

Remaking Crisis
Communications

Presented By
PREMO
CONSULTANTS

BEFORE THE CRISIS

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MAKE YOUR FRIENDS BEFORE YOU NEED THEM

Establish proactive relationships with:

- Media
- Community leaders and officials
- Public safety officials

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SET COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

- How up-to-date is your website?
- How are people treated when they call?
- How active and engaging is your social media?
- How is your community notified of school events? Timely fashion?
- Do you include your staff in communication before it goes out to your community?

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IDENTIFY YOUR RESPONSE TEAM

- Identify who will respond in a crisis, including communications representatives
- Define their roles, duties and functions
- Get back-up communications support for sending emergency notifications and updating your website and social media accounts

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BEST PRACTICE RESPONSE TEAM

- Superintendent and heads of schools
- PIO (2)
- School safety chief and officer (2)
- Facilities/operations manager (2)
- Technology manager (2)
- Business manager
- Receptionist (2)
- Parent (2)
- Student (2)

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MAKE SURE THEY'RE TRAINED

- Protocols
 - Who is doing what and in which circumstances?
- Messaging
 - What is the official position and who is delivering this message?
- How to use all communication platforms
- Media training for select liaisons
- Training is ongoing, especially with transition

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THE PLAN

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SETUP PROTOCOLS

- Know your communication channels and who manages which outlets
- Have all login information, passwords, and contact information readily available
- Know your initial spokesperson and chain of command if the situation escalates
 - Head of the school likely busy handling the actual situation

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ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

- What does your school have access to?
 - Emergency Response App
 - Phone
 - Text
 - Email
 - Website
 - Social Media
- All login information should be readily available
- Who is trained on these platforms (no matter the time of day)?

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PLAN MESSAGING

Planning your message ahead of time buys you time and eliminates confusion

Should be thorough, easy to navigate and regularly updated

- Social media hoaxes and rumors
- Data breaches, leaks, FERPA violations
- Employee arrests for non-school related matters
- Inappropriate relationships between employees and students
- Teacher and student walkouts
- School board meeting protests
- Controversies during school-sponsored field trips
- Bus accidents and wrecks with students on board, no injuries
- Student fights with law enforcement response, student arrests
- Sexual assault, sexual harassment between students, between adults and students
- Inappropriate discipline of a student
- Weird weather
- School board member matters

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RETHINKING MESSAGE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

- Schools are getting creative with the many forms of new media available
- Potential Target Audiences:
 - Students
 - Parents
 - Community at large
- Should be taken into consideration when planning messaging

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EDUCATE YOUR COMMUNITY ON WHAT TO EXPECT

- Make sure that all stakeholders are aware of your crisis communications plan BEFORE a crisis occurs
 - Everyone knows how, when and where to receive communications and updates in a crisis
 - Atlanta school shooting example:
 - Tremendous job at being informative and responsive on Twitter, but parents didn't know to check the platform for updates
- Share the link to your crisis hub landing page - encourage families to bookmark it for easy access during a crisis
- Test your emergency response system

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WHAT NOW?

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PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

- Ongoing training
- Required training with transition
- Run drills regularly (planned and unplanned)
- Work with a third party to audit the Plan and response time
- Never stop improving the Plan

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THANK YOU!

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