



Enhancing School Safety

Premier Body Armor's First Aid School Shield

Summary

Premier Body Armor introduces the First Aid School Shield, an innovative solution for enhancing school safety. This whitepaper outlines the product's significance, supported by insights from educators and law enforcement, and data on school shootings, underscoring its role in protecting students and staff.

Introduction

School shootings are an unfortunate reality, necessitating proactive measures to ensure the safety of students and staff. Premier Body Armor's First Aid School Shield, equipped with built-in bleed control kits, provides a comprehensive solution designed to protect and save lives in emergencies.

Problem Statement

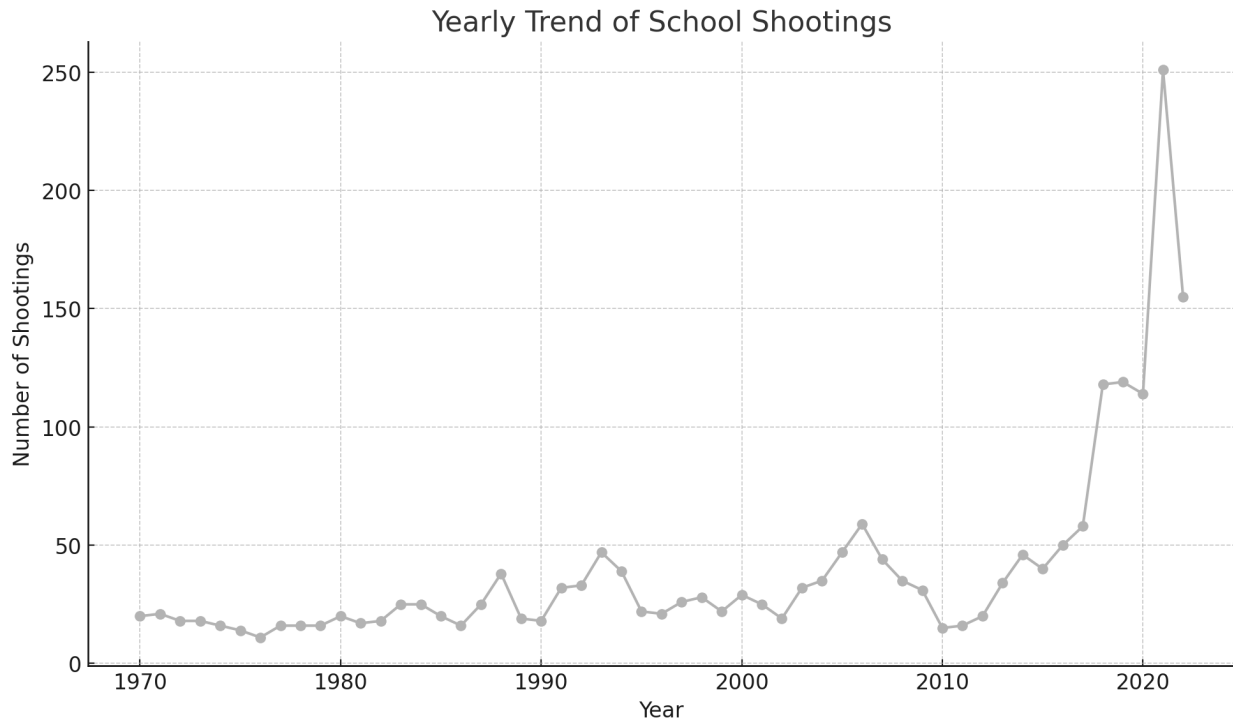
The prevalence of school shootings in the United States underscores the urgent need for effective safety measures. Data from the K-12 School Shooting Database (1970-2022) reveals::

- Handguns are the most commonly used weapon, involved in 1,404 incidents.
- Rifles, used in approximately 5.17% of shootings, pose a significant threat due to their high lethality.
- A total of 1,968 incidents have been recorded, highlighting the critical need for preparedness and protection.
- School shooting events have seen a significant upward trend since 2015.

Trends in School Shootings

Data from 1970 to 2022 reveals several significant trends:

- **1970s to 1980s:** School shootings remained relatively steady, with 11 to 25 incidents per year.
- **Late 1980s:** Noticeable uptick in events starting in 1988 with 38 incidents.
- **2000s:** Some fluctuation, with an increase in the mid-2000s, peaking at 59 incidents in 2006.
- **2010s:** A steady increase is observed, with a significant spike starting in 2018.
- **2018 and 2021:** Dramatic increases, with 118 incidents in 2018 and a peak of 251 incidents in 2021.



Initial Inspiration and Motivation

Multiple Premier Body Armor employees, including members of the executive team, are former teachers. The transition from education to body armor was driven by a recognized need for increased personal protection for individual teachers and students. As parents, members of the leadership team saw the importance of body armor for students (in backpacks) and training on stop-the-bleed techniques. The combined experiences directly influenced the design and features of the First Aid School Shield.

Influences on Design

The First Aid School Shield was designed based on data from the K-12 School Shooting Database to stop rounds commonly used in school shootings.. Utilizing Ultra-High-Molecular-Weight-Polyethylene (UHMWPE), the NIJ Level III+ shield remains lightweight (around 10 lbs), making it easy for any teacher to handle. The bleed control kits were designed to be easy and intuitive, using the X-Force zip tie-like tourniquet.c

Key Features

Premier Body Armor designed the shield to blend seamlessly into the school environment, avoiding any standout appearance. Each shield is customized to the school's colors and



mascot. Including bleed control kits directly on the shield provides a logical and easy-to-transport safety solution. Importantly, the shield is 100% made in the USA.

Additional features include:

- Durable 600D Cordura carrier
- Easy-hold, ambidextrous handles
- Size: 16"x20"
- Waterproof, polyurea coating
- Variety of color choices and free school logo

Development Process and Challenges

Consultation with teachers and school leaders was crucial. Initially, the design featured an integrated handle similar to the Premier Body Armor Home Shield, giving it a more tactical feel. However, discussions among Premier's former educators and current teachers highlighted the need for a more "kid-friendly" and universal design. Transitioning to a Cordura carrier allowed the shield to be covered in school colors, making it not only less intimidating but more practical for use and classroom storage. Adding the bleed control kits was a natural progression, ensuring the First Aid Shield provided both prevention and mitigation during emergencies.. This collaborative approach ensured the product met the real-world needs of schools.

Ensuring User-Friendliness and Effectiveness

Premier Body Armor collaborated with EMTs and a trauma surgeon to ensure the bleed control kits were user-friendly and effective. The team carefully selected the kit's components and filmed a video tutorial accessible via a QR code on each package.

Training and Support

Premier Body Armor offers extensive training and support for schools implementing the shield. In addition to the video training on the bleed control kit, face-to-face training is provided for nearby schools like Community Charter School. For schools farther away, video resources are available, or a trainer can be flown in at the school's expense.



Pilot Project Success: Community Charter School

Summary: Community Charter School successfully implemented Premier Body Armor's First Aid School Shield. Initially met with skepticism, thorough training alleviated concerns, making the shield a welcomed addition to the school's safety measures. Stakeholders, including the executive director, teachers, and the school resource officer, praised the shield's effectiveness and user-friendliness.

Monica Dellinger, Executive Director, Community Charter School "Last summer, I attended the North Carolina Department of Instruction School Safety Conference in Gastonia. There, we were introduced to Premier Body Armor and its safety shield, which is usable by all teachers regardless of size, height, or weight. It provides a way to protect students in a lockdown situation and potentially prevent mass casualties."

"Initially, our teachers were unsure about the shields. However, after training, they understood its use and preventative measures. Their worries disappeared once they knew how to use it. The hands-on training with Premier has been invaluable."

"Despite initial fear, the school's safety measures made them feel safe."

"I have two children who experienced a school situation involving a student with a gun. Despite the fear and knee-jerk reaction to take them out of school, my kids felt safe because of the school's measures. This reinforced the importance of intentionality in making students and parents feel safe."

"Parents are aware we have added safety measures, although we haven't shared specific details. Our safety committee, which includes parents, has seen the product and supports it. The shields, especially with the included tourniquet, have been well-received. The tourniquet's ratchet system is easy to use and effective in emergencies. The hands-on training with Premier has been invaluable."

Maria Campbell, Teacher, Community Charter School "My initial impression of the school shield was, 'What in the world? Why are we doing this? We are in small-town USA.' But I had to stop and think this is our reality now. If I'm going to continue to educate, I need to be ready for anything that might stop me from educating these children. If the shield can help me continue to teach, then why not learn how to use it?"

"The shield is not intimidating... it's another tool to help protect the children."



"The shield is not an intimidating object; it's not a huge, bright orange thing. I like the clean lines and style. It's something I can tell the children is another tool to help protect them if needed. It's not intimidating, and it can be hung anywhere, readily available when needed."

Deputy Justin Robinson, School Resource Officer "The shields weigh about 10 pounds, making them lightweight enough for even smaller teachers to handle. The staff bleed kits on the back are a big relief to me because, in an active shooter situation, I can focus on the threat while the teachers have the tools and training to start addressing injuries."

"They don't have to watch something bad happen; they have the tools to address it."

"Psychologically, having something straightforward and easy to use relieves stress for the teachers. They don't have to just watch something bad happen; they have the tools to address it."

Conclusion

The First Aid School Shield by Premier Body Armor is a significant advancement in school safety. Combining cutting-edge materials, thoughtful design, and comprehensive training, it offers a practical and effective solution to protect students and staff during emergencies. Its successful implementation at Community Charter School demonstrates the shield's effectiveness and the peace of mind it brings to educators, students, and parents. As school safety remains a critical issue, implementing innovative measures is essential to ensure a safe learning environment.