

School Safety and Emergency Management

Monthly Minute: Crime Prevention

February 2024

Monthly Minute is a newsletter providing insight and tips on potential threats and hazards brought to you by your regional school emergency management professionals in partnership with the Oregon Department of Education.



According to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC), communities that incorporate CPTED principles see a decrease in violent and criminal behavior, including gun violence and destruction of property. A simple way to think about CPTED is this: a clean and well-kept property that demonstrates pride of ownership in the community will go a long way toward discouraging criminal activity. Keeping your school well maintained will communicate to others that disruptive or disorderly behavior is not tolerated. Lighting and signage can help deter unwanted behavior, as will prominent security cameras and clean walkways.

A school that is well prepared for any emergency should regularly assess their environmental risks and take steps to reduce those risks—including the risk of criminal activity and the harm it can cause to our students and our facilities. In this edition of the Monthly Minute, we will talk about a little-known acronym that can have a big impact on your school's safety: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, or CPTED. It might sound complex, but CPTED involves some fairly simple concepts that schools can practice to prevent criminal activity.

CPTED is a practice that requires looking at the whole school environment to find ways to reduce crime and property destruction while promoting pride in the school community. It's not just security cameras and locked doors; it is also keeping buildings and grounds clean and neat. It's making sure to have adequate lighting and good visibility. It's making sure that each school campus sends the message that bad behavior is not acceptable. The following are some often ignored considerations when applying the concepts of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design:

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This Month... Conduct a Secure Drill this month. Be on the lookout for environmental hazards, both inside your school and outside.

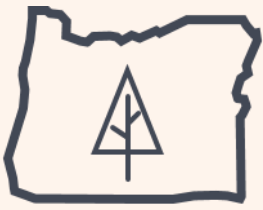


Conduct a Secure Drill in February.

Up Next... March's Monthly Minute will talk about transportation safety. Conduct an Evacuate! drill next month.



Evacuate! (A location may be specified)



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Sometimes, no matter how diligent we may be with CPTED principles, criminal activity occurs outside our building. Often when we least expect it. Practice your Secure drill this month at an inconvenient time to test your school's response. It's okay if it's not perfect this time if you're able to learn how to do it better.



Secure! Get Inside. Lock outside doors.

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- Keep the grass cut and the bushes trimmed back—an orderly appearance tends to discourage unwanted behavior and trimmed foliage can reduce hiding spots for criminal activity.
- Ensure dumpsters are in a controlled area.
- Install and maintain lighting around your facilities—particularly in areas you don't want trespassing or vandalism.
- Make sure portables and other remote buildings are secured and that they are visible from the main building; install screens under portables to limit access.
- Be aware of what is happening on adjacent properties and ensure a clear delineation between those properties and school grounds.

- Routinely check and maintain perimeter fencing.
- Quickly repair broken windows and keep the exterior in good order.

Conducting a comprehensive walkthrough of your school grounds will help you identify spots where maintenance or cleaning are needed. Such a walkthrough will also help you identify other environmental vulnerabilities. **Connect with the SSEM team at the link below** for help with site safety assessments and for ways to apply CPTED concepts to improve the safety of your whole school community. Check the links below for additional information on CPTED and other school safety resources.

Contact Information

Scan the QR code below or [click this link](#) to connect with a school emergency management professional for help on this or any other school emergency topic.



Join us on the **2nd Wednesday of every month at 8:30am** to get assistance with this or other emergency preparedness topics: [ZOOM LINK!](#)

Additional Resources

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency [K-12 security guide](#).

[CDC information on violence prevention and youth violence prevention](#).

Oregon Emergency Management [local contacts list](#).