

Introducing Tabletop Exercises

A New Resource to Help CSDSIP Members Prepare for the Unexpected

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CSDSIP is happy to announce the addition of a new resource for our Members! [CSDSIP Tabletop Exercises](#) are designed to test your team's emergency response skills by presenting you and your team with a realistic scenario to work through together. When completed regularly, these exercises can help improve your teams critical thinking, coordination abilities, and confidence responding to urgent events. Proper use is the key to the effectiveness of any tool, so we've created a step-by-step guide to help you get the most out of our Tabletop Exercise Series.



If you have questions about how to work through a Tabletop Exercise, [CSDSIP's Risk Control Team](#) would be happy to help!

Steps for a Successful Session:

1. Gather your Team

Bring your emergency response team together in one room (be it virtual or physical). This should include both the planners, such as a school principal or Superintendent, and those first on the scene. However, beware of casting your net too wide as large groups can limit the contributions of individual stakeholders. If you are presenting this tool to an audience of 10 or more, have them complete the activity in smaller groups to promote robust discussion.

2. Review the Scenario & Critical Thinking Questions

Make sure all participants understand the scenario and the details of the simulated emergency event. When you move onto the Critical Thinking Questions, allow participants plenty of time to formulate and share their responses. Though this is a test of emergency preparedness, allowing your team ample time for thought could increase the quality of their responses. Have someone note group responses/decisions to compare against recommendations later.

3. Review CSDSIP Recommendations for Incident Response

After you have decided on your group response, review CSDSIP's recommendations. If any of your responses differ greatly from the recommendation, consider why. Does your group's response speak to specific conditions that the recommendation did not take into account? Did the recommendation bring up something your group did not consider? Feel free to update your responses if need be.

4. Evaluate your Conclusions and Next Steps

Take a step back and think about what you learned from this exercise and how it could impact your larger emergency preparedness plans. Review the additional resources included and update your emergency preparedness plan. Remember, having an effective plan in place with trained staff can drastically improve the outcome of a real emergency, and your participation in this activity shows your commitment to community safety. If these scenarios bring up further questions and you require further guidance, please do not hesitate to contact [CSDSIP's Risk Control Team](#)!

Interested in trying Tabletop Exercises yourself? [Check them out here!](#)