



BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT REGIONAL FORUMS

**Building Safer Communities:
Behavioral Threat Assessment in
K-12, Higher Education, and Beyond**

October 2025



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT

PRE-FORUM AGENDA

8:30am–12:00pm

K-12 Basic Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Training

Bryan Carr, *Threat Management Professional* and Dr. Jim Russo, *Threat Management Professional*

The DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) presents a newly revised half-day basic threat assessment session to help schools continue to comply with the *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-79.4 (creation of threat assessment teams) and § 9.1-184 (collection and reporting of data by threat assessment teams), along with new training requirements effective July 1, 2023. The goal of this session is to provide K-12 threat assessment teams with basic tools and resources to conduct and manage threat cases as required by the *Code of Virginia*. Topics to be covered include the definition of a threat, recognition of concerning/aberrant behavior, principles of threat assessment, understanding the behavioral threat assessment process and pathway to violence, mandated roles and responsibilities of threat assessment teams, assessing and classifying cases, overcoming barriers to and the importance of reporting, the nexus between threat assessment and suicide risk assessment, and information sharing. A case scenario will be woven into this session.

Beyond the Surface: Differentiating Autism from Psychopathy in Social Settings and Behavioral Threat Assessments

April Szilagyi, Phys.D., *EAS Winchester, LLC* and Jason Cornwell, *Captain, Frederick County Sheriff's Office*

This training is a combined presentation from school-based law enforcement and a clinical psychologist regarding threat assessments within the school setting. Two case studies will be presented – one regarding an autism diagnosis and the other regarding psychopathy. We will dive below the surface and explore the nuances of autism and psychopathy, and the importance of collaborative relationships in these cases.

Forensic Statement Analysis

Gary Aschenbach, *CEO, Law Tech Consultants*

Snap decisions often affect our safety, finances, work, and sometimes even personal relationships. Making sound choices requires facts, details, and—most importantly—the complete truth. Traditionally, truth and deception detection training has been reserved for law enforcement and the military. Today, these powerful tools are now made available to the private and business sectors to help you do your job more effectively and to keep you and others safer. Among other topics, in this training, you will learn how to apply behavioral and statement analysis; identify the ONE true lie; get the complete truth while avoiding common mistakes; recognize the power of open- vs. closed-ended statements; understand the difference between an interview and an interrogation; and prioritize safety in every interaction. This fast-paced, interactive session is delivered in a practical, easy-to-understand style—designed for everyone.

1:00pm–4:30pm

K-12 Behavioral Threat Assessment and Case Management Training

Bryan Carr, *Threat Management Professional* and Dr. Jim Russo, *Threat Management Professional*

This session builds upon the “K-12 Basic Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Training” provided by VCSCS. This session will incorporate an understanding of the case management process, beginning with identifying the individual needs of the subject of concern, based on the threat level of classifications (Low, Moderate, High, and Critical). The four components of the STEP (Subject, Target, Environment, Precipitating Events) Framework will be reexamined to guide participants in the development of a holistic management plan. The session will provide critical insights into the types of interventions that should be considered for each threat level. Participants will be guided through a resource mapping exercise to identify and analyze the programs, people, services, and other resources that currently exist in their school/division/community to appropriately manage these cases. The session will also address strategies to monitor the initial case management plan, timelines for review, and possible revisions, as needed. A critical component of this session will include the opportunity to work through a scenario to apply newly acquired case management development knowledge.

Optimizing the SRO's Support on the School's Threat Assessment Team

Jason Cornwell, *Captain, Frederick County Sheriff's Office*

This training will offer actual threat assessment case examples and discuss how to choose and train an SRO, build school-law enforcement partnerships, best support an SRO, and use SROs during threat assessments. It will also include tabletop group exercises to help explore these topics.

Forensic Statement Analysis (Continued)

REGIONAL FORUMS – OCTOBER 2025

MAIN FORUM AGENDA

Welcome — 8:30am–8:45am

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Staff

Current Trends and Considerations in the Threat Landscape — 8:45am–10:45am

Andre Simons, *Certified Threat Manager, VanSlyke Schouten LLP*

This session will cover a variety of topics related to targeted violence in schools and on campuses. These will include a review of the strategies typically employed by school and campus shooters to conceal their pre-attack planning activities from bystanders, the utility of threat assessment interviewing and specific steps to counter offender concealment strategies, and the implications of legislation and litigation (e.g., Cleveland v. Taft Union High School) on threat management team operations.

Break — 10:45am–11:00am

Legal Considerations for Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Teams — 11:00am–12:00pm

Shawn VanSlyke, *Certified Protection Professional, VanSlyke Schouten LLP*

This session will explore some of the many legal considerations faced by threat assessment teams. Topics will include privacy issues and the requirements of FERPA and HIPAA, disclosure of student information related to threatening/concerning behaviors, the implications of legislation and litigation (e.g., Cleveland v. Taft Union High School) on threat management team operations, the rights, responsibilities, and influence of parents in the Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) process related to privacy issues and FERPA and HIPAA requirements, and the disclosure of student information related to threatening/concerning behaviors.

Lunch (provided) — 12:00pm–1:00pm

Beyond the Threat Assessment: Best Practices for Developing Student Support Plans — 1:00pm–2:00pm

Sarah Bazemore, *Coordinator of Behavioral Health and Instructional Supports, Virginia Department of Education*

When schools conduct a threat or suicide risk assessment, teams convene to determine what immediate actions need to occur to ensure everyone's safety. However, the assessment process should only mark the beginning of a journey of support. Learn how to design a support plan after a threat or suicide risk assessment that offers ongoing support, monitors progress, and reduces the risk of future self-harm or violence. This session will focus on what happens after a threat or suicide risk assessment is complete. Attendees will learn the importance of determining the root cause of the threat and identifying interventions that can be put in place to prevent more serious threats from occurring.

Break — 2:00pm–2:15pm

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its Impact on Accurate Threat Assessments — 2:15pm–3:15pm

Steven MacDonald, *Director of Training and Development, Safer Schools Together*

Colton Easton, *Director of Project Development and Steven MacDonald, Director of Training and Development, Safer Schools Together*

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has made remarkable progress in recent years, with advancements in machine learning, natural language processing, voice cloning, and a variety of additional services. These innovations have enabled AI to impact various industries, including university/college campuses, school communities, corporations, and law enforcement. The future of AI holds vast potential; however, it is important to understand that there are risks associated with the use of such services. To better understand the power of AI, it is crucial that safety/threat assessment teams stay up to date with evolving AI technology. Following this session, attendees will better understand what AI services are currently available to the public, how they are being used, and what risks may be associated with their use.

Break — 3:15pm–3:30pm

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its Impact on Accurate Threat Assessments (Continued) — 3:30 pm–4:30pm

Forum Concludes — 4:30pm

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