



# Lockdown with Options: Elementary School Student Discussion Guide

Eastern Carver County Schools is changing our lockdown practice and moving to a new protocol called Lockdown with Options. Those options are hide, run, and counter. Our current practice is to hide in place, and multiple agencies agree this is now obsolete. Students and staff need to be empowered with options if the school faces a serious safety threat. A lockdown is initiated when there is a threat in or around a school building. A “lockdown with warning” would be called in a low-level situation like a police action in a neighborhood near school. “Lockdown with options” responds to a crisis like a dangerous intruder. Because the safety of everyone in our schools is our first priority, the district is committed to learning from past crises, research and best practice recommendations.

Lockdown with Options includes the basic instincts of self-defense: hide, run, and counter. To learn more about Lockdown with Options, watch our Lockdown with Options video at: [eccs.mn/lockdown](https://eccs.mn/lockdown). We have provided this discussion guide for parents to continue the conversation about safety and lockdown drills with their child at home.

**If a child asks why we do lockdown drills, explain that it is important to practice being safe.** We practice all kinds of safety like fire drills and safety rules for the bus and playground. This is another safety drill that we need to practice. If you practice, you will know exactly what to do to stay safe if there is a real lockdown.

**If a child has fear of lockdown drills, explain that even though we hear about crises like these on the news, most schools never experience a violent intruder.** Ask them to tell you how they feel. Reaffirm their feelings of fear and anxiety and let them know that those feelings are normal for anyone in a crisis and that they should practice taking deep breaths to stay calm so that they can think and act quickly in the event of a real lockdown. **Reassure your child that school is the safest place for him or her. School is filled with adults responsible for each student’s safety.**

**If a child is not sure what to do to defend themselves in the event of a lockdown, give them an example of safety you’ve practiced with them.** For example: “We do a lot of things to stay safe every day. You wear your helmet when you ride your bike, not because you expect to fall, but just in case. We wear seat belts in the car, just in case. We don’t expect bad things to happen, but we do things just in case. The more you practice anything, like drawing or riding your bike, the better you get at it. Remember when we practiced stopping and looking both ways before crossing the street? You do that automatically now, but when you were younger, you’d almost step into the street without looking and I’d have to yell “Stop!” because you hadn’t practiced looking both ways. Now, your brain that tells you to stop and look before stepping into the street. You practiced and now it’s automatic. This keeps you safe. So, your school wants you to practice being safe even though you probably won’t need it.”

**Reassure your child that we have things under control.** Letting them know they have options in an emergency gives them a sense of control.

## **Some key questions to ask your child:**

### **What things you do to stay safe?**

Look both ways before crossing the street and wear a helmet when riding a bike

### **What are things you do to practice safety at school?**

Fire drills, lockdown drills and tornado drills

### **How do you know if someone is supposed to be in your school?**

They have a school badge or a volunteer badge

### **How do you know if someone is not supposed to be in your school?**

The person is acting strange, is trying to hurt people, or has a weapon

### **What should you do if you see someone who looks like they aren't supposed to be in your school?**

Tell a teacher, tell the front office, tell a custodian – tell an adult

### **Who do you listen to in a situation with an intruder?**

Teacher or a safe adult

### **What if there is no safe adult around?**

If you can't find a safe adult, run to or hide in a safe place

### **What do you do if there is an intruder in your school?**

Hide, run, or counter

### **What would it look like for you to hide?**

Find a place that is safe where the intruder can't see you

### **What should you do once you find your hiding spot?**

Stay quiet once you are hidden, breathe and stay calm, and do not leave your safe area until a teacher or another safe adult tells you to do so or unless the intruder finds you and you must run

### **What would it look like for you to run from an intruder?**

Get away from the intruder and go to a safe place