

A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM FOR PREVENTIVE BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

Presented by:

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- Courtenay McCarthy, the lead school psychologist in student preventive threat assessment and management for Salem-Keizer Public Schools, is chair of the Mid-Valley Student Threat Assessment Team and is a member of the Marion County Threat Advisory Team.
- While partnering with John Van Dreal, she has refined the Salem-Keizer student threat assessment system to reflect leading practice in behavioral threat assessment, violence prevention, early intervention, and equitable practices.
- Courtenay has extensive experience in prevention, threat assessment and management, psychoeducational evaluation, intervention with at-risk youth and families, and behavioral consultation and intervention. As a certified threat manager and nationally certified school psychologist, she regularly provides training and consultation on student threat assessment systems implementation and youth violence to school districts and community agencies throughout the nation. She also provides workshops, symposiums, and content presentations to national audiences.
- In addition, Courtenay is a co-author of Youth Violence Prevention: The Pathway Back through Inclusion and Connection and a contributing author to the book, Assessing Student Threats: Implementing the Salem-Keizer System – Second Edition (Van Dreal, et al. 2017).



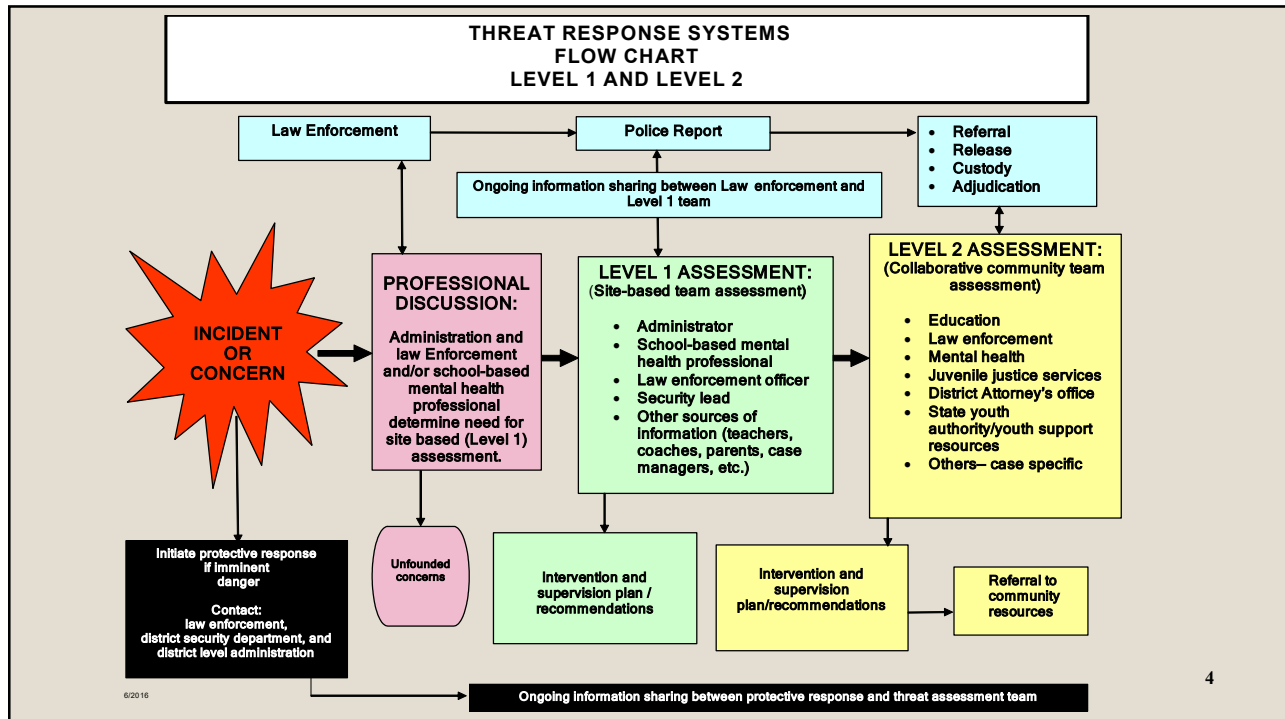
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The presentation will:

- Review the research and basic principles regarding preventive behavioral threat assessment and threat management
- Review the use of preventive behavioral threat assessment to decrease expulsions, arrests, and dismantle the school to prison pipeline
- Review the steps, developmental procedures, and protocols necessary to develop a two-tiered, multi-disciplinary, multi-agency preventive behavioral threat assessment and management system
- Explore changes to the system that may be necessary to adapt to the existing resources of this community
- Train on the use of assessment protocols for K-12 campus preventive threat assessment and management
- Provide case exercises and conduct student threat assessments through the collaborative assessment process



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The presentation will not ...

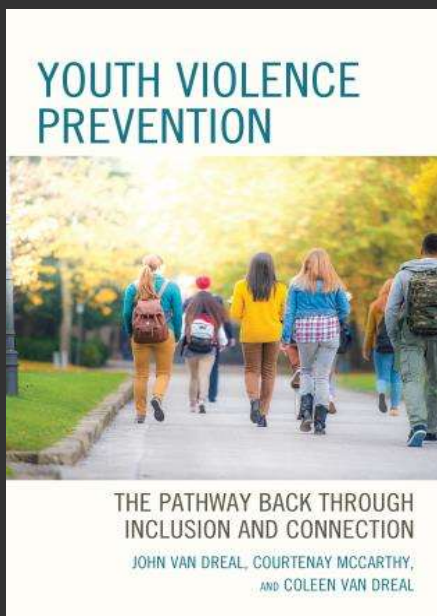
provide all of the training necessary to establish a level of expertise in leading a preventive behavioral threat assessment system.

Advanced training in preventive behavioral threat assessment and threat management is available through Van Dreal Consulting LLC or associates linked from www.vandrealconsulting.com/, the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, through the resources noted in the books, or by referral (speak with us during a break for options).



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Youth Violence Prevention: The Pathway Back through Inclusion and Connection

By John Van Dreal, Courtenay McCarthy, Coleen Van Dreal

Available at:

[Amazon](#)

[Barnes & Noble](#)

[Rowman & Littlefield](#)

[Watermark Books and other book vendors](#)

This is a book about behavioral threat assessment that focuses on prevention and early intervention. It's about thoughtful connection, inclusion, prosocial relationship building, and the restoration of meaningful and positive experiences for young people within the school environment. It's about the importance of staying objective, avoiding assumptions, and eliminating prejudice.

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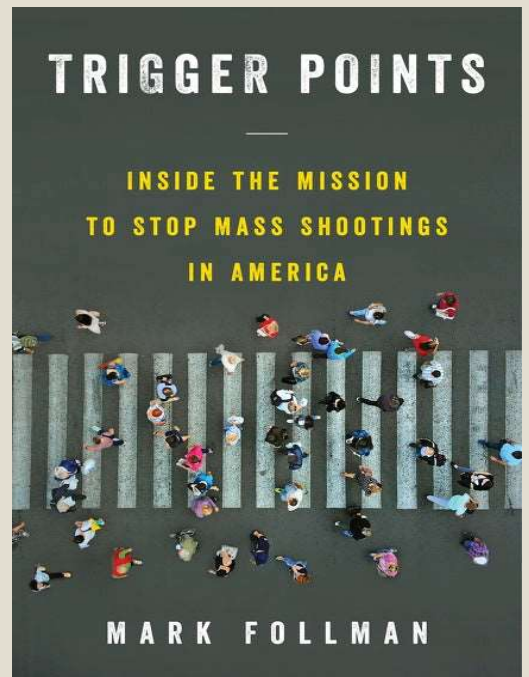
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TRIGGER POINTS
INSIDE THE MISSION TO STOP MASS
SHOOTINGS IN AMERICA
 BY
MARK FOLLMAN
 A LONGTIME JOURNALIST AND THE
 NATIONAL AFFAIRS EDITOR FOR *MOTHER*
JONES.

Available at:
[Harper Collins](#)
[Amazon](#)
[Other vendors](#)

"An urgent read that illuminates real possibility for change." —John Carreyrou, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Bad Blood*

For the first time, a story about the specialized teams of forensic psychologists, FBI agents, and other experts who are successfully stopping mass shootings.

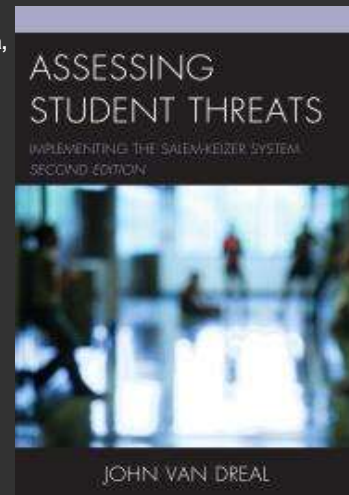


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Assessing Student Threats: Implementing the Salem-Keizer System (Second Edition)

Van Dreal, McCarthy, Swinehart, Speckmaier, Elliott, Okada,
 Rainwater, Novotney, Rutledge, Mendoza, Byrd

Rowman and Littlefield
 (800) 462-6420.
 email orders@rowman.com
 website <http://www.rowman.com>



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Salem-Keizer Cascade BTA Courses by John Van Dreal

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Insights Emerging Solutions Salem-Keizer Cascade BTA Courses by John Van Dreal

Training Solutions for Effective and Accurate Implementation of the Salem-Keizer Cascade Model of Behavioral Threat Assessment

The only behavioral threat assessment (BTA) model developed by an experienced school psychologist, the Salem-Keizer Cascade Model focuses on helping schools build a sustainable system that includes school site teams and community-based collaboration.

Multi-disciplinary teams and training are critical components of a successful program. Exclusively through PCG, schools can access online training courses developed in partnership with John Van Dreal, author of the Salem-Keizer Cascade Model.

Our Salem-Keizer Cascade BTA training courses are for BTA team members, including:

WEB-BASED CASE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

John Van Dreal Consulting is proud to partner with Public Consulting Group to bring leading technology and training solutions to school threat assessment teams and school districts using or considering the Salem-Keizer Cascade prevention system.

SAFER SCHOOLS TOGETHER
 Digital Threat Assessment and Management
 Consultation and Training
<https://saferschoolstogether.com/>

The year was 2019

- The chances of being harmed by violence in a school are 1 in 2 million... killed by homicide in a school, about 1 in 2 to 4 million, depending on the year.
- The chances of being hit by lightning in a particular year are 1 in 960 thousand. Annually, there is a 1 in 31,000 chance of being poisoned by cafeteria food.
- A youth is approximately 40 times more likely to be killed by homicide outside of school than inside a school.
- School safety has improved steadily within the last 30 plus years.
- Still, depending upon how the data is measured, over the past 15 years in America, the rate of targeted or rampage killings has increased when places of commerce and higher education are factored in.



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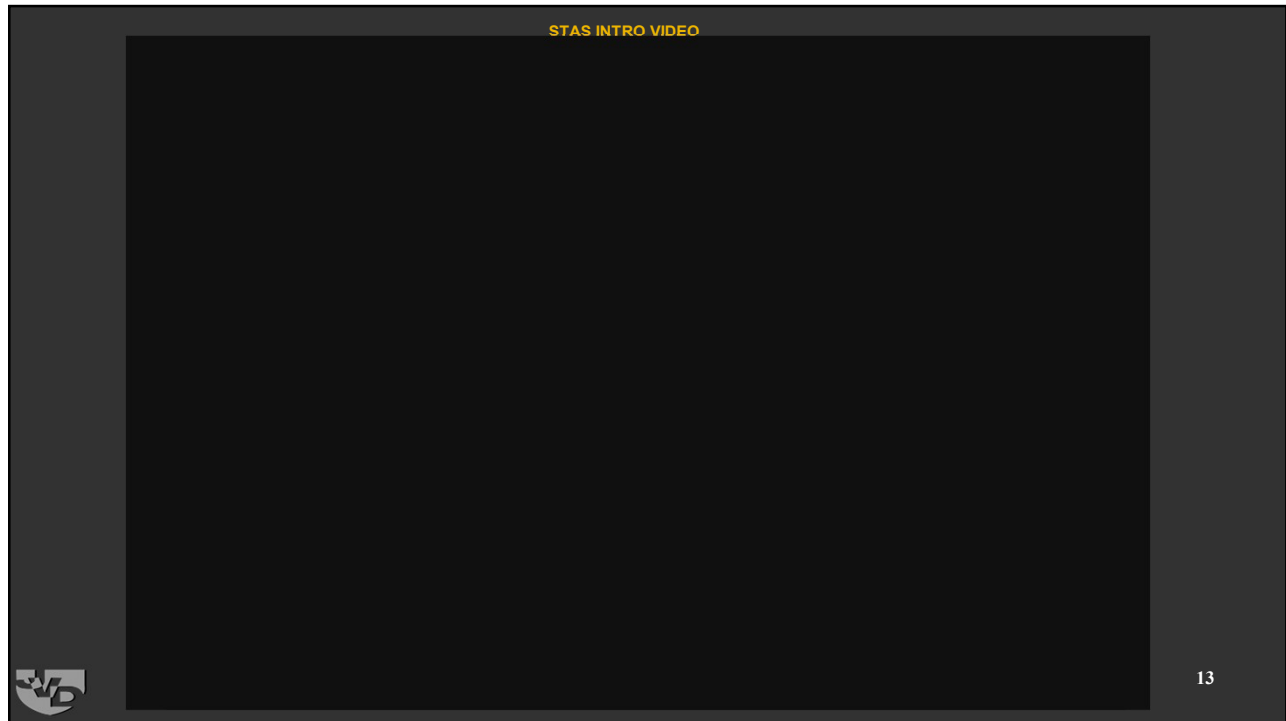
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- **Response in education and community policy has varied from highly reactive policy making to avoidance and denial.**
- **Furthermore, students and community members frequently make threats or use threatening talk as a means of socializing and communicating. How do we know when a threat is real, when do we worry and how do we respond?**



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JUSTIFICATIONS

- 1. Concerns regarding violence and school safety**
- 2. Response to (ORS 339.250) requiring policy and procedure**
- 3. Zero-tolerance policy, expulsion. Reactive public policy measures**
- 4. Psychological safety**

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The Salem-Keizer Cascade System

- Multi-discipline, multi-agency collaboration
- Designed by an educator (with input and support from youth serving agencies) for the application and use in an education setting
- Shared ownership; shared responsibility; decreased liability



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- Includes equity language; includes trauma informed strategies, includes restorative practice
- Checks and prevents implicit bias and other forms of bias
- Expeditious but methodical
- User friendly—simple and clear language; identification of risk in clear terms; step by step instructions and guidance



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- Inexpensive—expertise is within the protocol-driven system
- Interventions and supervision strategies that fit the situation and accurately address risk
- Inclusive, not exclusive—promotes connections, observation, and supervision in the schools
- Prevention and early intervention, not a punitive or gotcha system



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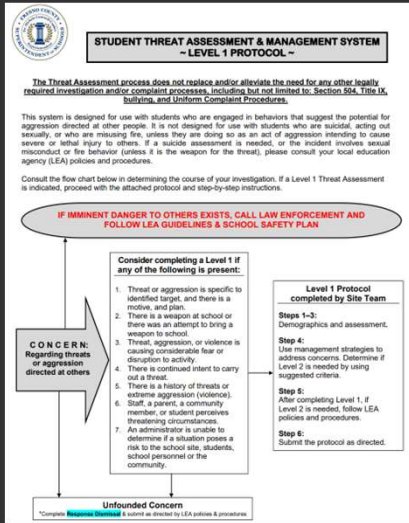
- Increases both the physical safety and psychological safety of a community



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Let's Get Started



PRINCIPLES

BASIC CONCEPTS

SUPPORTIVE RESEARCH

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The Threat Assessment System objectives are:

1. **Assess** threats of potentially harmful or lethal behavior and determine the level of concern and action required
2. **Organize** resources and strategies to **manage** situations involving threatening situations that pose a risk of harm to others
3. **Maintain** a sense of psychological safety within the community



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DEFINITION OF A THREAT

The intention
to commit harm to a target
or be a menace or source of danger
to a target
(person)



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Level 1 Site Based Protocol development

1. Develop a template, with identified key risk factors as well as supervision strategies, that all members of the team use as a guide during assessment.
2. Document the use of the template in every case.
3. Document the risk concerns and document the supervision and safety planning.



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Level 1 Protocol



STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ~ LEVEL 1 PROTOCOL ~

The Threat Assessment process does not replace and/or alleviate the need for any other legally required investigation and/or complaint processes, including but not limited to: Section 504, Title IX, bullying, and Uniform Complaint Procedures.

This system is designed for use with students who are engaged in behaviors that suggest the potential for aggression directed at other people. It is not designed for use with students who are suicidal, acting out sexually, or who are misusing fire, unless they are doing so as an act of aggression intending to cause severe or lethal injury to others. If a suicide assessment is needed, or the incident involves sexual misconduct or fire behavior (unless it is the weapon for the threat), please consult your local education agency (LEA) policies and procedures.


Consult the flow chart below in determining the course of your investigation. If a Level 1 Threat Assessment is indicated, proceed with the attached protocol and step-by-step instructions.

IF IMMINENT DANGER TO OTHERS EXISTS, CALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FOLLOW LEA GUIDELINES & SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN



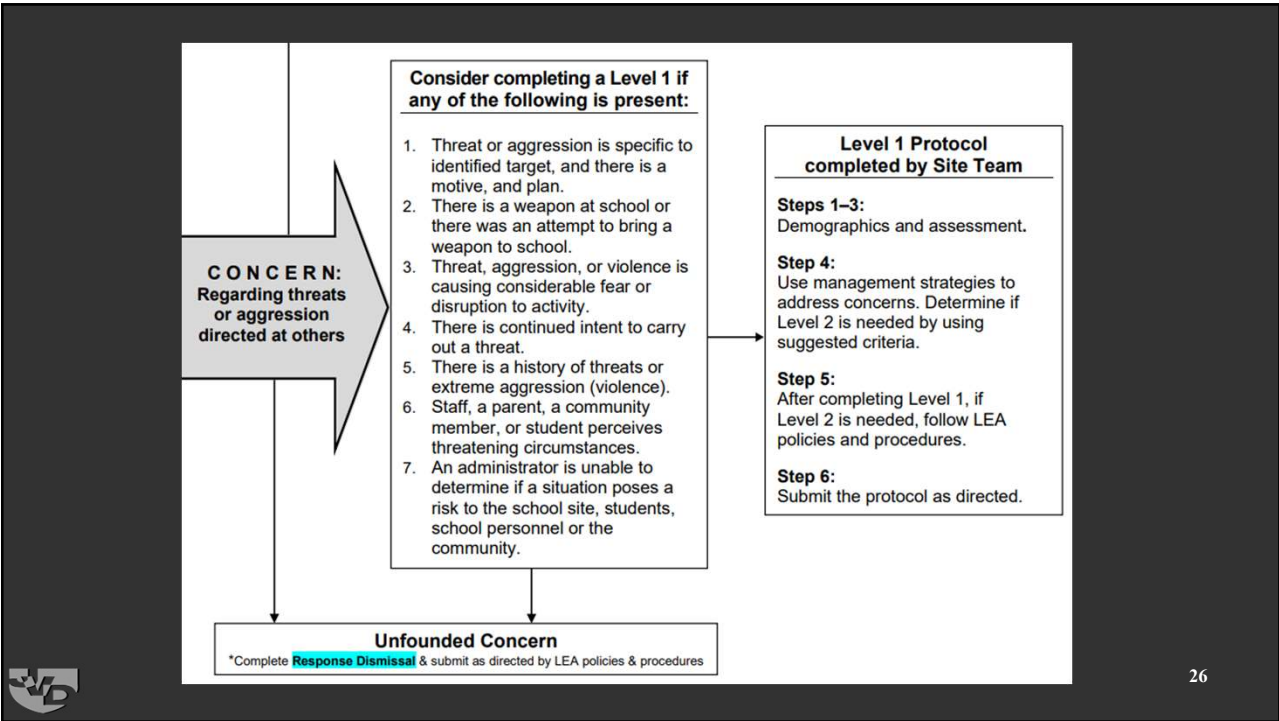
CONSIDER INITIATING A LEVEL 1 IF THE FOLLOWING IS KNOWN OR SUSPECTED:

- Threat, aggression or violence is specific to identified target with motive and plan
- Threat, aggression or violence is causing considerable fear or disruption to activity
- Weapon at school or attempt to bring a weapon
- There is continued intent to carry out threat
- There is a history of threats, aggression or violence
- Staff, parent or student perceives threatening circumstances
- Administrator is unable to determine if a situation poses a risk to school personnel or the community



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This protocol does not predict future violence, nor is it a foolproof method of assessing an individual's (including an individual member of a group's) potential for harm to others. This survey is not a checklist that can be quantified. It is a guide designed to assist in the investigation of potential danger (identify circumstances and situational factors that may increase concern for potential youth aggression) and to assist school staff in the development of a management plan. Furthermore, as circumstances change, so too does concern for aggression (concern may decrease or increase); therefore, if you are reviewing this protocol at a date after assessment completion, be mindful of supervision, intervention, and the passage of time.

Complete the following protocol through investigation conducted by the Level 1 Site Team. A multidisciplinary Level 1 Site Team may be comprised of an administrator, school counselor, school psychologist, mental health professional, School Resource Officer (SRO) and/or law enforcement. The threat assessment case manager should lead the discussion using the noted step-by-step instructions and accompanying questions as a guide. Many cases can be managed through a Level 1 Assessment with appropriate interventions. The assessment usually takes from 20 to 45 minutes and is a method of documenting concerns and management strategies. It is also the method of determining if there is a need to conduct a more extensive Level 2 Assessment (Step 4).


The following people should be considered for participation in Level 1 meetings as sources of additional information:

- Teachers, coaches, case managers, and other educators. If these individuals are unavailable to attend the Level 1 meeting, ask them to complete the Teacher/Staff/Other Service Provider's Questionnaire and return prior to the Level 1 meeting.
- District school security staff, SRO, district law enforcement.
- Instructional assistants, transportation staff, or other people who have contact with student.
- Case managers, social workers, and/or probation officers if student is adjudicated or a ward of the court.
- If the threat assessment case manager, in consultation with the administrator, determines that parents/guardians will be constructive to this process, the parent/guardian should be notified that the assessment will be taking place and invited to participate. If parents/guardians are **unable** to attend, complete the Parent Interview form. If it is determined that parent/guardian participation would compromise the process, the Level 1 Site Team may elect to complete the assessment without notification and/or inclusion of the parents/guardians; excluded parents likely would not be invited to complete the Parent Interview form.
- Students should NOT attend this meeting.** Student information can be gathered through Student Interview and Student Witness Interview forms.

*Ensure that the LEA either has parent/guardian consent through a Release of Information form to share personally identifiable information with non-LEA employed individuals on the Level 1 Site Team OR that any non-LEA employed individual fits an exception under California Education Code section 49076 or 49076.5, which allows them to access information in which they have a legitimate educational interest without parent/guardian consent.

**Note that if an SRO who is a member of a law enforcement agency or law enforcement is involved in the Level 1 Site Team or Threat Assessment, they must follow the rules related to law enforcement interrogation. (See e.g., California Welfare & Institutions Code section 625.47 seq., especially section 625.6.)


An equity lens has been applied to the threat response process. The lens identified concerns underserved and underrepresented populations who lack confidence in support systems and, thus, tend to underreport. Be sure to approach information sources with cultural sensitivity and explore all leads. Provide assurance that safety, inclusion, and connection are the focus of the assessment and management of the situation. The lens also identified concerns for bias toward underserved populations and minority groups that may lead to overreaction or unnecessary discipline. Review the assessment and intervention process by focusing on facts and behavior unique to the situation. Avoid assumptions and/or personalizing language and behavior.



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Equity in Threat Assessment

Use	Use an equity lens to assess the impact of your process on underrepresented populations.
↓	
Gather and assess	Gather and assess data on an ongoing basis to determine unintended impacts and mitigation strategies.
↓	
Be	Be sure to approach information sources with cultural sensitivity, explore all leads, and confirm information sources.
↓	
Provide	Provide assurance that safety, inclusion, and connection are the focus of the assessment and management of the situation.
↓	
Review	Review the assessment and intervention process by focusing on facts and behavior unique to the situation.
↓	
Avoid	Avoid assumptions and/or personalizing language and behavior.



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STEP 1: ADDRESS STUDENT AND STAFF SAFETY

IF IMMINENT DANGER EXISTS, CALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FOLLOW THE LEA GUIDELINES AND SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN.

STUDENT: _____	STUDENT SSID#: _____
SCHOOL: _____	TODAY'S DATE: _____ GRADE: _____
SCHOOL PHONE #: _____	BIRTHDATE: _____ AGE: _____
PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S): _____	PHONE: _____
DATE OF INCIDENT: _____	
THREAT ASSESSMENT CASE MANAGER: _____	
ADMINISTRATOR: _____	
INVESTIGATING OFFICER (IF LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVED): _____	
CASE #: _____ * Obtain copy of law enforcement report	

If necessary, take appropriate precautions, such as building-wide security measures or detaining the student(s) of concern, restricting access to coats, backpacks, technology, etc. Note that, while the device can be confiscated, if it's a personal technology device, LEA cannot search unless LEA has a search warrant, there is a legitimate emergency, or the LEA has consent from the owner of the device.

Provide notification to parent/guardian of any student(s) identified as a target of violence (where outcome could be severe or lethal injury).

Is law enforcement involved in the investigation or protective response? What were the results (i.e., student arrested, charged, detained, search of belongings, parent/student interviews, etc.)?

STEP 2: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The parent/guardian has been notified that an assessment is being done and will attend the Level 1 meeting.

The parent/guardian has been notified that an assessment is being done but cannot attend the Level 1 meeting.
 A parent interview was completed. Yes No If not, why?

The parent has been notified but not invited due to response, asked to complete parent interview.
 A parent interview was completed. Yes No If not, why?

The parent/guardian **has not** been notified of meeting and will **not** be asked to complete an interview because:

STEP 3: ASSESSMENT – DISCUSS, INVESTIGATE, AND DOCUMENT

Prior to completing this protocol, consider reviewing the sources of information listed below. Each question is a prompt for the investigation of circumstances that may involve the escalation of aggression by one or more students. The question is noted in **bold** and is followed by a short clarifying explanation. Review the questions as an outline for guided conversation investigating situational factors that suggest an increase in concern for acted out aggression. Note responses at each item or under "Other Concerns" (Item #20).

Information was gathered from the following sources:

- Cumulative file review, including confidential folder
- Review of grades, including report cards and transcripts
- Review of all screens in electronic records systems (e.g., Aeries, Synergy, etc.)
- Review of discipline records
- Classwork-related communications, such as journaling, artwork, etc.
- Student/family criminal history
- Student interview
- Student witness interview
- Parent interview (if not in attendance & interview was pursued)
- Teacher/Staff/Other questionnaire (if not in attendance)
- Search of belongings
- Search of technology, including social media and web browser activity (note limitation in Step 1)
- If applicable, review of Section 504 Plan or special education file
- Other: _____

AGGRESSION CONTINUUM
(from Eric M. Johnson, PhD.)

-Violent Aggression: serious or lethal injury-

-Aggression Behavior: low to moderate injury-

- Bombing
- Shooting
- Raping
- Stabbing
- Beating
- Strangling
- Fighting
- Hitting with objects
- Throwing objects
- Slugging
- Kicking
- Scratching
- Biting
- Slapping
- Pushing



1. Note the severity of the threatened aggression on the continuum below.

Does the communication or situation suggest a threat of low to moderate aggression, such as punching or fighting? Or does the communication or situation suggest a threat of serious or lethal injury, such as a severe beating, shooting, stabbing, or bombing? (The behaviors listed within the continuum are examples and not necessarily locked into their position). Note that there is a change within the continuum from low to moderate aggression (non-severe or non-lethal injury) to extreme aggression (severe or lethal injury). Extreme aggression is also referred to as violence.

MILD AGGRESSION → MODERATE AGGRESSION → EXTREME AGGRESSION (VIOLENCE)
(Frequent, Low Impact) (Less Frequent, Moderate Impact) (Infrequent, High Impact)

← Suggested or Threatened Aggressive Behavior: Scratch Bite Hit Fight Hit w/ Object Forceful Strike Rape Strangle Stab Shoot Bomb Kill →

If aggression was acted out, locate the outcome or intended outcome on the continuum below.

MILD AGGRESSION → MODERATE AGGRESSION → EXTREME AGGRESSION (VIOLENCE)
(Frequent, Low Impact) (Less Frequent, Moderate Impact) (Infrequent, High Impact)

← Acted out Aggressive Behavior: Scratch Bite Hit Fight Hit w/ Object Forceful Strike Rape Strangle Stab Shoot Bomb Kill →

Describe the details of the threat, dangerous situation, and/or acted-out behavior:



CONTEXT AND SITUATION

WHAT IS THREAT ASSESSMENT?

Defined by the Safe School Initiative (*Threat Assessment in Schools*): **The primary purpose of a threat assessment is to prevent targeted violence.**

- The threat assessment process is centered upon analysis of the facts and evidence of behavior in a given situation.
- The appraisal of risk in a threat assessment focuses on actions, communications, and specific circumstances that might suggest that an individual intends to mount an attack and is engaged in planning or preparing for that event.



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Context and Situation

- The assessment of the unique interaction and dynamics between the person of concern, the target and the situation they share.
- The question is “does the situation ‘pose’ a threat,” not “did the person ‘make’ a threat.”



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Acted out Aggressive Behavior:

Scratch Bite Hit Fight Hit w/ Object Forceful Strike Rape Strangle Stab Shoot Bomb Kill

Describe the details of the threat, dangerous situation, and/or acted-out behavior:

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Threats and Communication

Inappropriate Communication:


Any unwarranted contact or approach that is strange, threatening or ominously predictive and intended to unsettle or unnerve.

- Direct Threat
- Indirect Threat
- Veiled Threat
- Conditional/Instrumental Threat
- Expressive Threat

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2. Have there been communications suggesting a potential attack or act of aggression (i.e., direct threats, specific references, veiled threats, or vague warnings)?
 Threats can be direct, through oral communication, art, email, internet use, social media, virtual reality, written language exercises, and other modes of communication. Note that threats can also be indirect (e.g., ominous warnings) or veiled, even casual references to possible harmful events or previously occurring violent events (e.g., school shootings).

No Yes Describe:



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Targeted and Reactive Aggression



REACTIVE / IMPULSIVE



TARGETED / PREMEDITATED
/PREDATORY

(AFFECTIVE)



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Reactive Aggression



- Absence of planning
- Elevated emotional state
- Aggressor feels under immediate threat

Borrowed from Reid Meloy



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Targeted and Reactive Aggression

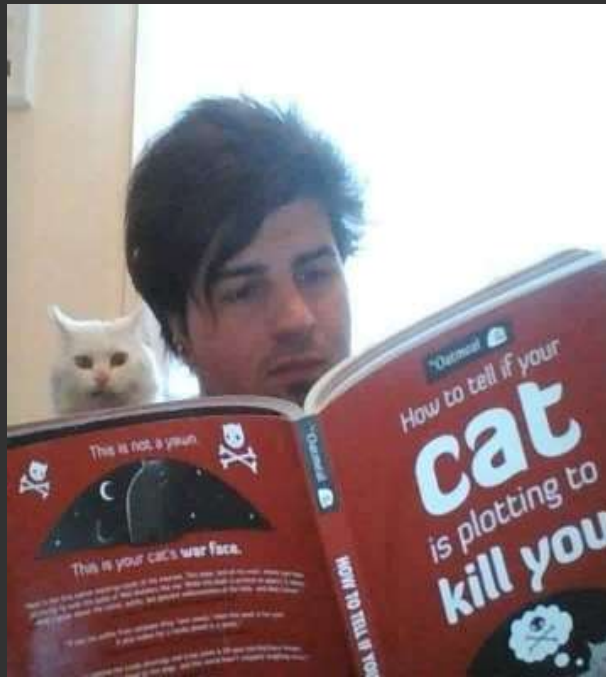


REACTIVE / IMPULSIVE/
(AFFECTIVE)



TARGETED / PREMEDITATED
/PREDATORY

(AFFECTIVE)



Targeted Violence

(Fein&Vossekuil, 1998; Cat example borrowed from Reid Maloy)

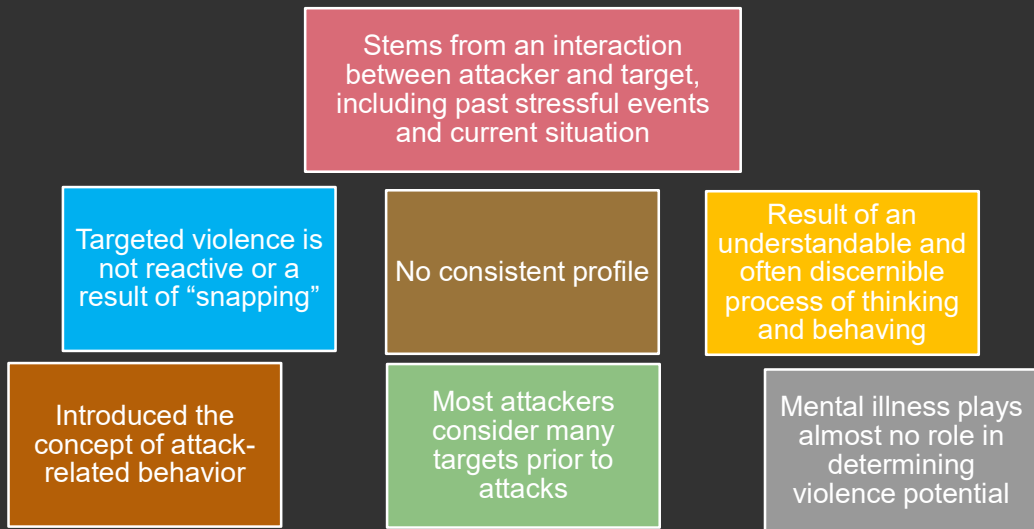
- Targeted violence is not reactive.
- It is not the result of someone “going mental” or “snapping;”
- It is the result of an understandable and often discernible process of thinking and behaving.
- The aggressor will display “attack-related” behaviors that move along a continuum of idea to action, including justification, planning, rehearsing, and logistical preparations.



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The Exceptional Case Study (Fein&Vossekuil, 1998)



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ATTACK-RELATED BEHAVIOR



BEHAVIOR THAT SUPPORTS THE THREAT AS A MORE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION

EXAMPLES:

- PLANNING
- RESEARCH
- PREPARATION (including WEAPONS ACQUISITION)
- REHEARSAL
- SCHEDULING
- OTHERS?



Targeted Violence

Scheduled or triggered **Implementation**

Pre-attack preparation/planning

Planning/Research

Ideation

Grievance

Adapted from Calhoun and Weston (2003)



3. Are there indications of a plan, feasible process, or clear intention to harm others?

Threatening communication becomes more concerning with behavior that suggests intent to follow through with a targeted attack (called "attack-related behavior"). Many threats are not stated directly but are indicated by vague references combined with behavior. Attack-related behavior may be, but is not limited to, the following:

- A plan (complex or simple) to carry out a targeted act of violence against a specific individual, group, or student body. The plan would have a sequence of actions necessary for its success, and almost always requires a motive. The more plausible and detailed the plan, the greater the risk.
- Acquisition of a weapon, attempted acquisition of a weapon, past possession of prohibited items at school, or research about how to acquire a weapon.
- Rehearsal (practice and simulation, including virtual simulation) of the plan or a similar plan. Rehearsal or simulation is often necessary before a targeted event can be completely planned and carried out. Rehearsal can be indicated through art, fantasy games, writing or film projects, the use of movies or Internet sites with themes and sequences of targeted violence, through first-person shooter video games, etc. However, participating in such activities does not lead students to act out violently. Their use is considered attack-related behavior only when used as rehearsal.
- Scheduling an attack. A scheduled attack may be clear and detailed or flexible, awaiting a triggering event (e.g., teasing, rejection, or loss) that further justifies the violence as a solution.

No Yes Describe:



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J.A.C.A. Gavin de Becker

Justification

+

Alternatives

+

Consequences

+

Ability



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SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVE

Critical Factors *(consistently present in histories of school shooters)*

- Peer Relationships Problems
- Weapon Fascination and access
- Recent loss, humiliation
- Signs of depression, suicidal ideation or actions
- Disconnect from adults

Contributing Factors *(associated with aggression, but not consistently present)*

- Poor school achievement. (grades, truancy, class disruption, suspension)
- Negative parent-child relationship (family distress, poor supervision)
- Exposure to violence
- Substance abuse
- Mental illness

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SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVE (continued)

Key Points:

1. Shootings were rarely impulsive.
2. No consistent profile of school shooter.
3. Shooters had difficulty coping with loss and failure.
4. Shooters perceived or experienced severe longstanding rejection, persecution, hurtful behavior, and bullying by peers.
5. Motives were mostly revenge and problem-solving.
6. Peers knew of plan ahead of time—some collaborated.
7. All attackers used guns. Most shooters had ready access to guns. Some made considerable efforts to acquire guns.
8. Most attackers did not threaten their targets directly prior to attack.
9. All shooters were of concern to parents, teachers and / or peers.
10. Despite prompt law enforcement responses, most attacks were quick and stopped by a means other than police intervention.

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Protecting America's Schools (US Secret Service, 2019)

Study examined 41 incidents (2008-2017) of targeted violence with one or more people injured or killed (excluding gang or drug-related violence)

- 19 killed, 79 injured
- Attackers: 81% male, 17% female
- 61% used firearms, 39% used bladed weapons
- 41% of attacks took place within the week after a break in attendance
- Of those who used a firearm, 32% acquired the firearm the day of the attack
- 40% had a mental health diagnosis, 63% had signs of depression, 60% had suicidal ideation



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Protecting America's Schools (US Secret Service, 2019) Key Factors

1. Still no profile of a school attacker or school that has been attacked
2. Attackers had multiple motives—most common was grievance
3. Attackers used firearms—most often acquired from home
4. Attackers experienced psychological, behavioral, or developmental symptoms
5. Half of the attackers had interest in violent topics—most common fixations were Columbine & Hitler
6. All attackers experienced social stressors involving relationships
7. Nearly every attacker experienced negative home life factors
8. Most attackers were victims of bullying, which was often observed by others
9. Most attackers had a history of school disciplinary actions, and many had prior contact with law enforcement.
10. All attackers exhibited concerning behaviors. Most elicited concern from others, and most communicated (through leakage) their intent to attack.



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4. Are there indications of suicidal ideation?

Is there a history of suicidal ideas, attempts, gestures, references, and/or intent? The wish to die, be killed, or die by suicide, combined with a threat to harm others, increases risk, especially if the self-destructive behavior is the last part of a plan to harm others and carry out revenge or justice.

No Yes Describe:



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5. Is the aggressive ideation focused on a specific, ongoing target?

Is there ongoing consideration or focus on a particular person, group, or student body? If the situation lacks an ongoing target, it may be a situation of reactive aggression, in which the individual involved perceives himself or herself to be under immediate threat, is in an escalated emotional state, and uses threats as a means of self-protection or defending interest and wants.

No Yes Describe:



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6. Are there indications of a choice and/or the availability of weapons?

If weapons are being considered but not immediately available within the home, are they available through relatives, friends, or other means? Note your level of confidence in the source of your information. *Be sure to ask both the student and parents/guardians directly about weapons availability and document their responses (even if not completing the parent interview).*

No Yes **Describe (How confident are you in your information?):**

[Light blue text input area]



8. Are there indications of a motive that would justify the act of severely injuring another person?

If focus is on a specific target(s) (see question # 5), then there is very likely a motive. Motives tend to revolve around a need to establish or re-establish control. Motives may include revenge for lost love or humiliation, payback for a perceived injustice, revenge for bullying, desire to kill, infamy, and the desire to establish power. If the situation lacks motive, then it may revolve around reactive aggression. Reactive aggressive talk often has triggers that can rapidly agitate the situation. Such triggers are not usually motives but should be identified to avoid or eliminate them in the future.

No Yes **Describe:**

[Light blue text input area]



Katherine S. Newman

Five necessary but not sufficient conditions for a rampage shooting:

1. Perception of self as extremely marginal within the social world that has value: Bullying and social exclusion lead to marginalization and increase frustration and depression.
2. Psychological problems and vulnerability: Mental illness, severe depression and abuse decrease emotional, psychological and coping reserves, thus magnifying impact of marginalization.
3. Cultural scripts: Cultural or media models of violence are readily available as examples of solving problems, getting even, releasing discomfort or elevating social status.
4. Failure of surveillance systems: Systems intended to identify troubled youth are ineffective or non-existent.
5. Gun availability



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Supervisory Special Agent Andre Simons

From anecdotal observations and the report Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education.

- Significant personal stress, humiliation, and/or perceived failure
- Aggressive Martyrdom (Reid Meloy)
- Psychologically transformational acts
- The brittle student
- Leakage, hyper profanity, negative emotional language, lack of future planning, weapons investigation or possession, and an inability to take personal responsibility for actions and outcomes.
- Solution to perceived problems
- Wills, manifestos, infamy and notoriety
- Pseudo-commando



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Warning Behaviors (Meloy, 2012)

Acts/changes in behavior that give evidence of increasing risk

- Pathway
- Fixation
- Identification
- Novel Aggression
- Energy Burst
- Leakage
- Directly Communicated Threat
- Last Resort Behavior



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Warning Behaviors (Meloy, 2014) continued

Of the 9 warning behaviors, 5 have been shown to be more prevalent in those who commit acts of targeted violence in schools:

- Pathway
- Fixation
- Identification
- Novel Aggression
- Last Resort Behavior

Warning behaviors prevalent in students of concern who did not intend to act violently:

- Leakage
- Directly Communicated Threat



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- 7. Are there indications of a focused or unusual interest in acts of violence; previous school or community attacks or attackers; weaponry; law enforcement, military paraphernalia, or appearance; or, anti-social characters, notorious criminals, murderers, or gangs (historical or fictional)? Are there indications of violent revenge fantasies, or a desire to be an agent or martyr of a particular cause or belief system?**

What may be inappropriate to some people may still be within the normal range, given the individual's age, developmental level, or cultural background. This question relates to question # 3. It examines whether interest is a curiosity or a fascination or whether interest is an admiration for anti-social characters as role models and examples of how to justify violence for solving problems.

No Yes **Describe:**



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- 9. Are there indications of hopeless, overwhelming, stressful, or desperate situations (real or perceived)?**

As students lose hope of resolving stressful or overwhelming situations through acceptable social or coping skills, they are more likely to engage in desperate solutions and last-ditch efforts to take control. Stressors may include humiliation, family conflict, mental illness, social distress, disciplinary actions, academic failure, law enforcement contact, bullying, economic, cultural, or environmental stressors, etc. It is important to note that the point of this question is to examine the perception of the person with whom you are concerned, and what has been observed by others (e.g., staff, parents, other students, or the community) about the person's perception.

No Yes **Describe:**



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10. Are there indications of a capacity or ability to plan and carry out an act of targeted violence?

Based on the cognitive or adaptive capacity of the person of concern, what is the likelihood of a successfully organized and executed planned attack? If someone is making exaggerated or complex threats but is unable to organize and execute them because of supervision, cognitive ability, or overall functioning, then feasibility drops.

No Yes Describe:



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11. Are values, beliefs, or ideas socially maladjusted (e.g., aggression is seen as an acceptable and justifiable method of problem solving)?

Socially maladjusted thinking can lead to justification and motive for violent behavior. The thinking process will indicate thoughtful consideration that follows a process of reason and justification that is anti-social and intended to cause significant harm. Communication or behavior that is a feature of a disability is less concerning than communication or behavior that is a feature of socially maladjusted thinking unless it is accompanied by attack-related behavior (see question # 3).

No Yes Describe:

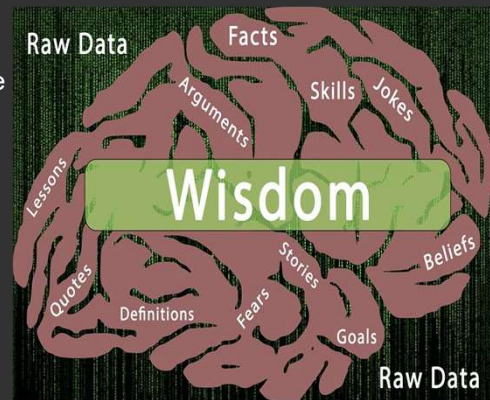


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Bias in Threat Assessment (FBI, 2015)

- **Implicit Bias** - The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- **Confirmation Bias** - The tendency to look for evidence or interpret information in a way that confirms a preconceived opinion.
- **Availability Bias** - Is a tendency to assign the most importance to behavior which comes immediately to mind, often that which is most recent.
- **Hindsight Bias** - The inclination to see events as having been more predictable than they actually were.
 - Can induce *foresight bias*, the tendency to overestimate the ability to predict future events.



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Why are problem behaviors missed? (O'Toole, 2014)

- **Normalizing behavior**—finding a normal explanation for what is seen
- **Rationalizing behavior**—excusing the behavior, minimizing it, or explaining it away
- **Ignoring behavior**—pretending the behavior did not occur
- **Icon intimidation or influence**—the view that because a person is iconic or has a position of trust and/or importance, he or she would not be capable of dangerous behavior



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Bias Mitigation

- ✓ Always use a collaborative, multidisciplinary structure
- ✓ Encourage the open sharing of perspectives
- ✓ Professional development in understanding and decreasing bias
- ✓ Review cases over time, check perceptions and impressions
- ✓ Involve/consult with professionals who share the same cultural background as the student of concern
- ✓ Use the bias checks provided in the Level 1 protocol as



a collaborative discussion

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STOP & REVIEW THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONS (# 1 - # 11) & YOUR RESPONSES:

Highlight and identify responses where unintentional bias may have affected the response. Consider the following as you summarize the previous 11 questions: Were any responses based on stereotypes or assumptions rather than actual observation and factual information regarding behavior? Are there concerning behaviors that could be appropriate within the student's culture?



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12. Do the responses to questions # 1-11 identify actions, communications, and/or behaviors that suggest a motive focused on a specific target, with an indication of planning or preparation, and the ability to carry out a targeted attack?

No Yes

If "yes", the risk of targeted aggression is indicated. Proceed with the assessment by moving on to #13.

If "no", do the responses indicate either of the following:

A. Aggressive talk or behavior that is highly emotional, is unplanned, and is a reaction to a perceived insult, affront, or threat, or a means of defending personal interest or self?

No Yes

B. Aggressive behavior and/or aggressive talk that is used to intimidate, bully, manipulate, or impress others?

No Yes

- If "yes" to either question #12A or 12B, the threat is likely reactive or affective. If the potential outcome of aggression is **severe or lethal injury**, proceed with the assessment by moving on to #13. If the potential outcome of the aggression is **minor to moderate injury**, you may stop the assessment at this point and move to step 4, using the answers from questions # 1–11 to identify situations, settings, and triggers that increase the likelihood of the behavior, and then develop strategies that will decrease that behavior.
- If answers to questions #12, 12A and 12B are "no", the situation does not pose a threat. You may stop the assessment at this point and move to step 4, noting the absence of the threat under *School Options: Other*. Then continue to monitor the situation for behavior, ideas, or circumstances that may indicate the presence of risk.



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13. Are caregivers, peers, campus staff members, and/or outside service providers concerned about a student's potential for acting out aggressively?

Concerns may range from an odd discomfort to a complete list of reasons that caution should be taken. If violence is being considered or planned, it is difficult to hide the indicators. In fact, sometimes little care is actually taken to hide intentions and, while there may be little to no documentation of past behavioral issues, there may be several people who have been or are currently concerned.

No Yes Describe:



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Adult Inhibitors (protective factors or stabilizers)

- Employment
- Finances
- Health
- Residence
- Children
- Family
- Looking to the future
- Resolving the grievance

What are examples of inhibitors available to the youth population?



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14. Are there trusting and successful relationships with one or more responsible adults, either on campus or within the community?

The greater and healthier the connection with teachers, service providers, coaches, parents, administrators, church leaders, etc., the less chance there is of a student wanting to disappoint or hurt them and the greater opportunity there is for fostering positive values, community connections, and prosocial choices. If a student (or group of students that the student hangs out with) lacks connection to pro-social adults and is also marginalized within the student population, then intervention and connection are strongly indicated!

No Yes Describe:

16. What circumstances, events, or inhibitors decrease the likelihood of a violent or aggressive attack?

What information or developments may decrease the concern for acted-out aggression? Identify all positive influences (e.g., activities, events, interests, relationships, goals, organization memberships, etc.) that promote responsible and accountable pro-social behavior. A situation that lacks inhibitors poses a greater risk, since there is less to lose by acting out and little motivation toward healthy solutions.

Describe:



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Accelerator, Triggers and Precipitating Events

Accelerators are destabilizing factors that increase the potential for individuals to resort to violence. These include (some are more specific to adults): illness, divorce, financial crisis, decreased or terminated employment, and perceived ongoing abandonment/rejection.



Triggers or precipitating events are similar to accelerators but tend to be acute experiences or circumstances that aggravate an individual or group further toward a violent act (Meloy, 2000).



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15. What circumstances, events, or triggers increase or agitate the likelihood of a violent or aggressive attack?

What information or developments might increase the concern for acted-out aggression? What situations agitate or trigger aggressive thinking, threats, and aggressive behavior? Is there an indication that the student of concern is awaiting an event or action before making his/her final decision regarding violent behavior?

Describe:



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FBI Critical Incident Response Group

Personality Traits and Behavior:

- Leakage
- Low Tolerance for Frustration
- Lack of Resiliency
- Poor Coping Skills
- Failed Love Relationship
- Injustice Collector
- Signs of Depression
- Narcissism
- Alienation
- Dehumanizing Others
- Lack of Empathy
- Exaggerated Sense of Entitlement
- Attitude of Superiority
- Exaggerated or Pathological Need for Attention
- Externalizes Blame
- Masks Low Self-Esteem
- Anger Management Problems
- Intolerance
- Inappropriate Humor
- Seeks to Manipulate Others
- Lack of Trust
- Closed Social Group
- Change of Behavior
- Rigid and Opinionated
- Unusual Interest in Sensational Violence
- Fascination with Violence-Filled Entertainment
- Negative Role Models
- Behavior Appears Relevant to Carrying out a Threat



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FBI Critical Incident Response Group

Family Dynamics:

- Turbulent Parent-Child Relationship
- Acceptance of Pathological Behavior
- Access to Weapons
- Lack of Intimacy
- Student "Rules the Roost"
- No Limits or Monitoring of TV and Internet

School Dynamics:

- Student's Attachment to School
- Tolerance for Disrespectful Behavior
- Inequitable Discipline
- Inflexible Culture
- Pecking Order Among Students
- Code of Silence
- Unsupervised Computer Access



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FBI Critical Incident Response Group

Social Dynamics:

- Media, Entertainment, Technology
- Peer Groups
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Outside Interests
- The Copycat Effect



17. Are there indications that the student's peer group reinforces delinquent thinking?

Are there peer relationships, marginalized peer-group status, and/or peer-accepted delinquent thinking to support the use of violence as a solution? Risk increases if a situation lacks positive social connection, accountability, and inhibitors and is filled with anti-social thinking about entitlement, revenge, and the use of violence as an acceptable means of solving problems.

No Yes Describe (include role within peer group):

Text input area for question 17

18. Is there a history of behavioral, drug or alcohol, or developmental issues?

Are there issues related to vulnerability and coping skills not necessarily directly related to targeted aggression? Risk increases considerably when coping strategies are limited.

No Yes Describe:

Text input area for question 18

19. Are there issues that indicate a low reserve of coping strategies and lack of emotional resiliency?

No Yes Describe:

Text input area for question 19



20. Other Concerns not noted elsewhere:

Are there other concerns not noted elsewhere on this protocol? Examples may include sexual misconduct, fire play, animal abuse, exposure to domestic violence, criminal behavior, etc.

Describe:



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The Level 1 is not a fixed checklist and does not provide a quantifiable score or level of risk. It is intended as a set of pertinent questions that encourage discussion and examination of concerns.

**CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING THROUGH TEAM DISCUSSION:**

1. Were any responses based on stereotypes or assumptions rather than actual observation and information regarding behavior? Are there concerning behaviors that could be appropriate within the student's culture?
2. Review all previous questions and highlight/identify responses that indicate concern.
3. Identify your impressions and sense of urgency.
4. Is the potential aggression likely to cause severe or lethal injury?
5. Do the responses identify threats (i.e., actions, specific circumstances, and/or communications) that are focused on a specific target (i.e., individual or group) for a specific reason or motive, and involve planning and preparation with the capacity to carry out the event? If so, concern for *targeted aggression* is clearly indicated and must be addressed immediately.
6. Is there indication that an attack has been scheduled or an identified date when an attack may happen?



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TAKE IMMEDIATE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO PROTECT POTENTIAL VICTIMS AND ADDRESS SUPERVISION FOR THE STUDENT(S) OF CONCERN IF ALL 3 EXIST:

1. Targeted aggression is indicated.
2. Potential victims are identified.
3. The potential outcome of the aggression may cause severe or lethal injury.

Complete the **Notification Log** and **Plan to Protect Targeted or Victimized Student**.

**IF CONCERN FOR VIOLENCE IS IMMINENT OR ANYONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER,
CALL LAW ENFORCEMENT (911).**



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Management Strategies



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Management Strategies

- Protection of target
- Increase accountability for student of concern
- Increase supervision
- Monitor for weapons
- Monitor communication
 - Verbal, academic-related, social media
- Build relationships
- Increase inhibitors
- Decrease agitators
- Community resources
 - Mental health, juvenile department services, faith community, mentoring, etc.
- Removal (last resort)



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STEP 4: DEVELOP A MANAGEMENT PLAN TO ADDRESS CONCERNS (Including aggravating factors) IDENTIFIED THROUGH STEP 3 OF LEVEL 1 ASSESSMENT.

RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

As you consider prevention strategies, reflect upon the effects of previous traumatic experiences. For example, prevention strategies may include ensuring a sense of emotional, physical, and cultural safety for the individuals involved; fostering trusting relationships; honoring an individual's dignity; making efforts to share decisions and collaborate; and offering validation and building on an individual's strengths.

Additionally, consider restorative practice as you address consequences and/or discipline. For example, if both parties are amenable, and you have appropriately trained staff, conduct a meeting allowing those who have been harmed or threatened to describe the impact of the behavior and the type of actions necessary to repair hurt, restore trust, and move forward from the isolated incident.

If Target(s) are identified:

- Warn intended victim and notify the intended victim's parent/guardian. Use the **Notification Log** to document.
- Develop a plan to protect victim (using the form **Plan to Protect Targeted or Victimized Student**) for identified target(s). Consider both physical and psychological safety needs of targeted student(s).
- Other:



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Student Options (Check all that apply)

Option Chosen	Option	Date Previously / To Be Implemented	Person(s) Responsible
	Student behavior/accountability plan developed		
	Initiate suicide risk assessment		
	Other:		
	Other:		
	Other:		

School Options

- Consider making the following firearms admonition to parents/guardians: "Firearms are the responsibility of the owner. Do not assume a child/student/adult has not learned the combination to a gun safe or the location of the key. Keys can be removed and duplicated, and combinations can be discovered through a variety of means. Consider changing keys or combinations or removing firearms from the home. Document the date, time, and parent/guardian's response.



School Options (Check all that apply)

*If student is on an IEP or Section 504 plan, any of the following must be discussed at and added to the students IEP or 504 plan through the IEP or 504 plan process with parental consent as applicable.

Option Chosen	Option	Date Previously / To Be Implemented	Person(s) Responsible
	Review educational plan		
	Review transportation options; consider bus support plan		
	Monitor social media activity for concerning statements, agitators, triggers, threats, or behavior related to the preparation of an attack		
	Monitor all communications for concerning statements, agitators, triggers, threats, or behavior related to the preparation of an attack		
	Consider specialized class		
	Hall pass for early/late travel		
	Provide access to social skill building programs		
	Consider strategies for problem-solving the grievance (i.e., mediation, counseling, etc.)		
	Increase supervision in following settings:		
	Create modifications of daily schedule		
	Allow late arrival/early dismissal		
	Alert staff and teachers on need-to-know basis		
	Decrease or eliminate pass time or unsupervised time		
	Conduct intermittent/random check of backpack, locker, pocket, purse, technology/phone etc. by: <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor <input type="checkbox"/> District security personnel (not member of law enforcement) <input type="checkbox"/> Office staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other:		



Family/Home Options

Option Chosen	Option	Date Previously / To Be Implemented	Person(s) Responsible
	Help parents/guardians strategize safety options/planning that parents/guardians can implement at home		
	Increase supervision (e.g., of curfew, communications, in community, during transportation, etc.)		
	Safety proof home (i.e., secure or remove all weapons and potential weapons, add/test smoke detectors, etc.)		
	Review and pursue non-school related crisis and/or mental health services		
	Monitor technology and social media activity for concerning statements, agitators, triggers, threats, or behavior related to the preparation of an attack		
	Monitor all communications for concerning statements, agitators, triggers, threats, or behavior related to the preparation of an attack		
	Use a family social media and/or technology contract or refer to www.common sense media.org for information on appropriate youth media		
	Consider installation of parent controls on student's technology/phone		



Community Options

Option Chosen	Option	Date Previously / To Be Implemented	Person(s) Responsible
	Explore mental health evaluation and referral options		
	Refer to anger management program/ mediation program		
	Refer to alcohol/drug evaluation/treatment		
	Refer to parenting program		

Community Options Continued

Option Chosen	Option	Date Previously / To Be Implemented	Person(s) Responsible
	Refer to mentoring program		
	Notify probation officer		
	Refer to faith community program		
	Refer to positive community activities/interests		



Review of Plan

Threat Assessment Case Manager will review the status of this plan via appropriate meeting process and revise as needed on a:

- Weekly basis
- Biweekly basis
- Other (specify) _____



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STEP 5: LEVEL 2 REFERRAL

CONSIDER REQUESTING A LEVEL 2 THREAT ASSESSMENT IF:

- You have concerns regarding extreme aggression but are unable to confidently answer questions on this protocol.
- You have confidently answered the questions on this protocol and have safety concerns regarding impulsive or reactive behavior that will likely result in serious or lethal injury to another.
- You have confidently answered the questions on this protocol and have concerns regarding threats of targeted aggression that indicate motive, plan, preparation, scheduling, and/or other behavior that suggests the serious consideration of an act of targeted aggression.

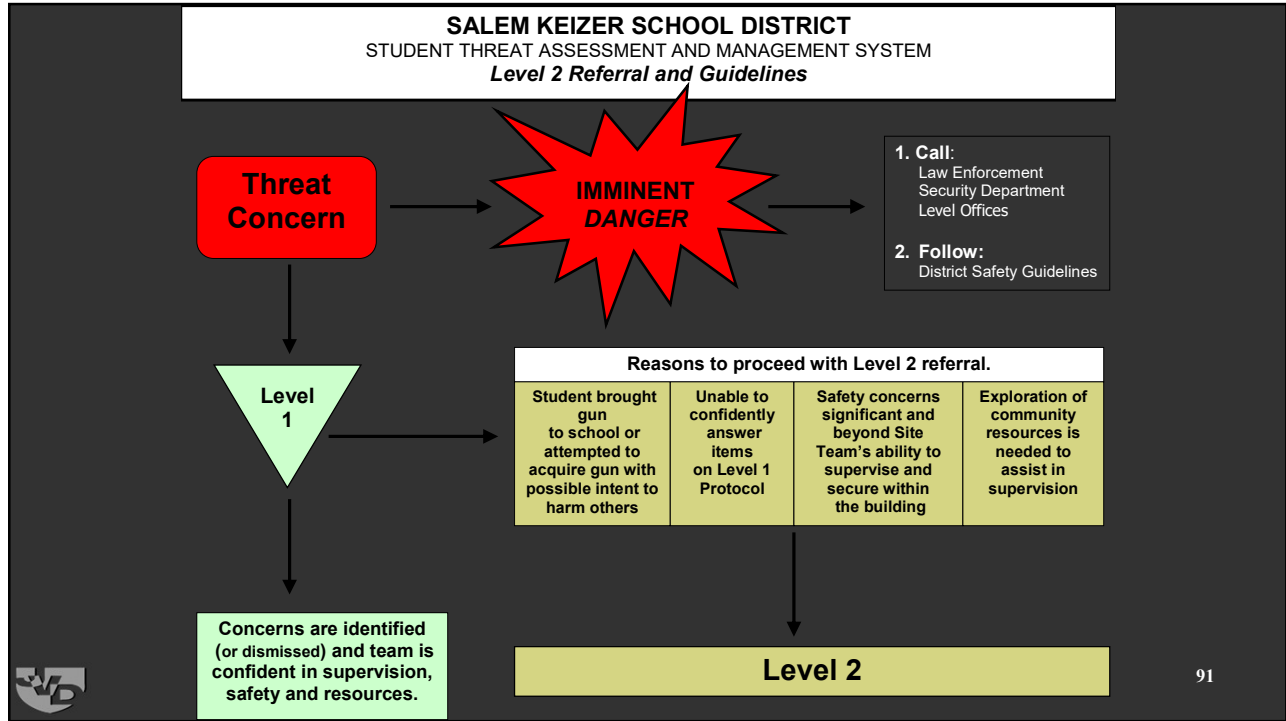
ALWAYS REQUEST A LEVEL 2 ASSESSMENT IF:

- A student of concern brought a gun to school, attempted to acquire a gun with intent to harm or intimidate others, or has been arrested for a firearm-related offense.



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Is the Level 1 Site Team requesting a Level 2 Threat Assessment at this time?
 No Yes

➤ **If yes, follow LEA policies and procedures for a Level 2 Threat Assessment and then proceed to Step 6 to complete the Level 1 protocol.**

****While awaiting the Level 2 Assessment, use the student management plan (Step 4) to manage the situation and document interim steps taken by the Level 1 Site Team.**

➤ **If no, proceed to Step 6 to complete the Level 1 protocol.**

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STEP 6: SIGN, SEND, FILE, AND BEGIN MANAGEMENT AS PLANNED

Team Signatures

Threat Assessment Case Manager Date

Administrator Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date

Other/Title Date



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THREAT ASSESSMENT CASE MANAGERS

- Familiarize yourself with the Level 1 information gained.
- Assign tasks and completion date expectations.
- Check in with teachers, coaches, campus monitors, counselors, and parents routinely for changes in behaviors, academics, attendance, or other concerns. Include both positive and negative behavior.
- Conduct status checks as often as necessary until your level 1 team determines the concern has diminished.
- Document your updates and management steps through the process.
- If the student moves to another school or program, immediately notify the receiving school of the Level 1/Level 2 Assessment and management plan.
- Contact your LEA with any concerns of significant updates.



REVIEW NOTES

Review Date:

Team Members:

Notes:

Review Date:


Team Members:

Notes:

Review Date:

Team Members:

Notes:



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BASICS OF ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS

- ✓ **Determine the Facts**
- ✓ **Immediate Action if Needed**
- ✓ **Conduct Initial Assessment**
- ✓ **Develop Management Plan**
- ✓ **Provide Team Members with Assigned Intervention Tasks**
- ✓ **Assess New Information/Follow Up**



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Youth Dating Violence, Rape, and Sexual Coercion

- Approximately 20% of high school girls report physical and/or sexual abuse by a dating partner.
- 50%-80% of teens report knowing someone involved in a violent relationship.
- By the age of 17, approximately 40% of girls are familiar with someone their age who has been hit or beaten by a boyfriend.

Research varies regarding numbers; however, as awareness campaigns increase, more girls are reporting the impact and frequency of date rape and/or sexual coercion.



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Violence or Aggression? Targeted or Reactive?

- Vindictive
- Bullying
- Mentally or emotionally troubled
- Gang
- Relationship, Stalking
- Rampage Shooting



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Databases

- Mother Jones Database, US Mass Shootings, 1982-2019:
<https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/12/mass-shootings-mother-jones-full-data/>
- Active Shooter: Incidents by Injuries and Fatalities Annually:
<https://www.chds.us/ssdb/active-shooter-incidents-by-injuries-and-fatalities-annually/>
- Peter Langman's School Shooter Database:
<https://schoolshooters.info/search-database>



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Mental Health

- What is Mental Illness?
- What has the press said about it?
- What is prevalence of mental health condition? What about severe mental illness?
- What is relationship between mental illness and violence?
- Do people commit mass murder or rampage violence because they are mentally ill?
- What kind of mental health issues increase a risk of violence?



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- **DSM-5**
- **Causal or as a factor that aggravates risk?**
- **As a factor that mitigates risk?**
- **Interplay of violence risk with:**
Depression
Suicidal ideation
Psychosis
Autism Spectrum Disorder
Others?



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Holding a Grudge

- **AI is a 17-year-old student**, two months from her 18th birthday.
- **She is academically and intellectually gifted** (IQ above 140; 4.0 GPA).
- **She is under tremendous pressure** from her parents to be successful.
- **Parents are very assertive about AI's academic success and college choice. They are controlling** and insist that AI will attend their alma mater, a notable university in their hometown, regardless of AI's desire to explore other universities. **AI is extremely resentful of the parent's control** but lacks confidence to assert her goals over her parent's demands. Parents were similarly controlling with AI's older sister, Abby, who is also extremely intelligent and academically outstanding. To spite her parents, Abby refused to attend college at all, moved to Florida, and is a barista. She and AI remain close.
- **AI's parents are affluent, intimidating, lawsuit driven.** One is a professor, the other is an executive at a big tech company.



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- **Al attends a public middle/high school in a town about 15 miles from her hometown.** The school has an advanced academic track that Al's parents pay out-of-district tuition to access. She has been at the school since the 6th grade.
- **Teachers consider Al a know-it-all** and are tired of her frequent comments about fact and accuracy in the details of their instruction. Al is usually correct, though, being more intelligent than most, if not all, of her teachers.
- **Students have teased Al for years, mostly because of her condescending attitude toward them,** but also because she was caught with an iPod in the 8th grade that contained downloaded porn. She had attempted to share the porn with other students to win their friendship, but it backfired, and they used it to humiliate her. Most students have forgotten the incident at this point and teasing has lessened. In fact, according to teachers, students have stopped teasing entirely and just avoid her because she can be extremely intense.



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- **Al holds grudges and perceives the social rejection among her peers as actual bullying.** A year ago, another female student, Maria, was running the track with Al during PE and thought it would be funny to wrestle her to the turf with a headlock and give her a head-nugie. It was a playful gesture, but Al reported it as an attempted strangulation. Witness accounts, including the PE teacher, did not support Al's perception; however, Al insisted that it was malicious. Although the student apologized to Al, she continues to bring the incident up as an example of injustice.
- **Al has a 16-year-old love interest, Alex,** whose parents are against the relationship, they say because of an age discrepancy of almost two years.
- **Al and Alex have a secret email account that they used to communicate.** The account allows an ongoing draft email that they use to write messages back and forth to each other. By using the draft, they do not have to send actual electronic emails from either of their home or school accounts, thus remaining clandestine.
- **Two months ago, AL's parents took her computer away for reasons they will not disclose.** Al uses her phone to access the secret email account and communicate through text messages.
- **Alex's mother discovered the open email account on Alex's home computer and read an entry written by Al the previous night, which greatly concerned her.** She called the school counselor to report her concern. The email entry read:



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*Baby,
I don't know just how quite to say this. So I will just say it. I need mental health. I have gone insane over the past year. I can't handle all this pressure anymore. Today's bullshit just highlights my pain. School continues to only get harder, so I have lost my reasoning to deal with it. Losing control of it has caused me to lose control of my life. Losing my computer has lost the one place where I could vent stress. Those assholes, Matt, John, Blake, Sierra, and just about everywhere I go . . . or anything I do . . . I get made fun of. It's pushed the 17 year lock on the stress that I have bottled up in my mind. I can't take it anymore. I have contemplated many options, and I will take them in numbered order in the list I made last month. This time I'm serious. This is my last strand of reason left in this world, for I have none left. I am literally bleeding right now. I have begun to hurt myself, I don't see any happiness in it. So that's off the list. I am in such pain no words can describe.*



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- **The school counselor and the assistant principal asked Alex to meet with them to discuss AI.** They said they were concerned about AI and requested Alex's help. At first, Alex resisted. However, Alex eventually admitted that AI was becoming increasingly agitated and angry about four students—Matt, John, Blake, and Sierra—who judged her and humiliated her often with simple looks or smirks. Alex showed them a note that AI had written a few weeks ago. It read:



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I have a list of things I can do to keep my pride. But the last is a big, ugly thing and they may only understand drastic actions and their perfect box is about to get fucking shot in the goddamn head with a pistol I can steal from my parents' bedroom if my list reaches the last number. I love you with all my heart, and with my last days of logic remaining, I will explain: I normally can control my rage and may be able to regain control by the end of the night. However, this is the longest and most furious rage I have ever lost reasoning over. I refuse to talk to my parents, they don't understand. I don't want medicine or drugs, I want blood. I want those four to die. I want death to own their souls, and the devil to torment them forever more. I love you baby. The pistol is in the same spot that my parents hid it, but every night I practice sneaking it into my backpack. It's really easy surprisingly. I will kill Matt, John, Blake and Sierra before I kill myself. If I reach the last option that is.



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- **Alex told the counselor and the administrator that AI was still really upset about Maria trying to “strangle” her and that AI refuses to talk to the school counselor or anyone else about it anymore. Alex quoted AI,** “All the administration does is sit around and be politically correct. They don't do any real work to get the job done. The attack on me last year in track was never dealt with. Maria strangling me was dealt with by a half-assed apology that she did not even mean. I know she thinks she got away with it. And Sierra and John just laughed and encouraged her. Teachers, administrators, counselors don't do shit!”
- **The counselor and the administrator asked Alex about the list. Alex said that AI kept it in her locker.**
- **The administrator asked the counselor to stay with Alex and left to find AI.** She assured Alex that AI would not be told that Alex had provided the information. AI was not in class and no one in school knew where she was. When the administrator called AI's parents, they did not know where she was either. They tried to call her, but she did not pick up. AI's parents demanded to know what was happening and threatened to sue if the administrators did anything that harmed AI's reputation or caused a scene. They became agitated stating, “If you even think of kicking AI out of school, we'll sue you personally and sue the district. We pay tuition. Do you know who we are? You better learn!” The said that they would be driving to school to find AI and that she better not be in trouble.



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- **The administrator and campus security searched Al's locker and found a journal. In the journal, Al had written the following:**

Option 1: I will talk to Teresa (my friend, my mom's friend) she has a PhD in and is a very successful psychologist. She of all people I think will understand my rage and could help me somehow.

Option 2: If I can't get a hold of Teresa, I will try my sister. She is next in line. She understands me like no one else.

Option 3: I will take the .22 pistol into school, wait till one of them pulls a smart comment or insults me, then stick the gun in their face. I will not harm anyone else but will show EVERYONE what happens when you BRAIN FUCK a kid who has done ABSOLUTELY FUCKING NOTHING to them, and they will take EVERYTHING from me, including my reason to live. So I will take their fucking life as revenge. 2 bullets to the head for each of them.

When the cops show up, I will kill myself.



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I keep trying to imagine a perfect life in New York, in my air-conditioned house with fast internet, a great relationship with my life partner, kids, a job, a college education, and a great computer. But it's just not going to happen. It's too far away. I can't escape my controlling parents or even get that far away. My parents keep telling me I have to go to their college, which of course is right next to my house practically. I can see why Abby was so pissed off. They don't really want me to go to the college I want. It's always what they want. I see no further point in living. The only reason I keep getting up is because I think maybe today will be better. I can see Alex and what few friends I have, but it's just not worth it anymore. I get hurt more and more each time I get up. I thought of just suicide, but then those assholes would move to another target. I must remove those diseased scum from the world. Their families and asshole friends will all see what they drove me to, and take note.



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- **The administrator and the security lead looked through a notebook from AI's English class. On the back page, there was an entry dated the previous week. It read:**

The gun is loaded and in my mom's hidden compartment. There's extra ammo in the closet. Every day I practice taking it and putting it in my backpack. So easy, they don't even know. What idiots. I'm shaking as I write this because I'm SICK of this shit. Sierra and her boytoys are going to get what they deserve, or they better leave me the fuck alone. If they don't, it's time to cleanse the world, in the name of God. The perfect music that drives my rage is "The Animal I Have Become" by Three Days Grace. I can control myself now, but it may not last. By the end of this month, either I will regain my sanity or there will be blood, I swear it. My own mini-Columbine!!!!



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- **The administrator calls the SRO, the remainder of the administrators, and school security, and they all immediately begin searching for AI.** As they do, the counselor receives a report from several students that AI has posted a statement on Twitter that reads:

I'm about at the end of my rope! You know who you are and what you've done. Be ready, because death is too good for you and you can be found wherever you try to hide. School is no exception!

- **As the administrator is notified of AI's Twitter message, she is spotted, sitting on the lawn about 50 yards from the building.** The SRO approaches her carefully and asks her if she can talk. AI seems surprised but does not resist. The administrator takes her backpack and holds it away from AI. They are joined by another SRO from neighboring school who assists with a full search of AI and her belongings. AI refuses to speak to them. The backpack does not contain a weapon.
- **AI is arrested for disorderly conduct.**



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- **Al's parents call a lawyer and inform the school administrator that they will be suing the district for humiliating Al in front of the student body and to have Al returned to school immediately.** They also demand that the juvenile department release Al.
- **The judge places Al in a 48 hour hold** while the threat assessment team addresses safety and a mental health evaluation is completed.
- **Upon meeting the mental health professional, who is also a member of the Level 2 threat assessment team, Al breaks down, admitting that she felt like she was out of control and wanted to kill the four students.** She says the whole thing is humiliating and embarrassing. She insists, though, that she was going to try to speak with her mother's friend, Teresa, or her sister, but if that didn't calm her down, she was willing to die to get rid of those who torment her and other students. She states that she just wants it all to end and that she hates her parents. She wishes she could move out and attend another school with smarter people and finish classes to get her diploma.
- **Al's parents refuse to cooperate** with the juvenile department, deny having a gun, and will not turn the computer over to the police.



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- **The school threat assessment team lead, the juvenile workers, and police (who are members of the threat assessment team) assure the parents that they want what is best for Al and also to keep the public safe.** They inform the parents that interference with a safety plan is a form of neglect, and even if Al returns home (which is likely), they will be doing well-checks daily. The parents confer with their attorney who advises them to cooperate in exchange for Al's eventual release. To avoid the embarrassment of the wellness checks and to assure Al's release, the parents admit to having the gun hidden in a safety panel under the bed and allow the police to take it and hold it at the precinct. The parents also allow the police to take Al's computer, which has multiple searches focused on school shootings, tactical operations, and instructions on using handguns. The parents stop their cooperation at that point, refusing to discuss the situation further.



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1. What are your next steps?
2. Are there victims that need to be warned? *Yes. AI's targets were clearly listed.*
3. AI will be released in 48 hours, what are your home interventions. What does your school safety plan look like?
4. Do you have another education option for AI? Since she is on an out of district tuition transfer, the school has decided not to allow her to return.
5. How can you stay connected to AI? Are there staffers or community supports that can help her as she is emancipated in two months?
6. How will you assist her with the likely breakup from Alex?
7. How will you assist AI plan for the future and develop a sense of hope and optimism? Can she attend a college of her choice?



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LEVEL 1 TEAMING AND INFORMATION GATHERING



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SCHOOL CLIMATE



1. Assess the emotional climate—promote listening and paying attention.
2. Adopt a strong, but caring position against the “code of silence.”
3. Implement systems to prevent and intervene in bullying.
4. Involve all members of the school community in creating a safe and respectful school culture.
5. Foster and develop trusting relationships between each student and at least one adult at school.
6. Create mechanisms for sustaining a safe school climate (such as a system that assesses and manages potential violence.)



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CONFIDENTIALITY AND THREAT ASSESSMENT

(A School Threat Assessment Team should consult with their respective legal counsel on existing laws and regulations prior to the development of information-sharing policies.)

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): A Federal law that protects the privacy of education records or any records that contain information directly relating to a student and that are maintained by the educational institution or a person acting for the institution. FERPA permits disclosure of personally identifiable information without consent in certain circumstances, including:

1. To school officials with legitimate educational interests as established by FERPA...
2. To **appropriate officials** in health and safety emergencies...
3. To comply with a lawfully issued judicial order or subpoena.

Obtain a copy of FERPA regulations at
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html>



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A FEW MORE DETAILS REGARDING FERPA AND INFORMATION SHARING

- Information from education records may be shared with police, social services, or other community representatives who are serving on a school's established threat assessment committee, if they are school officials with legitimate educational interests in accordance with the school's established criteria. Such individuals may not use that information for any purpose other than consideration on that committee, nor may they take the information back to their agencies or share it with anyone else except under the provisions of FERPA.
- A school's (LEUR) law enforcement unit's records are excluded from the definition of "education records."
- FERPA does not protect the confidentiality of information, in general. It protects information from education records. Therefore, if education staff reports information regarding a student's behavior or communication to members of the threat assessment committee, the information is not protected by FERPA since it was not provided through an education record.
- FERPA **does not have a personal liability recourse**. Claims are made through US Dept. of Ed against schools. Personal claims are made through state law.



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Updated FERPA Regulations January 2009

The new regulations impose a "rational basis" test on a school's decisions to disclose information in emergency situations. "The Department [of Education] will not substitute its judgment for that of the agency or institution if, based on the information available at the time ... **there is a rational basis for the agency's or institution's determination that a health or safety emergency exists.**"



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Leroy Rooker says:

(Director of the US. Department of Education's
Family Policy Compliance Office)

- "We wanted to strike that balance between privacy and safety and certainly emphasize that safety on a campus is paramount. **As long as you can articulate what that emergency was, we're not going to be in the business of second-guessing you on that.**"
- Still, according to the new rules, administrators must document what emergency circumstances prompted their decision to disclose information.



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California statutes regarding information sharing

Per Ed Code 49076(a)(2)(A): School districts may release information from pupil records to the following: appropriate persons in connection with an emergency if the knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of a pupil or other persons. This may include emergency contact if unable to contact parent/guardian.

Ensure that the LEA either has parent/guardian consent through a Release of Information form to share personally identifiable information with non-LEA employed individuals on the Level 1 Site Team OR that any non-LEA employed individual fits an exception under California Education Code section 49076 or 49076.5, which allows them to access information in which they have a legitimate educational interest without parent/guardian consent.



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California statutes regarding information sharing

Note that if an SRO who is a member of a law enforcement agency or law enforcement is involved in the Level 1 Site Team or Threat Assessment, they must follow the rules related to law enforcement interrogation. (See e.g., California Welfare & Institutions Code section 625, et seq., especially section 625.6.) A school-based member of the Level 1 Site Team (cannot be conducted by law enforcement unless law enforcement follows the rules related to an interview (See e.g., California Welfare & Institutions Code section 625, et seq., especially section 625.6., but law enforcement maybe present)



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Level 1 Assessment Ancillary Forms



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FCSS Student Threat Assessment & Management System

based on the Salem-Keizer Cascade Model

SYSTEMS GUIDE

THE INCIDENT


A. Implied threat or act of aggression occurs (i.e., student(s) engaged in or considering aggression directed at other people.) **NOTE:** System is NOT to be used for students who are suicidal, acting out sexually, or setting fires, unless they are doing so as an act of aggression intending severe or lethal injury to others (violence).

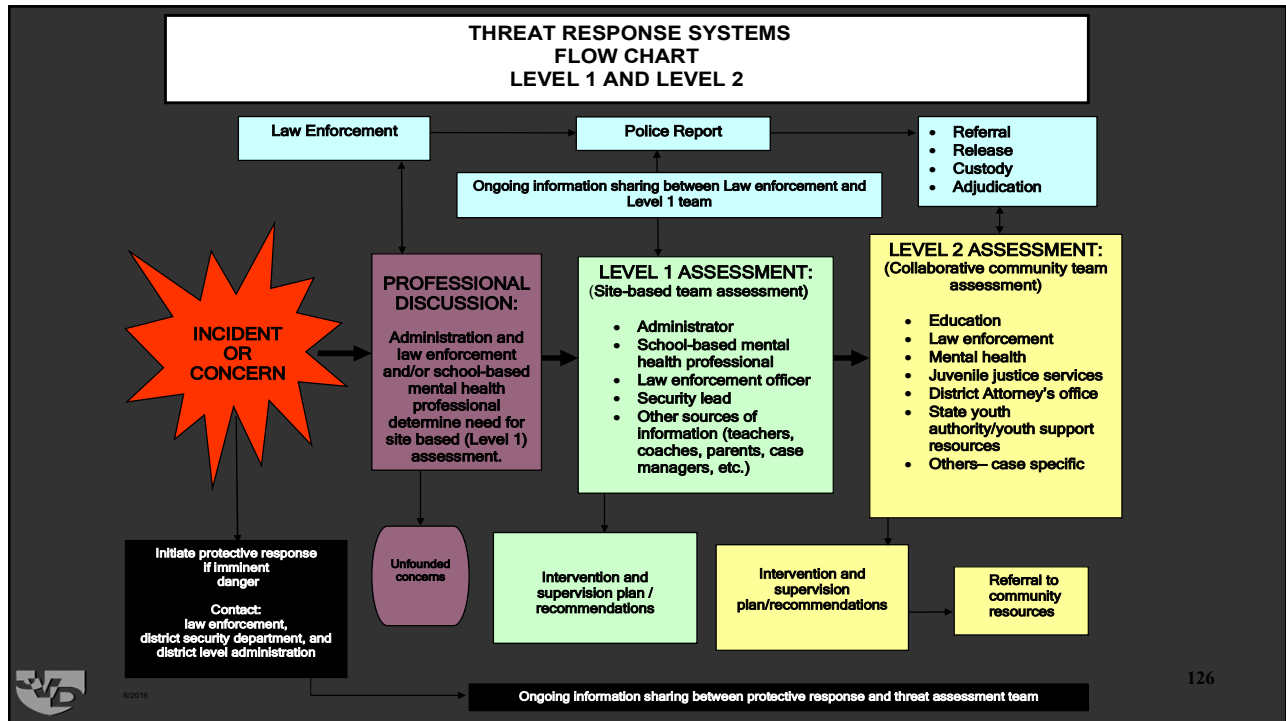
B. If imminent danger exists, notify law enforcement, and follow the local education agency's (LEA) guidelines and school safety plan. Initiate protective responses using the LEA guidelines.

NEED FOR LEVEL 1

A. The Level 1 Assessment is initiated by the school site administrator with consultation from another member of the Site Team. The Site Team may be comprised of administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school mental health professional, school resource officers and/or law enforcement. (See [Systems Flowchart](#).)

B. The Level 1 Protocol is recommended for investigation and documentation of concerns about dangerous student activities, behaviors, ideation, and/or statements. A direct threat (either expressed or acted out) does not have to be clearly indicated to proceed with a Level 1 Assessment. Site Teams are encouraged to use the Level 1 Assessment to address concerns and document their review of potential danger or safety issues, even if dismissed as minor or unlikely. The Level 1 Assessment process can be used as a reasonably short (20-30 minutes) review, or as a more extensive and lengthy assessment, depending on the circumstances. FCSS Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) staff are available to assist the LEA if needed.


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Student Threat Assessment & Management System Threat Assessment Level 1 Response Dismissal

This form is to be completed by a school administrator or Site Team member after investigating and determining through team discussion that a situation does not necessitate a Level 1 Assessment.

Student's Name: _____ Today's Date: _____
Administrator Name: _____ Date of Incident: _____
School: _____
Person Completing Form (Name/Title): _____

Staff Involved in Dismissal: Administrator School-Based Mental Health Professional School Psychologist
 School Counselor SRO Law Enforcement Other: _____

Description of Incident:



- Student Interview, Witness Interview
- Parent Interview
- Teacher Questionnaire





STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Student Interview - Level 1

Step 1 Directions for Interviewer

This interview is only to be conducted by a school-based member of the Level 1 Site Team (cannot be conducted by law enforcement unless law enforcement complies with the law regarding student interviews (see, e.g., California Welfare & Institutions Code section 625, et seq., especially section 625.6), but law enforcement may be present) as part of the Level 1 Assessment Protocol. Address the following questions through an interview or open-ended inquiry with the student or students of concern (who is/are in a situation that poses a threat). If more than one student is of concern, complete a separate interview form for each student.

Do **NOT** ask the student to read and complete the questions by themselves.

Although the student can provide crucial information regarding a situation, do not delay the Level 1 Assessment if the student is not available or is unwilling to participate.

The following is an examination of current circumstances, and as these circumstances change, so too does concern for aggression; therefore, review the results of this interview while being mindful of supervision, intervention, and the passage of time. Each question is a prompt for exploration of circumstances that may involve the escalation of violence.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Administrator's Name: _____

Interviewer's Name: _____ Title: _____

Step 2 Ask the following questions through conversation or direct inquiry.

- 1. Do you know why I'm speaking with you? It has been reported that you are _____ or have done _____. How do you explain what is being reported by others?



STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Student-Witness Interview - Level 1

Step 1 Directions for Interviewer

This interview is to be conducted by a school-based member of the Level 1 site team (cannot be conducted by law enforcement unless law enforcement complies with the law regarding student interviews (see, e.g., California Welfare & Institutions Code section 625, et seq., especially section 625.6), but Law Enforcement may be present) as part of the Level 1 Assessment Protocol. Address the following questions through an interview or open-ended inquiry with the student or students of concern (who is/are in a situation that poses a threat).

Do **NOT** ask the student to read and complete the questions by themselves.

Although the student can provide crucial information regarding a situation, do not delay the Level 1 Assessment if the student is not available or is unwilling to participate.

The following is an examination of current circumstances, and as these circumstances change, so too does concern for aggression; therefore, review the results of this interview while being mindful of supervision, intervention, and the passage of time. Each question is a prompt for exploration of circumstances that may involve the escalation of violence.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Administrator's Name: _____

Interviewer's Name: _____ Title: _____

Step 2 Ask the following questions through conversation or direct inquiry.

- 1. It has been reported that you witnessed a threat. Tell me what happened.





STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Parent/Guardian Interview - Level 1

Step 1 Directions for Interviewer

This interview is to be conducted by a school-based member of the Level 1 site team as part of the Level 1 Assessment Protocol (by phone or in person) if a parent/guardian does not attend the Level 1 Assessment meeting. Address the following questions through an interview or conversation with open-ended inquiry.

Do NOT ask the parent/guardian to read and complete the questions by themselves.

Although a parent/guardian can provide crucial information regarding a situation, do not delay the Level 1 Assessment if the parent is not available, is unwilling to cooperate, or if the Site Team determines that the parent should not be included at this time.

The following is an examination of current circumstances, and as these circumstances change, so too does concern for aggression; therefore, review the results of this interview while being mindful of supervision, intervention, and the passage of time. Each question is a prompt for exploration of circumstances that may involve the escalation of violence.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Administrator's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Interviewer's Name: _____ Title: _____

Step 2 Ask the following questions through conversation or direct inquiry.

The numbers in parenthesis at the end of each question refer to the corresponding Level 1 Protocol questions that are to be addressed in accordance with the information collected in this questionnaire.

- 1. Does the parent/guardian have concerns (or know of concerns from other family/community members) about behavior, potential violence, or issues specific to the incident? (1, 2, 13, 18, 19)



STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Teacher/Staff/Other Service Provider Questionnaire - Level 1

Step 1 Directions for Interviewer

Contact teacher/staff/other service provider and describe threat, dangerous situation, or aggressive action that has brought this student to your attention. Explain our obligation and responsibility to investigate and assess any situation that may be dangerous for the student and/or others. Request that teacher/staff/other service provider complete this questionnaire as thoroughly as possible. **The numbers in parenthesis at the end of each question refer to the corresponding Level 1 Protocol questions that are to be addressed in accordance with the information collected in this questionnaire.**

This questionnaire is only to be completed as a supplement to the Level 1 Assessment Protocol if a teacher or staff member does not attend the Level 1 Assessment. The Level 1 process is an examination of current circumstances, and as these circumstances change, so too does concern for aggression; therefore, review the results of this questionnaire while being mindful of supervision, intervention, and the passage of time. Each question is a prompt for exploration of circumstances that may involve the escalation of aggression.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Interviewer's Name: _____ Title: _____


Teacher's/Staff/Service Provider's Name/Title: _____

Step 2 Directions to teacher/staff member- Please address the following questions regarding the student noted above and return to interviewer.

- 1. Do you have concerns about disruptive behavior or potential aggression? (1, 2, 13, 18, 19)



- Plan to Protect Victim
- Notification of Threat Log
- Notification of Threat Letter


STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
Plan to Protect Targeted or Victimized Student

Student Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

DOB: _____ Student #: _____ School _____ Date(s) of Incident: _____

INCIDENT	The following is the plan to protect _____ from harm. (student's name)
SAFETY CONCERNS	The safety issues of concern are: _____
	After meeting with: <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> School-Based Mental Health Professional <input type="checkbox"/> School Psychologist <input type="checkbox"/> School Counselor <input type="checkbox"/> SRO <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ the following was or will be implemented: The student received/will receive the following support from the school: _____ The student received/will receive the following support from home: _____





STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM Notification Log

(Use as documentation for notification to parents/guardians of threatened or victimized students)

School: _____ Student Name: _____ Student #: _____

Date/Time of Incident: _____ Name/Title of person completing this form: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Home #: _____ Work #: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Home #: _____ Work #: _____

**#1 Emergency Name: _____ Home #: _____ Work #: _____

**#2 Emergency Name: _____ Home #: _____ Work #: _____

Per Ed Code 49076(a)(2)(A): School districts may release information from pupil records to the following: appropriate persons in connection with an emergency if the knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of a pupil or other persons. This may include emergency contact if unable to contact parent/guardian.

DOCUMENT CONTACT OR ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT IN LOG BELOW

Name	Number Used	Attempted Date & Time	Message Left

An interpreter was used for non-English communication
Name: _____ Title: _____

NOTIFICATION CHECK-LIST

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Level 1 Protocol completed by Site Team

Steps 1–3:
Demographics and assessment.


Step 4:
Use management strategies to address concerns. Determine if Level 2 is needed by using suggested criteria.

Step 5:
After completing Level 1, if Level 2 is needed, follow LEA policies and procedures.

Step 6:
Submit the protocol as directed.

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Student Name: [Redacted]
 Student #: [Redacted]
 DOB: [Redacted]

CONFIDENTIAL

School district staff viewing the contents of this envelope should have a legitimate educational interest in doing so.

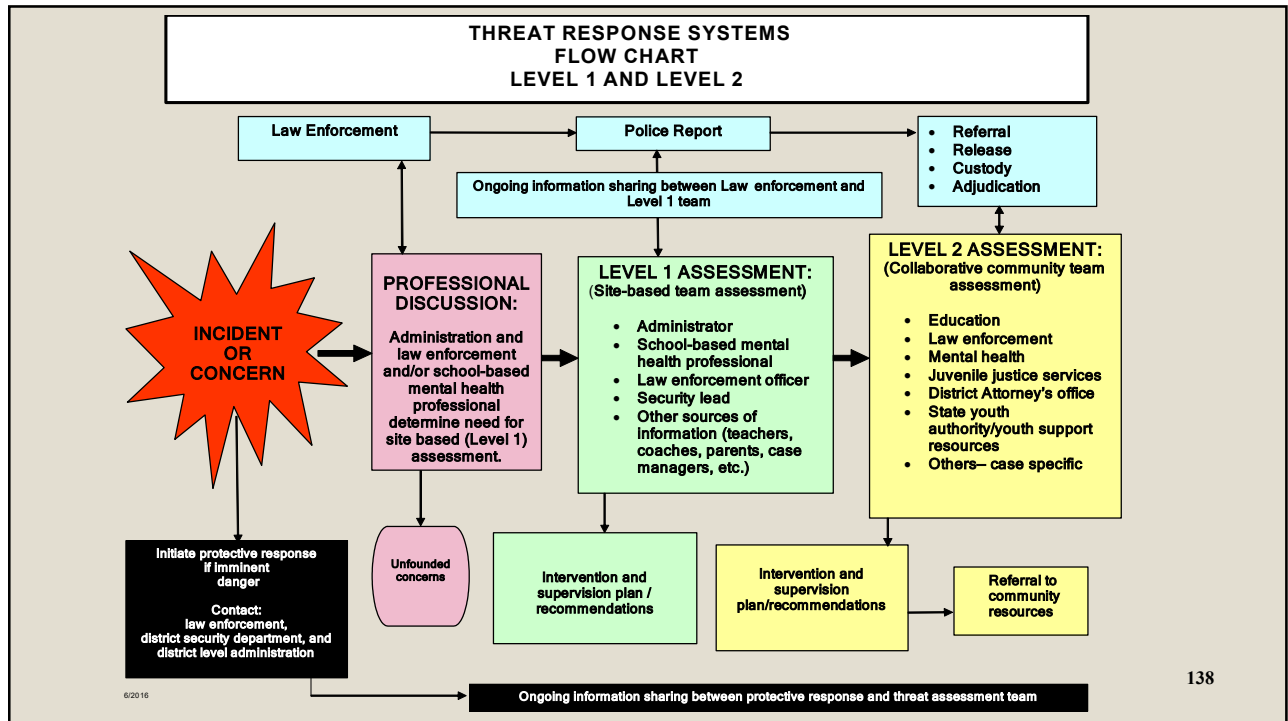
This envelope may contain:

- Student Discipline
- Threat Assessment
- Suicide Risk Assessment
- Other Relevant Documents



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Communicating Results



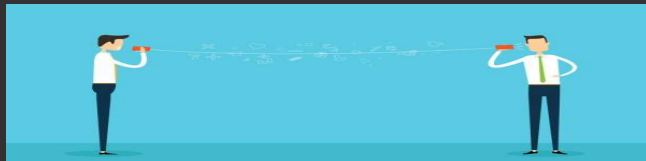
- School staff
 - Supervision responsibilities/management plan
 - Situations where aggression is likely
 - Where communications are likely to be received
 - Consider level of concern
 - Lower risk = general information about process
 - Higher risk = more specific information needed for supervision/intervention
- Parents of the assessed student
- Parents of targeted student
 - Consider level of concern
- Provide the name of the student who made the threat?



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Communicating Results



- Community at large – when notification may be beneficial:
 - Anonymous, specific threats
 - Identified perpetrator but causing disruption due to rumor mill
 - Student brings a gun to school and threatens, or others see it
 - Notification may include:
 - General information regarding the situation
 - Safety precautions in place
 - Presence of threat assessment and management systems
 - Confidence in safety
 - How to report concerns



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Salem-Kelzer Public Schools Student Threat Assessment System

Risk Indicators Associated with Targeted Violence

Has there been a shift toward a threat of extreme aggression or violence?
Violence is aggressive behavior that is intended to, or results in, serious or lethal injury.

Have there been threatening communications suggesting a potential violent attack?
Does the communication suggest details of planning or ongoing consideration of an attack?
Communications may include verbal expressions, artwork, email, Internet messaging, texting, written language exercises, or any other medium of communication. A communication can also be made by indirect, veiled, or casual references to possible harmful events, warnings of potential harm, or references to past violent events such as school or community shootings.

Are there indications of a specific target or targets?
Is there an ongoing consideration or focus on a particular person or a group of people?

Are there indications of a motive, goal or justification for a serious or lethal attack?
While there can certainly be many motives for acting out violently or aggressively, the most common is the need to establish or re-establish control, often disguised as revenge or a vendetta for lost love or humiliation, and the desire to prove bravery after making a threat or taking a dare. Pay close attention to motive-related themes of loss, being wronged, or excessive anger.

Are there any indications of behavior that increase the possibility of violence occurring? Such indications may include a plan, acquiring weapons, rehearsing or practicing the attack, scheduling the attack, or other preparations.

A communication that threatens an attack is only an expression and does not suggest a "posed threat" unless there are behaviors supporting the intent to carry out the attack. Many threats are not stated with clearly expressed language but are indicated by veiled threats and/or behavior that relates to a possible attack. Attack related behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- A plan to carry out a targeted act of aggression against a specific individual or group. A plan would have a sequence of actions necessary for its success. The more plausible the plan, the greater the risk.
- The acquisition of a weapon, the attempted acquisition of a weapon, or research about how to acquire a weapon. If the threat is the use of physical force to the point of serious or lethal injury, then the physical force is the weapon.
- The rehearsal of the event or a similar event. Rehearsal is like simulation or practice. Rehearsal can be indicated through art, fantasy games, writing, or film projects. It can also be indicated by the use of movies, Internet sites, or video games that have themes and sequences of violence that can serve as a kind of simulation or practice. However, the use of such games or films as entertainment alone does not lead or cause students to act out violently. Their use is only attack-related behavior when they serve as rehearsal or practice.
- Scheduling an attack. Scheduling the act can be indicated through vague communication or actually noted in clear detail. Sometimes, the schedule is flexible, awaiting a triggering event (e.g., leaving, rejection, or loss) that further justifies the violence and locks it in as the only solution.

Are actions and behaviors consistent with communications?
If threats are made but not accompanied by attack-related behaviors, motives, or a specific target(s) consistent with that threat, then the risk decreases.

Is there peer collaboration?
Are peers aware of, or concerned about, a potential attack? Are peers encouraging the attack?

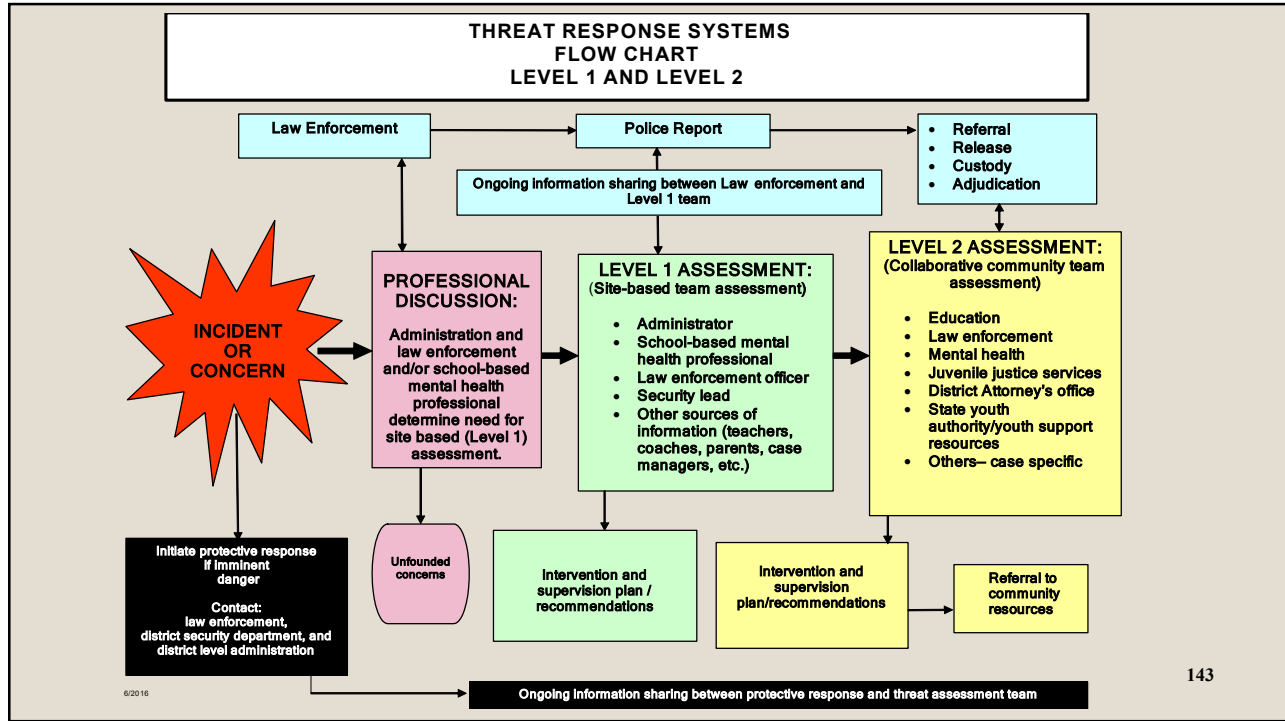
Are alternatives and emotional coping reserves decreasing?
For example, a person who feels low on coping strategies or alternatives may consider violence to be the only option available to solve problems.

Are there indications of suicidal thoughts?
Is there a history of suicidal ideation, gestures, References, or intent? A desire to die, be killed by another, or commit suicide, combined with a threat to harm others, increases the overall risk, especially if the suicidal behavior is one feature of a plan to kill others and carry out revenge or gain justice. If there is a risk of suicide, seek out advice and assessment from a doctor or mental health professional, or call the Psychiatric Care Center or Crisis Center (see back of brochure).

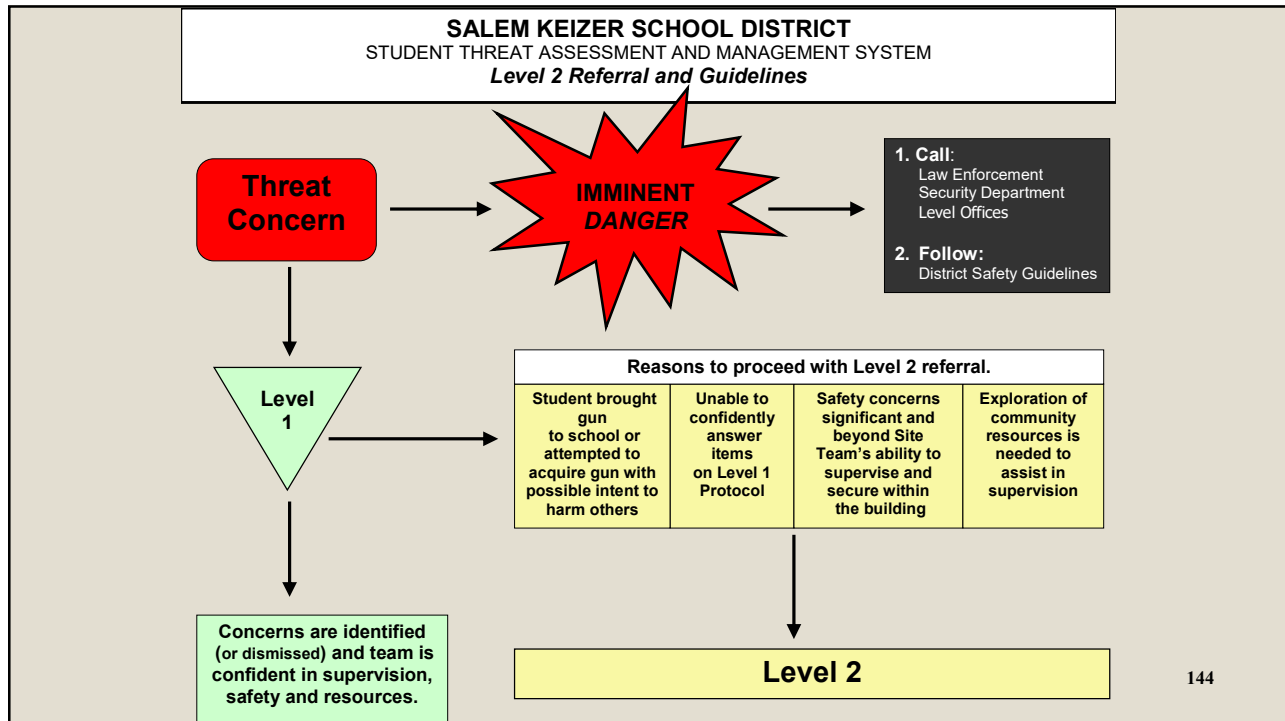
Are there personality or behavioral traits, family dynamics, school system issues, or social dynamics that lead to a more vulnerable and potentially dangerous situation?
Reckless and vindictive behavior, family dysfunction, academic failure, and social crisis are all risk factors that can aggravate an already risky situation.

If you or someone you know is being threatened or has threatened harm to someone else, contact your school administrator or local law enforcement office.

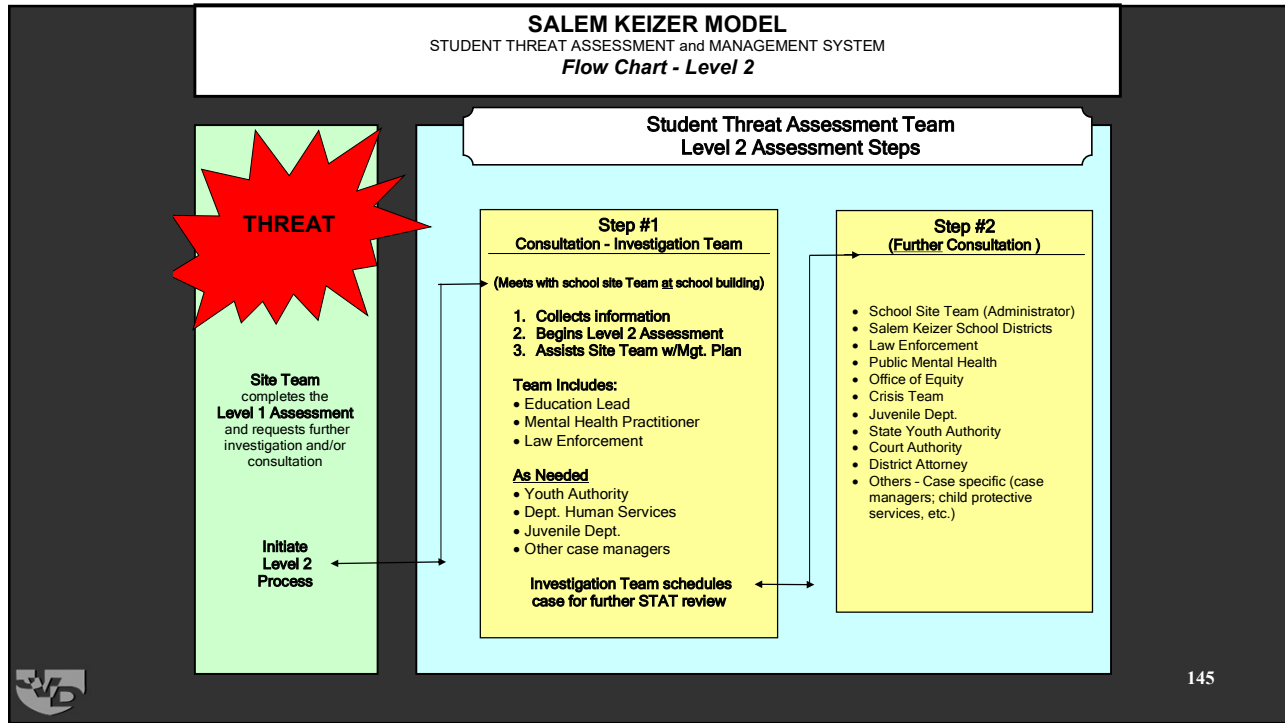
LEVEL 2 COMMUNITY TEAM



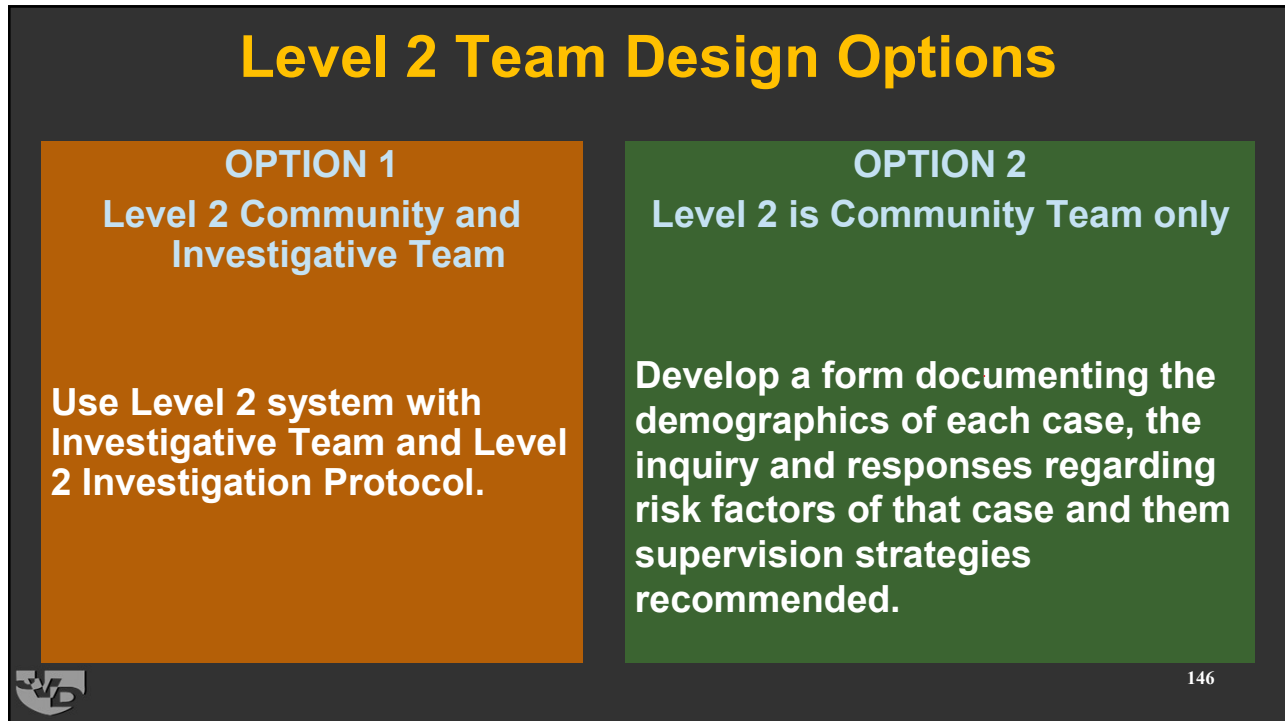
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Level 2 Protocol options

OPTION 1

Level 2 Community and Investigative Team

- Level 2 Investigation (Education)
- Level 2 Student Interview
- Law Enforcement Level 2
- Mental Health Level 2

OPTION 2

Level 2 is Community Team only

- Level 2 Investigation as template
- Documentation regarding use of template and recommended supervision (could be responsibility of Site Team Case Manager)



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UNIQUE FEATURES OF YOUR LEVEL 2 SYSTEM

FTE

RESOURCES

TIME

DISTANCE

TRAINING

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

AVAILABILITY

AGENCY Commitment

OTHER



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KEY COMPONENTS OF THREAT ASSESSMENT

- Pay attention to intuition but focus on facts.
- Focus on behavior, not profile traits.
- Review all factors as they exist within unique context.
- Examine behavioral progress, changes, and movement into the targeting continuum.
- Confirm information, confirm impressions.
- Address all investigative questions regarding risk.
- Focus on prevention and inhibitors, not prediction.
- Remember the goal—identify risk, decrease that risk and . . .
- improve the psychological safety and learning environment.



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CONDUCT LEVEL 2 STUDENT THREAT ASSESSMENT



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PAUL AND MAYA

PAUL (age 17, Junior)

- **Three female students report that their friend, Susan, has a boyfriend named Paul, and he has brought a large knife to school and cut Susan on the hand while flipping it at her in a gesture.** They believe that he intended to intimidate her because he may think that Susan is going to break up with him. They report that they do not like Paul because he is very controlling of Susan, is always criticizing them, and continually tries to distance her from them.
- **Susan is called into the office, and she confirms that Paul did cut her on the hand;** however, she believes that it occurred because he was showing off his knife-fighting skills, something he is very proud of. She also thought that maybe he was trying to intimidate her because she might be breaking up with him, but she was not sure. You examine her hand and there is a superficial cut on the palm, where she raised her hand to block is knife gesture. She does not believe that Paul meant to cut her.



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- **Susan confirms that Paul is controlling and monopolizes her time but insists that she really cares for him.** She said that she is not worried about herself, but that she believes Paul is likely to stab someone with his knife. She reports that he has been practicing his knife fighting skills and intends to defend himself against four students who have tormented and bullied him since his freshman year. She says that he is frequently humiliated and embarrassed by their harassment, causing him tremendous anger and resentment. She says that he must walk home every day and cannot get to his house without passing these four students at their homes. When asked about breaking up with Paul, she admits that she is considering it because of her concerns about his anger and potential violence toward other people, and she does not want to be a part of that. She says that Paul is dismissing of her concerns and ignores her suggestion that he consider non-violent solutions to his problems. She says Paul thinks that violent self-defense is his only option, and he accepts the consequences, which he thinks will give him street credit and a reputation as a vigilante.



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- **You call Susan's mother to inform her about the event. Her mother very assertively asks to speak to Susan.** Susan listens on the phone and assures her mother that she will do as told. Susan hands the phone back to you and her mother says, "Paul did not intend to hurt my daughter. It was an accident. He was just showing off and we want nothing to do with any of this from this point forward. Susan will not be speaking with you, the police, or anyone else about this. We will not be pressing charges or providing any other information. I'm coming to get my daughter and check out her hand." She hangs up the phone. Susan says, "I'm sorry this has caused a problem. Paul did not mean to hurt me. He was just messing around and it was an accident. I do not want to talk about this anymore and that includes with the police."
- **Susan's mother picks her up from school.**



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- **Paul is called into the office and found to be carrying a large lock-blade hunting knife.** The knife is very sharp and sturdy. It is the type of knife used to skin large animals. He says that he carries the knife to school every day and is more than happy to discuss why. He emphatically swears that he would never hurt Susan, that he loves her, and that someday he will marry her. He is proud that she is smart and wants to be a doctor. He says that he carries the knife daily so that he can defend himself from his enemies. He identifies his enemies as Kevin, Darren, Michael, and Jeff. Paul says that these four boys have been bullying him since he started high school. He says that they meet him after school on his path home and push him around, calling him derogatory names and humiliating him in front of his girlfriend. He says he is unable to get home without passing their houses.
- **Paul reminds you that his mother cannot give him a ride because she is a "shut-in" and will not leave their home.** Paul's mother was a victim of domestic violence by Paul's stepfather four years ago. Paul was a witness to the violence, which he reported his freshman year. The report generated a visit from protective services and the police, which unfortunately escalated the situation, leading to an attack on her that involved several hits from a baseball bat. Paul's stepfather is now in prison.



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- **Paul reported that he found the knife in the woodshed and that it had belonged to his stepfather.** He said that, while his use of the knife has been limited to stabbing practice on a large punching bag in his garage, he is learning advanced knife-fighting skills from YouTube videos on the martial art Krav Maga, a fighting system used by the Israeli defense forces. Paul says that he is not ready to fight the four boys yet but that he believes he will be able to defend himself, using a knife, within the next three or four weeks. He has been practicing his moves for about six months. He is insistent that he has a right to fight back with a knife since there are four of them and one of him. As a longstanding victim of bullying, he believes wholeheartedly that he will become a hero for standing up for himself and tells you that nothing you say will convince him otherwise. He does not believe that an arrest will stick, since he is a victim, and that he is unlikely to be placed in jail. And if he is placed in jail for a while, it will earn him street credit.
- **You attempt to convince him that his thinking is inaccurate, but he states that he does not believe you.** He thinks that you and all school employees are weak because you were not able to stop the bullying when he reported it to the counselor as a freshman. He politely tells you that he is not interested in more of your help because you and society have already failed his mother and him. He says that he only comes to school because of Susan and that he intends to protect her, his mother, and himself for the rest of his life. He assertively states that he will not be a victim like his mother and that his mother supports his efforts to prepare to use a weapon if necessary.



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- **You ask Paul if there is anything you can do to stop him from wanting to carry a weapon.** He states that it is obvious but that he does not believe you will be able to do it—he tells you that you must stop the bullying, or he will eventually stab one, if not all, of the boys. He says he knows you will be taking his knife, but that he can get another one and will continue to find weapons as long as there are people in the world who would harm others just for fun or power. He says he knows that he broke the school rules by carrying the knife, but believes he has a right to defend himself and take control of the situation because that's what a real man would do.
- **Paul is failing all his classes, he is credit-deficient, he is disconnected from teachers, and his only friend is Susan.** The school counselor reports that he has not been able to reach Paul for the last two years—Paul is unresponsive to efforts to help. The counselor is sad that the bullying has continued because he believed that it had stopped three years ago when he confronted the four boys and they promised they would leave Paul alone.
- **The SRO confirms that Paul was a witness to longstanding and considerable domestic violence** directed at his mother by his now imprisoned stepfather. His mother is isolated, fearful, and hyper-vigilant, a condition she fosters in Paul.



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- **You call Paul's mother, and she assures you that Paul would never hurt Susan because he loves her**, and she is a light of hope in their world. She justifies Paul's right to carry a weapon and even says that at some point she would buy him a gun. She believes that he has been a victim but that the Krav Maga and the knife-fighting skills will make him a strong person so that he does not end up like her. She believes he has every right to defend himself against the four boys and fully supports his preemptive thinking. She also believes he will be a hero for standing up the bullies and laughs at you when you inform her that he will likely be arrested if this occurs. She tells you that you are misinformed and that the police, social services, and the school leadership have never done anything to help her and her son and, in fact, have only made things worse.
- **She tells you that the public is sick of bullies and that she believes her son will be a real man if he stands up for himself.** She describes Paul' suffering, his three years of depression, and suicidal ideation that resulted from the failure of society to protect them and insists that Paul is becoming a strong, confident young man. She is proud of him. You ask if there is anything you can do to help her and she declines your offer, again stating that you have already failed her. She reports that her fear and injuries have created a situation of considerable weakness, and she views herself as incapable of functioning a normal life. She ends the conversation by suggesting that you do something about those bullies or one of them will end up badly cut. She also says that, even if the bullies stop, Paul will continue to carry weapons so that he can protect himself and those he loves in the future.



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- **Paul is undiagnosed** but appears to have been depressed, highly anxious, and suicidal over the previous three years.
- **Paul is disconnected and has no identifiable positive relationships with pro-social adults in the community or school.** He has no relatives or other family. His mother appears damaged and struggling to survive. The two together are hypervigilant and entrenched in an "us vs. them" pattern of thinking. Their paranoia is clear; however, the bullying does appear to be a real issue.
- **Paul states that he knows he will likely be expelled for having the knife but says he does not care.** He says he hates school anyway and that he will wait for Susan every day after school and continue his relationship with her as they mature to adults. He says that he will not attend the alternative education high school or meet with a tutor because he knows he is going to fail school anyway. He notes that he cares for his mother, does the shopping, and should be able to get a good job. He also tells you he has not done anything illegal and that he is simply informing you that he will be defending himself if people continue to hurt him. And he again points out that there are four of bullies and one of him, justifying the use of a knife.



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- **You ask Paul if he will stop carrying the knife and attend the alternative high school for at least five days if you can stop the bullying and get apology letters from the four boys.** He laughs, but says, “sure, if you think you really can. But I will always carry a weapon at least off campus because there are more bullies and terrible people out there. Just ask my mother.”
- **When you investigate the bullying, you find that Kevin, Darren, Michael, and Jeff, are seniors and actually good students** who are considered caring and kind. Your investigation determines that, while they have matured and become nice young men, they have continued to practice an immature pattern of bullying behavior with Paul after school, believing that it did not really harm him.



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- **When the four boy’s parents are notified of potential violence and their son’s behavior, all parents are extremely upset,** especially when they find out about how the bullying has hurt Paul. The boys commit to immediately stop the harassment and write apologies. You also ask their parents to write a group apology to Paul and his mother. They agree, stating their regrets and acknowledging their awareness of the abuse that Paul and his mother suffered. The bullying stops and the apology letters are delivered.
- **Paul is expelled** but follows through on attending the alternative education high school for one week.



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Maya (age 15, Sophomore)

- **Paul, in an effort to lessen the attention on him, reports that another student, Maya, has shown her friends and several other students several knives earlier that day.**
- **Maya is brought into the office and found to be in possession of 8 knives**, varying in size and style. Most of the knives are of the fantasy or heroic type design with considerable ornamental and embroidered features. None of the knives are sharp or appear to be of a professional quality that would be typical of a weapon.
- **Maya reports that she has the knives at school to show her friends because they are all very interested in weaponry**, especially the type that accompanies fantasy games such as Dungeons and Dragons and Magic. She says that she is in a fantasy game club with six peers. One of their hobbies is to collect ornamental knives and swords as symbols of power. She says that she wishes she could find a dragon to accompany her weaponry because her power would increase even further. She reports that she knows that bringing the knives to school is wrong, but she could not resist because she had purchased them over the weekend at a flea market and could not resist showing her friends. She apologizes and begs you not to call her father because he will be very disappointed in her since she has made him a promise not to bring any knives or swords to school. You inform her that you will have to discuss the situation with him.



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- **Maya and her friends are viewed by education staff as average students who are somewhat immature and often involved in game playing.** They enjoy each other's company, respond well to direction, and are generally well liked by teachers. Two teachers speak up for Maya, reporting that they have a great relationship with her. They state that they enjoy her creativity and slightly odd sense of humor. Her drama teacher has cast her as Seymour in the musical *Little Shop of Horrors*. Her band teacher says her energy is excellent but that her trombone skills leave a lot to be desired. Still, she is always enthusiastic and enjoys playing music.
- **Maya has a history of impulsive and oppositional behavior as well as poor academics when she was in middle school.** Her mother abandoned her father and her, becoming involved in drugs and street living, and eventually became completely estranged from the entire family. Maya become depressed and suicidal as a result, losing interest in friends and academics. Her father took considerable efforts to help build their lives back, including counseling and frequent meetings with teachers and the school counselor. The efforts resulted in Maya having a successful freshman year and sophomore.



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- **Maya's father is disappointed that Maya brought the knives but blames himself** for not realizing her excitement about the weekend purchase. He says that he will do whatever he needs to do to help the school employees and students feel safe but that he is concerned about the possible repercussions of school discipline. He is very cooperative with the investigation but worries about how Maya will respond if she is expelled and loses access to her friends, her school musical, and the positive school environment. He says that Maya is still in counseling and that her therapist considers her fragile, especially when dealing with loss.
- **Teachers consider Maya's father to be caring and attentive** and doing his best with limited resources. They believe he will welcome support. The school counselor confirms that Maya's father monitors her educational progress and social connections, and that he stays in contact with teachers.
- **Maya's father agrees to search her room, her computer, and her other belongings**, but does not find any indication of aggressive thinking or a motive to harm anyone. He says that, while Maya is not necessarily popular, she is well liked within her social group and she never speaks of enemies, social distress, or anger directed at others. Furthermore, her suicidal ideation that occurred two years earlier has been resolved, and she continues to have considerable support from her friends and their parents, extended family, her therapist, and him.



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- **When asked about thoughts or intentions of hurting herself or others with the knives, Maya becomes embarrassed** and troubled about your perception that she might bring a weapon to school to hurt herself or someone else. She insists that she would never do such a thing and has no intention of giving the knives to someone who would. She says she only wanted to share them with her friends. She tearfully states that she is very sorry and wishes she had listened to her father.
- **Further investigation does not uncover any information suggesting attack motive, ideation, or preparation** with Maya or her friends. In fact, further investigation confirms that Maya and her friends are fascinated by knives and swords as part of their role-playing games but are not using them or planning to use them as weapons against each other or other students.
- **Unfortunately, Maya showed over twenty students the knives** and the situation escalated to rumor and drama, disrupting the school and the community. Discipline policy requires that the matter be referred to the expulsion officer, who states that Maya's disregard for the rules, combined with the number of students she showed the knives to, requires an expulsion. However, the expulsion officer agrees to keep the duration to the minimum amount of time—through the end of the semester (about seven weeks).



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- **Maya is referred to the alternative education high school** to continue her classwork but is trespassed from all other district property by policy. She cannot participate in the play, band, or other school related activities. Her school day will consist of morning classes only. Her afternoons will be free. The education staff at the alternative education high school are extraordinarily good at connecting with and supporting students.



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CONDUCT LEVEL 2 TEAM FOLLOW UP CASE REVIEW



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BUILDING A COLLABORATION AND CHOOSING MEMBERS



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Organizing a system



Need, justification, and authorization

Community ownership, commitment, and responsibility

Policy and procedures necessary for functioning.
(Legal counsel)

Organize resources, design system and refine

Training, implementation, more training

Maintenance of program, trouble-shooting and ongoing training



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Choosing Team Members (Modified Safe School Initiative)

1. An ability to relate well to others
2. An awareness and sensitivity to the difference between harming and helping in an intervention
3. A reputation for fairness and trustworthiness
4. A questioning, analytical and even skeptical mindset
5. Training in the collection and evaluation of information from multiple sources
6. Discretion and an appreciation for the importance of keeping information confidential
7. Familiarity with the contemporary issues of school and community safety
8. The ability to serve as a formal link or liaison between various systems (a “boundary spanner” and a “team player” who believes in the project and the process)
9. In-depth knowledge about their own organization, resource availability, and both political and ethical boundaries
10. Full credibility and respect within their own organization



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94% of administrators stated that:

- The BTA team effectively identified potentially dangerous students and situations.
- The BTA team had positive effects on school safety.
- The BTA team provided important information necessary for support, discipline, and placement decisions.
- The BTA team fulfills a valuable role in schools.

In the same survey, 90% of administrators reported that the BTA team increased efficient prevention coordination with law enforcement and mental health.



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Benefits of a Threat Assessment System

ESD 112 Clark County 2012-13 study

- A total of **77,776** Students enrolled
- A total of **181** students were in situations that posed a threat
 - 181 level I assessments** by School-based Teams
 - 81 resulted in a level 2**, multi-agency community team response (less than 2%)
- **Of the 81 Level 2 assessments** (ESD coordinated)
 - **62% of the students remained in school**
 - **85% remained enrolled in the same district**
 - **89% remained enrolled in the county**
 - **95% remained enrolled in the school setting**



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Benefits of a Threat Assessment System

ESD 112 Clark County 2012-13 study

ESD 112 Clark County 2012-13 study cost saving for one district student enrollment of **26,486**

A total of 24 students received level 2 assessments. Of the 24:

- 15 remained enrolled in the same school and 6 student enrolled in a school within the same county.
- The average months enrolled were 4 months. Ranging from 1-8 months.
- The total cost savings was \$80,287 by having students stay in school (\$9,558/student)



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