# Pre-K to 5th: Developmental Considerations Associated with School Safety Drills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Levels</th>
<th>What individuals at this developmental level typically know and understand about school associated dangers</th>
<th>What individuals at this developmental level are typically able to do in response to school associated dangers</th>
<th>Appropriate school safety explanations, procedures, activities, and/or drills for this developmental level</th>
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</table>
| Preschool–Kindergarten Students | - Demonstrate basic understanding of “danger.”  
- Require adult guidance to determine what is, and is not, dangerous.  
- Have difficulty distinguishing probable dangers from all possible dangers, and between reality and fantasy.  
- Understand: “Get-Out” or evacuate; “Hide” or stay out of sight with lights off; “Keep-Out” (i.e., that adults will lock and barricade classroom doors and keep students safe). | - Dependent on adult management and direction during emergencies.  
- Able to follow basic safety directions (e.g., “Get-Out” or evacuate; and “Hide” or stay out of sight with lights off). | - Explain that adults at school work hard to keep school safe.  
- Offer concrete examples of common dangers that adults address (e.g., a stray dog on campus and not knowing if it is a good or sick dog).  
- Use the word safety when describing/conducting drills (e.g., use “Get-Out Safety Drill” to describe an evacuation).  
- Practice following atypical adult directions associated with elements of safety drills (e.g., during art, ask students to quickly line up at the door).  
- Conduct “Get Out” and “Hide” safety drills. |
| Early Elementary Students | - Demonstrate evolving understanding of “danger.”  
- Require some adult guidance to determine what is, and is not, dangerous.  
- Have difficulty distinguishing probable dangers from all possible dangers, and may have difficulty distinguishing between reality and fantasy.  
- Able to follow basic safety directions.  
- Can provide assistance with simple safety tasks in an emergency (e.g., following adult direction to turn off lights, close blinds). | - Explain that teachers and school staff members always work to keep school safe.  
- Offer concrete examples of common dangers that adults address.  
- Use the word safety when describing drills.  
- Practice following atypical adult directions associated with elements of safety drills.  
- Conduct “Get Out” (evacuations) and “Hide” (lockdown) safety drills. |
| Upper Elementary Students | - Require limited adult guidance to determine what is, and is not, dangerous.  
- May have some difficulty distinguishing probable dangers from all possible dangers.  
- Capable of understanding why school safety drills are conducted.  
- Understand all safety directions and instructions. | - Need adult direction during emergencies.  
- Able to follow all safety directions and instructions.  
- Can assist with many safety tasks during an emergency (e.g., following adult direction to turn off lights, closing blinds and doors, moving furniture, barricading doors, calling 911). | - Explain that teachers and school staff members always work to keep school safe.  
- Offer examples of common dangers that adults address.  
- Teach the difference between possible dangers and common dangers.  
- Use the word safety when describing/conducting drills.  
- Conduct “Get Out” (evacuation) “Hide” (lockdown), and “Keep-out” (barricade) safety drills. |
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<thead>
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<th>Developmental Levels of Safety Awareness</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Early</strong> PreK-Kindergarten</td>
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<td>- Demonstrates a general understanding of danger.</td>
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<td>- Heavily or completely reliant upon adult direction and management during an emergency.</td>
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<td>- Capable of practicing basic safety options such as “Get Out” (Evacuate) and “Hide” (stay out of sight, lights off, remain quiet).</td>
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<td>- Capable of understanding the concept of “Keep Out” (whereby an adult will lock and barricade classroom entries to “keep out” danger).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Developing Early Elementary</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Demonstrates the characteristics of Early Awareness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capable of providing basic assistance in an emergency (turning off classroom lights, retrieving the first aid kit, or closing blinds at the command of an adult).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Practiced Upper Elementary</strong></td>
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<td>- Demonstrates the characteristics of Developing Awareness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capable of assisting an adult in emergency actions such as closing a door, moving furniture, helping to barricade an entry, or calling 911 at the command of an adult.</td>
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