

# PREVENTIVE SECURITY MEASURES INSIDE & OUTSIDE SHARED SPACES

As we've seen in the wake of the [terrible events in Parkland, Florida](#) and at the [YouTube corporate campus](#), the task of protecting shared spaces, such as offices and schools, has become increasingly complex, particularly in the current environment of rising political tensions and the difficulty that schools, workplaces and law enforcement can have in assessing threats. However, with the right combination of knowledge, experience, and resources, the risk of an incident can be mitigated and lives can be protected. Given the randomness of when and where a distressed person may strike, those who manage facilities need, at a minimum, an emergency plan, as well as robust training, detection and awareness efforts. When the time comes to develop a security plan, it is crucial to complete a comprehensive security risk assessment.

Proper evaluation of the following can make or break an effective security plan.

- Is there a proper and up-to-date [security risk assessment](#) in place? What are the current policies on training and implementing notification systems?

Threats to shared spaces continue to evolve and adapt at a rapid pace, and therefore a security risk assessment must follow suit. After an attack occurs, it is important to re-evaluate and re-tool plans and policies, as needed. Recent attacks around the world can give insight into what preventative measures are working and what others must be amended, to better protect individual buildings, campuses and perimeters.

- What [technologies](#) are being using to keep intruders out and students and employees safe, inside facilities?

Strategic, forward-thinking investments into new technologies can strengthen security for both present and future risks. ID cards, electronic keycards and mass messaging software are just some of the many technological advancements that help make buildings safer. These technologies are cost-effective, easy to implement, and impose minimal to no burden.

## Differentiating between threats and non-threats

Employers and school officials are confronted with the difficult task of determining what truly qualifies as a threat.

Proactive initiatives are always more effective than reactionary actions and, therefore, fostering a see-something, say-something culture within a school or workplace can act as an effective prevention tool. For administrative personnel, there are no set rules for determining what constitutes as a threat grounded in intent, opposed to someone “blowing off steam.” But, for those individuals or groups who are subjected to something they deem could be a threat, they should be encouraged to report the incident to the proper authorities, as that proactive approach will help mitigate the risks associated with a violent incident.

### **Allow an open discussion**

Technological advancements, carefully curated [crisis plans](#), and the implementation of new state or federal laws are not the be all end all for preventative measures. Creating a safe environment for those with mental health issues means that communities can better identify underlying issues before they reach a violent head. This is crucial to removing the stigma from discussing mental health issues and to help initiate a dialogue that can result in people obtaining sufficient treatments and medications.

Criminals and individuals with mental health issues often do not act with rational motives. There is no cookie cutter answer for preventing attacks, but there are a multitude of ways to increase preparedness. Taking appropriate action when there are warning signs and keeping security programs up to date can help with efforts to make working and learning environments the safest they can be, and prevent the loss of life.



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