**Emergency Preparedness – Active Shooter – Lockdown**  
The following suggestions can be used to establish an active shooter plan with local authorities to best protect the children in your center.

**1 – Assess your center access points**. In our Discovery Point model, the front door should be the only entry point and the door should only be accessible by parents and staff with a code. Consider adding a second keypad entry on the doors to the activity area/café. This would actually require new door installation to replace the double-swinging doors, but it would add a second layer of safety to at least slow down an intruder.

**2 – Secure entry points.**  
• Update front door codes monthly or quarterly. Distribute codes in a secure manner.  
• Update front door codes after staff changes, especially the dismissal of an employee.   
• The more “private” the codes, the more secure your building will become.  
• Consider providing a code for management, a separate one for teachers, and a third for   
 parents. This way if teachers or management change, you can update the code for that   
 group without having to update all.  
• Remind teachers that outer classroom doors should only be unlocked when they are on the  
 playground. Re-lock doors upon entering the building after designated outdoor time.   
• Train front desk staff to walk to the front door to give entrance to an unknown visitor. DO NOT   
 automatically “buzz” in a guest from the front desk. Ask an unfamiliar visitor through the   
 glass, their purpose for the visit and WHO they are coming to pick up.   
• Teach parents not to allow other parents to “tailgate” into the building behind them. Each  
 parent needs to enter the building on their own.

**3 – Plan**• Talk about it! Include Active Shooter/Lockdown in discussion and preparation with other   
 emergency drills! Feeling unprepared adds fear, knowing the plan empowers teachers to act  
• Assign tasks and duties. Have a specific person who calls 911 and one who communicates   
 instructions in the building. Have others assigned throughout the building to make 911 calls as well.  
 If the front desk staff is trying to fight or delay the intruder’s entrance, the 911 call needs to be made   
 from the kitchen or somewhere else in the building.   
• Plan “code words” that trigger specific actions for teachers to take. Even have a code word as a front desk manager is about to check an unfamiliar person at the front door.   
  
For example, if an unfamiliar face arrives at the door, before the staff even leaves the desk, she intercoms to the second designated 911 caller in the building, “Door Guest”. That teacher or staff member responds, “Got it!” and waits on high alert for the “Good to Go!” announcement. If the guest from the other side of the door does respond positively with the name of a child and reaches for their ID, that “Good to Go!” announcement comes quickly. If the guest is drunk, angry ex-spouse, or something more sinister, that staff person in the back is aware that police may be needed and is ready to call. She can call the front to confirm “Good to Go” or if she hears threatening noises, go ahead and call 911.

**4 – Practice**   
• Add Lockdown emergency drills into the rotation with fire and tornado drills  
• Practice the drill a couple of times with STAFF only, after hours at staff meeting  
• If an owner decides to practice with children, it can be a less formal process and game-like. One class at a time can be walked through the drill with a member of management. See how many children can fit into designated areas OR add it to a regular tornado drill, but only staff know that this is   
additionally an intruder / active shooter drill.If announced to families, let them know a drill will happen, but how it will be presented to the children.Stirring up fear in the children & families should be avoided.   
• Consider code words instead of fire alarm, so that this drill is specific to an intruder emergency  
 and can be “played down” for the children.   
• Give this drill a specific name – IOC (Intruder on Campus) or “Quiet and Hide” drill, again, so  
 that children can become familiar with the routine without stirring up fear.  
• Just like with the example above, the more times the teachers and front desk partner and practice… “Door Guest” / “Got it!”/ “Good to go!” it becomes routine. The front desk has safety and backup no matter what the situation. And, if ever that “Good to Go!” is not forthcoming, then the 911 call and the code words to the classrooms can be communicated from the back of the building instead of the front.

**Teacher and Staff Actions:**

In the case of an armed intruder, there are really only three options: **FIGHT, RUN, HIDE**

**FIGHT** is not really an option for a teacher trying to protect young children. Management and front desk staff need to take designated roles to inform teachers and secure classrooms. However, in a need to **FIGHT** situation, a fire extinguisher can be sprayed in the face of a shooter to delay or at least disable him for a short time.

**RUN** is also not a great option for small children, but prepare options in case children are already outdoors and it is clear that returning inside is not the safest option. Teachers would just need to be told options “beyond the fence”. In a drill, the class would exit just like a fire drill and line up against the fence as usual. The designated emergency person would check that each teacher has the class roster AS WELL AS the additional instructions in case of an intruder. Additional instructions may include an emergency destination or a plan to hide behind a nearby dumpster or building. The teacher and children do not need to exit the property in a drill, but just discuss the additional steps that would be taken.   
  
Any **RUN** procedure would also need a reunification plan with contact information so that the teacher knows what steps to take at the emergency location and under what conditions the class can return to the center or be united with parents or emergency personnel.

**HIDE** is usually the best option for small children. When the designated person sounds the IOC alarm or walks door to door and says “Quiet and Hide”, then teachers can take the following actions:

**BASIC DRILL:**(Needs just heavy-duty door stops for interior doors or slide locks installed high on the inside of doors and bathrooms. Check with the fire marshal for approval of locks installed for just this one purpose.)   
 **Preschoolers:**1. Upon hearing the code word, teachers jam a door stop under the interior door. Guide children into the restrooms or closet space. Decide during planning which class uses which connecting restrooms, so multiple classes aren’t coming from each side. Slide the lock or place a doorstop against the interior and huddle with the children until management announces all clear.

2. For classes too large to fit in restrooms, know ahead of time which children go into which spaces and designate which teacher goes with each smaller group. Assign additional staff like cook or assistant director to large classes that would need to divide to fit into restrooms. Again, planning is key to knowing which staff is assigned to help a specific class.   
  
3. If classroom space must be used to hide, flip a table in front of a bookshelf and one to the side and have all huddle together behind it. Use natural spaces like the block center that already contains the heaviest furniture.   
 **Infants, Beginners, Toddlers:**1. Place infants in fire safety cribs and move to the beginner room. Jam door stops or lock the doors from the inside. Designate where children in each class stay, possibly the infant cribs behind the changing table and beginners in the closet space or behind the shelving. For large infant classrooms, it may make more sense to exit outside and try to stay hidden against the wall of the building.   
  
2. Toddlers can hide in the potty-training restroom. Again, teachers place the door stop or lock interior doors and if time, move a table in front of door as well.

3. Teachers remain calm and talk or sing in whispers.   
  
4. Remain in lockdown until management or police give the all-clear.

**Additional Resources:**

<https://www.childhoodpreparedness.org/>

<https://thrivingchildcare.com/2022/06/13/how-to-create-an-active-shooter-plan-for-daycare/>

Consider Safety Glass for Infants/Lobby <https://www.riotglass.com/who-we-serve/schools/>

Protect Panels for Hiding Barriers ($2500 each) <https://www.screenflex.com/products/ballistic-panel/>  
DPFI can get 20% off if we order in bulk.