RAVE
MOBILE SAFETY

School Safety and Security in Seminole County, FL

SEMINOLE COUNTY
FLORIDA'S NATURAL CHOICE

STATE & LOCAL

Rave Panic Button™

67,000 Students
8,000 Faculty
62 K-12 Public Schools

BENEFITS

Reduces emergency response times and saves lives

Enables instant communication in non-urgent situations

Seminole County is situated to the north of Orlando in Florida and has a population of 450,000, of which 67,000 are students and a further 8,000 are employed in the county's 62 K-12 public schools.

Up until 2015, school safety and security was managed by the Seminole County Public Schools District. Following the retirement of the former School Safety and Security Manager, the role was passed to the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, where Captain Rick Francis was handed responsibility.

Captain Francis initiated a program in which a trained School Resource Officer (SRO) or Deputy (SRD) was assigned to each school. The SRO/SRD had the responsibility of conducting threat risk assessments and identifying the measures necessary to mitigate risk.

"The time Rave Panic Button has saved over the last few years is priceless."

CAPTAIN RICK FRANCIS,
SCHOOL SAFETY DIRECTOR
SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

At the same time, Captain Francis was evaluating technologies that could best support existing resources and accelerate emergency responses. He selected the Mutualink multimedia interoperability solution and Rave Panic Button due to their abilities to quickly achieve and sustain situational awareness.

Having now used the combined Mutualink and Rave Panic Button solution for a couple of years to build a day-to-day operational communication system for all 62 schools and better prepare for active shooters and other safety threats and hazards, Captain Francis describes the time the Rave Panic Button saves as "priceless."–

THE CHALLENGE

On assuming the role of School Safety and Security Director at Seminole County Sheriff's Office, Captain Francis reviewed the existing school safety and security procedures. He found a series of low-cost initiatives that were applied with a broadstroke approach - for example, an emergency at a high school was managed in the same way as an emergency at an elementary school. Captain Francis felt this approach could be improved to better serve the very unique environments.

He also found that only school principals had the authority to initiate a lockdown or evacuation. This bottleneck created a situation that wasted valuable time in an emergency. Existing onsite security personnel were assigned discipline-enforcement roles rather than security-awareness roles, and there was a lack of coordination between school administration and law enforcement.

THE SOLUTION

With the unwavering support of the Sheriff's Office, Superintendent and School Board, Captain Francis implemented a series of measures to address the shortcomings in school safety and security. School Resource Officers (SROs) and Deputies (SRDs) were located in each of the county's sixty-two schools and trained with security awareness as their top priority. They were also tasked with conducting threat assessments.
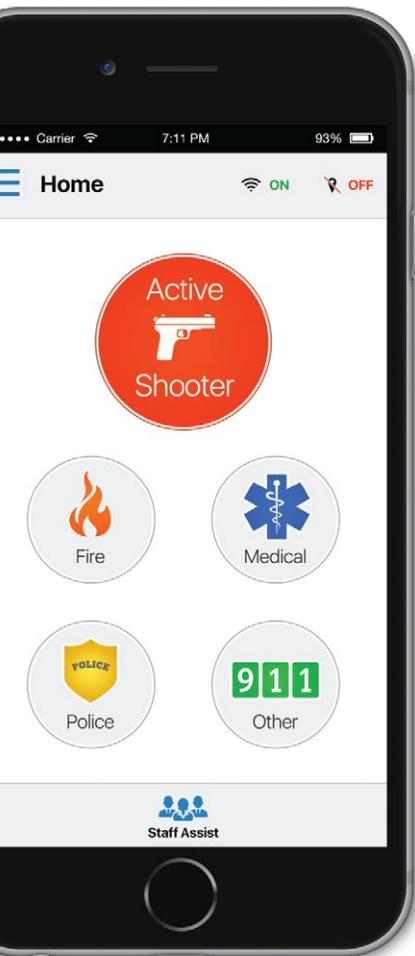
He also found that only school principals had the authority to initiate a lockdown, an evacuation or call 9-1-1. This bottleneck created a situation that wasted valuable time in an emergency.

From day one in his role, Captain Francis had also wanted to implement technology to support existing resources and accelerate emergency responses. After a lengthy evaluation process, he selected a combined solution of Mutualink and Rave Panic Button. According to Captain Francis, Rave Panic Button was selected due to its user-friendly platform, immediate notification capabilities, and the way in which it connected 9-1-1, law enforcement and end users and has built-in safety features to prevent accidental activations.

THE RESULT

The Rave Panic Button was quickly deployed to faculty staff in the county's schools and School Response Plans were developed for all situations. The plans were tested in announced and unannounced emergency drills. Due to faculty staff knowing how to react in an emergency situation, a subsequent "real-world" lockdown incident was managed seamlessly with the Rave Panic Button, resulting in the incident being resolved quickly and without injury.

To better prepare first responders for an incident, schools buildings are geo-fenced and floor plans loaded onto Rave Panic Button's incident management dashboards accessible by PSAP personnel. With this information, first responders know exactly where an incident is taking place on a school campus, thus preventing delays in responding to an emergency. The time saved by Rave Panic Button is not only "priceless," it can save the lives of Seminole County students.

Captain Francis also reports faculty staff use the Staff Assist function of the Rave Panic Button on a daily basis for instant communication in non-urgent situations. Becoming familiar with the Rave Panic Button app eliminates hesitation when an emergency occurs and alerts his emergency management team quicker to an incident, facilitating the likelihood of a positive outcome.

ABOUT RAVE PANIC BUTTON

Rave Panic Button provides best-in-class, highly available emergency notification for educational institutions, businesses, and government departments.

Thousands of organizations rely on Rave Panic Button to alert 9-1-1 to emergency situations due to its ease of use, instant notification and accelerated response times.