

## Ways that parents/guardians can help in an emergency...

- Explain to family members why schools have emergency plans.
- Provide current emergency contact names and phone numbers at the beginning of each school year. Inform the school of any changes to emergency contact information.
- **Do not** call the school in emergency situations. Phone lines must remain open for staff to communicate with emergency personnel and families.
- **Do not** come to the school site during lockdown situations because it is not safe to do so. Your presence may complicate the emergency response.
- **No Cell Phone Use** — Many students carry cell phones. While they are handy tools for students to communicate with their parents, during an emergency, they can become a problem. In case of an emergency, students will be required by staff to shut off their cell phones because:
  - A sudden, massive increase in cell phone use in one area can cause the network to fail. In recent school emergencies in other provinces, the increased volume of cell phone traffic caused the network to crash compromising the effectiveness of emergency responders who rely on their cell phones to do their work.
  - Incomplete or inaccurate information may be shared compromising the efforts to resolve the emergency.

In emergency situations parents and guardians are kept informed through local radio and television newscasts. The major media source will always be 900 CKBI radio.

If you have any questions about what is in this brochure, or would like more information on your school's safety plan, please contact the principal at your school or Superintendent of Schools, John Schultz (306-764-1571).

A copy of this brochure can be found online at <http://www.srsd119.ca/parentinformation.html>



# Safe Schools

*Working together for everyone*



# What Happens in a School Emergency?

## A Guide for Parents



The staff at Saskatchewan Rivers' schools are doing their best to work proactively in an attempt to eliminate potential threats to student safety before they emerge. However, it is prudent to plan effective and efficient responses in case an emergency does arise.

### School Protocols

All schools in the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division have clearly defined emergency procedures. It is impossible to predict what emergency will arise so schools establish policies and protocols to deal with a wide range of emergent situations.

Our school staff works directly with the Prince Albert Police Service, RCMP, and Prince Albert Fire Department who provide us with advice on the best way to respond to a potential threat. They are the experts!

The main objective in all crisis interventions is to:

- Make sure everyone is safe;
- Make sure schools have the supports they need;
- Ensure timely and accurate communication during and after the incident;
- Bring the incident to a peaceful solution; and
- Ensure appropriate debriefing and follow-up.

### School Safety Plans

Prevention is the best defense against a crisis occurring. That is why we prepare safety plans and why we practice drills in our schools. All schools have developed safety plans for many different scenarios. In each instance the situation is assessed, a level of response is identified, and action is taken. One common prevention scenario is a "lockdown".

### Lockdowns

An emergency may prevent the safe evacuation of a school and require a specific response to protect students and staff in the building. In this instance, staff institute a school lockdown. Depending on the danger two different lockdown levels may be used.

- A perimeter lockdown is used when an emergency/crisis exists near or at the school and requires an enhanced level of safety. School exterior doors are locked to ensure that no individuals leave or enter the building. Individuals are only allowed to exit and enter via the front doors of the school with the approval of school administration. This could be for extreme weather or other threatening situations.
- A general or full lockdown alerts staff and students that an imminent danger exists inside or outside the school. School personnel lock classroom doors and windows. Students and staff move away from windows and doors and remain in their classrooms until directed by emergency personnel that it is safe to leave.

Our school division has plans to address other emergencies such as school closures due to watermain breaks, severe weather, power outages and other situations of emergency. All schools have an "alternate" safe location.

