

Areas of Refuge

Questions

1. As a wheelchair user, what are some things that you need to keep in mind regarding your safety in a large building?
2. How do you evacuate a building if you are not on the ground floor?
3. What is an “area of refuge”?
4. How would you want other people to assist you, if at all, during an emergency evacuation?
5. What would you do if there was an earthquake while you were at school?
6. Are there any special accessibility considerations for lockdown/dangerous intruder situations?
7. Is there anything else you want people to know about accessibility and how it relates to emergency situations?

Responses/Answers:

1. I need to keep in mind that there are lots of people moving around the building, and I need to take my time and get around.
2. I have to wait in the refuge area. And then I have to wait there with an EA until fireman arrive.
3. The area of refuge is a safe place for me to wait. It is located beside the stairwell on the second floor.
4. I am suppose to go to the area of refuge if I am on the second floor. When on ground level, I will make my way to an exit and get out myself. If I needed to get out of the building urgently, and I was on the second level, I would ask other boys for help down the stairs with my wheelchair.
5. I would go under my desk until the announcement says we can move. I do have the ability to get out of my wheelchair.
6. No, everyone just has to hide to any possible corner or hidden space.
7. I feel okay with the plan during an emergency, as the EA will be with me, and I would not be left alone. It’s not a good feeling being left behind, when everyone else gets to evacuate.