

August is School Safety Month

As the end of summer approaches and school is around the corner, it's time to start thinking about back-to-school shopping and planning for your child's upcoming school year.

Week 4: Backpack safety

According to the American [Occupational Therapy Association](#), 55% of students in the U.S. who use a backpack are carrying too much weight. Not only is it uncomfortable to carry throughout the day, it can also contribute to long-term damage to an individual's body and posture. Incorrectly wearing a pack or bag can also contribute to similar health problems. It is necessary to ensure that your student is wearing their backpack properly in order to prevent posture problems and long-term damage. The following suggestions are recommended by the [University of Pittsburgh Medical Center](#):

1. **Ensure the backpack is at an appropriate weight.** Backpacks should be 15% of your child's weight at most. This means if your child weighs 50 pounds, the pack should be 7.5 pounds, or if they weigh 100 pounds, it should be no more than 15 pounds.
2. **Make sure the shoulder straps are wide and padded.** Wide, padded straps provide all-day support and prevent straps from becoming too tight or uncomfortable.
3. **Multiple compartments are beneficial.** Not only do the compartments allow for organization, they also allow the pack's weight to be distributed more evenly. The heaviest items should be packed low and toward the center of the bag.
4. **Both straps should be worn at all times.** Though shoulder bags are trendy, they are not as safe. Wearing both straps also helps to distribute weight more evenly, and prevents your child from leaning to one side, which can cause neck, back, and shoulder pain.
5. **Look for a backpack with a waist strap.** These help to hold items closer to your child's back, which can help them maintain balance.

With the start of school approaching, it is important to ensure that your students are equipped with a backpack that will keep them safe, while maintaining comfort and style. Not only is it important that students wear backpacks that can physically keep them safe from harm, it is also important to consider comfort and health when choosing a backpack. Luckily, Bullet Blocker has the products necessary to fulfill the safety needs of parents and their students. We offer over a dozen [backpacks](#) to choose from, all ranging in style and color. While they vary in style, none of them sacrifice on safety, ensuring that your child will be protected throughout the day. The packs all come equipped with NIJ IIIA level anti-ballistic protection to keep them safe in the event of an emergency situation. Many of them offer waist straps and thick padded shoulder straps to maintain their all-day comfort and health. The anti-ballistic panels typically add only about 20 ounces of additional weight, which ensure that their backpacks will not exceed the appropriate weight limit for their size.

This school year, consider taking steps to better protect your child at school, all while ensuring their health is not at risk.

Week 3: Staying safe as an educator

Last week we discussed the traditional “Run Hide Fight” protocol that has been implemented within more and more school districts across the nation. These days, it is important for students, educators, and teachers alike to have access to resources and protocol to follow in the event of an emergency. Many emergency school plans tend to be tailored towards students, but the teacher plays a significant role in emergencies as well, whether the situation involves an active shooter, earthquake, or fire.

The best thing teachers can do is be prepared. Active shooter incidents are often spontaneous events in which the shooter's behavior is highly unpredictable. During these events, teachers are required to act quickly and efficiently, all while accounting for students and maintaining composure. Some districts have considered equipping teachers with handguns in their classrooms. While this particular idea has received a lot of controversy, the general concept makes sense: protect classrooms with resources as a way to prepare for one of these tragedies.

Because the majority of school districts are gun-free zones, this can leave teachers feeling vulnerable in emergency situations. Instead of keeping a handgun in a classroom, teachers nowadays can invest in bulletproof products to keep their classroom safe. These products can give educators and parents of students an ease of mind in the event that an emergency did happen. Our NIJ IIIA level bulletproof products are versatile, safe, and discrete—many look like ordinary school supplies, such as our [safety seat](#) or [laptop bag](#). Our safety seat is an anti-ballistic seat cushion that doubles as an anti-ballistic shield. Portable and lightweight, it is perfect for teachers who are seeking a personal safety barrier in their classroom. The NIJ IIIA panel is covert and reliable, with no ID tags or labels that may reveal its anti-ballistic abilities. The cushion is 1-inch thick and non-absorbent, providing all day comfort. For those educators who desire a greater level of concealment, our laptop bag is a great option. The spacious tote has multiple pockets and can hold up to a 15” laptop, and the bulletproof interior lining only adds 20 ounces of weight. Conveniently coming in 5 color options, the bag is designed to keep you both stylish and safe, all while maintaining a high level of concealment.

For educators or school districts that are looking to invest in classroom-wide safety solutions, we offer a school safety [insert kit](#). This product is one of our custom-made bulletproof products that can be altered to fit the needs of your particular school or classroom. The kit comes equipped with a NIJ IIIA bulletproof teacher's vest and bulletproof panels for students in the classroom. The case is lockable and rolling, conveniently making it portable for storage purposes and ease of use. The bulletproof student panels are large at 16” x 12” each, yet still lightweight and easy to use. If you are interested in purchasing one of these kits, please call us to discuss customization and specific pricing.

As another school year begins, consider taking proactive safety steps within your school district, whether you are a teacher, administrator, or even a parent of a student. You should never have to worry about your child or student's safety while they are at school. We provide the school safety solutions necessary to protect schools and give parents and educators peace of mind.

Week 2: Run/Hide/Fight Protocol

This week we will be discussing the Run/Hide/Fight Protocol. Over the past decade, this set of protocol has gained recognition and has been implemented in various schools across the country. The protocol exists as a way to prepare students on how to respond during an active shooter incident. Recent national tragedies unfortunately remind us that the risk of an active shooter incident is real, and that an emergency situation can happen in any place at any time. Thankfully, there are steps you can take to eliminate your risk and better prepare yourself for any emergency situation. The protocol is as follows:

RUN: This is the first step you should take during an active shooter situation. Getting away from the threat is the top priority. Leave your things behind and run to a safe location. If you are able to safely do so, warn others nearby to get to safety. When you are out of harm's way, call 911 and describe the shooter(s), their location(s), their weapon(s), and any other identifying or helpful information you can remember.

HIDE: If you are not able to run away safely or risk being caught by the shooter, find a place to hide. Ideally, find a room or another area that can be locked or blocked off, out of the shooter's field of view. Stay quiet, silence your electronic devices, close window blinds, and turn off the lights. Though it may be tempting, do not hide in groups—hiding separately makes it more difficult for the shooter. If possible, try to communicate with police without calling attention to yourself—either through text messages or placing a sign in a nearby window. Stay in place until law enforcement gives you the okay.

FIGHT: Defend yourself as a last resort when in immediate danger. If you are unable to run away safely, there is nowhere to hide, or you are discovered by the shooter, commit to your actions and act aggressively to stop the shooter. If you do not have any physical weapon to defend yourself, ambush the shooter with makeshift weapons such as chairs, scissors, books, or fire extinguishers. These items can distract and disarm the shooter.

Taking an active role in your safety is vital. Preparing well in advance of an emergency is the best course of action. Many people have the mentality of: "it could never happen to me." While the statistical likelihood may be low, violence and emergencies are largely at random and can happen in unexpected places. Consider signing you and your loved ones up for an active shooter training class in your community, learning you or your child's specific school protocol, and identifying exits and good places to hide within the school. Equipping yourself with physical protection is also beneficial, particularly for the "fight" element of the Run/Hide/Fight protocol. Having an anti-ballistic product on hand can give you ease of mind in the event of an emergency. For those individuals who are unable to physically fight, one of our NIJ-III A rated bulletproof products such as our [backpacks](#) or [3-ring binder inserts](#) can be a great defense mechanism against an active shooter. The anti-ballistic technology acts as a barrier between you and the threat, without requiring the responsibility of making physical or aggressive unarmed contact with an active shooter. Many of our school safety products are discrete, comfortable, and easy-to-use, ensuring that students will be protected without compromising on their personal comfort or style.

Though the protocol may be frightening for some, it is important that you or your child are prepared for an active shooter situation. The best ways to ensure that you and your loved ones are safe is to prepare ahead of time and be ready for any emergency.

Week 1: Backpack Alternatives

As with any school year, a new backpack is a great addition to any student's back-to-school gear. It's important to find a backpack that suits your child's style and comfortability without compromising on your safety preferences. Now more than ever, investing in your child's safety is essential. At Bullet Blocker, we have a variety of backpacks and school safety solutions that can be a great addition to their back-to-school gear.

For those students who already have a favorite backpack or are not planning on buying a new one this year, we offer backpack panels that can be conveniently placed into an existing backpack, regardless of its size or dimensions. Our [Built-For-You panel](#) is an NIJ IIIA rated bulletproof panel that can be custom-made to fit into your backpack, laptop tote, or briefcase. Using the unique dimensions of your bag, we can customize a panel to fit securely and discretely. The ¼ inch bulletproof panel is semi-flexible and lightweight, ensuring comfortability for extended wear.

In light of the recent school shooting tragedies, many school districts have implemented new rules requiring students to wear clear backpacks. We have recently begun to offer a [clear backpack](#) as one of our new products. The spacious pack comes equipped with an anti-ballistic panel placed in the back of the bag, providing a discrete layer of protection. The lightweight panel only weighs about 20 ounces, ensuring comfort during the school day. The panel gives you ease of mind that your child is protected, without making them stand out among other students.

Some students don't carry a backpack with them, either due to leaving it in their locker during the day or mandatory school rules. Our school safety solutions are a great option for these types of students. We offer anti-ballistic 3-ring binder inserts, notebook portfolios, tablet cases, and organizers. Our NIJ IIIA bulletproof [3-ring insert](#) effortlessly clips into binders, clipboards, and notebooks to discretely make a pre-owned item bulletproof. It is ideal for students who want to enhance their safety at school without the need to carry around a backpack. The semi-flexible panel weighs only 10 ounces, ensuring lightweight convenience.

With the new school year approaching, now is the time to start making back-to-school preparations. Though we typically promote our wide selection of backpacks, we also offer many other school safety products ideal for students who already have backpacks or who cannot carry one throughout the day.

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