

FEMA and Emergency Manager Partners Release School Safety PrepTalks

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WASHINGTON — The Federal Emergency Management Agency and emergency management partner organizations released today two new PrepTalks from Michele Gay and Kristina Anderson focused on improving school safety. Communities around the country can use these resources to assess and improve their school safety protocols and engagement strategies before the next school year begins in the fall.

Gay is a mother of three, former teacher, and co-founder of Safe and Sound Schools, a nonprofit started by Sandy Hook parents to support school crisis prevention, response, and recovery. In her [PrepTalk, “Rethinking School Safety,”](#) Gay relays her personal experience as the parent of a child killed in the Sandy Hook shooting in 2012. She highlights some of the simple solutions that students and staff needed during the crisis at Sandy Hook, and presents Safe and Sound Schools’ Framework for Comprehensive School Safety Planning and Development: Emergency Management, Community Engagement, Physical Safety, Mental and Behavioral Health, Climate and Culture, and Health & Wellness.

Anderson founded the The Koshka Foundation for Safe Schools, a non-profit dedicated to helping local community and school stakeholders work together to prevent, respond, and heal in the aftermath of school violence. Her [PrepTalk, “Safety is Personal: Lessons Learned as a Survivor of the Virginia Tech Tragedy,”](#) begins with her experience of the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007, when she was shot three times. She translates her experience into a focus on the importance of threat assessments in schools to identify and mitigate potential threats. She explains that it’s important to improve physical safety, but it’s just as important to encourage people to monitor their environment and to build a supportive culture in a school.

The next PrepTalks Symposium will be held on September 6, 2018 in Washington,



DC. All PrepTalks, question-and-answer sessions, discussion guides, and related resources are available at <https://www.fema.gov/preptalks>. PrepTalks are presented by FEMA, the International Association of Emergency Managers, the National Emergency Management Association, the National Homeland Security Consortium, and the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security.

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