



School Threat Assessment Program: Implementation Checklist

Step 1: Establish a multidisciplinary team

- Create a multidisciplinary team(s) (One per school? One serving multiple schools?)
- Choose a team name. Examples include:
 - Assessment and Care Team
 - Behavioral Intervention Team
 - Threat Assessment Team
 - Coordinated Intervention Team
- Identify team membership (members should represent at least the following areas):
 - Administrator
 - School psychologist / social worker / counselor
 - SRO / Security / Local Law enforcement
 - Ad hoc member(s) when needed
- Designate a team leader
- Establish team procedures and protocols (see Step 5 below)
- Meet on a regular basis, and as-needed

Step 2: Define prohibited and concerning behaviors

- Establish policy defining prohibited behaviors:
 - Engaging in violence
 - Threatening violence
 - Bringing weapon to school
 - Bullying /harassing behavior
 - Include online behavior?
 - Other(s)?
- Identify other behaviors for screening or intervention:
 - Marked decline in performance
 - Increased absenteeism
 - Sudden or dramatic change in behavior or appearance
 - Erratic, depressive, or other mental health symptoms
 - Other(s)?
- Define threshold for intervention or involvement of threat assessment team
- Team procedures should address how to screen cases

Step 3: Create a central reporting mechanism

- Establish one or more reporting mechanisms, such as:
 - Online form on school website
 - Dedicated email address and/or phone number
 - Smartphone application platforms
 - Other(s)?
- Provide training and guidance to encourage reporting:
 - Everyone's role and responsibility to report
 - What behaviors should be reported
 - How to report concerns
 - Options for anonymous reporting
- Ensure availability to respond
- Establish trust that reports will be acted upon

Step 4: Define threshold for law enforcement intervention

- Most reports can be handled by school-based team:
 - Threats of suicide
 - Bullying / harassment
 - Depression / other concerning behavior
 - Other(s)?
- Establish which behaviors should be referred for law enforcement intervention (consult SRO, local LEOs):
 - Physical violence
 - Threats that *pose* a risk of violence
 - Planned school attack
 - Behavior involving weapons
- Cases referred to law enforcement should still involve school-based team

Step 5: Establish threat assessment procedures

- Decide how to document each case:
- Create procedures to screen reports
- Determine which reports warrant a full threat assessment
- Establish procedures for gathering information
 - Identify who will conduct interviews (inquiry vs. investigation)
 - Seek out information inside and outside of school
 - Use “welfare check” approach to help build rapport
- Organize information around 11 Investigative Themes / 11 Investigative Questions
- Make assessment and decide on intervention

Step 6: Develop risk management options

- Identify all available resources for creating individualized management plans:
 - Within each school
 - In the school district
 - In the community
 - Available remotely (e.g. tele-medicine)
 - Resources for staff (not just students)
- Identify resources to assist targets / victims
- Involve SRO, school security, and/or local law enforcement to identify safety planning resources
- Research resources available through EAP program and/or community-based options
- Establish points of contact for all resources

Step 7: Create and promote safe school climates

- Assess current school climate:
 - Administer surveys to students, staff, parents
 - Share results (even if they aren’t flattering)
- Enhance current school climate:
 - Use survey findings to identify areas to address
 - Involve students in developing and implementing solutions
- Strengthen students’ connectedness

Step 8: Conduct training for all stakeholders

- Training for threat assessment team on behavioral threat assessment procedures
- Training for students, all staff, and parents to encourage reporting (age-appropriate)

Sources: *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence (2018).* Washington DC: National Threat Assessment Center, U.S. Secret Service. *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and Creating Safe School Climates (2002).* Washington DC: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.