

'THIS MUST STOP' - Awareity, CEO, Rick Shaw, Discusses A Solution For The Tragic, Seemingly-Unending, School Shootings

'Pre-Incident Indicators', which are most always available, have resulted in successful life-saving projects in OK, NE, TX, AZ, CT and in other states.

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SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Thank you for joining us today, Rick. One will read on Awareity.com

(<https://www.awareity.com/effective-prevention/>) that "Pre-Incident Prevention is the most effective, most forward-looking solution for improving people's safety, trust, and freedom to go out and about.

Pre-Incident Prevention involves people recognizing and utilizing the Pre-Incident Indicators exhibited by At-Risk individuals so Pre-Incident Intervention actions can be taken before the At-Risk individual(s) escalate and show up ready to execute their plan." We couldn't agree more!



Rick Shaw, Founder & CEO. Awareity / Author: The First Preventers Playbook

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We are honored to speak today with Rick Shaw, Founder and CEO, Awareity, about a solution for the tragic, seemingly-unending, school shootings. We couldn't agree more... "THIS MUST STOP!"

Martin Eli, Publisher

In recent days there were tragic headlines once again regarding shootings at Florida State University (<https://www.cnn.com/2025/04/20/us/gun-fsu-shooting-suspect-mother/index.html>), a Dallas Texas High School (<https://apnews.com/article/dallas-texas-school-shooting-wilmer-hutchins-82cd97f09a5e109bd8f312495ddcec49>), and home invasion at the residence of Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro (<https://www.cnn.com/2025/04/15/us/pennsylvania-governor-josh-shapiro-house-fire/index.html>).

Details are still coming in but what are your thoughts, Rick, regarding pre-incident indicators that

may have been missed in these tragic events?

Rick Shaw: From the early releases of information, each of the attackers and/or evildoers seemingly were known to be at-risk individuals before the attacks.

This was due to exhibiting pre-incident indicators such as red flags, historical and concerning behaviors, and other warning signs. What we do not know at the time of this response, is which silos (students, faculty, family, friends, law enforcement, social media, mental health, city/county agencies, incident reporting options, systems, and other silos) the pre-incident indicators and behaviors were scattered across.

Silos are common recurring problems where pre-incident indicators and other information existed BEFORE the attack but were scattered so the whole story for each at-risk individual was not seen BEFORE the attack and pre-incident prevention actions not taken. When the existing pre-incident indicators are shared after the attack, headlines and leaders say things like they didn't connect the dots and lawsuits point to negligence due to actions that could have been taken if the organization had connected the existing pre-incident indicators in the silos.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Please tell us about your security journey and may we have a brief corporate history about Awareity.

Rick Shaw: My journey started in 6th grade when a girl at my school who was in a special needs class was bullied on the playground and she became so flustered she had a seizure. It was scary



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for her and scary for me and others, so from that point on I stepped in and prevented the others from bullying her. Long story short, she wanted to give me hugs in 6th grade and she has given me a hug at multiple class reunions since then, including last year's reunion. The initial "return on prevention" and now many, many years of "return on prevention" reminds me how important it is to step up and be a First Preventer to keep people safer.

As far as my security journey is concerned, I started an internet security and white hat hacking company in the late 1990s which then evolved into Awareity. The Columbine Massacre in 1999 and 9-11 in 2001 were horrible tragedies and I wanted to understand why these and so many other tragedies were not prevented even though attackers were known due to existing pre-incident indicators they exhibited, sources of pre-incident indicators and other information existed, and resources (organizational and community) to intervene and prevent the tragedies also existed. Since 1999 there have been thousands and thousands of tragedies that were determined to be preventable because information, sources, and resources all existed before the tragedy.

My research since 1999 has focused on understanding the "profile of failed preventions" and creating the missing tools and strategies needed to make schools, organizations, and communities safer for children and adults. Every child and adult deserves better safety in schools, colleges, organizations, and communities and it's my passion to help others understand how pre-incident prevention and First Preventers make everyone safer.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Please give us an overview of Awareity solutions and key target markets.

Rick Shaw: Awareity's solutions are focused on safety, meaning pre-incident prevention before at-risk individuals escalate towards incidents and tragedies.

Awareity's solutions complement security solutions that focus primarily on incident response when the incident has started, meaning the at-risk individual has started their plan of attack and/or shown up at your front door.

To achieve pre-incident prevention, Awareity's solutions equip and empower multidisciplinary resources and team members (TAT, BTAM, WPV, Terrorism, Weapons, Bullying, Suicide, Wellbeing,



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Abuse, Human Trafficking, Mental Health, Law Enforcement, etc.) from schools, colleges, organizations, and their communities to collect, funnel, share, assess, and connect information from hundreds of sources so resources and team members can see the whole story for any/all at-risk individuals. Data and successes reveal when resources are equipped to address hundreds of common silos, barriers, and blind spots, resources and team members are able to take proactive pre-incident actions to help, intervene, disrupt, and prevent escalations and prevent more incidents and tragedies before they occur. While pre-incident prevention efforts sound obvious, post-event reports have revealed for 25+ years that information, sources, and resources almost always existed BEFORE most tragedies, but the information, sources, and resources were scattered across hundreds or more silos and blind spots, so the pre-incident prevention actions did not take place.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Can we talk about suicide for a moment? Unfortunately, suicide continues to be one of the leading causes of death in the United States

(<https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/data.html>) . What is your perspective Rick on how The Butterfly Effect (<https://www.awareity.com/butterfly-effect/>) can help save lives?

Rick Shaw: Yes, suicide deaths have been steadily rising since the year 2000 (except for 2020 and covid) and in 2023 there were over 49,000 suicide deaths in the USA, which is 1 suicide every 11 minutes. Even more horrible and scary are the statistics from the CDC reveal that over 12.8 million people thought about suicide in 2023. In addition, suicide deaths have become the 2nd leading cause of death for individuals between 10 – 24 years old. Multiple suicide focused foundations report that 70% to 80% of people who died by suicide exhibited pre-incident warning signs before they died. Once again, it is vital for pre-incident prevention to help and equip schools, colleges, organizations, and communities to potentially help, intervene, and prevent thousands of deaths and help millions who could be at-risk to suicide.

At Awareity, we have conducted years of research and surveys and learned not only about the dangerous silos I previously mentioned, but also key reasons why people do not report pre-incident warning signs. While most people say snitching or they don't want to get involved are the top reasons, our surveys of thousands of students revealed most did not report the pre-incident warning signs because they had done so in the past and no actions were taken, so they didn't feel it would make a difference. This data and other research led to Awareity's Butterfly Effect, where one small thing could save the life of a friend, colleague, or family member. Accessing the Awareity Butterfly icon is easy so any source of pre-incident indicators and warning signs (which could include hundreds of sources) can simply click on the Butterfly and know their warning signs will be delivered to the right resources and team members. The source can feel confident there is built in accountability and know the right resources and team members can see the indicators and the actions that are being taken (or if no actions are happening) and ongoing support is taking place so at-risk individuals do not fall through the cracks. The Awareity Butterfly Effect is game-changing by saving more lives and preventing more incidents and tragedies before they happen.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Congratulations on the Awareity success story (<https://oklahoma.gov/education/newsroom/2025/march/walters-touts-student-safety-first-initiatives.html>) with the Oklahoma Department of Education! Please tell us more.

Rick Shaw: Oklahoma has emerged as the leader and the epicenter of pre-incident prevention for making schools and communities safer. Tulsa and Oklahoma City school districts were early adopters of the Awareity First Preventers Framework back in 2015 when the First Preventers platform was brand new. Since then, other Oklahoma schools have followed their lead as well as law enforcement and the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). Oklahoma has an initiative called Student Safety First and they are utilizing Awareity's solutions to address state-wide initiatives to address bad actors in schools and ultimately making students and staff safer in their schools.

Oklahoma City Schools and the OKC Police Department are utilizing the Awareity First Preventers Platform to meet another state initiative called "Handle With Care". Together, they are leading the way here too in making it simple and easy for law enforcement to make sure the appropriate school resources are notified when a school aged child is impacted by violence, abuse, drugs or other situations where law enforcement is involved away from school. Law enforcement simply clicks on the Butterfly Effect icon to make their report and the appropriate resources at the school are immediately and automatically made aware so the school resources can help the child deal with any trauma or other concerns related to the incident.

Oklahoma's impressive utilization of visionary tools to simplify siloed and manual processes and centralize information and pre-incident indicators gives the resources and team members in their schools and communities the ability to see the bigger picture with at-risk children and adults. This equips them with the ability to immediately help and intervene while also making sure at-risk children and adults do not fall through the cracks that could lead to more trauma or harm.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Your video here (<https://vimeo.com/254397338>) is very compelling, "Most organizations invest almost their entire budget for safety and security into REACTING" and "Warning signs were almost always observed before an incident happened". Please elaborate, Rick !

Rick Shaw: Yes, you are correct on both. Research and news headlines almost always reveal warning signs and other pre-incident indicators were exhibited before the incidents occurred. Data reveals most organizations have invested a majority of their budget, time, and training in security solutions that detect the beginning of incidents (weapon detection, shot detection, metal detectors, etc.) to kick-off multiple reaction efforts (911 notification, mass notification, lockdowns, etc.) and to notify law enforcement and other First Responders so they can immediately respond to the incident that has started. Other security solutions such as alarms, access controls, panic buttons, and others also react to the incident that has started.

But what if these pre-incident warning signs were acted on in the hours, days, weeks, and months before the incident and the incident never started? What if the organization was equipped to collect and funnel the pre-incident warning signs to the right resources and team members who could help, intervene, disrupt, and prevent the at-risk individual from escalating to an incident? Which option is safer, pre-incident prevention or incident response?

Most people agree that preventing an incident from happening delivers far better results which is why we help organization and community leaders see the value of Return on Prevention. No scary lockdowns, no trauma related to law enforcement showing up with guns drawn, no chaos with parents and media showing up, no lawsuits, no federal investigations, no negative headlines... Pre-Incident Prevention and Return on Prevention is what people want, need, and deserve and why the First Preventers Framework is so valuable and easy to justify too.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: The Awareness solution potentially prevents costly lawsuits which we think results in immediate ROI for your clients...your thoughts?

Rick Shaw: Yes, great point. The costs of lawsuits and settlements are soaring to millions and even hundreds of millions of dollars. For example, many people do not realize that the US Department of Justice settled with Parkland families for \$127.5 Million dollars due to FBI inaction even though they received multiple pre-incident reports about the Parkland shooter's intentions. There have been many other lawsuits for shootings, suicides, bullying, hazing, and other incidents in schools, colleges, workplaces, and communities where pre-incident indicators existed, but were not acted upon.

The lessons learned are mounting to show it is vital to equip your organization and community with the tools to collect pre-incident indicators and other information that exists in silos within your organization, with law enforcement silos, or with numerous other community and social media silos and share the information with the right resources and team members. While saving lives and futures should be more than enough of a reason to equip your organization and community, millions of dollars in settlements is yet another reason to make sure your First Preventers are equipped and empowered to take proactive pre-incident actions before incidents and tragedies occur.

SecuritySolutionsWatch.com: Your book is a great read and we encourage everyone to check it out on Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/1642251259/>) . What are the major takeaways ?

Rick Shaw: One of the primary takeaways is that Pre-Incident Prevention is possible.

This is validated by years of research (and successes) that reveal Pre-Incident Indicators almost always existed before shootings, suicides, bullying, workplace violence, sex abuse, human trafficking, drug overdoses, and numerous other incidents and tragedies. Another takeaway is Pre-Incident Prevention is easier to accomplish when people in organizations and communities are equipped with the right tools. As an analogy, you can give people the recipe for a cake and

train them on the steps to make a cake, but if people do not have all the ingredients and do not have the right tools – it is impossible to make the cake. The First Preventers Playbook explains the recipes, ingredients, and tools that will make your school, college, organization, and community safer for everyone. Another takeaway relates to Albert Einstein's quote about insanity, we cannot keep doing the same things and expect different results.

Children and adults deserve safety, they deserve pre-incident prevention, and they deserve different results that the First Preventers Framework has been delivering since 2015.

About Awareity

We believe in making the world safer by questioning status quo thinking and giving Good People the advantage over evil doers.

At Awareity, we are on a mission to prevent incidents and make the world safer with a Butterfly (<https://www.awareity.com/butterfly-effect/>), knowledge, action, and helping clients connect the dots. We do this by providing valuable consulting, education, and a platform of tools to achieve community-wide prevention.

We believe the world can be a safer place if we give Good People the advantage over evil doers. This advantage requires questioning status quo thinking and looking at things differently on purpose. We value knowledge-driven actions which is why we do extensive research and listen, then we design and deliver the best strategies, tools, and support possible to make sure our clients and their communities are doing the right things to not just feel safer, but be safer. We've seen world-changing results start with a single piece of the puzzle (Awareity Butterfly Effect <https://www.awareity.com/butterfly-effect/>), are you ready to do your part in changing the world forever?

THIS MUST STOP !

We have heard these words before from:

Governors, Mayors, Chiefs of Police, CEOs, students, children and parents

WE CAN SAVE LIVES ! WATCH THE VIDEO HERE ! (<https://www.awareity.com/first-preventers-framework/>)

For more information:

www.Awareity.com

www.SecuritySolutionsWatch.com

<https://x.com/PreventionCoach>

Rick Shaw – Prevention Specialist – LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rick-shaw-prevention-specialist-first-preventers-leader/>)

Awareity blog (<https://www.awareity.com/blog/>)

First Preventers Framework (short video) <https://www.awareity.com/first-preventers-framework/>

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