

# SCHOOL EMERGENCY PARENT GUIDE

**The Hendrick Hudson School District takes emergency preparedness very seriously. We have a comprehensive district-wide safety plan that assists our staff and public safety partners to respond swiftly should an emergency occur. We provide ongoing crisis management training to school administrators and other key staff members throughout the district.**

**Building-level emergency response plans are in place at each school. A building-based Safety Committee oversees the plan for each school, and committee members have assigned roles and responsibilities should an emergency occur. These committees meet regularly to review procedures and conduct annual training and drills so that students and staff are aware of the most effective and safe emergency responses.**

## Safety is Our PRIORITY

The Hendrick Hudson School District is committed to making school safe for students and staff. We work closely with local and state agencies, including police, fire, emergency medical services and public health officials to ensure that we are well prepared and children are protected.

Please know that should an emergency occur, we will do what is necessary to protect children first and then inform you as accurately and fully as we can. Communication with parents during an emergency is an important priority for the school district. Please be patient and understand if we are unable to respond to you as completely or quickly as you would wish. Our first priority is the safety of your child and the other children and staff in the school.

## By Definition...

An emergency involves unexpected events and rapidly changing conditions. We train to deal with different kinds of problems, whether caused by natural forces or humans. However, it is impossible to say in advance exactly how we will respond in any particular situation. In general, you should know that we will do what is necessary to protect children first and then to inform you as accurately and fully as we can. If a situation is serious enough to require you to leave your home or workplace, we will

either ask you to pick your child up or will direct you to a safe place where we can brief you on developments.

## How to Prepare for a School Emergency

- Keep your child's emergency information up to date, including alternate phone numbers for you and family/friends you have authorized as your back up. Notify the school promptly if this information changes.
- Talk with your children about the importance of following instructions in the event of an emergency.
- Tell your children NOT to use cell phones unless permitted. Unauthorized cell phone use could put people at risk during an emergency and may distract students from listening to important safety instructions.
- Have a plan for an emergency, and make sure your children are familiar with the plan.



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## Terms That May be Used During an Emergency

### Shelter-in-Place

A course of action when students and staff are required to remain indoors, perhaps for an extended period of time, because it is safer inside the building or a room than outside. Depending on the threat or hazard, students and staff may be required to move to rooms that can be sealed or without windows.

In case of a bomb threat the school administration will consult with first responders and law enforcement when making decisions.

### Hold-in-Place

If there is an internal incident or administrative matter such as students fighting in a hallway, a maintenance issue or medical emergency that requires students and staff movement be limited, a “Hold-in-Place” may be initiated. This is intended to keep students and staff out of the affected area until the situation can be rectified.

### Evacuation

Each school has procedures for partial or complete evacuation, including a designated safe location to which students may be transported. If students are to be released from the off-site location, parents will be directed where to pick up their children and will be required to sign out their child. A student will be released only to an adult with proper identification and who is documented as an emergency contact.

### Lockout

This is the response to an actual or potential threat from outside the school building. An example of such a threat might be an escaped fugitive, criminal activity occurring nearby, or a wild animal outside of the school. The primary objective of a lockout is to quickly ensure all

school staff, students, and visitors are secured in the school building away from the outside danger. Outside activities are terminated and the school day proceeds as normal.

### Lockdown

A lockdown is initiated when a school administrator, faculty or staff member has become aware of an actual or imminent incident that poses an immediate threat in or around the school. The primary objective of a lockdown is to quickly ensure school staff, students and visitors are secured in rooms away



from immediate danger. Individuals will be kept within locked rooms until the incident is brought to a close by emergency responders or law enforcement personnel.

## What to do During a School Emergency

- Do not go to the school or scene of an emergency unless officials ask you to, even though a child may ask you to come. Although this may be your first instinct as a parent, your presence may interfere with the emergency response.
- Check the district website at [www.henhudschools.org](http://www.henhudschools.org).
- Tune into local radio.
- Do not listen to rumors. If your child does contact you, remember that he or she may only know pieces of the larger picture.
- Remain as calm as you can if your child contacts you. They are looking to you for reassurance.