THREAT ASSESSMENT RESOURCES
INTERNATIONAL

DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES
- VIRGINIA -

Virginia Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams

Basic Training Session

Provided by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

A training curriculum developed by
Gene Deisinger, Ph.D. & Marisa Randazzo, Ph.D.

Instructor Manual

Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams

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Gene Deisinger, Ph.D. & Marisa R. Randazzo, Ph.D.

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INTRODUCTION

In the time since the campus shootings at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University, several prominent organizations and task forces have released reports on campus safety and violence prevention. All of these reports have recommended that campuses create threat assessment teams as a key measure to prevent violence before it can occur. The threat assessment model is now advocated for use in higher education settings by entities at the federal, and state levels, as well as various international and national associations. These include the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice, and Health & Human Services; the National Association of Attorneys General; the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators; and state task forces in Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, North Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin. In 2008, both the commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Illinois passed laws requiring their colleges and universities to establish threat assessment teams (applying to public higher education institutions in Virginia and all higher education institutions in Illinois).

This curriculum is designed to help colleges and universities to develop and implement a threat assessment capacity that fits within their unique cultures and that is effective in both preventing violence and helping persons in need. The course includes information on how to create and implement a threat assessment team (or add threat assessment capabilities to an existing team) and how to identify, investigate, evaluate, and intervene with persons and situations that raise concern on campus. It also covers issues surround information-sharing and record-keeping, and includes case studies to help illustrate key concepts.

This curriculum was designed by Dr. Gene Deisinger and Dr. Marisa Reddy Randazzo. Drs. Deisinger and Randazzo have over 30 years of combined experience investigating individual threat cases and conducting original research on targeted violence and threat assessment in educational institutions. Their approach has been cited as a model program for threat assessment and management services, including the new national standard for colleges and universities approved by the American National Standards Institute.[1] This training is based on research and best practices in the area of campus threat assessment, including the model for threat assessment developed from the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education's landmark study of school shootings (which Dr. Randazzo co-authored). Their model has been used as a foundation for successful threat management programs on numerous campuses, schools and corporations across the country.

From empirical research and individual threat assessment cases, it is clear that many violent situations on campus can be prevented, de-escalated and managed. Threat assessment is complex, but not complicated. There is no need for cumbersome procedures and protocols. But threat assessment does take the right training, identifying the right people to be involved in the process, and having experienced professionals that you can depend upon for advice when needed. Most institutions have at least some of the critical elements already in place, but can benefit from threat assessment training and from expert consultation in maximizing threat assessment capabilities and improving collaboration and coordination of case management services.

For more information on campus threat assessment and threat management, please see The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams (Boston: Applied Risk Management, 2008; www.arm-security.com) or contact Dr. Deisinger and Dr. Randazzo directly at (Gene.Deisinger@gmail.com or MRandazzo@ThreatResources.com).

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[1] Nolan, J., Randazzo, M. & Deisinger, G. (2011). Campus threat assessment and management teams: What risk managers need to know now. URMIA Journal 2011, 105-122. ASME Innovative Technologies Institute, LLC (2010). A Risk Analysis Standard for Natural and Man-Made Hazards to Higher Education Institutions. Author: Washington, DC.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Gene Deisinger, Ph.D., is a nationally recognized expert on threat assessment and management. Dr. Deisinger was a founding member of the Iowa State University Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), a multidisciplinary team that serves as a pro-active planning group and coordinates institutional responses during crisis situations. As part of this team, Dr. Deisinger developed the threat management program. He has served as the primary threat manager for Iowa State University since the program's inception in 1994. This program has been recognized as a model for threat assessment in college and university settings. He has personally managed and supervised threat cases and protective details for a broad range of governmental dignitaries, public figures, and members of the university community. Dr. Deisinger has provided consultation and training to numerous colleges, universities, law enforcement agencies, and private corporations across the United States; and been an invited speaker for several national organizations. He currently serves as a subject matter expert, consulting to the FBI, Secret Service and U.S. Dept of Education, regarding their joint study of targeted violence in institutions of higher education. As a licensed psychologist, a certified health service provider in psychology, and a certified peace officer, Dr. Deisinger brings a unique perspective to the field of threat assessment. He serves as the Associate Director of Public Safety and Deputy Chief of Police with the Iowa State University Police Division, and also serves as a Special Deputy United States Marshal with the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.

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Marisa Reddy Randazzo, Ph.D., is a national expert on threat assessment and targeted violence. Formerly the Chief Research Psychologist for the U.S. Secret Service, Dr. Randazzo has provided threat assessment training to over 10,000 professionals in higher education, secondary schools, corporations, law enforcement agencies, human resources, mental health, and the intelligence community throughout the United States, Canada, and the European Union. In her ten years with the Secret Service, she reviewed hundreds of threat investigations and supervised the agency's research on assassinations, presidential threats, insider threats, school shootings, security breaches, and stalking incidents. She also served as Co-Director of the Safe School Initiative, the largest federal study of school shootings in the United States, and is co-author of the U.S. Secret Service/U.S. Department of Education model of threat assessment for educational institutions. Dr. Randazzo now heads Threat Assessment Resources International, LLC, providing threat assessment training and case consultation to colleges, schools, corporations, and security professionals. She has testified before Congress, briefed Cabinet Secretaries, and been interviewed by numerous major television, radio, and print news outlets about threat assessment and targeted violence prevention. In 2005, Dr. Randazzo was awarded the Williams College Bicentennial Medal for her work in preventing violence.

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Dr. Deisinger and Dr. Randazzo are the lead authors of The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams (Boston: Applied Risk Management, 2008). This book is a practical guide designed specifically for implementation of threat assessment teams within institutions of higher education. Ordering information is available at www.arm-security.com or www.amazon.com.

COURSE PREPARATION

Target Audience

The primary target audiences for this course include all who are responsible for developing and implementing threat assessment teams and processes at institutions of higher education across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Training participants are likely to include a variety of campus representatives including:

- College and university administrators
- Campus law enforcement and/or security personnel
- Student counseling staff
- Student health staff
- Student affairs staff
- Legal counsel
- Risk managers
- Academic leaders and department heads
- Residence life staff
- Human resources/personnel staff
- Employee assistance staff
- Community-based mental health professionals
- Local, county and state law enforcement personnel, and
- Others with a role in preventing, deterring, intervening or managing concerns of violence on campus

Course Materials

Materials required for this course include:

- This Instructor Manual
- Book: Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams
- The Participant Training Manual (one per participant)
- Course resource and reference materials (on CD/DVD)

<u>Instructor Manual</u>

This Instructor Manual provides:

- Copies of the course visuals
- Content to be covered in each unit
- Descriptions of course activities, including directions and tips for conducting the activities successfully
- Copies of the activities and resource materials (also included in the Student Manual)

<u>Participant Training Manual</u>

The Participant Training Manual includes:

- Copies of all course visuals
- Room for notes and comments
- Copies versions of all course activities
- All resources that are included in the Instructor Manual are also included in the Participant Training Manual

Instructor Requirements

Number of Instructors

Although this course can be conducted with one Instructor, it is preferable for at least two Instructors to present the course. Ideally, those instructors are from differing areas of professional expertise (e.g., one from law enforcement and one from student affairs or counseling services). This not only provides participants with a broader range of experiences and perspectives from which to learn, but also exemplifies the multi- disciplinary approach that is encouraged throughout the training.

Instructor Qualifications

Instructors should be recruited and selected based on their overall knowledge of the planning process and its application to schools, their experience with State requirements, and their interpersonal effectiveness.

Course Instructors should have:

- Knowledge of the nature, process and dynamics of violence as they relate to institutions of higher education.
- Knowledge of the principles and practices of threat assessment and management.
- Commitment to the safety and well-being of campus communities.
- The ability to apply those principles and practices within a range of higher education settings (e.g., public and private, large and small, universities and community colleges, etc.).
- Experience in dealing with issues related to the safety and well-being of campuses and communities.
- Understanding of campus emergencies and the special issues facing campus personnel who prevent, deter, assess, intervene, manage and respond to those emergencies.
- The ability to identify potential issues facing campuses issues and to help training participants and their institutions to develop strategies to resolve the issues.

Preparing To Train

The Instructors' preparation and conduct of the course have a definite impact on the effectiveness of the training. This introductory section provides guidelines for preparing to conduct this course. The suggestions below will help you prepare for the training.

- Read the Instructor Manual and the Participant Training Manual thoroughly. Be familiar with the content and organization of the material.
- Read and familiarize yourself with the content and concepts discussed in Deisinger and Randazzo's *Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams*. This book is the basis for the course. All of the elements addressed in the course are covered in greater detail in the book.
- Review and complete all activities (and discussion points) and be prepared to facilitate discussion and to answer questions that the students will ask while completing the activities themselves.
- Make your own notes and comments in Instructor Manual. Use these to help convey concepts in your own words.
- Include personal experiences (with which you have direct knowledge) that help to explain the concepts in the course.
- Identify and include any supplemental materials from which you feel the students will benefit. (**Note:** Be sure to obtain copyright releases when necessary.)

Preparing the Classroom

As an Instructor, you are responsible for preparing the classroom and ensuring that the general supplies that you will need for this course are available. Use the list below to ensure that you have all of the materials and equipment required.

Room Setting

Ideally, the room should be set up in a small-group format with five or six participants per table. Ensure that the tables are organized so that all participants can see the Instructors, the visual display, easel pads, and the video monitors.

Place a table at the front of the room so that you can organize your materials. If you will be displaying other resources for the participants, be sure to add a table for the display, allowing for traffic past the table without interfering with the small-group setup.

Equipment

You will need the equipment listed below to conduct this course. Be sure to test all of the equipment so that you feel comfortable with its operating requirements and are sure that all of the equipment is functional.

- Computer and projector for display of the Powerpoint presentations and any other visuals;
- Chart paper, easels, and markers;
- Pens and pencils.

General Instruction Tips

As an Instructor, you are setting an example for the participants, who will be returning to their campus to implement the material. You will enhance your credibility with the class if you are knowledgeable about the subject matter, are fully prepared, and utilize effective skills both in instruction of content and facilitation of discussion. Following are a few tips to help you present the course effectively:

Don't answer questions if you are not sure of the answers.

If a participant asks you a question to which you do not know the answer, it's okay to tell the participant that you do not know the answer. Then suggest resources to help the participant find the answer or explain that you will find the answer and get back to the participant.

Make yourself part of the group.

Do not separate yourself physically from the group by remaining behind a podium or a table. Doing so often conveys that you are not interested in or open to input from the group. Feel free to walk around the room while you are speaking. Engage with participants during breaks. These interactions role-model a key element of the case management strategy used in the course!

Remember that you are working with professionals.

Value the resources that your participants bring to the group. Encourage them to share their experiences, knowledge, and ideas. Facilitate discussion that helps participants share their expertise.

Check for understanding.

Sticking to the agenda is important, but do not move to the next activity or lecture before ensuring that the group understands what has already been discussed. You can check understanding by asking participants to summarize concepts and to provide feedback about the course as it unfolds.

Do not read or lecture to the group.

Think back to the last class that you attended. If the Instructor lectured on and on, without end, chances are that you tuned out and did not learn much. This manual is a *guide,* <u>not</u> your script. Flexibility is the key to success. You may modify discussion questions to meet the needs of the group. If you do not like or do not understand a question, change it.

Do not go too long without a break.

As a general rule, groups need a break every hour for about 10 minutes. Although most students will let you know when they need a break, you should watch for nonverbal signs, including glazed eyes or shifting in seats as indicators that a break is needed. Try to find natural breaking points in the course as needed. Adjust the timing of breaks as necessary according to what is going on in the class. However, there is a lot to cover, so resume training promptly at the end of a break!

Learn from each group you instruct.

Solicit and learn from feedback from participants. Revise the course content, discussion points or your approach, based on experience.

TRAINING MATERIALS

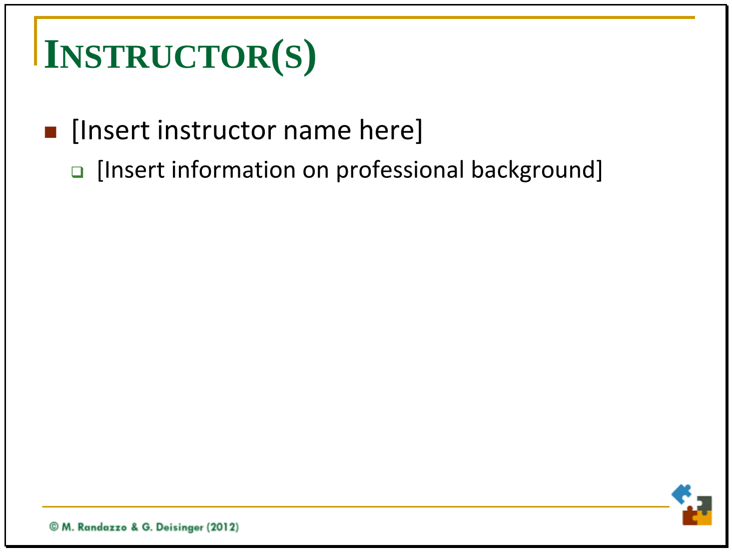
Virginia Campus
Threat Assessment Teams:

Basic Training Session

Training Curriculum developed by
Marisa Randazzo, Ph.D. &
Gene Deisinger, Ph.D.
www.ThreatResources.com

Instructor Notes:

Reference that this curriculum was funded and supported by The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) in conjunction with Threat Assessment Resources International and the expertise of Dr. Marisa Randazzo and Dr. Gene Deisinger.



Instructor Notes:
(Be sure to fill in your bio info on this slide before starting the session).

Start out the session by introducing yourself and telling participants about your background. This self-introduction helps to establish why you have the experience and background to be leading this training session. If the size of the audience permits, we recommend asking participants to introduce themselves and share some information about themselves, such as their current position, whether they serve on a threat assessment team, and if so how long have they served. This helps participants to get to know each other initially and may facilitate more communication between participants in class discussions as well as during breaks.

Training Agenda

- Overview of Violence on Campus
- Nature and Process of Targeted Violence
- Contrasting Assessment Approaches
- Guiding Principles and Best Practices
  - Group exercise
- Operationalizing a Multi-Disciplinary Team
  - Group exercise
- Steps in the Campus Threat Assessment and Management Process
  - Group exercise
- Legal Considerations
- Conclusion / Q&A

Instructor Notes:
Introduce participants to the content that will be covered.

Emphasize that the session will be interactive, with several group tabletop exercises so that participants can practice their skills.

Note that while there is time set aside for questions at the end, participants are encouraged to ask questions and share their experiences throughout the session.

Note that participants can learn from each other's experiences, and that they can use each other as resources after the training is over. Encourage participants to share contact information because it can be helpful to talk over ideas or strategies with others, even if confidential information cannot be disclosed.

Learning Objectives

After the course, participants will be able to:

- Understand targeted violence and prevention implications
- Distinguish between various assessment approaches
- Know the guiding principles of threat assessment
- Identify strengths of effective team members
- Encourage reporting about threats, concerns
- Know how to screen and triage initial reports
- Gather information and assess situations of concern
- Develop, implement, and monitor case management plans
- Understand legal issues that affect teams
- Identify resources for further reading

<u>Instructor Notes:</u>
The learning objectives for the course are what participants will better understand and/or do after having taken the course. A major goal in this session is to give participants a foundation in understanding targeted violence and in the guiding principles and best practices of campus threat assessment and management.

In addition, participants will get a chance to <u>practice</u> their skills in a few key areas – particularly in developing a team threshold, in threat assessment procedures, and in identifying case management resources and strategies.

Participants will also gain a better understanding of the legal issues that typically impact in campus threat assessment teams.

Discussion Question:

What do we fear most?

Instructor Notes:
Start off with a question for the participants: "What do you fear most on campus?" or "What do most people fear most on campus?"

What you are looking for are answers that indicate "a mass shooting," "A Virginia Tech type of attack," "a rampage shooting," etc. Then proceed to the next slides that show examples of recent rampage shootings.

Instructor Notes:
It will usually be sufficient to show the slide briefly without comment and let participants reflect on their memory of the incident. However, if the trainer or participants are unfamiliar with an incident, a brief overview may be helpful.

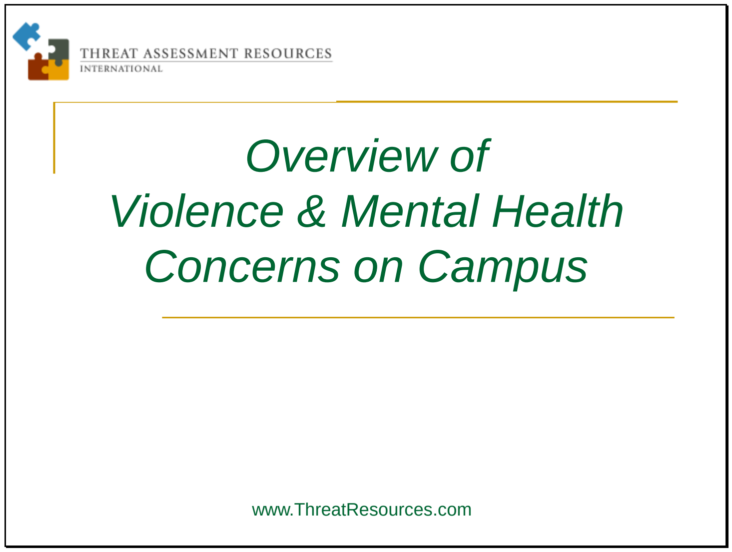
Incident Overview:

April 16, 2007
Virginia Tech
Subject: Seung-Hui Cho (Age: 23)
Student, Enrolled at Virginia Tech
Two students shot and killed in West Ambler Johnson Residence Hall
Subsequent attack in Norris Hall (Academic building) results in an additional:
  30 persons killed and 28 wounded
Subject kills himself upon arrival of law enforcement.

Instructor Notes:
It will usually be sufficient to show the slide briefly without comment and let participants reflect on their memory of the incident. However, if the trainer or participants are unfamiliar with an incident, a brief overview may be helpful.

Incident Overview:

February 14, 2008
Northern Illinois University
Subject: Steven Kasmierczak (27)
Graduated from NIU;
Was enrolled as student at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign at time of shooting
Brings multiple weapons into a classroom where
6 persons are killed and 18 are wounded
Subject kills himself.



Instructor Notes:
To put the issue of targeted campus attacks into context, we will start with an overview of violence and mental health concerns on campus.

On-Campus Violence

Type of Violence	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Murder	11	8	45	16	18
Forcible Sex Offense	2722	2717	2738	2676	2605
Robbery	2053	1981	1966	1957	1871
Aggravated Assault	2906	3034	2784	2719	2631
Arson	1024	966	789	709	653
Injurious Hate Crime	33	53	36	37	127
Illegal Weapon Arrest	1450	1438	1432	1262	1183

Source: US Dept. of Education Office of Post-Secondary Education
Available at: www.ope.ed.gov/security/

Instructor Notes:
Data are from US Department of Education as required by the Clery Act, and reflects certain criminal acts that occur on or adjacent to campus.

This slide represents reported violent crimes that occur on campus only – Does not include acts that occurred off-campus but the patterns are similar.

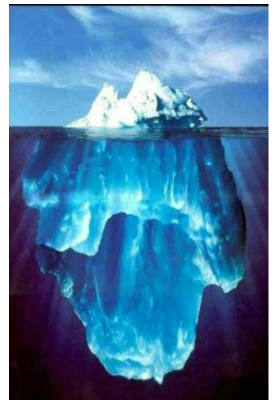
Key Points:
- Homicide on campus is a rare phenomenon. There are 12-20 homicides/year that occur on college campuses with approximately 17-18 million college students enrolled in a given year, and another several million faculty and staff and unknown millions of visitors/year. Most of these cases are not a result of mass casualty incidents (despite concerns that have arisen since 2007)about mass shootings.
- Beyond cases of homicide, campus communities are subject to a range of violent crimes just like the rest of society, although (for nearly all campuses) rates of violent crime are much lower for campuses than they are for the communities in which the campuses exist.
- Our focus must be broader than on just mass violence and we should not be distracted by hyperbole and exaggeration of the problems. The realities are challenging enough!

Beyond The Tip of the Iceberg

Beyond Mass Shootings

A broad range of issues impact the safety and well-being of college campuses.

- Harassment
- Bias-related incidents
- Stalking
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual assault
- Substance abuse
- Mental illness
- Suicide



Keep the Big Picture in Mind

Instructor Notes:

While much attention is given to high profile mass shootings, it is important to keep in mind the broad array of issues and problems that can affect safety and well-being on campus. Having a threat assessment process in place can be useful in identifying a helping to address a broad array of emerging problems, not just a mass shooting.

Mental Health on Campus

Counseling Center Clients Reporting:	Percent*
Non-suicidal self-injury	21
Seriously considered suicide	25
Prior suicide attempt	8
Seriously considered harming others	8
Afraid of losing control & acting violently	7
Intentionally harmed another person	5

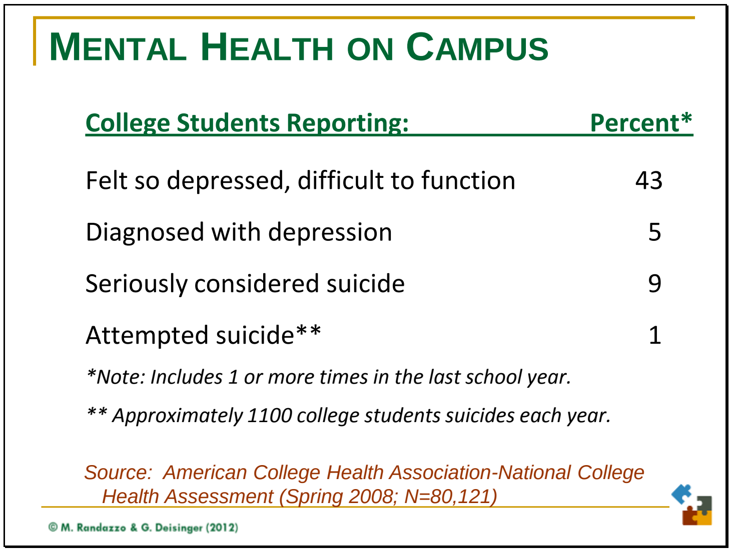
**Note: Includes prior to and after starting college.*

Source: Center for the Study of Collegiate Mental Health (CSCMH): 2009 Pilot Study

Slide 11

Instructor Notes:

This slide and the next slide focus on data on mental health issues and concerns on campus. This slide shows self-report data from a pilot study of people who had used services at a campus counseling center. Of note here is that 8% of the study respondents reported they had seriously considered harming others, and 25% reporting they had seriously considered suicide. We'll talk a bit later in this session about how a threat assessment process can address these concerns through information gathering, assessment, and case management planning where needed.



Instructor Notes:

This slide shows findings from a survey of college students generally (as opposed to the previous slide that focused on those who had been seen at a campus counseling center). These findings show the high percentage of students reporting that at some point they felt so depressed that it was difficult to function.

Mental Health on Campus

Counseling Center Clients	Percent
Clients with severe mental health issues	49
❑ Impaired ability to maintain enrollment	8
❑ Severely distressed but treatable	41

Source: 2007 National Survey of University Counseling Center Directors

Instructor Notes:

Shortly after the Virginia Tech incident, there were calls for colleges and universities to “identify mentally ill students and remove them from colleges.”

It is important to note, however, that the majority of those students with severe mental health issues are able to safely and effectively continue their enrollment as students.

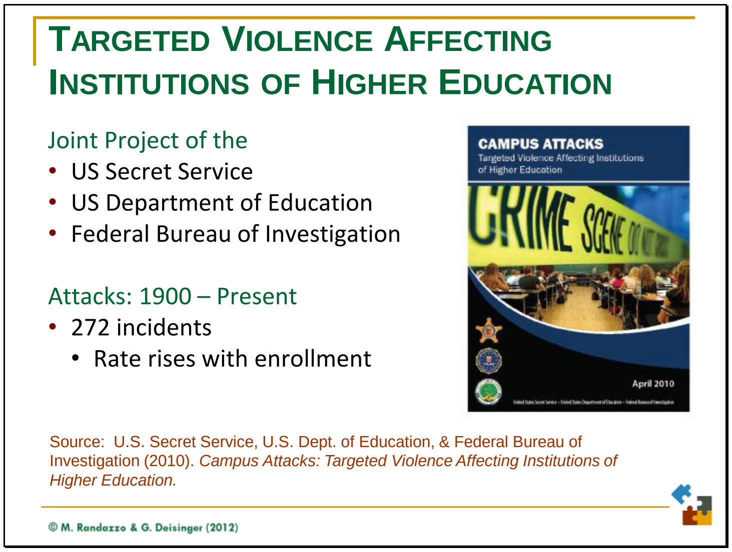
Note: Severe mental health concerns refers to such conditions as schizophrenia (and other psychotic disorders), bipolar disorder, major depression, or severe anxiety disorders (including post-traumatic stress disorder).

Fewer than 20% of students with severe mental health concerns (or 8% of all clients) were so impaired that they could not maintain their enrollment.

41% of all clients (or 80% of those with severe mental health concerns) were able to maintain their enrollment without posing a danger to themselves or others.

Clearly, a “one size fits all” approach to identifying and responding to persons with mental health concerns is not appropriate or helpful. Effective responses are based on individualized assessment of the student and their situation in order to help determine what is best for that student AND for the community as a whole.

Instructor Notes:
We'll now move on to more detailed information about targeted attacks, and targeted violence on campus.

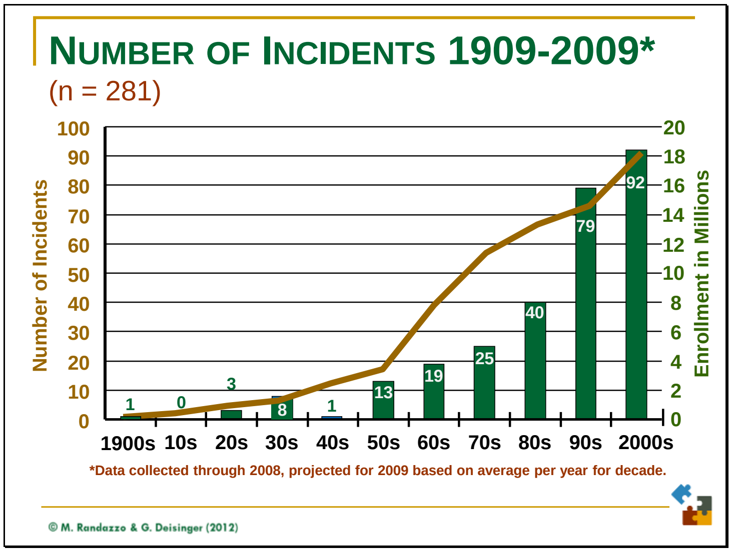


Instructor Notes:

For slide 15-18: Instructors should read the report "Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education".

With respect to campus threat assessment, the major developments since the Virginia Tech shooting are in the areas of (a) research on campus attacks and (b) new national standards for higher education institutions and workplaces. With respect to research on campus attacks, the major research development in campus threat assessment has been the release of the initial report from the US Secret Service / US Department of Education / FBI joint study on targeted violence on campus.

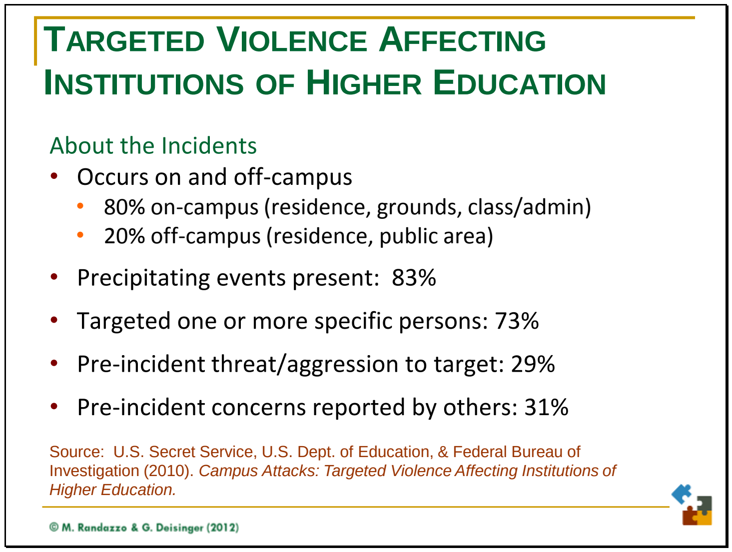
This is the first report from this large-scale project on campus targeted violence, spanning over a century. This report provides a broad overview of the cases identified for the study. The second phase of the study – which is ongoing – is slated to provide more detailed analysis of the 272 incidents, similar to the analysis provided in the Safe School Initiative, the study of school shootings conducted by the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.



Instructor Notes:
For slide 15-18 Instructors should read the report "Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education".

While we often hear in the media that there is an epidemic of violence on campus, or that it is increasing significantly, when we take a close look at these numbers and other measures of campus violence, we know that it is not the case. At first glance, this graph of the number of incidents of targeted violence in campus appears to have increased since the early 1900s – however the numbers are in fact following the significant increase in the number of students enrolled in higher education institutions in the U.S. during the same time period. The researchers point out that the apparent increase in number of incidents of targeted violence on campus is a direct result of the greater number of students enrolled at colleges and universities across the country.

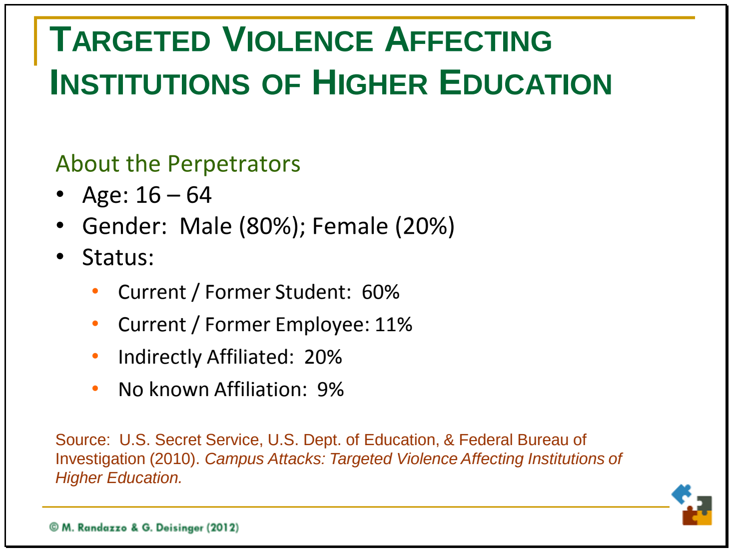
There was only one decade from 1900 to 2000 where there wasn't a shooting. Enrollment numbers picked up starting in the 1950s when GIs returned from WWII and entered colleges.



Instructor Notes

Other information reported from the study of campus attacks includes some initial findings about where the incidents occurred (most on campus but 1/5 off campus) as well as some preliminary information about the perpetrators' known pre-attack behavior. Of particular note is that only some perpetrators threatened their targets prior to their attacks – which is consistent with findings from other types of targeted violence. Prior to acts of targeted violence, attackers may not threaten their targets – but they typically engage in behavior that alarms others around them. It is important to respond to and investigate threats because we don't know what we might uncover or stop by doing so. But it is equally important to have a threat assessment process that can be activated by a range of disturbing or alarming behavior even when no threat is present – because many of these perpetrators do not threaten I advance.

It is also worth noting that in the preliminary findings from this study – as in other studies of targeted violence – there were precipitating events prior to most of the attacks. When we conduct a threat assessment, we look at what precipitating events or triggers might exist – or soon develop – for the person of concern. Threat management – findings ways to intervene with a person who poses a threat – looks at ways to prevent those precipitating events or ways to help buffer or reduce their negative impact on the person of concern, so they don't lead to feelings of desperation.



Instructor Notes:
For slide 15-18: Instructors should read the report "Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education"

This first report from the federal study of campus attacks looked primarily at providing an overview of the incidents that have occurred. In that context, the findings offer largely descriptive information. The next stage of the research will focus more dissecting these attacks to provide information on the perpetrators' pre-attacks behaviors and communications. But for now, we know that the perpetrators ranged in age from 16 to 64, were both males and females, and had various affiliations with the institutions where they attacked: some were current or former students, some current or former employees, but some had only an indirect affiliation or no affiliation at all.

These initial findings are consistent with findings from studies of other types of targeted attacks, showing that there is no accurate or informative profile of a campus attacker. These perpetrators differed more than they were similar. We see this in studies of school shootings, workplace shootings, and attacks on public officials and public figures: no accurate or useful profile of the attackers – and that we cannot tell by a person's appearance or demographic characteristics whether they may pose a threat or violence or self-harm.

Facts About Serious Campus Violence

Perpetrators of serious campus violence don't ***"just snap"***

These incidents are not impulsive or random.

- Most consider, plan, and prepare before engaging in violent behavior;
- Most discuss their plans with others before the attack.

Source: U.S. Secret Service & U.S. Dept. of Education (2002). *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative.*

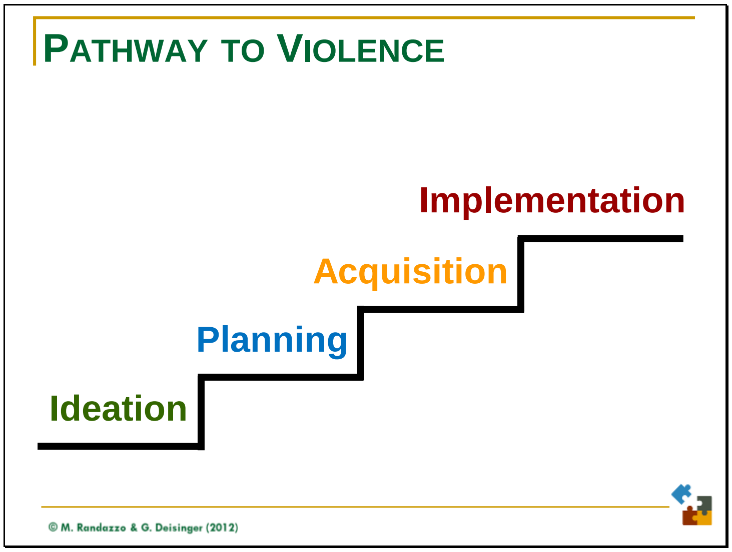
Instructor Notes:

In research on school shootings and workplace shootings – as well as analyses of recent campus shootings – we see some commonalities among this type of violence – what the researchers call "targeted violence."

One of the first facts about these attacks is that they are rarely impulsive; these attackers don't "just snap." Even though the media has often described these attacks as occurring "out of the blue," in reality they do not.

Instead, the attackers think about and plan their attacks in advance – sometimes a few days in advance, sometimes over a year in advance. Moreover, they typically tell other people about their plans for harm beforehand.

Now just to be clear, I'm not talking about threatening a target. In fact, very few attackers directed threats to their target before their attacks. But they often told OTHER people – friends, co-workers, online buddies, etc. – what they were thinking about and planning to do.



Instructor Notes:
This graphic illustrates the pathway to violence that these attackers typically take:

They start with an idea to do harm, develop a plan to carry it out, then acquire the means or capacity to do harm --- meaning they get weapons and ammunition and get those to where they want to carry out the attack – and then to implementing the attack itself.

This graphic is also depicted as a set of steps of stairs to illustrate that at each progressive point along the pathway, there is potentially more information that can be uncovered and more behavior that can be observed – that would give away the person's ideas and plans for harm. When we talk later about the threat assessment process and about determining whether someone poses a threat, essentially we will be trying to determine whether the person is on this pathway toward violence – and if so, where are they on the pathway, and where can we intervene to move them off of the pathway.

Facts About Campus Attacks

We cannot know whether to be concerned by a subject's appearance – but we can tell by their behavior.

- No unique profile of the campus attacker.
- Most have concerned several others with troubling behavior before their attacks.
- Most are suicidal or at a point of desperation prior to their attacks.

Source: U.S. Secret Service & U.S. Department of Education, (2002) *Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative.*

Instructor Notes:

One other major fact that has emerged from research on school shooters and workplace shooters is that there is no accurate or useful profile of these shooters. This is true of what we have seen so far in campus attackers as well. To be honest, our work would probably be easier if there were a profile – because we'd know where to focus our resources. But there isn't one. In fact, these attackers have differed more than they were similar. So we know that we cannot tell by looking at a person whether they will pose a risk.

But there is something we can look at, and that is their behavior. Nearly all attackers alarmed at least one person in their life – and most concerned three or more people in their life – with some very troubling or disturbing behavior. The people who have carried out school shootings, workplace shootings, and campus shootings were not "invisible" – they were already on someone's radar screen for very concerning behavior. Moreover, most attackers were suicidal or desperate prior to their attacks. Now it's clear that not all people who are suicidal are at risk of homicide. However, some people who are suicidal decide to get some revenge or inflict some harm on others before they die. Or they may look at carrying out an attack as a way to get police to kill them – a "suicide by cop" scenario.

IMPLICATIONS

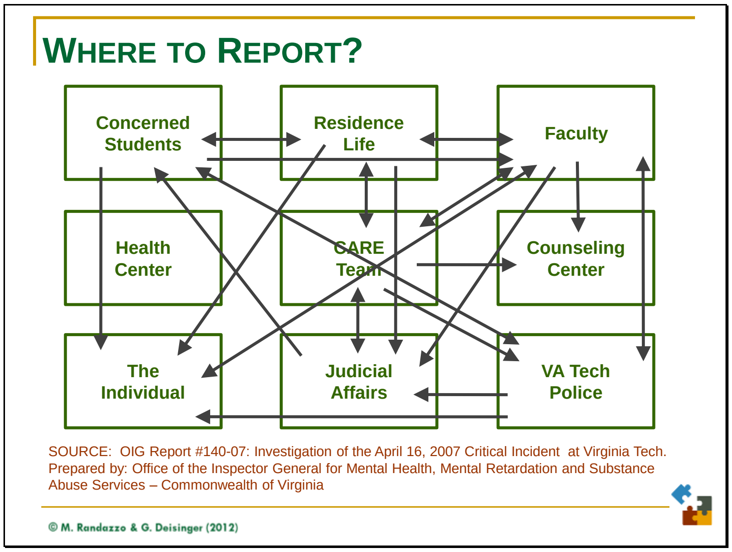
- Many campus and workplace targeted attacks can be prevented.
- Information about a person's ideas and plans for violence can be observed or discovered before harm can occur.
- But information available is likely to be scattered and fragmented.
- Key is to act quickly upon an initial report of concern, see who else has a piece of the puzzle, then pull all the information together to see what picture emerges.

Instructor Notes:

The take-home message from all of this is that many campus and workplace shootings are preventable – if we can uncover someone's ideas and plans for violence in advance.

The challenge is that while there are usually pieces of the puzzle available, the information is likely to be scattered and fragmented.

If we can act quickly when we first learn about someone who has raised concern, we can figure out who might have some relevant information – a piece of the puzzle – and start assembling the facts.



Instructor Notes:
Diagram of Communications Regarding the Individual Within the Virginia Tech Community – Fall 2005

SOURCE: OIG Report #140-07: Investigation of the April 16, 2007 Critical Incident at Virginia Tech. Prepared by: Office of the Inspector General for Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services – Commonwealth of Virginia

This graphic illustrates all of the various components on the Virginia Tech campus that had concerning information about Cho, and this case helps to illustrate why a threat assessment team is so vitally important.

The Team serves as a centralized location where an individual can report alarming behavior or troubled suspicions. Based upon an initial report, the Team can gather more information from others who know the person in question, piecing together scattered fragments to create a more comprehensive picture of the individual and the threat that he/she may pose. Armed with this information, the TAM Team can then develop a strategy to monitor the situation or intervene with the person if necessary to reduce the threat. The TAM Team facilitates communication, collaboration and coordination that can markedly improve the institution's response to developing concerns where that information was shared.

IMPLICATIONS

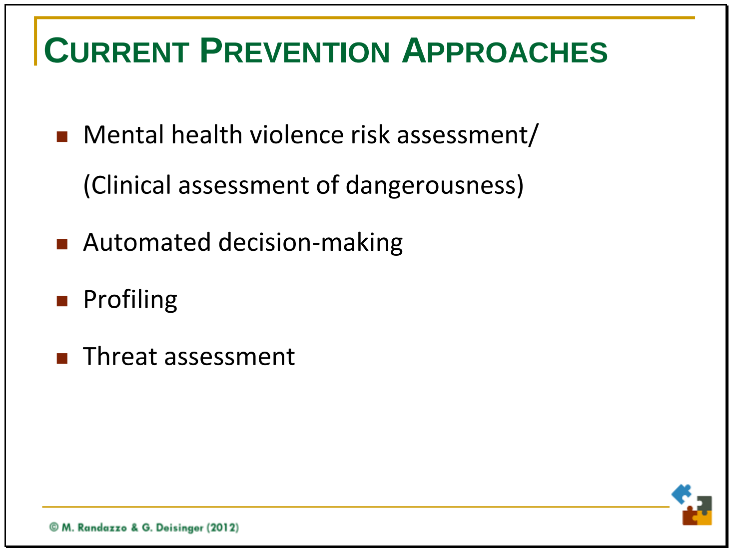
- Assessment involves asking: Is this person on a pathway toward violence or significant disruption to the community?
- Using a team can be particularly effective for gathering and evaluating information, and intervening if necessary.
- Threat assessment and case management is not an automatically adversarial process.
- Engagement with a person of concern can be critical to preventing violence or harm.

<u>Instructor Notes:</u>
When we evaluate the information gathered, we essentially ask whether the person of concern is on the pathway to violence that I described earlier.

It can be very helpful to use a team of people to gather and evaluate the information because information can be gathered more quickly and easily.

Finally, threat assessment is not necessarily or even typically adversarial. It is not a matter of finding "the bad guys" before they can do us harm. Instead, it is usually most successful when a team, or someone designated by the team, can engage with the person of concern, to work with them to solve underlying problems and move them away from thoughts of violence.

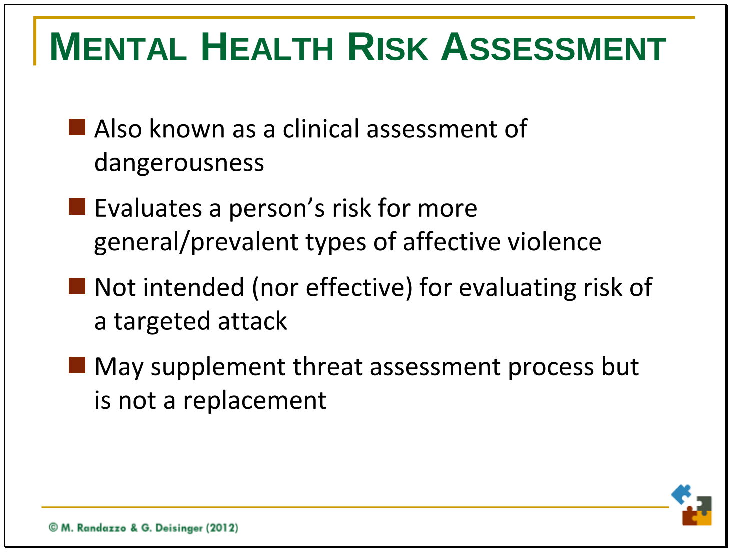
Instructor Notes:
We move now to a discussion of how threat assessment compares with other assessment approaches.



Instructor Notes:
There are four assessment approaches that have been discussed or promoted with respect to campus violence prediction and prevention:

- Mental health violence risk assessment
- Automated decision making
- Profiling
- And Threat Assessment

We will discuss each one in turn.



Instructor Notes:

Mental health violence risk assessment (also known as a clinical assessment of dangerousness)

A process where a licensed mental health professional evaluates a person's risk for more general (and more prevalent) types of violence.

Generally Involves comparing subject to base rate behaviors among those who have committed generalized violence;

Base rate data based on highly specific (and limited) primarily involving incarcerated or inpatient subjects.

- Raises concerns about applicability for day to day threat assessment concerns.

Can be an effective approach for some evaluations – i.e. for the risk of more general/affective violence, when mental health concerns appear to be a primary factor, or when there are concerns about an active client/patient in a clinic setting.

Not effective for evaluating risk of a targeted attack.

Subjects must reach a relatively high threshold to be compelled to undergo such an evaluation – though can be referred for voluntary involvement.

Limited by necessary involvement of mental health provider

- Not all mental health practitioners have training and experience in conducting such evaluations
- Evaluation should be done by independent examiner and NOT by a the treating professional

Automated Decision-Making

Two Areas of Concern:

- The statistical or mathematical process for making the evaluation is unknown
- No correlation between satisfaction with using the automated tool and the accuracy of the decision made

Instructor Notes:

Automated decision-making

There are software programs and web sites that (purport) to provide assessments of risk or threat based on answers to questions about the person in question. Concerns about automated decision-making center on two areas: (i) the statistical or mathematical process for making the evaluation is generally unknown and (ii) there exists no correlation between satisfaction with using the automated tool and the accuracy of the decision made.

PROFILING

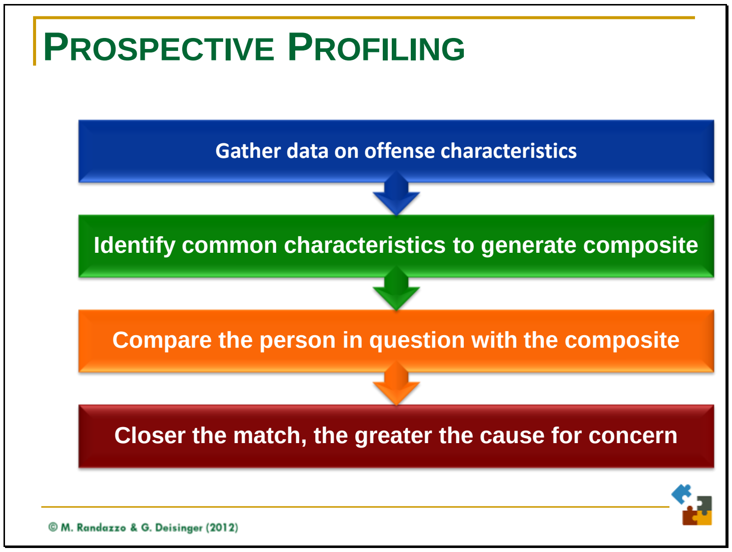
- Most commonly used as an investigative tool to describe the person or type of person who committed a particular crime
- It is retrospective in that it uses clues from a crime that has already occurred to narrow down possible suspects
- When used with respect to evaluating risk of violence, profiling is prospective, not retrospective

Instructor Notes:

Profiling

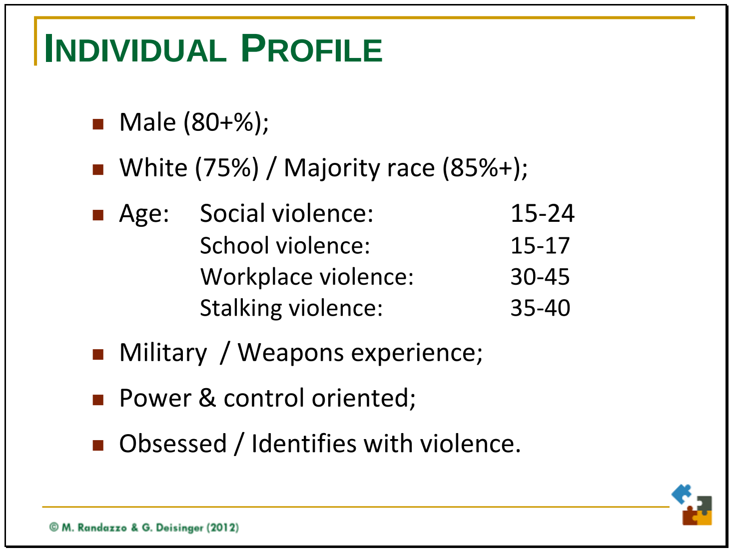
Profiling is most commonly utilized as an investigative tool for describing the person or type of person who may have committed a particular crime;

- Retrospective profiling uses clues from a crime (that has already occurred) to help identify possible suspects. However, when profiling is used with respect to evaluating risk of violence, it is prospective, not retrospective.



Instructor Notes:

Prospective profiling comprises creating a composite view of those who have carried our campus attacks in the past using common characteristics or traits, then comparing a person in question with the composite. According to profiling, the closer the match, the greater the cause for concern.



Instructor Notes:

This slide reflects the summary findings of profiles of workplace violence perpetrators. This description is used to represent the false positives inherent in this type of profiling, as it will likely reflect many of the people participating in the course. In particular, it represents one of the curriculum developers, Dr. Gene Deisinger.

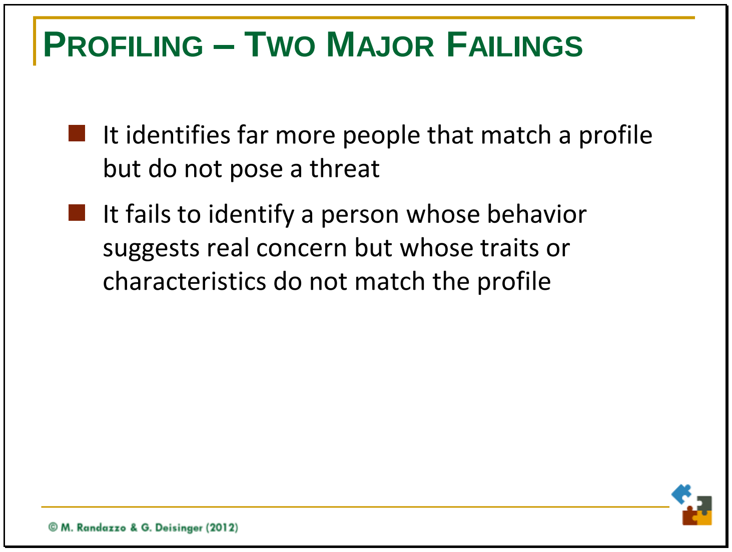
KEY POINT:

Workplace violence offender profiles
that are based on
demographic or static variables
are remarkably accurate,

and utterly worthless.

Instructor Notes:

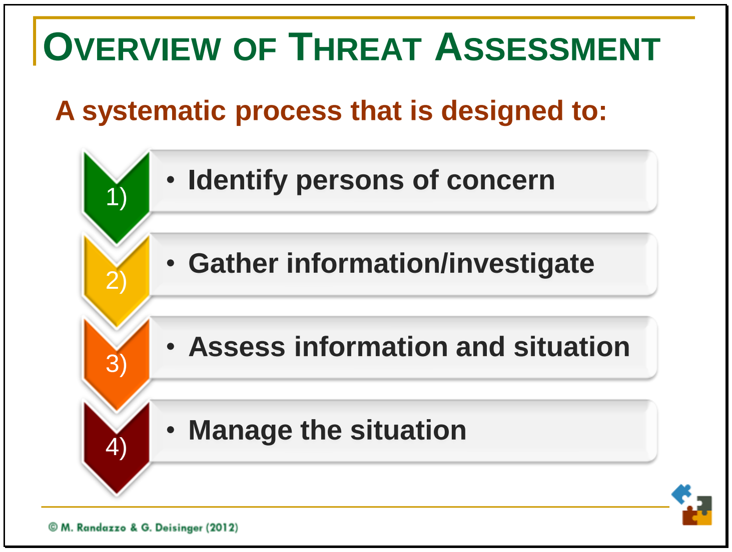
Profiles are accurate in retrospectively describing many of the perpetrators of workplace/campus/school mass violence events, but because of high error rates, the profiles have no utility in predicting the next offender.



Instructor Notes:

Profiling has two major failings:

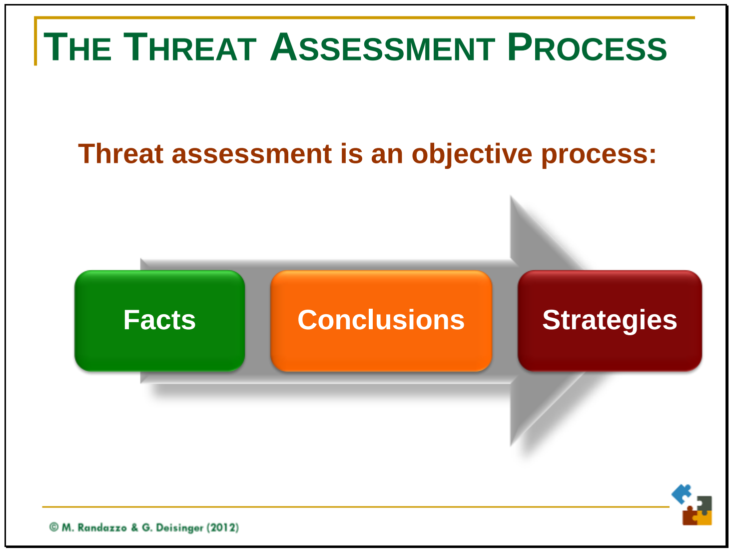
- It identifies far more people that match a profile but do not pose a threat
- Profiling will fail to identify a person whose behavior suggests real concern but whose traits or characteristics do not match the profile



Instructor Notes:

While many participants may be familiar with the concept of threat assessment, it is helpful to include here a clear description of the threat assessment process so that everyone is on the same page. Threat assessment and management – also known as behavioral threat assessment – is a four-part process that includes:

- identifying persons and situations that have raised some concern (for example because a person made a threat or is behaving in a way that is troubling or worrying their friends or classmates)
- gathering additional information about that person and situation from multiple sources
- evaluating or assessing the information gathered to determine whether the person poses a threat of violence or harm to others (or to self, or both others and self)
- developing and implementing a plan to manage the situation and reduce risk if the person is believed to pose a threat



Instructor Notes:

Threat assessment is an objective process – and one that is fact-based and deductive. After gathering facts about a person and situation, a team will ask what conclusions the gathered facts allow them to draw. If the team concludes that the person in question poses a threat, the team will then use those same facts to determine what strategies would best address and reduce any risk posed.

Why Threat Assessment?

- Evidence-based and derived from:
  - U.S. Secret Service model;
  - Safe School Initiative;
  - FBI recommendations regarding workplace violence;
  - Student development (e.g., Ursula Delworth, 1989);
- Used successfully to prevent campus, school, and workplace shootings.
- Broadly applicable for identifying people in need.
- Low-cost and effective.
- Legally defensible approach.
- Involves the community.

Instructor Notes:

There are a number of reasons why threat assessment has been recommended so widely for preventing campus violence. Some of the reasons include that it is an approach that is based on research findings from studies on different types of targeted violence, that it is used regularly by those who practice in the field of threat assessment, and that it can help identify and address a host of emerging problems and not just the potential for a mass shooting.

Why Threat Assessment?

Recommended by:

- Virginia Tech Review Panel (governor's panel)
- Report to President from U.S. Departments of Education, Justice, Health & Human Services
- Numerous professional associations:
  - AASCU, ASJA, IACLEA, MHEC, NAAG, NASPA
- Several state task forces on campus safety:
  - CA, FL, IA, IL, KY, MA, MO, NC, NJ, NM, OK, PA, WI.

Instructor Notes:

Even though public colleges and universities in Virginia are required by law to have threat assessment teams, some people may still ask why threat assessment is used on campus.

The short answer is that the campus shootings at Virginia Tech in 2007 and at Northern Illinois University in 2008 prompted an array of federal agencies, state task forces, and professional associations to examine ways to prevent campus violence – with these agencies, task forces, and associations recommending that colleges and universities to develop and operate threat assessment teams as a key measure to prevent campus violence.

This list shows the various agencies, associations, and task forces that have recommended threat assessment on campus.

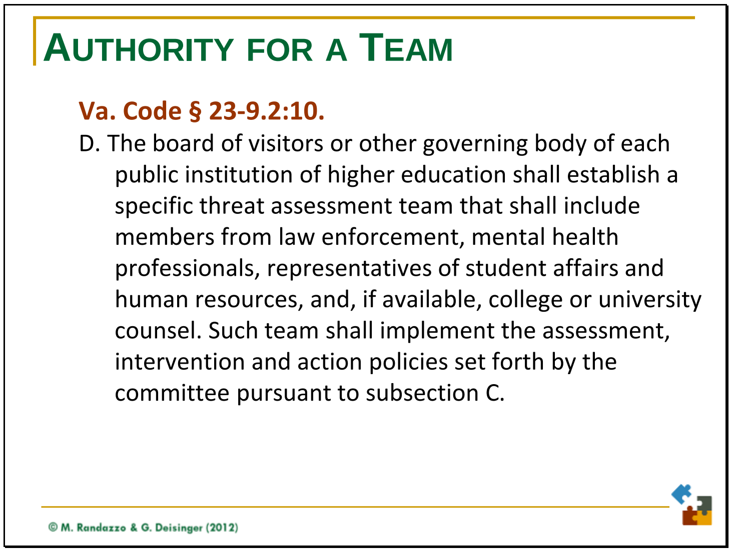
Why Threat Assessment?

Required by legislation:

- Commonwealth of Virginia –public institutions
- State of Illinois – All institutions

Instructor Notes:

The two states where campus threat assessment teams are now required by law: Virginia and Illinois.



Instructor Notes:

This is the language in the Virginia law regarding the requirement for threat assessment teams.

THREAT ASSESSMENT RESOURCES
INTERNATIONAL

Guiding Principles and Best Practices

www.ThreatResources.com

Instructor Notes:

As we move into more detail about campus threat assessment and management, we'll start with the guiding principles and best practices of threat assessment and management.

Threat Assessment Principles

1. Prevention is possible
   - Acts of targeted violence typically follow a logical progression of behavior:
     - Idea
     - Plan
     - Acquisition
     - Implementation
   - This allows opportunities for behavioral progression to be observed.

Instructor Notes:

1. Prevention is possible

- Research on targeted violence has shown that acts of targeted violence – whether on campus, in the workplace, or in school – are rarely impulsive.
- Instead, they are typically thought out and planned out in advance.
- Those who have carried out such attacks usually trouble, disturb or seriously concern multiple people in their lives before carrying out their attacks.
- From a preventive standpoint, these findings are good news.
  - They indicate that there is information that can be detected – about a person's thoughts and plans for violence – before harm occurs.
  - But this information may be scattered among different people and other sources.
  - A threat assessment team can serve as a critical mechanism to pull that information together into one place, evaluate it, and act on it if necessary.

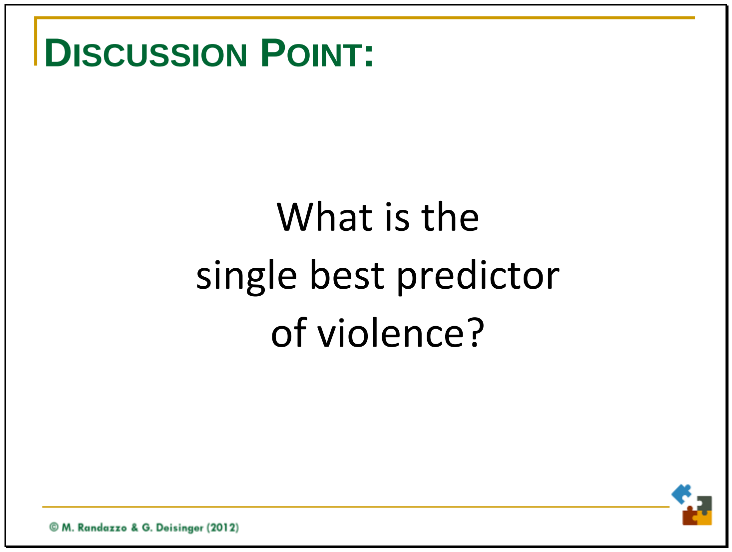
Threat Assessment Principles

2. Violence is a dynamic process
   - Not asking whether this is a "violent person."
   - Looking at changes in circumstances, situation, and its impact on the person in question.

Instructor Notes:

2. Violence is a dynamic process

- The second principle – also from research findings – is that violence is a dynamic process. This means that we are not asking whether this is a "violent person" or a "non-violent person." All of us are capable of becoming violent under the right circumstances – for example if our life is threatened, if our children are threatened. So in threat assessment, we are asking the conditions under which this particular person – the one we are concerned about -- may become violent.



Instructor Notes:

This discussion/ exercise helps illustrate that people often have deeply held views that influence their assessment of cases, even when those views are demonstrably wrong.

Ask participants: What is the single best predictor of violence or future behavior?

Most will respond with "past behavior". Let's explore that idea.

"Our subject of concern has a history of volatility, aggression and violence in multiple situations, both stressful and not. They are about to encounter a stressful situation. What do you predict?"

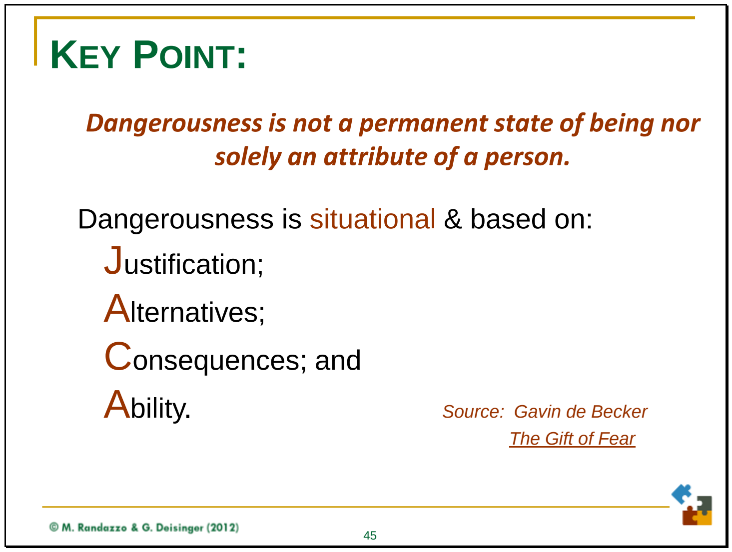
Participants will generally predict "more of the same", i.e., that the subject will continue to act the same way. Reinforce that this is a generally valid perspective.

Now give a different scenario: "Our subject of concern has NO history of volatility, aggression or violence in any situation, stressful or otherwise. They are about to encounter a stressful situation. What do you predict?"

Participants tend to hesitate here, but will generally predict that the subject will NOT behave aggressively. If they don't answer this way, or say "It depends" challenge them – after all, they agreed that past behavior predicts future behavior. So, to be logically consistent, they should say that absence of violence should predict absence of violence.

Point out to participants that if this "truism" were accurate, no one could be violent for the first time.

History (or absence of violence) tends to be over-relied upon as a predictor. This exercise helps point out the dynamic and contextual nature of violence.



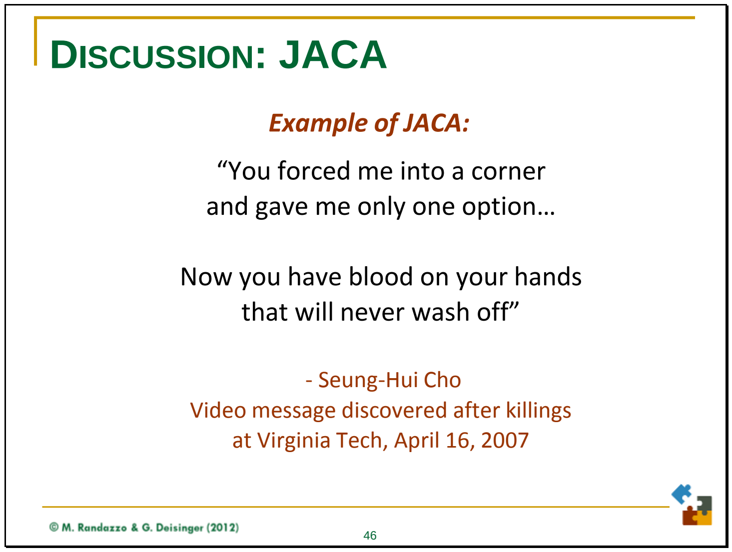
<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

JACA is an acronym that Gavin De Becker uses educate his staff about violence. It distinguishes between the people who are thinking about committing violence and those who are moving towards violence.

JACA stands for:

- J- **Justification** for the use of violence
- A- Lack of perceived **alternatives**
- C- Lack of concern for **consequences** in engaging in violence; or welcoming the **consequences**
- A- Perceived **ability** to engage in the violence

In a subjects' behavior– we are looking for evidence of those 4 elements.

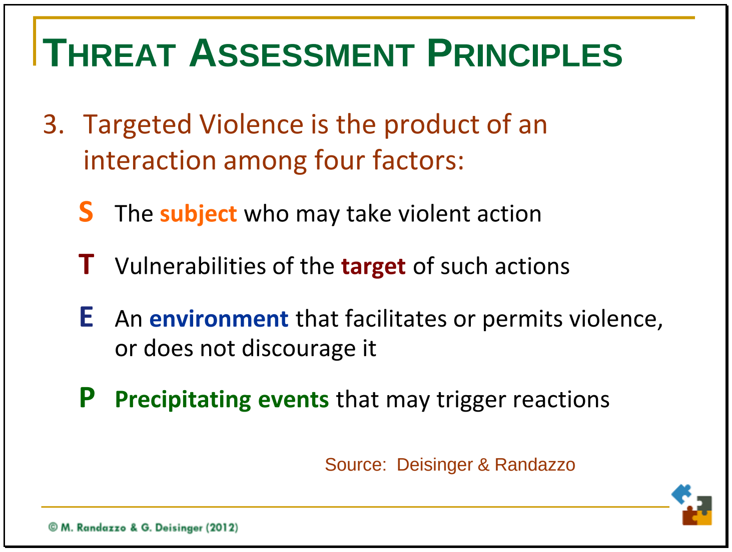


Instructor Notes:

This quote is from the video tape that Cho sent to NBC after he committed the first attack in West Ambler Johnston Residence Hall and before he began the attack on Norris Hall, the academic building. This video was not discovered until after the shootings occurred.

You can use this quote to illustrate the difference sections of JACA:

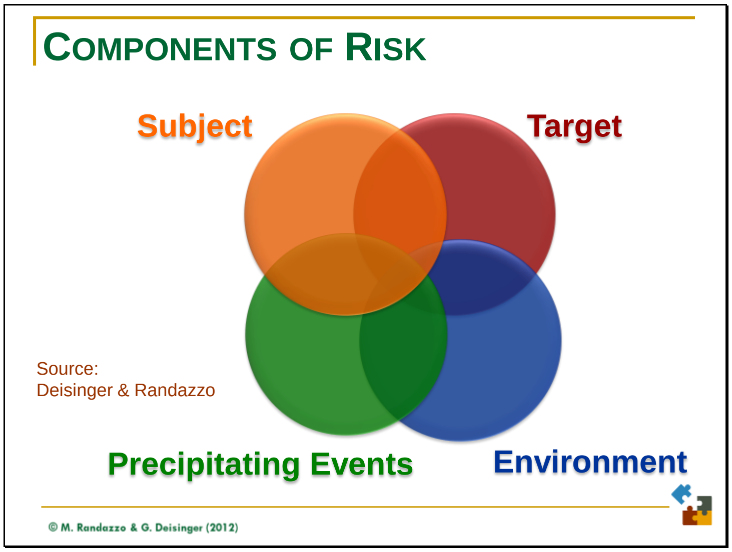
Justification—”You forced me into a corner”
Ability– “You gave me only one option”
Consequences—”Now you have blood on your hands that will never wash off”
Ability– Is not clearly stated in this quote; because Cho exhibited no prior examples of violence, it is believed that he used the shooting in the residence hall to prove his ability to commit violence.



Instructor Notes:

3. Targeted violence is a function of several factors

- We know further from research that targeted attacks – whether on campus, in the workplace, or in school – stem from an interaction between several factors. These include the potential subject (attacker), possible targets, the situation or circumstances, and his or her setting. What we mean by setting relates to the messages about violence that the people around them or people important to them. Is violence encouraged? Do others see violence as a possible solution to the person's problems? Are particular targets mentioned? Or is violence discouraged?



Instructor Notes:
This is another way of conceptualizing that intersection between the four factors just mentioned.

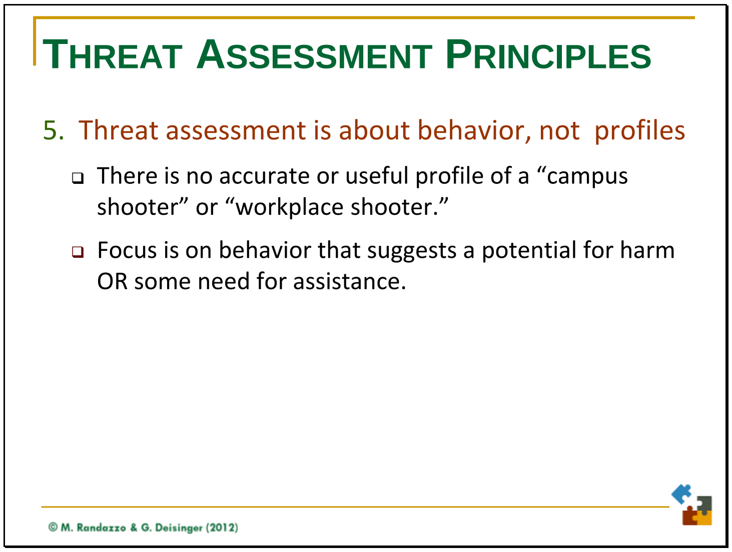
Threat Assessment Principles

4. Corroboration is critical
   - Check facts
   - Use multiple sources
   - Gauge credibility of sources
   - Maintain a healthy skepticism

Instructor Notes:

4. Corroboration is critical

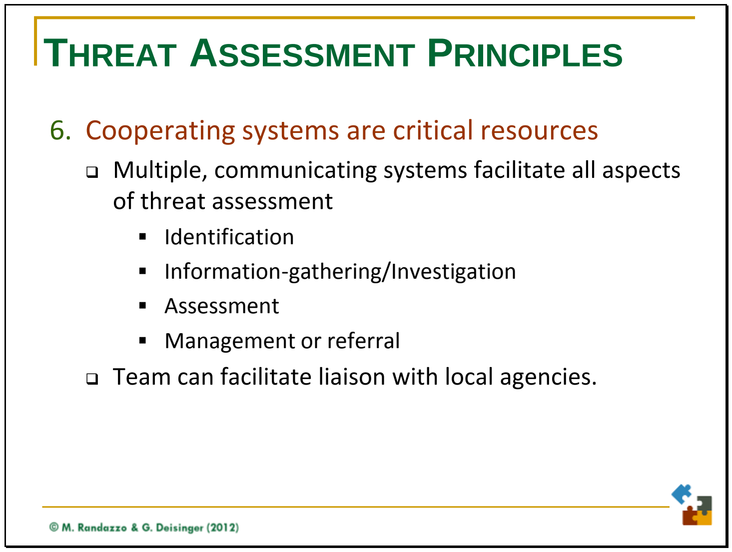
- It is important to keep in mind that a threat assessment case is an investigation – meaning it's a process designed to gather information and facts in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding about the person in question, his or her situation, setting, and potential targets. One hallmark of a good investigation is corroboration or fact-checking. What this means is that it is important to see where information from one source confirm information from another source. When we look into a threat or other concerning behavior, we may well get one story from one person and a different story from someone else. It is critical to check our facts and determine which information is more reliable.



Instructor Notes:

5. Threat assessment is about behavior, not profiles

- As we explained in the previous Lesson, behavioral threat assessment is different from profiling. The emphasis in threat assessment is on a person's behaviors and communications – what they are doing and saying – rather than on their traits or characteristics. In a threat assessment inquiry, we gather together bits and pieces of information from different people who know the person in question, and then see what conclusions those facts allow us to draw.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

6. Cooperating systems are critical resources

- One thing we have found in our combined decades of experience as threat assessment practitioners is that having systems – both on-campus and off-campus – that can cooperate can make the entire threat assessment process far smoother and more efficient. What we mean by systems are the different “silos” that can occur on campuses and in surrounding communities, such as an institution’s administration, its faculty, its counseling and health services, its support staff and other service staff (such as buildings and grounds, food service, etc.), campus law enforcement or security, and community social service agencies, local law enforcement agencies, criminal justice agencies, and others.

Threat Assessment Principles

7. Determine if situation **poses** a threat
   - Critical question is about behavior along a pathway toward harm or significant disruption.
   - Focus is not solely on whether the person made a threat.
   - Expressed threats (or the lack thereof) are not reliable indicators.

Instructor Notes:

7. Does the person pose a threat?

- The key question that a threat assessment team must answer is whether or not the person in question POSES a threat – not whether they made a threat. A lot of people threaten, adults and children alike, and they do so for many different reasons. Most never go on to do harm. So we know that just because someone makes a threat, it doesn't necessarily mean they will do something harmful. But we also know from research on school shootings and workplace shootings that most of those shooters never made threats to their targets before harming or killing them. So we also know that just because someone DOESN'T make a threat, it doesn't mean we can rest easy. What a threat assessment team focuses on instead are the person's behaviors – and whether those behaviors suggest that person has ideas and plans for harm, whether they are on a pathway toward violence.

Instructional strategy:

Use a diagram or graphic to illustrate that some people threaten but never do harm; some never threaten but still do harm; some never threaten and never harm; and some threaten and then do harm.

Threat Assessment Principles

8. Keep victims in mind
   - Threat assessment involves victim concerns as well
   - Victims are typically more concerned about case management than threat assessment
   - Team members should focus on victim safety and well-being, as well as assessment and management

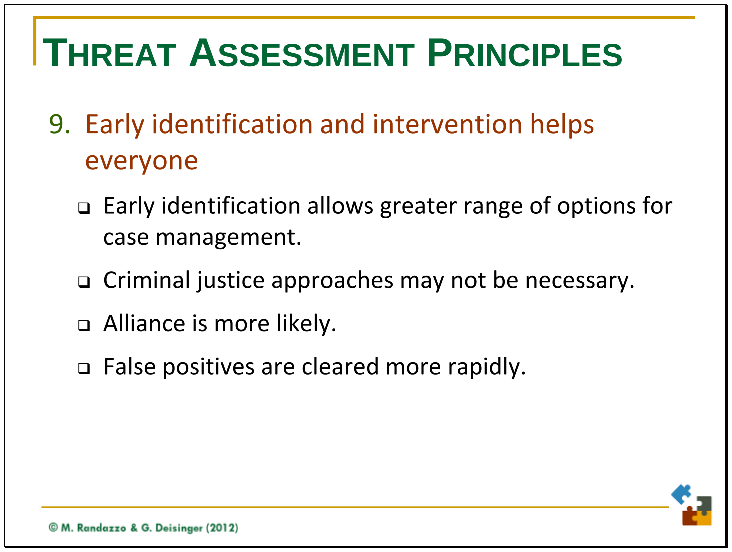
Instructor Notes:

8. Keep victims in mind

- One key area that threat assessment teams must take into consideration in the course of their work is the experience of victims – anyone the person in question has threatened, stalked, or otherwise made fearful. Victims are inherently more interested in threat management – what the threat assessment team is doing to intervene – rather than about the team's overall assessment. Therefore a team will need to factor into their work communicating regularly with victims, even if it just to say that progress is being made – and to remind victims they can call campus police (or local police) if they ever feel unsafe.

Instructional strategy:

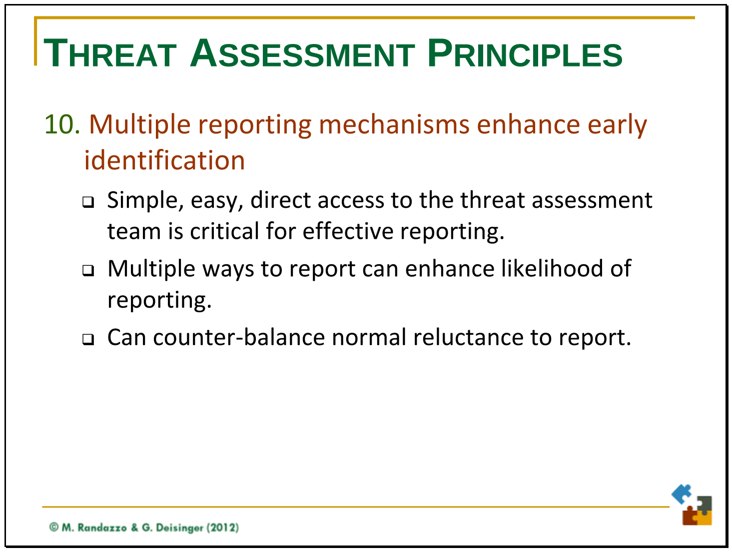
Instructor should use a case study from personal experience to illustrate working with victims and helping to manage their fears. A personal experience that has to do with a higher education case is most appropriate here (such as interacting with a professor who was reluctant to readmit a concerning student to her class).



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

9. Early identification/intervention helps everyone

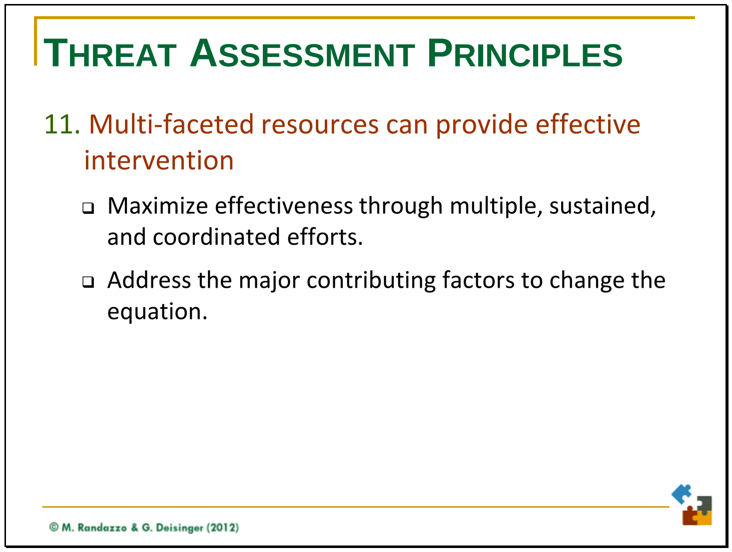
- One of the biggest challenges that any threat assessment team faces is ensuring they are receiving reports of threats and other troubling or potentially violent behavior in a timely manner. A threat assessment team cannot investigate – and intervene – if it's not aware of the problem in the first place. Moreover, the earlier a team learns about a potential problem, the greater the range of tools and options the team will likely be able to use to intervene if necessary, making severe measures such as the involvement of law enforcement or the need to expel a student less likely. This message – about the importance of early reporting – is an important one for threat assessment teams to convey to the campus and broader community. It is people in the area – on campus and off – who will likely the first to notice troubling behavior or other potential problems. They should be encouraged to reports those concerns early on, and reminded that doing so is not considered "snitching" or "tattling" unless their sole intent is not to get that person into trouble.



Instructor Notes:

10. Multiple reporting mechanisms enhance early identification

- One thing that can enhance early reporting is for a campus to have multiple ways for people on campus (and off campus) to share their concerns with the threat assessment team. This can include using existing reporting channels, such as through a faculty member's department chair or dean. It can include anonymous reporting mechanisms, so someone fearful of having their identify discovered can still get information to the team. And it can include an array of phone numbers, web sites, email addresses, and online forms. The easier we can make it for people to share reports with a team, the more likely they will be to convey what they know, and in a timely manner.



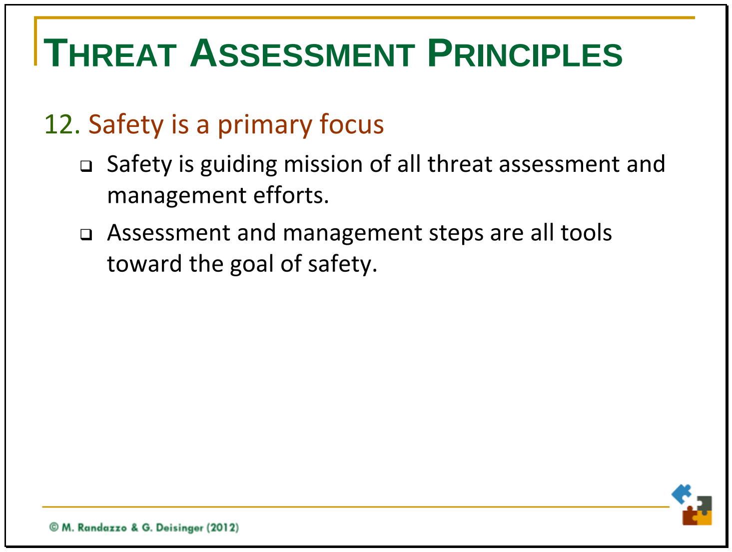
Instructor Notes:

11. Multi-faceted resource can provide effective intervention

- The real crux of the threat assessment process is the ability for a threat assessment team to intervene if the team feels that someone poses a threat. Intervention can take a variety of forms and is always based upon the information gathered in the case and the particular needs of the person in question. In fact, no two case management or intervention strategies will ever look exactly alike. In our experience, the most effective approaches are often those that incorporate multi-faceted intervention strategies. The means that the intervention strategies will address several different aspects of the person's life and circumstances – and likely use different tools and resources to do so.

Instructional strategy:

The instructor should ask participants to each make a list of the various resources they have available on campus and in their community that could be tapped for intervention purposes. The instructor will then compile a master list – using an easel, pad, and markers – or overhead projector – to detail all of the options participants have identified. Many resources that participants identify will be the same, but the purpose of sharing the participant-generated list is to give suggestions to participants that they may not have considered – and to inspire them to think creatively about resources in their communities.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

12. Safety is a primary focus

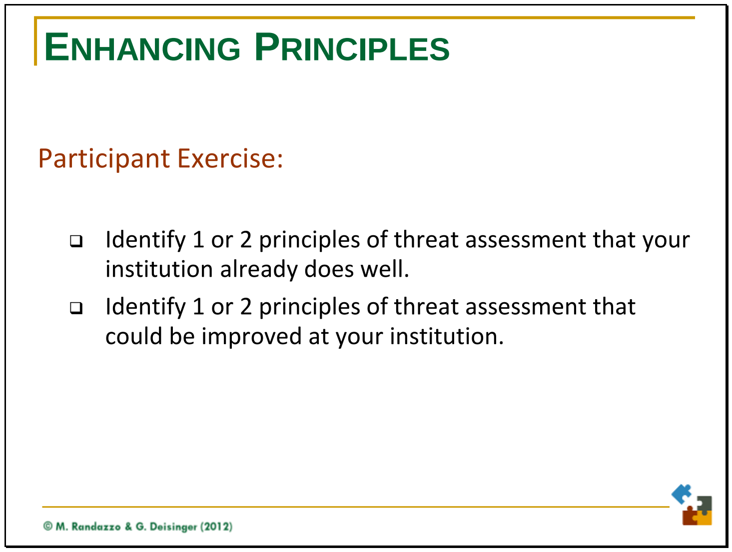
- The goal of threat assessment is – above all – to ensure safety, for potential victims, for the campus and broader community, and for the person who raised concern. Any intervention strategies – whether they be support, confrontation, counseling, suspension, arrest, mentoring, psychiatric evaluation, or others – are all TOOLS toward that goal.

THREAT ASSESSMENT RESOURCES
INTERNATIONAL

Tabletop Exercise

www.ThreatResources.com

Instructor Notes:
(This tabletop exercise is to help participants think through the principles of threat assessment that are already working well at their institution and those that could be enhanced.)



Participant exercise:

Using the tabletop worksheet at the back of the participant manual, ask participants to work in small groups (with other members of their team if they are in attendance) to figure out 1 or 2 (or more) threat assessment principles their institution already does well – and reasons why.

Next, ask them to identify 1 or 2 principles that they would like to enhance or improve at their institution.

Then ask participants to discuss what they decided.

Instructor Notes:
Ask if there are any questions on the material covered so far.

Next we will move on to aspects of developing and operating a threat assessment team.

Context of Safe Campuses

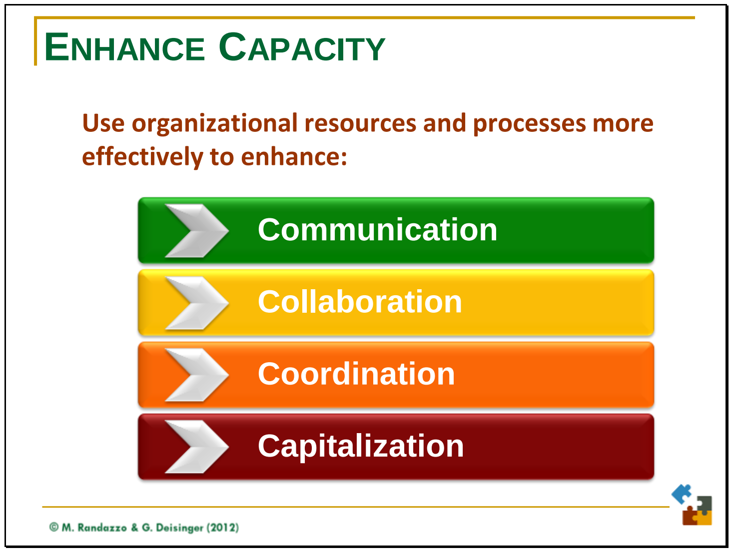
Comprehensive Safety Planning

Pro-active plans in place to:

- Prevent and mitigate violence
  - Identify at-risk situations
  - Assess situations
  - Intervene & manage concerns
- Prepare for potential violence
- Respond to violent acts and
- Recover from the event.

Instructor Notes:

A threat assessment team can be particularly effective at an institution that already has a proactive approach to campus safety. We see threat assessment as an integral part of campus-wide efforts to prevent violence, identify persons at risk, intervene with developing concerns, respond to violent events, and recover from any violent events. We recommend that campuses consider conducting an overall vulnerability assessment, consistent with the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA) Blueprint for Safe Campuses, and the Massachusetts Higher Education report, Campus Violence Prevention and Response, to identify areas where enhancement may be need



Instructor Notes:

Communication:
Effective teams continually seek to improve communication to and from the team, in lawful and appropriate ways. Multi-disciplinary teams include persons that can serve as information sources due to their connections across campus. Team members facilitate information getting to the team through a broad range of channels. Similarly, team members can facilitate dissemination of information to relevant constituencies across campus. Team members work continuously to identify gaps in communication and to enhance timely and effective flow of information. In short, they agree to share!

Collaboration:
Effective teams view issues related to safety and violence as community problems, requiring community investment and partnerships. Team members agree to work together toward shared goals of enhancing the safety and well-being of the campus community.

Coordination:
Through increased communication and a spirit of collaboration team members are better able to coordinate activities and interventions. This minimizes risks of individual departments taking actions that interfere with team goals or the actions of other departments. It better allows for interventions and follow-up to be done consistently and more effectively.

Capitalization:
Teams make the best possible use of the resources and skills that are available to them. The good news is, especially in times of diminished resources, that many campuses have a range of staff, skills and resources that are already in place and have an existing role in addressing concerns regarding the safety and well-being of the campus community. The team approach helps maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of those resources. In short, the emphasis is to begin with what you have, and make it better as you go.

Discussion Point:
The instructor will review these key concepts and ask participants questions about the relevance these concepts fit with their campus.

COMPONENTS OF A CAMPUS THREAT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

- Systematic process for addressing concerns
- Multi-disciplinary Threat Assessment Team
- Administration support
- Policies and procedures necessary for functioning
- Legal counsel input on information-sharing
- Incident tracking and other record-keeping
- Multiple reporting mechanisms
- Effective case management resources and strategies.

Instructor Notes:

It is important to have a basic understanding of the various components on campus that contribute to effective threat assessment efforts. The next module will cover all of these components in greater detail, but this brief overview is presented to provide a sense of the different elements that enhance campus threat assessment strategies. These components include:

- A multi-disciplinary threat assessment team
- Administration support and empowerment of the process
- Policies and procedures necessary for functioning
- Legal counsel input on information sharing, decision-making and case management
- Incident-tracking and other record keeping
- Multiple reporting mechanisms
- Effective case management resources and strategies

Threat Assessment Team: Functional Authority and Role

- Understand threats / concerns;
- Evaluate legitimacy of concerns;
- Identify motivations for violence;
- Assess likelihood of physical harm;
- Develop strategies for risk reduction;
- Guide implementation of strategies;
- Re-evaluate threat;
- Evaluate needs of community.

Instructor Notes:

Authority:
Teams work best with full administrative support. Threat assessment & management teams must have either:

- The authority for managing cases and making decisions; or
- Direct access to those with decision-making authority on their campus.

Discussion Point:
Instructor should either ask participants how their teams are (or will be) authorized, OR may provide feedback to the group regarding participant responses to the pre-conference survey.

Key Roles:
Teams should be authorized to function across all aspects of the threat assessment and management process including:

- Identification of potential situations of concern;
- Investigation of those situations;
- Assessment of the situation;
- Management of interventions; and
- Follow-up and closure of cases upon resolution.
- Understanding the core elements, authority and functional roles necessary for team effectiveness will help campuses identify members for their threat assessment and management teams.

Discussion Point:
Instructor should either ask participants to identify team roles OR may provide feedback to the group regarding participant responses to the pre-conference survey.

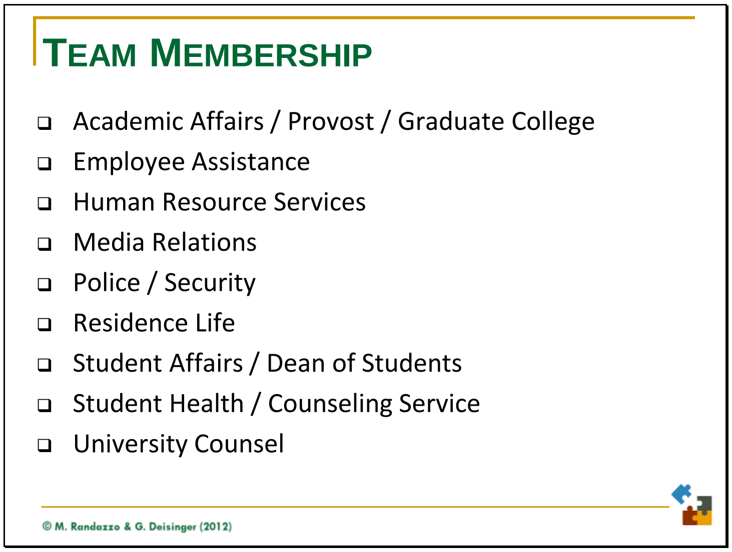
Need for Collaboration

"Most important, dangerous people rarely show all of their symptoms to just one department or group on campus. A professor may see a problem in an essay, the campus police may endure belligerent statements, a resident assistant may notice the student is a loner, the counseling center may notice that the student fails to appear for a follow-up visit. Acting independently, no department is likely to solve the problem. In short, colleges must recognize that managing an educational environment is a team effort, calling for collaboration and multilateral solutions."

Source: Peter Lake, Chronicle of Higher Ed 6/29/2007

Instructor Notes:

This quote from Peter Lake, which appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education, provides a great summary of the importance of information sharing and collaboration in threat assessment and management efforts.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

<u>Key Membership and skill sets:</u>
There are several people and roles that can contribute to threat assessment teams. What are your thoughts about prospective team members?
Common representatives include those from offices such as:

- Academic Affairs / Provost / Graduate College
- Employee Assistance
- Human Resource Services
- Media Relations
- Police / Security
- Residence Life
- Student Affairs / Dean of Students
- Student Health / Counseling Service
- University Counsel

The size of the TAM Team will be determined, in large part, by the Team's workload and the resources of the institution... Core team membership should be driven by the communication and working relationships that are necessary to achieve the mission of the Team. The institution can decide on the Team's initial membership, and then expand or contract as conditions dictate. A general guide is to have as few core members as are necessary to provide for a timely and objective review of cases. Having too many core members may make for difficult scheduling of regular meetings.

However, membership should not be viewed only in terms of positions. And a time should not be conceptualized only in terms of what particular people or roles are seated around a table discussing a particular case. Rather, team membership should be considered more broadly in terms of how to maximize the key elements of communication, collaboration, coordination and capitalization on existing resources.

Conceptualizing the Team

- Players (First-string)
- Players (Second-string, specialty units)
- Team Leadership
  - Owners
  - Coaches
- Trainers
- Marketing
- Scouts
- Fans

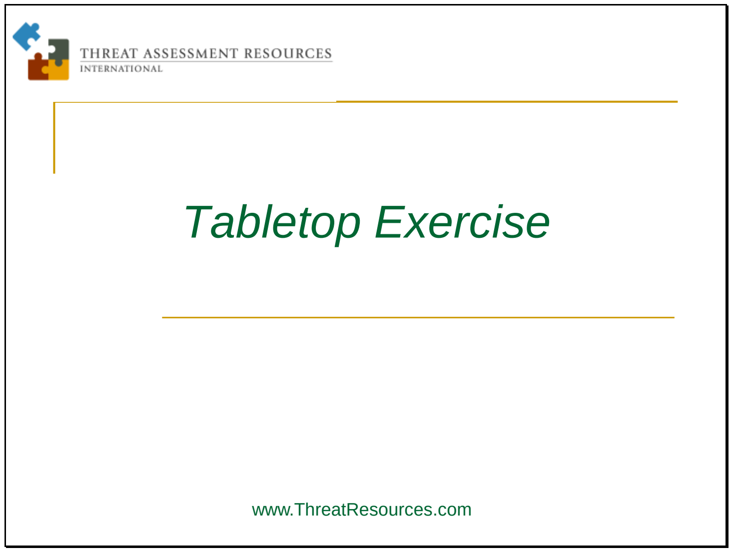
Instructor Notes:

Deisinger and Randazzo, in "The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams use the analogy of a sports team in conceptualizing the makeup of a threat assessment team.

- The players on the field are the most visible members of a sports team. These are analogous to the core team members who meet, discuss, assess, manage and follow up. They are the ones who implement the plays and adjust to changing conditions or strategies on the field. However, the players are supported and enhanced by several other entities.
- However, beyond the players on the field at any given point, there are additional players that are on the bench. Some of them provide depth and backup to the primary players. Others only come into the game to utilize specific skills sets that are needed at points in the game, such as place kickers or special teams. These additional players are analogous to team members who provide backup to primary representatives on the team or only participate in regard to their specialized area of expertise (e.g., financial aid issues that impact on the stability of a student's situation, or representatives from international student programs to explain how cultural or immigration issues may impact a case.)
- A sports team owner or college athletic director provides strategic direction and authorization for the membership. This is akin to the institution's senior administration, which authorizes the mission and activities of the Team. A sports team has a coach who is knowledgeable and experienced in playing the game, sets general direction, guides the development of fundamental skills, and facilitates the application of core principles. This is analogous to the team leader providing direction, structure and accountability for the TAM Team.
- Sports trainers provide for specific needs in support of players. Similarly, there are often subject matter experts on campus that may supplement the TAM Team's activities, but who are not directly involved in the assessment and on-going management of cases. One example may be environmental health or safety staff members who have expertise with a particular chemical that is referenced in a subject's threats.
- In addition, just as a sports team often has a marketing component that reminds people of its existence and generates interest, the TAM Team engages in community outreach efforts to advertise its existence and get the community involved.
- Finally, a sports team has scouts who search out new talent and monitor how other teams play and strategize. In a sense, these are all the members of the campus community, any of whom may be tapped to share information and observations that are relevant to a particular case.

Discussion Point:

Instructor should ask participants to identify roles or skills sets (that exist on their campus or in their community) that would further enhance the effectiveness of their team.



Instructor Notes:

(This tabletop exercise is designed to help participants think through and/or articulate their team's mission or scope – ie, the range of cases or situations their team handles or will handle).

Setting a Threshold for Team Involvement

Participant Exercise – Part 1:

- What information do you want reported to your threat assessment team?
- What 'threshold" do you want to establish for reporting?

Instructor Notes:

Threshold of Team Involvement

An early challenge for teams is to establish a threshold for which the team is to be engaged in the assessment and management of a situation of concern. While this seems fairly straightforward, in practice this involves difficult choice making.

Each Team should define its threshold with regards to the level of behavior or concern that should trigger a notice to the Team. There is a tradeoff between early identification and managing the workload. A low threshold of concerning behavior will facilitate early identification and intervention, will allow for a broader range of management options, and may thereby reduce the likelihood of cases escalating to crisis levels. However, the more information the Team receives, the greater the Team's workload and the greater the risk of becoming overwhelmed. Conversely, a high threshold of concern will reduce the overall workload but may result in the Team not becoming aware of situations until later in their development when there are likely to be greater crises and diminished range of appropriate options.

The key, of course, is to find a balance for the threshold of team involvement. That balance should be driven by the team's mission/goals, resources, and capacity for expansion.

Participant exercise:

Using the tabletop exercise worksheet at the back of the participant manual, ask participants to work in small groups (with other members of their team if they are in attendance) to figure out what information they want reported to the team. Do they want a low or high threshold?

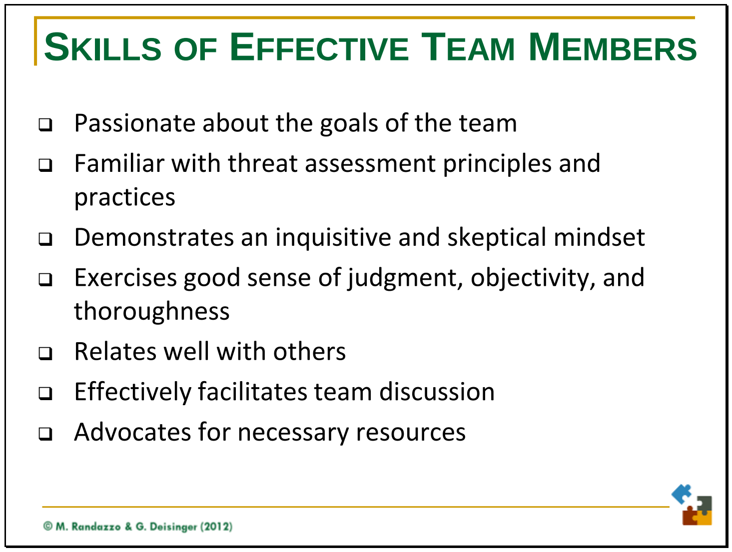
Setting a Threshold for Team Involvement

Participant Exercise – Part 2:

- How will you communicate this with your campus?
  - What wording will you use?
  - What method(s) will you use?

Participant exercise – Part 2:

Now ask participants to figure out how they will communicate their mission or scope to the campus? Will they use the same language? Examples? What methods will they use to convey this message? Then ask participants to share what they decided.



Instructor Notes:

Skills of Effective Team Leaders
One individual on the TAM Team should be designated as the team leader.

This individual will be responsible for leading the Team meetings, assigning responsibilities to other team members, ensuring that the threat assessment and management process is followed, and facilitating discussions.

The team leader will also have authority for making decisions when the Team cannot reach consensus or in crisis situations that require immediate decision-making.

In choosing the team leader, the Team (or institution) should select someone with the following skills and attributes:

- Passionate about the goals of the team;
- Familiar with threat assessment principles and practices;
- Demonstrates an inquisitive and skeptical mindset;
- Exercises good sense of judgment, objectivity, and thoroughness;
- Relates well with others;
- Effectively facilitates team discussion;
- Advocates for necessary resources.

Team Decision-Making

Crew Resource Management:

- Consensus-driven decision making
- Team leader may make ultimate decision, but <u>everyone on team</u> is obligated to share opinions and raise concerns and ideas
- Focus on what still works – for the person and their situation
- Focus on what the team can change or fix

Source: NASA & Major Airlines

<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

<u>Consensus-Driven Decision Making</u>
Experience with multi-disciplinary, problem-solving, teams has shown that consensus driven decision-making is usually the best approach.

However, consensus here does not mean that all team members must agree with every aspect of the decision in order for actions to occur. Rather, consensus is defined by member's ability to accept that the group decision is an acceptable means of addressing the issue, even if it might differ from the preferred approach for a given team member.

We borrow here from the concept of "Crew Resource Management" that is often used by NASA and the major airlines. The Crew Resource Management approach involves the following elements:

- Consensus-driven decision making;
- Team leader may make ultimate decision, but <u>everyone on team</u> is obligated to share opinions and raise concerns and ideas;
- Focus on what still works – for the person and their situation;
- Focus on what the team can change or fix.

Team Decision-Making

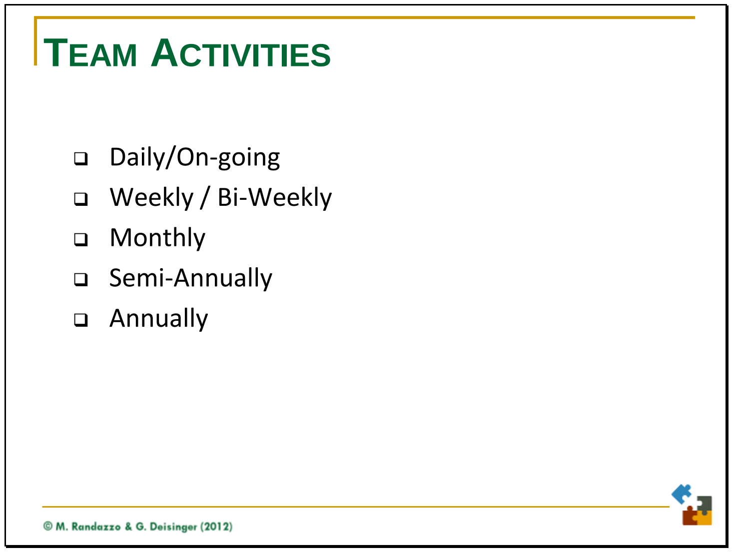
Crew Resource Management:

- Think creatively about resources, as well as "eyes and ears."
- Anticipate likely change in the short and mid-term, and how the subject may react.
- Monitor the situation using available resources.
- Document decision-making, implementation, and progress.

Instructor Notes:

Crew Resource Management

- Think creatively about resources, as well as "eyes and ears."
- Anticipate likely change in the short and mid-term, and how the subject may react.
- Monitor the situation using available resources.
- Document decision-making, implementation, and progress.
- Team consensus is a critical element of an effective problem-solving process.



Instructor Notes:

Daily Activities The team leader or another designated person on the Team should screen for new cases on a daily basis. If a case seems in need of immediate attention, as in cases where there appears to be a threat of physical injury posed to the community or to an individual, the team leader (or any other member of the team) can call for an emergency meeting of the entire group.

Weekly/Bi-weekly Activities In addition to discussing new cases, the Team also needs to regularly review existing cases,; follow up on previously assigned tasks,; report on completion of previously discussed tasks, discuss management strategies, decide whether management of a particular case requires a broader level of representation, set the next action steps, assign responsibility for completion of action steps, set timelines for those steps and how their success will be evaluated.

For each new case, the following issues should be addressed: Understand threats / concerns Identify immediately available information; Determine imminence of situation; Identify target (if not already known)'; Begin threat assessment process ; Assign responsibilities and deadlines; Document initial information; For on-going cases, the above issues should continue to be addressed, as well as the following: Continue guiding implementation of previously established strategies; Re-evaluate threats; Evaluate needs of community. Before the end of each TAM Team meeting, responsibility should be assigned to specific team members for implementing the recommendations that the Team has developed. This helps to avoid confusion, ensuring that efforts are neither duplicated nor neglected.

Monthly - Team should review its overall performance to determine if cases are being identified, assessed and managed effectively. The team's work should be reviewed and compared to its goals to determine whether these are being carried out successfully. In addition, some form of outreach to the campus community should be conducted to encourage reporting.

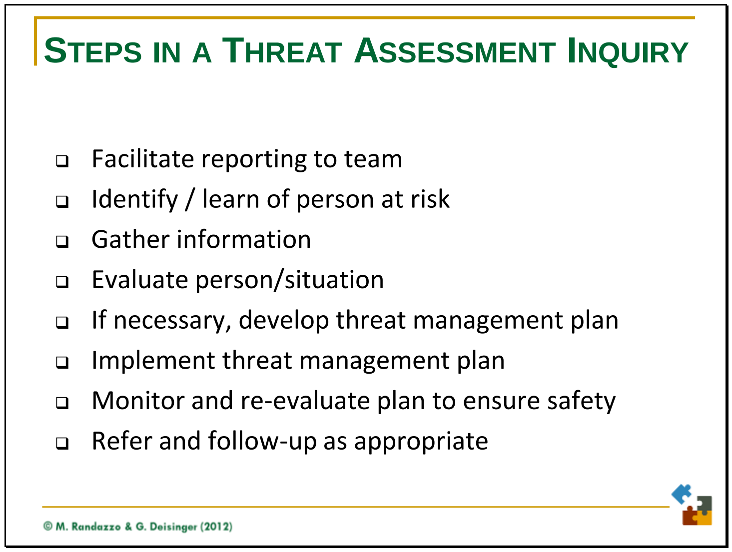
Semi-Annually About twice per year, the team members should train together and conduct tabletop exercises or review cases for lessons learned. After-action reviews should be conducted in order to capture the lessons learned and update the team's mission and goals. If needed, outside consultants, agencies, and/or institutions can be brought in for assistance.

Annually On a yearly basis, the team should meet to conduct strategic planning. The team should take a long-term look at what needs to be done on campus in the upcoming year, such as faculty/staff training, outreach, tabletop exercises, and after-action reviews, and make plans accordingly. The team's strategy should be clearly outlined, including the team's mission, guiding principles, and membership.

Instructor Notes:

Ask if there are any questions on the team module.

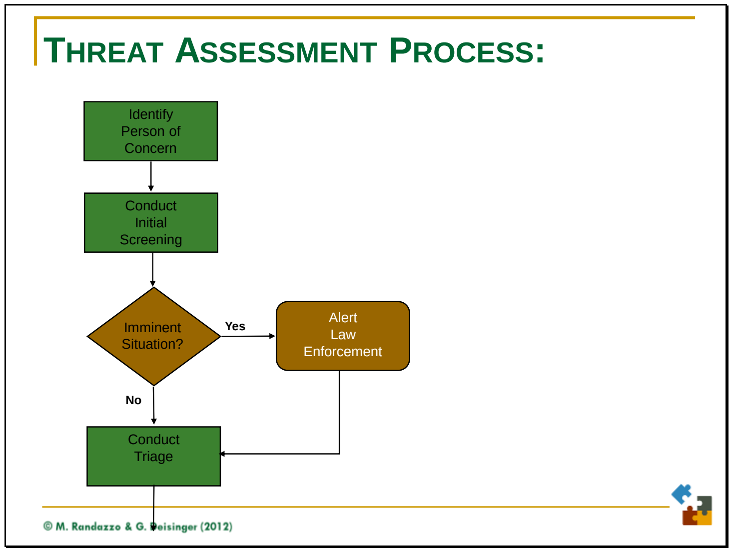
We will now move on to discuss the details of the threat assessment and management process. At the back of the participant manual, in the Resource section, there is a one-page diagram of the threat assessment process that participants can refer to.



Instructor Notes:

There are several steps in the threat assessment and management process. We will review these in greater detail throughout this section, but essentially the process starts with the team encouraging people throughout campus and in the community to report threats and other concerning behavior to the team. Then once the team learns of a person of concern, the team gathers more information about the person from various sources. The team will then evaluate the person and their situation to determine whether they pose a threat of violence or self-harm – or if they are otherwise in need of some help. If so, the team will then develop and implement a case management plan, and then monitor the plan to see if it is working as intended. The team will continue to monitor and follow up on the case as needed – gathering more information and re-evaluating whenever necessary.

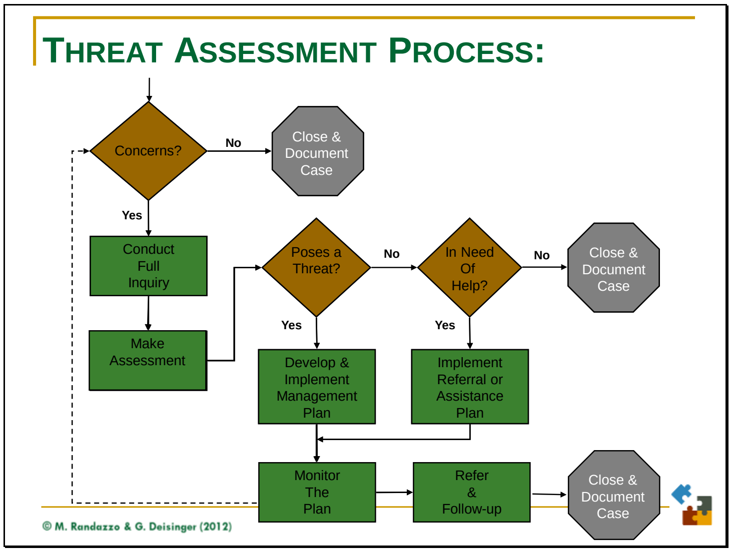
The next two slides provide a graphic depiction of the threat assessment and management process. I will focus on particular sections of these graphics when we discuss these components in greater detail.



Instructor Notes:

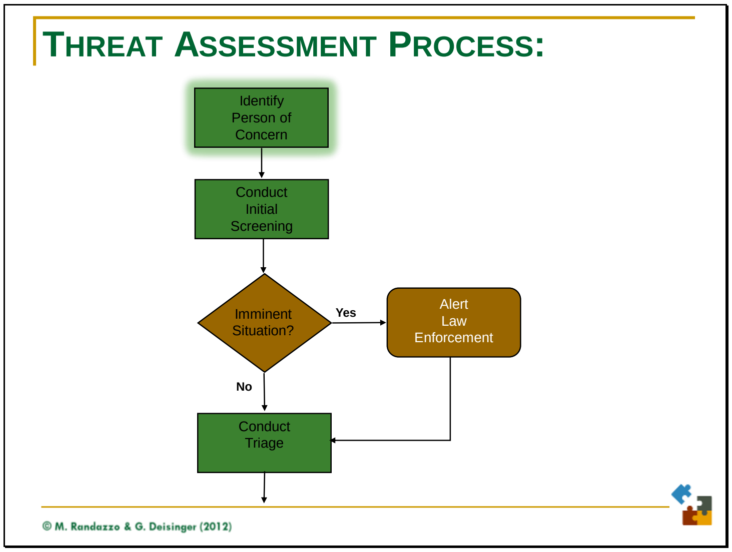
In their book on Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams, Dr. Deisinger and Dr. Randazzo described a process they recommend in conducting a threat assessment. That process is depicted on this slide and the next.

The instructor(s) can quickly review the process depicted in this slide and the next. The elements will be elaborated upon in subsequent slides.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

This is the second part of the process flowchart. We will review all of these steps in detail.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

We will begin at the start of the threat assessment process – identifying persons of concern and findings ways to make it easy for people to convey reports to the threat assessment team.

FACILITATE REPORTING

For reporting to be effective, people need to know:

- Their role and responsibility to report
- What to report
- Where to report
- Reports are wanted
- Something will be done
- Regular reminders of issues and process

"If you see something, say something."

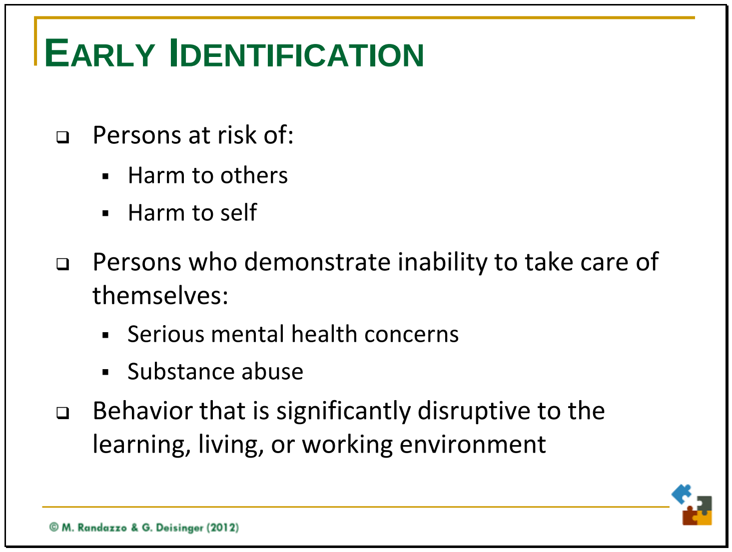
Source: NYC Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Instructor Notes:

Encouraging reporting

Identification depends, in large part, upon the willingness and ability of the campus community to communicate with the threat assessment team and make the team aware of any concerns or suspicions they may have about a particular individual's behavior. Therefore, a critical element of the threat assessment process is to encourage the campus community to look for warning signs and report them. What information is reported to the team will depend on how the campus is educated about reporting. We recommend that campus students and personnel be encouraged to report any threats and any other behavior that they find troubling or upsetting. The message should be that there is no penalty for reporting, and that the team wants to hear about behavior that causes some worry or concern, even if the behavior seems low-level or unclear. It is also important to emphasize that the team's efforts are oriented around assistance, not primarily (or solely) punitive actions.

Encouraging reporting can be accomplished through various mechanisms such as general awareness training for the entire campus, providing multiple ways to report a concern to the team, and notification to parents. Many campuses have well-developed admissions and orientation programs for parents to inform them about a myriad of campus resources.



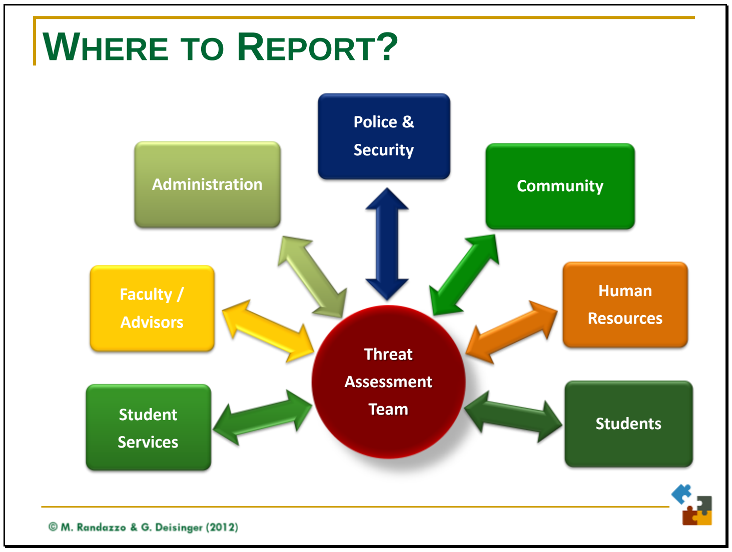
Instructor Notes:

Checking around campus

Departments and programs can also be contacted to see if they are aware of any concerning students, faculty, or staff members that have raised some concern. These concerns can be about a person's risk of harm to themselves or to others. The concerns can be about a person's inability to take care of themselves – whether because of some mental health concerns or because of substance abuse. Or the concerns can be about behavior that is significantly disruptive – in the classroom, department, dorms,etc.

The team can do simple liaison or outreach activities to those departments to encourage them to report and to check in with them periodically (e.g., weekly, bi-monthly, monthly) to see if any persons have come on their radar screen for any of the reasoons listed here or for other troubling or worrisome behavior. Departments where the threat assessment team can (and should) "check in" include the following:

- Student judicial process
- Faculty grievance/conduct boards
- Staff grievance review committees
- Equal opportunity & diversity offices
- University legal counsel
- Campus police or security departments
- Local law enforcement
- Residential Life conduct boards
- Honor boards
- Greek Council/fraternity and sorority system (or other student social organizations that may or may not be formally linked to campus)
- Community entities such as hospitals
- Others?



Instructor Notes:

This diagram shows the various sources of information – on campus and off campus – that may report concerns to the threat assessment team. Likewise these are various places where a threat assessment team can check in and see if they have any concerns to report.

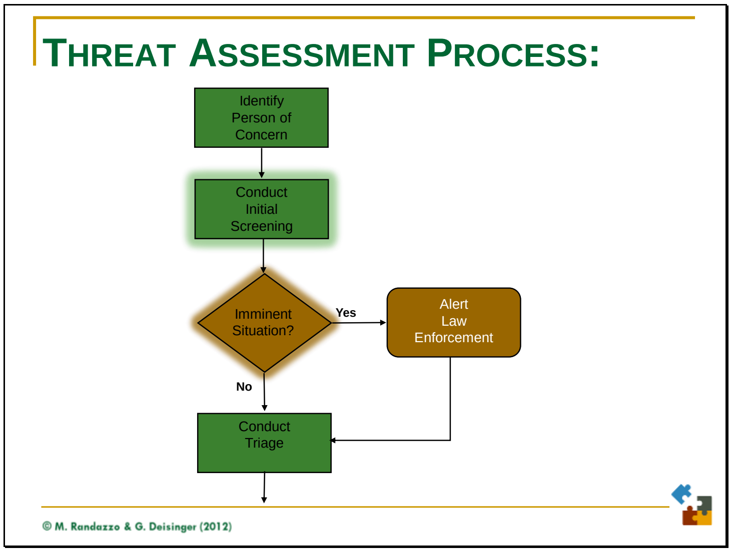
Facilitate Reporting

- Available 24 / 7
- Records protected in centralized database
- Cross-referenced with other contacts
- Review by trained personnel

Instructor Notes:

Our tendency as humans is to not want to report concerns or threats unless they are truly alarming – and even then we tend to be bad at reporting. But the easier we can make it for people to report concerns, the more likely they are to report. The campus community should be able to report possible threats to the threat assessment team 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The more ways that students, faculty, staff, and parents can report concerns to the Team, the greater the likelihood that the Team will receive reports as early as possible. Many colleges and universities provide their community with a means of anonymous reporting, such as a single telephone number that can be used to provide information about a person in question without revealing information about the caller. While it may be helpful to have this means of anonymous reporting, we feel it is important that it not be the community's only means of communicating concerns about suspicious or troubling behavior. We recommend that the Team consider the various vehicles that can be used to facilitate reporting to the Team, including such low-tech options as periodic liaison discussions with each department to remind them that a student or colleague might come to them with some concerning information and that they can, in turn, report that information to the Team.

It also means having mechanisms where the reports come in that facilitate the information gathering process, including searchable records of previous contacts with the threat assessment team, cross-referencing with other police contacts, and personnel trained in how to act on reports quickly.



Instructor Notes:

Conduct an initial screening

Now let's get back to the threat assessment and management process. Once the team learns about a person of concern, the team will conduct an initial screening. The first question the team needs to ask is whether or not this is an imminent situation.

Initial Screening

- The team should gather initial information from several key sources, including:
  - Student affairs (for a case involving a student)
  - Human resources (for a case involving a faculty member or staff member);
  - Campus police/security,
  - Local law enforcement
  - Online search of the person's name, the name of the institution, and the name(s) of anyone they may have threatened, harassed, pursued, or scared.

Instructor Notes:

Initial sources of information

If the threat assessment team determines that there is not an emergency or imminent situation at hand, the next thing it needs to determine is whether there is a need for a full inquiry. To do this, the team should begin by gathering initial information from several key sources, including:

- Previous contacts made through the threat assessment or assistance process;
- Student Affairs or Human Resources
- Campus police/security and local law enforcement
- Academic affairs
- Residential staff

Instructional strategy:

Ask participants to list other potential sources of information.

INITIAL SCREENING

- Recommended Internet sites include:

Google.com	Bebo.com
MySpace.com	Xanga.com
Facebook.com	Snopes.com
YouTube.com	TheHoodUp.com
Twitter.com	Cuil.com
Blackplanet.com	RateMyProfessor.com
MiGente.com	Craigslist.com (Search by relevant location)
Technorati.com (searches blogs)	

Instructor Notes:

An online search of the person's name, the name of the institution, and the name(s) of anyone they may have threatened, harassed, pursued, or scared. Recommended websites to search include:

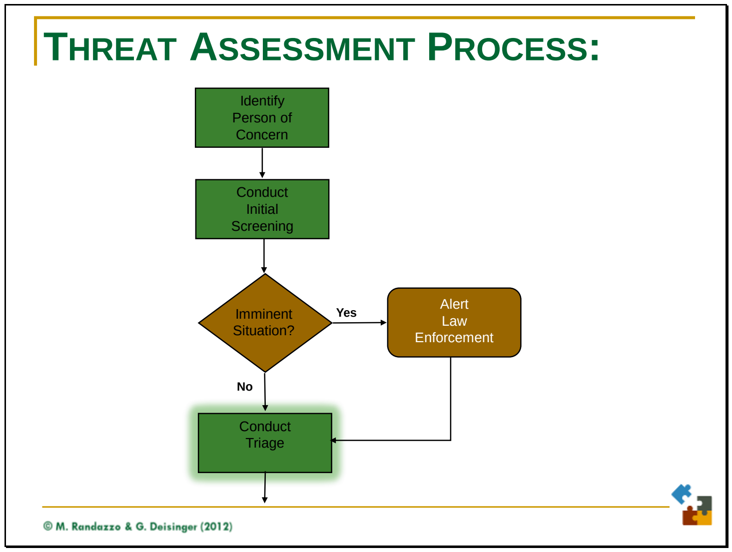
- *Google.com*
- *MySpace.com*
- *Facebook.com*
- *YouTube.com*
- *Cuil.com*
- *Technorati.com (searches blogs)*
- *Twitter.com*
- *Blackplanet.com*
- *MiGente.com*
- *Bebo.com*
- *Xanga.com*
- *Craigslist.com* (search the relevant city/town)
- *Thehoodup.com*
- *Others?*

Imminent Situation?

- Determine if situation is emergency/imminent
  - Decide beforehand on definition
  - Examples: if person has weapon, has indicated intent to use it
- If imminent/emergency, call campus police.
- If not, move on to Initial Screening

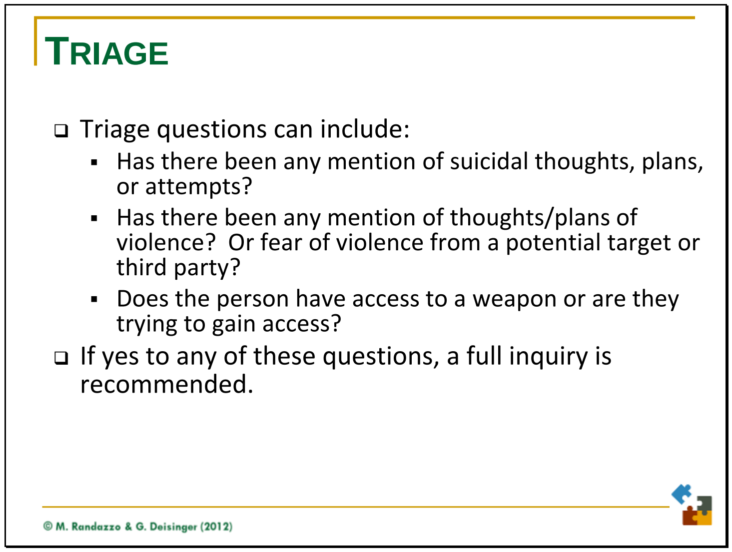
If there is an emergency situation or imminent danger, the team should immediately contact campus law enforcement or local law enforcement so that steps can be taken immediately to contain the person, effect an arrest, or possibly get the subject to an emergency psychiatric evaluation if the circumstances allow.

In such a situation, a full inquiry should be launched once the person is contained or concurrent with law enforcement efforts to contain the person. Once the urgency of the situation has passed, the person will be released at some point and may then pose a threat to the campus community. It is therefore still important for the threat assessment team to determine whether the person poses a threat or otherwise needs intervention, and if so, to develop and implement a plan to reduce the threat and intervene with appropriate support to help address the person's long-term problems.



Instructor Notes:

Next, the team will move to asking triage questions to determine whether the team should conduct a full inquiry.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

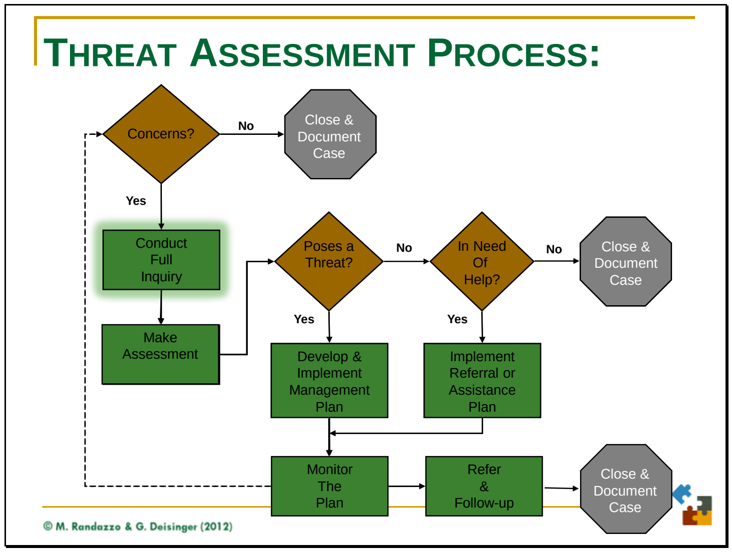
Answering screening/triage questions

The threat assessment team uses this preliminary information to answer the following five triage questions, to determine whether a full inquiry is warranted:

- Has there been any mention of suicidal thoughts, plans, or attempts?
- Has there been any mention of thoughts/plans of violence?
- Have there been any behaviors that cause concern for violence or the person's well-being?
- Does the person have access to a weapon or are they trying to gain access?
- Are there behaviors that are significantly disruptive to the campus environment?

If there is a "yes" response to any of these questions, a full inquiry is recommended, as this may indicate an imminent risk as well as a need for further assessment. If the answer to all five questions is "no" <u>AND</u> the Team gathered sufficient information to be able to answer those questions fully, then no further inquiry is necessary. The incident that brought the person to the team's attention should still be entered into the Team's case database and the results of the initial inquiry should be documented and kept, in case the person comes back to the Team's attention at a later date and still has assistance needs.

If necessary, conduct a full inquiry.
If a full inquiry is necessary, the team should add to the initial information by first identifying who in the person's life may have some information the team needs to know. The role of the Team in a threat assessment inquiry is to figure out who might have a piece of the puzzle, ask those people what they know about the person in question, and then assemble all of those pieces of the puzzle to determine whether the person poses a threat or otherwise needs help or intervention.



Instructor Notes:

After answering the triage questions, the team either closes the case or moves to a full inquiry.

Gather Information (Full Inquiry)

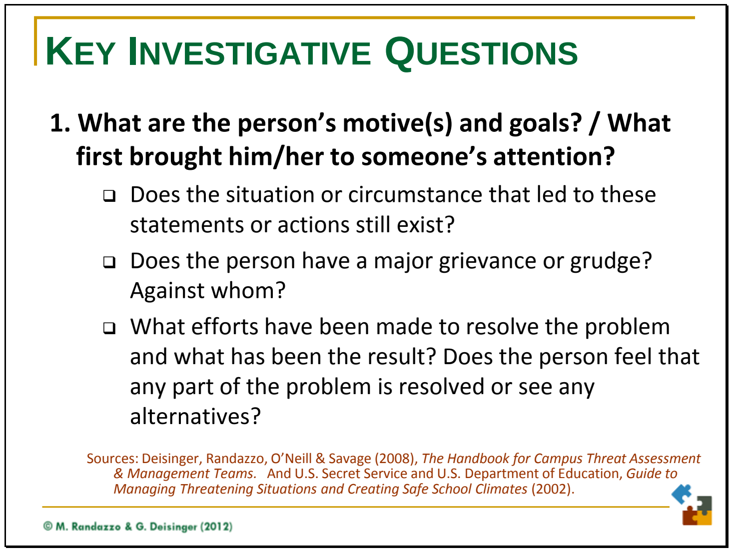
- Think broadly and creatively about those who might have information:
  - Co-workers
  - Other staff
  - Friends
  - Family
  - Online friends, web sites, etc.
  - Previous schools / employers
  - Others?
- Document information and use it to answer the Key Investigative Questions.

Instructor Notes:

Gathering information
The team may wish to solicit additional information about the person in question from the following sources. This list is similar to the list of departments where the team should check in on a regular basis; however, the focus at this point is on what (if any) information these entities may have about the *particular* person who is the subject of a full inquiry.

Answer key inquiry questions
Once the team has gathered, organized, and documented the information it has collected, we recommend that the Team first use this information to answer several key inquiry questions. These questions are designed to help organize the information gathered, as well as to use these facts to answer the ultimate inquiry questions that follow.

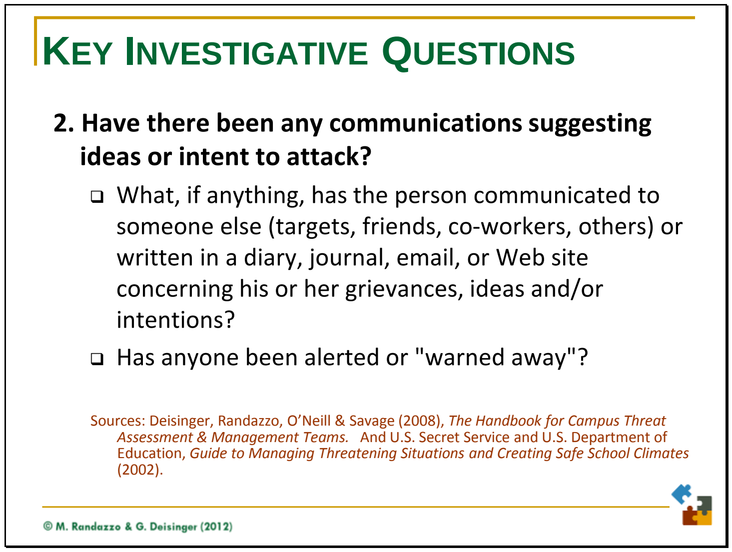
Instructional strategy:
Instructor should use examples from personal threat assessment case experience or from case studies to help illustrate some of these questions. Instructor should try to provide illustrations for at least 3 of these questions.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

What are the person's motive(s) and goals?

The purpose of this question is to understand the overall context of the behavior that first brought the person to the attention of the threat assessment team, and also to understand whether those conditions or situations still exist. If those conditions still exist, the team can use that information in crafting a management or referral/monitoring plan if necessary.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?

If the team finds that the person in question has communicated an idea or plan to do harm — and that the source of that information is credible (i.e., it was not reported by someone trying to get the person in trouble) — this is a strong indication that the person may be on a pathway toward violence and therefore poses a threat. The team should try to confirm or corroborate this information through another source, or through other information about the person's behavior that confirms an idea or plan to do harm.

Key Investigative Questions

3. Has the person shown any inappropriate interest in campus attacks/attackers, weapons, incidents of mass violence?

- Workplace/school attacks or attackers;
- Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon);
- Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, rampage violence, mass murderers).

Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

Instructor Notes:

Has the person shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?

- Workplace, school or campus attacks or attackers;
- Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon);
- Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers);
- Obsessive pursuit, stalking or monitoring others.

A "yes" to this question alone does not necessarily indicate that the person in question poses a threat or is otherwise in need of some assistance. However, if a person shows some fascination or fixation on any of these topics and has raised concern in another way, such as by expressing an idea to do harm to others or to himself/herself, recently purchasing a weapon, or showing helplessness or despair, the combination of these facts should increase the team's concern about the person in question.

KEY INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS

4. Has the person engaged in attack-related behaviors?

- Developing an attack idea or plan
- Making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons
- Surveying possible sites and areas for attack
- Testing access to potential targets
- Rehearsing attacks or ambushes

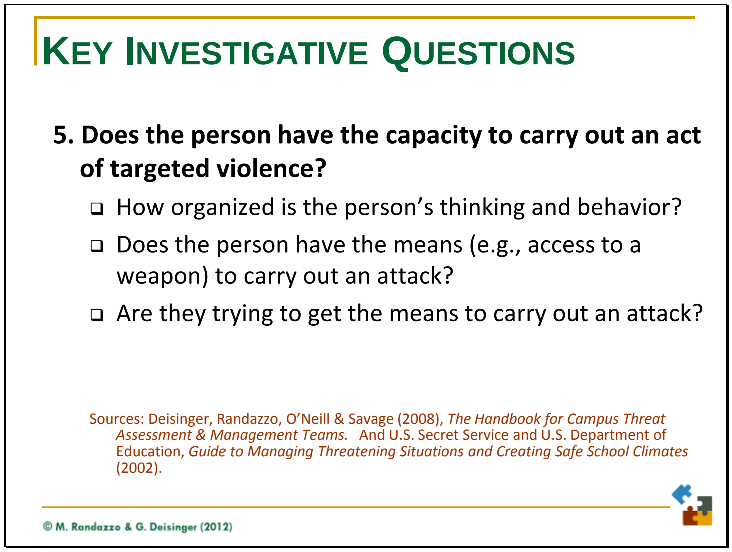
Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

Instructor Notes:

Has the person engaged in attack-related behaviors (i.e., any behavior that moves an idea of harm forward toward actual harm)? These behaviors might include:

- Developing an attack idea or plan;
- Making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons or other material to support an attack;
- Surveilling possible sites and areas for attack;
- Stalking or surveilling potential targets;
- Testing access to potential targets;
- Rehearsing attacks or ambushes.

Any of these behaviors should prompt the team to try to corroborate or confirm these behaviors through other sources (or confirm the reliability of the source reporting these behaviors). These behaviors will give the team an indication of how far along the pathway of violence the person has progressed, and may also help the team understand how quickly the person is moving forward toward an attack — i.e., how imminent a threat there may be. Any attack-related behaviors should be seen as a serious indication of potential violence.



Instructor Notes:

Does the person have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?

It is important for the team to ask whether the person in question has access to weapons and ammunition. A "yes" to this question may be cause for concern. However, it is important for the team to recognize that in some areas of the country, it is quite common to own weapons and to have experience using weapons from a young age.

Therefore, what the team should focus on is the combination of the person owning or having access to weapons AND some indication that the person has an idea or plan to do harm. Similarly, the Team should be concerned if the person develops an idea to do harm and THEN starts showing an interest in weapons. Either combination should raise the Team's concern, and move the Team toward determining that the person poses a threat.

Key Investigative Questions

6. Is the person experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?

- Is there information to suggest that the person is feeling desperation and/or despair?
- Has the person experienced a recent failure, loss and/or loss of status?
- Is the person having difficulty coping with a stressful event?
- Has the person engaged in behavior that suggests that he or she has considered ending their life?

Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

Instructor Notes:

Is the person experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?

Many persons who have engaged in targeted violence have been suicidal prior to their attacks or actively suicidal at the time of their attacks, hoping to kill themselves or be killed by responding police. Most people who are feeling hopeless, desperate, or even suicidal will not pose a threat of harm to others. However, these people are still in need of help, possibly involving a quick referral for help. If the Team determines that the person in question is experiencing — or has recently experienced — desperation, hopelessness, and/or thoughts of suicide and there is also information that the person also has thoughts or plans to harm other people, the team should determine that the person poses a threat and move to develop and implement a management plan to intervene with the person. The management plan should include resources to evaluate and treat the person's desperation and/or suicidal thoughts/plans.

KEY INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS

7. Does the person have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible person?

- Does the person have at least one friend, colleague, family member, or other person that he or she trusts and can rely upon?
- Is the person emotionally connected to other people?
- Has the person previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggested he or she needs intervention or supportive services?

Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

Instructor Notes:

Does the person have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible person (e.g., a friend, significant other, roommate, colleague, faculty advisor, coach, parent, etc.)?

A "yes" to this question is good news. Having someone that the person in question already trusts may be a protective factor in itself. This means that a responsible person may already be a good influence on the person. If the team decides that the person in question poses a threat of harm, the team can solicit the help of this responsible person to assist in developing and implementing a management plan.

Key Investigative Questions

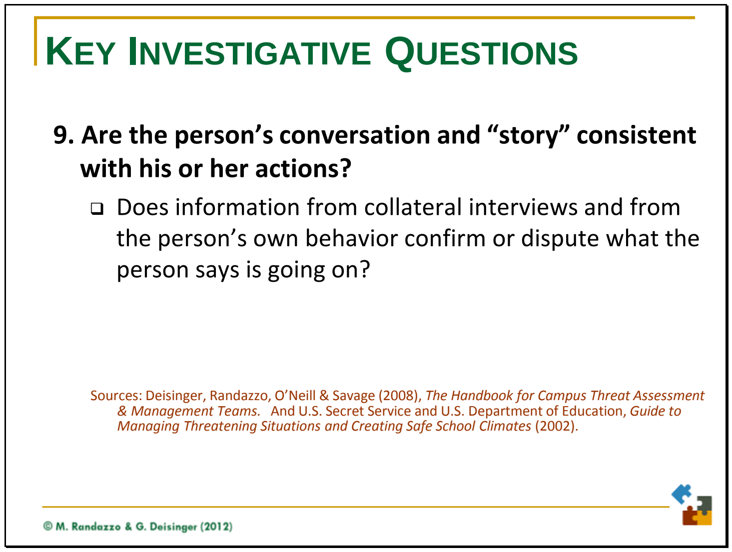
8. Does the person see violence as an acceptable, desirable – or the only – way to solve a problem?

- Does the setting around the person (friends, fellow guests, colleagues, others) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolving problems or disputes?
- Has the person been "dared" by others to engage in an act of violence?

Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

<u>Instructor Notes:</u>
Does the person see violence as an acceptable, desirable, or only way to solve problems?

A "yes" to this question should increase the Team's concern about the person in question. But it should also lead the Team to consider what options they may have for helping the person solve their problems or improve their situation so that the person no longer looks toward violence as a solution.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

Are the person's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?

If the team decides to interview the person of concern, the interview can be used as an opportunity to determine how forthcoming or truthful the person is being with the Team. The less forthcoming the person is, the more work the Team may have to do to develop an alliance if a management plan is needed.

Key Investigative Questions

10. Are other people concerned about the person's potential for violence?

- Are those who know the person concerned that he or she might take action based on violent ideas or plans?
- Are those who know the person concerned about a specific target?

Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

Instructor Notes:

Are other people concerned about the person's potential for violence?

It is important for the team to ask of those who know the person in question whether they see the person as capable of violence. However, the team should recognize that some people — such as parents, significant others, or anyone else who is very close with the person in question — may not see the potential for violence even if others do. Those in close relationships with a person may be too close to the person/situation to admit violence is possible or even likely.

Key Investigative Questions

11. What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?

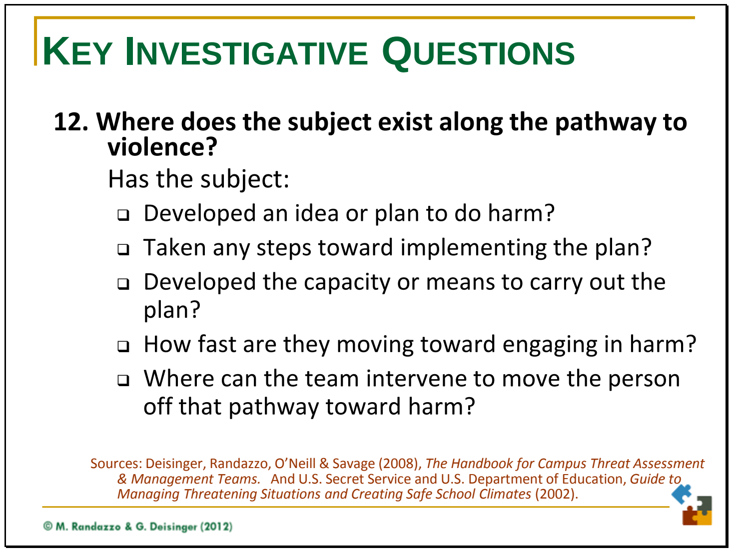
- What factors in the person's life and/or environment might increase or decrease the likelihood that the person will engage in violent behavior?
- What is the response of others who know about the person's ideas or plans? (Do they actively discourage the person from acting violently, encourage the person to attack, deny the possibility of violence, passively collude with an attack, etc.?)

Sources: Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008), *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* And U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, *Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates* (2002).

Instructor Notes:

What circumstances might affect the likelihood of violence?

This question underscores the principle that violence risk is dynamic. By asking this question, the team can identify what factors in the person's life might change in the near- to mid-term, and whether those changes could make things better or worse for the person in question.



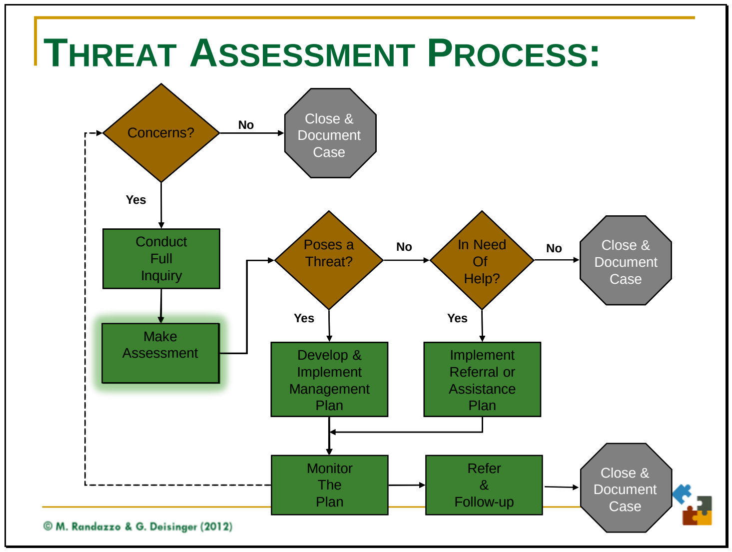
<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

Where does the subject exist along the pathway to violence?

Has the subject:

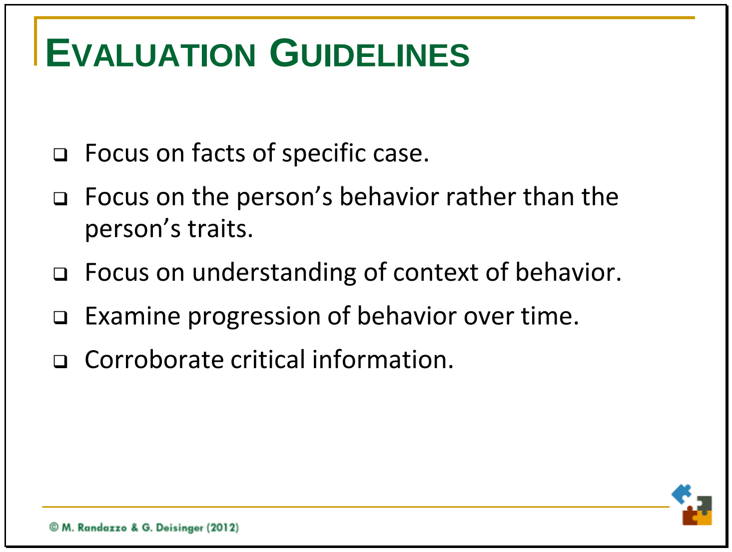
- developed an idea to do harm?
- developed a plan?
- taken any steps toward implementing the plan?
- developed the capacity or means to carry out the plan?

How fast is he/she moving toward engaging in harm?
Where can the team intervene to move the person off that pathway toward harm?



Instructor Notes:

Once the team has gathered information about the person and situation of concern, the team then needs to make the assessment and determine whether the person poses a threat.



Instructor Notes:

In moving into the evaluation, there are several points the team should keep in mind to evaluate the person and situation of concern. First, the team should focus on the facts of the person/situation – including the person's behavior and communications -- and what conclusions those particular facts allow the team to draw. The team should NOT focus on the person's traits of characteristics, nor on how "similar" the person may appear to previous attackers. The team should also try to corroborate key facts or facts that are in question or from a questionable source.

Evaluation Guidelines

- Every team member's opinion matters and must be shared
- Focus on prevention not prediction
- Goal: Safety of the community and the person in question

Instructor Notes:

In discussing the person and situation, the team needs to make sure that each team member's opinion matters. Each team member needs to know that they are obligated to share their observations and concerns, even if the rest of the team sees the information differently or are far more senior within the college or university. The team also needs to keep in mind that their focus should be on preventing, rather than predicting – meaning if the team is concerned, they need to get in and do something to reduce the risk, rather than sitting back to see if they are in fact 'correct.'

Evaluation Questions

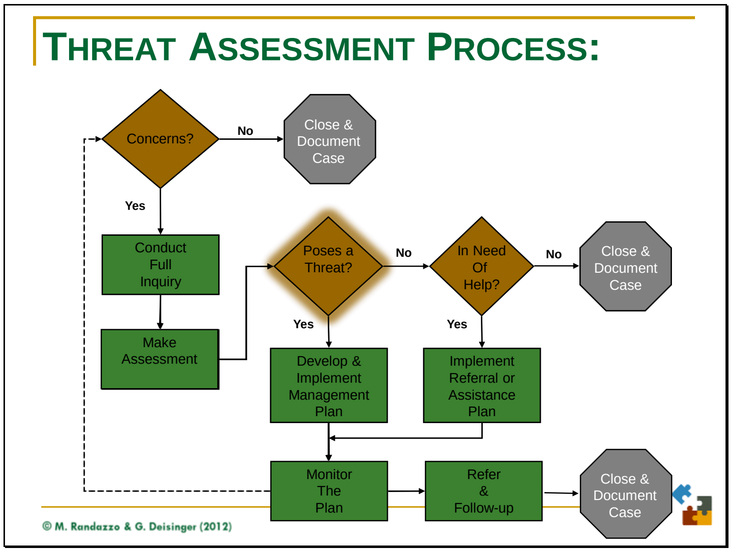
1. Does the person pose a threat of harm, whether to himself, to others, or both?
   - Focus on prevention not prediction
   - Goal: Safety of the community and the person in question

Instructor Notes:

The primary question that the team needs to answer is:

Does the person pose a threat of harm, whether to him/herself, to others, or both? That is, does the person's behavior suggest that he or she is on a pathway toward harm?

If the answer is "no," the team documents its response and reasoning and proceeds to Question 2.
If the answer is "yes," the team documents its response and rationale, and then proceeds to develop, implement, and continually monitor an individualized threat management plan to reduce the risk that the person poses. The team should document the details of this plan, as well as document steps it takes to implement the plan and/or refer the person for help. The team should also document its efforts to monitor the effectiveness of the plan and modify the plan as needed.



<u>Instructor Note</u>:

(Point out the steps down from “Poses a threat?” to illustrate this part of the process.)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

2. If not, does the person otherwise show a need for help or intervention?

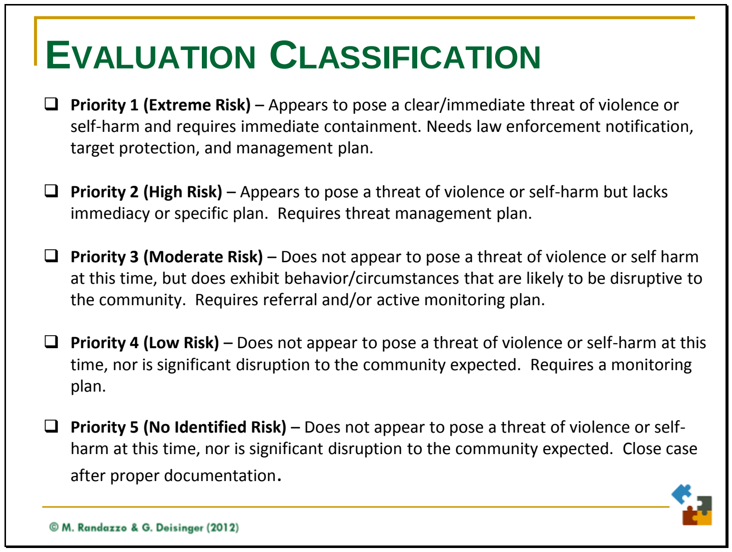
   - Focus on prevention not prediction
   - Goal: Safety of the community and the person in question

Instructor Notes:

If the answer to the primary question is “no,” then the team moves on to the secondary question: *If the person does not pose a threat of harm, does the person otherwise show a need for help or intervention, such as mental health care?*

If the answer is “no,” the team documents its response, records the person and incident in the Team’s incident database, and closes the inquiry. There is no need to proceed to Steps 6, 7 or 8.

If the answer is “yes,” the team documents its response and rationale, and then develops, implements, and re-evaluates a plan to monitor the person and situation and/or connect the person with resources in order to assist him/her with solving problems or addressing needs.



Instructor Notes:

Case prioritization

The answers to Questions A and B will dictate the Priority Level that the threat assessment team assigns to the case. The Priority Level is designed to communicate both the level of threat posed by the person in question, as well as actions that may be necessary on the part of the team to address and reduce that threat level. While the team can choose its own rating scale, we offer the following for consideration.

Sample Priority Levels for Threat Cases

Priority 1 (Extreme Risk) The person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward self or others and requires containment. The team should immediately notify law enforcement to pursue containment options, and/or take actions to protect identified target(s). Once such emergency actions have been taken, the team shall then develop and implement a management plan in anticipation of the person's release or return to campus.

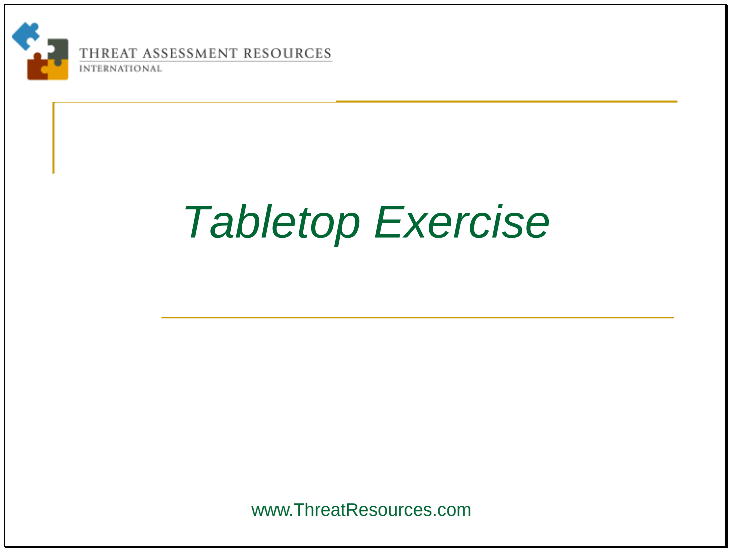
Priority 2 (High Risk) The person/situation appears to pose a threat of self-harm or physical violence, usually to an identifiable target, but currently lacks immediacy and/or a specific plan — or a specified plan of violence does exist but currently lacks a specific target. This requires the team to develop and implement a management plan.

Priority 3 (Moderate Risk) The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but does exhibit behaviors/circumstances that are likely to be disruptive to the community. This case warrants some intervention, referral and monitoring to minimize risk for significant disruption to the community or escalation in threat. The team should develop a referral and/or active monitoring plan.

Priority 4 (Low Risk) The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, nor is there evidence of significant disruption to the community. This case may warrant some intervention, referral and monitoring to minimize risk for escalation in threat. The team should develop a monitoring plan.

Instructional strategy:

Instructor should use the analogy of weather prediction (e.g. storm watch vs. storm warning) to explain the information contained in the prioritization system: i.e., each priority category both describes the level of concern/threat and also prescribes what actions should be taken in response.



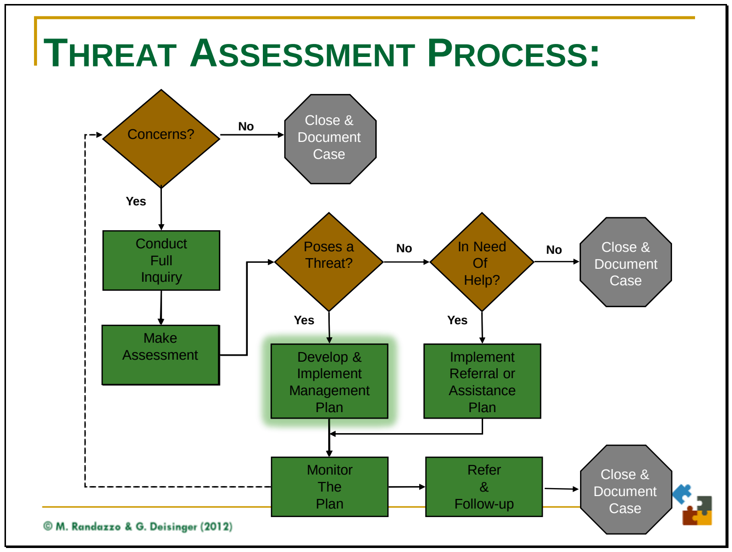
Instructor Notes:

This tabletop exercise is designed to familiarize participants with the threat assessment process up to and including the evaluation and selecting a case prioritization level. Using the case scenario provided in the instructor manual (or another one you create), read the Initial Report to participants.

Working in small groups, ask them to first decide if the information in the report indicates an imminent situation or an emergency. If they say yes, ask them what should the do (ASNWER: call 911 or campus police). If they say no, have them identify what information they want to collect as part of their full inquiry – ie whom should they interview? Where else should they look for information?

Next, give participants the information they seek. If they don't think to ask for the information, do not volunteer it – and be sure to point out in the case discussion after the exercise that there was other information available that they did not request.

Using the information they were given, have them work together in their groups to answer the 12 investigative questions, answer the two evaluation questions, and select a prioritization level. Then discuss their evaluations and prioritization levels as a group.   Make sure each group can articulate why they chose the answers they did.



Instructor Notes:

Point out the Develop & Implement Management Plan box to show participants the part of the process you will discuss next.

<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

Ask if there are any questions on the threat assessment and management process so far. Now we will move on to the last component of the process – case management plans.

Effective Case Management

The primary goal of Threat Assessment & Management is the **safety** of all persons involved.

Counseling, support, confrontation, termination, arrest, prosecution, etc., are **tools** to reach that goal.

Instructor Notes:

Develop and implement a plan to manage and/or monitor the person

If the team determines that the person in question poses a threat of violence or suicide, it then needs to develop, implement, and monitor an individualized plan to intervene and reduce that threat.

The Team can best accomplish its ultimate goal of managing threatening situations by identifying in advance the range of resources

that may be available on campus. These can include traditional resources such as counseling at the institution's mental health center; evaluation and treatment through a local mental health professional; and the involvement of law enforcement to contain or control the person in question. However, the Team should also consider less traditional options, such as a reduced course load, medical leave of absence, behavioral contracts, involvement in community service, assignment of a mentor, or any other resources that can help give the person in question something to look forward to or that plays to their strengths. Identifying a wide array

of resources in advance will help the Team think broadly and creatively about options that may work when an individual case arises.

Case Management Options

Effective case management incorporates interventions in each of the (relevant) factors:

S De-escalate, contain, or control the **subject** who may take violent action;

T Decrease vulnerabilities of the **target**;

E Modify physical and cultural **environment** to discourage escalation; and,

P Prepare for & mitigate against **precipitating events** that may trigger adverse reactions.

Instructor Notes:

Incidents of violence typically arise from an intersection of several factors, including:

- The "subject" or individual of concern,
- The "target" of the individual's animosity or grievances,
- An "environment" where violence may be encouraged or dared – or at least where it is not discouraged, and
- "Precipitating events" or triggers that prompt a violent reaction.

Effective case management explores interventions with each of the (relevant) factors.

Develop a Case Management Plan

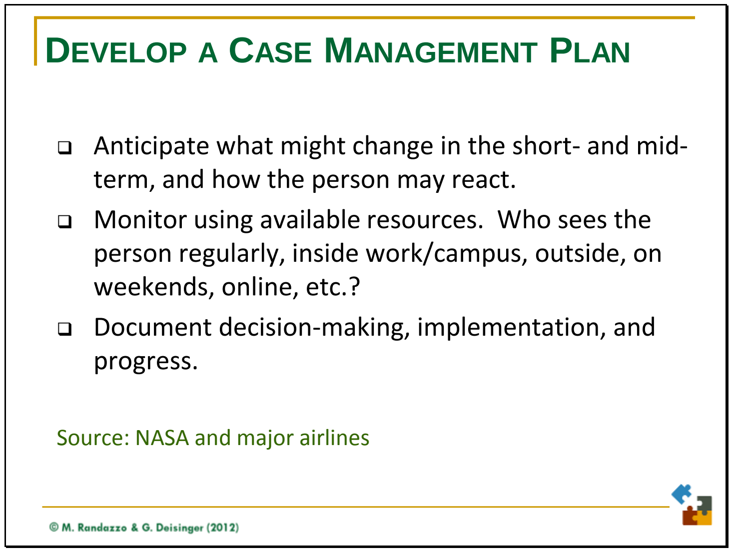
- Develop an individualized plan based on information gathered in the investigation and other facts known about the person.
  - Case management is more art than science.
  - Plan must be fact-based and person-specific.
  - Engagement is essential, even when dealing with someone who is very angry.
  - Distancing makes monitoring and intervention more difficult.
  - Personalities matter.

Instructor Notes:

The plan should be based upon the information gathered in the threat assessment inquiry, and tailored to address the problems of the person in question. Threat management is more art than science. It focuses both on addressing what is already working -- or still working -- for the person of concern, and creatively searching for resources — both on- and off-campus — that are available to help move the person away from thoughts and plans of violence/suicide and get assistance to address underlying problems.

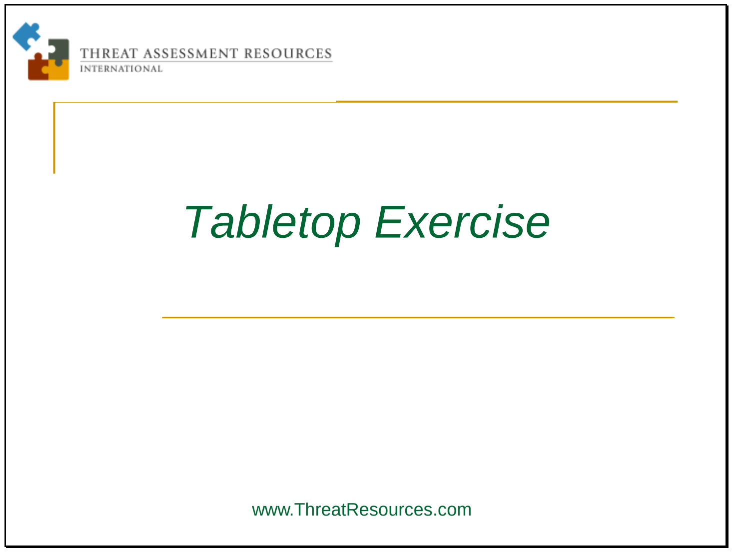
An engagement model works well with the majority of cases. Most persons who come to the attention of TAM Teams are persons who are at a crisis point and are looking for assistance. Most have distanced themselves from others or feel alienated from others. They typically respond positively to someone who will hear their concerns, who will not over-react to emotional venting, who will engage in problem-solving, and who demonstrates care for them and their situation. While this model often works well, there are some cases in which such direct engagement might inflame the situation. Therefore, each situation should be evaluated based on its own case facts in order to determine whether such direct follow-up would be appropriate.

A key to establishing an effective working relationship with the person of concern is to identify a responsible person they already trust. One key step to defusing a potentially violent situation involving someone with a grievance is to allow him or her to feel “heard” and validated. Even if they cannot get their way — which oftentimes they cannot — feeling as if someone has understood their position can go a long way toward moving the person away from thoughts and plans of violence. The trusted ally can be a friend, fellow student, colleague, faculty advisor, mentor, coach, supervisor, residential advisor, spouse, or parent. If the Team cannot find someone that the person already trusts, they can use someone in the campus community who relates well with most people.



Instructor Notes:

Anticipate what might change over the coming days, weeks, and months. Are there changes that might help the person of concern (e.g. is there something they are looking forward to)? Are there potential changes that could make things worse? If so, what -- if anything – can the team do about those potential changes (e.g. help ensure positive changes come about; try to prevent negative changes from occurring)?

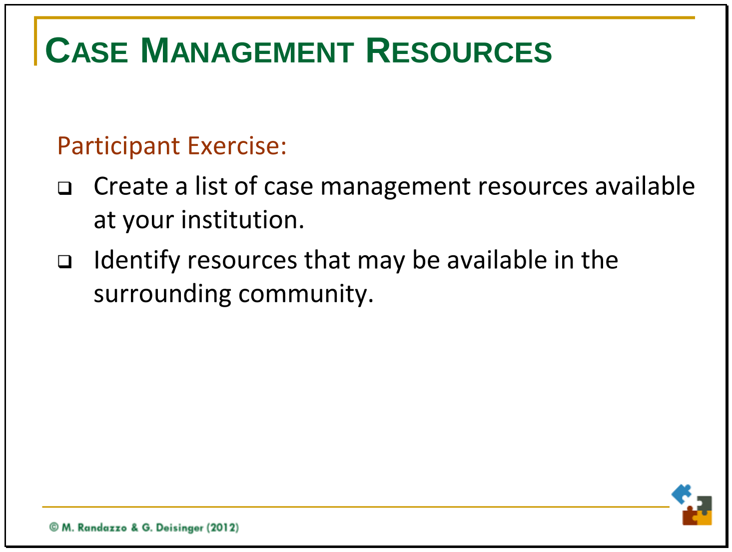


Instructor Notes:

Using the tabletop exercise worksheet at the back of the participant manual, ask participants to list all of the resources, services, policies, and other tools available at their institution that could be used for case management and/or intervention.

Next, have them do the same thing with respect to off-campus resources – those in their community or at the state level – that could be used.

Finally, have participants discuss their lists to give other participants ideas for case management.



<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

Participant Exercise:
Have participants work in small groups (with others from their institution if possible) to identify resources and services that are available at their institution that could be used for case management and intervention.

Have participants identify resources in the surrounding community that might be available for case management in certain situations.

Discuss these lists as a group to share these ideas and resources with all participants.

CLOSING A CASE

Threat management cases generally:

Remain open until the person in question is no longer reasonably assessed to pose a threat or in need of case management and/or monitoring.

Instructor Notes:

With respect to the question of when to close a threat assessment team case, threat assessment cases generally remain open as long as the team reasonable believes the person continues to pose a threat and is in need of case management or some type of monitoring.

Closing a Case

While the case is open the team should:

- Continue to monitor and modify the plan as long as the individual still poses a threat
- Recognize that a person can continue to pose a threat even after he/she ceases to be a member of the campus community
- Continue to monitor the situation through its relationship with local law enforcement agencies and mental health agencies, as well as in direct cooperation with the person, if possible

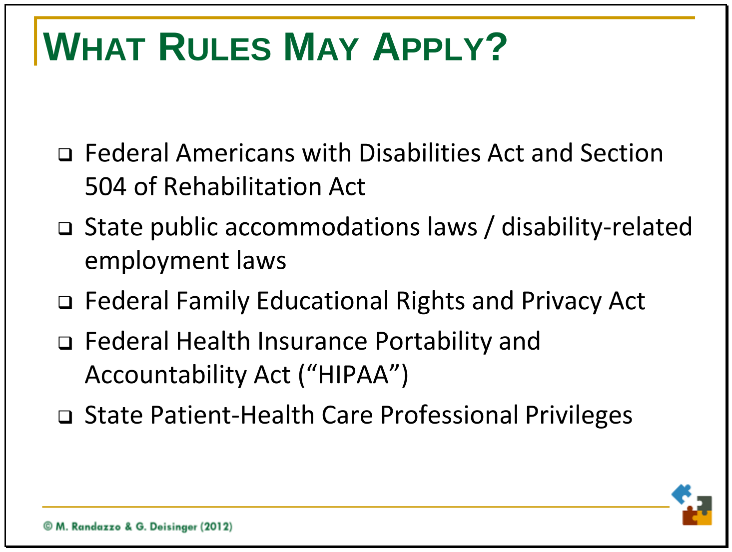
Instructor Notes:

As long as a case is open, the team should be sure continue monitoring – even if the person is not part of the campus community (which may require liaison with local law enforcement where the person is, as well as information from a trustworthy person still in contact with the person of concern).

Instructor Notes:

Ask if there are any questions on case management.

Now we will move onto the final section of the training, legal issue that can impact the work of a threat assessment team.



Instructor Notes:

There are several federal and state laws that may impact the work of a threat assessment team. These include federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (or ADA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). They also include state laws on disability issues and employment law, as well as state laws on patient confidentiality. Teams should be strongly encouraged to consult with their institution's legal counsel to determine which laws may affect their team, and what recommendations their legal counsel may have for working within those laws.

Disability Law Considerations

- Ensuring due process
- Direct threat provisions
- Not assuming every threat assessment case involves mental illness

Instructor Notes:

If disability law is an issue in a particular case, the team has to make sure that the person in question is afforded due process and is not treated differently than others whom the team investigates by virtue of their disability (including mental disabilities/illness). As long as the team can show that it followed the same procedures in the case of someone with a disability as it would in other cases, there should be no concern about due process. This is where documenting the team's actions and decision-making can be especially helpful.

Disability laws state that an institution does not have to accommodate student or employee who poses a "direct threat" to self or others, considering the nature, duration and severity of risk; the probability that potentially threatening injury actually will occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices or procedures will sufficiently mitigate the risk.

Finally disability laws prohibits discrimination against an individual who is "regarded as" having a disability, or has a "record of" having a disability. For this reason, it is important that the team does not automatically treat every case before the team as if it has a mental illness component, because doing so would activate disability considerations where there doesn't need to be any.

INFORMATION SHARING: FERPA

- Federal Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)
- FERPA should not be an impediment to effective threat assessment and case management.
- FERPA governs records only, not observations, communications, etc.
- FERPA does not govern police records.
- New guidance from ED encourages information sharing where public safety is a concern.
- FERPA does not permit a private right of action.

Instructor Notes:

FERPA protects the privacy of information in a student's educational records. It is designed to prohibit the inappropriate disclosure of student educational information beyond those who have a legitimate educational need to know. However, institutions can and should identify team members in their FERPA policies as among those educational officials with a legitimate need to know information in educational records.

FERPA provisions also include exceptions that allow information sharing in the case of emergency situations and/or situations where public safety is a concern. Guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education (which enforces FERPA) following the Virginia Tech shooting has made clear that it is up to individual institutions to decide whether there is an emergency or public safety concern. As long as the team documents why it felt there was an emergency and/or threat to public safety, there should be no concerns about sharing information.

FERPA pertains only to the privacy of records; it does not extend to communications, observations, and other forms of information that team members may need to share. This means that team members are free to ask — and faculty and staff are free to share — their observations about a student, verbal communications with that student, and anything else not written down.

FERPA does not pertain to law enforcement unit records. For this reason, institutions may wish to establish their team under the umbrella of the institution's police department, designated law enforcement entity, or unsworn security operation.

Finally, FERPA does not permit a private right of action, meaning that individuals or institutions cannot be held liable for violations of FERPA. The law provides that federal funding could be withheld or fines could be assessed in cases where a pattern or practice of violations is present (as opposed to isolated violations, which are not individually sanctionable). To date, there have been no instances where an institution has received monetary sanctions for violating FERPA. Rather, it is more likely that an institution would receive some additional training from the U.S. Department of Education if it were found to have shared information in violation of FERPA.

Information Sharing: HIPAA

- Check with legal counsel as to which laws govern counseling center records.
- Confidentiality is held by client, not MH provider.
- In cases where HIPAA applies, can try these strategies:
  - No legal prohibition against <u>providing</u> information to health/MH professionals.
  - Can inquire about *Tarasoff* - type duty.
  - Can ask subject for permission to disclose.

<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

HIPAA protects the confidentiality of information in health and mental health records. In addition, state laws also protect the confidentiality of mental health information and discussions between a patient and a mental health professional.

HIPAA may not govern health and mental health records at university counseling centers (FERPA may apply instead). An institution's legal counsel should be consulted as to which regulations apply.

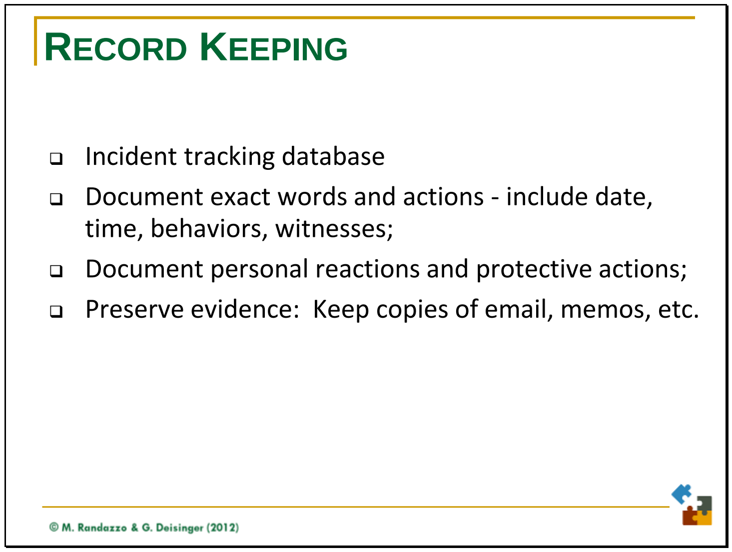
HIPAA and state laws include exceptions where information can be shared in situations where a patient is a threat to themselves or others. In such situations where a mental health professional is aware that his/her patient has threatened harm to themselves or to someone else, the mental health professional has the duty to warn someone or to do something to protect the victim in question.

While HIPAA and state laws may prevent a mental health professional from disclosing information to the threat assessment team, it does not prohibit mental health professionals from *receiving information* about a patient. The team can provide the information it knows to an individual's therapist or counselor. In many cases, a treating mental health professional may only have partial information about a patient/client. Receiving information from the team about a particular individual may enhance the treatment that the mental health professional is able to provide.

If the team provides information to a mental health professional, it can then ask the mental health professional whether the new information received from the Team elevates their concern about the patient to the point where they now have a duty to warn or a duty to protect. If so, the mental health professional may be able to share information with the team.

Under HIPAA and state laws, confidentiality is held by the client or patient, not the mental health professional. The threat assessment team can always ask the person in question for their permission to access their mental health records and talk with their mental health professional. If approached with sincerity for their well-being and assurance that the team can best help the person in question with full information, it is quite likely that the person will consent. The team will need to get the person's permission in writing.

Finally, access to mental health information can be helpful in threat assessment cases, but it may not provide more detail than the team is able to access through others who know or have observed the person in question. It is more important to consider incorporating any treating mental health professional into an individual case management plan.



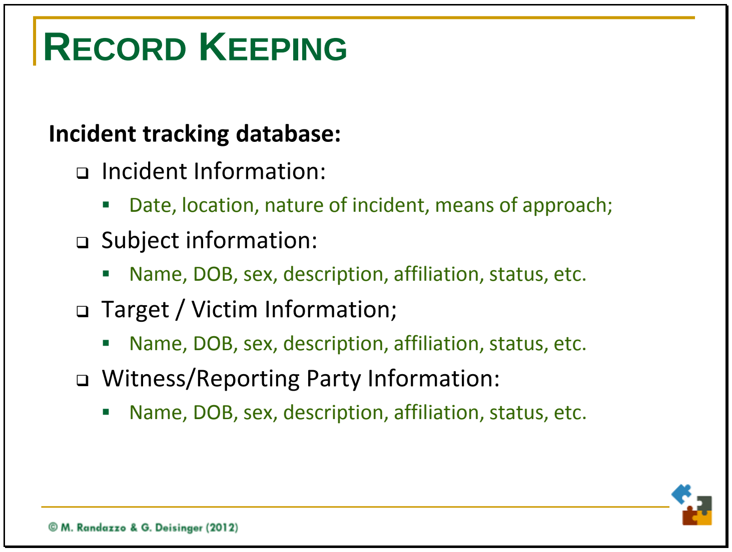
<u>Instructor Notes:</u>

As the recipient and screener of all potentially threat-related information, it is helpful for the threat assessment team to maintain a centralized database of everyone who has come to the team's attention. It need not be complicated; a simple spreadsheet (one that can be searched for names, terms, etc.) would suffice. However, given the amount of information and the importance of accessing it easily and quickly, we do recommend that a database be used.

This database can be used to store all information gathered throughout the threat assessment and management process. Or, the database can be used as more of an incident-tracking system that holds the names and other identifiers of everyone who is reported to the team. This system would enable the team to cross-references the case file that contains the information relevant to that person and incident. Either way, even if a report does not seem to be a legitimate threat now or the case is closed quickly, the individual's name should still be noted in the database. If, at a later time, the individual's name comes up again, the team will find information from this earlier report in the database after "pinging" the system — that is, searching the database for the name in question — and therefore be more informed about the individual's pattern of behavior.

Thus, this database provides a simple and organized way to store, search, and retrieve information so that the threat assessment team can quickly know if a certain individual has come across the radar screen previously.

By maintaining records and preserving evidence throughout the threat assessment and management process, the team establishes a legal and behavioral justification for intervention in order to reduce a potential threat. Records that should be maintained by the team include: documentation of the individual's exact words and actions, including date, time, behaviors, and witnesses; documentation of personal reactions and protective actions taken by the individual; and copies of emails, memos, voicemails, and other communications pertaining to the case. In addition, the minutes of each team meeting should be carefully documented and maintained. All of these records should be stored in a secure, centralized location 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Instructor Notes:

With respect to what to capture in an incident database, it does not have to be much information – but it helpful to have information that can be searched for particular names, dates, etc. Here are some suggestions.

Instructor Notes:

Ask if there are any questions about legal issues, and recommend that participants read the article by Jeff Nolan and colleagues from the 2011 URMIA Journal, listed in Recommended Reading at the back of the participant manual for additional information on legal issues.

Now, it's time to wrap up the training session with some concluding thoughts.

Conclusion

- Many incidents of campus and workplace violence are preventable.
- Campus/school/workplace attackers typically raise concerns before they engage in violence.
- Information about a person's ideas and plans for violence are usually available before harm occurs – but the information will likely be scattered.
- A threat assessment team can pull together scattered information and determine whether there is a real concern or opportunity for intervention.
- The team can then develop and implement an integrated plan to intervene and reduce the risk and monitor the situation.

Instructor Notes:

The major points we've covered today focus on the fact that campus and workplace shootings can be prevented. If we can identify persons who have raised some concern, identify who might have a piece of the puzzle, gather and evaluate that information, and develop plans to intervene if necessary – then we can prevent violence and get help to persons who need it. The earlier a threat assessment team can get involved, the more options is has for intervention and assistance – including for situations where a person doesn't pose a threat but is still in need of help.

RESOURCES

Implementing Behavioral Threat Assessment on Campus: A Virginia Tech Demonstration Project

www.ThreatAssessment.vt.edu

Threat Assessment and Management Teams: What Risk Managers Need to Know (Published by URMIA)

www.HigherEdCompliance.org

Association of Threat Assessment Professionals

www.atapworldwide.org

Instructor Notes:

For more information about threat assessment, and more details on what we have discussed today, please refer to The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams. It is available at www.tsginc.com or amazon.com.

In addition, there is more information in the book, Implementing Behavioral Threat Assessment on Campus – which is available as a free PDF download at www.threatassessment.vt.edu.

There is a list of recommended readings at the back of the participant manual.

For Additional Information

The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams

www.TSGinc.com

www.amazon.com

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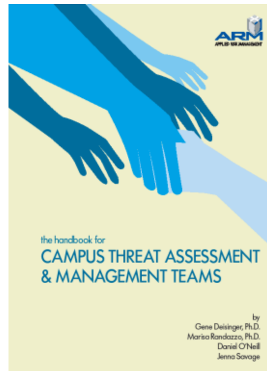


Instructor Notes:

Ask if there are any final questions. Let participants know they should feel free to contact Dr. Deisinger and Dr. Randazzo, who designed this course, with any questions. They encourage you to reach out to them at any time.

Thank the participants and review and concluding information, instructions, requests, etc.

TABLETOP EXERCISES

Tabletop Exercise 1:
Enhancing Threat Assessment Principles

Question 1:
Which 1 or 2 principles of threat assessment does your institution already do well? Please give an example of each, or a reason why they work:

Question 2:
Which 1 or 2 principles of threat assessment could be enhanced at your institution? Please list some suggestions for how that could be accomplished:

Tabletop Exercise 2:

Threat Assessment Team Mission / Threshold

Part 1:
What is your team's mission statement?
What scope of cases and/or situations do you want reported to the team?

Part 2:
How will you communicate that mission statement or scope to the campus community? What slogan, examples or message will you use (or do you use)? What methods will you use (or do you use) to disseminate this message?

TABLETOP EXERCISE 3:
CASE INVESTIGATION

PERSON OF CONCERN: ____

INITIAL REPORT: ____

____

____

____

____

____

____

SCREENING QUESTION: Emergency or imminent situation? YES (call 911) NO

FULL INQUIRY

Information Gathered (Student Case) – Fill in information next to each source checked
☐ **Dean of Students:**
☐ **Student Organizations:**
☐ **Student Conduct:**
☐ **Professors/Instructors:**
☐ **Campus public safety:**
☐ **Local law enforcement:**
☐ **Disability services:**
☐ **Veterans services:**

☐ **Legal counsel:**
☐ **Friends:**
☐ **Internet searches (list sites searched):**
☐ **Previous school(s):**
☐ **Others (please specify source(s)):**
☐ **Person of concern:**

Information Gathered (Employee Case) – Fill in information next to each source checked
☐ **Human Resources:**
☐ **Department Chair / Supervisor:**
☐ **Co-worker(s):**
☐ **Previous employer(s):**
☐ **Previous school(s):**
☐ **Campus public safety:**

☐ **Local law enforcement:**
☐ **Grievance/conduct board:**
☐ **EEO/Diversity offices:**
☐ **Legal counsel:**
☐ **Internet searches (list sites searched):**
☐ **Health/counseling provider or EAP (typically requires release from person):**
☐ **Others (please specify source(s)):**
☐ **Person of concern:**

FERPA Exception for Health/Safety Emergency or Public Safety Concern?
Please indicate whether the Team feels there is a concern for public safety or a health/safety emergency in this situation – and if so, why:

Investigative Questions
1. ***What are the person's motive(s) and goals? What first brought them to the Team's attention?*** The purpose of this question is to understand the overall context of the behavior that first brought the person to the attention of the Team, and also to understand whether those conditions or situation still exist. If those conditions still exist, the Team can use that information in crafting a management or referral/monitoring plan if necessary. **Answer:**
2. ***Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?*** If the Team finds that the person in question has communicated an idea or plan to do harm — and that the source of that information is credible — this is a strong indication that the person may be on a pathway toward violence and therefore poses a threat. The Team should try to confirm or corroborate this information through another source, or through other information. **Answer:**

3. ***Has the person shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?***

- Workplace, school or campus attacks or attackers;
- Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon);
- Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers);
- Obsessive pursuit, stalking or monitoring others.

A "yes" to this question alone does not necessarily indicate that the person in question poses a threat or is otherwise in need of some assistance. Many people are interested in these topics but never pose any threat. However, if a person shows some fascination or fixation on any of these topics and has raised concern in another way, such as by expressing an idea to do harm to others or to himself/herself, recently purchasing a weapon, or showing helplessness or despair, the combination of these facts should increase the Team's concern about the person in question.

Answer:

4. ***Has the person engaged in attack-related behaviors (i.e., any behavior that moves an idea of harm forward toward actual harm)?***

If the Team determines that the person has engaged in any attack-related behavior, this is an indication that the person is on a pathway toward violence and has taken a step(s) forward toward carrying out an idea to do harm. Any of these behaviors should prompt the Team to try to corroborate or confirm these behaviors through other sources (or confirm the reliability of the source reporting these behaviors). Any attack-related behaviors should be seen as a serious indication of potential violence.

Answer:

5. *Does the person have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?*

It is important for the Team to recognize that in some areas of the country, it is quite common to own weapons and to have experience using weapons from a young age. Therefore, what the Team should focus on is the combination of the person owning or having access to weapons AND some indication that the person has an idea or plan to do harm. Similarly, the Team should be concerned if the person develops an idea to do harm and THEN starts showing an interest in weapons. Either combination should raise the Team's concern, and move the Team toward determining that the person poses a threat.

Answer:

6. *Is the person experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?*

If the Team determines that the person in question is experiencing — or has recently experienced — desperation, hopelessness, and/or thoughts of suicide and there is NO other information indicating the person has thoughts or plans to harm other people, the Team should develop a plan to refer the person to necessary mental health care or emergency psychiatric intervention, possibly involving the institution's counseling center and/or police or local law enforcement if necessary. If the Team determines that the person in question is experiencing — or has recently experienced — desperation, hopelessness, and/or thoughts of suicide and there IS information that the person also has thoughts or plans to harm other people, the Team should determine that the person poses a threat and move to develop and implement a management plan to intervene with the person. The management plan should include resources to evaluate and treat the person's desperation and/or suicidal thoughts/plans.

Answer:

7. ***Does the person have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible person (e.g., a friend, significant other, roommate, colleague, faculty advisor, coach, parent, etc.)?***

If the Team decides that the person in question poses a threat of harm, the Team can solicit the help of this responsible person. The responsible person can also be encouraged to take a more active role in discouraging the person from engaging in any harm — whether to himself/herself, others, or both.

Answer:

8. ***Does the person see violence as an acceptable, desirable, or only way to solve problems?***

A "yes" to this question should increase the Team's concern about the person in question. But it should also lead the Team to consider what options they may have for helping the person solve their problems or improve their situation so that the person no longer looks toward violence to solve the problem.

Answer:

9. ***Is the person's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?***

If the Team decides to interview the person of concern, the interview can be used as an opportunity to determine how forthcoming or truthful the person is being with the Team. The less forthcoming the person is, the more work the Team may have to do to develop an alliance if a management plan is needed.

Answer:

10. ***Are other people concerned about the person's potential for violence?***

As people are often reluctant to see violence as a possibility, if the Team learns that someone in the person's life does think the person is capable of violence, this should raise the Team's concern considerably. However, the Team should recognize that those in close relationships with the person may be too close to the person/situation to admit violence is possible or even likely.

Answer:

11. ***What circumstances might affect the likelihood of violence?***

All of us are capable of violence under the right (or wrong) circumstances. By asking this question, the Team can identify what factors in the person's life might change in the near- to mid-term, and whether those changes could make things better or worse for the person in question. If things look like they might improve for the person, the Team could monitor the person and situation for a while and re-assess after some time has passed. If things look like they might deteriorate, the Team can develop a management plan (if they believe the person poses a threat of harm or self-harm) or a referral plan (if the person does not pose a threat but appears in need of help) to help counteract the downturn in the person's circumstances.

Answer:

12. ***Where does the person exist along the pathway to violence?***

- Have they developed an idea to do harm?
- Have they developed a plan?
- Have they taken any steps toward implementing the plan?
- Have they developed the capacity or means to carry out the plan?
- How fast are they moving toward engaging in harm?
- Where can the Team intervene to move the person off that pathway toward harm?

Answer:

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EVALUATION QUESTION A. ***Does the person pose a threat of harm, whether to him/herself, to others, or both? That is, does the person's behavior suggest that he or she is on a pathway toward harm?***

Answer:

If the answer is "no," the Team documents its response and reasoning and proceeds to Question B. If the answer is "yes," the Team documents its response and rationale, and then proceeds to develop, implement, and continually monitor an individualized threat management plan to reduce the risk that the person poses. The Team should document the details of this plan, as well as document steps it takes to implement the plan and/or refer the person for help. The Team does not need to answer Question B.

EVALUATION QUESTION B. ***If the person does not pose a threat of harm, does the person otherwise show a need for help or intervention, such as mental health care?***

Answer:

If the answer is "no," the Team documents its response, records the person and incident in the Team's incident database, and closes the inquiry. If the answer is "yes," the Team documents its response and rationale, and then develops, implements, and re-evaluates a plan to monitor the person and situation and/or connect the person with resources in order to assist him/her with solving problems or addressing needs. The Team should document the details of this plan, as well as document steps taken to implement the plan and/or refer the person for help.

Priority Level	Comments
❍ **Priority 1 (Imminent Risk)** The person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward self or others and requires containment. The Team should immediately notify law enforcement to pursue containment options, and/or take actions to protect identified target(s). Once such emergency actions have been taken, the Team shall then develop and implement a management plan in anticipation of the person's release or return to campus.	
❍ **Priority 2 (High Risk)** The person/situation appears to pose a threat of self-harm or physical violence, usually to an identifiable target, but currently lacks immediacy and/or a specific plan — or a specified plan of violence does exist but currently lacks a specific target. This requires the Team to develop and implement a management plan.	
❍ **Priority 3 (Moderate Risk)** The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but does exhibit behaviors/circumstances that are likely to be disruptive to the community. This case warrants some intervention, referral and monitoring to minimize risk for significant disruption to the community or escalation in threat. The Team should develop a referral and/or active monitoring plan.	
❍ **Priority 4 (Low Risk)** The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, nor is their evidence of significant disruption to the community. This case may warrant some intervention, referral and monitoring to minimize risk for escalation in threat. The Team should develop a monitoring plan.	
❍ **Priority 5 (No Identified Risk)** The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, nor is their evidence of significant disruption to the community. The Team can close the case without a management or monitoring plan, following appropriate documentation.	
❍ **Insufficient Information / No Priority Level Selected**	

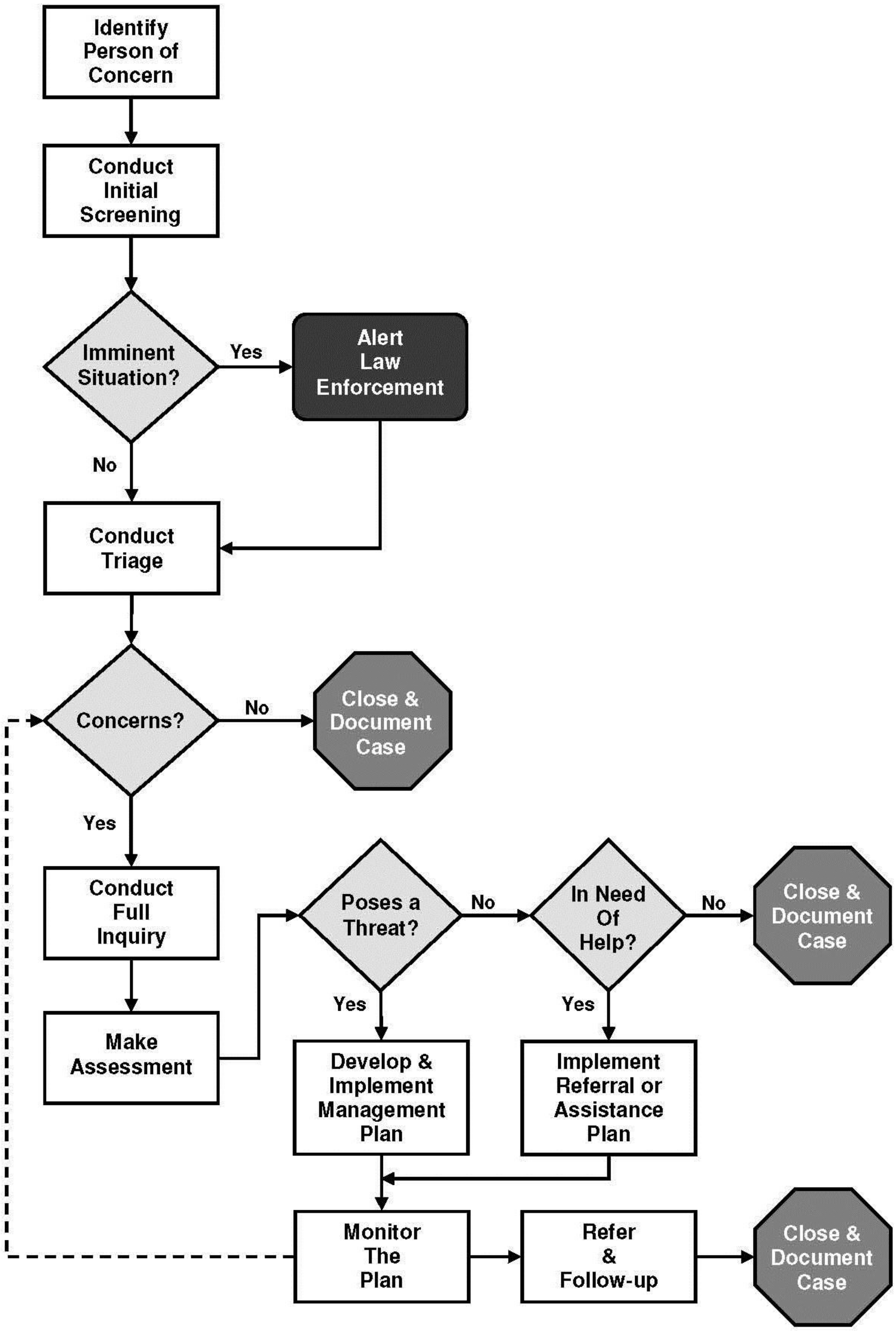
Tabletop Exercise 4:
Case Management Resources

Part 1:
Please list the various resources, services, and policies/tools at your institution that could be utilized for case management purposes:

Part 2:
Please list the various resources, services, and policies/tools in the surrounding community that could be utilized for case management purposes:

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Threat Assessment and Management Process



Source: Deisinger, G., Randazzo M.R., O'Neill, D., & Savage,J. (2008).
The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.
Available through: www.arm-security.com

Principles of Threat Assessment and Management

The following principles guide threat assessment and management:[1]

Principle 1: Targeted Violence Can Often Be Prevented

Perpetrators typically come up with an idea to do harm, develop a plan, acquire the means to do harm (e.g. get access to weapons), and then carry out the attack.[2] A TAM Team looks for information that may indicate that a person is on such a trajectory toward violence, and if so, the Team then determines where it might be able to intervene to prevent harm.

Principle 2: Violence is a Dynamic Process

A TAM Team tries to determine the circumstances in which the person in question might pose a threat to himself or to others. A key aspect of the threat assessment and management process is to look ahead over the coming days, weeks, and months and see what in the person's life or situation might change — and how that change(s) might affect the likelihood of violence.

Principle 3: Targeted Violence is a Function of Several Factors

Threat assessment should examine facts about the individual, the context of behavior, the environment in which the individual lives, the individual's current situation, factors that may precipitate violence or other negative behavior, and ways to make a target less accessible or vulnerable.

Principle 4: Corroboration is Critical

Being skeptical about information received and corroborating information through multiple sources are critical to successful threat assessment and management.[3] This means that it is important to check facts where possible.

Principle 5: Threat Assessment is about Behavior, not Profiles

There is no single "type" of person who perpetrates targeted violence.[4] Instead, threat assessment is evidence-based, focusing on the specific behaviors a person has exhibited and determining whether the person poses a threat (or is at risk) based upon those behaviors.[5]

Principle 6: Cooperating Systems are Critical Resources

Communication, collaboration, and coordination among various departments and agencies are critical throughout the process of threat assessment and management. Using different systems throughout campus as well as outside resources provides more eyes and ears on the process of both assessing and managing a potentially violent situation.

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[1] These principles come from Fein et al. (2002); Calhoun, F. & Weston, S. (June 2006); and from the experience of the primary authors.

[2] Vossekuil et al., 2002.

[3] Fein, et al., 2002.

[4] Vossekuil,et al., 2002.

[5] Randazzo et al., 2006; Reddy et al., 2001.

Principle 7: Does the Person Pose a Threat?

The central question of a threat assessment is whether the person in question *poses* a threat, NOT whether they *made* a threat.[6] A TAM Team should take *all* potential threatening behaviors seriously, not just those that have been verbalized or expressed in some other way. Similarly, just because a person has expressed intent to do harm does not necessarily mean that he/she poses a legitimate threat.

Principle 8: Keep Victims in Mind

The TAM Team will need to pay attention to both victim safety and victim well-being. Victims are inherently more interested in threat management than threat assessment — meaning that they are more interested in what the Team will do to intervene, rather than what the particular assessment is. The TAM Team may need to devote time and energy to managing victim or witness fears.

Principle 9: Early Identification and Intervention Helps Everyone

The earlier a concern is reported to the Team, the easier it is to address and resolve. Early identification also allows for a broader range of intervention options, especially those that are less punitive or control oriented.

Principle 10: Multiple Reporting Mechanisms Enhance Early Identification

The TAM Team should make it as easy as possible for the campus community to report concerns and for the Team to quickly access the resources it needs in order to intervene appropriately.

Principle 11: Multi-Faceted Resources Can Provide Effective Interventions

Multiple strategies to de-escalate or contain the individual, connect the individual with the resources and assistance needed, reduce his/her access to the target, decrease the vulnerability of a potential target, and address situational or environmental factors should be used in concert in order to manage a threat.

Principle 12: Safety Is a Primary Focus

Safety is the primary goal of all threat assessment and management efforts. The TAM Team's ultimate purpose is to ensure the safety of the campus community by identifying and managing threats. Any particular interventions — counseling, support, confrontation, termination, arrest, hospitalization, etc. — are tools to achieve the goals of safety. They are not ends unto themselves.

[6] Fein et al., 2002; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998; Fein, Vossekuil, & Holden (September 1995).

Inquiry and Assessment Questions

Once the Team has gathered and documented the information it has collected, we recommend that the Team first use this information to answer several key inquiry questions.[7] These questions are designed to help organize the information gathered.

What are the person's motive(s) and goals?

The purpose of this question is to understand the overall context of the behavior that first brought the person to the attention of the TAM Team, and also to understand whether those conditions or situation still exist. If those conditions still exist, the Team can use that information in crafting a management or referral/monitoring plan if necessary.

Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?

If the Team finds that the person in question has communicated an idea or plan to do harm — and that the source of that information is credible — this is a strong indication that the person may be on a pathway toward violence and therefore poses a threat. The Team should try to confirm or corroborate this information through another source, or through other information.

Has the person shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?

- Workplace, school or campus attacks or attackers;
- Weapons (including recent acquisition of any relevant weapon);
- Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers);
- Obsessive pursuit, stalking or monitoring others.

A "yes" to this question alone does not necessarily indicate that the person in question poses a threat or is otherwise in need of some assistance. Many people are interested in these topics but never pose any threat. However, if a person shows some fascination or fixation on any of these topics and has raised concern in another way, such as by expressing an idea to do harm to others or to himself/herself, recently purchasing a weapon, or showing helplessness or despair, the combination of these facts should increase the Team's concern about the person in question.

Has the person engaged in attack-related behaviors (i.e., any behavior that moves an idea of harm forward toward actual harm)?

If the Team determines that the person has engaged in any attack-related behavior, this is an indication that the person is on a pathway toward violence and has taken a step(s) forward toward carrying out an idea to do harm. Any of these behaviors should prompt the Team to try to corroborate or confirm these behaviors through other sources (or confirm the reliability of the source reporting these behaviors). Any attack-related behaviors should be seen as a serious indication of potential violence.

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[7] From Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage (2008). *The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams.* Stoneham, MA: Applied Risk Management. These questions are taken largely from Fein et al. (2002) and have been modified for a higher education setting and to be used for faculty and staff who raise some concern, as well as for students. The guidance for how to weigh or interpret responses to the questions has been provided by the authors.

Does the person have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?

It is important for the Team to recognize that in some areas of the country, it is quite common to own weapons and to have experience using weapons from a young age. Therefore, what the Team should focus on is the combination of the person owning or having access to weapons AND some indication that the person has an idea or plan to do harm. Similarly, the Team should be concerned if the person develops an idea to do harm and THEN starts showing an interest in weapons. Either combination should raise the Team's concern, and move the Team toward determining that the person poses a threat.

Is the person experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?

If the Team determines that the person in question is experiencing — or has recently experienced — desperation, hopelessness, and/or thoughts of suicide and there is NO other information indicating the person has thoughts or plans to harm other people, the Team should develop a plan to refer the person to necessary mental health care or emergency psychiatric intervention, possibly involving the institution's counseling center and/or police or local law enforcement if necessary. If the Team determines that the person in question is experiencing — or has recently experienced — desperation, hopelessness, and/or thoughts of suicide and there IS information that the person also has thoughts or plans to harm other people, the Team should determine that the person poses a threat and move to develop and implement a management plan to intervene with the person. The management plan should include resources to evaluate and treat the person's desperation and/or suicidal thoughts/plans.

Does the person have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible person (e.g., a friend, significant other, roommate, colleague, faculty advisor, coach, parent, etc.)?

If the Team decides that the person in question poses a threat of harm, the Team can solicit the help of this responsible person. The responsible person can also be encouraged to take a more active role in discouraging the person from engaging in any harm — whether to himself/herself, others, or both.

Does the person see violence as an acceptable, desirable, or only way to solve problems?

A "yes" to this question should increase the Team's concern about the person in question. But it should also lead the Team to consider what options they may have for helping the person solve their problems or improve their situation so that the person no longer looks toward violence to solve the problem.

Is the person's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?

If the TAM Team decides to interview the person of concern, the interview can be used as an opportunity to determine how forthcoming or truthful the person is being with the Team. The less forthcoming the person is, the more work the Team may have to do to develop an alliance if a management plan is needed.

Are other people concerned about the person's potential for violence?

As people are often reluctant to see violence as a possibility, if the Team learns that someone in the person's life does think the person is capable of violence, this should raise the Team's concern considerably. However, the Team should recognize that those in close relationships with the person may be too close to the person/situation to admit violence is possible or even likely.

What circumstances might affect the likelihood of violence?

All of us are capable of violence under the right (or wrong) circumstances. By asking this question, the Team can identify what factors in the person's life might change in the near- to mid-term, and whether those changes could make things better or worse for the person in question. If things look like they might improve for the person, the Team could monitor the person and situation for a while and re-assess after some time has passed. If things look like they might deteriorate, the Team can develop a management plan (if they believe the person poses a threat of harm or self-harm) or a referral plan (if the person does not pose a threat but appears in need of help) to help counteract the downturn in the person's circumstances.

Where does the subject exist along the pathway to violence?

- Have they developed an idea to do harm?
- Have they developed a plan?
- Have they taken any steps toward implementing the plan?
- Have they developed the capacity or means to carry out the plan?
- How fast are they moving toward engaging in harm?
- Where can the Team intervene to move the person off that pathway toward harm?

Make the Assessment.

Once the Team has answered the above questions (recognizing that a team may not be able to obtain information regarding all of the questions) and documented its answers, it then assesses the threat posed by the individual by answering the following two ultimate assessment questions:

A. ***Does the person pose a threat of harm, whether to him/herself, to others, or both? That is, does the person's behavior suggest that he or she is on a pathway toward harm?***[8]

If the answer is "no," the Team documents its response and reasoning and proceeds to Question B. If the answer is "yes," the Team documents its response and rationale, and then proceeds to develop, implement, and continually monitor an individualized threat management plan to reduce the risk

that the person poses. The Team should document the details of this plan, as well as document steps it takes to implement the plan and/or refer the person for help. The Team does not need to answer Question B.

B. ***If the person does not pose a threat of harm, does the person otherwise show a need for help or intervention, such as mental health care?***

If the answer is "no," the Team documents its response, records the person and incident in the Team's incident database, and closes the inquiry. If the answer is "yes," the Team documents its response and rationale, and then develops, implements, and re-evaluates a plan to monitor the person and situation and/or connect the person with resources in order to assist him/her with solving problems or addressing needs. The Team should document the details of this plan, as well as document steps taken to implement the plan and/or refer the person for help.

The answers to Questions A and B will dictate the Priority Level that the TAM Team assigns to the case. The Priority Level is designed to communicate both the level of threat posed by the person in question, as well as actions that may be necessary on the part of the Team to address and reduce that threat level. While the Team can choose its own rating scale, we offer the following for consideration.

[8] Fein et al., 2002.

Recommended Reading

Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams: What Risk Managers Need to Know Now
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