popular belief, some murders are committed by "unarmed" persons.

A disparity of force, whether it be the size of the attacker, the number of attackers or the training and experience the attacker brings to the fight, can be the "weapon." Basically, if you reasonably believe that the person attacking you can cause death or great bodily harm, you may use an appropriate level of force to stop the assault.

Intent

Intent can be declared or it can be implied. Declared intent is simple. Someone may clearly declare intent by saying, "I'm going to kill you." Implied intent includes actions that show the potential victim that the attacker is likely to use the weapon in the assault. If you have clearly ordered a person to stay away from you and that person keeps coming, you can, considering the totality of the circumstances, reasonably assume that person intends to do you harm.

Again, this is based on the totality of the circumstances, and the prosecutor will conduct a thorough investigation to ensure your version of events meets the standard for justifiable use of force.

Delivery System

Delivery System simply means that the attacker has the means to carry out the threat — to use that weapon as part of a deadly assault.

Example #1

The classic example is a man across the street, in a wheelchair, waving a knife and screaming that he will kill you. Because of the distance, his limited mobility and the style of weapon he is using, this threat is not imminent.

Example #2

The same man in the same wheelchair — holding a gun 15 feet away from you — IS an imminent deadly threat, and you should act accordingly to protect your life.

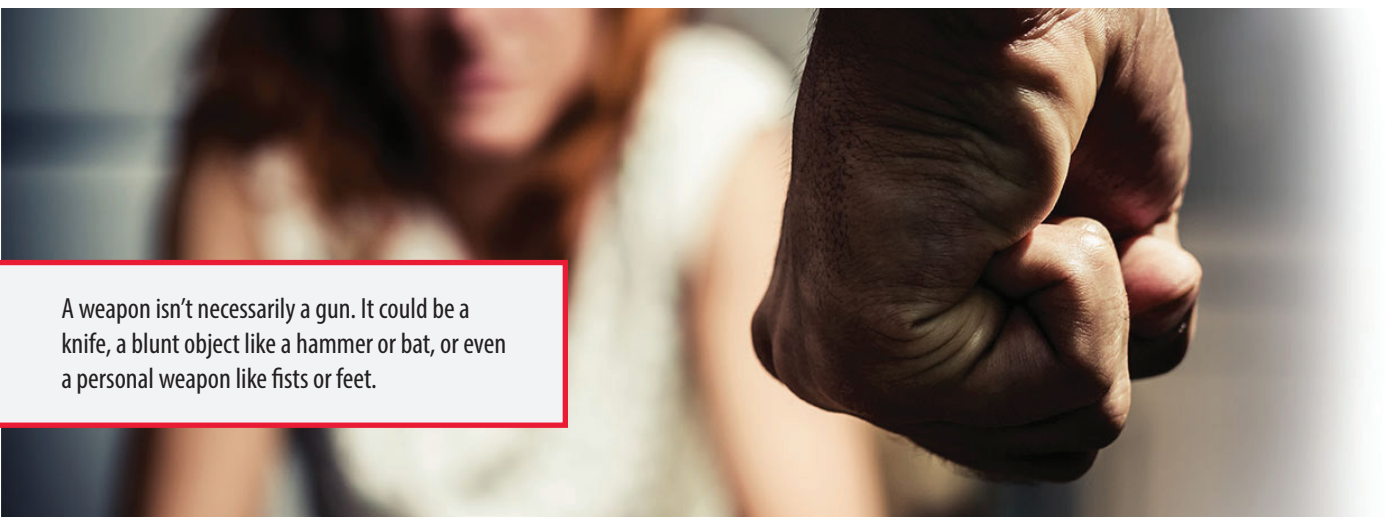
What does it mean to "act accordingly?"

The first thing you need to remember when faced with an imminent deadly threat is to "get off the X." In other words ... move! The attack is coming to where you are and your movement forces the attacker to adjust his or her assault. Distance gives you time, and time gives you the opportunity to respond.

If at all possible, your movement should be toward cover or concealment. Cover is anything that stops bullets. Concealment is anything that makes you more difficult to see and thus makes it more difficult for the attacker to accurately complete the attack. If concealment is all you have, use it while you look for cover. There will be lots going on, but, during the fight, you should always be looking for and moving toward any location that gives you a tactical advantage.

Keep in mind the range of a firearm is best described as "your line of sight unbroken by cover." What that means is this: If the bad guy can see you, his bullets can reach you. He may not be accurate enough to consistently score hits on a human-sized target at long range, but a lucky (unlucky for you) shot could still have deadly consequences. Distance is nice, but cover is better.

There is much to think about during a deadly force encounter. Legal issues, tactical issues and safety issues will all be racing through your head. It is far better to have the answers before the shooting starts. If you know, before the fight begins, what makes a threat imminent, you won't waste valuable time thinking about your legal obligations and can instead use that time to make tactically sound decisions that will help you prevail when your life is on the line.



A weapon isn't necessarily a gun. It could be a knife, a blunt object like a hammer or bat, or even a personal weapon like fists or feet.

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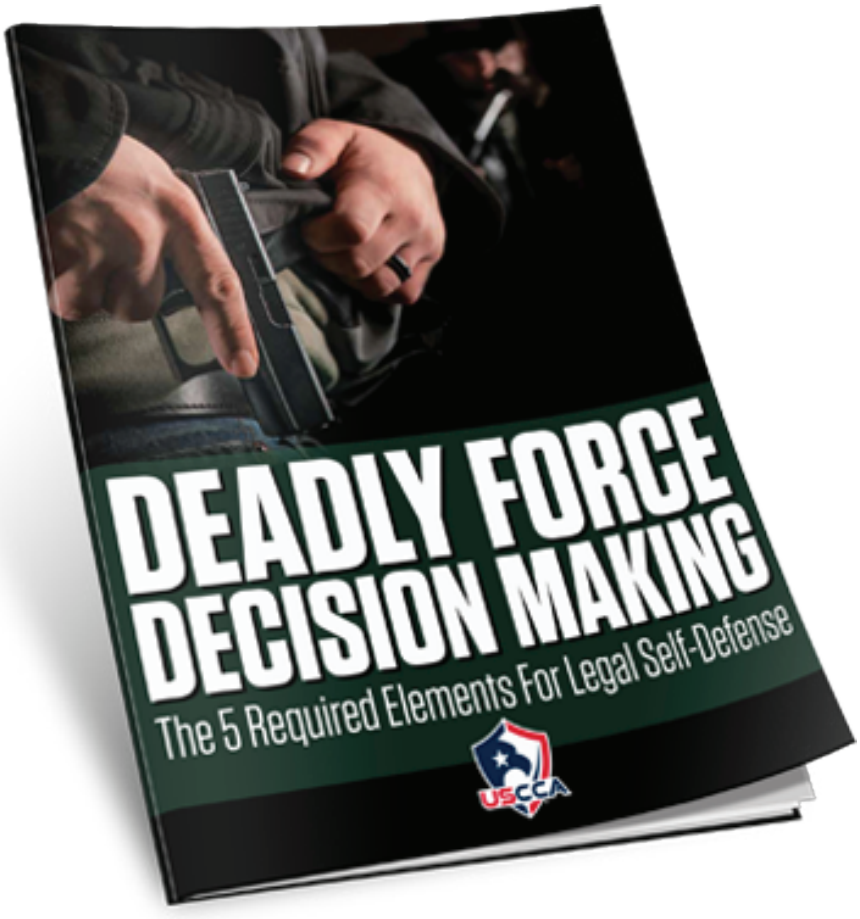

Chapter 8

Deadly Force Decision Making:
The 5 Required Elements For Legal Self-Defense



DEADLY FORCE DECISION MAKING

The 5 Required Elements For Legal Self-Defense

USCCA



In a Nutshell:

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF THE LAW OF SELF-DEFENSE



By Andrew Branca

American society recognizes that there are certain circumstances in which the use of force, even deadly force, against another person might be necessary and justified. When this is so, the use of that force is deemed not a crime, and even if the state can prove beyond a reasonable doubt each and every element of, say, murder, the fact that the act was done in lawful self-defense requires an acquittal.

This is, really, a remarkable degree of autonomous power held by the individual citizen. A person who reasonably believes that he or she is being threatened with imminent and otherwise unavoidable death or grave bodily harm might in that instant take the life of his or her attacker, with absolutely no requirement for prior permission from any governmental authority. In contrast, think about how long it usually takes the government to execute someone who has been proven guilty of a capital crime with all due process of law.

Where the government does enter the picture in a self-defense scenario, of course, is after the fact. Examining events in hindsight, they seek to determine whether the use of force did, in fact, adhere to all five legal principles of self-defense. If they can prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that any single one of those principles has been violated, the defendant's right to claim self-defense disappears.

That said, let's briefly discuss each of the five principles of the law of self-defense: Innocence, Imminence, Proportionality, Avoidance and Reasonableness.

For the prosecution to win on the issue of self-defense, it must *disprove*, using the facts in evidence and beyond a reasonable doubt, that any one or more of these fundamental elements existed at the time of the incident.



Lawful self-defense requires five fundamental elements: Innocence, Imminence, Proportionality, Avoidance and Reasonableness.

INNOCENCE: AGGRESSORS NEED NOT APPLY

The principle of Innocence refers to the notion that a person who initiates a conflict should not later be permitted to justify his or her use of force as self-defense. It is, however, possible for the initial aggressor of a conflict (or the genuine non-aggressor whom the prosecution is presenting to the jury as the aggressor) to regain his or her "innocence" under certain circumstances and thereby regain his or her right to justifiably use force in self-defense. The two methods through which innocence can be regained occur when (1) you effectively withdraw from the conflict and the other party pursues; and (2) your aggression is only of non-deadly force and the other party escalates to deadly force. (Note that not all jurisdictions recognize both methods!)

IMMINENCE: RIGHT NOW!

The principle of Imminence refers to the notion that you can defend yourself with force only against a threatened danger that is about to happen *right now*. You can't use force to prevent a danger that might arise at some later time — the law expects you to seek an alternative resolution in the meantime, such as calling the police — nor can you use force in response to a danger that has already occurred or passed; doing so would be retaliation, not self-defense.

PROPORTIONALITY: THE 'GOLDILOCKS' PRINCIPLE (JUST RIGHT)

The principle of Proportionality refers to the notion that the degree of force you can use in self-defense must be proportional to the degree of force with which you are threatened. Briefly, a non-deadly threat can only be countered with a non-deadly defense. A threat capable of causing death or grave bodily harm (e.g., a broken bone, blinding or rape) can be met with deadly force.

Usually, the use of deadly force against an unarmed attacker is fatal to a claim of self-defense. If you nevertheless want to argue self-defense, you will have to convince the court that the unique circumstances warranted your use of deadly force — *despite* the fact that your attacker was unarmed.

In many states, the fact that the attack occurred in the defendant's home often raises a legal presumption of a threat of death or grave bodily harm (e.g. so-called "Make My Day" laws). Such legal presumptions are rebuttable by a preponderance of the evidence.

AVOIDANCE: A DUTY TO RETREAT AS LONG AS SAFELY POSSIBLE

The principle of Avoidance refers to the notion that you should not use force in self-defense if you can avoid the need to do so by making use of a safe avenue of retreat. Today, some states have a generalized "Duty to Retreat;" others are effectively "Stand Your Ground" states, even if they don't have an explicit "Stand Your Ground" statute. Even the "Duty to Retreat" states always have an exception for one's home — the "Castle Doctrine" — and many others have additional exceptions for temporary dwellings (e.g. hotel rooms, campers or tents), your place of business and even your occupied vehicle.

Also, it's important to emphasize that you are *never* required to retreat if attempting to do so would increase your danger. Of course, whether the avenue of retreat was or was not safe is something that will be argued in court by lawyers (who weren't at the scene and under attack) to a jury (that wasn't at the scene and under attack).

Importantly, the issue of retreat can still arise even in a "Stand Your Ground" state. In many SYG states, you can't be automatically stripped of your right to argue self-defense because of a failure to take advantage of a safe avenue of retreat (as would happen in a "Duty to Retreat" state), but the prosecution can still argue to the jury that the availability of a safe avenue of retreat means your use of defensive force was not really necessary.

Also, as mentioned above, if you were the aggressor — or can be made to appear as though you were the aggressor — then retreat might be your best means of "regaining" your innocence and your right to lawfully use defensive force.

REASONABLENESS: MEET THE 'REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MAN'

The principle of Reasonableness is really an umbrella principle that applies to each of the previous four. The issue here is whether your perceptions and conduct in self-defense were those of a reasonable and prudent person under the same or similar circumstances who possesses the same specialized skills and knowledge (if any). If your actions were not



reasonable by this standard, any claim to self-defense fails.

So, if you believed the other person was an aggressor, but a reasonable person would not have believed this, you did not act in lawful self-defense. Similarly, if you believed that the threat was imminent, but a reasonable person would not have; or that the force you used was proportional to the threat, but a reasonable person would not have; or that you could not have avoided the threat, but a reasonable person would have, your claim to self-defense fails.

It is within the contours of the principle of Reasonableness that the attacker's prior acts and/or reputation might be made relevant at trial, even if they were unknown to you at the time. The reasonableness of your perception that the attacker's behavior was threatening would be strengthened if your attacker had a reputation in the community for behaving in a threatening manner. Similarly, the reasonableness of your perception that the attacker was acting in an irrational and frightening manner would be buttressed if your attacker habitually used intoxicants and was, in fact, intoxicated at the time of the attack.

WRAP-UP

So, those are the five principles of the law of self-defense in a nutshell. Obviously, a ton of detail has been left out, so take it for what it is: a concise overview. Hopefully, this can serve as a useful conceptual framework and context into which you can place the specifics of your state's self-defense laws.

If you'd like to learn how the five principles of the law of self-defense apply in your specific state, take a look at the 3rd edition of *The Law of Self Defense*, available for purchase at USCCA.com.

This content originally appeared on lawofselfdefense.com. Visit that site for more content from Andrew Branca and additional resources related to self-defense laws.

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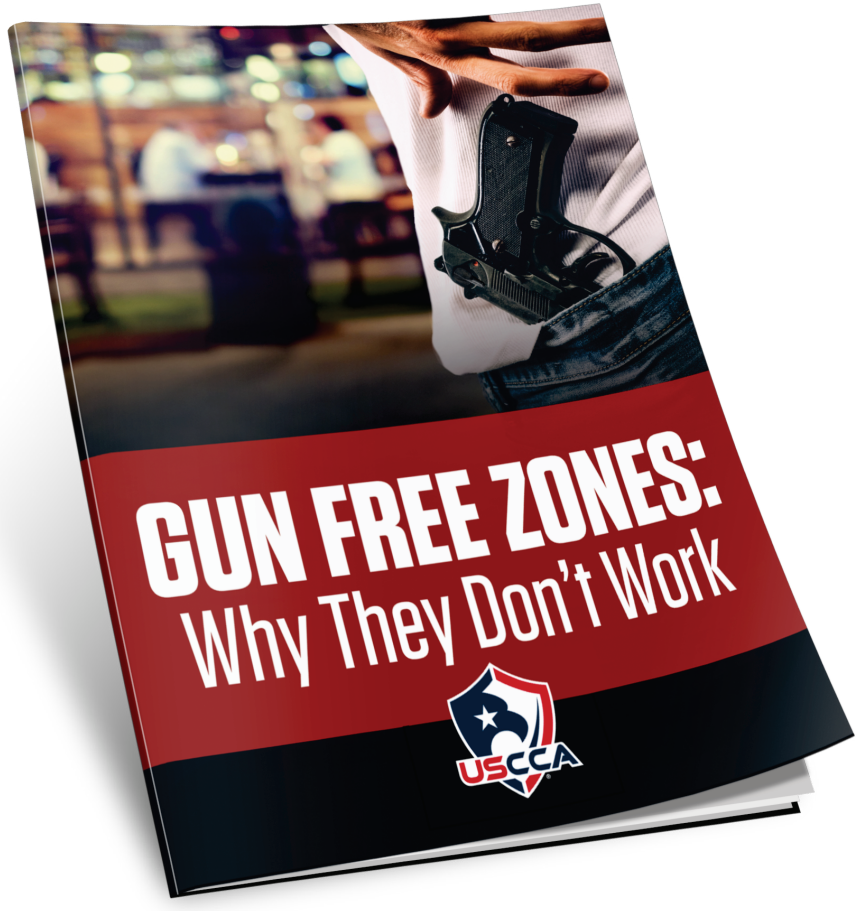


Chapter 9

Gun Free Zones:
Why They Don't Work

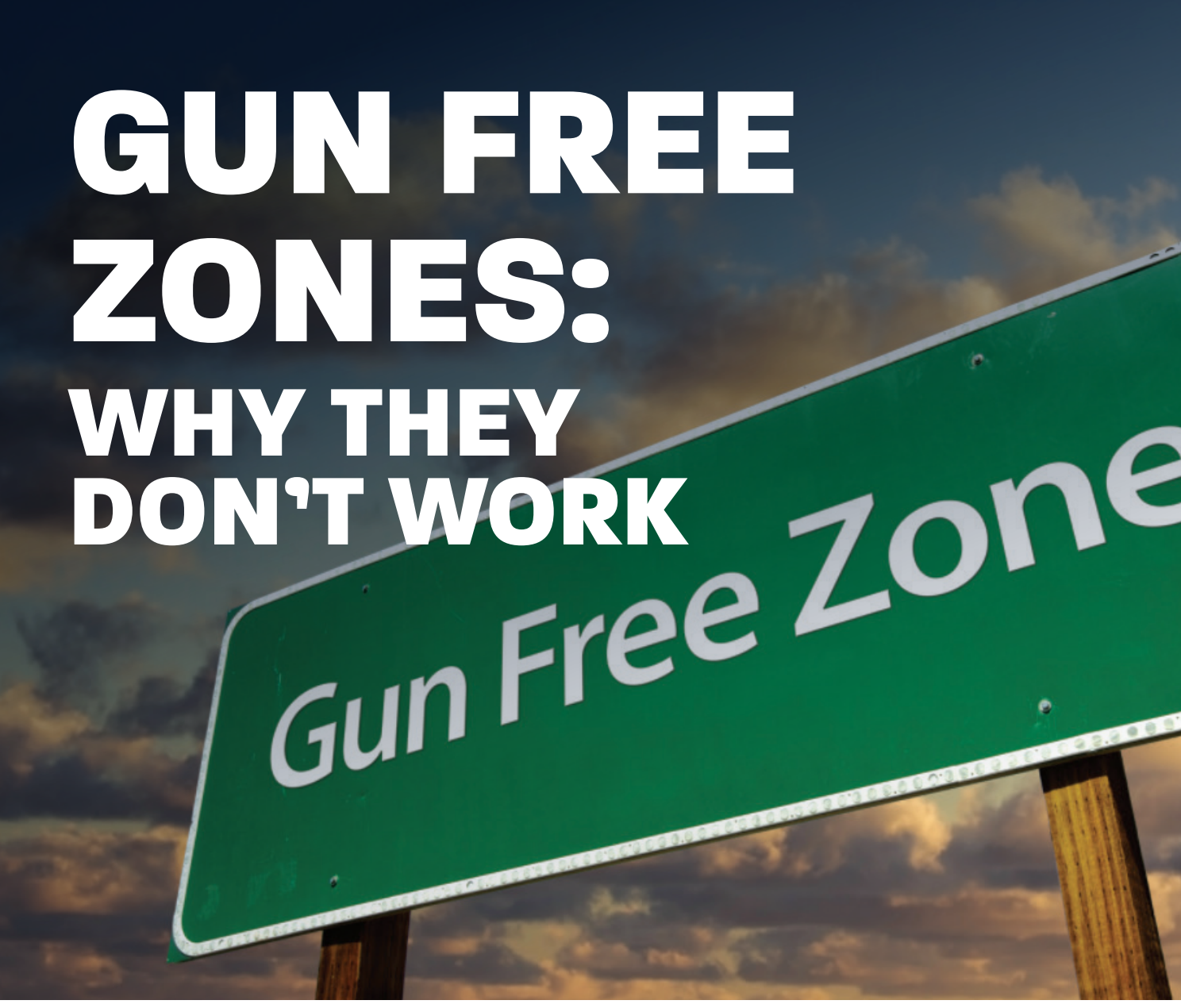


GUN FREE ZONES:
Why They Don't Work

USCCA

GUN FREE ZONES:

WHY THEY DON'T WORK



ALL OF THE SOLUTIONS THAT WE'VE DISCUSSED SO FAR have been solutions which can be implemented at the institutional level. But to make a significant dent in mass shootings, we're going to need to change public policy by eliminating gun-free zones, or, by rethinking the obligation an institution owes to us if they choose disarmament.

Since Columbine and up to and including the terrorist attacks in San Bernardino and Orlando, 48 mass shootings have occurred with 74 percent of the events and 85 percent of the deaths occurring in gun-free zones, where civilians were either disarmed by state law, school policy, federal law or policy, or by private policy.

The data makes the case that schools, houses of worship, public and private businesses, and other locations that advertise themselves as "gun-free"aren't actually keeping themselves safe and are instead, doing the exact opposite. But that begs the question: should anywhere be gun-free? If so, what responsibility does the governing body of that area or building have for keeping occupants and visitors of the disarmament zone safe?

Before attempting to answer those questions, let's look at a case study of what happens when an institution is not barred from concealed carry on their property by federal or state law, but which makes the determination to disarm, all on their own.

Umpqua Community College

On October 1, 2015, Christopher Harper-Mercer, a 26-year-old enrolled at Umpqua Community College, fatally shot an assistant professor and eight students, and wounded nine others before committing suicide as police closed in. As a self-declared gun-free zone (the state of Oregon allows colleges to decide for themselves whether they'll allow students and/or staff to carry guns. Umpqua decided on their own to be a gun-free zone), the outcome at Umpqua was really a forgone conclusion But it didn't have to be, since the state of Oregon enjoys one of the highest rates of concealed carry permits per capita, with 6.3 percent of all eligible adults receiving a permit. With nearly 14,000 students registered at Umpqua and an average student age of 38, there was an opportunity to have more than 800 students and staff members on campus capable of defending themselves and their peers. Instead, for nine long minutes (which coincidentally, is the national average for how long these mass shootings last) the only armed individual on campus was the shooter.

Today, most of our nation's colleges all carry that same virtual blinking neon light stating, "no one here will stop you." Allowing eligible students, parents and staff to be armed simply provides them with the same protection on school grounds that they enjoy off campus, and the simple fact is, removing school grounds from the "gun-free zone" list will deter the next deranged individual who is angry at the world, and is looking to take out his rage on innocent and unarmed victims.

The claim that more guns on campus will lead to accidental shootings or shootings of opportunity is without merit. Today, the states of Colorado, Idaho and Utah have laws on the books allowing concealed carry on campus by students who have applied for and received a permit (and passed a background check), yet no incidents have occurred involving these lawfully armed students.

Detractors of this solution have also claimed that allowing students to be armed will create an uncomfortable environment for those students who are unarmed. But if you are an Oregonian, ask yourself this: Are you uncomfortable when you relax at Starbucks enjoying your favorite latte, or when you browse the aisles at Target? While you might not know it, one out of every 16 adults around you has a concealed carry permit. If a mass shooting were to erupt, what would you hope for? Would you pray that the shooter only had 10-round magazines rather than 30-round magazines, or would you hope beyond hope that one or more of the 200,000 licensed Oregonians was by your side while you waited the nine long minutes for the police to make entry?

Umpqua Community College obviously chose poorly when it came to their options for allowing or barring concealed carry on campus. But as a public institution, should they have been given the option? For that, let's turn to Kansas as a model.



In an Oregon Court of Appeals case in 2011, a three-judge panel concluded that Oregon public colleges and universities no longer have authority to ban firearms on the physical grounds of a campus. Each school does however, have discretion as to whether concealed carry will be allowed inside of buildings, dormitories, event centers, and classrooms. Umpqua Community College chose to enforce a ban within those areas, effectively making the entire campus a "gun-free zone." The result was that on October 1, 2015, for nine long minutes, the only person on campus with a gun was a mass shooter.

Kansas HB 2052

With the passage of HB 2052, Kansas forced the hand of public institutions that wanted to ban concealed carry on their premises, but whose security amounted to nothing more than signs declaring the ban. Today, those public institutions may still choose to restrict the rights of concealed carry license holders from carrying in their buildings, but if they do so, they must provide "adequate security measures" to ensure that no one (license holders or criminals) may carry a firearm or any weapon into the building. The theory behind the passage of HB 2052 is best explained by Kansas State Senator Forrest Knox (R-Altoona):

"Following passage of concealed carry in Kansas, many buildings were posted, prohibiting concealed carry even though no security was provided. The recent prevalence of mass shootings in public places, many of which have been posted "no concealed carry" and are often referred to as "gun-free zones," has shown such places to be attractive sites for criminals. Elected officials are realizing that there are liability concerns in posting unsecured buildings. The 2007 Virginia Tech shooting is an example of such an event. A jury found the school liable in a civil law suit and awarded family members of victims large cash settlements. In this case the judge instructed the jury that a special relationship did exist between university officials and the victims, and that the relationship required officials to provide for their safety and security. The jury found that Virginia Tech's actions contributed to the deaths of the students."

"In America our right to keep and bear arms is guaranteed and we must not allow this to be denied anyplace that we have a right to be. The only exception to this is in the rare instances when special security is provided to the general public as a whole. Elected officials and Kansas citizens are figuring out, a sign is not adequate security.

Implied in [HB 2052] is that the weapons themselves are not evil but rather it is the actions of criminals that are evil. We can trust the citizens of Kansas and should not limit their freedoms based on the illegal actions of a few. Local control starts with our citizens, by protecting their constitutionally guaranteed individual liberties. Kansas [license holders], are not a threat to our security. We should not tread on their rights while at the same time taking no steps to prevent criminals from bringing illegal weapons into public buildings. Good Kansans with guns make all of Kansas safer."

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What HB 2052 Provides

To summarize Senator Knox's out standing explanation of Kansas HB 2052, publicly owned buildings in Kansas may no longer restrict licensed concealed carry unless "adequate security measures" are present. Adequate security measures means two things:

1. The use of electronic equipment and personnel at public entrances to detect and prevent the carrying of any weapons into the building by members of the general public. Electronic equipment may include metal detectors, metal detector wands, or similar equipment used for detecting weapons.

2. Adequate options for storing and securing lawfully carried weapons, such as gun lockers or similar storage devices at all public entrances.

Areas Not Covered by HB 2052

Publicly owned buildings that do not have open access to the public or that have only controlled access entrances are not specifically covered by HB 2052. Examples of this include primary and secondary schools (K - 12), which have an automatic exemption to the "adequate security measures" requirement. However, that does not mean that carrying in Kansas primary or secondary schools is automatically banned. It simply means that these schools may choose to post their schools as not allowing concealed carry without meeting the "adequate security measures" requirement. If they choose not to post, then carrying in those buildings is legal for license holders. In addition, nothing in HB 2052 prevents law enforcement agencies from prohibiting weapons from entering the secure areas of their buildings. However, they cannot prohibit licensed concealed carry in the public areas unless they meet the "adequate security measures" requirement.

Government Backed Armed Staff Program

In addition to the changes for posting requirements, HB 2052 also provides certain publicly owned institutions with authority to allow employees with a concealed carry license to carry within their buildings, even if the buildings are posted.

These institutions, which may set their own policy or training requirements for allowing employees to carry, include the following state or municipal owned institutions:

- Unified school districts.
- Medical care facilities.
- Adult care homes.
- Community mental health centers.
- Indigent health care clinics.
- Post-secondary educational institutions.

Firearms in K - 12 Schools

As mentioned, if a public primary or secondary school in Kansas chooses to post their buildings as off limits for concealed carry, they get an automatic exemption to the "adequate security measures" requirement. But the decision to ban or not, is left it up to the individual school. The school may choose to allow carry by license holders; or they can choose to post signs, informing license holders that they are not allowed to carry in the building; or, as mentioned, the school may choose to allow licensed employees to carry, regardless of whether the school itself is posted. I'll add that after its passage, HB 2052 provided municipalities with a limited exemption for six months in order for security plans to be developed. Thereafter, one four-year exemption was allowed. After this four-year period (which ends on December 31, 2017), no further exemption is allowed. After that date, all state and municipal buildings must either provide the "adequate security measures" as outlined, or, they must allow concealed carry licensees to carry in the building.

Using Kansas HB 2052 as a Model

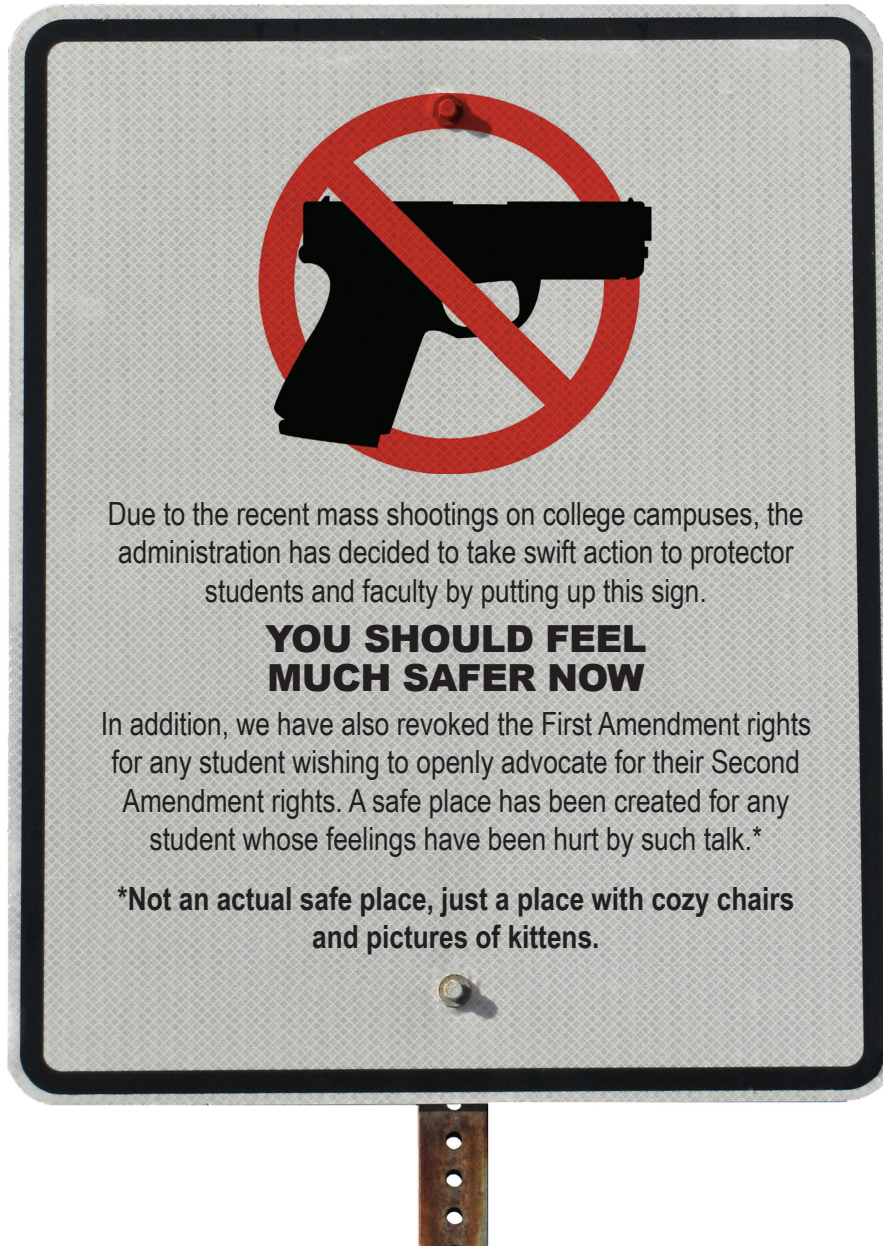
While you might view Kansas HB 2052 as radical, it should really serve as a model for updating the laws in all 50 states, and it should serve as an example for all institutions who may decide, or have decided to ban lawfully carried firearms on their premises (regardless of what state or federal law says), as Umpqua Community College did.

If lawfully armed Americans are going to be disarmed at the front door of any location, we must ask for and expect that our personal security is being accounted for by much more than a sign posted at the building entrance. Instead, we should expect the same type of "adequate security measures" as defined in Kansas HB 2052. I would take this a step further. In addition to providing, "electronic equipment and personnel at public entrances



››› After Kansas HB 2052 became law, publicly owned buildings in Kansas may no longer restrict licensed concealed carry unless "adequate security measures" are present, including the use of electronic equipment and personnel at public entrances to detect and prevent the carrying of weapons of any kind, by anyone, into the building.

to detect and restrict the carrying of any weapons into the state or municipal building," it's also my belief that the responsibility for protecting individuals within any disarmament zone must be born by the body responsible for disarming them. In other words, if a governing body wants to remove your right to protect yourself with a firearm, they must do two things — first, they must have adequate security to ensure that no one else within the gun-free zone may have a gun or any weapon, and second, they must provide armed security to defend you in the event that an armed intruder is able to make it past security. The sterile area of airports is a good example. The U.S. government wants these areas to be weapon free, so they have established security at each entrance to the sterile area to ensure that no one carries a gun, a knife, or any other type of weapon past security. Second, airports provide armed security throughout the terminal and on many airplanes to provide security for the disarmed masses. Whether you believe that those measure are an adequate defense against a potential mass shooter at an airport or against another terrorist attack on an airplane, it is at least a model for how we should be thinking about disarmament zones elsewhere in the U.S. If your child's school wants to ban you from lawfully carrying a firearm on the premises, then their moral obligation to you and your child is to ensure that no armed person may enter the premises, other than the mandatory armed security that the school has put in place. No other option can avoid the nightmare scenario that all mass shooters look for and all parents dread, which is any building where everyone in it has been conveniently disarmed by the authorities, yet which still allows an armed attacker to walk right in, unopposed.



›››While this sign is obviously meant as a parody, it brings to light the foolish belief that signs or school policies will stop mass shootings at colleges, or at any other location. Far too many colleges spend more time and money on creating "safe zones" for students whose feelings have been hurt, than they spend on actual "safe rooms" or on training using the Run, Hide, Fight methodology.



David jumped into action and saved his children and innocent bystanders from two armed robbers. Without the self-defense education, training and legal protection of USCCA Membership, David's story could have ended very differently.

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