The Concerns of Ontario Elementary School Teachers on School-Based Emergencies and Emergency Preparedness

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ABSTRACT

The world is in a constant state of change and evolution, bringing with it new hazards and risks. Every inhabited place on earth is exposed to various hazards and risks, be it natural or human made. People are beginning to discover that places which were historically deemed to be 'safe' places, such as schools, are also susceptible to risks and hazards. In recent years, school-based emergencies, such as school shootings, have received a large amount of media coverage and exacerbated public fear. Parents and guardians place their trust in the school system to keep their child(s) safe, as children spend a large portion of their day at school. School teachers are responsible for the safety of the children in their classroom and throughout the school, which begs the question: Are elementary school teachers concerned with school-based emergencies, and do they believe there is enough preparation and education on the subject for both staff and students? This study uses interviews of elementary teachers and examines the major concerns/themes, which are as follows: Lockdown/intruder situations, lack of training, students with disabilities, evacuation procedures, first aid training, and access to emergency information. The interviewed teachers expressed the most concern with unpredictable situations such as an intruder/lockdown, the challenges surrounding students with disabilities, and the fact that it is not mandatory for all teachers to be first aid certified. Children are considered a vulnerable population, and thus require that school emergency plans are regularly exercised and the gaps in the plans filled.

Key Words: Children, School-based Emergencies, Emergency Management, Lockdown, Fear, School Shootings, School-based Violence

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The Earth has been evolving for over 280 million years and so have hazards. Humans'
interaction with hazards and disasters is evident from the recorded history. From natural hazards
to technological hazards, the global population has witnessed the expansion of the hazard
repertoire as the human population increases and becomes more dependent on modern
technologies. Certain geographical areas are more prone to hazards than others, however all
areas have the potential to be struck by emergencies and/or disasters. Southern Ontario is
perceived to be a relatively safe place to live with respects to natural hazards (Emergency
Management Ontario, 2015); while that perception might be true, Ontario is still vulnerable to
natural hazards, including highly improbable hazards, commonly referred to as *black swan*
events. Black swan events are unexpected incidents that cause a large amount of damage, with a
very low probability of a repeated occurrence; for example, the sinking of the Titanic in 1912 is
considered to be a black swan event, as the ship was deemed to be 'unsinkable' (Professor D.
Baumken, personal communication, April 2016).

The media has a fascination with disastrous events, influencing and inflating public
anxiety and perceptions of danger (Borum et al., 2010). When events such as school shootings
occur, public fear is heightened due to the fact that schools are portrayed as a safe place for
children (Lindle, 2008). Like the general public, teachers hear about school shootings occurring,
exacerbating their existing fear of violence against children. Ontario School Boards are required
to have emergency plans as well as ensuring that students and school staff members are provided
with a safe learning and teaching environment (Ministry of Education, 2000); however, not all
plans are error-free. The study was developed to discover if elementary school teachers are
concerned with school-based emergencies, and if the teachers believe there is enough preparation

and education on the subject for both staff and students. In order to flush out any gaps in school emergency plans, elementary school teachers were interviewed on their professional experiences with school-based emergencies and any concerns and worries they might have pertaining to school emergency drills and real emergencies. The main themes from the interviews are as follows: concerns with lockdown and intruder situations, concerns with vulnerable students and students with disabilities, first aid training, and gaps in emergency information provided to the teachers. Above all, the interviewed teachers' prominent concern was the safety of their students.

1.1. <u>Study Rationale</u>

Providing meaningful and engaging education to children is a passion of teachers. Many people perceive a school as a safe place for their children to spend their days learning, interacting with others and having fun. Teachers, however, are faced with the complicated task of serving as both an educator and protector. When teachers are faced with an emergency, concerns and fears begin to surface. School-based emergencies such as recent school shootings in the United States and Canada, still strike fear into the hearts of teachers, students, and parents.

Emergency drills such as fire and lock-down drills are mandatory for schools across Canada, however some gaps and inconsistencies in the studied emergency plans exist, which could become a concern to the school boards. The issue needs clarity and attention in order to better serve the community. Training of teachers and school staff as well as awareness among children is vital. This study addresses some of these issues by engaging elementary school teachers in an interview setting.

1.1.1. Emergencies in a School Setting

There are several versions of what defines a school-based emergency, however for the purpose of this study the definition from the York Region District School Board will be used. The definition is as follows:

"[An] emergency is defined as a situation in which the normal operations of the school or work location cannot continue and/or where student and staff safety is brought into question". Some examples used by the School Board include, but not limited to: serious health issues, fire, explosion, power failure, bomb threat, missing student, and death on the school property (York Region District School Board, 2014). Each school board is responsible for designing and implementing an emergency plan, in accordance to the Ministry of Education's Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol (2015). School board plans will be discussed in greater detail within this section.

1.2. Previous Studies

In 2015, a study was conducted with fellow researchers that became the baseline for this study. The team of researchers interviewed elementary school teachers from different school boards in Southern Ontario: Halton District School Board, Toronto District School Board, York Region District School Board, and Peel District School Board. Upon the completion of the interviews, the researchers transcribed and coded each interview. Common themes began to emerge from the data, and proved to be a case deserving a more in-depth examination in addition to the short report written by the team of researchers. With permission from each member, the

author utilized the original data collected, and compiled literature and statistical data that furthered the existing research.

The results of the 2015 study revealed that school lockdown situations seemed to be the largest concern for the teachers interviewed, followed by concerns with vulnerable students and students with disabilities, and the lack of first aid training. Due to the fact that these specific situations were common amongst the participating teachers, this study focuses on the concerns surrounding events such as active shooters as well as teasing out any existing or emerging trends in both the United States of America and Canada. School shootings can be viewed as high impact, low frequency events, particularly in Canada where the number of school shootings is low in comparison to the U.S.

1.3. Ontario School Board Emergency Plans

In Ontario, each school board is required to have an emergency plan for schools in the event of an emergency or disaster occurring. The Ontario Ministry of Education put in place the Safe Schools Act, also referred to as Bill 81, Chapter 12 of the Statutes of Ontario. Each Ontario school board is required by law to abide by the Safe Schools Act. The purpose of the Act is to "increase respect and responsibility, to set standards for safe learning and safe teaching in schools and to amend the Teaching Profession Act" (Ministry of Education, 2000). The Act identifies means to increase safety, responsibility and respect in Ontario schools, as well as ensuring that students and teachers have a safe learning and teaching environment. The main topics covered are as follows: respect, responsibility, appropriate dress, access to school premises, mandatory consequences, expulsion and strict discipline programs; The Act also

includes the Provincial School Code of Conduct (Ministry of Education, 2000). Below are brief

descriptions of emergency plans for two of the four studied Ontario School Boards: Halton

District School Board and Peel Region District School Board.

1.3.1. Halton District School Board

The Halton District School Board (HDSB) is located in Southern Ontario and

encompasses Burlington, Oakville, Halton Hills and Milton (Halton District School Board,

2016). As previously mentioned, Ontario school boards are responsible for implementing an

emergency preparedness plan within the individual school boards (Ministry of Education, 2000).

Each school and related facilities within Halton have an emergency response plan in place, and is

based on procedures established by the Board. The Halton District School Board's goal for

emergency preparedness is "to ensure a rapid, coordinated and effective response is possible

when an emergency occurs". The school board has two separate plans for school safety: *Threats*

to School Safety Procedures and *Pandemic Response Plan*. It is important to note that the

specifics of the Emergency Response Plan may be altered for each school due to the uniqueness

of each location. It is therefore important that the plan offers flexibility in order for the plan to be

successful. The specifics of the individual school's plan, such as evacuation sites, are detailed on

Emergency Response Plan posters displayed within the school (Halton District School Board,

2009).

The Emergency Response Plan for each school includes the following, as stated by

Halton District School Board:

> "*Threats* to School Safety and Evacuation procedures, including
> the designation of one or more appropriate evacuation sites; the
> maintenance of a portable critical response kit that contains key
> information and supplies; training to personnel, updating of the

plan and a practice drill for students and staff twice a year;
resources for help before, during and after an emergency/crisis; an
established Safe Schools team" (n.d.).

The aforementioned is only a general outline of Emergency Response Plan, and it is the duty of

each individual school and facility to make additions and adjustments where necessary.

The second Response Plan for school safety is the Pandemic Response Plan. The Halton

District School Board is aware of the potential for another influenza pandemic and has developed

a Response Plan to prepare for such an event. According to the World Health Organization, an

influenza pandemic is possible in the future, however "the timing and pattern of the pandemic is

unpredictable". Halton Region believes that each Ontario municipality is responsible for

preparing for a pandemic event. The region has engaged specific stakeholders during the

preparation process over the last several years in order to address any potential challenges

surrounding an influenza pandemic event. The Board acknowledges the potentially crippling

effects of an outbreak, as the rate of absenteeism tends to be quite high during such an event. The

Board assures that they have the ability to maintain essential education services throughout the

duration of the event, through the development of a business continuity plan (Halton District

School Board, 2009).

1.3.2. Peel District School Board

The Peel District School Board is one of the largest school boards in Ontario, spanning

across Caledon, Brampton and Mississauga. Information on emergency procedures can be found

in the Staff Handbook (2013-2014), including board and school policies, health and safety, and

emergency procedures. The school board "is committed to developing a culture of non-violence

in all schools and work locations", while partnering with community agencies and police to

encourage prevention strategies. The overall purpose of the school board practices and policies is to put forth effort to eliminate violence in schools, provide rapid response to violence or other actions "that threaten the safety and security of the school community", and to ensure that appropriate action is taken regarding any students who commit an act of violence (Peel District School Board, 2013).

The Peel District School Board emergency procedures outline the following procedures: Fire safety and fire drills, lockdown procedures, bomb threat procedures, and an evacuation plan. The Handbook briefly explains the roles and responsibilities of staff members – teachers, secretarial, principal and vice principal, and custodians – during emergency events. Fire safety and drills is the most commonly practiced emergency procedure, with six drills annually (minimum), as required by law. Teachers are urged to review fire drill procedures and routines with their students at the beginning of the school year, and to periodically reinforce said procedures. Lockdown drills are practiced less frequently than fire drills; two drills per year is a requirement. The board uses the following definition of a lockdown procedure: "the restriction of movement during the time of a potentially serious, violent incident that would endanger the lives of students and staff" (Peel District School Board, 2013).

The Peel District School Board developed a pandemic preparedness plan during the 2005-2006 school year for both schools and facilities. During the developing stage of the pandemic plan, the school board worked with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Peel Health, in addition to working closely with the board's unions and staff federations. In the event of a confirmed pandemic event in Ontario, the pandemic plan will be activated and "the board will follow the advice and guidance of provincial and local public health officials who have the expertise to assess the level of health risk posed by a specific situation" (Peel District

School Board, 2013). If it is safe to do so, the board will strive to keep schools open during a pandemic event, unless the health and safety of students and staff are at risk in which case the school board will consider closures.

1.4. <u>Violence in Schools</u>

As a species, humans are susceptible to committing acts of violence, regardless of age, gender or race. According to the Nobel Prize winner Kinrad Lorenz, aggression in humans occurs due to a "spontaneous buildup of the 'aggressive instinct' in the nervous systems" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). Violence is viewed as a social act, and different forms of violence have become socially acceptable due to influences such as the media. People can be influenced into violence by culture, public discourse, television and other media platforms (Wheeler & Baron, 1994; Jull, 2000). Some believe that society has become increasingly violent, including an increase in violence in the workplace and amongst youth in schools (Hylton, 1996). According to Canadian-based research on education, rates of aggression among children are high and therefore the public's concern for school safety is not unsupported (Jull, 2000).

Frustration is said to be a driving factor for aggressive tendencies, which may stem from a person being unable to reach a desired goal. A hypothesis exists called the *frustration-aggression* hypothesis, developed in 1939 by Yale University psychologists Leonard Doob, John Dollard, and Neal Miller. The hypothesis claims that "all frustration produces an inclination to aggression and that every aggressive act can be traced back to some prior thwarting. Thus, the thwarted individual has the strongest urge to attack what or whoever is considered an obstacle to reaching his goal" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). In short, frustration may evolve into displaced

aggression where the individual attacks not the primary cause of frustration, but instead attacks individuals associated with the primary cause of frustration; associated individuals may possess similar characteristics and qualities, such as a similar ethnic group, occupations, or value system.

Schools are no longer isolated from the threats of violence and aggression. Schools were once viewed as "islands of safety", and unfortunately have become susceptible to many types of violence that occur in the community (Hylton, 1996). In 1993, a Canadian survey revealed that citizens believe the largest issue facing public education is school-based youth violence (Jull, 2000). A report to the Solicitor General Canada in 1995, stated that approximately 80 percent of the survey participants believed that youth violence in schools had become more dominant in comparison to ten years prior. Not only is the public observing a higher rate of youth violence in schools, teachers are also reporting "dramatic increases in type, frequency, and severity of anti-social, aggressive, and violent behaviour in classrooms". However, it is important to note that national statistics on youth crime show youth criminal activity to be stable, with a possible decline over recent years (Jull, 2000). In the U.S., a staggering number of students are physically attacked in secondary schools; approximately 282,000 students every month. It has been suggested that teenagers are more often victims of crime than adults; "on the average, every 1,000 teenagers experienced 67 violent crimes each year, compared to 19 for every 1,000 adults age 20 and older" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). It is a widely held belief that youth resort to gun violence; however according to Jull (2000), bullying, verbal abuse, and disorderly behaviour are the most common school discipline problems. Gun-related school violence is predominately a phenomenon in U.S. schools, for the time being (Jull, 2000). When trying to comprehend weapon-related violence in schools, it is important to note that gun-related violence is predominantly experienced outside of the school; for example, children traveling to and from

school (Mulvey & Cauffman, 2001). In order to predict the potential for school violence, one must observe the conditions of the neighbourhood in which the school is situated, such as crime rates, poverty, and population turnover.

Traditionally, the management of student misbehaviours has been the responsibility of teachers and school administrators, who followed school board guidelines and discipline policies (Jull, 2000). Teachers have been relied on by parents to effectively manage misbehaving students on an individual basis and enforce discipline, respect for diversity, order, and peace. However, it is now recognized that teachers and school administrators are not exclusively responsible for managing misbehaving students, as issues spread beyond the schoolyard and into the community. Due to the increasing complexity of school-based violence, policies such as the Zero Tolerance policy have been developed, suggesting that misbehaving students receive rapid punishment. The Zero Tolerance policy is widely used in the U.S. public school system and addresses the following issues: violence, alcohol, weapons, drugs, firearms, and tobacco. Due to Canada's "close cultural associations and the powerful influence of the U.S. media-machine", school administrators across the nation have decided to adopt the above-mentioned U.S. approach to handling youth violence (Jull, 2000). Whether or not the Zero Tolerance policy is effective is yet to be determined; many researchers believe the Zero Tolerance policy to be ineffective. Mulvey & Cauffman (2001) suggest that not only is Zero Tolerance ineffective, but can have the opposite effect on students. For example, a student brings aspirin to school and is thus suspended or expelled for violating the Zero Tolerance drug policy. In turn, the student is likely to harbour feelings of dislike towards the school administration who decided upon the method of punishment.

It is important to note that school violence is not limited to internal threats, such as misbehaving students, and includes the threat of violence from visitors; school violence such as shootings have been conducted by visitors as well as students and former students. External threats create a different set of challenges for predicting and monitoring potentially violent acts, and has therefore motivated school boards across Canada and the U.S. to increase security measures in schools. The Ontario provincial government reportedly assigned 10 million dollars for the implementation of a "locked door" policy to address the threat of intruders (Professor D. Baumken, personal communication, April 2016; Martin, 2013).

The media can have a strong influence on public perception of the risk of school violence, particularly when reporting on an event occurring within the community. Incidents involving youth violence can experience a large amount of exposure and thus puts pressure on school administrators to implement security-related policies (Hylton, 1996). The media portrayal of schools being "chaotic jungles" is an exaggeration; however this portrayal is contagious and causes a societal hyperawareness of violence amongst youth. For example, "incidents such as…shootings and gang-related beatings in and around schools in major Canadian cities such as Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Victoria... [Reinforce] the notion that youth are armed and out-of-control" (Jull, 2000). Refer to section 2.4. for a more in-depth observation of the influence of media on fear and public perceptions.

Preventing youth violence in schools is a complex issue requiring exploration of multiple avenues to achieve optimal safety and security in schools. Research conducted by Mulvey & Cauffman (2001) explains how a school environment can affect the rate of youth violence. Students who feel a positive connection to the school, have a sense of belonging and feel as though they are being treated fairly, are less likely to partake in acts of aggression and

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misbehaviour. Students who feel alienated, unsupported, uninvolved and treated unfairly are more likely to participate in acts of violence and aggression. It is therefore important for schools to establish an environment "where students feel connected and trusted [and] will build the critical link between those who often know when trouble is brewing and those who can act to prevent it" (Mulvey & Cauffman, 2001). Student engagement and involvement in curricular and extra-curricular activities, paired with staff support and a sense of community could very well be a powerful antidote to high levels of youth aggression and violence in schools.

The concept of school-based violence has become increasingly complex and difficult to identify prior to an incident. External influences such as the media, neighbourhood and community characteristics, and family conditions have the ability to encourage youth into acts of violence. When a tragic act of violence occurs at a school, such as a shooting, the media exposure triggers public fear and in turn demands new school policies such as Zero Tolerance, to keep the children safe and secure (Hylton, 1996). Often, the policies are unwarranted and can agitate students, therefore increasing the possibility of youth violence. One of the most effective strategies in mitigating and preventing youth violence and aggression, is to form a school environment that makes students feel connected, supported, included and trusted (Mulvey & Cauffman, 2001).

CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGIES

2.1. Emergency Management

Emergency management is a relatively modern concept which has been growing, developing, evolving and taking root globally in the various levels of government, communities and businesses. Emergency management requires an all hazards approach and in doing so faces complex and sometimes unpredictable situations that require extensive planning, cooperation and training. It is a dynamic field comprised of private, public, non-profit organizations, government agencies and volunteers (Waugh, Jr., 2000). Emergency management does not have an internationally agreed upon definition. In Europe, the term *civil protection* is widely used, while several countries around the world use *disaster planning* or *emergency management* when referring to organized efforts used to deal with collective threats (Quarantelli, 1998). In addition to the lack of consistency for labeling emergency efforts, the social evolution of emergency management, disaster planning and civil protection has been relatively inconsistent and diverse globally, until approximately three decades ago. Within the last few decades, a number of similarities in the functions and structures involved in emergency efforts began to emerge (Quarantelli, 1998).

2.1.1. Defining Disaster, Emergency and Catastrophe

To some, emergencies, disasters and catastrophes have the same meaning; however that is not the case. What defines a disaster? There are many different definitions of what constitutes as a disaster, and depends on the nature of the organization creating the definition and the perception of the various risks faced. For the purpose of the current study, the definition of

disaster is derived from the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), and is as follows:

> "A situation or event which overwhelms local capacity, necessitating a request to the national or international level for external assistance, or is recognized as such by a multilateral agency or by at least two sources, such as national, regional or international assistance groups and the media" (CRED, 2009).

In order for an event to be classified as a disaster, at least one of the following criteria must be satisfied. The criteria are as follows: minimum ten reported deaths (human), at least 100 people affected, state of emergency has been declared, and a need for international assistance (CRED, 2009).

Ontario's Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act defines an emergency as:

> "A situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise." (Emergency Management Ontario, 2009).

A catastrophe is the most severe situation of the three terms. There are different criteria that must be met in order for a situation to be classified as a catastrophe. According to Quarantelli (2000), the following factors separate a catastrophe from a disaster. To begin, the built structure of the affected community must be either mostly or completely impacted. Hurricane Hugo serves as an excellent example of heavily impacting most or all of the community. The U.S. Virgin Island of St. Criox experienced an astonishing amount of impact on residential structures, where over 90 percent of the homes were damaged. In addition to large structural damage, operational

bases and emergency organization facilities are usually struck. The second characteristic of a catastrophe is the inability of local officials to continue working within their usual roles, "and this often extends into the recovery period" (Quarantelli, 2000). The interruption and/or halting of most or all daily community functions, is considered to be another determining factor. Interruptions include resource and service shortages such as water, electricity, transportation and communication services. Lastly, during a catastrophe, nearby communities are unable to provide help. This could be due to the fact that the neighbouring communities have also been struck by the event and are therefore competing for the same resources.

2.1.2. The Pillars of Emergency Management

Emergency management is a dynamic and complex system. It is both broad and specific, and rests upon five pillars. Like most components of emergency management, there are inconsistencies amongst organizations. For many organizations and agencies, there are four pillars of emergency management, however Emergency Management Ontario uses five pillars, which will be used in the study. The five components are as follows: prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery (Emergency Management Ontario, 2014). Most organizations tie prevention and mitigation together as one component of emergency management, however for the context of the present study, prevention will remain an individual pillar as it plays an important role.
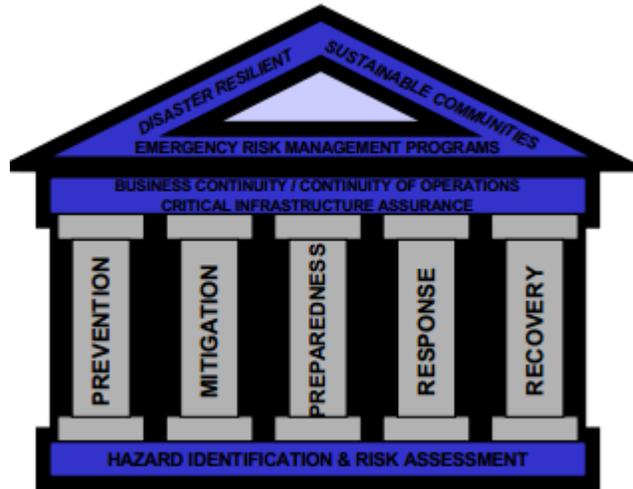
Figure 1: The five components of emergency management.
Image derived from: Crisis Comms Command Post, 2012.

Prevention:

The first component of emergency management is prevention. Prevention and mitigation share many commonalities in pre-disaster planning, however prevention activities focus on avoiding the adverse impact of hazards, while mitigation focuses on limiting the impacts (Baas et al., 2008). Prevention also aims to minimize the occurrence of any related biological, environmental and technological disasters. Public awareness and education of disaster risk prevention, has shifted behaviour and attitude of the public, thus contributing to the emergency of a "culture of prevention" (Professor N. Nirupama, personal communication, June 2014).

Mitigation:

Similar to prevention, mitigation aims to reduce the impacts of a disaster prior to the occurrence of such an event. If a risk to the safety, health, and welfare of a community or society has been determined, mitigation measures will be used for decision making and implementation of a risk reduction program (Petak, 1985). It is a proactive, all-hazards approach with multiple tools and methods such as hazard mapping, insurance programs, and adapted building codes (Public Safety Canada, 2015). Mitigation measures are both structural and non-structural.

Structural measures "refer to any physical construction to reduce or avoid possible impacts of hazards" (Professor N. Nirupama, personal communication, June 2014). For example, utilizing engineering and construction measures to reinforce and/or protect infrastructure and build hazard-resistant structures; i.e. a flood dike. Non-structural measures "refer to policies, awareness, knowledge development, public commitment, and methods and operating practices"; i.e. land use zoning (Public Safety Canada, 2015).

Preparedness:

The third component of pre-disaster planning is preparedness. Unlike prevention and mitigation, preparedness focuses on identifying the appropriate measures and activities required to ensure an effective response (Baas et al., 2008). This includes effective and timely early warning, as well as "the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations" (Professor N. Nirupama, personal communication, June 2014). Preparedness rests upon six pillars: emergency plans, emergency operations centre, training, exercises, emergency information, and public education (Professor K.P. Melo, personal communication, December 2, 2015). Preparedness is an on-going component and if neglected, could have serious impacts on the outcome of an event.

Response:

The response component is activated during and/or after a disaster has occurred, in order to provide basic subsistence to the affected population and to preserve life. Response can occur immediately, and have a short- or long-term duration (Professor N. Nirupama, personal communication, June 2014). Immediate response may include evacuation, immediate assistance, and damage and loss assessments. Longer-term response is a "continued assistance until a certain

level of recovery" has been achieved (Baas et al., 2008). Response is initially managed at the local level; be it the fire department, hospitals, police, or EMS. If the local assistance becomes overwhelmed and unable to effectively manage the emergency, provincial assistance can be requested (Public Safety Canada, 2015).

Recovery:

The fifth and final pillar of emergency management is recovery. After a disaster or emergency event, decisions are made and actions are taken in order to rehabilitate and reconstruct the affected community. The restoration and improvement of the "pre-disaster living conditions" is a priority, while applying disaster risk reduction measures (Professor N. Nirupama, personal communication, June 2014). Depending on the level of damage, resettlement and/or relocation is necessary. Recovery does not focus solely on the physical recovery of the community, but the economic, social and cultural recovery as well (Baas et al., 2008). Loss of loved ones, cultural institutions (i.e. churches, mosques…etc.), and social networks can be just as damaging to the community, and may take longer to recover from compared to the physical damage.

2.1.3. A Historical View of Emergency Management

History plays a very important role when it comes to emergency management. Despite the common assumption that each individual disaster event is historically unique, research suggests the existence of behaviour patterns, identified via comparative analyses (Drabek, 2005). The way in which humankind deals with a crisis has evolved in many different ways, attempting to keep up with the rapid growth and development of the species. Modern emergency management, however is a relatively new concept, emerging in the mid-twentieth century.

During this time, a shift in social philosophy began as governments became increasingly present in disaster response and prevention (Professor Asgary, personal communication, June 2014). As governments began to develop, crisis management shifted from the individual level, to a collective expectation of the government's responsibility to protect and provide assistance during a crisis (Canton, 2007). Interestingly, Waugh, Jr. states that "hazards and disasters are the reason we have government" (2000). A trend began to emerge as governments began to increase their involvement in emergency management. For example, in the 1350s after the Black Plague, towns in Italy attempted to control public sanitation by implementing specific initiatives. Following the Great Fire in London England, "the government issued charters to insurance companies to support fire suppression efforts" (Canton, 2007). The reactive mindset of governments made its way to North America (Canton, 2007).

Past events can be studied in order to learn what techniques were effective, what types of mistakes were made, and the probability of the event occurring again. Historical disasters can identify foreseeable hazards and suggest possible outcomes in a community. Past events can identify potential social impacts, as well as providing a unique forecast for any potential hazards in a given area. Disasters are not typically a singular event, but a series of cascading events. Cascading events are disaster situations where the initial incident triggers multiple disasters, like a ripple effect, which could then cause the disaster to expand into areas that would typically be protected or unharmed by the event. (Canton, 2007). In order to prepare for a cascading event, one should look to historical disasters as excellent examples.

Historical events should be studied and included during the development of strategies for communities to reduce potential risk and build resilience (Canton, 2007). Each disaster event carries the potential to expose the key structures and core values of the affected community

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(Drabek, 2005), and therefore provides invaluable data for future events. If properly utilized, the data can assist in creating a more resilient community. History has the unique ability of repeating itself, and analysing past disaster events could provide potential future solutions to prevent life loss and property damage.

2.1.4. Emergency Management in Ontario

It is a widely held belief that Ontario is devoid of many types of disasters. However, Ontario is vulnerable to emergency situations that could occur without warning, at any time (Emergency Management Ontario, 2015). In 1980, the province of Ontario acknowledged the importance of emergency management, and thus Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) materialized, providing assistance to communities when needed (Emergency Management Ontario, 2015). The main focuses of EMO is prevention and preparedness – two of the five emergency management pillars – as well as providing support to community response when unimagined situations occur. Emergency Management Ontario is comprised of mutually supportive partnerships whom are coordinated by EMO. Emergency Management Ontario will coordinate provincial activities when required (Emergency Management Ontario, 2015). In addition to occupying a supportive role, EMO takes the lead in "coordination, development and implementation of prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery strategies" in order to enhance resiliency, safety and security in the province, and will accomplish such a goal through "effective partnerships with diverse communities" (Emergency Management Ontario, 2015).

Ontario's emergency management frame work and legal basis is governed by the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, as defined in Section 2.1.1. The primary purpose of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act "is to promote the public good

by protecting the health, safety and welfare of the people of Ontario in times of emergencies"
(Emergency Management Ontario, 2015). The Act defines the authority, roles and
responsibilities as well as safeguards bestowed upon municipalities, provincial ministries and
individual appointments. It is a requirement of the Act that all provincial ministries and
municipalities have an emergency management program, and is the responsibility of EMO to
provide support in program implementation, assistance, training, advice and guidelines.

In order to readily support municipalities during a crisis, the province uses the Provincial
Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) to coordinate and maintain an "extensive emergency
management capacity". The PEOC is continuously staffed and monitors potential and/or
developing emergency situations, both within the province and outside, to ensure a rapid
response from provincial resources and decision makers. Lastly, the premier and his/her cabinet
has the authority to declare a provincial emergency if the emergency situation is large in scale, as
well as enact special orders in order to protect the public. If the above occurs, the request for
federal government assistance will be passed through Emergency Management Ontario
(Emergency Management Ontario, 2015).

2.2. Resiliency and Risk as it Pertains to Emergency Situations

Resilience

Historically, the concept of resilience has belonged to social-ecological systems, however
it is emerging in different fields such as community development and emergency management
(Townshend et al., 2014). Over the past 40 years, the idea of resilience has evolved and become
well-defined due to the developing practical and theoretical concepts that shape the disaster

paradigm (Manyena, 2006). Resilience is a process which uses local resources "to deal with unpredictable environments" (Townshend et al., 2014). The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) has an excellent definition of resilience, and it is as follows:

> "The capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself to increase this capacity for learning from past disasters for better future protection and to improve risk reduction measures" (UNISDR, 2005).

When a community is deemed to be resilient, it possesses the ability to function effectively while under stress, is self-reliant, and has the capability to adapt. The community is able to "anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover quickly from impacts of disasters", as well as possessing social capacity (Townshend et al., 2014). The level of resilience in a community is measured by the ability of the community's social system to learn from previous disasters in order to improve risk reduction and protection measures in the future (Baas et al., 2008). There are certain traits that a disaster-resilient system or community possesses. For example, the people within the community or system are able to comprehend and understand any risks the community and themselves may face, and understand the need for cooperation and collaboration amongst the community in order to prepare for and handle any emergency situations that occur. The members of the community should feel as though their voices are being heard and appreciated, as well as being encouraged to take part in community events. By doing so, the community is building and strengthening the social support networks depended upon during an emergency.

Sustainability and sustainable development is found to be connected to resilient communities. The continuous practice of preparedness, mitigation, resilience building, and response has aided in the evolution of sustainability. Communities using sustainable development attempt "to live in harmony with the natural environment" in such a way that the environmental, social, and economic conditions of the community are improved for current and future generations. Sustainability has become a widely recognized principle by practitioners and academics, to be used in development practices (Professor Nirupama, personal communication, July 2014).

Risk and Risk Perception

Unfortunately the trend continues – along with many emergency management concept definitions – with the lack of a universal agreed upon definition of risk; the reason being, people experience risk differently (Etkin, 2014). Since the emergence of the species, humans have been exposed to risk, as it is believed to be engrained in human thinking as an integral part of the thought process (Wahlberg & Sjoberg, 2000). So, if there is no singular definition of risk, how can it be comprehended? To begin, one must become exposed to the debates that surround the controversial term. One such debate is whether risk is socially constructed. Is it objective and measureable, or subjective and immeasurable, and to what degree? To clarify, the objective perspective is referred to as the *rationalist approach*, and the subjective perspective is referred to as the *constructionist approach* (Etkin, 2014). The rationalist approach puts emphasis on scientific management, statistics, and decision theory in order to control risk. The constructionist approach suggests that "nothing is a risk in itself, but rather that it is a product of cultural, political, social and historical ways of seeing". The above-mentioned debate is one of major standing in the field of risk; however, risk does in fact reflect upon both perspectives. If risk is

socially constructed, society has made decisions which have inadvertently determined who is at

risk and what the risks are. There are several factors contributing to socially constructed risk,

such as minorities, education, disability, elderly and children, poverty, and health (Pine, 2009).

Etkin (2014) provides a well-developed example of a socially constructed risk faced by many in

urbanized areas:

> "Allowing housing construction near hazardous chemical plants
> is a social/political decision that puts people who live there in
> harm's way. The proximity of residential areas to hazardous
> industrial ones has become increasingly important due to urban
> growth".

By allowing the development of residential buildings near a hazardous area, society has

determined the persons occupying the buildings to be at risk.

There exists two types of risk: involuntary risk and voluntary risk. Involuntary risks are

"associated with activities that happen to [a person] without…prior knowledge or consent"

(Professor Nirupama, personal communication, July 2014). An example of an involuntary hazard

could be food preservatives, which offers benefits as well as risk (Slovic, 1987). Voluntary risks

are associated with activities that people decide to take part in, sometimes on a regular basis.

Examples of voluntary risk include: driving a vehicle, swimming in the ocean, or skydiving.

With voluntary risk, it is difficult to determine what level of risk is deemed acceptable; as

previously mentioned, people view and experience risk differently (Professor Nirupama,

personal communication, July 2014; Etkin, 2014).

When a person is exposed to a risk, they do not respond to that risk directly; rather they respond to their own perception of that risk. Generally speaking, the average person (non-expert) relies on intuition to assess a risk; this concept is referred to as *risk perception* (Slovic, 1987). Risk perception is controlled "by sets of dynamic social and psychological processes that result in some hazards becoming of increased concern within society, while others become less of a concern" (Etkin, 2014). Some processes include trust, blame, and prior attitudes. It is a subjective judgement of an individual's feeling towards the plausibility of experiencing a hazard when there is minimal objective information. Risk perception is influenced by direct or indirect experiences of activities, events, and/or technologies; for example, receiving information from news sources, or witnessing a natural disaster such as a severe flood (Wachinger et al., 2013). The characteristics of potential dangers associated with a risk also heavily influences risk perception. People tend to believe that rare, sensational events pose a higher level of risk than more conventional events. The above distortion of perception possesses the ability to travel between social groups, potentially causing widespread panic and fear towards very unrealistic and rare threats (Gierlach et al., 2010). Slovic (1987) suggests that within social groups, acting powers "downplay certain risks and emphasize others as a means of maintaining and controlling the group".

People's judgements of risk stem from social learning, peer influences and cultural practices, and are continuously exposed to media reports and other processes of communication. Similar to risk, risk perception is viewed differently by each individual depending on the following factors: the type of risk, the context of the risk, the social context, and the individual's personality. An individual's judgement of risk is further influenced by personal experience,

knowledge, emotions, and attitudes (Wachinger et al., 2013). Research suggests that one of the greatest influences on risk perception is cultural factors, rather than social factors (Gierlach et al., 2010).

A common perception found within many industrialized nations is the belief that people are presently exposed to a higher degree of risk than traditionally faced in the past, and risks to be faced in the future will be larger than present risk (Slovic, 1987). The above is a general statement, attempting to express the common beliefs of the population. There is, however, two viewpoints of risk not mentioned in the above-mentioned common perception: lay judgment of risk and expert judgement of risk. Lay judgement is generally a rights-based approach that focuses on justice, uncertainty, who benefits from the risk, who is at risk, and dread. Expert judgement uses a risk management approach, and as a result is more technical and narrow; for example, using annual fatalities as a measurement of risk (Professor Etkin, personal communication, September 2014). It is important to note that expert judgement is prone to the same biases as laypeople, especially if the experts "are forced to go beyond the limits of available data and rely on intuition" (Slovic, 1987). With that being said, members of the public sometimes do not possess all of the information relating to a certain hazard, and therefore can be misinformed. It is beneficial to embrace both the public and expert viewpoints in order to develop a well-rounded grasp on risk, as both views offer unique intelligence and insight.

Risk perception is fueled by people's experiences (or lack-of), emotions, and social and cultural factors of the community, along with numerous influencers (Gierlach, et al., 2010). Each individual experiences and perceives risk differently, and therefore makes it difficult to truly define the concept. To conclude, individuals' perception of risk is a motivator, urging

community members to spring in to action mitigate, avoid, and adapt to risks (Wachinger et al., 2013).

2.3. Root Causes of Emergencies

Emergencies are very complex situations with many different contributing factors that drive the severity and duration of the event. Due to their complex nature, the root causes of emergencies are numerous and challenging to quantify. Factors such as geographical location, access to resources, socio-economic influences, the physical environment, and physical exposure can contribute to the occurrence of an emergency event. Root causes can be observed by evaluating the risk a population faces, more specifically the combination of the population's vulnerabilities and exposure to hazards (Wisner et al., 2004).

A model exists that is widely used in the emergency management field known as the Pressure and Release model, commonly referred to as the PAR model. This model demonstrates "how disasters occur when natural hazards affect vulnerable people" (Wisner et al., 2004). According to the PAR model, disasters occur at the intersection of the physical hazard exposure and vulnerability (Awal, 2015). Below is a depiction of the PAR model, with special attention to the root causes, dynamic pressures, and unsafe conditions.

The Progression of Vulnerability

1 ——————— 2 ——————— 3

Root causes	Dynamic pressures	Unsafe conditions	Disasters	Hazard
Limited access to •Power •Structures •Resources **Ideologies** •Political systems •Economic systems	**Lack of** •Local institutions •Training •Appropriate skills •Local investments •Local markets •Press freedom •Ethical standards in public life **Macro-forces** •Rapid population growth •Rapid urbanisation •Arms expenditure •Dept repayment schedules •Deforestation •Decline in soil productivity	**Fragile physical environment** •Dangerous locations •Unprotected buildings and infrastructure **Fragile local economy** •Livelihoods at risk •Low income levels **Vulnerable society** •Special groups at risk •Lack of local institutions **Public actions** •Lack of disaster preparedness •Prevalence of endemic disease	**RISK =** **Hazards +** **Vulnerability** **R = H × V**	Earthquake Cyclones Hurricane Typhoon Flooding Volcanic eruption Landslide Drought Virus and pests

Figure 2. The PAR model framework (Wisner et al., 2004

Wisner et al., (2004) uses a nutcracker as a metaphor for the PAR model, "with increasing pressure on people arising from either side – from their vulnerability and from the impact (and severity) of the hazard for those people". In order to relieve the pressure of a physical hazard, the reduction of vulnerability is necessary, referred to as the 'release'. The root causes in the PAR model are societal processes – political, demographic and economic – which enhance vulnerability (Awal, 2015). Root causes of emergencies and disasters can be a result of economic and societal structures, the physical exposure to a hazard, the vulnerability of a population, and access to resources. Root causes of specific school-based emergency incidents will be discussed in chapter 3.

2.4. <u>The Influence of Fear on School Safety</u>

For approximately ten months out of the year, children spend most of their days at school. Schools portray an image of a safe, calm place where parents and guardians feel reassured of their child's well-being (Lindle, 2008). According to Lindle (2008), parents and guardians assume that their children are offered better protection during school hours, opposed to before and after school. As such, "safety and security of pupils are forgone conclusions for public educational institutions; thus, episodic incursions of school safety and security shock and horrify". Unfortunately, when a tragic display of school violence occurs – such as the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012 – fear grips the hearts of the community (Martin, 2013), and thus the perception of school safety is negatively influenced (Borum et al., 2010).

The widespread fear generated from such events has the ability to encourage policy and procedure changes within the school system (Hylton, 1996). The creation of policies and policy changes decided upon during a time of fear, although well-intended, tend to be rash and "may exacerbate conditions that certainly offer unintended consequences" (Lindle, 2008). Changes in school safety and security appears to be a practical solution to eliminate fear, however the solutions can have the opposite effect and intensify public fear. For example in 2006, West Nickel Mines School in Pennsylvania experienced a tragic shooting of five girls; as a result, recommendations were made to have teachers carry firearms as well as issuing textbooks coated in Kevlar to serve as a bullet shield. In addition to the above recommendations, a school division in Texas provided training to students to attack and restrain an armed attacker (Borum et al., 2010). Although the above-mentioned suggestions come from a place of well-meaning, they are unrealistic in nature. The politics of fear is used to justify increasing funding for security measures in schools. In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012,

the Ontario government reacted with a declaration of ten million dollars to be used to increase school security measures by implementing a "locked door policy". Across Canada and in the United States of America, school boards invested in on-site police officers, surveillance cameras, security guards, and enforced regular lockdown drills (Martin, 2013).

The fear caused by horrific school emergencies does not dissipate quickly. The affected communities and/or nations can feel the repercussions for years following the event. The 1999 Columbine shooting in Colorado is a prime example of lingering presence of fear within society. According to a survey that was conducted one year after the Columbine event, approximately "71 percent of parents felt that the Columbine shooting had changed their view on how safe their children were at school". It is interesting to note that, while the event that took place at Columbine High School was indeed horrific, thousands of youth were killed that same year in accidents (voluntary risk) and homicides occurring outside of school (Borum et al., 2010).

Publicity of school-based events can inflate public anxiety, perception of danger (Lindle, 2008; Borum et al., 2010), and sensationalizes the level of risk. The media holds a great deal of power and influence over the general public, and often makes speculation of emerging trends. Returning to a previous example of the 2006 shooting at West Nickel Mines Elementary School in Pennsylvania, national media reports claimed there was an emerging pattern of school shootings occurring in rural areas with female students being targeted. These speculations are "based on unusual cases [and] exacerbate public fear (Borum et al., 2010). Not only does public fear infiltrate media outlets, it also penetrates the academic world and stimulates scholarly investigations of the events. The academic publications that are produced in the wake of a school violence event tend to reinforce the already circulating fear. According to research, a particular phenomenon emerges when the public is exposed to media reports on school violence, known as

moral panic. This phenomenon is a reflection on the publicity of the event, rather than a reflection of the realities of the event (Lindle, 2008). Fear is a very powerful motivator for increased security measures and policy changes, which are sometimes unnecessary and counterproductive.

2.5. Dynamic Pressures and Their Potential Impact on School Safety

As a nation, Canada has experienced a low number of serious school emergencies in both elementary and high schools. Despite the small number of school-based emergencies, – such as school shootings – some events have left their mark on Canadians. An example of a horrific school-based act of violence is the 1989 Montreal massacre at the École Polytechnique engineering university; 14 women were killed and more than 14 individuals were wounded (Jesse MacLean, 2015). Universities and colleges could run a higher risk of armed intruders entering buildings, due to the nature of campuses being open to the public. The specifics of this event fall outside of the scope of the study, however it is important to note that mass casualty events can occur in Canadian schools, despite the low frequency of such incidents to date.

Over time, social and cultural norms have evolved and molded to the dynamic and changing Canadian population. With change, dynamic pressures could materialize, which can influence the behaviour of individuals who are affected by such emerging pressures. In chapter 3, it becomes evident that certain societal pressures helped guide the perpetrators of school shootings down a reckless path and arriving at the decision to attack a targeted school. Regarding elementary and high school safety, certain evolving pressures exist and could possibly become a concern to school boards.

2.5.1. Funding Cuts to Ontario School Boards

Since the year 1995, substantial cuts to the education budget in Ontario have occurred, leaving a nasty mark on all school boards in the province (Martin, 2013). An estimated $400 million was slashed from the education budget between the years 1995 and 2002; As a result, many student support services were eliminated. Due to budget cuts, in 2002 Toronto, Hamilton, and Ottawa public school boards turned to deficit spending in order to maintain the necessary educational services. In response to the deliberate defiance of the law, the Ontario government removed the governing authority from the board trustees, and in turn assigned "government appointed 'supervisors' to implement and oversee budget cuts and operations in the boards in August 2002" (Anderson & Jaafar, 2003). The Toronto District School Board experienced a budget cut from classroom spending of approximately $30 million. The Toronto Board was forced to make drastic cuts, which included the elimination of 13 Youth Counsellors (Falconer et al., 2008).

Across Ontario, the underfunding has negatively affected the overall health and performance of the school environment (Martin, 2013); however, large urban school boards such as Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton, have experienced a larger impact. As previously mentioned, student support services were among the many roles eliminated in various school boards, "thereby further exacerbating the plight of marginalized youth" (Falconer et al., 2008). According to the School Community Safety Advisory Panel, schools have been relatively unsuccessful in engaging disenfranchised and at-risk youth by failing to address the students' socio-psychological needs. Thus, these marginalized youth become "the greatest safety concern", to schools, as they are not provided with the proper support. In 2012, People of Education conducted the Annual Report on Schools, and determined that Ontario elementary and secondary

schools have poor access to mental health services: 24 percent and 19 percent respectively. The above statistic is concerning, as approximately 500,000 children in Ontario struggle with mental health problems. If these children remain untreated and without support, consequences could include substance abuse, violence, school failure and suicide (Martin, 2013). If education budgets continue to reduce the availability of support services in schools, the students could become a concern to school safety.

2.5.2. Influence of School Neighbourhoods

It is a popular belief held by researchers that school violence is influenced by the characteristics of the neighbourhood that it is situated in. Although very difficult to prove, multiple theories exist that predict a relationship between schools and their surrounding residential areas. Hylton (1996), for example, claims that "it is only natural that the types of violence that take place everywhere in the community should spill over into the schools". Some researchers suggest that violence in schools has a heavier association with the characteristics of a neighbourhood compared to the characteristics of the school. If the above statement is correct, than it can be stated that "schools do not generate violence as much as they reflect locations where violence permeates" (Mateu-Gelabert, 2000). Theoretical explanations such as *school effects* and *neighbourhood effects* explore underlying factors that attempt to establish a connection between youth behaviours and the influence of neighbourhoods and schools. Both schools and neighbourhoods are environments where socialization occurs frequently between young peers, and are considered hot-spots for influencing youth's values and attitudes. It has been suggested that if there is a geographical concentration of less advantaged youth and households, these areas yield "lesser opportunities of learning, insufficient information about the education system, and thereby potential future labour market positions". Youth from less

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advantage households may also have a lower educational drive and lacking a role model. It is important to note that the research conducted does not have strong evidence linking neighbourhood characteristics to the educational outcome of individuals (Brannstrom, 2008).

Structural factors of neighbourhoods could cause neighbourhood instability and as a result, neighbourhood violence. Structural factors include: high residential mobility, low socio-economic status and ethnic heterogeneity. Poverty, urbanization and family disruption, among other factors, can create an unstable neighbourhood in a community with little social control over the community members; this in turn leads to more violence. As communities become structurally disorganized, subcultures with a higher crime tolerance have a tendency to emerge. This is referred to as the social disorganization theory (Mateu-Gelabert, 2000). Research conducted by Ennett *et al.* (1997) suggests that "the absence of community-level social control mechanisms in declining neighborhoods contributes to the spread of delinquency" among adolescents. Socially disorganized communities include the following characteristics: economic deprivation, low neighbourhood attachment, residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity. As the community's social and economic structures begin to break down, the affected neighbourhoods become incapable of preventing criminal behaviour.

It is common for schools to be located within neighbourhoods, and as a result, mirror the neighbourhood composition regarding sociodemographic characteristics (Ennett et al., 1997). Researchers agree that additional and more extensive research needs to be conducted, exploring the interrelationship between schools and the surrounding communities, as an emerging dynamic pressure for school-based emergencies.

2.5.3. Influence of Urbanisation

As urban economies around the globe boom and cities evolve into 'mega-cities', new challenges are emerging, particularly governance and sustainability challenges for both local and national governments. Large urban centers can experience "nationalistic and counter discourse", political influences, and power struggles. Urban centers tend to have a larger number of poverty stricken residents, and have a tendency to be "centers of crime" (Cohen, 2009). Research suggests that although urbanisation has provided a potential improvement in access to goods, jobs, and services to poor populations in developing countries, it has also presented challenges in the form of poverty, violence, conflict and inequalities (International Development Research Centre, 2012). It should be noted that urbanisation does not only involve a migration to large urban centers, but also a migration to rural towns which can be referred to as "mini-urbanization" (Kluwer Law International, 1999).

In the previous section, it is suggested that neighbourhoods have an influence on the level of violence experienced by children in school, and the school has the tendency to mirror the neighbourhood composition (Ennett et al., 1997). As cities and towns increase in size, an increase in poverty and crime may occur (Cohen, 2009), which in turn could negatively affect school safety. There is little research that directly connects urbanisation to school violence, however one could predict a possibility for an increased risk of school violence as cities and towns increase in population, and as neighbourhoods surrounding schools continue to grow.

Trends in Canada

      With the use of Excel software, a series of graphs were created depicting the number of

school shootings – in both Canada and the U.S. (see chapter 3 for U.S. graphs) – in the following

categories: number of school shootings in elementary and high schools, number of school

shootings in only elementary schools, number of mass casualty events in elementary and high

schools, and number of mass casualty events in only elementary schools. Maps were also

constructed, displaying the geographical areas where the school shootings took place. The

statistics used in the bellow graphs are a compilation of data from multiple sources. Once

collected, the data was then inputted into an Excel spreadsheet in order to produce the graphs.

Statistical functions were not used in this study, as the author was not attempting to observe a

relationship between the number of school shootings and any particular year.
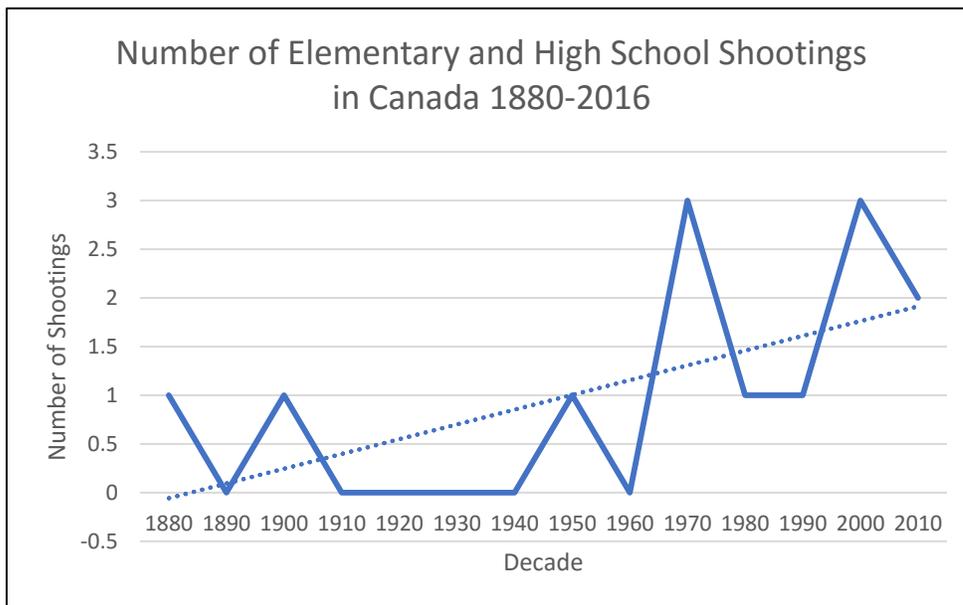

Figure 3: Number of school shootings in elementary and high schools: 1880-2016 (present):

According to the above graph, there has been increase in school shooting incidents since the first incident in 1884, with two visible peaks during the 1970s and early 2000s (Markdale Standard, 1884). There has been a total of 14 recorded school shooting incidents in Canada, excluding university and college shooting events, with a combined death toll of 19. One incident occurred at a daycare, and was included in the above graph due to the young age of the children.
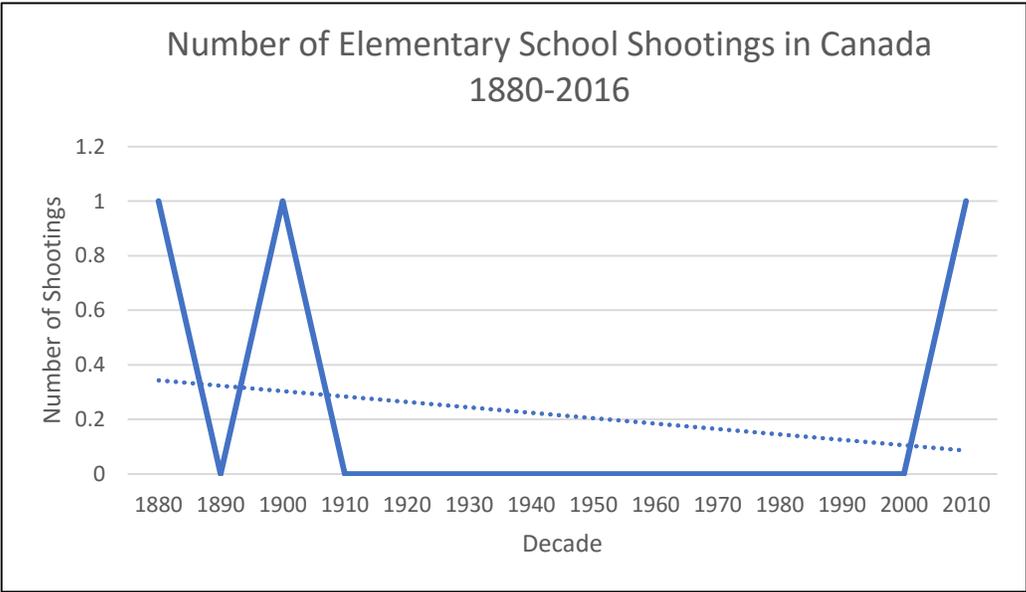
Figure 4: Number of school shootings in elementary schools: 1880-2016 (present):

The above graph shows a decrease in the number of school shooting incidents occurring in elementary schools within Canada, from 1880 to 2016 (present). An observable no-incident period occurred between the decades of 1910 to 2000. A total of three recorded incidents have occurred, with a combined death toll of five.

Number of Mass Casualty Events in Elementary and High Schools in Canada 1880-2016
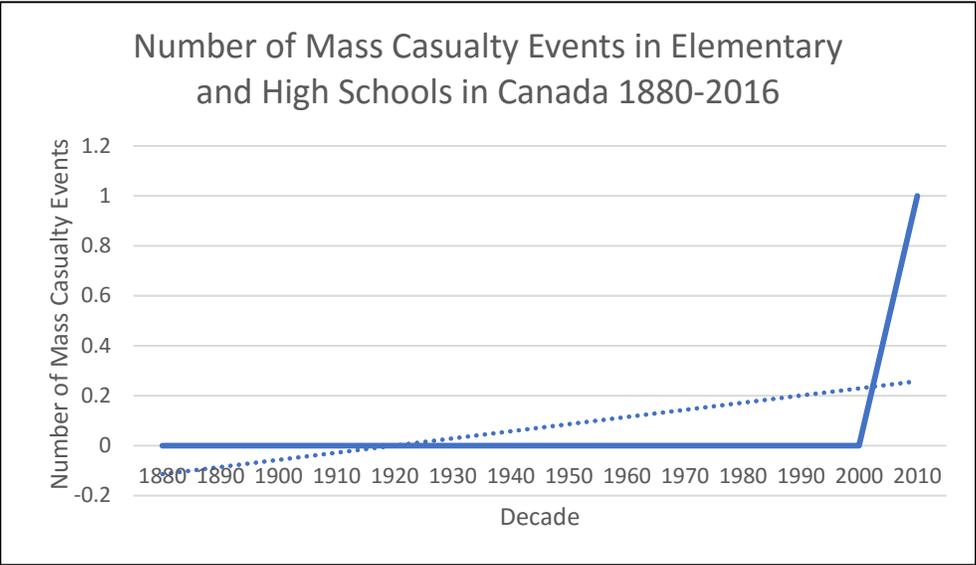
Figure 5: Number of mass casualty events in elementary and high schools: 1880-2016 (present):

There has been only one recorded incident of a school shooting resulting in mass casualty, which was the 2016 shooting at La Loche High School in Saskatchewan; a death toll of four. According to the trendline in the above graph, a slight increase in mass casualty events in elementary and high schools can be observed.

There has not been any recorded mass casualty school shooting events in Canadian elementary schools as of yet.
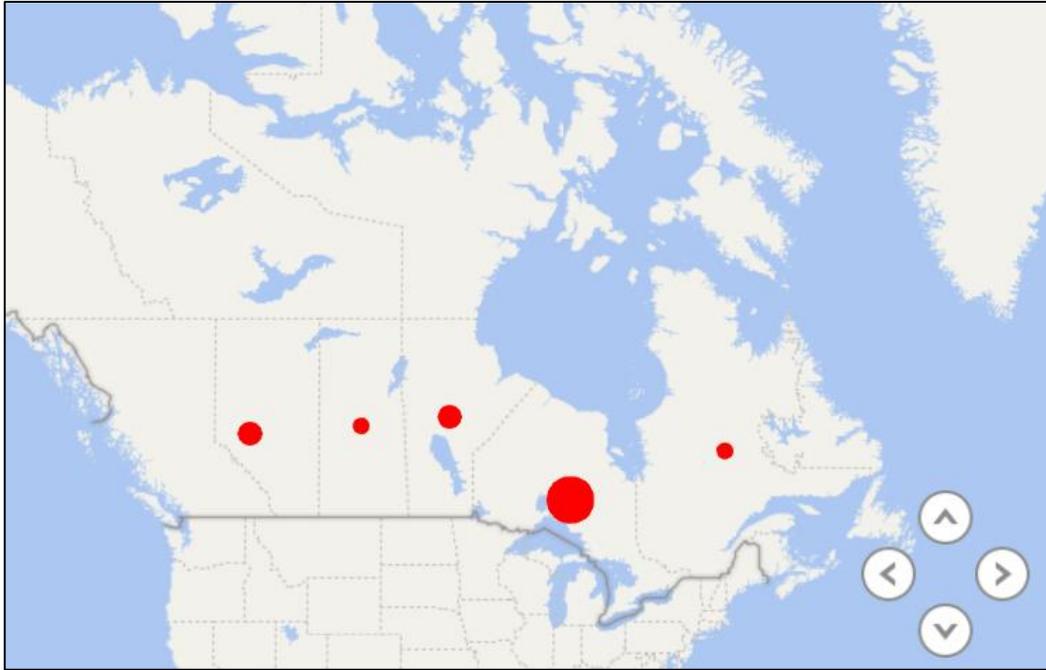
Figure 6: Geographical map of elementary and high school shootings in Canada: 1880-2016 (present):

The size of the red circles on the map represent the number of school shootings that occurred in the different provinces. Ontario has the largest number of school shootings with eight in total, followed by Alberta with two shootings, Manitoba with two shootings, Saskatchewan with one shooting, and Quebec with one shooting (Belgrave, 2015; CBC News, 2016; CBC News, 2004; Chliboyko, 2013; Doucette, 2010; Henry, 2008; Markdale Standard, 2016; Muschert & Sumiala, 2012; Penner & Friesen, 1990; Sherring, 2012; The Canadian Press, 2013; The Huffington Post Alberta, 2013).

CHAPTER 3 – INCIDENTS IN THE U.S.: A Case Study of Elementary School Attacks

3.1. Introduction and First Recorded Incident

Throughout American history, there have been countless school shootings and attacks in both elementary schools, high schools, colleges and universities. Indeed the number of attacks is much higher in the U.S. than in Canada for the time being, however the occurrence of an increasing trend is possible. This chapter observes six school shooting events that have occurred in the U.S. from 1927 to 2016 (present). Due to the high number of past school incidents in the U.S., the decision was made to only discuss mass casualty events that have taken place in the 20th and 21st centuries. Mass casualty or mass murder events can be defined as follows:

> "A number of murders (four or more) occurring during the same incident, with no distinctive time period between the murders. These events typically involve a single location, where the killer murdered a number of victims in an ongoing incident" (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.).

In addition, the focus will remain on elementary school incidents, in order to maintain uniformity throughout the paper; the interview participants used in this study are elementary school teachers.

3.1.1. First Recorded Incident of a Mass Casualty Event Occurring in a School:

The history of recorded school massacres in America dates back to the mid-1700s during the Pontiac War of 1763. During this time, the chief of the Ottawa Tribe, Pontiac, was attacking small American colonies from Detroit to Pittsburgh. Pontiac was targeting settlers who were dwelling "in lands promised to remain in Indian hands by the British Crown" (Strait, 2010). On July 26th, 1764, a small group of Native Americans ambushed a small schoolhouse in

Pennsylvania, killing the schoolmaster, Enoch Brown, and ten students. At the start of the school day, three young warriors stormed the schoolhouse and proceeded to club the schoolmaster and all his pupils – eleven students in total. Once all twelve individuals supposedly succumbed to their extensive head injuries, the warriors proceeded to scalp each victim. Incredibly, one student survived both the clubbing and scalping, unknown to the warriors, and hid until the warriors left the schoolhouse. It has been rumoured that the small group of Native warriors were deemed cowards by the tribe for performing such an act on children (Strait, 2010). There is a limited amount of literature on this particular incident, due to the time period in which it took place. A monument has since been erected in the location of the massacre, in memory of the victims who were mercilessly murdered.

3.2. Elementary School Shooting and Bombing Incidents: 1927-2016 (Present)

3.2.1. Bath Elementary School Bombing, Michigan, 1927:

The first case study addressed is the Bath Elementary school bombing on May 18th, 1927 in Michigan. To many, this incident is considered to be the "worst school violence incident in US history (Muschert, 2007). A local farmer by the name of Andrew Kehoe, age 55, harboured feelings of resentment and unhappiness that ultimately led him to wire an elaborate system of explosives beneath the elementary school. The massive explosion claimed 45 lives, mostly children, and injuring approximately 58 others (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011); Kehoe was also killed in the blast (Knoll, 2010). Fortunately, not all of the explosives detonated as Kehoe intended. While investigators searched the remnants of the school, they discovered a large number of undetonated explosives "along with an alarm clock precisely timed to trigger an even more

massive explosion". Kehoe also killed his wife and obliterated his farm with explosives on the morning of May 18th, shortly before detonating the school explosives.

Mr. Kehoe was considered a *pseudocommando* who cultivated his feelings of anger and resentment over a substantial period of time. A pseudocommando is a type of mass murderer who has carefully planned out their act of violence over a long time period. This person "often kills indiscriminately in public during the daytime, but may also kill family members and a 'pseudo-community' he believes has mistreated him" (Knoll, 2010). The farmer was experiencing significant financial problems which led to a foreclosure against the farm and its assets, as the farm was uninsured. In addition to financial stressors, Kehoe was particularly enraged over a proposed property tax dedicated to building a new school, and made attempts to have the tax repealed. To add more wood to the fire, so to speak, Kehoe sat on the Bath Consolidated School Board for several years as the treasurer, but lost the position during re-election in 1926 (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011).

There is no existing evidence of Kehoe displaying warning signs or exposing his intentions leading up to the event, however other townsfolk recalled suspicious behaviour. Mr. Kehoe's warning, or *pathway* behaviours were either undetected, overlooked or ignored by the community. Such behaviours included purchasing an extraordinary amount of explosive materials from multiple stores; however he purchased the materials in small quantities at each location in order to avoid being detected. It has been recorded that explosions could be heard on Kehoe's property, but when he was approached about the subject, he simply stated that he was experimenting with timers and dynamite. Kehoe was described as "extremely secretive, cunning, and mission-oriented" and was careful to not announce his lethal intentions to any other person (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011). His ability to hold a strong grudge and toxic feelings of anger and

resentment, cost the lives of 45 innocent students and adults in the small community of Bath, Michigan.

3.2.2. Edgar Allen Poe Elementary School Bombing, Texas 1959:

The massacre at Edgar Allen Poe Elementary School was also a bombing event, similar to the Bath Elementary School bombing mentioned above. On September 15th, Paul Orgeron detonated a bomb on the playground of a Houston elementary school, killing six and injuring at least 19 whom were mostly children; among the deceased were three children, two adults and himself. According to local police, Orgeron was a three-time convicted felon, who had separated with his wife one year prior to the incident (The Daily Illini, 1959). At the time of the bombing, Orgeron was attempting to enroll his seven-year-old- son, Dusty, in the school, however the child had not been properly registered and therefore Mr. Orgeron was unable to enroll his son that day. Only moments after leaving the Principal's office, reports of "a man acting strangely on the school playground" reached the ears of Mrs. Doty, the school Principal (Houston Chronicle, 2001). Mrs. Doty asked Orgeron, whom was carrying a briefcase, to leave the school property, to which he replied: "The police can't do anything to me".

Found in the area of the blast was a note – investigators speculated that the note was handed to the Principal – which read:

> "Please do not get excited over this order I am giving you….this suitcase you see in my hand is filled to the top with high explosives. This will make them do their job. Please do not make me push this button, that's all I have to do. I also have two more cases of dynamite set to go off at a certain time at three different places, so it will do more harm to kill me, so do as I say and no one will get hurt. I'd like to talk about God while I'm waiting for my wife" (The Daily Illini, 1959).

Both Orgeron and his son were killed in the explosion. In addition to the above note, another was found addressed to his wife Betty Jean Orgeron, threatening to "blow her and the children up" (The Daily Illini, 1959). The gruesome scene of scattered pieces of flesh and clothes shook the community to its core.

3.2.3. Cleveland Elementary School Shooting (Cleveland Elementary School), California, 1989:

January 17th, 1989, left a mark on the community of Stockton, California as a young man fired over 100 rounds of ammunition on a school playground. Children from grades one through three were spending their noon recess on the playground when 24 year old Patrick Purdy loaded a military-style assault rifle, killing five students and injuring 30 others, including one teacher (Johnson, 2013; Cleveland School Remembers, n.d.). Immediately after the rampage, Purdy committed suicide as the police approached the schoolyard (Kempsky et al., 1989).

Around lunchtime, Purdy drove into the elementary school parking lot, parked and walked to the south edge of the playground, less than 200 feet away from the playing children. He fired 66 rounds of ammunition from an AK-47 assault rifle in a spraying motion from side to side. He then ran behind the building and headed to the other side of the schoolyard and fired the remaining rounds "into the crowd of terrified children". While Purdy was firing the remaining rounds of the first magazine, his car exploded and caught fire. Upon emptying the first magazine of ammunition, he reloaded an additional 30-round magazine in the AK-47 and shot all 30 rounds into the chaotic mass of screaming children. After emptying the last ammunition magazine, Purdy used a 9mm pistol to kill himself. The victims were predominately Southeast Asian immigrants; approximately 70 percent of the school population was Southeast Asian at the time of the shooting (Johnson, 2013). According to a report to the Attorney General, Purdy targeted Southeast Asians and "blamed all minorities for his failings, and selected Southeast

Asians because they were the minority with whom he was most in contact". Purdy also attended the school when he was a child (Kempsky et al., 1989; The Deseret News, 1989).

Purdy had a history of mental health issues, suffering from mild mental retardation as well as growing up in a disturbed household (TIME Magazine, 2001). His disabilities – both emotional and social – fueled his anger and "resorted to racial hatreds to combat his own sense of failure". Evidence presented in a report to the Attorney General indicates that Purdy made the decision to commit suicide a year prior to the shooting, and decided to kill other people in addition to himself so he would be remembered throughout history. In addition to his history of mental health, he also had a criminal history of weapon and narcotic violations as well as soliciting for sex (The New York Times, 1989). Despite his prior convictions, Purdy was able to legally acquire dangerous firearms with high-capacity ammunition, which he used in the January 17th attack. Purdy's anger, mental health issues, and difficult childhood likely aided in his decision to take his own life, and the life of five innocent children.

3.2.4. Westside Middle School Shooting, Arkansas, 1998:

On March 24th, 1998, two young male students pulled the school fire alarm at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and fled to an adjacent field. As the students and teachers evacuated the building, the two boys opened fire using various types of weapons. A total of 87 students and nine teachers evacuated during the fire alarm, while the two perpetrators fired approximately 30 rounds at the crowd, killing five and injuring ten. The majority of the victims were female, although appearing to be a targeted attack, further investigations ruled it as coincidental (The New York Times, 1998; The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, 2016).

Mitchell Johnson (age 13) and Andrew Golden (age 11) had both been raised around firearms; the boys participated in shooting competitions as well as belonging to gun clubs (HISTORY, n.d.). Fellow students described Johnson as "bullish" and had a tendency to brag about his alleged gang related activities. Students also reported him telling fellow students that he was "going to kill them", and kill all of the girls that broke up with him (The New York Times, 1998). Johnson had a history of behavioural issues and had been suspended from school three times, and had been "criminally charged for molesting a two-year-old girl". Golden has been reported to have a "Jekyll and Hyde" lifestyle; he did not showcase any concerning disciplinary behaviours at school and was described as cheerful and well-mannered by adults. However, he had a violent side which he demonstrated by reportedly shooting animals and other children with a BB gun. It was reported that Golden shot many dogs in preparation for the school shooting event. The perpetrators' motives are unclear to researchers, however they suggest that having access to firearms is considered strong factor in a person's ability to carry out such an act (The New York Times, 1998). The two boys were apprehended by the police while attempting to flee the school property towards a parked van containing food, camping equipment, and extra clothing to aid in their escape (The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, 2016).

3.2.5. West Nickel Mines School Shooting, Pennsylvania, 2006:

A quiet Amish community nestled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, experienced a horrific massacre at a one-room schoolhouse on October 2nd, 2006. A man by the name of Charles Carl Roberts IV, entered the West Nickel Mines School at the beginning of the school day and proceeded to shoot 11 female students, killing five (one later died in hospital) and injuring six. When Mr. Roberts entered the schoolhouse, he was heavily armed and demanded the adults and boys to leave the building. He barricaded the doors with lumber, then lined up the 11 girls, ages

six to 13, and tied their legs together with plastic ties and wire, and proceeded to shoot each girl "execution style" and then committed suicide (Lancaster PA, n.d.; CBC News, 2016). Police found a large cache of supplies and weapons which indicated that Roberts was preparing for a longer attack. Amongst the collection: 9mm semiautomatic handgun, a stun gun, two shotguns, two cans of gunpowder, two knives, and approximately 600 rounds of ammunition. Mr. Roberts spent several months collecting ammunition and supplies from stores in the area, in order to avoid triggering the curiosity of the store owners (Kocieniewski & Gately, 2006).

Mr. Roberts was a 32 year old dairy truck driver, serving the community of Lancaster and the surrounding farms, some of which belonged to the victims' families (Lancaster PA, n.d.). He had no existing criminal record or a history of mental illness, however he seemed to harbour negative feelings over an event that happened 20 years prior. It is not apparent what the particular incident was that caused him to carry a 20 year 'grudge', so to speak, but it has been suggested that a girl insulted him. According to record, Roberts was seeking out female victims in particular, and the Amish schoolhouse was close to his home with ideal female victims. His attack came as a surprise to his wife, family and neighbours, as they did not witness any unusual behaviour. He was a well-liked person, who was cheerful and personable, however police records state that Roberts' fellow co-workers noticed a shift in his behaviour several months prior to the shooting. During this time, Roberts appeared to be more withdrawn and glowering until a week before the shooting, when his personality shifted back to its cheerful nature once more. The co-workers speculated that the behavioural shift from sullen to upbeat was caused by Roberts' decision to commit the murder and suicide: "We think that's when he decided to do what he did. It's like his worries and burdens were lifted from him" (Kocieniewski & Gately, 2006). Roberts had written four suicide notes, stating that he was "filled with so much hate and

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unimaginable emptiness" (CBC News, 2016). The small Amish community mourned the loss of five innocent girls and offered support to the victims' families of both the deceased and the injured, and eventually moved passed the horrific event, but still remember and honour the children whom were taken far too early by a man who held on to the past (Lancaster PA, n.d.).

3.2.6. Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting, Connecticut, 2012:

The last event that will be discussed, is the traumatic shooting event on December 14th, 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. A total of 26 people lost their lives that day, six adults and 20 students, ages six and seven, as 20 year old Adam Lanza made his way through the school. On the morning of December 14th, Lanza reportedly killed his mother in her Newtown home, before heading to the elementary school. He carried with him three firearms that he retrieved from his house: two pistols and a semiautomatic AR-15 assault rifle. When Lanza arrived at the school, the doors into the building were locked, so he used his assault rifle to create an entrance into the building (CNN, 2016). A custodian caught sight of Lanza in the school caring the firearms, and began running through the halls, "warning of a gunman on the loose". The intercom had been switched on in order to alert everyone about the unfolding attack, and it has been suggested that this quick thinking likely saved the lives of many. According to a teacher, by having the intercom switched on they were able to hear the chaos occurring in the school office. Upon hearing the panic over the intercom, teachers locked their classroom doors and moved the children into corners or closets "as shots echoed through the building" (CBC News, 2012).

Upon entering the school, Lanza encountered two classrooms of kindergarten and first grade children. He shot and killed all 14 kindergarten students in one classroom, and six first grade students in the second classroom. Victoria Soto, age 27, was attempting to corral her first

grade students away from the door and behind her, when Lanza entered the room and fatally shot her. Lanza then proceeded to take his own life after firing between 50 and 100 shots in the school (CNN, 2016; Bio, n.d.).

Adam Lanza displayed behavioural traits that could lead to violence, however it is unclear as to why he targeted Sandy Hook Elementary School in particular, or what caused him to conduct such a chilling act of violence. At the young age of two, Lanza was placed in a special education preschool, as he was experiencing "significant developmental challenges from earliest childhood" which included difficulties with sensory and communication, repetitive behaviours and delays in socialization (ABC News, 2014). As Lanza grew older, he developed Obsessive Compulsive Disorder-like symptoms – such as constantly washing his hands – and began to avoid personal contact. In the fifth grade, he began showcasing thoughts of violence, after submitting "The Big Book of Granny", which was a quite violent creative writing text and could not be shared with the other students due to its graphic descriptions. Lanza became quite anti-social, and fellow classmates described him as "fidgety and deeply troubled"; it has also been stated that family members believed he suffered from Asperger's syndrome (Bio, n.d.). Lanza did have one unnamed friend, who he confided in on serious topics such as his unstable relationship with his mother, depression and mental health, as well as his interest in serial killers and mass murderers; the latter was deemed to be just a "mutual morbid interest" shared between the two friends. In June, 2013 – approximately seven months prior to the shooting – Lanza and his friend had a falling out over a movie dispute, and halted personal contact (ABC News, 2014). The 20 year old gunman struggled with many different issues in his short life, however there is not enough evidence to suggest that any behavioural issues were the cause of his murderous rampage.

3.3. Critical Analysis of the Incidents

In the U.S. there is a history of violence, which can often be one of the best predictors of future violence; with each act of crime, "the probability of future crime increases" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). Often individuals who have been exposed to violence during their developmental stage, such as being abused as a child, have a higher chance of showing violent tendencies. In order to begin to understand the perpetrator's desire for violence, a psychological profile of specific behaviours can be outlined; the behaviours can be compared to behavioural criteria "frequently associated with individuals who become violent" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). According to Wheeler and Baron (1994), almost every violent person will fall into at least one of the following categories: psychosis, depression, history of violence, chemical dependence, pathological blamer, romance obsession, interest in weapons, elevated frustration with the environment, personality disorders, and impaired neurological functioning. The perpetrators in the six case studies do not fall in to every above mentioned category – without hard evidence – therefore only some of the categories will be discussed. Due to the lack of academic research conducted on the selected perpetrators, and the very delicate topic of mental health characteristics, the author placed the perpetrators into the below categories based on the available information. The below categories are only potential partial explanations of why the perpetrators might have decided to commit acts of murder. Due to the fact that the majority of the perpetrators committed suicide after their homicidal attacks, law enforcement and mental health professionals were unable to study the perpetrators in order to uncover the motives behind the attacks. The perpetrators fall in to more than one of the below categories, as some of the categories tend to overlap.

3.3.1. History of Violence

As previously mentioned, if an individual has a history of violence and/or abuse – physical or verbal – it is considered to be one of the best predictors for future violence. In fact, it has been suggested that "it overshadows all others in the area of prediction" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). Four of the perpetrators appeared to have a history of violence and criminal convictions: Patrick Purdy, Paul Orgeron, Mitchell Johnson, and Andrew Golden.

Purdy had an extensive criminal history of weapons and narcotics violations as well as soliciting for sex (The New York Times, 1989). Joan Cappalla had known Purdy as a child, and remembers him chasing her own children with a "wooden-handled butcher knife", at nine years of age (Phillips, 2009). His first brush with the law occurred at age 12, when he was suspected to be involved in an assault. At age 14, Purdy's then foster parent expressed her fear of Purdy to the police, as he possessed a BB gun and knives (Phillips, 2009).

There is not a sufficient amount of information on Paul Orgeron, however it has been stated that he was a three time convicted felon, committing acts of theft and burglary prior to the bombing event (Houston Chronicle, 2001; Lieberman, 2008). The young perpetrators, Mitchell Johnson and Andrew Golden had a history of violence, although brief due to their young ages. Although the boys had obvious personality and behavioural differences, according to fellow students were verbally aggressive towards other students and "threatened that something big was about to happen". Johnson, age 13, apparently used to brag to fellow students about being part of a gang and participated in gang related activities. Johnson was also received three in-school suspensions in addition to being convicted for the molestation of two year old girl. The day before the shooting, Johnson reportedly threatened another student with a knife in the school locker room. He had also made many verbal threats to fellow students, claiming he was going to

kill all of his past girlfriends whom ended the relationship with him (The New York Times, 1998). Golden on the other hand, did not typically display many indications of violent behaviours at school, however there were reports of him shooting other children and animals with a BB gun (The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture, 2016). In order to prepare for the school shooting, reports claim that Golden shot several dogs (HISTORY, n.d.).

3.3.2. Psychosis: Persecutory Type of Paranoid Disorders

Psychosis encompasses many different disorders, from schizophrenia to paranoid disorders. According to the available literature – and due to the fact that the majority of the perpetrators committed suicide, making it difficult to study the victims' psychological behaviours – only two perpetrators, Andrew Kehoe and Charles Roberts, displayed signs of the persecutory type of paranoid disorders. This type of delusional disorder is the most common type, where individuals "have a long history of resentment toward a person or organization they feel has slighted them in the past". Individuals who fall in to this type of disorder tend to exaggerate the offense(s) and attempt to use harassment measures or legal action in order to "right the wrong" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994).

Andrew Kehoe has been described as a man who was capable of holding on to grudges over an extended period of time. A new property tax had been proposed, which he was incredibly angry about, and had attempted to have the tax repealed on multiple occasions. Kehoe believed that his community had mistreated him by increasing taxes and therefore causing him to have financial problems (Knoll, 2010; Meloy & O'Toole, 2011). Charles Roberts displayed less obvious signs of psychosis, however it has been suggested that he was holding on to a grudge of 20 years. It is unclear what the grudge was based on, however it is speculated that it involved a female. A neighbour, Mary Miller, stated: "I am dying to know what kind of insult from a girl 20

years ago could have led to this" (Kocieniewski & Gately, 2006). Due to the fact that Roberts targeted girls only for the shooting, suggests that the long-held grudge had something to do with a female.

3.3.3. Signs of Depression

Signs of depression amongst the perpetrators is difficult to determine, as the symptoms can be overshadowed by other categories such as personality disorders. According to the literature examined, Charles Roberts and Patrick Purdy showed signs of depression. Depression is considered to be the "most common symptom treated by counselors", and causes approximately one in seven individuals to commit acts of violence on others or themselves "including suicide and/or homicide". Some depressive symptoms include: self-destructive behaviour, socially withdrawn, "perpetual blank, sad, or frowning expression", feeling hopeless, and sense of helplessness (Wheeler & Baron, 1994).

According to authorities, Charles Roberts had no recorded history of psychiatric illness. In his home, where he lived with his wife and children, Roberts left notes explaining distress over an incident that occurred over 20 years ago (Kocieniewski & Gately, 2006). Roberts had also written four suicide notes claiming to be "filled with so much hate and unimaginable emptiness" (CBC News, 2016). Purdy showed signs of self-destructive behaviour, blank facial expression, and very low self-esteem (Phillips, 2009). Evidence suggests that Purdy had potentially made the decision to commit suicide many months prior to the shooting, and had begun methodical preparations in late 1988 for his death (Kempsky et al., 1989).

3.3.4. 'Pathological Blamer'

When an individual is considered to be a pathological blamer, they have a tendency to blame the external world for their misfortunes. The individuals also do not accept the responsibility for their own actions (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). Andrew Kehoe is an excellent example of a pathological blamer. Kehoe was experiencing major financial difficulties and blamed the addition of a new property tax as the cause of his financial misfortunes (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011). Investigators discovered a sign on Kehoe's farm property that read: "Criminals are made, not born", suggesting that Kehoe believed the newly levied tax for a new school building turned him into a murderer (Knoll, 2010). According to reports, Purdy blamed minorities for his misfortunes, particularly the Southeast Asian population, as he was mostly in contact with that particular ethnic group. At the time of the shooting, Cleveland Elementary School's student population was composed of approximately 70 percent Southeast Asian children; a reported 69 percent of the shooting victims were Southeast Asian. It has been suggested that Purdy decided to target Cleveland Elementary School due to the high percentage of Southeast Asian students, in addition to being a student there himself years before (Kempsky et al., 1989).

3.3.5. Elevated Frustration with Their Environment

An individual's environment – be it family, job, or peer environments – can have a negative effect if there is a disturbance. These environments are considered to be support systems for an individual, and if one or more of the environments experiences disorder, violence may ensue (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). Patrick Purdy did not have the luxury of having supportive parents while growing up (Kempsky et al., 1989). His siblings and he were constantly neglected by their parents. One neighbour recalls the children being locked out of the house in winter

without jackets on and without adult supervision. Due to a neighbour's report to the authorities of child neglect, Purdy had been placed in protective custody on two occasions; he also entered the foster system around age 14. Purdy did not have a stable work environment, as he changed jobs quite frequently. He became a prostitute at age 15, and was consequently arrested for engaging in such work (Phillips, 2009).

Adam Lanza also experienced familial instability, as he and his mother reportedly had a strained relationship, and had a falling out with his father two years before the shooting. According to reports, Lanza shot and killed his mother before heading to the school (CNN, 2016). Lanza did not have a strong peer environment, he did however have one close friend, whom he had a falling out with earlier in 2012. The falling out was apparently due to a disagreement about a certain movie. Lanza confided in the unnamed friend, and the collapse of the relationship likely aided in his decision to commit an act of violence (ABC News, 2014).

3.3.6. A Fascination with Weapons

According to Wheeler and Baron (1994), an interest in weapons – such as owning a gun collection, skilled in shooting, and/or having a fascination with weapons – is considered to be a significant indicator in assessing an individual's potential for committing acts of violence. Johnson and Golden, although very young, had knowledge and experience with firearms. Golden's family possessed a collection of weapons in which he had access to, allowing the two boys to acquire the weapons used in the school shooting. In addition to being raised in the presence of firearms, both Johnson and Golden were members at gun clubs and participated in shooting competitions; the shooting competitions reportedly required participants to shoot at "simulated moving human targets" (HISTORY, n.d.). Patrick Purdy reportedly owned a BB gun and knives, however it is unknown whether or not he had a *fascination* with weapons (Phillips,

2009). Purdy also had a criminal history of weapons violations prior to the shooting event, suggesting he was relatively familiar with handling firearms (The New York Times, 1989).

3.3.7. Personality Disorders: Antisocial Personality Disorder & Borderline Personality Disorder

Personality disorders take on many different forms, and can be defined as "consistent human behaviour patterns within the individual" (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). Two particular disorders will be addressed, as some of the perpetrators show similar characteristics: Antisocial Personality Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder. It should be noted that the perpetrators only displayed certain behavioural characteristics found in the above disorders. Purdy appeared to possess behavioural characteristics of both Antisocial and Borderline Personality Disorders. If an individual shows signs of having an Antisocial Personality Disorder – also referred to as *sociopath* – they tend to be aggressive and irritable in nature. Purdy was believed to have an antisocial personality, however he did not receive a "sustained mental health intervention" (Phillips, 2009). A neighbour recalls Purdy chasing her children with a butcher knife when he was young. His many interactions with the law included an assault case, in which he was a suspect. Another characteristic of Antisocial Personality Disorder, is the individual's inability to maintain long-lasting relationships with family members or peers. Purdy did not maintain a relationship with his parents, as he was placed into the foster care system due to his parents being reported for child neglect. He was also referred to as a loner (Kempsky et al., 1989).

Individuals who suffer from Borderline Personality Disorder will experience instability, such as instability in relationships and self-image. Borderline Personality Disorder is similar to Antisocial Personality Disorder, in the sense that the individual is also easily irritated. A person with this disorder is "preoccupied with self and will use people to achieve their purpose", similar

to narcissistic personality, and is willing to make threats of suicide in order to avoid loss (Wheeler & Baron, 1994). When Purdy made the decision to commit suicide, he reportedly wanted to do so in a way that would make him memorable. He decided to murder children in addition to himself, in order to achieve his desire for 'fame'. He committed suicide in order to escape the authorities and the consequent punishment, therefore robbing victims' families and authorities of justice (Kempsky et al., 1989).

3.4. <u>Are Age Groups Being Targeted?</u>

It is difficult to prove whether or not a particular age group was being targeted in the above incidents, or whether elementary schools were selected out of convenience. Out of the seven perpetrators, four attended their targeted schools: Patrick Purdy, Mitchell Johnson, Andrew Golden, and Adam Lanza; Johnson and Golden were still attending their school at the time of the shooting. Andrew Kehoe worked as a part-time electrician and handyman at the Bath Elementary School, and had access to the school basement on a regular basis (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011). As previously stated, Kehoe was unhappy with the newly proposed tax to be used for the construction of a new school building, and therefore could have been a strong motivator to attack the school (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011). Paul Orgeron did not appear to have any prior negative associations with Edgar Allen Poe Elementary School, other than the fact that his son was not allowed to enroll that day due to a lack of paperwork (Houston Chronicle, 2001). Charles Roberts reportedly chose the West Nickel Mines School for more logistical reasons: "it was close to his home, it had the female victims he was looking for, and it probably seemed easier to get into than some bigger school" (Kocieniewski & Gately, 2006). As previously mentioned, it is

extremely difficult to pinpoint the perpetrators' motivations behind their attacks on elementary schools, due to the fact that the majority committed suicide immediately afterwards.

3.5. Trends in the United States
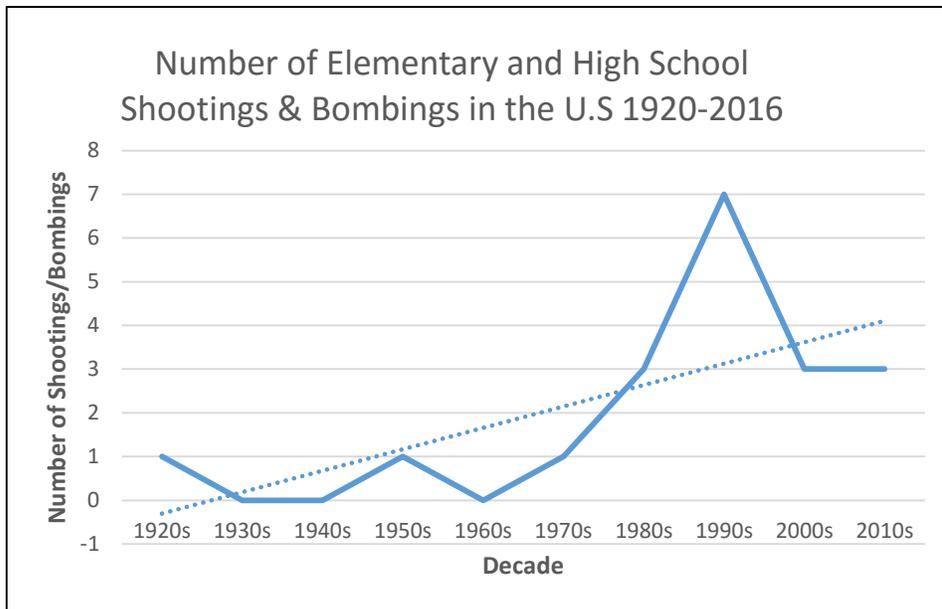
Figure 7: Number of school shootings and bombings in elementary and high schools: 1920-2016 (present):

This graph shows an increase in school shootings and bombings in elementary and high schools since the first incident in 1927, with a particularly large spike around the 1990s. Due to the high volume of school shootings in the U.S., only incidents from 1920 to present (2016) were included in the data set. In addition, events that resulted in accidental discharge of a firearm were also excluded from the data set, as it does not match the parameters of the study. During the time period displayed in the above graph, there have been 20 school shooting and bombing incidents in total, with a combined death toll of approximately 149 individuals.
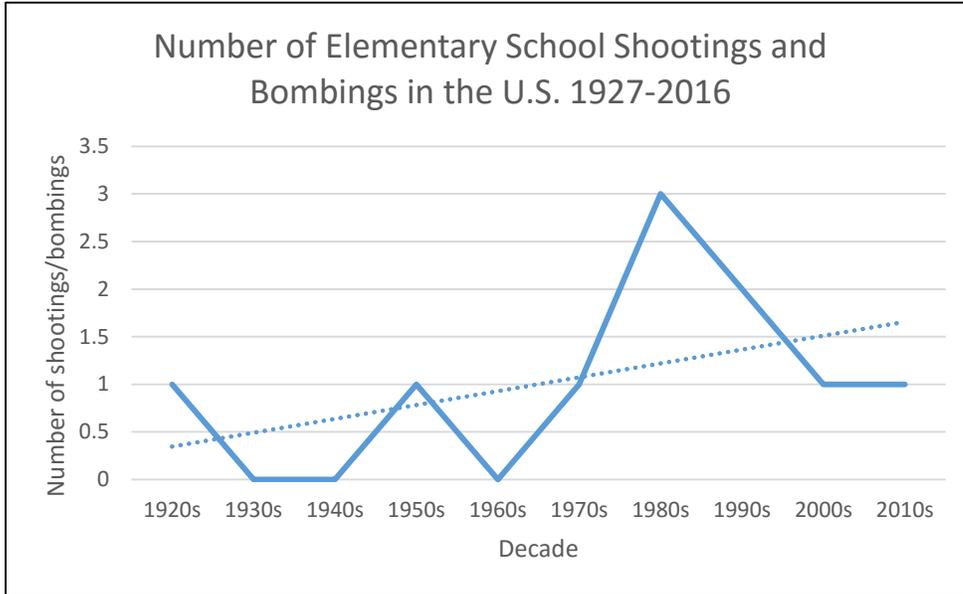
Figure 8: Number of school shootings and bombings in elementary schools: 1927-2016

(Present):

A moderate increase in elementary school shootings and bombings can be observed, with a particularly large spike around the 1980s. There are two no-incident periods from 1930-1940 and another one during the 1960s. A total of ten incidents have occurred, with a combined death toll of 97.
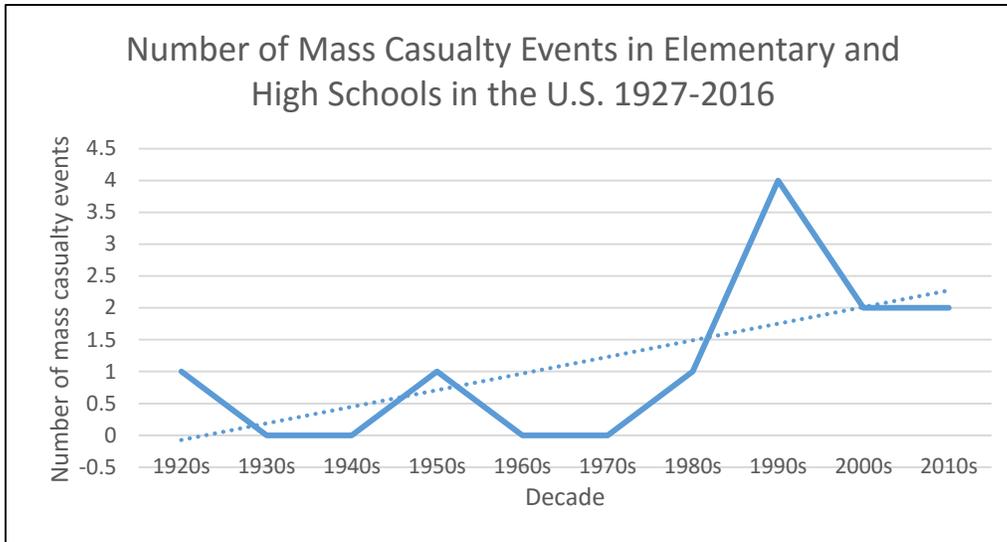
Figure 9: Number of mass casualty events in elementary and high schools: 1927-2016 (present):

Until present (2016), there have been 11 mass casualty events in elementary and high schools in the U.S., with a combined death toll of 126. The graph displays an observable increase in the number of incidents since the first incident in 1927. A spike in the data can be seen, occurring around the 1990s, with a total of four mass casualty events causing 26 deaths. Two no-incident periods can be seen from 1930 to 1940 and 1960 to 1970.
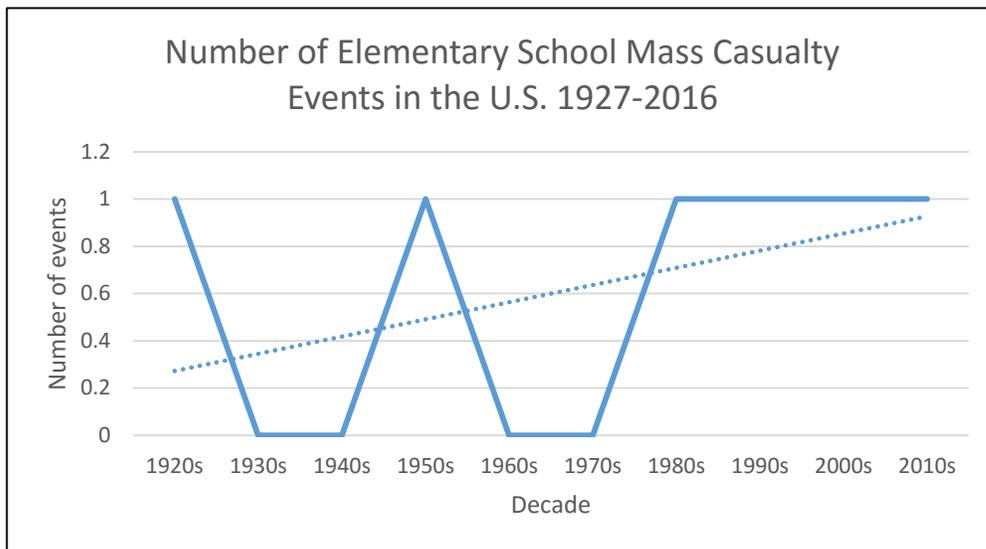
Figure 10: Number of mass casualty events in elementary schools: 1927-2016 (present):

Since 1927, there have been six mass casualty events in American elementary schools, with a death toll of 92. Two no-incident periods occurred from 1930-1940 and 1960-1970, and a leveling-off period from the 1980s to 2010s with one event per decade.
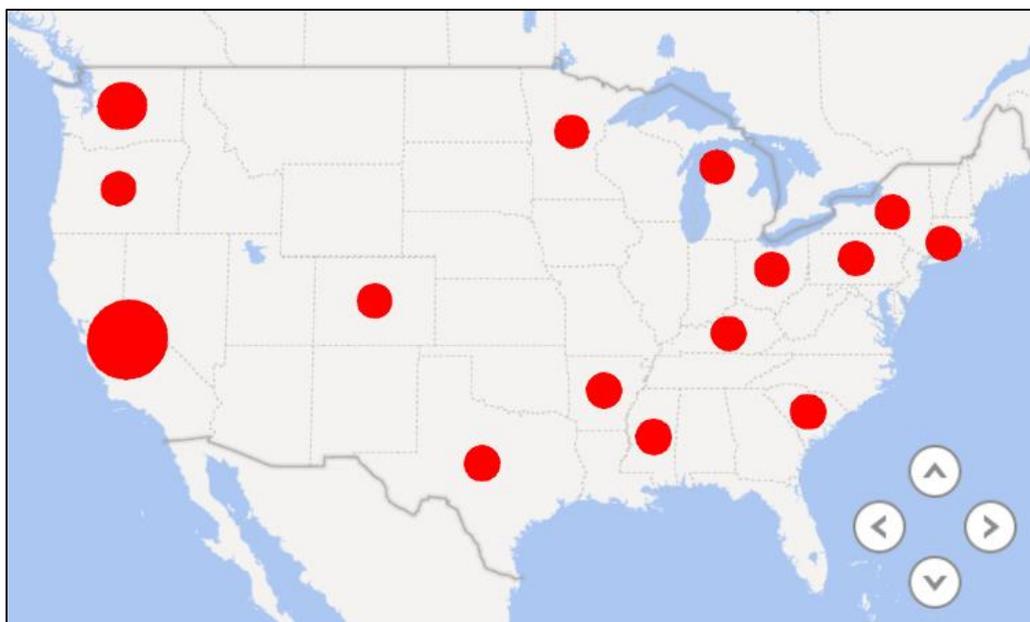
Figure 11: Geographical map of elementary and high school shootings and bombings in the U.S.: 1927-2016 (present):

The size of the red circles represent the number of school shootings and bombings in the respective states throughout the U.S. The State of California has the highest number of incidents in the country with a total of five, followed by Washington State with two incidents.

The United States has experienced many attacks on elementary schools, high schools, colleges and universities during its relatively short history. At this moment in time, the U.S. has experienced more school attacks than Canada, however the future is uncertain and Canadian schools should remain cautious. The six incidents discussed in the chapter were mass casualty events occurring at elementary schools, with horrifying outcomes as many innocent children lost their lives. Many of the incidents were premeditated with the common goal to kill as many individuals – children and teachers – as possible. Resentment, anger, depression, and revenge are among many driving factors behind the attacks; unfortunately the real motivators behind the attacks will not be known, due to the fact that the majority of the perpetrators committed suicide after committing their murderous rampage, leaving many to wonder indefinitely.

CHAPTER 4 - METHODOLOGY

In 2015, the author and a team of researchers conducted four interviews for an independent study that examined how elementary school teachers – Kindergarten to grade six – felt in terms of preparedness towards school-based emergencies. The main focus of the report was on emergency training, drills and education. Each researcher was required to interview one elementary school teacher from a school board within Ontario. The following boards were examined: Halton District School Board, York Region School Board, Toronto District School Board, and Peel District School Board. The interviews were approximately one hour in length and focused on the teacher's individual experiences and concerns with school-based emergencies. Each interview was transcribed by the researchers and placed into a coding table (see appendix B). Throughout the transcription and coding process, gaps began to emerge and became apparent that more research should be conducted in the future. The decision to interview only elementary school teachers was made, due to the fact that young elementary school children are considered to be a vulnerable population as they depend on adults for care and assistance. Therefore, any serious gaps in the drills and plans could place children in harm's way. Each researcher from the previous study was asked permission to use the existing interview transcriptions and relevant information as a baseline for the present study.

4.1. Qualitative Methods

The majority of the study follows a qualitative research approach, using the above mentioned elementary school teacher interviews as the basis for the research. An extensive literature review was conducted in order to provide a solid foundation and supportive theoretical concepts for the study. The author made the decision to include a literature review of elementary school shootings and bombings in the United States of America, and examine the root causes of

the incidents, as well as attempting to determine if any trends exist. In addition to the above mentioned literature reviews, an examination of school board emergency preparedness plans was conducted as supportive documents for the study.

The study takes a phenomenological approach, examining the common concerns expressed by the elementary school teachers interviewed. Through their lived experiences of school emergencies, themes emerged in the data that will be explored in this study (Creswell, 2013). The concerns expressed by the teachers will be accompanied by literature, which will provide a more in-depth view for the reader.

4.2. Quantitative Methods

The research predominantly focuses on teachers' personal narratives regarding school-based emergencies, as well as supporting literature on past school emergency events. The author collected data on both U.S. and Canada school attacks and the year each attack took place, and determined if there were any trends within the data using Microsoft Excel. Statistical analysis of the data did not serve a purpose in the paper, as the author was not trying to identify any relationships between a given year and number of events. Graphs were then produced from the collected data to visually display any trends that are occurring.

CHAPTER 5 – RESULTS

In early 2015, the author and a team of researchers conducted a preliminary study on elementary school teachers and school-based emergencies. Due to the fact that children are a vulnerable population and depend on adults for daily tasks, the team decided school-based emergencies and gaps in emergency plans was an important topic to address. The initial study was short in length, and therefore did not delve into the details of the findings; thus leading the author to continuing the study in depth.

5.1. Interview Coding Results

A total of five interviews were conducted in the previously mentioned study in 2015, conducted by the author and four other researchers. One interview was not used, as it did not meet the specified time length criteria. The participants were elementary school teachers from four different Ontario school boards: Halton District School Board, Toronto District School Board, Peel District School Board, and York Region District School Board; One participant per school board. All interviews were previously transcribed by the team of researchers, however for the purpose of that particular study, only two interview transcriptions were coded. The author coded the remaining two interview transcriptions in order to provide stronger themes. Two themes were focused on for this study: teacher concerns/worries, and gaps in planning and preparedness.

Concerns and Worry

This theme is an umbrella theme, as there are four observable sub-themes: Lockdown/intruder, evacuation procedures, vulnerable students/students with disabilities, and

does not feel trained or prepared. This theme registers on more of an emotional level, as the participants recalled particular events that left them unsettled, and at times, scared.

Vulnerable students/students with disabilities:

Participant A expresses her concern with having a child in a wheelchair during an emergency:

"…but it is a bit of a concern having a child in a wheelchair"

Participant A also expressed concern for young students:

"…when you have two, three, four year olds and five year olds – it's tricky to get them out"

Participant B displayed concerns for children with disorders such as anxiety disorder, and how those children react to emergency drills:

"I have one [child] in my class with anxiety disorder, it was very overwhelming for her to suddenly find out that we were doing lock down drills or fire drills, even if they were pretend"

Participant B also briefly discussed varying degrees of vulnerable students in her school:

"I have a new student in my class who's deaf and hard of hearing…we have students with Down syndrome"

She explains that each student with a disability have full time caregivers, however the participant stopped to think about what would happen to those students, should the caregiver become unable to care for the child. This thought concerned her:

"Unless in the event that their caregiver was, for some reason, unable to care for them, then it would be a real serious, grave situation. I'm not really sure what would happen…yeah…I don't know"

Participant C teaches at a school that provides education to children with disabilities and special needs, and is connected to a hospital. As a new teacher at the school, she had many concerns about students with disabilities from the beginning:

"Most of the kids are [in] wheelchairs…it was one of my first concerns"

She also highlights:

"So my biggest concern was how to get my kids basically where they need to be because pushing wheelchairs, we don't have enough bodies for all the students in the classroom."

Participant C expressed difficulties surrounding deaf students, particularly during evacuation procedures:

"That's more of a panic from my point of view because if I can't just grab hold of you and take you, which I don't want to do, because if I just grab you and take you, I can't sign and tell you where I'm taking you."

Participant D appears to be more concerned with the young children and is unsure of how they might react in an emergency situation:

"I think it's definitely more of a risk with students with disabilities, or um, younger students. I think that kindergarteners is a worry because they, you know, would be prone, in a lockdown they would be probably be more likely to start crying"

Evacuation Procedures:

Participant A brought up a very interesting scenario that can occur during an emergency evacuation, particularly in Southern Ontario:

"…glitches with our fire drills, or the alarm…but it was below zero. And we all had to go outside without coats. And we're talking three year olds…that was concerning because it's wintertime."

Participant B also expresses concern with cold weather and evacuations:

"We could certainly have a lot more upset children if it happened during the winter months in the winter weather…I would wonder if some of the kids would even resist going outside because of [cold weather]; that's very scary"

The number of students she is responsible for, is also worrisome during an evacuation situation:

"I have 22 students, and I can't guarantee that they're all actually going to make it outside"

Participant C also expresses concern with evacuating students, largely due to the fact that most of her students are in wheelchairs:

"It's pretty – very slow because you got kids in chairs, and kids in walkers, and kids in motorized chairs, and you also have kids that have come down from the hospital, so you've got kids who have just had surgery."

Participant C admits that the school has not had an evacuation since the start of her teaching contract, and is unsure on how the students would react:

"We've never had to leave, I think there would be issues if we have to leave the facility that we're in, because then it's something completely different for them, and I think then they'd be unsure."

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Lastly, participant C explained the challenges of evacuated deaf students at her previous school:

"It's really hard to get them out of the building because you keep trying to get their attention."

Participant D did not outwardly express any worries or concerns with evacuation procedures.

Lockdown/Intruders:

Lockdown situations are nerve-racking events to be sure, and participant A claims to be scared by the thought of a lockdown:

"…the lockdown scares me, to be honest" – said with passion

One particular scenario leaves participant B uneasy, and that is a missing student during a lockdown procedure:

"Sometimes there's problems…if a lock down drill occurs, maybe right after a break or transition period, you don't always have all the students in your class that should be. You also think about students who could still be maybe in the washroom."

She is also concerned with the fact that her classroom does not have a place for her to hide the children:

"If I actually have proper or safe space in my room to have the children hide or crouch down"

Participant B is also worried about her responsibilities during a lockdown procedure:

"I worry again…for the lockdown about not having my keys, not being certain that my door is locked"

She is also concerned about the location of her classroom with regards to the entrance of the school:

"In my school, when you come in the main entrance…my classroom is the first classroom you would encounter. So it's scary when you hear all the stories from different schools who've had shootings"

Participant C did not express any concerns regarding lockdown or intruder incidents.

A lack of knowledge on lockdown situations is a concern for participant D:

"With lockdowns, that's something that very few of us have experienced, so panic might creep in to a few people or whatever so just more discussions about what to do and what, how you're going to feel…that would be more helpful I think."

Lack of Confidence in Training and/or Preparedness:

This sub-theme addresses the participants concerns with a lack of training and/or preparedness regarding school emergencies.

Participant A has been in situations where she assumed the role of teacher-in-charge (when the Principal is absent), and stated that she was not comfortable with the training she had received for such a role:

"I don't feel trained for that…as teacher-in-charge, they don't give you enough training"

"And I did not feel, truthfully, trained for that"

Participant B appeared to be more concerned with the lack of first aid training for teachers:

"If there's instances where I don't feel prepared as a teacher for emergencies, it would be more related to health and wellbeing, as opposed to a fire drill or a lockdown drill"

As previously mentioned in the evacuation procedure subsection, Participant C expresses concern with evacuating students and feels as though she is not prepared for such an event:

"I have no idea, and for that one I'm not prepared. I don't know where we're evacuating to."

Participant D did not explicitly express concerns with feeling unprepared and untrained for certain emergency procedures.

Gaps in Planning and Preparedness

The second theme has been divided in to two sub-themes: Emergency information, and first aid training. This theme focuses on gaps in school plans and emergency preparedness, identified by the participants through recalling specific events and feelings of uncertainty.

Emergency Information:

Participant A discussed the issue of receiving information pertaining to emergencies, but not actually being taught the information:

"You're not getting the whole document at the staff meeting, but you are expected to go home and read it all…and I have read it all, but I don't remember it all"

She also admits to not possessing the knowledge of where the school's emergency shelter was located:

"The school board chooses where you go in case of an emergency situation. You know, I think I might be wrong about that. See, that's bad I don't even know that. It's written and I know I'm supposed to know."

Participant B did not express a lack of available information for emergency procedures.

With respects to evacuation procedures, participant C was also unaware of where she and her students are supposed to evacuate to in the event of an emergency:

"That's something I should look into. Do we have that written somewhere that I'm not aware of?"

Participant D also did not express concern with emergency information, or a lack there of.

First Aid and Training:

When asked what additional training the interviewee would like to be provided to teachers, participant A expressed an interest in first aid training:

"I would feel more comfortable, first of all, updating my first aid. I wouldn't feel comfortable with the training I've had if someone in gym broke their neck or even a bad break"

Participant B also expressed an interest in first aid training and felt as though it would be beneficial if teachers were certified:

"I think additional training where teachers are certified in first aid would be helpful"

Both participant C and participant D did not express interest in first aid training.

CHAPTER 6 – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

One of the most prominent concerns amongst the interviewed elementary school teachers was regarding students with disabilities, and the vulnerability of young children. Approximately 200 million children globally experience disability in many different forms (Peek & Stough, 2010). The rather limited research on this topic states that children with disabilities are quite vulnerable to emergencies and disasters" because of socio-economic and health factors inherent to disabilities" (Boon et al., 2011). Children with disabilities face an increased probability of experiencing harmful physical impacts during an emergency event as well as after the event has occurred. When children walk through the school doors each morning, they become the responsibility of the school faculty and staff. Children spend, on average between 70 and 80 percent of their day in school, and therefore it is the school's responsibility to assure parents that their child is being properly taken care of, "and proper preparation and interventions are delivered before, during and after" and emergency. Due to the young ages of elementary school students, many rely on adults to help them with everyday tasks such as helping them with their shoes, or to clean and bandage a cut. If a student has a physical, cognitive, or emotional disability, they often require more care and supervision, which can be concerning during an emergency event; it is possible that during an emergency event the child's support staff and/or support system could become disrupted. In the event of a rapid onset emergency, students with disabilities may experience more difficulty in evacuating or comprehending protective actions, due to such little warning time. For example, "children with mobility limitations may be incapable of crouching under their desk in an earthquake" or evacuating to higher ground during a tsunami event (Peek & Stough, 2010).

Two interview participants were particularly concerned with students who are wheelchair-bound specifically, and how difficult it might be to evacuate those students. Students who have limited mobility become highly vulnerable if an emergency situation is severe – for example if the school is required to evacuate the building – and are also vulnerable during the recovery stage of the emergency "when accessibility accommodations are often the last components of infrastructure to be restored" (Boon et al., 2011). Although the participants' schools are equipped with accessibility ramps, the participants are concerned with the speed in which the wheelchair-bound students are able to accomplish whilst evacuating the building. If a wheelchair-dependent student is on the top floor of the school at the time of an emergency event, the participants are concerned that the students will not be able to get out of the building quickly and safely. According to Participant B, students who have disabilities in her school, such as Down syndrome, have a personal caregiver who supervises the child all day. That is not the case for each school, however. Participant C, who works at a specialized school for children with needs, has many students who are wheelchair-bound and do not have enough adults in her classroom to be able to escort the class out of the building safely. In order for her students to be successfully evacuated from the building in the event of an emergency, Participant C took it upon herself to ask other adult staff members to assist her students during an evacuation.

Children with disabilities such as anxiety disorder, deaf and hard of hearing, and other communicative, cognitive and emotional disabilities, are another concern amongst the participants due to the unpredictability of the children's reactions to an emergency event. Participant B explained the challenges surrounding a child who has anxiety disorder, and how overwhelming it is for the student during emergency drills, despite the fact that the drills are only practice and not a real emergency event. Participant B explained that children with anxiety may

react differently in an emergency situation; for some students, an emergency situation can be paralyzing, can cause the student to cry, or could even become defiant. If a child has a cognitive disability or impairment, they may be unable to recognize and comprehend signs of danger or impending threats. The child may also "become anxious and confused in response to emergency signals" (Peek & Stough, 2010). If a child has an intellectual disability, such as autism, they may become agitated during an emergency situation due to the startling alert systems. Participant B also mentioned having a deaf and hard of hearing student in her classroom, which could also become probable in the event of an emergency. Communication disabilities, such as deaf and hard of hearing, can create challenges during an emergency, such as inhibiting their ability to access emergency information and their ability to ask for assistance. Additionally, "communication disorders can affect how quickly a student becomes aware of an (impending) [emergency]" (Boon et al., 2011). Participant C expresses panic towards deaf students during an emergency because she cannot simply grab the child and take them with her, as she would be unable to use sign language to tell the child where she is taking them. Some schools are equipped with an emergency lighting system along with the sound alarm system, which alerts the students who are deaf and hard of hearing of an emergency drill; however participant C explained that the deaf students would tend to panic, as they are not able to differentiate between a drill and an actual emergency situation. Participant B, who has a deaf and hard of hearing student in her classroom, would like to see her school install an emergency lighting system so that students with hearing troubles would be able to immediately identify when an emergency or drill was occurring.

Lastly, there is concern surrounding young children, such as kindergarten students, and the challenges teachers face when handling these students during an emergency event or drill.

Participant D believes that kindergarten students could become overwhelmed during emergency situations, such as a lockdown, and would potentially be prone to crying.

Schools in Ontario are required by law to practice evacuation procedures during fire drills on an annual basis. Despite the frequent occurrence of fire drills in schools, concerns surfaced amongst the interview participants surrounding evacuations, in both practice and real events. Living in Southern Ontario presents its own unique challenges during emergency events, such as the climate; the winter months can boast some pretty cold temperatures, dropping well below zero degrees Celsius. During a fire drill, students are typically not allowed to take their coats with them, as it would slow down the evacuation process, potentially placing the students in danger. Participant A, from the Peel District School Board, explained that her school did not conduct fire drills during the winter months, and admitted that the school should conduct some drills during this particular season. Participant A described a situation where the fire alarm had a glitch and went off by accident during the winter. As required by fire drill procedures, the building was evacuated into sub-zero weather without coats; children as young as age three were required to stand outside for an extended period of time. Participant B also admitted that her school does not conduct evacuation drills in the winter. The participant believes that there would be more upset children if a drill or real emergency event were to occur during winter weather, and wonders if some children would resist going outside all together.

As previously mentioned, vulnerable children and children with disabilities present certain challenges during an emergency event, particularly during an evacuation procedure. Participant C, who teaches at a school for special needs children, explains that evacuating the school would be very slow, as there are children in wheelchairs, walkers, motorized chairs, as well as children who have just returned to class from having surgery in the attached hospital;

space is also an issue for evacuating, due to the amount of space each wheelchair and walker encompass. Interestingly enough, that particular school had not conducted an evacuation since the start of participant C's contract; the participant does not feel prepared for such a procedure. Due to the fact that the children in participant C's school are incapable of evacuating quickly, they could become injured or trapped in the building. Since that particular school has not had an evacuation as of yet, she believes the children may be uncertain on what to do, as it is a completely new experience for them. Young children also pose a concern with respect to a swift evacuation. The participants explained that young children, such as kindergarten students, have trouble evacuating the building quickly if they are required to climb down a stair case. The participants stated that kindergarten and grade one classrooms are usually located on the ground floor, some classrooms even having their own set of doors leading outside. However, participant A, who is a teacher-librarian, explains that the young children do spend time in the library on the top floor of the school, and that makes her particularly nervous if an emergency event were to occur during their library time. Participant A stated that the young children take quite a bit longer to walk down the stairs in comparison to the older students.

When schools evacuate for emergency situations, a secondary shelter is normally designated to temporarily house the students and staff. Participants A and C admitted that they are not sure of where their schools are supposed to evacuate to. Participant A believed that the school board was responsible for selecting the location of a secondary emergency shelter, however she was not confident in her answer and admitted: "I think I might be wrong about that. See, that's bad that I don't even know that". This lack of knowledge demonstrates a gap in the emergency preparedness information provided to teachers. Participant B explained that she knows the location of the designated emergency shelter – in this case, a neighbouring school –

however she concludes that the school has not practiced traveling to the neighbour school. Participant B's school is located very close to a highway, and she is concerned with the children having to walk along the sidewalk to evacuate, and to travel to the designated emergency shelter.

Overall, there are identified gaps and lack of preparation in school evacuation plans regarding vulnerable students and students with disabilities, the season in which the drills and emergencies occur, lack of practice regarding evacuation procedures, and information on designated emergency shelters. Above all, the interview participants expressed concern for the protection of the students, and the students' reactions to an evacuation procedure.

Having a potentially dangerous individual enter a school building is an unpredictable and terrifying experience for staff members, students and parents. The uncertainty of where the individual is located within the school, if they are armed with any weapons, and what their intention is, has led to an increase in security measures in many American schools, as well as some schools in Canada. It has yet to be determined if 'beefing up' security measures and infrastructure in schools, such as surveillance cameras and metal detectors, has had a positive or negative effect (Martin, 2013). Past school shooting events (predominantly in the U.S.) have received a large amount of media attention, reinforcing the already existing public fear of children as targets. Children spend on average between 70 and 80 percent of their day in school, which is portrayed as a safe place where children are offered safety and security (Boon et al., 2011; Lindle, 2008). Therefore, when an attack on a school occurs, it shakes the very foundation that the image of schools being a place of protection, was built upon.

It comes as no surprise that the interview participants found lockdown and intruder incidents to be terrifying. The main underlying concern that the participants had, was concern for the safety of the children. Lockdown situations are not a common experience for the participants,

other than having annual lockdown drills; participant A admits that sometimes she catches herself thinking that she lives in a "bubble" where situations such as school shootings do not occur, and the thought of an incident, such as the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, occurring in her school scares her. If a dangerous individual was able to gain access into the school building, there is little stopping him/her from entering any classroom, regardless if the door is locked; this is a concern for participant B. For participant B, her classroom, where she teaches 22 grade one and grade two students, is the first classroom a person would encounter upon entering the school. This deeply concerns her, as her classroom is the only classroom in that particular hallway, and is therefore unable to ask a nearby teacher or staff member for help. In addition to being alone in that particular hallway, participant B explains that she does not have a safe space, such as a large cupboard or closet, to hide the children in. She does not feel as though she can protect her students in an intruder situation, which scares her. Some classrooms, such as participant B's classroom, are not ideally designed to prevent an intruder from entering or making visual contact with the pupils inside. For example, participant A teaches in the school library which has many windows that face out into the hallway. If an armed individual was walking past the library, they would be able to see the children inside the library crouching beneath tables. Participant A explained that the only windows equipped with blinds are the windows on the outside of the building, not the windows along the hallway. Participant A suggested that she cover the hallway windows with chart paper, however due to the unpredictable nature of a lockdown/intruder situation, she may not have enough time to cover all of her windows. There are some classrooms that have a storage room or storage area that provides the children with an additional "buffer" from an intruder. One such classroom exists in participant D's school; there is a storage room connected to the kindergarten room where the

students hide during a lockdown. However, that is the only classroom in participant D's school that has a separate storage room connected to the classroom.

Both participant A and participant B have had their worries and fears enhanced after hearing of school shooting events, and how the teachers made their best attempts at protecting the children. For example, in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, a young teacher by the name of Victoria Soto took a fatal bullet while attempting to hide her students from the gunman (CNN, 2016). Teachers in the four studied school boards – Halton, Peel, York, and Toronto – do not receive training on how to handle a situation where an intruder breaks into the classroom and threatens the teacher and/or students. Participant B admits that she does not feel safe being inside her classroom, and the fact that she has no control over the situation is "really nerve-racking". Having a more detailed discussion about lockdown and intruder situations during staff meetings, would make participant D more comfortable. He would like the discussion to include what to do in an intruder situation (beyond the lockdown), and how an individual will potential feel during and after such an event. Due to the fact that school attacks have been few in number in Southern Ontario, participant D is uncertain of the psychological impacts on teachers and students caused by such a horrific event.

One particular issue that might be overlooked by emergency plan writers, is that of a missing student during a lockdown procedure. This particular issue was identified by participant B, who explains that lockdown events can occur during a transition period when not all of the students are in their assigned classroom. If a person knocks on the classroom door during a lockdown procedure, the teacher is not allowed to open the door as they could be opening the door to a potentially dangerous individual. For example, a student might be in the washroom, watching a presentation in another classroom, or the lockdown occurs during the lunch period or

recess. Having a student who is in the washroom or out for recess during an intruder/lockdown situation is "scary for a teacher", claims participant B. Prior to locking their classroom doors, teachers are required to check the hallway for students, in which case the teacher would pull the student into their classroom. Participant B says that if one of her students is missing during a lockdown procedure, there is a chance that he/she was pulled into another classroom by a different teacher; however the participant explains that there is not a way of communicating such important information.

As previously mentioned, the interview participants have not received training from the school boards for intruder threats, other than the occasional lockdown drill. Indeed Canada as a whole has not experienced a large number of school shootings and attacks, however school shootings are generally unpredictable and schools should therefore be well prepared for such an event. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in the U.S. has developed a three-option approach to an intruder situation called Run-Hide-Fight. According to DHS, the three-option approach are individual options, not action plans for the entire building. The reason being, the response to the threat is based on two factors: "your proximity to the threat (contact) and your location" (Fennelly & Perry, 2014). If an individual is in direct contact with the intruder, or the intruder cannot be locked out of the area the individual is in, the individual should *run*. If an individual is able to create a barricade in order to delay the intruder from entering the space, the individual is using the *hide* option; a lockdown belongs to the *hide* category. As a very last resort, if an individual is in direct contact with the intruder and is unable to either run or hide, and the individual fears for their own safety and the safety of others, the individual should *fight* the intruder. The DHS stresses that the *fight* option should only be used if there is absolutely no foreseeable alternative. It is noted that students from kindergarten to grade 12 should not be

trained in the *fight* method. However, "as with any emergency, schools should prepare themselves on how to provide best direction and control over the students should Fight be required" (Fennelly & Perry, 2014). The Run-Hide-Fight method may appear to be extreme for Canadian schools, however the interview participants agree that additional training or information on intruder situations would be welcomed.

Literature on historical school attacks suggest that the majority of the perpetrators have a history with the targeted school; whether the perpetrator previously attended the school, has a personal grudge against the staff or other students, or is looking to punish the surrounding community. It is difficult to catch a perpetrator before the incident occurs, as the warning signs often go unnoticed or are ignored. This was the case in the 1927 school bombing in Michigan; according to record, the perpetrator, Mr. Andrew Kehoe, displayed suspicious behaviours which were overlooked by the community and ultimately led to the death of 45 individuals (Meloy & O'Toole, 2011). If a school enters into a lockdown situation due to a dangerous intruder, it could be considered a reactive *response* measure. The *mitigation* of an intruder would be ideal, however implementing stricter security measures such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras, can create a prison-like atmosphere. Experts fear that schools are "becoming controlled disciplinary institutions, rather than structured learning environments", including elementary schools; this phenomenon is more prevalent in the U.S. than in Canada (Fuentes, 2011).

As mentioned in chapter one, each school board is responsible for designing and implementing an emergency plan (Ministry of Education, 2015). However, the interview participants identified gaps in the emergency plans and in their training. Below are the main gaps in teacher training identified by the participants.

First Aid Training:

Despite the attention surrounding emergency events such as a fire or an intruder, health related emergencies are more common for teachers to experience. The interview participants explained that not every teacher is required to be certified in first aid; the school is required to have a certain number of first aid certified teachers on staff, however participant B believes that it would be beneficial if all teachers became certified. In some cases, a school only requires one or two staff members to be certified in first aid, which is the case at participant A's school. Participant A is one of the staff members who is certified in first aid, and admits that her certification is a year overdue. Being the one teacher on staff with a first aid certification is a "huge responsibility", claims participant A; she does not feel comfortable with the training she has received if she had to treat a bad bone break or similar. At participant B's school, the teachers who are certified have been trained for different situations. For example, participant B is trained on the defibulator, however the training is not conducted on an annual basis, and she explains: "if it's not something you're using regularly, then it's very easy to lose track of how something actually works and if the proper steps are in place".

There appears to be a large amount of pressure put on the teachers who have their first aid certification. The participants claim that they feel unprepared for a serious medical emergency, and are not confident in their first aid capabilities, as they do not use that particular skill often.

Access to Emergency Information:

Each school board has their own emergency plan, however the details of the plan are not necessarily disseminated properly to the teachers. It is important to provide teachers and staff

members with the necessary tools and information for emergencies in order to build confidence in their ability to handle such situations. Schools conduct staff meetings where various topics are discussed, including information on emergency procedures and plans. The emergency plan is normally a rather large document and the short duration of the staff meetings leaves teachers to read the document on their own time. Participant A admits that she has read the entire emergency plan document, however she does not remember the details, such as where the school's emergency evacuation center is located. Similarly, participant C is a new teacher at her school and has not been informed of the name or location of the evacuation center; she asks: "do we have that written somewhere that I'm not aware of?" and admits that she should investigate how to acquire the information. For both participant A and participant C, it is the responsibility of the teachers to read the emergency plans during non-working hours and to find out important information, such as the name and location of the designated evacuation center. In short, it is the responsibility of the teachers, sometimes without their knowledge.

What about the Teachers?

Indeed the concerns and worries of the interview participants focused on children safety, and rightly so, but what about the safety of teachers? During emergency procedures, such as fire drills and lockdown drills, student attendance is taken to ensure that all students are accounted for. This is not necessarily the case for teachers. Participant B explains that there is no attendance in place for the school staff at her school. This can become a concern, as it is common for teachers to be absent, whether they are away for professional development or off sick. The supply teachers are provided with notes about emergency procedures and the location of the emergency folder, should an emergency occur.

6.1. <u>Recommendations</u>

Training for Teachers and Staff Members:

One of the largest gaps identified by the interview participants, was the lack of training and/or discussion in certain areas pertaining to emergency preparedness and planning. On many occasions the participants did not feel trained for specific situations, or the participants were uninformed on important topics. As previously mentioned, not all teachers are required to be first aid certified. Schools require a certain number of teachers on staff to be certified in first aid, however the limited number of certified teachers appears to put a great deal of pressure on those specific teachers. Like many skills, if it is not continuously practiced, the individual may forget the proper steps and techniques needed for a successful first aid response. Participants A admits that her certification is one year overdue, and participant B explains that her first aid training on the defibulator is not an annual recertification. Participant B believes that it would be highly beneficial if all teachers were required to be first aid certified, as each teacher is normally responsible for multiple children. It is therefore recommended that each school board make it mandatory for all full time teachers and supply teachers to be first aid certified, and to go for recertification on an annual basis. By doing so, all teachers would be prepared for health related issues and would not necessarily rely on a small number of certified teachers to come to a student's aid. Review of first aid training should be incorporated into staff meetings, so teachers can practice their skills in order to stay sharp and therefore feel more comfortable and confident in their abilities of performing first aid on students.

Lockdown situations are nerve-wracking events for all parties involved, and although there is training for school staff and students in the form of lockdown drills, there is not additional training for teachers and staff in the four studied school boards on what to do when

confronted by the intruder. The idea of being trained to handle a confronting intruder may appear to be unnecessary and not the responsibility of the teachers; however, having basic training may allow teachers to feel more in control of the situation. Participant B claims that she does not feel safe in her classroom and does not feel in control during an intruder situation, so perhaps additional training would ease the minds of teachers during such events. Indeed lockdown events are precarious situations and school boards should consider investing in additional training for its staff members. If additional training is not an option for a particular school board, more in-depth discussions about intruder events should be conducted. Discussions could include how to deal with panic, the psychological and emotional effects of an intruder event, and what to do if the intruder breaks into a classroom.

The participants explained that only a portion of a staff meeting is dedicated to the emergency plans, usually occurring during the staff meeting at the beginning of the school year. Due to the fact that some of the participants do not feel trained for certain aspects of emergency events, such as first aid and intruder situations, it is recommended that a separate meeting be held that focuses solely on the school emergency plan. This would allow staff to focus on emergency plans and situations only, instead of covering many different topics in one meeting.

Evacuation Information and Drills:

According to the interview participants, schools have a designated emergency evacuation shelter where the staff and students can seek refuge during an emergency event if needed. Interestingly enough, some of the participants were not knowledgeable of the name and location of the designated evacuation shelter, or were not confident in their knowledge. Participant A, from the Peel District School Board, explains that the school board assigns the evacuation shelter for each school, however she is unsure of which shelter was chosen. Participant C does not

possess any knowledge whatsoever about the name or location of the evacuation shelter. She also admits that an evacuation drill has not been conducted at the school since the beginning of her contract. Similarly, participant B claims that her school has not practiced walking all together to the evacuation shelter, which is a neighbouring school, however she is knowledgeable of the name and location of the evacuation shelter. It is recommended that the name and location of the assigned evacuation shelter be circulated amongst the school staff each year, if it is not done so already. Evacuation drills are conducted each school year as part of the mandatory fire drills, except at participant C's school for children with special needs; it is extremely important for that particular school to practice such a procedure, as there are many children who are wheelchair bound or require walking aids. It is also recommended that participant C's school should also practice traveling to the assigned evacuation shelter.

Teacher and Staff Member Attendance:

The final recommendation comes from participant B, who was concerned with the fact that there is no attendance system in place for teachers during an emergency situation. It is common for teachers to be away for the day, which may go unnoticed by fellow teachers. Some teachers may also leave school property for lunch, and therefore would be unaccounted for if an emergency was to occur during the lunch period. The safety of school staff is important and it is therefore recommended that attendance for teachers and school staff be conducted along with student attendance. For example during a fire drill, teachers take their class attendance after safely exiting the building to ensure all of their students are accounted for. A staff member should be responsible for confirming the presence of all teachers and supply teachers upon exiting the building. A teacher and staff attendance system may already be in place within certain schools, however it has not been implemented in all schools.

6.2. <u>Research Limitations</u>

Throughout the duration of the study, the author was faced with limitations that could potentially impact the overall results of the study. The following were the main limitations found in the study: the number of interviews conducted, and the amount of available credible research on emergency management and the related. As mentioned at the beginning of the paper, the interviews used in the study were conducted prior to the present study. Five interviews were conducted in total, however one interview did not reach the time length requirement set forth by the research team, and was therefore excluded from the present study. The four interviews provided the author with many interesting concepts and themes presented in the study, however it might have been beneficial to the research if additional interviews were conducted. A larger sample size has the potential to produce richer qualitative results, and therefore a stronger study. Due to time restrictions, the author decided that there was a substantial amount of information produced from the limited number of interviews, and thus proceeded with the study.

The emergency management field is a growing field with emerging research topics and experts. Due to the relative newness of the field, the author had difficulty possessing credible research on certain emergency management topics such as: children with disabilities during school emergencies, and information on historical school attacks in the U.S. The latter depended mostly on news reports. It is apparent that more research needs to be conducted surrounding the issue of children with disabilities and school-based emergencies. Looking forward, additional interviews should be conducted in order to produce stronger recommendations which could then be brought to the attention of Ontario school boards.

CONCLUSION

As the human population and its dependency on modern technology continues to increase, so does the probability of hazard and disaster occurrence. Certain areas in the world tend to experience a higher number of hazards than other areas. Southern Ontario is not exempt from such hazards, and is vulnerable to natural hazards and other emergency situations (Emergency Management Ontario, 2015). When a disaster occurs, the media tends to be the dominant platform that reports on the event, reaching a wider audience and exacerbates public fear (Borum et al., 2010). School violence tends to receive a large amount of attention from the media, which in turn inflates the already existing concerns of teachers, school staff members, and parents. When the public is exposed to media reports on school violence, a phenomenon emerges known as moral panic. Often this phenomenon is a reflection of the event publicity, rather than a reflection of the realities of the event (Lindle, 2008). Regardless, the interviewed elementary school teachers admitted their many worries and concerns surrounding school violence and school-based emergencies.

The interviews revealed gaps in school board emergency plans that have the potential to produce negative results during an emergency situation. By collecting the narratives of elementary school teachers, the study gained a unique view of the existing emergency plans and recommendations from the teachers. Vulnerable students and students with disabilities, lockdown and intruder situations, a lack of first aid training, and gaps in emergency information were the main themes discussed by the interview participants. Student and staff safety is of the utmost importance, and school boards should therefore review the existing emergency plans and incorporate the recommendations of the teachers into future plans. The interview participants were particularly concerned with intruder events, and with the increase in neighbourhood size

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and density in some areas due to urbanisation, there is a potential for neighbourhood-influenced school violence; this factor could influence both internal (students, staff) and external (visitors, intruders) threats. In Canada, school shooting events do not occur as frequently in comparison to the U.S., however the unpredictable nature of such events allows for the probability of an attack to occur at any point in time. Dynamic pressures such as funding cuts and neighbourhood influence can negatively affect school safety in the future, however more research needs to be conducted in order to make a strong prediction on the aforementioned pressures and root causes. Prevention, mitigation, and preparedness are necessary pillars for the success of an emergency plan and the protection of life. Preparing teachers, staff and children for all potential emergencies is an effective method to ensure that schools continue to be viewed as a safe place for children and staff.

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Appendix A: Interview Transcriptions

Interview 'A' Transcription

Date: Thursday, March 7th 2015
Location: Rossland Cres.
Length: [00:55:06]
Interviewee: Karol Beemish (Alias; name changed within transcription; referred to as 'K')
Interviewer: Jacqueline Martens (referred to as 'J')
Transcriber: Jacqueline Martens

J: All right. I'm Jacqueline Martens, I'm a student, um, doing my Masters in Disaster and Emergency Management at York University. And this interview is for me to gage how to do interviews for my Qualitative research class. Um, this is the informed consent form. I printed two, just a copy for you and a copy for myself.
K: Okay. So, do I need to sign it now before the interview?
J: Um. Yes.
K: Okay. I'm happy to do that.
J: Thank you. I didn't know if you wanted a copy so I printed two…
K: Thank you
J: … Just in case. So the area of focus for this interview is how well do teachers feel prepared for school-based emergencies. Umm, Two factors were focusing on are school drills and emergency education. Um, emergency education is defined as information sessions provided for students and teachers by professionals in the field of emergency or disaster management, such as the Office of the Fire Marshal, Police, and relief and response organizations. Um, so can you tell me, to start off, just a little, tell me a little bit about how long you have been a teacher?
K: Thirty years. Thirty years with the Peel board, and… Actually thirty-two years, and two years with Evington Public, years and years ago.
J: Oh wow! You have a lot of experience.
K: I do! [laughs]
J: And what grade do you teach?
K: I teach K to five. Because I'm actually a teacher-librarian at the moment, so I teach all of the kids.
J: Have you always been a teacher-librarian?
K: No.
J: What did you used…
K: I taught grade one, I taught grade four, five…I had ESL, umm… But most of the time, I spent most of my years as a teacher-librarian.
J: What did you like doing better?
K: Teacher-librarian.
J: You did? Why?
K: Because you get to teach all of the kids. You get to know all of the kids in the whole school. You co-plan and co-teach with the teachers, so it's more of a mentorship role.
J: Wow. There must be a lot of coordination with the teachers.
K: There is. Yeah. Lot's of planning. But it's embedded in my timetable and you have to have a good principal that values the library and, and the whole literacy focus. And um, you know, that co-planning and collaborative piece.

J: Uh huh. [nods in agreement]

K: And it's better for the kids because there's two teachers planning or there's sometimes three teachers planning together. And then you have a richer… a richer lesson, for sure.

J: Do you feel like you get to know the kids… Get to know more kids…

K: Yep.

J: …Better? Okay.

K: For sure. Because it's more of uh, um… You get to know the whole child then because you get to see them at different times during the year, different subject areas… Because even math, we even do math lessons in the library. It's not just all about books. And then I get to see them when they do book exchange and I get to know what they like to read and, and, and there's that aspect of it too. So, you know.

J: Wow.

K: It's fun

J: Um, how large is your school?

K: We have just under 450 kids. I think it's about 430 right now.

J: 430

K: Something like that…

J: And you deal with all of them?

K: Mhm [nods in agreement]. With the exception of one kindergarten class.

J: Why don't you…

K: I don't have her planning time. She was an added on kindergarten teacher.

J: okay.

K: In… I think it was late September, so someone else covers her class. So I don't see that particular class. It's the only class I don't see.

J: Okay. Because you're part time…

K: Right!

J: Is there another part-time librarian?

K: No

J: So is there another part-time librarian?

K: No. Because we're under 500. Our population is under… actually I think it's under 550 now. They just changed the rules. So I'm 0.5 teacher-librarian and 0.1 planning time. Planning time, I cover the kindergarten classes for half an hour a day and they come to me for strictly book exchange and then I do a story. So I actually don't do a lesson… or you know… a teaching lesson… It's just book exchange for kindergarten… But rest of grades one to five is actual teaching.

J: Okay. Is there usually a teacher with you in the library as well? Like, is there….

K: When we teach, yes.

J: Okay

K: And when it's kindergarten, there is an ECE with me. Not a teacher.

J: What's an 'ECE'?

K: Early Childhood Educator.

Interviewer: Ohhh kay.

K: Yep. So every kindergarten teacher has an ECE. So she's always with me in the library.

J: Okay. Do you think, does she get to know the children as much as you do?

K: She does. She's an… [pause] They're very helpful to me because um, well, for one thing, if one of the children has to go to the washroom, I can't leave, so she will take them and/or if someone is sick, I mean, everything's happened. There's also a couple of autistic kids, so

sometimes she has to take them out… Yep…. Otherwise, I don't think I could manage well on my own.

J: Right.

K: 'Cause it's large, there's 28 kids - 30 kids in some of the classes in kindergarten.

J: That's a large class. Wow.

K: [nods in agreement] Mhm. They're large.

J: Okay. Okay. Um, now we're getting into your experience with emergency preparedness in a school setting questions. So, as a teacher, have you ever through about what you might do in case of an emergency? Like fires or….

K: Yes. Yep.

J: How does it worry you?

K: It worries me because first of all, we do have stairs in our [school]… I'm on the upper floor. This is a renovated school. It was just renovated last year. It was closed and renovated, so it's a beautiful space. For example, um, the kindergarteners come up and it's four year olds… you know, some of them have just turned four…. So they have to hold the railing and it's pretty steep going down. So there's actually two sets of stairs. If we have a fire drill when they are with me, it would be tricky and slow to get down the stairs because they have to go single file and there is one, two, three, four other classrooms in my hallway that use that same stairwell. Now the other kids would go down the other side [of the stairs], obviously, because they would see that the kindergartens are, you know, a little bit more, slower. But that does concern me. If we ever have a fire drill, I'm always hoping it's not when I have kindergarten, even though there's two adults there. The stairs are a big issue with little kids.

J: And has there been…. Has anyone done anything to address this problem?

K: Usually our fire drills are, we know when they are ahead of time. So our principal will often say, you know, they have to have so many fire drills a year, and so she will say "we're going to have one today between this time and this time" and it hasn't ever been when I've had kindergarten in the library.

J: Right.

K: And maybe she looks at that. I don't know.

J: Yep.

K: But, I mean, it's very inevitable, that it could happen. And we also have a boy in a wheelchair.

J: So what would you do with him in that case?

K: Well that's always talked about at our school. He has a ramp, we built a ramp in that school, and there's an elevator. Obviously we can't use the elevator [in a fire] but there's always some child who is in charge of that wheelchair. At recess time, for example, there's a child assigned to that little boy. And he can walk on his knees, so he'll play on the field on his knees and then he comes back to the wheelchair. So he, and that little girl, actually there's two kids, so they'll wheel him, but they have to wheel him around to the front door. They don't go in any other door. But if it's a fire drill, they're very well versed in knowing "k, these two kids are in charge of *Ira*" and out they go, they go out as a class. But, the ramp is in the middle of the school. So if they're somewhere else on the other side of the school, it's a little bit concerning because **you** have to be

with your class, and that means that the other kids are going off with him down the ramp. And they're responsible for him.

J: How old are the kids who are responsible for him?

K: They are in grade 3.

J: That's a big responsibility for grade 3's to have. Do you have confidence in those kids to wheel him out?

K: Mhm. Definitively. And there's also support staff. Special Ed. teachers, there's two of them. And they will, they will also check the washrooms, and that's where the ramp is.

J: Okay.

K: So, they will definitely be watching for him. Yeah, so, he hopefully won't be let out by just those two kids, but it is a bit of a concern having a child in a wheelchair.

J: Wow. Um. Have you received any specific training besides the drills?

K: We do at the beginning of the year. It's law that every school has to show their teachers how to use epi-pens, we have to practice with two different kinds, we have to read all about lockdown, fire drills and secure and…what's it called… not lockdowns… there's another word for it… I forget what it is right now. Hold and secure! That's what it is. So there's hold and secure, lock down and then fire drills.

J: What is hold and secure?

K: Hold and secure is not a full lock down, where you don't have to actually be on the floor, under tables and what not. But all the doors are locked and no one is allowed to leave the building. So you carry on your day, but nobody can leave. Because there might be a situation around the school. For example, years ago someone robbed the jewelry store fairly close to the school. And I guess the person was armed so they… it was hold and secure in our school… So they couldn't let the kids out right at 3:20. We had to wait until we heard from the police. And at that time we had portables. And that was an issue because during that time, the kids could not go to the washroom.

J: Ohhh.

K: If you're in a portable, and it's hold and secure – you are not allowed to leave the portable.

J: So what did the kids do?

K: Well, um. I don't remember. That was many years ago and I remember a discussion about that, and they said that if worse came to worse, they would have to use the garbage pale and put a little barrier around it, so if people had to go they would just have to go in the garbage can and just make it more private.

J: Wow.

K: You have to do what you have to do.

J: Do you remember how the children reacted? Were they traumatized?

K: Um… We work really hard at not making it a situation so that they go home and tell their parents "this happened [in excitement]"… So we try to send home a letter immediately and we always try to give the facts, what we're allowed to give, but we try to not downplay it, but just say that this is something that we had to do, every thing is fine, no one is going to be hurt, and that we're just being safe. We want you to be safe, that's all. And then we go on with our day.

J: Okay. Oh. My next question was going to be have you ever been involved in a real emergency situation at your school, which I guess…

K: Yes we have. We've had a couple of hold and secures. Um, I'll tell you another situation that happened, which was very scary for us. I'd say this was about six years ago and we had two students at our school who had been kidnapped previously by their, by their mother who was in

jail previously. So, she got out of jail and was not allowed to see her kids. Um, the kids came to our school and we had to have walky-talkies at recess, we had to make sure that we had, we could see them at all times because the mother was spotted at our school in a van and we had to call the police. So that was really scary because she did abduct the kids previously. And she had a criminal record, but I already said that.

J: How did you feel about being in a situation like that?

K: I was very nervous because I was 'teacher in charge'.

J: What's that?

K: So when the principal was away, I'm in charge. And I did not feel, truthfully, trained for that. If something had happened, if that mother had somehow came at lunch time, because we have lunchtime supervisors and sometimes you know, there's not always a teacher in the classroom. And at lunchtime, at that school, we didn't always have a teacher out on lunch duty. There's lunchtime supervisors. Now obviously they were aware of the situation, we had a picture of the mother, "this is what she looks like," but maybe she could be in disguise. You don't know. But of course, if a parent comes into the yard, we always say, "can we help you?"

J: Right.

K: But it's very rare that a parent will come out into the yard for recess, or for lunch recess. But that made me very nervous because of the criminal record….

J: Do you mind me asking, um, was she violent?

K: Yes.

J: She was violent. Okay. That puts you in a tricky situation.

K: Also, her partner, it wasn't her husband at the time, he was also a criminal. He had also been in jail. So we knew that they could come together. And she was not allowed in the school. She was not allowed to see her kids, her kids had been taken away from her. She actually, yep, it ended badly for her. But that was very scary for me.

J: Mhm. Yeah, you're the one in charge! That's a lot.

[nods in agreement] [pause]

J: Are there any other situations that you can think of?

K: Well something that happened this year that was unfortunate, was, well because we're a newly renovated school we've had some glitches with our fire drills, or the alarm, fire alarm. So the alarm went off in the winter, there were some wiring issues, and it was really cold out. It wasn't minus 30 or whatever, but it was below zero. And we all had to go out without coats. And were talking three year olds and four year olds. Everyone needs to go out. So three-year-old kids without coats, waiting for the firemen to come for a good 15, maybe 20 minutes. Because they have to go in the school, check it out... So, that was concerning because it's wintertime. So we just made a big circle around, we had the kindergartens make a big circle so they would get warm and however many adults - we had the ECE, the teacher, and myself. I went to the

kindergartens because the older kids they could stay in a line. But that was pretty chilly for young kids.

J: I mean, its cold, but that's what a real life situation could be.

K: I've thought about that since then. If it had been one of those negative 30-degree days and we had a fire, and you're out there without your coat for how long? Because our emergency place, I think is the Salvation Army, which is quite a walk. I think it's on Collegeway, right there.

J: How far of a walk do you think that would be?

K: Umm, it would probably be a 15 minute walk. With kindergartens it would be, it would be longer. You have to cross the streets…

J: So, sorry, do you have a contract with the Salvation Army?...

K: No. The school board chooses where you go in case of an emergency situation. You know, I think I might be wrong about that. See, that's bad that I don't even know that. It's written and I know I'm supposed to know. If it's the catholic school down the way, then that's like half a block away […?].

J: So the day where you learn about hold and secure, epi-pens and lockdowns, how long is that day of learning?

K: It's not even a day. It's um, usually done during a staff meeting. So lets say 2 hours. And how they've done it at previous staff meetings, there's a lot of information there… the information about epi-pens is 20 pages long, hold is long… It's long. And the principals don't want it to be just a sit and [get?] session so they're going through everything. Usually what they do is divide us into groups. So this group does lock downs, this group does hold and secures, and you just pick out the important points. So you're not getting the whole document at the staff meeting, but you are expected to go home and read it all. And I have read it all, but I don't remember it all, which I just proved by forgetting what the emergency evacuation center is […?] Mind you, obviously I would know, because the principal would know. So I would just follow everyone and all I would have to do is ask and someone would know. But I should, that should have stuck in my head. But it's a lot, there's a lot of pages to those documents.

J: Do you think it would be more effective if it was a day session?

K: No. I don't think it would necessarily. The epi-pen is done really well. We all have to practice, everyone has to take the epi-pen, and you know, it's a fake one, put it into their thigh, and you have to sign a form that you've done it and that someone has witnessed you practicing it. Yeah, and we have to know where they are in the school, who has an epi-pen in the school, all of the pictures are in the staff room and names of who's allergic to what. Which is tricky because, there's a lot of kids. A lot of kids with allergies.

J: I bet. Do you guys have restrictions? So, no peanut butter?

K: Mhm. Peanut free. Peanut free school. BUT you can't force a parent to not…

J: So do you know where you keep epi-pens?

K: Mhm. Yep.

J: Is there one in every room? Or how is that set up?

K: The kids that are really severe always have one on them. So we have to make sure it's on them.

J: Do you ask them, actively?

K: We look for it. There's a couple of kids in kindergarten, soooo, yes. Usually we look for that little belt and it's [the epi-pen] usually hanging off the back of them. I'm thinking of two kids in kindergarten and whenever they come in, I always try to make a point of looking for it, "k good, its there." Because when they're older, they might take it off. And that has happened to us where

one child did take it off and put the epi-pen in their backpack. I don't know why, maybe it was gym, I don't know. And the teacher noticed it, luckily, and said "you know, you've got to have it on you all the time." Because, he is pretty severe. And the other kids that don't have them on them, they're [the epi-pens] labeled in the office so that if we have to go there and get them.

J: How far is the office?

K: For me, it's on the other side of the school.

J: How long would it take you to get there?

K: Um, if I ran? A minute, less than a minute.

J: Okay, that's okay then.

[both nod in agreement]

J: Um… Wow, we really covered a lot here. I think we can go onto the next topic? Um, the effectiveness of preparedness programs at your school. So, do you think that the drills are effective?

K: The fire drills? Yes, definitely I feel that they're effective. I think we practice enough.

J: How many times do you practice?

K: There's a rule around that. You have to have so many, I don't know, the principals know. I'm thinking, you know, we might have to have three or four. I'm not there every day so that's the other thing, so they might have one on my day off. I'm thinking we maybe had five in the Fall? I don't know for sure though.

J: Um, so you mentioned earlier when the alarm had glitches and you went out in the winter – when you have a planned drill in the winter then, are you guys allowed to grab your jackets?

K: No.

J: So how many fire drills would you say you had in the winter, typically?

K: No. I guess we should have them in the winter. No. Now when we did have that particular one, I had a parent volunteer in my library, she grabbed her coat, and she grabbed my coat….

J: Ohhhh.

K: Which was fine, because I used that coat, we used that coat for some of the younger kids to wrap around when we were in the circle….

J: Oh good quick thinking…

K: Yes, because it was very windy. So it was a sort of wind barrier. And there were some other teachers that grabbed their coats for that reason. And that's okay, I think, because literally, if you're going by the door, and your coat is on the back of a chair and you can grab it for that reason – that's not frowned upon. But um, there was a problem with one of the kids in

kindergarten; they didn't have their shoes on. So they had to put the shoes on before they went out…

J: No! [shaking head]

K: Or else he must have carried them or brought the shoes out, anyway, I don't know. But in that particular class, there's three adults because there's a couple autistic kids, so there's one ECE, one teaching assistant and a teacher.

J: Mhm. [nods in agreement]

K: Yeah. But they still are a scramble, you know, when you have two, three, four year olds and five year olds –it's tricky to get them out. And they get very excited, and scared sometimes. But that's why we have the fire drills so that they know what they have to do.

J: Um. I'm just thinking back to when I was in elementary school and how it would be exciting for us because it was a break from class. Do you ever find that some kids maybe stop taking them seriously, the fire drills?

K: Well we've never had a real fire, I don't know, um, none of them are scared when we're out there. I think the little ones might be a little nervous, it can be a bit overwhelming, but the older kids, it's sometimes hard to keep them quiet. Because we always tell them to be quiet **because** there might be an important announcement, maybe there is a real fire. We have to go out quietly and in quietly. And it's harder to get them in quietly because by then they know it's not a real fire drill so they think it's chatting time…

J: Time to chat…

K: So, that, that…. They're very good most of the time. They know where to go, teachers have prepped them.

J: Um, so do you feel like that you could carry out everything that you've been trained for in an emergency?

K: Um… Um. You know, the whole, the lockdown scares me, to be honest. The lockdown scares me because I have windows in my library and if the kids under the tables, they're supposed to lie on the floor, hide under tables, away from the windows. And I do have windows that are in the hallway. So, if you do have someone who was armed in the school, they would see us. So, I

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don't know, I guess I would have to get some chart paper and stick it up. And I could do that - stick it up on the windows so they can't see us.

J: You don't have blinds over top of the windows?

K: Um, for my outside windows I do. But for the windows in the hallway, I don't.

J: You don't.

K: So that has sort of entered my mind. Sometimes I think about that.

J: It sounds like if you got blinds to cover those windows, blinds you could just draw if that happened…

K: Yeah.

J: That could be a solution.

K: I don't think they put blinds up inside I think because of the cost, but it is something I should ask my principal about.

J: It makes me worried still about having three or four year olds coming down the stairs. Have you ever talked to anybody about that? Maybe a supervisor?

K: No, because it would be, "just do it." Because you have to do it. So that's why when I leave the library I always say "single file, hold the railing, one hand on the railing, no body pushes nobody." If it goes too fast, do it slowly. Uh, you just have to do it.

J: It doesn't sound like you're prepared though.

K: [pause] It would be scary going very slowly. If there was a fire, a really fast, raging fire that came through that hallway, it would be very tricky getting those kids down quickly.

J: Mhm

K: And it's not, well we have an alternate route. There's a ramp beside the library. That's for the carts and the wheelchair but that wouldn't be a good way to get the kids out because that's a very congested hallway where lots of other classes, grades three, four. So that's not a good option. The way we go, it's a wider hallway. Its stairwell is high, it's just that they're [the kids] so tiny and the steps are just big for them.

J: Have you noticed any challenges or differences during drills with students in terms of age or ability? So you did mention earlier that the older kids like to chat a little more…

K: Right, I would say the biggest challenge is obviously the boy in the wheelchair. That's challenging. Uh, obvi – and sometimes some of the kids who have autism… because they can be very excitable, or scared, they may not understand what's going on. Sometimes, um, it might make them cry or have one of their tantrums. And that makes it difficult for the teaching assistant and other kids too… if they see that that child is nervous, then it makes them a little anxious too, the younger kids.

J: Mhm.

K: So that can be a little challenging. And again, if that happened to me in the library – if the ECE had to leave and take one of the kids to the washroom, and then I'm left on my own with uh, kids with special needs and a fire drill goes or something happens – she's in the washroom with the child so she goes out another way. So I would be on my own with these kids, which would be challenging. I'm sure, you know, you have these scenarios but I'm sure I could go to a teacher outside my door and say, you know, "Mr. H., I'm on my own, I've got kindergartens," he's got grade one, two… We would work something out. He would help me, or whatever. I wouldn't have time to pick up my phone and say, "I need help." Because you can't, I would have

to get out. But that would be challenging. For sure. Me on my own with that particular class. Yeah, there one, two kids with autism in that class.

J: How large are the classes with the children with autism in them?

K: Um, 30, 28? There's also a little boy who has Down syndrome, but he always has a T.A. with him. He's in grade two, but he can be challenging – he runs away sometimes.

J: Oh wow.

K: Yep. But he always has got someone with him

J: Those are big classes for you to be on your own.

K: Kindergarten is, yep.

J: And then to have a child with disabilities on top of that. How would you handle that if you had a child with autism and were on your own and nobody else was there?

K: I would probably, um, depending on the child, sometimes they don't like to be touched or picked up…

J: Right.

K: So I would get the…. I would probably go in the hallway and say, um, you know, to one of the teachers…. Actually, the teaching assistant that's across the hallway is the one who helps the child with Down syndrome… I would probably call her to bring that little boy with her. But, she may not be there. Sometimes she's not there, sometimes they take Jason, that's his name, Jason to kindergarten even though he's in grade two. Sometimes he spends time with them. And he's all over the place because he can't sit for a long time. Um, so she takes him all around the school. So that is one option – I can go and get her. Or go across the hall and say, "Mr. H, I need help." I'd ask one of the teachers, or who ever. There's also a behavioural teaching assistant two doors down from me. Her office is there. I could ask her, but she's not always in her office, she's rarely in her office. She's usually with kids. So, you know, that's what I'd do. Get another teacher…

J: So, having talked about all of this, and reflecting on it, um, what additional training, if any, would you like to be provided?

K: Well, I did have my First aid. There's supposed to be at least one staff member who has first aid. Usually they like to have two, and it's supposed to be up to date. Mine, I think it's a year overdue. So, for me, [pause] I would feel more comfortable, first of all, updating my Frist Aid. And it's my fault because I let it go, but I also feel like that's a huge responsibility to be 'the one' on staff

J: That is…

K: Because they, they have the certificates that these are the people who have their First Aid. And it was me for a while at the other school and you know…

J: I find that a little surprising because, um, where I work, and working with vulnerable people, we all have to have our First Aid. So, I wonder why all teachers… Because children are technically vulnerable, or considered to be part of a vulnerable population – why all teachers shouldn't…

K: They should.

J: ….take a First Aid class.

K: They should. But I wish they offered it on a work day. Because we'd have to do it obviously outside of school time. And you know, it's a full Saturday, or weekend.

J: Yeah, it's usually two days.

K: Yeah, so what I did was after school, for four, five sessions. I forget how many it was. Um, so, I would prefer it… It would certainly help me out if the board would have it a couple of half

days during school so that I didn't have to go after school or on my weekend. It just makes it much more convenient.

J: Do you think a lot of teachers would be willing to give up half days after school?

K: I do! Oh, not after school, necessarily. Not necessarily. Because there's work shops to go to, there's staff meetings, not so many committee meetings anymore, but, and you know, some people have young families, they have to take their kids to sports events. They've got marking to do, planning to do, and all of that. But I really think it's important to have the basics for sure. But still, I wouldn't feel comfortable with the training I've had if someone in gym broke their neck or even a really bad break. You are their go-to person. Obviously they'll call 911 and all of that, but you're their go-to person.

J: So what happens if you get called and you have a kindergarten class, well, you have your ECE…

K: Yeah, I have my ECE, but another teacher has to always be present. So what would happen is another teacher would take over for me or the principal. No, the principal. Or else they might just take - your ECE - take the kids back to the class. Or they might say take your kids to the library because you cant be with the class….

J: Is there any other training, any other training… [stuttering] Bleh, I can't even talk!

K: You know, the other thing that happened one time, this is before they locked the doors, we had someone come in that had inappropriate clothing on and flashed some children. It was during Education Week, and he came in the front floor. There were two grade five students reading at the door, because parents were allowed to come in during the day where parents could come in and see what we do. So parents could just come in to the office, sign in and then go to the classroom. So this man came in, flashed himself, and the kids had to go tell the principal, and the police were called and all of that. I guess in those days we didn't have 'hold and secure,' but, um, I always remember that. And I think you could still have that situation. Now you have to buzz to come in, you have to buzz.

J: Oh wow.

K: So, the secretary or staff or who ever is in the office lets them in. They don't say, "Who is this?" They know the parents, but they don't know all the parents. I don't know all the parents. You could still let someone in the school who could do something like that, be armed, or be of some danger to the kids. You don't know. But you have to let them in.

J: Is that a norm now to have buzzers?

K: Yep. Even when we go to staff meetings at Saw Mill Valley, we either go to Saw Mill for staff meetings or they come to us. But when we go to another school, I have to buzz. They always let me in. They don't know who I am. They don't know if I'm there for the workshop. But they let me in. There's a speaker there, but I've never been asked, "Why do you, why do you need to be here? Why did you come here?" So I've never had an issue like that, but there's potential for sure. And then the other thing is, the doors are open in the morning, they're not locked. So, teachers come in. So, there's two doors open, the front door and the side. So, I get to

school between 7:30 am and 8. Those doors are open for teachers to come in. So, potentially anybody could come in.

J: Right.

K: There's no office staff at 7:30. Now, that one door is for P.L.A.S – the 'Peel Lunch and for After School', for parents to drop their kids off there. Um, but nobody's monitoring that.

J: Who locks and unlocks the doors?

K: The custodians. But you can't, I understand why they have those doors unlocked. Teachers are coming and the custodian can't stand at the door. He can't be there at 7am and look at the camera to see who's come in.

J: Do you guys have CCTVs…

K: Yes…

J: The surveillance camera?

K: Oh, no. The office staff does. That's for the front door. Now that side door, sometimes I go in the side door or sometimes the front door. I don't believe there's a camera outside the door. So anybody could get in there and hide. What do you do about that? I don't know. Now the other thing that happened, at my other school, a man was taking photos.

J: Oh!

K: He had his camera and he was taking photos. So we had to, we had to tell the admin, and the admin. had to call the police. And they had to do an investigation. And um, he was so innocent but we had to treat it so seriously. He was a man that lived in the area, and he had lived there for many, many years. His son grew up in the area and had gone to that school and the son had moved away. I'm thinking the son was in his forties or something. And the man was taking pictures of the schoolyard for his son.

J: Ohhhhh [relieved]

K: It was very innocent! Nothing to do with the kids! And he was very offended by the whole thing. The police came, and they came to his house, "why are you taking pictures? There's kids around the playground"….

J: He must have been embarrassed.

K: He was embarrassed and he was offended. And I can understand that but we have to be so careful these days.

J: Mhm.

K: So that was another situation that happened when I was 'teacher in charge' again. It happened a second time, so they had dealt with it. And then there was another incident of someone taking pictures and I was teacher in charge and I had to call the police. So…

J: Wow.

K: Yep. You have to treat everything so seriously, even when it isn't. Because if you don't, and it is, then you are responsible. So, that was scary for me, too. But it didn't end up being anything, but I didn't like that responsibility. I don't feel trained for that. As a teacher in charge, they don't give you enough training. You have a day of training and they go "here's a scenario, here's a scenario, here's a scenario – now what would you do?" And there's a discussion about those scenarios. And there's secondary teachers there, too. And their scenarios are completely different than our scenarios, you know, drugs, weapons, possible physical fights, kids coming in from outside who aren't supposed to be in the school, who come from public and don't have a uniform and aren't supposed to be there, you know, that kind of thing. So, a lot of the talk is around that. And you're thinking, "well, you know what? None of that is relevant to me" so you're not going

to learn anything there. But I didn't feel good going out of those workshops. I felt more scared, actually.

J: Do you have any, um, suggestions then, to make the workshops better?

K: I think that they should, um; first of all, teachers shouldn't really be teachers in charge. They're in their classes teaching, so if a situation comes up, they have to leave their classroom. If you're going to be teacher in charge, you should be removed from your classroom and be in the office for the day.

J: Okay.

K: It used to be like that. But it's not.

J: Why not?

K: Because they can't afford supply teachers. They cost too much. So if you're teacher in charge, you're teaching away… and this happened to me many times… you get a call, "can you come to the office, we have a situation with so-and-so"… "Well, I can't right now, I have a class." So then so-and-so would have to come into the library, to my class, so that I can go to the office and deal with… it wouldn't be anything at this little school I was at. But we did have a behavioural teaching assistant and she was there for half a day. She was great, she would deal with anything. And that was great. So whenever she was there, she was the teacher in charge, which was great for me. Because she knew all of the protocol. But when she wasn't there, it's not a good situation when you're in the classroom. It's difficult. You need to be in the main office.

J: I never realized how stressful it would be to be a teacher in charge.

K: Actually our union in the past three years, I'm not sure if I can say this, but they've suggested that we not be teacher in charge, because there's too many, uh, too many ramifications for you legally. Because if something doesn't go right, you can get blamed or it could end your career.

J: How do you feel about that?

K: I agree. I don't want to be teacher in charge, in fact… is that what you mean? Is that the question?

J: Yes.

K: I was teacher in charge for probably five years at the other school. There was three of us who shared it. None of us liked it even though we had a binder of what to do, we always had the number for a principal if we weren't sure what to do… We just felt relief when the day was over, when the last child was gone. Nothing happened today. Phew! I'm off the hook. I do agree with the union. I think if you're going to be teacher in charge, you need to have more training. You need to be released from your classroom and be in the office so that if there's an issue you are there. And, and I don't care so much about getting paid more for it. I don't get paid more for it but in the olden days you got a little bit more money, with that responsibility. But now you don't. It's just, "would you like to do?" And if you're wanting that leadership role, if you want to be principal or VP, then, great! It's great experience for you! But that was never my intent, and I'm not interested in admin. But I do have a leadership role in the school, so sometimes it does make sense for the teacher-librarian to be teacher in charge because they also don't have their own classroom per se. A class, I don't have a class. But there are some days where I'm teaching all day. I'm teaching period one, period two, I have recess duty, I'm outside, I come back in, I'm

teaching, I'm teaching, it's lunchtime, I'm teaching, I'm teaching, it's recess, I'm teaching, I'm teaching…

J: Mhm.

K: And then on other days I have some prep time so I might not have a class for 40 or 80 minutes. And that's my own time. But, to do lessons and whatever. But its tricky if you're teaching all day and you're teacher in charge.

J: So you mentioned there were discussions about not putting teachers as teachers in charge when the principal is away. What would be the alternative?

K: Well, the other thing they do do, is that if the principal is away all day, they're supposed to bring in a VP from another school to check in.

J: Okay.

K: So, um, usually the principal is only away for half the day. So that person is teacher in charge for half the day. But if it's a full day, you're really not supposed to just be the teacher in charge for the whole day. This is a new rule, I think in the last three years. So you have a VP or principal come in and check during lunchtime to say, "hey, how's it going? Have there been any problems" Or, they might be there for the full day depending on the situation. Which is nice, we've had that before. When our principal went away for a retreat for a few days, we had a VP from Erin Mills come over and stay in the office. Yay. That's great.

J: Um, but how aware are they of any preparedness procedures that you have in place? So, if there was a fire, would they know what to do in this new school?

K: Yep. They would know, for sure. They would have to know. But they wouldn't know the situations with some of the kids. Probably the principal… maybe they have a binder, or tell them over the phone. I'm sure they would if there were certain students or situations that they needed to be aware of. But, they certainly know how to deal with whatever situation… playground situations. Usually in k to 5 school, we don't have serious situations. They're well behaved for the most part. So it's not an issue. But you never know. Anytime you can get a new student who has severe behavioural issues or who have extreme, I don't know, emotional issues that could cause a lot of situations like throwing furniture. Those things do happen. It's more the lockdown and the hold and secure and those kind of situations that are scary for teachers. And a fire, obviously.

J: I bet. Well, is there anything else you'd like to share with me?

K: Um, I think I would sum up by saying that if you think too much about, about those situations that *could* happen, it's a very overwhelming responsibility to be in charge of a classroom, or, you know, a whole group of students. But, you don't really, we don't think of that so much, we think about our love of teaching. Because that's why were in the profession. We're there for the kids and you want to make your lessons engaging and you want to think about their self-esteem and all that. We try not to focus on those or think about those things so much, it's overwhelming. When you hear about what happened in the States, in, um, Connecticut.

J: The shooting?

K: Yeah, I can't even imagine. I think that would be really, really, really, really traumatic for teachers too. But, we sort of, I think, live in a bit of a bubble here and think that stuff like that doesn't happen here.

J: I think that's kind of the norm for people, if it doesn't happen to you; you think that it will never happen.

K: Yeah, I talked about that. It's open doors. You never know. You don't think about that too much. Our school is a very happy school. That helps too. It's not a negative place. It's a great

administration, really good teachers, very professional, brand new building, it's a beautiful building, brand new space…

J: What kind of neighborhood is it in?

K: It's a mixed neighborhood. It's, um, there's some co-op housing in there, there's some apartments that are subsidized, and then you have your homes around the school. The other school that amalgamated with our school, it closed. The one I was at closed. That was a little bit more higher income area. So, it's a bit of a mix, but it's a good mix.

J: That's good. I think that about wraps everything up. I wanted to thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me. It's really been a learning experience, I learned a lot.

End of Interview.

Interview 'B' Transcription

Date: Thursday, March 5th 2015
Location: Burlington Public Library
Length: [00:47:25]
Interviewee: Amanda Bradley (Alias; name changed within transcription; referred to as 'P')
Interviewer: Lauren Hébert (referred to as 'I')
Transcriber: Lauren Hébert

I: Can you tell me a bit about how long you've been a teacher at your current school? P: This is my 4th year at my current school, Anonymous Elementary School. I've been a primary teacher since the school opened, so I teach grade 1 and 2.

I: Is this the 1st school you've taught at?

P: Nope, this is my second school with a permanent position. I had a short term LTO as well, and then I had 2 placements in different schools when I was a student teacher.

I: How old are the students in your class?

P: At the beginning of grade 2 they're 7, there are some students who are 6, turning 8 in the New Year, and so for grade 1 they would be almost all 5 turning 6.

I: Is it a 1,2 split?

P: I had a 1,2 split last year.

I: How large is your school, in terms of student population?

P: We're a growing school, there is currently 815 students. We have JK to grade 8.

I: How big is your class?

P: I teach 2 classes because I'm at a French emersion school, so I have 22 students in one class, and 21 in the other. It is over capacity.

I: As a teacher at your school, have you ever thought about what you might do in case of an emergency?

P: So we do have annual staff meetings at the beginning of the year when we go over the various emergency procedures. In each classroom we also have what's called an emergency folder, and so in it is the details and descriptions of what to do during a fire drill or a lock down procedure. And then we go over those notes as well. During the school year, it is mandatory that we have so many practice fire drills, and so many practice lock down drills, so we're able to prepare and rehearse in the event that one of these situations did in fact occur. I think when you're practicing for a lock down or fire drill, you're running through in your mind different problems that could occur, so how could you make the system better because it's not flawless; but it's difficult too when your actually rehearsing. For example, in a lock down procedure, you have to be able to lock your door. So if you've misplaced your keys or you only get one chance to think that you've locked it; whereas when you're practicing, you can lock it and make sure that you have turned the lock the right way; that you've shut the door all the way and it's actually not going to open. Sometimes there's problems, like I had today where if a lock down drill occurs, maybe right after a break or a transition period, you don't always have all the students in your class that should be, so the door is lock but sometimes not all of your students are in the class. So you could have someone knocking on your door, but it's dangerous to open your door to a potential danger, someone who could cause harm; but at the same time, you don't want to leave any students out in the hallway during the procedures. I do think about those things. You also think about students who could still be maybe in the washroom. You worry about if you should leave the kids you have in your safety and open the door to someone else. Teachers are supposed to look out into the hallway before you lock and shut your door to see if there are any kids you could grab into your room, so there's the chance that your kids could be safe under the care of another teacher, but you have no way to communicate those things. The announcement comes on the PA saying that we're now in a hold-and-secure situation. They also make an announcement on the PA saying when the hold-and-secure is over; but you're not sure what would happen if, that was really the case, what if the situation wasn't actually secure, and the person on the PA had to say that. So you think about those things too. If I actually have proper or safe space in my room to have the children hide or crouch down; we can't all fit behind my desk. There's blinds that cover windows, but something could easily go through the window, and then would a child still be protected. You hear other stories about teachers that hid kids in cupboards and closets and that sort of thing, but I have 22 kids, I don't have that kind of space to hide or protect them. You think a lot about making sure the kids understand that what we're doing or what we're practicing is important, but at the same time not creating too much anxiety because they always have a lot of 'what if' questions. It's hard to run through every scenario. I have one girl in my class with anxiety disorder, it was very overwhelming for her to suddenly find out that we were doing lock down drills or fire drills, even if they were pretend. We think also about for doing attendance or attendance purposes, you're checking that you have all your kids in the class, but there's also no way to communicate with the office if someone actually is missing, to go and get help.

For the fire drill, I have windows in my classroom that open and close, and we review that they should be closed. The blinds are shut, the lights are turned off, and the door is closed. But sometimes you wonder how those drills would actually go, if you weren't in the classroom;

because that could occur during the lunch time. So then it's up to the kids to do all those procedures: line up, walk themselves outside around the building to where we are supposed to line up. And I feel like that is probably very hard for kids to organize, because some of them mean well but one person might stay behind or make sure they're at the end of the line, or fighting about who's doing what, that sort of thing. You talk about just whatever you're doing is not that important, you just need to go and exit the building, but some of them might be stuck on pushing in their chair or 'what do I do with my lunch bag', that sort of thing. We also know that we have alternate exits in case that for some reason we can't go out our normal exit; could be a fire hazard, the door could be blocked. It would probably be difficult or concerning for the kids if they were by themselves when that happened. We have a small narrow path that we have to walk outside and then there's a gate that we have to go through to get out to the blacktop where we line up. There's been instances where the gate has been locked, so I have been able to open the other door, but I'm not sure kids would know how to do that. Our school is also very close to the highway, so it is concerning that we have to walk alongside the sidewalk to get outside to go line up for the fire drill. We want to make sure that all of the kids are going single file. In the event of a real emergency, there's always a lot more panic and anxiety, so you worry about pushing or tripping; maybe if the gate was locked, they would start to create a barrier; kids could get squished. We have a place outside where we line up, but the problem at our school is that the blacktop doesn't have any clear markings on it saying 'this is room 113, this is where room 111 lines up'. So what you're supposed to do is gauge and look for other teachers classes beside you to line up. But if you get out there before them, them that's really difficult. We've talked about putting marks maybe on the blacktop, but that also doesn't work either because we do you do during winter season where you can't see the numbers. We just try and make sure we stick together, and we always bring the fire duo-tang with us. Another problem, or things I worry about is when we are not actually in our homeroom class, maybe we're in the gym, maybe we're in the library. You don't have that fire duo-tang walking around with us everywhere that we go.

In the case that there is an emergency, we wonder or think about what you do during recess time if a fire drill occurs, and all the kids are already outside. Are they going to be able to organize themselves as to where they're supposed to go? Sometimes there's been different alarms that have gone off, one that sounds like a very faint fire drill alarm is when the protective case over the fire alarm has been maybe touched or moved and it's really sensitive, and it sets off a really dull alarm. And so, sometimes the kids are really confused about that, whether it's an actual alarm or not. I think... I think that's what I think about.

I: Very excellent observations. A lot of that stuff I haven't really thought about; for example the gap where they're in the bathroom or in recess during a lockdown. That's a bit concerning. I don't really know what you could do at that point. Scary for a teacher.

P: Normally if the teacher is there with them or even if the kids are there, they have to bring their fire duo-tang out, and lineup and do attendance. And then if we have all the kids there, there's one side of our fire duo-tang that's green so we hold it up to say all the students are there, and if it's not, then we flip it over to the red side. Also if you end up grabbing an extra student from somewhere else, then you have the red side showing as well. In our practice fire drills, there's been times where fire fighters have taken a couple of kids, or teachers and held them back just to see if everyone is accounted for, which is good practice too. But if it does happen over a lunch, there are a lot of teachers that go out for lunch, then you're short staffed or who's going to check the attendance for those kids, that kind of thing. You could be doing the attendance but maybe

you're the teacher covering, you don't actually know who is away absent, or who could potentially be missing; so those are problems too.

I: You did touch on this already, but have you received any specific training for drills. For example, fire, evacuation, lockdown?

P: So we do train for all of those 3, and our administration gives us feedback, shares the feedback that the fire department gives us: to see how we perform, ways in which we can do better, that sort of thing.

I: Have you been involved in a real emergency situation at your school? Example, fire, lock-down, gas leak, evacuation…etc

P: Yes. So, we did have a lock-down at my school, and it was more so as a preventative measure. There were some robbers who had robbed a house across the street and they hadn't been able to catch the people who were involved in the crime. And so we knew they were still around the area, and so our school went in to hold-and-secure just to make sure that they wouldn't try and enter the building, it would be safe. The problem with this is that it did occur over lunch hour, so there were teachers who needed to be in the school, who were locked out because of the lock-down situation. The kids handled it fairly well, we didn't give them too much explanation what was going on. We made sure to turn off the lights, and we put on a movie and do something quiet. It all went well and it probably only lasted about a couple of hours…

As for a real fire drill, we haven't had an actual fire in our school, but there has definitely been instances where a child thought it would be amusing to pull the alarm; so a false alarm, which would result in a $500 bill to the family. But none the less, we would proceed with the fire drill and that went well.

I: Do teachers and students receive any special emergency information or training? So during class time or after school.

P: So the educational assistance, and the special education resource teachers, along with administration, do special training for our special needs students, who potentially have a physical disability that would impair them from being able to get out of the building independently. So they run through those situations with the students; who will be carried, and that sort of a thing. At the beginning of the year, you have a new class, you go over all of your routines and expectations, but you definitely touch on the fire drill and the lock-down procedure. We talk about the expectations for that. We do practice runs as a class and together as a whole school for both those instances. I have 2 classes, I make sure I do it with both classes, and every time we know that we're going to have a practice drill we touch on those key points over again just as a refresher. We also practice in various rooms and settings in the school; so how does the fire drill procedure work for the gym, when we have 5 gym classes in there at once, so 100 kids. Where do we line up, what's our exit when we're in the library? So they know all of these different things. Probably the hardest part would be for them, is if we were transitioning between one place and the next and we were in a hallway. Or they were in an unfamiliar room, maybe visiting another class or seeing a presentation.

I: Does a fire chief come to the school to do presentations? Or is it all done in-house?

P: It's all done in-house, so the fire department does not come to do a presentation on the fire drill procedures or lock-down procedures. Teachers run these programs on their own.

I: where there any sessions for the parents to attend to? Or has it been all for the students

P: There aren't, and haven't been, any sessions for the parents to attend, so I would say that they would be unfamiliar to the procedures for fire drills and lock-downs. That information isn't really communicated at home with the parents, unfortunately not.

I: Fair. The information that you are given, how helpful are they? So when you brief the students before the fire drill coming up, is it successful?

P: Yes, I would say that they all understand the underlying message, which is that they are more important than anything else in the classroom, and their primary concern should be to get out of the building; do it quietly, do it safely. You just need to get outside, and even if you're confused or unsure about specifically where to line up. The main thing is that you'll be safe, and that it might take some time but we'll make sure that you get your teacher and that we know you're here. What's not helpful for them is when they find themselves in an unpredictable situation, for example, they're in the bathroom, they're still in the hallway. It's hard to follow the 'drop what you're doing and go'. They always have questions like 'well what if I to go in the middle of going to the bathroom', or 'what do I do if I haven't washed my hands', 'what do I do if I don't have any shoes on'. Those kinds of situations are harder for them to wrap their head around, so that part is difficult for them; the unpredictability of the whole thing. Especially, I remember last year with some of the various school shootings that were going on, our kids were aware of these things so there was extra anxiety. There are a lot more questions and they wanted to make sure and know that they would be safe in our school, should something like this happen. And you can prepare, and you can rehearse these kids for the situation, but it's hard because it's not just black and white. There's a lot of gray and there's 'what ifs', and I think we talk about how we need to do the things that we've practiced and kind of just use some common sense, because every situation is going to be difficult or different. And we haven't been through these things ourselves, so all we can do is put in to practice the things that we've been asked and practiced for.

I: What do you think would happen if there was a real emergency? So I know you mentioned a lock-down you had, but you can touch on any of the other ones as well. What do you think would actually happen? Any predictions, speculations that you think might happen?

P: … I think in a real emergency, the kids would have a hard time being quiet; walking through the halls calmly, quietly. Usually when they hear the alarm for something, one of the first things they ask right away is 'is this real'. If in fact a teacher was to say this is real, there would be a lot more panic. Everything is really accelerated and sped up, so I worry about kids pushing, running, some kids being upset or crying. Maybe feeling unable to move. I wonder about, teachers lead the class outside but I don't actually get to see if every child makes it out of my classroom. I can't do that because I am too busy leading the kids where to go. So that would be a concern that I would have because sometimes fear can paralyze people in different ways. I think in a real fire situation, we wouldn't always have the drill pulled right away, there would be a longer response time for the fire department to arrive. We would certainly have a lot more upset children if it happened during the winter months in the winter weather. We would be all outside without coats,

boots. It would be extremely difficult, and I would wonder if some of the kids would even resist going outside because of that; that's very scary. We talk about how in the event that we need to exit our school, we know what school we're supposed to go to, but we've never practiced that; we haven't walked to our neighbor school, you know 800 students. Getting in touch with the parents would be very difficult if we weren't inside the building. There'd be a lot of questions, those kinds of things. I worry again, like I mentioned earlier, for the lock-down about not having my keys, not being certain that my door is locked. I've made a paper cover to cover my window, but there's a wooden door and a window, it would be very easy to get in to my classroom if someone actually wanted to. In my school, when you come in the main entrance, there's the office on the left and then if you head down the hallway to the right, my classroom is the first classroom you would encounter. So it's scary when you hear all the stories from different schools who've had shootings; if someone did in fact come in who was upset, my classroom would easily be the first classroom that you would find. That's really hard to think about too. I'm the only classroom in my hallway, so there's not really anyone nearby for help…which is scary.

I: It's a bit terrifying

P: Yeah…

I: Anything you want to add on to what happened?

P: [thinking]…For the lock-down? … We would be waiting a very long time, and we talk about how it's really important to sit still, be quiet, but I'm not sure I can imagine kids being able to do that for a prolonged period of time. We have a hard enough time sitting still in the dark, being quiet for 10 minutes, let alone how long it would actually be in a real situation… Kids are accustomed to their nutrition breaks at specific times, needing the bathroom. It would be very overwhelming to them to not be sure of when something was actually over. Not be able to [laughs] go to the bathroom when they need to.

For the fire drill…I'm not sure if I can think of how something might be different, but in our practice drills we've noticed or discussed strategies like if you catch fire, stop drop and roll. If you notice that there's a lot of smoke, you should crawl on your hands and knees. We never get into that much detail about what to do if the building was really burning; if there's lots of flames. I think our goal is to just to get the kids out as quickly as we can so that it wouldn't come to that. I think if a fire was to occur, it would likely happen either in our staffroom where there's a kitchen, where we have a stove and oven; lots of things that are using electrics. And then we have a science lab upstairs, so I think if there was fire, those are the 2 most likely places for it to occur.

I: So with the training you have received with your school, do you feel like you could actually carry out what you've been trained for confidently? Like what you've learnt, could you actually do it, in the event of an emergency?

P: I think so… I think it's not too hard, whatever you're doing, to stop that to line up, and then walk outside of the building. That part I think will come naturally to people. What would be difficult, was if in fact you had a student who was upset, or you didn't know if they were actually able to leave. Or seeing students cry or being in hysteria. If your exit was blocked, or multiple exits were blocked.

And then for the lock-down, that is a lot more scary. I think the threat of that and the unknown, and the unpredictably is what's really nerve-racking, because… being inside your classroom, you don't feel safe, and the fact that you can't leave your classroom to be safe. You just have to hope that the person who's in the building leaves. So a lot of it seems like it's out of your control, whereas with the fire drill, you can feel like you have control of the situation because you were trained, and it's very specific what you do. You need to walk out of the building. Whereas for the hold-and-secure situation, you know that you need to lock your door and crouch down, and be quiet. But that doesn't necessarily mean that you are going to continue to be safe, because there is no training for what do you do if the intruder threatens you. What do you do if someone breaks down your door? Because there are too many 'what-ifs'. That's a lot harder. The lock-down is harder for the kids to grasp as well. I have a lot of questions about that. Whereas for the fire drill, they're mostly concerned about going outside in not the appropriate attire, and being in the washroom, and being embarrassed about just pulling up their pants [laughs] and running out.

I: Are there any students or staff who you think would have trouble during an emergency? For example, students with disabilities, young vs. older students, English as a second language…etc.

P: I think all of those people could potentially have difficulty. But it's hard to know in a real emergency who that's going to impact people. I worry a lot about our kids with anxiety. For some kids, that means that they're becoming defiant, for others it's paralyzing. or lots of tears. The kids who have a physical disability, I think I would worry less about because there is an adult or a couple of adults, who has the sole responsibility of looking after that student. Whereas, I have 22 students, and I can't guarantee that they're all actually going to make it outside. Whereas someone else has the job to stay with that student and physically bring them with them. So I think there's less risk for them. What's really great about being a kindergarten student, in junior kinder or senior kindergarten school, is that they each have an exit outside from their classroom; which is really helpful for the smallest kids because they have the shortest distance to travel. They're not walking down a hallway, you don't have to worry about them being lost or mixed up in a crowd with other kids. They just exit out of their classroom, which is very helpful for them. So the biggest challenge would be for grade 1 kids, who are small. But the youngest kids in schools are also on the first floor, so shortest distances to the exits. Whereas the older students are upstairs. They have the longest way to travel. They have the hazard of going down stairs, small kids do not. So that's one less obstacle to overcome, especially if people could be rushing, pushing, that sort of a thing.

Who's the other group you mentioned?

I: English as a second language. I'm not sure if you have any ESL students?

P: We do. But, I think that emergency sounds are universal. So those students are able to still comprehend what's going on. When English is your second language, most of them still have some English. And even if they're not able to verbally articulate who they are feeling in the moment, they're likely to comprehend simple, direct, instructions that are predictable, that have been practiced. The hard part for them would be, is if they've been separated from the group or another teacher who they weren't familiar with, was trying to communicate with them. If there's a language barrier there. But there's still a lot of gestures or visual cues that would be able to

guide them and provide them with the urgency of the situation; even if they had a language barrier. I don't think it would be as big of a concern for them.

I: That makes sense to me. What, if any, preparations have you made to help students with disabilities? So, someone in your class, for example

P:… I have a new student in my class who's deaf and hard of hearing. Normally in the class I wear a microphone headset, it's an FM system, so my voice is amplified. But sometimes with those students, making sure that they're buddied up or they have a special spot close to you, someone else to kind of guide them. But for students in our school who have significant disabilities, whether it's physical, or they have for example we have students with Down syndrome. They have specific EAs and administration who are responsible for their safety and wellbeing. Those students are being monitored fulltime. Unless in the event that their caregiver was, for some reason, unable to care for them, then it would be a real serious, grave situation. I'm not really sure what would happen….yeah…I don't know.

I: So for the child in your class that is hard of hearing, would you have them at the front, for example in a fire drill, maybe at the front of the line with you? Would you make sure they were kind of at the front? Or just lined up, it was going to be ok.

P: I think as long as they're lined up because even sometimes having a specific spot in the line can really waste a lot of time. It's amazing how long it takes kids to kind of line up without fighting over 'I got here first', 'you butted me', 'don't push me', that sort of thing. We don't have any time for that kind of nonsense. I don't think I would want students to have a specific lineup order, especially if there's someone who was absent. But I think for her, making sure that you also use a lot of visuals. I wish that, even though there was a fire alarm drill going off, that there was a light system as well. That would replace for those students who have a harder time hearing, or maybe there's the language barrier, they would still get the same message across.

I: That's a really good idea actually, to have a light system. Never even thought of that. Do you have a specific role to play during an emergency drill? I'm not sure if schools do this, but I'm not sure if teachers are assigned to a certain duty during a drill?

P: Some teachers are. So teachers who are not classroom teachers, usually have a different kind of role. So there's some teachers who have the responsibility of checking with each teacher outside to make sure that they have all their students, that their folder is facing the green side and not the red side. There are also teachers who are helping return students to their classroom teacher if they were separated, or in the bathroom, the office, had got in with another class, they'll return them that way. During the drills, there are also teachers who have walkie-talkies, so they're communicating with each other to ensure that there's no one left in the building, that different areas have been cleared. Outside, if different students are absent, they have those roles. But when you're a classroom teacher, your primary role is just to look after and be responsible for your class. So if you were covering another class, you would take your class that you were covering outside. But then, the teacher who in fact was the classroom teacher would join you, and then relieve you so that you could go back to your homeroom class; and fill them in as well. So if you're a teacher who is on their prep time, or doing something that's different, you are required to still participate in the drills. For fire drill, you still go outside, you still meet your class. If it's a lock-down drill, then you are in hold-and-secure in the office, that's where you go. I guess I always wonder about, there's all this attendance going on for the students, but there's

no attendance in place for the actual staff, to know if 'Mademoiselle Cadbury' here. And there are teachers who are away every day for professional development or sick days, but you don't know who are maybe 10 teachers who are out of your school. There's a supply teacher there. As a teacher, you are supposed to leave in your supply plans, notes about the emergency procedures. You're supposed to specify the location of your emergency folder, that sort of thing. So the teacher covering you should be aware of those things. But there's nothing in place to make sure all the staff are accounted for. Which I see as a big problem [laughs]

I: that's very interesting, actually…something to think about, I guess [laughs]. What additional training, if any, would you like to be provided to you?

P: I think that…

I: Is there anything that you would like to see in a drill or in your prep at the beginning of the year with the school that you want to be included?

P: … I don't think so. I think finding a better system for marking where to sit your classes to go, would be very beneficial, and I'm not sure how that would look or how it would work. But it would be so much easier for the students to get organized, would save a lot of time. That would be one thing…But other than that, I can't really think of anything specific to those 2 drills. I think additional training where teachers are certified in first aid, would be helpful because in these situations it's easy for students to be hurt; and you would want to be able to assist them. So I think that training would be useful. There's always a specific number of teachers on staff who have to be certified in first aid, but I think it would be something that all teachers would benefit from. There are different teachers with different training for different things. So I have training on the defibulator, but that was something I did last year, so it's not even an annual thing. And if it's not something you're using regularly, then it's very easy to lose track of how something actually works and if the proper steps are in place. So I think if there's instances where I don't feel prepared as a teacher for emergencies, it would be more related to health and wellbeing, as opposed to a fire drill or a lock-down drill.

I: That's probably because that would potentially happen more often than a fire. It's probably one of your bigger concerns. Having first aid would definitely put people at ease I think.

P: I think so. Well, unless you could be sued [chuckles], which you hear a lot about too.

I: That's crazy. So that's all my questions. If there's anything you want to add, anything about emergencies in general? Your experiences, questions?

P: I don't believe so. Unless you think there's something else that you're more curious about? I don't know if I provided the right picture.

I: No, this was great, this was really good…see if I missed anything… I think we got it all. I'm going to stop the recording, and if we think of something, we can add it.

P: Ok.

End of Interview.

Date: Wednesday, March 4ᵗʰ 2015
Location: Participant's apartment
Length: [00:21:06]
Interviewee: Jean Cobb (Alias; named changed within transcription; referred to as "P")
Interviewer: Gillian Coyles (referred to as "I")
Transcriber: Gillian Coyles

I: Okay so, my first question is, what school do you teach at?

P: Right now, at the Lake View School Authority

I: And how long have you been a teacher there?

P: Uh, [pause] how many months? [counting on fingers] September, October, December, January, February, March, seven months.

I: Okay, and before that?

P: Davisville Public School for 21 years

I: and what age are the students that you teach?

P: Kindergarten, so four and five year olds.

I: Excellent, and in terms of student population, how big is the school?

P: The school I'm at now, is um [pause, counting] I'm going to say we're around 75 roughly.

I: Okay, and how big is the class?

P: Each class has eight students.

I: So, you're in charge of eight students?

P: Yes.

I: Excellent. Okay, as a teacher there have you ever thought about what you might do in case of an emergency, such as a fire, or an earthquake, or a flood?

P: Absolutely, because most of the kids are on wheelchairs, and so yes, it was one of my first concerns, but because it's um, connected to a hospital we have the code system. So, code red, code blue, all of those, and we're attached to the hospital facility for all of those emergency calls. So my biggest concern was how to get my kids basically where they need to be because pushing wheelchairs, we don't have enough bodies for all the students in the classroom. So, one of the first things I did within the first month of school was found two people who don't have classes – don't have classrooms with students in them. They have other positions in the school, and I asked two of them that in every single emergency that we have, whether it's a drill or a real

emergency, I'm asking them to commit to come to my room, because we cannot get eight students out with three adults. So I put that in place, yeah, because it's a huge concern because you're dealing with kids who cannot get out themselves. Yeah.

I: Right, and so do you receive any specific training from the school? Specifically drills? You mentioned that you did drills.

P: Yeah, so they do drills. They have drills, uh [pause] I think it's [pause] I would have to find out exactly. I think we do them roughly once every four to six weeks, and they call the code, and we aren't told that it's a drill. We're just, they call a code and off we go.

I: Okay, and can you give me an example of what kind of code you're describing?

P: Usually code red, which is fire. So we do fire drills. Um, there was a [pause] lockdown drill and I was not at school, uh when I was home sick one day. And we have had one other, um [pause] lockdown – hold and secure, which is um, an external threat, so we're secured in the building and no one goes outside of the building. So, we've had a couple of practices with those. *Nothing major.* We have *not* done an evacuation as of yet.

I: Alright, are there plans to do a drill?

P: I have no idea, and for that one I'm not prepared. I don't know where we're evacuating to. Where as previously in the public school I did know where we were evacuating. We had done evacuation drills.

I: Interesting, and so have you ever been in any – has there ever been a real emergency in the school? A fire? It's attached to a hospital, so obviously there are smaller emergencies there all the time

P: Yeah. Today there was a code yelling – uh, yellow – which means that there was someone missing.

I: Okay

P: Everyone is on alert, everyone stops and listens to the code and then they describe the person, because that person could be wandering through the school. So, uh, you get used to hearing codes all the time, a lot of code blues, but then we've also had code white, which is an aggressive, uh, person, and it happened to be a student in the school, and code yellow which was missing person. These are all kids because if I talk about clients, it's all under 18. Yeah.

I: Okay, and do the teachers and/or the students receive any special emergency training? During class time or after class?

P: Just the drills that we have, and we also have um, on our ID badge. I can show you. On the back of the ID badge all the codes are listed and what they mean, so if someone says code yellow, you know what that means. They wont say what it is. Like, they wont say "code red, there is a fire blah blah blah". They'll just say "code red" and you have to go into code red mode. So then, we also have a paper that lists everybody's responsibility for that code, so, you look at code red, you follow it down to where the teacher is and it says specifically what I need to do

during that code red. Where I should be, where my students should be, and what I'm supposed to do. Whether it's calling attendance into the office because they need to know. Um [pause] when we had the threat, the external threat, you have to pull everybody into the room. If someone happens to be wandering the halls, and it happened to be when they were registering new students and registering [laughing], so you just have to pull everybody in, and then you have to phone or email the office and let them know which bodies you have in your room, because everyone has to be accounted for.

I: Right

P: So, if you went off to the washroom and you got stuck in the hallway, you might be in someone else's room.

I: So all of the teachers there are familiar with this procedure? They all know what to do?

P: Yes.

I: and are the students given any information before hand or is it during emergency drills?

P: They aren't really, um, mine are all JK, so they aren't. Um, it's more to keep them calm, and make sure they're not panicking. Um, it's very different in the hospital setting because there's not alarms that go off, it's a code being called. So it's a person's voice, "code red, code red" and it continues on. Whereas in a school it's very loud. You've got the fire drill going and all that, so um, are the kids prepared? Not really. Um [pause] we have things go off on the speakers all the time. When the, the um, like when something's down, like, you know, they'll tell you to phone 5555, "this is an emergency," and things like that. Uh, "the fire alarm's offline," things like that. So the kids hear it all the time, so they're not panicked when they hear the voice, and then we just go "oh, we have to go to the cafeteria."

I: Right, okay.

P: and we always tell them that it's a drill. We have had a fire, but it wasn't in the school. But because there is a fire somewhere in the hospital, everybody has to evacuate wherever they're supposed to go. Ours is the main cafeteria. So the kids aren't panicked at all. It's just, it's pretty – very slow because you got kids in chairs, and kids in walkers, and kids in motorized chairs, and you also have kids that have come down from the hospital, so you've got kids who have just had surgery who are in [motion with arms] straight legs out. So there are a lot of space issues and it's just a slow process, but no one panics, it just *moves.* Everybody just keeps moving on. Everything actually gets done very efficiently.

I: That's great. What do you think would happen if there was a real emergency? You mentioned that everyone is very comfortable and you always tell the kids that it is a drill. Would you do that if there was a real emergency?

P: Uh, when we had the external threat, which was a drill but we, you know, had to close the blinds, and go "that's okay, we're just closing the blinds, we're all going to sit here and play, and lets all play on the floor" So you're keeping them down below the windows, and things like that. So, there's never – they're not panicked.

I: Okay, and do you think that you could carry out what you've been trained for? Especially during a real emergency?

P: Yes.

I: Cool, are there any students or staff who you think would have trouble during emergencies? Other than the students being confined to wheelchairs.

P: We've never had to leave, I think there would be issues if we had to leave the facility that we're in, because then it's something completely different for them, and I think then they'd be unsure. Although, in the situation I'm in right now with this class, you are – like you know the kids so well. It's, you know, you're having to carry them places, you're having to lift them up. Some of them you have to feed them. You're much closer to them than you are, say with a typical student in school – you wouldn't be that close. So, like picking kids up and carrying them, they wouldn't blink an eye if you did that. They would think that was fun and just part of what we always do. So I don't, I don't know how they'd react. If there were loud noises, I know a lot of my kids startle. *That* would cause the tears. That would be, you know, the panic. Then my ed assistants and I just go into the whole, you know, scoop them up, now we're carrying them, we're all good. You know, they come first, so.

I: Right, and your ed assistants are as trained as you are in emergencies.

P: Yes.

I: You mentioned earlier that you have a specific role to play during emergencies. Can you talk on that further? Are you a leader, or do you [trails off].

P: Uh, the leaders tend to be the ones who do not have students so we have a lot of people who work in the school that are like a community liaison, They can be a liaison because it's, um, clients coming in that may be in for short spurts of time, like three months, four months, surgeries, and they attend school there, so there are people who don't have students. There is also, like, the phys-ed teacher who doesn't have students assigned to her, she just takes the kids through their different classes. So those people are assigned those kinds of roles. Um, it is a small school. It's just two hallways paralleling each other. There's a principal and a VP, so they can each take a walk down. They tend to be towards the end of this whole movement towards. My responsibility 100 percent is *my* eight students, that's it. Unless it's um, where we're not leaving – we're going into the classroom, we're going into lockdown mode in the classroom, then I would obviously look out into the hallway to make sure everyone is taken care of as I lock my door and cover my windows, go inside my classroom. If I had to bring someone else in, yeah, then I've got them to and my responsibility is just letting the office know who I've got – do I have everybody I need? Can I account for the eight students and three adults that are supposed to be in that classroom.

I: Excellent, What additional training, if any, do you think should be provided?

P: [pause] Um, I don't know. It's such a big place and there's so many – like, I'm such a nooby there and such a different feeling for me. I haven't been a nobody in a long time [laughing]. Um,

I don't know what other training I would need, but I do know that I could ask *anyone* in the hallway as we're heading out. Like, if it was an evacuation, "where are we going?," if I didn't know ahead of time. That's something I should look into. Do we have that written somewhere that I'm not aware of? Um, but I would just be out there – you're always with other people, so the nice thing is you always have other adults in your room, so not you alone, which it is in a typical classroom. It could be you with your students alone. And then it's more – like, there isn't anyone to talk it out with.

I: You mentioned that you had worked at Clearville Public school before working at Lake View. Can you shed some light onto that experience?

P: Sure, I had deaf students, and on what you've asked me, it's very different with the deaf students because the school was set up with – of course, the fire alarms that you hear, but we also had to have lights because they only identify what they see, so *those* students tend to panic. So you'd have to say to them, "you know what, this is probably just a drill," or if we know it's a drill and their announcing over the PA it's a drill, obviously the students can't hear, so you're interpreting what it is, but I found with those students, they would panic, um, regardless of their age. Just because it's – I think, I may be reading into this, but I think it's the fear of they have no idea of what's going on because they can't hear it. They can't hear a siren if it's on its way. If there was a fire truck outside, I would know because I've heard it coming, or I would hear it on it's way and think, "okay, you know my hearts pounding, but that's okay, you know, the fire truck's on its way." They have nothing to go by until they physically see the fire truck, or the fire fighter, or the police officer, or whoever. So, them, I found them very frightened, and you have to really calm them down. And then they would be out in the hallway, and of course everything is visual, and they're just like, you know, panicked looking side to side, back and forth, all around them [looks side to side]. [Laughing] it's really hard to get them out of the building because you keep trying to get their attention – you're signing [starts signing], "K, we're going out of the building, we need to leave this way. Stay with me. Keep walking with me." And they're like looking all over the place. So that's more of a panic from my point of view because if I can't just grab hold of you and take you, which I don't want to do, because if I just grab you and take you, I can't sign and tell you where I'm taking you. So it's a lot more – you go into a completely different mode of how you're going to safely and comely get them out, and not be afraid, and all of that. But it's very different because it's so *visual* and you see the whole school moving on mass. It's funny because all the hearing kids are, you know, chatting, walking through with their friends, and these kids are just – they aren't even signing with each other. They're just like, in panic mode, deer in the headlights, looking around trying to take it all in and trying to figure out what their role is in all of it. So, it's an interesting situation to be in.

I: That would pose issues for staff as well. If you were in a real emergency, and you were nervous yourself, you would have to translate what you were thinking into sign and things might get lost in translation – that's very interesting.

P: [nods head in agreement] but then in other situations where you might hear um, [pause, laughing] we went into – it was really odd, remember the G8 summit?

I: Yes

P: So, all the helicopters and everything are outside our building and we can hear them, and we go into lockdown. So, we were like, what is happening here? We're in lockdown, there's G8, is there someone coming, like around the school? Are we really unsafe or are we in a drill mode? What's happening? Turns out it was a threat outside, [laughing] but it had nothing to do with the helicopters, it was someone who had robbed a store that was around. Anyways, so in that situation, they can't hear any of that. So, it's funny that I would be a little more [shocked gasp], "I'm going to have to be really calm in front of the kids," they're like, "*whatever.*" They're totally oblivious to it until you say, like, "Okay," you know, "we're all going to go into the bathroom and play a game there," "why?," "just because for fun," you know? "because they said we should," "because there's something outside. We're not sure what's outside," and we would hear all the rustling of people checking your door, 'cause if you're in a lockdown someone has to come around and check to make sure that everybody actually is locked down. So, you would hear your door and you would be like [nervous noise], and they would be like, "what?!," and you would have to be like, "nothing, nothing, I thought I heard something, but I didn't." Calmly of course. So, it's an interesting situation to be in. Yeah, totally different. And you don't have the codes or colours. They just call it over the PA.

I: So, there's no special emergency preparedness for the deaf section of the school?

P: No, just the same as everybody else. We go through drills – I mean the terms, we do still sign those, like, [signing] hold and secure, lockdown, that type of thing. So that they know what they are and they know the signs because they have to have the vocab for them. The same as hearing kids have to know, if we say 'lockdown', this is what it means, if we sign 'lockdown', that's what it means. So, yeah, they get the same as everybody else, but you're almost a little more – you explain it a whole lot more. You give them the vocabulary, but then you're explaining all of it, but also keeping them calm.

I: That's a very interesting factor to think about in terms of kid's safety.

P: Yes, and then you don't have the codes called, you just say "lockdown" or whatever it is. They tried that way back when, probably when you were in elementary school, when we were trying to bring lockdown into the school system and everything. They were like, "What would we call it?," and we had these funny little terms, and you realize that – is that really what we should be doing? Or should we let the kids actually know? Should we be pretending we're not? Or should we actually let them know and it was decided, you know what, kids need to know. We have to arm them with all the information and that's how we're going to keep them the safest, and how they're going to feel the most secure. "Yes you're scared it's a lock down, but we know what to do!" Instead of, you know, "the purple bird has flown," and everybody suddenly runs, grabs their keys, locks their doors, and yells kinda thing, it's just – it was silly. It wasn't respectful of the kids either because they do better if they know all the information and are knowledgeable too.

I: Yeah, I remember at my high school we had a bomb threat, and they didn't call it over the PA, which usually they do for drills, but it was something completely different. It was

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something like, "Miss so-and-so is in the office" and that was the code for a bomb threat, which was probably never used prior, and so it was very confusing and everyone had so many questions and was not quite sure what to do.

P: [nods in understanding] and then you have to be very careful because they say – at one point we had – this is another interesting thing, just as we're think about that, I realized, I the public school that I was at, Davisville, at the phones, like the teacher phones, if you want to call them that. Around the teacher phones, we had that information. If someone calls with a threat – with a bomb threat, we had to have all of our steps laid out there. Things like, you couldn't use your cellphones because that can detonate a bomb, which is difficult because then you have deaf staff who have all been given Blackberries to communicate, and then when we're in lockdown we're not supposed to be on our cellphones, but you have to be because – like if you were in a classroom where everybody's deaf, they have no idea. Right? So, everybody's texting each other, "What are you hearing?" That was the big one I got through my ed assistant. She wants to know what you hear. So, you know, "I hear helicopters outside, but we don't know what it is. It could be nothing." She was [typing noise and motion] tick, tick, tick, tick , because they could hear nothing and were just living in silence waiting with the time ticking away. So yeah, but I mean, they're very diligent. The schools now are really diligent about all of these threats that we could have. I think even more so those of us that are closest to the subway system.

I: Yeah.

P: You know, it just seems to me we – I guess maybe we had people who were more inclined to just wander into the school.

I: Yeah, I can see that.

P: That type of thing. So, we always needed to be safe.

I: Absolutely.

End of Interview.

<h1 style="text-align: center;">Interview 'D' Transcription</h1>

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;">
Date: Unknown
Location: Unknown
Length: Unknown
Interviewee: Fred (Alias; name changed within transcriptions; referred to as "B")
Interviewer: Nicolaas Jonkman (referred to as "N")
Transcriber: Nicolaas Jonkman
</div>

N: Hi Ben, how are you?

B: Very good, thank you.

N: Good. So, we're here to talk about teachers in emergencies and how teachers will be able to help their students and how they respond, and all that kind of stuff, but before we begin can you tell me how long you have been a teacher?

B: I graduated from teacher's college in 2012 and have worked in both public and private sector. I worked in a private school in Toronto for a year, and spent 6 months teaching in Ecuador, and now I'm working for the York Region School Board.

N: So what grades do you teach and what ages are the students?

B: I have taught all grades kindergarten to grade 12 and I am now working in elementary schools for many grades.

N: How large would you say the average school is in terms of school population and how big is your average class?

B: Average school would be hard to say because there are lots of different sizes. There are some schools that I've seen that are 150 students and the ones which are much larger. Class size is usually around 20 to 25 students, sometimes a little bit more than that, upwards of 30.

N: Okay, as teacher, have you ever thought of what you would do in an emergency?

B: I think about that a lot. There's a lot of, well, when you're responsible for 25 students you do want to be aware of the situation in case something happens and the board is very clear aware about what these situations are supposed to look like. There are drills that are scheduled fairly regularly, and there information that is circulated fairly regularly of what to in case there ever is ever a situation. And a lot of time you do think about it because you have students and you out have interactions with them and they react in certain ways you think 'Oh. If they react to this, how are they going to react in and real emergency and how am I going to deal with it', so it is something that comes up fairly often.

N: Um, have you received any specific training like drills, fire evacuation, intruder lockdown- that kind of stuff?

B: In the orientation for when I was hired for York Region, we were in, we were there for about 5 hours I would say and a portion of that was spent and I couldn't say how much exactly, was talking about what to do in various situations whether it's a lockdown or fire drill or any other emergency procedures. And the key thing is that they informed us in that orientation is, and I've seen it in every classroom that I've been in, that there is an emergency folder posted on, next to the door of every room that says what to do in any case of emergency. So other than the hour, possibly, of training in the orientation, in the book it says step by step what to do in the emergency.

N: Have you ever been involved in a real emergency in your school for example fire, lockdown, gas leak, evacuation?

B: Today actually I was involved in not a, not an external emergency like that, but there was an emergency where a student- it was deemed that there was unsafe, something unsafe at school so there was a yellow alert for the school which just means that the school closes and locks all the doors until the all clear is given. I was, I've not been told yet what the situation was about but we followed it, it came over the phone because there are phones in every, in every, um room, as well as the speakers and they said, "this is a yellow alert" and we are aware of what to do in those situations, so we just close the doors kept going about our business. In those situations if there has to be a change of class or anything, for instance if the students needed to go to music class, they just stay with you until, until it's over.

N: Um, is this something that you will eventually be informed of, possibly a staff meeting tomorrow, to find out what the yellow alert was about?

B: Usually, yes, I would say. That situation today, I am not entirely sure because it might be there was a student in the school in which case they need to keep things private for various reasons. But, generally there would be more information available to the teachers about what happened.

N: Um, like, did teachers and students receive any special emergency information or training during class time? In terms of teachers, were you, did you receive any training after class or in staff meetings do you guys ever talk about it or?

B: Yes, there are staff meetings and there are drills that are scheduled fairly regularly, and as teacher then, we talked about it and go over the results of the drill. We talk with the students about it fairly regularly as well, talk about what to do in case there is ever a real event what to do when there is a drill and there's also, members of the police community come in, emergency responders come in and talk to teachers and students about what to do in situations.

N: Can you describe any of these sessions and what kind of information was discussed, how helpful were these informations, where they valuable, did you gain anything out of them?

B: There is one that I remember where a police officer was talking to a group of grade 4 to 6 I believe, and she was informing us, she was going over the procedures for fire alarm for a bit and more importantly for lockdowns. She was just saying, she was explaining to the students, and staff who were there, why we do that and what the police are doing when that happens. I think a lot of it was to reassure the students and staff that is important that we do the things that lockdown drills say we should do. We shut the windows and close the blinds, lock the door. And she was explaining what the police are doing in that time to make sure the students know that if we do those things properly, they will most likely be safe cause the police are doing everything they can to get it over with. And it was very reassuring to have that police officer talk to us, she was a really friendly officer, she was great with the kids and great with the staff.

N: So, we are going to move on to the effectiveness of uh, programs at your school. The first question I would like to ask is what do you think would happen if there was a real emergency at a school you are teaching at?

B: what kind of emergency?

N: Um, just like a generic emergency, like if there was a fire or something like that.

B: I believe that they go, that the students are incredibly well drilled on what to do, and I think that, that students would safely get out of the building. Um, from everything I've seen, students are great at not panicking and you'd be surprised I'd think, because there are some kids you'd see in the classroom running off, all over the place, uh, and then when the fire alarm goes and then they don't know it's a drill, they take it seriously and they line up, they go out of the building, they are outside waiting for it, um, so I think in those situations they are very safe. Once outside, it's another story because then students are thinking they are safe and they are starting to you know, they're outside and they're playing, they're running around and it then becomes a little more difficult to keep them in order and pattern but, they are safely outside so that's the important thing

N: Do you feel like you can carry out what you've been trained for? <inaudible> you've trained for fire drills, you've trained for a lockdown, like, do you feel capable of fulfilling those duties?

B: Definitely, I do, because like I said before the, the procedures are outlined, even if what I've been told is not necessarily that helpful, the procedures in the manual that are given are so clear. It says, 'take the students, bring them here, take them here, go through this exit, or bring them to this room, shut these blinds, open this, do this, do that, do that". It's so step by step, it really is like a dummies guide to getting results, so I really do find, feel that it would be done, and done in an efficient way.

N: Um, do you think, like, taking yourself aside, are there any students or staff you feel would think would have trouble during an emergency or, for example, students with disabilities, young students versus older students, um, we'll talk about students first, um, and then we'll talk about, like maybe newer teachers versus older teachers, experience levels, that kind of stuff.

B: Okay. Yeah, I think it's definitely more of a risk with students with disabilities, or um, younger students. I think that kindergarteners is a worry because they, you know, would be prone, in a lockdown they would be probably be more likely to start crying or at least that's the general impression of them, but, when it comes to emergencies, I think again people would be surprised at how well students do respond to real life situations where it's happening. So, you know, in kindergarten class where I've seen, there was a specific room they would go into for their lockdown, as oppose to the older kids where they would stay in their room. So there was a room off the kindergarten room, it was a storage area, so they go in there, and that and that gives them an extra sort of buffer between them and the outside in case, you know, there is any crying or what have you, cause that is more likely to happen with kindergarten classes. And students with you know, any other, any problems, you know, ones that display fear or outbursts, that's going to be a bigger worry, but the teachers looking after them are also trained in those situations so, if there are students with special needs, the teachers are very used to those special needs, so are better equipped to handle those situations as well. And I'm not one of them <inaudible>...

N: Um, and in terms of like, teachers, do you think like experience plays as big a role on being prepared or age, anything like that.

B: I think that it can, I mean in the drills that I've taken part in I've looked to the more experienced teachers to sort of guide me along the way, but I don't think it's necessary to get the, to get the students in safe positions. It's just nice to know that the experienced guys are around in case you don't know exactly what to do.

N: So it's just like more of a guidance thing...

B: Yeah, for sure. It's just, it's just nice to have the experience but not necessary.

N: What, if any, preparations have you made to help students with disabilities? Like, are you, within a classroom are you going to have students that have severe intellectual disabilities, or minor ones that you would feel a little more concerned about?

B: Yeah, I've definitely had conversations take place with those kids, either, the younger ones they are frequent conversations that happen to prepare them in case of of a drill, because drills come up pretty regularly, um, so, and the students don't know whether it's a drill or real, so teachers prepare the students regardless and say 'this could happen, we won't know if it's a drill or if it's real, so you have to be prepared' and that helps the students out, just knowing that it could be a drill. So, it keeps them a little bit calm, and it reinforces what they are supposed to do. So, if you talk about it every couple of weeks, you know, you have a reminder of what we do, um, some teachers that I know have charts in the classroom that says, that say, or they go over it, 'what does it look like to have a good evacuation line, what do we do in case this happens' and they go over that regularly and I think that's definitely beneficial to special needs students or younger students who don't have the experience of a grade 7 or 8 who has done it for years

N: Alright, um, do you have a, besides your classroom, do you have a specific role you play in an emergency. Like, if you're, like during a fire drill do you have to follow behind and check all the classrooms.

B: I don't know but I know that as part of emergency folders there are specific people who are supposed to check the floors for people, to check the bathrooms etcetera, and then once outside they are the ones that collect the attendance sheets from from the individual teachers so, my role would be to make sure my class gets outside and then I take attendance to make sure all the kids that were there that day are there and then someone else will collect my attendance when I'm done with it. So what is done in my school and most schools, is there's a red binder that has the attendance, you bring it outside with you, when you're done you're attendance you hold up your red binder and the teacher that is in charge of that age group or that year will collect the binder and make sure it is complete for all the students.

N: Um, what additional training, if any would you like to be provided, by the school board, by principals, by schools?

B: Um, I think probably more talk about um, lockdowns and situations where there are intruders or the possibility of intruders just because that is so much more of a serious issue I think, I think with fire drills uh, we've all experienced them, whether school or university and we know, we know what we're supposed to do, we've been drilled enough on them. But, with lockdowns that's something that very few of us have experienced so panic might creep in to a few people or whatever so just more discussions about what to do and what, how you're going to feel and stuff like that is. That would be helpful I think.

N: Um, just a question that kind of came up while you were talking is what's the role of a principal in an emergency? What kind of stuff are they responsible for? Um, do you know that? Is that made clear during your meetings?

B: I believe they are, I believe they are responsible for coordinating with uh, the police or fire department or both, and the vice principal is usually in a charge of making sure the students are all accounted for. So they've got specific jobs and it's probably different in different schools, but one of them will be responsible for students and one of them will be responsible for ensuring all the other things are met, so police and fire, notifying staff and students that the drill is over, that sort of thing.

N: Okay, that's about it. Thank you for the interview, I appreciate it.

B: Pleasure

N: As we discussed beforehand, everything will be kept confidential.

B: Thank you very much.

End of interview.

Appendix B: Coding Tables

Table 1: Initial Coding Framework for Interview 1	
Interview Transcript	**Coding**
"Every kindergarten teacher has an ECE (early childhood educator)… Otherwise, I don't think I could manage well on my own"	Has help
"It <u>worries</u> me first of all, we do have stairs in our [school]…it would be <u>tricky</u> and slow to get down the stairs because they [the kindergartens] have to go single file"	Concerns Issues What if? "tricky"
"The stairs are a big <u>issue</u> with little kids"	Concerns Issues
"…we know when they [fire drills] are ahead of time… and it hasn't ever been when I've had kindergarten in the library"	Concern Issues What if?
"And we also have a boy in a wheelchair…we built a ramp in that school, and there's an elevator"	Accommodation for vulnerable students
"…they're very well versed"	Confidence in Preparedness
"…it's a little bit <u>concerning</u> because you have to be with your class, and that means that the other kids are going off with him down the ramp. And they're responsible for him"	Concerns for responsibilities
"And there's also support staff. Special Ed. Teachers…they will also check the washrooms, and that's where the ramp is"	Has help
"…but it is a bit of a <u>concern</u> having a child in a wheelchair*"*	Concern for vulnerable students
"It's the law that every school has to show their teachers how to use epi-pens"	Mandatory training sessions
"We have to read all about lockdown, fire drills and… hold and secures"	Mandatory training
"…someone robbed the jewelry store…it was hold and secure…We had to wait until we heard from the police."	Waiting for emergency services
"And that was an <u>issue</u> because during that time, the kids could not go to the washroom"	Issue Concern Problem during emergencies "What if"
"…they would have to use the garbage pale and put a little barrier around it"	Problem solving during an emergency
"We work really hard at not making it a situation"	Safety Reduce anxiety
"We want you to be <u>safe</u>, that's all"	Concern for Safety
"…was very <u>scary</u> for us"	Scary

"I was very <u>nervous</u> because I was 'teacher in charge'"	Nervous Responsibility No Confidence
"And I did not feel, truthfully, trained for that" – said this with genuine concern, passion	Unprepared Concern Does not feel trained*
"But that made me very <u>nervous</u> because of the criminal record"	Does not feel trained to handle situation Concern, Nervous
"But that was very <u>scary</u> for me" (regarding risk of children being kidnapped by mother)	Scary Concern
"Well something that happened this year that was <u>unfortunate</u>…" (regarding fire alarm <u>glitches</u>)	
"…glitches with our fire drills, or the alarm…but it was below zero. And we all had to go outside without coats. And we're talking three year olds… that was <u>concerning</u> because it's wintertime."	Adaptation Concern Issues with younger students
"With kindergartens it would be longer. You have to cross the streets…" (regarding walking to an emergency shelter)	Issues with younger students
"See, that's bad I don't even know that" – was unsure what the emergency shelter was	Weakness is training staff? Gap
"You're not getting the whole document at the staff meeting, but you are expected to go home and read it all"	Sufficient?
"And I have read it all, but I don't remember it all"	Ill-equipped
"Mind you, obviously I would know because the principal would know"	Confidence in Superiors
"So I would just follow everyone and all I would have to do is ask and someone would know"	Team work Help others
"…which is <u>tricky</u> because there's a lot of kids. A lot of kids with allergies"	Tricky to ensure safety
"…they're <u>effective</u>. I think we practice enough" – regarding fire drills	Confidence Feelings of preparedness
"…there was a <u>problem</u> with one of the kids in kindergarten; they didn't have their shoes on"	Issues with young students Problems Adaptation
"…the principals know" (how many fire drills there are annually)	Confidence in superiors
"…when you have two, three, four year olds and five year olds – it's <u>tricky</u> to get them out"	Concern for young students
"But that's why we have the fire drills so that they know what they have to do"	Confidence in procedures/ preparedness
"And they get very <u>excited</u>, and <u>scared</u> sometimes"	Concern for young students Scared Negative feelings

"…the lockdown <u>scares</u> me, to be <u>honest</u>" – said with passion	Negative feelings Concern Scary
"the lockdowns <u>scare</u> me because I have windows in my library"	Scary
"So that has sort of <u>entered my mind. Sometimes I think about that</u>." – said genuinely	Concern/Worry
"…it would be 'just do it.' Because we <u>have</u> to do it" – said matter-of-factly	Confidence Feelings of preparedness
"It would be <u>scary</u> going very slowly. If there was a fire, a really fast, raging fire.	Scary/Concerns What if
"…it would be very <u>tricky</u> getting those kids down quickly"	Concern for young students Tricky
"if they see that child is nervous, then it makes them a little anxious too… So that can be a little <u>challenging</u>."	Challenge
"I'm sure I could go to a teacher outside my door and say, you know, "Mr. H., I'm on my own, I've got kindergartens.""	Collaborative. Helpful environment Confidence in colleagues
"I would probably go in the hallways and say, um, you know, to one of the teachers… Or go across the hall and say, "Mr. H, I need help.""	Collaborative. Helpful environment Confidence in colleagues
"I <u>would feel more comfortable</u>, first of all, updating my First aid"	Offers solution
"I wouldn't feel comfortable with the training I've had if someone in gym broke their neck or even a bad break"	Needs more trainings
"You could still let someone in the school who could…be armed, or be of some danger to the kids." – concern with strangers in schools and use of monitoring systems.	Concern over strangers
"So potentially anybody could come in" – said with a lot of worry	Concern for safety
"You have to treat everything so seriously, even when it isn't. Because if you don't, and it is, then you are responsible. So that was <u>scary</u> for me too."	Concerned with being put in charge/ responsibilities Scary
"I don't feel trained for that"	Questions quality of training Gap
"As a teacher-in-charge, they don't give you enough training"	Gap in training
"well, you know what? None of that is relevant to me" – regarding teacher in charge training	Gap in training Does not feel prepared
"But I didn't feel good going out of those workshops. <u>I felt more scared</u>"	Gap in training Does not feel prepares
"…she was the teacher in charge, which was great for me. Because she knew all the protocols."	Confidence in superiors
"…if something doesn't go right, you can get blamed or it could end your career"	Risk for teachers for emergencies to go well
"None of us liked it even though we had a binder of what to do…We just felt relief when the day was over"	Is this what regular principals experience?

"But its tricky if you're teaching all day and you're teacher in charge."	A lot of pressure and responsibilities put on teachers.
"Supposed to bring in a VP from another school to check in…Or they might be there for a full day."	Relief
"But, they certainly know how to deal with whatever situation"	Confidence in superiors
"…it's a very <u>overwhelming</u> responsibility to be in charge of a classroom…it's <u>overwhelming</u>."	Overwhelming Responsibility

Table 1: Initial Coding Framework for Interview 2	
Interview Transcript	**Coding**
"How could you make the system better because it's not flawless"	Concern about uncertainty Lack of confidence
"Sometimes there's problems…if a lock down drill occurs, maybe right after a break or transition period, you don't always have all the students in your class that should be"	Concerns Issues during transition Missing students
"You also think about students who could still be maybe in the washroom"	Concerns Missing students
"If I actually have proper or safe space in my room to have the children hide or crouch down"	Concerns for Child safety
"I have one [kid] in my class with anxiety disorder, it was very overwhelming for her to suddenly find out that we were doing lock down drills or fire drills, even if they were pretend"	Accommodation for vulnerable students
"Our school is very close to the highway"	Safety Concern for evacuating
"Another problem, or things I worry about is when we are not actually in our homeroom class, maybe we're in the gym…"	What if? Unfamiliar environment Gap in training
"think about what you do during recess time if a fire drill occurs, and all the kids are already outside"	Concerns for organization
"But if it does happen over a lunch, there are a lot of teachers that go out for lunch, then you're short staffed"	Concerns about staff Short staffed
"We did have a lock-down at my school, and it was more so as a preventative measure."	Preparedness Preventative measures
"The educational assistants, and the special education resource teachers, along with administration, do special training for our special needs students"	Mandatory training Training for vulnerable students

"We also practice in various rooms and settings in the school; so how does the fire drill procedure work for the gym, when we have 5 gym classes in there at once, so 100 kids"	Practice drills Preparedness
"It's all done in-house, so the fire department does not come to do a presentation on the fire drill procedures or lock-down procedures. Teachers run these programs on their own"	In-house training Teacher responsibility
"What's not helpful for [the kids] is when they find themselves in an unpredictable situation, for example, they're in the bathroom"	Concerns with unpredictability
"Those kinds of situations are harder for them to wrap their head around, so that part is difficult for them; the unpredictability of the whole thing."	Concerns with unpredictability
"There's a lot of gray and there's 'what ifs', and I think we talk about how we need to do the things that we've practiced and kind of just use some common sense, because every situation is going to be difficult or different"	What if? Common sense Concerns with unpredictability
"…I think in a real emergency, the kids would have a hard time being quiet; walking through the halls calmly, quietly"	Concerns with behaviour
"Usually when they hear the alarm or something, one of the first things they ask right away is 'is this real'."	Practice vs. reality
"I worry about kids pushing, running, some kids being upset or crying. Maybe feeling unable to move"	Concerns with evacuation Concerns with fear/paralysis
"I don't actually get to see if every child makes it out of my classroom. I can't do that because I am too busy leading the kids where to go. So that would be a concern that I would have because sometimes fear can paralyze people in different ways."	Concerns with student evacuation Concerns with fear/paralysis
"We could certainly have a lot more upset children if it happened during the winter months in the winter weather"	Concerns with outside temperature Hypothermia
"I would wonder if some of the kids would even resist going outside because of [cold weather]; that's very scary"	Resisting evacuation Concerns with outside temperature Scary
"Getting in touch with the parents would be very difficult if we weren't inside the building"	Gap in communication
"I worry again…for the lock-down about not having my keys, not being certain that my door is locked"	Feeling unprepared Safety
"In my school, when you come in the main entrance…my classroom is the first classroom you would encounter. So it's scary when you hear all the stories from different schools who've had shootings"	Concerns with location of classroom Scary

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"I'm the only classroom in my hallway, so there's not really anyone nearby for help…which is <u>scary</u>"	Lack of help Scary
"If your exit was blocked, or multiple exits were blocked"	Concerns with evacuation process
"For the lock-down, that is a lot more <u>scary</u>…a lot of it seems like it's out of your control, whereas with the fire drill, you can feel like you have control of the situation because you were trained"	Lack of situational control (lock-down) Confidence in training (fire drill)
"I worry a lot about our kids with anxiety. For some kids, that means that they're becoming defiant, for others it's paralyzing or lots of tears"	Concerns with student anxiety and other vulnerabilities
"The kids who have a physical disability, I think I would worry less about because there is an adult or a couple of adults, who has the sole responsibility of looking after that student"	Confidence in training
"I have 22 students, and I can't guarantee that they're all actually going to make it outside"	Concerns with evacuation procedures Concerns with teacher/student ratio
"Junior kinder or senior kindergarten…each have an exit outside from their classroom; which is really helpful for the smallest kids because they have the shortest distance to travel"	Positive feedback on school layout
"The biggest challenge would be fore grade 1 kids, who are small. But the youngest kids in school are also on the first floor, so shortest distances to the exits"	Positive feedback on school layout
"I have a new student in my class who's deaf and hard of hearing…we have students with Down Syndrome"	Challenges with vulnerable students
"Those students are being monitored fulltime. Unless in the event that their caregiver was, for some reason, unable to care for them, then it would be a real serious, <u>grave</u> situation. I'm not really sure what would happen…yeah…I don't know"	Confidence in colleagues Concerns with caregiver safety Scary
"I wish that, even though there was a fire alarm drill going off, that there was a light system as well. That would replace for students who have a harder time hearing, or maybe there's the language barrier, they would still get the same message across"	Offers solution
"There's all this attendance going on for the students, but there's no attendance in place for the actual staff"	Identifies gap in plan Concerns with staff safety
"There are teachers who are away every day for professional development or sick days, but you don't know who are, maybe 10 teachers who are out of your school"	Concerns with absent staff Concerns with uncertainty
"I think finding a better system for marking where to sit your classes to go, would be very beneficial"	Offers solution

"I think additional training where teachers are certified in first aid, would be helpful"	Offers solution
"If there's instances where I don't feel prepared as a teacher for emergencies, it would be more related to health and wellbeing, as opposed to a fire drill or a lock-down drill"	Feeling unprepared Concerns with health and wellbeing of students

Initial Coding Framework for Interview 3	
Interview Transcript	Coding
"Most of the kids are on wheelchairs…it was one of my first concerns"	Concern Challenges Vulnerable students/students with disabilities
"[school is] connected to a hospital we have the code system"	Adaptation/protocols
"So my biggest concern was how to get my kids basically where they need to be because pushing wheelchairs, we don't have enough bodies for all the students in the classroom."	Concern Challenges Vulnerable students/students with disabilities
"One of the first things I did within the first month of school was found two people who don't have classes…and I asked two of them that in every single emergency…to commit to come to my room, because we cannot get eight students out with three adults…it's a huge concern because you're dealing with kids who cannot get out themselves."	Problem solving Team-oriented environment Concern Evacuation procedures Comfortable seeking help
"We have *not* done an evacuation as of yet."	Gap in planning/preparedness
-Regarding plans to do an evacuation drill- "I have no idea, and for that one I'm not prepared. I don't know where we're evacuating to."	Concern Does not feel trained Evacuation procedures
-Regarding emergency training- "Just the drills that we have"	In-house training
"We also have a paper that lists everybody's responsibility for that code"	Confidence in planning
Interviewer: "So all of the teachers there are familiar with this procedure? They all know what to do?" Participant: "Yes"	Confidence in colleagues
"It's pretty – very slow because you got kids in chairs, and kids in walkers, and kids in motorized chairs, and you also have kids that have come down from the hospital, so you've got kids who have just had surgery."	Concern Vulnerable students/students with disabilities
"So there are a lot of space issues and it's just a slow process, but no one panics, it just *moves*. Everybody just	Confidence in colleagues

keeps moving on. Everything actually gets done very efficiently."	
"We've never had to leave, I think there would be issues if we have to leave the facility that we're in, because then it's something completely different for them, and I think then they'd be unsure."	Concern with student behaviour Evacuation procedures Gap in preparedness
"If there were loud noises, I know a lot of my kids startle."	Concern with student behaviour
Interviewer: "And your ed assistants are as trained as you are in emergencies [?]" Participant: "Yes."	Confidence in colleagues
"I don't know what other training I would need, but I do know that I could ask *anyone* in the hallway as we're heading out."	Comfortable seeking help Confidence in colleagues
"If it was an evacuation, 'where are we going?', if I didn't know ahead of time. That's something I should look into. Do we have that written somewhere that I'm not aware of?"	Concern with evacuation procedures
"You're always with other people, so the nice thing is you always have other adults in your room, so you are not alone, which it is in a typical classroom."	Confidence in colleagues Helping students with disabilities
-Referring to a previous school- "I had deaf students, and on what you've asked me, it's very difficult with the deaf students because the school was set up with…the fire alarms that you hear, but we also had to have lights because they only identify what they see, so *those* students tend to panic."	Concern with student behaviour Vulnerable students/students with disabilities
-Referring to deaf students in previous school- "It's really hard to get them out of the building because you keep trying to get their attention."	Concern with students with disabilities
-Referring to deaf students- "That's more of a panic from my point of view because if I can't just grab hold of you and take you, which I don't want to do, because if I just grab you and take you, I can't sign and tell you where I'm taking you. So it's a lot more – you go into a completely different mode of how you're going to safely and calmly get them out, and not be afraid, and all of that."	Concern Vulnerable students/students with disabilities
"But it's very different because it's so *visual* and you see the whole school moving on mass. It's funny because all the hearing kids are, you know, chatting, walking through with their friends, and these kids are just – they aren't even signing with each other. They're just like, in panic mode, deer in the headlights, looking around trying to take it all in and trying to figure out what their role is in all of it. So, it's an interesting situation to be in."	Concern with student behaviour Vulnerable students/students with disabilities

"[Kids] do better if they know all the information and are knowledgeable too."	Educating students
"Around the teacher phones, we had that information. If someone calls with a threat – with a bomb threat, we had to have all of our steps laid out there."	Protocols
"The schools now are really diligent about all of these threats that we could have. I think even more so those of us that are closest to the subway system."	Confidence in superiors School location

Initial Coding Framework for Interview 4	
Interview Transcript	**Coding**
-Referring to an emergency- "I think about that a lot."	"What if?"
"In case something happens…the board is very clear aware about what these situations are supposed to look like."	Confidence in superiors
"'Oh. If they react to this, how are they going to react in [a real] emergency and how am I going to deal with it', so it is something that comes up fairly often."	Concern with student behaviour
"I think it's definitely more of a risk with students with disabilities, or um, younger students. I think that kindergarteners is a worry because they, you know, would be prone, in a lockdown they would be probably be more likely to start crying"	Concern Vulnerable students/students with disabilities Concern with student behaviour
"In kindergarten class where I've seen, there was a specific room they would for into for their lockdown, as oppose[d] to the older kids where they would stay in their room. So there was a room off the kindergarten room, it was a storage area, so they go in there…and that gives them an extra sort of buffer between them and the outside in case"	Problem solving/adaptation Utilizing existing infrastructure
"Students with you know, another, any problems, you know, ones that display fear or outbursts, that's going to be a bigger worry, but the teachers looking after them are also trained in those situations so, if there are students with special needs, the teachers are very used to those special needs, so are better equipped to handle those situations as well."	Concern/worry with student behaviour Confidence in colleagues
-Referring to any additional training – "I think probably more talk about um, lockdowns and situations where there are intruders or the possibility of intruders just because that is so much more of a serious issue I think"	Concern with lockdown Unpredictability/uncertainty Gap in planning/preparedness Student and staff safety

"With lockdowns that's something that very few of us have experienced so panic might creep in to a few people or whatever so just more discussions about what to do and what, how you're going to feel…that would be more helpful I think."	Concern with lockdown Unpredictability/uncertainty Gap in planning/preparedness Student and staff safety