

Health and Safety Fact Sheet

Campus Security



Planning for Security

In 2006, New York State enacted legislation creating a new Section 27-b of State Labor Law that requires public employers to perform a workplace evaluation or risk evaluation at each worksite and to develop and implement programs to prevent and minimize workplace violence caused by assaults and homicides. Effective violence prevention integrates many issues: intervention programs to help troubled students, fair and clear behavioral expectations, crises intervention plans, and procedures and training on the early warning signs of potentially violent behavior. Physical environment considerations are important tools that supplement a *comprehensive* violence prevention program.

College campus security is a challenging task. Many campuses house sensitive materials and information and sponsor activities and events that increase their vulnerability¹. To adequately address security on your campus, a complete assessment survey is needed. The survey should cover physical design, safety policies and emergency procedures. A good assessment is done in cooperation with campus public safety staff, physical facilities personnel, fire and other emergency service personnel, faculty, staff, students and other campus community members. Look at access to the campus and other physical environment conditions, where and when incidents have occurred, communication procedures and procedures to be followed when security is breached.

If your college is constructing or renovating a campus, make sure your local is involved in the design process and gives input on how the design can help improve supervision and safety.

Access Control/Physical Design

Entrances and Exits

- Campuses should consider securing residence halls access using card/key pad or similar systems and additional monitoring of building entrances.
- Colleges should consider student and staff IDs to be carried and/or worn on campus.
- Involve campus public safety or local law enforcement when considering any of these methods to be sure whatever is chosen will work. Make sure building access control systems take into consideration life safety, ADA, and fire code regulations.

Building Maintenance

- Buildings should be neat and in good repair. This includes appropriate colors and adequate lighting. A building that looks as if no one cares will only encourage poor behavior and negative feelings about the campus.

Internal Traffic Control

- Increase security presence in areas of greatest activity or highest risk.
- Staff visibility is important.
- Classroom and common area doors should be equipped with locking devices that allow the doors to be secured from within.
- Keep classroom door windows free of materials so that someone could see a problem from the hall.
- Campuses must also be able to open selected areas in the evening while limiting access to other areas.

Electronic Surveillance

If your college is considering electronic surveillance, it's important that they meet a campus's needs and have community support. Surveillance methods such as cameras can raise privacy concerns. Use crime stats and student-staff surveys to determine where to place cameras. If possible, visit a campus that is using surveillance to see and understand what's involved.

Because of the cost of electronic surveillance, do assessments to find out what kinds of problems need to be solved before you invest in any equipment. All equipment must be well maintained.

Campus Environs

Campus Grounds

- Patrol campus grounds especially where students gather.
- Strictly enforce parking zone regulations.
- If there are problems in parking lots, install cameras and/or panic alarms.
- Use landscaping to break up line of sight into campus grounds. Decorative fencing helps define where students enter campus.
- Grounds should be attractive and well maintained.



Exterior Building

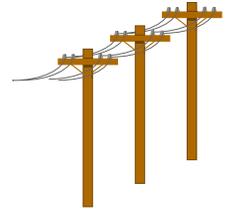
- Shrubs and plants in front of windows should be kept low or removed.
- Use anti-graffiti sealer on exterior walls.

Lighting

- Good lighting is needed around campuses and in parking lots. Lights should come on *before* dark.

Communications

Being able to communicate problems and get assistance is vital for every campus. Use multiple technologies to deliver emergency messages. A multi-tiered approach allows for communication overlap in the event of weak or partial reach of other systems. As the threat level increases, more methods should be used.



Intercom/Classroom Telephone System

- A state-of-the-art intercom system allows every area of the campus buildings to quickly alert campus security of any situation.
- Administration and security should also be able to contact classrooms.

Walkie-talkie (hand held radio)

- Campus administrators and other appropriate staff should have a two-way radio system. Test the equipment on campus before purchasing.
- Do daily radio checks.

Public Address Outdoor campus emergency notification system

- This type of system allows campus public safety officials to broadcast targeted voice alerts via loudspeakers to students, faculty, staff and visitors.
- Work with surrounding communities for information on the new system and an installation and testing timetable.
- Test the equipment at the campus before purchasing.

Personal Messaging Alerts

- Used to warn students, employees, visitors, and parents of an impending emergency. Can include cell phone (text and/or voice), telephone, email, and fax
- SUNY NY-Alert system is available to all SUNY campuses and community colleges

Visual messaging through LED displays

- A visual notification used to provide relevant information for specific locations on campus
- Locate in high traffic and gathering areas

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED is a concept that more campuses are using to help prevent violence on campus grounds. CPTED emphasizes understanding and changing the physical environment of a building or neighborhood, including the positions of buildings and other structures, interior and exterior design details such as color, lighting, entrances and exits, and landscaping. Its goal is to design a physical environment that positively influences human behavior. CPTED uses the following strategies:

Natural Surveillance:

- Place physical features, activities, and people in ways that *maximize the ability to see what's going on* to discourage crime.
- Barriers, such as bushes, sheds, or shadows, make it difficult to observe activity.

Natural Access Control:

- Properly located entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping, and lighting can direct both foot and automobile traffic in ways that discourage crime.

Territorial Reinforcement:

- Create or extend a sphere of influence through a physical design, so the users of the area develop a sense of ownership over it.
- Fences, pavement treatments, art, signs, good maintenance, and landscaping are some physical ways to express ownership.
- Identifying intruders is much easier in a well-defined space.

Although the impact environment has on security can be significant, members of the campus community must be careful not to view environmental security, including the presence of security personnel, as *the* answer to violence prevention. Staff in each NYSUT Regional Office can assist you in outlining a comprehensive campus violence prevention program. The staff has access to a wide range of resources on this and other safety and health issues, including NYSUT publications on a variety of topics.

¹ Campus Law Enforcement Summit Report Date: July 2005
ISBN: 1-932582-56-8

Published by New York State United Teachers, Division of Program Services
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, New York 12110
(518) 213-6000

9/08

#13207

