



Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management: Town Hall

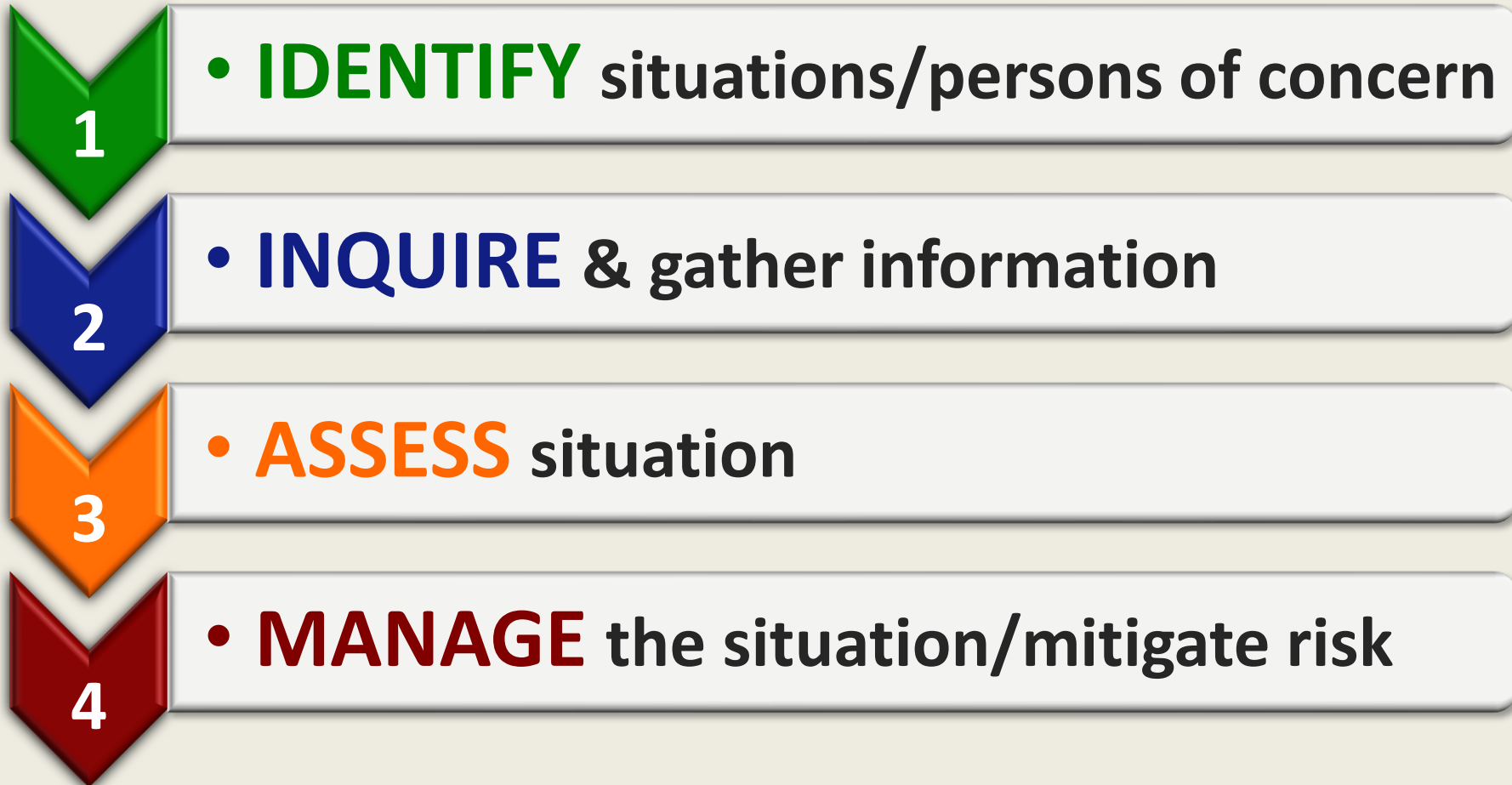


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The BTAM Process

A systematic process that is designed to:



Multi-disciplinary BTAM Team

- Shared responsibility
- Accountability
- Engages different perspectives
- Better decision making
- Mitigates bias
- Helps avoid knee-jerk reactions

**Is an
Intervention
Team**

At least one, preferably two, school MH professionals should be engaged!

Best Practices Guidelines

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

**Consequences
with Care!**

“When young people think that the authority figures in their lives extend fair treatment to them, they are more likely to accept the negative outcome for their interactions with those authorities.”

Shedd (2015), *Unequal City*, p. 160

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

Mitigation of Threatening Behavior

- Increase engagement of school mental health professionals in SEL and mental health initiatives
- Build positive, trusting relationships with students and among staff
- Collaboration and engagement of parents and community supports

Failure to intervene = negligence

yet

“wrong” decision = criminal liability???

WE KNOW IT WORKS!!!

I just wanted to follow up with you with this e-mail from our conversation about Threat Assessment and the work you have done with schools on using the new protocols.

I told you about the incident where we had a student who made some very inappropriate remarks and we used our threat assessment team and protocols that we are working to improve how we respond. By following our protocols and using our threat assessment team we were able to have real conversations with the students mother and we helped her reach out to have her student receive some mental health counseling that she agreed he needed. We had all the right players to the table and worked as a team to identify the threat level and help develop some options for the student to receive help. I just wanted to say thank you for all your hard work. Although we still have work ahead for this group, I am glad that we are working as a team to ensure we keep faculty and staff safe as well as looking at what we can do to help the students in crisis.

Take care, Ralph



RESOURCES...



Informed by Research & Practice



Best Practice Resources
Secret Service/National Threat Assessment Center

- <https://www.schoolsafety.gov/resource/protecting-americas-schools-us-secret-service-analysis-targeted-school-violence>
- <https://rems.ed.gov/REMSPublications.aspx>
- <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/enhancing-school-safety-using-threat-assessment-model-operational-guide-preventing>
- www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf
- <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/preventingattacksreport.pdf>
- <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf>

School Safety and Crisis

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools

Behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM) is a fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations. School safety experts, law enforcement officials, and the United States Departments of Education, Justice, Secret Service, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (2017, 2018) have cited research indicating that before a student commits an act of violence on a school campus, warning signs are usually evident. Research and best practice guidelines provided by these entities also indicate that a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to behavioral threat assessment and management can identify effective interventions and supports that mitigate a potential threat and help the person(s) toward a more positive pathway.

Research has also shown that when BTAM is implemented according to best practices and implemented with fidelity, students on which a threat assessment has been conducted are more likely to receive counseling services and a parent conference and are less likely to receive long-term suspension or an alternative placement (Cornell et al., 2012). Preliminary research has also shown that, when implemented correctly, no disparities were found: Black, Hispanic, and White students in out-of-school suspensions, school transfers, or legal actions; that, an assessment process may reflect a generalizable pathway for achieving parity in school discipline (Cornell, 2018). The primary goal of BTAM is intervention. Violence is preventable, and school threat assessment is a critical component to school safety.

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORTS

Threat assessment is most effective when embedded within a comprehensive multilevel system that involves interdisciplinary, collaborative partnerships, focusing on prevention. A *Framework for Successful Schools* (Cowan et al., 2015) specifies best practices for establishing safe and successful schools. This framework can help to identify students before they enter into the pathway to violence in need of additional supports. The outcomes of an effective BTAM process and MTSS. This framework can help to identify students before they enter into the pathway to violence in need of additional supports. The outcomes of an effective BTAM process and MTSS. This framework can help to identify students before they enter into the pathway to violence in need of additional supports. The outcomes of an effective BTAM process and MTSS.

LEGAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

An increased number of states have passed legislation that v... process¹. In addition, multiple government agencies have v...
¹ As of April 2020, Virginia, Florida, Maryland, Rhode Island, Texas, Tennessee, Oregon, Idaho, and Missouri have passed legislation that v... process¹. In addition, multiple government agencies have v...
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School Safety and Crisis

Upholding Student Civil Rights and Preventing and Disproportionality in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM)

School officials have a responsibility to maintain the safety of students, staff, and visitors to the school, and to investigate threatening circumstances. Behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM), when done properly, is a critical component in schools' overall ability to effectively identify and address the needs of students whose behavior raises concerns about risk of harm to others. When not done properly, or when the process is not used in the context of threatening behavior, students may be disproportionately referred to the justice system, and necessary interventions and supports, unnecessarily suspended or labeled, not provided with necessary interventions and supports, unnecessarily suspended or labeled, not provided with necessary interventions and supports, unnecessarily suspended or labeled, not provided with necessary interventions and supports.

This document provides clarification on what properly conducted behavior threat assessment and management is; how it complements, yet is distinct from, special education policies and procedures; and how a multidisciplinary team process can mitigate bias and disproportionality while connecting the student with necessary social-emotional and mental and behavioral health supports. In many cases, the BTAM process helps to identify underlying student needs so proper interventions (i.e., student supports) can be provided to ensure safety for all.

For a more detailed explanation of BTAM and some of the concepts discussed in this document, please see [Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management: Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools](#) (NASP School Safety and Crisis Response Committee, 2021).

What BTAM is, and What It is Not
BTAM is a multidisciplinary, fact-based, systematic process designed to identify, assess, and manage potentially dangerous or violent situations where someone is intending to injure or kill others. The primary goal of BTAM is intervention, not punishment. Violence is preventable, and school threat assessment, not punishment, is specifically in response to a threatening situation and when there are concerns for targeted acts of violence. The BTAM process is utilized to replace, not as a substitute for, child study/behavioral intervention teams that engage with other nonviolent behaviors of concern (e.g., academic, attentional, emotional regulation, social skills). BTAM is not a mechanism to allow schools to remove children from school because they may have behaviors that are difficult to manage. Rather, the

Behavioral threat assessment and management is not:
• profiling,
• adversarial,
• a disciplinary process, schools, or
• the same as a (functional) behavioral assessment.

A School Safety and Crisis Resource
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Threat Assessment Resources

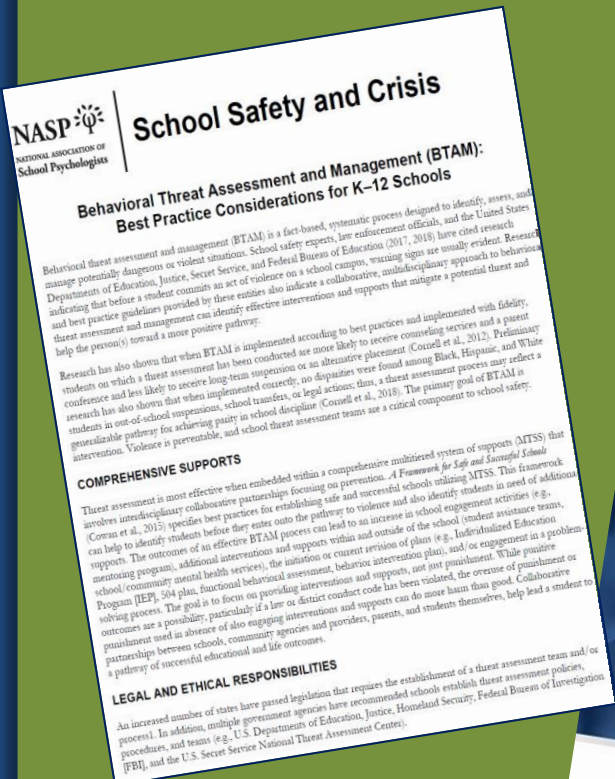
Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM): Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools

- www.nasponline.org/btam

Upholding Student Civil Rights and Preventing Disproportionality in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM)

- <https://www.nasponline.org/btam-sped>

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Virtual Threat Assessment Resources

Behavior Threat Assessment and Management in the Virtual Environment

- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center>

Handling Threat Assessment Cases Remotely

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4AtiXRRlww>