Before & Beyond Threat Assessment: Comprehensive School Safety Planning using the MTSS Framework

Inspired to lead

Presented by
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CASP Convention, October 11, 2023

Workshop Objectives

Participants will learn…

- **How a multi-disciplinary Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) process fulfills SB 906 requirements**
- **The importance of assessing if an individual *poses* a threat to self or others, and their progression on the pathway to violence**
- **Strategies for improving school climate, thereby fostering psychological and physical safety on school campuses (Tier 1)**
- **How to identify targeted supports through the BTAM process for case management and monitoring (Tier 2)**
- **Leveraging community partnerships for intensive support services (Tier 3)**

School Safety Data

School Violence Statistics

- **Homicide and Suicide at School**
  - *1.1% of youth homicides took place @ school*
  - *Odds of a student (5-18 yrs.) being victim of school-associated homicide was 1 in 3.1 million in 2019*
    - Odds of being killed in a motor vehicle accident in 2016 were 1 in 20 thousand.
  - *Violent death at school less likely today than in 1990s*
    - 1992/93 - 2000/01 = 246 school associated student homicides
      - 27 deaths per year
    - 2001/02 - 2020/21 = 303 school associated student homicides
      - 16 deaths per year
      - *However, 2020/21 = 47 school shootings with deaths*
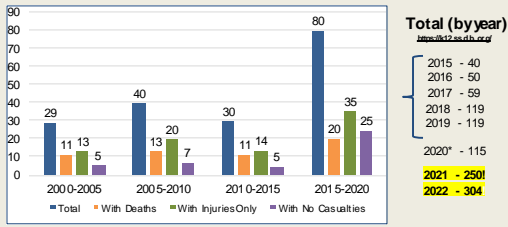
Irwin et al. (2022); Wang et al. (2020)

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Average Number of School Shootings by Type of Casualty Per School Year Averaged Across 5-Year Increments

https://k12ssdb.org/

Total (by year)

- 2015 - 40
- 2016 - 50
- 2017 - 59
- 2018 - 119
- 2019 - 119
- 2020* - 115
- **2021 - 250!**
- **2022 - 304**

Chart data:

	Total	With Deaths	With Injuries Only	With No Casualties
2000-2005	29	11	13	5
2005-2010	40	13	20	7
2010-2015	30	11	14	5
2015-2020	80	20	35	25

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security, K-12 School Shooting Database; Data chart prepared by the National Center for Education Statistics (Digest 2021, Table 228.12)

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School Violence Statistics

- **2021 YRBS**
  - Carried a weapon on school property
    - 1993–2021, significant **decrease** (11.8%–3.1%)
    - Up from 2.8% in 2019
  - Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property
    - 1993–2021, significant **decrease** (7.3%–6.6%)
    - Down from 7.4% in 2019
  - Physical fight on school property
    - 1993–2021, significant **decrease** (16.2%–5.8%)
    - Down from 8.0% in 2019

https://yrbs-explorer.services.cdc.gov/#/; Underwood et al. (2020)

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School Violence Statistics

- 2021 YRBS
  - *Bullied on school property*
    - 2009-2021, Significant **decrease** (19.9%–15.0%)
    - 19.5% in 2019

  - *Did not go to school because of safety concerns*
    - 1993–2019, a significant **increase** (4.4%–8.6%)
    - 8.7% in 2019

  What do these data suggest for you?

https://yrbs-explorer.services.cdc.gov/#/; Underwood et al. (2020)

Suicide Statistics

Self-Reported Suicide-Related Feelings, Thoughts, and Behaviors Among U.S. High Schoolers

Feelings, Thoughts, or Behaviors	% of 9th–12th Graders
Persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the past year	42.3
Poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic	36.9
Poor mental health in the past 30 days	29.3
Seriously considered suicide during the past year	22.2
Made a suicide plan during the past year	17.6
Attempted suicide during the past year	10.2
Injured in a suicide attempt during the past year	2.9

YRBSS (CDC, 2023). Over the past decade (since 2011), there have been increases in self-reported suicide-related feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.

Threatening Behaviors and Link to Suicide

- Most had significant difficulty coping with losses or failures, or were suicidal.
  - *78% of targeted mass attackers exhibited a history of suicide attempts or suicidal thoughts[1]*
    - *Many attempted or succeed at suicide or "suicide by cop" at the conclusion of targeted violence*
    - *40% of the offenders completed suicide.[2]*

Vossekuil, et al (2004) [1] US-DOJ & FBI (2014) [2]

Suicide Risk Screening v. Behavior Threat Assessment

- Rates of *homicidal* **AND** *suicidal* incidents low
  - *Compared to rates of homicidal* **OR** *suicidal acts*

- Involvement of a large team in suicide risk screening might be counterproductive to supporting and gaining student trust
  - *As more states and school divisions adopt policies to implement school-based threat assessment, they should carefully consider the important distinctions between the types of threats identified in the current study to avoid suicide assessment being subsumed into the threat assessment process (p. 390).*

Burnette et al. (2019)

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Assessing for Suicidal & Homicidal Thoughts

Dr. Thomas Joiner:

- Interpersonal Theory of Suicide
  - *Low Belongingness*
  - *Perceived Burden*
  - *Acquired Capability*
- Perversion of Virtue
  - *Murder-Suicide is an act of mercy, justice, duty, or glory*

Possible Assessment Questions:

- When you were hopeless or helpless in the past, who did you talk with? Who did you tell? (Protective Factor)
- When you think about the circumstances or people that brought you to that place, can you identify people who failed you?
- Do you every wish that they should pay? How would that look?
- How do those thoughts make you feel? Do you get relief from thoughts of them suffering?

"You must treat suicidal thoughts and behaviors to prevent homicidal acts. Without suicidal ideations, the bridge to homicidal acts is removed."

BTAM vs Suicide Safety Assessment
Separate yet sometimes both needed

SIMILARITIES

- Are NOT disciplinary processes
- Are NOT educational, special education, and/or mental heath evaluations
- They are SAFETY ASSESSMENTS!
- Both identify risk factors, warning signs, contributing factors, protective factors
- Does individual POSE a risk of harm?
- Foreseeability and negligence

DIFFERENCES

- Team composition
- Sources of information
- Timing (BTAM data collection/decisions)
- Management strategies

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Research Findings and Foundations of BTAM

National Threat Assessment Center Reports
www.secretservice.gov/protection/ntac

NTAC (2002)

NTAC (2018)

2019

2021
Averting Targeted School Violence
A U.S. SECRET SERVICE ANALYSIS OF PLOTS AGAINST SCHOOLS

NATIONAL THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

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NTAC REPORT ON TARGETED SCHOOL VIOLENCE
Key Findings

- Attackers usually had multiple motives, the most common involving a grievance (83%)
- **All** attackers experienced social stressors involving their relationships with peers and/or romantic partners
- Nearly every attacker experienced negative home life factors
- Most attackers had a history of school disciplinary action; many had prior contact w/ law enforcement
- **All** attackers exhibited concerning behaviors

NTAC (2019)

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NTAC REPORT ON <u>TARGETED</u> SCHOOL VIOLENCE
Behavioral Concerns

1. Threats to the target or others, and/or intent to attack (83%)
2. Intense or escalating anger (74%)
3. Interest in weapons (71%; firearms from home most common)
4. Sadness, depression, or isolation (63%)
5. Changes in behavior or appearance (57%)
6. Suicidal ideation and/or self-harm (54%)
7. Unusual interest in violence (37%)
8. Talk of being bullied (34%; observed by others)
9. Adult concerns over grades/attendance (29%)
10. Harassing others (14%)

These factors **MAY** signal a youth is considering an act of violence

NTAC (2019)   16

Recent Study
K-12 perpetrators more likely to…

- experience chronic rejection
  "failed joiner"
- feelings of not mattering or belonging
- lack a sense of belonging
- are "on the periphery"
- have mental health issues

Kowalski et al. (2021). K-12, college/university, and mass shootings: similarities and differences.
The Journal of Social Psychology, 161:6, 753-778, DOI: 10.1080/00224545.2021.19.0004.7   17

NTAC REPORT ON <u>AVERTED</u> SCHOOL VIOLENCE
10 Key Findings

1. Targeted school violence is preventable when communities identify warning signs and intervene
2. Schools should intervene as early as possible
3. Students were most often motivated to plan an attack because of a grievance with classmates
4. Students are best positioned to identify and report concerning behaviors displayed by their classmates
5. Collaboration with parents/guardians is vital
6. SROs play an important role (involved 1/3 cases)

NTAC (2021)   18

NTAC REPORT ON AVERTED SCHOOL VIOLENCE
10 Key Findings (cont.)

7. Removing a student from school does not eliminate the risk they might pose to self/others (*process* - don't rush to remove until assessment is complete)
8. Students displaying an interest in violent or hate-filled topics should elicit immediate assessment and intervention
9. Many school attack plots were associated with certain dates (April, beginning/end of school year)
10. Many plotters had access to weapons; some unimpeded access to firearms

NTAC: Averting Targeted School Violence Video (16 minutes)

NTAC (2021)   19

Overview of BTAM
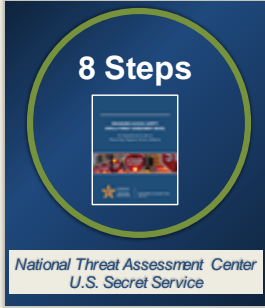
Building a School BTAM Program

1. Establish a multidisciplinary team
2. Define prohibited and concerning behaviors
3. Create a central reporting mechanism
4. Define threshold for law enforcement intervention
5. Establish threat assessment procedures
6. Develop risk management options
7. Create and promote safe school climates
8. Conduct training for all stakeholders

8 Steps

National Threat Assessment Center
U.S. Secret Service

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Threat Assessment

A systematic process designed to:

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

Sigma Threat Management Associates; Deisinger & Randazzo (2017)

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Pathway to Violence

Grievance

Ideological
Beliefs;
Power &
Control

Ideation

Planning

Preparation

Implementation

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Threat Assessment Procedures

Receive Report
• Screen
• Full assessment needed?

Gather Info
• Multi-method
• Multi-source

Organize & Analyze Information
• 11/13 Secret Service Questions
• Type of Violence

Make Assessment
• Harm to others?
• Harm to self?
• Needs supports?

If needed

Develop Management Plan
• Appropriate for concern
• Intervention, Supervision, Monitoring
• Replacement Skills!!

Progress Monitor
• As long as needed
• Regular check-ins

Close/ Inactive Status
• Informally Monitor
• Stay Engaged

Adapted from SIGMA

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BTAM IS....

- **A safety assessment**
- Collection and analysis of multiple sources of information
- Focuses on patterns of thinking and behavior
- Individual and dynamic factors
- Identifies escalating behaviors
- Level of concern based on behaviors detected
- Do they *POSE* a threat?
- Goal is **risk management** (interrupt pathway)

How is K-12 BTAM unique?
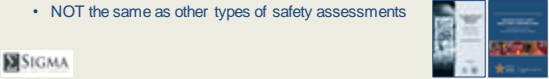
Meloy (2011), US Dept. of Justice/FBI (2017)

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BTAM IS ...

- NOT the same as profiling
- NOT used to predict future behavior
- NOT adversarial
- NOT the same as a disciplinary process
- NOT to be used for the purpose of exclusion
- NOT an educational, special education or mental health evaluation
- NOT the same as a (functional) behavioral assessment
- NOT the same as other types of safety assessments

Is parent permission needed?

SIGMA

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BTAM is an intervention process...it is NOT a disciplinary process!

Research & Systemic Contributors

Overrepresentation in Number of TA's Conducted *

Disproportionality & Bias

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- Disabilities
- African American & Native American
- Hispanic

Crepeau-Hobson & Leech (2021); Cornell et al. (2018); Maeng et al. (2020); Gregory et al. (2018); Also see: NIJ Equity-based School Safety (2023)

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Considerations

- Equity & Equality
  - Economically challenges communities
- US culture of individualism
  - Victim blaming
- School discipline practices
- Bias and privilege
- Prejudices
- Discrimination
- Racism

Zimmerman & Astor (2021); NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

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Link between Implicit Bias and Perceived Threats

Implicit bias refers to the unconscious attitudes and generalizations that impact our understanding, actions and decisions about an individual or group.

+

Threat

Trigger

=

Threat to comfort vs Threat to Safety???

Conolly (2021)   31

Extensions for Cultural Competency

Prework — Select team members who have high degree of cultural dexterity; train team in culturally responsive consultation and trauma informed care; identify community partners (i.e., interpreters, translators, religious/spiritual leaders

Threat Assessment — Engage family; consider third-party (neutral) team member from another school; ensure a cultural broker on team; consider implicit bias in witnesses' reports; consider power imbalances and historical experiences of racism/discrimination; consider language barriers; consider variables that may affect student's expression of emotion (i.e., enculturated notions of stress and wellbeing); consider individual and community trauma history; clarify rules and responsibilities in threat assessment process to family

Safety Planning — Culturally adapted interventions for SEL, skill building, and culturally relevant healing approaches; engage student's natural support network; consider diverse family constellations to inform intervention; connect mental health clinicians with special training in serving culturally diverse clients; involve family in writing of safety/intervention plans; translate written plan to family's primary language and deliver orally and in writing

Follow-Up — Conduct periodic assessment of the threat assessment system to evaluate whether disproportionality exists in the rates of referral for threat-related behavior of children with diverse racial, ethnic, and language backgrounds. Evaluate whether threat assessment procedures are fair and balanced and are not resulting in disproportionate punishments

Note: Adapted from O'Malley, et al. (2018)

Best Practice Guidelines in BTAM

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WHO IS PART OF THE BTAM TEAM?

ADMINISTRATOR*
Principal,
Assistant Principal

SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL*
School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker or other MH professional employed by or contracting to provide services to schools

SRO/LAW ENFORCEMENT*

EXPANDED TEAM, as needed for full assessment
- Teachers, coach, support specialist, technology, nurse
- Additional expertise

*Screening – at least 2 members

Full Assessment – at least 3 members

Identify Team Leader

Information Sharing California Specific Ed Code

SUMMARY OF PERMITTED DISCLOSURES REGARDING SAFETY

1. **SCHOOLS:** FERPA – An Educational Agency or Institution can disclose personally identifiable information from education records germane to health and safety emergencies.

2. **SCHOOLS & HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:** 45 CFR 164.512(j) – Permits a covered entity to use or disclose Protected Health Information (PHI) if disclosure is necessary to lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.

3. **HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:** HIPAA – Through 45 CFR 164.512(j), disclosure and/or exchange of information, including PHI, is permitted if a good faith belief exists that the disclosure was necessary to lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.

4. **HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:** CMIA – Multiple California Civil Codes and Welfare and Institution Codes permits the disclosure and exchange of information, including PHI, to prevent/lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.
   Examples: WIC § 5150 (adults), WIC § 5585.50 (minors), CIV § 56.10(c)(19).

5. **SCHOOLS & HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:** Risk Management Considerations - Disclosing/exchanging sensitive information, to prevent/lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public, may lessen vulnerabilities to risk management issues for the discloser/exchanger.
   Examples: lack of due diligence, negligent intervention, professional malpractice, civil litigation (personal injury, wrongful death).

Cleveland vs Taft Union High School District

- Now California Case Law (2nd Case in US to go to Civil Trial)
  - *March 2022 Appellate Court Upheld Ruling Holding School Liable*

- Establishes precedence for "Standard of Care" in Threat Assessment
  - *Threat Assessment must be carried out by team collectively*
  - *Law Enforcement as core member of team*
  - *Sharing of information must be communicated to all members of the team*
  - *Parent must be kept informed of information gleaned*
  - *Intervention techniques (in this case including parent counseling) must be considered/offered*
  - *Team must collectively monitor and reassess the safety plan*

Opinion Summary

CA Legislation In Effect (2023-2024)

All K-12 Schools = AB 452

- **Annual Notification to Families** Safe Storage of Firearms in first semester/quarter of school year
- Child Access Prevention Laws

California Association of School Psychologists Resource Paper

Middle & High Schools (6-12) = SB 906

- School officials are required to report homicidal threats or perceived threats, as defined, to law enforcement who **"with the support of the local educational agency"** must conduct an immediate investigation and threat assessment, as defined.

Be SMART: 5 Simple Actions

Be SMART promotes responsible gun ownership to reduce deaths, injuries, and trauma that can result when a child or teen is able to access a gun.

S - **secure** guns in homes and vehicles
M - **model** responsible gun behaviors
A - **ask** about unsecured guns homes
R - **recognize** role of guns in suicide
T - **tell** your peers to Be SMART

Be SMART Resources

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Behaviors to Report to BTAM Team
Threat to Safety

- Weapon, assault, harassment arrest
- Planning attack
- Threatened an attack
- Physical attack
- Escalating pattern aggressive or violent behavior
- Others fearful of individual
- Inappropriate anger for situation
- Expression of or justification for violence

- Significant change in behavior, especially after the following:
  - Exposed to physical threat
  - Something valued is lost or destroyed (relationship/possession)
  - Self-esteem/identify threatened
  - Experienced (perceived) injustice
  - Frustrated/confused mental state
  - Withdraw from others

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Overview BTAM Process

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VALIDATED MODELS
What does it look like, when done right?

- **USSS/NTAC: National Threat Assessment Center**
  - *Secret Service and Safe School Initiatives 11/13 Key Questions*
  - *20+ years of qualitative and case study research; the first model developed*
  - ***https://www.secretservice.gov/node/2558***
- **CSTAG**
  - *In 2013, the "Virginia School Threat Assessment Guidelines" or VSTAG* (Now CSTAG) became the first form of threat assessment recognized as an evidence-based practice in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP n.d.).*
  - *https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/virginia-center-school-and-campus-safety*
- **Salem-Keizer (Oregon)**
  - *Student Threat Assessment and Management System*
  - *What Works Clearinghouse as a best-practice program*
  - *http://www.studentthreatassessment.org/*

Responding to Reports

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BTAM: Assess for Risk and Resiliency

- Type of Threat
- Context
- Risk Factors
- Warning Signs
- Trauma Informed Assessment
- Resiliency and Supports

There is a difference between making a threat and *POSING* a threat!!

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POSES A THREAT?

Means = access to weapons

Capacity = physical and cognitive capacity and physical proximity to carry out attack

Intent = motivation and desire to carry out attack

MEANS OR CAPACITY

INTENT OR MEANS / CAPACITY

INTENT MEANS / CAPACITY

Low Concern if only means or capacity is present

Medium Concern if intent or a combination of means and capacity are present

High Concern if all three circles are present
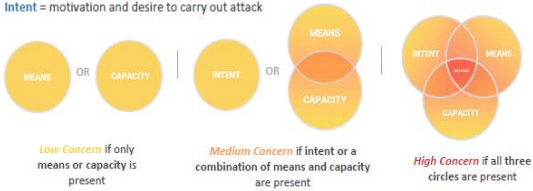
Safer Schools Together (2023)

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Assessing Harm to Self and Others

Harm to Self

Harm to Others

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Best Practices and Implementation Fidelity

BTAM helps move individuals onto a more positive pathway

Cornell, et al (2012, 2018); Maeng, et al (2023)

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

When implemented correctly...

- more likely to receive counseling services, parent conference
- less likely to receive long-term suspension or alternative setting
- prevents overuse of expulsion
- helps mitigate discipline disproportionality

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Lessons Learned

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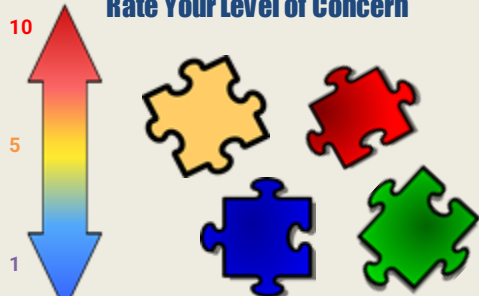
Rate Your Level of Concern

10

5

1

Karl, was a senior and had been the captain of the debate team since his Junior year. In September, he was removed from that position by the advisor who was also the school librarian. There had been concerns about how he was running the practices and the inappropriate comments he frequently made. After a meeting with Karl and his mother, explaining he was demoted, Karl was visibly angry and was heard yelling to his mom in the parking lot that he was going to kill the Debate Team Advisor. This triggered a Threat Assessment.

Arapahoe High School, Colorado, December 13, 2013

On December 13, 2013, at about 12:30 p.m., KP entered AHS with a pump-action shotgun, a large hunting knife, several rounds of ammunition in bandoliers and backpack, a knife, and 3 improvised incendiary devices. He fired three rounds in the school hallway, shooting 17 year-old Claire Davis. He then ran a short distance down an intersecting hallway and entered the library, calling for the school debate coach who escaped through a door, as other students also escaped or hid from the attack. He lit and threw incendiary devices, setting fire to books and a bookcase. When officers entered the library a few minutes later, they found that KP had taken his own life with a self-inflicted gunshot (Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Investigative Report, 2014). Claire died of her injuries eight days later on December 21, 2013.

Arapahoe Investigative Findings

Several errors in the implementation of the Secret Service's guidelines for threat assessment, including:

- Team included only 2 members, not the recommended 4 or 5 members
- Relied on responses to interview at face value
  - *They did not seek out multiple sources of information to verify or corroborate including searches of his technology, interviews with peers, interviews with teachers, connect within mental health provider*
  - *Failed to use an "investigative mindset"*
- Did not collect ongoing information after assessment, failing to provide case management. He was told he could seek out the counselor or school psychologist if he needed to talk.

https://schoolshooters.info/karl-pierson
Learning from a failure in threat assessment: 11 questions and not enough answers, Behavioral Science Law (2019)

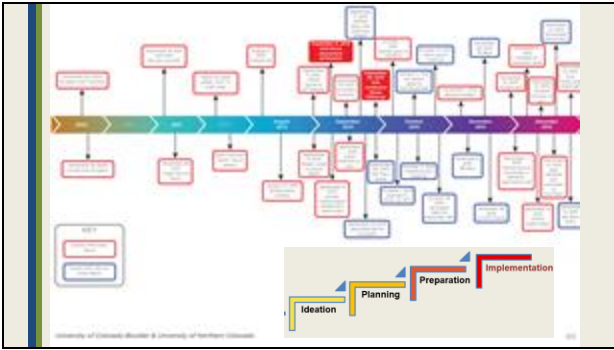"...numerous incidents occurred that were clear warnings of mental instability. Although various individuals and departments within the university knew about each of these incidents, the university did not intervene effectively. No one knew all the information and no one connected all the dots."

Key finding in the *Mass Shootings at Virginia Tech* report of the review panel to Governor Kaine (2007)

Tier 1
Prevention

Fostering Physical and Psychological Safety Through School Climate

Prevention is Key!

- MTSS initiatives
- Balance physical/psychological safety
- Breaking the "code of silence"
- Empowering to report concerns
- Early intervention and skill building
- Universal behavioral expectations
- Universal screenings
- Student leadership

Must be culturally responsive!

CREATE SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE

Connectedness and relationships

2022 State of School Safety Report

- Top school safety concern for students is shooter/attack
- Every group surveyed (students, teachers, parents, and public safety) showed a decline in safety perception compared to the previous year.
- General lack of confidence and/or knowledge of safety preparedness efforts among students, a trend that has persisted year over year
- Students reported lower rates of positive culture and climate
- All survey participants agreed that knowing a process for identifying and managing a behavioral threat increases their feelings of safety in school.

www.safeandsoundschools.org

CA School Climate Report Card

CALIFORNIA SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS   About   Resources   Project Cal-Well   CA Center for School Climate +   Subscribe   Contact

2023 CA Healthy Kids Survey High School Survey   https://calschls.org/reports-data

Students
- School Connectedness - 62%
- Feel a part of School - 52%
- Perceived Safety at School - 72%

Staff (Rate of change 2019 to 2023)
- School is supportive/inviting place for students to learn (-10)
- School is supportive place for staff (-9)
- School is a safe place for students (-10)
- Harassment/bullying is severe problem (+10)
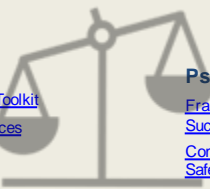
Which Way Does your System's Scales Tip?

Physical Safety

Safe and Sound Schools Toolkit

School Safety.gov Resources

REMS Training Center

Psychological Safety

Framework for Safe & Successful Schools

Comprehensive School Safety Framework

"Physical safety and security and psychological safety and mental wellness go hand-in-hand and combine to provide comprehensive school safety efforts."

Good Prevention

Positive School Climate & Culture of Connectedness	Clear and Explicit Expectations	Physical Safety	Crisis Response & Recovery

• Social Emotional Learning for all
• Restorative Practices
• Trauma Informed Practices
• Student voice in development of procedures and practices
• Leading through lens of equity
	• Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports
	• Bullying Prevention & Intervention
	• Suicide Prevention, Intervention, and Response
	• Clear and transparent discipline policies
	• Digital Citizenship
		• Campus "Hardening the target"
		  ○ Physical/Cyber Security
		    ▪ Access control
		    ▪ Cameras
		    ▪ Locked Doors
		  ○ Site/Building Design
		    ▪ Open/Closed Campus
		• Security Personnel
		• Lockdown Drills vs Active Shooter Drills
		• Policies & Procedures
			• Being PREPaREd
			• Established relationships, protocols, and response plans with stakeholders
			• How to minimize traumatic impact by making informed intervention decisions

Developmentally Appropriate

https://safeandsoundschools.org/resources/the-toolkits-assess-act-and-audit/

The Importance of Being PREPaREd

Five Mission Areas of Preparedness

WS1
1. **Prevention:** Avoid, prevent, or stop crises
2. **Protection:** Safeguard against crises
3. **Mitigation:** Lessen impact, reduce damage

WS2
4. **Response:** Reduce traumatic stress, stabilize, assist
5. **Recovery:** Return to precrisis function, restore

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Functional Annexes

Prevention/ Protection	Mitigation/Response	Recovery
• Security	• Accounting for All Persons • Communications and Warning • Evacuation • Shelter-in-Place • Lockdown • Reunification • **Public Health, Medical & Mental Health**	• Recovery • Continuity of Operations

Security Annex – Psychological

SCHOOL

TIER 3: INTENSIVE SUPPORT

TIER 2: EARLY INTERVENTION/IDENTIFYING STUDENTS AND STAFF AT-RISK

TIER 1: CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTING HEALTHY AND SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

Public Health, Medical, and Mental Health Annex

Goals:
• Addresses

Public Health	• Disease outbreaks • Information sharing
Medical	• Staff medical first aid roles • First aid supply management
Mental Health	• Mental health crisis intervention • Behavior threat assessment and management • Suicide prevention and intervention

Key Components: Coordination!

2019 NTAC Report

- In two-thirds of the cases (n = 23, 66%), at least one prohibited behavior was observed by classmates or adults and was not reported!!!

2023 Toolkit

A TOOLKIT FOR STRENGTHENING K-12 REPORTING PROGRAMS

NTAC (2019, p. 44)

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2023 NTAC TOOLKIT ON REPORTING PROGRAMS
Key Strategies

1	Encourage bystanders to report concerns for the wellness and safety of themselves or others
2	Make reporting accessible and safe for the reporting community
3	Follow-up on reports and be transparent about the action taken in response to reported concerns
4	Make reporting a part of daily school life
5	Create a positive climate where reporting is valued and respected

Reporting directly to a trusted adult | Submitting a tip via phone | Submitting a tip via email or online form | Submitting a tip via text or mobile application

CISA AND NTAC (2023)

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Building a Suicide Prevention Program

1. Comprehensive suicide prevention policy
2. Mandate annual training for all staff on signs
3. Establish suicide assessment team & protocol
4. Properly supervise suicidal students
5. Parent notification procedures
6. Know community resources and protocols for hospitalization
7. Ensure meet state legal requirements
8. Mental health presentation for parents
9. Local, state, and national crisis hotlines
10. Suicide prevention task force
11. Depression screening programs (e.g. SOS, Riding the Waves)
12. SEL Programming

Poland & Lieberman (2018)

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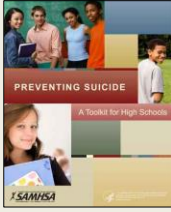
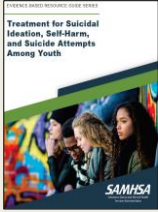## Suicide Prevention Resources

PREVENTING SUICIDE
A Toolkit for High Schools

Florida School Toolkit (for K-12) Educators to Prevent Suicide

Treatment for Suicidal Ideation, Self-Harm, and Suicide Attempts Among Youth

https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669

..\..\..\Crisis Resources\Suicide\Suicide Tool Kit\Florida School Toolkit for K-12 Educators to Prevent Suicide.pdf

https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Treatment-for-Suicidal-Ideation-Self-harm-and-Suicide-Attempts-Among-Youth/PEP20-06-01-002 67

Safe School Climate

A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools

- Model equity and inclusion
- Integrate SEL lessons into academics
- Increase engagement of school mental health professionals in SEL and mental health supports
- Encourage all staff members to continue building positive, trusting relationships with students
  - ➢ *Each student should identify at least one trusted adult*
- Address bullying and cyberbullying
- Provide care-for-the-caregiver support

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www.casel.org

Strategies to Build Social-Emotional Skills

All emotions are ok, is what you do with those emotions.

FREE SEL Curriculum: Choose Love

- PreK – 12 grades
- School, home, community, student leaders, athletes/coaches
- Aligned with CASEL, Common Core and ASCA
- **1st SEL program to fully incorporate Character Social Emotional Development (CSED) model standards**

https://chooselovemovement.org/
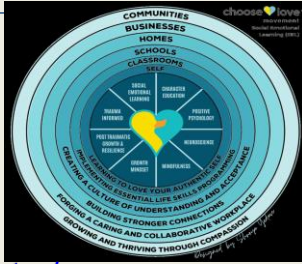
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"The presence of a supportive relationship is more critical than the absence of ACE's in promoting well-being."

(Documentary – *Resilience: The Biology of Stress, the Science of Hope*)

Pathway to Violence Video

- Which behavioral concerns were present for the younger student planning the attack?

- What was it about the climate and culture that helped Megan feel comfortable reporting?

- What were the important roles of the SRO?

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Tier 2
Targeted Supports

Assessment Suggests . . .
Need to Build Skills!

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Removing a Student
from School Does NOT
Decrease Risk!

Punishment alone does not change behavior!

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Intervention & Support Planning

- Monitoring
- Skill Development
- Resiliency Building
- Relationship Building
- School Environment
- Community Supports
- Discipline

MTSS

RTI & SST

SEL

PBIS
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

Mental Health

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Monitoring

- Check-in, checkout
- Backpack search
- Locker search
- Clothing search
- Social media monitoring
- Adult/increased monitoring
- Late arrival/early dismissal
- Adult escorts from class-to -class
- Modify daily schedule (reduce unsupervised time; travel card)
- Restrictions
- On-going progress monitoring
- Safety contract
- Monitor attendance
- No contact agreement

- Ongoing collaboration between school and parent/guardian
- Parent/guardian will provide increased supervision
- Monitor for precipitating events (e.g., anniversaries, losses, perceived injustice, etc.)
- Home visits (home-school connectedness, weapons check, etc.)
- Ankle monitor
- Ongoing collaboration with agency supports, probation/juvenile diversion, mental health professionals
- Detained, incarcerated, under intensive court supervision
- Removal of lethal means
- Other:

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Skill Development/Resiliency Building

- Academic supports
- Conflict resolution
- Anger management
- Social skills group
- Social-emotional learning/curriculum
- Participation in activities/ clubs
- Identify triggers and (self) initiate time-out

- Identify coping strategies
- Supports from behavior specialist
- Conduct functional behavioral assessment (FBA)/develop behavioral intervention plan (BIP)
- Family supports/resources
- Counseling – in school
- Counseling – outside of school
- Other:

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Relationship Building

- Establish system for student to seek support proactively from an adult
- Peer mentor
- Adult mentor
- Provide feedback and monitoring
- Peer supports
- Increase engagement in school activities

- Increase engagement in community activities
- Engage in leadership activities
- Decrease isolation
- De-escalation training for staff
- Monitor reactions to grievances, precipitating events and provide supports
- Identify peer/adult supports
- Other:

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Discipline

Consequences with Care!

- ❑ Letter of apology
- ❑ Conflict resolution
- ❑ Warning
- ❑ Restorative practice
- ❑ Removing privileges
- ❑ Identify triggers/"cool down" location
- ❑ Behavior contract
- ❑ No-contact order
- ❑ Parent Meeting
- ❑ Detention

- ❑ Suspension
- ❑ Alternative to Suspension
- ❑ Habitually Disruptive Plan
- ❑ Alternative placement
- ❑ Expulsion
- ❑ Ticketed by law enforcement
- ❑ Charges filed by law enforcement
- ❑ Law Enforcement Diversion Program
- ❑ Court issues protective orders
- ❑ Other:

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Additional Interventions

- ❑ Intervention team referral
- ❑ Revise IEP/504 Plan
- ❑ Change in transportation
- ❑ Change in class schedule
- ❑ Change in school day schedule (e.g., delayed start, reduced day)

- ❑ Change of placement to access more intensive services
- ❑ Drug/alcohol intervention
- ❑ Special education assessment
- ❑ Evaluation – psychiatric/psychological
- ❑ Other:

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Suicide Assessment Procedures:

- Mental Health Professional Risk Assessment and Referral Procedures
  - *Whenever a student judged to have some risk of engaging in self-directed violence or suicide, a school-based mental health professional should conduct a risk assessment and make the appropriate referrals.*

Identify & Screen → Assess → Consult → Support/ Refer

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Tier 3

Intensive Supports

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Intensive School and Community Supports

Intensive School Interventions	Intensive Community Interventions
Individual Counseling	Long Term Therapy
Functional Behavioral Assessment	Family Counseling
Special Education Consideration	Involvement with Social Services
Individualized Behavior Plan	Community Mentoring
More restrictive environment	

Systems of Care – 6 Integral Practices

1. Use clinicians or other student support providers in the schools to work with students, their families, and all members of the school community
2. Use of school-based and school-focused Wraparound services to support learning and transition.
3. Use of school-based case managers
   - *determine needs; identify goals, resources, and activities; link children and families to other services; monitor services to ensure that they are being delivered appropriately; and advocate for change when necessary.*
4. Schoolwide prevention and early intervention programs.
5. Creation of centers within the school to support students and their families.
6. Use of family liaisons or advocates to strengthen the role of and empower family members in their children's education and care.

Wraparound Services - 10 Essential Elements

1. Community-based.
2. Individualized and strengths-based.
3. Culturally competent.
4. Families involved as full and active partners in every level of the Wraparound process.
5. Team-driven process, involving the family, child, natural supports, agencies, and community services.
6. Flexible funding and creative approaches.
7. A balance of formal services and informal community and family resources.
8. Unconditional commitment.
9. A service/support plan developed and implemented based on an interagency, community-neighborhood collaborative process.
10. Determined and measured outcomes.

Burns & Goldman 1999; Kendziora, Bruns, Osher, Pacchiano, & Mejia, in press

Community Services

- Preventive
- Supportive
- Rehabilitative

Family-School Partnerships
(see Formed Families Forward Resources)

- https://formedfamiliesforward.org/resource_category/trauma-specific-topics-schools/

- https://formedfamiliesforward.org/resource_category/family-engagement/

PFA TEACH

- Evidence-informed strategy for supporting students in the aftermath of a crisis.
- Approach easily be used by all school personnel.
- helps them return to and feel calm, safe and supported at school.

- This process includes the following:
  1. Talk to build Trust
  2. Educate with Empathy
  3. Acknowledge and Address
  4. Connect to Cope
  5. Hope
- Online training
- 1.5 hours CEU''s

https://traumaawareschools.org/index.php/learn-more-pfateach/

Law Enforcement as Partners

TATM Initiative
Operational and Legal Guidance

Echoes of Columbine, FBI (2018)
https://www.fbi.gov/video-repository/echoes-of-columbine-2019.mp4/view

PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 4
TATM for FBI-led Investigations	TATM for Non-FBI Threat Investigations	Working with Local TATM Teams	FBI-led TATM Teams

- Case Examples: TATM vs No TATM
  - List of contacts to deconflict and share information
  - No training and education in preventing a targeted attack
  - Lack of trust and communication, roles when developing a management strategy
  - Significantly delayed response to potential threat

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For those with trauma exposure

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CBITS
COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION FOR TRAUMA IN SCHOOLS

- 5th – 12th grades

- Teaches coping and recovery skills from trauma
  - *Psychoeducation - reactions to trauma*
  - *Relaxation training*
  - *Cognitive restructuring*
  - *Exposure*
  - *Social problem-solving*

- 10 group,1-3 individual, 2 parent, & 1 teacher psychoeducational sessions
- Can include a Racial Trauma Module
- Reduces symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression, and psychosocial dysfunction
- Online training!
- 5 hour CEU's

https://traumaawareschools.org/index.php/learn-more-cbits/

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BB Bounce Back

- Elementary school adaptation of CBITS

- Teaches skills to cope and recover from traumatic experiences
  - *coping skills*
  - *feelings identification*
  - *relaxation exercises*
  - *positive activities*
  - *social support*
  - *problem solving*

- 10 group, 1-3 parent, and 2-3 individual student sessions
- Online training!
- 6 hours CEU's

https://traumaawaresch.wpengine.com/index.php/learn-more-bounce-back/

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Support for Students Exposed to Trauma

- Middle school
  - *can extend to late elementary - early HS*
- Non-clinical adaptation of CBITS
- Ten 45-min lessons
- 4 hours CEU's

- Skill building:
  - *common reactions to trauma*
  - *relaxation techniques*
  - *coping strategies*
  - *how to approach difficult situations*
  - *developing a trauma narrative*
  - *social/problem solving, relaxation*

https://traumaawareschools.org/index.php/learn-more-sset/

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DOCUMENTATION & FIDELITY OF IMPLEMENTATION

THERE IS NO FORMAL GUIDANCE FROM US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NOR MOST STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

Progress Monitoring

Progress Monitor
• As long as needed
• Regular check-ins

1. Assign "case manager"
2. Define success
   • goals?
3. How will interventions be monitored and documented?
   • what data will be collected?
   • frequency of progress monitoring
4. Document regular check-in's during implementation

PROGRESS

Close Case

Close/ Inactive Status
• Informally Monitor
• Stay Engaged

Close case/move case to inactive status when…
  ➢ Goals have been met
  ➢ Can informally monitor
  ➢ Answer to both assessment questions is "no"
    1. Subject **POSE** a threat of violence to others?
    2. Need additional interventions and on-going supports?

Even after case is closed, stay engaged and informally monitor

BTAM Full Protocol

Fidelity
Objective
Reasonable
Timely

- Documents fidelity of process

- Helps to guide the analysis and synthesis of data

- Provides guidance to ensure management strategies are appropriate for the concern

- Documents parent communication and follow-up

Documentation
"Standard of Care" vs. "Negligence"

- Fill out screening and full assessment forms
  - use with consistency across cases and schools

- Documentation MUST support fidelity and include:
  - team composition and process followed
  - data gathered (do NOT identify specific sources!)
  - conclusions reached by team and data to support
  - re-entry meetings/return-to-school plans, if appropriate
  - supports offered/recommended/implemented
  - progress monitoring
  - rationale when closing the case

Documentation

- Decide where documentation will be stored and accessibility
  - Copy kept at school and also send to district office
  - Centralized database
  - How long will keep?
  - Paper and/or electronic copies?

- Information may be disclosed to staff on a need-to-know basis

- If student transfers:
  - What info and records will be shared?

Case Tracking Sheet

Parent Request for Records?

Evaluating Fidelity of Implementation

- Develop and review checklists and flow charts to ensure fidelity to established protocols and procedures
- Clearly define roles and expectations for all team members
- Assign one person to manage documentation (hard copies, electronic logs, etc.)
- Schedule regular follow-up meetings and reviews for individual students
- Schedule regular follow up meetings and reviews for the system and teams

FIDELITY IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

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Analyze School/District Data

Keep data regarding:
- Number potential threats reported
- Number of potential threat screened
- How many went to full assessment
- Type of threat
- Did student POSE a threat
- Level of concern

Student characteristics:
- Age
- Grade
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability? Prior supports?

Process
- Implementation checklist (fidelity)
- District coordinator reviews cases
- Feedback from team, staff, students, families

Outcome data
- Intervention vs disciplinary action
- Progress monitoring data
  - ➢ Academic, social, emotional growth
- Use of community resources

Disproportionality outcomes
- Compare to general population data and other disciplinary data

An increased # of assessments is NOT always a bad thing!

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Summary

- It is possible to prevent school violence and self-harm
- Early identification identifies problematic behavior and engages supports!
- Enhancing a school's climate improves school safety
- School safety should…
  - ➢ *utilize best practices and be culturally responsive*
  - ➢ *have access to high quality, ongoing safety and crisis training*
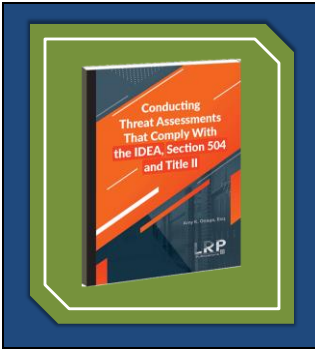 - ➢ *Focus on intervention and support resources*

Resources & References

BTAM Informed by Research & Practice

- National Threat Assessment Center Documents
- REMS Publications and Guidance Documents
- CISA School Safety Resources
- FBI *Making Prevention a Reality* Document Download

Best Practice Resources

15-Minute Focus Series

Practitioner and parent friendly

Includes:

- *BTAM*
- *Anger, Rage and Aggression*
- *Anxiety, Depression, Suicide*
- *Behavior Interventions*
- *Counseling Techniques*
- *Diversity, Bias, and Privilege*
- *Trauma*
- *And more!!!*

Link to the Series Website
$12.95-17.95

Threat Assessments and IDEA, 504, Title II

- Excellent guidance on BTAM and students with disabilities
- Many court cases referenced
- Link to LRP Publications
- $34.95

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NASP Resources

- *BTAM: Best Practice Considerations for K-12 Schools*
- *Upholding Student Civil Rights and Preventing Disproportionality in BTAM*
- *Effective BTAM: Critical Information for School Safety Teams Townhall*

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Virtual BTAM Resources

- *BTAM in the Virtual Environment* (NASP)
- *Handling Threat Assessment Cases Remotely* (SIGMA)

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Suicide & Threat Assessment CSP Resources

Additional Resources

Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Resources
https://wke.lt/w/s/nuK3A

Supplemental Crisis Intervention Resources
https://wke.lt/w/s/muYMyY

SEL Resources
https://wke.lt/w/s/muYMyY

From Ben Fernandez

Grant Funding Opportunities 💲💲💲

- Department of Homeland Security - FEMA. Targeted Violence Prevention. 50,000 to 2,000,000 (Total 20,000,000 for 2023)

- SAMHSA Project AWARE: Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education (Total 38, 129,774 anticipated 21 awardees)

- https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html
  - *Safe and Supportive Schools: School-Based Mental Health Grant*

- https://www.grants.ca.gov/

- DOJ: Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence

PREP**a**RE Crisis Prevention & Intervention Curriculum

- Workshop Descriptions & Target Audiences
- Program Evaluation Data
- Upcoming Trainings
- List of Local Trainers
- FAQs

http://www.nasponline.org/prepare/index.aspx

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