



BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management in a Campus Setting:
A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant, or Threatening Behavior

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Gene Deisinger, Ph.D.

Deisinger Consulting, LLC
▪ President & Founder

Education, Training & Certifications:

- Ph.D., Counseling/Clinical Psychology
- Licensed Psychologist (IA)
- Certified Health Service Provider in Psychology (IA)
- Certified Law Enforcement Officer (IA & VA; Retired)

Experience:

- U.S. Department of Justice Critical Incident Review Team
 - SME: Regarding Mass Casualty Incident in Uvalde, TX
- Virginia Center for School & Campus Safety
 - Threat Management Consultant (2015-Present)
- Virginia State Police / Virginia Fusion Center
 - Threat Management Consultant / Advisory Board Member
- Virginia Tech
 - Deputy Chief of Police & Director, Threat Management Services
- Joint Terrorism Task Force / ATAC Southern District of Iowa
 - Special Deputy US Marshal (2001-2009)
- Story County (IA) Mental Health Task Force / CIT Program
 - Founding Member / Leader (1995-2009)
- Iowa State University
 - Deputy Chief of Police & Director, Threat Management (1993-2009)





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Session Agenda

- Introduction
- Overview of Threat Assessment and Management
- Overview of Workplace / Campus Violence
- The Nature and Process of Targeted Violence
- Essential Elements of a Threat Management Process:
 - Multi-disciplinary approach capable of addressing all threats;
 - Coordinated & early awareness of developing concerns through active community engagement;
 - Thorough & contextual assessment;
 - Proactive & integrated case management;
 - Monitors & re-assesses case on a longitudinal basis;
 - Standards of practice and law;
 - Continuous improvement & adaptability.
- Case Scenarios & Applications




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Virginia CARES for Schools and Campuses

- Threat assessment and management are part of a larger, on-going approach to support and enhance school/campus safety and well-being.
- School/campus safety and well-being are sustained and enhanced through:
 - C:** Caring and connection to build a positive climate;
 - A:** Awareness of resources and reporting options;
 - R:** Recognition of (and response to) threatening, aberrant and concerning behaviors;
 - E:** Engagement with the community and with persons (within the school or campus) for whom there is concern; and
 - S:** Support for all members of the school community.



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Enhancing Your Experience!

Maximize opportunities to enhance your practice

- **Actively engage with the training**
 - Contribute to and learn from others
- **Build collaborative networks**
 - Introduce yourself and share contact information
- **Commit to a process of continual development**
 - Identify next steps for enhancing & applying your skills

For further consideration: This icon identifies issues for further consideration to enhance your understanding and application of concepts.

Enhance your understanding: This icon will identify active internet links to resources and reference material.



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Exercise

Identify whether the following are general risk factors vs. proximal warning behaviors for targeted violence.

1. The subject communicates threats directly to the target and that contain specific detail about intended harm to the target.
2. The subject has a history of violence.
3. The subject expresses increased desperation and lack of alternatives to violence in dealing with grievances.
4. The subject obsesses over grievances and the need for justice through violence.



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Exercise

Identify whether the following are general risk factors vs. proximal warning behaviors for targeted violence.

- The subject regularly plays first-person-shooter video games.
- The subject expresses aspects of grievances and need for justice through violence to 3rd parties or via social media but not directly to the target.
- The subject is living with a serious mental illness.
- The subject admires and seeks to emulate others who have engaged in acts of violence.

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Discussion Point:

What is Threat Assessment & Management?

For further consideration:

- Do various people or groups view threat assessment differently?
- Who does not understand the role and function of the threat assessment team as well as you would like?
- How do you address misperceptions/concerns?

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What is Threat Assessment & Management?

A systematic process that is designed to:

- IDENTIFY** situations / subjects of concern
- INQUIRE**, investigate & gather information
- ASSESS** situation
- MANAGE** the situation / mitigate harm

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A Public Health Approach

Why a Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention?

- Emphasis on prevention
- Enhances the health, safety and well-being of the community
- Utilizes a multi-disciplinary approach
- Engages community & key stakeholders for input and action
- Continuously evaluates and improves

Centers for Disease Control. "The Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention," Jan. 28, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/about/publichealthapproach.html>.

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Threat Assessment & Management Process

BTAM facilitates a more objective process:
There are no facts, only interpretations.
— Friedrich Nietzsche

Deisinger, 2017

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What is Concerning or Aberrant Behavior?

Concerning Behavior:

- Behaviors or communications that cause concern for:
 - The health, safety, or well-being of the subject
 - Their impact on the health, safety, or well being of others, or
 - Both

Aberrant Behavior:

- Behaviors or communications that are unusual or atypical for the person or situation, and that cause concern for the health, safety or well-being of the subject, others, or both.

For further consideration:

- Do all aberrant or atypical behaviors cause concern?
- Do various groups in the community view behaviors differently?

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Concerning or Aberrant Behavior

- **Concerning or Aberrant Behavior (examples):**
 - Withdrawal, isolation or alienation from others
 - Sudden changes to usual attire, behavior, or hygiene
 - Changes in eating or sleeping habits
 - Sullen or depressed behavior
 - Declining work performance
 - Atypical interest or fascination with weapons or violence
 - Fixation on violence as means of addressing a grievance
 - Fearful, anxious, depressed, tense, reactive or suspicious
 - Atypical outbursts of verbal or physical aggression
 - Increased levels of agitation, frustration, or anger
 - Confrontational, accusatory, or blaming behavior
 - Feelings of helplessness or decreased self-esteem



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What is a “Threat”?

A threat:

- **Is a concerning communication or behavior that:**
 - Indicates an individual may pose a danger to the safety or well-being of the campus community:
 - through acts of violence or
 - other behavior that would cause harm to self or others
- **May be expressed or communicated:**
 - behaviorally
 - orally
 - visually
 - in writing
 - electronically
 - or through any other means
- **Is considered a threat regardless of whether:**
 - Observed by or communicated directly to the target or
 - Observed by or communicated to a third party or
 - Whether the target is aware of the threat



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Threatening Behaviors

Threatening behaviors (examples):

- **An act that would be interpreted by a reasonable person as threatening or intimidating, such as:**
 - Directly communicated threats
 - Leakage
 - Overt physical or verbal intimidation
 - Bullying that continues after interventions to stop the behavior
 - Throwing objects or other gestures intended to cause fear
 - Making inappropriate statements about harming others
 - Any statements or behaviors indicating suicidality
 - Research or planning related to carrying out violence
 - Stalking
 - Physical violence toward a person or property
 - Unlawful possession of weapons on campus or at campus events



[The Concept of Leakage in Threat Assessment](#)

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Threat Assessment & Management Goal

**The primary goal of the
threat assessment and management process
is to support and enhance
the health, safety, or well-being
of the organization.**



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Principles of Threat Management

- Threat assessment & management is about prevention, not prediction



**The best way
to predict your future
is to create it.**
- Abraham Lincoln

- Threat assessment and management is a helping process, rather than punitive or adversarial



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Predatory / Targeted Violence

Targeted Violence:

- Incident(s) of violence
- Where (a) potential assailant(s)
- Chooses a particular target(s)
- Prior to a violent/destructive act.

Adapted from: FBI (2017). *Making Prevention of Violence a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*



www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf



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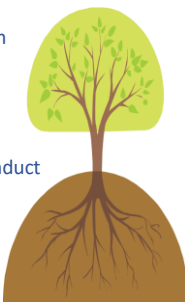
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Targeted Violence

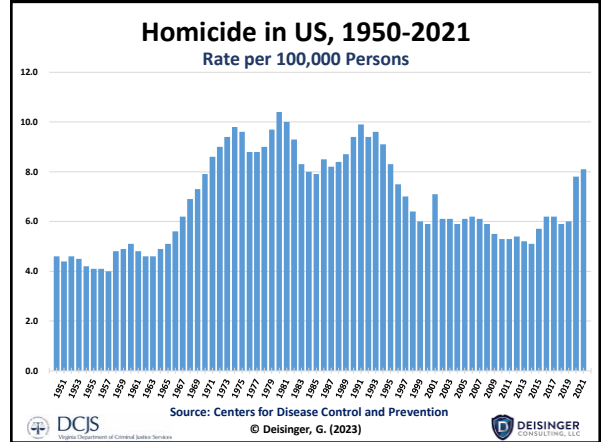
Examples of Targeted Violence:

- Public Mass Violence
- Lone Actor Terrorism / Violent Extremism
- Grievance-Based Violence impacting:
 - Workplace, schools, & campuses
 - Houses of Worship / Faith communities
 - Government agencies / Public figures
- Domestic / Intimate Partner Violence*
- Predatory Sexual Assault / Sexual Misconduct
- Stalking
- Human Trafficking
- Gang Violence*
- Harassment / Bullying / Mobbing
- Bias and Hate Crimes
- Suicidal Behaviors in Public Locations*

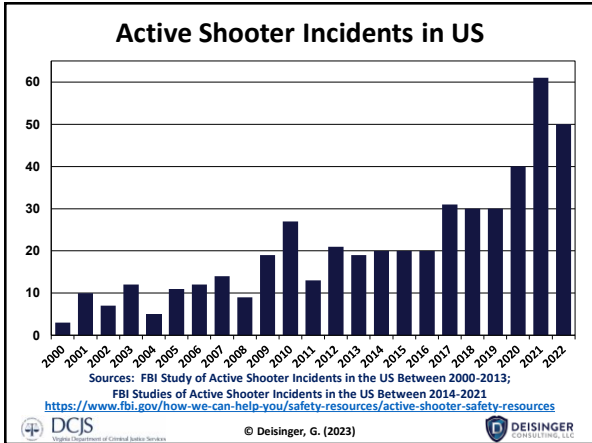


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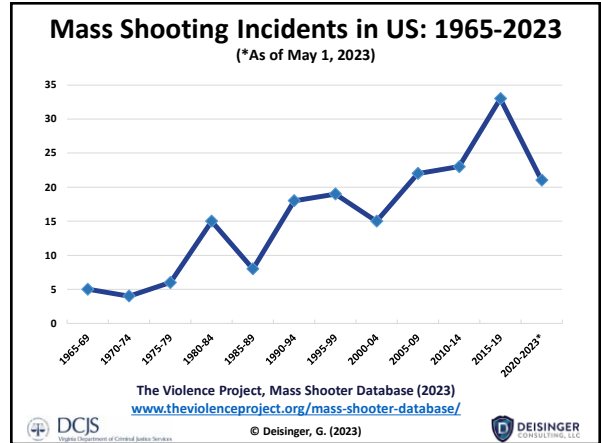
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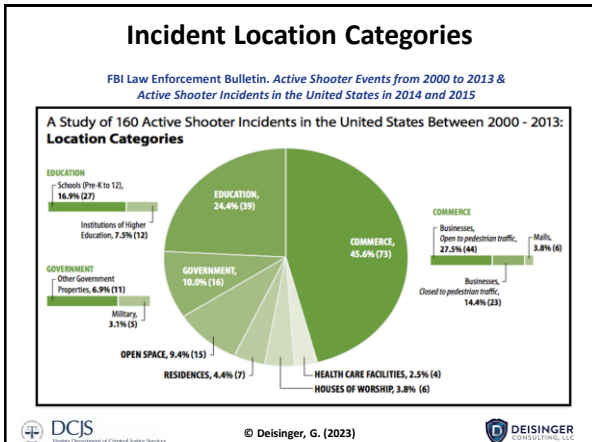
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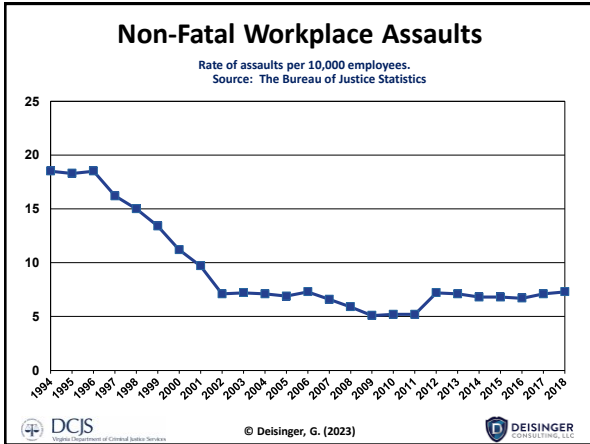


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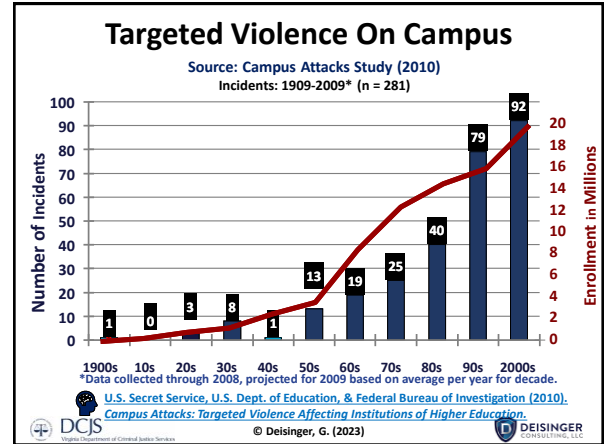


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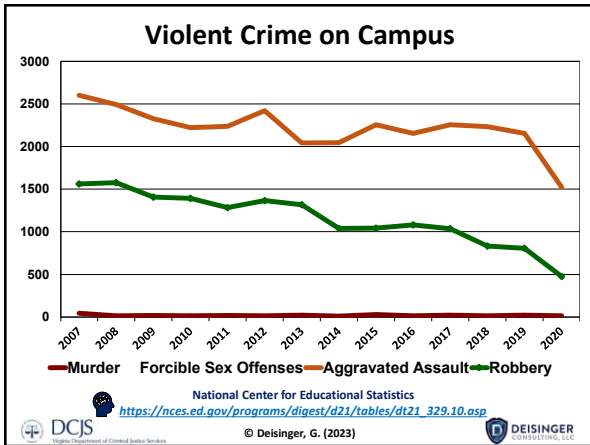
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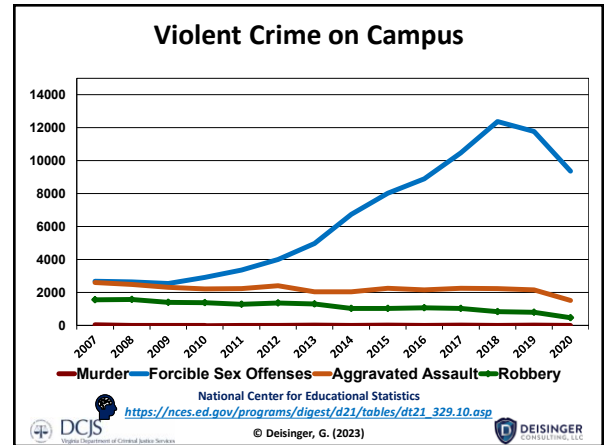
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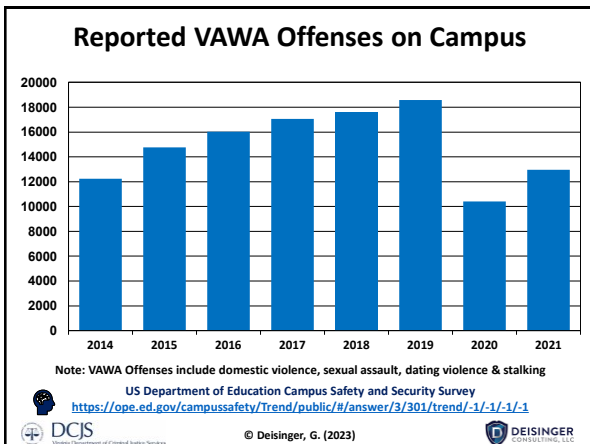
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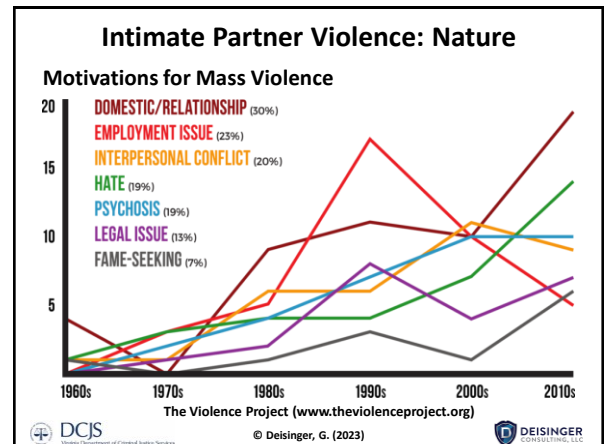
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Intimate Partner Violence: Nature

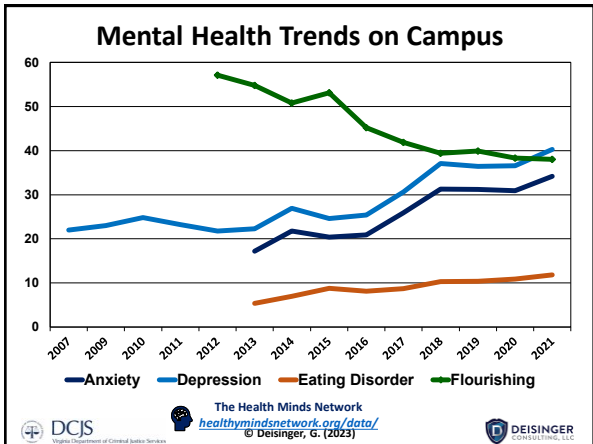
IPV and Mass Violence

- 59.1% of mass shootings between 2014 and 2019 were DV-related
- 68.2% of mass shootings, the perpetrator either
 - killed at least one partner or family member or
 - had a history of DV

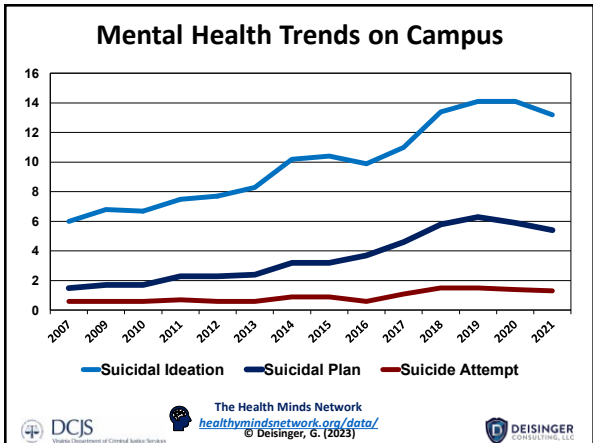
Geller, L.B., Booty, M., & Crifasi, C.K. (2021). The role of domestic violence in fatal mass shootings in the United States, 2014–2019. *Injury Epidemiology*, 8(38), <https://injejournal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s40621-021-00330-0.pdf>

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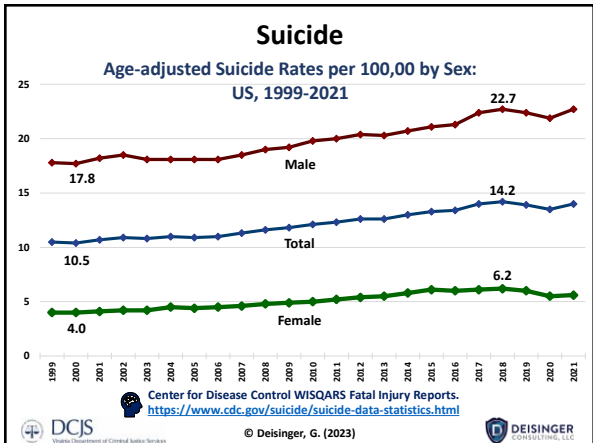
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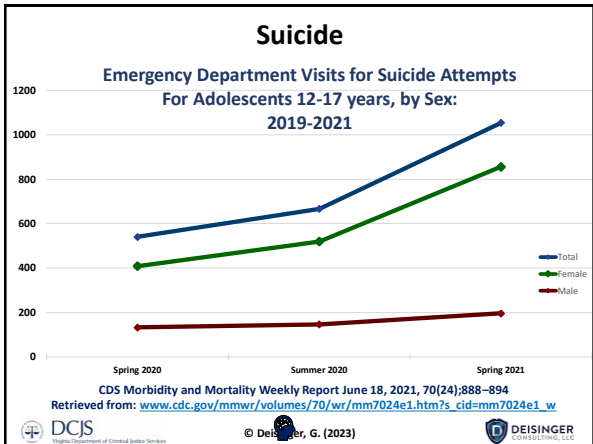
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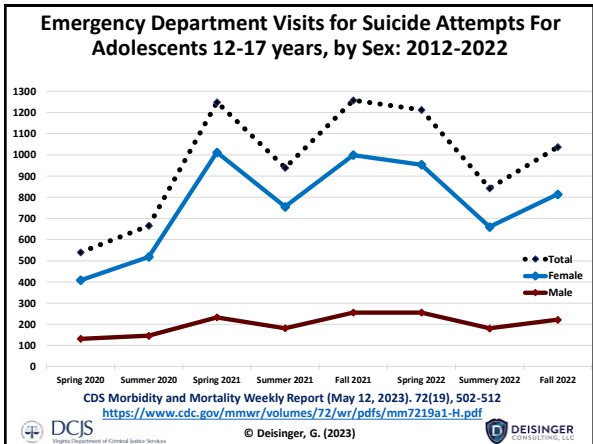
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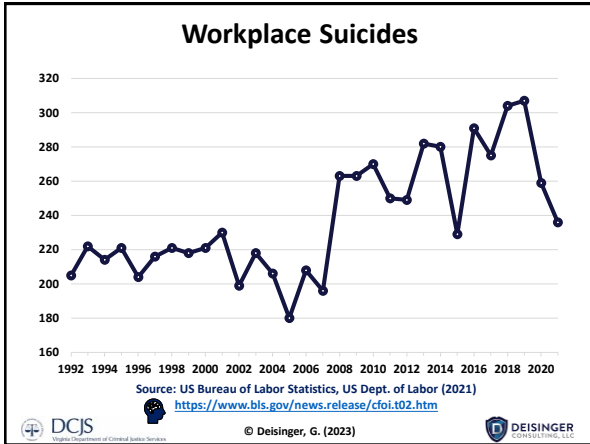
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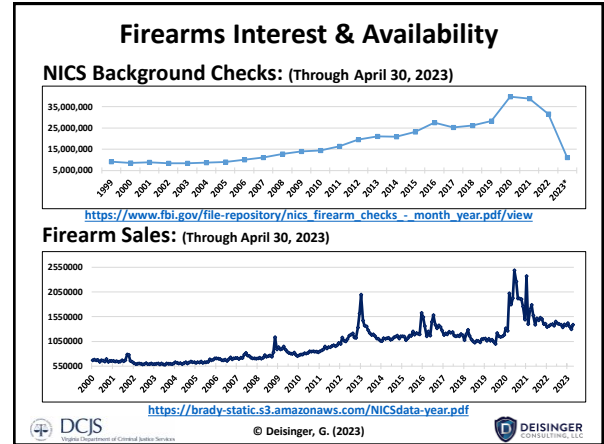
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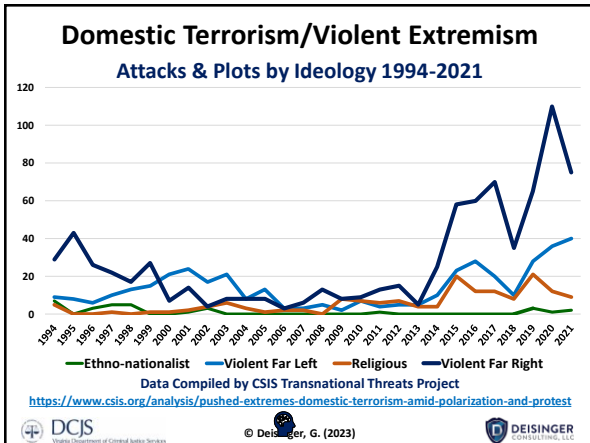
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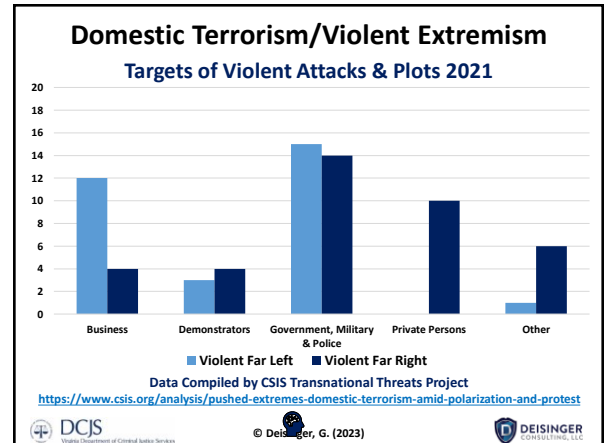
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Modes of Violence

Affective Violence:		Predatory Violence
Intense emotion & expression	↔	Minimal emotion or expression
Violence is reactive and immediate	↔	Violence is planned and purposeful
Violence against perceived threats	↔	Violence against specified targets
Heightened and diffuse awareness	↔	Heightened and focused awareness
Goal is threat reduction	↔	Violence serves variable goals
Primarily emotional and defensive	↔	Primarily cognitive and attack-oriented
Rapid displacement of target	↔	Minimal displacement of target;
Reactions are time limited	↔	Not time limited;

Source: Meloy (2000) *Violence Risk & Threat Assessment*

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- ### Understanding Targeted Violence
- There is no demographic profile of a perpetrator of targeted violence.
 - There is no profile for the type of organization or community that has been targeted.
 - A broad range of persons may engage in violence:
 - Staff
 - Clients/customers/patrons
 - Contractors and vendors
 - People in relationships with staff or clients, and
 - People with no connection to the organization/community
- [A Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters 2000-2013](#)
Protecting America's Schools
Making Prevention a Reality
Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020
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Understanding Targeted Violence

- Most perpetrators act alone
- But, in many cases, others (e.g., staff, peers, family members, etc.) were involved in some way:
 - Failing to report concerns
 - Failing take other steps to prevent violence
 - Encouraging violence
 - Helping with plans or preparation for violence.
- Most perpetrators of mass casualties used firearms
 - Typically acquired from home
- Over 1/3 of perpetrators used knives

 [A Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters 2000-2013](#)
Averted School Violence
Protecting America's Schools
Indicators of School Crime and Safety
[Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020](#)



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Understanding Targeted Violence

- Many perpetrators were preoccupied with violent interests, incidents or perpetrators
- Many perpetrators had a history of violence
- Many perpetrators of mass violence had a history of disciplinary actions
- Many had prior contact with law enforcement
- Many perpetrators were suicidal in addition to their violent thoughts or acts toward others
- Suicidal behaviors are a significant and growing concern across all genders and age groups.

 [A Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters 2000-2013](#)
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[Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020](#)



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Understanding Targeted Violence

- Perpetrators usually had multiple motives
 - Most common: unresolved grievance with a peer
- Many perpetrators had multiple stressors, including significant difficulties with losses or failures
- Many student perpetrators had been victims of (or participated in) prior bullying, often known to others
- Most perpetrators did not threaten their targets directly prior to engaging in violence
- Many perpetrators expressed their grievances and aspects of their thoughts or plans to others
 - Often through social media or online activities

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Understanding Targeted Violence

- All perpetrators exhibited concerning behavior.
- Most perpetrators had engaged in multiple behaviors that caused others to have serious concerns about their behavior and/or well-being.
- Many perpetrators had experienced psychological, behavioral, or developmental symptoms, but may not have been diagnosed with a mental health condition or benefited from adequate treatment.
- Incidents of targeted violence are rarely sudden or impulsive acts.

 [A Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters 2000-2013](#)
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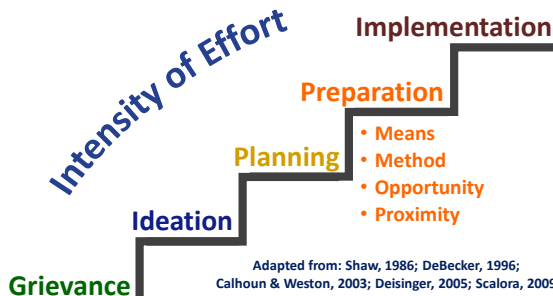


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Pathway to Violence



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Understanding Targeted Violence

- Prior to most incidents of targeted violence, other people knew about aspects of the individual's ideas, plans or preparations to cause harm.
- Many bystanders who had knowledge of concerning behaviors did not report them.
- Often, there were concerns about the perpetrator by others outside of the campus, but the concerns were not reported to campus staff.

[A Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters 2000-2013](#)
[Averted School Violence](#)
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Violence Prevention

- Many acts of violence can be prevented.
- Information about a subject's ideas, behaviors, plans & preparations for violence can often be observed before harm can occur.
- Information about a subject's behavior, plans or preparations is likely to be scattered & fragmented.
- Keys for the community are to:
 - Recognize concerns,
 - Act quickly upon report of concerns,
 - Gather relevant information,
 - Enhance understanding of situation,
 - Facilitate intervention.

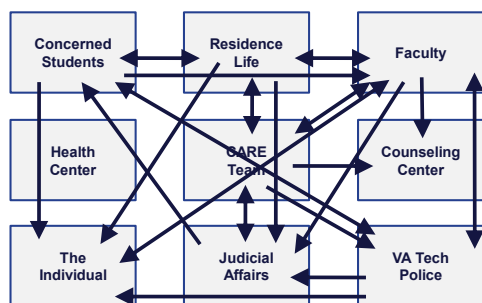


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Communication is Key



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



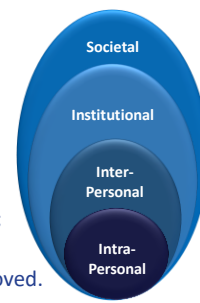
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Effective Prevention Strategies

- Comprehensive;
- Systematic and theory driven;
- Collaborative;
- Socio-culturally relevant;
- Appropriately timed;
- Delivered by well-trained staff;
- Utilize multiple & varied methods;
- Sustained over time;
- Continuously evaluated and improved.



Source: Nation, M., et al (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of Effective Prevention Programs. *American Psychologist*, 58, 449-456.



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Essential Elements of an Effective Threat Assessment & Management Process

Organizations must have a systematic process that:

- Utilizes a robust & relevant multi-disciplinary approach to address all threats;
- Enables coordinated & early awareness of developing concerns through active community engagement;
- Facilitates a thorough & contextual assessment;
- Implements proactive & integrated case management;
- Monitors & re-assesses case on a longitudinal basis;
- Conducts all practices in accordance with relevant laws, policies, and standards of practice;
- Continuously improves & adapts to challenges & needs.

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TAM is a Systemic Process

Systematic Process:

- Building & supporting community safety & well-being
- Identification/recognition & reporting
- Intake & Initial Inquiry
- Triage / Screening
- Full Inquiry / Investigation
- Assessment
- Management
- Monitoring & Re-Assessment
- Update/Engagement & Closure
- Continuous improvement of environment/systems



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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

Utilizes a robust & relevant multi-disciplinary approach to address all threats

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Establishing a BTAM Team:

Developing the Team:

- **Mission:** Purpose, scope, functions & authority
- **Structure:**
 - Membership (Core & Ad-Hoc)
 - Leadership
 - Support
- **Training:**
 - Member roles, responsibilities & resources
 - Behavioral threat assessment & management process
 - Consulting/Reporting options & methods

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TAM Functions

Define Mission, Scope & Authority

- Enhance awareness/recognition of potential threats
- Enhance reporting
- Triage and assessment
- Case management to prevent/mitigate harm
- Guide implementation of strategies
- Re-evaluate, monitor and intervene with situation
- Evaluate needs of community
- Enhance: policy, process, practice and people*

* © G. Deisinger, Ph.D.

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Multi-Disciplinary TAM Process:

Goals:

- Increase awareness of developing concerns/threats
- Maximize skills and resources to address concerns
- Enhance ability to monitor outcomes
- Enhance community healthy, safety & well-being
- Enhance:
 - Communication
 - Collaboration
 - Coordination
 - Capitalization

By far the most valuable prevention strategy identified was the threat assessment and management team
FBI (2017) Making Prevention a Reality

© G. Deisinger, C. Cychosz, L. Jaeger (1993/1995)


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Team Membership:

Multi-Disciplinary Involvement by:

- **Administration**
 - Academic Affairs/Provost; Graduate/Professional Schools
 - Student Affairs; Dean of Students; Residence Life; Conduct
 - Human Resources; Employee Relations
- **Police / Security (local/state law enforcement)**
- **Key Gatekeepers / “Boundary Spanners”**
- **Legal Counsel ***
- **Mental Health Professional ***
- **Threat Management Professional ***
- **Independent Medical/Psychological Evaluator ****

* Internal or External Resource ** External Resource






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Skills of Effective Team Members

- Passionate about the goals of the team
- Communicates effectively
- Relates well with others
- Familiar with threat assessment & management policies, processes and practices
- Actively and effectively participates in team-work
- Demonstrates an inquisitive mindset
- Exercises judgment, objectivity, and diligence
- Demonstrates accountability
- Advocates for necessary resources

Deisinger, et al (2008) *Handbook of Campus Threat Assessment & Management Teams*

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Key Dynamics of Successful Teams

Psychological Safety: We take risks without feeling insecure or embarrassed.

Dependability: We can count on each other to do high quality work on time.

Structure & Clarity: We are clear about our goals, roles, and execution plans.

Meaning of Work: We are working on something that is personally important for each of us.

Impact of Work: We fundamentally believe that the work we are doing matters.

Julia Rozovsky (2015) *The five keys to a successful Google team.*



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Team Size

Optimal Size: 5 – 9 members

- Fewer than 4
 - Too much responsibility / stress
 - Minimal diversity of thought
- Greater than 9
 - Diminished responsibility & engagement
 - Decreased individual performance
 - Decreased communication
 - Increase of cliques

Mueller, J.S. (2012). *Why Individuals in Larger Teams Perform Worse. Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes, 117(1), 111-124.*



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Threat Assessment Team: Scope

Utilize An “All Threats” Approach

- Teams assess and manage subjects whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of the organization

Subjects who may pose a threat:

- Students: current, former, and prospective
- Faculty/Staff: current, former, and prospective
- Indirectly affiliated:
 - Parents, guardians or other family members
 - Persons who are/have been in relationships with staff/students
 - Contractors, vendors or other visitors
- Unaffiliated persons

Considerations:
 What challenges do you see in addressing subjects who may have no, or limited, connection to the community?



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Subject Affiliation

Subject Relation to Workplace

- Type 1: Unaffiliated (with other criminal intent)
- Type 2: Customer/Client
- Type 3: Employee
- Type 4: Personal Relationship

Source: Occupational Safety & Health Administration, US Dept of Labor

- Type 5: Unaffiliated (without other criminal intent)

Source: G. Deisinger (2005)



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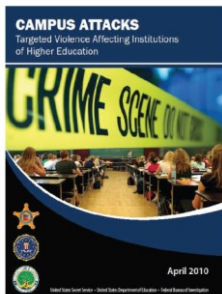


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Subjects: Address All Threats

Perpetrator’s Affiliation:

- Student: 60%
 - Current: 45%
 - Former: 15%
- Employee: 11%
 - Current: 6%
 - Former: 5%
- Indirectly Affiliated: 20%
- No known Affiliation: 9%



U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Dept. of Education, & Federal Bureau of Investigation (2010). *Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education.*



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SOURCES OF GRIEVANCES / TARGETS

Grievance Sources / Targets:

- Persons
 - Places
 - Programs
 - Processes
 - Philosophies
 - Proxies
- Chosen based on:**
- Desirability
 - Availability
 - Vulnerability

Source: FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit (2017)

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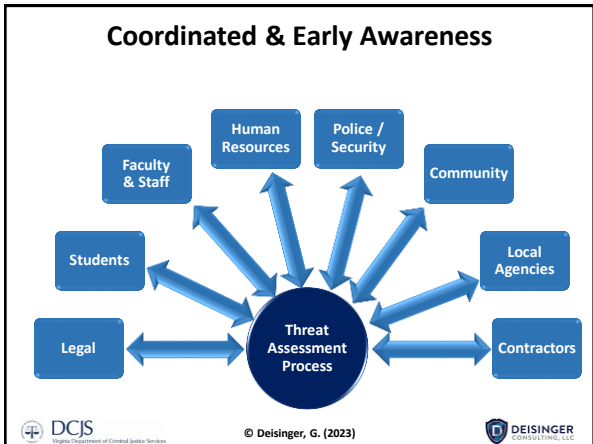
TAM is a Systematic Process That:

**Enables coordinated & early awareness
of developing concerns through
active community engagement**

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Importance of Reporting

Key considerations:

- Reporting allows concerns to be addressed
- Earlier reporting allows greater range of options
- The threat management process is designed to help
- Goals are to maintain the health, safety and well-being of the campus community



***“If you see, hear, or know something,
say something
and do something.”***

Adapted from: NYC Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Considerations:

- What might create barriers to reporting?
- How can we overcome these?

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Facilitate Bystander Engagement

Facilitate engagement:

- Emphasize that it is everyone’s role and responsibility to share and address concerns
- Identify concerning, aberrant, threatening, and prohibited behaviors to be reported
- Establish and promote effective reporting mechanisms
- Establish and identify how and where concerns can be reported
- Respond to reports in timely and effective manner
- Provide regular reminders of issues and process

[USSS and DOE \(2008\) Prior Knowledge of Potential School-Based Violence](#)
[Police Foundation \(2019\) A Comparison of Averted and Completed School Attacks from the Police Foundation Averted School Violence Database](#)
[Craun, Gibson, et al \(2020\). \(In\)action: Variation in Bystander Responses Between Persons of Concern and Active Shooters](#)
[USDHS \(2023\) Improving Safety through Bystander Reporting](#)

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Building Awareness

Outreach/Awareness presentations

- Managers, supervisors, employees
- Contractors



Training Sessions

- Consulting & case management process;
- Verbal de-escalation
- Incident survival

Information: Available and sustained

- Website
- E-mail updates/newsletters
- Social media

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Maintaining Awareness

Sustain organizational knowledge about:

- **Mission & function of team**
 - Early intervention and assistance with situations
- **Importance of consulting about concerning behaviors**
 - “This may be nothing but . . .”
 - If in doubt, shout it out!
- **Mechanisms for reporting and consultation**
- **Community role in maintaining safety and well-being of the community**
- **GOAL:** Sustain a culture of care, engagement and consultation.

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Facilitating Engagement / Reporting

- Clear and trusted reporting mechanisms
 - Confidential
 - Anonymous
 - Anonymous with reach back
- Acknowledgement of report
- Support engagement



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Documentation

Record keeping

- Consult with administration and legal counsel:
 - Record creation, storage, access, sharing, and destruction
- Consider:
 - Database of threat assessment team cases
 - Documentation of the subject's exact words and actions
 - Documentation of target reactions and protective actions
 - Copies of emails, memos, voicemails, assignments, etc.
 - Agenda and minutes of team staffing and consultations.
 - Data
 - Assessment
 - Plan



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Process & Record Keeping

FORTify the process:

- Process and documentation should demonstrate that TAM team's decision-making process was:

Fair,
Objective,
Reasonable, and
Timely

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Documentation

Record retention

- Student Threat Assessment Records
 - Retain for three (3) years after closure.
[Schedule GS-111 College Records \(Student Affairs Investigations; page 15\)](#)
- Non-Student Threat Assessment Records
 - Retain for five (5) years after closure.
[Schedule GS-103 Personnel Records \(Incident Reports; page 6\)](#)
- Employee Health Records, as part of TAMT record
 - Retain for thirty (30) years after separation
[Schedule GS-103 Personnel Records \(Employee Health Records; page 4\)](#)



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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

Facilitates a thorough
& contextual assessment

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Steps in the Threat Assessment Process

Threat assessment team:

- Receives report of threat
 - Intake: How you take in reports and being processing
 - Triage: Assigning urgency/priority to cases
 - Screening: Determining appropriateness for TAM
- Gathers additional relevant information
- Analyzes information and assesses threat
 - If the team decides subject poses a threat:
 - Team alerts superintendent
 - Responds to manage threat
- Monitors and re-evaluates plan
- Follow up as appropriate



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Comprehensive Threat Assessment & Management

Targeted Violence is the product of an interaction among multiple domains:

- S** The **subject** of concern;
- T** The **target** or others impacted;
- E** The **environment/systems**; and,
- P** **Precipitating events**.



Deisinger (1996); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)



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Intake

Upon receipt of initial report, the team obtains basic information about the situation:

- **Initial Report of Concern:** Date and time reported, date and time reviewed, person receiving report
- **Reporting Party:** Name, affiliation, contact information, relationship to subject of concern
- **Incident/Nature of Concern:** Date and time occurred, location, nature of concern, weapons involved or threatened, details about concerns, and any relevant background
- **Subject of Concern:** Name, affiliation, contact information, relationship to reporting party or target(s)
- **Identified/Identifiable Target(s):** Name, affiliation, contact information, relationship to reporting party or subject



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Imminent Situation?

Determine if situation is emergency/imminent

- **Subject intends imminent and/or serious harm to self/others, e.g.,:**
 - Has weapon on campus or campus activity, or enroute to/from either of those
 - Imminent intent to use weapon(s) or cause serious injury
 - Attempting to breach security and/or to gain access to targets
- **Lack of inhibitions for using violence, indicated by:**
 - Feels justified in using violence to address grievances
 - Has no perceived alternatives to the use of violence
 - Lack of concern for or desiring of consequences
 - Has the capability and willingness to cause harm



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Imminent Situation

If the situation is emergent or imminent, initiate crisis response procedures according to school policy, e.g.:

- **Involve law enforcement and appropriate security personnel**
- **Initiate relevant security protocols**
- **Notify key administrators**
- **When safe to do so, move on to screening and assessment steps to further resolve any ongoing threat posed**



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Triage and Screening

Timely and systematic review by trained personnel

- **Consider Triage/Screening Team:**
 - Minimum of two (2) members
 - Different roles/departments
- **Review initial report(s)**
- **Consult relevant records/sources**

Triage / screening process shall:

- **Consider the nature and level of concern indicated**
- **Determine if existing resources and mechanisms are sufficient to address those concerns**
- **Determine whether the full team needs to further assess and manage the situation**
- **Initiate any crisis responses as appropriate**



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Inquire / Gather Information

Review relevant records based on lawful and ethical access to information, such as:

- **Prior threat assessment team contacts**
- **Work performance history**
- **Disciplinary or personnel actions**
- **Law enforcement or security contacts at organization and in the community**
- **Critical involvement with mental health or social services**
- **Presence of known problems, grievances, or losses**
- **Current or historical grievances that may be related to the behavior of concern**
- **Online searches: internet, social media, email, etc.**



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Social Media Landscape

Conversation Prism 5.0
Brian Solis

<https://a1partners.com/>
<https://saferschoolstogether.com/>

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Inquire/Gather Information

Consider interviews:

- Initial interviews to verify report:
 - Person(s) reporting threat
 - Person(s) receiving report of threat
 - Target/Recipient(s) of threat
 - Witness(es)
 - Subject of concern
- Other potential sources:
 - Peers: Friends/Co-workers
 - Employers, teachers, other staff
 - Parents/guardians
 - Relational Partners
 - Local law or state enforcement
 - Community services

Considerations:

- Corroboration of information across these sources may be critical in helping to assess the level and nature of the threat.
- What may be revealed by significant differences in the information provided by these sources?

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Considerations for Interviewing

Considerations for interviews:

- By whom?
- With what skill set?
- In what setting?
- With what goals in mind?
 - Information gathering and assessment;
 - Redirect from violence/targets;
 - Problem solving/support
 - Set boundaries/limitations
 - Admonishment/confrontation
 - Intervention/support/referral
 - Monitoring
 - Deterrence

Considerations:

- Are TAT members adequately trained and prepared to conduct interviews?
- Who may be best suited to conduct this interview?

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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

What situation(s) or behaviors are causing concern?

- Does the situation or circumstance that led to these concerns still exist?
- When and where and do the behaviors tend to occur?
- Is there a pattern to the behaviors or a change in pattern of behavior that is causing concern?
- If the behaviors have occurred previously, how has the subject dealt with the grievances?
- Has subject previously come to someone’s attention?
- Are the subject’s behaviors causing others concern for the welfare of the subject, or others, or both?

Adapted from: FBI (2017) Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks; * Meloy, et al. (2012). The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment; U.S. Secret Service (2000) Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials.

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Key Areas for Inquiry - Subject

Have there been any concerning, aberrant, threatening, or violent communications?

- Were there **Directly Communicated Threats***?
- Has there been **Leakage***?
- How and to whom is the subject communicating?
 - What is relationship between subject and target?
 - What means/modes communication have been used?
- What is the **Intensity of Effort**** in communications or attempts to address grievance?
- Do the communications provide insight about motives, grievances, ideation, planning, preparation, targets, etc.?
- Has anyone been alerted or “warned away”?

Adapted from: * Meloy, et al. (2012). The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment; ** FBI (2017) Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks; U.S. Secret Service (2000) Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials.

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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

What are the subject’s motives and goals?

- Does the subject have a major grievance or grudge?
- Against whom? What is the relationship?
- Are there other motives that support use of violence such as desire for notoriety/fame?
- What do they seem to want to achieve?
- Is the subject exhibiting **Fixation***?
 - Increasing perseveration on person/cause or need for resolution
 - Increasingly strident and negative characterization of target
 - Angry emotional undertone, accompanied by
 - Social or occupational deterioration
- What efforts have been made to resolve the problem?

Adapted from: * Meloy, et al. (2011). The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment; FBI (2017) Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks; U.S. Secret Service (2000) Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials.

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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

Has subject demonstrated significant or novel interest in violence or other perpetrators:

- Do they exhibit heightened interest, fascination, obsession, or fixation with acts of violence?
- Do they immerse themselves in violence?
- Is there **Identification*** (strong desire or need to emulate/be like others) with:
 - Perpetrators of targeted violence or powerful figures
 - Grievances of other perpetrators
 - Weapons or tactics of other perpetrators
 - Effect or notoriety of other perpetrators
 - Ideologies or groups that support and encourage violence

Adapted from: * Meloy, et al. (2011). *The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment*; FBI (2017) *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*; U.S. Secret Service (2000) *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment: Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials*.



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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

Does the subject have (or are they developing) the capacity to engage in targeted violence?

- Are there **Pathway Warning Behaviors*** ?
 - Planning
 - Preparation (Means, Method, Opportunity, Proximity)
- Where on the Pathway?
- Are there changes in activity levels or **Energy Bursts*** ?
- How organized is the subject's thinking and behavior?
- History of violence or aspects of **Novel Aggression*** ?
- Is subject developing perceived capability?

Adapted from: * Meloy, et al. (2011). *The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment*; FBI (2017) *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*; U.S. Secret Service (2000) *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment: Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials*.



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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

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

- Has subject experienced perceived loss, failure, injustice?
- Does subject express shame or humiliation?
- Is subject having significant difficulty coping?
- Are there indications of **Last Resort Behaviors*** ?
 - Desperation, despair, finality or action imperative
 - Violence justified to address perceived grievance
 - Lack of perceived alternatives
 - Lack of concern for, or welcoming consequences
 - Development of **legacy token****

Adapted from: * Meloy, et al. (2011). *The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment*; ** FBI (2017) *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*; U.S. Secret Service (2000) *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment: Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials*.



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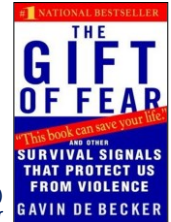
Key Areas for Inquiry

Dangerousness is not a permanent state of being nor solely an attribute of a person.

Dangerousness is situational & based on:

- Justification;
- Alternatives;
- Consequences; and
- Ability.

Source: Gavin de Becker (1997)
The Gift of Fear



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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

Has the subject's behavior indicated or raised concern of need for intervention or supportive services?

- Does subject have difficulty coping?
- Symptoms of severe, acute, untreated mental illness:
 - Significant lack of contact with reality:
 - Hallucinations (especially command hallucinations)
 - Delusions (especially paranoid/persecutory or grandiosity)
 - Extreme wariness, distrust, paranoia
 - Symptoms that impact subject's perceptions of grievances or how others respond to subject
 - Significant or sustained agitation or anxiousness
 - Significant or sustained depressed mood
 - Alcohol or other drug use/abuse
 - Pervasive patterns of maladaptive behavior
- Is subject actively engaged in treatment?

Adapted from: FBI (2017) *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing and Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*



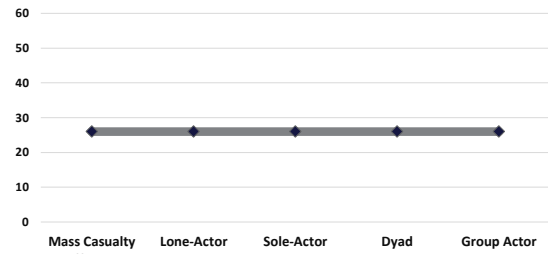
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Mental Illness & Targeted Violence

Mental Disorder Prevalence Across Actors



Source: Corner, Gill & Mason (2016)



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Threats to Self: The Nexus Between Threat Assessment and Suicide Risk Assessment

- If triage identifies any of the following concerns, in addition to, or in place of, a potential threat to self, then the TAT should assume primary responsibility:
 - Subject expresses ideation or intent to harm others
 - Subject expresses co-occurring anger or hostility to others
 - Subject's intent, preparations, or acts of harm to self would pose a threat of harm to others, whether intended or not
 - Subject's suicidal or self-harm behaviors are responses to victimization, bias, bullying, harassment, or to other environmental/systemic issues within the campus
 - Others are, or may reasonably be, significantly impacted or feel endangered by the threat of harm to self



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Threats to Self: The Nexus Between Threat Assessment and Suicide Risk Assessment

- If none of the above conditions are met, then no other actions are needed by the threat assessment team and the threat assessment case can be closed
 - The suicide risk assessment and interventions are completed by the Suicide Crisis Response Team as relevant for the case
- Campus or community mental health professionals retain primary responsibility for the direct assessment and mental health interventions with the subject at risk, per campus guidelines
- Other team members assist with assessment and intervention actions, and address any other concerns impacting upon the case



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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

Does the subject have protective factors, stabilizers, or buffers that inhibit use of violence?

- Views violence as unacceptable/immoral
- Accepts responsibility for actions
- Demonstrates remorse for inappropriate behavior
- Respects reasonable limits and expectations
- Uses socially sanctioned means to address grievances
- Values life, job, relationships, freedom
- Maintains and uses effective coping skills
- Treatment compliance/engagement
- Sustains trusted and valued relationships

Adapted from: FBI (2017). *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing and Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*; National Threat Assessment Center (2018). *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An operational guide for preventing targeted school violence.*



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Key Areas for Inquiry - Subject

Does the subject have a trusting & sustained relationship with at least one responsible person?

- Is subject emotionally connected to other people?
- Does subject have a friend, colleague, family member, or other person that they trust and can rely upon?
- Does that other person have skill and willingness to monitor, intervene, support subject?
- Is the relationship in jeopardy?
- Is there sustained/increased isolation or alienation?

Adapted from: FBI (2017) *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*; U.S. Secret Service (2000) *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials.*



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Protective Factors

Stabilizers and Buffers Against Violence Risk

- P Positive Personal Attachments
- R Remorse is Genuine for Transgressions
- O Obeys Limits Set by Employer or Authorities
- T Takes Sanctioned Actions to Address “Wrongs” & Setbacks
- E Enjoys Life & Freedom
- C Coping Skills are Positive
- T Treatment Compliance

© Stephen G. White & J. Reid Meloy
WAVR 21 V3



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Warning Behaviors

Distal Warning Behaviors

- Personal Grievance and Moral Outrage
- Framed by an Ideology
- Failure to Affiliate with an Extremist or Other Group
- Dependence on the Virtual Community
- Thwarting of Occupational Goals
- Changes in Thinking and Emotion
- Failure of Sexually Intimate Pair Bonding
- Mental Disorder
- Creativity and Innovation
- Criminal Violence

Meloy, J. R., Hoffmann, Bibeau, L., & Guldemann, A. (2021). Warning behaviors. In J. R. Meloy & J. Hoffmann (Eds.), *International handbook of threat assessment 2nd Edition*. (pp. 45 – 67). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.



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Proximal Warning Behaviors

Proximal Warning Behaviors

- Pathway (actions)
- Fixation
- Identification
- Novel Aggression
- Energy Burst
- Leakage
- Directly Communicated Threat
- Last Resort Behaviors

Meloy, J.R., Hoffmann, J., Guldimmann, A. & James, D. (2012). The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 30(3): 256-79.

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Warning Behaviors (Proximal)

Attackers

Meloy, J. R., Goodwill, A. M., Meloy, M. J., Amat, G., Martinez, M., & Morgan, M. (2019); Challacombe, D. J., & Lucas, P. A. (2018); Meloy, J.R. & Gill, P. (2016)

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Time Sequencing of Warning Behaviors

Meloy, J.R., Goodwill, A., Clemmow, C. & Gill, P. (2021). Time sequencing of the TRAP-18 Indicators. *Journal of Threat Assessment & Management*, 8(1-2), 1–19.

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Time Sequencing of Warning Behaviors

Silver, J., & Silva, J. R. (2022). A Sequence Analysis of the Behaviors and Experiences of the Deadliest Public Mass Shooters. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(23–24), NP23468–NP23494. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/08862605221078818>

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Key Areas for Inquiry – Target

What are the vulnerabilities and needs of targets or others impacted by the situation?

- Are targets/others concerned for the well-being or safety of the subject, target or others?
- Are targets/others around the subject engaging in protective actions?
- Are targets/others experiencing stress, trauma, or other symptoms that may benefit from intervention?
- Do targets/others have adequate support resources?
- Are targets engaging in behaviors that increase their:
 - Desirability
 - Availability
 - Vulnerability

Adapted from: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger and Nolan (2021); FBI (2017). *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing and Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*.

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Intimate Partner Violence: Lethality Risk

Key Perpetrator Lethality Risk Factors:

- Direct access to firearm(s) [11.13]
- Threatened victim with a weapon [7.36]
- Nonfatal strangulation [7.23]
- Rape/Forced sex [5.44]
- Controlling behaviors [5.60]
- Threatened to harm victim [4.83]
- Abused victim while pregnant [3.93]
- Stalking [3.13]
- Jealousy [2.58]
- Substance Abuse [1.85]

Spencer, C.S., Stith, S.M. (2020). Risk factors for male perpetration and female victimization of intimate partner homicide: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 21(3), 527-540.

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Intimate Partner Violence: Lethality Risk

Key Victim Lethality Risk Factors:

- Substance abuse [OR = 2.56]
- Less than high school education [OR = 2.45]
- Separated from perpetrator [OR = 2.33]
- Children from previous relationship [OR = 2.29]

Spencer, C.S., Stith, S.M. (2020). Risk factors for male perpetration and female victimization of intimate partner homicide: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 21*(3), 527-540.



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Key Areas for Inquiry - Environment

Are there Environmental/Systemic factors that are impacting the situation?

- Systemic, policy, or procedural problems
- Silos, gaps, or delays in reporting of concerns
- Poor conflict management skills
- Poor supervisory skills and/or willingness to address
- Organizational climate concerns: e.g., harassment, bullying
- Lack of support resources in community
- Social influences of others in environment; e.g.
 - Actively discourage or encourage/dare use of violence
 - Deny/minimize the possibility of violence
 - Passively collude with act

Deisinger (1996); Deisinger & Nolan (2020); FBI (2017). *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks.*



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Risk Factors for Workplace Violence

Environment / Workplace Factors

- Understaffing leading to job overload or compulsory overtime
- Frustrations from poorly defined job tasks and responsibilities
- Downsizing or reorganization
- Labor disputes and poor labor-management relations
- Poor management styles (e.g., arbitrary or unexplained orders)
- Corrections or reprimands in front of other employees
- Inconsistent discipline
- Inadequate security
- A lack of employee counseling
- A high injury rate
- Frequent grievances

Federal Bureau of Investigation (2004). *Workplace Violence: Issues in Response.*



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Key Areas for Inquiry – Precipitating Events

Are there precipitating events that may impact the situation currently and in foreseeable future?

- Loss, failure, or injustice
- Key dates/events
- Triggers and reminders of any of the above
- Opportunity
- Contagion effect
- Case management interventions

Source: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger and Nolan (2021)



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Precipitating Events

Intervention Outcomes

- Improve situation.
- Worsen situation.
- No discernable change in situation.
- Create new concern/situation.

Source: Deisinger (1996)



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Key Areas for Inquiry – Global

What is the completeness, consistency, and credibility of information about the situation?

- Do sources have direct and unique knowledge?
- Are there multiple sources?
- Do collateral sources confirm or repute each other?
- Do sources exhibit bias or ulterior motives?
- Are the source's statements and behaviors consistent?
- What gaps exist in understanding of situation?
- What biases or misperceptions may be present?

Deisinger (1996); Deisinger and Nolan (2021)



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Improving Decision-Making

Protecting Against Cognitive Bias

- Confirmation Bias
- Anchoring
- Over-Confidence
- In-group Bias
- Availability Bias
- Probability neglect
- Fundamental attribution error
- Hindsight Bias

Convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies.
- Friedrich Nietzsche

Daniel Kahneman (2013) *Thinking Fast & Slow*



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Decision-Making

Managing Information to decrease Cognitive Overload:

- Humans do not multi-task well, despite perceptions
- Instead, we shift attention from task to task
 - Decrease level of attention to given task
 - Decrease quality of attention
- Optimal information load is 4 - 6 items
 - Maximum information load is 10 items
 - Irrelevant information still contributes to overload
- Consider how you brief on cases
 - Prepare summary before team discussion
 - Organize case information systematically

Daniel Levitin (2014) *The Organized Mind*



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Support Structured Professional Judgment

Systematize data collection and assessment:

- Workplace Assessment of Violence Risk (WAVR-21)
- Historical Clinical Risk Management-20, 3rd ed. (HCR 20)
- Cawood Assessment Grid
- MOSAIC (DeBecker)
- Communicated Threat Assessment Protocol (CTAP)
- Stalking Risk Profile
- Guidelines for Stalking Assessment & Management (SAM)
- Screening Assessment for Stalking & Harassment (SASH)
- Dangerousness Assessment (Campbell)
- Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA)
- Spousal Risk Assessment Guide (SARA)
- Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol (TRAP 18)
- Violence Risk Assessment Guide (VRAG)
- Classification of Violence Risk (COVR)

Note: This is a partial listing of supplemental instruments and not an endorsement of any particular approach.



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Using Assessment Tools

Appropriate use of instruments:

- Ensure that instrument is reliable and valid;
- Be aware of limitations of the instrument;
- Use for purpose for which it was designed.
- Stay current with new data and versions;
- Ensure evaluator is properly trained;
- Avoid reliance on instrument only;
- Integrate information with structured professional judgment.

Source: Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (2006).
Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence



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Decision-Making

Facilitating Effective Case Discussions:

- Active participation by all team members
- Keep discussion focused on the case
- Minimize bias in decision-making
 - Consider totality and context of information available
 - Consider information sources, credibility and relevance
 - Corroborate critical information; resolve discrepancies
 - Avoid generalizations or stereotypes, focus on behavior
 - Consider changes in behavior or circumstances
 - Be inquisitive and challenge assumptions
 - Consider the impact of the unknowns
- Focus on active problem-solving



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Decision-Making: Cognitive Load

Enhancing Case Decision Making:

- Organize information systematically, e.g.:
 - STEP Framework
 - Pathway model
 - Proximal warning behaviors
 - JACA
 - Timeline
 - Pending Issues/Tasks
- Use tools to support structured professional judgement
- Prepare summary for Team
- Team review case(s) before discussion
- Have a break/sleep between review and discussion



Deisinger (2018)



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Prioritization

Prioritization based on totality of circumstances:

- Severity
- Immediacy
- Impact
- Probability / likelihood / credibility
- Rate of change in situation
- Vulnerability / reactivity of target
- Complexity / number of environmental factors
 - Political / social influences
- Impact (current or impending) of precipitants
- Unknowns

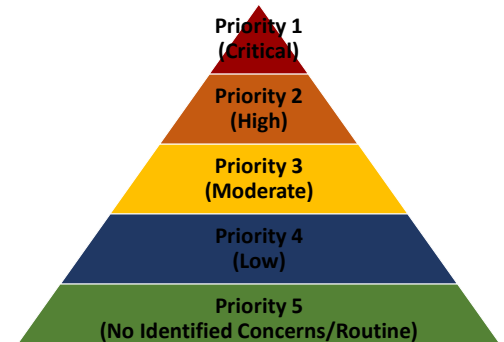
© Gene Deisinger, Ph.D. (2010)

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Priority/Level of Concern Classification



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Priority Classification

Priority 1 (Critical) – Subject poses imminent threat of serious violence or harm to self/others. Target/others vulnerable and/or have support needs. Environmental/systemic factors & Precipitating events typically present. Requires immediate law enforcement and administration notification and response, subject mitigation & containment, activation of crisis management and notification protocols, target warning, target protection & support plan, ongoing assessment and management plan, and active monitoring.

Priority 2 (High) – Subject poses, or is rapidly developing intent/capability for, a threat of serious violence or harm to self /others; and/or is in urgent need of intervention/assistance. Target/others vulnerable and/or have support needs. Environmental/systemic factors & Precipitating events typically present. Requires law enforcement/security & administration notification, subject mitigation plan, activation of crisis management and notification protocols as appropriate, target notification, target protection and support plan, ongoing assessment and management plan, and active monitoring.



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Priority Classification

Priority 3 (Moderate) – Subject not known to pose a threat of serious violence or harm though risk cannot be ruled-out. Subject may be developing capability for harm and/or engaging in concerning or threatening behaviors that indicate need for assistance/intervention. Targets/others likely concerned and impacted. Environmental/systemic factors & Precipitating Events may be present. Notify law enforcement/security & administration as appropriate. Requires ongoing assessment and management plan, referrals as appropriate, and active monitoring.

Priority 4 (Low) – Subject does not indicate a threat of violence or harm to self/others; but would/may benefit from intervention/assistance. Target or Environmental/systemic concerns, or Precipitating Events may be present at low levels. May involve ongoing assessment/management with passive monitoring or periodic active monitoring. Referrals as appropriate. Close case if no BTAM interventions or monitoring indicated.

Priority 5 (No Identified Concerns) – Subject does not pose threat of violence or harm to self or others; nor need for BTAM assistance or intervention. No Target needs, Environmental/systemic factors, or Precipitating Events that need BTAM intervention. Close case.



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TAM is a systematic process that:

**Implements proactive & integrated
case management plans**

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Develop a Case Management Plan

Develop an individualized, contextually-relevant, plan based on inquiry and assessment.

- Plan is contextually relevant and situationally specific
- Accountability is critical
 - Assign tasks/interventions to specific person
 - Set deadline
 - Set monitoring plan
- Consider the STEP Domains
- Rapport and engagement matter
 - Consider personalities, backgrounds and skills
 - Consider use of trusted sources



Source: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger and Nolan (2021)



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Subject-Based Strategies

Implement appropriate strategies:

- No further action
- Monitor/Watch & wait;
- Third party monitoring
- Third party intervention
- Direct intervention: Support, assist, referral, confrontation
- Administrative actions
 - No contact/communication notice, probation, suspension, expulsion/termination, no trespass/ban from premises
- Civil actions
- Mental Health interventions (voluntary or involuntary)
- Criminal justice interventions

Adapted from: Calhoun & Weston (2003) *Contemporary Threat Management*



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Subject-Based Strategies

Implement appropriate strategies:

- Check-in / Checkout
 - Maintain channel of communication & engagement
 - Gather information
 - Build rapport and relationship
 - Decrease isolation
 - De-escalate volatile reactions
 - Set expectations
 - Provide feedback & mentoring
 - Monitor reactions to grievances and precipitating events
- Problem solving about legitimate grievances
- Spouse / Parental / Family involvement
 - Parent training / support



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Subject-Based Strategies

Implement appropriate strategies:

- Assistance or support services;
 - Trauma informed approaches
 - Work mentoring / Academic tutoring
 - Alternative work / school placement
 - Accommodations for work/school
 - Social / emotional learning
 - Behavioral management plans
 - Positive behavioral intervention & support (PBIS) programs
 - Involvement in extra-curricular activities
 - Modification of work schedule or assignments
 - Performance improvement plans
 - Peer coaching/mentoring
 - Recognition / positive engagement



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Subject-Based Strategies

Implement appropriate strategies:

- Counseling/mental health services
 - Check-in/check-out with mental health staff
 - Disability / mental health / violence risk assessment
 - Suicide prevention & intervention programs
 - Outpatient counseling / mental health care
 - Emergency psychiatric evaluation & care
- Disciplinary measures
 - Subject confrontation or warning / boundaries
 - Administrative orders for no contact of communication
 - Parental involvement (students)
 - In school detention / after-school detention
 - Suspension
 - Termination / expulsion



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Subject-Based Strategies

Implement appropriate strategies:

- Criminal Justice Services
 - Law enforcement / juvenile justice involvement
 - Court issued protective orders
 - Emergency risk protection (“Red flag”) orders
 - Diversion programs
 - Mandated mental health services



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Subject Control Strategies

Leave, suspension, or termination options that focus **solely on controlling the person do not address the long-term challenges of:**

- Moving person away from thoughts & plans of, and capacity for, violence and/or disruption;
- Connecting person to resources (where needed);
- Mitigating organizational/systemic factors;
- Monitoring person when they are no longer connected to organization.

Use with intentionality, awareness of limitations, and anticipation of consequences.

Source: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Re-Entry Planning and Preparation

Prepare for re-integration of subject:

- Establish conditions for return
- Evaluate subject readiness to safely and effectively return to participate in school or work experience
- Develop proactive case management plan
 - Align ongoing interventions
 - Coach subject about re-entry
 - Anticipate environmental aspects which may impact subject
 - Prepare community for subject's re-entry
 - Consider precipitating events
- Monitor, re-assess and intervene as appropriate

Source: Deisinger (2011); Deisinger and Nolan (2021)



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Target Management Strategies

Coaching regarding personal safety approaches

- Set clear limits and boundaries
- Monitor communications for changes/escalations
- Avoid contact/response
 - Document all contacts from/with subject
- Minimize reactivity to subject actions
- Minimize public information
- Maintain/enhance situational awareness
- Vary routine
- Develop contingency plans: Escape, shelter, defense
- Utilize support systems

Source: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger and Nolan (2021)



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Target Management Strategies

Organizational roles in reducing target vulnerability

- Engagement with target
- Support for target
- Change work/school hours
- Change work location
- Notice to co-workers/classmates
- Enhance physical security
- Security staffing
- Safety escorts
- Fear management
- EAP/Counseling referrals

Source: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger and Nolan (2021)



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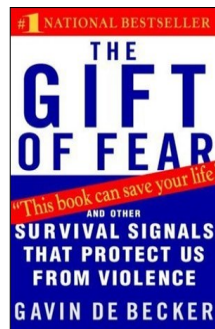
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Remembering Who We Serve

What targets/victims want:

- Care
- Certainty
- Consistency
- Communication

- Gavin de Becker
"The Gift of Fear"



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Environmental Management Strategies

- Address systemic, policy, or procedural problems
- Identify/address reporting gaps/delays
- Intervene with associates that support violent behavior
- Enhance conflict management skills
- Enhance supervisory skills & accountability
- Enhance organizational climate – caring community
 - Emphasize fairness & respect
 - Effective communication
 - People rewarded, supported, and held accountable
 - Prevention & early intervention with inappropriate behaviors
 - Build engagement for mutual safety & well-being

Source: Deisinger (1996); FBI (2004); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)



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Manage Precipitating Events

- Minimize unnecessary precipitants where possible
- Consider impact of interventions
- Monitor reactions to case management/interventions
- Monitor & plan for loss / Injustice
- Monitor & plan for key dates / events
- Monitor for reactions to administrative/court actions
- Consider contingency plans

Source: Deisinger (1996); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

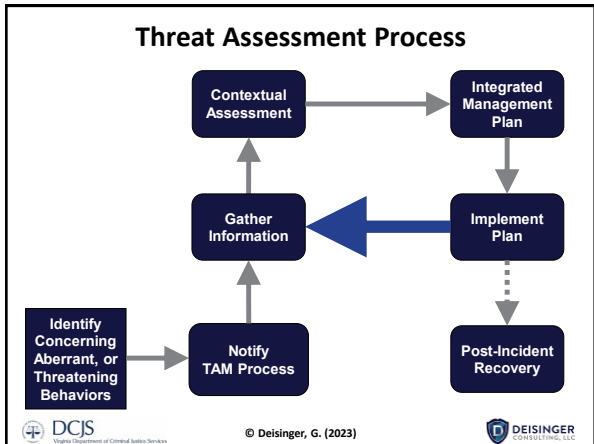
TAM is a Systematic Process That:

**Monitors & re-assesses
the situation
on a longitudinal basis**

Source: Deisinger (1998); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)

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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

**Conducts all practices in accordance
with relevant laws, policies,
and standards of practice**

Source: Deisinger (1998); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)




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Current Practice: Schools & IHE's

Required by legislation:

- Virginia:
 - Public Institutions of Higher Education (2008)
 - K-12 School Divisions (2013)
- Illinois:
 - All Institutions of Higher Education (2008)
 - All K-12 School Districts (2019)
- Connecticut: All Institutions of Higher Education (2013)
- Florida: K-12 Schools (2018)
- Maryland: K-12 Schools (2018)
- Kentucky: K-12 Schools (2019)
- Oregon: K-12 Schools (2019)
- Rhode Island: K-12 Schools (2019)
- Tennessee: K-12 Schools (2019)
- Texas: K-12 Schools (2019)
- Washington: K-12 Schools (2019)
- New Jersey: K-12 Schools (2022)




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What Laws, Regulations, Rules May Apply?

- Constitutional issues,
- Civil Rights
- Federal & State Healthcare Privacy Laws
- Federal & State Disability Laws
- Federal & State Employment Laws
- Federal & State Employee Privacy Laws
- Federal/State Intelligence/Fusion Center Privacy Policies
- State Threat Assessment Laws, Regulations, Standards
- Record-Keeping & Open Records Laws
- Standards of Practice / Tort Law
- Organizational Policies




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Free Resource

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

Jeffrey J. Nolan, J.D.,
Marisa R. Randazzo, Ph.D., &
Gene Deisinger, Ph.D.

University Risk Managers
& Insurance Association
(URMIA) Journal, 2011

Free download:
https://www.higheredcompliance.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/10/NolanRandazzoDeisinger_CampusThreatAssessmentTeams_FINAL_20110802.pdf

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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

EXERCISE: Information Sharing & FERPA

A professor approaches you (as a member of TAT) very concerned about an interaction they just had with a student after a class. During that conversation the student engaged in behaviors and made statements that lead the professor to believe that the student was a serious threat to the safety of themselves and others on campus.

Based on the information shared, you concur there appears to be a significant threat.

When you ask the name of the student and about their behavior and performance in the class, the professor becomes very cautious and says they are not sure if they can provide that information, that they don't want to violate privacy law (FERPA) and be sued by the student.

What mistakes, if any, are being made?



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Information Sharing: FERPA

- Is not an impediment to effective threat assessment and management.
- Protects educational records, not observations, verbal communications, direct personal knowledge, etc.
- Allows sharing with:
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest
 - Other educational settings for enrollment or transfer
 - Outside of campus to protect health or safety
- Does not govern law enforcement unit records.
- If created and maintained by law enforcement, for law enforcement purposes.
- Does not permit a private right of action.



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Information Sharing Guides

Key Resources:

- [Information Sharing Guide for Institutions of Higher Education](#)
 - Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (2021)
- [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations](#)
 - 34 C.F.R. Part 99 (amended 2022)
- [Addressing Emergencies on Campus](#)
 - U.S. Department of Education (June 2011)
- [School Resource Officers, School Law Enforcement Units, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)
 - U.S. Department of Education (2019)
- [A Quick Guide to Information Sharing During Threat Reporting & Assessment](#)
 - National Center for School Safety



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Disclosures Allowed Under HIPAA

Disclosure of “protected health information” is allowed if provider makes good faith determination that disclosure:

- “Is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health and safety of a person or the public” and disclosure
- “Is made to a person or persons reasonably able to prevent or lessen the threat, including the target of the threat”



[Sharing Behavioral Health Information: Tips & Strategies for Police-Mental Health Collaborations](#)
[Information Sharing in Criminal Justice-Mental Health Collaborations](#)



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Understanding Confidentiality

Confidentiality is right held by client, not the mental health provider.

- In cases where privacy laws apply, consider these strategies:
 - Ask subject for authorization to disclose.
 - No legal prohibition against providing information to health professionals.
 - Ask medical provider about Tarasoff - type duty to warn/protect.
 - Request and document name of provider.



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Dispelling ADA Myths

Restrictions & sanctions may be imposed for misconduct, even if caused by disability IF appropriate due process is provided.

TAM teams should:

- work with conduct/judicial affairs, student affairs, human resources and counsel regarding processes;
- work with counsel on “direct threat” and “otherwise qualified” standards;

Community should understand: ADA protections should not conflict with safety of the community or individuals



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Disability Law Considerations

Cautions:

- Ensure due process
- Do not assume every threat assessment case involves mental illness
 - Caution against automatic referrals to counseling
- Understand “Direct threat: provisions”
 - Elimination of “threat to self” element of definition
 - Consider whether “otherwise qualified”
- Use mental health violence risk evaluations appropriately
 - Understand limitations of forensic evaluations

Source: Deisinger & Nolan (2019)



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Disability Law Considerations

Direct Threat

- A significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by the organization’s modification of its policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.



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Disability Law Considerations

Direct Threat

- Based on a reasonable belief that a disability would pose a significant risk of substantial harm,
 - Risk must be identified & current, not speculative or remote
- Organization may require:
 - An individualized assessment of the individual’s present ability to safely perform essential functions of the job.
 - Assessment shall be based on a reasonable medical judgment that relies on the most current medical knowledge and/or on the best available objective evidence.



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Disability Law Considerations

Direct Threat

- In determining whether an individual would pose a direct threat, the factors to be considered include the:
 - duration of the risk;
 - nature and severity of the potential harm;
 - likelihood that the potential harm will occur; and
 - imminence of the potential harm.”
- Even if a genuine significant risk of substantial harm exists, the employer must consider whether the risk can be eliminated or reduced below the level of a “direct threat” by reasonable accommodation.



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“True Threats”

True Threat: The speaker means to communicate a serious expression of an intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group of individuals. The speaker need not actually intend to carry out the threat.

Virginia v. Black, 538 U.S. 343 (2003)

- Considerations:
 - Content
 - Context
 - Target reasonably experiences fear
 - Intention (place victim in fear of bodily injury/death)

FBI (2017). *Making Prevention of Violence a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*
www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf



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Defining True Threats

Defining True Threats: Objective or Subjective Test

- **Counterman v. Colorado**
 - Pending before the US Supreme Court
- **True Threat:**
 - Subjective Test: Speaker knew or intended the threatening nature of the statement.
 - Reckless Test: Speaker aware that others could regard speech as a threat, but made statements anyway.
 - Objective Test: A statement which, considered in context and under the totality of the circumstances, an intended or foreseeable recipient would reasonably perceive it as a serious expression of intent to commit an act of unlawful violence.”

- Colorado Supreme Court

Howe, A. (April 20, 2023). Justices hear “true threat” protected speech case. *SCOTUSblog*.
<https://www.scotusblog.com/2023/04/justices-hear-true-threat-protected-speech-case/>



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

Violence prevention committee; threat assessment team.

A. Each public college or university shall have in place policies and procedures for the prevention of violence on campus, including assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior poses a threat to the safety of the campus community.



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

Violence prevention committee; threat assessment team.

B. The governing board of each public institution of higher education shall determine a violence prevention committee structure on campus composed of individuals charged with education on and prevention of violence on campus. Each violence prevention committee shall include representatives from student affairs, law enforcement, human resources, counseling services, residence life, and other constituencies as needed and shall consult with legal counsel as needed. Each violence prevention committee shall develop a clear statement of mission, membership, and leadership. Such statement shall be published and made available to the campus community.



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

Violence prevention committee; threat assessment team.

C. Each violence prevention committee shall

- (i) provide guidance to students, faculty, and staff regarding recognition of threatening or aberrant behavior that may represent a physical threat to the community;
- (ii) identify members of the campus community to whom threatening behavior should be reported;
- (iii) establish policies and procedures that outline circumstances under which all faculty and staff are required to report behavior that may represent a physical threat to the community, provided that such report is consistent with state and federal law; and



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

Violence prevention committee; threat assessment team.

C. Each violence prevention committee shall

- (iv) establish policies and procedures for
 - (a) the assessment of individuals whose behavior may present a threat,
 - (b) appropriate means of intervention with such individuals, &
 - (c) sufficient means of action, including interim suspension, referrals to community services boards or health care providers for evaluation or treatment, medical separation to resolve potential physical threats, and notification of family members or guardians, or both, unless such notification would prove harmful to the individual in question, consistent with state and federal law.



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

D. The governing board of each public institution of higher education shall establish a threat assessment team that includes members from law enforcement, mental health professionals, and representatives of student affairs and human resources.

College or university counsel shall be invited to provide legal advice.

Each such threat assessment team may invite other representatives from campus to participate in individual cases, but no such representative shall be considered a member of the threat assessment team.

Each threat assessment team shall implement the assessment, intervention, & action policies set forth by the violence prevention committee pursuant to subsection C.



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

E. Each team shall establish or utilize existing relationships with local and state law-enforcement agencies, as well as mental health agencies, to expedite assessment & intervention with individuals whose behavior may present a threat to safety.

Upon a preliminary determination that an individual:

- poses a threat of violence to self or others, or
- exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or
- need for assistance,

a threat assessment team may obtain:

- criminal history record information, as provided in §§19.2-389 and 19.2-389.1, and
- health records, as provided in §32.1-127.1:03.



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BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT IN A CAMPUS SETTING: A Systematic Approach to Identifying, Assessing & Managing Concerning, Aberrant or Threatening Behavior

Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

- F. Upon a preliminary determination that an individual poses an articulable and significant threat of violence to others, the threat assessment team shall:
1. Obtain any available criminal history record information as provided in §§ 19.2-389 and 19.2-389.1 and any available health records as provided in § 32.1-127.1:03;

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

2. Notify in writing within 24 hours upon making such preliminary determination
 - i. the campus police department,
 - ii. local law enforcement for the city or county in which the public institution of higher education is located, local law enforcement for the city or county in which the individual resides, and, if known to the threat assessment team, local law enforcement for the city or county in which the individual is located, and
 - iii. the local attorney for the Commonwealth in any jurisdiction where the threat assessment team has notified local law enforcement; and
3. Disclose any specific threat of violence posed by the individual as part of such notification.

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

- G. The custodians of any criminal history record information or health records shall, upon request from a threat assessment team pursuant to subsections E and F, produce the information or records requested.
- H. No member or invited representative of a threat assessment team shall redisclose any criminal history record information or health information obtained pursuant to this section or otherwise use any record of an individual beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was made to the threat assessment team.

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

- I. Each threat assessment team member shall complete a minimum of eight hours of initial training within 12 months of appointment to the threat assessment team and shall complete a minimum of two hours of threat assessment training each academic year thereafter. Training shall be conducted by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (the Department) or an independent entity approved by the Department.

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

- J. When otherwise consistent with applicable state and federal law, in the event that a public institution of higher education has knowledge that a student or employee who was determined pursuant to an investigation by the institution's threat assessment team to pose an articulable and significant threat of violence to others is transferring to another institution of higher education or place of employment, the public institution of higher education from which the individual is transferring shall notify the institution of higher education or place of employment to which the individual is transferring of such investigation and determination.

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

2. The Secretary of Education and Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security shall convene a task force to determine best practices and develop model policies and procedures for all threat assessment teams at public institutions of higher education.
The task force shall also consider and make legislative recommendations on the appropriate qualifications of members of such threat assessment teams.
The task force shall include representatives from the Office of the Attorney General, campus police departments and local law enforcement, attorneys for the Commonwealth, mental health and student affairs professionals, university counsel, human resources representatives, one student representative, and one faculty representative.

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Virginia Code [§ 23.1-805](#)

- The task force shall submit its findings, including all applicable best practices, model policies and procedures, and legislative recommendations, to the Governor and Chairs of the House Committee for Courts of Justice, the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, the House Committee on Education, and the Senate Committee on Education and Health no later than December 1, 2023.

Note: Statute update, effective July 1, 2023



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Other Virginia Statutes Relevant to BTAM



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Exclusion from Freedom of Information Act

Code of Virginia [§ 2.2-3705.4](#):

- Information held by a threat assessment team at a public IHE is excluded from FOIA.
- However, if a subject who has been under assessment:
 - Commits an act or
 - Is prosecuted for the commission of an act that caused the death of, or serious bodily injury, to another person, including felony sexual assault
- Threat assessment team information shall be made available
 - Except for any criminal history, health, or scholastic records
- The school shall remove identifying information of any person who provided information to the threat assessment team under a promise of confidentiality



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VA Code [§ 23.1-806](#)

Reporting of Acts of Sexual Violence (2015)

- D. Public & Private IHE shall establish a Review Committee to review information related to acts of sexual violence. Review Committee shall consist of three or more persons and shall include:
- Title IX coordinator or designee,
 - Campus law enforcement
 - Campus security representative if no campus police
 - Student affairs representative.



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VA Code [§ 23.1-806](#)

- D. The Review Committee may be the threat assessment team established under [§ 23-1-805](#), or a separate body.

The review committee may obtain:

- law-enforcement records
- criminal history record information
- health records
- available institutional conduct or personnel records, and
- known facts and circumstances of the information reported
- Information or evidence known to the institution or to law enforcement.



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VA Code [§ 23.1-806](#)

- D. Review Committee shall be considered a threat assessment team established pursuant to [§ 23.1-805](#) for purposes of:

(i) obtaining criminal history record information and health records and

(ii) the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

Shall conduct review in compliance with federal privacy law.

- E. Upon receipt of information of an alleged act of sexual violence reported pursuant to subsection C, the review committee shall meet within 72 hours to review the information and shall meet again as necessary as new information becomes available.



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VA Code § 23.1-806

F. If the review committee (or if the committee cannot reach a consensus, the law enforcement representative on the committee) determines that the disclosure of the information, including personally identifiable information, is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, the law enforcement representative shall immediately disclose such information to the law-enforcement agency that would be responsible for investigating the alleged act of sexual violence.



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VA Code § 23.1-806

F. Such disclosure shall be for the purposes of investigation and other actions by law enforcement.

Upon such disclosure, the Title IX coordinator or his designee shall notify the victim that such disclosure is being made.

The provisions of this subsection shall not apply if the law-enforcement agency responsible for investigating the alleged act of sexual violence is located outside the United States.



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VA Code § 23.1-806

F. Such disclosure shall be for the purposes of investigation and other actions by law enforcement.

Upon such disclosure, the Title IX coordinator or his designee shall notify the victim that such disclosure is being made.

The provisions of this subsection shall not apply if the law-enforcement agency responsible for investigating the alleged act of sexual violence is located outside the United States.



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Policies to Support the Process

Policies with TAM-related implications:

- Workplace violence prevention
- Threat assessment & management
- Harassment & discrimination
- Crisis management
- Employee discipline
- Interim suspension
- Fitness for duty
- Direct threat evaluations
- Weapons
- Bomb threat
- Pandemic



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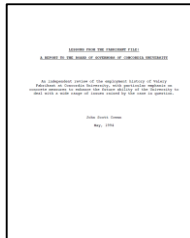
Lessons from the Fabrikant File: A Report to the Board of Governors of Concordia University (1994)

John S. Cowan

In the report which follows, I identify a substantial number of actions or omissions which I consider to be mistakes. It is, of course, vastly easier to see mistakes with a retrospectroscope. In many cases the mistakes were exacerbated or caused in their entirety by decisional processes, policies, practices and mechanisms which were never designed or contemplated to carry the burden of a like case. In such a milieu very fine people can make very poor decisions.

Available at:

<https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/archives/docs/cowan-report.pdf>



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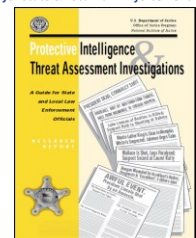
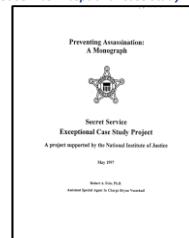
179

Informed by Research and Practice

Exceptional Case Study Project

Fein, R. & Vossekuil, B. (1997) *Preventing Assassination: A Monograph. Secret Service Exceptional Case Study Project.*

Fein, R. & Vossekuil, B. (1997) *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State & Local Law Enforcement Officials.*



www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Photocopy/167224NCJRS.pdf

www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/ecsp2.pdf



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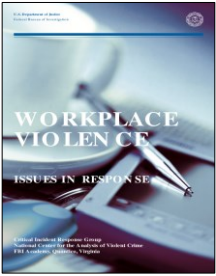
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Informed by Research & Practice

Workplace Violence: Issues in Response. (2004)

U.S. Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation



Available at:
www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/workplace-violence

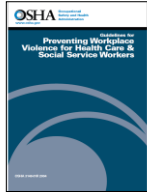
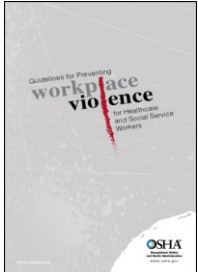
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Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers (2004/2015)

Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Available at:
www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3148.pdf

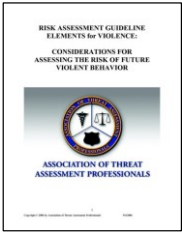
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Informed by Research & Practice

Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence: Considerations for Assessment the Risk of Future Violent Behavior (2006)

Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP)
www.atapworldwide.org



Available at:
cdn.ymaws.com/www.atapworldwide.org/resource/resmgr/imported/documents/RAGE-V.pdf

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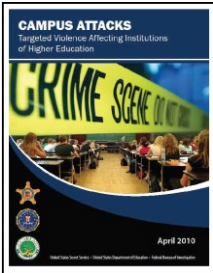
183

Informed by Research & Practice

Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education (2010)

Joint Project of the:

- US Secret Service
- US Department of Education
- Federal Bureau of Investigation



Available at:
www.fbi.gov/file-repository/campus-attacks-pdf.pdf

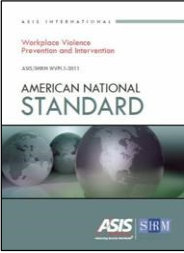
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Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention American National Standard (2011)

ASIS International & Society for Human Resource Management



Available at:
www.asisonline.org/publications/sg-asis-shrm-workplace-violence-prevention-and-intervention-standard/

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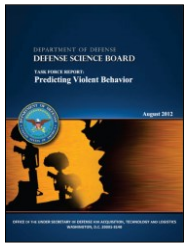
Informed by Research & Practice

Task Force Report: Predicting Violent Behavior (2012)

Department of Defense; Defense Science Board

1.8 Recommended Strategy

- Provide effective intervention capabilities throughout DoD using a threat management approach.
 - Increase likelihood of early detection and warning of problems to commanders, supervisors, co-workers with improved information sharing and knowledge.
 - Enhance awareness of the risk of targeted violence throughout DoD.



Available at:
<https://dsb.cto.mil/reports/2010s/PredictingViolentBehavior.pdf>

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Informed by Research & Practice

**Balancing Safety and Support on Campus:
A Guide for Campus Teams (2013)**

Higher Education
Mental Health Alliance (HEMHA)
Led by the Jed Foundation



Available at:
<http://hemha.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/campus-teams-balancing-safety-support-campus-jed-guide.pdf>

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Available at:
rems.ed.gov/RemsPublications.aspx

Released: 6/18/13

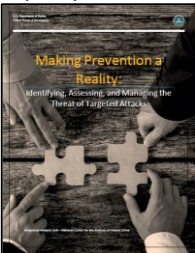
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Informed by Research & Practice

Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks (2017)

US Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Behavioral Analysis Unit



Available at:
www.fbi.gov/file-repository/making-prevention-a-reality.pdf

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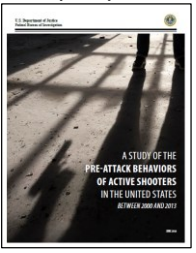
Informed by Research & Practice

A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States Between 2000 and 2013 (2018)

US Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Behavioral Analysis Unit

Quick Reference Guide
<https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pre-attack-behaviors-of-active-shooters-2000-2013-quick-reference-guide.pdf/view>

Full report available at:
<https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pre-attack-behaviors-of-active-shooters-in-us-2000-2013.pdf/view>



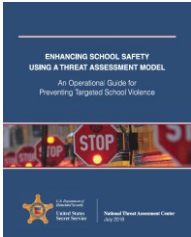
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Informed by Research & Practice

**Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model:
An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence (2018)**

US Dept. of Homeland Security
US Secret Service
National Threat Assessment Center



Available at:
www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/USSS_NTAC_Enhancing_School_Safety_Guide_7.11.18.pdf

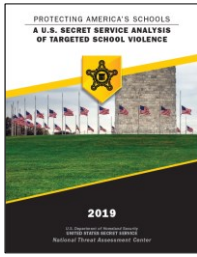
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Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence (2019)

US Dept. of Homeland Security
US Secret Service
National Threat Assessment Center



Available at:
www.secretservice.gov/data/protection/ntac/usss-analysis-of-targeted-school-violence.pdf

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Available at:
www.avertedschoolviolence.org

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Informed by Research & Practice

Workplace Violence & Active Assailant- Prevention, Intervention & Response Standard (2020)

ASIS International

Available at:
<https://store.asisonline.org/workplace-violence-prevention-and-intervention-standard-softcover.html>

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Averting Targeted School Violence: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Plots Against Schools (2021)

US Dept. of Homeland Security
US Secret Service
National Threat Assessment Center

Available at:
<https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2021-03/USSS%20Averting%20Targeted%20School%20Violence.2021.03.pdf>

© Deisinger, G. (2023)

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Informed by Research & Practice

International Handbook of Threat Assessment Second Edition (2021)

Edited by:
J. Reid Meloy &
Jens Hoffmann

Available at:
<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/international-handbook-of-threat-assessment-9780190940164?q=Meloy&lang=en&cc=us>

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Preventing Targeted Violence and Terrorism: A Guide for Practitioners (2022)

Prevention Practitioners Network
McCain Institute

Available at:
<https://www.mccaininstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/PPN-TVTP-Framework-Nov-2022.pdf>

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Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020 (2023)

US Dept. of Homeland Security
US Secret Service
National Threat Assessment Center

Available at:
<https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2023-01/uss-ntac-maps-2016-2020.pdf>

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Informed by Research & Practice

Cause for Concern 2024: The State of Hate (2023)

The Leadership Conference
Education Fund



Available at:
<https://civilrights.org/edfund/wpcontent/uploads/sites/2/2023/04/Cause-For-Concern-2024.pdf>

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Duty of Care: The Taft Union Case

Threat management team breached duty of care as the:

- Assessment was not carried out by the team collectively
 - Confirmation bias of team leader making independent decisions
- School resource officer should have been involved, being a core member of the team
- Team failed to communicate among themselves about the subject
- Team failed to adequately communicate with subject's parent
- Team failed to recommend counseling to subject's parent as an intervention technique and
- Team did not continue to collectively monitor the subject and reassess the safety plan

Meloy, R. & Amman, M. (2022). *Threat Assessment Team Negligence: The Taft Union Case*
<https://www.wtsglobal.com/threat-assessment-team-negligence-cleveland-vs-taft-union/>

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TRAINING


- APATAP 2023 CONFERENCE**
June 7-9, 2023 | Singapore
www.apatap.wildapricot.org
- ATAP Joint Threat Assessment Training**
June 19-22, 2023 | Philadelphia, PA
www.atapworldwide.org
- ATAP Threat Management Conference**
August 15-18, 2023 | Anaheim, CA
www.atapworldwide.org
- CATAP CONFERENCE**
October 15-19, 2023 | Whistler, BC
www.catap.ca
- AfATAP CONFERENCE**
November 13-17, 2023 | South Africa
www.afatap.africa
- ATAP Winter Conference**
February 6-9, 2024 | Orlando, FL
www.atapworldwide.org
- 14TH AETAP CONFERENCE**
April 22-24, 2024 | Paris, France
www.aetap.eu

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Training

**2023 National Threat Assessment Conference
for Educational Institutions**
October 23-26, 2023
Virginia Beach Convention Center
Virginia Beach, VA
www.dcsj.virginia.gov/content/2023-national-threat-assessment-conference-educational-institutions



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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

**Continuously improves &
adapts to challenges & needs**

Source: Deisinger (1998); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)

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Challenges

Communication and Coordination are Critical!

- Multiple processes that manage cases:**
 - Student Assistance / CARE Team
 - Threat Assessment
 - Sexual Harassment / Title IX
 - Domestic Violence / Dating Violence / Stalking
 - Insider Threat
 - Dignitary Protection
- Mind the Gap!**
 - Clarify mission/roles
 - Shared membership
 - Regular communication
 - Integrated planning
 - Designated authority and responsibility

Source: Deisinger (2015); Deisinger & Nolan (2020)

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Common Pitfalls

Continued focus only on students as subjects of concern

- Address all domains of threat:
 - Students
 - Staff
 - Indirectly affiliated
 - Interpersonal relations
 - Vendors/Contractors
 - Non-affiliated subjects



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Building Collaboration

Support Collaboration

- Make it ok to ask for help, to be vulnerable
- Lead by example
- Build bridges
- Reinforce efforts to collaborate
- Support choirs



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Common Challenges

Use of Consultants with Questionable Expertise

- Consultants have no, minimal, or irrelevant:
 - Education
 - Training
 - Experience
- Fail to conduct background on consultants
- Fail to evaluate validity of methods
 - Are sources cited for methods and materials?
 - Are they relevant to your situation?

Source: Deisinger (2007); Deisinger & Nolan (2019)



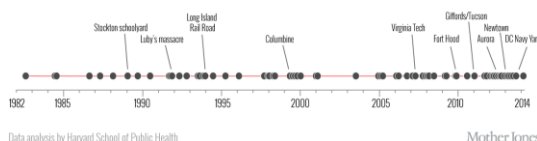
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Contagion Effect

Time Between Mass Shootings, 1982-2014



Data analysis by Harvard School of Public Health

Mother Jones



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Considerations For Community BTAM

Challenges:

- Subjects: Paths cross roles and jurisdictions
- Targets: Paths cross roles and jurisdictions
- Organizations:
 - Don't understand each other's roles and resources
 - Don't communicate, collaborate or coordinate
 - Under-resourced
 - Don't understand threat
 - Don't share investment

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Growing/Future Challenges

Increased Complexity due to:

- Strategic partnerships / collaborations
- Remote business
- Globalization

Challenges:

- Identifying threats
 - Distance
 - Limited contact/engagement
- Capacity and authority to address concerns
- Duty to warn/protect
- Monitoring

Source: Deisinger (2010); Deisinger & Nolan (2020)



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Violent Extremism: Domestic Trends

Violent extremism: Broad base

- Racial / Ethnic supremacy (R/EMVE)
- Anti-Government / Authority (AG/AAVE)
 - Militia
 - Anarchist
 - Sovereign Citizen
- Misogynistic (including Incel)
- Single Issues: (e.g., abortion [ARVE], animal rights [AREVE])
- Composite Violent Extremism (CoVE)

Redefining Extremist "Groups"

- Individuals/Networks/Affinity vs. Groups / organizations
 - Activity driven more by shared goals than ideology
 - Cross over between ideology

211

Violent Extremism: Global Threat

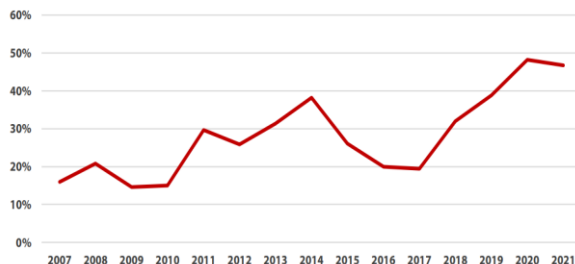
Growth of Global Interconnectedness

- Crowdsourcing funds online
- Sharing tactics, techniques & procedures for action
- Inspiration through sharing manifestos and livestreams
- Recruitment for direct action / combat
 - Online
 - Social media
 - Encrypted communication
 - Gaming
 - Music festivals
 - Combat sports

Miller-Idress, C. (2020). *Hate in the Homeland*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

212

Radicalization to Mobilization in Less than 1 Year



National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
https://www.start.umd.edu/sites/default/files/publications/local_attachments/PIRUS%20March%202023%20Update.pdf

213

Weaponization of Information

Pathways:

- Disinformation / Misinformation
- Doxing
- Conspiracy
- Voice cloning
- AI generation
- Deep fakes

214

Technological Threats



Memes:

- Information that propagates, impacts & persists
 - Words, symbols, images, icons
- Memetic warfare: Using memes for disinformation

215

Technological Threats & Law

Challenges:

- Imagery: Intent and Interpretation
 - Emojis, symbols, memes, pictures 
 - First court case involving emojis: 2014
 - 2022: 200 cases involving emoji interpretation
 - Emojis render differently on different devices 
- Generative AI Systems (Chatbots)
 - Weaponization to create threatening content
 - Who is responsible for threatening content?

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Continuous Improvement

Team Training and Process Development

- Basic training for new team members & backups
- Advanced/applied training
 - DCJS Special Topics and Applications Course (NEW)
 - Interviewing
 - Domain specific (e.g., DV/IPV, Stalking, Extremism, etc.)
- Tabletop exercises / case study reviews
- Professional organization/affiliation
 - Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP)
- Review of process
 - Deisinger Consulting, LLC



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Continuing Process Development

Prepare Foundations:

- Review/integrate existing mechanisms & resources
- Implement/enhance process structure
- Train key stake-holders in process
- Build collaborative relationships
- Implement systematized process:
 - Reporting
 - Screening/Triage
 - Operational Guidelines (manual)
 - BTAM Casework
 - Ongoing Process Review / Continuous Improvement

SEE RESOURCE: Self & Team Assessment Worksheet



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Contact Information

Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety
www.dcps.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety

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Division of Public Safety Training and
Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety
Donna.Michaelis@dcjs.virginia.gov

Marc Dawkins

Law Enforcement and Public Safety Training Manager
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