

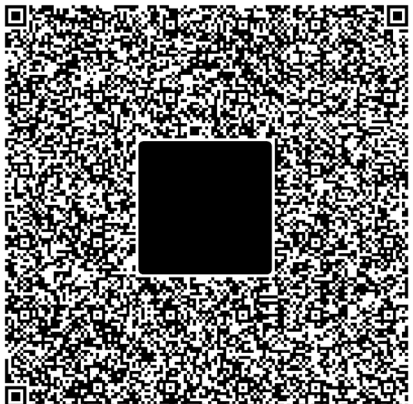


# 107<sup>th</sup> Summer Meeting

Salt Lake City – 2026

*Emergency Action Planning  
&  
Risk Management  
for  
Performing Arts & Activities*

Zac Stevenson - CMAA: New Mexico Activities Association





***Follow along!***



[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rAhDFE3Y7l7mo7lk8\\_BlQ1W-MxgWrjd0D/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rAhDFE3Y7l7mo7lk8_BlQ1W-MxgWrjd0D/view?usp=drive_link)





# **Today's Takeaways**

- **Every Performing Arts venue needs a customized Emergency Action Plan.**
- **Plans must be practiced - not just written.**
- **Preparation, communication, and clearly defined roles save lives when emergencies occur.**





# Event Management and the Fourteen Legal Duties

- 1) **PLANNING**
- 2) **Supervision**
- 3) Selection/Training Staff
- 4) Technique Instruction
- 5) Warnings
- 6) **Safe Environment**
- 7) Protective Equipment
- 8) Evaluating Conditioning
- 9) Evaluating Injury
- 10) Matching/Equating Participants
- 11) **Medical Assistance**
- 12) **Emergency Response Plan**
- 13) Safe Transportation
- 14) Disclosures



<https://nfhs.org/stories/essential-legal-duties-for-athletics-directors-and-coaching-staff>





# Liability

If an incident occurred at your event, and someone is injured, be assured you would be asked or legally challenged about:

- \* ***Assessments***
- \* ***Plans***
- \* ***Did you practice the plans?***
- \* ***Post Event Evaluation of Plans***



It can no longer be assumed that a successful defense will be:

- *“It was not foreseeable.”*
- *“We cannot afford more supervisors.”*





# Event Management: Standards of Responsibility

- Event administrator as “content expert”
- Imagining the WCS (Worst Case Scenario)
- Foreseeability (law of tort) – “If you could have known, you should have known.”
- Elements of Negligence
  - Duty
  - Breach
  - Causation
  - Injury





# Emergency Planning for Worst Case Scenarios

## Anticipate Types of Emergencies that Occur at Events

- Fire
- Bomb Threat
- Contact Emergency
- Crowd Disturbance
- Parking/Traffic Problem
- Active Shooter Scenario
- Medical Emergency (Injury)
- Medical Emergency (Illness)
- Weather Emergency
- Equipment/Lighting Failure
- Elevator/Escalator Problem
- Bomb Explosion Scenario





# Event Safety Planning Considerations

- Personnel & Event Managers
- Event Access Control & Spectator Policies
- Design & Configuration of the Event/Facility
- Event-Day Implementation & Execution of the Plan
- Addressing Communication Issues in Event Security
- Developing an Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Addressing the Special Needs of the Disabled
- Assessing Liability Insurance Needs for the Event





# Personnel Issues / Event Managers

- Job Descriptions: Define duties of the event managers, faculty supervisors, ticket takers, ushers, security, first-aid personnel, etc.
- Chain of Command: Define who reports to who and who has decision-making power to resolve crisis situations.
- Training for Personnel: Pre-event procedures, spectator behavior policies, event procedures, emergency procedures, and post-event procedures must be communicated to all event managers.





# Event Access Control

- Focus on Control at Entrances: Control must be exercised over entry to the facility and movement between activity areas depending on activity area zoning.
- Focus on Screening Entrants: Training regarding visual searches. Develop policy on searches/metal detectors/refusal of entry/re-entry.





# Spectator Policies

- Decision on what to prohibit: weapons, alcohol, drugs, and any other items with the potential to create problems.
- Media for Communication: Public address announcements, signs at entrances, signage, tickets, programs, event managers, social media, etc.
- On the Front Line: Training for event managers, procedures for reporting situations, consistent enforcement, up close & personal interaction, communication between event management personnel etc.





# Facility Configuration

- Public Area / Front of House (FOH): ticket booths, food/beverage stands, restrooms, drinking fountains, merchandise stands, and first-aid facilities/accommodations
- Performance Area: Open only to active performers, administrators. Includes dressing rooms, warm-up rooms, and other backstage areas
- Service Area: Open only to ticket sales workers, concession workers, and custodial workers. Includes ticket booths, concession stands, supply rooms, and storage areas
- Support Personnel Area: Open only to security, police, and medical personnel
- Parking Area: Designated for the particular event
- Closed Area: Off-limits to everyone at the event





# Performing Arts Venue Zones

- Stage/Performance Area: Restricted to cast, crew, and authorized personnel only. Includes fly space, wings, and trapdoors.
- Backstage/Green Room: Warm-up and holding areas; must have direct emergency egress.
- Orchestra Pit: Enclosed low-visibility area; requires dedicated evacuation path and AED access.
- Catwalks/Fly Space: Fall hazard zones; access restricted to trained technicians; hard-hat area during load-in/out.
- Loading Dock/Scene Shop: Contractor and crew only during build; must remain clear during performances.





# Self Safety Audit: The “Walk-Through”

## Sanitization and Cleanliness

- Public Areas
- Concessions
- Rest Rooms
- Capacity and Codes
- Walkways, entry gates, emergency access
- Seating and stairways
- Aisles and handrails
- Lighting – including parking lots and perimeter areas





# ADA

- Seating Locations & Access
- Accessibility of Entrance and Egress
- Curb Cuts, Ramps & Other Physical Modifications
- Policy Regarding Companion Animals
- Restroom Accessibility
- Water Fountain Accessibility
- Concession & Merchandising Access
- Emergency & Evacuation Procedures for the Disabled





# Stage & Technical Hazards

- **Rigging & Fly Systems:** Inspect counterweight systems before every performance. A dropped batten or piece of scenery is a life-safety event.
- **Stage Lighting:** Hot fixtures can ignite soft goods (curtains, scrims, costumes). Inspect for lamp placement and clearance.
- **Pyrotechnics & Special Effects:** Fog machines can trigger fire suppression systems. Flames and flash pots require a fire watch and fire suppression on standby.
- **Trapdoors & Raked Stages:** Mark all openings clearly. Assign a spotter when open. Raked decks increase fall risk.
- **Prop Weapons:** Blank firearms, stage knives, and replica weapons must be stored securely and inventoried before/after each performance.





# Pre-Show Safety Checklist

- Rigging inspection complete; no loose battens or fly lines
- All emergency exit signs illuminated; glow tape visible on all steps and pit edges
- AED location confirmed; first aid kit stocked and accessible backstage and FOH
- Fog machine / pyrotechnic clearance obtained; fire watch assigned if applicable
- Communication test complete: headsets, house PA, and radios all confirmed functional
- Child performer sign-in complete; supervision assignments confirmed
- **Show stop protocol reviewed with stage manager, board op, and house manager**
- **Post the completed checklist at the stage manager's station before every performance**





# Child Performer Safety

- **Adult supervision ratio:** A responsible adult must be assigned to each group of child performers backstage at all times
- **Restricted access:** No unauthorized adults permitted in backstage/dressing room areas. Implement a sign-in/sign-out system for all minors
- **Reunification:** In an emergency, child performers must be reunited with parents/guardians via the same reunification protocol used for student events
- **Safe Sport:** All adults working with child performers should be Safe Sport certified ([www.NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com))
- **Dressing room safety:** Same-gender supervision required. No photography permitted in dressing areas





# Medical Emergencies and Intervention

**Performing Arts participants share the same needs as Athletic Event participants:**

Personnel trained in specific skills

- First Aid
- CPR/AED
- Sudden cardiac arrest
- Heat illness prevention (marching band – high heat events)
- [www.NFHSLearn.com](http://www.NFHSLearn.com)



Best practice – Certified Athletic Trainers





# Medical Emergencies: Tools of the Trade

- Venue-specific emergency plans for the entire facility
  - Performance areas
  - Spectator areas
  - Public areas
  - Parking lots
- Strategically located AED's
- Certified Personnel
- The importance of practice

**First-Responder Contacts**

EMS Services: 555-444-1212

Fire Dept: 555-444-3434

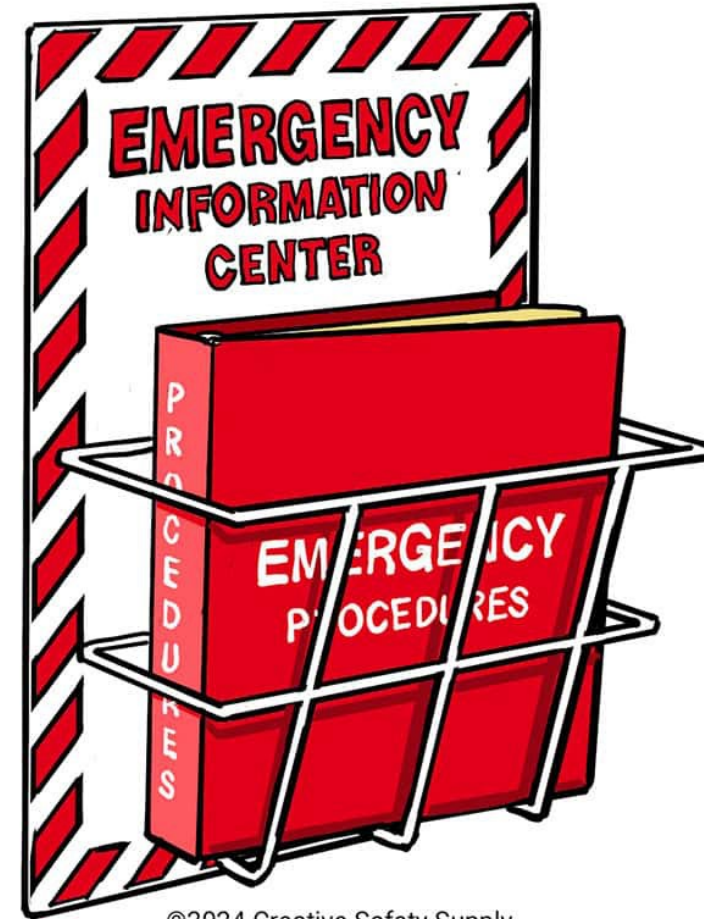
Security: 555-444-5656

Police: 555-444-7878

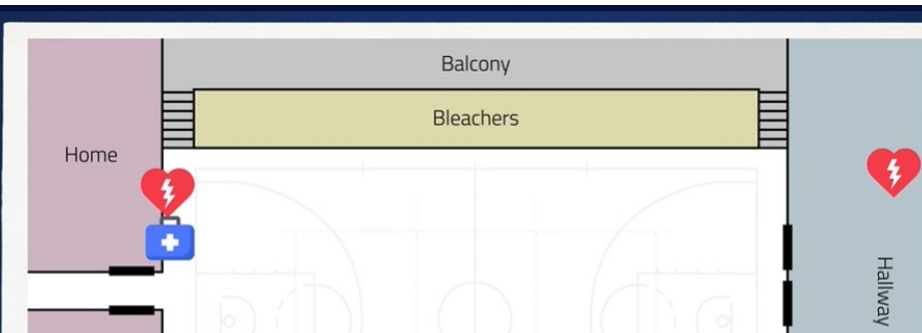
Northwest  
360 E Main St

School Address  
510 W Cherry St

Meeting Location  
South Entrance - Cherry St



©2024 Creative Safety Supply





# Medical Emergencies: Performers

- Performer collapses on stage: Stage manager initiates show stop protocol. House lights up immediately. Do not move performer unless necessary for airway
- Heat illness: Performers under hot stage lighting in full costume/makeup are at elevated risk. Designate a cool-down area backstage stocked with water and cooling towels
- Fall injury: Orchestra pit falls and falls from elevated platforms are common. Ensure trained personnel are present for every performance
- Panic attack / mental health crisis: Designate a quiet recovery space backstage. Train stage managers in basic de-escalation techniques
- Allergic reaction: Costume materials, adhesives, and stage makeup can trigger reactions. Obtain and keep on file any known allergies for all cast members





# Blackout & Power Loss Protocol

- Theaters present a unique blackout risk: when stage lighting cuts, the house can be in complete darkness
- Emergency lighting: Battery-backed emergency lights must illuminate all exit paths, aisle ways, and stage egress routes. Test monthly
- Glow tape: Apply phosphorescent tape to all stairs, pit edges, stage steps, and exit door handles. Inspect before every performance
- PA backup: Ensure the public address system has an independent power source to deliver emergency announcements during outages
- ***Do not allow audience movement until emergency lighting is confirmed active***





# Show Stop Protocol

- “**Show Stop**” is a deliberate halt of a live performance due to a safety emergency
- Who calls it: Stage manager has full authority to stop the show at any time. No approval from director or administration required
- How to communicate: Stage manager calls “Stop the show” over headset (Clear-Com). Board operator brings house lights to full immediately
- PA Announcement Script: “Ladies and gentlemen, we need to pause the performance briefly. Please remain in your seats and await further instructions”
- Reunification: Performers remain backstage under supervision until “all clear” or evacuation is ordered
- ***Practice this drill at least once per production cycle with full technical crew***





# Event Safety Communication

## Basic Radio Usage Rules For Event Security:

- Radios should be for event-related transmissions only
- Transmissions should be concise and to the point
- Radios should be carried in holsters, not by hand
- Clear description of issue – ensure clear understanding





# Communication Systems in Performing Arts

- Headset / Intercom (Clear-Com): Primary communication for stage manager and crew. All key personnel must be on-headset during performance
- God Mic / House PA: Used for direct communication with audience. Pre-write emergency announcement scripts. Test before every performance
- Radios: House managers, front-of-house staff, and security should use two-way radios separate from the stage intercom
- Cell phone policy: Designate a secondary contact number for 911 calls backstage and at the front-of-house position
- Communication drill: Conduct a full communication chain test (headset to PA to radio) before every opening night





# *And the Band Played On...*







# Weather Emergency Planning

- Two-way radios
- US Weather Service Radio
- Weather apps
- Lightning detectors
- Script for announcements
- Marked exits





# Weather Emergency Planning

- Emergency Lighting
- Evacuation plans
- Options for shelter
- Role of supervisors
  - Stay above the crowd

**5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT HAVING AN EVACUATION PLAN**

1 Find out if you would need to evacuate. Don't travel hundreds of miles, only far enough away from the evacuation area.

2 Plan your evacuation route. Have an alternate route.

3 Leave when ordered to so do. Do not wait.

4 Communicate your plan with someone not in the storm's path.

5 Plan for your pets. Most local shelters do not permit them.

For more Hurricane Safety Information, visit [weather.gov/hurricanesafety](http://weather.gov/hurricanesafety)





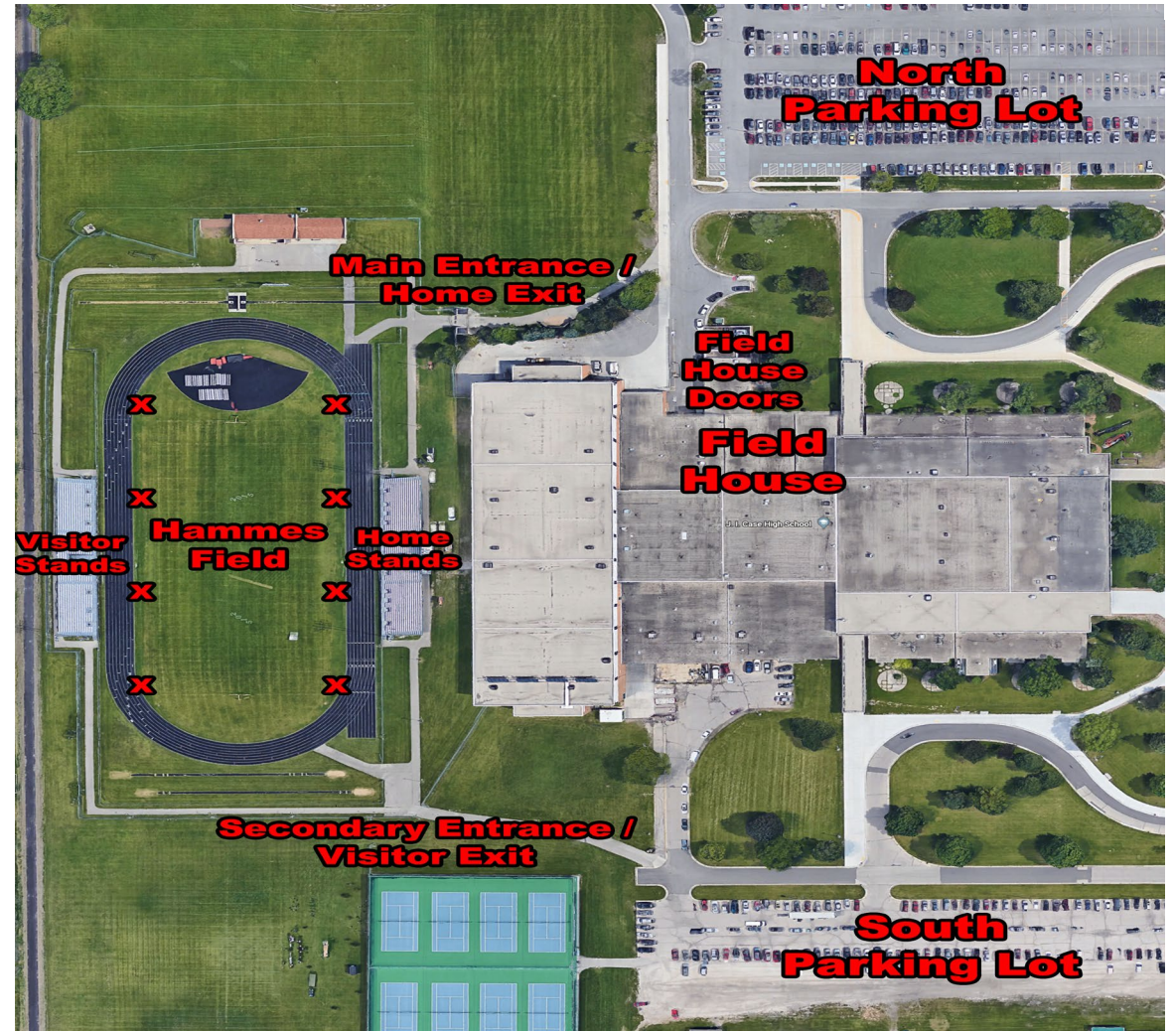
# Planning for the WCS





At team meetings use a diagram of the venue to discuss scenarios:

- What?
- Where?
- When?
- How?



# Action Strategies

## Lockout



## Lockdown



## Evacuation





# Exit Management: Spectators

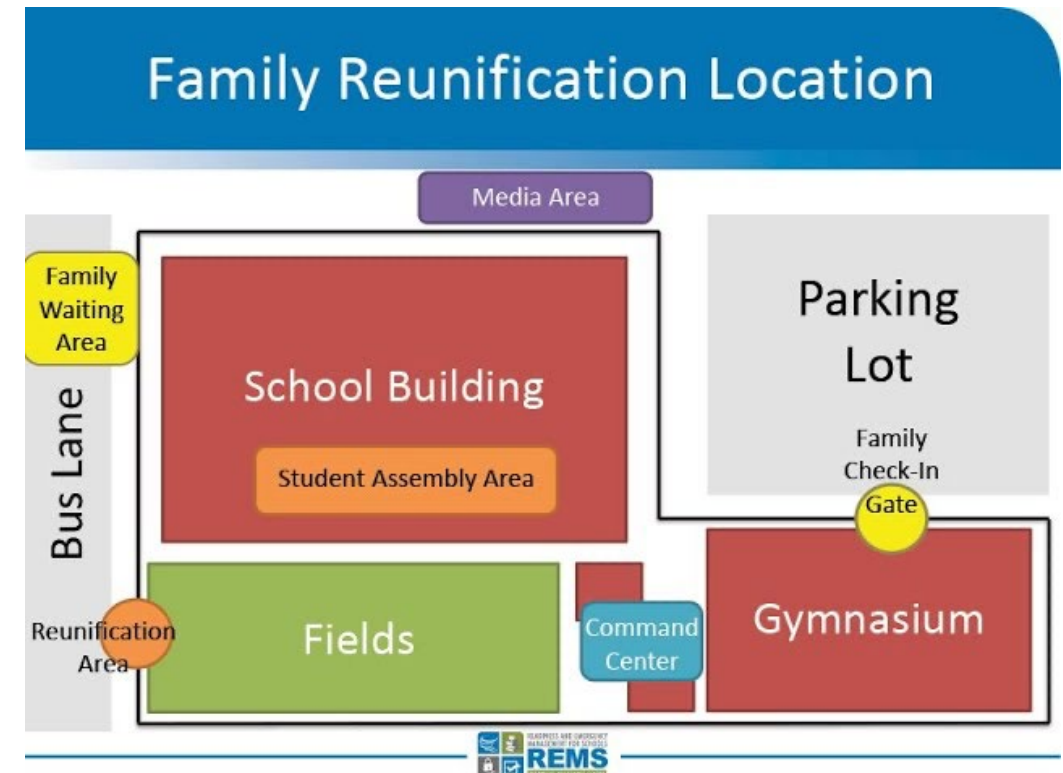
- Control both ends
- Ensure all exit doors are not blocked
- Exit doors should open in the direction of escape
- Exit doors should be confirmed operational
- Ensure there are no trip hazards





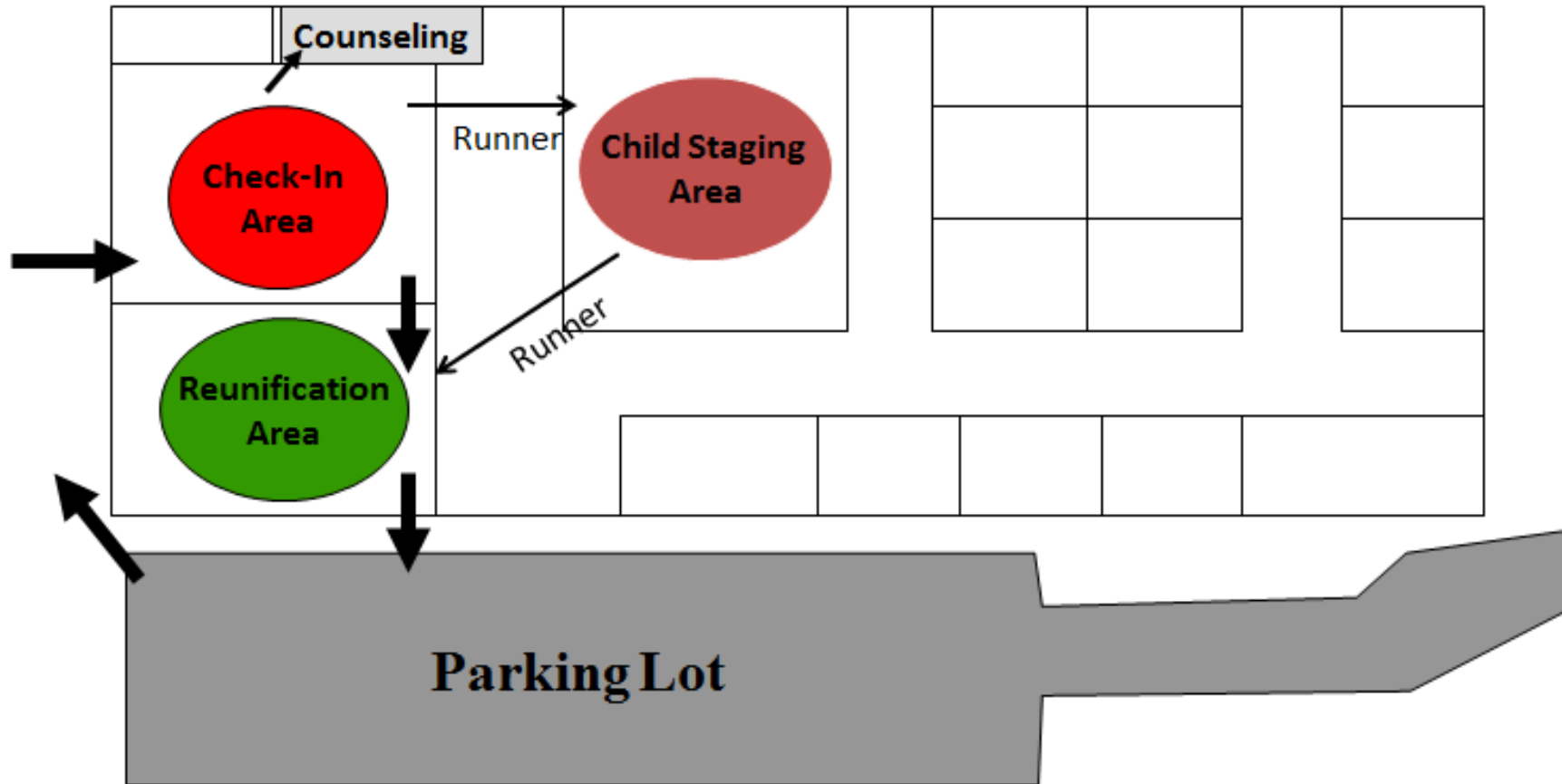
# Reunification Planning

- Unites children with their parent/guardian after an incident occurs and a normal release is not appropriate
- Possible reasons to use:
  - Occupants moved from original facility
  - People are missing, injured, or deceased due to incident
  - Community affected by incident & parents may be unable to get there or are severely delayed





# Sample Reunification Plan





# Emergency Preparedness

- Contact information for emergency response personnel, agencies & institutions must be compiled in advance
- Access for emergency personnel planned in advance & communicated
- Evacuation procedures planned in advance & both training/rehearsal conducted for event personnel
- Performers v Spectators
  - Child Performers
  - Musicians in the Pit
  - Guests





# Incident Reports

- Report altercations, injuries, actions
- Perspectives of multiple observers
- Report filed with supervisor no later than next morning
- No surprise calls from the media

## EMPLOYEE INCIDENT REPORT FORM

### INDIVIDUAL FILING REPORT

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### INCIDENT DETAILS

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  AM  PM

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the Incident:

### PARTIES INVOLVED

1. Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification:  Driver's License No. \_\_\_\_\_  Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification:  Driver's License No. \_\_\_\_\_  Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification:  Driver's License No. \_\_\_\_\_  Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Identification:  Driver's License No. \_\_\_\_\_  Passport No. \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_





# Event Security Resources

**National Center for Spectator Sports Safety & Security** [NCS4]

<https://ncs4.usm.edu>

**Safe Sport Zone** [Jay Hammes]

[www.safesportzone.com](http://www.safesportzone.com)

**International Association of Venue Managers** [IAVM]

[www.iavm.org](http://www.iavm.org)

**Gameday Security Magazine** [Athletic Business Free Online Publication]

[www.athleticbusiness.com/gameday-security/](http://www.athleticbusiness.com/gameday-security/)

**National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers** [NASPAA]

[www.naspaa.net](http://www.naspaa.net)





[www.safesportzone.com](http://www.safesportzone.com)



## AFTER SCHOOL EVENT EMERGENCY PLANS

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES	PAGE 1
FIRE	PAGE 2
SEVERE WEATHER	PAGE 3
SHOTS FIRED INSIDE	PAGE 4
SHOTS FIRED OUTSIDE	PAGE 5
SUSPECTED/OBSERVED WEAPON ON PREMISES	PAGE 6
SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR	PAGE 7
CHILD ABUSE	PAGE 8
PERSONNEL HARASSMENT	PAGE 9
POWER OUTAGE	PAGE 10
MISSING CHILD	PAGE 11
CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES	PAGE 12
SEXUAL HARASSMENT / SEXUAL ASSAULT	PAGE 13
TACTICAL SITUATION / FLASH MOB	PAGE 14
BOMB THREATS	PAGE 15
SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE	PAGE 16





nfhslearn.com/courses/emergency-action-planning-for-afterschool-programs



NFHS.org NFHSLearn.com

Zac Stevenson

Search our Products

DASHBOARD NFHSLearn FOR YOU USER LOOKUP HELP

COURSES FOR

Coaches Students Parents Administrators Officials Performing Arts Featured

Back to Courses



# Emergency Action Planning for Afterschool Programs

Elective Course

Recommended for: Coach, Administrator, and Performing Arts

Share on: Facebook X

Get Course(s) For

Myself

Distribution

Select State

New Mexico

Start Learning

- ✓ Approved for 1 Clock Hour
- ✓ Certificate of Completion
- ✓ Additional Resources

Every learner needs an account. Certificate names can't be changed in an account with a completed course.





# Leadership **EAPs** Takeaways

- **Educate** – Share these concepts with your performing arts leaders.
- **Assess** – Encourage every venue to conduct a safety walk-through.
- **Prepare** – Stress each venue has a site-specific Emergency Action Plan.
- **Practice** – Promote regular drills and communication exercises.





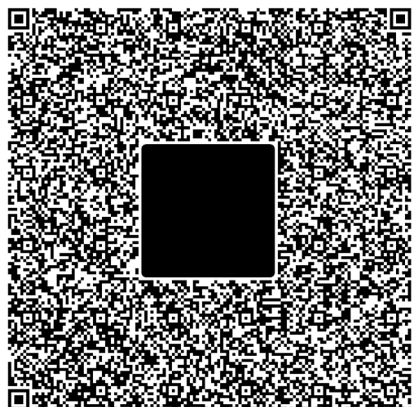
# Discussion & Sharing Of Ideas

**RESOURCES**



<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13zTqAj-nzPihYqH7pkRWW0UyH-vv2jLa?usp=sharing>

Contact info



**Zac Stevenson - CMAA: New Mexico Activities Association**

[zac@nmact.org](mailto:zac@nmact.org)

**616-581-3384**

