



UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE
**ENHANCING SCHOOL SAFETY USING
A THREAT ASSESSMENT MODEL**

An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence

1. Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team

Define District team and building teams:

Expertise represented in the following areas:

Administration Special Education	Mental Health School safety/ security	Behavior Management Emergency Management	Classroom Instruction Law Enforcement Technology expert
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2. Define concerning behaviors (what is prohibited and what should trigger intervention)

The following behaviors should serve as “red flags” and trigger the BTAM process:

Arson - Student plans and/or participates in malicious burning of property.

Bomb Threat - Student delivers a message of possible explosive materials being on campus, near campus, and/or pending explosion.

Bullying - The delivery of direct or technology-based messages that involve intimidation, teasing, taunting, threats, or name calling.

Fighting - Student is involved in mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence.

Harassment - The delivery of disrespectful messages in any format: gender, ethnicity, sexual, race, religion, disability, physical characteristics, or other protected class. These subtypes are based on documentation from the U.S. Office of Civil Rights.

Targeted Physical Aggression - Student engages in actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur (e.g., hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, etc.) due to a grievance with a targeted person or persons

Use/Possession of Weapons -

- Student is in possession of knives or guns (real or look alike)
- Student is in possession of any object readily capable of causing bodily harm, with intent to do harm

Use/Possession of Combustibles - Student is/was in possession of substances/objects readily capable of causing bodily harm and/or property damage (matches, lighters, firecrackers, gasoline, lighter fluid), with intent to do harm.

Threatening words/behaviors/gestures (A key consideration with situations that are less clear is that someone felt threatened or interpreted this as a possible threat). Threats can take the form of:

- Pictures (e.g. drawing of violence, photo on student with gun, etc.)
- Writing
- Social media (e.g. written threat online, picture of student with weapon, etc.)
- Direct threat (e.g. "You're dead!", "I'm going to kill you!")
- Implied threat (e.g. "You better watch your back.")
- Threatening sexual behaviors
- Threatening gestures such as making hand into the shape of a gun and pointing it at someone

Concerning Behaviors: Obsessive interest in acts of violence, mass shootings, planning behaviors (e.g. collecting maps of the school, going to the shooting range, taking notes of school schedule, casing), stalking, intentional harm to animals, etc.

3. Establish and provide training on a central reporting system

4. Determine the threshold for law enforcement intervention
5. Establish threat assessment procedures
6. Develop a risk management system (Intervention Plan)
7. Create & promote a safe school climate
8. Provide training for all stakeholders