

## School Safety Program

One of the most recent, and relevant, concerns within our country is the safety and security of children when attending school. In response to these concerns a comprehensive program was developed that incorporates actions to be taken by the Police Department, School staff, and other response agencies, jointly, in the event of an emergency.

This program uses a series of specific "Codes" that are announced during an emergency situation. (Weather Emergency, Missing Student, Violence in the School, Threats to the School, etc.) School Staff and students are instructed yearly on their required responses to each of these codes. Code Emergencies are drilled/practiced throughout the school year. (Just like Fire Drills!)

This Program has been implemented to assist the Edgewater Park Twp. School District to prepare for emergencies, protect students from possible dangers and/or disasters, and to prevent emergencies from becoming disasters. The Edgewater Park Twp. Police Dept. Community Policing Unit created this Program with the assistance of other Federal, State, and Local Agencies. These guidelines are suggestions and are for all of the schools in the Edgewater Park Twp. School District. They may be modified to meet the specific needs of a particular building or a given situation as determined by the School Administration (Superintendent/Principal) and the Emergency Review Committee.

The Edgewater Park Twp. School District is not only concerned with school safety as it relates to the traditional environment, but also with the physical protection of every school student in the district. The need for planning and implementation of policies to deal with emergency situations in the schools of New Jersey has never been more evident than at the present time. Our school district has a moral as well as a legal responsibility to develop plans to provide for the protection of all students in all emergency and/or disaster situations.

"Lack of uniformity in action often leads the outside observer to the erroneous conclusion that the (victim) population has panicked. What they are witnessing is not panic, but social disorganization, this does not necessarily indicate individual irrationality or personal disorganization. Many individuals and small groups are working within the disaster area with purpose and with some degree of organization. These individuals/groups however, are more likely to be focused on discrete, limited tasks and appear oblivious to the more general needs for assistance. The central problem of disaster management is to broaden the focus of attention and re-establish general, coordinated action for this mass of individuals and small group actions."

Thank you, again, for your time and concern for your children and our schools. Please don't hesitate to contact me, at any time, if you have any other questions, suggestions, or concerns.

Lt. Gene J. Di Filippo, Community Policing Coordinator

Edgewater Park Twp. Police Dept.

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