



**UMBC
POLICE**

Active Assailant
Awareness Training



Baltimore Co. officer involved shooting, Wilkins Ave. precinct, March 13, 2025

HOW TO ESCAPE AND SURVIVE A VIOLENT ATTACK

Available at <https://police.umbc.edu/emergency-preparedness/active-assailant-awareness/>

WARNING

This subject matter concerns descriptions of gun violence and is meant for informational training purposes only.

There is NO GRAPHIC imagery.

This training is derived from Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) training developed by the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Center at Texas State University.

Basic Assumptions

- Everyone needs a basic understanding and awareness of the threat.
- Every attack is a complex, chaotic, panic-driven situation.

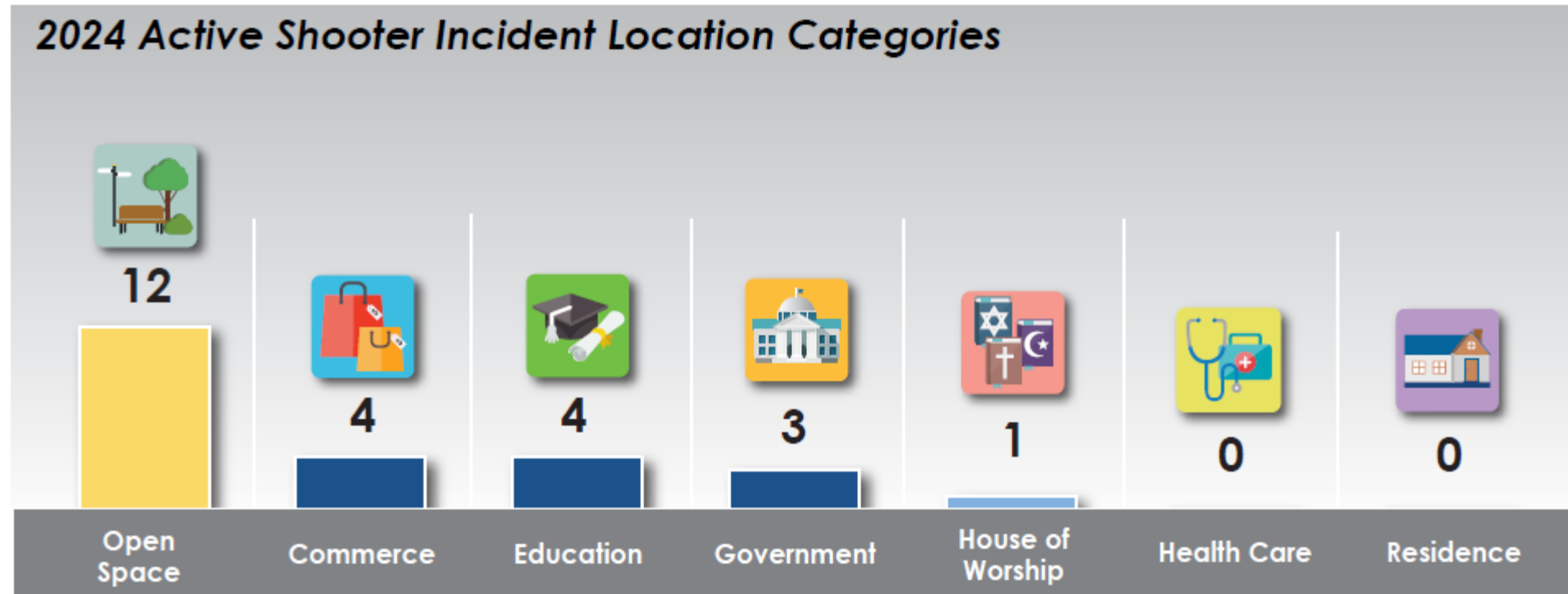
Ground Rules

- Avoid “what ifs.”
- Focus on the MOST LIKELY threats and our KNOWN vulnerabilities.

Training Objectives

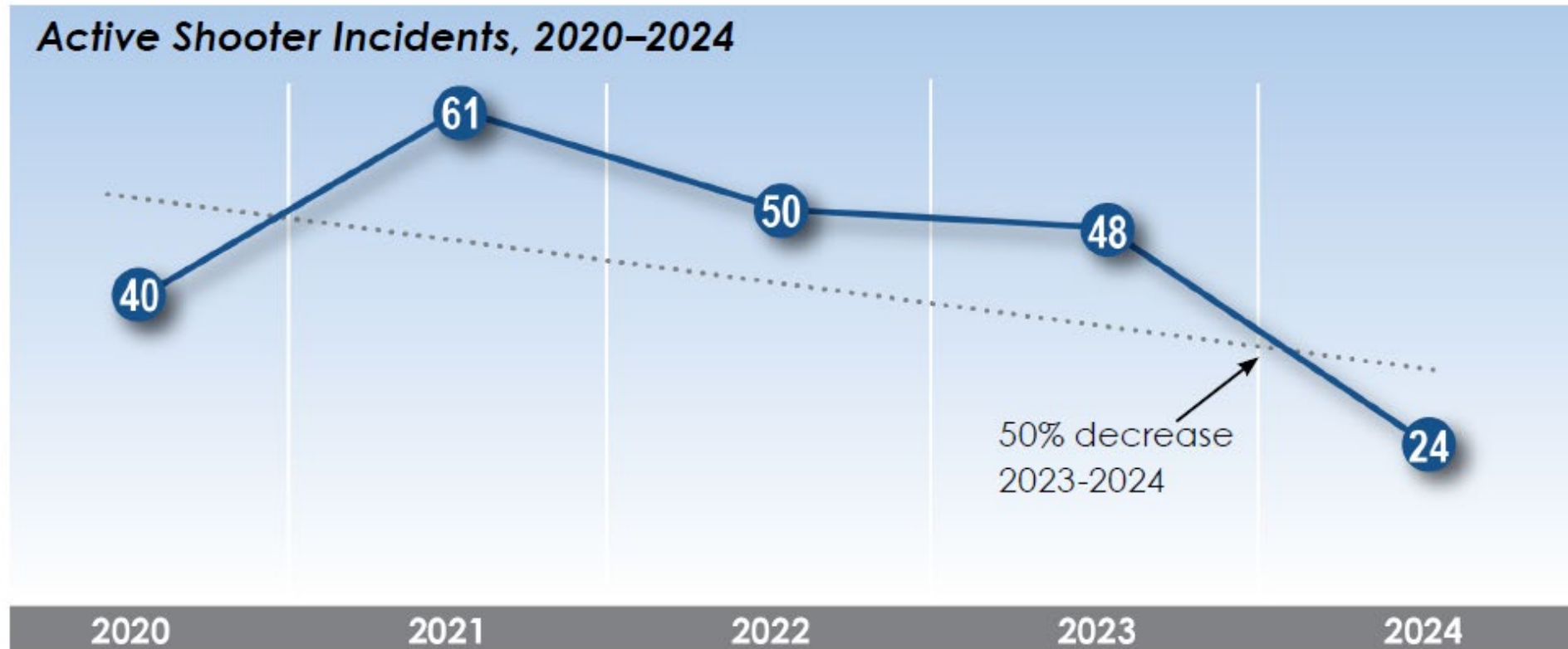
- Learn most likely threats and behaviors of attackers.
- Understand police response and how we detect guns on campus.
- Improve your situational awareness, learn to function under severe stress, and know how to escape and survive.
- Understand lessons from recent incidents.
- Know how to call for help, heed alerts, and report concerning behaviors.

2024 Incident Locations and Casualties



** Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation*

2020–2024 Incident Statistics



* Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation

Recent Incidents and Lessons Learned

Michigan State University, 02/13/2023: Alerts are essential for survivor actions.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Survivors were forced to remain in lockdown for a long time without an update.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will send follow-up alerts with instructions ASAP.• Escape & survive. Deny to delay the attacker and buy yourself time.• Expect lockdowns to take hours.
University of North Carolina, 08/28/2023: Ensure your community knows the plan.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People panicked in the absence of information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure people receive regular training.• Communicate plans effectively and make them available online.• Trust in official communications not unofficial sources.
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 12/06/2023: Access controls prevent intruders.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The attacker easily entered a campus building to access victims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limit public access to interior spaces. Ensure emergency exits that are meant to be secure are secure.• Don't prop open doors for convenience.
Florida State University, 04/17/2025: Attacks can occur indoors or outdoors.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your environment can limit your survival strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outdoor open areas may provide little or no protection.• Know your campus' physical environment.• Think about safe locations inside your building and outdoors.

The Most Likely Threats

Attacks are most likely to take one of two forms:

Active Threat

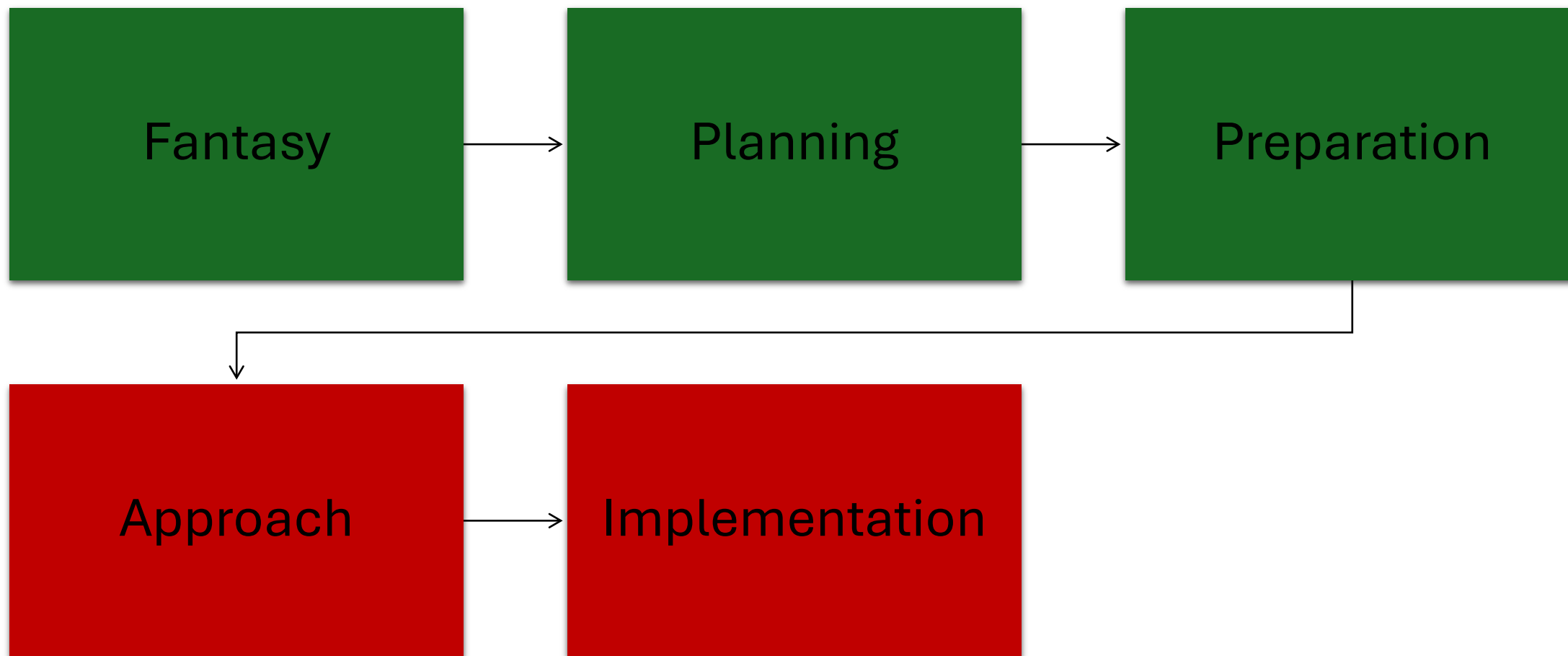
- This is a **DYNAMIC** situation.
- One or more attackers are actively causing death or serious injury.
- Their intent to cause continuous harm to others.
- Their objective is mass murder and victims may be targeted or random.
- They are not engaged in other criminal conduct such as robbery or taking hostages.

Barricaded Suspect

- This is a **STATIC** situation.
- An attacker has taken a defensive position in a room or a building.
- They may use barriers or obstacles and may have hostages.
- No indication they are causing immediate death or serious injury.
- They are suspected of committing a crime, may be armed, and have displayed or threatened violence.

**Who is responsible
for safety on campus?**

Attackers' Behavior



Behaviors of Concern

Overly Depressed

Outbursts

Suicidal Ideation

Aggressive Behavior

Abuse

Obsession with Violence

Sexual Assault

Noticeably Unstable

Dating Violence

Severe Mood Swings

Behaviors of Concern

Uncomfortable? Inappropriate? Disturbing? Do you feel unsafe?

- Call UMBC Police for potentially dangerous behavior.
- Learn how to appropriately disengage.
- Use your “walk-away power.”

For persons in distress or behaviors of concern:

- See: <https://studentaffairs.umbc.edu/student-support/retriever-support-services/retriever-care/>.
- Contact Retriever CARE (formerly known as BRACK) at 410-455-2770 or email studentaffairs@umbc.edu.

Concerned for yourself or someone else?

- See the Retriever CARE Online Referral Form at:
https://umbc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid215676?

Improve Your Situational Awareness

Pay attention to your surroundings.

- Indoors and outdoors.
- On-campus and off-campus
- Avoid “autopilot.”

Know your exits.

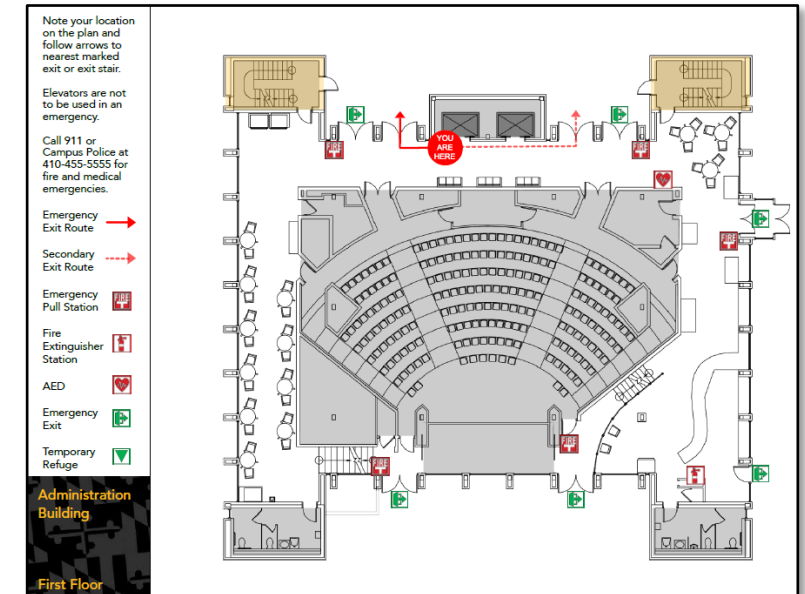
- At least one other than the one you use all the time.
- Know where each building’s emergency floorplans are located.

Watch for suspicious activity.

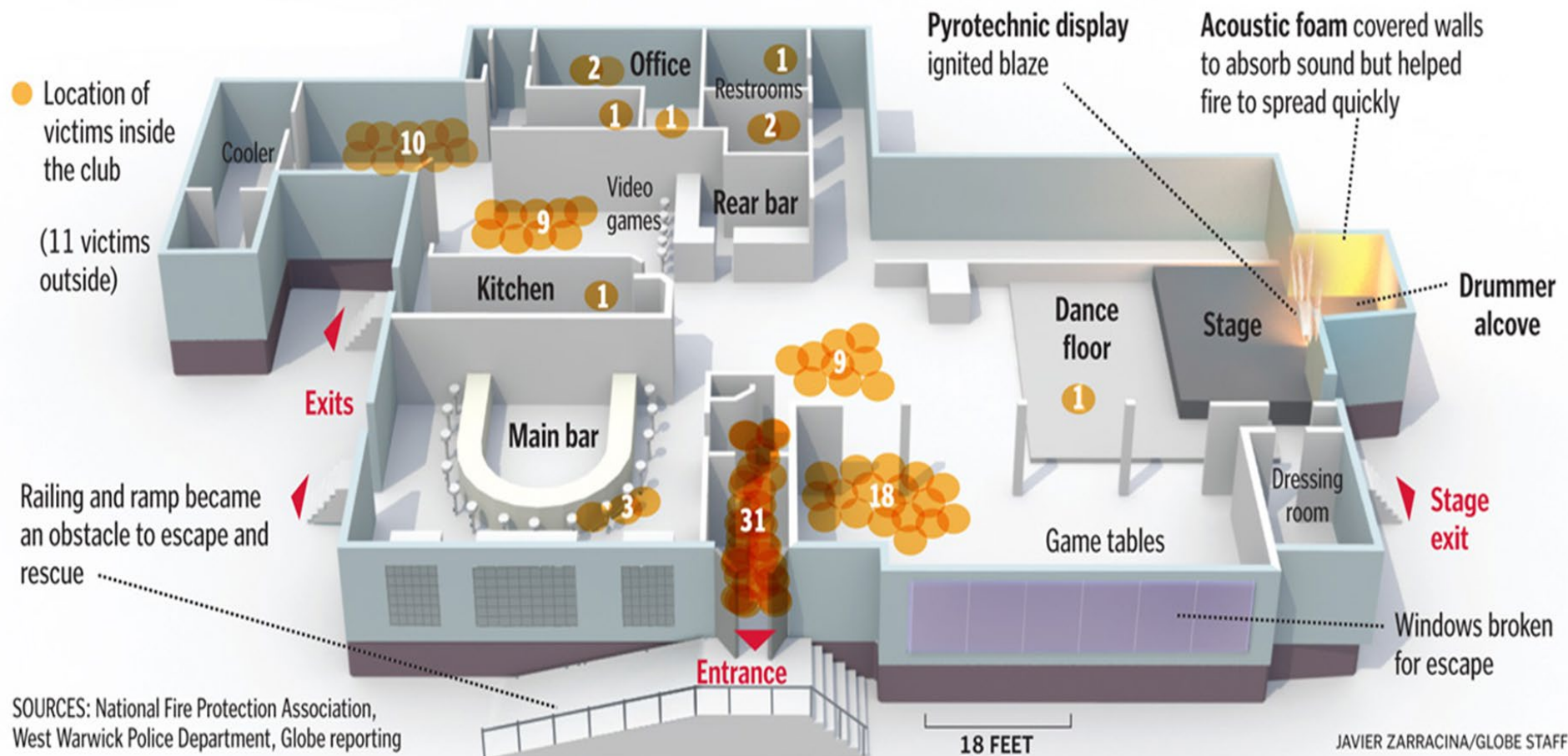
- Does it seem wrong?
- Is it out of the ordinary?
- Does it make you feel uneasy?*



Your Phone is a distraction



Improve Your Situational Awareness



Function Under Severe Stress

Heartrate 115 - 135 BPM

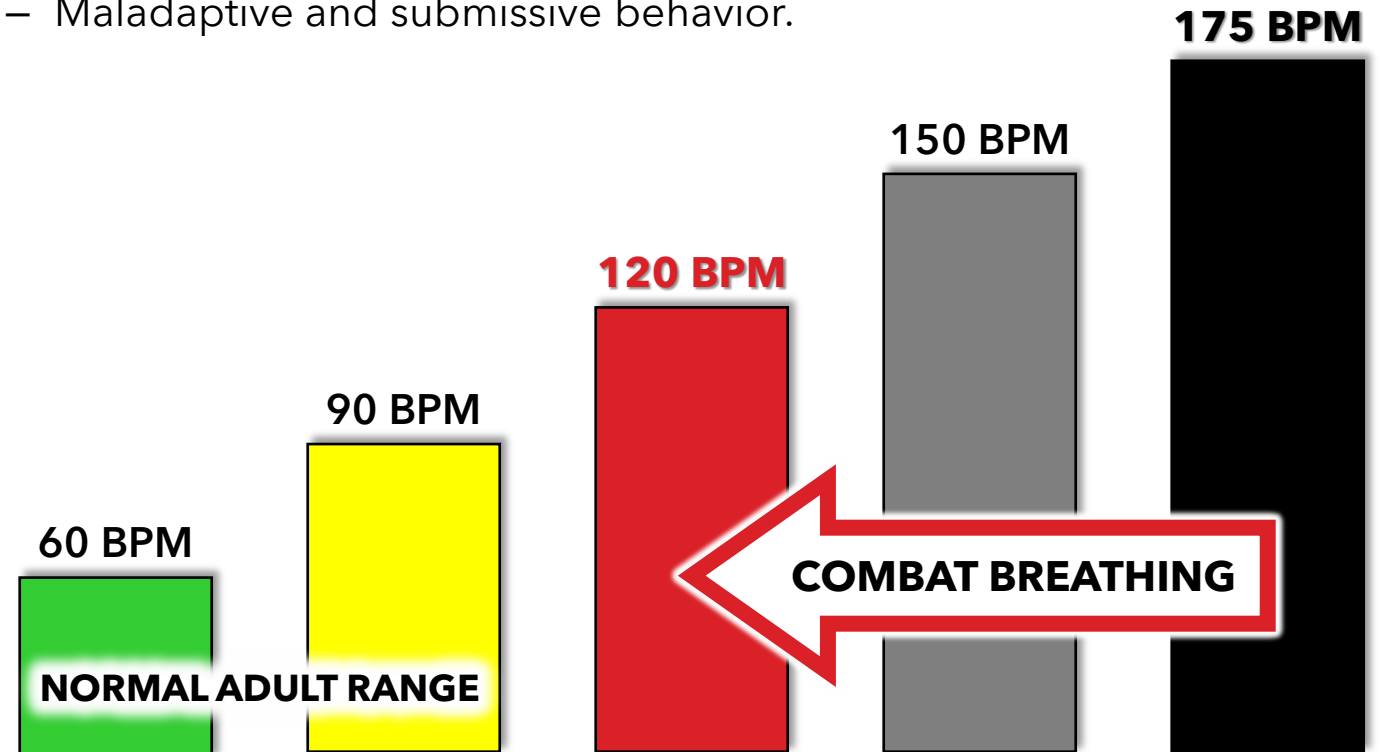
- Optimal for fight-or-flight.
- *“Operating in the red.”*
- Greater adrenal activity ... strength, endurance, speed, pain resistance.
- Loss of fine motor skills.
- Loss of precise thinking.

Heartrate over 170 BPM

- *“Operating in the black.”*
- Partial paralysis.
- Maladaptive and submissive behavior.

COMBAT BREATHING: 3 to 5 breaths...

- Visualize each number as you count.
- Breathe in counting 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Stop and hold your breath counting 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Exhale counting 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Repeat the breathing.



Function Under Severe Stress

Who is operating in the red? Who is operating in the black? (00:14)



Function Under Severe Stress

We undergo a 3-stage process when exposed to danger:

- Denial & disbelief.
- Deliberation.
- Decisive moment.

Survivors are more likely to move faster through these stages.

DENIAL & DISBELIEF

"This isn't happening."

- People gathering their things instead of evacuating.

DELIBERATION

"What do I do?"

- Engage in combat breathing.
Shift your fear to anger.

DECISIVE MOMENT

"Let's go!"

- You must act quickly and commit to your decision.

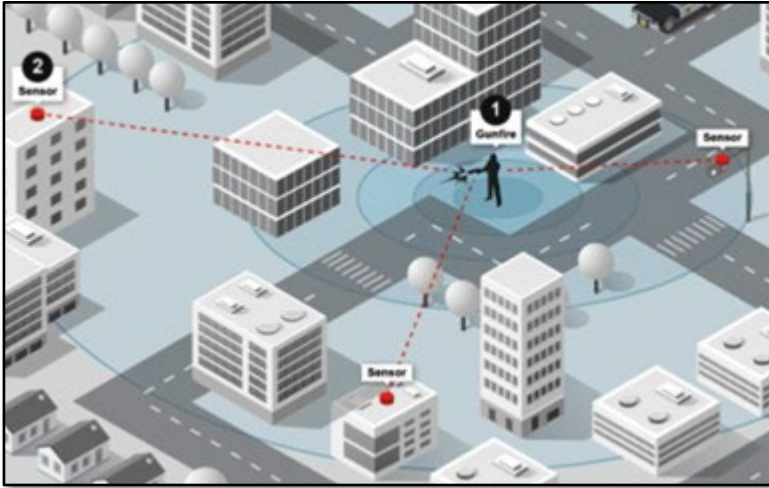
Escape and Survive

3 to 5 minutes...

- **You must have a strategy to survive the first 3 to 5 critical minutes of an attack before police arrive.**
 - Incidents on average last approximately 8-10 minutes.
 - A victim is shot every 8-12 seconds.
 - SWAT response is 45 minutes.
 - National average police response is typically greater than 12 minutes.
- **Your survival depends on...**
 - Police response time.
 - How vulnerable you are.
 - How many people are around.
 - Your environment.
 - **What you do.**



Detecting Guns on Campus



ShotSpotter

- Uses acoustic sensors to detect the sound of **outdoor** gunshots.
- Police dispatchers and patrol officers still need to confirm actual gunshots.
- If confirmed, we may send a follow-up alert with the location and instructions to stay away from the area.



Zeroeyes

- Analyzes security camera video to detect the presence of a firearm.
- Provides us with a location and time.
- Differentiates between real and toy guns.

Escape and Survive

These are the basic survival skills everyone needs to know:

GOOD

RUN • HIDE • FIGHT

BETTER

AVOID • DENY • DEFEND

We will discuss these concepts in this order.
But do not expect to take these actions in this linear order in a real attack.

Escape and Survive



Good idea ... **RUN.**

- If you have a safe escape path. Even if others don't want to follow.
- Help others if possible.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- If outdoors, get inside and find cover.
- Obey orders from police officers.
- Go to areas of safety as they instruct.
- **DO NOT pull the fire alarm.**



Better idea ... **AVOID.**

- Requires more situational awareness and more attention to your surroundings.
- Have an exit plan before entering.
- Recognize the source and location of danger.

Escape and Survive



Good idea ... **HIDE**.

- Find a place with **PROTECTION**.
- Find **CONCEALMENT** to make yourself invisible to an attacker.
- **NOT UNDER A DESK or table in open spaces.**
- Silence phones, turn off lights.
- Avoid becoming trapped.
- People will panic, try to remain calm and quiet.



Better idea ... **DENY**.

- **A locked door is your best defense against an attacker.**
- Put distance and obstacles between you and the attacker.
- Maintain an escape path and evacuate when safe to do so.
- Delay the attacker...give police time to respond.

If you can't lock the door, **DENY** entry

Doors that **OPEN IN** to the room:

- Barricade the door with anything and everything available.
- Heavier = better.
- More = better.
- Cover interior windows with tall objects.

Be aware of multiple entrances.

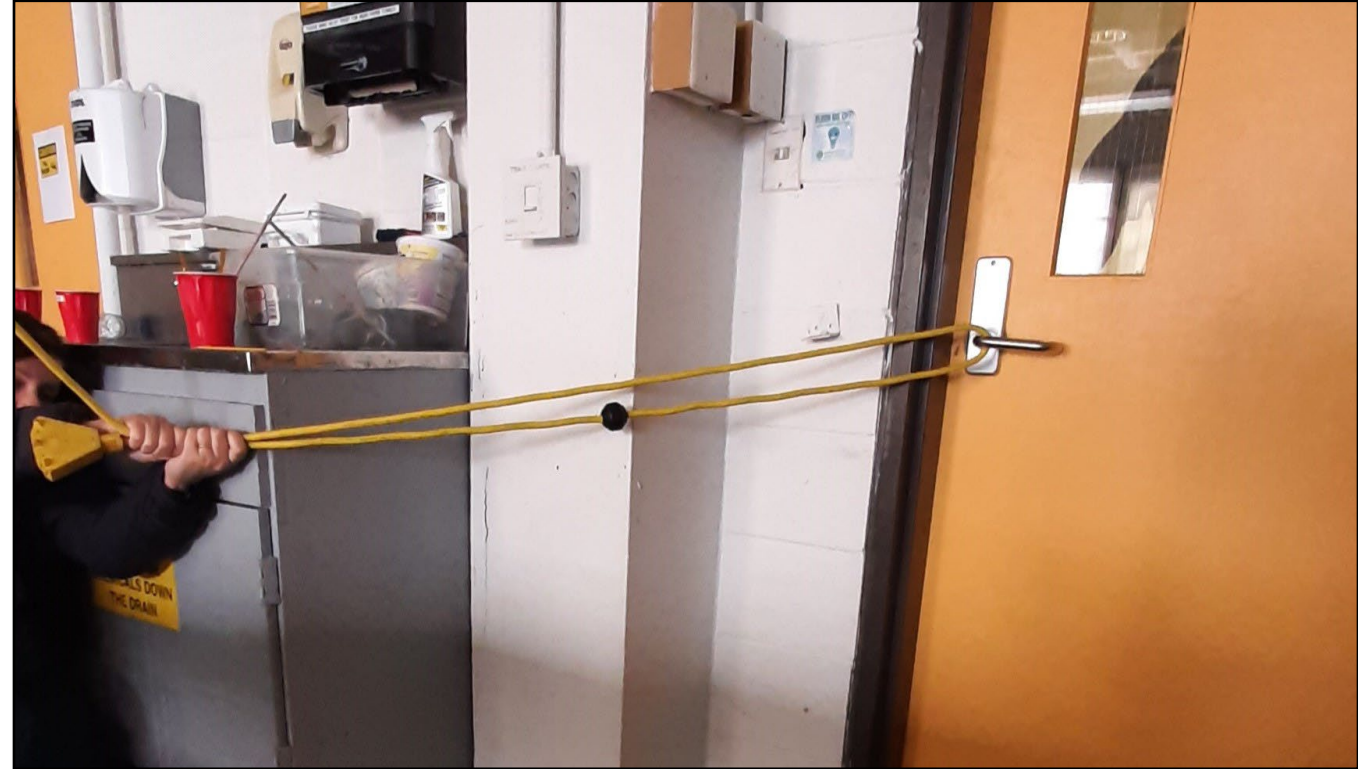
- Do you have the resources to deny entry?
- Can you maintain an escape route?



If you can't lock the door, **DENY** entry

Doors that **OPEN OUT** to the hallway:

- Pull against opening with a belt or cable.
- Use counterforce along the same wall as the door-handle side.
- Stay out of sight if there are interior windows.
- This is dangerous...**BE READY TO DEFEND YOURSELF.**



Escape and Survive

You have the right to **FIGHT**.

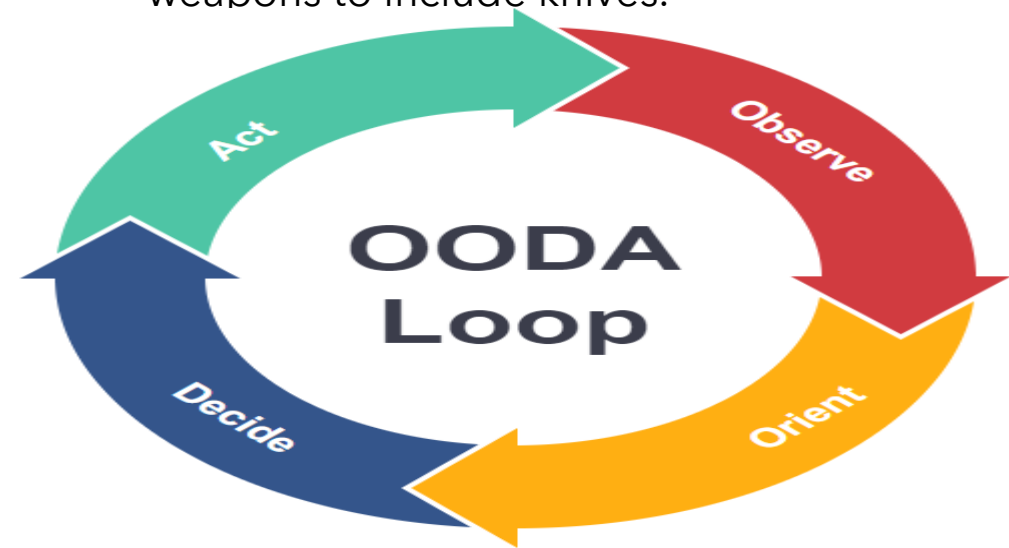
- Commit yourself to violent, aggressive action ... switch from fear to anger.
- You may have to fight to escape.

[Nov 10, 2022: Unarmed guard prevents gunman from entering a treatment clinic in Buffalo, NY](#)



You must **DEFEND** yourself.

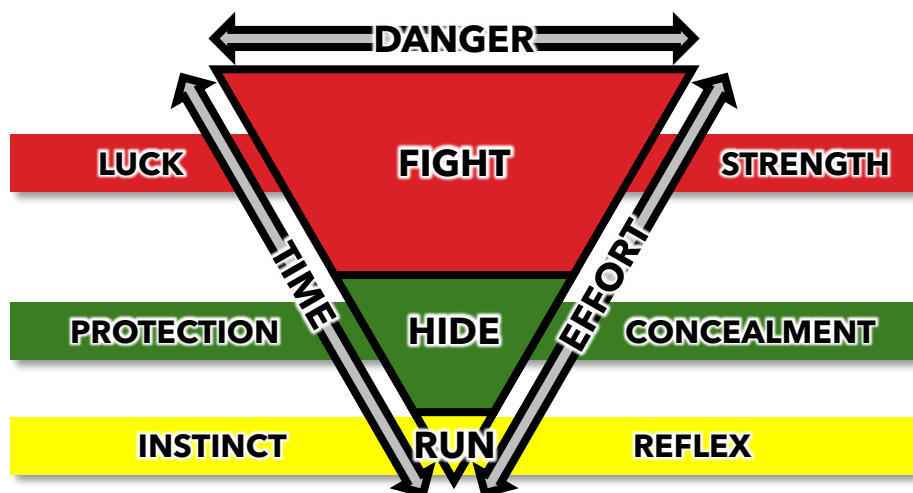
- Plan and launch a counter-attack that is unexpected and violent.
- Work as a team and improvise weapons from anything available.
- Use overwhelming force to injure and immobilize the attacker.
- Take away and **CONTROL** the gun ... do not risk being seen as a threat by police.
- Beware of multiple guns or concealed weapons to include knives.



Escape and Survive

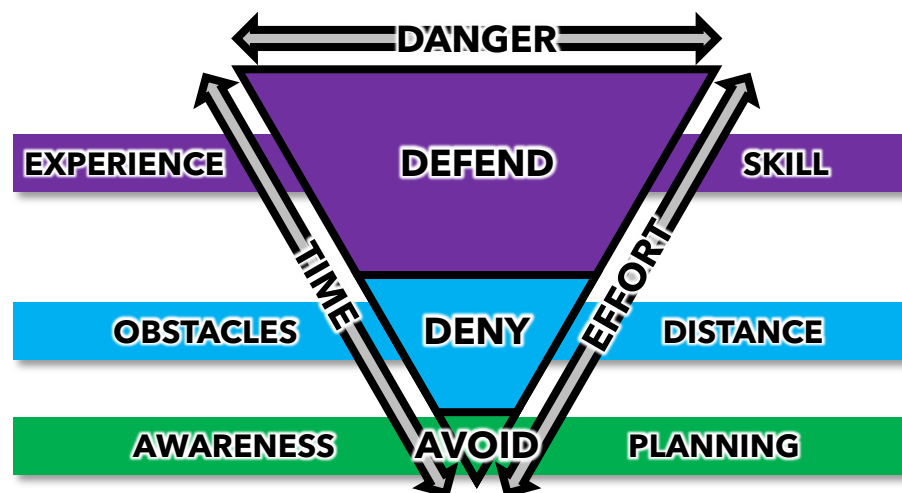
SO, WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

RUN - HIDE - FIGHT



REACTIVE & FEAR DRIVEN

AVOID - DENY - DEFEND



PROACTIVE & KNOWLEDGE DRIVEN

Escape and Survive

Survival is not a process of elimination.

- Running OR hiding OR fighting could be necessary depending on the circumstances.
- Know the risks of each action. Be prepared to decide, act, move, and adjust based on the situation.
- You may have to defend yourself immediately, or...
- Hide, then move, and find protection again, or...
- Make multiple life and death decisions before you can escape an attack.

Fight **FREEZING** in the face of sudden unexpected violence.

- Engage in combat breathing
- Lower your heart rate ... *"operate in the red."*
- Command yourself to **"MOVE!"**

Police Response

Expect teams and individual armed officers from multiple departments.

- Police priorities are: 1) stop the attacker; 2) rescue survivors; 3) clear.
- They may not stop to help injured.

Be compliant.

- OBEY all orders from police officers.
- Put down any items in your hands.
- Always keep hands visible.
- Officers may shout commands and push you to the ground.
- Remain in areas of safety as instructed...expect to be held there until the scene is cleared.
- Do not leave a safe area until directed.



UMBC Police have access to emergency trauma kits.

- In police vehicles.
- Placed at strategic locations across campus.

When Campus is in Lockdown

DENY an intruder access.

- **COMPARTMENTALIZE** ... secure interior access points to lockdown multiple adjoining rooms or suites.

Identify Safe-Havens* Ideally these areas...

- Deny an intruder access through physical barriers.
- Provide some protection from gunfire.
- Suppress lights/sounds to conceal occupants.
- Cannot have any interior windows.
- Must have working locks that can be locked from inside.

**We are actively identifying safe havens for each building.*

Lockdown actions.

- If the threat is not immediate, give people the time needed to reach safety before closing and locking the doors.
- If you cannot reach it before it is locked, you must find other protection.

DO NOT OPEN UP FOR ANYONE OR ANY REASON, EVEN FOR SOMEONE IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS "POLICE," UNTIL AFTER YOU RECEIVE THE ALL-CLEAR ALERT

Help Disrupt Possible Attacks



REPORT

Threatening behavior
and online activity.



PREVENT

Unauthorized entry. Contact FM Work
Control if emergency exits are damaged.

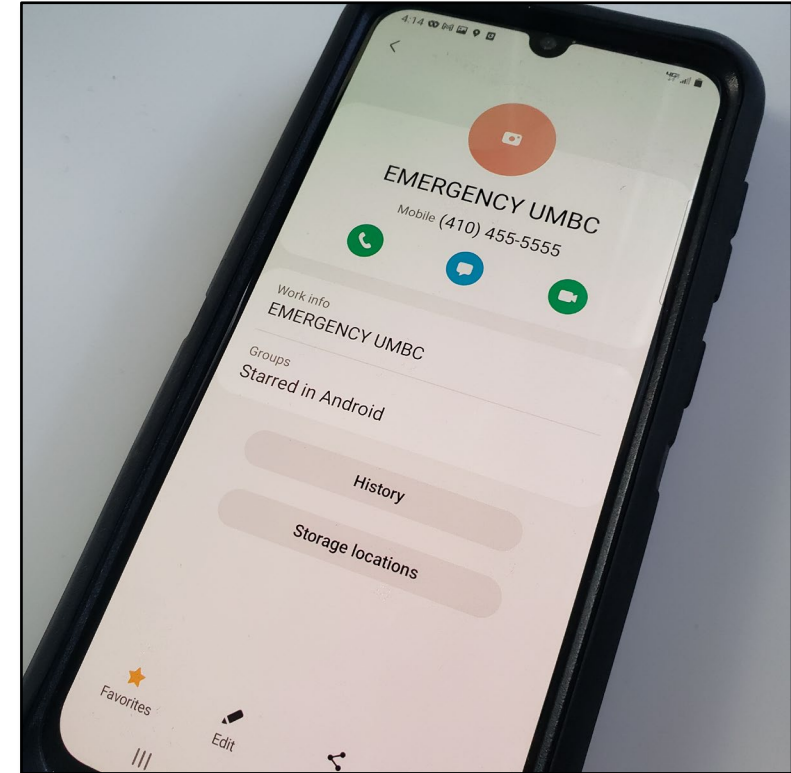


KNOW

Does your classroom or office have
working doors locks?

Call for Help

- Call UMBC Police after you have taken action to stay safe.
- **IF YOU ARE ON CAMPUS:**
 - For Immediate Police, Fire or EMS, call the UMBC Police Department.
 - 410-455-5555, or ext. 5-5555.
 - Make a new phone contact, add this to your favorites: **"EMERGENCY UMBC"**
 - UMBC Police can relay your emergency to 911.
- **IF YOU ARE OFF CAMPUS:**
 - For Police, Fire or EMS, call 911.



Watch for Alerts

- **Ensure you receive text alerts.**
 - Lean about alerts and register at <https://police.umbc.edu/emergency-preparedness/umbc-alerts/>.
- **Alerts will go to multiple channels:**
 - Text message
 - E-mail
 - Computer screens (Alertus)...you must be logged in to myUMBC
 - Digital signs across campus
 - The myUMBC webpage
 - UMBC Police Facebook



Heed Alerts

- If UMBC Police receive reports of an attack on or near campus, expect an alert with 4 parts:
 - 1) **CONFIRMED THREAT**: Take it seriously.
 - 2) **LOCKDOWN**: DENY access if there are no signs of immediate danger.
 - 3) **RUN-HIDE-FIGHT**: Escape and survive if you are in immediate danger.
 - 4) **WEB PAGE LINK**: [Your immediate response actions](#).
- Do not expect to be told the location of the attack immediately.
 - We may provide a location in a follow-up alert...but expect this to take time.

A shooting has been reported at the Baltimore County Police Station on Walker Ave. Police are on the scene. Stay away from the area while police are investigating. More information will follow.

Remember your Objectives

- Survive the first 3 to 5 critical minutes.
- Remember how attackers behave and how police respond.
- Move quickly through the 3 stages of danger to take action.
- Control your heart rate and your breathing.
- Know how to effectively run, hide, and fight if attacked.
- Learn to avoid threats, deny access, and defend yourself.
- Know how to call for help and what to do when you see an alert.



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QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

UMBC Police Department
410-455-5555

<https://police.umbc.edu/services/emergency-preparedness>