Threat Assessment & Management:
Essential Elements for Effective Practice

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1

Gene Deisinger, Ph.D.





Deisinger Consulting, LLC
- President & Founder

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

Experience:
- Virginia Center for School & Campus Safety
  - Threat Management Consultant (2009 – Present)
- Virginia State Police / Virginia Fusion Center
  - Threat Management Consultant / Fusion Advisory Board Member
- Virginia Tech (Retired)
  - Deputy Chief of Police & Director, Threat Management Services
- Iowa State University (Retired)
  - Deputy Chief of Police & Director, Threat Management
- JTTF / ATAC Southern District of Iowa
  - Special Deputy US Marshal (2001-2009)
- Lead Author:
  - VA School TAM Model Policies, Procedures & Guidelines
  - Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment Teams





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2

Overview Of Threat Assessment & Management

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What is Threat Assessment & Management?

A systematic process that is designed to:

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

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Threat Assessment & Management Process

BTAM facilitates a more objective process:



Deisinger, 2017

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Threat Assessment & Management Goal

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

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Predatory / Targeted Violence

Targeted Violence:

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

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

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Targeted Violence

Examples of Targeted Violence:

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

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Understanding Targeted Violence

- There is no demographic profile of a perpetrator of targeted violence.
- There is no profile for the type of campus that has been targeted.
- In addition to students, others engage in violence:
  - Administrators, faculty, other staff,
  - Parents/guardians of students,
  - Contractors and vendors
  - People in relationships with staff or students, and
  - People with no connection to the campus.

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Understanding Targeted Violence

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

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Understanding Targeted Violence

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

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Understanding Targeted Violence

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

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17

Understanding Targeted Violence

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

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18

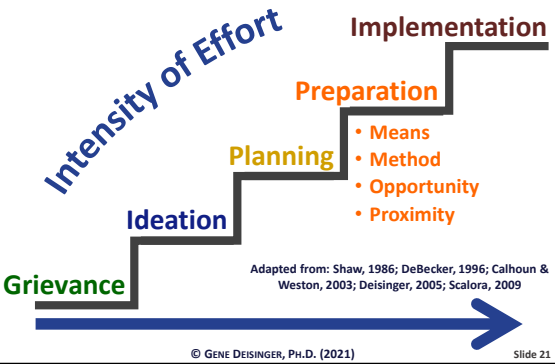
Understanding Targeted Violence

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

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Pathway to Violence



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Targeted Violence Prevention

- Many acts of targeted violence can be prevented.
- Information about a subject's ideas, behaviors, plans & preparations for violence can often be observed before harm can occur.
- Information about a subject behavior, plans or preparations is likely to be scattered & fragmented.
- Keys are to:
  - Act quickly upon an initial report of concern,
  - Gather additional information,
  - Enhance understanding.



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Connecting the Dots

You can't connect the dots

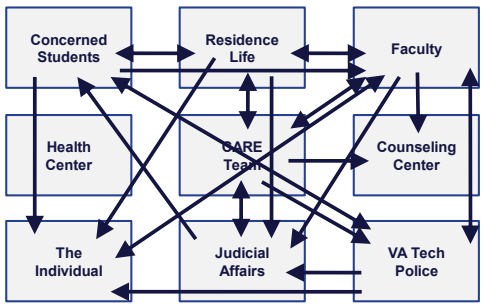
If you don't collect the dots.

Rich Wilson

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Communication is Key



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

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Essential Elements of an Effective Threat Assessment & Management Process

Organizations must have a systematic process that:

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

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TAM is a Systemic Process

Systematic Process:

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



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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

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

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

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Multi-Disciplinary CTAM Process:

Goals:

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

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Establishing a Community BTAM:

Developing the Team:

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

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Team Membership:

Multi-Disciplinary Involvement by:

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

* Internal or External Resource
** External Resource

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Key Dynamics of Successful Teams

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Team Size

Optimal Size: 5 – 9 members

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

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

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Subject Affiliation

Subject Relation to Workplace

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

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

- Type 5: Unaffiliated (without other criminal intent)

Source: G. Deisinger (2005)

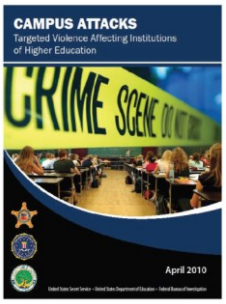
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Subjects: Address All Threats

Perpetrator's Affiliation:

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



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

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CTAM is a Systematic Process That:

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

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Coordinated & Early Awareness



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Facilitate Engagement

For effective bystander intervention & engagement, people need to know:

- Their role and responsibility
  - GOAL: Consult and engage about concerns
- What to consult about
- Where (and with whom) to consult
- Consultations are wanted
- Something will be done
- Regular reminders of issues and process

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Building Awareness

Outreach/Awareness presentations

- Managers, supervisors, employees
- Contractors

Training Sessions

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

Information: Available and sustained

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

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Facilitating Engagement / Reporting

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

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Documentation

Record keeping

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

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Process & Record Keeping

FORTify the process:

- Final documentation **SHOULD** demonstrate that TAM team's decision-making process was:

Fair,

Objective,

Reasonable, and

Timely,

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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

Facilitates a thorough & contextual assessment

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

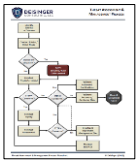
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Steps in the Threat Assessment Process

Threat Assessment Team:

- Receives report of concern
  - Intake: How you take in reports and being processing
  - Triage: Assigning urgency/priority to cases
  - Screening: Determining appropriateness for TAM
- Gathers additional relevant information
- Analyzes information and assesses case
- Develops & implements management plan
- Monitors and re-evaluates plan
- Continues follow-up as appropriate



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Intake, Triage and Screening

- Timely & Systematic review by trained personnel
  - Consider Triage/Screening Team:
    - ➢ Minimum of 2 members
    - ➢ Different roles/departments
- Records protected in centralized database
- Cross-referenced with other TAM contacts

Definitions:

- Intake: How you take in reports and being processing
- Triage: Assigning urgency/ priority to cases
- Screening: Determining appropriateness for CTAM

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49

Intake

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

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

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50

Imminent Situation?

Determine if situation is emergency/imminent

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

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Inquire / Gather Information

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

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

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Inquire/Gather Information

Consider interviews:

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

Corroboration of information across these sources will be powerful in helping to assess the level and nature of the threat…

What might significant differences in the information provided by these sources reveal?

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Considerations for Interviewing

Considerations for interviews:

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

Are team members adequately trained and prepared to conduct interviews?

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Holistic & Contextual Threat Assessment & Management

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

S The **subject** of concern;

T The **target** or others impacted;

E The **environment/systems**;

P **Precipitating events**.



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

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Key Areas of Inquiry - Subject

- What situations / behaviors are causing concern?
- Have there been any concerning, aberrant, threatening, or violent communications?
  - Are there ***Directly Communicated Threats**** of violence/harm?
  - Is there ***Leakage****?
  - What is the ***"Intensity of Effort"*****?
- What are the subject's motives, grievances & goals?
  - ***Fixation**** on grievance, target, or need for resolution?

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

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Key Areas of Inquiry - Subject

- Has subject demonstrated significant or novel interest in violence or other perpetrators?
  - Is there Identification*?
- Does the subject have (or are they developing) the capacity to engage in violence?
  - Are there ***Pathway Warning Behaviors**** ?
    - Planning
    - Preparation (Means, Method, Opportunity, Proximity)
  - Are there changes in activity patterns or ***Energy Bursts**** ?
  - Is there a history of violence
  - Are there aspects of ***Novel Aggression**** ?

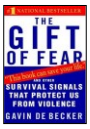
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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

- Is the subject experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?
  - Are there indications of ***Last Resort Behaviors****
    - Consider ***JACA*****:
      - **J**ustification;
      - **A**lternatives;
      - **C**onsequences; and
      - **A**bility.



***Gavin de Becker (1997). *The Gift of Fear*

  - Development or dissemination of a ***legacy token****

Adapted from: * Meloy, et al. (2012). *The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment;* ** FBI (2017) *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing Threats of Targeted Attacks*; USSS NTAC (2018). *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An operational guide for preventing targeted school violence*

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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

- Has the subject's behavior indicated or raised concern of need for intervention or supportive services?
  - Does subject have difficulty coping?
  - Symptoms of severe, acute, untreated mental illness:
    - Significant lack of contact with reality:
    - Symptoms that impact subject's perceptions of grievances or how others respond to subject
    - Significant or sustained agitation or anxiousness
    - Significant or sustained depressed mood
    - Alcohol or other drug use/abuse
    - Pervasive patterns of maladaptive behavior
  - Is subject actively engaged in treatment?

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

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60

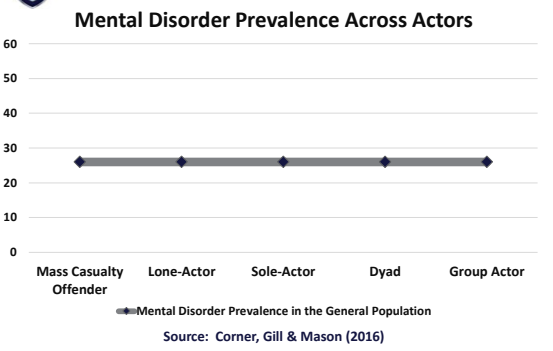
The Nexus Between Threat Assessment and Suicide Risk Assessment

- If triage identifies any of the following concerns, in addition to, or in place of, a potential threat to self, then the TAT should assume primary responsibility:
  - Subject also has ideation or intent to harm others
  - Subject's acts of harm to self would pose a threat of harm to others, whether intended or not; OR
  - Has engaged in behaviors (e.g., planning or preparation) that would place others at risk of harm, whether intended or not;
  - Subject's suicidal or self-harm behaviors are responses to victimization, bias, bullying, harassment, or to other environmental/climate issues;
  - Others are, or may reasonably be, significantly impacted by the threat of harm to self.

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Mental Illness & Targeted Violence



Source: Corner, Gill & Mason (2016)

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Key Areas for Inquiry – Subject

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

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

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

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Key Areas for Inquiry - Target

Are Targets (or others impacted) indicating vulnerability or need for assistance?

- Are targets engaging in behavior or in situations that increase their desirability, availability or vulnerability?
- Do targets/others have unmet safety or support needs?
- Are targets expressing reasonable fear/concern regarding the situation?
- Are targets or others around the subject engaging in protective actions (e.g., distancing, avoiding, modifying routine, minimizing conflict, etc.)?
- Are those who know the subject concerned that they may act based on violent ideas or plans?

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

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Key Areas for Inquiry - Environment

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

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

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Key Areas for Inquiry - Precipitants

Are there Precipitating Events that may impact the situation currently and in foreseeable future?

- Stresses, challenges, loss or injustice:
  - Job / income
  - Status
  - Relationship / support
  - Health
  - Community/Identity (Rejection / Ostracization);
- Key dates / events
- Opportunity (availability & vulnerability of target)
- Case Management Interventions

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Key Areas for Inquiry - Global

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

- Are the subject's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?
- Do collateral sources confirm or dispute the subject?
- Do sources have direct and unique knowledge of subject and/or situation? Are there multiple sources?
- Are sources providing consistent information?
- Do any sources have ulterior motives?
- How effective were our interviewing skills?
- What gaps exist in understanding of the situation?

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67

Improving Decision-Making

Protecting Against Cognitive Bias

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

Source: Daniel Kahneman (2013) *Thinking Fast & Slow*

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68

Using Supplemental Assessment Tools

Systematize data collection and assessment for SPJ:

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

Note: This is a partial listing of instruments to support SPJ, and not an endorsement of any particular tool.

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Facilitating Case Discussions

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

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Decision-Making: Cognitive Load

Enhancing Case Decision Making:

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

Deisinger (2018)

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Assessment Using STEP+

Assessment Considerations:

S Is **Subject** engaging in behavior(s) causing concerns for violence, significant disruption, or need for assistance?

T Are **Targets or others** concerned, impacted, vulnerable, taking protective actions, or need assistance?

E Are significant **Environmental/systemic** issues impacting the situation?

P Are there reasonably foreseeable **Precipitating events** that may impact the situation?

+ Are there identifiable actions to mitigate concerns?

If yes to any, case remains open.

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

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73

Prioritization

Prioritization based on totality of circumstances:

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

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74

Priority/Level of Concern Classification

Priority 1 (Critical)

Priority 2 (High)

Priority 3 (Moderate)

Priority 4 (Low)

Priority 5 (No Identified Concerns)

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TAM is a systematic process that:

Implements proactive & integrated case management plans

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

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76

Develop a Case Management Plan

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

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

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

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Subject Management Strategies

Implement appropriate strategies:

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

Adapted from: Calhoun & Weston (2003)

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78

Subject Management Strategies

Undue rush to sever connection with person of concern

- Separation may:
  - Decrease opportunities to monitor situation
  - Decrease resources available to mitigate risk
  - Exacerbate rather than minimize threat
- Case-by-case evaluation must be done, balancing pros and cons of separation vs. continued engagement
- Anticipate separation as potential precipitating event and have plan to monitor/intervene.

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

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Subject Management Strategies

Re-Entry Planning and Preparation

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

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

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80

Target Management Strategies

Coaching regarding personal safety approaches

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

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

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81

Target Management Strategies

Organizational roles in reducing target vulnerability

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

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

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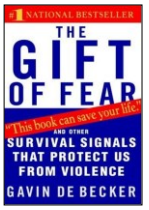
82

Remembering Who We Serve

What targets/victims want:

- Care
- Certainty
- Consistency
- Communication

- Gavin de Becker (1997). *The Gift of Fear*



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Environmental Management Strategies

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

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

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Manage Precipitating Events

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

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

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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

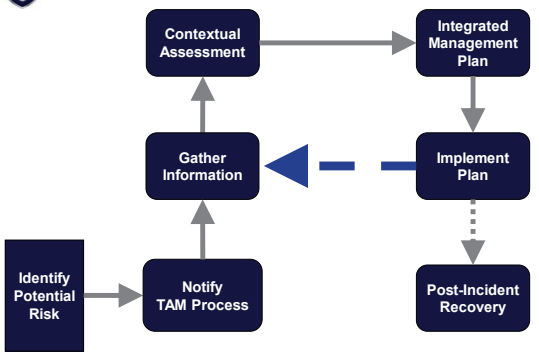
Monitors & re-assesses the situation on a longitudinal basis

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

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Threat Assessment Process



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TAM is a Systematic Process That:

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

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

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88

What Laws, Regulations, Rules May Apply?

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

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Current Practice: Schools & IHE's

Required by Legislation in United States:

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

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Information Sharing: FERPA

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

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Policies to Support the Process

Policies with TAM-related implications:

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

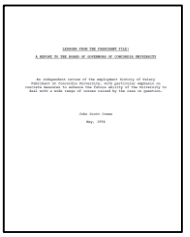
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Lessons from the Fabrikant File: A Report to the Board of Governors of Concordia University (1994)

John S. Cowan



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

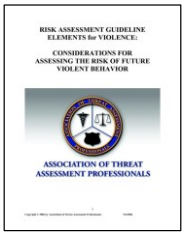
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Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence: Considerations for Assessment the Risk of Future Violent Behavior (2006)

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



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

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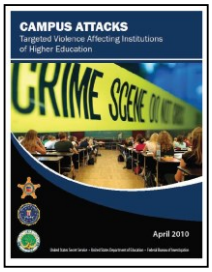
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Informed by Research & Practice

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

Joint Project of the:

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



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

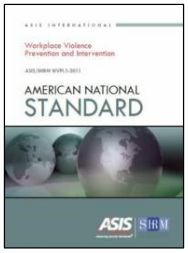
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Workplace Violence Prevention and Intervention American National Standard (2011)

Society for Human Resource Management & ASIS International



Available at:
https://webstore.ansi.org/Standards/ASIS/ASISSHRMWVP2011

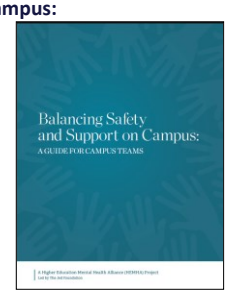
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Balancing Safety and Support on Campus: A Guide for Campus Teams (2013)

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



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

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Available at:
https://rems.ed.gov/RemsPublications.aspx
Released: 6/18/13

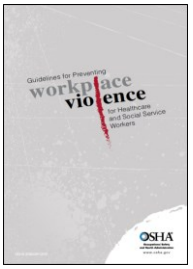
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Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Health Care and Social Service Workers (2015)

Occupational Safety & Health Administration



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

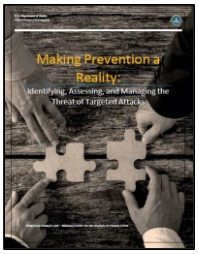
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Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing & Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks (2017)

US Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Behavioral Analysis Unit



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

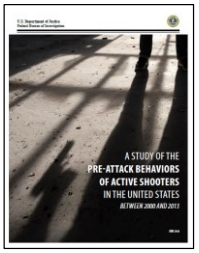
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A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States Between 200 and 2013 (2018)

US Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Behavioral Analysis Unit



Available at:
https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/pre-attack-behaviors-of-active-shooters-in-us-2000-2013.pdf/view

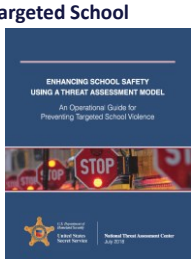
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Informed by Research & Practice

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

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



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

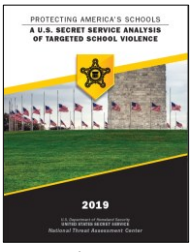
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Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence (2019)

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



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

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

ASIS International



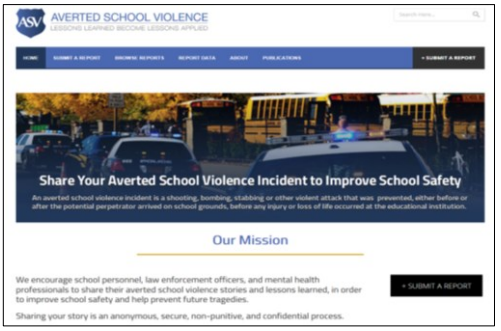
Available at:

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

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Averted School Violence Project



www.avertedschoolviolence.org

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Informed by Research & Practice

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

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



Available at:

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

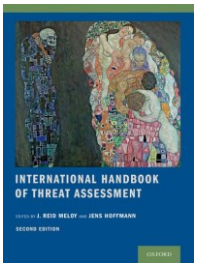
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International Handbook of Threat Assessment Second Edition (2021)

Edited by:
J. Reid Meloy &
Jens Hoffmann



Available at:

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

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109

Training

National Threat Assessment Conference for Educational Institutions
October 12-14, 2021 | Virginia Beach, VA
www.atapworldwide.org

1st AfATAP Conference
Nov. 15-17, 2021 | Virtual, South Africa
www.afatap.africa

ATAP Winter Threat Assessment Conference
February 1-4, 2022 | Orlando, FL
www.atapworldwide.org

13th AETAP Conference
April 25-29, 2022 | Nuremburg, Germany
www.aetap.eu

ATAP Threat Management Conference
August 2022 | Anaheim, CA
www.atapworldwide.org

APATAP Virtual Symposium
Spring 2022
www.apatap.wildapricot.org

National CATAP Conference
TBA, 2022
www.catap.ca

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110

TAM is a Systematic Process That:

Continuously improves & adapts to challenges & needs

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

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Overcoming the Silo Effect

Communication and Coordination are Critical!

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

Source: Deisinger (2015); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)

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112

Growing/Future Challenges

Increased Complexity due to:

- Strategic partnerships / collaborations
- Remote business
- Globalization

Challenges:

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

Source: Deisinger (2010); Deisinger & Nolan (2021)

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114

Considerations For Community BTAM

Challenges:

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

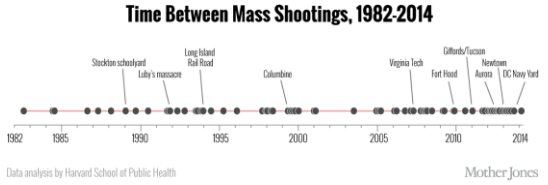
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Contagion Effect



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117

Right-Wing Extremism: Domestic Trends

Right wing extremism: Broad base

- Racial / Ethnic supremacy
- Opposition to government authority
- Misogynistic (including Incel)
- Single Issues: Abortion

Redefining Extremist "Groups"

- Groups / organizations ➡ individuals / network
- Activity driven more by shared goals than ideology
  - Cross over between ideology

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118

Extremist Recruitment

Elements for Effective Extremist Recruitment

- Identify vulnerable individuals
- Gain trust
- Isolate target
  - Exposure to ideology / goals
  - Engagement with ideology / goals
- Activate

Saleh, N.F., Roozenbeek, J., Makki, F.A., McClanahan, W.P. & Van Der Linden, S. (2021). Active inoculation boosts attitudinal resistance against extremist persuasion techniques: A novel approach towards the prevention of violent extremism. *Behavioral Public Policy*, 1-24.

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Weaponization of Information

Pathways:

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

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Continuous Improvement

Team Training and Process Development

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

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Continuing Process Development

Prepare Foundations:

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

SEE RESOURCE: Self & Team Assessment Worksheet

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122

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125