



K-12 Threat Assessment

For Certificated and Classified Staff Members

Course Overview

Whether you are a teacher, administrator, counselor, SRO or school psychologist, the growing challenges of assessing violent social media posts, overheard conversations in the hallway, or direct threats of violence are on the forefront of educators' minds trying to keep our students safe. This course offers an evidenced-based, consistent approach to understanding and assessing threat, regardless of your previous experience or training. Designed as a course to formalized existing informal processes and place proven research and prevention strategies in the hands of those who need them most, this K-12 Threat Assessment course will deepen your knowledge and help move students off the pathway towards violence and help foster protective factors and social engagement. This introductory course provides a foundation for understanding the key concepts and leveraging available tools and resources.

Participants will learn to recognize the warning signs and how to develop recommendations on appropriate means of intervention/mitigation with individuals whose behavior may represent a threat. This will be accomplished through case examples, interactive discussion and a review of structured, researched-based processes for identifying, managing and if necessary, responding to incidents of violence by leveraging recommended practices by the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.

Learning Objectives

1. Participants will review the common risk factors for targeted violence.
2. Participants will discuss with others through practical, group exercises case studies.
3. Participants will learn early warning signs of high-risk behavior.

Research Support

- Mohandie, K. (2014). Threat assessment in schools. In J. R. Meloy & J. Hoffman (Eds.), *The international handbook of threat assessment* (pp. 126–147). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- MSD (2019). Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission Report. Retrieved on December 29, 2019 from www.fdle.state.fl.us/MSDHS/CommissionReport.pdf
- National Threat Assessment Center. (2018). *Enhancing school safety using a threat assessment model: An operational guide for preventing targeted school violence*. U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security.
- O'Toole M.E. (2000). *The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective*. (FBI, Washington, DC.)
- Schiemann, M. and Molnar, J. (2019). *A Practical Guide to Case Management in Higher Education*. PA, King of Prussia. The National Behavioral Intervention Team Association.
- Swick, K.J. (1985). *Disruptive student behavior in the classroom: What research says to the teacher*, 2nd ed. National Education Association: Washington, DC.
- Turner J, Gelles M. (2003). *Threat Assessment: A Risk Management Approach*. (Routledge, New York, NY.)
- Van Brunt, B. (2016). Assessing Threat in Written Communications, Social Media, and Creative Writing. *Journal of Violence and Gender*, 3(2), 78-88.



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Agenda

During the morning sessions, certificated and classified staff members will:

- ✓ Review and discuss current terminology as they relate to affective and targeted violence.
- ✓ Develop an understanding of how to best identify and intervene with potentially violent individuals.
- ✓ Learn appropriate investigative strategies through practical examples and discussions.
- ✓ Increase awareness of bias in decision-making processes and mitigate this through a multi-disciplinary team approach.
- ✓ Review relevant case studies to bring home core threat concepts in a practical manner.
- ✓ Review and apply practices for behavioral intervention and threat assessment.
- ✓ Review the Three Cs: Context, content, circumstances.
- ✓ Review the limitations and benefits of a range of evidence-based risk and threat assessment models.
- ✓ Discuss the importance of building resiliency and grit through a culturally competent lens.
- ✓ Review protective factors for affective and targeted violence and offer examples related to classroom management and referral.

During the afternoon session, certificated and classified staff members will:

- ✓ Discuss common risk factors for violence and demonstrate how they can be applied to the existing cases to better assess the overall risk and lethality in the writing.
- ✓ Review case examples of social media threats to further engagement and application.
- ✓ Be trained on best practices for behavioral intervention and threat assessment.
- ✓ Identify warning behaviors for assessing threats if intended violence.
- ✓ Understand differences between hunters and howlers, transient and substantive threats.
- ✓ Discuss the differences between a violence risk assessment and mental health assessments.
- ✓ Review how behavioral intervention teams can address at-risk behavior and prevent violence.