



Staying Safe Together

A Guide for Parents to Talk to Kids About School Safety



**HURLBURT FIELD
CHILD AND YOUTH
PROGRAMS**

Purpose: To assist parents initiating conversations about active shooter drills with their children and instilling preparedness without creating fear.

Plan for age appropriate language

Adjusting language based on age and maturity levels is key for each family's needs.



1 Starting the Conversation

- **Use Reassuring Language:** Begin by explaining that schools are very safe and that learning about safety is something everyone does to be prepared.
- **Be Open and Honest:** Explain that just like fire drills, these practices help everyone stay safe and prepared in unlikely situations.

2 The Basics of Staying Safe

The **ALICE** Plan (Adapted for Young Listeners):

- **Alert:** If you hear something unusual or feel something isn't right, always tell a trusted adult.
- **Lockdown:** Sometimes, staying in one place is safest. Teachers will guide everyone in what to do. **Inform:** Teachers and leaders will give instructions if things change, so it's important to listen.
- **Counter** (Only if age-appropriate): In rare cases, we might need to make noise to scare someone away.
- **Evacuate:** Leaving the building can be safest, so always follow the teacher if this happens.

3 Helping Them Understand the Plan

- **Role-Play Simple Scenarios:**
Gently practice what they would do if they were asked to stay quiet in the classroom or leave quickly with their teacher.
- **Reassure Through Practice:**
Remind them that these steps are just like practicing for a fire drill and that it's okay to feel nervous.

4 Reinforcing Confidence and Safety

- **Encourage Questions:**
Ask your child if they have any questions or worries, and let them know it's okay to feel uncertain.
- **Use Reassuring Reminders:**
Emphasize that teachers and staff are there to keep everyone safe.



5 Family Safety and Communication

- **Have a Family Safety Plan:**
Let your child know how to reach you and who else they can talk to if they ever feel scared or unsafe.
- **Keep Things Consistent:**
Reiterate that no matter what, there are trusted adults at school and at home to help.

6 Mental and Emotional Safety

- **Talk About Feelings:** Explain that practicing safety helps everyone feel ready and strong, not fearful.
- **Resources:**
If they feel anxious, let them know they can always talk to someone, whether it's a school counselor, a teacher, or a family member.



All of us at Hurlburt Field's Child and Youth Programs prioritize your child's safety above all else and we thank you for taking the time to go over this information with them so they can be more prepared during our exercises and in the unlikely chance of a real world event.

Learn more safety tips at:

<https://www.fema.gov>
<https://www.alicetraining.com/our-program/alice-training/>
<https://www.nasponline.org/>
<https://www.ready.gov/kids>
<https://www.healthychildren.org/>

