

# DO'S & DON'TS OF A SCHOOL LOCKDOWN: FOR PARENTS – 7 STEPS TO SAFETY

When a child attends school they are versed in basic classroom rules and the do's and don'ts of classroom safety. But, in today's world, there is a little more to classroom safety than knowing where the fire extinguisher is. Chances are, they are also told how to behave during a lockdown and the proper emergency lockdown procedures. But, do you as a parent know what to do and, more importantly, what NOT to do to keep your child safe?

## Don't Contact Your Child

With the wide use of cell phones, getting in touch with your child at school is probably a snap. But whether by call or text, and despite your instinct, it's best NOT to try to get in touch with your child during school lockdowns. Exchanging information with them, especially information that is incomplete or wrong, could make matters worse or cause unnecessary worry. Your school should have policies in place that will keep you up to date on the situation and it is best to abide by those policies.

## Don't Go to the School

If a school is on lockdown, there is a reason. It may involve an unsafe environment surrounding the school. For your safety, the safety of your child, and the well-being of all involved, it's best to steer clear until you get the okay from the school.

## Don't Call the School

School staff will most likely be unable to answer phones and the lines must remain clear to contact emergency personnel.

## Don't Panic

This is probably the most important thing to remember. Of course when we hear about a school going into lockdown we assume the worst, another school shooting. But, there are many reasons that a school could go on lockdown and many of those may not directly involve the school. Remain calm for both yourself and your child.

## Do Prepare Your Child

It's not fun to imagine scary scenarios, and we certainly don't want to scare our kids more than the world already can, but it is still important to prepare them for a lockdown situation. Explain how they will be expected to behave, warn them they may not be able to talk to you right away, and stress that they should listen to their teachers and those in uniforms who are there to help.

## Do Have Your ID With You

When picking your child up, once the all clear has been given, make sure you have the proper ID. Even if you are well-known to the staff, there may be other officials involved in the situation and you should be prepared to prove your child belongs with you.

## Do Be Aware of Your School's Lockdown Policies

What are their lockdown policies? What safety measures do they have in place? Make sure you know what is expected of you and your child before a lockdown occurs and that you are comfortable with the precautions your child's school provides. Following the rules and policies of school lockdowns is vital to providing a safe environment for your child.