



UNITED SIKHS - COMMUNITY SAFETY TOOLKIT

In light of the recent event in Milwaukee, UNITED SIKHS would like to offer our assistance to you in hopes to better prepare the community for emergency situations. We would like to offer precautionary and preventive self defense trainings to members of the gurdwara sangat and the community were you to accept our assistance. The trainings are designed to help members of the community who might face situations similar the Wisconsin tragedy on August 5, 2012. This training can prove to be very beneficial for each individual to act in self-defense and for the community as a whole. We welcome everyone to participate.

Threat prevention suggestions:

It is advised to increase awareness about Sikhism in your surrounding communities. Some ways to do this is to involve them into your activities as well as get involved in various town, school and state activities. Be a part of the community you live and worship in.

- Organize tours of the gurdwara
- Host joint learning activities for Sikhs and non-sikhs alike
- Create a volunteer group responsible for Community outreach

Taking Precaution:

- Be wary of any unusual or suspicious persons, packages, or activity.
- Designate safe zones within the gurdwara and nearby for people to move to in case of an emergency.
- Communicate and educate your community of the emergency exits, evacuation plans and designated safe zones.
- Consider investing in security cameras, exterior lighting, or a burglary alarm system.
- Request additional patrols be done in the vicinity of the gurdwara by police, especially when it is busy.
- Replace hollow core doors with more solid doors.
- Build strong relationships and open communication with your local law enforcement and other officials.
- Ask the local police departments community relations officer to give suggestions on further security.

In case of an emergency:

1. Assess the Situation:
 - a. Stay Calm!
 - i. This will allow you to figure out what is happening, the threat level and the proximity of the perpetrator(s).
 - b. Get out!
 - i. Can you safely escape?

- ii. Do NOT try to gather belongings. Although you may be tempted to grab your purse/bag, car keys, cell phone, etc. It may be wasting valuable time.
 - c. Hideout!
 - i. Is there a good place to hide? Will it protect you against gunshots? (Brick walls, large trees, retaining walls, parked vehicles or any other object that may stop bullet penetration)
 - ii. Is it a safe place in case you have to stay hidden for an extended period of time?
 - iii. Spread out and do not huddle up or all stand hide in one area. Groups are an easy target and it can make escape very difficult.
 - iv. Try to keep everyone calm, in order to not alert the perpetrator(s) to their location.
 - v. If you are in a room, secure it after sheltering as many people as time and space allows. If you are in the hallway, rush into the nearest room, try not to barricade yourself in a bathroom. Keep everyone away from windows and doors, barricade them if possible.
- 2. If Outside when Shooting Occurs:
 - a. Drop to the ground immediately, face down as flat as possible. If within 15-20 feet of a safe place or cover, duck and run to it.
 - b. Move or crawl away from gunfire, trying to utilize any obstructions between you and the gunfire. Remember that many objects of cover may conceal you from sight, but may not be bulletproof.
 - c. When you reach a place of relative safety, stay down and do not move. Do not peek or raise your head in an effort to see what may be happening.
 - d. Wait and listen for directions from Public Safety and/law enforcement personnel.
- 3. Call for Help!
 - a. Do NOT assume someone else must have done it already. Be proactive!
 - b. If you are outside and you hear gunshots inside the building, call 911 immediately and keep them informed of the situation.
 - c. Be calm in providing the police with the information they need. It will make the help they provide be more efficient. Common information to know:
 - i. Provide location of incident: building name, floor level, room number
 - ii. Describe briefly what is happening (i.e. man or woman with a gun shooting)
 - iii. Provide your name and phone number
 - iv. Provide suspect physical description
 - v. Give weapon description
- 4. If trapped:
 - a. Try to call for help. If you cannot speak, leave the phone line open so the police can hear what is going on.
 - b. Make a collective plan for survival (when possible).
 - c. If you are trapped with the perpetrator and he/she isn't physically harming you, do as they says. Do not do anything to provoke them. Do what they say and do not make any sudden moves.
 - d. If he/she is shooting or begins to shoot, run in zig-zags away from him or attack back (whichever you feel would be most efficient given the circumstance).
 - i. Attempting to overcome the suspect with force is a last resort that should only be considered in the most extreme circumstances. Only you can decide if this is something you should do.

Safety Checklist

- Evacuation Plan
- Designated Safety Zones
- Make sure unused doors stay locked
- Ensure compliance with all fire & safety requirements for the building
- Have a plan to contain the perpetrator(s) in one area to minimize casualties

What to do in case of a threatening call:

- Take note of the calling number if possible.
- Ask the nearest person to call 911 and inform them of the situation. This can simply be done by writing "call 911" on a nearby piece of paper or even mouthing the words quietly.
- Try to stall the caller as long as possible so an accurate trace can be made on the call. Try to ask the caller as many questions as possible, keep a list of questions near the phone as well as these instructions.
- Write down as accurate a description of the call as possible, including the exact time of the call.

When Encountering Suspect Letters and Packages:

1. What to look for to identify a suspect letter or package:
 - a. Name and title of addressee are not accurate.
 - b. No return address, or the sender is not known to the addressee.
 - c. Handwriting is distorted.
 - d. Unprofessionally wrapped, uneven, bulky, lopsided.
 - e. Contains bulges or soft spots.
 - f. Poorly wrapped package is marked "Fragile-Handle With Care," "Rush," or has unusual restrictions such as "Personal" or "Private."
 - g. Excess amount of postage.
 - h. Protruding wires or tin foil.
 - i. Package makes a buzzing/ticking or unusual noise, a sloshing sound, or emits an odor.
2. DO's & DON'T's:
 - a. DON'T open the package or letter.
 - b. DON'T put it in water or in a confined space such as a drawer.
 - c. DO isolate the article and secure the immediate area.
 - d. DO open windows if possible to help vent potential explosive gases.
 - e. DO contact your local police department and Postal Inspector.

Plan, Communicate and Assist ! Hold a community meeting to inform everyone of these guidelines.

To speak to a UNITED SIKHS representative directly, please visit <http://unitedsikhs.org/contact.php> to find an office near you.



OUR MISSION

To transform underprivileged and minority communities and individuals into informed and vibrant members of society through civic, educational and personal development programs, by fostering active participation in social and economic activity.

UNITED SIKHS is also an avenue for networking between like-minded organisations to establish and nurture meaningful projects and dialogues - whether social, cultural or political- to promote harmony, understanding and reciprocity in our villages, towns and cities.

UNITED SIKHS is a coalition of organisations and individuals, who share a common vision based on the belief that there is no greater endeavour than to serve, empower and uplift fellow beings. The core of our philosophy is an unwavering commitment to civic service and social progress on behalf of the common good.

Accordingly, UNITED SIKHS has sought to fulfil its mission not only by informing, educating and uplifting fellow beings but also by participating in cross-cultural and political exchanges to ensure that the promised and benefits of democracy are realized by all.

UNITED SIKHS believe that the development of enlightened and progressive societies can be made possible by socially conscious groups of people who make a commitment to develop and direct human potential. Our work, efforts and achievements stand as a testament to our faith in this vision.