Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management: Town Hall

Melissa A. Reeves, Ph.D., NCSP, LCMHC
drmelissareeves@gmail.com

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The BTAM Process

A systematic process that is designed to:

1. **IDENTIFY** situations/persons of concern
2. **INQUIRE** & gather information
3. **ASSESS** situation
4. **MANAGE** the situation/mitigate risk

SIGMA Threat Management Associates (2017)
Multi-disciplinary BTAM Team

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

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???
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 student’s 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
Threat Assessment Resources

Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM): Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools
- [www.nasponline.org/btam](https://www.nasponline.org/btam)

Upholding Student Civil Rights and Preventing Disproportionality in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM)
- [https://www.nasponline.org/btam-sped](https://www.nasponline.org/btam-sped)

National Association of School Psychologists
Virtual Threat Assessment Resources

Behavior Threat Assessment and Management in the Virtual Environment


Handling Threat Assessment Cases Remotely

SIGMA Threat Management Associates

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4AtiXRRlww](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4AtiXRRlww)