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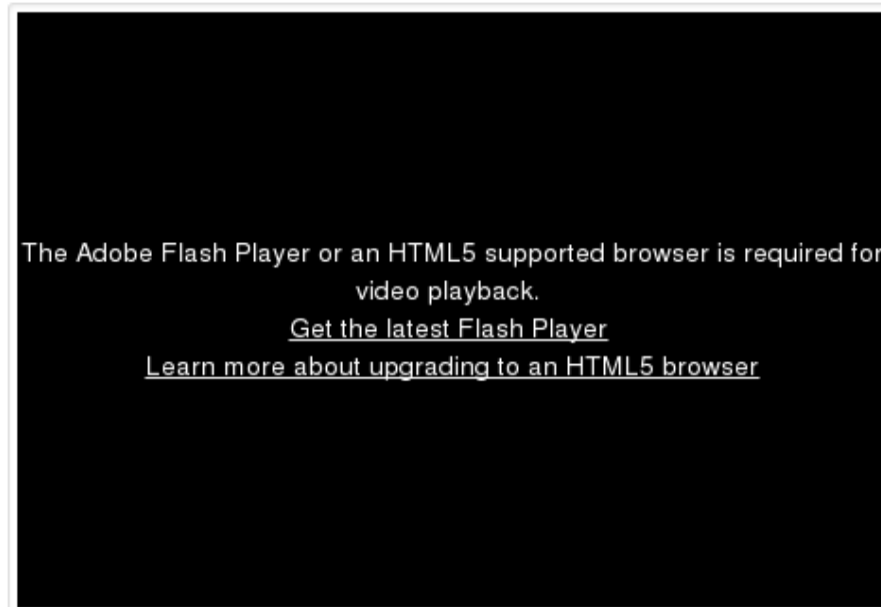
District 220 Pilots New Emergency Management App

Groundbreaking software stores school district's vital safety and emergency procedures in a user-friendly app for smart phones and tablets.

Posted by [Angela Sykora](#) (Editor) , November 21, 2013 at 05:46 PM

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Barrington District 220 Chief Communications Officer Jeff Arnett said he'll never forget May 21, 1998, the day 15-year-old Kip Kinkel went on a shooting spree at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon, killing two students and wounding dozens more.

About a half-hour after learning of the tragedy, Arnett's pager went off, alerting him that a student in the Missouri school district where he was working had brought a loaded gun to the high school with plans to open fire on students and staff. Fortunately, the plot was foiled when the student showed the gun to a classmate, who then told a teacher.

"It was nearly an hour before we had all the facts. It was evident we needed a simpler, more efficient crisis communication plan," said Arnett.

Gone are the days of relying on a 3-ring binder to reference a school district's crisis plan.

Pilot program

Since the beginning of the school year, District 220 has been piloting a new app for smart phones and tablets, created by Marion-based crisis management software company [CrisisGo](#), that puts instant emergency management tools in the hands of school staff and first responders.

When a school experiences an emergency situation like hazardous weather, a fire, bomb threat or violence, the CrisisGo app connects and equips responders with all the necessary information they need to communicate effectively and bring the situation under control, as quickly as possible.

The app is so impressive, the [Illinois Association of School Administrators](#) (IASA) is teaming up with CrisisGo to spread the word to school districts.

Every year, the IASA is presented with hundreds of suggested products, said executive director Brent Clark. Few are deemed worthy of implementation.

The CrisisGo app, said Clark, "was one of those products you always dreamed about and wondered if existed."

This week, representatives from area school districts attended a seminar at Barrington High School to [learn about the app and how it works](#).

"In an emergency situation the one thing people are likely to grab is their cell phone," said CrisisGo President and CEO Jim Spicuzza. "It just makes sense to utilize the portability and availability of Smart phones as a tool for emergency management."

- What can the app do?**
- Alert district staff and crisis teams when there is an emergency.
 - Quickly read and execute a checklist of what to do, whether the crisis is a shooter, disaster or something less serious.
 - Instantly view maps showing building evacuation routes.
 - Access every phone number needed - emergency management officials, utilities, etc.
 - Track all students in each class with an up-to-date roster.
 - Send live streaming video of the crisis situation to responders.

The cost of the app is \$1 per student, per year, with a one-time implementation fee of \$1,000 and a one-time integration fee of \$1,000. Spicuzza said emergency management information can be downloaded to the app in a matter of days. The stored information can be accessed online and offline.

All administrators and safety team members in District 220 have the app. Teachers will be next to get it. The district is also planning extensive drills using the app this spring, said Arnett.

What do you think of this new app? Share your thoughts in the comments.

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