Research on Targeted School Violence
U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)

Analysis of 35 Attackers
- Law enforcement contact
- Psychological, behavioral & developmental health
- Substance use/abuse
- Stressors
- Bullying
- Concerning behaviors/communications
- Disciplinary history
- Observable planning behaviors
- History of weapons use & violence
- Home life factors

Analysis of 43 Plotters
- Law enforcement contact
- Psychological, behavioral & developmental health
- Substance use/abuse
- Stressors
- Bullying
- Concerning behaviors/communications
- Disciplinary history
- Interest in violence
- Observable planning behaviors

Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model

Step 1: Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team
Step 2: Define prohibited and concerning behaviors
Step 3: Establish and provide training on a central reporting system
Step 4: Determine the threshold for law enforcement intervention
Step 5: Establish assessment procedures
Step 6: Develop risk management options
Step 7: Create and promote a safe school climate
Step 8: Provide training for all stakeholders
Best Practices Guidelines
Melissa Reeves, National Association of School Psychologists

• BTAM = an intervention process, NOT a disciplinary process
• Protocols and procedures follow Secret Service/NTAC/US Dept of Ed Guidelines
• Multi-method, multi-source – verify data
• Parent engagement and partnership
• Focus on supports
• Punishment alone does not change behavior
• Exclusionary measures can increase risk
• High-quality training by experts who have worked K-12 cases in schools

Upholding Civil Rights & Addressing Disproportionality

• Training and processes must address:
  • context of threat
  • historical and acute trauma
  • biases
  • cultural identity and experiences
  • equity, equality, privilege
  • history with systems & trust in process
  • impact of disAbility
• Does not replace child study or behavioral intervention teams
• Complements special education procedures, does not replace
• Must study fidelity of implementation and outcome data to better identify and address disproportionality
Key Factors of the Threat Assessment Process

Elizabeth Brown, PRN Charter Member through the NASSP

- Proactive and reactive
- Form a diverse team with many voices
- Open, transparent communication with the parent/guardian
- Follow the steps in order
- No assumptions
- Leave personal agendas/history out of the process
- Student well being is the first priority
- Err on the side of caution
- Listen

The School Counselor’s Role in Risk Assessments

Carolyn Stone, University of North Florida/American School Counselor Association

- Collaborator
- Team Player
- Member of the Assessment Team
- Constant at the School
- Honed Observational Skills
- Contact with Students in Need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Role in Threat Assessments – Team Member: Survey Results from 1/22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>School counselors should not be involved in threat assessments in any way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>School counselors should be involved in threat assessments but only in collaboration with other professionals specifically trained in violence assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>School counselors should lead the threat assessment team for their school.</td>
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Minor Role in Threat Assessments but a Major Role in Suicidal Ideation

ROLE: Information Gathering

The School Counseling Profession’s Truths Regarding Student Risk:

• Confidentiality is superseded.
• Err on the side of caution.
  • Quantifying risks is random guessing.
  • Making a judgment call about “no risk” or “low risk” is dangerous.
• Parents are in the best position to exercise custody and control over their child and must be contacted
  • and provided with resources.
• Neglect is a Child Protective Services report.
• School counselors have very limited authority.
• Protocol must be rooted in reality. If written into a protocol, it must be done with integrity every time.