

Prevention of Targeted Violence in K-12 Schools

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Fort Lauderdale, FL



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Overview

- The National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)
- Targeted violence in schools
- Creating a targeted violence prevention plan
- Key investigative themes
- Creating safe school climates

The National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC)

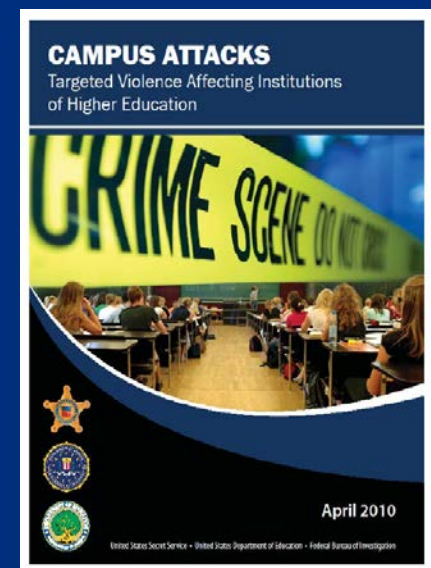
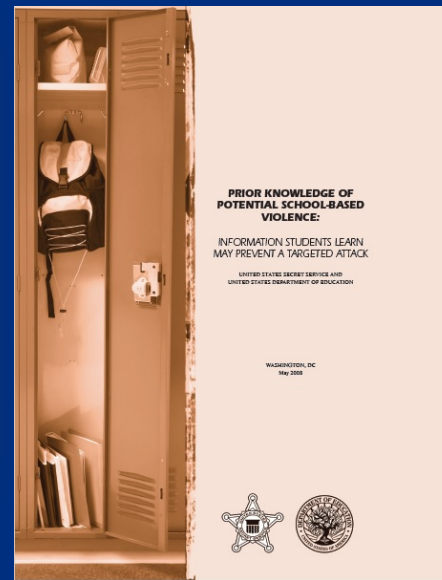
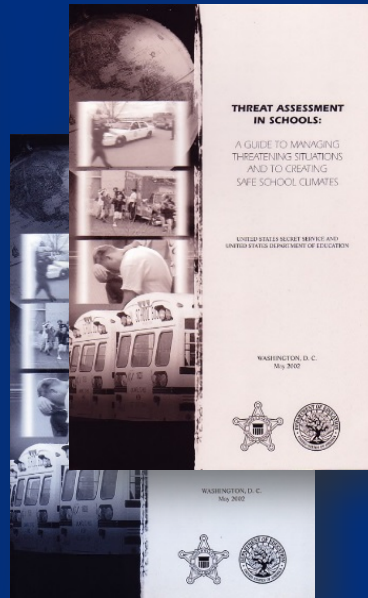
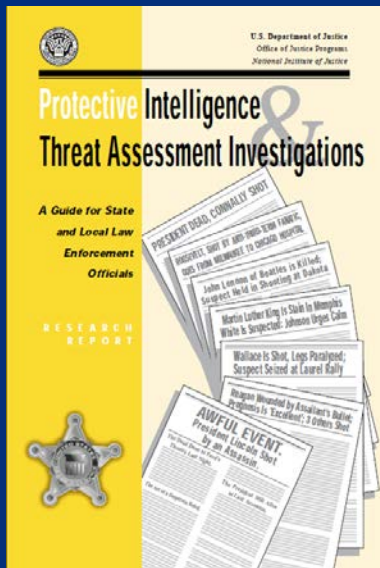


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National Threat Assessment Center

Research, Training, and Consultation



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National Threat Assessment Center

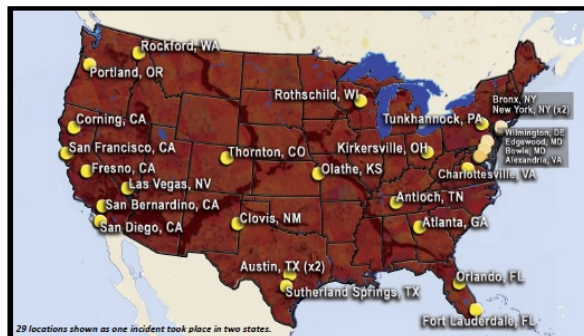
20 years in threat assessment



MASS ATTACKS IN PUBLIC SPACES - 2017

March 2018

INTRODUCTION



Between January and December 2017, 28 incidents of mass attacks, during which three or more persons were harmed, were carried out in public places within the United States (see map for locations). These acts violated the safety of the places we work, learn, shop, relax, and otherwise conduct our day-to-day lives.¹ The resulting loss of 147 lives and injury to nearly 700 others had a devastating impact on our nation as a whole.² As the uncertainty they caused continues to ripple through our communities, those charged with ensuring public safety strive to identify methods to prevent these types of attacks. To aid in these efforts, the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) examined these 28 incidents, to identify key themes for enhancing threat assessment and investigative practices. Regardless of whether these attacks were acts of workplace violence, domestic violence, school-based violence, or terrorism, similar themes were observed in the backgrounds of the perpetrators³, including:

- ★ Nearly half were motivated by a *personal grievance* related to a workplace, domestic, or other issue.
- ★ Over half had histories of *criminal charges, mental health symptoms, and/or illicit substance use or abuse*.
- ★ All had at least one *significant stressor* within the last five years, and over half had indications of *financial instability* in that timeframe.
- ★ Over three-quarters made *concerning communications and/or elicited concern* from others prior to carrying out their attacks. On average, those who did elicit concern caused more harm than those who did not.

These findings, and others in this report, support existing best practices that the U.S. Secret Service has established in the field of threat assessment. They highlight the importance of gathering information on a person's background, behaviors, and situational factors; corroborating the information from multiple sources; assessing the risk the individual poses for violence; and identifying intervention points to mitigate that risk.⁴

ENTER

RESSIONAL SHOOTER: REVIEW OF JAMES HODGKINSON

October 2, 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

James Hodgkinson, 38, fired at least 70 rounds from a 20-gauge shotgun, rifle, and pistols, and others practicing at Eugene Simpson Stadium at Jassoul Game for Charity. Five people were wounded during the event. U.S. Capitol Police special agents who were sent to his family address and to his home in Washington, DC to work on returning his passport. He then he was being out of his car prior to the attack.

Incidents of targeted violence to update Secret Service investigate a thinking and behavior of past attackers. Hodgkinson's background relevant to threat assessment. A few of these are highlighted below.

home inspector whose business failed months prior he 30 years, father 155 children, multiple 12 children, a son, and pushy by some, but quite mild and a nice guy included numerous health violations and charges for fleeing police, including fleeing police, and domestic battery. He had his own Republican views with friends, family, and others; absence of letters to his local paper expressing discontent with economic factors; never made a threat; called his Republican congressman at least 30 times to express his level of issues; and was protected.

at Assessment

He is a threat agent of any public officials to make his intentions for the in an already-charged incident that was derogatory and derogatory from those regularly made by many like-minded others. During the election, others noted changes in his behavior as he became locally charged. This was evident in his online postings in which he had his time in Dashing Trump & Co. His anger was also evident in a letter to his local paper and the manager mentioned that he had to work in a service center and the manager mentioned that he had to work in a service center into a course like that that was concerning due to his other customer anger. He was deeply troubled to where Hodgkinson's

DO TO OPEN SOURCE INFORMATION

10/2/17 10:35



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Threat Assessment

- *Primary* objective: Gather information to assess if an individual poses a threat
- *Secondary* objective: Investigate criminal violations
- We cannot *predict* who will be violent, but we can *prevent* violence through intervention
- Threat assessment is as important to preventing targeted violence as physical measures
- Uses a “behavior-based” approach



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“It is the sense of Congress that a fact-based threat assessment approach, involving school officials, local law enforcement, and members of the community, is one of the most effective ways to prevent targeted violence in schools.”

The EAGLES Act: Introduced by U.S. Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Bill Nelson (D-FL), and Orrin Hatch (R-UT)



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Safe School Initiative - 2002

- Identified 37 incidents of targeted school violence between 1974 and 2000
 - Characterizing the attacker
 - Conceptualizing the attack
 - Signaling the attack
 - Advancing the attack
 - Resolving the attack
- Basis for Threat Assessment in Schools: *A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates*



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NTAC and School Safety

- 450+ trainings for 93,000+ attendees
 - School administrators, teachers, counselors, mental health professionals, school resource officers, and other public safety partners
- Update to the *Safe School Initiative*: 40+ incidents from 2008 – 2017
 - Current or former student
 - Attacked a K-12 school with gun or knife
 - At least one person injured
 - Targeting in advance, unrelated to other crimes



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Safe School Initiative - 2018

- Aplington-Parkersburg High School, Parkersburg, IA
 - June 24, 2009
 - Former male student, 24, shot and killed football coach
- Millard South High School, Omaha, NE
 - January 5, 2011
 - Suspended male student, 17, shot and killed vice principal
- Lincoln Pius X High School, Lincoln, NE
 - October 7, 2013
 - Current female student, 16, attacked another student with a hunting knife and claw hammer



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School Safety



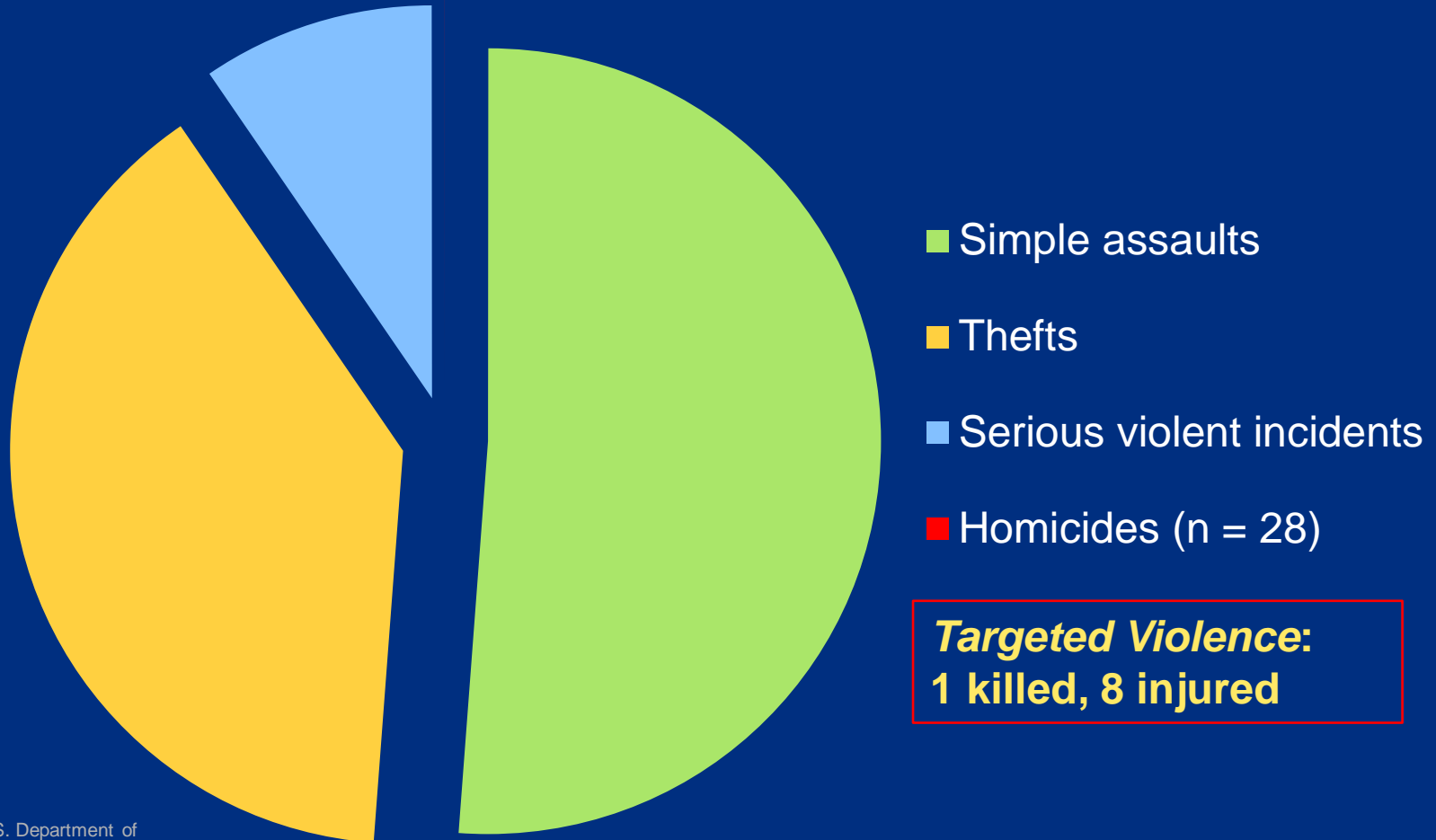
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The many aspects to school safety

Incidents of Crime, 2015-2016

Total incidents: 749,428



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Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2017

Targeted violence in schools

- Incidents of targeted violence at school rarely were sudden, impulsive acts.
- Prior to most incidents, other people knew about the attacker's idea and/or plan to attack.
- Most attackers did not threaten their targets directly prior to advancing the attack.
- There is no accurate or useful "profile" of students who engaged in targeted school violence.



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Targeted violence in schools

- Most attackers engaged in some behavior prior to the incident that caused others concern.
- Most attackers had difficulty coping with significant losses or personal failures. Moreover, many had considered or attempted suicide.
- Many attackers felt bullied, persecuted, or injured by others prior to the attack.
- Most attackers had access to and had used weapons prior to the attack.



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Threat assessment in schools

- Threat assessment is the process for mitigating the risk of targeted school violence:
 - Identify
 - Assess
 - Manage
- Targeted violence involves:
 - Person
 - Event
 - Situation
 - Target



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New Bedford, MA

- Student overheard students talking about a plan to attack the school. She told a school administrator, and an investigation began involving the principal and SRO.
- A second student, who was part of the plotting group, told a teacher about the plot.
- Local law enforcement discovered a nearly-completed bomb in a vacant house.
- On a Tuesday, a janitor found a note alluding to something bad happening on “Monday.”



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Points to note

- A student was comfortable enough to reach out to a school administrator with concerning information
- The school had procedures in place to assess the concerning information
- The investigation focused on the students' behavior
- The team focused on whether the students *posed* a threat, as opposed to simply having *made* a threat
- The investigation took place over the Thanksgiving holiday, and arrests were made before Monday
- School worked together with local law enforcement

Benefits of this approach

- University of Virginia research has shown:
 - Lower rates of bullying
 - Greater willingness to seek help for bullying and threats of violence
 - More positive perceptions of school climate
 - Fewer long-term suspensions
 - Greater rates of counseling services and parental involvement



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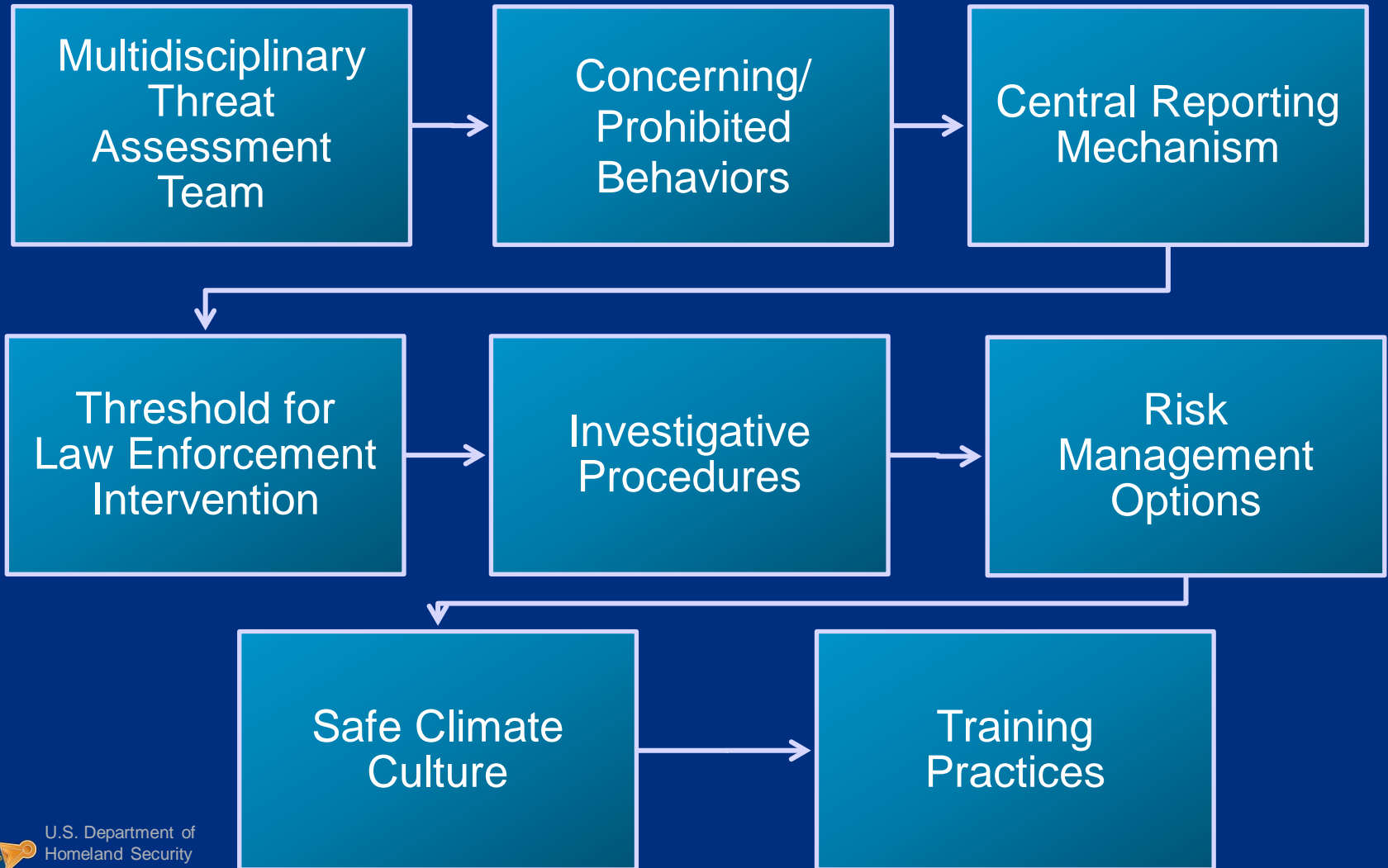
Creating a Targeted Violence Prevention Plan



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Targeted Violence Prevention Plan



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Establish “threat assessment” team

- Multidisciplinary team
 - School staff
 - Guidance counselors
 - Teachers
 - School administrators
 - School resource officers/Local law enforcement
 - Mental health professionals
 - Coaches
- District-level as well as school-based teams

Threat
Assessment
Team



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Define concerning behaviors

- Prohibited behaviors that trigger a threat assessment
- Other behaviors of concern that require an intervention

Create a central reporting mechanism

- Phone number
- Web form
- Email address
- Smart phone application

Central
Reporting
Mechanism



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Law enforcement intervention

- The point at which a school decides a situation must be referred could involve:
 - Imminent or immediate threats
 - Serious violence
 - Bringing a weapon to school
- Not every inquiry requires local law enforcement

Threshold for
Law
Enforcement
Intervention

Establish investigative procedures

- Assign roles in advance
- Gather information
- Assess threats, concerning behavior, risk for violence
 - Transient or substantive threats
 - Unsure, err on side of caution
 - Respond to all incoming reports
- Corroborate – parents, friends, teachers, coaches
- Evaluate

Investigative
Procedures

Assessing the Risk: The key themes

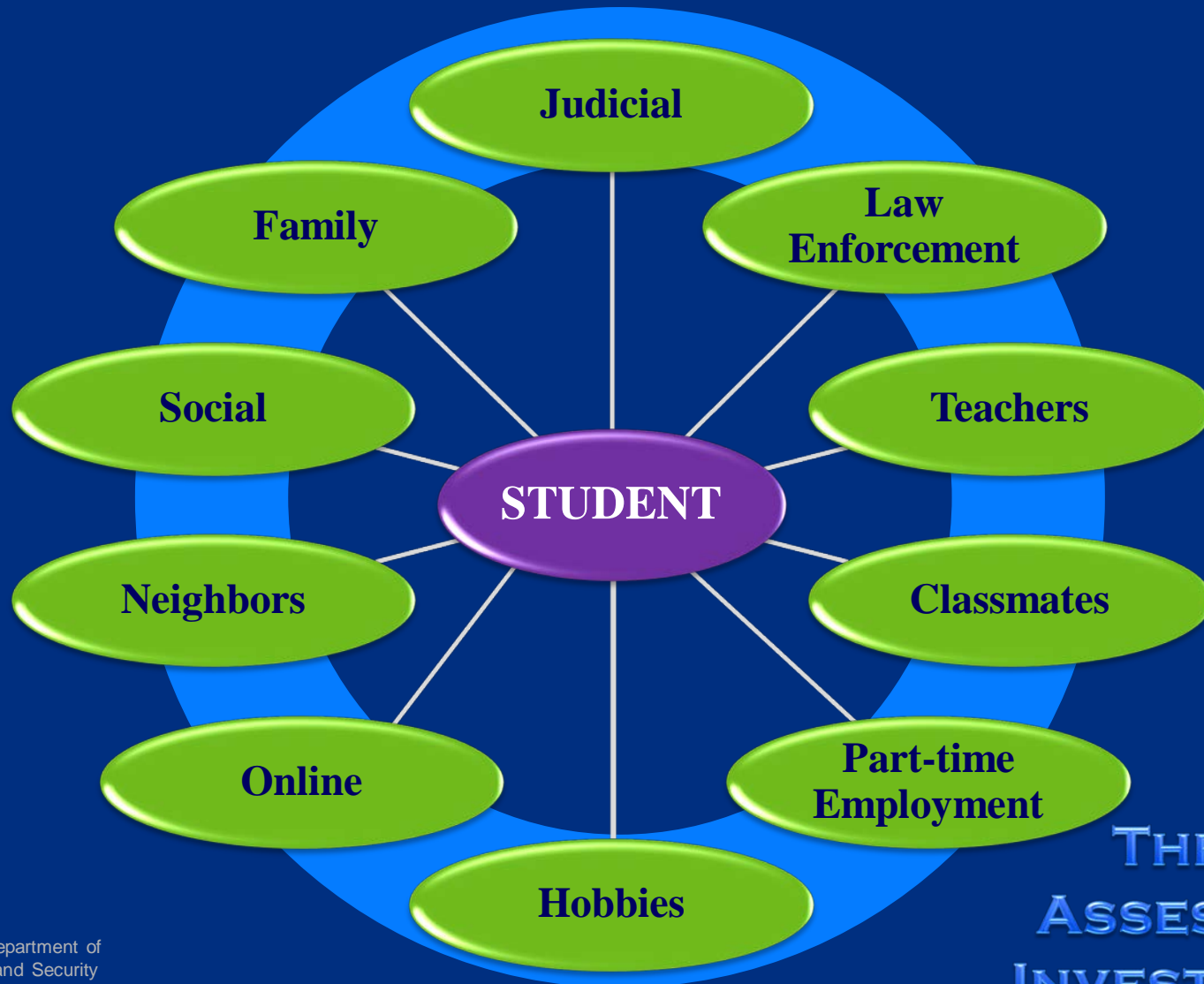
1. Motive
2. Communications
3. Inappropriate interest
4. Weapons
5. Stressors
6. Bullying
7. Desperation
8. Violence as an option
9. Mental illness
10. Concerned others
11. Capacity to carry out an attack
12. Planning
13. Consistency
14. Protective factors



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Gather Information



**THREAT
ASSESSMENT
INVESTIGATION**



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Gather Information



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Key assessment themes

- Why did the student make the threatening or concerning statements, or engage in the concerning behavior?
- What has the student communicated about his or her feelings or ideas?
- Does the student have an unusual interest in violence, school shootings or other acts of mass violence?
- Does the student have a fascination with weapons?
Access to weapons?

September 20th

I'm tired of this shit 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔 I'm sooo
fucking done!!! 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔

October 20th-21st

If I just laid down... 🤔

144 242

Oct 21

I should have listened.... You were right...
The whole time you were right... 🤔🤔

218 236

Oct 21

It breaks me... It actually does... I know it
seems like I'm sweating it off... But I'm not..
And I never will be able to... 🤔🤔🤔

417 326

Oct 20

Alright. You fuckin got me.... That broke me
🤔🤔🤔

249 198

October 13th

Fuuuuccckkkkkk you

I Hate Hearin Shit Like T
Feel Stupid Now.. Exactly
Happened..

123



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- Home
- My Channel
- Subscriptions
- History
- Watch Later

SUBSCRIPTIONS

- Add channels
- Popular on YouTube
- Music
- Sports
- Gaming

- Browse channels
- Manage subscriptions

YouTube Red

All activities



Cmore Asses uploaded a video 1 year ago



Works Bomb

by Cmore Asses
 1 year ago • 410 views
 Small works bomb I made using aluminum foil, works toilet bowl cleaner, and a small apple juice bottle.



Cmore Asses uploaded a video 1 year ago



Testing QF-2X6 Firing System

by Cmore Asses
 1 year ago • 418 views
 I decided to try out a new firing system that I heard good reviews about. I had one previously, but it sucks for range and one of the ...



Cmore Asses uploaded a video 1 year ago



10 Grams Of Flash Powder

by Cmore Asses
 1 year ago • 236 views
 10 grams of flash. 7/3 mix of KCLO4 and Dark German ALP. I used a visco fuse that burns at 1 foot every 28 seconds.



Cmore Asses uploaded a video 1 year ago



Hydrogen Balloon Fail

by Cmore Asses
 1 year ago • 287 views
 There was not only hydrogen in the balloon. It was from a lab in chemistry where we dropped magnesium into hydrochloric acid ...



Cmore Asses uploaded a video 1 year ago



CO2 Bomb In A Slide

by Cmore Asses
 1 year ago • 916 views
 This is a 12 oz CO2 cartridge filled with a type of smokeless powder. I used a visco fuse that burns at 1 foot every 28 seconds...



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Key assessment themes

- Has the student experienced stressors in any area of his or her life?
- Does the student feel bullied, persecuted, or injured by others?
- Is the student experiencing desperation, despair, or hopelessness?
- Does the student think violence is acceptable or the only way to solve a problem?



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Sinking into bed

Homicidal thoughts filling my head

Suicidal thoughts not gone, but fleeing

Because it's other people's death I'm seeing

suicide or homicide

Homicide or suicide

Into sleep I'm sinking

Why me I'm thinking?

Homicidal and suicidal thoughts intermixing

I know my life's not worth fixing



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Key assessment themes

- Is the student experiencing symptoms of mental illness?
- Are others concerned about or for the student?
- Is the student organized enough to create and execute an attack plan? Is there evidence that the student has initiated planning?
- Are the student's statements consistent with his/her actions or with what others are saying?

Key assessment themes

- Remember the Protective Factors
 - Does the student have a relationship with a responsible adult?
 - Is there evidence of a connection to other students?
 - What situational or intrinsic factors are present?



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Management Options

- Immediate and long-term
- Parental involvement (e.g., removing access to firearms)
- Counseling and mental health treatment
- Community resources
- Suspension/expulsion: May have negative effects - unsupervised, lack positive peer interactions or mentorship from school staff
- Legal actions if warranted

Risk
Management
Options



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Components of safe school climates

- Fostering a climate of respect and trust
- Breaking down “codes of silence”
- Prevention and intervention of bullying
- Ensuring all students have a trusting relationship with at least one positive adult role model
- Positive reinforcement

Safe Climate
Culture



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Prevention/Intervention of Bullying

- Quick and consistent responses
- Classroom management and rules
- Encourage reporting
- Encourage safe intervention when they see bullying
- Safe school environments with inclusion and respect for all

Safe Climate
Culture



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Safe school climate programs

- Student assistance programs – teachers meet and discuss students who are having academic or behavioral problems
- Peer assistance groups – support groups led by students encourage students to come forward with information and provide support to overcome self-doubts or guilt about breaking code of silence
- Law enforcement – weekly calls coordinated by local LE that includes school resource officers, where the call members discuss concerns and share resources

Safe Climate
Culture

Training

- Frequency
- Topics for training
- Target audience
 - All threat assessment team members
 - School resource and local law enforcement officers
 - Administrators, faculty, staff
 - Students, parents

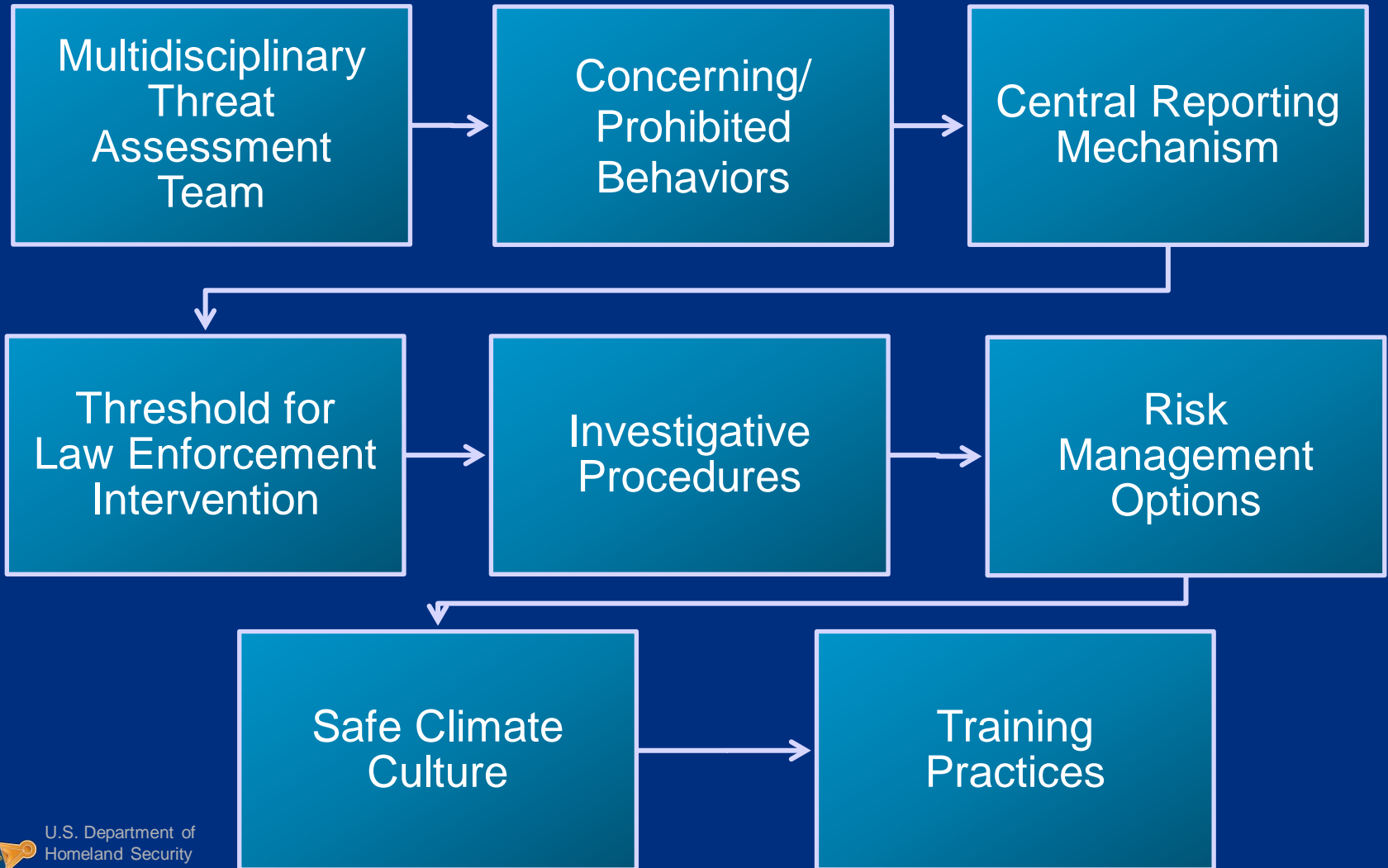
Training
Practices



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Targeted Violence Prevention Plan



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