

Essential Elements of School Threat Assessment



School threat assessment has emerged as a leading strategy for preventing school violence nationwide. [This on-demand webinar](#) reviews the essential features of school threat assessment, how and when it should occur, and how it differs from other forms of threat assessment. Multidisciplinary teams and their function, concerns about school threat assessment, and research supporting the benefits of school threat assessment are covered.

Learning Outcomes

- » Define the practice of school threat assessment as a key component of a comprehensive school safety plan.
- » Describe how school threat assessment teams function.
- » Identify the benefits of school threat assessment.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Threat assessment is a problem-solving approach to violence prevention that involves assessment and intervention with students who have threatened violence in some way.
- ✓ School-Based Threat Assessment has to account for three unique factors: 1) Compared to adults, students more frequently make threats, 2) Overreactions to student misbehavior can have serious negative consequences, and 3) Schools have a duty to educate all students.
- ✓ Threat Assessment has three phases: identification, evaluation, and intervention, all of which take place on a graduated scale in response to the specific incident.
- ✓ Threat assessments should be conducted by a team of individuals with multidisciplinary backgrounds and a wide range of resources who go through training together to ensure a shared context and baseline of knowledge.
- ✓ Schools benefit from an internal threat assessment team who can respond quickly and personally, as well as a network of support, including law enforcement, for extreme situations.
- ✓ The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is not as restrictive as many believe and should not be a barrier to providing information for a threat assessment.
- ✓ Benefits of a threat assessment include safety, limiting school exclusions, reducing disciplinary inequities, helping troubled students, and supporting a positive school environment.
- ✓ Some of the challenges facing school threat assessment are: standards for high quality training and implementation, inaccurate public perception of threat assessments, and an incomplete incorporation of law enforcement on campus.

Additional Resources

[National Police Foundation](#) - A collection of data and resources to support safety in schools.

[School Shooter.Info](#) - Resources on school shooters, perpetrators, and prevention.

Questions for Discussion

- » What resources does your school need to complete a school threat assessment?
- » Who would serve on the multidisciplinary threat assessment team? Who would be a part of the network of support for extreme situations?
- » What obstacles might your team face? What concerns from the community might you need to overcome?

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