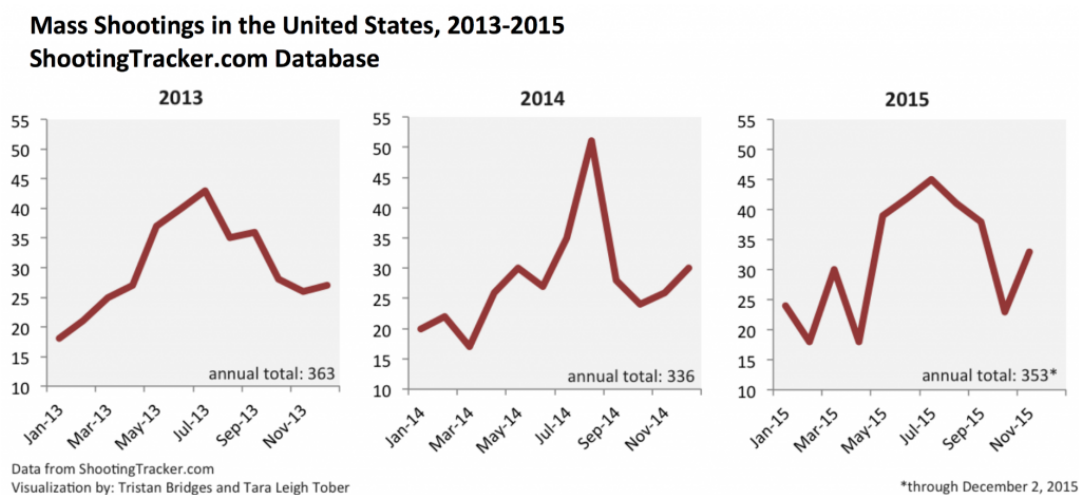


# How to Survive an Active Shooter in Your Workplace

It's sad. It's tragic. It has an impact profound enough to rattle an entire nation; launching citizens, students and employees into a state of fear and panic. While science and research hasn't quite allowed us to pinpoint the mental and psychological reasons behind why school or workplace shootings take place, we have been able to pinpoint what steps should immediately be taken in the event that one occurs. We know you probably don't relish the thought of having to digest some disheartening facts about school and workplace shootings. But knowing the basics can help profoundly reduce the lasting emotional damage caused by them.



Source: [TheSocietyPages.org](http://TheSocietyPages.org)

It's fascinating how humans have this innate arrogance that nothing will happen to them, until it does. We see and hear of terrorist attacks or people diagnosed with deadly diseases, and while we feel immediate empathy, we never completely accept the fact that tragedy could strike us at any point. Hence propelling the phrase "you can never really imagine, until it happens to you." When it does happen to us, it's bewildering. Why me? If it does happen to you, here's how to

react:

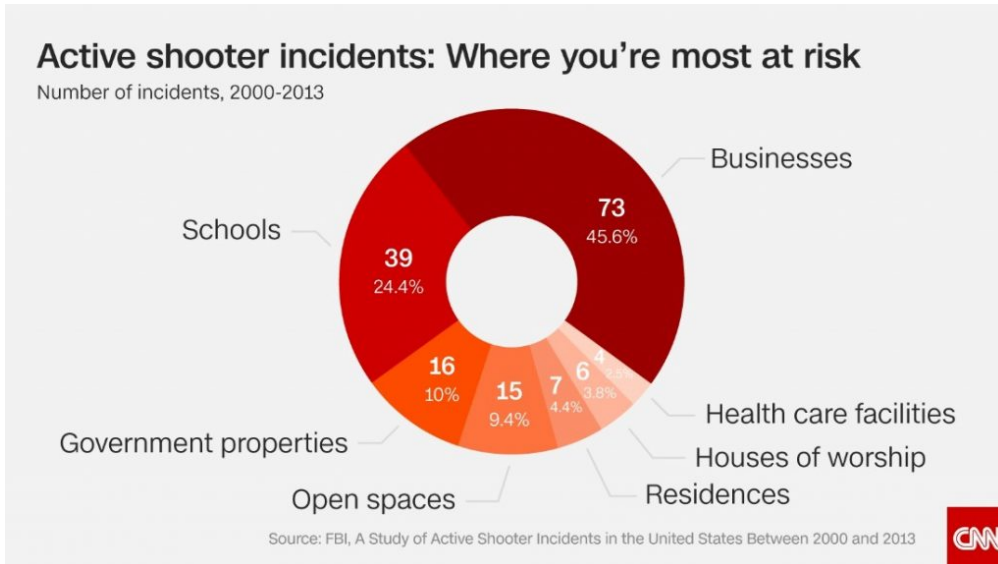
## **Your Emergency Evacuation Plan**

In order to truly accept the fact that a crisis could take place at any time, it's important to accept that it could happen, and it could happen to you. No, I'm not talking about the cheesy 1994 movie with Nicolas Cage. I mean having a plan in the event of a crisis. Always have an emergency evacuation plan. Here are some tips to formulating an exit plan for your workplace:

- If the shooter is in the building and has opened fire, run. If you can't run, hide behind large, heavy, and relatively non-permeable objects such as cabinets, and machinery.
- Have all employees know where at least 2 emergency exits are at all times.
- Keep them free and clear of any obstructions.
- Have them clearly marked so they're visible in any situation.
- Have a preferred method for reporting fires and other emergencies. [1]
- Have an evacuation policy and procedure. [1]
- Have emergency escape procedures and route assignments, such as floor plans, workplace maps, and safe or refuge areas. [1]
- Have rescue and medical duties for any workers designated to perform them. You also may want to consider designating an assembly location and procedures to account for all employees after an evacuation. [1]
- Have a site of an alternative communications center to be used in the event of a fire or explosion. [1]
- Make sure alarms are distinctive and recognized by all employees as a signal to evacuate the work area. [1]
- Make available an emergency communications system such as a public address system, portable radio unit, or other means to notify employees of the emergency and to

contact local law enforcement, the fire department, and others. [1]

## Suspicious Signs to Keep an Eye On



Courtesy: CNN

It is unbelievably important to remain vigilant, and report suspicious activity right away should you see something take place around the building. Don't let it be propelled by prejudice or fear, but rather, by your primal gut instinct. That undoubtedly perturbed feeling that signals your brain to take action before it's too late. Here are some suspicious signs that are worth reporting to law enforcement:

- An unrecognizable person loitering around the school or workplace
- An unrecognizable person on the premises wearing items that may hide their identity
- An unidentifiable person who seems jumpy, nervous or erratic

## Recognizing the Behavior

Often times, the suspect in a school or workplace shooting is a student or an employee. Here are some signs that a student

or an employee may be showi



- Change in normal behavior
- Showing signs of high stress [2]
- Has a history of angry outbursts
- Has a history of mental illness or behavioral disorders [2]
- Mentions their hate for their school or workplace often
- Shows signs they may be experiencing bad situations outside of the office

Bottom line: be prepared, be vigilant, and make sure all your employees are likewise.

By Mikaela Delia

## References

[1] <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3088.pdf>

[2] [Safety Matters: Active Shooter Preparedness \(Video & DVD\) by Coastal Training/DuPont](#)

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## Related Training:

For more information or for specialized training about what you and your employees should do in the event of an active shooter, try our new releases for active shooter training

## [Safety Matters: Active Shooter Preparedness \(Video & DVD\)](#)



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