

# Age-Appropriate Guidelines for ALICE Training® at Any Age

**ALICE Training® provides guidance to schools on how to respond to an armed assailant or other violent critical incident. While necessary, it is important to ensure that ALICE drills are age- and ability-appropriate for students to avoid traumatizing children.**

ALICE applies a trauma-informed approach to training, and one of the primary principles is to do no harm. As such, Navigate360 does not advocate the use of scenarios or simulations of any kind with students of any age or at any grade level. This includes using role play, props, simulations, and/or scare tactics to train students how to respond in an emergency. Armed assailant drills, however, are appropriate when they are run without real-life simulations and in a calm, supportive environment, similar to a fire drill.

Accommodating students with disabilities should also be considered in your drill planning. For specific details on how your safety team

can proactively plan for the unique needs of those students, we suggest the free Especially Safe guidelines from Safe and Sound Schools.

The following guidelines are based on the recommendations of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP\*). For more information, consult their guide, Best Practice Considerations for Armed Assailant Drills in Schools. Please note that these are guidelines only. You know your students best and should make appropriate decisions alongside your safety team, based on age and ability, in compliance with federal, state or local regulations.

\*Endorsement of ALICE from NASP is neither explicitly or implicitly implied.



## Before Drills for All Grade Levels

- Armed assailant drills should never be a surprise for students. Drills should be announced in advance.
- Prior to drills, explain to students in a calm manner what will happen and why.
- Affirm that it is OK to feel however they are feeling, and remind students that emergencies are extremely rare and drills will help to keep them safe.
- Help students identify a favorite coping strategy to use in case they need to self-regulate during the drill.
- Obtain consent and inform families of upcoming drills so they can partner with you to help prepare children for drills.
- Utilize the student lesson plans found in the ALICE eLearning for additional resources to prepare for drills.

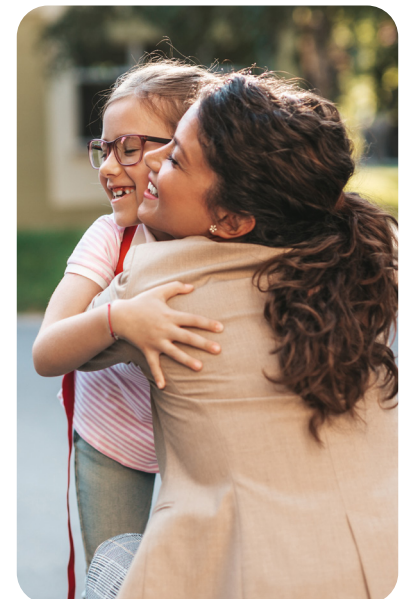


## During Drills for All Grade Levels

- Remember to stay calm. Students take cues from trusted adults.
- Keep an eye on students who appear to be in distress and provide additional support as you are able to do so.

## During Drills for All Grade Levels

- Debrief with students about the drill. Identify things that went well and areas to improve.
- Give students a chance to share their feelings about the drill. Share and reflect how you feel while affirming that drills help keep students safe.
- Allow students free time to complete a non-academic activity that releases stress before pivoting back to the books.
- Students may react with behaviors that are atypical. Be on the lookout for these and consult the school counselor if they persist.
- Inform family members if you notice unusual behavior and encourage them to be on the lookout for these behaviors at home.



## Preschool-Kindergarten

For students in preschool and kindergarten, ALICE drills should focus on listening to the directions of a trusted adult (i.e. teacher, classroom aide) and simple safety procedures. Teachers can instruct children to recognize the sound of the school's alarm system or PA and what to do when they hear it, such as lockdown. If possible, practice before the first drill. Teachers can also incorporate games and songs that help young children remember safety procedures in a low-stress and engaging way. Check out the *I'm Not Scared, I'm Prepared* student storybook and Classroom Activity and Idea Guide for additional tips.

## Early Elementary

In addition to the skills learned in preschool and kindergarten, students in early elementary can learn about the different types of emergencies that can occur and how to be a helper by following directions. Students learn about rally points and where the designated rally point is. Teachers can discuss ways students can stay safe in a variety of situations, including evacuation.

## Late Elementary

In addition to the skills learned in preschool-early elementary, late elementary students can begin to learn about utilizing response options during an emergency. Teachers can discuss available options with students and practice appropriate ways they can stay safe in each situation, such as using simple barricades to block doors. Students should be able to identify the best evacuation route, which may be through a first-floor window, and know the rally point.

## Middle School

For middle school students, you can build upon the concepts learned in preschool-grade 5. Teachers can discuss additional options with students, such as creating more complex barricades by stacking chairs or desks against the door. Middle school students can also learn about the distraction technique, which encourages the use of classroom items or loud noises to distract an intruder in their classroom. Advanced evacuation techniques can also be introduced.

## High School

High school students can build upon the learning in preschool – grade 8. For example, they can learn how to break a window and evacuate safely, as well as advanced distraction strategies. Students should not be encouraged to try to disarm or otherwise control an active assailant. Instead, they should be advised to get as far away from the conflict as possible when it is safe to do so. Research shows this is the most likely way to avoid physical harm during a violent critical incident.

It is important to note that the ALICE training® should be tailored to the specific needs of each school, classroom, and student. Training should be conducted in a way that is age- and ability-appropriate, sensitive, and empowering. Drills should never create unnecessary fear or anxiety in students. By following these guidelines, schools can ensure that their ALICE Training® and drills are effective and help to keep students and staff safe in the event of an armed assailant or another violent critical incident.

**Our ALICE e-learning program has lessons you can do with students in all grades to help them learn these key concepts.**

# Coping Strategies



## Balloon Breathing

Have students practice breathing by imagining their belly is a balloon they have to blow up and then contract.

## Visualization

Students can recall a favorite place. As they picture the place, have them imagine themselves there.

## Manipulatives

Quiet manipulatives and/or fidget items, such as stress balls, putty, or pieces of fabric can be used.

## Set a course for zero incidents.

Take a layered, holistic approach to school safety with Navigate360 technology, training, and guidance to move you closer to your goal.

Contact us today.

