

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center

Teen CERT Webinar Closed Captioning Transcript

Audio link: <https://1sourceevents.adobeconnect.com/p9pjzau7zah>

Greetings, everyone. My name is Akshay Jakatdar, and I would like to welcome you all to the webinar, "Teen CERT: Enhancing School Emergency Management Through Youth Engagement and Preparedness." Thank you for joining us today.

This webinar will provide an overview of FEMA's Teen Community Emergency Response Team, or Teen CERT, program, and explore how schools and districts are using Teen CERT to support their overall emergency preparedness and response efforts.

After providing an overview of the program, we will provide an in-depth example of how one school district has developed a Teen CERT semester program. This webinar will also include a discussion of Teen CERT and the youth preparedness resources.

I would now like to take a moment to introduce our presenters for today: Mr. Dante Randazzo of FEMA and Ms. Susan Graves of Oregon's Lincoln County School District.

Mr. Dante Randazzo is the program specialist with the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Division, ICPD, and currently serves as the National Lead for the CERT program. In this role, he promotes the efforts of states, local, territorial, and tribal programs; coordinates strategic planning, develops new content and curricula, and facilitates technical assistance. As an ICPD team member, he has also managed FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards program, helped produce a series of community preparedness webinars, and supported individual and community preparedness efforts in each of the 10 FEMA regions. Prior to joining FEMA, Mr. Randazzo was an emergency management associate for Georgetown University, where he established a campus CERT program that offered training to staff, faculty, and students at Georgetown and several other universities in the District of Columbia. He was also senior consultant for BAE Systems, working in support of FEMA's national preparedness assessment and individual and community preparedness divisions.

Ms. Susan Graves has served Lincoln County School District on the Oregon coast as safety coordinator since 2001. She oversees all aspects of emergency preparedness and management for 17 public schools and facilities that serve more than 5,000 students and 500 staff. Her collaborative work frequently involves multi-agency full-scale training exercises as well as presentations for school administration, staff, students, partnering agencies, and community groups. Mrs. Graves is a nationally recognized subject matter expert on school emergency management, earthquake and tsunami preparedness, and Teen CERT. She has served as a trainer with both the U.S. Department of Education and FEMA. In addition to these accomplishments, Ms. Graves has developed a

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nationally recognized Teen CERT program, which she will be presenting on today.

Let's now take a look at our agenda.

During this one-hour webinar, we will begin with a brief introduction of the Federal guidance, which will be presented by Dr. Amy Banks of the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Banks works with ED's Office of Safe and Healthy Students' Center for School Preparedness, and focuses on K-12 school and higher education emergency management. She will be followed by Mr. Randazzo, who will provide an overview of CERT and Teen CERT, and describe a few Teen CERT case examples. Next, Ms. Graves will provide an in-depth overview of her exemplary Teen CERT program in Oregon's Lincoln County School District. The webinar will conclude with a discussion of Teen CERT resources, a dedicated Q&A session, and a Web chat, which will take place on the TA Center's community of practice.

Before we get started, let's review some quick tips to help ensure you are able to hear the audio, ask questions, download files, and request technical assistance during this event. To ask a question, use the Q&A tool on the lower right side of the screen to send your message to the facilitator. Questions will be answered in the order in which they appear and as time permits. At this time, we invite you to download a copy of the presentation slides, as well as an accompanying resource list, using the download box in the upper right-hand corner of your screen. The resource list contains information about resources available from FEMA and other Federal agencies, as well as a customizable toolkit for practitioners developed by Ms. Graves for use in Lincoln County School District. Please click the "Download Files" button to save a copy of these resources to your desktop.

As a reminder, there is no dial-in for this webinar. Audio is available via the link provided. If you are experiencing difficulty hearing the audio stream, please turn up your computer speaker volume at this time. Finally, if you experience any technical difficulties during the webinar, please contact Kayla Baker at KBaker@sourceinternational.com. You may also request technical assistance using the Q&A tool. Questions are viewable to the webinar moderator only.

Now that we have that covered, let's begin today's presentation. At this time, I am very pleased to introduce Dr. Amy Banks.

Thank you, Akshay. Before we began discussing Teen CERT, we want to provide you with some information on developments from the Federal level on school emergency management that will help inform our discussion today. On January 16, 2013, after the events in Newtown, Connecticut, President Obama put forth his "Now Is The Time" plan. This plan sets forth four major objectives to protect our children and communities by reducing gun violence. One of these objectives was to make schools safer.

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To do so, the president's plan called for every school to have a comprehensive emergency plan. In support of this effort, he tasked the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice, Health and Human Services, and Homeland Security to develop guidelines for such plans.

As such, they collaborated and produced the guide for developing high-quality emergency management plans for schools, institutions of higher education, and houses of worship. You can view the full "Now Is The Time" plan at the URL that you see on your screen.
[<http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/preventing-gun-violence>]

So, together, these six agencies drew upon the respective areas of expertise in these fields and customized these recommendations for schools. As a result, in June 2013, the administration released the guides for developing high-quality emergency operations plan for schools, institutions of higher education or IHEs, and houses of worship. These guides align and build upon years of emergency planning work by the Federal government, and are also the first joint products of DHS, DOJ, ED, and HHS on this topic.

These agencies are now sharing this information with their respective state and local entities, and everyone is being encouraged to use the same process and the same guidance. Not only is this the first-ever collaboration among Federal agencies in this manner, but it is also designed to promote aligned collaboration all the way down to the local level.

You can access these guides by way of the REMS TA Center Website that you see provided. [<http://rems.ed.gov>] The TA Center Website has also recently been redesigned to showcase this new Federal guidance and to provide the important information and a host of supporting resources to the field in multiple ways. In addition, the TA Center provides access to key supporting topics such as information on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, better known as an FERPA; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, better known as HIPAA; school climate and emergencies; preparing for active shooter situations; and much more.

PPD-8 is a presidential policy directive, and it describes the nation's approach to preparedness, as well as defines preparedness around five distinct mission areas: prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. They represent an evolution in our collective understanding of national preparedness, and are based on the lessons learned from terrorist attacks, hurricanes, school incidents, and a variety of other experiences.

Just to define those mission areas briefly, "prevention" means the capabilities necessary to avoid, deter, or stop an imminent crime of threatened or actual mass casualty incidents.

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“Protection” means the capabilities to secure schools against acts of violence and man-made or natural disasters.

“Mitigation” means the capabilities necessary to eliminate or reduce loss of life and property damage by lessening the impact of an event or emergency.

“Response” means the capabilities necessary to stabilize an emergency once it has happened or is certain to happen in an unpreventable way.

“Recovery” means the capabilities necessary to assist schools affected by an event or emergency, restoring the learning environment.

These mission areas generally align with the three timeframes associated with an incident: before, during, and after.

In the “before” timeframe, the majority of prevention, protection, and mitigation activities generally occur before an event, although these three mission areas do have ongoing activities that occur throughout the life of the incident. “During” refers to those response activities that occur during the event. “After” refers to recovery activities that can begin during an incident and occur after an incident. To help avoid any confusion of these terms and allow for ease of reference, we generally use the terms before, during, and after.

As we will hear in just a few moments, Teen CERT enables high school students to contribute to each of the five preparedness missions. From peer-to-peer prevention activities, to responding to emergency events in order to ultimately increase the overall level of preparedness of the school.

As the school guide explains, the following principles are key to developing a comprehensive school emergency operations plan, or EOP, that addresses a range of threats and hazards. First, the plan must be supported by leadership. At the district and school levels, senior-level officials can help the planning process by demonstrating strong support for the planning team.

They can emphasize the importance of getting buy-in from a variety of leadership levels throughout the process, as well as at the end, where leadership needs to sign off.

Second, effective planning builds on comprehensive assessment of the school community. Information gathered through assessment is used to customize a plan to the school level, taking into consideration the school’s unique circumstances and resources.

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A comprehensive school emergency planning process must take into account a wide range of possible threats and hazards that may or may not impact the school, as well as address safety needs before, during, and after an incident.

And fourth, planning provides for the access and functional needs of the entire school community, which includes students, staff, and visitors; children, adults, and seniors that might be there; individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs including language, transportation, and medical needs; those from religiously, racially, and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and people with limited English proficiency. This particular planning principle is important in the context of CERT.

By including teenagers in the planning process, through programs like Teen CERT, the unique needs of children and teenagers can be better understood by the planning team. This said, school EOPs must account for incidents that may occur before, during, and after the school day, as well as on and off the campus—for example, on a school bus, on a sporting event, or field trip. This could occur also in outside activities such as during recess or physical education. Before and after school could be on the school bus, during gathering times where students gather immediately before or after school. After the school day could be at an after-school athletic program, clubs, rehearsals, school dances, or weekend sporting events. Field trips can occur during the school day, and they can also be extended trips or out of town.

Six, creating and revising the model school EOP is done by following a collaborative process. This guide provides a process plan format and content guidance that is flexible enough for use by all school emergency planning teams. If a planning team also uses templates, it must first evaluate usefulness to ensure that the tools don't undermine the collaborative initiative and the collectively shared plan.

Also, the guidance recommends a six step planning process for developing a high-quality plan. That includes step one, forming a collaborative planning team. Step two, understanding the situation. Step three, determining goals and objectives. Step four, plan development identifying courses of action. Step five, plan preparation review and approval. And step six, plan implementation and maintenance.

The school or district's planning team can work through these steps to develop the EOP, to perform a comprehensive review of their existing EOP, and to conduct reviews of their plan's component parts.

These steps are sequenced to support this collaborative process that invites multiple perspectives for information gathering, prioritizing, goal setting, execution of specific activities, and evaluations. The process is intended to be cyclical and ongoing.

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Teens that participate in Teen CERT can participate in all of these steps. The school guide recommends that student representatives be included in the core planning team that is described in step one. Student representatives who participate in Teen CERT would be highly equipped to contribute to the planning team and to the planning activities that are described in steps two through five: determining threats and hazards; developing goals, objectives, and courses of action for addressing those threats; as well as writing and reviewing the completed plan.

Additionally, Teen CERT students can also help in the training and exercises that are described in step six. More specifically, they can help train other students on components of the EOP and play a role in various exercises.

Okay. Now, let's turn our attention to the specifics of the CERT program and Teen CERT in particular. I am very pleased at this time to turn this presentation over to Mr. Dante Randazzo and Ms. Sue Graves. Dante.

Thank you very much, Amy. I would also like to thank the Department of Education for hosting us today, and also thank all the participants that are on the line. We appreciate you taking time out of your day to listen to our presentation about team preparedness and youth preparedness and Teen CERT in general.

I am very pleased to be here and always happy to talk about CERT and especially Teen CERT. What I am going to do is provide a quick overview of CERT in general before we get into Teen CERT. Several of you on the line today may already be familiar with the CERT program, so I ask you to bear with me. For those unfamiliar, the CERT program trains and organizes teams of volunteers in order to be able to assist their families, their neighbors, their coworkers, their fellow students, and even strangers during a widespread emergency when professional responders may simply not be able to get to everyone who needs assistance as soon as they need it.

Generally, volunteer teams are asked to perform basic response activities, which allows professional responders to focus on more complex task. In addition a role in emergencies, CERT teams of volunteers can also be very effective in preparing the communities for disasters. The rationale behind CERT is it is a very common sense program. People want to help during disasters and during emergencies. They have a natural inclination to help. Anytime you see a major disaster there are always Good Samaritans who arrive on the scene and want to be able to provide assistance. And they can save lives.

The impetus for the CERT program was the Mexico City earthquake in 1985, where about 10,000 people lost their lives; however, untrained volunteers were able to save about 700 people. Unfortunately, 100 of those volunteers died themselves attempting to help. What the Los Angeles Fire

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Department, which started the CERT program, learned from that incident is that volunteers can be effective in saving lives, but can become hurt or killed themselves. So, while they can be effective, untrained volunteers may not be as effective as they might be or be able to act as safely as they might be without training. The emphasis of the CERT program is if we can provide training and harness that natural inclination to help others during a time of emergency or disaster, training can only make them more effective but also help ensure that they are acting in a way that is responsible and safe, reduces their risk, and keeps them out of harm's way, while still being able to render assistance where it is very much needed.

Since the initial CERT training was offered in 1986, nearly 30 years ago, it has spread throughout the country. Today there are over 2,500 local programs in every state and territory in the United States, as well as several programs in tribal nations throughout the country. We have trained over half a million people since then. The types of activities that CERT volunteers perform in support of their communities vary a great deal and largely depend upon what they are called to do by the local communities and the hazards that their community may face. Most CERT programs are sponsored by local fire departments; however, some are sponsored by police departments, emergency management agencies, public health departments, mayors' offices, college campuses, and even private businesses.

In terms of their activities, the range of what they do again varies quite a bit. They can do something as simple as residential or neighborhood checks, and that is something as simple as going door to door in your neighborhood and checking on your neighbors and making sure they are okay, seeing if they have any needs. Some CERT programs support shelters and emergency operations centers. Some support traffic and crowd management. Some provide information to the public, and then you have some that are more complex like debris removal, managing and processing supplies and donations, conducting evacuations. We get a lot of CERT programs that are called out to conduct missing person searches as well, and conducting initial damage assessments after disasters. Quite a wide range of activities that they do during disasters. Prior to emergencies, CERT programs are very active as well, conducting outreach booths, doing door-to-door outreach, again, providing instruction and community outlets via schools, faith-based organizations, places of work, participating in service projects like putting together emergency supply kits or installing smoke detectors, and also supporting planning exercises, and drills in the community, including those for neighborhood schools and businesses.

Just a quick overview, again, CERT volunteers are all trained in the basic CERT curriculum. In most communities, this training is offered by paramedics, firefighters, and other emergency management and first-responder personnel. This allows them to not only benefit from the CERT

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curriculum, but also from the insight and experiences of first responders themselves. And, because so often the CERT volunteers will be working in support of and alongside these professional responders, it allows them to really develop a relationship and a level of trust with these responders. The responders, because the responders have trained these volunteers themselves, they know what they are capable of, know what they can do. That really makes things a lot easier when a disaster actually happens and they are working together.

Sue, in her presentation, is going to be going into this curriculum a little more in-depth. We have eight basic units of curriculum: disaster preparedness, fire safety and utility control, two on disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, CERT organization-Incident Command System, so it helps CERT teams to be organized and leadership oriented in the field. Disaster psychology and terrorism are also units. The final unit is an exercise or simulation where CERT volunteers are able to put the skills they learned over the previous eight units to the test and process that.

Something that is really important throughout the curriculum, however—there are two themes that really are consistent throughout all nine units, and those are safety and teamwork. Safety is one of, if not the, core principle of the CERT program. Participants learn first and foremost how to protect themselves and how to limit their exposure to risk during emergencies. Rescuer safety is paramount, if for no other reason that if you are hurt yourself, how can you help others? The point of CERT is to make Good Samaritans and make volunteers an asset and to reduce the potential burden on professional responders without needing to be rescued themselves.

For Teen CERT itself, Teen CERT aims to train students in emergency preparedness and basic response to help ensure they have the skills needed to protect themselves and assist others during emergencies. Teen CERT can support a school's emergency operations plan, and assist emergency services personnel, and really CERT provides a service capacity to local first responders when needed, serving as eyes and ears at the school site. Something that is also particularly important and extends not just to Teen CERT but youth preparedness in general, is really their impressive capacity to take home lessons learned in the classroom and spread the preparedness message to their families.

Something that we have really learned through years of research is that a person might watch an ad on TV for buckling their seat belt and they may take action as a result of that. But something that is going to be far more effective than any PSA on buckling your seat belt is having your child next to you in the car and asking why you have not buckled your seat belt. Teens and youth can be really effective advocates for change. And obviously, in addition to affecting the adults in their lives, they are the future. We are trying to build a culture of preparedness in the

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United States, and if we can instill preparedness habits, knowledge, and skills in our nation's youth today, we will be a far more prepared and resilient nation tomorrow.

Just to provide a quick overview of the Teen CERT program, it does use the same curriculum as the basic training offered throughout the country. Something that we really emphasize with CERT, and I think it is effective for both adult and teen audiences is that, while it is largely in a lecture format, there is a great emphasis on hands-on training. Every unit has hands-on activities to develop that muscle memory and to get volunteers engaged. So, while there is a great deal of discussion and there is a great deal of knowledge that is being passed on to our participants, we really do emphasize the hands-on aspect of the training.

The Teen CERT program is intended for high school-aged participants. Safety first, I cannot emphasize that enough. We really do teach volunteers that if they are asked to be able to support their communities during a disaster that they put their own safety first. Training for our Teen CERT program, training and volunteer hours may qualify for a community service credit. There are even some Teen CERT programs at school that offer academic credits. You can take Teen CERT in addition to some other curriculum for academic credit, and there's more than one successful model. Teen CERT is not a one-size-fits-all approach by any means. Programs can be started in schools as part of community programs, through extracurricular groups, and they do not even have to be stand-alone programs. There are instances throughout the country where schools simply invite existing programs in the community to come to their schools and provide training not just to their students, but to their faculty and staff as well.

Before we go into examples, I know a benefit of the Teen CERT program is, in addition to the basic disaster response skills that all CERT participants learn, a lot of these youth that are involved in Teen CERT really build a lot of life skills that will benefit them throughout the rest of their lives, including leadership, teambuilding, discipline, critical thinking, decision-making, and giving back to the community. A lot of these skills will have broader applications in their careers and lives in general. They can really benefit them even after they graduate from high school and even after they move on from the CERT program. Just to illustrate what I was saying earlier about there being more than one successful model, there are quite a few. I will not get into all of the local examples listed here, but there really are several different ways that you can have a successful Teen CERT program.

For example, the Harvest Christian Academy CERT Club is based in Guam. That's sort of a school club, and their focus is on keeping students, faculty members, staff and their respective families safe in a disaster and to help them afterwards. The club basically exists as an after-school program in order to prepare participants for manmade and natural hazards.

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The Mid America Teen CERT program is another unique program. It is regional, so they provide training throughout several different counties in the state of Missouri. They also work very closely with the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts.

The Mississippi Youth Preparedness Initiative, this is really an interesting program. It's 10 weeks long, which is a little bit longer than the typical CERT curriculum. They also provide CPR and automated external defibrillator certification to the students who participate in that. Something that is really interesting about the MYPI program, the Mississippi Youth Preparedness Initiative program, is that they have a service project called Prep+6. As part of that, they develop emergency kits and communication plans not just for their family but also for six other families in their community. This really allows this fantastic ripple effect that allows a single student to affect and help prepare several families in their communities.

We also have the South Los Angeles Teen CERT Collaborative. This program is very unique—instead of being established in any one organization or school, it is a coalition of private, public, and nonprofit organizations that came together and wanted to make this training available to at-risk youth in South Los Angeles. Again, different businesses and organizations bringing different things to the table, getting the fire and police departments involved to provide training, and really providing a whole-community approach to engaging youth in something that is very constructive and positive.

The Texas School Safety Center has a youth preparedness camp. That is a summer camp, and so students will go and receive a full training in more of a summer camp environment. That is another option as well.

And then, you have listed here also the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District. That is a program that has actually incorporated a Teen CERT training program into all of its introductory public safety courses. So students learn the curriculum and practice the techniques with hands-on activities. They can be called upon to assist with school district safety programs and respond to natural disasters. The program has allowed students to assume positions of leadership and also serve as mentors to younger community members.

Speaking of successful models, it is my pleasure, at this point to pass on to Sue Graves from the Lincoln County School District in the state of Oregon, who will be talking about her Teen CERT program.

Thank you so much, Dante. It was really fun hearing about all the different models that you just described, the different ways that people present the Teen CERT program. Thank you so much for doing that. I am excited to share with everyone the model that we use here in Lincoln

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County School District, that is, through a semester-long course that we teach at our high schools.

Just a little bit of background: Several years ago, as we were meeting with our local community partners, with police and fire and some of our other partners, we were talking about some of the hazards that we face here. One of them is earthquake, the big risk of an earthquake and tsunami. There are other hazards also. They said, "You know, if we have one of these big events that occur while school is in session, you need to know that we do not have the amount of resources, and may not even have the ability, to get to your school."

They said, "Sue, you have capable teenagers in your high school that if we provide the training, they can be your first responders in a big disaster when we are not available." We really looked at that and took it seriously, and realized they are absolutely correct. Our teens are very capable. We just need to provide the training and the mechanisms so that they can be that response group for our schools. So, just like Dante was saying, we train our teens to help when there's a big disaster, when professional emergency response is delayed or unavailable. What we have found is that this Teen CERT curriculum really helps empower teens with lifelong emergency preparedness and response skills. Like the adult CERT program, our goals—help yourself, help your family, help your neighbor—really with our Teen CERT, it is to help your school. They really get these incredible hands-on skills and knowledge to be able to keep themselves safe during an emergency, and then help their fellow students and teachers and really their whole school. For some of them, some of the neighboring schools, too.

Like Dante said, the priority is safety. Everything we do with Teen CERT focuses on safety—everything. We drill safety into them, and they really learn, and they get it. Everything that they do they work as a buddy system, they work in pairs, at least, sometimes more than pairs. They learn how to check each other's gear so that throughout an exercise or event, if someone's mask is slipping down, the buddy is always looking to say, "Oops, slip that mask back up" or "You took your goggles off because they were steaming up, let's get those fixed." So they really look out for each other's safety and look out for accountability. It's probably good because they learn how to care for each other. They realize that sometimes their own ability to look out for themselves can be compromised because adrenaline takes over during an emergency, so the more they are trained to look out for each other, the better they can do at helping each other with safety.

So, let's talk a little bit about the units in a little more depth. The first unit is on disaster preparedness. We really bring in experts to talk about the threats and hazards that are particular to our area. We look at identifying and reducing hazards both at home and at school. They learn how to shut off utilities; our local gas company provided us with a

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demo gas meter. So, they can actually practice turning off the gas and when it is appropriate to do it, and how you can never turn it back on yourself, only the gas company can do it. They actually go on missions around the school to find out where our school utility shutoffs are and how to do that. And then, they also learn about doing some home disaster preparedness and planning. This is really where the team building begins. So much of what we do really is teambuilding. They are learning these things as a team.

Unit two is the fire safety unit. I think this is their most favorite unit. They learn about fire chemistry, how to extinguish small fires and also about hazardous materials. You will see in this picture that they are actually practicing with just a bucket with some cellophane to mimic a fire. Once they learn the actual procedure for extinguishing a small fire, and they get proficient in the different commands and communication and the different things to look for, then the fire department comes and they get to actually put out a real fire, and they love it. They are just totally hooked at this point.

So, by now, they are working as a team, and they are ready to go on and learn more hands-on skills. The next two units are all about disaster medical and it is interesting, because some of the students have already taken first aid, CPR, and AED, and have those skills, but disaster medical is a little bit different than those traditional methods of training.

They learn how to identify and treat what we call the three killers. If someone's airway is obstructed, if there is excessive bleeding, or if they have circulation issues and they might be going into shock. They get really good at identifying those and then treating those. Those are the three things that if they do not treat really well, people can actually die from. It really empowers them once they learn these skills, because they realize that they can actually save lives. That is just such an amazing and empowering thing for these students to realize. "I now have the skills to save lives if I really need to do that." They practice these skills and they get really good. Dante mentioned the muscle memory thing, the more they practice, the better they get. And they get really good at it, so they can be competent in a disaster.

They also learn how to do what is called triage, which is a French word for "sort"—how to sort people out according to their injuries. If they have one of those three killers we talked about, that would mean immediate need. Different types of injuries will put them in a delayed category or minor category. And they learn what to do with those who may die because of a disaster. Learning how that affects people emotionally and how they can respectfully deal and safely deal with those kinds of situations, as well as how that may impact them. Fellow students and staff members could die when they are at school and how to deal with that. This is a section where they really learning about assessment and

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decision-making. It is really powerful to see from the beginning of - their Teen CERT experience to the end of the semester how much they grow in their assessment and decision-making skills. They really mature. It is just exciting. Also in disaster medical, they learn about proper hygiene and how to treat minor injuries. Some of it is basic first aid, but it really is a little different in a disaster situation, when normal emergency responders are not going to be readily available. They learn some of those different differences.

Unit five is called light search and rescue. This is where that critical thinking really progresses and they learn how to size up a situation, and assess it, and really consider a lot of different things so that they can make good, safe decisions and make a plan for how to address this big disaster and then take action. So, they learn how to communicate well with each other, because they are all in this process. They see different things. Everyone has a different perspective. They learn how to communicate what they're seeing and what they're rethinking, and what those probabilities are, with each other. And then establishing a plan and taking action, and then continually reevaluating that plan as they are going on.

Also, in the search and rescue unit they learn how to do an initial damage assessment on buildings, whether they have light, moderate, or heavy damage. They learn different search methods and when it is safe to go into a classroom or building to search and when it is not, and when special considerations be to be taken. They learn how to remove victims safely using different lifts, drags, and carries, and available resources that may be there at the school. They learn if someone is trapped under something heavy, how to use physics and do leveraging and cribbing to get people unstuck. They love that. They really love this unit. It is very empowering. They have to really have a lot of good planning and teamwork in this section. What happens is, when they are having to remove victims or survivors, a lot of those activities take six or seven people in a very coordinated fashion to do safely. They really learn how to communicate with each other, to designate a leader. They learn how to become followers, so that they can coordinate carefully together to keep not only that victim safe, but themselves safe. It is really exciting to watch.

In unit six, they learn about CERT organization and how that leadership and management structure is set up, so they can organize themselves to have an effective and efficient response depending on what the emergency is. Like Dante said, using Incident Command Systems. They are really introduced to that and not only introduced, they put it into action. They gain so much self-esteem and confidence by learning how to organize and operate in a system where some of them are leaders and some of them are followers. They learn how to do both roles. They learn what it means to be-what it's like to be a follower and what it's like to be a leader, and how to be a leader that others want to follow. They go through all kinds

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of different exercises and activities to learn how to lead and follow and to be good team members. They are really fun.

There is a unit on disaster psychology. They learn how to really look at their own selves and recognize the psychological and physical symptoms of stress after a disaster so they can reduce their stress as well as survivors' stress. They learn listening and empathizing skills, which are great for so many areas of our relationships and lives. And as Amy said, the whole recovery process after an emergency, this unit really empowers them to have a lot of those skills to help with the psychological part of recovery.

And then unit eight on terrorism is really a pretty short unit. We do not really allow our Teen CERT students to do a lot involving terrorism, but we do give them some awareness of it, and really help them to think of it as a stop sign. This is not something that you would really get involved in.

And this is a section, the certification, that we have added to the standard CERT curriculum. We worked with our local CERT club and they had this recertification thing that they put in place to help their CERT members, every year, be able to demonstrate that they are capable, that they remember certain skills, so buddies could trust each other. If they are going to respond, they would trust that they actually have those skills to keep each other safe. We adopted their recertification program and made it into our certification program, where Teen CERT (and we modified it to work in the school) but where Teen CERTs have to demonstrate certain basic skills from the CERT curriculum, that they are proficient at them. This way they can feel like they can do it and so that their buddies can know they can do it. So the school staff knows we have equipped them properly to be able to safely respond and help us in a large-scale disaster event. There are skills that they have to demonstrate, there is a knowledge test, certain things from the CERT curriculum that we want to know that they know. And then there are rules of conduct that they sign. In the toolkit that was mentioned earlier, our whole certification process and the checklist and everything that we require is in there. I encourage you to look at it. The kids love it; the neat thing about it this is, they go through this certification. It is an afternoon session and they go through all these different stations to demonstrate their proficiency as buddies doing these things. They are so proud of themselves and each other once they get signed off and prove that they have all of these skills.

It really prepares them for the next step, which is their final drill. That is what we are going to talk about next. Then, they have all been certified, they know they have the skills, now they are going to put all these skills together in an actual exercise. So we have actors, students from school, who become our victims, and we actually make this into an all school earthquake drill.

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So the school will make the announcement that there is an earthquake and everyone will do their drop, cover, and hold on. Actually, we do it for four or five minutes, where the whole school is doing that, because that is our most likely scenario here.

And then, after the earthquake, everybody evacuates the building, goes to their assembly area, and the whole school goes through their normal system of accounting for students and staff. So, what we do to participate in this drill, is we have some of the students as actors placed in certain areas of the school as if they are trapped and have injuries. As we go to account for everyone, they find they are missing 25 or 30 students.

Then, the Teen CERT students are activated. They get their gear on, and they go in and actually start putting their skills into practice. They set up a medical treatment area, they set up their Incident Command System, then someone is in charge of logistics and planning. And then there is a whole medical treatment area and the search and rescue teams. They get busy, and put it all together and rescue their fellow students. They bring them to the medical treatment area, they get their treatments. The Incident Commander is working along with the school and letting them know the status of the people that are missing.

It is just really exciting. It is exciting for everyone involved. It is exciting for the other students and staff to see from a distance that there are trained students at the school that know how to do this, the really higher-level things. It gives them so much confidence that "Wow, we are going to be okay. We are going to make it in a big disaster. We have people who know how to help us." It also helps recruit other students for the next class, which is really cool.

The students that are participating, they really do a great job. They are pretty well trained. This happens towards the end of the semester, and it's a daily class, so they really learn these skills well.

After the exercise, we debrief with all the Teen CERT students. The section leaders on the Incident Command chart give their perspectives on what they did well as leaders and what they did not do well, what they may be able to improve. The actors and victims give their perspective on what it was like and how they were treated. Observers and evaluators give their perspectives. This is one of my favorite things: during the debrief, these students are so vulnerable and open and honest about how they performed. They demonstrate so much maturity in front of their peers to be able to say, "I was so surprised. My heart was racing so fast, I could not even think about this, or I missed that. Now looking back, I really like the way that I did this, or I noticed that."

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They have so much mature self-reflection that they do in front of their peers; it is super powerful and humbling to see their amazing growth from the beginning of the class until the end of the semester. Having them put it all together and then talk about it and really speak honestly, and to hear them praise one another and say how each other did very well in other areas and tactfully say the areas that they need to improve on. It is incredible. Obviously, you can tell I am super proud of the students, because they are amazing. I have to say I am super proud of our teachers who teach the class, because they are the ones who really make it happen.

Then we have a big graduation and make it a big deal. We invite dignitaries, sometimes the police, mayors, local fire chiefs, and others. We shake their hands and give them each a certificate and take their photo, we really let them know what a good job they have done and how proud we are for their commitment to safety, and really caring for their fellow students and staff at the school. That is how our program works.

Here are just a few things that sometimes people ask about our CERT program: How does this integrate into the regular curriculum of the school?

Here are a few things that I pulled out that might help illustrate that. For chemistry classes, the whole unit on fire and hazardous materials relates to that. All of our disaster medical stuff relates really well to our health science classes.

There is a lot of physics involved, actually, in the whole cribbing and leveraging, as well as building assessments.

Earth sciences, there is a lot of stuff in earth sciences for natural disasters. We actually have retired seismologist in town who comes in and does training during the unit on disaster preparedness regarding those natural disasters.

Psychology, of course, like we talked about the disaster psychology unit. And then, students, this is one of the key things. In addition to all of those hands-on rescue skills, they learn so many organizational skills and teamwork skills. Search methods, documenting, triaging, buddy system, and the Incident Command System—these skills transfer into so many areas of life and into their other classes in being able to be successful in other classes. They really integrate well.

For time commitment, we started out trying some different models in our school, but really found, for us, that the daily, semester-long class was ideal because having the instruction in those practices daily really help them to integrate it into their whole being and mind-set.

Like I said, we have a semester-long daily class and our students love it. In one high school, it's a health class; in another it is a science

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class; and in the other it is an elective. One of our schools has a health occupations class, and they have integrated some of the Teen CERT stuff into that class.

We originally did it as a leadership class two days per week. We did not find that we had enough time in those two classes per week to really make the students proficient. And so now, we have the semester-long classes.

And then, for our schools, we have designated school teachers that this is one of their courses. They are the teachers for Teen CERT and they have been trained, but they have a lot of community partners that come in as guest speakers that help them with a lot of the more technical parts of the curriculum. You will see a lot of those listed there. And the students love it when the guest speakers come in, by the way.

And then some of our keys to success—really it's teambuilding. Students, these students are all different kinds of students in our schools. It is not like they are all athletes or all the drama kids. It is just a whole broad range of students. When they go through all of these team-building activities, they learn how to put aside their differences and really become a team. They cannot be successful at a lot of these skills unless they use really good teamwork.

And they learn how to really take ownership, because they have so much ownership as they become proficient and see how well they work together and how much they can accomplish.

One of our high school Teen CERT teachers does what he calls our field leadership lab, where he will all of a sudden divide up the class into teams, appoint a leader, and he will appoint the followers. And then they just go on different missions around the school. It is one of the ways that he teaches them how to be a team, and how to be followers and how to be leaders. That has been one of his big keys to success. So, participants—like I said, we use a whole cross-section of our student body. When we first started, we thought that we were going to have an application process. We really have to be careful of safety, there are dangerous things here. They are going to have to have a certain GPA level and no behavior problems. We did that the first year, and then we threw that all out. This is a high school course just like any other high school course. Students are responsible for being safe, and it has risk just like any other class. Our culinary arts classes have risk, our automobile and shop classes have risk, everything does. Everything we teach is all about safety, and we have high expectations for their being responsible and they are. They totally rise to that level of responsibility, so we do not even have an application anymore. It is just a class like other classes. They rise to the level and take it seriously.

So, benefits to students: they learn accountability, responsibility, organization, leadership, teamwork. They learn a lot of personal

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protection skills that can be useful at home as well as the school, life-saving skills to help others, community service hours (this is great for their scholarship applications and college applications). Their self-image improves so much from the beginning of the semester to the end that it is amazing. Their self-awareness: When someone has a strong self-awareness, they become better at everything. They just get these lifelong learning skills. The satisfaction from helping others, one of them said, I feel like I can make a difference. That is such an empowering feeling.

We have also found that Teen CERT helps to influence careers. They get introduced to not only all of these skills in these different fields, but all of these different people that come in as guest speakers from these different fields. They are getting introduced to all kinds of different possible career choices that they can take into consideration as they are thinking about their future.

Finally, there are a lot of benefits to the school. Having a whole group of students who are trained in safety, and they think safety now and they have the skills, it just improves school safety. You have a reduction of school violence because you have more responsible students, peer role models. The school also has an awareness that they have additional resources in case of an emergency, and actually a trained team of first responders for a mass casualty disaster. We always emphasize that they are not a replacement for professional responders; they have very specific skills. In our schools, they are not used for any type of threat related to weapons or that type of thing. It is only natural disaster-type things. That how it works in the Lincoln County schools. Thank you so much for letting me share that with you. I look forward to turning this back over to the REMS TA Center.

Thank you so much, Sue. Before we turn it over back to the REMS TA Center, I want to make all participants aware of some tools and resources we have available. The first is the Teen CERT Web page. That is where you will find a lot of these different resources available. We have Teen CERT annexes; what these are is essentially teachers' editions of our instructor guides with a basic CERT curriculum that are intended to help develop instructors to teach the curriculum to a teenage audience. Obviously, adult learning is a bit different from how high school students learn. What this does is we have basically two resources. We have the basic training instructor guide, and that's the guide that instructors use in their delivery of the training. And, we have an annex for delivering Teen CERT, which is in essentially an add-on or insert for that. We also have a train-the-trainer course that we use to develop instructors, and we have an annex for that as well. So, if a jurisdiction is developing instructors to provide certain training, as part of that training process they can include the Teen CERT Annex and prepare them to deliver the CERT training to not only adult but high school audiences as well.

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Hopefully at this point you're thinking, "Wow, how can I start a Teen CERT program?" We have a "start and maintain" program guide, just click on the link and it will take you directly to it. All these resources are on the Teen CERT Web page. We realize budgets are tight, especially for schools and for school printing, so if you are interested in starting a Teen CERT program and you want to use our free Teen CERT activity books, rather than print them yourself, this link will not take you to that resource because it is not available online, but it will take you to the contact information for our state program managers. All you have to do is contact your state program manager and say "Hello, I work with this high school or this after-school program, and I'm interested in starting Teen CERT program or we are going to be offering some Teen CERT training and would like to have these materials." They will tell you how to place an order. There is no need for you to print those yourself. Contact your state program manager, and they will help you place an order for those materials. Finally, we also have a Teen CERT brochure that is available for download and you can distribute.

In addition to the resources that we have available for Teen CERT, I also want to talk a little bit about all the different resources we have available for youth preparedness in general. Again, most of the content can be found on our youth preparedness Web page, which is linked at the top. We have a national strategy for youth preparedness education. We have had over 50 different national, state, and local organizations all working on youth preparedness that have signed onto and affirmed this national strategy. I strongly encourage you to take a look at that. You can subscribe to our *Children and Disasters Newsletter*. It's news and notes covering current events, best practices, tips, and advice from practitioners and even youth themselves. We currently have a distribution list of about 23,000 individuals. If you click on that link it will tell you how to subscribe. If you are thinking that Teen CERT isn't quite what you are looking for, but you do want to start a different type of youth preparedness program, we have an implementation guide available in English and Spanish to start a youth preparedness program. We also have guides for funding a program and also for managing any risks that might be associated with starting or maintaining a youth preparedness program. That said, we really want to emphasize that it is best not to try to reinvent the wheel. There are so many successful programs out there already that can be replicated and adopted in communities, programs that deal with a wide variety of subject matter and also can appeal to a wide variety of age groups. What we have done is develop a catalog of a great many youth preparedness programs around the country. I encourage you to check that out. Rather than start a program of your own, take a look at some programs in the catalog and see if any are a good fit for your school. For example, let's say you work with an elementary school and Teen CERT isn't age-appropriate. There are a wide variety of programs in the catalog that are intended for younger audiences.

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Finally, if you have any questions about Teen CERT or youth preparedness in general, or if you need assistance or support in starting or maintaining a youth preparedness program, we have a technical assistance center set up for that. Just send your question or inquiry to FEMA dash Youth dash Preparedness at fema.dhs.gov. [FEMA-Youth-Preparedness@fema.dhs.gov] It will generate a response between two and three business days.

Finally, we have a Youth Preparedness Council, and this supports our commitment to involving youth in youth preparedness-related activities. It actually provides us an avenue to engage the youth population and take into account their perspectives, their feedback, and their opinions. We first formed the Council in 2012. This brings together youth leaders from all across the country who are interested and engaged in advocating youth preparedness and making a difference in their communities. Our council members are from all throughout the country and they are selected based upon their dedication to public service, their effort to making a difference in their communities, and their potential to expand their impact as national advocates for preparedness. They will meet periodically and discuss youth preparedness periodically, and each of our council members puts together a youth preparedness project in their region. It is a really great initiative, and a great way to get youth involved and really hear their voice when we are doing youth preparedness.

Finally, for CERT inquiries in general, for any request for general assistance, you can reach us at cert@fema.dhs.gov. Again, if you are interested in free print materials, if you're starting a Teen CERT program, or if you're just interested in learning more about CERT in general, you can also contact your state CERT or Citizen Corps program manager. That link will take you to the page with all of their contact information. We strongly encourage that Teen CERT programs, or even high schools that are interested in getting CERT training for their students, work very closely with their existing local CERT program. They're an incredible resource. Many of them have been doing this for a very long time and have a lot of expertise and are more than happy to work with high schools to help provide this training to not just your students but also your faculty and staff as well.

What you want to do is go to our main page, our CERT Web page, and if you scroll down there will be a link to find nearby CERT programs. You will type in your ZIP Code to bring up a list of all the CERT programs near you. So contact the nearest CERT program, explain that you are a high school and you are interested in getting CERT training, and you can have a discussion with them. A really fantastic resource, and a way so you're not reinventing the wheel but partnering, usually with a fire department that's been doing this for quite a long time. With that, I think that concludes our presentation. I will now hand back over to the REMS Technical Assistance Center.

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Thank you, Dante and Susan, for that wonderful presentation. We will now take a few questions from our participants. Remember to pose your question using the Q&A tool on the lower right side of your screen.

The first question is have you had any reluctance from administrators due to liability issues for having students involved with this training?

This is Sue. I will be happy to answer that question. When we first started, we did have some reluctance from administrators, but as we talked about it and really explained to them how everything we do is all about safety and that we teach students how to be ultra-safe and work in a buddy system, and we give them the protective gear, they quickly realized that liability will probably be less because of this. Now we do not have any problems and our administrators love the Teen CERT program.

This is Dante, I will see if there is a way to post this in the webinar, but if you go to our main page at the CERT Web page—fema.gov/cert—we actually have a CERT liability guide that is intended to help program managers to address their risk. I think that having this guide and having a plan for addressing and mitigating risk really makes it a lot easier for CERT program managers to alleviate those concerns from administrators and other officials.

Great. Thank you. This next question has two parts. Part one, how much does Teen CERT cost to implement at a school or a school district? Part two, are there grants available to start a Teen CERT program?

This is Sue again. I can tell you in terms of the cost, it is going to be depending on how many students you want to train, because each student needs to have the protective gear. At our school, we actually keep that gear at the school. Once it is purchased one time, it gets re-used for the new students that are in the class next semester, next year, and the following year. That is part of our sustainability plan. We purchased the gear, it stays at the school, and students use it each semester. Figuring out what you want for your gear and CERT has standards for that. You also need some tools for your training and things that they practice with. It is going to be dependent upon how big of a program you want to develop.

This is Dante, just to talk a little bit about grants. While there isn't a stand-alone grant for Citizen Corps programs anymore, including for CERT, CERT programs and their activities are still allowable under the Homeland Security Grant program. This program is offered through the Department of Homeland Security. Several CERT programs throughout the country still draw funds from that program as well as the Emergency Management Performance grant. Those are a couple of grants that are available to local CERT programs and that are eligible to fund CERT programs and their activities.

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This is Sue again. I have one other thought about that. In terms of ongoing costs, once you have those initial investments of the CERT kits and the gear and the training tools, there is really not very many ongoing costs, at least there have not been for us. One of the ongoing costs is refilling the fire extinguishers each semester because they do train with those. That is not very expensive, and our fire departments have helped us with that. Gloves and masks are some of those consumable items. Again, they are not very expensive. Almost everything else is just there because you made that initial investment. The only, and most expensive, ongoing cost that we have found is that we have to have a teacher who is teaching the class. So, we are not hiring someone different, but there has to be a place in their schedule to teach the class and oversee the class. That is the biggest ongoing cost for us.

I could not agree more. When it comes to CERT, the most important thing is to have an instructor and to have the space in order to provide the instruction. The stuff a lot of times is really secondary. The supplies and so forth, you have that initial investment and most of the other supplies you get, to provide the training at least, really are negligible compared to the initial investment. Just having a place to do the training and having instructors available and willing to donate their time really makes a huge difference. We also just did a webinar last month about developing resources for CERT programs. It is not posted yet, but I can share that link with the Department of Education afterwards once it is posted. That might provide some interesting ideas and approaches for securing resources for certain programs.

Thank you, Dante, and Sue. Thank you all for joining us today. Unfortunately we are out of time, but we would like to invite you to join our Web chat, which will begin momentarily. Instructions are available on your screen. During the chat you will be able to continue discussion with our presenters on some of the questions we were unable to address, as well as other information and topics that we covered during our webinar. If you are not already a member of the community of practice, we encourage you to sign up and explore the community now. It offers a variety of forums to exchange ideas and resources with practitioners in the field.

We would now like to invite you to visit the REMS TA Center Website to view additional information on developing high-quality, comprehensive school emergency operations plans. Archived access to today's presentation, including the slides, resources, and a transcript of the closed captioning, will be available on our Webinars page in seven to 10 business days. If you have any questions on accessing the toolbox, using an interactive tool, or requesting an on-site Training by Request at your school or school district, please contact us by e-mail at info@remstacenter.org or at the toll-free number listed on your screen. [855-781-7367]

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Thank you again for participating in today's webinar on Teen CERT. Have a great afternoon.

[Event Concluded]